

Dynamics of the Scarcity of Al Jam'atul Washliyah Ulama, North Sumatra

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ABSTRACT

The dynamics of the Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah organization in North Sumatra, Indonesia, in the past, present, and future are covered in this essay. Al Washliyah is a group that has its roots in the city of Medan and has grown there while being influenced by the clergy and undergoing numerous dynamics. The findings of this study show that Al Washliyah has outstanding academics who help the people of North Sumatra gain knowledge and insight in the area of religion. Al Washliyah must be mindful of the shortage of academics that exist in the midst of its organization as we approach the turn of the century. If Al Washliyah wants to avoid falling behind and losing its clerical traditions, it must act promptly to carry out the upkeep of its clerical curriculum.

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1. INTRODUCTION

An Islamic group called Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah was founded by academics. The founders of Al Washliyah were people who had made great contributions to the Islamic struggle in Indonesia before independence, especially in the fields of education, da'wah, social charity and politics. (Nasution)

Al Washliyah's organizational operations mostly occur in the da'wah sector, according to Syah. Conveying Islamic da'wah to those who are not yet Muslim,

especially to the Batak population, is one of the aims of Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah's da'wah. This is in line with the basic principle of Al Washliyah article 4: "Spreading da'wah to people who are not yet Muslim". The cleric who founded Al Washliyah is known as a diligent worker, pious, knowledgeable about Islam, sincere, and has strong morals. He was also ready to sacrifice his life and property to advance Islam.

The founders of Al Washliyah include Mahmud Yunus (1889-1950 AD), Ismail Banda (1910-1951 AD), Abdurrahman Syihab (1910-1955 AD), Muhammad Arsyad Talib Lubis (1908-1972 AD), Adnan Nur Lubis, Udin Syamsudin (1907-1984 AD), and Yusuf Ahmad Lubis (1912-1980 AD) when he was still very young and broad-minded (bashirah). On average, they are students at the Tapanuli Islamic College (MIT). (Hasanuddin) See also (Sulaiman's) comments about the founder of Al Washliyah.

This short essay aims to reveal and underline the past, present and future conditions of Al Washliyah Ulama. This is important considering the first point which states that the Al Washliyah academic community had a significant role in both the growth and decline of this institution. Second: There is no doubt that the ulama function exists in this organization because of the contribution of the Al Washliyah ulama who formed, raised and continued the legacy of the organization.

2. Meaning of Ulama

The term ulama is simply pious (mufrad), plural. The words "know" and "person who has a lot of knowledge" come from the verbs *alima* (fi'il madzi) and *ya'lamu* (fi'il mudhari'). When these academics assimilated into Indonesian, the meaning changed from "as people who are experts in the field of religion" to "as scientists or researchers in Arabic". Ulama is a scientist or researcher in Arabic. (Fattah) If the term "ulama" is not used in conjunction with other terms, such as "tafsir expert", "hadith expert", or similar terms, it refers to someone who is knowledgeable. What knowledge, including that gained from other scientific disciplines and religions? (Hashim)

Religious leaders known as ulama have the responsibility to defend, develop and guide Muslims both in religious matters and in everyday problems that are necessary from both a religious and social perspective. The status of ulama in a social context is as unofficial leaders who are elected and recognized by the community as leaders who are

respected, obeyed, used as a source of information and a forum for exchanging ideas. As long as the community he leads recognizes or accepts him as a leader, that status will continue to apply. "Even though they are informal leaders, ulama play a major role in social change in society." (Fadli)

Amirul Hadi, defines ulama as: "A scholar, and especially an Islamic religious scholar." (Hadi) This is as interpreted in the Encyclopedia of Religion, that:

"The custodians, transmitters, and interpreters of Islam's sciences, doctrines, and rules are its religious scholars, or ulama (the learned), who are also the main guarantors of continuity in the community's spiritual and intellectual past. The phrase is general in nature and refers to anybody who has developed their spiritual practices or performed certain practical roles, such as judgeship". ["The guardians, transmitters, and interpreters of Islamic knowledge, doctrine, and rules were the ulama, or ulama (the learned), who were also the main guarantors of the spiritual and intellectual continuity of past societies. This expression is general and refers to anyone who has developed their spiritual practice or performs a particular practical role, such as judgment"]. (Arnold)

The word "ulama" is often used by Muslims, especially aimed at those who understand theological sciences. According to Nukman Sulaiman, the call of ulama is only appropriate for Muslims because ulama are people who have knowledge of religious rules relating to religion, worship and muamalat. (Thaib) More specifically, according to Nukman Sulaiman, a person can only be considered a scholar if: a. knowledgeable; B. put his knowledge into practice; C. teach science; D. fear Allah with his knowledge; and e. have their status as publicly recognized scholars. Even when someone has been recognized by the wider community as a scholar, if they do not yet have the necessary qualifications, they may not issue a fatwa on issues related to religious matters. (Hasballah) Ulama also have different names for each region in Indonesia, such as Kyai in Java. (Rahardjo). Both (Sobari) and (Ziemek) made similar statements. Ajengan for Sundanese people, Tengku for Acehese people, Sheikh for North Sumatran people, and Tuan Guru for Nusa Tenggara and Kalimantan people are other names for ulama. (Thankfully) Ramli Abdul Wahid agreed, saying: "Ulama are people who have mastered Islamic knowledge and put it into practice. Ulama is a place where people ask questions and complain about their difficulties to get interesting and reassuring answers. because they are trusted for their knowledge and morals (Wahid, Facing the Era of Secular Globalization: The Role of Islam).

Al Washliyah divides scholars into three parts: past, present and future. The first generation or founders of Al Washliyah in the past were ulama. Today's ulama are those who are still alive and actively engaged in cadre formation, education and Al Washliyah da'wah efforts. The next generation that will be born from Al Washliyah's womb will be the academics of the future.

3. Regeneration of Al Washliyah Ulama

Al Washliyah's academic community can be known throughout time based on their various educational backgrounds, ways of thinking, and the work they produce. Because the al-Haram mosque in Mecca and the Nabawi mosque in Medina were centers of Islamic teaching in 1895, some of these scholars traveled to the Middle East to study through talaqq. Due to the importance of the al-Haram mosque, madrasas are less visible in Mecca. Students are more likely to mention the name of their teacher than the school they are going to because it is considered very important in the subject of the Yellow Book of Isnad. (Brunnessen)

The first group of intellectuals who became professors or founders of Al Washliyah, including Hasan Maksum (1884–1936), were those who studied at Haramain in 1895. The next generation began studying at official educational institutions such as al-Azhar University in Egypt and others. colleges and universities. The second group consisted of academics who had graduated from nearby universities including Madrasah Islam Tapanuli and al-Hasaniyah, two of whom were famous: Abdurrahman Syihab (1910–1955) and Muhammad Arsyad Talib Lubis (1908–1972). The third group consists of academics who follow Al Washliyah, including Nukman Sulaiman and several other people. Those who study more outside Al Washliyah educational facilities are the fourth type.

Some of these categories, such as those studying domestically and those studying abroad, can be boiled down to just two categories. those who study abroad tend to think more reasonably than those who study at home, but different views will emerge from these two styles of thinking. Ahmad Khatib al-Minangkabawi was an instructor at the al-Haram mosque who was known for his reformist views, as can be seen from his publications, which included shariah on an earlier work on *Ul al-fiqh*, *al-Waraqat*, by al-Juwaini. Another educational facility known for its moderation is Al-Azhar University.

Although the Asy'ariyah and Maturidiyah schools of theology were accepted by al-Azhar. As long as this continues, people who study at home will continue to deal with social problems in conventional ways. (Brunnessen)

Ulama from Al Washliyah collaborated with ulama from Haramain, such as Ahmad Khatib al-Minangkabawi (1860–1916). The first reformer in the 20th century who introduced ideas from the Middle East to Indonesia was Ahmad Khatib al-Minangkabawi. He served as Grand Imam of the Al-Haram Mosque in Mecca. He never returned to his hometown because: one, the traditional system of his ancestors did not want to be changed; and secondly, he opposed the religious order system that was currently developing. His students, including Muhammad Jamil Djambek, Abdul Karim Amrullah (Rasul Haji), Abdullah Ahmad, Ahmad Dahlan (Founder of Muhammadiyah), Sulaiman ar-Rasuli, and Hasyim Asy'ari (Founder of NU), spread many of Ahmad Khatib's ideas. (Noer) Because of Ahmad Khatib's wildness in providing information to his students so that he could investigate it from other sources, the last two figures continued to follow the old system or did not agree with the reformist group, including their professors. Abdul Qadir al-Mandili (1910–1965) and (Ghofur). Sayyid Bakri Syaa (1849-1892) and Ahmad Zaini Dahlan (1816-1886) had intellectual relations with these two Haramain intellectuals, according to the research. (Ja'far) Muhammad Yunus (1889–1950), Hasan Maksun (1884–1936), Dja'far Hasan (1880–1950), Kadhi Iljas (1883–1936), and Mahmud Ismail Lubis (1900–1937) were few of the many academics who have a clerical network with Haramain intellectuals.

The founders of Al Washliyah, including Ismail Banda (1910–1951), Abdurrahman Syihab (1910–1955), Adnan Lubis (1910–1966), Muhammad Arsyad Talib Lubis (1908–1972), and Yusuf Ahmad Lubis (1912–1980), continuing the legacy of the scholars of the names mentioned above. It was passed down to the next generation from the founding generation to the present. Based on the lineage of Al Washliyah scholars, there is a continuous lineage. (Rozali)

Al Washliyah academic circles currently still need to categorize and filter which scientists can be considered ulama. Of course, you have to touch on some of the vocabulary that has been explained by Al Washliyah scholars, including Nukman Sulaiman and Ramli Abdul Wahid.

According to the author, only Abdul Somad, a well-known preacher who is now popular on social media and in real life, deserves to hold the title of ulama today. Academics who had been involved in the world of da'wah in the early days of Al Washliyah's rise were a little relieved by the presence of Abdul Somad in the international da'wah scene. It is extraordinary that Abdul Somad is present on the local and international stage. Its presence has brought various changes that have not only been felt by Al Washliyah but also the global da'wah community.

The emergence of well-known preachers such as Abdul Somad indicates a change in preaching strategy and media in Indonesia through the use of social media. The market for conservative themes is also increasing its appeal. At the Seminar on the Role of Da'wah in Indonesian Politics held at Monash University Melbourne on 15 February 2019, Julian Millie discussed this matter. "Are Muslim preachers pushing Indonesian politics to the right?" is the focus of the seminar. As a Malay born in Riau with a distinctive personal style, according to Millie, Abdul Somad is popular. (Millie).

Social media and the millennial generation, one of the target groups for Islamic da'wah, are intertwined in this era of digitalization. Along with the rise of social media, Abdul Somad's presence has a magnetic power that goes beyond common sense. This means that some people are sometimes surprised and amazed to see the public's enthusiasm for his lectures. It is like candy for greedy ants everywhere, both in urban and remote communities. In almost all sectors, (Ali) Abdus Somad has risen to the status of a public idol. With very few exceptions, devotees of all affiliations embrace it with great enthusiasm. From NU, Muhammadiyah, wa specifically bil Al Washliyah, such as those associated with secular groups such as Pemuda Pancasila, diverse communities, or vice versa, as well as those oriented towards the caliphate such as HTI, were also interested in his lectures.

Everyone wanted to invite him, including ordinary citizens in distant cities, university professors, high-ranking police and military officers, and even high-ranking state officials. When giving a speech at a mosque in Jakarta, the Vice President specifically paid tribute to him. Even the President of the Republic of Indonesia allegedly wanted to invite him at some point.

Apart from lectures given on the ground, in the air, in the physical world, and even online, lectures given on social media, especially YouTube, are one of the most popular lectures. His lecture became one of the most widely circulated lectures among Indonesian people after it was uploaded, modified and distributed widely. Non-Muslims often listen in secret to even such conversations. They may be interested in or looking for something, whether positive or bad. (Ali) What is Abdul Somad's claim to fame? This also arouses the interest of the Indonesian people, especially modern Muslims. Why are ulama or ustadz from Islamic groups such as NU and Muhammadiyah not as famous as him? (Subarkah) This can be seen from the number of subscribers to Instagram, Facebook and YouTube.

Abdul Somad's current popularity is not only due to the growth of mass media, electronic media and social media as a means of connecting real information with the global community. People's interest and desire for Islam can be fulfilled by the presence of these ulama with a modest attitude. Islam, which is known for being dogmatic and never giving up, can now be seen from various points of view. Abdul Somad can answer impromptu questions from the general public about various real-world problems with thorough justification.

This also refers to the question of why academics from other institutions do not have the same level of fame as Abdul Somad. Basically, there are clerics who are equally important and are said to be famous, such as Abdul Somad, but who cannot be associated with certain organizations because they are not members of groups such as Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama. giving lectures and recitations online.

Meanwhile, the Al Washliyah academic community will continue to uphold its own ulama traditions in the future. The ability of current ulama and the capacity of Al Washliyah educational institutions to compete with the progress of the era of globalization and digitalization will determine the seeds, strength and weight of Al Washliyah academics in the future.

Al Washliyah must be able to create an ulama cadre formation system with a curriculum that is capable of producing academics like Abdul Somad based on Abdul Somad's viral success. This is because modern Muslims idolize experts who are not members of traditional Islamic institutions such as Muhammadiyah, Nahdlatul Ulama, and Al Washliyah.

If you go back in time, you can see that Al Washliyah ulama have always played an important role in people's lives. This is due to the influence of ulama in these fields, both in the field of religion, as well as in the fields of politics, economics, society and

education. Ulama have contributed to the establishment of a number of educational institutions in Indonesia, both formal and informal, including mosques, Islamic boarding schools and madrasas. Ulama function as interpreters of canonical Islamic ideas through the establishment of educational institutions and the publication of various publications, as well as being a link in the transmission of religious ideals, especially through education. According to R. Stephen Humphrey, clerics were involved in all aspects of communal life:

What are the 'ulama' and who are they? Since they are neither a socioeconomic class, a clearly defined status group, a hereditary caste, a legal estate, nor a vocation, it is simpler to clarify what they are not. They appear in our books as literate qadis and rabble-rousers, king's privy advisors and spiritual advisers, as well as as cynical politicians and semiliterate rural imams. Some are descendants of powerful and affluent families, while others are poor immigrants from far-off places. Landowners, paid academics or government employees, business owners, or lowly artisans are among them. Although men make up the vast bulk of their ranks, there are a few noteworthy women as well. In summary, they appear to cross practically all boundaries between categories of groups in Islamic society, acting in a variety of political, social, and cultural capacities. Despite this uncertainty, they are unquestionably an essential part of Islamic society they are the one group that truly defines it as "Islamic" as opposed to something else and they are everywhere we look. (Humphreys) [What are 'ulama' and who are they? Because they are not a socioeconomic class, a defined status group, a hereditary caste, a legal status, or a calling, it is easier to clarify what they are not. They appear in our books as learned qadis and rabble-rousers, personal advisors to kings and spiritual advisers, as well as cynical politicians and illiterate village imams. Some were descendants of powerful and wealthy families, while others were poor immigrants from far away places. Landowners, academic or paid government employees, business owners, or lowly craftsmen were among them. While men make up the bulk of their lineup, there are a few women worth noting as well. In short, they appear to cross almost all the boundaries between group categories in Islamic society, acting in a variety of political, social, and cultural capacities. Despite this uncertainty, they are undoubtedly an important part of Islamic society. They are the only group that truly defines it as "Islamic" as opposed to something else and they are everywhere we look.]

As a result, all administrative tasks undertaken by Al Washliyah scholars in the past were managed and completed individually using a variety of techniques. These are passed on to the next generation at a later stage, so individuals who inherit these activities can be considered academics in the long run. Although there were differences of opinion among scholars in the past, scholars today and in the future will use many strategies and means to spread the word of Islam.

4. Al Washliyah's Contribution in Overcoming the Scarcity of Ulama

The people's desire and the nation's ideals to educate the people are reflected in the commitment of the Al Washliyah academic community to maintain social stability and improve education. There are not many scholars in Al Washliyah today who have as much knowledge about Islam as the scholars of the past. Reality shows how difficult it is to find anyone nowadays who can read and understand the yellow book (an Arabic book). (Wahid) Al Washliyah currently has fewer ulama than before; some even claim that there is a shortage of ulama. (Nasir) Even the names of the ulama who currently meet the requirements to issue fatwas are still unknown. There are many academics and religious scholars, but it is rare to find people who can read and understand Arabic texts. (Wahid, *Facing the Era of Secular Globalization: The Role of Islam*).

This problem is becoming increasingly evident with the increasing number of well-known professors who die without being replaced by someone who has equal expertise, and as a result, religious lecturers, religious teachers and writers are mushrooming everywhere. Surprisingly, many of them come from people who are not clerics and have no religious educational background, but there are also general academics who have never studied at university. They are specialists in fields other than religion (Islam), including aerospace, medicine, neuroscience, building, art, music, and even cooking. (Wahid, *Facing the Era of Secular Globalization: The Role of Islam*).

To overcome the shortage of ulama, Al Washliyah implemented cadre formation designed to produce ulama. As a result, religious education facilities, including madrasas and Islamic boarding schools, are needed. Al Washliyah must also be able to help send prospective students abroad, especially to Al Azhar University in Egypt and other Middle Eastern countries in general. The number of students going to the Middle East has decreased, especially since the Indonesian government's policy in 2005 which restricted sending non-scholarship students there. Although Al Washliyah annually sends between five and ten prospective students to the Middle East, the impact of this government policy also has a negative impact on Al Washliyah's ulama cadres, making it increasingly difficult to send students to various universities in the Middle East. (Rozali, Utilization of Educational Supervision to Improve the Quality of Al Washliyah Al Washliyah Private Madrasah (Jalan Ismailiyah Medan, Al Washliyah Graduates) Al Washliyah should look for alternative approaches, such as a number of universities in Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam which offer full scholarships to international students.

5. CONCLUSION

Al Wasliyah may be pleased to have such outstanding academics advancing social awareness and religious understanding. But we must also be aware of the fact that the Islamic world as a whole, not just Al Washliyah, was experiencing a shortage of academics towards the turn of the century. In order not to be left behind and lose its intellectual traditions, Al Washliyah must immediately act to preserve the curriculum of educational institutions in accordance with the needs of the times. This is a non-negotiable obligation.

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