



## Development of Islamic Historiography in Indonesia

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### Abstract

This research carries the theme of the development of Islamic historiography in Indonesia with a focus on the methods of writing Islamic history, the influence of traditional literature, and other relevant topics. The development of Islamic historiography in Indonesia through historical research methods namely heuristics, criticism, interpretation, and historiography collected by researchers from various sources such as books, articles, and similar studies that discuss the theme of Islamic historiography in Indonesia. In the context of writing Islamic historiography in Indonesia, the writing method can be divided into two things, namely first, Islamic history is an inseparable part of the history of Muslims globally and holistically. Second, Indonesian Islamic historiography is understood as an integral part of Indonesian national history. Variations of Islamic historiography writing in Indonesia are manifested in various forms such as hikayat, khabar, silsilah and tambo. Topics of study in Indonesian Islamic historiography include local history, multidimensionality, and biographies of national figures. Historians try to reconstruct the history of Indonesian Islam by taking various sources from traditional historical records, Dutch colonial records, and modern historiography.

## INTRODUCTION

The development of Islamic history writing in Indonesia developed in line with the development of Indonesian history writing as a whole. In the beginning, the writing of Indonesian history began with the emergence of a traditional style of historiography involving mythological elements, in which the main role was given to the royalty, as reflected in the work of Empu Prapanca who wrote the book Negara Kertagama. During the colonial period, history writing was dominated by European writers who came to Indonesia and tended to be European-centric. After Indonesia's independence, there was a shift in history writing, which was dominated by Indonesian writers who took an Indonesia-centric approach. The focus of history writing in this period was more on national heroes who contributed to the struggle for independence. Many biographies of national heroes were also published as part of efforts to promote Indonesian history (Azra, 2002).

Recent advances in the writing of Indonesian history, in Azra's view, can be recognized from the emergence of several major historical works that adopt a global view. In this global historical perspective, it is important to see and place Indonesian history in the context of world history in general. Research on the history of Islam in Indonesia is an interesting topic to investigate. As a result, many scholars from both abroad and locally have conducted research on Islam in Indonesia. Although the history of Islam in Indonesia has been the focus of research with various approaches, styles, and topics, among the many existing works, it is difficult to categorize them as works of Indonesian Islamic historiography. This is because, as stated by Azyumardi Azra, both foreign and local historians have not yet succeeded in formulating a historical paradigm that can serve as a common basis for writing Islamic historiography (Azra, 2006).



Historiography or historical explanation is the final stage from the point of view of historical research methods, including heuristics, criticism, interpretation, and historiography. Starting with the question of how historians reconstruct historical events and create historical documents based on historical evidence and sources, historiography plays a role in achieving this mission (Umar, 2003).

Historiography is the effort to organize historical data into stories and presentations by writing historical books and articles and giving historical lectures. Alternatively, historiography also includes critical examination of written history. According to Helius Syamsuddin and Ismaun, historiography is an imaginative restoration of human history compiled based on evidence and data found through research and critical analysis of records and relics of the past (Kartodirjo, 1982).

The development of Islamic historiography reflects very complex and dynamic power relations. This is evidenced by the emergence of various works of Islamic history that differ in type, model, characteristics, form and content. This diversity is caused by certain motives, socio-cultural backgrounds, and ideological structures that influence historical writers. The creation of these works can be influenced by certain conditions and circumstances, by themes that were popular at the time, or by the quality of the historian's own intellect during the writing process (Walsh.W.H, 1967).

In Indonesian history, there are several forms of historical writing that include traditional historiography, colonial historiography, national historiography, and modern historiography. Traditional historiography emerged in the early period of Indonesian history before the realization of history developed. This type of historical writing can be found in the form of babad, tambo, hikayat, silsilah and others. Besides focusing on regional and ethnic cultural aspects, traditional historiography is often symbolic, with deep meanings behind its stories (Abdullah, 1996).

## **METHODS**

In this research, the method used is the historical method with data collection techniques, namely the literature study approach. Literature study is a series of activities related to data collection methods from written sources, reading, recording and processing research materials. This approach emphasizes the use of written materials such as books, articles and other documents to be the main basis in collecting data (Zed, 2008).

The steps used in this research are Heuristics by looking for books, articles and relevant research related to Islamic Historiography in Indonesia. The next stage is to critique the source, namely conducting a review of the data obtained in order to ensure the authenticity of the data. The next stage is Interpretation, which is interpreting or giving meaning to the data obtained from these various sources. Then in the last stage called Historiography, namely writing down data obtained from various sources that have gone through the previous three stages and written down in the form of scientific articles.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Islamic Historiography in Indonesia**

Etymologically, the term "Historiography" comes from the Greek words "Historia" and "Graffein". Historia means the study of physical natural phenomena, and "Graffein" means picture, painting, text, or description. Therefore, historiography can also be said literally as a description and description of the results of research related to natural phenomena. However, the concept of historiography has changed over time. This is because historians tend to explain the notion of "history" as an academic endeavor that focuses more on human actions in the past (Katodirjo, 1982).

Historiography or the preparation of history is the final phase of the historical research method including heuristics, criticism, interpretation, and historiography. This approach stems from the question

of how historians reconstruct historical events to create historical documents based on historical evidence and sources, historiography plays a role in achieving this mission (Kuntowijyo, 2003).

Rosenthal traced the early history of Indonesian Islam and found that the roots of Indonesian Islamic history writing can be found in traditional literary works. These works often contained terms such as *haba*, *hikayat*, *cerita*, and *tambo*. (Rosenthal, 1968). This view is also reinforced by Hamka with his book *Sejarah Umat Islam IV*, which contains *Raja Pasai*, *Sejarah orang Melayu* and various other stories. These works illustrate the direct communication between the archipelago and Arabia (Hamka, 1981). According to Rosenthal, the existence of classical works such as *Haba*, *hikayat*, stories and *Tambo* can be considered as important material for the study of Islamic history. It can provide a new perspective more rooted in the local context, in the writing of Islamic history and enrich the growth of a skillful scholarship on Islamic history involving contributions from Muslim historians.

Mukti Ali said there are two main methods for writing the history of Islam in Indonesia. The first method sees the history of Islam in Indonesia as an inseparable part of the history of Muslims throughout the world. The second method emphasizes the view that the history of Islam in Indonesia needs to be understood as an integral part of Indonesia's national history. The first method that places the history of Indonesian Islam in the context of the history of Muslims as a whole was introduced by Hamka through his work entitled *Sejarah Umat Islam IV*. In this approach, Hamka analyzed that Islam had arrived in Indonesia directly from Mecca and Medina not in the 12th or 13th century, but in a much earlier period, namely in the early 7th century. This means that Islam had entered Indonesia at the beginning of the Hijri era, when Kulafaul Rashiddin ruled. Hamka stated that during the reign of his companions the prophet as Amirul Muqminin, this theory promoted by Hamka became known as the Arab theory.

The above discussion provides a brief overview of the writing of Islamic history in Indonesia. Although some of the works of early writers on Islamic history are discussed, early works on Indonesian Islamic history tended to follow traditional historical theories and methods. This article focuses on political processes and figures as descriptive accounts of how events occurred. In addition, historiography tends to present events based on broad descriptions in a linear process. This approach views history as a grand narrative expressed through important events and people. It also includes documentation of the origins of events, genealogical analysis, and the selection and emphasis of events that are considered spectacular such as wars and other Islamic events.

### **Early Patterns of Writing the History of Islamic Writing in Indonesia**

Franz Rosenthal explains that one of the main elements driving the rapid development of Islamic historical writing is the understanding that Islam is a religion that is closely related to history. During the last decade, the development of Islamic historiography has increased both qualitatively and quantitatively (Azra, 1999). Subsequently, the development of Islamic history writing became an integral part of Indonesian history, especially as a number of historians wrote various works on Muslim societies in Indonesia.

In the early phase of its development, most of the writing of Islamic history in Indonesia tended to incorporate myths and historical accounts into Western frameworks (Azra, 1999). According to De Graaf, traces of early Islamic history in Indonesian Islamic historiography are not entirely reliable, but it is important not to ignore them completely. This is because the historiographical approach comes from an indigenous perspective that is the result of a similar cultural heritage and is not based on historical accuracy.

Initially, the historical records of Islam in Indonesia differed from what we observe today in that they were not based on the principles of historical science and focused more on events triggered by supra-natural forces. *Hikayats*, stories, genealogies, and *tambo* emphasize myth more than fact, these

works reflect a wide variety of historical content (Umar, 1985). as for the early style of writing Indonesian Islamic history, among others:

#### 1) Hikayat

Hikayat is a type of story that is generally told in poetic form and is often referred to as poetic literature. Like legends that tell the story of a king and his kingdom, the story of the spread of religion has also changed since Islam entered history. Religious figures and royal titles were changed to "Sultan". Over time, historiography developed and many religious figures became part of the historical record, such as in the stories of Hikayat Amir Hamzah and Hikayat Muhammad Ali Hanafia. Among these stories, it is not uncommon to find stories about Islamic mythical figures and heroes, but for example, the story of Iskandar Zulkarnain, who existed before Islam, is recognized as a hero in historical records by Islamic writers, the story of the Prophet is an original Indonesian work and is included in the book of Al Anbiya. Some other works include: Hikayat Suraratus Salatin, Sejarah Kedah, the story of Raja Pasai, the story of Hang Tuah and Hikayat Chirebon (Suroto, 1990).

According to Sartono Kartodidjo, the hikayat text shows the characteristics of royal centrism. Hikayats tend to focus on the story of a king and his dominance, but historical records in areas outside his palace are not described in detail and are only partially written. The writing of this type of story is aimed at the king, the royal family or government officials and the author is less interested in revealing various aspects of the lives of ordinary people. Therefore, most of the contents of these stories only discuss the details of the conversion of the leader, members of the royal family, and other government officials (Azra, 2002).

#### 2) Khabar

Franz Rosenthal states that the term "Khabar" is considered one of the fundamental forms of history in Islam. It is the most ancient form of Islamic history that is directly connected to war stories and contains a thorough description of events that usually does not require many pages. In the Acehese language, the term "Khabar" is referred to as "haba" which means "news". Haba itself is a work of poetry.

#### 3) Tambo

The origin of the word "tambo" comes from the Minangkabau language and refers to the story of the ancestral lineage of the Minangkabau people. Tambo generally contains oral literary stories in the form of proverbs and long poems. The content includes stories about Minangkabau customs, governance systems and norms of daily life. Tambo is often told when the community holds a traditional event, often narrated by storytellers called perajin kaba. One of the purposes of Tambo is to strengthen group identity and unity, and is considered a lesson for the community. These traditional historical works are filled with stories of myths, legends and narratives about characters. As an illustration, there is a Tambo from Negeri that tells the journey of Zulkarnain's son. In the story, Zulkarnain sails and stops at Mount Merapi, which was originally the size of a chicken egg, but later transformed into a large area.

#### 4) Genealogy

Genealogy is a type of historiography that contains historical information from the beginning. The word "silsila" comes from the Arabic al-ansab which means nasab or genealogy, and its main purpose is to maintain the authenticity of the tribe's descendants (Yatim, 1997). Genealogical writing in Indonesia also aims to maintain group identity and hereditary unity, although it is sometimes considered to glorify a person (or myth). Genealogies of figures in traditional Islamic history are often linked to previous famous figures, such as prophets, guardians, scholars, and Islamic heroes.

### Topics of Islamic Historiography in Indonesia

So many historical records have been produced by historical experts. These works cover a wide range of forms, styles and themes regarding the early history of Islam in Indonesia. This is not surprising

with the increasing historical awareness of Islam in Indonesia. There are several categories of topics in Islamic historiography, including the following:

1) Topics that include local history

The importance of local history is of great interest because it is closely related to the specific history of the local community. The writing of local historical accounts is often influenced by considerations of Islamic belief and law, as well as being driven by a sense of pride in recounting the origins of the homeland (Umar, 2003). The writing of regional history was generally done by writers in the past in a simple form known as traditional historiography. In the realm of traditional historiography, local history is described through various forms such as chronicles, stories, tambo, genealogies and haba. For example, the Banjar Hikayat, the Roro Jongrang Hikayat and the Kutai royal Hikayat tell about the government and kingdoms in a particular region.

2) Examining Aspects of Universal History in Recording the History of Islam in Indonesia.

In general, the history of Islam in Indonesia is described in Hamka's study entitled "History of Indonesian Muslims". In addition, Nurudin al-Ranili's other work, Bustan Salatin, tells the story of the kings in the kingdom.

3) Character Writing (Biography)

Historical writing about figures including this one with the title "Sultan Agung Tirtayasa: Against the Power of the Dutch Company" is a historical work written by Uka Djandrasasmita. This work describes the role of figures or fighters in the resistance to Dutch imperialism (Umar, 2003).

**Historians used a variety of sources to reconstruct the history of Islam in Indonesia from the 14th to the 19th century.**

To reconstruct the history of Indonesian Islam, historians relied on various types of historical sources including traditional historical records, colonial historical records arising from Dutch colonial rule and modern historiography. Traditional sources include local sources such as chronicles, stories, poems and genealogies, as well as non-local sources such as news from China, Portugal, Spain, etc. Historians often use traditional sources to reconstruct Indonesia's Islamic history. Historians often use traditional Indonesian sources such as the following:

1) Malay sources

According to J.C. Bottoms, information about the Malays before the mid-18th century is very limited and only a few sources are available. These sources include the famous Hang Tuah hikayat which tells the story of a Malay hero and his experiences during the reign of the Sultan of Malacca, the Abdullah hikayat written by Abdullah bin Abdul Kadir Munsyi, this work provides an overview of Malay life in the 19th century and the author's travel notes, and there are also reports of European explorers and sailors such as Ibn Batutta, Marcopolo, Portuguese and Dutch sailors who provide a foreign view of life in the Malay region.

2) Sources from Java

The first original Javanese material created by non-Javanese people is Babad Tana Jawi. In addition, there are various other traditional Javanese sources such as Babad Petjina, Babad Gianti, Babad Diponegoro, Serat Centini, Yogyakarta palace manuscripts, Islamic inscriptions in Java, Javanese poems, and other sources.

**CONCLUSION**

Indonesian Islamic history is developed from classical literary works, such as Haba, hikayat, stories and tambo that provide a new perspective with roots in the local context. There are two main approaches to Islamic historiography in Indonesia: One sees it as an integral part of the history of Muslims globally,

while the other emphasizes that the history of Indonesian Islam should be understood as an inseparable part of Indonesia's national history. There are also several theories of the entry of Islam into Indonesia, such as through India, Persia and Arabia, which are the focus of debate among historians. The early patterns of Indonesian Islamic historiography include the influence of the idea of Islam as a religion that encompasses history, with rapid development both qualitatively and quantitatively. In its early stages, Indonesian Islamic historiography tended to blend myths and historical accounts into Western concepts, with the use of various forms such as hikayat, khabar, tambo and silsilah. Local cultural influences, such as royal centrism, were very strong in traditional historiography. Topics in Indonesian Islamic historiography include local history, aspects of universal history, military history, and biographical writing. Various historical works describe important events and figures who played key roles in the history of Islam in Indonesia. The sources used by historians include various types, including traditional sources such as chronicles, stories, genealogies, and non-local sources such as news from China, Portugal, and Spain. Historians also rely on colonial and modern historiography in reconstructing the history.

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