

A Special Village on the Trajectory of Religious Pluralism: History of Manado Arab Village

Eka Yuliana Rahman^{1*}, Siti Fathimah², Rahmania Rahman³

¹ *History Education, Faculty of Social Science, Manado State University*

² *Sociology Education, Faculty of Social Science, Manado State University*

³ *Social Science Education Study, Faculty of Social Science, Manado State University*

*Corresponding author. Email: ekayulianarahman@unima.ac.id

ABSTRACT

The Arab village is traced to its population, which on average are Arabs from the Arabian Peninsula, especially from Saudi Arabia and Hadramaut (now Yemen), whose history in this village has developed until now. Like the ethnic Chinese whose settlements are just next door to the Manado Arab village, they are classified as foreign easterners or vreemde oosterlingen. Interestingly, they have their own village head called wijkmeester, and the head of the clan who by the Dutch was given the titular title Luitenant alias Lieutenant. Research with a qualitative approach was carried out to understand the events or history of the Manado Arab village, in which researchers sought in-depth information about its historical aspects, including describing its social reality. This writing uses historical research methods. The historical method uses four main stages, namely; heuristics, criticism, interpretation, and historiography to answer the problems and try to reveal the process of Islamization and describe the development of Islam in North Sulawesi, especially in Manado. In the middle of the sixteenth century, the influence of East Asians, especially China, further strengthened the process of acculturation and cultural assimilation. After the Chinese Mongol dynasty was able to enter the archipelago at the end of the XIII century, it opened up opportunities for the Chinese to return to the road. A mixture of Arab tribes consisting of traders from Persia, India, and even some Arab traders who were active in trading activities in the archipelago had known trade routes long before Europeans knew the archipelago. Even their descendants were included in this designation, and later on this became the identity and identity of the Arab tribes in Minahasa (Manado).

Keywords: *Pluralism, Arab Village, Manado.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The Manado Arab Village is administratively located in the Istiqlal village, Wenang sub-district, Manado city. The label is not only attached to giving a name for a kelurahan referring to the name of the Istiqlal mosque in the area, but also holds special features in the past Dutch colonial period. If the population is traced, the average Arab originating from the Arabian Peninsula, especially from Saudi Arabia and Hadramaut (now Yemen), has a history in this village that has developed until now.

Like the ethnic Chinese whose settlements are just next door to the Manado Arab village, they are classified as foreign easterners or vreemde oosterlingen. Interestingly, they have their own village head, called wijkmeester, and a clan head whom the Dutch gave the

titular title Luitenant alias Lieutenant (Konjogian, 2014) [1]. Another specialty is, even though during the Dutch era this village was included in the Manado area, the system of government in this village was not subject to colonial laws as applied in other areas. except for the business of collecting trade taxes.

Rahman [2] The encounter of religion in the trade route in North Sulawesi became a common thing that time, local religions with religions subordinated to traders (Islam) and Christianization were played by colonial actors (Portuguese and Dutch) as capital, political and economic forces.

The initial location of their settlement was in Kampung Islam Tuminting, then they moved to a location which is now known as the Arab village. The reason for their move is to approach the trading center and port of Manado which is known to be visited by

many people so it is very profitable for trade. Their lives besides trading are also preaching to spread the religion of Islam.

Minahasa cultural expert Jessy Wenas, in *Minahasa History and Culture* (2007:23) explains that Islam entered North Sulawesi along with the entry of Arab traders. They then breed there. For hundreds of years Arabs have lived in North Sulawesi, including the port city of Manado. "In the 1590s there was already Syarif, an Arab trader in Manado," [3].

In addition, there is also an Arab named Wahid Rais who lives in the coastal area of Belang—now in the Southeast Minahasa region. Wahid Rais is married to a woman Bolaang-Mangondouw. Jessy Wenas (2007) concludes, "it appears that Arab merchants have been coming to the port city in Minahasa for a long time. Entering the post-independence era, Kampung Arab has produced great people in the Islamic movement in North Sulawesi (North Sulawesi). According to Taha, one of the third generation of merchants and scholars from Hadramaut, Masjumi, NU, Muhammadiyah leaders in North Sulawesi generally comes from Arab villages. The center of Muslim activities in the Istiqlal village is in the Istiqlal Mosque itself (formerly known as the Masyhur Mosque). The mosque, which was founded around 1880, underwent a last renovation in 1988, the mosque was completely demolished. "According to history, initially the mosque area was 16 square meters, now it has four floors with a capacity of 2,000 people.

Tracing the existence of the old village which is characterized by Islam in Manado, according to the author, is considered important. Given that the city of Manado in 2020 received the title of the city with the best tolerant index for inter-religious harmony by the Setara Institute (2020), a well-known research institute for issues of pluralism [4]. This predicate does not only judge from the aspect of achievements and awards, but furthermore it is related to how early the development of Islam was present in Manado. How interfaith struggles intertwined in the past. It is at this point that the author needs to trace the early history of the development of the first Muslim community in Manado through historical binoculars in Arab villages and how the influence of the arrival of Islam in North Sulawesi.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach. This approach was chosen, because the object under study cannot be generalized and is casuistic (Bugin, 2010: 366) [5]. Research with a qualitative approach (Moleong, 2002) [6], was carried out to understand the events or history of the Manado Arab village, where the researchers sought in-depth information about aspects of history, including describing the social reality. This writing uses historical research methods.

The historical method uses four main stages, namely; heuristics, criticism, interpretation, and historiography to answer the problems and try to reveal the process of Islamization and describe the development of Islam in North Sulawesi, especially in Manado. Historical research methods In this paper, the author tries to unify the historical method with a social approach that seeks to interpret the socio-religious conditions that occurred in North Sulawesi, using the historical method.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. A brief history of Islam in North Sulawesi

Before describing the history of the entry of Islam in North Sulawesi (North Sulawesi), the author needs to emphasize that the mention of North Sulawesi is administrative terminology referring to the formation of the province on August 14, 1959. Meanwhile, in cultural records, the North Sulawesi region is dominated by ethnic/ethnic groups including: Minahasa, Bolaang Mongondow, Sangihe & Talaud. However, ethnicity in North Sulawesi is more heterogeneous. The Minahasa and Bolaang Mongondow tribes spread almost throughout the mainland of North Sulawesi. The Sangihe, Talaud, Siau tribes inhabit the Sangihe Talaud Islands, and Lembeh Island, especially in the northern, eastern and western coastal areas of North Sulawesi. This explanation helps us to understand that ethnic diversity contributes to the spread of Islam in each region which has its own character.

If traced through trade and maritime routes, the entry of Islam in North Sulawesi (North Sulawesi) cannot be separated from the development and technological progress of traders. Those who are trying to find new areas to get economic resources. However, it is undeniable that there are other things that encourage Islamization in this northern coastal area of Sulawesi Island. In the middle of the sixteenth century, the influence of East Asians, especially China, further strengthened the process of acculturation and cultural assimilation. After the Chinese Mongol dynasty was able to enter the archipelago at the end of the XIII century, it opened up opportunities for the Chinese to return to the road. The Yunan-Malacca-Sumatra-Java-Makassar-Maluku route is a route from the west to enter the archipelago [7].

However, not only relying on the "western" route, it turned out that another kind of route was also created to enter the archipelago. Yunan-Malacca, Brunei/Philippines-Manguindanao,Sulu-Sangihe and Talaud, as well as the North Coast of Sulawesi-Maluku/Hitu are routes which then open through the northern route. The influx of Chinese and European sailors who found new transit areas in North Sulawesi made trade routes in the northern coastal areas of the

island of Sulawesi increasingly crowded. A.B. Lopian wrote that Bugis and Makassar traders used the Makassar Strait to visit North Sulawesi. In addition to European traders and sailors, Nusantara traders also knew North Sulawesi as a transit port like other areas in the archipelago, which in the end was Maluku. [8].

Interestingly, the Arab tribes besides being traders, they also became converts (sailors) for European ships. A mixture of Arab tribes consisting of traders from Persia, India, and even some Arab traders who were active in trading activities in the archipelago had known trade routes long before Europeans knew the archipelago. Even their descendants were included in this designation, and later on this became the identity and identity of the Arab tribes in Minahasa (Manado) [9].

The influence of Islam in Minahasa land was felt when Ternate succeeded in including it as a special area. Apparently, this could not be separated from the influence of the VOC, the Netherlands, which carried out the spread of the gospel before the influence of the Sultanate of Ternate was strengthened in Minahasa. Minahasa historian H.B. Palar explained that the background of the presence of Islam in the Minahasa land tends to be rejected, based on the agreement between Ternate and the VOC it was agreed that the areas under the influence of Ternate opened themselves to Islam, except for the Minahasa Highlanders area or the Minahasa people in the mountains who adhered to the alifuru ideology. It turned out that the influence of Ternate in Minahasa could not be found clearly especially after the fall of the Makassar Sultanate based on the Bongaya agreement (1667), but the Sultan of Ternate acknowledged that the Minahasa people were under his protection and had the right to security and religious rights without being forced to embrace the Sultan's religion (Islam). The acknowledgment of the Sultan of Ternate shows that he accepts the existence of religious pluralism without forcing the people and uses his prerogative to unite religions as has happened in several regions in the archipelago. (H.B. Palar, 2009, pp. 135-136.) [10].

The influence of Islam does not just stop in Minahasa, but H.M Taulu notes that Islam in Minahasa is not developing, but there is an area on the southern coast of Minahasa where most of the population has embraced Islam. He wrote that Belang had experienced Islamization from a Syarif who had lived in Ternate for a long time.8 Abdul Wahid Rais was the sharif who was known as a trader from Ternate and settled in Belang, until now he has descendants (Thaulu: 1999) [11].

3.2. Traces of the history of Sech Faray bin Wakid in the Arab Village of Manado

According to Minahasa culturalist Adrianus Konjogian (2014) that it is not known for certain when the Manado Arab village was founded, but according to his sources it is estimated that in the mid-1850s, Arabs who were mostly traders by profession began to form a residential neighborhood in Manado. Over time the Muslim thought grew and became known as the Arab village. It is also stated that in 1866 there were only 11 Arabs in Manado. Furthermore, at the end of December 1868 population calculations found as many as 16 people and 1872 only increased to 18 people. The jump occurred in 1930 in the number of times, namely 315 men and 270 women.

Apart from Manado, Arab villages also grow in Gorontalo and Donggala. An Arab figure in Manado who was known in 1857 was Mohamad bin Abdullah Djobran. He owned a plantation in Manado, then in the 1890s he was known as Awab Basalama, Sech Alie bin Selim bin Hyaser and Said Alie Banzir. The last name "Basalama" is quite popular, and is often found in North Sulawesi and Gorontalo. The Arab figure who is known to have served as the first Wijkmeester (village head) is Said Mansjoer bin Abdoellah Alhasni. On February 28, 1895 he was confirmed as Luitenant der Arabieren Manado. However, the position was not served until the end. May 1909 at his own request Said Manjour was dismissed. As his bride, Sech Faray bin Mohamad Wakid was appointed, who temporarily served as Wijkmeester as well as the leader of Muslims in Manado, since May 15, 1909.

A number of documents regarding an Arab Islamic leader in Manado recorded are Sech Faray bin Mohamad Wakid, born in 1863 in Saudi Arabia. According to sources from Adrianus Konjogian (2014) around 1903 Mohamad Wakid came to the Manado residency from the port of Jeddah. However, arrival is not a trade business in Manado. He chose Kotabunan

which was an important trading city in Bolaang-Mongondow. In this area he chose to open a small shop but no information was found regarding the type of business or commodities in the shop. It didn't take long for the shop he started to grow rapidly, until a few years later, Kotabunan was deemed too small for its economic activity. Finally, Sech Faray Wakid moved his shop, later named Mastoer, to Manado. In this area, the trading business is quite advanced. Not only the shop as a business center, but his figure began to be widely known among the local Minahasa people, especially Manado Arabs. He is known for his generosity. Among the Dutch at that time, he established very good relations, so that many Dutch officials in the Manado residency liked him.

Seeing the role and character of Sech Faray Wakid who is considered to have a good reputation in Manado, he is even considered and recognized by fellow Arabs and even Muslims in Manado, he was appointed as Head of the Muslims (Hoofd der Muhammedenan) and received the title *Wijkmeester*. So, when Said Manjour, who at that time was the first head of the Muslim community, asked to resign from his position, he was sworn in by acclamation as the new Manado Arab Lieutenant.

The positions and responsibilities of sech Faray Wakid as village head must be subject to Dutch rules in Manado. One of them was an effort to significantly increase the taxation of Arabs in Manado, so that after 16 years of serving as a lieutenant he was given an award by the governor general of the Dutch East Indies number 14 on 22 August 1925 and was awarded the rank of *Kapiten der Arabier Manado*.

Sech Faray Wakid received a number of awards in return for his services to the colonial government in Manado. He was awarded two awards, so the Arabs in Manado greeted him with the nickname *Kapitein Bintang*. The first award was *Groote Zilveren ster* and finally *Kleine Gouden ster voor trouw en Verdienste* with *besluit* number 01 on 24 August 1931.

On May 9, 1933, Sech Faray Wakid who had served for 24 years, namely 16 years as a Lieutenant and eight years as a captain died at the age of 70 years. According to records, he died of liver disease he suffered. Susana of the Arab village on the day of her funeral mourned and the houses of its citizens put the flag at half-mast. Almost all Dutch officials, including residents, mayors, and *ambtenar*, were present to pay their respects, including a number of Minahasa, Chinese and Manadonese figures.

If you look at the actions of Sech Faray Wakid in the Arab village of Manado, you can at least explain that the Dutch government in the Manado residency felt that it suited Faray Wakid's leadership style. Information about the awarding of a number of awards and a relatively long term of office for the position of a village head shows an intimate relationship. This relationship not only facilitated the trade mission of the Arabs in Manado, but also as an effort to supervise the Dutch against the Islamization mission in Manado, at the same time the mission of spreading the gospel in Minahasa land was intensified.

4. CONCLUSION

The presence of the Manado Arab Village around the 1850s which was driven by Arab traders showed that their main mission was trade relations. Historians and scholars agree that Islam in the archipelago was first brought by traders, although the initial goal was not for Islamization, which in turn spread the teachings of Islam

through social interaction. These traders aimed to find sources of spices on a number of islands in the Dutch-controlled archipelago.

The local community in Manado in the 1850s to 1930s had an open social system. The interaction with a number of migrants from various regions shows evidence of an open attitude and peaceful Islamization. The work of local residents who depend on nature, then increased by the presence of new skills for long-term land use, attracts the attention of local residents to bond with it.

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