

# THE HADRAMI ARAB SCHOOL IN BETAWI A Portrait of the Ambivalence of Habib 'Uthmān bin Yaḥyā's Attitude Towards the Dutch Colonialism

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**Abstract:** This article analyses the existence of the Hadrami Arabic School in Betawi, which shows the ambivalence of Habib 'Uthmān's attitude as a figure who is exclusive on the one hand and inclusive on the other. The figure portrayed often responds to the problems faced by the hadrami community in Betawi, including the scope of education with his idea of an Arabic School. This article explores Habib 'Uthmān's life journey, work, and thoughts written in archives or books, journals, and newspapers related to Habib 'Uthmān in the context of his life history, including the curriculum of the Arabic School. This article finds that Habib 'Uthmān supports the implementation of an education system that maintains the hadrami community and rejects education systems that are contrary to hadrami customs and traditions, including those initiated by the government so that he seems exclusive. On the other hand, Habib 'Uthmān is found to support government policies, including educational concordance, so he is considered inclusive. This attitude shows Habib 'Uthmān's ambivalence in Betawi towards the hadrami community and Dutch colonial policies, which is a form of humanization, which is the core purpose of education.

**Keywords:** Habib 'Uthmān, Arab School, Hadrami Community, Dutch Colonial, Betawi.

## Introduction

Habib 'Uthmān bin Yaḥyā (1822-1914) (Habib 'Uthmān) was an Arab figure, cleric, and Mufti from among the "Alawiyyin who became Adviseur Voor Arabische Zaken in Betawi. His position was considered controversial because it was an attempt to trace the

development of the social dynamics of the Hadrami community after Habib Abd al-Rahmān al-Zāhir's conspiracy with the Ottoman Turks in the 1870 Aceh War.<sup>1</sup> This 'Ulama, in Burhanuddin's view, was perceived as supporting colonial policies with narratives that ran throughout his life.<sup>2</sup> He was often accused with the phrases “the friend of the Dutch East Indies government,”<sup>3</sup> “a very loyal servant of the Dutch colonial government” and “an Arab affiliated with the Dutch East Indies government” to “a sycophantic preacher”, who “deceived the eyes of Europeans.”<sup>4</sup> Others referred to him as “a government advisor who gave views according to his understanding as a scholar and mufti”.<sup>5</sup>

This assumption is contradicted by the texts written by Habib 'Uthmān himself. He appears as a “caller and reminder” for the Hadrami community not to be affected by *ghurūr*.<sup>6</sup> He urges constant religious study because of *ghurūr* is embedded in the attitudes and thoughts of those who are ignorant of religion and reluctant to learn it.<sup>7</sup> He then supported the Hadrami movement for education because *ghurūr* is also the result of the unsuccessful process of learning or socializing religious values, both to individuals and society.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, Habib 'Uthmān always tried to contribute his thoughts and support for

<sup>1</sup> A.H. Swaving, *Mr. L.W.C. van Den Berg's De Toekomst van Atjeh* (Batavia: H.M. Van Dorp & Co., 1890), 2; Hamid Algadri, *Islam Dan Keturunan Arab: Dalam Pemberontakan Melawan Belanda* (Bandung: Mizan, 1998), 113, 118.

<sup>2</sup> Jajat Burhanudin, ‘The Dutch Colonial Policy on Islam: Reading the Intellectual Journey of Snouck Hurgronje’, *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 52, no. 1 (2014): 25–58.

<sup>3</sup> Nico JG Kaptein, *Islam, Colonialism and The Modern Age in The Netherlands East Indies: A Biography of Sayyid 'Uthman (1822–1914)* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 179.

<sup>4</sup> Hussein Badjerei, *Al-Iryad Mengisi Sejarah Bangsa* (Jakarta: Penerbit Presto Prima Utama, 1996), 21; Deliar Noer, *Gerakan Moderen Islam Di Indonesia, 1900-1942* (Jakarta: Lembaga Penelitian, Pendidikan dan Penerangan Ekonomi dan Sosial (LP3ES), 1982), 29.

<sup>5</sup> Muhammad Noupal, ‘Pemikiran Keagamaan Sayyid Usman Bin Yahya (1822-1914): Respon Dan Kritik Terhadap Kondisi Sosial Keagamaan Di Indonesia’ (Doctoral-Thesis, Jakarta, UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, 2008).

<sup>6</sup> 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, *Al-Naṣīḥah al-Mardīyyah Fī Radd 'Alā al-Waṣīyyah al-Manāmiyyah* (Betawi: Percetakan 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, 1309), 38–39.

<sup>7</sup> 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, ‘Ini Jadwal Bernama Cahaya Bulan’ (n.d.), personal manuscript.

<sup>8</sup> bin Yahyā, *Al-Naṣīḥah al-Mardīyyah Fī Radd 'Alā al-Waṣīyyah al-Manāmiyyah*, 38–39.

the education movement.<sup>9</sup> This fact, according to Azra, is evidence that Habib 'Uthmān was a pioneer of the notion of the purity of sayyid blood.<sup>10</sup>

Based on the above description, it can be seen that Habib 'Uthmān had ambivalence between the government and the Arabs.<sup>11</sup> This paper aims to explore this point by portraying the case of the establishment of the Arab school (*Jamiat Kheir*) of the Hadrami Community. For him, the school was an effort to maintain the identity of his community, *the 'Alawiyyin*.<sup>12</sup> In this case, his actions were found practicing what Nelson calls identity politics, as noted by Hiariej who considers that Habib 'Uthmān was striving for the existence of the Hadrami community.<sup>13</sup>

For this purpose, Habib 'Uthmān's life journey, work and thoughts written in his works were collected together with the writings of others who discussed the existence of Arab schools in Betawi. The discourse and analysis related to the curriculum were also captured in order to obtain a detailed picture of the lesson content that accommodated the existence of the Hadrami community while reviewing those that conflicted with customs and traditions. This paper also addresses how the Hadrami community responded to Habib 'Uthmān's movement which was considered modern and contrary to the ancestral traditions of Hadhramaut, especially in the tradition of religious teaching without denying the customs of the ancestors that are still routinized today, such as music, recitation of *Tarekat Alawiyyah*, *Rātib al-Haddād* or

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<sup>9</sup> 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, 'Brieven van Sayyid 'Uthmān b. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Aqīl al-'Alawī (1822-1914) Aan Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje (1857-1936) Or. 8952 A: 1024', 4 November 1912.

<sup>10</sup> Azyumardi Azra, 'Hadramī Scholars in the Malay-Indonesian Diaspora: A Preliminary Study of Sayyid 'Uthmān', *Studia Islamika* 2, no. 2 (1995): 1–33, <https://doi.org/10.15408/sdi.v2i2.833>.

<sup>11</sup> Hamid Algadri, C. Snouck Hurgronje: *Politik Belanda Terhadap Islam Dan Keturunan Arab* (Jakarta: Penerbit Sinar Harapan, 1984), 119; Kaptein, *Islam, Colonialism and The Modern Age in The Netherlands East Indies: A Biography of Sayyid 'Uthman (1822–1914)*, 140–44; Aqib Suminto, *Politik Islam Hindia Belanda Het Kantoor Voor Inlandsche Zaken* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1985), 118, 160; P.S.J. van Koningsveld, *Snouck Hurgronje Dan Islam* (Jakarta: Girimukti Pusaka, 1989), 159.

<sup>12</sup> 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, *Tuhfab Al-Wardiyah Min Riyad al-Shari'ah al-Muhammadiyah Fi al-Nasihat al-Mardiyah* (Betawi: Percetakan 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, 1297), 23.

<sup>13</sup> Dana D Nelson, 'Guest Introduction: Identity? Politics', *Modern Language Studies* 32, no. 1 (2002): 53–54, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3252050>; Eric Hiariej, 'Pluralisme, Politik Identitas, Dan Krisis Identitas', in *Politik Identitas Dan Masa Depan Pluralisme Kita*, ed. Ihsan Ali-Fauzi (Jakarta: Democracy Project, 2012).

*Maulid*,<sup>14</sup> which in Zamhari's analysis is the Hadrami tradition of promoting love for Allah and the Prophet Muhammad.<sup>15</sup>

In presenting the findings, this article is formatted into four parts; first, it presents a description of the establishment of Arab schools in Betawi by the figure discussed. The second describes the religious teacher ordinance that made Habib 'Uthmān exclusive. The third reveals the educational concordance and the character's response that shows his inclusive nature. Finally, the fourth section concludes the article, confirming his ambivalence. This article is important to reveal how Habib 'Uthmān's profile, to borrow Fadjar's opinion, becomes a form of humanization, which is the core purpose of education.<sup>16</sup>

### Arab School in Betawi

Although Hadrami community spread to many regions in archipelago,<sup>17</sup> their presence in Betawi was very strong. This section provides an overview of Arab schools established by Habib 'Uthmān for Hadrami community in Betawi which, in terms of social structure,

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<sup>14</sup> Zeffry Alkatiri and Mathar Mochammad Kamal, 'Modern Malay Rhythm Music Trend as Popular Culture in Indonesia, 1950-1960's: A Sociological Analysis', *Tawarikh* 4, no. 2 (2013): 223–44, <https://doi.org/10.2121/tawarikh.v4i2.558>; Ismail Alatas, 'Land of the Sacred, Land of the Damned: Conceptualizing Homeland among the Upholders of the Thariqah 'Alawiyyah in Indonesia', *Antropologi Indonesia* 35, no. 2 (2014): 142–58, <https://doi.org/10.7454/ai.v29i2.3533>; Zainul Milal Bizawie, 'Sanad and Ulama Network of the Quranic Studies in Nusantara', *Heritage of Nusantara: International Journal of Religious Literature and Heritage* 4, no. 1 (2015): 23–44, <https://doi.org/10.31291/hn.v4i1.60>; Gamal Gasim, 'Hadhrāmūt and Its Diaspora: Yemeni Politics, Identity and Migration Ed. by Noel Brehony', *The Middle East Journal* 71, no. 4 (2017): 688–89; Sumanto Al Qurtuby, 'Arabs and 'Indo-Arabs' in Indonesia: Historical Dynamics, Social Relations and Contemporary Changes.', *International Journal of Asia-Pacific Studies* 13, no. 2 (2017): 45–72, <https://doi.org/10.21315/ijaps2017.13.2.3>; Yasmine Zaki Shahab, 'Exploring Uniting Factor for Multiculturalism Policy: Portrait of Hadrami, Arab Community in Indonesia', *KnE Social Sciences* 3, no. 10 (2018): 650–80, <http://dx.doi.org/10.18502/kss.v3i10.2940>.

<sup>15</sup> Arif Zamhari, 'Defending Islamic Tradition: Theological Responses of the Hadrami Majelis Taklim Groups toward the Salafi-Wahabi Preaching Movement in Contemporary Indonesia', *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 16, no. 1 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2022.16.1.75-102>.

<sup>16</sup> A Malik Fadjar, *Tinta Yang Tidak Pernah Habis* (Jakarta: INTI, 2008), 152.

<sup>17</sup> Amanah Nurish, Religious and Cultural Embodiment in the Land of Osing: A Portrait of Hadrami Community in Banyuwangi, East Java, *Islamica*, Vol. 18 No. 2 (2024).

were comprised of people of mixed ethnicity, tribe and culture.<sup>18</sup> The Hadrami community being one of them recognized as respectable religionists.<sup>19</sup> A Hadrami named ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Alawī al-’Attās (d. 1929) was heavily involved in spreading the idea of progress, mainly in education.<sup>20</sup> The Betawi people, therefore, respected them with the same respect that they had for religious elites such as Quran teachers and Haji. On a practical level, Habibs were even given a greater portion of the honor due to their nobility and diligence in worship.<sup>21</sup>

Habib 'Uthmān felt this situation. At the age of forty, he was immediately involved in various religious activities after a scientific pilgrimage to several parts of the Middle East. He was documented as actively giving teachings such as in the Petamburan mosque to replace his grandfather who passed away, in the Pasar Senin mosque (Kampung Besar) upon the request of Haji Mu'in, and in the Pekojan mosque, to replace the old Shaikh Abd. al-Ghani Bima.<sup>22</sup> He, himself, at that time, resided in Petamburan, which today, is south of the Petamburan mosque, behind the west side of the gas station and Bank Mandiri, just in front of the Pelni hospital on Jalan Sasuit Tubun Jakarta.<sup>23</sup>

For Betawi people, having learned religion from the elites was a cultural identity that evolved even more and became an option than pesantren. Habib 'Uthmān routinely practiced this system of education in his intellectual history, on a daily basis. Until 1898, he introduced the idea of organizing education in a special school for the Hadrami community, which he thought would be an adequate platform for

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<sup>18</sup> Anwarudin Harapan, *Sejarah, Sastra Dan Budaya Betawi* (Jakarta: APPM, 2006), 74–75.

<sup>19</sup> Ismail Fajrie Alatas, ‘Menjadi Arab: Komunitas Hadrami, Ilmu Pengetahuan, Kolonial & Etnisitas’, in *Orang Arab Di Nusantara*, by LWC Van den Berg (Jakarta: Komunitas Bambu, 2010), xxxiv–xxxv; Abdul Aziz, *Islam Dan Masyarakat Betawi* (Jakarta: Logos, 2002), 39.

<sup>20</sup> Alwi Alatas, Syed Mohammad Chaedar, Investing in the Ummatic Cause: The Philanthropic Activities of ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Alawī al-’Attās (d. 1929), *Qijis*, Vol 10, No 1 (2022)

<sup>21</sup> Uka Tjandrasmita, *Sejarah Jakarta Dari Jaman Pra Sejarah Sampai Batavia* (Jakarta: Dinas Museum dan Sejarah DKI Jakarta, 1977), 11.

<sup>22</sup> Abd. bin ‘Uthmān bin Yahyā, *Sulub Zamān* (Jakarta: Percetakan Sayyid Usman, n.d.), 9.

<sup>23</sup> Habib Ahmad al-Habshi, Wawancara dengan keturunan dari ‘Uthmān bin Yahyā, 12 January 2016.

conducting activities to socialize religious values to his community, while maintaining the cultural identity of the community members.<sup>24</sup>

The idea was introduced by Habib 'Uthmān in a non-formal meeting of Hadrami community, January 1898 and it was warmly welcomed by the Hadrami Community.<sup>25</sup> Simultaneously was the idea of raising funds to strengthen the solidarity of the members. Habib 'Uthmān stated that the response he received from the community was an important step in the organization of his Islamic education system. Shadaqah (charity) to bring the idea into reality successfully established the Arabic School named *Jamiat Kheir (Djamiat Geir)*, which was officially registered in 1901, and inaugurated by the government on June 17, 1905 through besluit No. 4 dated June 17, 1905. The approval of its articles of association ('Anggaran Dasar Rumah Tangga' or ADRT) was on October 24, 1906, which contained data on the number of Jamiat Kheir members of 70 people, and grew in 1915 to reach 1,000 people with Habib Ali bin Ahmad Syahab as the elected chairman.<sup>26</sup>

Shahab said that the figure of Habib Ali bin Ahmad Syahab was one of the leading Arab figures in the Dutch East Indies who suggested establishing a modern school in Hadramaut in *al-Manar Magazine*.<sup>27</sup> His prominence was due to his intellectual position as one of the most vocal opponents of the *al-Irşyad* organization, which was founded as a result of the '*Alawi-Irşhadi* conflict that had been going on since the second decade of the 20th century. He was also the main informant of the British Consul General in Batavia until the 1920s and used his position to provoke the British to take action against *al-Irşhad*,

<sup>24</sup> Edrus Alwi Al-Masjhoer, *Jamiat Kheir: Sejarah Dan Perkembangannya* (Jakarta, n.d.), 26; Adnan al-Mecky, *Abou Guecha: Politik Satirisch Blad*, n.d., 9; 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, *I'lan al-Ikhwān Bi Wujūb al-Tablīgh Wa al-Tadbkīr Bi al-Iḥsān* (Betawi: Percetakan 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, 1331), 2; bin Yahyā, *Tuḥfab Al-Wardiyah Min Riyāḍ al-Sharī'ah al-Muḥammadiyah Fī al-Naṣīḥah al-Mardīyyah*, 23.

<sup>25</sup> 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, 'Perihal Kumpul Uang Buat Bikin (Sinuman?)' (transcription, UB Leiden University, n.d.), Plano 53 F1, No. (unread).

<sup>26</sup> 'Besluit Gouverneur Generaal (BT)', 24 October 1906, 31; 'Rapport Departement van Justitie', 20 October 1906, 22; 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, *Faṣl Al-Khīṭāb Fī Bayān al-Ṣawāb* (Betawi: Percetakan 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, n.d.), 2–3; Noer, *Gerakan Modern Islam Di Indonesia, 1900-1942*, 71.

<sup>27</sup> Muhammad Asad Shahab, *Al-Shi'a Fi Indonesia* (Najaf: Matba'a al-Ghary al-Haditha, 1962), 43–45; Solichin Salam, *Ali Ahmad Shahab: Pejuang Yang Terlupakan* (Jakarta: Gema Salam, 1992), 17.

which Alatas and Slama discuss as diaspora politics.<sup>28</sup> He convinced Indian and Singaporean ports to ban al-Irshad travel to Hadramaut and also intercepted their remittances.<sup>29</sup> He also influenced Sultan Qu'ayti in Hadramaut to prevent al-Irshad people from getting passports to visit their relatives in Hadramaut and vice versa.<sup>30</sup>

A notable record of this figure was the influence of the spirit of Pan-Islamism in his life. Habib Ali bin Ahmad Syahab had established contacts with Sultan Abdul Hamid of the Ottoman Empire, who was considered to be the figure behind the movement's power.<sup>31</sup> He even visited Turkey to request the provision of education for Habaib students from the Dutch East Indies in Istanbul. The result of his movement was Habib Abdul Muthallib, his own son, Habib Abdurrahman Alaidrus and Habib Muhammad bin Abdullah al-Attas who had the opportunity to study at the Galatasary Lyceum, in Istanbul.<sup>32</sup> Habib 'Uthmān considered it unethical for children from prominent and wealthy families, let alone from the Hadrami community, to do so.<sup>33</sup>

Based on these data, it can be said that Habib 'Uthmān had a central role for the Hadrami community with the *Jamiat Kheir Arabic school* that he initiated. In the subsequent educational progress of Arab figures, Arab schools such as *Makarimul Akhlak* led by Habib Abdullah bin Hussein Alaidrus, Habib Abdullah al-Attas and Habib Abu Bakar al-Attas emerged. This school was reportedly dissolved in 1909 due to a poorly maintained license. Habib 'Uthmān was very disappointed

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<sup>28</sup> Ismail Fajrie Alatas and Martin Slama, 'Rethinking Diasporic Returns: Hadrami Trajectories in Indonesia's Religio-Political Field', *Bijdragen Tot de Taal-, Land-En Volkenkunde/Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences of Southeast Asia* 178, no. 4 (2022): 410–39.

<sup>29</sup> Natalie Mobini-Keshch, *The Hadrami Awakening: Community and Identity in the Netherlands East Indies, 1900-1942* (Ithaca, New York: Southeast Asia Program Publications Cornell University, 1999), 60.

<sup>30</sup> Ulrike Freitag, 'Hadhramis in International Politics', in *Hadhrami Traditions, Scholars, and Statesmen in the Indian Ocean, 1750s-1960s* (Leiden, New York, Kolen: Brill, 1997), 124–25.

<sup>31</sup> Howard M. Federspiel, *Pembaharuan Islam Indonesia Abad XX* (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1996), 11; Lothrop Stoddard, *Dunia Baru Islam* (Jakarta, 1966), 61–65.

<sup>32</sup> Noer, *Gerakan Moderen Islam Di Indonesia, 1900-1942*, 67.

<sup>33</sup> 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, *Jam' al-Nafā'is Liṭaḥsīn al-Madāris* (Betawi: Percetakan 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, 1327), 4.

with the leadership when he was informed that the license of the educational institution was denied because it was only a one-sided request of their member named Yusuf.<sup>34</sup>

In addition, there was also an institution known as *Daja Oepaja*. Within the decision of the Algemeene Vergadering Daja Oepaja (D. O) there were names from the Hadrami community such as Habib Ali bin Abdurrahman al-Habsyi (oud voor zitter), Habib Abdullah bin Alwi Alattas (adviseur en goeroe), Shaikh Achmad al-Anshori (religious teacher) and several commissioners such as Habib Hasyim bin Abdullah Alatas, Habib Abdurrahman bin Ali al-Habsyi, Habib Abu Bakar bin Alatas, Habib Abdurrahman bin Ali al-Habsyi, Habib Abu Bakar bin Ahmad bin Shahab. The new members who attended on Sunday, April 27, 1913 at the Jati Baru Gang vereniging house were Habib Abdurrahman bin Ali al-Habsyi (commissar), Habib Abdurrahman bin Abdul Qadir Alaidrus (English teacher), while the new member (lid) was Habib Ahmad bin Umar Alatas (trader in Kwitang), Habib Abu Bakar bin Mohamad al-Habsyi (Tanah Abang), Habib Syaikh bin Achmad bin Syahab (Pekojan), Habib Muhammad bin Husain bin Tahir (Palembang Arabic teacher) and Habib Husain bin Saleh al-Habsyi (trader in Jati Tanah Abang).<sup>35</sup>

Then there was also *the Moeroeatoe'lichwan*, whose chairman was Habib Ahmad bin Muhammad al-Musawa, a modern intellectual who was very pro pan-Islamism and a supporter of Sarekat Islam in Surabaya.<sup>36</sup> Similarly, the Batavia Al-Chairiah institution based in Gang Petasan, Krukut, which was proven by an invitation advertisement leaflet delivered by the president of Batavia Al-Chairiah named Jayanegara about a lazing (taswier) event by Habib Ali bin Abdurrahman al-Habsyi on January 26, 1913 at 08:30.<sup>37</sup> Closing this section, it can be briefly stated that the Jamiat Kheir Arabic School initiated by Habib 'Uthmān was the first and pioneered the educational movement of Arab figures in the archipelago.

<sup>34</sup> 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, 'Brieven van Sayyid 'Uṭmān b. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Aqīl al-'Alawī (1822-1914) Aan Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje (1857-1936) Or. 8952 A: 1023', Desember 1906; 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, 'Brieven van Sayyid 'Uṭmān b. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Aqīl al-'Alawī (1822-1914) Aan Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje (1857-1936) Or. 8952 A: 1024', 25 July 1909; 'Pemberita Betawi', Oktober 1901.

<sup>35</sup> 'Pemberita Betawi', Mei 1913; 'Pemberita Betawi', 13 March 1913.

<sup>36</sup> National Archief, 'Algemeen Rijksarchief (ARA)' (Collection, Den Haag, n.d.), No.131.

<sup>37</sup> 'Pemberita Betawi', 4 April 1913.

### **The Ordinance of Religious Teachers in Arab Schools in Betawi**

This section depicts the exclusive nature of Habib 'Uthmān who supported the political policy of the ordinance for religious teachers in Arab schools in Betawi because he saw that it would contribute in maintaining the glory of the Hadrami community. He also rejected the activity of bringing teachers in Arab schools whom he considered would shift the social position of religious figures in the community.<sup>38</sup>

Habib 'Uthmān served as Honorary Advisor for Arab Affairs on May 3, 1891 when the teachers' ordinance was passed. He was appointed with ten points of consideration outlined by Snouck Hurgronje in his letter to the Director of Teaching, Worship and Crafts, April 5, 1891. (1) His valuable work for the central government and his strong influence as a rare scholar in the archipelago. (2) he had authority and noble origin. (3) He came from a respected family and had spent a long time studying religion in Mecca and Hadramaut. (4) He was the foremost expert on religious law in the archipelago and had good relations with the scholars in Mecca. (5) He was very fanatical in religion, but respected the government's power by rejecting religious heresies that were against the government. (6) He was humbly able to criticize government policies that harmed the worship of the Muslim community and advocated obedience to government law. (7) He rejected the movement of rebellion and the achievement of personal gain, even in the name of religion. (8) He was the one who often gave advice to the ruler in order to remain trusted by the government. (9) He was the one who had full confidence when solving religious problems with a calm and mature attitude. (10) He was a pious person and a good commander.<sup>39</sup> From this information, it can be seen that, both in terms of personality and competence, he was indeed worthy and qualified to get the position.

Another factor was certainly the colonial government's subjective assessment of his services, particularly when it came to composing the prayer for the coronation of Queen Wilhelmina in 1898, and his fatwa on the peasant uprising in Cilegon, 1888. Habib 'Uthmān, albeit in a closed ceremony, was honored with the cross of the Dutch Lion

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<sup>38</sup> Noer, *Gerakan Moderen Islam Di Indonesia, 1900-1942*, 68–69.

<sup>39</sup> Snouck Hurgronje, 'Surat Snouck Hurgronje Kepada Direktur Pengajaran, Ibadah Dan Kerajinan, 5 April 1891', in *Nasihat-Nasihat C. Snouck Hurgronje Semasa Kepengawaiannya Kepada Pemerintah Hindia Belanda 1889-1936*, by E. Gobece and C. Andriaanse, IX (Jakarta: INIS, 1994), 1624.

(Nederlandschen Leeuw) by the resident of Betawi, December 5, 1899. Snouck Hurgronje stated that the ceremony was held in private to prevent negative attention from the Turkish government towards the Ulama. The Dutch scholar stated in his letter of March 26, 1899 to the Governor-General that he asked Goeje for help in refuting the slanders directed at Habib 'Uthmān. The letter also stated that the Ulama deserved the Nederlandschen Leeuw star because he had rejected pan-Islamism, encouraged the people to always be loyal to the government and wrote a prayer of salvation for the coronation of Queen Wilhelmina as well as a fatwa on jihad.<sup>40</sup> With his appointment, Habib 'Uthmān was authorized to give socio-religious advice related to society and government.<sup>41</sup>

Furthermore, the Islamic teachers' ordinance was a political policy enacted after the 1888 peasant uprising in Cilegon. The colonial government felt the need to enact it because they were troubled by the militancy of teachers who were responsible for the incident.<sup>42</sup> Through the teacher ordinance policy, they hoped to monitor and reduce militancy, especially Islamic religious teachers because they were required to obtain prior permission before carrying out their duties as religious teachers.<sup>43</sup> The Betawi and Hadrami communities were certainly affected. In this context, Habib 'Uthmān viewed that the implementation of the teachers' ordinance could be used to maintain the greatness and glory of the Hadrami community. In short, maintaining cultural identity as a religionist, or a respected descendant. He was referring to the case of Shaikh Ahmad Soorkatti, Shaikh Muhammad Abdul Hamid and Shaikh Muhammad Thayib who were invited by the Jamiat Kheir board to teach in several Arab schools in

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<sup>40</sup> 'Besluit Gouverneur Generaal (BT)', 11 September 1889, 11 Lijst B; 'De Telegraaf', Desember 1919; 'Missive Gouvernements Secretaris (MGS)', 11 September 1899, 2474-2475; 'Pemberita Betawi', 22 January 1913; Snouck Hurgronje, 'Surat Snouck Hurgronje Kepada M.J. De Goeje, 4 November 1899', in *Nasihat-Nasihat C. Snouck Hurgronje Semasa Kepengawaiannya Kepada Pemerintah Hindia Belanda 1889-1936*, by E. Gobe and C. Andriaanse, IX (Jakarta: INIS, 1994); Nico Kaptein, 'The Sayyid and The Queen: Sayyid 'Uthmān on Queen Wilhelmina's Inauguration on the Throne of the Netherlands in 1898', *Journal of Islamic Studies* 9, no. 2 (1998): 158-77, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jis/9.2.158>.

<sup>41</sup> Suminto, *Politik Islam Hindia Belanda Het Kantoor Voor Inlandsche Zaken*, 99 and 102.

<sup>42</sup> Maksum, *Madrasah Sejarah Dan Perkembangannya* (Jakarta: Logos, 1999), 122.

<sup>43</sup> Abd. Halim Soebahar, *Kebijakan Pendidikan Islam Dari Ordonansi Guru Sampai UU Sisdiknas* (Jakarta: Rajawali Press, 2013), 17.

March 1911.<sup>44</sup> Similarly, the case of Shaikh Muhammad al-Hasyimi from Turkey who was invited by Habib Abdullah bin 'Alwi Alatas to teach in Pekojan in 1911 according to Noer or 1913 according to Badjerei. Neither the former group of names, nor the latter, were rejected by him as they were considered degrading and de-culturizing to the hadrami community in Betawi.<sup>45</sup>

The rejection was more specifically due to the invited teachers' attitude towards the traditional and religious rules of the Hadrami community that have been in place since the early 19th century in Betawi. Shaikh Ahmad Soorkatti, for example, stated that he did not agree if the legal traditions of *kafā'ah* in marriage, the culture of kissing hands (*taqbil*) and the use of the title *habib* were used in the midst of a diverse society in Betawi. This discussion even continued in parliament until 1930.<sup>46</sup> Noer noted that, while in Solo, Shaikh Ahmad Soorkatti had given an opinion on the fate of a *sharīfah* living with a Chinese in 1913. At the meeting, the *Shaikh* suggested to most of the Arabs present to raise money for the *sharīfah* to leave the Chinese. No one gave the money. The *Shaikh* suggested again to find a Muslim willing to marry the *sharīfah*, although all objected on the grounds of *kafā'ah*. The Sayyid faction in Solo informed their Sayyid friends in Jakarta about the incident which caused hostility when the Shaikh returned to Jakarta.<sup>47</sup>

Similarly, the culture of kissing hands (*taqbil*) is considered by the Hadrami community as one of the manners of the student to the teacher to maintain honor and avoid humiliation.<sup>48</sup> Shaikh Ahmad Soorkati also opposed it due to the diversity of the Betawi community. It was this view that in Van Bruinessen's<sup>49</sup> record caused the Shaikh to

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<sup>44</sup> Badjerei, *Al-Irsyad Mengisi Sejarah Bangsa*, 27.

<sup>45</sup> bin Yahyā, *I'ān al-Ikhwān Bi Wujūb al-Tablīgh Wa al-Tadbkīr Bi al-Iḥsān*, 6–9.

<sup>46</sup> 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, *Tasrīḥ Al-Qindīl Li Bayān Ḥukm al-Taḡbīl* (Betawi: Percetakan 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, 1330), 2,11,13; Snouck Hurgronje, 'Brieven van Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje (1857-1936) Aan Emile Gobée (1881-1954) Or. 8952 B: 27', 5 July 1931.

<sup>47</sup> Noer, *Gerakan Moderen Islam Di Indonesia, 1900-1942*, 72.

<sup>48</sup> 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, *Sadd Al-Bāb 'An Zann al-Sū Wa al-Iḡhtirāb* (Betawi: Percetakan 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, 1317), 5–7.

<sup>49</sup> Martin Van Bruinessen, 'Indonesian Muslims and Their Place in the Larger World of Islam', *Indonesia Rising: The Repositioning of Asia's Third Giant*, 2012, 117–40.

be expelled from Jamiet Kheir in 1914, although in De Jong's record it is added to the matter of intercession (*tawassul*).<sup>50</sup>

Concerning the title *habib*, Shaikh Ahmad Soorkatti rejected it as an aristocratic sentiment of the hadrami community. Such an attitude, according to him, is not in accordance with the Islam taught by the Prophet, which does not discriminate between its adherents just because of ancestry or other criteria. Individuals are not entitled to a special position and then discriminate against various groups just because of bloodline, wealth or position.<sup>51</sup> Habib 'Uthmān responded in writing in *Kelakuan Terpuji bagi Guru Mengaji* while highlighting some of the provocative efforts of those who had put up leaflets containing ḥadīths that criticized the validity of the *habibs'* lineage that were hung and posted on the walls of mosques in Betawi.<sup>52</sup>

In these circumstances, we can see how Habib 'Uthmān viewed the Teachers' Ordinance that would control the behavior of members of the Hadrami community. He was even reported to have used the policy to expel Shaikh Ahmad Soorkatti despite opposition from Hazeu, the Adviseur voor Intandsche Zaken, who considered him to have misunderstood the purpose of the Teachers' Ordinance, which was intended to supervise Islamic education, not inhibit, expel or suppress Islamic teachers.<sup>53</sup> The interpretation of the purpose itself was actually quite diverse. KF. Holle, September 20, 1890, in his advice to the Governor-General stated that it was to supervise Islamic education, but there was also his suggestion that the Regent should report a list of teachers in his area every year. In 1904, Snouck Hurgronje proposed that the supervision should include a special

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<sup>50</sup> Hubb De Jonge, 'Sebuah Minoritas Terbelah Orang Arab Betawi, Terj.', in *Jakarta-Batavia: Esai Sosio-Kultural, Terj.*, by Kees Grijns and Peter J.M.Nas, trans. Gita Widya Laksmi and Noor Cholis (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2000), 160–61.

<sup>51</sup> Bisri Affandi, 'Syaiikh Shaikh Ahmad Soorkatti: His Role in The al-Irshad Movement in Java in The Early Twentieth Century' (Magister-Thesis, Monreal, McGill University, 1976), 56; De Jonge, 'Sebuah Minoritas Terbelah Orang Arab Betawi, Terj.', 161.

<sup>52</sup> 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, *Kelakuan Terpuji Bagi Guru Mengaji* ('Uthmān ibn 'Abdallāh ibn 'Aqīl ibn Yahyā al-'Alawī, 1906), 23–34, <https://books.google.co.id/books?id=ZT3-VAAAAAMAAJ>.

<sup>53</sup> Suminto, *Politik Islam Hindia Belanda Het Kantoor Voor Inlandsche Zaken*, 28–31.

license from the regent, a list of teachers and students, and supervision by the regent to be carried out by a committee.<sup>54</sup>

Irrespective of this, Shaikh Ahmad Soorkatti was still expelled from Jamiat Kheir. The news then spread to the hadrami community in Betawi, which drew sympathy from non-hadrami, particularly Shaikh Yusuf bin 'Umar Mangusy. The latter even gave him a house on Jalan Jatibaru no. 12 Jakarta, to hold his return to his home region. Other support came in the form of funds provided by Sayyid Abdullah bin Alwi Alatas in the amount of f 60,000. This support led to the creation of a community called the "shaikh or non-habib community". Under the leadership of Shaikh Ahmad Soorkatti, this community then established an educational institution called Madrasah al-Irsyad al-Islamiyyah, September 1914, which was inaugurated on August 11, 1915 with the chairman Shaikh Salim bin Awad Balweel (former vice-chairman of Jamiat Kheir), vice-chairman Saleh bin 'Ubaid bin Abdat, secretary Muhammad Ubaid bin Abud, and treasurer Said bin Salim Masy'abi. This community also consisted of 19 commissioners, all of whom were non-sayyids. With the existence of the madrasa, Soorkatti continued to try to get the government to help his efforts to formulate a new scheme on religion by promising not to cause riots. The madrasa later grew into an official organization of the non-habib hadrami community called *Jam'iyyah al-Isblah wa al-Irsbad al-'Arabiyah*.<sup>55</sup>

This period of history, placed Habib 'Uthmān as the user of the teacher ordinance to maintain the identity and culture of the Hadrami community. He even considered the policy as a form of government respect for religious teachers, who also did not interfere in religious matters, did not prohibit people from reciting the Quran, and allowed people to become religious teachers.<sup>56</sup> That, according to him, was the right attitude of the government, which the community should also appropriately respond to by respecting the government that had given

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<sup>54</sup> Soebahar, *Kebijakan Pendidikan Islam Dari Ordonansi Guru Sampai UU Sisdiknas*, 17; 'Staatsblad van Nederlandsch-Indie Tahun 1905. No.550' (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1892).

<sup>55</sup> Badjerei, *Al-Irsyad Mengisi Sejarah Bangsa*, 32; Hurgronje, 'Brieven van Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje (1857-1936) Aan Emile Gobée (1881-1954) Or. 8952 B: 27', 5 July 1931; Ahmad Soorkatti, 'Ahmad Soorkatti Kepada Dr. Rinkes', 22 February 1918.

<sup>56</sup> 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, 'Bermula Ada Empat Fasal Ini Kepada Yang Suka Membaca Padanya' (UB Leiden University, n.d.), Plano 53 F1, No. 38.

justice to religious teachers.<sup>57</sup> He stated that the government had also given freedom (*vrij*) to the teachers.<sup>58</sup> Such a harmonious relationship, according to him, should be established because it would bring security and the right to practice religion. This attitude of his, in Fanani's view,<sup>59</sup> demonstrated Habib 'Uthmān's sharia-oriented clerical attitude, which Berg referred to as a figure who showed the possibility of a Muslim remaining loyal to the colonial government in the archipelago while practicing his religion.<sup>60</sup>

However, Habib 'Uthmān did not just accept this. He had also advised the Dutch government not to interfere in religious matters, especially not to prevent Muslims from practicing their religion. He also thanked the government for providing salaries to the religious judges, helping the religious officials and teachers, giving the religious courts a holiday during the fasting month and helping to build mosques. For this reason, his attitude towards the people continued to advocate thanking the government by doing religious good and not violating government regulations.<sup>61</sup> However, after Habib 'Uthmān passed away, the Dutch government began to interfere in religious affairs, especially the position of mufti was eliminated afterwards.<sup>62</sup> Fanani considered that Habib 'Uthmān's awareness as part of Muslims living under the control of a non-Muslim government was a form of maintenance of order (*cosmos*) which at that time needed to be carried out.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, 'Brieven van Sayyid 'Uthmān b. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Aqīl al-'Alawī (1822-1914) Aan Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje (1857-1936) Or. 8952 A: 1023', Agustus 1888.

<sup>58</sup> 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, *Sinar Istirlam* (Betawi: Percetakan 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, 1913), 14–15.

<sup>59</sup> Ahmad Fanani, 'Fikih Antar Umat Beragama Dalam Pemikiran Sayyid Uthmān Bin 'Abdullah Bin 'Aqīl Bin Yahyā al-'Alawī' (Doctoral-Thesis, Surabaya, UIN Sunan Ampel, 2011), 175–86.

<sup>60</sup> Lodewijk Willem Christiaan van den Berg, 'Hadramaut Dan Koloni Arab Di Nusantara: Seri INIS', 1989, 106.

<sup>61</sup> bin Yahyā, *Sinar Istirlam*, 7–9.

<sup>62</sup> Karel Andrian Steenbrink, *Pesantren Madrasah Sekolah* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1994), 138.

<sup>63</sup> Fanani, 'Fikih Antar Umat Beragama Dalam Pemikiran Sayyid Uthmān Bin 'Abdullah Bin 'Aqīl Bin Yahyā al-'Alawī', 167–79.

## The Concordance of Arabic Schools in Betawi

This section describes Habib 'Uthmān's inclusive nature as seen in his attitude towards the Dutch East Indies government's principle of educational concordance. He rejected it even in his position as Honorary Advisor for Arab Affairs because he saw it as incompatible and even contrary to the traditions and religious values prevailing in the Hadrami community. This rejection even extended to the curriculum of the Arab School in Betawi, which refused to follow the government's curriculum. Included in this section is a portrait of how it responded to the modernization movement in the early 20th century.

In 1894, before Queen Wiljelmina inaugurated ethical politics, the Dutch East Indies government had organized educational activities. At that time, existing schools were classified into *De Scholen der Eerste Klasse* for children of the aristocracy or wealthy people, and *De Scholen der Tweede Klasse* for the indigenous people in general. First Class Schools were established in Tondano (1865 and 1872) in Bandung (1878), Magelang and Probolinggo. Second Class Schools, although no details of their locations were found, were often introduced as *Ongke Loro Schools*.<sup>64</sup>

Apart from their designation, the two schools differed in their curricula. *De Scholen der Eerste Klasse's* curriculum used Malay and Dutch as the medium of instruction, with subjects revolving around the ability to read and write Malay with Latin letters, conversation exercises; and learning to count. *De Scholen der Tweede Klasse*, on the other hand, only taught the indigenous people to be able to interact properly because its graduates were projected to become low-level and menial laborers.<sup>65</sup>

However, the Dutch government had set the same educational principles for both, which aimed to instill Christian missions and Christianize the natives, with an orientation centered on Western values. Azra details it by referring to the principles of the Dutch government, which were: first, trying not to favor one particular religion; second, education was aimed at turning graduates into job seekers, especially for the benefit of the colonizers; third, the school

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<sup>64</sup> Izaak Johannes Brugmans, *Geschiedenis van Het Onderwijs in Nederlandsch-Indië* (Batavia: JB Wolters, 1938), 227; Mestoko Sumarsono, *Pendidikan Di Indonesia Dari Jaman Ke Jaman* (Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan RI, 1997), 52; S Nasution, *Sejarah Pendidikan Indonesia* (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 2001), 51; Abuddin Nata, *Kapita Selekta Pendidikan Islam* (Jakarta: UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Press, 2005), 17–18.

<sup>65</sup> Ary Gunawan, *Kebijakan-Kebijakan Pendidikan* (Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 1995), 21.

system was structured based on existing social stratification in society; fourth, education was aimed at forming a Dutch social elite; and fifth, the basis of education was Western education and oriented towards Western knowledge and culture.<sup>66</sup> Nata refers to the latter principle as concordance, i.e. the position of government schools in the Dutch East Indies that were forced to be Western-oriented (modern) and prevented them from adjusting to local conditions. Each school, therefore, was in the position of being forced to act as an agent of Western (modern) culture as well as spreading the message of Christian missionaries.<sup>67</sup>

On a more practical level, these schools had six characteristics, i.e. first, tremendous gradualism in the provision of education for Indonesian children; second, dualism in education by emphasizing a clear distinction between Dutch education and indigenous education; third, a strong central control; fourth, the limited objectives of indigenous schools and the role of schools to produce employees as an important factor in the development of education; fifth, the principle of concordance which made schools in Indonesia the same as in the Netherlands; and sixth, the absence of systematic educational planning for the education of indigenous children.<sup>68</sup>

The classification, curriculum, principles and characteristics of schools mentioned above were rejected by Habib 'Uthmān as they were considered contrary to the traditions and even religious values prevailing in the Hadrami community.<sup>69</sup> In some of his works that are to be cited, it is clear how he argued for his rejection. For him, the glory of the Hadrami family was paramount and that would only be seen when the next generation emulated the behavior of his *jid* in Hadramaut.<sup>70</sup> The Hadrami community should have understood the reasoning behind the establishment of Arab schools in Betawi as

<sup>66</sup> Azyumardi Azra, 'Pendidikan Islam Di Era Globalisasi: Peluang Dan Tantangan', in *Mereka Bicara Pendidikan Islam: Sebuah Bunga Rampai*, ed. Marwan Saridjo (Jakarta: PT Rajagrafindo Persada, 2009), 9–10.

<sup>67</sup> Nata, *Kapita Selekta Pendidikan Islam*, 20.

<sup>68</sup> Nasution, *Sejarah Pendidikan Indonesia*, 20.

<sup>69</sup> 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, *Tarīqah Al-Salāmah Min al-Khusrān Wa al-Nadāmah* (Betawi, 1329), 2; 'Nieuwsblaad Voor Den Boekhandel', Desember 1896, 99 edition; 'Pemberita Betawi', 4 April 1913.

<sup>70</sup> 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, *Risalah Dua Ilmu Pada Menyatakan Perbedaan Dua Macam Ilmu Dan Dua Macam Ulama* (Betawi, n.d.), 28–30.

explained in the ordinance section. In addition, government schools had also incorporated Christianity in the late nineteenth century, which they feared would threaten the Arab generation. In short, the establishment of the Arab school enabled all the knowledge to be taught to the Hadrami community, and protected them from the influence of the government even though it was part of the government itself.<sup>71</sup>

Habib 'Uthmān then detailed the curriculum applied in the Arab school, which was related to the sciences of the Quran such as *tajweed*, *tartil* and memorization of the book *Riyād al-Ṣibyān Mandhūmah* by Shaikh Ahmad Bahdhib. He also emphasized the study of *Risalah Saḥībah al-Najāh* by Salim bin Sumair, *Mu'allim* by Habib Ahmad bin Zain and other books such as *Mukhtaṣar Abi Faḍl*, *Bidayah al-Hidāyah*, *Hilyah al-Banīn Wa al-Banāt*, *'Umdah Sālik*, *Fath al-Mu'min*, *Iḥyā 'Ulūm al-Dīn* and *Mulḥah al-I'rāb and Jurmiyah*. As for general knowledge, Arabic is prioritized in addition to arithmetic and writing. With such prioritization, the children of the hadrami community would perform their prayers well and correctly.<sup>72</sup>

Habib 'Uthmān's attitude, in fact, did not only show how he rejected the education system of the Dutch East Indies government. It also contributed to protecting the Hadrami community from the influences of modernization that emerged in the early 20th century in the Arab schools in Betawi. According to him, modernization was a gimmick of the times or a trick of the devil, as seen in the formation of Arab children similar to European schools. Therefore, the principles of Arab schools, according to him, should be maintained by excluding foreign clothing, equipment and teaching. Thus, the teachings, traditions and even religious values embodied in the ancestral books of Hadrami community could be taught to Arab children in accordance

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<sup>71</sup> 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, *Al-I'lān Bi al-Naṣṥḥah al-Maṭlūbah; Pernyataan Dengan Nasikha Yang Terminta* (Betawi: Percetakan 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, 1321), 2; 'De Tijd', 11 February 1889; Al-Masjhoer, *Jamiat Kheir: Sejarah Dan Perkembangannya*, 26.

<sup>72</sup> bin Yahyā, *Tuḥfah Al-Wardiyah Min Riyād al-Sharī'ah al-Muḥammadiyah Fī al-Naṣṥḥah al-Mardīyyah*, 38–39; bin Yahyā, *Sadd Al-Bāb 'An Zann al-Sū Wa al-Iḡtirāb*, 8–9; bin Yahyā, *Jam' al-Nafā'is Litahsin al-Madāris*, 6–7; 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, *Maslak Al-Akhyār Fī al-Ad'iyyah Wa al-Adhkār* (Betawi: Percetakan 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, n.d.), 61.

with their original ideals.<sup>73</sup> The Arab schools' acceptance of modernization was also rejected because he thought that the al-Manar teachers who sponsored the modernization had collaborated with Christian fathers in the establishment of al-Manar schools. Habib 'Uthmān forbade Arab children in Betawi to attend such Arab schools stating that anyone who did so would be entering the church or the house of the devil<sup>74</sup>. According to him, modern schools at that time included secretarial and accounting schools or Arab schools that included Dutch language lessons.<sup>75</sup>

Therefore, it can be seen that Habib 'Uthmān strongly protected hadrami traditions and religion. In *Faṣl al-Khiṭāb fī Bayān al-Ṣawāb* (p.42-43) it is explained that tradition and religion are in accordance with *ahl al-sunnah wa al-jamā'ah*, and the *Madhhab Shāfi'i*. This was evidenced during the High Court trial on April 27, 1893, in the case of the distribution of the inheritance of the late Habib Muḥammad bin Shahab. At that court, an expert on religion, government law, societal norms and customs, Mr. C.W. Margandant, and an expert on Islamic law, Habib 'Uthmān bin Yaḥyā, were invited. They were both invited to provide expert testimony in deciding the difference of opinion on who was entitled to be the trustee to distribute the inheritance. On the one hand, the eldest son of the deceased, Habib Abdullah bin Shihab, was declared entitled to be the guardian of his younger siblings. On the other hand, there were those who stated that the rightful guardian was the brother of the deceased or the person who made the will and if it was not fulfilled then the guardian was the government. He supported the decision that was in accordance with his *Madhhab Shāfi'i*.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>73</sup> 'Uthmān bin Yaḥyā, 'Ini Sebuah Nasihat Yang Wajib' (UB Leiden University, n.d.), 2, Plano 53 F1, No. 39; 'Uthmān bin Yaḥyā, *Nasehat Yang Bermula* (Betawi: Percetakan 'Uthmān bin Yaḥyā, 1329); Al-Masjhoer, *Jamiat Kheir: Sejarah Dan Perkembangannya*, 26.

<sup>74</sup> 'Uthmān bin Yaḥyā, *Salāmah Al-Muslimīn Min al-Ibtidā' Fī al-Dīn*, n.d., 6; bin Yaḥyā, *Jam' al-Nafā'is Līṭahsin al-Madāris*, 12; bin Yaḥyā, *Ṭarīqah Al-Salāmah Min al-Kbusrān Wa al-Nadāmah*, 2.

<sup>75</sup> bin Yaḥyā, *Jam' al-Nafā'is Līṭahsin al-Madāris*, 12; bin Yaḥyā, *Nasehat Yang Bermula*, 2.

<sup>76</sup> 'Uthmān bin Yaḥyā, 'Surat Habib 'Uthmān Bin Yaḥyā Kepada Gubernur Jenderal, 12 Juli 1893', in *Nasihāt-Nasihāt C. Snouck Hurgronje Semasa Kepegawaianya Kepada Pemerintah Hindia Belanda 1889-1936*, by E. Gobe and C Andriaanse, IX (Jakarta: INIS, 1994), 1637.

In relation to modernization, Habib 'Uthmān also mentioned the prominent and wealthy families from the Hadrami community who sent their children to Istanbul. He stated that this was very unethical. He argued that the choice of region also meant an attempt to reject the land of Hadramaut, as the land of the ancestors. According to Habib 'Uthmān, it would have been better for them to send their children to the religious educational institution of Wadi Anwar, which had proven to have more benefits (*barakah*) and was the advice of the early salaf scholars.<sup>77</sup>

Habib 'Uthmān then narrated the consequences of modernity. He recounted that many Arab children began to get used to reading newspapers and history books and abandoned studying the books of the salaf of the Hadrami community. As a result, these Arab children would appear to be good at “contemporary sciences” but behave greedily, claiming, lying and denouncing taklid. In addition, the youth who graduated from Arab schools created by modernization or the government would be more liberal in taking arguments from the Qur'an and al-Sunnah to perform acts of worship that were minor in nature while arguing that many religious arguments were wrongly carried out by Muslims all this time. Moreover, they would start to dare to interpret the Qur'an in their own way, which was actually an act of ignorance like a “rat dressed up a pumpkin”. They reached the level of claiming to be smarter than the previous Imams and mufasirs so that such social facts seemed like a “lure” that had deceived the Hadrami community.<sup>78</sup>

Therefore, for Habib 'Uthmān, in addition to Arab schools, what was necessary was the family education of Hadrami community, by accustoming their children from a young age in the family environment, to live according to Hadrami traditions and religion. He explained that parents should teach their children the knowledge of the Quran such as *tajweed*, *tartil* and memorization of the book *Riyāḍ al-Ṣibyān Mandhūmah* by Shaikh Ahmad Bahdhib. In addition to religious education, parents should also introduce Arabic language, arithmetic, writing and monitor their children so that they would avoid mingling with ignorant people. If parents could not do these things, then they

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<sup>77</sup> bin Yahyā, *Jam' al-Nafā'is Litaḥsin al-Madāris*, 4.

<sup>78</sup> bin Yahyā, *Jam' al-Nafā'is Litaḥsin al-Madāris*; 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, *Hukmu Al-Rahmān Bi al-Nahyi 'an Tarjamah al-Qurān* (Betawi: Percetakan 'Uthmān bin Yahyā, 1327).

would have to find a Quranic teacher who was fluent in Arabic phrases so that it would be easy for them to learn Arabic. With their proficiency in Arabic, hadrami children would be able to perform their prayers properly. Habib 'Uthmān added that the religious education provided since childhood would shape the personality of Hadrami community to be religious, clever, not only proud of their lineage and wealth, but also not demeaning the religious qualities of others.<sup>79</sup>

## Conclusion

The description above has shown the ambivalence of Habib 'Uthmān's attitude, which stands on two interests at once, namely the interests of the government and the interests of the Arab nation. The ambivalence mentioned is very human and is often found in everyone who encounters socio-contextual factors and identity-cultural dimensions in the course of their lives. The tendency to judge the figure as leaning towards one interest, according to our research, is due to the fact that the social context of his life is frequently overemphasized compared to his scholarly cultural identity. Our findings from archives, books, journals and newspapers related to him show both his inclusive and exclusive sides, which in turn can be used as a starting point for the reinstatement or reinterpretation of existing studies.

An interesting outline of Habib 'Uthmān's ambivalence that we found is the background of the scientific narrative that underlies his choice to be inclusive or exclusive, which is not due to material gain or prestige. He supported the colonial government's ordinance policy because he thought it would preserve his community's identity, yet he also advised his community not to oppose the government that did not prohibit them from practicing their religious teachings. He advocated for the Hadrami community to learn religion properly, but he also refused to bring in religious teachers who would shift the values of nobility of lineage. He narrated all the data in a scholarly and written manner, which we cite in each paragraph.

Parallel to this is the establishment of Arab schools in the Betawi that serves as the locus of this article. The education of Hadrami

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<sup>79</sup> bin Yahyā, *Maslak Al-Akhyār Fī al-Ad'īyyah Wa al-Adhkār*, 61; bin Yahyā, *Tuḥfah Al-Wardīyah Min Rijāl al-Sharī'ah al-Muḥammadiyah Fī al-Naṣīḥah al-Marḍīyyah*, 38–39; bin Yahyā, *Sadd Al-Bāb 'An Zann al-Sū Wa al-Ightirāb*, 8–9; bin Yahyā, *Jam' al-Nafā'is Līṭāḥsin al-Madāris*, 6.

community was a concern for Habib 'Uthmān after realizing that the education organized by the colonial government would incorporate Western values and Christianization in its curriculum. This awareness was followed by the knowledge that the spirit of Pan-Islamism and subsequent modernization could be a challenge from within that needed to be responded to and anticipated thoroughly, whether through direct actions such as his rejection of Shaikh Ahmad Soorkatti or through publications, leading to the preparation of a very detailed curriculum as we have written.

The ambivalence of such an attitude, to draw it in the present context, needs to be followed up especially in making decisions related to the world of education. A good education is one that bridges the interests of the community with its inherent cultural identity, not solely focused on the final achievement as in the case of Habib 'Uthmān's refusal to send Arab children to Istanbul. A good education also keeps the family factor in mind by teaching the prevailing traditions and customs. A good education is one that humanizes human beings, as seen from the inclusive and exclusive perspectives of the figure under discussion. []

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