

THE RESISTANCE OF PALEMBANG'S LOCAL RELIGIOUS ELITES TO DUTCH EAST INDIES ISLAMIC POLITICS IN THE 20TH CENTURY

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Abstracts: *The 19th century was the peak of the mission era and the beginning of the 20th century was the period of independence of the Protestant Church by inviting various missionary organizations from Europe to carry out their missions in the Dutch East Indies. This was a major threat to Muslims, including Palembang Malay Muslims. This article seeks to complement existing research with the aim of knowing the resistance factors of local elites in the Palembang Malay community. This study uses a socio-historical approach by making use of James C. Scoot's resistance theory. Scoot's theory of resistance. This study concludes that the resistance of local elites in Palembang Malay society is caused by the central role of local religious elites in preaching and teaching the Muslim community in Palembang to remote areas. The elites are in the category of free ulama. Figures such as Abdullah Munsyi and the Samaniyah tarekat teachers who made various efforts to save Muslims from Islamic politics run by the Dutch East Indies. Efforts were made such as the construction of various places that served as centers of Islamic studies such as langgar, mosques, and madrasas.*

الملخص: كان القرن التاسع عشر ذروة عصر الإرساليات، وكان أوائل القرن العشرين فترة استقلال الكنيسة البروتستانتية من خلال دعوة مختلف المنظمات التبشيرية من أوروبا للقيام بالإرساليات في جزر الهند الشرقية الهولندية. ويشكل هذا تهديدًا كبيرًا للمسلمين، بما في ذلك مسلمي الملايو في باليمبانج. تحاول هذه المقالة استكمال الأبحاث الموجودة بهدف تحديد عوامل مقاومة النخبة المحلية في مجتمع باليمبانج الماليزي. يستخدم هذا

البحث منهجًا اجتماعيًا تاريخيًا باستخدام نظرية المقاومة لجيمس سي سكوت. ويخلص هذا البحث إلى أن مقاومة النخب المحلية في مجتمع باليمبانج الماليزي سببها الدور الرئيسي للنخب الدينية المحلية في الدعوة وتثقيف المجتمعات المسلمة في باليمبانج في المناطق النائية. وتدرج هذه النخب ضمن فئة رجال الدين الأحرار. بذلت شخصيات مثل عبد الله منسي ومعلمي الطريقة السمانية جهودًا لإنقاذ العقيدة الإسلامية من السياسة الإسلامية من السياسة الإسلامية التي تديرها حكومة جزر الهند الشرقية الهولندية. وقد بُذلت جهود مثل بناء أماكن مختلفة لتكون بمثابة مراكز للدراسات الإسلامية مثل اللغات والمساجد والمدارس

Abstrak: *Abad ke-19 merupakan puncak era misi dan awal abad ke-20 merupakan masa kemerdekaan Gereja Protestan dengan mengundang berbagai organisasi misionaris dari Eropa untuk menjalankan misinya di Hindia Belanda. Hal ini menjadi ancaman besar bagi umat Islam, termasuk umat Islam Melayu Palembang. Artikel ini berupaya melengkapi penelitian yang sudah ada dengan tujuan untuk mengetahui faktor resistensi elit lokal pada masyarakat Melayu Palembang. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan sosio-historis dengan memanfaatkan teori perlawanan James C. Scoot. Teori perlawanan Scoot. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa resistensi elit lokal pada masyarakat melayu palembang disebabkan oleh sentralnya peran elit agama lokal dalam mendakwahkan dan mendidik masyarakat muslim di palembang hingga ke pelosok. Para elite tersebut masuk dalam kategori ulama bebas. Tokoh seperti Abdullah Munsyi dan guru tarekat Samaniyah yang melakukan berbagai upaya untuk menyelamatkan umat Islam dari politik Islam yang dijalankan Hindia Belanda. Upaya yang dilakukan seperti pembangunan berbagai tempat yang dijadikan sebagai pusat kajian Islam seperti langgar, masjid, dan madrasah.*

Keywords: resistance, local elite, religion, politics, Palembang.

INTRODUCTION

In the current era, Palembang is the center of government as well as the capital of South Sumatra province. The name Palembang is

very familiar in Indonesia, because if you look back at the history of the kingdom, there was one kingdom that was quite large at the peak of its glory at that time, namely Sriwijaya.¹ In addition, Palembang in the XVIII century AD was the center of Islamic studies in the archipelago which was the successor to the baton of Islamic development.

The sultanate of Palembang at that time motivated the scholars to always create works that were intended to be disseminated to the people of Palembang. Therefore, the Palembang Sultanate at that time motivated the scholars and intellectuals to always work with the aim of being disseminated to the people of Palembang. No doubt many written works emerged at that time, which can now be taught. These studies include various branches of knowledge, such as fiqh, tafsir, and Sufism. One of the Palembang sultans who had an accentuation on science was Sultan Mahmud Badarudin II.

But in the end, the splendor of Srivijaya and the Palembang sultanate had to recognize the power of Western hegemony, Britain and the Netherlands. The rivalry has been felt since the 17th century, each representing a trade union, VOC by the Dutch and EIC by the British, which from time to time became hotter (1811 to 1825). At that time, the Palembang Sultanate was not only faced with external factors that were ready to destroy it at any time, but also internal factors. The rivalry between the 'old sultan' (de oude sultan) Mahmud Badaruddin and the 'young sultan' (de jonge sultan) Ahmad Najamuddin was another factor that made the Palembang sultanate unstable. In just a few years (1804 to 1823) there were six changes of power due to this rivalry. Until finally, in July 1821-October 1825, the Palembang Sultanate had to face the expansion of the Dutch colonial power.² This transition of power had a major impact on Palembang society socially, economically, culturally, and even religiously.³

At the same time, the attitude of the Dutch East Indies government towards the Indonesian people in the last two decades of the 19th

¹ Joshua Jolly Sucanta Cakranegara, "Citra Ibu Kota Palembang Dalam Historiografi Barat Pada Abad XIX," *JURNAL PENELITIAN SEJARAH DAN BUDAYA* 7, no. 1 (May 31, 2021): 51, <https://doi.org/10.36424/jpsb.v7i1.217>.

² *Ibid.*, 56–57.

³ Endang Rochmiatun, "Elit Lokal Palembang Dan Polemik Kebangkitan Kesultanan Palembang: Menggali Sumber Sejarah Melalui Manuskrip," *Manuskripta* 8, no. 1 (July 30, 2018): 108, <https://doi.org/10.33656/manuskripta.v8i1.103>.

century and the first two decades of the 20th century experienced significant turmoil. This happened because this period was known as the peak of the imperial age, which was a golden age for nations that were eager to form empires. The colonialist Dutch government needed *inlandsch politiek*, the policy of the natives, to understand and control the natives. Therefore, Snouck Hurgronje, with his idea of Islamic politics, managed to find the art of understanding and mastering the predominantly Muslim population. He was “the architect of the most legendary success of Islamic politics,” which complemented Dutch knowledge of Islam, especially in the social and political fields. Through Snouck, according to Suminto, the Dutch knew about the threat posed by Islam and firmly made policies towards Islam based on Snouck Hurgronje’s three pillars of Islamic politics, namely:

1. With regard to religious dogma and purely religious legal orders, the government should be neutral.
2. The issues of marriage and the division of inheritance in Islam demand respect.
3. No form of Islamic Pan should be accepted by European powers.⁴

The policies set by the Dutch above are certainly very contrary to the people of Palembang. During the colonial period, there was a person or group of people who had influence and often they also made changes to their society. Although, changes in society are not entirely dependent on the role he or they play. This is where some ulama emerged who had an important role in maintaining the integrity of Islam from the onslaught of the colonials, as was the case with the ulama of Palembang done by Abdullah bin Abdul Kadir Munsyi and some other ‘free scholars’⁵, they are the so-called ‘local elites’.

The term elite etymologically comes from the Latin word *eligere* which means *to choose*. The term then developed in the XIV century

⁴ H. Aqib Suminto, *Islamic Politics of the Dutch East Indies: Het Kantoor Voor Inlandsche Zaken* (Jakarta: Kementerian Agama RI, Badan Litbang dan Diklat, Puslitbang Lektur dan Khazanah Keagamaan, 2011).

⁵ During the Palembang Darussalam Sultanate, the main religious elite was divided into three categories: first, the sultan's ulama who were in charge of assisting the sultan in running the wheels of government, second, the ulama pengulu (bureaucrats) were in charge of the administration and implementation of Islamic law in the sultanate area, and third, independent ulama acted as teachers, mentors and propagators of Islam in the midst of society. After the collapse of the Palembang Darussalam Sultanate, the ulama were divided into two types, namely independent ulama and bureaucratic ulama or ulama penghulu.

into a *choice of persons*, and in the XV century the term was used to mention the *best of the best*. In the next development, namely in the XVIII century, the term was used in French to refer to a group of people who held leading positions in a society. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the term elite was used in English as early as 1823. Elite according to Pareto is a group of people who have the highest index in their activities. Pareto divided the elite into two groups, namely the governing elite and the non-governing elite. The governing elite includes individuals who directly or indirectly play an important role in their government. Clearly, for Pareto, those who have and get more than what other people have and get, either as holders of power (*governing elite*) or those outside power (*non-governing elite*).⁶ Meanwhile, Mosca says the elite is a group that holds power, which is generally small in number but controls a larger group.⁷ Thus, elites are people who have advantages and influence and get a higher status and position in life in society.

One of their roles was to fight the Christianization carried out by the colonial party. This effort was carried out by preaching to the people of Palembang to all corners of the countryside. The above reality is interesting to be deepened, how the central role of local religious elites in Palembang in resistance to Dutch East Indies Islamic politics in the 20th century. The study is so interesting because until now there has been no similar research. The presence of this study is expected to add to the treasures of the history of Islamic civilization in Palembang.

Studies on local religious elites in general have certainly been carried out, such as those conducted by Hajad on the study of kyai politics and social resistance.⁸ Kosim's study highlights the role of Kyai and Blater juxtaposed with violence in Madurese society.⁹ Padila examines the role of religious elites in the development of

⁶ Zainuddin Maliki, *Agama Priyayi*, Cet. 1 (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Marwa : Didistribusikan oleh Solusi Distribusi Buku, 2004).

⁷ Sartono Kartodirdjo, *Pesta Demokrasi di Pedesaan: Studi Kasus Pemilihan Kepala Desa di Jawa Tengah dan DIY*, ed. Suharni and Universitas Gadjah Mada, Cet. 1 (Yogyakarta: Aditya Media, 1992).

⁸ Vellayati Hajad, "Politik Kiai Dan Resistensi Sosial," *Jurnal Public Policy* 1, no. 1 (November 23, 2015), <https://doi.org/10.35308/jpp.v0i0.700>.

⁹ Mohammad Kosim Kosim, "Kyai Dan Blater (Elite Lokal Dalam Masyarakat Madura)," *Karsa: Jurnal Sosial Dan Budaya Keislaman*, 2007, 149–60, <https://doi.org/10.19105/karsa.v12i2.139>.

Islam in Ogan Ilir, South Sumatra.¹⁰ While the study of local elites in Palembang was specifically conducted by Rochmiatun on the position and role of “Haji Mukim” in the 19th-20th century¹¹ as well as his study of Palembang’s local elites and the polemics over the revival of the Sultanate Palembang which is based on the excavation of historical sources through manuscripts.¹² Tita Amalia’s research proved that the local religious elite in Palembang, namely Sheikh Abdoes Shamad al-Palembani, played a significant role in the process of internalizing Islam.¹³ Studies on local elites who specifically carried out resistance movements against the Dutch East Indies government included those conducted by Erman who wrote the resistance of Minangkabau ulama to colonial policies in the field of education in the early 20th century,¹⁴ Ajat Sudrajat who presented KH Ahmad Rifai Kalisasak’s resistance to the Dutch government in the 19th century.¹⁵ Thus, religious elites have played their role in various situations and conditions. From the various studies mentioned above, the study of the resistance of Palembang’s local religious elite to Dutch East Indies Islamic politics in the 20th century.

SOCIO-HISTORICAL CONDITIONS OF THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY PALEMBANG MALAY COMMUNITY

After the Sultanate of Palembang was conquered in 1823, according to P.J. Veth, Taal and de Clercq mentioned that this region was divided

¹⁰ Padila Padila, “Peranan Ulama dalam Perkembangan Islam di Ogan Ilir,” *Tamaddun: Jurnal Kebudayaan dan Sastra Islam* 13, no. 2 (2013), <http://jurnal.radenfatah.ac.id/index.php/tamaddun/article/view/155>.

¹¹ Endang Rochmiatun, “Elite Lokal Palembang Abad XIX-Abad XX: Kajian Terhadap Kedudukan dan Peran ‘Haji Mukim,’” *Jurnal Adabiyah* 18, no. 1 (June 2, 2018): 64–81, <https://doi.org/10.24252/JAd.v17i118i1a5>.

¹² Rochmiatun, “Elit Lokal Palembang Dan Polemik Kebangkitan Kesultanan Palembang,” 108–27.

¹³ Tita Amalia and Hudaidah Hudaidah, “Peranan Syekh Abdoes Shamad Al-Palembani Sebagai Ulama Bebas Dalam Proses Internalisasi Islam Di Palembang,” *Fajar Historia: Jurnal Ilmu Sejarah Dan Pendidikan* 6, no. 1 (June 25, 2022): 128–40, <https://doi.org/10.29408/fhs.v6i1.5486>.

¹⁴ Erman Erman, “Perlawanan Ulama Minangkabau Terhadap Kebijakan Kolonial di Bidang Pendidikan Awal Abad XX,” *Turast: Jurnal Penelitian dan Pengabdian* 3, no. 1 (2015): 1–21, <https://doi.org/10.15548/turast.v3i1.372>.

¹⁵ Ajat Sudrajat, “K.H. Ahmad Rifa’i dari Kalisalak Pekalongan dan Gerakan Protes Sosial Abad 19,” n.d., <https://staffnew.uny.ac.id/upload/131862252/penelitian/K.H.+Ahmad+Rifai+dan+Gerakan+Ptotes+Sosial.pdf>.

into the Palembang Prefecture which was divided into five *afdeeling* in 1855, namely (1) Palembang Capital (Hoofdplaats Palembang), Iliran and Banjoe Asin, Kemering Ilir, Ogan Ilir, Moesi Ilir, Lematang Ilir; (2) Tebing Tinggi, Ampat Lawang, Lematang Oeloe, Moesi Oeloe, Kikim, Redjang, Pesocmah; (3) Ogan Oeloe, Kemering Oeloe, Enim, Semindo, Kizam, Makakau; (4) Rawas; and (5) Djambi (Cakranegara, 2023). The conquest of the Palembang Sultanate by the Dutch resulted in rapid changes in urban life. The Dutch East Indies colonial government was faced with a large population and local elites. The social structure developed increasingly complex. The Dutch began to regulate a number of things, including the formation of villages that were named with numbers and accompanied by the name of the district where the village was located, such as 1 ilir and 1 ulu.

In general, the social stratification of the population is divided into two, namely the iliran and uluan populations. The *iliran* are associated with areas on the mainland, while the *uluan* are highland areas.¹⁶ The population in the capital city of Palembang is classified as iliran with trade talents and associates itself with being part of an advanced civilization. The uluans were labeled as *hicks*, but there was cooperation between the two through trade.¹⁷ If detailed, according to a Dutch commissioner (J.I. van Sevenhoven) in Palembang who worked since 1821, the distribution of the population in the capital city of Palembang can be divided into two large groups, namely the priyayi and the people. The first group includes descendants of kings and nobles such as pangeran, mas agus, and raden. The second group included kiai-mas, kiai-agus, and commoners. The commoners included senan (*snouw*) people, miji people, pawned people, and slaves. While mathematically, the population of Palembang city based on the records of C.F.E. Praetorius, amounted to around 30,085 people. The native population consisted of 27,690 people, Arabs 921 people, and Chinese around 1,474 people. Based on this record, it can be said that plurality in the city of Palembang is a necessity.

¹⁶ Hafnita Sari Dewi Lubis, Yushar Tanjung, and Ahmad Muhajir, "Pendekatan Elemen-Elemen Melayu-Islam dalam Restrukturisasi Birokrasi pada Kesultanan Palembang Darussalam oleh Sultan Mahmud Badaruddin II," *Patra Widya: Seri Penerbitan Penelitian Sejarah dan Budaya*. 23, no. 2 (2022): 176, <https://doi.org/10.52829/pw.414>.

¹⁷ Jeroen Peeters, *Kaum Tuo-Kaum Mudo: Perubahan Religius di Palembang, 1821-1842 [i.e. 1942]*, Seri INIS 31 (Jakarta: INIS, 1997).

Therefore, in its development, the social stratification factor is very obvious.¹⁸

Earlier in 1854, as a result of the divisions in the structure of colonial society and the divisive politics of the Dutch East Indies, the government organized an apartheid classification system dividing Dutch East Indies society into three groups. The three groups were each distinguished. *First*, whites (Europeans, Americans, Japanese). The first class ranks the highest. *Second*, Foreign Orientals (Chinese, Indians, Arabs). Their position is in the middle. *Third*, the indigenous population (Indigenous Indonesian people). The purpose of this classification was for the political stability of the Dutch East Indies government to remain safe and not endanger the colonial side.¹⁹ With this division of groups, in big cities such as Batavia and Palembang, Chinese villages, Arab villages, Javanese villages, Bugis villages and other ethnic villages were found, reflecting physical separation. This condition can still be witnessed in the settlement of Arab descendants in Kampung 12 Ulu, 13 Ulu and 14 ulu. Chinese descendants in Kampung 7 Ulu (Kapiten) and 10 Ulu the oldest temple Soei Goeat Kiong.²⁰

The social stratification of Palembang society changed significantly after the collapse of the Palembang Sultanate (1823), which had an impact on changes in the structure and function of the ulama. During the colonial period, the ulama were divided into two groups: free ulama and bureaucratic ulama (ulama penghulu). These two groups of ulama organized the spread of Islam that complemented each other. The free ulama worked on the path of aqidah and tasawwuf, manifested in the form of da'wah and education. The penghulu ulama are engaged in the field of fiqh in the form of legal systems and judicial legislation.²¹ In principle, the penghulu has a role

¹⁸ Cakranegara, "Citra Ibu Kota Palembang Dalam Historiografi Barat Pada Abad XIX," 60.

¹⁹ Hosniyah and Agus Trilaksana, "Kebijakan Pemerintah Hindia Belanda Terhadap Komunitas Arab Di Malang 1900-1935," *AVATARA, e-Journal Pendidikan Sejarah* 4, no. 3 (2016): 966, <https://ejournal.unesa.ac.id>.

²⁰ Makmun Abdullah et al., *Kota Palembang Sebagai "Kota Dagang Dan Industri,"* ed. R. Z. Leirissa, P. Wayong, and M. Soejanta Kartadarmaja (Jakarta: Direktorat sejarah dan nilai tradisional, 1984), http://pustaka.kebudayaan.kemdikbud.go.id/index.php?p=show_detail&id=2393&keywords=kota+palembang+sebagai.

²¹ Ibnu Qoyim Isma'il, *Kiai Penghulu Jawa: Peranannya di Masa Kolonial* (Gema Insani, 1997).

as a regulator of religious affairs, religious education and religious issues.

During the sultanate period, the position of Penghulu Nata Agama was a noble position, heading several Islamic religious affairs and directly responsible to the Sultan. This position did not apply in the Dutch Colonial period, precisely in the Palembang Prefecture. At this time, the Penghulu Nata Agama had duties only in the capital city of Palembang. The Keresidenan assigned Hoofd Penghulu to take care of the divisions and the interior, organizing tasks related to religious, community and family issues. Penghulu Nata Agama is appointed by the central government. The appointment of khatib, penghulu was proposed by Penghulu Nata Agama and determined by the resident. At that time the appointment of penghulu was more structured than during the sultanate period. The process of appointing the penghulu was regulated based on the Palembang Resident's decree dated April 20, 1832 No. 43. The procedures that had to be carried out included; 1) The appointment of Pangeran Penghulu Nata Agama was carried out by the Gubernemen in Batavia at the choice of the resident, 2) The community itself can choose the position of preacher Based on the results of the election, the Penghulu Nata Agama submitted them to the resident, 5) if the resident was pleased, the candidates would be appointed as khatib penghulu or khatib imam; the positions of modin and marbot were chosen by the Penghulu Nata Agama.) The resident then weighed the merits and demerits of the candidates, 6) if the resident was pleased, the candidates would be appointed as khatib penghulu or khatib imam; the positions of modin and marbot were chosen by the Penghulu Nata Agama by listening to the opinions of the Malay ambtenar who were then appointed by the resident, 7) while the appointment of Bilal was carried out by Penghulu Nata agama based on the choice of the community, 8) and the position of lebai penghulu and khatib who served in the uluan area was based on the choice of the pasiarah or district head, then submitted to the Pangeran Penghulu Nata Agama to be examined, if he fit the criteria he would be proposed to the resident. During the Palembang Prefecture, the duties of the penghulu were not only related to the Islamic religion, but also carried out government duties.²²

²² Suryo Arief Wibowo, "Peranan Penghulu pada Masa Keresidenan Palembang Tahun (1299-1361 H/ 1831-1942 M)," *Tanjak: Sejarah dan Peradaban Islam* 2, no. 3

In the development of the role of the ulama, apart from the Palembang war in 1819 AD, there were no rebellions and wars involving the ulama of South Sumatra (including Palembang) throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries. This shows that the role of the free ulama of South Sumatra (including Palembang) concentrated more on religious and sociocultural activities, not on political activities. It is possible that the ulama were more concerned with fostering society through the fields of education and preaching in addition to the freedom given by the colonial government in carrying out educational and preaching activities. The administration and restrictions imposed by the colonial rulers may still be tolerable, especially in the early days when the colonial rulers only continued the principles and procedures for regulating Islam previously run by the Sultanate.

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, Islamic education and teaching in South Sumatra, including Palembang, was non-formal in the form of recitation of the Koran and kitab. Those who wanted to deepen their religious knowledge continued to the holy land.²³ At the same time, in the early 20th century, various modern Islamic movements emerged in Indonesia that wanted to bring about a spirit of change. This movement arose because of the concern of the condition of Indonesian Muslims which was getting worse every day. Therefore, religious elites who already have a strong scientific provision feel the need to make changes to these conditions. This awareness is not only to change personal consciousness, but also on a broad scale for a better life in the surrounding Muslim community. In the end, they made an institutionalized movement with the spirit of the religious social movement which includes education, da'wah, economy, fatwa, and so on. Although the various existing social movements have different sides, but on the other hand they have the same goal, namely to step on the good.²⁴

(August 31, 2022): 293–94, <https://doi.org/10.19109/tanjak.v2i3.14027>.

²³ Zulkifli Zulkifli, *Ulama Sumatera Selatan: Pemikiran Dan Peranannya Dalam Lintasan Sejarah* (Universitas Sriwijaya, 1999).

²⁴ M. Desta Ramadoni and Alfian Ghofur, "Ittihadoel Oelama: Integrasi Sosial Keagamaan Di Palembang, 1939-1942," *Warisan: Journal of History and Cultural Heritage* 3, no. 3 (December 20, 2022): 106, <https://doi.org/10.34007/warisan.v3i3.1687>.

This was also felt in Palembang and began to be busy in the early twentieth century. This massive movement brought great changes to the development of Islam in Palembang. This reform movement had a real impact on the religious social order and formed two groups, each of which opposed each other, namely traditionalists (*kaum tuo*) and reformers (*kaum mudo*). Those who belong to the first group highly value local traditions or customs that are old traditions, as well as local beliefs. Meanwhile, the reformers (modernists) are educated people who reject old traditions or customs, the majority of them returning from the hajj pilgrimage from the holy land.²⁵

The dualism of this Islamic group has further heated up the situation and conditions of Muslims in Palembang, which will have an impact on friction within the Muslim body. Therefore, there were some religious elites who took the initiative to form a movement whose purpose was to unite the two groups. So *Madjelis Pertimbangan Igama Islam* (MPII) was formed, but this determination effort could not run smoothly and reached a dead end. However, the religious elite did not lose heart, they established *Ittihatoel Oelama* in the house of Kiagus Abdoelroni Oedjang, the religious elite in Kampung 19 Ilir Palembang. This organization also seems to have accentuated the educational and political movements of the late colonial period.²⁶ In the end, these two groups managed to unite themselves because they shared the same fate due to colonization. They united to resist the colonizers. Therefore, the differences in views were put aside.²⁷

Some free scholars also wrote books that were used as teaching and reading materials for the community. Although, no complete data was obtained regarding the writers and the books they produced.²⁸ Philological studies on the works of the scholars of South Sumatra including Palembang are still limited to the works of scholars and writers of the 18th century AD, especially those works found in the Sultanate and successfully seized and sent to Batavia. Clearly, the works of scholars during the colonial period almost escaped the

²⁵ Ramadoni and Ghofur, "Ittihadoel Oelama."

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid., 112.

²⁸ Zulkifli, *Ulama Sumatera Selatan: Pemikiran Dan Peranannya Dalam Lintasan Sejarah*.

attention of philologists. After Abdus Shomad al-Palembani,²⁹ came Muhammad Azhary bin Abdullah bin Ahmad (1811-1874M) and his son Haji Abdullah bin Muhammad Azhary (1854-1974M). These two scholars were known to the people of Palembang in the 19th and early 20th centuries.³⁰

Some other ulama, although not known as ulama writers, or perhaps their works have not been published, have a role in the field of education and preaching in Palembang, especially in the early 20th century. These local elites such as, H. Malian (1826-1928) he was the son of Pangeran Liting (Abdul Chalik) who still had descendants from Ki Renggo Wirosentiko, an official of the Palembang Darussalam Sultanate. H. Malian continued the tradition of his father and brother as preachers in his area. He often preached from village to village on foot. In addition, he also has services in the establishment of Madrasah Islamiyah school located in Tanjung Raja, the purpose of which is to provide education to the lower class people of Pegagan Ilir Tribe II clan. In addition, there are still some local elites who are members of the Sammaniyah tarekat,³¹ Sarekat Islam, in the Muhammadiyah and al-Irsyad organizations.³²

THE ROLE OF FREE SCHOLARS IN PALEMBANG'S LOCAL RELIGIOUS RESISTANCE

Resistance became one of the interesting things to be discussed by social scientists in the late 1980s. James C. Scoot provides a definition

²⁹ He was one of the Nusantara's network of scholars with the Middle Eastern world in the 18th century. He was a renowned scholar both in his own country and in other countries. Al-Falimbani was born in Palembang, a city in South Sumatra. Regarding his year of birth, Azra only found one source from one work 'Tarikh Salasilah Negri Kedah', in the work al-Falimbani was born around 1704 and died around 1785. He was the son of a sayyid (descendant of the Prophet) from Yemen and a mother from Palembang. Although his life was in Makkah, he still had a high sense of nationalism towards the Indonesian state. This is evidenced by his resistance to Dutch colonialism through intellectual movements. It was from him that the resistance of the Palembang people carried out jihad war against the Dutch colonial.

³⁰ Ravico Ravico, "Hubungan Sosial-Politik Tarekat Samaniyah Dengan Kesultanan Palembang Darussalam," *Islamika : Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 18, no. 02 (2018): 31, <https://doi.org/10.32939/islamika.v18i02.308>.

³¹ Ravico, "Hubungan Sosial-Politik Tarekat Samaniyah Dengan Kesultanan Palembang Darussalam."

³² Rochmiatun, "ELITE LOKAL PALEMBANG ABAD XIX-ABAD XX," 69-77.

as a form of resistance carried out by subordinate groups or people aimed at rejecting or reducing claims made by superordinate groups against them. Scoot divides it into two parts; *first*, public or open resistance (*public transcript*), *second*, *hidden* resistance or closed resistance (*hidden script*). In gambling, what is meant by the first form is an organized, systematic and principled resistance effort. The method used by this method is clear, such as by means of violence or rebellion. While the second is a form of resistance imposed on society, such as gossip, slander or disrespect for the authorities. From the description above, Scoot concludes that resistance is carried out because of the oppressive attitude of the ruler under the pretext of defending the rights contained in him, therefore resistance becomes a reason for people who feel oppressed to maintain existing subsistence by means of resistance movements.³³

The resistance in Palembang against the Dutch was carried out by the local religious elite, namely the ulama. After the collapse of the Sultanate of Palembang Darussalam, the ulama were divided into two types, namely free ulama and bureaucratic ulama (ulama penghulu). Free ulama continued to organize Qur'anic recitations, other book recitations and da'wah to rural areas. These educational activities were organized in their own homes, in langgar or in mosques. The collapse of the Palembang Darussalam Sultanate also provided a great opportunity for the Arabs to dominate the religious field, which had previously been given a special position by the Sultan. Some of them became ulama penghulu, such as Sayyid Muhammad Arif (khatib) and Sayyid Jamalul Lail bin Ahmad (imam). The sayyids used to pay attention to religious observance. They built langgar in their own neighborhoods, such as the al-Munawawar Family built a langgar in the village of 13 Ulu. Masagus Haji Abdul Hamid (Kyai Muara Ogan) built two langgar in Palembang city, in Karang Berahi village and 5 Ilir village in 1871 and 1881. This langgar changed its name to Jami' Mosque and was later known as Kyai Muara Ogan Mosque and Lawang Kidul Mosque. Sayyid Abdullah bin Salim Al-Kaf in 1873 established a Jami' mosque known as the Sungai Lumpur mosque in 12 Ulu Village. Haji Mohammad Akil in 1909 founded a mosque known as the Kapuran mosque in Kampung 4 Ulu. Haji Mahmud

³³ Enik Zuni Susilowati, "Resistensi Perempuan dalam Kumpulan Cerita Tandak Karya Royyan Julian (Teori Resistensi-James C. Scott)," n.d., 5.

Khatib and Ki. Abdurrahman Delamat in 1906 established a mosque known as the Suro mosque in Kampung 30 Ilir and several mosques scattered in several areas.³⁴ Haji Mohammad Akil also established a religious school (Muhammadiyah) in his village to accommodate children from poor families with no access to education.³⁵

Based on the data above, it is known that these free scholars established langgar and mosques as centers of Islamic education and teaching. Thus, they have a dual role not only as preachers and educators, but also builders of langgar or mosques whose rewards will not break up as amal jariyah. This was expressed by Kyai Muara Ogan, according to him the mosque has a special meaning so he built many mosques because the maintenance of the mosque is comparable to the maintenance of orphans who need patience.³⁶

In later developments, formal educational institutions and systems emerged in the Palembang Prefecture. This is certainly the role and efforts of Islamic leaders and organizations to renew the traditional Islamic education system that has been running at home, in the langgar and in the mosque. Some of these semi-formal schools according to Sukardi include: (a) A group of Arab youths established Al-Ihsan which was preceded by the establishment of the al-Ihsan social organization in Kampung 13 Ulu. (b) The Al-Munawar family founded Madrasah Arabiyah. Then the classical and formal Islamic Education Institutions, among others, are: (a) Madrasah Ahliyah Diniyah in Sekanak 28 Ilir Village. (b) Madrasah Islamiyah in Tanjung Raja Onderfdeeling Komering Ilir (c) Madrasah Arabiyah 1926. (d) Madrasah al-Ihsan 1927. (e) Madrasah Quraniyah 1926 in Kampung 15-16 Ilir as a transformation of the traditional Islamic Education system at home since 1924. Until February 1928 there were five primary level educational institutions in Palembang: Madrasatoel Arabiah, Al-Ichsan, Sjamsuel Hoeda, Islamiyah and Religious School. Then madrasahs were also established in the capital city of Palembang, namely Al-Hidayah, Madrasah al-Hilal,

³⁴ Zulkifli, *Ulama Sumatera Selatan: Pemikiran Dan Peranannya Dalam Lintasan Sejarah*.

³⁵ B. Triharyanto, *Pers Perlawanan, Politik Wacana Antikolonialisme Pertama Selatan* (Penerbit & distribusi, LKiS Yogyakarta, 2009).

³⁶ Zulkifli, *Ulama Sumatera Selatan: Pemikiran Dan Peranannya Dalam Lintasan Sejarah*.

Madrasah Al-Huda, Muhammadiyah school and Madrasah Ma'had Islamy in Kampung 7 Ulu.³⁷

In 1939, KH Abdul Malik Tadjuddin also established an Islamic education institution in his parents' house at 1 Ulu Laut Palembang under the name Madrasah Al- Irfan.³⁸ Then together with Mgs. H. Umar Usman who is the grandson of Kyai Muara Ogan and his uncle Ki.H.A.Majid Azis and assisted by several local community leaders established Madrasah MI Ma'had Islamy. This idea received a good response from the surrounding community. Then as a follow-up to this strong desire, the establishment of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah named MI Ma'had Islamy in 1951 was led directly by him. The use of the name Ma'had Islamy on the advice and permission of his teacher (KH.Kms.Masyhur Azhari) to continue the history of the previous name MI Ma'had Islamy which has been closed.³⁹ During the author's childhood, on several occasions he participated in preaching in various mosques and langgar, Ki. H. Abdul Malik Tadjuddin always reminded parents not to send their children to *kaperius schools*. He used this term to refer to zending and missionary educational institutions. So it is clear that the purpose of this Madrasah was established not only to educate Muslims, but also to stem the spread of the Gospel.All of the above Islamic educational institutions are located within the capital city of the Palembang Prefecture. Politically, this area was at the center of the Dutch colonial government's control. Not only in the city center, even in rural areas formal educational institutions were also established, such as Madrasah Islamiyah in Tanjung Raja (1925). Some names mentioned include Madrasah Islamiyah Sekayu (1926), al-Irsyad Pagar Dewa School (1927), Religious School in OKU (1929) Religious School in Rawas (1929). Several schools were established in the 1930s, namely: Religious School in Muara Dua, Religious School in Lahat, Religious School in Muara Enim

³⁷ I. Sukardi and N. Huda, *Madrasah Dan Pergolakan Sosial Politik Di Keresidenan Palembang, 1925-1942: Fenomena Historis Lembaga Pendidikan Islam Di Sumatera Selatan Pada Masa Kolonial Belanda* (IDEA Press, 2014).

³⁸ Choirunniswah. (2023, July Saturday). Ki, H.A. Malik Tadjuddin. (N. Fitriyana, Interviewer)

³⁹ Ahmad Dailami, *Sejarah Hidup Singkat KH. Abdul Malik Tadjuddin (1918-2000) Ulama Pejuang Dan Sang Pendidik Yang Bersahaja* (Penerbit Noer Fikri, 2022), <http://repository.radenfatah.ac.id/26269/>.

and Religious School in Batu Raja.⁴⁰ The establishment of the above educational institutions was caused by several motivations, namely: (a) The awareness of the ulama about the importance of education to educate Muslims. (2) In the editorial of the *South Pertja* newspaper (1928) the emergence of this educational institution was driven by the spirit of the success of reform organizations in Indonesia in the early 20th century, namely Muhammadiyah and al- Irsyad. (3) In 1926, zending schools were established in Palembang with the aim of spreading Christianity. The establishment of zending schools with the intention of spreading Christianity.⁴¹ This can be seen in an editorial of *Pertja Selatan Onderwijs and Christianity* (1928). A former Governor-General wanted :

“Soepaja regent-regent (boepati) jang at this time oemoemnja still seen as the priest of Islam in Indonesia same peloeck religion christen.” In addition to political efforts, it is also said that Christianization efforts were also carried out through the field of education by way of: *“slipping daja oppaya Chisten in onderwijs.”*

The data above shows that the role of evangelization by zending was carried out with political and educational efforts. Meanwhile, free ulama continued to organize Qur’an recitations, other book recitations and preach not only in the city center of the Palembang Prefecture, but also to rural areas. The establishment of Islamic educational and preaching institutions at home, in the langgar, in the mosque until the formation of Islamic schools as an effort of the role of free ulama to educate the Islamic generation as well as an effort to stem the preaching of the Gospel from both missionaries and zending in the Palembang Malay community.

IDENTITY BATTLES IN LOCAL RELIGIOUS RESISTANCE IN PALEMBANG

Indonesia was one of the countries targeted by European colonizers. When they established their colonies, they carried three missions at once, known as the ‘3G’ movement, namely *glory, gold, gospel*. *Glory*

⁴⁰ Sukardi and Huda, *Madrasah Dan Pergolakan Sosial Politik Di Keresidenan Palembang, 1925-1942: Fenomena Historis Lembaga Pendidikan Islam Di Sumatera Selatan Pada Masa Kolonial Belanda*.

⁴¹ Ibid.

is a political movement whose goal is to colonize and control its colonies. *Gold* is an economic motive that is carried out by massively exploiting, squeezing, and dredging existing natural resources for the benefit of their own country. *Gospel* is a missionary movement as an effort to spread Christianity in the colonized country. This is the movement that the Dutch brought when colonizing Indonesia, specifically in the third point in their efforts to spread Christianity in Indonesia to remote areas. The same thing was also done by the previous colonizers, namely the Spanish and Portuguese who came to Indonesia with the aim of fighting Islam and Christianizing Muslims.⁴²

The missionary movement was also felt in Palembang. The existence of this movement made the identity battle between missionaries and local religious elites. The identity battle can be seen from the dialog of Abdullah bin Abdul Kadir Munsyi (1787-1854), he is a local elite of Arab-Indian descent. His father, Sheikh Abdul Kadir was an Arab and his mother Salmah was of Indian descent. Abdullah Munsyi was born in 1787 and died in 1854. His early educational career was inseparable from his own father, the father had a harsh disposition in educating Abdullah. But it is with such a character that shapes Abdullah's character and becomes a path of success in the transmission of his knowledge. He began to feel this when he was able to copy the text of the Koran at the age of eleven years. From the results of this labor he received his first honorarium. It was from there that his career began to take shape. He was trusted to teach the language of the British soldiers who were in the Malacca fortress. The soldiers referred to him as 'munsyi', a word derived from Malay which means language teacher. Indeed, it was very appropriate that he was chosen as a language teacher, because there were several languages he mastered such as Arabic, Indian, Tamil, English, and Malay.⁴³

⁴² Asliah Zainal, "Aisyiah di Muna: Negosiasi Dakwah dan Politik," *Jurnal Dakwah UIN Sunan Kalijaga* 15, no. 1 (2014): 6, <https://doi.org/10.14421/jd.2014.15102>.

⁴³ Andi Chandra Jaya, "Konsep Nation-State Dalam Pemikiran Ideologi Politik Melayu Islam Pada Abad Ke-19 M (Studi Pemikiran Abdullah Bin Abdul Kadir Munsyi (1787-1854)," *Tamaddun: Jurnal Kebudayaan Dan Sastra Islam* 18, no. 2 (December 3, 2018): 12, <https://doi.org/10.19109/tamaddun.v18i2.2788>.

He is known as a controversial figure in the Malay world because of his tendency to criticize the royal ideology known for its absolutism,⁴⁴ as well as for his closeness and work with missionaries.⁴⁵ Evidence of his controversy was when he showed the Gospel to his friends.

*Do not read this book, because it is the book of the puteh, and our faith will be corrupted. So I said to them: "How can you know that this is a book of orang puteh?" Isn't it Malay? "And can it ruin our faith?" What is the meaning of faith?" As for the meaning of faith that I know, it is perchaya; then if I were to read a thousand books of other religions, if I had no perchaya of him. Is it possible to destroy faith?" I would not listen to such foolish words. So they were silent.*⁴⁶

The above dialog proves that the Gospel for the Malay Muslim community should not be read because it damages faith. Likewise, Christianity for the Malay Muslim community is seen as the religion of the Dutch colonizers, because this religion is embraced, spread among Muslims and supported by the Dutch. Therefore, if there are Malay Muslims who convert to Christianity, they are not only ostracized from their environment, but also considered to have become "Dutch" or Dutch lackeys.⁴⁷ Thus, when becoming a Christian, the sense of pride based on nationality will be disturbed.⁴⁸ strengthens the argument that Islam is not only the identity of Malay Muslims, but also synonymous with nationality.

This view arises from the strong influence of Islam on Muslims. For them, Islam served as a central point of identity to symbolize their

⁴⁴ Muhammad Abdillah, "Islam Dan Budaya Politik Melayu," *Medina-Te : Jurnal Studi Islam* 17, no. 2 (2021): 161, <https://doi.org/10.19109/medinate.v17i2.17008>.

⁴⁵ Jan van der Putten, "Abdullah Munshi and the Missionaries," *Bijdragen Tot de Taal-, Land- En Volkenkunde / Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences of Southeast Asia and Oceania* 162 (January 1, 2006): 410, <https://doi.org/10.1163/22134379-90003661>.

⁴⁶ A.A. Kadir, *Hikayat Abdullah Bin Abdul Kadir Munshi* (Malaya Publishing House, 1939).

⁴⁷ T. van den End, *Sumber-Sumber Zending Tentang Sejarah Gereja Di Jawa Barat, 1858-1963*, Seri Sumber-Sumber Sejarah Gereja Di Indonesia (BPK Gunung Mulia, 2006).

⁴⁸ Deliar Noer, *Gerakan Modern Islam Di Indonesia 1900-1942* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1996).

separation from and resistance to Christian and foreign rulers. Dutch colonial policy after 1850 was not only economically motivated, but also military, personnel, political and religious expansion. In this case, evangelization activities helped to strengthen Dutch colonial political power. In this context, Abdullah Munysi was also instrumental in fortifying Muslims from the influence of Christianization by missionaries. He gave dedication to the community by establishing various schools as a provision of knowledge for ordinary people. Muslim villages became solid fortresses to maintain the Islamic identity of their citizens and fight the spread of Christianity.

In addition to the figures above, the role of local elites who cannot be ruled out is the role of local elites who are in the Samaniyah tariqah network. This order was brought by Abdul Shamad al- Palimbani through his two major works, *Hidayatus Salikin* and *Siyarussalikin*. It developed rapidly in Palembang and throughout the archipelago. In Palembang it played an important role in the Muslim community there. Not only that, this order also resisted the colonizers in Palembang. From this order, until the 20th century, resistance was still carried out by local religious elites affiliated with the Samaniyah order. These figures include: Haji Abdullah bin Muhammad Azhary (1854-1974M). He was the son of Muhammad Azhary bin Abdullah bin Ahmad. Haji Abdulah was the leader of the Samaniyah order in Palembang. He received the tarekat diploma directly from his father. It is important to note that the Samaniyah order in Palembang has played a very central role since its presence during the Palembang sultanate. Not only is it involved in the Sufistic world, it is also the driving force of resistance to the colonizers, such as the wars that have occurred between these people and the colonials. This resistance also continued in the 20th century.

The leader of the Samaniyah Tariqat is Haji Abdullah, who is known as a person who is good at various fields of knowledge such as fiqh, tawhid, tasawwuf, and falaq which he learned in Palembang and in Makkah. He lived around his birthplace in 12 Ulu. He was the successor to the teaching and education pioneered by his father. He was a persistent fighter in providing Islamic teaching and preaching to the wider community, so he became a respected figure. He always provides guidance and services to the wider community in every religious activity or event while being the leader of the Samaniyah

order. Haji Abdullah is also known as Ki Pedatukan, hence the village he lives in is called Kampung Pedatukan. His activities in proselytizing Islam, teaching, and spreading the Samaniyah order were not only in his own hometown, but also in remote rural areas in South Sumatra.⁴⁹

The struggle in this tariqah was continued by Masagus Haji Abdul Hamid bin Mahmud (1811-1901). He is better known as Kyai Kyai Marogan or Ki Marogan. He learned Tarekat Samaniyah from his own parents, Masagus Haji Mahmud bin Kanan. Ki Marogan was known as a Tarekat teacher who had economic success. Because of the amount of wealth he had, he gave many steps to his struggle for Islam by donating two mosques in Palembang, namely the Jami' Mosque of Kiai Haji Abdul Hamid bin Mahmud or commonly known as the Ki Marogan Mosque and the Mujahidin Mosque or the Lawang Kidul Mosque.

The next central figure in the Samaniyah tariqah is Haji Abdurrahman Delamat (1820- 1895M). He was a student and close friend of Haji Abdul Hamid. Just like his teacher, Haji Abdurrahman was also known as a generous person. So he built many mosques in the interior areas of Sumatra. Another figure who also contributed greatly to the resistance among this tarekat was Muhammad Azhary bin Abdullah bin Asikin (1856-1934 AD). This cleric was the most productive after Abdul Shamad al-Palimbani. Through various written works he produced which helped educate the people of Palembang during his time until the present era.⁵⁰

From some of the figures above, Muslims in Palembang can still be protected from the missionary parakaum. The tarekat teachers who were always actively struggling to preach from region to region to the interior of Palembang. With their persistence, the missionaries of the colonizers in their efforts to Christianize the people of Palembang failed. In his letter to the Central Board of the Nederlandsche Zendings Vereeniging on December 15, 1884, J. Verhoeven said:

“In view of the experience of many friends and the many associations in Muslim villages in the interior, I have become convinced that for the time being it is impossible to expect the followers of Christ to

⁴⁹ Ravico, “Hubungan Sosial-Politik Tarekat Samaniyah Dengan Kesultanan Palembang Darussalam,” 31.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 32.

*live in the same village with the followers of Muhammad. Not so long ago an example was given which proves that the structure of the village government and the whole economic life in a Muslim village constitute a solid, and for the time being unconquerable, bulwark against the spread of Christianity”.*⁵¹

The failure of missionaries was also stated by Dehonian Indonesia,⁵² noting that the face of the South Sumatra Church, including Palembang, shows more Javanese and Chinese colors. The colonial mission in its efforts to Christianize the Palembang Malay community did not develop as expected. The difficulty of evangelization is due to not only religion but also customs that govern their lives. It is therefore difficult to make a personal decision, because each is bound to the views of the group. The Malay Muslim community is bound by family ties. The differences that exist in the community are a burden to themselves and the family. Thus, social control in the life of the Palembang Malay community is so strong.

Based on the description above, in Scoot's perspective, the resistance carried out by the local religious elite of Palembang can be categorized as *hidden* resistance (*hidden script*). The local elites in the 20th century did not make violent means of physical warfare as the steps taken by the local elites before them. The resistance carried out by local elites in the 20th century by persuasive means, such as preaching from village to village, instilling Quranic education since childhood, building religious study centers (mosques and schools) and so on. With strategies like this, the local religious elite in Palembang can fortify Muslims from missionary groups.

CONCLUSIONS

From the description above, the author can conclude that the resistance of the local religious elite who became free ulama in Palembang to Dutch East Indies Islamic politics in the 20th century can be concluded in the category of *hidden* resistance. Local religious

⁵¹ S. Kartodirdjo, *Pengantar Sejarah Indonesia Baru, 1500-1900: Dari Kolonialisme Sampai Nasionalisme*, Pengantar Sejarah Indonesia Baru, 1500-1900 (Gramedia, 1987).

⁵² dehonian, “Sejarah Provinsi SCJ Indonesia – Dehonian Indonesia Website,” accessed October 3, 2023, <https://dehonian.or.id/2019/11/05/sejarah-propinsi-scj-indonesia/>.

elites in the 20th century The resistance was replaced by persuasive means such as in the realm of Koranic education, preaching to remote areas, building madrasas, and building places of worship or mosques. With this resistance, the colonial party failed in its efforts to Christianize Muslims in the Palembang region.

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