

## RELIGIOUS PLURALITY IN THE MADIUN RESIDENCY AFTER THE ADMINISTRATIVE MODERNIZATION OF THE 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY

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### Abstract

This article aims to answer the question of how indigenous officials in the Madiun Residency responded to the attitude of the Dutch East Indies Government which was anti to religious issues, given its position as part of the administrative area of the Dutch East Indies Government formed after the Java War (1825-1830), in addition to controlling the colonies, there were also efforts to separate religion and government, thus making indigenous peoples struggled in carrying out their worship and religious activities until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Using historical methods and approaches to the sociology of religion, as well as reinforced by the Challenge and Response theory, which was initiated by Arnold Joseph Tonybee, the findings show that there was interference from the priyayi elite and peasants who urged the Dutch government to issue a policy of administrative modernization in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which provided an opportunity for indigenous officials to hold certain posts in the government, then the native officials responded again dengan gave a kind of flexibility in carrying out religious activities for every religious believer.

Keywords: Religious plurality; Madiun Residency; administrative modernization.

### INTRODUCTION

The Madiun Residency was previously part of the *Mancanegara Timur* (Eastern Foreign government structure), the Mataram Dynasty, which fell to the Dutch East Indies Government after the Java War as known as Diponegoro War (1825-1830). The *Mancanegara Timur* administrative regions are Madiun, Ngawi, Magetan, Ponorogo, and Pacitan. The birth and development of the Madiun Residency have significant differences compared to fellow regions of the former Mataram Dynasty, such as Pekalongan, Banyumas, Kedu, Semarang, Rembang, and Kediri, which lies in the *Mataraman* culture, customs, and manners that are always well maintained by the people of Madiun, in addition to having religious spiritual activities that are cultured with Javanese tradition (Mahamid, 2021).

Meanwhile, the Dutch East Indies government's anti-religious problems make indigenous peoples, especially in Madiun, less flexible in carrying out worship, religious activities, and teaching and learning activities in *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools). It cannot be separated from certain interests that limit its space for movement so it is difficult to develop (Steenbrink, 2017). Another impact is the lack of historical studies that discuss the religious conditions of indigenous peoples in the colonial period, so in this article, it is necessary to deepen the material about religion, including referring to *Madiun: Sejarah Politik dan Transformasi Kepemerintahan dari Abad XIV hingga Awal Abad XXI* written by Sri Margana et al (Margana, et al, 2018). Margana discusses the study of Dutch politics and colonial government, in addition to explaining the growth of Islamic boarding school educational institutions in the Madiun Residency until the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The next reference is *Madiun dalam Kemelut Sejarah: Priyayi dan Petani di Keresidenan Madiun Abad XIX* by Ong Hok Ham (Ong Hok Ham, 2019).

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Ong Hok Ham reviewed the struggle of indigenous peoples, peasants, and indigenous Muslim officials against the Dutch in the early formation of the Madiun Residency, while this article aims to continue the discussion after the modernization of the administration. The study discusses government administration policies in Madiun in *Politik Pemerintahan dan Kebijakan atas Ruang dalam Penetapan Ibu Kota Baru Kabupaten Madiun: Menemukan Posisi Caruban, 1830-2017* by Agus Suwignyo dan Baha'uddin (Suwignyo & Baha'uddin, [2018](#)). Suwignyo and Baha'uddin show where administrative modernization becomes one variable determining the progress of the Madiun region and produces changes in the socio-political sphere, including the religious field.

So, this article aims to complement previous studies that are limited to explaining the changes in the administration of the Dutch East Indies government in the Madiun Residency in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Margana, et al, [2018](#)) but do not explain how the efforts of indigenous Muslim officials who played a role in the process of the birth of the administrative modernization policy, as well as the intersection between administrative changes and their influence on religious conditions.

## RESEARCH METHOD

The writing of this article uses historical or historical methods, the stages of which consist of heuristics (collection of sources), verification (criticism of sources), interpretation (analysis of historical facts), and historiography (writing of history) (Abdurrahman, 2011). Primary sources used include *Algemeene Secretarie* number 1271 (27 January 1905), which contains important data related to administrative changes in the Madiun Residency; *Staatsblad van Nederlandsch-Indië* number 605, 1905 on the establishment of the division of administrative areas in the Madiun Residency; and books written by historical actors, J.J. Donner (1896-1902), as the first Resident of Madiun to propose administrative changes, titled *Een Tienjarige Strijd* (Ten Years' Struggle) retrieved from [www.delpher.nl](http://www.delpher.nl). Secondary sources used include scientific articles, books, and theses.

This research uses the sociology of religion approach as a multidisciplinary study that helps analyze an event regarding the relationship between religion and society and government (Tharaba, [2016](#)). Then reinforced by the theory of *Challenge and Responses*, which was put forward by the British Historian, Arnold Joseph Tonybee. In this theory, it is explained that the birth of a change is due to challenges which then gives rise to a response as an effort to rise from a difficult situation (Toynbee, [2017](#)). The Dutch East Indies government separating religion from government affairs is a challenge that must be faced by the people of the Madiun Residency, so an appropriate response from indigenous officials is needed so that their people can get freedom in embracing religion and carrying out religious activities.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Colonialism: Separation of Religion and Government

This section will be explained the religious conditions of the people of the Madiun Residency before the modernization of the administration and focused on the

spiritual activity of the Islamic religion. Madiun was once part of the three great powers of the Islamic Sultanate that operated in Java, including Demak, Pajang, and Mataram. After the Dutch came and took power, and built the madiun residency government, the majority of the population had already embraced Islam, while non-Islamic religions at that time were still rare, and no primary sources have been found that support the discussion (Mahamid, [2022](#)).

Islamization had taken place long before the arrival of the Dutch to the archipelago. In Java, Islam is taught in Islamic boarding schools by *kiai* with an emphasis on learning the Qur'an and everything related to the main obligations in religion. The mosque is the center of Islamic civilization, a gathering place for Muslims to carry out prayers and other worship activities. However, Islam experienced a decline in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the Dutch East Indies government had reached its heyday by mastering various important fields of state life, namely economic, social, educational, and cultural, then accompanied by an anti-religious (Steenbrink, [2017](#)). In *Regeering van Nederlandsch-Indie 1854* verse 119, written: "Every citizen is free to adhere to his religious opinion, not to lose the protection of society and its members for violation of the general rules of religious law." (Khotimussalam, [2019](#)).

A significant impact of this policy is the lack of religious activities in the Islamic boarding school and mosque environment. At that time, only a few Islamic boarding schools in the Madiun Residency still existed amid pressure from the Dutch colonial nation such as the Pesantren Banjarsari in Madiun, Pesantren Sewulan in Madiun, and the Pesantren Tegalsari in Ponorogo. The mosque was founded in the 18<sup>th</sup> century during the Islamic Sultanate of Mataram which carried out the mission of teaching Islam in Java. In the follow-up of Pesantren Tremas in Pacitan, Pesantren Tempurejo in Ngawi, and Pesantren Takeran (Sabilil Muttaqien) in Magetan, which was built at the beginning of the Dutch population period in 1830. At that time, pesantren began to be guided by an educational curriculum that instilled Islamic values, every year succeeded in graduating the best students spread across major cities in Java. Some of them have obtained jobs as clerks, traders, teachers, and *kiai* (Mahamid, [2021](#)).

As for the special building for worship, the Kuncen Ancient Mosque is the oldest in Madiun, since it was founded during the 16<sup>th</sup> century Demak Islamic Sultanate, which was used for five-time prayers, as well as exploring Islamic teachings for the people of Madiun and for its surroundings until now. As the customary custom carried out by every leader who will serve in the Madiun government, is obliged to make a pilgrimage as well as ask for prayers of blessing to the tomb of the founder of Madiun, Ki Ageng Panembahan Ronggo Djoemeno, whose location is adjacent to the mosque (Triatmoko & Wibowo, [2012](#)). Furthermore, there is the Tegalsari Ponorogo Mosque, which was built before the Tegalsari Islamic Boarding School. In the past, the mosque was used as a center for Islamic studies, and religious lectures. Namun after the establishment of the pesantren, the mosque is only for prayer activities (Kusnanto & Hartono, [2017](#)). In addition, there is the Great Mosque of Ponorogo, which was inaugurated by the Regent of Ponorogo, R.M.A.A. Tjokronegoro I (1856-1882) in 1858 AD / 1275 H, in addition to being used as a place of worship, the mosque was also used by one of the Ponorogo scholars, Ki Gelendung, in an effort to protect himself from Dutch pursuits (Wahyuliana & Wathoni, [2019](#)).

Basically, the Dutch East Indies Government does not completely prohibit indigenous people from embracing religion and performing worship, as long as it does not interfere with the course of government. On the other hand, the religious activities they carried out also did not provide any benefit, so the Dutch government did not have a strong reason to interfere in it. Exception if there are special reasons related to religious affairs that turn out to be able to help smooth government affairs, and are able to bring benefits to the Dutch East Indies Government, which will be outlined in the next sub-discussion.

### **Administrative Modernization of the XX Century**

The end of the Java War (Diponegoro) in 1830 became the beginning of Dutch rule in the Madiun Residency, which was marked by the appointment of L. Launij as the first Resident based in Madiun, assisted by Resident Assistants stationed in Ngawi, Magetan, Ponorogo, and Pacitan, in addition to the Control (Supervisor) who served as a communication connector between the Dutch East Indies Government and the indigenous government, headed by the Regent (Ong Hok Ham, [2019](#)). The establishment of the government structure was a systematic effort made by the Dutch government, in order to make its new colony, Madiun, part of trade activities, including through the *Cultuurstelsel* era, which was very burdensome for indigenous peoples, then followed by the Liberal Economic policies, to Ethical Politics, which also colored the Dutch colonial government's activities in the former Mataram area (Margana, et al, [2018](#)).

That situation certainly created turmoil between the Dutch and indigenous governments, especially after the door to negotiations between the two was wide open ahead of the enactment of the Ethical Politics policy at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The demands of the Dutch government were voiced by the indigenous people to hold them accountable for the suffering they experienced during the *Cultuurstelsel* era, through a movement called the "Socio-Political Movement". The movement was attended by about 3,000 heads of families from among the peasants who protested the burdensome income tax, as well as the *priyayi* (elite) who were not fulfilled with their rights and authority as regional heads. This condition forced the Dutch government to act immediately to reduce the conflict that occurred in the Madiun Residency ([Mahamid, 2022](#)).

In 1896, J.J. Donner was appointed as the new Resident of Madiun, as well as being the first Resident to seek administrative changes in the Madiun Residency. As stated in his notebook *Een Tienjarige Strijd* (Ten Years' Struggle), he took the policy of changing the administrative structure of the government by giving indigenous officials the opportunity to fill government seats in two positions, namely the duties of the controller changed his function as the head of the district level regions. Then under it aspirant-controller who presides over the onder-district (village) (Donner, [1908](#)). With the beginning of the formation of 16 districts, including 4 districts in Madiun, 2 districts in Ngawi, 1 district of Magetan, 5 districts in Ponorogo, and 4 districts of Pacitan (Bezemer, [1921](#)).

The policy is also supported by the development of infrastructure and transportation facilities that support the running of the government bureaucracy, such as roads, official houses, rail transportation modes, and stations (Donner, [1908](#)). This

coincided with the implementation of the new Ethical Politics officially announced in 1901 by the Queen of the Netherlands, Wilhelmina (Susilo & Isbandiyah, 2018). This was used by Resident Donner, as a step of reorganization or reorganization of the administrative area in the Madiun Residency, only that his reign did not last long after the political conflict involving himself with the Regent of Madiun, Brotodiningrat, in 1902, who led the two to the court table, and were dismissed from their respective posts (Brooshooft, 1903).

The Dutch government then appointed W.F.L Boissevain as the new Resident of Madiun who had expertise in government administration. Boissevain continued the administrative modernization program initiated by the previous Resident, namely making the Madiun Residency a structured government, starting from the district level to the smallest administrative area, namely the village, and it was hoped that the Dutch and indigenous governments would both accept the results of decisions related to the new governance (Mahamid, 2021).

The most strategic step taken by resident Boissevain was to make and submit a proposal for administrative changes signed in Madiun, on January 27, 1905, addressed to the then Governor-General, J.B. van Heutsz, in Batavia (*Algemeene Secretarie No. 1271*, 1905). The proposal was approved on December 18, 1905 (*Staatsblad van Nederlandsch-Indië* number 605, 1905), along with an appendix to the determination of the results of the division of the boundaries of the administrative area consisting of afdeling (district), district (sub-district), and onder-district (village), with the following details:

**Table 1. The division of administrative areas in the Madiun Residency, 1905**

Regency	Size / km <sup>2</sup>	Number of Administrative Regions	
		District	Village
Madiun	1.147	4	13
Ngawi	1.395	4	15
Magetan	701	4	13
Ponorogo	1.416	5	19
Pacitan	1.419	4	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.078</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>73</b>

Source: *Staatsblad van Nederlandsch-Indië* No. 605, 1905; Stibbe & Sandbergen, 1939

The description above was the first stage of the formation of a new administration and government in the Madiun Residency at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It aims to create bureaucratic efficiency and progress in each region over a long period of time so that all administrative areas that have been formed have an opportunity to be re-bloomed. In addition, it gives advantages to indigenous officials at the subdistrict and village levels to regulate their respective administrative areas. This contributed significantly to changes in the socio-political sphere, as well as the indigenous government's support for all religions and gave every believer freedom to carry out religious activities.

## Religious Plurality in the Madiun Residency

Islam is the majority religion embraced by the people of the Madiun Residency. It is evident from the number of mosques and Islamic boarding schools that continue to increase when entering the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Dutch East Indies government issued a policy of administrative modernization, which allowed every regional head from the indigenous circle to give freedom to the *kiai* in their environment, namely through his leadership to be able to teach his students. In addition to exploring religious knowledge, they are expected to actively play a role in the life of society, nation, and state after graduation (Makmun, 2014). Meanwhile, among the general public, the role of Islamic boarding school *kiai* is also needed to rally forces that are able to match the Dutch colonial nation (Muhakamurrohman, 2014).

One of the concrete pieces of evidence of the success of indigenous officials, after modernization, is the establishment of the Darussalam Gontor Islamic Boarding School on September 20, 1926, as well as being the first modern Islamic boarding school in the Dutch East Indies, located in Gontor Village, Ponorogo, East Java. The difference between traditional pesantren and modern pesantren Gontor, namely in its learning system which is already of international standard, by making Mecca, Medina, and several Middle Eastern countries as the center of orientation, as well as using the *kitab kuning* (yellow books) in Arabic as a study of Islamic science. Gontor now has 13 branches for students and 7 branches for female students, so a total of 20 branches spread throughout Indonesia, with the number of students reaching 23,000 every year (Syamsuri & Borhan, 2016).

With regard to religious traditions, *halalbihalal* has become one of the routines carried out by the Javanese people during Eid al-Fitr, especially the Madiun Residency which is Muslim, after carrying out fasting for 30 days in the month of Ramadan. This tradition has existed since the reign of the Mataram Dynasty in Madiun, which was initiated by King Mengkunegara I (Prince Sambernyawa) of Surakarta, carried out simultaneously by all court soldiers by performing *sungkem* to the king and empress, then twisted by a child to his parents which became a custom that has prevailed until now. Not only fellow Muslims, but *halalbihalal* also invites followers of other religions to be directly involved, in order to increase the enthusiasm of the community, whose situation at that time was still under pressure from the Dutch government (Husna, 2019).

Another Islamic tradition that involves all religious believers, namely *Grebeg Suro* in Ponorogo, in commemoration of the Hijri new year, precisely in the month of Muharram or called the month of *Suro* by the Javanese people, where the series of events consist of *kirab pusaka* (heirloom festival), *Reyog Ponorogo* dance festival, various religious competitions, and the culmination is *Grebeg Suro* on the closing night. In addition to involving the active role of the community, the event was able to invite attraction of tourists (Khoirurrosyidin, 2018). While in Madiun, holding the *Slematan* tradition by making "Suro porridge", following one of his ancestors, Ki Ngabehi Soerodiwirjo (Eyang Suro), who made the dish when celebrating the month of *Suro*. It should be noted that Eyang Suro is one of the highly respected martial arts teachers from Madiun, so in addition to the *Slametan* event. The Madiun practitioners from

various *pencak* schools first made a pilgrimage to his tomb to give prayers based on their respective beliefs (Soebijantoro, et al, [2012](#)).

There is also a religious ritual that is still being carried out today, namely praying for the spirits of the ancestors who have returned to the realm of the afterlife, as performed by Hindus and Buddhists who have long since spread in Madiun. Then when the teachings of Islam began to spread, the animism-dynamism beliefs brought by the previous religion did not immediately disappear. There are attempts to modify it so that the ritual can continue to be carried out in an Islamic way (Mugni, [2018](#)). The people of Madiun have a tradition of *Kenduren* or sending prayers to ancestors, which is rich in the value of local wisdom that continues to be maintained. Even in the Dutch colonial period, the purpose of the tradition is almsgiving, as a form of gratitude to God. Generally, the owner of the celebration invites others to his home, and before returning home each invited guest is given a blessing or food that has been read a prayer (Mayer & Moll, [1909](#)).

Hinduism and Buddhism also have their own rituals, one of which is the *Entas-entas* ceremony, which is performed on the eve of the full moon as a means of communicating with God, as well as honoring his ancestors (Wahyuningtyas, [2018](#)). The ritual is usually carried out centrally at Sanggaha Bhwana Temple, located in Magetan, and is followed by all Hindus in the Madiun Residency, while Buddhists have their own place of worship, namely the Dharma Sila Parang Vihara in Magetan, besides that there are three sects or sects of Buddhism in the Madiun Residency, including Theravada, Buddayana, and Nichiren, where each individual is given the freedom to choose, both the teachings and beliefs they profess, without any coercion from any party (Sukarti, [2020](#)).

With regard to the Ethical Politics of the Dutch East Indies, helped increase the number of Christians and Catholics in the Madiun Residency which reached more than one million, then marked by the establishment of the Church of St. Cornelius on March 12, 1899, as the largest catholic church in Madiun. However, every Christmas celebration the church was always crowded with pilgrims from Madiun, Ngawi, Magetan, Ponorogo, and Pacitan, who even went so far as to spill into the churchyard, because of their strong desire to be able to attend mass with reverence, and listen to lectures from the Parish Priest of the Church (Rahmawati & Nurcahyo, [2017](#)). Meanwhile, the Christian church in Madiun built during the Dutch colonial period, namely *Kerkkeraad de Protestansche Gemeentete Madioen*, was established on August 30, 1908. As written in the inscription of the church made of alabaster stone, and is still clearly visible in Dutch, including two figures who were instrumental in its establishment, including T. Pilon Spark and W.F. Reisner. After Indonesia's independence, the church was later renamed GPIB (Gereja Protestan Indonesia Barat) Gamaliel Madiun (Mahamid, [2022](#)).

The last religion recognized in Indonesia is Confucianism. However, its beginnings have existed since the Dutch came to power in the Madiun Residency, especially after the Liberal Economic policy that brought the Chinese to Madiun to establish companies, as well as spread their beliefs (Mahamid, [2021](#)). Recorded in the Encyclopedia of the Dutch East Indies in 1918, there were as many as 5.960 Chinese scattered in the Madiun Residency area, with details of 2.000 people in Madiun, 850 people in Ngawi, 250 people in Magetan, 810 people in Ponorogo, and 250 people in

Pacitan (Graaff & Stibbe, 1918). The next step, to minimize the interaction between the Chinese population and the indigenous people, a "Chinatown Village" was established in Madiun, specifically accommodating ethnic Chinese, one of the heads of his village, called *Kapitan Cina*, was once his residence located to the south of Madiun City Square, in the form of a colonial-style house that is still maintained today (Putro & Hadiwasito, 2013).

Regarding the place of worship of Confucian people, Madiun has a fairly famous sacred building, namely Hwei Ing Kiong Temple, which is used to worship Confucian believers throughout the Madiun Residency. Since it was inaugurated in 1897, it is always crowded during Chinese New Year celebrations, such as the installation of lanterns that adorn every corner of the temple, then in the afternoon there is a performance of *Barongsai* and *Liong Dance*, which is in great demand by the entire Madiun community, without knowing their ethnicity or beliefs, is even more enthusiastic about enjoying the typical Chinese art treat (Afiyanto & Ayuningtyas, 2019).

## CONCLUSION

Madiun's case shows that administrative modernization plays an important role in producing changes in the socio-political sphere, while in the field of religion it can strengthen the ropes of friendship and maintain harmony between religious people, such as the Eid al-Fitr tradition which is not only Muslims celebrate, but adherents of other religions are also included, including several other religious traditions that involve the wider community, regardless of the beliefs they have, among them *Grebeg Suro*, *Slametan*, *Kenduren*, *Entas-entas*, *Barongsai*, and *Liong Dance*. Because in essence, all religions teach all their adherents to live in harmony with their fellow human beings, even though each individual has different beliefs.

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