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Understanding the Hadith of Lubs al-Syuhrah and the Historical Facts of Robes and Turbans as the Identity of Nusantara Ulama

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Keywords

Robes, turbans, Lubs al-
Shuhrah, Nusantara Ulama

Abstract

This study examines the evolution of clerical attire, specifically the so-called Arab or hajj attire, comprising robes and turbans, and its role in shaping the identity of Nusantara clerics over centuries. In the context of the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad, the question of the relevance of Arab attire to the Nusantara is a subject of divergent scholarly opinion. Some clerics consider it to be irrelevant, whilst others regard it as sunnah fi'liyah, analysing it from an ethical and aesthetic perspective. The present study employs qualitative methods, with a focus on historical approaches. To this end, it utilises a range of sources, including autobiographies and biographies, visual materials, such as images of clerics, and a series of interviews conducted with 19 individuals who are both historical witnesses and relatives of the aforementioned clerics. It is evident that in the 19th century, the adherents of Islam in the region of Riau were distinguished by their distinctive attire, which included the wearing of robes and turbans. The scholars' attire represented their elevated economic, social, and political status, in addition to their substantial religious authority. The robe and turban also became symbols of the scholars' anti-colonial struggle. The historical and cultural factors that influenced this acceptance included the Hajj pilgrimage, colonial government regulations pertaining to Hajj attire, the harmonisation of Arab attire with Malay culture, and the emergence of Sufi movements. Nevertheless, since the 20th century, the attire of Islamic scholars has experienced substantial modification, primarily due to the integration of Western educational frameworks and the rise of the contemporary Indonesian elite. The attire of clerics in Riau comprises trousers, Western-style suits, ties, and hats, in addition to skullcaps or peci, which collectively serve to establish a uniform appearance that mirrors that of other Indonesian intellectuals who have undergone modern educational pursuits. Moreover, religious attire in the form of robes and turbans began

to be adopted as a collective identifier, rather than exclusively as a religious or clerical vestment, by certain Muslim communities.

Introduction

In contemporary times, the utilization of robes and turbans as distinctive attire among Ulama has become a rarity. This phenomenon stands in stark contrast to the preceding century, during which Arab or Hajj dress evolved into the ulama's identity. The practice of wearing such attire is regarded as improper for individuals not belonging to the clergy, as it constitutes an infringement upon cultural norms and institutions. The Dutch East Indies government imposed a structural prohibition, while the cultural prohibition was based on Malay culture's unique attire regulations for ulama.¹ Robes and turbans function not only as a means of expression and interaction between the ulama and their surroundings, but also as a sign of the ulama's social, cultural, and political position in their resistance to colonialism. The contemporary state of Muslim fashion indicates a shift from traditional practices, marked by the decline in the prevalence of robes and turbans. This transformation has prompted inquiries into the contemporary role and significance of these attire in Muslim fashion trends, particularly in Indonesia. Research conducted by Jamil et al. in 2005 and Miski M. M. in 2017 offers insights into the current status and perceived decline in the wearing of these items in Indonesia.² The current phenomenon in Indonesia, robes and turbans can be worn by anyone, then followed by the expansion of the meaning of robes and turbans, no longer as clothing identifying religious scholars or Hajj clothes.³

Nevertheless, studies on the history and development of clothing among the Nusantara ulama have been classified into three categories: The initial inquiry concerns the intersection of fashion and religion, particularly the role of Islamic dress as a medium for religious expression or reflection. This topic has been explored in the works of Emilia and Mursal (2021), Misbah (2018), and H. M, Fatonah and Putri (2020). The second area of inquiry focuses on the clothing industry and commodities. This segment includes research on the origins of materials and clothing designs in the Nusantara region. Clothing serves the primary purpose of protecting the body from natural circumstances. It also functions as a medium for creative expression through design, materials, and techniques. Furthermore, clothing can serve as a means of expressing the wearer's identity, social affiliation, and cultural and political expression (Miski M M 2017; Suparman 2020; Mrd and Siregar 2021; Raufi 2022; Musaffa and Abdurrahman 2023). A study of the history of clothing as the identity of ulama, the subject of the present paper, is necessary to supplement the study trends outlined above.

¹ O.K Nizami Jamil, *Pakaian Tradisional Melayu Riau*, Pekanbaru: Lembaga Adat Melayu Riau, 2005, 120-121.

² M. Miski, "Pemahaman Hadis Ali Mustafa Yaqub Studi Atas Fatwa Pengharaman Serban dalam Konteks Indonesia", *Riwayah*, Volume 2, Number 1 (2016), 15-31.

³ M., Sadiyah, D., & Assidiqi, A. (2024). Implementasi Pemikiran Ali Mustafa Yaqub Dalam Memahami Hadis Persoalan Busana Sosial Di Masyarakat. *Lisyabab : Jurnal Studi Islam Dan Sosial*, 5(2), 28-39.
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According to Bourdieu, the concept of social environment or habitus analysis pertains to an individual's cultural wealth and daily experiences, including their mode of dress.⁴ Delistone conceptualizes clothing as a medium of communication, an expression of aesthetics, and a response to fundamental human needs.⁵ As posited by Emillia and Mursal, clothing functions as both a necessity and an expression, thereby reflecting the wearer's social identity.⁶ Clothing is a method for conveying the wearer's identity; therefore, fashion encompasses more than mere clothing and accessories. It is intended to enhance the wearer's appearance and reveal their identity.⁷

The role of clothing throughout history is influenced by a variety of factors, including tradition, society, and religion. Robes and headpieces are regarded as conventional attire for religious leaders, symbolizing honor and majesty for the wearer. Islamic jurisprudence regards clothing as a means of covering the private parts and safeguarding human dignity. Islamic teachings offer ethical and aesthetic guidelines for dressing, which are integral components of Muslim clothing. The Islamic, Arabic, and Persian influences on the Nusantara have contributed to the evolution of clothing types, materials, and designs⁸. The following text is intended to provide a comprehensive overview of the subject matter.

The present study offers empirical evidence that validates the hypothesis that attire serves as a medium for the articulation of identity, particularly in the context of Arab clothing's historical function as a marker of identity for the Nusantara ulama. The present study seeks to address the following research question: What is the historical and sociocultural rationale behind the adoption of the ulama identity by robes and turbans? The result of this study relies on the assumption that the Nusantara ulama, particularly in regions with Malay society and culture, such as Riau, played a vital role in the political, economic, and social aspects of colonial resistance. Their identity is evident in their distinctive attire, which includes robes and turbans, setting them apart from both ordinary people and colonialists. The attire that became synonymous with the nineteenth century underwent alterations in the twentieth century. Certain scholars of Islam opt to don pantaloons, jackets, and ties. Conversely, the trend of robes and turbans has gained popularity among the general public and specific religious communities.⁹

Method

This research was conceptualized and executed in Indonesia, with a particular emphasis on the historical evolution of ulama in Malay society in Sumatra, with a focus on the province of Riau, from the nineteenth to the twentieth centuries. Throughout both of these eras, there have been numerous ulama in Riau, including prominent figures who have been recognized as monuments or have served as centers of scholarship, as well as those whose biographies remain obscure due to a lack of investigation or publication. The participants in the study were ulama (religious scholars) from Riau who had received authorization for their clerical roles from the Governor of Riau in the form of awards called Tokoh Pejuang Riau (Riau Warrior Figures) from 2016 to 2023. According

⁴ Gauna Davey, "Using Bourdieu's Concept of Habitus to Explore Narratives of Transition", *European Education Research Journal*, Volume 8, Number 2 (2009), 277

⁵ F.W. Dilistone, *The Power of Symbol*, Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 2002, 55.

⁶ Emilia & Irhas Fansuri Mursal, "Sejarah Gaya Berbusana Perempuan Kota Jambi 1900-1970", *Siginjai: Jurnal Sejarah*, Volume 1, Nomor 2 (2021), 45-46.

⁷ Retno Hendariningrum & M. Edy Susilo, "Fashion dan Gaya Hidup: Identitas dan Komunikasi". *Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*, Volume 6, Number 2 (2008), 25.

⁸ Porrie Muliawan, *Konstruksi Pola Busana Wanita*, Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1992, 1.

⁹ M.U.A Musaffa & Abdurrahman, L., "Fikih Pakaian Jamaah Tabligh: Antara Doktrin, Identitas, Dan Strategi", *Harmoni*, Volume 2, Number 1 (2023): 48-69.

to an inventory conducted by the Indonesian Ulama Council of Kampar Regency in 2022, there are approximately 15 of them, 4 of whom are ulama. The data presented was obtained through various methods, including observation, interviews, and documentation received from the Riau Province Social Service in Pekanbaru. Additionally, the Kampar Regency Ulama Council, also known as MUI Kampar, provided supplementary data.¹⁰

This qualitative study adopts the Historical Method, which comprises four stages: heuristic, critique, interpretation, and historiography.¹¹ The completion of each step occurred concurrently or with a negligible temporal discrepancy. The heuristic stage has relied significantly on written texts, particularly memoirs and biographies, which frequently include details and seemingly insignificant concerns like attire.¹² This study incorporated visual materials, including images of clerics attired in robes and turbans engaged in quotidian activities (January 2008). The photographs depict a variety of robes that extend to the ankles as an outer layer, covering the *teluk belanga* (male's traditional attire) shirt, a white or light-colored shirt or t-shirt, and black or dark trousers or sarongs. The head covering is a turban that manifests in a variety of forms, characterized by intricate patterns and textures, including white fabric.

A series of interviews were conducted for the purpose of verifying the authenticity of the images in question. These interviews yielded specific information regarding the attire of each of the aforementioned clerics. A total of 19 informants were identified, with 15 of these informants having a personal connection to the research subjects, either as family members or acquaintances. Fourteen individuals were designated as historical witnesses, while three individuals provided less reliable information due to their age, falling below the stipulated age threshold of three years at the time of the subject ulama's life. Additionally, there were informants who did not have the opportunity to meet the cleric during his lifetime. Consequently, these informants relied on historical witnesses for information. The majority of the interview results have the potential to offer information or clarity on the robes and turbans worn by the clergy subjects of the investigation.

Researchers classified primary and secondary sources as data types according to their proximity to the subject of investigation. The primary materials used in this study consist of memoirs and biographies concerning ulama in Riau and its environs. A significant portion of these materials have been printed and published, while others have been disseminated on a limited basis by the Riau Province Social Service from 2016 to 2023. The remaining information is considered supplementary, providing contextual details and interpretive resources. The majority of the data acquired regarding Riau ulama was obtained from the subjects' family collections; consequently, no source criticism or assessment was implemented. The preponderance of the data is in the form of photocopies, images, or digitized original papers. The subsequent phase entailed the interpretation or analysis of the data using decomposition, unification, and prosopography techniques. The triangulation of data, or the collaborative analysis of multiple sources, is a process

¹⁰ Putra, Afriadi. *Biografi Para Ulama dan Tokoh Penggerak Kampar Serambi Mekah*. Bangkinang: MUI Kampar, 2022.

¹¹ I.N. Wijaya, "Biography as a Source and Methodology in Humanities Research", *Humaniora*, Volume 31, Number 3 (2019), 238-252.

¹² I.N. Wijaya, "Biografi sebagai Pintu Masuk Mencermati Peristiwa Remeh Temeh Sehari-Hari dalam Revolusi Indonesia (1945-1949) di Bali", *Jurnal Sejarah Citra Lekha*, Volume 5, Number 1 (2020), 57-74.

that incorporates photographs, documents, and interview findings. The aforementioned elements are subsequently assembled into a historical text referred to as historiography.

Results and Discussion

Experts' Thoughts on the Use of Robes and Turbans and Lubs al-Shuhrah

In an analytical investigation conducted by Indonesian Hadith scholar Ali Mustafa Yaqub, a scholar specializing in the sociocultural phenomena from the perspective of Hadith, the practice of wearing robes and turbans within the Indonesian archipelago necessitates an examination within the broader context of the nation's socio-cultural and historical milieu. According to the aforementioned source, the donning of robes and turbans within the Arabian context was indicative of an adaptation of Islam to Arab culture. This observation suggests that this phenomenon may not be universally applicable, as the sociocultural and geographical contexts of Arabia differ significantly from those of Indonesia. The attire of the Prophet Muhammad, consisting of robes and turbans, represented a cultural adaptation to the prevailing Arab traditions of his era. Historically, in Indonesia, the attire of scholars or pilgrims consisted of robes and turbans. These garments were worn by individuals who had performed the Hajj pilgrimage and had resided for a considerable period to study religious knowledge, thereby becoming scholars.

In the context of academic discourse and historical analysis, robes and turbans emerged as symbolic representations of scholarship. During the colonial period, these symbols assumed a different, albeit often discrepant, role, becoming emblems of resistance against the colonial regime and subsequent liberation struggles.¹³ Mustafa Yaqub cited a hadith recorded by Ibn Mājah in his work *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, which contains the prophetic tradition narrated by 'Izz al-Dawla: "From the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) we learn that whoever dons clothes for the sake of worldly admiration, Allah shall clothe him in garments of humiliation on the Day of Reckoning" (Ibn Mājah, *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, trans. Muhammad Fu'ad 'Abd al-Baqi, 2010). As elucidated in the *Sunan Abu Dawud*, specifically in the section titled "Lubs al-Shuhrah," the hadith explicitly prohibits the practice of donning a turban, as its primary function is to seek undeserved popularity. The aforementioned prohibition also encompasses robes that are worn in an excessive manner.¹⁴

Meanwhile, Kyai Syamsul Yakin posits that, despite the turban's Arab cultural origins, its donning has evolved into a component of religious instruction. He cites Imam Jalaluddin al-Suyuthi's statement in *Lubab al-Hadis* concerning the hadith: "Turbans are the crowns of the Arabs, so when they wear them, they wear their glory." He further elaborates on this sentiment by asserting that the practice of donning turbans, as observed in other nations, does not contribute to a sense of nobility for the individual who dons it. However, the practice of donning a turban in the context of *sunah fi'liyah* aligns with the actions of the Prophet Muhammad. In the context of receiving revelations from Allah, the Messenger of Allah was known to don a turban. It was this very turban that Khadijah requested to be used as her shroud in her final moments. The practice of wearing a turban is also considered a *Sunnah*, as evidenced by the hadith that states, "Allah and His angels honor those who wear turbans on Friday" (HR. Thabrani), and another hadith that says, "Two rakats with a turban are better than seventy rakats without a turban." (HR. Dailami). It is widely accepted that the practice of donning a complete robe and turban during prayer is

¹³ Hamka, *Ayahku*, Jakarta: Ummida, 1982, 289.

¹⁴ M., Sadiyah, D., & Assidiqi, A. (2024). Implementasi Pemikiran Ali Mustafa Yaqub Dalam Memahami Hadis Persoalan Busana Sosial Di Masyarakat. *Lisyabab : Jurnal Studi Islam Dan Sosial*, 5(2), 28-39.
<https://doi.org/10.58326/jurnallisyabab.v5i2.299>

indicative of respect. This attire is regarded as both ethical and aesthetically pleasing, contributing to an ambiance of reverence and elegance in religious spaces.¹⁵

As articulated in the prophetic traditions documented in the Sunnah fi'liyah and Hadith, when considered in conjunction with the passage from QS al-Hashr (59):7, the principle is articulated: "And whatever the Messenger gives you, take it. According to Ali Mustafa Yaqub's interpretation, this particular verse of the Quranic text contains general religious teachings, the implications of which demand a detailed elaboration by the hadith text. The specific directive to "refrain from whatever he forbids you" is regarded as an integral component of this elaborate system of religious guidance. It is noteworthy that Prophet Muhammad SAW held personal opinions on worldly matters, as evidenced by his instructions to his companions on augmenting the fertility of date palms. However, subsequent implementation yielded unsatisfactory outcomes. The Prophet (peace be upon him) is quoted as saying: "I am a human being. In the event that I issue a directive pertaining to religion, it is imperative that you adhere to its tenets. If I were to command you based on my personal perspective, I would be considered a typical human being." According to the principles of Islamic jurisprudence, not all of the Prophet's sayings or actions are considered religious teachings that must be universally observed. This demonstrates that his opinions are subject to acceptance or rejection, akin to the opinions of other ordinary individuals. The practice of wearing a robe and turban, which are symbols of religious devotion, was not part of the Prophet's tradition. Instead, it was based on worldly matters, particularly Arab cultural norms that predated the advent of Islam.¹⁶

It has been observed that certain individuals regard the wearing of robes and turbans as obligatory and representative of scholarly attire. Consequently, individuals who adorn themselves with these accolades are regarded as scholars. A prominent scholar from Al-Azhar University in Egypt, Sheikh Muhammad al-Ghazali, has challenged the authenticity of hadiths pertaining to turbans, as recorded by Imam al-Baihaqi, Imam Abu Daud, and Imam at-Tarmidzi. These hadiths, as reported, are said to indicate the presence of angels. The turban, a distinctive garment of the Arab people, is a cultural artifact that varies significantly among different populations worldwide. Muslim clothing is distinguished by modesty and simplicity, as outlined in hadiths recorded in the Sunan collections of Ibn Majah and an-Nasai. These texts include the prophetic guidance, "Eat and drink what you want, and wear whatever you want, as long as it is free from arrogance and extravagance." Muhammad al-Ghazali refutes the notion that attire such as shirts and pants is synonymous with that of "infidels."¹⁷

Within the framework of Sufi Orders, adherents traditionally don attire that is unmistakable and readily identifiable, chiefly consisting of robes and turbans.¹⁸ Nevertheless, there are also orders that have endeavored to adapt their dress style to the Indonesian environment. One such example is the Qadiriyyah Arakkiyyah order. In Sudan, the country of origin of these adherents,

¹⁵ Syamsul Yakin, Pahala Memakai Sorban, 25 Agustus 2020. di <https://republika.co.id/berita/qflqpo374/pahala-memakai-sorban> (sam/mf), (11/10/2025, 07.03).

¹⁶ M., Sadiyah, D., & Assidiqi, A. (2024). Ibid.

¹⁷ M. Alvin Nur Choironi, Syekh Muhammad al-Ghazali: Muslim Tak Harus Pakai Jubah dan Surban. 1 September 2020. <https://islami.co/syekh-muhammad-al-ghazali-muslim-tak-harus-pakai-jubah-dan-surban/> 11/10/2025:08:31.

¹⁸ Moh Rasyid. 2018. Mengidentifikasi Kemuktabarahan Tarekat Syahadatain. Ulul Albab, 9(1), 98-118. DOI:10.18860/ua.v19i1.4811

adherents wear jalabiyah, robes, and turbans. Within the Indonesian context, the leader of the order, Sheikh Hilmial-Araki, does not adhere to the customary practices of wearing a robe and turban, nor does he stipulate such adherence from his adherents. This shift is exemplified by Sheikh's sartorial choices, which include the wearing of a koko shirt, sarong, and black cap. Additionally, Sheikh allows the Ikhwan to don attire that covers the aurat and aligns with the prevailing societal ethics and values.¹⁹

A Historical and Geographic Analysis of Arab or Hajj Clothing

The Mecca theory of Islam's commencement in the Nusantara posits that Arab traders and scholars who conveyed Islam were responsible for introducing the Islamic faith and Arab-Islamic civilization to the Nusantara in the 7th century AD.²⁰ The presence of Muslim burials in Barus, as attested to by Chinese sources, serves as a historical indication of the recognition of Islam in Sumatra during that period. According to this theory, Arab traders and academics from the Middle East introduced Arab attire to the region.²¹ Robes and turbans, as an Arab tradition, have disseminated to other countries of Islamic influence with the advent of Islam and the Hajj pilgrimage.²² According to Ma Huan, who resided in Java during the 15th century, Muslim merchants were known for their clean and modest attire.²³ In the nascent stages of the dissemination and development of Islam in the Nusantara region, Arab attire had become an integral component of the cultural patrimony.

The adoption of robes and turbans as ulama identities was a consequence of the expanding activity of Indonesian congregations and pilgrims to Mecca. This phenomenon began in the nineteenth century and persisted until the twentieth century. Concurrently, in Sumatra during the 18th century, a discernible distinction emerged between the attire of pilgrims journeying to Mecca and that of the local populace. The pilgrims are attired in traditional Hajj garb, which consists of robes and turbans.²⁴ Robes and turbans are regarded as symbols of sanctity due to their association with the holiest sites in Islamic history and their potential lineage to the Prophet Muhammad SAW.²⁵ In the Malay kingdoms, long robes and head-covering turbans were also widely worn and served as regalia since the mid-18th century. The Arab, Said Umar, who served as advisor and son-in-law to the Sultan of Siak, Tengku Buwang, was attired in a long, flowing robe of snow-white fabric, complemented by an embroidered turban. The Sultan of Siak was also known to don elegant, oversized robes.²⁶

Prior to the 20th century, ulama in Riau adhered to a comparable mode of dress, undertaking the Hajj while engaged in the pursuit of religious knowledge and customarily donning robes and turbans during their sojourns in Mecca. Upon their arrival in the Nusantara, these customs were

¹⁹ Nur Istiqomah, 2021. Transformasi Tarekat Qomariyah Arakiyah di Indonesia. Syntax Idea, 3(2), 2694-2711 <https://doi.org/10.36418/syntax-idea.v3i12.1672>

²⁰ Azyumardi Azra, *Jaringan Ulama Timur Tengah dan Kepulauan Nusantara Abad XVII dan XVIII: Melacak Akar-Akar Pembaharuan Pemikiran Islam di Indonesia*, Bandung: Mizan, 1995, 28,

²¹ Nurul Jannah & Muhammad Infithar Al-Ahqaf, Orang Arab di Nusantara: Sejarah dan Pemikiran serta Kontribusi Bagi Bangsa Indonesia. *Conference Paper*, December 2020, 16.

²² Azra, *Jaringan Ulama*, 57.

²³ Macdonald, Duncan B. 1898. "The Preaching of Islam. A History of the Propagation of the Muslim Faith . T. W. Arnold ." *The American Journal of Theology* 2 (1). <https://doi.org/10.1086/476759>.

²⁴ William Marsden, *Sejarah Sumatera, the History of Sumatra*, Yogyakarta: Indoliterasi, 2022, 699-701.

²⁵ Azra, *Jaringan Ulama*, 28.

²⁶ W. Mallincrodt, "Poeloe Gontong. (Eene Indische Phantasie) Op waarheid gegrond." *De Tijdspiegel*, tweeded eel. 'sGravenhage. Charles Ewings, 1889, 472-490.

maintained. Tuanku Tambusai (1784-1882), the leader of the Padri War, deliberately implemented a change in attire and appearance. He encouraged his students to adopt specific forms of dress, including the wearing of white attire, the cultivation of beards, and the practice of shaving their heads.²⁷ This deliberate change in students' appearance and behavior was a significant aspect of the religious and cultural transformation that Tuanku Tambusai sought to instigate. Sheikh Abdurrahman Ya'qub (1912-1970) of Indragiri Hilir was known for his distinctive sartorial style, characterized by the wearing of layered clothing, a white robe, a white cloak, and a black robe on the exterior, accompanied by the traditional headdress known as a turban.²⁸ Indragiri clerics such as Kyai Haji Bustani Qadri, Tuan Guru Mandah Haji Khalil bin H. Abdul Shamad, Tengku Said Muhammad Alydrus (1905-1996), and Engku Mudo Husin (1909-1986) were known for donning long robes that extended to their ankles, complemented by vibrantly hued turbans.

Moreover, the Dutch East Indies government's policies permitted the wearing of robes and turbans in society. The Dutch East Indies Government established a policy that restricted the utilization of Hajj attire exclusively to individuals who had successfully completed the Hajj and demonstrated proficiency through the examination. As indicated by Steenbrink, the authorities employed Arab and other national traditional attire to differentiate between distinct groups of foreign eastern peoples in the Dutch East Indies.²⁹ The hajj dress has emerged as a distinctive custom among ulama, aligning with the Islamic political agenda of the Dutch East Indies government. Consequently, the donning of robes and turbans has been reserved exclusively for religious authority figures, such as professors who have devoted years to the study of religion in Mecca. The legitimacy of these rulers is recognized not only by the populace but also by the Malay sultans. As indicated by Dilistone, the ulama have been influential figures in the realm of clothing, serving as role models and traditional leaders with regard to social, political, and identity issues. The following text is intended to provide a comprehensive overview of the subject matter.³⁰

Ulama Clothing in the Malay Cultural Context

In Sumatran Malay society, clothing is intricately intertwined with religious practices and the adherence to Malay religious doctrines and rites.³¹ Riau's customary attire, encompassing religious ceremonial and ulama garments, is designed in accordance with Islamic law.³² Men's attire typically consists of Malay clothing, such as baju kurung Cekak Musang or Teluk Belanga, which includes a black skullcap and a side fabric wrapped around the waist. The attire of the mosque imam and Bilal consists of robes, turbans, and Malay Cekak Musang shirts. The distinction is in the color of the robe, turban, or skullcap.³³ The attire of Malay priests, comprising long robes and head-covering turbans, reflects the community's adherence to traditional religious customs. Concurrently, Malay dress exemplifies the convergence of Islamic faith and Arab culture with

²⁷ UU Hamidi, *Islam dan Masyarakat Melayu di Riau*, Pekanbaru: UIR Press, 1999, 52-53.

²⁸ Zulkifli M Nuh, Alimuddin Hassan & Kholil Syu'aib, "Tuan Guru Reth Syekh Abdurrahman Ya'qub: Kiprah, Peran dan Pemikirannya dalam Bidang Pendidikan Islam". *Potensia: Jurnal Kependidikan Islam*, Volume 4, Number 1 (2018), 23-45.

²⁹ Karel A. Steenbrink, *Beberapa Aspek tentang Islam di Indonesia Abad ke-19*, Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1984, 240-242.

³⁰ Dilistone, *The Power of Symbol*, 55; Hendariningrum & Susilo. "Fashion dan Gaya Hidup", 25.

³¹ Hartati M, Fatonah, Selfi Mahat Putri, "Estetika Ragam Tengkuluk Pakaian Tradisional Masyarakat Melayu Jambi", *Jurnal Ilmiah Universitas Batanghari Jambi*, Volume 20, Number 2 (Juli 2020), 438.

³² Mita Sapitri, Wilson, Daeng Ayub, "Nilai Karakter pakaian Corak Tenun Songket Melayu Siak di Kampung Tengah Kabupaten Siak", *Jurnal Ideas*, Volume 8, Number 1 (2022), 155.

³³ Jamil, et al. *Pakaian Tradisional Melayu Riau*, 12, 95.

Malay culture.³⁴ In the nineteenth century, it was recommended that the khadi people in the Kingdom of Riau wear black turbans to signify their noble standing. The religious authorities in the Kingdom of Siak wore robes and turbans until the first half of the twentieth century.³⁵

Robes and turbans constituted formal attire for the clergy on designated days, during special occasions, and in the context of religious activities in Riau during the twentieth century. According to an informant (08/08/2023), Kyai Haji Imam Bulqin's dressing habits were as follows: "*I am his grandson, and my mother is his surviving child. His attire, which included a white koko shirt, turban, and sarong, was consistent and meticulous in its daily selection. For formal occasions, the recommendation is to don a black robe or jacket.*" Buya Mahmud Marzuki (1911-1946), Haji Hamzah Yunus (1914-1986), Buya Mansyur Jabbar (1919-1994), and Buya Ma'rifat Mardjani (1917-1989) are notable examples of modern-looking clerics who don Western-style attire, including pantaloons, shirts, jackets, and ties, sometimes accompanied by a skullcap or peci. In contemporary times, the attire that signifies Malay identity, as worn by clerics, is known as baju kurung. This attire is formally regulated by local government ordinances. The following text is intended to provide a comprehensive overview of the subject matter.³⁶

Symbolic resistance to colonizers through clothing

Throughout the history of colonial resistance in Nusantara, Islamic symbols have been prevalent in different contexts.³⁷ During the nineteenth century, colonialists engaged in confrontations with ulama and sultans. Ulama advanced wearing Hajj garb, which included robes and turbans that differed from the enemy's attire. This observation has been recorded in various historical contexts, such as the Java War (1825-1830), the Paderi War (1821-1837), the Menteng War in Palembang, the Aceh War, the Banten War, and others.³⁸ Clerics who played a pivotal role in the colonial resistance movement had a tendency to engage in pilgrimages to Mecca, a practice that entailed the donning of robes and turbans. In 1872, a resident of Surabaya by the name of van Deventer proposed a ban on Arab or Hajj garb. Snouck Hurgronje rebuffed the proposal and expressed trepidation regarding its potential to foment Pan-Islamism in relation to the Hajj.³⁹

The prominent figure within Nahdlatul Ulama who served as its foundation, K.H. Hasyim Asyari, hailing from Jombang, and his principal student, K.H. Wahab Hasbullah, were known to don formal robes, accompanied by a turban, a vestige of the Nusantara warrior tradition that prevailed during the latter years of the nineteenth and the initial third of the twentieth century.⁴⁰ Nahdlatul Ulama, a prominent Islamic organization in Indonesia, has become involved in the effort to preserve Arab clothing, issuing a religious decree that encourages its members to refrain from donning colonial attire and instead promote a more authentic nationalist identity.⁴¹ In

³⁴ Qomar, M. "Ragam Identitas Islam di Indonesia dari Perspektif Kawasan". *Episteme: Jurnal Pengembangan Ilmu Keislaman*, Volume 10, Number 2 (2015), 71.

³⁵ Mahdini, *Tsamarat al-Muhimmah Karya Raja Ali Haji*, Pekanbaru: Yayasan Pusaka Riau, 1999, 58.

³⁶ Ari Prayoga, Bunari, Yulianto, "Nilai dan Makna Sejarah Baju Kurung Labuh sebagai Baju Adat Khas Riau." *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai*, Volume 6, Number 1 (2022), 2881.

³⁷ Azyumardi Azra, *Renaissance Islam Asia Tenggara: Sejarah Wacana dan Kekuasaan*, Bandung: Rosda Kayra, 1999, 37-38.

³⁸ Irsad Akil, I., "Kontribusi Ulama Sufi dalam Keutuhan NKRI". *PUTIH*, Volume 6, Number 2 (2020), 59-76.

³⁹ Steenbrink, *Islam di Indonesia Abad ke-19*, 237-238.

⁴⁰ Farika Imas. 2024. "Jejak Sejarah Jubah KH Hasyim Asy'ari: Simbol Kekuasaan Kolonial Belanda." *Prosiding Konferensi Nasional Mahasiswa Sejarah Peradaban Islam (KONMASPI) 1* (October):653-60.

⁴¹ Abdurrahman Mas'ud, *Dari Haramain ke Nusantara: Jejak Intelektual Arsitek Pesantren*. Jakarta: Kencana Prenada Media Group, 2006. 257.

Minangkabau, a benevolent businessman named Haji Abdul Latif was known for his practice of providing Arab garments to the local ulama. Clerics,⁴² in their capacity as spiritual leaders, don traditional Hajj attire throughout the archipelago to enhance their image and demonstrate their resistance to colonialism.⁴³ K.F. Holle, a native affairs advisor to the Dutch East Indies government, once proposed that the Dutch adopt a uniform appearance similar to that of the ulama, with the intention of creating a negative perception of them. If the indigenous populace harbored animosity towards the Dutch, it was hypothesized that they would also harbor animosity towards the ulama, given the comparable nature of their attire.⁴⁴

Despite the evolution of Western-style attire, tarekat religious leaders in Riau maintain the practice of wearing robes and turbans as an integral component of their identity. They engaged in a confrontation with the Dutch, which corroborated van Bruinessen's hypothesis that the tarekat ulama had provoked the Dutch.⁴⁵ Tuanku Tambusai and Sheikh Abdul Wahab Rokan mobilized their supporters and students in Rokan.⁴⁶ Sheikh Mustafa al-Khalidiyah's armed opposition in Pelalawan resulted in his subsequent arrest by the Dutch authorities. Kyai Imam Bulqin has been identified as a teacher of martial techniques to Kaum Muda (Young People) in Bengkalis. Kyai Ihsan is recognized as the founder of the Sabilillah army, and Haji Zakaria (1913-2006) is documented as having participated in the conflict. Engku Mudo Husin was a leading independence fighter and the figurehead of the Naqshabandiah Samaniah congregation in Kampar.

In the twentieth century, following the influence of education on a number of Indonesian youth, van Niel coined the term "Indonesian Modern Elite" to describe a new opposition organization formed among student youth. These individuals, educated beyond the confines of traditional leadership, found a place within society while being closely monitored by the Dutch government. These Muslim intellectuals adapted to Western culture by receiving modern education and adopting Western modes of dress. A close examination of their attire style reveals notable similarities to those observed in other nationalist intellectual groupings.⁴⁷ In Malaysian Malay society during the 1930s, the rise of nationalism had an impact on fashion.⁴⁸

The twentieth century witnessed numerous transformations, particularly in the realm of clothing as a means of identifying religious identity among priests engaged in the struggle against colonialism. Despite Monarch-Sultan Syarif Kasim II's authorization of the wearing of robes and turbans by religious leaders in the Siak Kingdom, the monarch himself personally initiated a shift in the nationalist identification trend, opting for the black cap.⁴⁹ Consequently, numerous ulama engaged in armed conflict during the period of Indonesian independence from 1945 to 1949 were attired in various forms of traditional dress, including robes, sarongs, and turbans. Prominent

⁴² Hamka, *Ayahku*, Jakarta: Ummida, 1982, 289.

⁴³ Dahrul Muftadin, "Fiqih Perlawanan Kolonialisme Ahmad Rifai". *Jurnal Penelitian* Volume 14 Nomor 2 (2017), 254.

⁴⁴ Steenbrink, *Islam di Indonesia*, 240-242.

⁴⁵ van Bruinessen, *Tarekat Nasabandiyah*, 130.

⁴⁶ Zaini Dahlan, "Ulama Tasawuf di Sumatera Timur Abad XIX dan XX: Menyingkap Jejak Tradisi Intelektual Syekh H. Abdul Wahab Rokan (1811-1926) dan Prof. Dr.H. Saidi Syekh Kadirun Yahya (1917-2001)", *Ansiru PAI*, Volume 4, Number 2 (2020), 1-25.

⁴⁷ Niel, Robert Van. 2009. *Munculnya Elite Modern Indonesia*. Jakarta: Dunia Pustaka Jaya.

⁴⁸ Lee, N. "Transformasi Fesyen Pakaian Muslim Di Semenanjung Tanah Melayu, 1930-1940: Muslim Dress Fashion Transformation in Malay Peninsula, 1930-1940". *Perspektif Jurnal Sains Sosial dan Kemanusiaan*, Volume 6, Number 3 (2014), 70.

⁴⁹ Ahmad Yusuf, et al., *Sultan Syarif Kasim II Raja Terakhir Kerajaan Siak Sri Indrapura*, Pekanbaru: Pemprov. Riau, 1992, 198.

among these figures were Kyai Imam Bulqin and Kyai Muhammad Ihsan of Bengkalis. Conversely, other combatants of the same rank, such as Mahmud Marzuki, who established the Hezbollah army to defend the Proclamation of Independence, opt for more formal attire, including pantaloons, coats, ties, and black caps.⁵⁰

The role of clothing as representation of economic, social, political, and religious authority

Previous studies have demonstrated that, historically, ulama in the Nusantara were a group of people with economic stability and a social standing that far exceeded that of the majority of society. Muslims are permitted to perform the Hajj and dress accordingly. In the nineteenth century, Ulama in Riau fulfilled a multifaceted role as religious teachers, mosque managers, and royal officials. Zakat and community donations have been demonstrated to provide revenue for them.⁵¹ During the reign of Sultan Syarif Kasim II, substantial royal incomes were received by Lebai Abdul Wahid⁵² and Lebai Abdul Muttalib.⁵³ The elevated economic status of the ulama (religious scholars) enables them to assume a role in promoting economic advancement and social welfare.

A number of ulama from Indragiri Hilir who lived at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries benefited from a strong financial and social base, such as Sheikh Abdurrahman Siddiq (1857-1939). Sheikh Siddiq pioneered community economic empowerment through coconut plantations, establishing the Indragiri area as the largest coconut producer in Riau.⁵⁴ Tuan Guru Abdurrahman Ya'qub (1912-1970), a member of a prominent merchant family, played a pivotal role in the establishment of the new community.⁵⁵ Sheikh Abdul Wahab Rokan (1811-1926) is recognized for his contributions to the economic development of the hamlets he founded.⁵⁶ Haji Mohammad Amin (1863-1968) is recognized for his instrumental role in the establishment of an Islamic Trade Union section in Pekanbaru, a development that aimed to organize Muslim traders within the region.⁵⁷

The ulama, a term denoting religious scholars, are predominantly engaged in commercial activities as traders, in the dissemination of religious knowledge as teachers, and in agricultural pursuits as farmers. During the mid-nineteenth century, traders in port cities had ample opportunity to embark on pilgrimages to the sacred land of Mecca.⁵⁸ The following individuals were members of the merchant community of Senapelan, Pekanbaru, in the early half of the twentieth century: Haji Saleh Abbas, Haji Muhammad Ali, Haji Yahya, Haji Rukun, and Haji Sulaiman. However, these traders do not employ Hajj dress as a deliberate means of self-identification; rather, they incorporate it into their attire inadvertently. Indeed, they opt for Western-style attire. Consequently, a diverse array of attire is observed among the Hajj, reflecting

⁵⁰ Umar Amin, *Peranan Mahmud Marzuki dalam Perjuangan Kemerdekaan di Daerah Kampar Provinsi Riau*, Pekanbaru: LPPM Unri, 1982.

⁵¹ Hijman van Anrooij, "Nota Omtrent het Rijk van Siak", *TBG*, Volume 30 (1885), 269.

⁵² Kasiri. 1993. Soeman HS; Guru Yang Berjiwa Guru, in *Tempo: Memoar Senarai Kiprah Sejarah*. Jakarta: Pustaka Utama.

⁵³ Wilaela. 2016. *Potret Pendidikan Perempuan Di Riau Sebelum Kemerdekaan*. Sukoharjo: Inti Prima Aksara.

⁵⁴ A. Muthalib, "Peranan Tuan Guru Syekh Abdurrahman Shiddiq dalam Membangun Lembaga Pendidikan Islam di Indragiri Hilir". *Edukasi*, Volume 8, Number 1 (2020), 1-13.

⁵⁵ Kholil Syu'aib & Zulkifli M. Nuh, "Jaringan Intelektual Ulama Riau: Melacak Silsilah Keilmuan Syaikh Abdurrahman Ya'qub". *Jurnal Ilmiah Islam Futura* Volume 17, Number 2 (2018), 296.

⁵⁶ HA Fuad, *Syekh A. Wahab: Tuan Guru Babussalam*, Medan: Pustaka Babussalam, 1991, 151.

⁵⁷ Wilaela, et al. *Pekanbaru Abad ke-20: Sejarah ala Biografi*. Yogyakarta: UAD Press, 202, 68.

⁵⁸ Marsden, *Sejarah Sumatera*, 699-701.

the practicality and functionality of their occupations. For instance, individuals belonging to the merchant class do not employ the traditional robes and turbans as a means of self-identification during the Hajj pilgrimage.

The ulama in Riau region wield considerable authority in religious matters, assuming leadership roles within their respective communities, and exercising significant political influence. Some ulama are pioneers in new residential areas, clearing trees and erecting prayer halls or mosques as centers of worship and learning. Concurrently, other individuals ascended to positions of authority within the monarchy. Ulama constituted an integral component of the Siak Kingdom's royal structure, assuming prominent roles such as Tuan Kadi Siak Haji Zakariah and Pekanbaru District Imam Haji Muhammad Taher (1892-1986). Ulama, or Islamic scholars, often distinguished by their robes and turbans, assumed prominent roles within these communities. Prominent figures such as Sheikh Abdurrahman Siddiq (1857-1939) became the Mufti of the Indragiri Kingdom, while Sheikh Mustafa al-Khalidiyah (1816-1886) held this position in the Pelalawan Kingdom. Additionally, Imam Muhammad Kali was appointed as the Kadhi of the Tambusai Kingdom, underscoring the diversity of religious leadership within these regions. The ulama assumed a leadership role within their respective communities. Notable figures include Tuan Guru Sheikh Abdul Wahab Rokan, who established the Babussalam villages; Kyai Imam Bulqin (1881-1974), who founded Pedekik Village; and K.H. Muhammad Ihsan (1899-1988), who founded Kampung Pasiran in Bengkalis. The following text is intended to provide a comprehensive overview of the subject matter.

Transformations of Ulamas' Clothing Styles

The observed changes in ulama dress across the archipelago are driven by the dynamics of ulama role and function. Prior to the twentieth century, ulama functioned as religious authorities in Riau due to their extensive education in Mecca. Robes and turbans have been identified as symbols of religious authority, contributing to the perceived status and respect accorded to those who wear them. Ulama serve as role models, agents of reform, and officials in royal power. They played a pivotal role in fostering a sense of nationalism and resistance to colonialism. However, with the introduction of Western education systems in the early twentieth century, some ulama adopted and adapted these systems to enhance religious education, thereby rendering robes and turbans as ulama identities increasingly obsolete. Contemporary groups, such as Muhammadiyah, have expanded the definition of ulama beyond its traditional boundaries, thereby influencing the identity of these religious scholars. Western-style dress, including suits, pantaloons, ties, caps, and shoes, has gained popularity among ulama who have received a modern education. This trend is evident in the fashion of several prominent buya in Kampar, such as Mahmud Marzuki, Mansyur Jabbar, Hamzah Yunus, and Nur Mahyuddin. Van Niel refers to Indonesia's modern elite as ulama from Western Islamic schools who use cultural association politics. The following text is intended to provide a comprehensive overview of the subject matter.⁵⁹

In the middle of the twentieth century, modern-leaning adolescent clergy did not wear robes or turbans. In contrast, other clerics opt for more modest attire, characterized by simple robes and turbans, for occasions such as religious holidays and special events. Ulama typically wear sarongs and Cekak Musang or koko attire.⁶⁰ An example of this can be seen in Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli

⁵⁹ van Niel, *Elite Modern Indonesia*, 129.

⁶⁰ Jamil, et al. *Pakaian Tradisional Melayu Riau*, 12, 95.

ulama from Candung.⁶¹ It has been observed that other Minangkabau Ulama, including Sheikh H.M. Djamil Djambek and Sheikh H.M. Thaib Umar, exhibit a sense of pride in their traditional attire, which includes robes and turbans. However, it is noteworthy that these individuals also opt for more contemporary attire, such as buttoned suits and sarongs, in their professional and formal settings.⁶² A prominent ulama, Haji Rasul, possessed a robe and turban, which served as a symbol of his prolonged sojourn in Mecca. However, he only donned these items during festival occasions, a practice that underscores the belief that true knowledge resides within the individual rather than being confined to physical items.⁶³ HOS Tjokroaminoto, a prominent figure within Sarekat Islam, had previously organized protests in opposition to the prohibition on wearing shoes, hats, suits, and pantaloons.⁶⁴ Consequently, Muslim intellectual ulama became the ones who permitted the ulama the option of wearing Western-style clothing, thereby eroding the significance of robes and turbans as symbols of the ulama's identity. The following text is intended to provide a comprehensive overview of the subject matter.

The advent of Muhammadiyah has precipitated a shift in clothing styles in the region of Riau. Muhammadiyah was initially met with disapproval by the populace and royal circles of Malay countries, who adhered to the Kaum Tua doctrine.⁶⁵ In 1938, Abdul Rauf, an imam from Bagansiapi-api, defiantly chose to diverge from the customary practice of donning all-white robes and turbans during Friday sermons. In addition, he began to deliver sermons in the non-Arabic language.⁶⁶ Initially, this shift encountered significant opposition due to its impact on religious symbols and the authority of elders and sultans, who served as religious guardians within the community. This authority had been further entrenched by local traditions, including the wearing of robes and turbans.⁶⁷ Finally, the Kaum Muda, an organization within the broader spectrum of the Indonesian Nationalist Movement, succeeded in establishing an alternative educational system that integrated the Dutch educational model while maintaining an emphasis on Islamic education. Concomitant with the embrace of contemporary educational paradigms, suits, shirts, pantaloons, and ties have emerged as a fashion trend among contemporary educated ulama and other individuals of similar educational attainment. The following text is intended to provide a comprehensive overview of the subject matter.

The study of clothing traditions in this region is influenced by two major factors: the educational influences of the Dutch and the diverse occupations of the Hajj pilgrims. The term "clerical garb" is a broad designation encompassing various forms of religious attire, extending beyond the conventional robes and turbans typically associated with traditional Western clergy attire. In contemporary society, there has been a notable shift in fashion preferences, with both men and women opting for more conventional attire that is deemed more suitable for traditional occasions. This shift away from sarongs can be attributed to a general move towards more

⁶¹ Mestika Zed, et al., *Biografi Inyik Candung: Perjalanan Hidup dan Perjuangan Syekh Sulaiman Arrasuli*. Jakarta: Murai Kencana PT Raja Grafindo, 2021, 22, 59.

⁶² Mahmud Junus, *Sedjarah Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia*, Jakarta: Pustaka Mahmudiah, 1960, 68, 77.

⁶³ Hamka, *Ayahku*, 158;

⁶⁴ Junus, *Sedjarah Pendidikan Islam*, 222.

⁶⁵ Amir Luthfi, *Hukum dan Perubahan Struktur Kekuasaan: Pelaksanaan Hukum Islam dalam Kesultanan Siak, 1901-1942*. Pekanbaru: Susqa Press, 1991, 143.

⁶⁶ Wilaela, *Potret Pendidikan*, 175-176.

⁶⁷ Hamka, *Kenang-Kenangan Hidup I dan II*, Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1974, 150-161; Isnanto, Muh. 2018. "Gagasan Dan Pemikiran Muhammadiyah Tentang Kaderisasi Ulama (Studi Kasus Tentang Ulama Di Muhammadiyah)." *Aplikasia: Jurnal Aplikasi Ilmu-Ilmu Agama* 17 (2).

appropriate and culturally sensitive clothing choices. In the context of Riau, a notable proportion of the ulama have pursued education in institutions such as schools and madrasas in West Sumatra, which have adopted the modern Dutch educational system. This system incorporates the practice of wearing pantaloons.⁶⁸ Even the largest madrasa in East Sumatra, Madrasah Masluriah in Tanjungpura, with 1,000 students in 1925, wore Dutch flag-colored uniforms to commemorate the Sultan of Langkat's anniversary. Rengat is home to a religious school known as Babul Khairat, which was founded in 1923. The students of this institution were known to don sarongs, while their teachers were attired in white shirts, dark-colored pantaloons, and skullcaps.⁶⁹ The following text is intended to provide a comprehensive overview of the subject matter.

The social changes that accompanied the adoption of Western-style clothing and student relationships among the Malay community gave rise to feelings of anxiety and rejection, as these shifts were perceived as a departure from traditional Eastern customs.⁷⁰ Clothing emerged as a distinguishing factor between contemporary Dutch intellectual education and traditional religious schooling.⁷¹ In the context of Riau, there has been a discernible shift in the sentiment among ulama and Islamic boarding schools towards a stance that is antagonistic towards the Netherlands. However, a divergence of opinion persists regarding the implementation of contemporary pedagogical methodologies. Those who endorse this ideology often pursue further education in contemporary institutions located in West Sumatra, Medan, or Java, donning attire reminiscent of Dutch fashion. Conversely, individuals who opt to abstain from conventional kuttub schools in Riau and maintain the use of sarongs, turbans, and analogous head coverings demonstrate a distinct cultural preference.⁷²

Conversely, the domain of Cultural Association Politics has witnessed a pronounced acceleration in the evolution of clerical attire. Snouck Hurgronje, a prominent figure in the field, posited that Western-backed associations would emerge victorious in the struggle to counter Islamic influence.⁷³ The emergence of Muslim intellectual organizations such as Muhamadiyah, which melds Western and Middle Eastern educational methodologies, has reinvigorated the pertinence of Islamic education to Western education, encompassing sartorial adaptations.⁷⁴ The erosion of robes and turbans as ulama identities was precipitated by a multifaceted array of factors, including criticism from the Dutch colonial administration, the implementation of Hajj rules, and the influence of association politics in the education sector. In the decades following independence, the robes and turbans worn by the ulama came to symbolize their identity. The utilization of these garments is not limited to the clergy; they are also employed by the general public and Islamic boarding schools during religious or traditional events. The following text is intended to provide a comprehensive overview of the subject matter.

⁶⁸ Azyumardi Azra, *Pendidikan Islam Tradisi dan Modernisasi Menuju Milenium Baru*, Jakarta: Logos, 1999, 37-38.

⁶⁹ Wilaela, *Potret Pendidikan*, 76-77, 164-165.

⁷⁰ Junus, *Sedjarah Pendidikan Islam*, 222

⁷¹ Mukti Ali, *Alam Pikiran Islam Modern di Indonesia*, Jogjakarta: Jajasan Nida, 1971, 18.

⁷² Suminto, *Politik Islam Hindia Belanda*, Jakarta: LP3ES, 1985, 47-51.

⁷³ Harry J Benda, "Christian Snouck Hurgronje and the Foundation of Dutch Islamic Polity in Indonesia", dalam *Continuity and Change in Southeast Asia*, Yale University, 1972, 89.

⁷⁴ Suminto, *Politik Islam Hindia Belanda*, 45.

Conclusion

In the pre-twentieth-century era, the ulama could be distinguished by the diverse attire patterns and types that characterized the majority of the Nusantara population. Robes and turbans are often used as symbols of economic, social, political, and religious authority. In the context of anti-colonial resistance, the use of attire such as robes and turbans played a significant role in the struggle against colonial rule. The integration of Arab traders in the Nusantara, the pilgrimage to Mecca, tarekat traditions, the Islamic politics of the Dutch East Indies Government, and the form of clerics' attire in Malay customs have all contributed to the tradition of Hajj apparel, such as robes and turbans. However, following the mid-20th century, the identification of ulama no longer pertains to attire. Some ulama appear similar to other modern intellectual elites, donning Western-style suits, pantaloons, ties, and hats or skullcaps. The emergence of youth groups and modernist organizations, such as Muhamadiyah and the Netherlands Cultural Association, as well as the adoption of Western education systems, have contributed to the erosion of the traditional function of robes and turbans in the identification of ulama. The traditional boundaries that once defined the role of ulama have become increasingly blurred. The practice of wearing Arabic clothing as a form of religious expression or as a means of identifying with specific Muslim communities has transcended the traditional purview of ulama, indicating a shift in the sociocultural landscape.

This paper emphasizes the role of clothing in shaping identity and its significance in the context of social and cultural dynamics. Robes and turbans have been the symbol of the Nusantara ulama for more than a century. This transformation can be attributed to the rise of the Modern Indonesian Elite, as documented by Robert van Niel. This study offers methodological support for the use of autobiography and biography as historical sources when employing prosopographic tools and images. It has come to our attention that clothing frequently mentioned in written biographies and photographic evidence of Islamic scholars is often not maintained properly. In the context of Islamic politics in the Dutch East Indies, clothing emerged as a pivotal issue. Presently, traditional Malay dress remains compatible with Hajj clothing, and the Riau regional government has granted it legal protection to preserve local identity in the context of globalization.

A notable weakness of the study is that it was not conducted during the heuristic phase, which is the process of gathering and analyzing historical sources on ulama dress during the period of Islam's advent and development prior to colonialism. Consequently, certain sections of the paper transition abruptly from the Mecca Theory in the seventh century to the colonial period in the nineteenth. Malay historiography, which is the study of the past of the Malay world, has the potential to illuminate the lifestyle and attire of ulama in Malay kingdoms. By examining historical records and documents, scholars can gain insight into the cultural and religious practices of these religious scholars in the context of the Malay kingdoms.

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