

## Islamization of Mandailing Natal After the Padri War

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### ABSTRACT

This study is about the Islamization of Mandailing Natal after the Padri war. This research portrays the history and the development of Islam in Mandailing Natal to analyze the uniqueness of the Islamization process. This was done by looking at the carriers of Islam in the region, the religion itself, and the media used in the process which was used to analyze how the development of Islam was in Mandailing Natal. As for the informants, historians and cultural practitioners of Mandailing Natal were the informants of this research. The method used was qualitative with a historical study. The techniques used to collect the data were observations, interviews, and documentation. The results of the study showed that Islamization in Natal of Mandailing District began before the reform movement in Minangkabau. The Islamization process took place in the 18th century CE and the carriers were Islamic clerics from Minangkabau, namely Syekh Abdul Fattah (1975-1985 CE), Syekh Abdul Rauf (1896 CE), Syekh Abdul Malik (1905 CE), also known as Baleo Natal, who was a student of Syekh Abdul Fattah. As the Paderi Movement (1816-1837 CE) entered Mandailing Region, Islamization took place massively which was done by the figures of the Paderi Movement. In terms of the Islamization pattern in Mandailing natal, the patterns were assimilation and accommodation pattern. The Islamization process in Mandailing Natal was done in four stages. The first stage (Conversion) was the stage of introducing Islam to those who had not followed the Islamic teaching. The second stage (Intensification) was the stage of teaching Islam and strengthening the existence of Muslims. The third stage (Actualization) was the stage of deepening Islam and applying the concept of Islam in social life as well as confronting *kafir* authorities. The fourth stage was the reformation stage which was marked by reforming thoughts and Islamic life in the society. Islam has kept on growing positively in terms of quality and quantity in Mandailing Natal.

*Keywords: Islamization, Padri War, Mandailing Natal.*



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### INTRODUCTION

The spread of Islam in the Mandailing Natal area occurred through two stages, the arrival stage and the development stage. There have been various opinions about the date of the arrival of Islam to the Mandailing area. Some say that it happened in the 18th century CE while others say it was in the 19th century CE. Some say even earlier which is since the time of the Prophet Muhammad, the seventh century AD when Islam arrived on the west coast of Sumatra. One thing that can be denied is that Arab merchant ships had arrived on the west coast of Sumatra several decades before the birth of Islam. The wealth of the west coast of Sumatra has been known as an area rich in agricultural products that are very much needed by foreign countries (Ridwan & Putra, 2017).

The entry of Islam into the land of Mandailing shows an identity aimed at the old civilizations that were on the outskirts of the west coast of Sumatra, the Indian Ocean. This area has long been a producer of world trade commodities. This is what makes the interaction between various tribes, nations, and major cultures of the world. One of which

is Islam. Islam first appeared in Sumatra in the 13th century AD which was marked by the emergence of the SamuderaPasai Kingdom. After that, Islam continued to expand to various regions of Sumatra and other parts of the archipelago, starting from the port area or areas close to the coast, not to mention one of the port areas in the Mandailing Natal district, namely the Natal port.

Mandailing Natal is one of the regencies at the tip of North Sumatra which is directly adjacent to West Sumatra. Precisely bordering East Pasaman Regency and West Pasaman Regency. The entry of Islam into Mandailing Natal is an interesting event to be studied in depth. As before Islam came to this area, people still believed in the old belief system, such as worshipping stones and also the ancestral religion found in the hinterland of Mandailing. Long before Indonesia's independence, this area was part of the Tapanuli region, namely South Tapanuli. Studying the meeting between Islam and local beliefs certainly has its uniqueness.

The entry of Islam into the Mandailing Natal area is almost the same as Islamization in the archipelago in general, however, what makes it unique is why Islam in Natal is influenced by the Minangkabau region? why was not it influenced by Aceh which at that time was an Islamic power in Sumatra? Based on findings in the field, the traces of Aceh's civilization in Natal are only the name of an old village located near the mouth of the Natal port. The village was formerly called the village "Java Aceh". Now, the village has changed its name to Pasar V Natal village. Meanwhile, the Minangkabau civilization is so close to the culture found in the Natal area. One of the same cultures adopted by the Natal coastal community is the Matrilineal system used by the coastal Malay community.

Islam spread from coastal ports (trading ports) to places of trade transactions to the hinterland (Al Anshori, 2011) This is what makes Islam rapidly develop. The spread of Islam is a very important process in the history of cultural development in the Sumatra region. The spread was marked by the arrival of Islamic traders (Arabs, Indians, Chinese, and others) in several parts of Sumatra, a center of the prehistoric maritime culture of Sumatra.

The history of the entry of Islam in Natal, like Aceh and Minangkabau, also underwent a process that was not much different in terms of the process of Islamization. According to existing records, Islam entered the Natal region in the 19th century CE and continued to develop until today (Rozi, 2012). Based on historical records, it can be found how the role of Islamic propagator figures was. In this case, the scholars were so persistent and motivated in preaching the teachings of Islam. The propagators of Islam worked hard to make Islam accepted by the community. The figures who spread Islam in Natal were scholars from Minangkabau, namely Sheikh Abdul Fattah, Sheikh Abdul Rauf, Sheikh Abdul Malik, and Abdul Syukur. Based on the information known by the elders in Natal, those scholars were from Minangkabau. The arrival of the scholars was for trading and also spreading the teachings of Islam.

## **METHODS**

This research which is about the history of how Islam entered and developed in Natal City was qualitative-descriptive research. The method used in this research was library research. Zed (2004) said there are some main characteristics of library research that need to be paid attention to. The first one is the researcher is dealing directly with the text. Second, the library is in the form of ready-made. Third, the library data is generally secondary data that the researcher obtains from material from the second hand and not the

original data from the firsthand in the field. Fourth is that the condition of library data is not limited by space and time. Library research is research conducted in a library where the object of research is usually explored through various library information (books, encyclopedias, scientific journals, newspapers, magazines, and documents).

## FINDINGS

The history of the entry of Islam and how Islam developed in Mandailing Natal has been going on for a long time. Generally, the process of how Islam entered and developed in Natal is categorized into four stages, namely:

1. First Stage (Conversion): The Conversion Stage is the stage of introducing Islam to people who have not embraced Islam (non-Muslims or kafir). The first stage began when the first Muslim set foot in one of the ancient ports on the west coast of Sumatra, Natal. As for who was the first Muslim to set foot on Christmas and when the person came to Natal. The answer to this question can be seen in the existence of ancient Islamic tombs. However, the explanation of Islam at Natal is not yet clear because there are no researchers or historians who have studied Islamization in this area. Meanwhile, the people in Natal did not seem to know much about the history of Islam in Natal as a whole. Before entering the discussion about the figures who brought Islam to Natal, the author first describes the origins of Islam entering Mandailing. The entry of Islam into Mandailing, cannot be separated from the emergence of the Padri movement in the early 19th century CE in Minangkabau (Undri, 2005). As discussed in the discussion above, Natal is an overseas area of the Minangkabau ethnic group. No exact data have been found regarding when the people of Minangkabau first migrated to Natal. However, before the Padri movement in West Sumatra, there had been interactions between the Minangkabau people and the Mandailing people as Dobbin (1992) explained that the interactions that occurred between the Minangkabau people and the Mandailing people could not be separated from the gold mining results from the Rao area. Merchants from the Rao area exchanged gold at Natal port, Batahan port, and Air Bangis port. Certainly, in that area, there were interactions between each other. Perhaps the initial acquaintance between the Minangkabau people and Natal was due to the interactions at the port.
2. Second Stage (Intensification): The second stage started with Mr. Sheikh Abdul Fattah together with his friend Sheikh Abdul Rauf who established a center for teaching Islamic religious activities in an area not far from the river and the mouth of the Natal port. According to the Mandailing historian, Basyral Hamidi Harahap in his book entitled "Madina Madani (2004:34)" It was there that he taught the ins and outs of Islam to the first generation of Muslims who lived in the area. This activity then gave birth to Islamic scholars who then opened similar activities in various places up to the hinterland of Mandailing, specifically Panyabungan, Padang Sidempuan, Sipirok, and Padang Lawas. The student of Tuanku Sheikh Abdul Fattah was a well-known scholar who continued the struggle for preaching Islamic teachings, especially in Natal and even in the hinterland of Mandailing. The name of the student was Sheikh Abdul Malik bin Abdullah (1850-1910) from Muaramais. He was known as Baleo Natal. Sheikh Abdul Malik had lived in Natal for decades to develop the teachings of Islam there (Harahap, 2004). Sheikh Abdul Malik bin Abdullah at a young age migrated to Hutasantar (a residential area in the hinterland of Mandailing, not far from Panyabungan City) to fulfill a request from Yang DipertuanHutasiantar to teach Islam there. His students came from various places around Hutasantar and Panyabungan. Mr.

Sheikh Abdul Malik Bin Abdullah even taught as far as Padangsidempuan, Sipirok, Padang Lawas, and Daludalu. This great scholar was married in Hutasantar, giving birth to a son named Abdul Syukur. Sheikh Abdul Malik went on pilgrimage three times to improve their knowledge at the same time. Most of his life was spent teaching at Natal until his death at the age of 75 and was buried in Bukit KayuAro Cemetery in the eastern part of Natal. On December 17, 2020 the author visited the tomb of Sheikh Abdul Malik. There were several tombs around his tomb which were surrounded by walls and iron fences.

3. Third Stage (Actualization): The third stage was marked by the establishment of Islamic boarding schools or places to mature the younger generation of Muslims so that in the future they master religious knowledge and apply a lifestyle that is following the teachings of Islam. Although this activity was initiated by Sheikh Abdul Fattah with a teaching or education system centered in Surau or Al Fattah Mosque, this stage has been widely started since entering the second decade of the 20th century AD. This stage was marked by the establishment of the PurbaMustafawiyah Islamic Boarding School in 1912 AD by Sheikh Mustafa Husein. Sheikh Mustafa Husein was born in TanoBato, KayuLaut in 1886 CE/1303 H with the first name Muhammad Yatim from the couple H. HuseinNasution and Hj. Halimah whose father was a devout merchant. The condition of the people in Tano Bato at that time was very sad as the result of the treatment of the Dutch colonialists who imposed a forced cultivation system for farmers. At the age of 7, Sheikh Mustafa attended Sekolah Dua, Kayu Laut. After five years of graduation, he continued to study with Sheikh Abdul Hamid in Huta Pungkut. Sheikh Abdul Hamid was his relative who completed his education in Makkah. In 1900, Sheikh Mustafa had the opportunity to continue his education in Makkah, Saudi Arabia. When in Makkah, he studied with prominent scholars, ten of them: Sheikh Abdul Qodir Al-Mandily, Sheikh Mukhtar Bagan, Sheikh Ahmad Sumbawa, Sheikh Salih Bafadil, Sheikh Ali Maliki, Sheikh Umar Bajuneid, Sheikh Ahmad Khatib, Sheikh Abdul Rahman, Sheikh Umar Sato, and Sheikh Muhammad Amin Medina. With the guidance of the leading scholars above, Sheikh Mustafa's knowledge improved. Therefore, he was trusted by his teacher to teach at the Masjid Al-Haram. His main study field was Fiqh, Islamic Jurisprudence. In 1912, Sheikh Mustafa returned to his hometown following his father's death.
4. Fourth Stage (Reformation): The fourth stage is marked by the emergence of sects within the *Tarekat* as well as new Islamic thought. The *Naqsyabandiyah Tarekat*, since it first entered Mandailing, which at that time was part of the Southern Part of Tapanuli, has been an important role in the development and development of Islam until now. Some of the *NaqshbandiahTarekat* are in Islamic boarding schools and others take place in mosques and special places. The *NaqshbandiyahTarekat* developed in several places in the Southern Tapanuli region through its caliphs. The process for the change of leadership in the *Tarekat* is the same as the process for the change of leadership in the monarchical system of government (kingdom) although the process for preparing the successor is not the same. Usually, the highest position in a *Tarekat* organization, which holds its association, is somewhere downgraded to the caliph who is also his son, grandson, relative, or closest family member who is considered worthy and capable of leading the *Tarekat* and the organization. The difference with the monarchy system of government is in the *Tarekat*, to become a caliph, one must obtain a *Tarekat* diploma from his teacher and other caliphs can open new associations after obtaining the teacher's permission while in the monarchical system there is no need for a certain diploma.

## CONCLUSION

Islamization in Natal of Mandailing District began before the reform movement in Minangkabau. The Islamization process took place in the 18th century CE and the carriers were Islamic clerics from Minangkabau, namely Syekh Abdul Fattah (1775-1835 CE), Syekh Abdul Rauf (1896 CE), Syekh Abdul Malik (1905 CE), also known as Baleo Natal, who was a student of Syekh Abdul Fattah. As the Paderi Movement (1816-1837 CE) entered Mandailing Region, Islamization took place massively which was done by the figures of the Paderi Movement. In terms of the Islamization pattern in Mandailing natal, the patterns were assimilation and accommodation pattern. The Islamization process in Mandailing Natal was done in four stages. The first stage (Conversion) was the stage of introducing Islam to those who had not followed the Islamic teaching. The second stage (Intensification) was the stage of teaching Islam and strengthening the existence of Muslims. The third stage (Actualization) was the stage of deepening Islam and applying the concept of Islam in social life as well as confronting *kafir* authorities. The fourth stage was the reformation stage which was marked by reforming thoughts in Islamization in Mandailing Natal. One of which is the *Naqsyabandiyah Tarekat*.

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