



**DISCOVERING THE LEGACY OF MANDAILING  
ULAMA: Education, Intellectuals, and Politics in North  
Sumatra in the Early 20th Century**

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**Abstract:** This study examines the role of Mandailing ulama in education, intellectuals, and politics in the early 20th century. Ulama plays a critical role in safeguarding the morality of Muslim society (umma). Drawing upon the historical approach, it employed Kuntowijoyo model of writing history stages and Anthony Giddens' structuration theory to analyze the problems that this study intends to answer. This study argues that the social structure surrounding the Mandailing ulama enabled them to address religious and other sociocultural issues. This study also unveiled that the Mandailing ulama in the early 20th century mobilized the organizations, such as Al Washliyah (1930), Al-Ittihadiyah (1935), and Nahdlatul Ulama (1918) to promote the education of the indigenous people, fortify the Sunni school of thought from the heretical and influence of Dutch colonial government. It was manifested by supporting only two Islamic political parties: the Masjumi Party and the Nahdlatul Ulama Party. This suggests that Ulama were not only religious scholars who acquired knowledge of Islamic norms and disseminated them through religious and educational institutions, such as *madrassa* and *pesantren*, but also active agents in socio-political transformation within the Muslim community.

**Keywords:** ulama, Mandailing, education, intellectual, politic

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<sup>1</sup> In the Sunni tradition, ulama are guardians, transmitters, and interpreters of religious sciences, especially Islamic doctrine and law. See Ian Richard Netton, *A Popular Dictionary of Islam* (London: Routledge, 1997); R.C Repp, "Ulamâ," in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 2000).

## Introduction

THIS STUDY examines the roles played by Mandailing ulama<sup>2</sup> in introducing civilization in Nusantara, often referred to as a peripheral Islamic area, in the early 20th century. "Mandailing Ulama" refers to a group of Muslim religious scholars from the Mandailing ethnicity, an ethnic group originating from the Tapanuli area (currently part of North Sumatra Province). They usually use clans after their names, such as the Lubis, Nasution, Daulay, Rangkuti, Batubara, Parinduri, and Matondang. Azyumardi Azra stated that some orientalist or Islamists divided the Muslim world according to a geographical map into two categories, namely central and peripheral Islam. Central Islam means the existence of this religion in the Middle East or Arabia. Conversely, peripheral Islam is practiced in neighboring countries except for Turkey and Persia. This religion in Arabia is perceived as pure Islam, and even the Arabs are regarded as ideal Muslims. Meanwhile, the peripheral is viewed as impure and unauthentic.<sup>3</sup> In this case, Indonesian Malay is categorized as a peripheral Islamic region.

Bustamam-Ahmad and Jory<sup>4</sup> State that the ulama in Southeast Asia, regarded as a peripheral Islamic area, has contributed to the development of Islamic thought since the Aceh sultanate era; meanwhile, those in the Middle East also participated in its interpretations. It indeed strengthens Azra's thesis<sup>5</sup> that Islam has been equally entrenched in two areas that are frequently compared, namely Arabia and Southeast Asia. In both regions, Islamic doctrines are related to local customs and traditions. Several preliminary studies have been carried out on the

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<sup>3</sup> Azyumardi Azra, *Jejak-Jejak Jaringan Kaum Muslim: Dari Australia Hingga Timur Tengah* (Jakarta: Hikmah, 2007), 31-33.

<sup>4</sup> Kamaruzzaman Bustamam-Ahmad and Patrick Jory, *Islamic Thought in Southeast Asia: New Interpretations and Movements* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 2013).

<sup>5</sup> Azra, *Jejak-Jejak Jaringan*, 33.

contribution of ulama in the central (Middle East) and peripheral Islamic world, especially in Indonesia.<sup>6</sup>

The Mandailing ulama, since the early 20th century, has expanded their influences beyond their home regions, therefore worth discussing. Originally from North Sumatra, the Mandailing ulama now live in neighboring areas of North Sumatra and overseas, mainly in Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam. Abbas Pulungan, Erawadi,<sup>7</sup> Mhd. Syahnan, et al.,<sup>8</sup> and Al Rasyidin<sup>9</sup> have researched various aspects of the ulama in the region, and this present study aims to enlarge those previous studies.

Methodologically, this study is based on library research, although field data also enrich this study. The historical approach was applied in this study. This study employs Kuntowijoyo's perspective<sup>10</sup> about the five stages of historical research: topic selection, source collection, verification (historical criticism, source validity), interpretation: analysis and synthesis, and writing. Meanwhile, Anthony Giddens's structuration theory was applied to explain the issue of this study.<sup>11</sup>

All written documents about the Mandailing ulama serve as the primary data, especially their intellectual heritage, such as manuscripts, books, and articles. This study interviewed those familiar with the Mandailing ulama to strengthen the archives and documents. It also requires observing the heritage of the

<sup>6</sup> Nina Nurmila, "He Indonesian Muslim Feminist Reinterpretation," in *Slam in Indonesia: Contrasting Images and Interpretations*, ed. Jajat Burhanuddin and Kees van Dijk, 2013.

<sup>7</sup> Erawadi Erawadi, "Jaringan Keilmuan Antara Mandailing Ulama-Angkola Dan Ulama Semenanjung Melayu," in *Prosiding Nadwah Ulama Nusantara (NUN)VI: Ulama Dan Umara Berpisah Tiada* (Selangor: Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 2015).

<sup>8</sup> Mhd. Syahnan, Asrul Asrul, and Ja'far Ja'far, "Intellectual Network of Mandailing and Haramayn Muslim Scholars in the Mid-19th and Early 20th Century," *TEOSOFI: Jurnal Tasawuf dan Pemikiran Islam* 9, no. 2 (2019).

<sup>9</sup> Al Rasyidin, "Islamic Organizations in North Sumatra: The Politics of Initial Establishment and Later Development," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 10, no. 1 (2016): 63–88.

<sup>10</sup> Kuntowijoyo, *Pengantar Ilmu Sejarah* (Medan: Tiara Wacana, 2013).

<sup>11</sup> See, Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

Mandailing ulama. Furthermore, this study also collected data through observations of the ulamas' tombs and the educational institutions they built.

### **Socio-Political Setting of Muslims in the Early 20th Century**

Steenbrink stated that at the beginning of the 20th century, the condition of Muslims in Indonesia changed due to four main factors.<sup>12</sup> The first factor was the national resistance against the Dutch colonial rulers. The second factor was the strong effort from Muslims to strengthen their organization in the socio-economic field to benefit individuals and the public interest. The third factor was a desire to return to the Qur'an and hadith. Fourth, there was a renewal in the field of Islamic education. The four factors are interrelated and ultimately encourage socio-political change in Indonesia.

In the context of the first factor, the Indonesian people, until the beginning of the 20th century, were still in a condition of being colonized until finally, on August 17, 1945, they achieved independence. The presence of the Dutch and Japan in Indonesia certainly affected the condition of Muslims in Indonesia in various aspects of life. Various resistance movements against the Dutch government appeared in different regions of the archipelago, and the Dutch were relatively able to hinder the pace of the Indonesian resistance movement. The Dutch policy towards Islamic political movements in Indonesia, as offered by Snouck Hurgronje was a neutral religious policy. Theoretically, the Dutch did not interfere with indigenous religions even though, in practice, they were very wary of people going on Hajj (pilgrims). In addition, the Dutch also supported the Christianization movement in Indonesia. The association's political policies aimed to distance Islamic culture from Indonesian. Indigenous people should be encouraged to follow Dutch culture and a political policy of supervision in which various Pan-Islamic movements in Indonesia must be rejected.<sup>13</sup> The Dutch stated that the Japanese also issued a policy towards

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<sup>12</sup> Karel A. Steenbrink, *Pesantren Madrasah Sekolah: Pendidikan Islam Dalam Kurun Modern* (Jakarta: Dharma Aksara Perkasa, 1986).

<sup>13</sup> Aqib Suminto, *Politik Islam Hindia Belanda* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1985).

Islam in Indonesia. They supported the establishment of Islamic groups and secular groups, which became political supports. On the other hand, the Dutch established the Priyais (a Javanese word originally denoting the descendants of the governors) as their political support. Nationalist leaders were officially recognized and even served as officials in the Japanese military government and provided something new for the Islamic group to be given positions in the socio-religious and socio-political fields.<sup>14</sup> Various national resistance movements gradually succeeded in passing the penetration of the Dutch and Japanese in Indonesia. Even after independence, the resistance of Muslims against the Dutch efforts to re-colonize Indonesia was unavoidable.

In the context of the second factor, at the beginning of the 20th century, Muslims in Indonesia established and strengthened the organizations they founded, both socio-religious organizations and socio-political organizations. The established socio-religious organizations were Jami'at Khair, Persyarikatan Ulama, Al-Irsyad, Muhammadiyah, Nahdlatul Ulama, and Persatuan Islam. In comparison, the political organizations founded by Muslims were the Indonesian Muslim Association (Permi), Sarekat Islam, and the Indonesian Islamic Party. In the next era, many Islamic organizations established a federation called the Indonesian A'la Islamic Council (MIAI) in 1937.<sup>15</sup> Until the beginning of independence, these Islamic organizations continued to strengthen their charities and increase their constituents. It all ultimately came down to the ability of Muslims to seize and even defend Indonesia's independence.

In the context of the third factor, there was a continuous movement back to the Qur'an and hadith. This movement then brought up an intellectual discourse within the Muslim community. Deliar Noer revealed that this brought up differences and conflicts of understanding in Indonesia. The group that wanted to return to the guidance of the Qur'an and hadith was

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<sup>14</sup> Harry J. Benda, *Bulan Sabit Dan Matahari Terbit: Islam Indonesia Pada Masa Pendudukan Jepang* (Jakarta: Pustaka Jaya, 1980).

<sup>15</sup> Deliar Noer, *Gerakan Moderen Islam Di Indonesia 1900-1942* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1980).

called the *Kaum Muda* (young generation), while those who continued to hold on to traditional thoughts and actions were called the *Kaum Tua* (old Generations). The organisations considered part of the *Kaum Muda* (young generation) are Muhammadiyah and Persis. At the same time, Nahdlatul Ulama, Al Washliyah, Al-Ittihadiyah, and Perti were parts of the *Kaum Tua* (old generation). These two parties initially disagreed with each other. Still, they later realized the urgency of the unity of the Ummah for the advancement of Islam and Muslims who had been lagged behind.

In the context of the fourth factor, Islamic organizations established at the beginning of the 20th century continued to strengthen the position of Muslims by improving the condition of their educational institutions. In the early 20th century, Muslims realized they could not compete with the Dutch in traditional ways. They began to realize that the Netherlands could be competed with by strengthening the field of science, expanding the area of influence, and using new methods introduced by the Dutch and Christian missions in Indonesia. Minangkabau was the first region to successfully reform the field of education. Later, this reformation succeeded in influencing other areas, including North Sumatra.<sup>16</sup> These findings indicate that at the beginning of the 20th century, the socio-political conditions of Muslims were marked by the awareness of Muslims in Indonesia to unite against the Dutch and Japanese colonialists. Also, The nation desired to become firm, so they later established religious organizations and politics, which finally succeeded in bringing up reformation in Indonesia, especially in education and religion.

### **The Gait of the Mandailing Ulama in the Educational Field**

Azra<sup>17</sup> stated that the Nusantaraulama built a network with those in the Middle East, especially Haramain. It was perceived as the center of Islamic intellectuals due to its role in contextualizing reform ideas through its teachings and writings. Like the

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 37.

<sup>17</sup> Azyumardi Azra, *Malam Seribu Bulan: Renungan-Renungan 30 Hari Ramadan* (Jakarta: Erlangga, 2005).

Nusantara ulama, they delivered religious teachings and wrote essays in the context of introducing Islamic knowledge obtained from Haramain according to the paradigm of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah, especially the Ash'ariyah and Shāfi'iyah schools. Mandailing ulama also introduced the ideas received from this region to North and East Sumatra, especially in Tapanuli, from the mid-19th to the 20th centuries. That is why the Sunni institute is deeply rooted in Tapanuli and East Sumatra Residencies which are now part of the North Sumatra Province.

The acquired data shows that the Mandailing ulama delivered formal religious teachings by establishing Islamic educational institutions, including pesantren and madrasa. These two schools taught Islamic sciences based on the yellow book in the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah paradigm, Ash'ariyah, and Shāfi'iyah. Furthermore, some of them produced written works in Arabic, Arabic Malay, and Indonesian. These were published by publishers in their respective regions and abroad. The educational institutions and written works have indeed become part of the Mandailing ulama treasures.

### *Religious Recitations in Tapanuli*

In the early 20th century, Mandailing ulama delivered religious teachings to Muslims in the region where they settled. Before 1900, several students traveled to Mecca to study under the tutelage of an authoritative ulama. After many years, the majority decided not to stay longer in Haramain. Religious da'wah was perceived as the reason they returned to their hometown in remote areas, far from their academic nuances. However, when they wanted to seek fame and fortune, they traveled to Haramain, although they preferred to build a Muslim community in the Tapanuli Residency. Perhaps only one student named Sheikh 'Abd al-Qādir bin Shābir al-Mandīlī decided to stay in Mecca. The rest of the students returned to Tapanuli and delivered formal religious teachings in their homeland.

Sheikh 'Abd al-Qādir bin Shābir al-Mandīlī was perhaps the only ulama and teacher in Mecca. This shows that as an immigrant from Mandailing, Shābir al-Mandīlī managed to attract the interest

of the Muslim intellectual community and became an internationally recognized Mandailing ulama. One of his works is entitled *Fath al-Rahmān fi 'Aqā'id al-Īmān*, a work in the field of Sunni creed on the nature of Arabic and Malay script.<sup>18</sup> Erawadi<sup>19</sup> stated that Sheikh 'Abd al-Qādir bin Shābir al-Mandīlī was the "head teacher" that led Madrasa Dār al-'Ulūm. This madrasa was founded by the Nusantara ulama, that resided in Mecca, and is an institution that teaches the paradigm of Shāfi'i school. Its library had various collections of books. This is why the madrasa alumnus is the successor of the Shāfi'iyah tradition in Nusantara.

Sheikh 'Abd al-Qādir bin Shābir al-Mandīlī's students spread throughout Malay, especially Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Some of the outstanding ones are believed to be teachers at this Madrasa, including Sheikh Ali Hasan Ahmad Ad-Dary. Mandailing ulama in Tapanuli were also Sheikh 'Abd al-Qādir bin Shābir al-Mandīlī's students, such as Sheikh Ahmad Zein (1846 to 1950), Sheikh Mustafa Husein (1886 to 1955), Sheikh Abdul Halim Khathib, Sheikh Syamsuddin bin Abdurrahim al-Mandili (1912 to 1991), Sheikh Ja'far Abdul Wahab, Sheikh Abdul Wahab Lubis (1914 to 1991), Sheikh Muhammad Solih (1912 to 2002), Sheikh Zainuddin (1917 to 2005), and Sheikh Muktar Harahap (1900 to 1948). Some ulama continued to pursue the traditional Shāfi'iyah school in Nusantara, especially in North Sumatra. Furthermore, the data above shows that the students from the Mandailing ethnicity perceived Sheikh 'Abd al-Qādir bin Shābir al-Mandīlī, whose surname is Nasution, as a central figure. The kinship factor, such as ethnic or clan similarities, was used to glue them to Sheikh 'Abd al-Qādir bin Shābir al-Mandīlī. After completing their studies in Islamic sciences, they returned to Tapanuli or East Sumatra. In these two residencies, where they were regarded as preachers and teachers, they delivered religious teachings and often initiated the establishment of educational institutions (pesantren and madrasas).

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<sup>18</sup> 'Abd al-Qadir bin Shabir Al-Mandili, *Fath Al-Rahman Fi 'Aqa'id Al-Iman* (Surabaya: Syirkah Banukul Indah, n.d.).

<sup>19</sup> Erawadi, "Jaringan Keilmuan."



Meanwhile, other Mandailing ulama also delivered religious teachings in Tapanuli. At least five of them, namely Sheikh Abd. Fattah Pagaran Sigatal (Rangkuti), Sheikh Ahmad Zein (Hasibuan), Sheikh Abdul Halim Hasibuan, Sheikh Abdul Hamid (Lubis) and Sheikh Abd. Muttalib Manyabar (Lubis) continued their Islamic studies in Mecca before 1900. They introduced Islam in Tapanuli, although the reason they decided to return to their hometown is unclear, rather than settling in Mecca as the intellectual center of the Muslim world. Unlike Sheikh 'Abd al-Qādir bin Shābir al-Mandīlī that stayed back and became a teacher in Mecca.

There was no information to prove that the Mandailing ulama that studied in Mecca before 1900 established formal educational institutions. However, they delivered non-formal religious teaching to the people in their villages. For example, Sheikh Abdul Fattah (d. 1900) taught religion in Huta Siantar, Panyabungan.<sup>20</sup> He also practiced the Naqshbandiyah Order, which he studied in Mecca, but it remains unclear whether Panyabungan found a place of suluk where people were taught. Panyabungan is considered a Zahid in his village, and those facing complex challenges make vows on the tomb.

Sheikh Ahmad Zein (d. 1950) is another ulama that lived in Mecca for 12 years from 1869 and returned to the village in 1881. Zein established *Pondok Pintu Padang Julu* as a place where religious teachings are taught. Zein taught books such as *Sair al-Sālikīn*, *Minhāj al-'Abidīn*, *Hidāyah al-Sālikīn*, *Tafsīr al-Baidhāwī* and *Furū' al-Masā'il* in Islamic boarding schools. Furthermore, Zein was a follower of the Naqsyabandiah Order. After hearing the fatwa of Sheikh Ahmad Khatib al-Minangkabawi regarding the tarekat, Sheikh Ahmad Zein left and only taught the Sammaniyah Order.<sup>21</sup>

Sheikh Abdul Halim Hasibuan (d. 1920) also delivered religious teachings after returning from Mecca in 1900. Recitations and the Naqshbandiah Order were taught at the Old Grand

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<sup>20</sup> Majelis Ulama Propinsi Sumatera Utara, *Sejarah Ulama-Ulama Terkemuka Di Sumatera Utara* (Medan: Majelis Ulama Propinsi Sumatera Utara, 1983).

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 11-16.

Mosque for 20 years. He did not establish a madrasa and only found the surau (small mosque), where religious recitations were made. It was later converted to the Old Grand Mosque, Padangsidempuan. Sheikh Abdul Halim Hasibuan uniquely embraced the world of movement and was appointed the Chairman of the Sarekat Islam in South Tapanuli.<sup>22</sup>

Sheikh Abdul Hamid Lubis (d. 1928) is an ulama from Hutapungkut and an opponent of the Naqshbandiah Order. After returning from Mecca in 1895, Sheikh Abdul Hamid Lubis organized recitation programs in their home and mosques. These places functioned as educational institutions in this era. In addition, questions relating to legal matters were asked and initiated the movement to eradicate the ignorant teachings of the Naqsyabandiah Order. It is suspected that he was influenced by Sheikh Ahmad Khatib al-Minangkabawi, who criticized this Order and motivates the community to establish madrasas during recitation.<sup>23</sup>

Sheikh Abd. Muthalib Manyabar Lubis (d. 1937) also delivered religious teachings and recitations in Manyabar village, Panyabungan, after returning from Mecca in 1923, where he lived for ten years. He also established a mosque, taught the Naqshbandiah Order, and was perceived as a teacher with *karāmah*.<sup>24</sup>

### *Madrasas in Tapanuli Residency*

Until the 1900s, religious students from the Mandailing ethnicity were still interested in studying religion in Haramain. However, some looked for alternative places to continue their studies, such as Egypt and India. Like their predecessors, most students returned to Tapanuli or East Sumatra and gave religious teachings both formally and informally. A student named Sheikh 'Abd al-Qādir bin 'Abd al-Muttālib al-Mandīlī, stayed long in Mecca while others returned.

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 90-91.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 94-95

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 104-105

Mandailing ulama in the Tapanuli Residency introduced the madrasa and pesantren system, and at the beginning of the 20th century, several others were established in the Tapanuli Residency area. These include Madrasah Ihsaniyah in Hutapungkut (1927), Diniyah School in Botung (1928), Madrasah Islamiyah in Manambin (1928), Madrasah Subulussalam in Sayur Maincat, Kotanopan (1929), and Madrasah Syariful Majlis in Singengu.<sup>25</sup> The existence of these madrasas also contributed to the strengthening of the Islamic intellectual tradition in Tapanuli.

One of the most influential figures in the establishment of madrasas was Sheikh Mustafa Husein that left Tanobato for Mecca in 1900 to study religion along with Sheikh Ahmad Khatib al-Minangkabawi and Sheikh 'Abd al-Qādir bin Shābir al-Mandīlī. In addition to opening a recitation, Sheikh Mustafa Husein developed the previously existing maktab into a madrasa, which only lasted for three years. Furthermore, he founded the Maktab Islamiyah, which later became a Madrasah, and finally, Pesantren Musthafawiyah in 1982 Sheikh Mustafa Husein had some students that later became ulama, such as Sheikh Abdul Halim Khatib (Lubis), Sheikh Mukhtar Siddiq Lubis, and Sheikh Ja'far Abdul Wahab Tanjung. Three of the many ulama helped him teach at the Islamic boarding school.<sup>26</sup>

Sheikh Mustafa Husein introduced and taught Sunni Islam using the yellow book at the school. The madrasa curriculum shows that the works of the Shāfi'iyah ulama and *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah* became compulsory for students. The results taught are *Matan Ghāyah wa al-Taqrīb*, *al-Bajūrī*, *al-Syarqāwī* in the field of fiqh or *Lathā'if al-Isyārah*. Others include *al-Warqat* and *al-Luma'* in the field of fiqh proposals, as well as *al-'Aqā'id al-Dīniyah*, *Fath al-Majīd*, *Kifāyat al-'Awam*, *al-Hushūn al-Hamīdiyah* and *al-Dasuqy* in the field of monotheism. Furthermore, this Madrasa introduced the book of *Tafsīr Jalālain* and *al-Shawi* in the field of interpretation as well as *al-Arba'in*, *Mawa'idz al-'Usfuriyah*, *Abi Jamrah*, and *Subul al-Salām* in hadith. In Arabic studies, the books of *Matan al-*

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> See also Abbas Pulungan, *Syekh Musthafa Husein, Syekh Abdul Halim Khatib Dan Haji Abdullah Musthafa* (Medan: Perdana Publishing, 2012).

*Jurmiyah, Syarh Mukhtashar Jiddan, al-Kawākib al-Durriyah, Khudari Syarh Matn al-Alfiyah, and Majmû' al-Sharf* were taught. Meanwhile, books of *Washaya li al-Abna'i, Ta'lim al-Muta'allim* and *Minhaj al-'Abidîn* were taught in sufism.<sup>27</sup> This shows that the Madrasah Islamiyah founded by Sheikh Musthafawiyah acts as an institution that preserves and spreads the Sunni Islamic tradition in the Tapanuli Residency.

The researcher's observations show that the Musthafawiyah Islamic Boarding School still organizes learning activities. This boarding school has attracted the interest of students from various regions and even from outside North Sumatra. The yellow book is still the main reference for teachers and students. It can be said that this pesantren is the largest and most influential pesantren in Mandailing Natal. This pesantren is also a stronghold of the Sunni tradition in Indonesia. The tomb of the founder of the pesantren, Syekh Musthafa Husein, is in front of the pesantren and has become an object of pilgrimage for the santri for the Muslim community who visit the pesantren. The Musthafawiyah Islamic Boarding School is a great legacy from Sheikh Mustafa Husein who is known to have not inherited any written works.

Another Mandailing ulama that contributed to the establishment and development of the madrasa system was Sheikh Juneid Thola.<sup>28</sup> These ulama from Hutadolok Hutanamale moved from his village to study religion at the Naqshbandiah Order in Basilam, Langkat, and Kedah. Different from other Mandailing ulama, Sheikh Juneid Thola studied theology at al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt, in 1919. However, he continued to follow the traditions of other ulama that studied religion in Mecca. In 1924, he went on a pilgrimage and stayed for a year to study with the teachers of a lot of other Mandailing ulama, such as Sheikh 'Abd al-Qādir bin Shābir al-Mandīlī, with permission to teach at the Masjidilharam (Grand Mosque). The waqf system as the

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<sup>27</sup> See also Abbas Pulungan, *Pesantren Musthafawiyah Purbabaru Mandailing* (Bandung: Citapustaka Media, 2004).

<sup>28</sup> Interview with Miswar Rasyid Rangkuti in Medan, August 20, 2019. Miswar Rasyid Rangkuti is a lecturer at Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara Medan, and was born in Hutanamale di Mandailing Natal.

concept of establishing al-Azhar University made positive remarks on him. After returning to Hutanamale in 1927, Sheikh Juneid Thola found Madrasah Islamiyah with a waqf system. He promoted Muslim families and communities in Hutanamale to donate their wealth to buy land, build madrasa buildings, gardens, and set up a waqf market. This movement was inspired by the waqf system at al-Azhar University and aims to fund madrasas the operational financing of madrasas, starting from teacher salaries to the costs of establishing their students. Therefore, he mobilized the community and ensured their madrasas had many waqf assets like al-Azhar University. The difference between Sheikh Juneid Thola and other Mandailing ulama is the productive use of the waqf system by Muslim families and communities to fund Madrasa.<sup>29</sup> However, it is reasonable to say that this Madrasa teaches Islamic treasures from the Sunni school, considering that its founder was ulama that studied at al-Azhar University with Sheikh 'Abd al-Qādir bin Shābir al-Mandīlī in the Grand Mosque and was also a religious teacher there. The researcher's observations show that as a legacy of Sheikh Juneid Tola, Madrasah Islamiyah Al-Junaidiyah still organizes learning activities. The most important site in this madrasa is Sheikh Juneid Tola's tomb in front of the madrasa.

Besides Sheikh Mustafa Husein, another Mandailing ulama that found the pesantren was Sheikh Mukhtar Harahap, also known as Ya'cub Harahap. In addition to studying in Tanjungpura, Langkat (1910-1914), Kedah, Malaysia (1914-1920), and Kelantan (1920-1925), Sheikh Mukhtar Harahap studied religion intensely in Mecca (1925) with Sheikh Mukhtār Bogor, Sheikh 'Abd al-Qādir bin Shābir al-Mandīlī, Sheikh 'Alī Mālikī, 'Umar Bajuri Hadhramī, Sheikh Abd. Rahmān Makkī, Sheikh 'Umar Syathā' Makkī, Sheikh Muhammad Amīn Medina, and Sheikh Muhammad Fathānī. In 1931, he returned to his hometown despite an offer to become a teacher in Malaysia and founded the Pesantren al-Mukhtariyah in Portibi, North Padang Lawas, North

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<sup>29</sup> Interview with Ali Atas Nasution at Pondok Pesantret Al-Junaidiyah in Kampung Lama, Mandailing Natal, August, 18, 2019. See also Ali Atas Nasution, *Sejarah Ringkas Syekh Junaid Tola Rangkuti, Pendiri Pondok Pesantren Al-Junaidiyah* (Kampung Lama, Mandailing Natal: Pondok Pesantren Al-Junaidiyah, 2018).

Sumatra, in 1935. This boarding school plays a vital role in developing Islamic da'wah and preserving Islamic sciences in this region.

Sheikh Ali Hasan Ahmad ad-Dary is another Mandailing ulama that developed the madrasa system. While in Mecca, he co-founded the Addiniyah Madrasa and taught at the Dār al-'Ulūm. After returning to his hometown, ad-Dary taught at Madrasah Mustafawiyah and later found Madrasah Ma'hadul Islahiddin (1941-1950), Sekolah Pendidikan Guru Agama Al-Iman (1958-1965), Sekolah Persiapan Perguruan Tinggi Agama Islam (1958-1961), and Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sumatera Utara (1962) which is currently the Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Tapanuli (STAITA).<sup>30</sup> Ad-Dary is a prolific Nahdlatul Ulama scholar who produced many works in various Islamic fields.<sup>31</sup> The results of the researchers' observations show that the STAITA campus, which Sheikh Ali Hasan Ahmad ad-Dary built, continues to organize learning activities and is one of the influential private universities in Padangsidimpuan City and its surroundings.

### *Madrasas in East Sumatra Residency*

From the 19th to 20th centuries, many Mandailing people migrated to East Sumatra, especially Medan City, the capital of the Deli Kingdom. According to Abbas Pulungan,<sup>32</sup> the Mandailing people migrated due to their desire for a decent life, imposed taxes and forced labor by the Dutch colonialists, and needed to learn religion, family conflicts, and social sanctions indigenes.

Many religious students at MIT come from the Mandailing ethnicity to study religion, according to the Shāfi'iyah and Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah schools. The Mandailing nomads in Medan City also established a madrasa called Maktab Islamiyah Tapanuli, consisting of MIT teachers from the Mandailing ethnic group,

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<sup>30</sup> Interview with Nur Sopayanti, a lecturer at STAITA in Padangsidimpuan, August 18, 2019.

<sup>31</sup> Mhd. Syahnan, "Nahdlatul Ulama Scholar in Mandailing Land: A Biography of Shaykh Ali Hasan Ahmad Ad-Dary," *Journal of Contemporary Islam and Muslim Societies* 3, no. 1 (2019), 68-82.

<sup>32</sup> Abbas Pulungan, *Perkembangan Islam Di Mandailing* (Bandung: Citapustaka Media, 2008).

namely Sheikh Muhammad Yunus and Sheikh Dja'far Hasan.<sup>33</sup> This madrasa teaches Arabic using books written by *al-Hidāyah al-Sālikīn*, *al-Yawāqit wa al-Jawāhir*, *al-Ajurrumiyah*, *Syarh Ibn 'Aqil*, *Qathr al-Nida*, *Syarh Alfiyah Ibn Mālik*, *Qirā'ah al-Rāsyidah*, *Fath al-Qarīb*, and *Tafsīr Jalālain*. Later on, senior MIT students with Madrasah Al-Hasaniyah students found the Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah,<sup>34</sup> which in its early period became the Mandailing movement in East Sumatra and initiated the establishment of 440 madrasas in 1951.<sup>35</sup> MIT no longer provided education after the Japanese occupation, and later this madrasa building was used by Al Washliyah as an educational institution at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah level. Recently, the MIT building has been used as the Al Washliyah Museum and is a cultural heritage.

In 1930, several senior MIT students supported by their teachers found Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah. This socio-religious organization adheres to the teachings of the Shāfi'iyah and Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah schools.<sup>36</sup> Al Washliyah is one of the moderate organizations in Indonesia.<sup>37</sup> The scholars are also relatively moderate.<sup>38</sup> Before the independence era, Al Washliyah through Abdurrahman Sjihab (Rangkuti), Ismail Banda (Lubis), M.

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<sup>33</sup> Abu Bakar Yacub, *Sejarah Maktab Al-Islamiyah Tapanuli*, ed. Hasan Asari and Muaz Tanjung (Medan: Perdana Publishing, 2020).

<sup>34</sup> Abdurrahman Sjihab, "Hari Peringatan Ulang Tahun Ke XX Al Djamijatul Washlijah 30 Nopember 1930-30 Nopember 1950," *Medan Islam*, 1950; Pengoeroes Besar Djam'ijatoel Washlijah, "Keringkasan Riwayat Hasil Dan Oesaha Pekerdjaan Al Djamijatoel Washlijah Selama 5 Tahoen Moelai Tanggal 30 November 1930-30-11-1935," *Medan Islam*, January 1936.

<sup>35</sup> Abdurrahman Sjihab, "Memperingati Al Djam'ijatul Washlijah 21 Tahun 30 November 1930-30 November 1951," in *21 Tahun Al Dj. Washlijah 30 Nov. 1930-30 Nov. 1951*, ed. M. Husein Abd. Karim (Medan: Pustaka Al Washlijah, 1951), 2-20.

<sup>36</sup> Pengurus Besar Al Djamijatul Washlijah, *Tafsir Anggaran Dasar Al Djamijatul Washlijah*, ed. Nukman Sulaiman (Medan: Pengurus Besar Al Djamijatul Washlijah, 1950), 348-353.

<sup>37</sup> Mhd Syahnan and Ja'far Ja'far, "Examining Religious Moderation of The Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah Fatwa Council," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 15, no. 1 (2021), <http://jiis.uinsby.ac.id/index.php/JIIs/article/view/721>.

<sup>38</sup> Mhd. Syahnan, Ja'far Ja'far, and Muhammad Iqbal, "Ulama and Radicalism in Contemporary Indonesia: Response of Al Washliyah's Ulama on Radicalism," *AHKAM: Jurnal Ilmu Syariah* 21, no. 1 (2021): 89-110.

Arsjad Th. Lubis and Yusuf Ahmad Lubis found 667 madrasas in 1956. The madrasas founded by Al Washliyah aim to preserve the Sunni tradition with the highest level known as Madrasah al-Qismul 'Aly Al Washliyah.<sup>39</sup> The works of ulama taught at this madrasa are *Anwār al-Tanzīl wa Asrār al-Ta'wīl*, *Lubāb al-Ta'wīl fī man al-Tanzīl*, *Madaruk al-Tanzīl*, *al-Khāzin*, and *Tanwīr al-Miqbas (Tafsīr Ibn 'Abbās)*, *Shahīh Muslim*, *Shahīh al-Bukhārī*, *Sharh al-Jalāl al-Dīn al-Mahallī 'ala Jam' al-Jawami'*, *Minhaj al-Thālibīn*, *al-Asybah wa al-Nazhā'ir*, *Risālah al-Qusyairiyah*, *Muhadharat Tārikh Umām al-Islāmiyah*, and *Adāb al-Munazharah*.<sup>40</sup>

Some Mandailing ulama in East Sumatra also joined Al-Ittihadiyah. Al-Ittihadiyah was inaugurated in Medan, January 27, 1935. The purpose of this organization is to “deliver the demands of the Islamic religion in its general sense and obligations.” Al-Ittihadiyah adheres to the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah and Shāfi'iyah schools and is engaged in education, da'wah, and social charity. This organization established many madrasas, held da'wah activities, and built orphanages for orphans and the poor.<sup>41</sup> Among the prominent scholars of the Al-Ittihadiyah organization are Sheikh Abdul Halim Hasan and Sheikh Zainal Arifin Abbas. Both are among the most prolific and influential writers in all of East Sumatra. Their work, *Tafsir al-Qur'anul Karim*, as many as nine volumes<sup>42</sup> is a significant work of interpretation. It can be said that they are exegetes from the Mandailing ethnic group. Al-Ittihadiyah is an influential Islamic organization besides Al Washliyah in East Sumatra.

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<sup>39</sup> Udin Sjamsuddin, *Chutbah Pengurus Besar Memperingati Ulang Tahun Al Djamijatul Washlijah Seperempat Abad 30 November 1930-30 November 1955* (Medan: Pengurus Besar Al Djamijatul Washlijah, 1955), 4-7.

<sup>40</sup> Pengurus Besar Al Djamijatul Washlijah, “Lembaga Peladjaran Al Djamijatul Washlijah,” in *Peringatan Al Djamijatul Washlijah ¼ Abad* (Medan: Pengurus Besar Al Djamijatul Washlijah, 1956), 6-14.

<sup>41</sup> Bachroem Azhar and et al., *Buku Peringatan Ulang Tahun 1/4 Abad Al-Ittihadijah 27 Djanuari 1935-27 Djanuari 1960* (Medan: Pengurus Besar Al-Ittihadijah, 1960); Ibrahim Arsyad and et al., *Conferentie Jubileum 6 Tahoen 1935-1941 Al-Ittihadijah* (Medan: C.V.O. Conferentie Al-Ittihadijah ke-1, 1941).

<sup>42</sup> Abdul Halim Hasan, Zainal Arifin Abbas, and Abdurrahim Haitami, *Tafsir Al-Qur'anul Karim* (Medan: Islamyah, 1958).



Based on the above study, throughout the colonial era in the early 20th century, it appears that the Mandailing ulama played a role as agents of change in their respective regions, both in the Residency of Tapanuli and the Residency of East Sumatra. As ulama, they helped improve the quality and quantity of indigenous education, especially Muslims, by establishing study halls, madrasas, and Islamic boarding schools. Their position as teachers with qualified knowledge managed to attract the interest of students even from outside the region. In the future, their students will welcome loyal supporters of the Mandailing ulama. This allows the Mandailing ulama to mobilize their fanatical followers to strengthen and spread religion and even politics.

### **The Gait of the Mandailing Ulama in the Intellectual Tradition**

The Mandailing ulama built an intellectual network with the Haramain ulama by visiting the region and leaving for Mecca before or after 1900. Mandailing ulama in this period tended to Sufism, especially tarekat (order), and the majority became followers of the Naqshbandiah Order. Furthermore, their work is unknown, except for those of Sheikh 'Abd al-Qādir bin Shābir al-Mandīlī that wrote *Fath al-Rahmān fi 'Aqā'id al-Imān*. In terms of content, this book consists of only ten pages and 20 nature-related problems, which clarifies that Sheikh 'Abd al-Qādir bin Shābir al-Mandīlī is an ulama that preserves the Ash'ariyah creed. Sheikh 'Abd al-Qādir bin Shābir al-Mandīlī (Nasution)'s position is very important in the thought map of the Mandailing ulama.

Some of the Mandailing ulama from East Sumatra went to Haramain after 1900 to study. However, some who traveled to this region failed to study intensely, while others went about their various businesses. Mandailing ulama are currently active in the world of movement and affiliated with at least three Islamic organizations, namely Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah, Nahdlatul Ulama, and Al-Ittihadiyah. These three Islamic organizations advance Muslims, especially in the fields of education, da'wah, and social charity.

In the 1900s, many ulama residing in Haramain were productive in generating written works. Furthermore, those that

studied religion in Mecca intensely but did not leave any written works were Sheikh Juneid Thola and Sheikh Mustafa Husein. Syekh Junaid Thola did not bequeath any written works but rather a waqf-based educational institution and donated all of his wealth to improve the quality of the Muslim community, especially in education. Syekh Junaid Thola did not bequeath property, such as a house or land, to his family and was buried in previously donated land. The heritage and tomb of Sheikh Junaid Thola can still be visited today. Meanwhile, Syekh Musthafa Husein, the founder of Nahdlatul Ulama in North Sumatra, did not leave any written works except for a legacy in the field of Islamic education, which is used to date. Sirajuddin Abbas, in his *Sejarah & Keagungan Madzhab Syafi'i*, claims that Sheikh Mustafa Husein is one of the scholars who broadcast and defended the Shāfi'i school in the 14th century Hijri as Sheikh Zaini Dahlān, Sheikh Sayyid 'Utmān, Sheikh Abu Bakr Syathā', Sheikh Ahmad Khāthib al-Minangkabāwī, Sheikh Nawawī Bantani, and Sheikh Hasan Ma'sum. Abbas said, "Sheikh Musthafa Husein Purba was a Shāfi'iyah scholar in the 14th century in Indonesia."<sup>43</sup> This indicated that a group of Mandailing ulama do not bequeath written works but bequeath Islamic educational institutions that preserve the treasures of Sunni Islam.

One of the Mandailing ulama that studied religion intensely in Haramain and taught in Malaysia before dying in Mecca was Sheikh 'Abd al-Qādir bin 'Abd al-Muttalib al-Mandīlī (d. 1965). This Mandailing ulama is different from Sheikh 'Abd al-Qādir bin Shābir al-Mandīlī. Although both studied and taught in Mecca, the second is ulama from Hutasiantar, Panyabungan. Meanwhile, the first came from Sigalangan, Batang Angkola, before visiting Mecca to acquire more knowledge. Sheikh 'Abd al-Qādir bin 'Abd al-Muttalib al-Mandīlī produced many works in Arabic-Malay.

Sheikh 'Abd al-Qādir bin 'Abd al-Muttalib al-Mandīlī, thus, was the most prolific Mandailing ulama, although he mostly worked abroad (Saudi Arabia and Malaysia). He is a scholar in the Malay world who mastered some fields of Islamic sciences,

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<sup>43</sup> Sirajuddin Abbas, *Sejarah & Keagungan Madzhab Syafi'i*, 17th ed. (Jakarta: Pustaka Tarbiyah Baru, 2010).

especially monotheism, Sufism, jurisprudence, politics, hadith, education, and morals. That is, he is a comprehensive scholar. Born in 1910 in Sigalanggar, South Tapanuli, he studied religion in Kedah, Malaysia, with some scholars. Finally, he went to the Holy City of Mecca to study Islamic sciences with some scholars, including Sheikh 'Alī al-Mālikī, Sheikh Hasan Muhammad al-Masysyāth, Sheikh Muhammad al-'Arabi bin Tabani al-Wahidi al-Maghribi, Sheikh Sayyid al-'Alawi bin 'Abbās al-Mālikī, and Sheikh Muhammad Ahyad. He was finally able to become a scholar with prolific knowledge.<sup>44</sup>

As a comprehensive scholar, Sheikh 'Abd al-Qādir bin 'Abd al-Muttalib al-Mandīlī produced many works in monotheism, fiqh, politics, hadith, education, and Islamic law.<sup>45</sup> His works have attracted the attention of researchers, mainly from Malaysia, considering that he worked as a scholar in Malaysia.<sup>46</sup>

The Mandailing ulama in the Tapanuli Residency was initially affiliated with Al Washliyah before Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). Sheikh Mustafa Husein had been an adviser to Al Washliyah before turning to Nahdlatul Ulama. From the aspect of written work productivity, the three NU ulama that produced written works were Sheikh Ali Hasan Ahmad Ad-Dary, Sheikh Baharuddin Thalib Lubis, and Sheikh Abdul Halim Khatib (Lubis). Although three ulama studied religion intensely in Mecca, Sheikh Ali Hasan ad-Dary was the most productive in producing written works besides establishing several Islamic educational institutions.

Sheikh Ali Hasan Ahmad Ad-Dary is a Mandailing ulama affiliated with Nahdlatul Ulama. He was born in Pintu Padang Julu, Mandailing Natal, February 9, 1915. As a religious student,

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<sup>44</sup> Ramli Awang, *Syeikh Abdul Qadir Al-Mandili* (Johor, Malaysia: Syeikh Abdul Qadir Al-Mandili, 2008).

<sup>45</sup> Wan Mohd Shaghir Abdullah has compiled the works of Sheikh 'Abd al-Qadir al-Mandili. See 'Abd al-Qadir bin al-Mandili, Muththalib, *Himpunan Kitab Karya Ulama Silam Muktabar Di Alam Melayu: Syeikh Abdul Qadir Bin Abdul Mutalib Al-Mandili*, ed. Wan Mohd Shaghir Abdullah, 2 Volume. (Kuala Lumpur: Khazanah Fathaniyah, 2019).

<sup>46</sup> Che Zarrina Sa'ari and Nor Azlinah Zaini, "Terapi Spiritual Melalui Kaedah Tazkiyah Al-Nafs," *Jurnal AFKAR* 18, no. Special issue (2016): 35–72, [https://umexpert.um.edu.my/file/publication/00005207\\_146141.pdf](https://umexpert.um.edu.my/file/publication/00005207_146141.pdf).

he studied with Sheikh Musthafa Husein, who founded and developed the Pesantren Musthafawiyah. His teacher, Sheikh Mustafa Husein had some students who also studied in Mecca, including Sheikh Abdul Halim Khatib, Sheikh Abdullah Kayu Laut, Sheikh Mukhtar Sidiq, Sheikh Ja'far Abdul Wahab, Sheikh Muhammad Ilyas, and Sheikh Abdurrahim Saiman. Sheikh Ali Hasan Ahmad ad-Dary studied at Madrasah Shaulatiyah and Madrasa Dār al-'Ulūm in Makkah with some teachers, including Sheikh 'Alī al-Mālīkī, Sheikh Hasan Muhammad Masysyāth, Sheikh Mukhtar Bogor, and Sheikh 'Abd al-Qādir bin Shābir al-Mandīlī. Studying with many Haramain scholars turned out to make Sheikh Ali Hasan Ahmad ad-Dary able to become a comprehensive Islamic scholar.<sup>47</sup> He also produced some works.<sup>48</sup>

Two other Mandailing ulama affiliated with Nahdlatul Ulama in the Tapanuli Residency are Sheikh Baharuddin Thalib Lubis and Sheikh Abdul Halim Khatib (Lubis). Sheikh Baharuddin Thalib Lubis was born in Stabat, Langkat, 1905. He is the older brother of Sheikh Muhammad Arsjad Th. Lubis co-founded Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah in 1930. He studied religion with Sheikh Zainuddin Bilah in Stabat, Sheikh Abdul Wahhab in Lumut River, Labuhan Bilik, Sheikh Abdul Hamid Mahmud in Tanjungbalai, and Sheikh Hasan Ma'sum in Medan. He even had time to study with some scholars in Mecca, especially Sheikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Mandīlī and Sheikh 'Ali al-Mālīkī at the Grand Mosque for five years. After becoming an Islamic scholar, he was affiliated with Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and later became the first Chairman of the

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<sup>47</sup> Salmawati Hasibuan and Mahfuzh Budi Hasibuan, *Syekh Ali Hasan Ahmad: Sebuah Biografi Kecil* (Tapanuli Selatan: Majelis Ulama Daerah TK. I Tapanuli Selatan, 1985). Salmawati Hasibuan and Mahfuzh Budi Hasibuan are children of Syekh Ali Hasan Ahmad ad-Dary.

<sup>48</sup> Ali Hasan Ahmad Ad-Dary, *Arkanul Iman* (Padangsidimpuan: Al-Mahfuzh Budi, 1964); Ali Hasan Ahmad Ad-Dary, *Tajdid Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jama'ah, Kebangkitan Ulama* (Padangsidimpuan: Al-Mahfuzh Budi, 1988); Ali Hasan Ahmad Ad-Dary, *Namazij Al-Kutub As-Sittah* (Padangsidimpuan: Al-Mahfuzh Budi, 1978); Ali Hasan Ahmad Ad-Dary, *Al-Hizb Al-Mushthafawiy* (Padangsidimpuan: Al-Mahfuzh Budi, n.d.).

NU Regional Leadership for North Sumatra Province.<sup>49</sup> He also produced works like *Hidāyah al-Mushallin ‘ala Sayyid al-Anbiyā’ wa al-Mursalīn*.<sup>50</sup>

Meanwhile, Sheikh Abdul Halim Khatib is one of Sheikh Musthafa Husein's best students and even became his teacher's successor at the Pesantren Musthafawiyah. He was born in Hutaraja Tinggi, Sosa, Padang Lawas in 1906. He first studied religious sciences with Sheikh Mustafa Husein, and a few years later, he was appointed as a teacher at the madrasa that his teacher had built. With the support of his teacher, he then continued his education at Madrasah Shaulatiyah in Mecca and studied with 15 scholars. After studying in Makkah for six years (1928-1934), he again became a teacher at the Pesantren Mustafawiyah and became the most influential teacher after Sheikh Mustafa Husein.<sup>51</sup> In addition to teaching hundreds of students, he also produced some works.<sup>52</sup>

Despite not studying in the Middle East, some of the Mandailing ulama that took part in the Al Washliyah organization produced many written works. However, those that studied intensely in Mecca did not leave written works in the form of books. Ismail Banda (Lubis), one of the founders of Al Washliyah, produced books and articles in the field of Islam.<sup>53</sup> One of the Al Washliyah ulama that studied in Mecca but left many works was M. Husein Abdul Karim (Lubis). Another was Sheikh Hamdan

<sup>49</sup> Abrar M. Dawud Faza, "Ketua PWNu Sumut Pertama: Syekh Bahruddin Thalib Lubis" (Medan, n.d.), <https://pwnusumut.or.id/2018/08/02/ketua-pwnu-sumut-pertama-syekh-bahruddin-thalib-lubis/>.

<sup>50</sup> Baharuddin Thalib Lubis, *Hidayah Al-Mushallin ‘Ala Sayyid Al-Anbiya’ Wa Al-Mursalīn* (Surabaya: n.p., n.d.).

<sup>51</sup> Abbas Pulungan, *Syekh Abdul Halim Khatib (Tuan Naposo)* (Medan: Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, 2020), <http://repository.uinsu.ac.id>.

<sup>52</sup> Abdul Halim Khatib, *Tazky Al-Sahy* (Purba Baru: n.p., n.d.); Abdul Halim Khatib, *Saif Al-Thalabah* (Purba Baru: n.p., n.d.); Abdul Halim Khatib, *Kasyful Gummah* (Purba Baru: n.p., n.d.); Abdul Halim Khatib, *Al-Bayan Al-Syafy* (Purba Baru: n.p., n.d.).

<sup>53</sup> Ismail Banda Lubis is the Head of Perpindom in Cairo, Egypt. He has written about his experience in Egypt while fighting for Indonesian independence with his friends. See Ismail Banda, *Pengakoean Mesir Dan Politik Arab League* (Yogyakarta: Himpoenan Mahasiswa Islam, 1947).

Abbas, an alumnus of Madrasah Shaulatiah that produced several works. Others, such as Syekh Muhammad Yunus (Nasution) and Syekh Dja'far Hasan (Tanjung), did not leave any written works, even though they are both prominent ulama in Medan City and have been teachers at the Maktab Islamiyah Tapanuli since it was established in 1918.

Then, Al Washliyah scholars in East Sumatra produced his writings. Among them were Abdurrahman Sjihab Rangkuti (d. 1955), M. Arsjad Th. Lubis (d. 1972), Yusuf Ahmad Lubis (d. 1980), and Adnan Lubis (d. 1966). They are students of Sheikh Hasan Ma'sum (Malay scholar) who is a student of some Haramain scholars, especially Sheikh Ahmad Khatib al-Minangkabawi.<sup>54</sup> Abdurrahman Sjihab was a student of Sheikh Muhammad Yunus at the Tapanuli Islamic School and Sheikh Hasan Ma'sum at Madrasah Al-Hasaniyah. He was born in Paku, Galang, North Sumatra in 1910. While performing the pilgrimage, he studied with Sheikh 'Alī al-Mālikī, Sheikh 'Umar Hamdan, Sheikh Hasan Masysyāth, Sheikh Amin al-Kutubi, and Sheikh M. 'Alawi. He later co-founded Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah and became this organization's longest-serving and influential leader. He produced some books and articles as a scholar, although it is a pity that his works were not republished.<sup>55</sup>

Based on his curriculum vitae, M. Arsjad Th. Lubis was born in Stabat, in October 1908, and is a Masjumi Party politician and was a member of the Constituent Assembly in 1955. He studied with Sheikh Hasan Ma'sum at Madrasah Al-Hasaniyah in Medan to study the Qur'an exegesis, Hadith, Fiqh, and Ushul Fiqh.<sup>56</sup> Eventually, he became an encyclopedic scholar because he produced dozens of works in the Qur'an, hadith, fiqh and fiqh proposals, history, monotheism, politics, and even comparative religion. Thousands of students at Al Washliyah madrasahs and schools and hundreds of students at Al Washliyah University

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<sup>54</sup> Matu Mona, *Riwayat Penghidoepan Al-Fadhil Toean Sjech Hasan Ma'soem: Biografie Sedjak Ketjil Sampai Wafatnya* (Medan: Sjarikat Tapanoeli, 1936).

<sup>55</sup> See Abdurrahman Sjihab, *Penoentoen Hadji* (Medan: Boekhandel Islamijah, 1940).

<sup>56</sup> M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, *Riwayat Hidup* (Jakarta, 1955).

Medan read his works. M. Arsjad Th. Lubis has a unique skill where he wrote works in the field of politics in response to political problems in the Old Order era and comparative religion as a response to Christianization activities in North Sumatra.<sup>57</sup>

Yusuf Ahmad Lubis is also the most prolific Mandailing ulama. Based on his written records, he was born in Medan, on January 10, 1912. He studied at Maktab Islamiyah Tapanuli (MIT) and Madrasah Al-Hasaniyah in Medan. His teachers were Sheikh Muhammad Yunus and Sheikh Hasan Ma'sum.<sup>58</sup> As M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, Yusuf Ahmad Lubis is interested in political issues in Indonesia and also the comparison of Islam and Christianity in response to the Christianization mission in North Sumatra. Although he never studied intensively in Mecca, he has so far recorded that he has produced 55 books and 27 articles in the fields of commentary, hadith, fiqh, sufism, philosophy, morality, politics, history, and comparative religion.<sup>59</sup>

Another Mandailing ulama who is affiliated with Al Washliyah is Adnan Lubis. Based on his curriculum vitae, he was born in Medan in 1910. After studying the basics of religion in Medan, he went to Makkah and studied with some scholars at Madrasah Shaulatiyah and Madrasah Dār al-'Ulūm. After that, he studied up to the Master's level at Nadwatul Ulama University in Lucknow, India. He became the first Mandailing to study in

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<sup>57</sup> M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, *Keesaan Tuhan Menurut Adjaran Kristen Dan Islam* (Jakarta: Hudaya, 1969); M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, *Pendapat Islam Dan Keristen Tentang Keaslian Bijbel* (Medan: Firma Islamiyah, 1964); M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, *Perbandingan Agama Kristen Dan Islam* (Medan: Islamiyah, 1971); M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, *Pemimpin Islam Dan Christen* (Medan: Islamiyah, 1934); M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, *Rahsia Bijbel* (Medan: Islamiyah, n.d.).

<sup>58</sup> See Yusuf Ahmad Lubis, "Riwayat Hidup H.M. Yusuf Ahmad Lubis," in *Sejarah Ulama-Ulama Terkemuka Di Sumatera Utara* (Medan: Majelis Ulama Sumatera Utara, 1983), 321-23.

<sup>59</sup> See his books, Yusuf Ahmad Lubis, *Kerasulan Yesus Dalam Biybel* (Medan: Masa, 1974); Yusuf Ahmad Lubis, *Perselisihan Ayat-Ayat Biybel* (Medan: Masa, 1974); Yusuf Ahmad Lubis, *Keesaan Allah Dalam Biybel* (Medan: Masa, 1974); Yusuf Ahmad Lubis, *Penjelasan Kitab Suci Al-Qur'an (Tentang Yesus/Kristen/Pendeta2nya)* (Medan: Masa, 1973); Yusuf Ahmad Lubis, *Ketuhanan Dan Salib* (Medan: Masa, 1973); Yusuf Ahmad Lubis, *Penjelasan Tentang Taurat Dan Injil* (Medan: Pustaka Aman, 1970).

India.<sup>60</sup> As a scholar and politician, he produced some books and articles in the fields of interpretation, philosophy, history, and politics.<sup>61</sup>

Furthermore, some Mandailing ulama in East Sumatra, such as Sheikh Abdul Halim Hasan and Sheikh Zainal Arifin Abbas, is affiliated with the Al-Ittihadiyah organization. Sheikh Abdul Halim Hasan had also been an advisor to Al Washliyah and the Chairman of the Binjai Branch of Muhammadiyah before becoming the Chairman of the PB Al Ittihadiyah Fatwa Council. Sheikh Zainal Arifin Abbas (surnamed Hasibuan) was the General Chair of *Pengurus Besar Al Ittihadiyah*. The two ulama produced many quality books in Islam and became a reference for the Muslim community in East Sumatra. Their masterpiece work is entitled *Tafsir al-Qur'anul Karim* 9 volumes. Sheikh Abdul Halim Hasan did not study intensively in Haramain, except during the pilgrimage, where he met the Haramain ulama and was taught religion. These two ulama studied intensely with Sheikh Hasan Ma'sum in Medan.<sup>62</sup>

At the beginning of the 20th century, magazine publishing was a unique phenomenon where many ulama initiated it as a medium for disseminating reform ideas. Mandailing ulama in East Sumatra also began the publication of Islamic magazines. The Mandailing Ulama in the Al Washliyah organization found two magazines, Medan Islam and Dewan Islam. Another magazine is al-Islam, where the chief editors are M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, Zainal Arifin Abbas (Hasibuan), and Abdul Halim Hasan (Daulay). Al-Islam magazine, which published articles on the general election in Indonesia from Nusantara ulama, is exciting to be studied. In

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<sup>60</sup> Adnan Lubis, *Riwayat Hidup* (Jakarta, 1955).

<sup>61</sup> Adnan Lubis, *Tashawuf* (Medan: UNIVA, 1958); Adnan Lubis, *Kisah Isra' Dan Mi'radj* (Medan: Islamyah, 1958); Adnan Lubis, *Tafsir Surat Jaasin Ajat 1-83* (Medan: Islamyah, 1954); Adnan Lubis, *Falsafah Timur* (Medan: Saiful, 1950); Adnan Lubis, *Tafsir Djuzu' Amma* (Medan: Islamyah, 1949).

<sup>62</sup> For their thought, see M. Jamil and Ja'far Ja'far, "Pemimpin Perempuan Dan Non-Muslim Perspektif Ulama Tiga Serangkai," *Teosofi: Jurnal Tasawuf dan Pemikiran Islam* 8, no. 1 (2018), <http://jurnalufuf.uinsby.ac.id/index.php/teosofi/article/view/216>.



essence, the Mandailing ulama transmitted Islamic knowledge through books and magazines.

The Mandailing ulama produced a group of works in the Islamic field, proving that they play a significant role in developing and preserving the Islamic intellectual tradition in Nusantara. Their works cover all fields of Islam, both general and specific, such as the Qur'an and its interpretation, hadith, monotheism and comparative religion (Christology), ushul al-fiqh, and tasawuf and philosophy. The specialization of science was not considered important by the Mandailing ulama because ulama can write about more than one field of Islamic science.

Mandailing Islamic ulama in East Sumatra is also involved in various intellectual debates, especially regarding the Ahmadiyah issue. The three Mandailing Islamic who was considered the most instrumental in blocking the presence of Ahmadiyah in Medan were Abdurrahman Sjihab, M. Arsjad Th. Lubis and Mahmud Ismail Lubis. However, this does not indicate that other scholars are ignorant. These three scholars have become the leading figures in rejecting the Ahmadiyya ideology and movement. Abdurrahman Sjihab and M. Arsjad Th. Lubis chaired the Komite Pemberantas I'tikad Ahmadiyah al-Qadiyany on November 10, 1935. This committee decided that "Mirza Ghulam Ahmad al-Qadiyany is an infidel (apostate), his followers are also infidels (apostates), take refuge in us from this situation." Mahmud Ismail Lubis and Mangaradja Ihoetan managed to record the results of the debate between Tengku Fakhruddin, a Malay Islamic scholar from the Kingdom of Serdang, and Ahmadiyah figures. The book is entitled *Openbarr-Debat Oetoesan Ahmadiyah Qadian Contra Tengkoeh Fachroeddin Pada 15 dan 22 Juli 1934 di Medan*.<sup>63</sup>

Based on the above study, the Mandailing scholars in the Tapanuli Residency, which is affiliated with Nahdlatul Ulama, and in the East Sumatra Residency, which is affiliated with Al Washliyah and Al-Ittihadiyah succeeded in playing the role of agents of intellectual change in North Sumatra through their works published in Medan and be read by Muslims, especially

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<sup>63</sup> Mahmud Ismail Lubis, *Openbarr-Debat Oetoesan Ahmadiyah Qadian Contra Tengkoeh Fachroeddin Pada 15 Dan 22 Juli 1934 Di Medan* (Medan: n.p., 1934).

from among students and students. As teachers, lecturers and preachers, they wrote and published many works. Some of their works were written as reading books in madrasas, schools, and universities in the Tapanuli area and East Sumatra. Some of their works are even a response to the political dynamics of the Old Order era and to the religious dynamics (Ahmadiyah and Christianization missions) in the areas where they work. The Mandailing ulama were thus able to become agents of socio-religious and socio-political change in the North Sumatra region. In the following discussion, their position as ulama, teachers, lecturers, preachers, and writers was able to attract sympathy and support from the people to defend Indonesia's independence, while at the same time winning Islamic political parties such as the Masjumi Party and the Nahdlatul Ulama Party in the 1955 General Election.

### **The Gait of the Mandailing Ulama in the Political Field**

Anthony Reid revealed that the Islamic leaders in East Sumatra who had established positions had not been actively engaged in politics until early December 1945. In the following discussion, their position as ulama, teachers, lecturers, preachers, and writers was able to attract sympathy and support from the people to defend Indonesia's independence, at the same time, won Islamic political parties such as the Masjumi Party and the Nahdlatul Ulama Party in the 1955 General Election.<sup>64</sup> The Muslim leaders at that time included figures from the Al Washliyah and Al-Ittihadiyah organizations, most of whom were Islamic scholars from the Mandailing ethnicity. Until the end of 1945, the Mandailing ulama, through the organizations they built and supported, was still focused on education, da'wah, and social charity. The same thing happened to the Mandailing Islamic ulama in the Tapanuli Residency, who were more concerned with education issues and da'wah, even though the anti-colonial attitude had been ingrained in themselves and their supporters.

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<sup>64</sup> Anthony Reid, *The Blood of the People: Revolution and the End of Traditional Rule in Northern Sumatra* (Singapore: National University of Singapore, 2014).

Their activities as educators in the educational institutions they build, as preachers who have closeness to the people, as writers of Islamic works, and as community leaders, especially leaders of the organizations they build and support, make them significant social and intellectual capital. They have a lot of passionate supporters and also have ideas to fight for.

With their social and intellectual capital, Mandailing ulama in the Tapanuli Residency and East Sumatra Residency quickly mobilize the people's power for the Muslims' political interests in Indonesia. Mandailing ulama is noted to have actively played a role as agents of socio-political change where they have mobilized the masses to seize, defend and fulfill independence. In the Tapanuli Residency, Mandailing Islamic ulama also showed an anti-colonial attitude. One record shows that figures such as Sheikh Juneid Tola, who received an education from Egypt, became symbols of resistance to the Dutch. Together with two Permi figures, Muchtar Lutfi and Gaffar Ismail, Sheikh Juneid Tola campaigned for the anti-colonial movement, and they even taught the community martial arts to be able to fight the invaders.<sup>65</sup> Another influential Mandailing ulama was Sheikh Mustafa Husein. With the support of hundreds of his students, along with other Mandailing ulama, he issued a fatwa during the Second Military Aggression that "it is obligatory and *fardhu 'ain* for every Muslim who is willing to fight against the Dutch colonial aggression and that those who the person who died in the battle was a martyr."<sup>66</sup> These are just a few of the many data that the Mandailing ulama in the Tapanuli Residency rejected Dutch colonialism.

In the Residency of East Sumatra, ulama from the Mandailing ethnicity actively supported and defended independence. Abdurrahman Sjihab is the prominent leader of Al Washliyah, with the support of all other Mandailing scholars affiliated with

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<sup>65</sup> Ali Atas Nasution, *Sejarah Ringkas Syekh Junaid Tola Rangkuti Pendiri Pondok Pesantren Al-Junaidiyah* (Kampung Lama, Mandailing Natal: Pondok Pesantren Al-Junaidiyah, 2018).

<sup>66</sup> Majelis Ulama Sumatera Utara, "Riwayat Hidup Syekh Mustafa Husein Purba Baru (1886-1955)," in *Sejarah Ulama-Ulama Terkemuka Di Sumatera Utara* (Medan: Majelis Ulama Sumatera Utara, 1983).

this organization, especially M. Arsjad Th. Lubis mobilized the power of Al Washliyah to participate in defending Indonesia's independence. After receiving information that Indonesia had become independent, Abdurrahman Sjihab (Rangkuti), as Chairman of Al Washliyah, together with Udin Sjamsuddin (Siregar), sent a message to President Soekarno and also T.M. Hassan as Governor of Sumatra at the time that "Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah helped defend the Republic of Indonesia." In a meeting on 27-27 October 1945, Al Washliyah emphasized that "on behalf of 50 thousand families, Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah wants 100% independence." This decision was then sent to President Soekarno and the Governor of Sumatra. The Mandailing Islamic ulama, who were members of the al-Fatwa Al Washliyah Council, also issued a jihad fatwa against the Dutch after intense discussions at the 5th Al Washliyah Congress, 30 November-6 December 1945 in Pematang Siantar, North Sumatra. The Madjlis Al-Fatwa Al Washliyah issued a fatwa that (1) every Muslim in Indonesia must refuse the arrival of the Dutch and their assistants who want to rule in Indonesia. (2) Muslims who die in battle against the Dutch and their assistants, and die because of the fighting to uphold the Islamic religion, are sentenced to martyrdom *fi sabilillah*.<sup>67</sup> This fatwa helped inflame the spirit of jihad among followers of Al Washliyah, who later joined the Washliyah Defense Agency.<sup>68</sup> Al Washliyah, an organization founded by Mandailing ulama from East Sumatra became one of the leading organizations in the fight against Dutch aggression.

Sheikh Ismail Abdul Wahab and Sheikh M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, two of the most influential Al Washliyah Islamic scholar in East Sumatra, also issued a resolution on the jihad against the Dutch. To maintain independence, Sheikh Ismail Abdul Wahab (Harahap), an influential Islamic scholar in Tanjungbalai, issued a fatwa "*syahid fi sabilillah* for someone who struggles against the colonial government and its accomplices." At the Alim Ulama East

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<sup>67</sup> Sjamsuddin, *Chutbah Pengurus*.

<sup>68</sup> Pengurus Besar Al Djamiyatul Washlijah, *Peringatan Al Djamiyatul Washlijah ¼ Abad 30 Nopember 1930-30 Nopember 1955* (Medan: Pengurus Besar Al Djamiyatul Washlijah, 1956).

Sumatra meeting in 1946 in Tebing Tinggi, he became one of the loudest and most assertive speakers in defending his position on the law against the colonial government.<sup>69</sup>

Sheikh M. Arsjad Th. Lubis wrote the book *Toentoenan Perang Sabil*<sup>70</sup> which was completed on February 8, 1946. In this book that has attracted the attention of the Dutch, he has issued a fatwa:

“... according to my understanding and stance, the battle in the war against the Dutch and their assistants who want to dominate our homeland, Indonesia, is included in the part of the war that Allah is pleased with, the war against the enemies of Allah and the war which will heighten the Oneness of God in Indonesian land. Therefore, whoever participates in the war with a sincere intention to exalt the word of Allah, to demand the pleasure and reward of Allah, to destroy Allah's enemies, then is fighting for God's cause, and if he is killed, he dies as a martyr *fī sabilillāh*, heaven is the place. God Knows Best.”

The Mandailing ulama, who chose to join the Al-Ittihadiyah organization, also showed an anti-colonial attitude and took part in leading the war against the Dutch. Sheikh Abdul Halim Hasan and Sheikh Zainal Arifin Abbas are the two most important figures of Al-Ittihadiyah. Sheikh Abdul Halim Hasan became the General Chair of the Sabilillah Front, Hizbullah, and North West Sector Mujahideen in the Medan Area, a member of the East Sumatra Regional Defense Council. He received the rank of Lieutenant Colonel when he was a member of the Staff of the Military Governor of the Aceh Residency. His views on infidels who colonized Muslims are written in two of his works, *Tafsir al-Qur'anul Karim* and *Tafsir al-Ahkam*.<sup>71</sup> His student, Sheikh Zainal Arifin Abbas, also led the war against the Dutch military aggression in East Sumatra. He is the Deputy Commander of the IX Division of Hizbullah in East Sumatra. At that time, he held the

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<sup>69</sup> Majelis Ulama Sumatera Utara, “Riwayat Hidup Almarhum Asyasyahid Fi Sabilillah Syekh Ismail Bin Abdul Wahab Tanjung Balai (1897-1947),” in *Sejarah Ulama-Ulama Terkemuka Di Sumatera Utara* (Medan: Majelis Ulama Sumatera Utara, 1983).

<sup>70</sup> M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, *Toentoenan Perang Sabil* (Medan: Soeloeh Merdeka, 1946), 22.

<sup>71</sup> Abdul Halim Hasan, *Tafsir Al-Ahkam*, ed. Azhari Akmal Tarigan and Agus Khair (Jakarta: Kencana, 2006).

rank of Lieutenant Colonel.<sup>72</sup> Like the ulama affiliated with Al Washliyah, the Mandailing ulama affiliated with Al-Ittihadiyah participated in igniting the spirit of jihad and even directly led the war against the Dutch colonialists who wanted to regain control of Indonesia.

Apart from being proven to pay attention to national politics, Mandailing ulamas are also involved in practical politics. They are also not indifferent to the socio-political life of Nusantara. Therefore, some were involved in the world of movements, such as affiliated with socio-religious organizations and becoming members of Islamic political parties. Furthermore, some Mandailing ulama in Tapanuli Residency was involved in practical politics, inseparable from their socio-religious organization choice. At least two, namely Sheikh Abdul Halim Hasibuan (d. 1920) and Sheikh Musthafa Husein (d. 1955), served as administrators of the Sarekat Islam in their respective regions. Despite being a member of the Sarekat Islam, Sheikh Mustafa Husein was later trusted as an advisor to Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah based in Medan City, East Sumatra, and an administrative member of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). Indeed, Sheikh Musthafa Husein's role was huge in establishing and developing NU in the Tapanuli Residency. The network of Pesantren Musthafawiyah alumni has made NU increasingly rooted in Tapanuli and East Sumatra Residencies. However, Al Washliyah's influence is still more dominant in East Sumatra even to date. Conversely, NU's influence is huge in the Tapanuli Residency. The impact and network of the Pesantren Musthafawiyah alumni are certainly the keys to the phenomenon of NU's power in Mandailing.

Unlike the ulama in the Tapanuli Residency, the Mandailing ulama in the East Sumatra Residency is affiliated with Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah or Al Ittihadiyah. The Al Washliyah in the early era was often identified with Mandailing nomads in North Sumatra because its founders were Mandailing ulama and

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<sup>72</sup> Dewan Harian Cabang Angkatan-45 Kotamadya Binjai, *Al-Ustazd H. Zainal Arifin Abbas, Wakil Ketua Majelis Islam Tinggi (MIT) Binjai, Pelaku Sejarah Pengibar Bendera Merah Putih Pertama Di Binjai Tanggal 6 September 1945* (Binjai, 1996).

comprised students, such as Sheikh Muhammad Yunus, Sheikh Dja'far Hasan, Abdurrahman Sjihab, Ismail Banda, M. Arsjad Th. Lubis and Yusuf Ahmad Lubis. Meanwhile, Al-Ittihadiyah is often identified with Malay ulama, although some are affiliated with these Islamic organizations, especially Sheikh Abdul Halim Hasan and Sheikh Zainal Arifin Abbas. After Indonesia's independence, Al Washliyah and Al-Ittihadiyah became special members of the Masjumi Party.

Due to their choice of religious organization affiliation, Mandailing ulama in the Tapanuli Residency and East Sumatra Residency became politicians of the Masjumi Party after NU left during the Old Order era. Al Washliyah is one of the notable members of the Masjumi Party supported by ulama. Abdurrahman Sjihab was a member of the Masjumi Party's DPP and lastly the Chairman of the Sjuro Council of the Masjumi Party's DPP. He was a member of the Central Indonesian National Committee (KNIP) and the Provisional Indonesian House of Representatives (DPRS) from the Masjumi Party faction until his death in February 1955. Four Al Washliyah ulama sit as members of the Constituent Assembly, namely M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, Adnan Lubis, Muhammad Ali Hanafiah Lubis (Mahals) and Bahrum Djamil. Udin Sjamsuddin (Siregar), another of Al Washliyah's most influential figures, was elected to the House of Representatives (DPR) as a result of the 1955 general election. M. Arsjad Th. Lubis is known as an expert on Christology and anti-communism, while Adnan Lubis is the drafter of Al Washliyah in the Masyumi Party based on an Islamic state. Two figures from Al Ittihadiyah are also members of the Constituent Assembly of the Masjumi Party, namely M. Salim Fachry and Zainal Abidin Nurdin. Their election as Constituent members is proof that they are involved in Indonesia's practical politics of social and political developments.

In the context of NU, this Islamic organization was initially a member of the Masjumi political party. Eventually, NU ulama became politicians in the Tapanuli Residency, such as Sheikh Musthafa Husein and Sheikh Ali Hasan ad-Dary. In the 1955 election, Syekh Musthafa Husein was elected as a member of the Constituent Assembly from the NU Party, but he died before the

official swearing-in ceremony. His position as a member of the Constituent Assembly was replaced by Haji Muda Siregar. Many of his students became the administrators of the NU Party with ideological affiliation with the school, even though Sheikh Mustafa Husein's family manages it. Mandailing ulama from Al Washliyah and Al Ittihadiyah, Mandailing ulama affiliated with NU were also not indifferent to political developments in Indonesia. They indicated that they considered it essential to participate in politics to fight for the ideals of Islam and Muslims.

Some Mandailing ulama, due to their support and sympathy for the disbandment of the Masjumi Party, lacked empathy for President Soekarno after the tragedy of the 1965 Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) rebellion. Al-Ittihadiyah is a special member of the Masjumi Party. Sheikh M. Arsjad Th. Lubis and Sheikh Zainal Arifin Abbas were the main speakers at the North Sumatran Ulama Conference which was held on 2-3 March 1967 in Medan. This meeting specifically discussed the issue of the position of the head of state of the Republic of Indonesia, the criminal law of Soekarno and his accomplices, and understanding the terms of piety and general elections. Sheikh M. Arsjad Th. Lubis presented a paper entitled "Kedudukan Kepala Negara R.I. Ditinjau dari Sudut Hukum Islam,"<sup>73</sup> while Sheikh Zainal Arifin Abbas presented a paper entitled "*Hukum Kedjahatan-Kedjahatan Yang Dilakukan Presiden Soekarno Dan Sekalian Anteknja Sebelum Dan Sesudah Gestapu Dipandang Menurut Hukum Al-Quran Surat Al-Na'am Ajat 33-34 Dan Surat Al-Hudjurat Ajat 9.*"<sup>74</sup> The contents of these two papers clearly show that they lacked sympathy for the leadership of the Old Order regime after the PKI rebellion in 1965. Sheikh M. Arsjad Th. Lubis also wrote a book entitled *Penjelesaian*

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<sup>73</sup> M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, "Kedudukan Kepala Negara R.I. Ditinjau Dari Sudut Hukum Islam," in *Kedudukan Kep. Negara Dalam Hukum Islam* (Medan: Jajasan Balai Penerbitan Islam, 1967).

<sup>74</sup> Zainal Arifin Abbas, "*Hukum Kedjahatan-Kedjahatan Yang Dilakukan Presiden Soekarno Dan Sekalian Anteknja Sebelum Dan Sesudah Gestapu Dipandang Menurut Hukum Al-Quran Surat Al-Na'am Ajat 33-34 Dan Surat Al-Hudjurat Ajat 9,*" in *Kedudukan Kep. Negara Dalam Hukum Islam* (Medan: Jajasan Balai Penerbitan Islam, 1967).



*Pemberontakan Dan Perang Saudara Menurut Hukum Fikih Islam*<sup>75</sup> as a form of his rejection of the strategy of the Old Order regime in resolving the problem of upheaval in regions such as DI/III. Thus, the Mandailing ulama participated in responding to national political issues, and this proved that they were actively able to play a role as agents of political change in Indonesia.

As Masjumi Party politicians, Mandailing ulama affiliated with Al Washliyah and Al-Ittihadiyah have an anti-communism attitude and the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). This can be seen from their presence at the Indonesian Ulama Conference in Palembang. The Al Washliyah ulama present at that time was M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, Adnan Lubis, Bahrum Djamil Nasution, Udin Sjamsuddin Siregar, Abdurrahim Sjihab Rangkuti and Bachrum Saleh Nasution. Meanwhile, Zainal Arifin Abbas as an Al-Ittihadiyah Islamic scholar was also present at the congress. M. Arsjad Th. Lubis as a representative of Al Washliyah presented a paper entitled "Pembelaan Islam Terhadap Serangan Atheisme."<sup>76</sup> They not only rejected communism from a teaching point of view but were also wary of the PKI movement in Indonesia. PKI henchmen physically attacked Udin Sjamsuddin as a figurehead of Al Washliyah and the Masjumi Party in Medan. All of this shows that the Mandailing ulama are not silent about political events in the country they have predicted since the beginning of the PKI rebellion in 1965.

**Table 1. The role of the Mandailing ulamas in the fields of education, intellectuals, and politics in the Residency of East Sumatra**

No.	Islamic Scholars	Roles
1	Sheikh Abdul Qadir bin Shabir al-Mandili	He taught at the Masjidil Haram and Madrasah Dār al-'Ulūm. He became a teacher for students from Indonesia, including Mandailing Islamic

<sup>75</sup> M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, *Penyelesaian Pemberontakan Dan Perang Sudara Menurut Hukum Fikih Islam* (Medan: Pustaka Al Washlijah, 1958).

<sup>76</sup> M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, "Pembelaan Islam Terhadap Serangan Komunisme," in *Muktamar Ulama Se-Indonesia Di Palembang Tgl. 8-11 Sept. 1957* (Palembang: Panitia Muktamar Ulama se-Indonesia di Palembang, 1957), 44–53; M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, "Pembelaan Islam Terhadap Serangan Atheisme," in *Muktamar Ulama Se-Indonesia Di Palembang* (Bandung: Daulah Islamiyah, 1957), 6–15.

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		scholars.
2	Sheikh Abdul Fattah	He studied in Mecca and spread the Naqshbandiyah Order.
3	Sheikh Ahmad Zein	He studied in Mecca, founded a boarding school in Tapanuli, taught the Sammaniyah Order.
4	Sheikh Abdul Halim Hasibuan	He studied in Mecca, established a recitation class in a surau, taught the Naqshbandiah school, and led the Sarekat Islam in South Tapanuli.
5	Sheikh Abdul Hamid Lubis	He studied in Mecca, criticized the Naqshbandiyah school, and taught at home and in mosques.
6	Sheikh Abd. Muthalib Manyabar Lubis	He studied in Mecca, taught at the Naqshbandiyah school, and established a recitation class.
7	Sheikh Musthafa Husein Nasution	He studied in Mecca, established a madrasa called Maktab Islamiyah which later became the Musthafawiyah Islamic Boarding School, became an Al Washliyah and Masjumi activist, and later he became the founder of Nahdlatul Ulama in the Tapanuli Residency.
8	Sheikh Juneid Thola	He studied in Mecca and Cairo, founded madrasas with a waqf system, and built relationships with Permi figures to oppose the Dutch.
9	Sheikh Mukhtar Harahap	He studied in Mecca and founded the Pesantren Al-Mukhtariyah.
10	Sheikh Ali Hasan Ahmad ad-Dary Hasibuan	He studied in Mecca, founded madrasas and even universities, taught in Mecca, wrote works in the Islamic field, and was affiliated with Nahdlatul Ulama.
11	Sheikh Abdul Qadir bin Abdul Muttalib al-Mandili	He studied in Mecca, taught in Mecca, then worked in Malaysia and produced many works in the Islamic field, including in the political field.
12	Sheikh Baharuddin Thalib Lubis	He studied Islamic teachings in Mecca, founded and led a madrasa, and became the first Chairman of the NU Regional Leadership.
13	Sheikh Abdul Halim Khatib Lubis	He studied in Mecca, taught, and later led the Mustafawiyah Islamic Boarding School, he was affiliated with Nahdlatul Ulama, and produced many works.

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**Table 2. The role of Mandailing ulamas in the fields of education, intellectuals, and politics in the Tapanuli Residency**

No.	Islamic Scholars	Roles
1	Abdurrahman Sjihab Rangkuti	He studied at many madrasas in East Sumatra, founded and led Al Washliyah, supported and made Al Washliyah a special member of Masjumi, became a Masjumi figure on local and national stages, became a member of KNIP and DPRS in Jakarta, and produced books and articles. He led the <i>Komite Pemberantas I'tikad Ahmadiyah al-Qadiyah</i> . He led Al Washliyah to defend Indonesia's independence.
2	M. Arsjad Th. Lubis	He studied at several madrasas in East Sumatra, founded and led Al Washliyah, became a member of the Madjlis Sjuro Masjumi and even a member of the Constituent Assembly, and produced dozens of works including in the field of comparative Islam and Christianity. He wrote <i>Toentoenan Perang Sabil</i> which explains the law of jihad against the Dutch.
3	Adnan Lubis	He studied in Makkah and India, was affiliated with Al Washliyah and became a member of the Madjlis Sjuro Masjumi, was elected as a member of the Constituent Assembly, and produced many books and articles including in the fields of commentary and politics.
4	Yusuf Ahmad Lubis	He studied at MIT and Madrasah al-Hasaniyah, founded Al Washliyah, was affiliated with Masjumi, worked in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore, and produced dozens of works including in the fields of interpretation, comparative religion, and politics.
5	Ismail Abdul Wahab Harahap	He studied in Cairo (Egypt), was affiliated with Al Washliyah, and affirmed the fatwa of jihad against the Dutch.
6	Abdul Halim Hasan Daulay	He studied at many madrasas in East Sumatra and at the Masjidil Haram while performing Hajj, taught and led madrasas, was affiliated with Muhammadiyah and later Al-Ittihadiyah, led the war against Dutch military aggression, and produced many works, especially in the field of interpretation.
7	Zainal Arifin Abbas Hasibuan	He studied at many madrasas in East Sumatra, was affiliated with Al-Ittihadiyah, founded and led a madrasa, became the leader of the Masjumi, Parmusi, and PPP Parties in North Sumatra, and produced many works including in the field of interpretation.

## Conclusion

This study proposes the following findings. First, the Mandailing ulama were able to become agents of social change, especially in the fields of education, intellectuals, and politics in the Tapanuli Residency and East Sumatra Residency throughout the early 20th century. As agents of change, after studying Islamic sciences in the Middle East for a long time, especially Mecca and Egypt as the intellectual centers of the Sunni world at that time, the Mandailing ulama in the Tapanuli Residency returned to their hometowns. They established educational institutions, both madrasas, and Islamic boarding schools. The yellow book in the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah school and the Shāfi'iyah school is the reference for teachers and students. In the case of the Residency of East Sumatra, senior Mandailing ulama are known to have studied in the Middle East region, while younger Islamic scholar prefer to study in madrasas built by senior Islamic scholar from both the Mandailing and Malay ethnic groups who have studied study at the Masjidilharam.

They studied for a long time until they became scholars, finally some of them later, like other scholars in the archipelago, established an Islamic organization called Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah or joined Al-Ittihadiyah where these two Islamic organizations became a means of struggle for them, especially in the field of education, da'wah, and social charity. Later, the Mandailing ulama in the Tapanuli Residency joined the Nahdlatul Ulama. Regardless of their choice of organization, it is clear that they have built hundreds of educational institutions, some of which are privately owned by ulama, and some are educational institutions managed by organizations. Through Islamic organizations in addition to their charisma and knowledge, the Mandailing ulama has a fanatical following with a significant number, especially from the educated. This makes it easier for them to mobilize the power of the Muslims to strengthen the Sunni Islamic tradition and pave the way in fighting for the political ideals of Muslims in Indonesia before and after the independence era.

Mandailing ulama are also known as productive individuals with numerous written works. Those in the Tapanuli and East Sumatra Residencies have produced works in Islamic sciences,

especially in the fields of the Quran and interpretation, hadith science, *fiqh*, and *ushūl al-fiqh*, monotheism and comparative religion, as well as *tashawuf* and Islamic history. Their works were published in Medan, especially Islamiyah, Madju, and Syarikat Tapanuli, with cross-ethnic and regional readers. Their works, apart from being textbooks in the field of religious sciences for students at the madrasas, schools, and universities they founded, were also a reaction to socio-religious issues (Ahmadiyah and Christianization) and socio-political issues in the Order era. Long. As respected and influential scholars, their works became a reference for their fanatical followers. Their works certainly influence Indonesia's socio-religious and socio-political dynamics, especially North Sumatra.

Furthermore, they did not ignore practical politics by fighting against and expelling the Dutch colonialists from Indonesia and participating in becoming politicians of the Masjumi and the NU Parties. Some of the Mandailing ulama even became members of the Constituent Assembly in Jakarta. Those that joined Al Washliyah or Al Ittihadiyah in East Sumatra were affiliated with the Masjumi Party. The Mandailing Ulama from the Tapanuli Residency was previously affiliated with the Masjumi Party and later with the NU Party. However, this deflection was after NU, as a socio-religious organization was no longer a particular member of the Masjumi Party. Despite the differences in the choice of mass organizations and parties, the Mandailing ulama showed that they were not anti-politics instead, they used it as a medium for the struggle for the political ideals of Muslims in Indonesia. They are also not only in practical politics because they also play a role as ideologues in the political field. The existence of their work in the political field as a response to political problems in Indonesia is proof that they also have thoughts in the political field, and these thoughts they fight for through the political parties they support. Finally, their position as politicians who later became public officials directly contributed to strengthening the educational institutions and organizations they built and making it easier for them to fight for their brilliant ideas.

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