
OVERVIEW OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF WORLD RELIGIONS AND THE HISTORY OF THEIR SPREAD IN THE NUSANTARA

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Abstract:

Whether the entry of world religions into Indonesia is driven more by puritanical economic, political, or missiological (da'wah) motives, has colored the uniqueness of each, and has influenced the thickness or thinness of tolerance levels towards the presence of "the other." How to read economic, political or missiological relations in these relations which are not as simple as imagined. So the article has the aim of understanding how the development of world religions and the history of their development in the archipelago at a glance. The method used is evaluative literature study, where each discussion of religions ends with an evaluation of their development.

Keywords: world religion, history, nusantara

Abstrak:

Masuknya agama-agama dunia ke Indonesia apakah itu lebih didorong motif ekonomis, politik, atau motif misiologis (*da'wah*) yang lebih puritan, telah mewarnai kekhasan masing-masing, dan mempengaruhi tebal atau tipis tingkat toleransi terhadap kehadiran "yang lain" (*the others*). Bagaimana membaca relasi ekonomi, politis atau misiologis dalam relasi ini yang ternyata tidak sesederhana seperti dibayangkan. Maka artikel memiliki tujuan memahami bagaimana perkembangan agama-agama dunia dan sejarah perkembangannya di Nusantara secara selayang pandang. Metode yang digunakan adalah studi literatur evaluatif, dimana setiap pembahasan agama-agama diakhiri dengan evaluasi dari perkembangannya.

Kata kunci: agama dunia, sejarah, nusantara

INTRODUCTION

In this introductory part, the author's point of departure is not on the explanation of the background of the problem as stated in the writing of scientific articles in general. But in this section we focus on the subject matter. What is the subject matter in this article is the arrival of the world religions (the world religions) to Indonesia through a fairly long historical process. The entry of these religions whether it is driven by more puritanical

economic, political, or missiological motives (*da'wah*) has colored each other's uniqueness, and has influenced the level of tolerance for the presence of "the other" thick or thin [the others]). Looking at the subject matter above, how to read the economic, political or missiological relations in this relation, which turns out to be not as simple as imagined. In this case the theological aspects never stand alone, but are influenced or influence one another. A number of chronicle literature (which historically cannot be fully trusted), for example, but can be seen as deposits of "collective memory" of traditional responses to the influx of foreign religions.¹

In the case of the entry of Islam into Java, it is interesting for us to evaluate that theologically Hinduism and Buddhism on the one hand, and Chinese religion and beliefs (Taoism and Confucianism) on the other hand, in the eyes of some puritan Muslim communities at the beginning of the founding of the Demak kingdom, could be mutually exclusive. are classified as "infidels". However, Demak's attitude towards Hinduism or Buddhism, as reflected in the chronicle texts, is quite harsh, in contrast to Chinese religions and beliefs. This is clear from Raden Patah's attitude towards "apostate" Chinese Muslims, but not so with Hindus and Buddhists.² This note is sufficient to judge that the differences in attitudes above are not solely based on theological judgments, but rather due to political factors. On the one hand, Hinduism or Buddhism is labeled with the strength of the old regime which is seen as a threat, on the other hand, Confucianism is more considered a friend, because of their support and Raden Patah's family relationship with his Chinese colleagues, even though theologically they are the same as other non-Muslims.

So it can be explained in this introductory section that this article aims to explain at a glance the development of world religions and the history of their spread in Indonesia or the "Nusantara."³

¹One of the historical works that uses "chronic literature" as a comparison is Slamet Muljana's book, *Runtuhnya Kerajaan Hindu Jawa dan Timbulnya Negara-negara Islam* (Yogyakarta: Penerbit LKiS, 2005), 42. In addition to using "Serat Kandha", Slamet Muljana also based on "The Chronicle of Sam Po Kong", a Chinese account of the position of China before and after the collapse of the Majapahit Kingdom..

²H.J. de Graaf, et. all. *Cina Muslim di Jawa Abad XV dan XVI Antara Historisitas dan Mitos*. trans: Alfajri (Yogyakarta: PT. Tiara Wacana, 1998), 15-19.

³The use of the word "Nusantara" as the equivalent of the word "Indonesia" because the use of the word Nusantara has first or simultaneously appeared when the entry and development of religions. See Weishaguna. "Reposisi Istilah Review Sejarah Ruang Kepulauan." *Jurnal Perencanaan Wilayah dan Kota*. Vol.6, No.2 (2006): 1-11, <http://puslit2.petra.ac.id/ejournal/index.php/pwk/article/view/17811>; Yunani.

METHODS

In this article, the author uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a synthetic literature study. What is meant by using this method is that a descriptive qualitative approach is an iterative process in which a better understanding of the scientific community is achieved by making new significant differences that result from getting closer to the phenomena studied descriptively.⁴ From this study, the author describes how the entry of Hinduism and Buddhism, Confucianism, Islam, and Christianity and Catholicism into Indonesia. From each of these, the author describes the active role of Indonesians in religion and provides an evaluation of the entry of these religions into Indonesia.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Hinduism and Buddhism

Regarding the entry of Indian culture that brought Hindu-Buddhist religion in Indonesia, in outline the views of historians can be divided into two opinions. The first opinion, views that the spread of Indian culture is due to the active role of the Indians themselves, be it the role of the *vaisyas* (merchants), knights (aristocrats) and *brahmanas* (priests, clergy). While the second opinion views that the spread of the two Indian religions is due to the active role of the Indonesian people, or what is often called the backflow theory.

The Active Role of the Indians

Vaisya theory. Regarding first glance, N.J. Krom argues that the *Vaisyas* are the largest group that plays a role in spreading Hindu-Buddhist religion and culture. Merchants who already knew Hindu-Buddhist came to Indonesia, apart from trading, they also introduced the two religions to Indonesians. At that time Indian traders sailed to the

"Tinjauan Sejarah Terhadap Penetapan Pulau-Pulau Di Indonesia." *Jurnal Criksetra*, Vol.5, No.2 (2016): 125-129, <https://doi.org/10.36706/jc.v5i2.4809>.

⁴Patrik Aspers, Ugo Corte. "What is Qualitative in Qualitative Research." *Qualitative Sociology*. Vol.42, Iss.2 (2019): 139-160, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11133-019-9413-7>.

archipelago depending on the monsoons, so that at a certain time they had to stay in Indonesia, if the monsoons did not allow them to return to their country. Well, while living in Indonesia they married indigenous women while spreading their religion. From here, Indian culture spreads in the lives of Indonesian people.⁵

Knight Theory. Next up C.C. Berg put forward the theory that the knight class played a major role in the spread of Indian culture in Indonesia through a number of conflicts over power struggles in Indonesia. The knights helped one of the groups, and as a reward for the victory of the group they supported, they were then married off to native women. From their marriage to the girls of the indigenous rulers, they spread Hindu-Buddhist religion to the families they married. And according to their professional calling, these knights then built colonies that developed into a Hindu kingdom. C.C. Theory This berg is endorsed by J.L. Moens who argues that in the 5th century AD quite a number of southern Indian families migrated to Indonesia, when their kingdom was defeated, and they founded a new kingdom in Indonesia.

The Brahman Theory. The theory proposed by J.C. van Leur, in essence, states that the early Hindu-Buddhist culture was actually introduced in Indonesia by Brahmin groups who were deliberately invited by the kings of the archipelago. The story of the arrival of the famous Resi Agastya, which is supported by historical records which is more adequate, strengthens the Brahmin theory.⁶ Also, evidence of inscriptions on the relics of Hindu-Buddhist kingdoms in the archipelago, especially the Sanskrit inscriptions in Palawa letters. Sanskrit and the Palawa script in India are only used as the language of the sacred scriptures (*Vedas, Upanisads*) and the language of religious rites which are only mastered by the Brahmins. They are more entitled to the recitation of the Vedas, because in their hands is mainly the spread of Hinduism and Buddhism carried out in the archipelago.

The Active Role of Indonesians

F.D.K Bosch put forward an interesting theory which in principle emphasized the

⁵Comp. I.B. Putu Suamba, *Siwa-Buddha di Indonesia Ajaran dan Perkembangannya*. (Denpasar: Program Magister Ilmu Agama dan Budaya dan Penerbit Widya Dharma, 2007), 34-38.

⁶I.B. Putu Suamba, *Siwa-Buddha di Indonesia Ajaran dan Perkembangannya*, 47.

Indonesian people themselves who played an active role in the spread of Hinduism and Buddhism in their own country.⁷ Although Bosch admits that the first to come to Indonesia were Indians who had a missionary zeal to spread their religion. In subsequent developments, the Indonesians themselves went to India to make pilgrimages and study Hinduism and Buddhism there. After returning to their homeland, it is the Indonesians themselves who teach their religion to other Indonesian people.

Historical Evaluation of the Entry of Hindus and Buddhists to Indonesia

The theories regarding the entry of Hinduism and Buddhism in Indonesia described above are actually complementary, they cannot be considered as contradicting each other. It can also be concluded that the entry of Hindu and Buddhist influences into Indonesia was very inculturative, and was harmoniously accepted by the Indonesian population, although it was still reflected in the light of local culture with high spirituality. As mentioned in the ancient Sundanese text, *Sang Hyang Siskakanda ing Karesian* (5th century AD), Hinduism and Buddhism were well received, but the Hindu-Buddhist deities were placed under the principle of Belief in One God (*ratu bhakti di dewata, dewata bhakti di hyang*).⁸ The historical traces of the harmonious coexistence of Hinduism and Buddhism, and subsequently Hindu-Buddhism and the "original religion" of this archipelago, are appropriately called F.D.L. Bocsh as the "local genius" of the Indonesian nation.

So, Western scholars recognize how high the cultural capacity of the Indonesian nation is to "Indonesianize" foreign influences, so that the new culture does not feel foreign, but seems to be its own. An example of this conscious effort to "indosinize" Hindu-Buddhist culture is the massive cultural project undertaken by King Dhamawangsa Teguh Ananta Wikramo Tunggaldewa (10th century AD): "mengjawa-ken byasamata" (*Javanization of Vyasa teachings*).⁹ This great cultural achievement finally culminated in the tradition of tolerance framed by the verse "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika" (Different but one) in the Majapahit era. The principle of tolerance which celebrates differences as a wealth

⁷F.D.L. Bosch, *Masalah Penyebaran Kebudayaan Hindu di Kepulauan Nusantara*, (Jakarta: Penerbit Bhratara, 1974), 17.

⁸M.D. Poepponegoro dan Nugroho Notosusanto (ed.), *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia*. Jilid II (Jakarta: Penerbit Balai Pustaka, 1984), 391.

⁹Putu Suamba, *Siwa-Buddha di Indonesia Ajaran dan Perkembangannya*, 11.

value is clearly reflected in social, political, cultural, and legal life. Unlike the culture in the Middle East region, Indian culture does not recognize "blasphemy" (blasphemy) which is based on criminalization due to differences in religious doctrine or belief, but rather closer to "hate speech" which is based on religious sentiments and which causes obvious physical casualties as a reason for criminalization, for example the act of destroying places of worship in the Adigama Law from the end of Majapahit.¹⁰

Confucian Religion

Confucianism developed from mainland China and was brought by Chinese traders and emigrants to the Indonesian archipelago in about the 3rd century AD. Unlike the others, Confucianism focuses more on individual beliefs and practices, and is not characterized by the religion of an organized society (the religion). organized religion). In the 1900s, Confucians formed an organization they called *Tiong Hoa Hwee Koan* (THHK) in Batavia. In early 1961, this organization announced that Confucianism was a religion and Confucius was their prophet. Furthermore, at the end of 1965, Bung Karno issued a presidential decree number 1/PNPS/1965, and in the explanation of Presidential Decree No. 1 of 1965 for the first time mentions Confucianism among the 6 religions recognized by the state.¹¹

In 1967, Bung Karno was replaced by Suharto, which marked the New Order era. Under the Suharto government, anti-Chinese laws were enacted to gain political support for certain groups, especially with the G30S/PKI incident, which China claimed to have supported. Pak Harto has issued Presidential Instruction Number 14 in 1967, concerning Chinese culture, worship, Chinese celebrations, and calling on the Chinese to change their real names. After all, Suharto knew how to control the Indonesian Chinese, who make up only 3% of the Indonesian population, but who have a dominant influence on the Indonesian economy. In the same year, Suharto before the PKTHI conference stated that "Confucians have the right to a proper place in the country". In 1969, Law number 5 in

¹⁰*Sang Hyang Adigama*. Transliteration from Old Javanese: P.J. Zoelmulder, SJ. Library collection "Artati", Map. 75, Yogyakarta: Universitas Katolik "Sanata Dharma", (Manuskrip Asli di Perpustakaan Leiden, MC.Or. 3878-1).

¹¹"Agama Konghucu di Indonesia", article loaded in konghucuindonesia.blogspot.com, accessed on March 8, 2015.

1969 was issued, replacing the 1967 presidential decree on the six official religions in.

However, in 1978, the Minister of Home Affairs issued a decree that there were only five official religions, excluding Confucianism. Therefore, the status of Confucianism in Indonesia during the New Order era was never clear. After the 1998 reform era, after the fall of Pak Harto, K.H. Abdurahman Wahid was elected as the fourth president. Gus Dur revoked Presidential Instruction Number 14 in 1967 and the Decree of the Minister of Home Affairs of 1978. Now, Confucianism is officially recognized as a religion in Indonesia. Chinese culture and all related Chinese activities are now permitted. Chinese Indonesians and followers of the Confucian religion are now free to practice their religious teachings and traditions. Like other religions in Indonesia which are officially recognized by the state and each religious day is designated as a holiday, the Chinese New Year has also been designated as an official Confucian religious holiday.

Islam Religion

Not unlike the entry of Hinduism and Buddhism into Indonesia, the process of the entry of Islam into Indonesia, there are also several theories put forward by historians. According to historians, there are 4 theories about the entry of Islam into Indonesia, namely the Gujarat Theory, the Persian Theory, the Mecca Theory, and the Chinese Theory. The four theories in outline can be described below:

Gujarat Theory

The Gujarat theory was put forward by the Dutch scholar, J. Pijnapel from the University of Leiden. Basically this theory argues that the first arrival of Islam to Indonesia came from traders from Gujarat in the 13th century AD Gujarat is located in western India adjacent to the Arabian Sea.¹² According to Pijnapel, Arabs with the Shafii school of thought have been living in Gujarat and Malabar since the early 7th century AD, but the propagator of Islam to Indonesia was not Arabs, but Gujarati traders who had embraced

¹² Asfiati. "Masuk dan Berkembangnya Islam di Indonesia (analisa tentang Teori-Teori yang Ada)." *THARIQAH ILMIAH: Jurnal Ilmu-ilmu Kependidikan dan Bahasa Arab* Vol.1, No.2 (2014): 16-19. <http://repo.iain-padangsidempuan.ac.id/350/1/294-858-1-PB.pdf>; Husaini Husda. "ISLAMISASI NUSANTARA (Analisis Terhadap Discursus Para Sejarawan)" *Jurnal Adabiya* Vol.18, No.2 (2016): 17-29. <http://dx.doi.org/10.22373/adabiya.v18i35.1202>.

Islam and traded far to the east, namely the territory of Indonesia. So, Islam first developed in the cities on the coasts of the Indian subcontinent. In this Gujarat traders opened trade relations with Indonesia earlier than with Arab traders. The Arabs finally also came to the archipelago to spread Islam, but that happened after the arrival of the Gujarati people.¹³

This Gujarat theory was also supported and developed by J.P. Moquetta in 1912, who gave an argument based on the discovery of the tombstone of Sultan Malik Saleh who died on 17 Dzulhijjah 831 H or 1297 AD in Samudara Pasai, Aceh. According to Moquetta, the tombstone in Pasai and the tomb of Maulana Malik Ibrahim who died in 1419 in Gresik, East Java, have the same shape as the tombstone found in Kambai, Gujarat, so it is possible that the tombstone was brought by traders from Gujarat, or made by Gujarati people, and could also be Indonesians themselves who have learned typical Gujarati calligraphy. Similarly, the similarity of the Syafi'i school proves that the Gujarati traders were the first to contribute to the spread of Islam in Indonesia, and not spread directly from Mecca.¹⁴

Persian Theory

This Persian theory was first proposed by the historian of Banten, Husein Djajadiningrat. According to Hoesein, Islam was first brought by Muslims who came from Persia. Hoesein's conclusion is evidenced by the fact that there are similarities in culture and traditions that developed in Indonesia and in Persia, which is now known as Iran. For example, the tradition of celebrating 10 Muharram or Ashura as a Shia celebration in memory of the death of Husein bin Ali, the Prophet's grandson. This tradition is called "the ark" and developed in Pariaman, West Sumatra. The word "ark" means "coffin", a transliteration from Farsi. In addition, the similarities in the mystical teachings of "Wihdatul Wujud" which were taught by Sheikh Siti Jenar in Java, are in fact the same as the teachings of Sufism Mansyur Al-Hallaj from Persia. Like Al-Hallaj, Sheikh Siti Jenar was finally sentenced to death by the Kingdom of Demak, for committing blasphemy. Another

¹³Uka Tjandrasasmita, *Penelitian Arkheologi Islam di Indonesia dari Masa ke Masa*, (Kudus: Penerbit "Menara Kudus", 2000), 25; Husaini Husda. "ISLAMISASI NUSANTARA (Analisis Terhadap Discursus Para Sejarawan)": 17-29.

¹⁴Uka Tjandrasasmita, *Penelitian Arkheologi Islam di Indonesia dari Masa ke Masa*, 20-29; Husaini Husda. "ISLAMISASI NUSANTARA (Analisis Terhadap Discursus Para Sejarawan)": 17-29.

evidence presented by Hoesein which is in line with Moquetta's theory, is that there are similarities in the art of chiseled calligraphy on the tombstones used in early Islamic graves in Indonesia.¹⁵

Mecca Theory

According to the Meccan theory, the entry of Islam to Indonesia was directly from Mecca or Saudi Arabia, and the process of spreading Islam had already taken place in the first century Hijri or the 7th century AD. This theory was put forward by Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah, or better known as Buya Hamka. . Hamka rejects all assumptions of Western scholars who argue that Islam did not come to Indonesia directly from Arabia. The materials that underlie Hamka's argument are Indonesian local sources and Arab sources. Again, according to Hamka, the initial arrival of the Arabs was not based on economic values, but was driven by religious motives for the spread of Islam. According to Hamka, the trade route between Indonesia and the Arabs had been going on long before Christ. The Muslims in the archipelago, in Hamka's opinion, accepted Islam from the Arabs, and not just for trade reasons. This view is almost identical to the theory put forward by A.H. Johns that the Sufi travelers were the first to spread Islam in Indonesia. They usually traveled from one place to another and established sects, which to this day continue to grow in Indonesia with "sufistic" characteristics.¹⁶

Chinese Theory

The Chinese theory about the entry of Islam into Indonesia is no less interesting, as well as from data findings that so far have not been widely discussed by experts in the 19th century. According to this theory, the process of the arrival of Islam to Indonesia, especially in Java, originated from Chinese immigrants. . It should also be noted that China's relations with Indonesia existed long before the birth of Islam. We have Chinese

¹⁵Taufik Abdullah (ed.). *Sejarah Umat Islam Indonesia*. (Jakarta: Majelis Ulama Indonesia, 1991); H.J. de Graaf, "South-East Asian Islam to Eighteenth Century" in *The Cambridge History of Islam*, Volume 2A, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 123.

¹⁶Hamka, *Sejarah Umat Islam*. (Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 2016); Taufik Abdullah (ed.). *Sejarah Umat Islam Indonesia*; Husaini Husda. "ISLAMISASI NUSANTARA (Analisis Terhadap Discursus Para Sejarawan)": 17-29.

records dating back to the fourth century, until before and after the fall of Majapahit, even the records of Admiral Zheng He's da'wah, especially his very famous goodwill visit, are quite clear in the records of the Ming dynasty. In the Chinese record above, it is even explicitly stated that Zheng He landed in the port of the eastern part of Java when the Paregreg War broke out, namely the "civil war" between King Wikramawardana, king of Majapahit in "*Kedaton kulon*" (western palace, the center of the kingdom) and Bhre Wirabhumi, vassal king in "*Kedaton wetan*" (east palace). In the "civil war" between the two heirs to the throne of King Hayam Wuruk, there was an incident where 170 Zheng He's soldiers were killed by Wikramawardana's troops. This Chinese record from the Ming Dynasty completes the historical void so far, namely the important role of the Chinese in the spread of Islam in Java at the beginning of the establishment of the Islamic kingdom of Demak.¹⁷

Previously, during the Hindu-Buddhist era, ethnic Chinese had mingled with the Indonesian population, mainly through trade contacts. In fact, the teachings of Islam have arrived in China in the 7th century AD, a period in which this religion was just developing. According to Sumanto Al-Qurtuby, in the chronicles of the Tang Dynasty (618-960 AD), a number of Muslim settlers had spread in the Canton, Zhang-zaho, Quanzhou and coastal areas of southern China. This Chinese theory, when viewed from several Chinese chronicle sources, as well as local sources (babad and saga), is historically acceptable. All local sources, namely chronicle literature (both santri and abangan), all agree to admit that Raden Patah, the first king of the Islamic kingdom in Java, was of Chinese descent.¹⁸

Likewise, the Sam Po Kong chronicle mentions that Raden Patah was the son of the last Majapahit king, Kertabumi (Chinese spelling: "Kung Ta Bu Mi), and that his mother came from Campa, an area in southern China, which today may be Vietnam. Also, the History of Banten and Hikayat Hasanuddin, mentioning the names and titles of the kings of Demak and their ancestors, were written using Chinese terms: "Jin Bun", "Cek Ko Po", "Cek Ban Cun", "Cun Ceh", and "Cu-Cu". Likewise, some names such as "Munggul" and

¹⁷Slamet Muljana, *Serat Kandha*, 179; Husaini Husda. "ISLAMISASI NUSANTARA (Analisis Terhadap Discursus Para Sejarawan)": 17-29.

¹⁸Al-Qurtuby, Sumanto. *Arus Cina-Islam-Jawa: Bongkar Sejarah atas Peranan Tionghoa dalam Penyebaran Agama Islam di Nusantara Abad XV dan XVI*. (Jakarta: Inspeal Ahimsakarya Press, 2003).

“Moechoel” seem to be other terms for the Mongols, a region in northern China bordering Russia. It can also be observed that the evidence of Chinese architecture from ancient mosques in Java has been established by the Chinese community in various regions of Java. These Chinese records also mention that a number of important ports in Java in the 15th century AD were initially occupied by Chinese sailors and traders.¹⁹

Historical Evaluation of the Entry of Islam to Indonesia

Like the theories of the entry of Hindus and Buddhists into Indonesia, all the theories about the entry of Islam above each have their weaknesses and advantages. In my opinion, it is not a question of whether or not each theory is wrong, because the fact is that there is a spread of Islam from Gujarat, Persia, Mecca or China. It is only a matter of when each of them came to Indonesia, which came first, and then among the four origins of the development of Islam, which is the most influential in embracing the face of Islam in Indonesia. And more importantly in our discussion now, of course the distinctive features of each that cover a culture of tolerance or *vice versa*.

Apart from what has been described above, it should also be noted that the emergence of the Demak kingdom as a "theocratic state" replaced the "national state" (nationale staat) borrowing Bung Karno's term then it was replaced as much as "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika" (different but one) become "*agama ageming aji*" (religion is following the king). Since then, there has been a criminalization of beliefs that are considered deviant, as can be seen in the case of Syeh Siti Jenar. Even in a number of chronicle texts (both santri and abangan) recorded "the trauma of the Hindu-Buddhist conflict and Islam" during the transition period between Majapahit and Demak, which in Javanese spirituality is called "goro-goro" (disruption of the cosmic balance) due to the transition to a new religion. In the Majapahit era, in the aspect of criminal law, it was known that criminalizing acts of destroying houses of worship which were considered "property of God" (*dewaswadinya*) regardless of religion and belief²⁰ — then for the first time since the

¹⁹Sumanto Al-Qurtuby. *Arus Cina-Islam-Jawa: Bongkar Sejarah atas Peranan Tionghoa dalam Penyebaran Agama Islam di Nusantara Abad XV dan XVI*.

²⁰In *Kekawin Negarakrtagama*, the work of Mpu Prapanca (1361 AD), it is stated that one of the shared responsibilities of the entire community, especially state officials, is the prohibition against

era of the Demak kingdom, the crime of "blasphemy" was recognized, namely "performing religious practices and interpretations that deviate from the state religion or official religion supported by the state..²¹

Protestant and Catholic Christianity

Although Christianity that is developing today, both Catholic and Protestant, developed from missions and zending that came from Europe in the 15th century AD, but long before that Christianity had entered Indonesia in the 7th century AD. read from Abu Salih al-Armini's book, "*Tadhakur Akhbar min al-Kana'is wa al-Adyar min Nawabin Mishri wa al-Iqta'aih*" (lists of news on churches and monasteries in the provinces of Egypt and beyond). In his book written in Arabic during the Fatimiyyah dynasty in Egypt (11th century AD), Abu Salih writes about 707 churches and 181 Christian monasteries scattered around Egypt, Nubia, Abyssinia, West Africa, Spain, Arabia and Africa. India. Since the beginning of the first century, the term "India" (*al-Hindah*) refers to "the Indian continent and the sea island countries (India)", namely Indonesia.²²

In his book above, Abu Salih Al-Armini reported on a church in the region of Fansur (now Barus), which at that time Indonesia was still included in the "territory of India" (*Al-Hindah*). Such is the quote from Abu Salih's news in Arabic: "*Fansur, fiha 'idda biya' wa jami' 'min min biha Nashara Nashatirah, wa hal fiha kadzalika. Wa hiya allati yasala minha al- kafur, Hadza wa al-sinfu yanbuka min al-khasab. Wa hadzihi al-madinat biha bi'at*

"damaging God's property in order to maintain places of worship to God" (*devasamdinya tatan purugen, ika maran swathang purusada*), which became the basis for criminalizing the crime of "Wurug Saddu Gawe" (destroying the place of worship of all religions). See I Ketut Riana, *Kekawin Desawarnana utawi Negarakrtagama. Masa Keemasan Majapahit*, (Jakarta: Penerbit Kompas, 2009), 48. Also Sang Hyang Adigama utawi Darma Upapatti. *Naskah Lontar disimpan di Gedung "Kirtya"*, (Singaraja, Bali: No. Katalog II-a 578, Transliterasi Jawa Kuno dalam aksara Latin oleh Putu Geria, 1949), 6-7.

²¹In Javanese literature, usually Syeh Siti Jenar is viewed differently, the santri blame her as a "sharia violator", but in the eyes of the kejawen people, she is a great mystic figure who remains mysterious. This difference in perspective does not change the historical fact, that the criminalization of heretical teachings was first carried out in the Demak kingdom, which had never happened in the previous Hindu-Buddhist era. More specifically, the "chronic version" of this event, read: *Serat Siti Jenar*, (Kediri: Boekhandel Tan Koen Swie, 1922).

²²One of the ancient church documents from the 2nd century AD entitled *Didascalia Apostolorum* (Apostolic Constitution) mentions that the area of the apostolic ministry of St. Thomas is "India and the lands of the islands of the sea far away". See Marqus Dawud (ed.), *Ad-Dasquliyah ay Ta'lim ar-Rusuli* (Al-Qāhirah: Maktabah Al-Mahabbah, 1979); Joel S. Kahn. *Southeast Asian Identities: Culture and the Politics of Representation in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand*. (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies ; London: I.B. Tauris c1998, 1998).

wahidat 'ala ismi Sitna al-Saydatu al-Adzra' Maryam al-thahirah mar'at Maryam". Meaning: "Fansur, there are many churches, and all of them are from Nashara-Nashatirah. And so it is there. From where the lime comes, the material drips from the tree. In that city against a church called Our Blessed Virgin Mary".²³ This record of the pioneering Christians in Barus in 645 AD is only briefly mentioned, and we do not know anything about their fate in later times.

The oldest record after Abu Salih regarding ancient churches in Indonesia can be read in the document of the East Assyrian Church, "Rules of Ecclesiastical Judgments" (1318 AD), by Mar Abdhi'sho, which reports on the existence of a diocese "in the islands of the sea... namely Dabag, Sin and Masin".²⁴ As noted in the canonical law of the church in Aramaic or Syriac, the word "dabag" is sometimes also spelled as "dabag" and "jabag" is the Arabic word for "Java and Sumatra." Furthermore, it is reported that in 1346 Bishop Joa de Margnoli, the ambassador of Pope Clement VI in Peking, appeared before the queen of the Srivijaya Kingdom, and at the same time he visited the Christians there. In 1323-1324 AD, Father Odoric de Porta Naone, OFM, reportedly also visited some Christians who had just been baptized in Kalimantan, the palace of Majapahit, and Sumatra. "There are only a few Christians there" (*Sum inim ibi vauci Christiani*), he said.²⁵

Abu Salih al-Armini lived during the last reign of the Khulafat or Fatimid dynasty in Egypt, namely 1150-1171 AD. -Shabushti, in his work entitled Kitab al-Adyar which was written in 990 AD and Abu Ja'far Ath Tabariy, in his Tarih al-Rasul wa al-Muluk which was written in 923 AD. At that time it was quite a lot Muslim writers who have an interest in writing about the history of the Church. Especially in some areas of the center of the development of Christian science at that time such as: Nasibis, Harran, Yundi Shapur and Baghdad, many of the Christian scholars employed by the parties to the Caliphate in collaboration with Muslim scholars in the field of scientific development, philosophy and

²³B. T. A. Evetts. *The Churches and Monasteries of Egypt and Some neighbouring countries, Attributed by Abu Salih. The Armenian.* (London: Clarendon Press, 1969), 129.

²⁴Y.W.M. Bakker, "Umat Katolik Peristis Indonesia", in M.P.M. Muskens, Pr. *Sejarah Gereja Katolik Indonesia*, (Jakarta: Bagian Dokuetasi Penerangan MAWI, t.t.), 29. Juga: Adolf Hueken, SJ., *Be Witness to the Ends of the Earth. The Catholic Church in Indonesia before the 19th Century*, (Jakarta: Cipta Loka Caraka, 2002), 14-16.

²⁵Y.W.M. Bakker, "Umat Katolik Peristis Indonesia", 34-35 Also: John C. England, "The Earliest Christian Communities in Southeast and Northeast Asia: An Outline of the Evidence Available in Seven Countiras Before A.D. 1500", *Missiology: An International Review*, Vol. XIX, No. 2, (April 1991), 208.

literature. The relationship between Christianity and Islam was quite good, its peak during the Caliphate of al-Ma'mun, namely in 833 AD with the construction of the "*Bait al-Hikmah*" (House of Wisdom), which was led directly by two Christian monks, namely: Abuna Yusuf bin Adi and Abuna Hunayn bin Ishaq. Christian scholars have helped to unlock the riches of Syrian (Aramaic) and Greek culture by translating many philosophical and literary works into Arabic..²⁶

Through the role of the previous Christian scholars it is clear how Christians have a great contribution in helping Muslims learn about science and new civilization to make Muslims experience intellectual progress, through the guidance of Christian scholars Muslims not only learn about philosophy, science as well as literature but also about the history and development of the churches, Christian monasteries that exist in the Arab region in full. In the process of writing the history of these churches and monasteries, the early Muslim writers before Abu Salih, such as: Al-Sabushtani, Abu Bakr M al-Khalindi, Abu al-Faraj al-Isfahani and Abu Ushman Sa'ad, have taken over the topographical method that has been developed by previous Christian historians, namely Said Al-Bathriq, in his writings entitled: *Kitab Nazm al-Jawhar*.²⁷ In the topographical method used, Abu Salih al-Armini tries to write in his book, as already mentioned, how accurate the data used and their foresight have been proven both historically and archaeologically.

Archaeological Evidence Supports the Writings of Abu Salih Al-Armini

Evidence of discoveries in the field of history as well as evidence from archeological excavations later turned out to have confirmed the data written by Abu Salih in his book, such as: When the Portuguese landed in Quilon (Kullam) in 1517 this place was close to Travangore in the Indian region South, on their way, they found 2 church buildings there with the name *Kanisat Al-Adza' Mara'at Maryam* (Church of the Holy Virgin Mary) and the Church with the name *Mar Jurjis* (Saint George). Both the name, shape and location of these two churches are exactly the same as the description presented in Abu Salih's writings.

The same is the case with archaeological excavations that were carried out in 1963-1964 at a large dam in Aswan, which is 926 Km from the Egyptian capital, Cairo.

²⁶Y.W.M. Bakker, "Umat Katolik Peristis Indonesia", 30-31.

²⁷Y.W.M. Bakker, "Umat Katolik Peristis Indonesia", 30.

During the relocation of the temples and some ancient statues from Abu Simbel, a complex of churches, monasteries and some Christian graves have been found near Qasr Ibrim. In an underground room, several Christian manuscripts were found written on papyrus, while the writings used were in two languages, namely Coptic and Arabic. What has been found from the excavations turns out to be very compatible with the writings of Abu Salih, in Abu Salih's writings it is said there that the Nubians were originally worshipers of the stars, but then they began to get guidance and repent.²⁸ "In the land of Nubia there is a city called Ibrim, there stands a beautiful church called Kanisat Al-Adzra 'Mar'at Maryam and a high dome and above the church there is a large cross."²⁹ But the church was eventually destroyed by the Abbasid army, along with the crushing of the Fatimid dynasty in 1173 AD.

According to the opinion of a historian and archaeologist named J. Martin Plumpey, he said that after comparing the results of the excavations carried out with the writings of Abu Salih, it can be concluded that there are similarities in detail.³⁰ A report published by UNESCO on Nubian monuments in 1966: "The imposing remains of the Church at Qasr Ibrim confirm the statement made by Abu Salih in his Account of the Churches and Monasteries of early XII-th century."

Furthermore, it is reported that in 1346 Bishop Joa de Margnoli, OFM., the ambassador of Pope Clement VI in Peking, met the queen of the Srivijaya Kingdom, and at the same time he visited the Christians there.³¹ In 1323-1324 AD, Father Odoric de Porta Naone, OFM, reportedly also visited some Christians who had just been baptized in Kalimantan, the palace of Majapahit, and Sumatra. "There are only a few Christians there" (Sum inim ibi vauci Christiani), he said.³²

²⁸Y.W.M. Bakker, "Umat Katolik Peristis Indonesia", 30-31.

²⁹Y.W.M. Bakker, "Umat Katolik Peristis Indonesia", 39; Abu Salih, *The Armeninan*. 265-266.

³⁰Al-Makirizi, a well-known Islamic historian, in his writings said, Macarius, Bishop of Jerusalem, has placed a large Cross on a dome of this Church. Then Abu Salih gave information that when the armies of the Abbasid dynasty under the leadership of Sham ad-Daulah began to attack the Fatimid power in Egypt, Jumad al-Awwal 568 H/1173 AD, the cross was burned and a Muazzin sounded the Azan from the top of the church tower without warning. the cross (266-267).

³¹Y.W.M. Bakker, "Umat Katolik Peristis Indonesia": 35. Also John C. England, "The Earliest Christian Communities in Southeast and Northeast Asia: An Outline of the Evidence Available in Seven Countries Before A.D. 1500", in *Missiology: An International Review*, Vol. XIX, No. 2, (April 1991): 208.

³²Y.W.M. Bakker, "Umat Katolik Peristis Indonesia", 35; John C. England, "The Earliest Christian Communities in Southeast and Northeast Asia: An Outline of the Evidence Available in Seven Countries

Furthermore, regarding the entry of Christianity through the Dutch zending and subsequent Catholic missions, many have been recorded in church history books. For the first time Protestantism was introduced by the Dutch zending movement in the 16th century AD which was heavily influenced by Calvinism. Furthermore, another mission that was separated from Germany in the Batak lands with a Lutheran pattern was brought by Nomensen. Meanwhile, the first Roman Catholic mission arrived in 1511 in Aceh, namely from the Carmel Order, and in 1534 in the Maluku islands through the Portuguese. Francis Xavier, Roman Catholic missionary, and founder of the Jesuit Order who worked in the Maluku islands between 1546 and 1547. A further development that should also be noted is that in the 1960s, as a result of the anti-Communism, many Chinese became Christians. Likewise, after the G30 S/PKI, many Muslim abangans became Christians, when they had to choose to convert to Islam or be branded a communist. In the 1980s there was a "boom" of churches with Pentecostal or Charismatic patterns, many of which came from Europe and America. They are usually more aggressive and missionary, have attracted a lot of Chinese circles, and lately have a Christian color, although they do not represent the face of Indonesian Christians.³³

Historical Evaluation of the entry of Christians into Indonesia

Unlike Hinduism, Buddhism or Confucianism, Christianity and Catholicism are missionary and doctrinal. Thus, Christianity in this respect is more similar in its characteristics to Islam as a "religion of da'wah". Because of their missionary nature, both Islam and Christianity in spreading their religion are more expansive. Because of these similarities, both Islam and Christianity translate their religious teachings by increasing the number of followers. And no doubt, because of this factor, collisions often occur in the field.³⁴ Furthermore, because they are both doctrinal in character, both religions emphasize "purification of teachings", which requires orthodoxy gatekeepers.

Before A.D. 1500": 208.

³³Perihal Misi Kristen di Bali dapat dibandingkan Yogi Prihantoro, Jatmiko Wahyu Nugroho. "MISSION STUDIES IN NUSANTARA: A Testimony of Local Philosophy Approach on Bali Island." *MAHABBAH: Journal of Religion and Education*. Vol.1, No.1 (2020): 44-55, DOI: 10.47135/mahabbah.v1i1.7.

³⁴Ebenhaezer I. Nuban Timo, Edim Bahabol, Bobby Kurnia Putrawan. "REVIVAL OF LOCAL RELIGION: A Challenge for Church and National Life in Indonesia." *MAHABBAH: Journal of Religion and Education*. Vol.1, No.1 (2020): 71-86, DOI: 10.47135/mahabbah.v1i1.9.

CONCLUSION

On a personal level concerning the "private realm" (*forum internum*), maintaining the purity of this teaching does not cause conflict, because it only applies to the community. But when this problem has to be dealt with in the "public sphere" (*forum externum*), problem after problem will arise. The purity of the teaching was maintained through the "inquisition" that prevailed in Catholicism in the Middle Ages, and in the legal field this paradigm was the background for the crime of "blasphemy" in western countries. However, in western countries there has been an awareness to abolish "blasphemy" since the last century, as happened in France, the Netherlands, England, and so on. This phenomenon also occurs in Islam, orthodoxy often "borrows the hand of the state", through "mihnah" trials during the Caliph Al-Ma'mun, one of the victims is Imam Ibn Hanbal, then the case of Al-Hallaj in Persia, and the case of Sheikh Siti Jenar in the Archipelago. Until the modern era and today, the Criminal Code in many Islamic countries the rules regarding blasphemy are still in effect.

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