



Muhammadiyah's Da'wa in Print Media in the Early 20th Century: A Case of Bintang Islam Magazine (1924-1927)

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Abstract

Purpose

This research aimed to provide an in-depth analysis of the Islamic outreach efforts of Muhammadiyah, one of Indonesia's largest Islamic organizations, as documented in Bintang Islam magazine during the years 1924-1927.

Method

The study employed a historical method comprising four stages: heuristic, verification, interpretation, and historiography. Primary sources included issues of Bintang Islam from 1924 to 1927, supported by relevant secondary sources such as books and journals. These sources were examined for authenticity, interpreted, and then synthesized into a historical reconstruction during the historiographical phase. The analysis integrates approaches from the sociology of mass communication and hermeneutics, emphasizing an analytical-descriptive framework.

Findings

The findings revealed that Bintang Islam, founded by Muhammadiyah, served as a representation of the Islamic press. Its establishment signified the continuity of modernism influenced by the Dutch East Indies and the impact of Islamic ideologies introduced by pilgrims, scholars, and the reformist ideas of Jamaluddin Al-Afghani, Muhammad Abduh, and Rashid Rida. Within Bintang Islam, Muhammadiyah figures articulated their da'wa thoughts, including efforts to counter Christianization, advocacy for renewal (tajdid), enjoining good and forbidding evil (amar ma'ruf nahi munkar), and excerpts on international da'wa activities.

Conclusion

Muhammadiyah's da'wah through Bintang Islam represented its response to widespread evangelization efforts in Java, addressing the decline in Muslim practices because of superstitions, innovations, and un-Islamic practices. It also served as a catalyst for enhancing religious, social, economic, and political awareness.

Keywords

Bintang Islam, Da'wa, Islamic Ideology, Islamic Press, Muhammadiyah.

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Abstrak

Tujuan

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memberikan analisis mendalam tentang dakwah salah satu organisasi Islam terbesar di Indonesia, yakni Muhammadiyah, yang tertuang di dalam majalah Bintang Islam pada tahun 1924-1927.

Metode

Penelitian ini menggunakan metode sejarah yang terdiri dari empat tahap, yakni heuristik, verifikasi, interpretasi, dan historiografi. Penulis mengumpulkan sumber-sumber primer berupa majalah Bintang Islam terbitan 1924-1927 dan didukung sumber-sumber sekunder berupa buku dan jurnal yang relevan. Sumber-sumber yang terkumpul kemudian diuji keabsahannya, lalu ditafsirkan, kemudian memulai untuk merekonstruksi sejarah dalam tahap historiografi. Untuk membantu analisisnya, peneliti menggunakan pendekatan sosiologi komunikasi massa dan hermeneutika, sehingga penelitian ini lebih bersifat analitis-deskriptif.

Temuan

Hasil dalam penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa majalah Bintang Islam yang didirikan oleh Muhammadiyah merupakan representasi dari pers Islam. Berdirinya Bintang Islam merupakan kontinuitas modernisme yang ditunjukkan oleh Hindia Belanda dan pengaruh ideologi Islam yang dibawa oleh para haji dan ulama dan pengaruh reformisme Jamludin Al-Afghani, Muhammad Abduh, dan Rasyid Ridha. Dalam Bintang Islam, para tokoh Muhammadiyah dapat menuangkan pemikiran dakwahnya, seperti dakwah mencegah Kristenisasi, semangat pembaharuan (tajdid), amar ma'ruf nahi munkar, dan kutipan dakwah luar negeri.

Kesimpulan

Dakwah Muhammadiyah dalam Bintang Islam merupakan sebuah respon Muhammadiyah terhadap upaya penginjilan yang sedang masif khususnya di Jawa, kemunduran umat Muslim akibat takhayul, bid'ah dan churafat, serta sebagai stimulus untuk meningkatkan kesadaran keagamaan, sosial, ekonomi, dan politik yang kuat.

Kata Kunci

Dakwah, Bintang Islam, Ideologi Islam, Muhammadiyah, Pers Islam.

المخلص

الهدف

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تقديم تحليل معمق لخطاب إحدى أكبر المنظمات الإسلامية في إندونيسيا، وهي جماعة المحمدية، التي نشرت في مجلة بينتانج إسلام في الفترة 1924-1927.

الطريقة

يعتمد هذا البحث على المنهج التاريخي الذي يتكون من أربع مراحل وهي: الاستدلال، والتحقق، والتفسير، والتأريخ. قام المؤلف بجمع المصادر الأولية في شكل مجلة بينتانج إسلام التي نشرت في الفترة من 1924 إلى 1927، ودعمها بالمصادر الثانوية في شكل الكتب والمجلات ذات الصلة. ويتم بعد ذلك اختبار المصادر المجمع للتأكد من صحتها، ثم تفسيرها، ثم البدء في إعادة بناء التاريخ في مرحلة التأريخ. وللمساعدة في التحليل استخدم الباحث المنهج السوسيولوجي في الاتصال الجماهيري والتأويل، حتى يكون البحث أكثر تحليلاً وصفاً.

النتائج

وتظهر نتائج هذه الدراسة أن مجلة بينتانج إسلام التي أسستها المحمدية تمثل الصحافة الإسلامية. كان إنشاء الإسلام في ماليزيا استمراراً للحدث التي أظهرتها جزر الهند الشرقية الهولندية وتأثير الأيديولوجية الإسلامية التي جلبها الحجاج والعلماء وتأثير الإصلاح الذي قام به جمال الدين الأفغاني ومحمد عبده ورشيد رضا. وفي الإسلام البنغالي، يمكن لشخصيات المحمدية التعبير عن أفكارهم التبشيرية، مثل التبشير لمنع التنصير، وروح التجديد، والأمر المعروف الذي لا يكره، والاقتباسات من التبشير الأجنبي.

الخلاصة

إن الدعوة المحمدية في بينتانج إسلام هي استجابة المحمدية للجهود التبشيرية الضخمة، وخاصة في جاوة، وانحدار المجتمع الإسلامي بسبب الخرافات والبدع والخرافات، وكحافز لزيادة الوعي الديني والاجتماعي والاقتصادي والسياسي القوي.

الكلمات الرئيسية

الدعوة؛ نجم الإسلام؛ الأيديولوجية الإسلامية؛ المحمدية؛ الصحافة الإسلامية

INTRODUCTION

In the early 20th century, there was a magazine originating from Muhammadiyah, *Bintang Islam*, which emphasized its content in the aspects of Islamic propagation, socio-culture, economics, and even politics. The existence of *Bintang Islam* magazine confirmed Muhammadiyah in responding to modernity to eradicate superstition, innovations, and *churafat* (*Takhayul*, *Bid'ah*, *Churafat* - TBC) in Muslim religious practices (Zubair, 2023, p. 135; Nashir, 2019a, p. 839). Through *Bintang Islam*, Muhammadiyah cadres can expand the thought of Islamic education, which is still stagnant, coupled with the massive flow of Christianization in the Javanese community (Shihab, 2016, p. 240). The emergence of print media such as *Bintang Islam* in the 1920s, made various Muhammadiyah cadres able to proselytize Islam, especially reformulating Islamic thought to avoid mystical elements, as well as penetrating the issue of spreading the gospel which was being massively carried out (Qodir, 2023, p. 78).

The content in *Bintang Islam* is practically influenced by the ideology of Islamic reformism, such as Jamaludin Al-Afghani, Rasyid Ridha, and Muhammad Abduh (Burhanudin, 2021, p. 185; Fauziah, 2020, p. 124), which the three figures shaped the characteristics of Muhammadiyah in preaching, especially Ahmad Dahlan, who performed modernism and Islamic reformism which were then passed down to various Muhammadiyah cadres and produced the concept of progressive Islam. Therefore, the content of Islamic *da'wah* in *Bintang Islam* is also *tajdid* (Islamic renewalism) (Latief, 2020, p. 294), so there is a maximum effort to find the formulation of Islamic law under the Qur'an and As-Sunnah (Jahroni, 2018, p. 3). Besides *tajdid*, the content of Islamic *da'wah* in *Bintang Islam* also discusses *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*, and records *da'wah* activities abroad.

Previous research on Muhammadiyah *da'wah* in magazines and newspapers can be found, for example, in the writing of Muhammad Yuanda Zara (2022) who examined *Adil* magazine, *Soeara Muhammadiyah*, and *Soeara 'Aisjijah*. In *Adil* magazine, Zara explained how Muhammadiyah citizens were phased in the Japanese invasion in 1941-1942 (Zara, 2022c). In *Soeara Muhammadiyah* magazine, Zara analyzed General Sudirman who became a symbol of patriotism in comic form (Zara, 2022a), while in *Soeara 'Aisjijah*, Zara explained how women were gradual in the Japanese invasion of 1941-1942 (Zara, 2021). In addition, researchers who focus on studying Muhammadiyah center on Muhammadiyah's modernism and reformism movements (Latief, 2020; Sila, 2020), leadership in Muhammadiyah (Kim, 2023), Muhammadiyah's political stance (Alhamdi, 2022; Nashir, 2019b), and Muhammadiyah's response to Pancasila (Bachtiar, 2020).

Based on the previous research above, the discourse that makes *Bintang Islam* magazine a comprehensive study has not been found in Indonesian Islamic historiography. Therefore, this research aims to fill the gap that has not been recorded in Indonesian history, namely Muhammadiyah's *da'wah* in *Bintang Islam* magazine. The author will provide an in-depth analysis of *Bintang Islam* magazine as a medium for proselytizing Muhammadiyah and to answer socio-cultural, political, and even economic issues among the Dutch East Indies community in 1924-1927. The reason the author makes *Bintang Islam* in 1924-1927 as the object of research, is because in that year *Bintang Islam* showed its presence as a form of Muhammadiyah modernism which also created a press to balance the narrative made by the Dutch East Indies in print media. *Bintang Islam* is also a magazine that adorns the beginning of the emergence of the Islamic press originating from Muhammadiyah and will later start the emergence of another Islamic press.

Through *Bintang Islam*, Muhammadiyah preached against the current of Christianization that was spreading, especially in Java. The massive mission of Christianization affected not only the religious aspects but also the socio-political aspects of Indonesian Muslim society, so that Muhammadiyah's preaching in *Bintang Islam* was also a forerunner for Muhammadiyah to respond to other aspects, such as the state aspect in the decades leading up to Indonesian independence. There was the central role of Fachrudin as the

chief editor of *Bintang Islam*, who was a direct student of Ahmad Dahlan, who had a very vocal role in preaching to stem evangelization efforts, convey renewal and invite to *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*.

METHOD

This research focused on examining the historical events related to Muhammadiyah's *da'wa* as documented in the *Bintang Islam* magazine from 1924 to 1927. To achieve this, the historical method was employed, involving four stages: data collection (heuristics), verification, interpretation, and historiography (Abdurrahman, 2019, p. 101; Garraghan, 1957, p. 475). In the heuristics stage, primary sources, such as issues of *Bintang Islam* published between 1924 and 1927, as well as contemporary newspapers, were collected from the National Library, and archives found in the Muhammadiyah central committee. Secondary sources included relevant books and journals. During the verification stage, the authenticity and reliability of the primary and secondary sources were assessed. In the interpretation stage, analysis and synthesis of the collected sources were done to derive meaning and insights. In the final stage, historiography, a historical reconstruction was created based on the verified and analyzed sources.

To provide a deeper analysis, the study used the sociology of mass communication and hermeneutics. According to Holz and Wright, the sociology of mass communication examines the relationship between social structures and communication media, exploring thoughts, attitudes, norms, and shared values (Holf, 1979, p. 194). The sociology of mass communication approach can be applied in analyzing Muhammadiyah as an Islamic social organization engaged in *da'wah*, where the value of *da'wah* can be seen, one of which is in the *Bintang Islam* magazine, which can influence the masses, in this case Muslims and the Dutch East Indies community. Meanwhile, according to Cushman and Ginev, the hermeneutic approach is closely related to texts that are considered able to speak (Cushman, 2022, p. 23; Ginev, 2018, p. 7), so that the author can take meaning from the content of the text available in *Bintang Islam*, especially the content regarding Islamic *da'wah*, prevention of Christianization, and *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*. By integrating these two approaches, the historical research transcended mere narrative description and evolved into a descriptive-analytical study.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Emergence of Islamic Press in Indonesia

The rise of the Islamic press in Indonesia is a continuation of the broader development of the press in the region. The origins of print media in the Dutch East Indies can be traced back to the 17th century when Jan Pieterzoon Coen, a governor-general, played a pivotal role in publishing the *Memorie der Nouvelles* (Soebagijo, 1974, p. 7), the first printed media in the Dutch East Indies. A century later, in 1744, the first newspaper titled *Bataviasche Nouvelles* was published (Tribuana, 1988, p. 15). This period marked the beginning of various other Dutch newspapers, such as *Bataviasche Courant* (1827), *Bataviasche Advertentieblad* (1827), *Nederlands Indiesche Handelsblad* (1829), *Soerabajasche Courant* (1831), and *Samarangsche Advertentieblad* (1845). The proliferation of these newspapers was driven by Dutch printing companies and Chinese Indonesian enterprises, alongside the emergence of an Indonesian elite who required communication platforms. As a result, the first indigenous press emerged in 1855 with the publication of *Bro-martani* in Surakarta. Following this, the first Malay-language native newspaper, *Soerat Kabar Bahasa Melajoe*, was published in Surabaya in 1856. These initial efforts were soon followed by other regional publications: *Soerat Chabar Betawi* in Batavia (1858), *Selompret Melajoe* in Semarang (1860), *Bintang Timoer* in Surabaya (1862), *Djoroe Martani* in Surakarta (1864), and *Medan Prijaji* in Bandung (1907) (Surjomihardjo, 2002, p. 77).

Following the general expansion of the press in Indonesia, the Islamic press emerged, started by Islamic leaders, who aimed to establish independent media for Muslims to communicate Islamic thoughts through the press (Tabroni, 2020, p. 34). This growth was significantly influenced by the efforts of pilgrims and Islamic scholars in the 19th century, who played a pivotal role in propagating Islamic ideology. Indonesian pilgrims and Islamic scholars, having studied in the intellectual centers of Mecca, Medina, and Cairo, were instrumental in the transmission of knowledge and the reform of Islam within Indonesian Muslim society. Upon their return, they disseminated Islamic teachings rooted in their studies abroad (Kersten, 2017, p. 84; Vlekke, 2018, p. 308). The rise of the Islamic press in Indonesia was further inspired by influential Islamic magazines such as *Al-Urwatul Wutsqa*, founded by Al-Afghani, and *Al-Manar*, established by Rashid Rida. These magazines were crucial in conveying Islamic reform ideas, including efforts to eradicate superstitions, innovations (*bid'ah*), and myth (TBC) in religious thought and practice, reaching Indonesian Muslims and sparking significant interest and action. *Al-Imam*, another key magazine, spread Muhammad Abduh's ideas throughout Southeast Asia. Inspired by *Al-Imam*, Kaum Muda Sumatera Barat launched *Al-Munir* in 1911 (Fogg, 2015, p. 310; Noer, 1997, p. 66).

Following the publication of *Al-Munir*, notable Islamic figures published their own magazines. For instance, Tjokroaminoto published *Al-Islam* in 1916, affiliated with the Sarekat Islam under his leadership. With help from Haji Abdullah Ahmad, *Al-Islam* featured content focusing on religious and political reform from an Islamic perspective (Tabroni, 2020, p. 14). Besides *Al-Islam*, Tjokroaminoto also launched *Bandera Islam* in 1923, serving as a platform for Sarekat Islam to voice its ideological foundations, rooted in Islam. Tjokroaminoto worked closely with Soerjopranoto in this endeavor. Subscription fees for *Bandera Islam* were set at f. 3,- per quarter within the Dutch East Indies and f. 4,- for subscribers outside the region. Advertising costs ranged from f. 0.15 to f. 2 per insertion (Rahzen, 2007, p. 195).

Besides Tjokroaminoto, another significant figure in the Islamic press was Agus Salim, who established the newspaper *Neratja*. The *Neratja* newspaper was first published in 1917 by the printing house N.V. Vitgeverss Mij Evolutie. Agus Salim was supported by Abdoel Moeis in its operation. Their effective collaboration resulted in *Neratja* featuring articles marked by a refined yet distinctly critical tone. The newspaper focused on education and Islamic politics. Regarding Islamic political themes, the modernist-reformist organization Persatuan Islam (Persis) established a magazine named *Pembela Islam*. *Pembela Islam* began its circulation in 1929 with Ahmad Hassan and Muhammad Natsir at the helm. Within its pages, Hassan and Natsir concentrated on critiquing and opposing nationalist-secular ideologies and Islamic political trends that they believed were undermining the faith of the Muslim community (Rahzen, 2007, p. 134; Tabroni, 2020, p. 15).

As an Islamic organization, Muhammadiyah contributed to the development of the Islamic press in Indonesia. In January 1915, Muhammadiyah launched the magazine *Soeara Muhammadiyah* in Yogyakarta. The editor-in-chief of this magazine was Ahmad Dahlan, supported by A.D. Hanie, a Kweekschool graduate and the owner of the KITA printing house in Yogyakarta. The editorial board of *Soeara Muhammadiyah* included Haji Hisjam, Haji Mochtar, Haji Djalal, Hadji Hadjid, Haji Siradj, and Haji Fachrudin. The primary aim of this magazine was to serve as a platform for preaching through mass media. *Soeara Muhammadiyah* was a 22-page magazine, printed in both Javanese and Malay. The annual subscription fee was set at f. 0.75, paid upfront (Zara, 2022, p. 309). Besides *Soeara Muhammadiyah*, Muhammadiyah members also managed the magazine *Medan Moeslimin*, which began its circulation on January 15, 1915. This magazine, led by Haji Misbach, was known for its revolutionary stance against colonialism. However Muslim community considered this magazine as having leftist (Marxist-Communist) ideologies (Hongxuan, 2018, p. 330; Triyanta, 2022, p. 34). Apart from *Soeara Muhammadiyah* and *Medan Moeslimin*, Muhammadiyah also published the magazine *Bintang Islam* in 1923, which by 1924 demonstrated significant content analysis in Islamic preaching

under the leadership of Haji Fachrudin.

Historically, the development of the Islamic press in Indonesia is rooted in two main factors. First, it stems from the development of printing media by the Dutch East Indies in the 17th century. This development was essential for the Dutch government and private enterprises to communicate with the population and serve as advertising platforms to enhance economic productivity in various regions, such as Surabaya, Surakarta, Semarang, Bandung, and Batavia. The second factor is the emergence of Islamic ideologies that were influenced by intellectual figures such as pilgrims and Islamic scholars, as well as the Islamic reform mission championed by Al-Afghani, Abduh, and Ridha. These pilgrims and Islamic scholars played a crucial role in transmitting Islamic ideologies and scholarship from the intellectual centers of Islam, namely *Haramayn* (Makkah and Madinah).

Beyond performing their religious duties during Hajj, they became role models and integrated into Indonesian Muslim society in the 19th century. Facing the strong currents of Islamic ideologies, the Dutch East Indies government dispatched a spy, such as Snouck Hurgronje, to monitor the movements of pilgrims and Islamic scholars (Burhanudin, 2014, p. 30; Laffan, 2015, p. 161). This underscores the significant impact of Islamic ideological transmission from Haramayn and Cairo in shaping the spirit of Muslim struggle against colonialism. This perspective challenges Western historians like Bernard Vlekke, George Mc Turnan Kahin, M.C. Ricklefs, and Robert Van Niel (Kahin, 2013, p. 37; Niel, 1984, p. 80; Ricklefs, 2008, p. 344; Vlekke, 2018, p. 356), who argued that Indonesia's national character formation began with the nationalist movements, overlooking the substantial role of pilgrims and Islamic scholars since the 19th century in shaping early 20th-century Muslim movements, including Muhammadiyah. Furthermore, the influence of magazines like *Al-Urwatul Wutsqa*, *Al-Manar*, and *Al-Imam* was profound among Muslim communities in the Dutch East Indies. The idea of Islamic renewal (*tajdid*) and expanded Islamic preaching inspired Indonesian Muslim figures in the early 20th century, including Muhammadiyah, which published *Bintang Islam* magazine.

Historicity and Role of Bintang Islam

In the early 20th century, the press played a significant role. It served as a means of communication, social critique, and opinion formation to influence the broader society. Islamic press, in particular, aimed to disseminate Islamic preaching urging adherence to Islamic ideology, expand the political struggle of Muslims, and address emerging socio-cultural issues (Tabroni, 2020, p. 34). Through the Islamic press, Islamic elites affiliated with organizations such as Muhammadiyah could articulate their ideas through print media and disseminate them to the general public. *Bintang Islam* magazine was among the significant contributors to the Islamic press in Indonesia during the third decade of the 20th century.

Bintang Islam magazine replaced *Tjahja Islam*, which was first published in 1922 in Solo. *Tjahja Islam* was started by M. Moechtar Boechary with the help of Muhammadiyah preachers' students. However, by the end of 1922, *Tjahja Islam* experienced a decline in subscribers because of its use of Javanese and Malay languages, which were less appealing to customers. Subscribers who did not understand Javanese felt disadvantaged because they could not comprehend the Javanese-language publications, and likewise for those who did not understand Malay. Therefore, in 1923, *Tjahja Islam* changed its name to *Bintang Islam* and began publishing in Malay (Mu'arif, 2010, p. 182).

Important figures behind the transition from *Tjahja Islam* to *Bintang Islam* included M.A Hamid, who served as the first chief editor of *Bintang Islam*. He was assisted by Fachrudin, a primary disciple of Ahmad Dahlan who also served as the secretary of Muhammadiyah from 1915 to 1921. Fachrudin played a significant role in the renaming process of *Tjahja Islam* to *Bintang Islam*. In early 1924, M.A Hamid moved to Batavia, and the position of chief editor subsequently passed to Fachrudin (*Selamat Berpisah*, 1924). Another important figure in the early days of *Bintang Islam* was Harsoloemekso, the first administrator based in Solo. In the administrative role, Harsoloemekso was assisted by M.

Ng Parikrangkoengan, a former editor of the newspaper *Darmo Kondo* in Solo in 1923 (*Terima Kasih*, 1924). In the position of editor-in-chief, a key figure was M. Moechtar Boechary, who served in the early days of *Bintang Islam*. M. Moechtar Boechary was assisted by H.M Syoedja, who became a member of the editorial board of *Bintang Islam*. M. Soemoedirdjo played an important role in contributing funds for the development of *Bintang Islam* (*Pengoroes Bintang Islam Inna Lillahi-Wainna Ilaihi-Rodji'o'en*, 1926).

The *Bintang Islam* magazine under the leadership of Fachrudin featured various articles that attracted attention, making it eagerly anticipated not only among Muslims in Java but also in other regions. It played a significant role in addressing various issues, such as politics, socio-religious matters, and economics. Regarding political issues, articles within *Bintang Islam* were easily found, particularly during the 1920s, covering emerging foreign political issues. In the Dutch East Indies, various ideologies such as Islam, nationalism, communism, socialism, and secularism emerged, which would later influence the course of politics in Indonesia. For example, there was an article titled *Kemadjoean Agama Islam dan Politiknja*. This article discusses the advancements that occurred in the West in terms of political-military aspects in weaponry. However, amidst the advancements of Western civilization, it ironically acted to eliminate humanitarian values, such as the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia in 1917, which resulted in millions of human lives being lost. The article also warns Muslims not to emulate the actions taken in the West. Despite the West being in a progressive world, Muslims must have the conviction to act under the commandments of Allah SWT through the guidance of Prophet Muhammad SAW (*Kemadjoean Agama Islam Dan Politiknja*, 1925).

Another example of a political issue in *Bintang Islam* is an article titled *Antara Timoer dan Barat*. Based on this article, there is a discussion between the Western and Eastern worlds. The Western world, under its political advancements, exerts superiority and colonizes Eastern territories such as Egypt, disturbing the Muslim community there. The Italian nation often disrupts Turkish territories and even attempts to eradicate the glory of Islam. In this context, Muslims in Turkey and Egypt feel deep-seated resentment; Islam appears to be undervalued by the Western nations, highlighting the perceived deficiencies of the Eastern nations (*Antara Timoer Dan Barat*, 1925).

Besides political issues, the *Bintang Islam* magazine also covers various socio-religious topics. For example, there is an article by Fachrudin titled *Kaperloean oentoek Bangsa Arab di Djawa* (Fachrudin, 1925c). In this article, Fachrudin discusses the lives of Arabs living in Java. He narrates the significant challenges faced by Arab-descended households. Their husbands work in countries, like Libya, Egypt, Palestine, Tunisia, and Turkey. Given this situation, what are their wives? The wives left behind by their husbands lead difficult lives in Java. These wives maintain Arab culture, which means they do not easily leave their homes without their husbands, adhering to the principle that leaving the house should be with their *mahram* (husband).

Another socio-religious issue is related to the history of Islam. B. Soedirah, a Mu-baligh from Muhammadiyah Branch Solo, wrote an article titled *Fatwa Coursus Islam*. (Soedirah, 1925) In this column, B. Soedirah emphasizes the importance for Muslims to reflect momentarily in order to choose leaders who embody the qualities of Prophet Muhammad. B. Soedirah gives the example of Caliph Umar ibn Khattab as a role model who emulated Prophet Muhammad in his courageous spirit. Umar ibn Khattab went to Syria to visit an old woman in a small house with a strong unpleasant odor. At that moment, Umar ibn Khattab felt sorrow because even as a caliph, there were still people among his subjects living in difficult conditions. The conclusion drawn in B. Soedirah's article is to engage in reflection. Besides Islamic history, socio-religious issues also include discussions on *fiqh* of fasting. An article titled *Poeasa dalam agama Islam* (*Poeasa Dalam Agama Islam*, 1925) is an example that discusses the *fiqh* of fasting. The content of the article invites Muslims to fast according to the commandment in the Quran, Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 183. Muslims are encouraged to train themselves to abstain from what nullifies the fast, such as eating, drinking, and sexual intercourse between husband and wife, all in or-

der to attain *taqwa*. Muslims are advised to understand the pillars of fasting, obligations during fasting, recommended acts during fasting, and prohibited acts while fasting, so that Muslims can observe fasting equipped with sufficient knowledge.

In the socio-religious issues of *Bintang Islam*, there are various intriguing articles, such as the one discussing Buddhism titled *Mythe Boedha: Dongeng Dewa* (Mythe Boedha: Dongeng Dewa, 1925). This article mentions Buddha was born to a mother named Maya but without a husband. Buddha then manifested as Maya's virgin daughter because he was considered a descendant of the divine being known as the Holy Spirit. When Buddha visited a place, the gods would protect him and promised to always praise Buddha, making his face glow. Alongside the writings about Buddhism, there are also discussions about Christianity in *Bintang Islam*. One of these is an article titled *Perdjamoean soetji Kali dan perdjamoean soetji geredja* (*Perdjamoean Sutji Kali Dan Perdjamoean Sutji Geredja*, 1925). This article mentions Jesus, who accepted being crucified to appease God's wrath. According to Christian believers, Jesus did not die; instead, his blood purifies humanity. These writings on Christianity in *Bintang Islam* are extensive because they reflect the extensive efforts of Christianization, particularly in the Javanese region.

Third is the economic issue. Various articles published by *Bintang Islam* also discuss economics. One such article, written by Haji Sjahdin titled *Mendjoeal obat-obat jan ke-loar dari Hindoestan. Sekarang tinggal di Singosaren Soerakarta* (Sjahdin, 1924), discusses various medicines for all kinds of ailments, such as headaches, eye problems, ear issues, dental care, throat ailments, chest problems, genital health, skin conditions, and back pain. Haji Sjahdin mentions that his medicines have received praise from patients across the Dutch East Indies, *Saja soedah banjak dapat soerat poedjian diseloeroeh tanah Hindia dari Ambtenaar-ambtenaar Melajoe dan Belanda jaitoe dari seloeroeh tanah Djawa, Soematra, Selebes, Borneo, Balik, Lombok, dan poelau-poelau sebelah timoer poen djoega dari Londos, Paris, Metsier dan Hindoestan*. Based on this article, it is clear that *Bintang Islam* magazine is one of the complex Islamic presses. The discussions in *Bintang Islam* are not only focused on Islamic issues but also publish various other topics, although the content of *da'wa* remains a primary analysis.

In its development, *Bintang Islam* magazine became a biweekly publication, issued on the 10th and 25th of each month in Yogyakarta. The magazine could reach 1,500 copies, each with 24 thick pages. The subscription rates for customers in the Dutch East Indies were f. 6 per year, f. 3.25 per half-year, and f. 1.75 per three months. For customers outside the Dutch East Indies, the rates were f. 7 per year, f. 4.25 per half-year, and f. 2.75 per three months. Initially based in Solo, on August 10, 1924, *Bintang Islam* began printing with the company Drukkerij P.P.P.B in Yogyakarta. A year later, Muhammad Hatta, still in Amsterdam, became a correspondent for *Bintang Islam*. By this time, *Bintang Islam* had expanded its international reach with marketing efforts extending to places like Penang, Johor, Perlak, and Singapore. Under Fachrudin's leadership, *Bintang Islam* experienced significant growth. From 1924 to 1926, the print run increased to 2,000 copies. However, by 1927, the print run decreased to 1,000 copies due to many subscribers who had not paid their subscription fees (Tabroni, 2020, p. 15).

Bintang Islam in 1924-1927: An Analysis of Muhammadiyah's Da'wa Message

During its publication from 1924 to 1927, *Bintang Islam* magazine, under the leadership of Fachrudin, a cadre of Muhammadiyah and direct disciple of Ahmad Dahlan, exhibited distinctive characteristics in each of its sections. Fachrudin's leadership was marked by his vocal stance against the spread of Christianity in Java and his mission of renewal (*tajdid*) within the Muslim community. As the chief editor, Fachrudin and other writers in *Bintang Islam* consistently published articles promoting *da'wa* to counteract missionary activities, advocating for renewal, *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*, and incorporating quotations from *da'wa* movements abroad.

First, the propagation of Christianity was strongly opposed by Fachrudin during his tenure as the leader of *Bintang Islam* magazine in the early 20th century Dutch East In-

dies. Christianization was initially spearheaded by Abraham Kuyper, a leader of the Anti-Revolutionary Christian Party who became Prime Minister of the Netherlands in 1901. During this period, many Dutch parliamentarians demanded restrictions on Islamic influence in Indonesia. Figures like Van Baylant cautioned the Dutch government to limit the spread of Islam and bolster Christian activities in the Dutch East Indies. W.H. Bogat furthered anti-Islam campaigns, attributing societal moral shortcomings to Islam (Shihab, 2016, p. 146). Idenburg, during his tenure as Minister of Colonies (1902-1909) and Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies (1909-1916), prioritized Christianization. His policies included the issuance of *Edaran Pasar* dan *Edaran Minggu* in 1910, promoting Sunday worship and reducing activities on Sundays among the Dutch East Indies populace. The missionary activities in Java were notably carried out by three organizations: *het Nederlandsch Zendeling Genootschap* (NZG), *Nederlandsch Gereformeerde Zendings Vereniging* (NGZV), and *Doopsgezinde Zendings Vereniging* (DZV) (Niel, 1984, p. 128). These organizations intensified Christianization efforts, especially in Java. In response, Muhammadiyah emerged as a staunch opponent of Christian missionary activities in the Dutch East Indies during the early 20th century (Aritonang, 2016, p. 167). Muhammadiyah, through platforms like *Bintang Islam* magazine under Fachrudin's editorship, vigorously opposed the structured and massive Christianization missions orchestrated by the Dutch government. Fachrudin was a prominent figure and activist known for his vocal and confrontational stance against these efforts, earning him a reputation as a radical opponent of Christianization efforts in the region.

The article *Politik Vereeniging Baroe* found in *Bintang Islam* discusses the establishment of the Catholic Political Union of Java (*Perserikatan Politik Katolik Djawa, PPKD*) in Muntilan. Initially, PPKD aimed to cultivate a social-cultural identity that combined Christianity with Javanese originality. However, its primary objective was to ensure representation of Javanese Catholics in the Volksraad (People's Council). Another article titled *Vergadering Pandita Malang* details the establishment of Lagerschool Christen Protestan in Malang. This school program aimed to send indigenous children to Egypt to study Arabic language and Islam under Protestant religious teacher Suwemer, with the ultimate goal of instilling resistance to Islam in Java. Additionally, the article *Djoel Boekoe Agama Terganggoe* (Fachrudin, 1925a) explains how the Dutch East Indies government unilaterally banned Islamic preaching in public spaces, specifically through writing and selling books to the public. Conversely, Christian-themed books were freely sold in markets, streets, and corners of cities like Yogyakarta by the Dutch government.

In response to the extensive Christian missionary efforts in Java, Fachrudin articulated various preaching messages in *Bintang Islam*, including an article titled *Takoet Bajangan Sendiri*. Through this article, Fachrudin aimed for a widespread Islamic preaching effort. Initially, Fachrudin was affiliated with an organization called Oemmat Islam Djokja, which was accused of being an enemy of Christianity. However, Fachrudin's goal within this organization was for Muslims to collaborate in strengthening their faith, participating in gatherings at mosques, and spreading Islam in various places of worship (*langgar*). This effort aimed to maintain the steadfastness of believers and protect them from the extensive missionary activities conducted by the Dutch East Indies government (Fachrudin, 1925e).

In another article, Fachrudin wrote a column titled *Perarakan Oemmat Islam jang terbesar karena memoeliakan hari Mi'radj K.N. Moehammad s.a.w. di Djokja*. Based on this article, it is clear that Fachrudin, along with the Muslim community, organized the celebration of the birth of Prophet Muhammad, attended by 25,000 Muslims who paraded from Alun-alun Selatan to Alun-alun Utara. The purpose of this event was to revive the Islamic spirit among Muslims, reaffirm their faith in the Shahada, and show the quantitative solidarity of Muslims amidst the vigorous Christianization efforts by Christian missionaries (Fachrudin, 1925d).

Fachrudin also authored various articles in *Bintang Islam* aimed at preventing further Christianization, such as *Kabar Penting Bagi Oemmat Islam di Seloeroeh Hindia*,

(Fachrudin, 1926a), *Kabenaran Itoe Ta'bolih Terhalang*, (Fachrudin, 1926b) and *Hal Qur'an Misael Bertanjak* (Fachrudin, 1925b). These articles urged Muslims to stand firm and unite in the face of the Dutch East Indies government's favoritism towards the spread of Christianity. Besides Fachrudin, several other figures contributed to *Bintang Islam*, including Moechajat with his article *Pastoor Djawa Bergerak*, (Moechajat, 1926), S. Tjitrosoebono with *Ideaal-Kita*, (Tjitrosoebono, 1926) and M. Charry with *Agama Islam dengan Bijbel* (Charry, 1924). Their writings similarly reflected thoughts and positions aligned with Fachrudin's. Moechajat's article highlighted how pastors in Christianity were directly involved in extensive missionary activities. S. Tjitrosoebono emphasized that the ideal for Muslims is to preserve their faith and not choose leaders from Christianity. Meanwhile, M. Charry rejected the equivalence between the Quran and the Bible.

Second is preaching as renewal (*tajdid*). Preaching through magazines has been an effective and impactful method for Muslims to convey messages about the truth of Islam. Muhammadiyah, driven by its spirit of renewal, used *Bintang Islam* as a platform to voice its ideas of renewal to Muslims in the Dutch East Indies. One article in *Bintang Islam* written by S. Siswosoedarma is titled *Igama Islam*. Through this article, S. Siswosoedarma explained that the religious community, Muslims in the Dutch East Indies, was experiencing a phase of decline. This was because of the prevalence of syncretic religious practices among Muslims in the Dutch East Indies, especially in Java. S. Siswosoedarma stated that Muslims in Java did not adhere to their religious obligations, expanded their religious practices, and were weak in faith and economic matters. These factors contributed to the lack of progress among Muslims in the Dutch East Indies (S. Siswosoedarma, 1924).

The next renewal preaching was an article titled *Masdjid Perempoean*. Below is the excerpt:

Baik di pihak lelaki ataoepoen perempoean kemadjoean Agama Islam di Sibolga (Tapanuli), tampaknja semangkin lama adalah dimoeka sekali. Beberapa dari pada boekti-boektinja ialah orang-orang jang asalnja beragama lain seperti Serani, banjak jang soedah masoek Islam dan pada beberapa boelan jang telah laloe disini soedah didirikan orang seboeah mesdjid jang semata-mata boeat perempoean-perempoean sadja. Berdirinja soeraoe itoe banjak sekali orang jang sama memoedji oesaha pengoesannja. Pengharapan jang bermoela ketika hendak mendirikannja njata tidak sia-sia, sebab selaloe ramai dikoendjoengi pihak perempoean-perempoean sebak lelaki mengoendjoengi soeranunja (Mesdjid Perempoean, 1925).

The article above explains the equal rights for men and women in performing worship. The author asserts that awareness of gender equality in accessing worship in mosques is emerging in regions like Tapanuli and Padang Sidempuan, where mosques exclusively for women are being built. This inclusion of information shows the renewal preaching (*tajdid*) conducted by Muhammadiyah, where mosques were traditionally seen as male-dominated spaces, but Muslim communities are increasingly recognizing that women also have the right to have mosques built for them and to worship within them (*Mesdjid Perempoean*, 1925).

Mohammad Hosni, during the Muhammadiyah's annual congress in Surabaya, also expressed his views on renewal preaching, as outlined in *Bintang Islam* in an article titled Islamic Attitudes towards All Religions in *Moeka Boemi* and the Center of Unity of All Religions (Hoesni, 1926). According to Hoesni, religion should serve as a unifying force for humanity. Islam is viewed as a religion that brings salvation in both the worldly and afterlife realms. Hoesni recognized Islam was experiencing decline because of the spread of superstition, innovation, and idolatry. Pressure from the Dutch East Indies government made it challenging for Islam to thrive. Therefore, Islam was needing renewal (*tajdid*) to purify its essence and strengthen its religious foundations. Fachrudin also wrote about his renewal preaching (*tajdid*). In the 1927 edition, there was an article titled *Congres Moehammadiyah ke-16* (Fachrudin, 1927). In this article, Fachrudin delivered a speech

emphasizing the need for educational reform. He advocated for the revitalization of Islamic education to advance Islamic education in the Dutch East Indies. Fachrudin further stated that since its inception, Muhammadiyah had contributed to the field of education by establishing an Islamic school in 1917 named Hoogere Moehammadijah School, which later in 1918 was renamed Qismoel Argo. Then, in 1920, the school underwent another name change to Kweekschool Islam.

Third, *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*. As an Islamic organization, Muhammadiyah consistently preached about enjoining what is right and forbidding what is mistaken in all aspects of life, using rational thinking for the extensive propagation of Islam in the Dutch East Indies. One of the preaching related to *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* in *Bintang Islam* can be found in an article entitled *Agama Islam di tanah Pasoendan*. Below is the excerpt:

Dalem sebegini lamanja toean M.R selidiki jang mendjadiken pokok adalah tentang pelatjoeran perempoean dan achirnja ija poenja conclusie agama Islam musti diloeaskan di tanah Pasoendan, karena agama inilah jang berazas dan bisa menoendjoekkan kesopanan Soenda goena memperbaiki keboesoekan jang ia telah selidiki. Sedikitlah saja ada merasa menjesal membatja dari pemandangan jang menjeboetkan bahwa perempoean dan laki-laki pada oemoemnja berpakean model Eropa (Hardjowijoto, 1926).

Through this article, the author explains the societal conditions in the land of Pasundan where people often followed the European lifestyle. There had been widespread prostitution in Pasundan. Therefore, it was clear that there is a need for efforts in enjoining *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* by making Islam the guiding principle of life in Pasundan. Islam, as a religion based on laws, can transform the morals of humans who initially exhibit bad behavior into individuals with noble character (*akhlaqul karimah*).

Amar Ma'ruf nahi munkar can also found in an article titled *Perselisihan Faham Djan-gan Menjebabkan Permoesoehan*. According to the article, when differences in jurisprudential matters (*furu'*) arise among Islamic schools of thought, tolerance should be practiced to maintain the internal unity of the Muslim community (*Perselisihan Faham Djan-gan Menjebabkan Permoesoehan*, 1926). Unfortunately, what often occurs is mutual excommunication, insults, and slander among fellow Muslims because of differing opinions and religious views. In response, scholars advocate for *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* by presenting evidence-based arguments to support their viewpoints without resorting to denigration of others. Similarly, the articles titled *Pengadjaran Agama Islam* (*Pengadjaran Agama Islam*, 1927), *Dasar Agama Islam* (*Dasar Agama Islam*, 1927), and *Poeasa Dalam Agama Islam* (*Poeasa Dalam Agama Islam*, 1925) echo the call for *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*. They urged all Muslims to restrain their desires, increase prayers upon Prophet Muhammad, adhere strictly to Allah's teachings, and observe fasting in accordance with the tradition of previous prophets.

Fourthly, concerning Islamic da'wa work abroad. In accordance with its slogan, *pengetahoean agama Islam dan pekabaran Islam dari dalam dan loear negeri kita jang berhoeboengan dengan keislaman* (*Bintang Islam*, 1924), *Bintang Islam* also featured news about Islamic missionary activities overseas. This serves to highlight the impact of Islamic preaching in various regions, observing the phenomenon of increasing conversions to Islam and the establishment of more mosques abroad. The discussion on Islamic missionary efforts abroad can be found in *Bintang Islam's* article titled *Orang Kristen, Brahma, Boedha masoek Islam: Memeloek Agama Allah*. Below is a quote from the article:

Di kota Amrirsat, Brit, Indie pada hari Senen tanggal 25 Februari 1924 Moesammat Hernamoen, seorang djanda bangsa Hindoe telah masoek dengan soekanja sendiri kepada agama Islam di hadapan Maulana Salamudin, dan ia telah diberi nama Maharoen Nisa. Ampir saben hari bangsa Brahma, Boedha dan Christen ada jang masoek memeloek agama Islam dengan soeka sendiri – ertinja tida kerana diboedjoek, dipaksa ataoepoen

karena perempoean, tapi sebab mempeladjari dan dapat taoe kebenaran Islam sebagai agama bagi sekalian manoesia dan tentang persatoean Toeh-an dalam Islam (Orang Kristen, Brahma, Boedha Masoek Islam: Memeloek Agama Allah, 1924).

The above article clearly reports that Islamic missionary work abroad has demonstrated success with numerous individuals, previously Hindu, Buddhist, and Christian, converting to Islam. Moreover, these converts willingly embraced Islam based on their own faith convictions, without coercion. Similarly, as detailed in the article titled *Tjahja Allah bertambah terang (550.000 manoesia masoek Islam) (Tjahja Allah Bertambah Terang (550-000 Manoesia Masoek Islam, 1926)*, a Hindu king from Gujarat converted to Islam, adopting the name Nasarullah Chan. Upon his conversion, he informed his people, resulting in 550,000 individuals embracing Islam immediately. Such news underscores the importance of Islamic da'wa efforts abroad for the comprehensive spread of Islam.

Further instances of Islamic da'wa abroad can be found in the article *Mesdjid Islam di London*. According to the article, Muslims in London expressed the need for adequate places of worship due to their significant population. This was realized with the construction of mosques, allowing thousands of Muslims in Britain to worship comfortably (*Mesdjid Islam Di Londen, 1925*). Similar articles on Islamic da'wa work abroad include *Islam di Djerman (Islam Di Djerman, 1925)*, *Kaoem Islam Australia (Kaoem Islam Australia, 1926)*, and *Gerakan Islam di Eropa: Tjatetan Persatoean dari Gelanggang Agama (Loebis, 1927)*. These articles illustrated how Islam has rapidly grown in Germany and Australia, and how Muslims in Europe have successfully integrated with other communities, establishing mosques and fostering solidarity among fellow Muslims. Most importantly, Muslims in foreign countries receive proper and safe treatment amidst non-Muslim majorities, necessitating continuous efforts to propagate Islam as a mercy to all mankind.

This is the essence of Muhammadiyah's mission within *Bintang Islam*. As an Islamic organization, Muhammadiyah played a significant role in the development of the Muslim community in the Dutch East Indies in the early 20th century. Notably, Muhammadiyah's Islamic da'wa in *Bintang Islam* had its distinct characteristics, particularly under the editorship of Fachrudin. Under Fachrudin's leadership, *Bintang Islam* focused on its mission to counteract Christian missionary efforts supported by the Dutch colonial government. This meant that Muhammadiyah's da'wa in *Bintang Islam* was a response to the Dutch East Indies' evangelization efforts. Muhammadiyah's efforts were also directed towards reform (*tajdid*) and *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*. According to various Muhammadiyah cadres, the Muslim community in the Dutch East Indies was experiencing a decline because of superstitions, innovations, and myths. Therefore, there was a pressing need for intellectual and behavioral renewal within religious practices. International Islamic preaching was also crucial for *Bintang Islam*, as it aimed to inform readers about the success of Islam's spread, including the increasing number of converts and the establishment of mosques, particularly in Europe where the majority adhered to Christianity.

CONCLUSION

Based on the explanation above, the conclusions in this study are as follows. First, as an Islamic organization, Muhammadiyah has a mission to preach to all levels of society in the Dutch East Indies, one of which is implemented in print media, namely *Bintang Islam*. The emergence of *Bintang Islam* is a continuity of the existence of print media published by the Dutch East Indies government, and is inseparable from the birth of Islamic ideology brought by hajj and ulama in playing the role of scientific transmission from Mecca and Cairo. In addition, the emergence of Islamic reformism through Al-Afghani, Abduh, and Ridha, where the three figures had published their writings in Al-Urwatul Wutsqa, Al-Manar, and Al-Imam, so that this had an impact on the establishment of the Islamic press in the Dutch East Indies, including *Bintang Islam* which was founded by Muhammadiyah.

Second, the rubrics in *Bintang Islam* magazine discuss political, socio-religious, and economic issues as an illustration that Muhammadiyah's da'wah clearly does not only discuss ritual guidance in Islam. In this case, through *Bintang Islam*, Muhammadiyah played a major role in building socio-political awareness, for example in *Bintang Islam's* content about the progress of an Islamic civilization with Islamic political thought that also develops within Muslims. On the other hand, the content about Haji Sjahdin who sold his medicine production in *Bintang Islam*.

Third, the da'wah of Muhammadiyah in *Bintang Islam*, especially when under the leadership of Fachrudin in 1924-1927, the da'wah content in the magazine was also a response to Christianization, especially in Java, which was being massively carried out by Christian missionaries assisted by the Dutch East Indies government. In addition, da'wah in *Bintang Islam* also discusses renewal (tajdid) and amar ma'ruf nahi munkar, because various Muhammadiyah cadres see that Muslims in the Dutch East Indies have regressed in thinking and religious practices that tend to superstition, innovations, and churafat (TBC). Muhammadiyah's da'wah in *Bintang Islam* also recorded foreign aspects, such as the number of foreigners who embraced Islam, and the massive construction of mosques in Europe. However, in this research, the author has challenges in accessing primary sources, namely *Bintang Islam* magazine in the period 1924-1927 which has been compiled into a digital catalog and limited to physical magazines. For future research, the researcher recommends studying *Bintang Islam* in the same period, but in a different discussion, for example, about Islamic belief (*akidah*) or theology contained in *Bintang Islam*. In fact, future researchers can study *Bintang Islam* after the leadership of H. Fachrudin as a continuation of *Bintang Islam* which both fought Christianization in Java as comprehensive research.

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