

The Influence of Muhammad Abduh in The Nusantara: From Qur'anic Exegesis to Islamic Reform Movement

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to present a survey of Abduh's extensive influence on Islamic reform (tajdid) in the Indo-Malay Archipelago, which often called Nusantara. Muhammad Abduh had a remarkable and lasting impact on religious thought and movement in Nusantara. His works and ideas were influential in the political and social landscape. He strongly impacted the movements of Muhammadiyah, al-Irsyad, Persatuan Islam (Persis), and Sarekat Islam. His Tafsir al-Manar brought inspiration with a rational outlook that influenced major tafsir works such as Tafsir al-Azhar, Tafsir al-Quranul Karim, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Madjiid (Tafsir al-Nur), Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Hakim, Tafsir al-Misbah, and Tafsir al-Furqan. The al-Manar magazine initiated by Muhammad Abduh significantly inspired many reform-oriented works and periodicals such as journal al-Imam, al-Munir, al-Ikhwani, Saudara, al-Dhakhirah al-Islamiyah, Qalam, and Seruan Azhar.

Keywords: Intellectual Tradition, Indo-Malayarchipelago, Modern Thought, Muhammad Abduh, Religious Reform

INTRODUCTION

The struggle to uphold the values of renewal and reconciliation driven by Muhammad Abduh (1266-1323/1849-1905) in Egypt had a significant influence on Islamic thought and reform tradition in Nusantara, or the Indo-Malay Archipelago. Many groups of scholars and reformers are labeled as Young People who are inspired and impressed by the aspirations and ideas they inspire, such as Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah (1879-1945), Haji Abdul Malik bin Abdul Karim Amrullah (1908-1981) Kyai Haji Ahmad Dahlan (1868-1923), Sheikh Muhammad Tahir Jalaluddin al-Falaki (1869-1956), Syed Sheikh al-Hadi (1867-1934), Dr. Burhanuddin al-Helmi (1911-1969), Mustafa 'Abdul Rahman (1918-1968) and others. Abduh's influence and significant impact on the Indo-Malay archipelago are reflected in the pioneering works published by the younger generation in the form of commentaries, periodicals, journals, newspapers, magazines, as well as educational and religious institutions which carried his renewal streams and movements in the nineteenth and twentieth century and contributed to continuing substantive influence and legacy in Nusantara.

This paper aims to examine Abduh's intellectual influence on the thinking of the pioneers and leaders of the reform movement in the Nusantara. This expansion of his influence was quite instrumental in forming new strongholds of the influential reformist movement in the Nusantara archipelago, as noted by Mohd Shuhaimi Ishak in his dissertation on the influence of Abduh's rational theology on Harun

Nasution and its monumental impact in the breakthrough of his reform ideas to Indonesia: "The birth of the modernist reformist Pan-Islamism advocated by al-Afghani and 'Abduh, attracted a vast audience among young students. Cairo, during the colonial times and particularly in the 1920s, provided a fertile ground for the Southeast Asian students".¹

This important network and relationship tied between the Middle East and the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago were crucial in spreading Abduh's tremendous influence in the Malay Archipelago. The emergence of this influence and its widespread impression and the political and economic factors that contributed to this expansion are traced by Azyumardi Azra in his study of the process of transmitting Abduh's reformist teachings in this region: "The Increasing contact between Muslims from the Middle East and the Malay Archipelago was due to many factors, including the rapid development in navigation technologies, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, the monetization of the colonial economy, which benefitted certain classes in the colony and the greater global community of populations".²

Many factors contributed to the existence of a network between the Middle East and Malay, especially the learning activities in *al-Haramayn* (Mecca and Madina), Cairo, and the widespread invention of printing presses.³ *Haramayn* has become the center of the largest gathering of Muslims worldwide, where scholars, Sufis, government groups, philosophers, poets, and historians meet and exchange information.⁴ Meanwhile, Cairo is a result of civilization, an essential arena of the intellectual movement, and a site of cultural heritage and religious relations. In the historical tradition, it is a bastion of the belief that embraces universal religious traditions.

Al-Manar's significant relationship with the reformists in Tanah Melayu (Malay lands) has sparked and inspired the emergence of a revivalist movement that fought for the ideals of revival and renewal: "With the expansion of the community of Indonesians in Egypt, the Cairene body has now come to represent far more than the revivalist scripturalism laid out by Muhammad Abduh".⁵ The modern thoughts and aspirations championed by *al-Manar* have provided significant stimulation and impact in inspiring a dynamic network with the Indo-Malay Archipelago. Through this connection, the ideas of Islamic reform advocated by the reformers in Egypt were absorbed and disseminated among the Islamic community in this region.⁶

Widespread distribution of reform-oriented magazines and newspapers that breathed the spirit of *nahdah* at the beginning of the twentieth century, such as *al-Imam* (Singapore), *al-Munir* (Sumatera Barat), *al-Huda*, *al-Iqbal* (Java), *al-Mir'ah al-Muhammadiyah* (Yogyakarta), *al-Tadhkirah al-Islamiyah*, *Pembela Islam* (Bandung), *al-Irsyad* (Pekalongan), *Tunas Melayu*, *al-Ikhwān*, *Saudara*, and other influential outputs have contributed to the driving Abduh's influence in the Malay Archipelago. He continued the school of thought and modernization efforts that sparked a monumental reform movement and became the catalyst for the revival of Islam in the Indo-Malay world. Impressed by his significant action, *Al-Manar* has attracted many followers from educated and intellectual groups from various schools and understandings who are influenced by the ideals of struggle and his intellectual movement. This influence is reflected in the requests and missions directed to *al-Manar* from three groups: Southeast Asian students in the Middle East, Arab communities living in Southeast Asia, and native Southeast Asian readers of *al-Manar*, which is mainly related to the theme "Islam and modernity, religious practice and the ideals of renewal".⁷ This can be seen from the interesting dialogue from the mission of Shaykh Muhammad Basyuni bin 'Imran (1885-1981) from the Sambas sultanate to *Al-Manar* magazine, which relates the thoughts of the ummah on the problems of the ummah who were removed from political power and its caliphate in the twentieth century. Bluhm investigates in his paper

the relationship between Cairo and the Malay immigrants and the role of Al-Manar in relation to submitting fatwas and issues related to this region.⁸ He shows that: "there was an interaction between al-Manar readers in the Malay world and the editors of the periodicals. In this regard, the Malay individuals from Malaya, Kalimantan, Sumatra, and other parts of the region wrote to those editors seeking advice and offering opinions on a broad range of theological questions, economic and environmental problems, technological advances, issues of current political concern such as patriotism and a range of other matter. Furthermore, during 1898-1936, *al-Manar* published 26 articles and some 135 requests for legal opinions from the Malay-speaking world".

DISCUSSION

The study focuses on Abduh's influence on the Qur'anic exegesis activities, mass movements, journalism, and rational understanding in the archipelago. In the Qur'anic interpretation tradition, Tafsir al-Manar, which was dictated by Muhammad Abduh and later published by Muhammad Rashid Rida (1282-1354/1865-1935) in the commentary room in the journal al-Manar, was very influential in the Malay world and had an extensive impact on the production of commentary works in the twentieth century. It demonstrates the scientific methodology of interpreting the Koran, which emphasizes rational strength and high *ijtihad* in formulating *nash* statements, free from classical ideologies and ideas in the oldest commentaries.

His interpretations had a key influence on the production of Malay commentary manuscripts by reformers impressed with the school of Islamic reform in Egypt that he pioneered. Among them is Tafsir al-Azhar, composed by Shaykh Haji Abdul Malik bin Abdul Karim Amrullah (Hamka) (1908-1981), who has contributed vehemently to upholding the *nahdah* and renewal struggles in Indonesia. It was compiled from his commentary lecture delivered at the al-Azhar Mosque, Kebayoran Baru Jakarta, the next dawn. The notes and comments he has been working on since 1959 have been put forward "in a semi-monthly magazine called 'Gema Islam' which was first published on Jan 15, 1962, as a substitute for the Panji Masyarakat magazine which Sukarno banned in 1960"⁹ who gave a significant influence on the struggle for the revival of his nation and the deep concern of his audience throughout Indonesia, as imagined in the introduction to his commentary: "The lesson of "tafsir" after the dawn prayer at the great mosque of al-Azhar has been heard everywhere throughout Indonesia... all the lessons of "tafsir" at dawn were published in the Gema Islam magazine".¹⁰

Milhan Yusuf, in his thesis exploring the understanding of legal verses in Tafsir al-Azhar, writes: "Since he was influenced by the idea of reform supported by (Shaykh) Muhammad 'Abduh and his friends, Hamka tried to raise and implement the idea of reform in his homeland, with efforts that are on him; through preaching and writing".¹¹

In the preamble of his commentary, Hamka discusses the influence of the works of interpretation he refers to, including classic and modern interpretations, especially the book of interpretations of al-Manar that triggered the idea of freedom which inspired the struggle and revived the revolutionary movement: Tafsir al-Manar written by Sayid Rashid Ridha, based on the teachings of his teacher Shaykh Muhammad Abduh's interpretation. This interpretation of his, apart from elaborating knowledge regarding religion, hadith, fiqh and history and others, also adapts the verses to political and social developments, which are following the era when the interpretation was written".¹²

His legal discussion effectively analyzes the differences in views and arguments of schools of thought by reviewing and emphasizing the most substantial views and refusing to adhere to disputes and differences of schools of thought: '*ashsub* to an understanding".¹³

The style of interpretation in *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Karim*, which was carried out by three commentators from Mandailing, East Sumatra (now part of the province of North Sumatra); Abdul Halim Hassan (1901-1969), Zainal Arifin Abbas (1912-1979), and Abdur Rahim Haitamy (1910-1948) [died in exile in Langsa (East Aceh) in 1948 (revolutionary era)] also showed strong currents and influences from *Tafsir al-Manar*. Accordingly, the views and manhaj that are brought out embody the principles and background of understanding fiqhul and broad kalam. According to T.M. Hasbi ash-Shieddiqy (1904-1975) in his commentary: "Tafsir al Ustadz Abdul Halim Hasan c.s., if it is perfect, a good interpretation. However, this interpretation incorporates sciences that must be discussed separately. The Tafsir seems to have been influenced by *Tafsir Djawahir*, who was too broad in explaining questions related to natural sciences, plants, etc".¹⁴

This book is one of the well-known works of modern commentary that discusses a wide range of significant and contemporary issues of fiqh and school of thought and legal views. According to Howard M. Federspiel¹⁵ in his specific research on this interpretation: "This triangular interpretation is qualitatively powerful, and its strength lies in its ability to combine the fields of history, theology and [it] is loaded with very high professionalism in conveying religious teachings that are complete with their responses".

This interpretation is motivated by the strong influence of Muhammad Abduh's interpretation of madrasah, which shows the impression of a new understanding of Islam that he pioneered: "Then, to make it easier to understand, and to help us provide real pictures of these verses, which are following the development of science in our time, we also explain them based on *Tafsir al-Manar* which al-Ustazul Imam Sheikh Muhammad Abduh originally wrote until juz II, and then continued by his student, Sayid Muhammad Rashid Rida but guided by the teachings he had received from al-Ustazul Imam Sheikh Muhammad Abduh also existed until the end of surat Yusuf (as) (juz xii-xiii)".¹⁶

This was emphasized by Abdul Qadir Umar al-Hamidy¹⁷ when examining the principles of the methodology of this interpretation which is generally impressed by the intellectual tradition and rational principles that *Ustazul Imam* rolled out, as he explained: "Almost all of the contents of their Tafsir are excerpts from the main Arabic Tafsir books, religious books, and Egyptian magazines. Also, the excerpts most widely sourced from *Tafsir al-Manar*, the work of Syeikh Rasyid Rida from the lectures of Sheikh Muhammad Abduh and *Tafsir Al-Jawahir* by Sheikh Tantawi Jauhari".

It is one of Muktabar's works of interpretation that upholds the ideology and idea of renewal based on *al-Manar*, as he explained in the fundamental principles of the faith which were enshrined in *Shaykh Muhammad Abduh's Tafsir*, as quoted by the interpreter: "*Fatihah* is read 17 times a day. It is none other than a whip for us so that we know how to apply to our Lord. It is not solely that we have to surrender to Him by leaving our efforts and endeavors. However, we do our efforts and endeavors first, then ask Him for help. Nevertheless, it is best to ask for help while being obedient and upholding good virtue".¹⁸

Abduh's views are also raised in his interpretation of prophetic verses, miracles, revelations, kalam, treatises, and prophecy, which are important issues that are worked on in this *Tafsir*. The continuation of the treatise brought by the Anbiya, with "the coming of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) perfected the sharia that preceded him (PBUH)",¹⁹ only delivers the same message of monotheism. *Nubuwwah* is associated with revelation and prophecy (as) that God has planned in His knowledge. In verse 124, Surah al-Baqarah, God said to Prophet Ibrahim (as): "Verily, I have made you an Imam (associate) for all mankind". the exegetes comment on the meaning of the verse explaining the rank of the prophets (as) who have been granted treatises and *nubuwwah*: "(stated) (*Fa qalal*) because the *kalimah* (*qala*) has no connection. Sheikh Muhammad Abduh's explanation reminds us that the rank of a prophet is solely a

gift from God and His choice, not because of perfecting the sentence (command). The reason is that the Imam is 'like a treatise (being an apostle), while the treatise cannot be achieved by the efforts of those who try'.²⁰

Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Madjied, known as Tafsir al-Nur, also drew inspiration from the principles and ideology of Tafsir al-Manar, produced by the prolific exegete Teungku Mohammad Hasbi ash-Shieddiqy (1904-1975), one of the important figures in the reformist movement and the thinking of young people in Indonesia. This work brings a broad view of interpretation in describing the idealism and reform thoughts echoed by Abduh. From his extensive discussion, he tries to work on the crucial ideas and thoughts raised in *al-Manar*. He brought his aspirations to the struggle for *islah* and *tajdid* by referring to the principal works of Abduh, such as *Tafsir Juz 'Amma*, *Risalatut Tauhid*, and *al-Urwa al-Wuthqa*.

In another, more concise interpretation, *Tafsir al-Bayan* also works on this influence by taking the books of *Tafsir al-Maraghi* and *Tafsir al-Manar* as his primary reference, which are quite instrumental in bringing about social, political, and religious changes and developing the influence of his madrasah in the tradition of interpretation in Indonesia.

The Book of *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Hakim*, produced by Ustaz Mustafa Abdul Rahman Mahmud (1918-1968), was also impressed with Abduh's ideals and thoughts. Published in 1949 by Persama Press, Pulau Pinang, in 27 volumes, it is one of the most influential works of interpretation based on the comprehensive interpretation of manhaj outlined in Tafsir al-Manar. Much of his interpretation is based on the discussions and comments in al-Manar based on rational and scientific principles. This book is an extensive work of exegesis that outlines a modern approach that contextualizes its meaning and understanding in a contemporary setting. Ustaz Mustafa was very impressed with the framework and outline of al-Manar's interpretation, in which he summarized the interpretation in Malay, as is evident from his title, Tafsir al-Quran al-Hakim, which is the original name for Tafsir al-Manar.

In her analysis of this interpretation, Nadzirah Mohd shows a significant impression of the influence of *Tafsir al-Manar* on this book of Tafsir: "Shaykh Mustafa's commentary work is an example of the influence of this madrasah *al-Manar* on the Malay. The title of its interpretation, i.e., *Tafsir al-Quran al-Hakim*, is exactly the title of the original work of Shaykh Muhammad Rashid Rida, better known as *Tafsir al-Manar*. In his work, he relies heavily on *Tafsir al-Manar* and *Tafsir al-Maraghi*. Shaykh Mustafa has succeeded in instilling reformist ideas from *al-Manar* to the Malay, not only in social and religious renewal but, more importantly, in presenting a new approach of commentary writing contextualized to the Malay".

This book of *Tafsir al-Furqan* was compiled by A. Hassan Bandung (1887-1958) with 1256 pages²² and also inspired the modern style of thought and interpretation of Sheikh Muhammad Abduh. Commenting on the power of this interpretation, T.M. Hasbi ash-Shieddiqy mentions in his tafsir: "If *Tafsir Persatuan Islam* is complete, it may serve as a good, or even the best, concise interpretation".²³

This interpretation was printed at the request of Persis (Islamic Unity) members who needed it as basic reading within the Persis environment in their missionary work and struggle. This interpretation of the Koran is motivated by the spirit of renewal and *ijtihad* that he fought for, which has puritan and Islamist views. According to Djamal Tukimin in his introduction to Hamka's book: "The 1950s were a great and chronic period when movements for purification of Islamic teachings were driven by 'Salafi scholars' or often known as the Young People. Among the prominent figures is Ustaz Hassan Ahmad, also known as Ustaz Hassan Bandung".²⁴

In principle, the main thought of A Hassan's Tafsir al-Qur'an discusses fundamental religious themes, in which "all material has been presented accurately, and technically the material is presented correctly, carefully prepared, and packaged well".²⁵ The thoughts of A. Hassan Bandung has provided an important basis for the struggle of young people and colored the traditions and early history of the battle of modernists in Indonesia. He teaches Masyumi legends such as Mohammad Natsir, K.H.M. Isa Anshory, Fakhroeddin al-Khairi, Kyai Munawar Khalil, and others.

In principle, this interpretation is put forward in the context of religious questions of answer and legal fatwas currently being handled in society. In his extensive discussion on the development of Al-Qur'an literature in Indonesia and the evil interpretations of it, Howard M. Federspiel²⁶ recorded in his book Popular Indonesian Literature of the Qur'an (multiple references on pages 36, 39-40, 47, 53, 83, 103-4, 111, 129-30, 132, 263, 267) about A Hassan's commentary work, which is categorized among the second generation of works along with Qomaruddin Hamidy and Mahmud Yunus (1899-1973) who have made a significant contribution to the development of the intellectual tradition and the writing of interpretations in Indonesia, in which, "The three works mentioned above have shown extraordinary durability; all three are still in use thirty years after their first release. The popularity of each is shown by the number of times it was printed [e.g. A. Hassan's tafsir has been printed seven times]."

His commentary views show a clear understanding of the *khittah* of reform compiled by *al-Manar*. According to Kurzman²⁷ : "Ahmad Hassan calculated that the notions of Islamic traditionalism and the doctrine of *taqlid* - a direct and unquestioned conviction to follow the schools of thought - have allowed freezing to bind the dynamics of Islam, and this situation can be reversed only through free research on religious sources". According to A Hassan in his *Risalah al-Mazhab*: "Having madhhab that has the same meaning as having taqlid. Both of these are prohibited by Allah, the Messenger, the Companions, and even by the Imams who are *taqlidii*".²⁸

The publication of modern-oriented magazines initiated at the beginning of the twentieth century, such as *al-Imam* in 1906 (which was the first Malay periodical to appear in Singapore), helped raise awareness about the aspirations of reform and *islah* and the need to improve the position and increase the livelihood values of the Malay people.

In the author's plan for the first issue of *Al-Imam* on Jul 23, 1906 (1 Jamada al-Akhir, 1324 AH), Syed Shaykh al-Hadi wrote: that they had with him, then we remembered our stand before God *al-Rabb al-Jalil* on the following day. When we are asked about things we know: Have we conveyed them to our brothers who do not know about him? Therefore, we have made this *al-Imam* to provide evidence for us with God *Rabb al-'Alamin*".

Al-Imam was published in Javanese writings in Singapore "to convey the call to all our brothers".²⁹ Its printing occurred in 31 issues until its final issue in December 1908. This magazine was widely circulated in Sumatra, Java, Kalimantan, and Sulawesi, with agents spread across Jakarta, Cianjur, Surabaya, Semarang, Pontianak, Sambas, and Makassar, and played a significant role in important as a cultural intermediary, translating the spirit of purification, rationalism and the new Islamic vitality into Malay - the lingua franca of the Malay island chain - as well as into terms relevant to the local frame of reference, Malay-Indonesian.³⁰ As stated in the author's introduction plan, the basic objectives are dated July 1906 by Sheikh Mohd. Salim al-Kalali is conveying knowledge and news, giving advice to those who are wrong, guiding those who are lost, to "remind those who are negligent, and guard those who are sleeping, and show those who are astray, and convey a voice calling out virtue to them".³¹ This printing was impressed by *al-Manar's* influence and manifested modernist thinking in Malay society. In Zahir, the

debate that culminated in Egypt is now moved and broadcast with a widespread here via *al-Imam*. He informed many of Abduh's writings and his tafsir on the Qur'an, which were published in *al-Manar*, from his lectures at al-Azhar in Muharram 1316 H, where "and starting 3 (September 1908), al-Imam published one "interpretation of the Koran" in its five final outputs which may have been written by Mohd. Abduh which has been broadcast in *al-Manar* since 1905, although I cannot confirm this".³²

In his twelfth issue, volume II *al-Imam* confirms his stance: "*Al-Imam* is a very cruel enemy to all *bid'ah* and *khurafat* and meddles and customs that people put into religion".³³ He attacks the hypocrisy of the leaders and peddlers of misguided religion and the stupidity and ignorance of the followers who allow themselves to be trampled on and deceived: "We have deluded ourselves by drinking the poison that made us and was forced upon us by our leaders because it made us choose the disease of deceit and hypocrisy so that we were powerless but to cry and ask from God: O Allah, we have been loyal to our rulers and our leaders and they have let us go astray. They are the head, and we are just the tail. They are the seeds of calamity and misery. They are spenders and kings of ignorance. They are the peak of all suffering and misfortune".

The early radical writings of *al-Imam* (published on Jul 23, 1906) inspired the important and influential *harakat nahdah* at the beginning of the 20th century where "One of the many names given to this group of reformers in Malaya was "the al-Manar". If one examines the contents of Kaherah's publications, as described by Charles C. Adams in his book *Islam and Modernism in Egypt*, it will be clear how much *al-Imam* has in common with him and how many Malay magazines broadcast excerpts from the Egyptian magazine".³⁴

This significant struggle paved the way for developing progressive ideas for young people in Malay "because it was from this Islamic renewal movement in Egypt that the writers and founders of *al-Imam* got almost all of their renewal ideas".³⁵

Conservative groups, such as the weekly *Taman Pengetahuan*, strongly opposed his publication. Nonetheless, this immediately left no trace, and "al-Hadi's opponents have disappeared into the ages, and al-Hadi and his *al-Imam* have lived forever in the memory of".³⁶ Ustazul Imam's philosophy, which called for revival and change, gave many impressions reflected in his basic discussions. According to Sheikh Salim al-Kalali, for example, the problem of poverty and the decline of Muslims is due to their lack of knowledge because "the lack of knowledge of Muslims causes them to fail to serve themselves, religion and the state because science is the principle of to change the standard of living of Muslims and the primary weapon to liberate them from colonialism".³⁷

Al-Munir magazine, published in 1911 by pioneers of youth in the early twentieth century, such as Haji Abdullah Ahmad, Haji Muhammad Thayeb, and Dr. Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah (Haji Rasul) in Padang Panjang, West Sumatra, continued the legacy and reform ideas that *al-Imam* said. In his response to the problem entrusted to *al-Munir*, the author Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah replied: "blind obedience is as low as possible - true religion cannot be upheld as long as imitation" and "the door to *ijtihad* is forever not closed to all people of understanding".who have the ability".³⁸ He fights for the progress of Muslims based on Islamic guidance, fosters peace between all nations and humanity, and enlightens Muslims with knowledge and wisdom.³⁹

This newspaper is issued every two weeks, and each issue consists of approximately sixteen pages printed in the Jawi script. *Al-Munir* spread widely throughout Sumatra, the island of Java, Sulawesi, Kalimantan, and Malay.⁴⁰ This spread has dramatically impacted the thinking and idealism that has grown among the fighters and reforming clerics where "the Kiai in Yogyakarta know that K.H. Ahmad Dahlan became a loyal reader of *Al-Munir*".⁴¹ *Al-Munir's* role is to galvanize awareness and a broad

sense of renewal. It serves as a "lantern" that illuminates Muslims in the Dutch East Indies islands, oppressed and colonized in their homeland. In his discussion of the role of Islamic periodicals and newspapers, *al-Munir* emphasizes their function as a teacher who guides his readers to the right path, reminds them of past mistakes, persuades those who are sad, helps those who are miserable, awakens them to virtue and enlightens their minds.⁴² This position, according to Syamsuri Ali,⁴³ reminds us of *al-Imam's* role and further indicates that *al-Munir* desires to continue *al-Imam's* mission. Consequently, it strengthens the argument of Charles C. Adams⁴⁴ in his book on Islamic vows in Egypt that if one considers its intellectual genealogy, it is only natural that *al-Munir* should take over *al-Imam's* role in spreading the teachings of the Young People and opposing all the enemies of Islam.

From his first printing, *al-Munir* referred to himself as "Islamic Magazine, Knowledge and News". He openly discusses highly prohibited and considered forbidden by the Old, such as wearing ties (necklaces) and headgear (hats) and taking pictures, which he defends because the Koran and hadith have never prohibited them. The author of *al-Munir* also insists that the Friday khutbah may be delivered in a language that is understood by members of the congregation and that Muslims may not imperceptibly follow the imam of the madhhab. The Shafi'i school is not the only valid interpretation of Islamic teachings and law.

Al-Munir also gave special consideration to the Islamic movement to channel the spirit of renewal, encourage activity and sincerity, increase the glory of knowledge and foster a brotherhood of all humanity and the nation.⁴⁵ As a result of his struggle to affirm this desire for renewal, he has led to strong opposition and reactions by his opponents and blasphemers. As a result, conservatives attacked him from the traditional and unknown muddlers who criticized him, believing that preaching through newspapers was heresy from the West.⁴⁶ Broadcasting ceased after the printing house was burnt down in 1916.

The monthly magazine *al-Ikhwan* (1926-1931), which was published in September 1926 in Pulau Pinang by Sayid Shaykh al-Hadi (1867-1934), also carried strong reform aspirations and became the main platform in his discussions regarding renewal involving women's issues in education, epistemology, reason, progress of the Malay people, deviations from religion and traditional understanding.⁴⁷ In the hands of al-Hadi as the chief author, he began to plant the seeds of reform. He strongly attacked the practices of heresy and superstition and the deviations of the leaders and peddlers of religion. The print had run for five years since its first issue, starting from the tenth number, and it was printed at Jelutong Press".

Tuan Haji Muhammad b. Dato' Muda Linggi once wrote in *Tarikh Surat Khabar* about the early history of its broadcasting and printing and the awareness it caused in Malay: "We have looked at it, and we found that it was from *al-Raqiat* magazine (which is of high quality) that deserves to be attached with pictures. Subsequently, *Al-Ikhwan* magazine is different from other Malay magazines that we have now in that the verses of the Qur'an and the hadiths of the Prophet that are published all use lines. This benefits readers who do not know how to read Nahwu Arab. Hopefully, it can be consistent. So let us pray that God will extend his life by making progress and success every time".⁴⁸

The spread of *al-Ikhwan* was supported by the bad state of the fate of the nation due to colonialism, where its wealth and produce were looted and unloaded by foreign nations, which caused Sayyid Shaykh "to be impatient to see his people sleeping soundly, not preaching the world and not realize their rights".⁴⁹ He tried to raise awareness of his nation's defeat and pessimistic attitude towards the British colonialists: "If we still have consciousness and can think, how can we allow foreigners to rule us, to be our guardians in our troubled country?" The backwardness of the Malay mind has brought *al-Ikhwan* magazine into existence. In the release of the first edition of *al-Ikhwan*, Sayid Shaykh noted:

"*Bismillah, fi sabilillah*. This is a voice from a brother who called for all his brothers in the original Malay language and all brothers with the letter *Ca-*, *Nga-*, *Pa-*, *Ga-*, and *Nya-* so that it is understandable for everyone. He was calling from a small island to be heard by his brothers on the mainland. He placed his voice on several ships to be heard by all his brothers and sisters in the Malay".⁵⁰

The radical and inspiring thoughts that were thrown out probably came from the influence of Sayid Jamaluddin al-Afghani (1254-1315/1839-1897) and his writings that express similar harsh statements, as recorded in al-Afghani's seminal writing "the past of the ummah and the present, as well as the medicine for its diseases: "So, which cry will wake up those who are sleeping based on negligence? Which blast can shock the frozen soul and move the stiffened realm of the mind? Which breath can enter the soul into the body of the community and drive it to goodness and success?".⁵¹

The influence caused by al-Afghani - from the philosophy of struggle that he upholds has impacted the awareness to interpret the strength of the Muslim people in eliminating the factors of their indolence and negligence. *Al-Ikhwān* echoes its original progressive teachings and doctrines that have inspired actions and efforts towards supporting the real pan-Islamic goals: "So the most successful treatment for him is to return to the basics of his religion and follow his teachings. It must begin with what was at the beginning of the religion and by giving information to the public about the perfect religious teachings while purifying the heart and educating morals. The fire of passion must be lit to unite determination and sacrifice souls for the nation's glory".⁵²

Saudara weekly newspaper (1928-1941), published in 1928 in Pulau Pinang, was the longest-lasting youth publication for 13 years. This is as imagined in its later print "Since this release, Alhamdulillah, our beloved newspaper has begun to step into the area of its thirteenth year of age that there is no newspaper that is still alive in Malaya today that can surpass it".⁵³

At first it was led by Sayyid Shaykh b. Ahmad b. Hassan b. Saqqaf al-Hadi (1284-1353/1867-1934), Syed Alwi al-Hadi, taken over by al-Hadi himself in 1933 where this magazine "became the field of that sharp questioner until the end of his life".⁵⁴ It was printed in Jawi script at his own printing house, Jelutong Press, Pulau Pinang (where his establishment was helped by Sayid Shaykh al-Hadi's close friend, Haji Abu Bakar). The rapid development of printing tools and the relaxation of laws in the Straits countries have facilitated its spread. Among the purposes of its publication is to find common ground and bind understanding and fraternity in upholding Islam's teachings: From the beginning, so also until today, *Saudara* calls himself *Saudara*. The purpose is to find fraternity or "passion" in the company of many people with similar directions, similar beliefs, and similar obligations or journeys towards the same guidance. This is what you say and call out for something that you feel is the right, whether in a sweet way or in a bitter and soft or hard way".⁵⁵

According to Kamarul Afendey Hamimi and Ishak Saat (2020: 330), the role of *Saudara* in attacking traditional strongholds and promoting new awareness is quite crucial, "*Saudara* newspaper is very serious in discussing the issue of heresy or superstitious practices in Malay society. Religious issues such as *talkin*, *tahlil*, *lafaz usalli*, *taklid* towards a practice without relying on valid arguments become issues published in the *Saudara* newspaper".⁵⁶ The influence displayed by *Saudara* and the strength of his progressive movement, as quoted by Za'ba in his article entitled "Persuratan Akhbar-Akhbar Malaya di Malaya," published by *Warta Malaya* and *Warta Ahad* (Mar 10, 1940) and *Wartawan* magazine (October 1957): "When the *Saudara* newspaper was in the hands of its founder and editor Sayyid Shaykh whose death was mourned by the public, the newspaper was harsh, and a brave commentator on the lives of the Malays, and strongly encouraged changes for Muslims".⁵⁷

When Shaykh Tahir Jalaluddin (1286-1377/1869-1957) came to Pulau Pinang, he took over his position as editor of *Saudara* newspaper between March 1934 to September 1934 before handing it back to Syed Alwi, who started managing it in October 1934 after giving up his position as editor of *Warta Malaya*. His writings are heavily influenced by the trend of modern reforms pioneered by *al-Manar*, "You often publish articles that support Islamic reform according to The Young Trend, whether it revolves around politics, economics or social Malays. Among the writers who sent many works related to the progress of the Malays are Syed Syeikh al-Hadi, Syed Alwi, and Rahim Kajai".⁵⁸ In addition, "this newspaper also reports on the development of the Islah movement in West Asia in the hope that the minds of the Malay community will be open to accepting Islamic reforms in their lives such as giving appropriate rights to women in education, careers, social justice and avoiding superstition and heresy in society Malay".⁵⁹

His writings were opposed by the newspaper *Lidah Benar*, which carried the opinion of the Old, which the *Saudara* newspaper called the rabble-rousers of the lodge. The polemic between these two newspapers also drags and provokes criticism and support from other newspapers, such as *Suara Benar* and *Panduan*, which favor the Old. On the other hand, *al-Ikhwān*, *Idaran Zaman*, and *Semangat Islam* support the Young. According to the *Jasa* newspaper (which was published in Johor Bharu on Nov 29, 1927), the struggle between these two newspapers was prolonged and miserable from October to November 1929 and has not stopped when "each used his rifle ammunition and was about to set their machine gun".⁶⁰

The renewal movement that started in the Eastern world was also influenced by the ideology and history of the struggle of the *Salafiyyah* people in their *islahiyah Salafiyyah 'aqlaniyyah* movement, such as the Muhammadiyah association established by Kyai Haji Ahmad Dahlan. Hamka expresses this influence: "After he (K.H.A. Dahlan) subscribed to the *Al 'Urwatul Wustqa* and *Al-Manar* magazines, he embraced new thoughts about Islam, plus by reading Tafsir Muhammad 'Abduh and the books of Ibnu Taimiyah and Ibnul-Qayyim".⁶¹

The effect of Abduh's aspirational thinking caused his influence in the preaching movement in Indonesia with his followers who were widely spread in the religious movement, especially Muhammadiyah, a movement founded by Kyai Haji Ahmad Dahlan (1868-1923) on Nov 18, 1912 (8 Dzulhijjah 1330), who built the largest da'wa organization - as a result of being impressed by the idealism of his struggle at the time of the movement - as expressed by Dr. H. Roeslan Abdulgani, "K.H. Ahmad Dahlan is one of the figures who represent the soul and spirit of activism from the 1912 era".⁶² The influence of the Salafiyyah movement that he moved greatly shaped and shaped his outlook on life, where "he interacted more intensely with the thoughts of reformers in the Islamic world, such as Muhammad Abduh, al-Afghani, Rashid Ridha and Ibn Taymiyah. The interaction with the Islamic figures of the reformer was very influential on the spirit, soul, and thought of Dervishes".⁶³

In his historical tradition, Abduh's idealism arose from his Pan Islamiyah idea, which influenced the Muhammadiyah struggle and the outlook on life he formed, as noted by Hendrik Kraemer in his book *Agama Islam*: "In the Islamic world, there is already an example of a new Islamic movement which means defending the Islamic religion against western influences that may threaten the position of Muslims. It is a new movement that arose in Egypt under the leadership of Muhammad Abduh. The meaning of Muhammad Abduh and his friends is to prove that the Islamic religion may adapt to the new era's atmosphere because the fundamentals of the Islamic religion are actually for all ages. Following that example, a new Islamic movement was declared in Indonesia under the leadership of Haji Ahmad Dahlan in Yogyakarta".⁶⁴

In contrast to the old way of pesantren, Ahmad Dahlan has outlined bold fatwas that touch on understanding based on broad *maqasid* and fiqh, such as allowing prayer using the Javanese language (for students who do not know Arabic), establishing the halal reckoning with *rukyyat bil 'ain*, and change the direction of the qibla of the Great Mosque of Yogya and the Great Mosque of Kauman, by giving white lines to each row, according to the actual degree of measurement.

Muhammadiyah also saw the need for new systems and methods in organizing curricula and schools according to modern developments, as explained by Dr. H. Abd. Karim Amrullah related to the ideas developed by Kyai Dahlan: "K.H.A. Dahlan was very disappointed to see the old fashioned that covers the land of Java since misunderstandings about religion are still deep, while Christians are more advanced. Kyai is trying to revive Islam in a new way by making lessons in the Pondok in a school way so that the teaching could be conducted regularly. Thus, the old-fashioned Pondok way will not be able to be maintained anymore".⁶⁵

The establishment of these schools as a whole has a very influential impact in empowering the destiny of the Indonesian nation in its remote islands: "Because among Muslims there are no bodies that care about their (Muslims') destiny. Based on that purpose, the movement led by Kyai Dahlan, with the name Muhammadiyah, held schools throughout the Indonesian archipelago and polyclinics. Although some Muslims do not agree with the purpose of Muhammadiyah, the result cannot be denied". (Kraemer, 1952)

It is the most organized Islamic movement in the world, formed by a disciplined and structured leadership and cadre line, as reviewed by Sayyid Amin al-Husayni, the former mufti of Palestine, when he saw this movement with his own eyes while visiting Indonesia: "The Union is the largest and most organized Islamic union in the world...even in Arab lands there is no religious union as large and organized as this".⁶⁶

Jam'iyat al-Islah wa al-Irsyad al-'Arabiyah (later converted to *Jam'iyat al-Islah wa al-Irsyad al-Islamiyyah*), which was established by Syeikh Ahmad Soorkati al-Ansari (1876-1943) in 1913 also brought aspirations for reform and new dynamics in outlook on life and social understanding. Surkati is the main driver of Abduh's modern struggle. He has been an avid reader of *al-Manar* magazine from Egypt since its first issue. In the framework of his struggle to revive the tradition of thought and movement of Abduh's struggle, he has established al-Irshad to uphold change and encourage the spread of the ideology of *Islah* and *Tajdid* in the region.⁶⁷ *Al-Irshad* is an important religious and social movement and an influential organization active within the Hadhrami community in Indonesia.⁶⁸ This influence is imagined by Muhammadiyah Idris⁶⁹: "As one of the pioneers of the Arab-born movement, Shaykh Ahmad Soorkati spread modernist orthodox teachings in Indonesia, especially among the local Arab community". In 1911, Surkati was appointed as a teacher at *Jam'iyat al-Khayr* (The Benevolent Society) in Jakarta and was known as the leader and main pioneer of the Islamic modernism movement. Surkati began to recruit teachers from Sudan who shared the same tendency for Islamic reform, such as Ahmad al-'Aqib and Muhammad Nur b. Muhammad Khayr al-Ansari (Abu al-Anwar), Satti Muhammad Surkitti (Abu al-Fadl, brother of Surkati), and Hasan Hamid al-Ansari, who helped in strengthening the agenda of change in *Jam'iyat al-Khayr*, as mentioned by Deliar Noer: "The appointed people are familiar with Abduh's reform ideas...who used to study at al-Azhar and consider themselves Abduh's loyal followers and spreaders of his reformist projects".⁷⁰

Jam'iyat al-Khayr inspired the rise of a significant Hadhrami elite group with the modern system and outlook it brought, as noted by Natalie N. Mobini⁷¹ in his paper *The Arab Periodicals of the Netherlands East Indies, 1914-1942*: "The *nahdah al-hadramiyah* or "hadrami awakening" can be dated from the

establishment of the first Arab educational organization, *Jam'iyyah Khayr*, in 1901. As it gained momentum in the ensuing decades, it was characterized by the proliferation of three novel social institutions: the voluntary organization (*jam'iyyah*), the modern style school (*madrrasah*), and the newspaper (*jaridah*)".

In 1913, Surkati separated from Jamiat Khair (*al-jam'iyyah al-khayriyya*), considered a more conservative Arab educational institution, and established the al-Irshad madrasah in Jakarta, which attracted a wider influence among *hadrami*. It teaches a curriculum in religious and general subjects, specifically in Arabic, for which it uses teachers from Middle Eastern Arab countries.⁷² *Al-Irshad* brought fundamental reforms in upholding the modern learning process, as noted by Farish Noor in his book about the madrasah network in Asia: "The school was oriented towards Egyptian reformism; instead of classical fiqh texts it emphasized the Qur'an and hadith; *usul al-fiqh* and the works of Abduh and other modern authors...many graduates of this madrasa spread the reformist message as teachers and preachers beyond Hadrami circles in Indonesia".⁷³

His ambition is to explain modern ideas from Abduh's works, especially *Tafsir al-Manar* to the *hadrami*: "This book, *Tafsir Muhammad Abduh*, contains exactly the teachings that Shaykh Ahmad Soorkati himself is passionate about spreading among the Arab community".⁷⁴ G. F. Pijper, a Dutch historian, referred to his figure as an "Islamic reformer in Indonesia" and *al-Irshad* as a "reformation movement that resembles the value of reformation in Egypt, such as the struggle initiated by Abduh and Rida in *Jam'iyyat al-Islah wa'l-Irshad* (*Association of Reform and Guidance*)".⁷⁵

Al-Irshad campaigned to uphold justice and equality among Muslims, where "the fact that the Hadrami Arabs are divided into two groups, the Sayyid group who get a high position and the non-Sayyid, has encouraged Ahmad Surkati to promote the idea of equality among the Muslims. Thus, in 1913, Surkati founded a reform-oriented Arab association called al-Irshad, which was very influential, especially in education".⁷⁶

Persatuan Islam or Persis, which was established on Sept 12, 1923/1 Safar 1342 in Bandung by K.H.M. Yunus and a generation of other activists, also brought Abduh's idealism. It was launched in a small alley called Pakgade, where many traders and merchants gathered, which at that time was called Urang Pasar.⁷⁷ This position of Persis was initially inspired by a conversation between Yusuf Zamzam (1894-1952), Qomaruddin, and E. Abdurrahman, who were greatly influenced by the problems in the magazines *al-Munir* and *al-Manar*.⁷⁸ Its activities are centered on purifying religion, da'wa, and education, with its motto "return to the Qur'an and Sunnah". This association strives to interpret the true value of Islam in Indonesian society. It advocates the original understanding of Islam brought by the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), about what forms the basis and principles of religion, and the practices worthy of Muslims.

It was led by Ahmad Hassan (born in Singapore on Aug 31, 1887-1958), otherwise known as Hassan Bandung, or Hassan Bangil, a "pure literalist" as mentioned by M.B. Hooker⁷⁹ and the main Persis teacher. A Hasan joined Persis in 1924, whose views gave a real format and distinctive character to the Islamic Society and placed it in the stronghold of the Modernists.⁸⁰ He himself is inclined towards the position of the Young (from his subscription to the magazines *al-Urwa al-Wuthqa* and *al-Manar* and his discussion with Faqih Hasyim on issues that are in dispute), and from this conviction, he began to focus his life on religion and become a defender of his beliefs. His involvement in Persis has highlighted the competence of A. Hasan is considered one of the most influential *Islah* figures in Indonesia. It is considered the most puritanical Islamic movement that developed a religious attitude close to Saudi Salafism. It was formed to expand the discussion on religious topics and provide a different view from

the traditional Islamic understanding. It is considered unoriginal because it is mixed with local traditions and culture and the attitude of blind submission to the imam. This harsh attitude drags him into debates and polemics in protesting the teachings of shirk and heresy and eradicating *taklid*. Its puritan nature distinguishes it from other Islamic movements, where "compared to other Islamic organizations of the early 20th century that prioritized the spread of new ideas softly and calmly, Persis seems happier with polemics and debates".⁸¹

The Sumatra Thawalib School, established in 1915, was also influenced by Abduh's thinking and was among the pioneers of the modern education system in Indonesia. It was founded by Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah, Haji Abdullah Ahmad, and other friends who were active in reform and development efforts in education, publishing, and politics. By using a new system and approach in schooling, he tried to start a radical method in modern teaching in the archipelago to replace the old and outdated pesantren teaching methods. It attempted to modernize Islamic institutions and introduce schools oriented towards reform and scientific values.

In his interpretation, Hamka revealed his experience while studying in Sumatra Thawalib, Padang Panjang, in 1922. His basic studies using the works of Abduh, where *Tafsir surah al-'Asr* and the translation of *Juz 'Amma* by Abduh had been used since 1924 and continued until now. *Tafsir al-Manar* is taught at school and included in the syllabus and subjects that must be taken by level VI and VII students.⁸² Among the new teachers recruited is Shaykh Muhammad Jamil Djambek, famous for his progressive struggle and ideals, bringing reforms in pedagogy and subjects taught in Sumatra Thawalib and defending his classical intellectual tradition.

Abduh's widespread influence is also rooted in the Hadhrami elite group in the Malayan archipelago, who closely relate to the idea of *al-Manar*. The earnestness of its figures expresses this solid relationship for publishing *al-Imam* magazine, which was pioneered by Syed Shaykh al-Hadi (1863-1934), Syed Muhammad Salim al-Kalali, and Syed Muhammad Aqil al-Yahaya (1863-1931) who had mobilized a significant influence from his thoughts in the Malay archipelago, especially the efforts of the sayyid group that formed the Hadhrami reformist group: "who were very impressed by the message of *al-Manar* where he tried to instill his teachings in the hearts of the majority of young Malays without limiting his efforts to *hadrami* diaspora in the Malayan peninsula".⁸³

Clashes between the young and the old from the *hadrami* began to erupt since the spread of reformist ideas, which caused a bitter confrontation between the modernist and conservative strongholds where "this *islah* and *tajdid* ideology has given rise to a real challenge to the status quo of traditional understanding in the *hadrami* and triggering a deep socio-political and ideological conflict between the *hadrami* reformers and their traditionalist counterparts".⁸⁴ This clash is also related to sharp cultural and ideological differences, which give rise to a series of conflicting ideas, practices, values and institutions where "it ignites a confrontation between the orthodox understanding of Islam and syncretic religion, between high culture and popular culture, between the global form of Islam with the local Islam and between sharia and custom".⁸⁵

The most important modernist thinker from the *hadrami* in Malaya was Syed Shaykh al-Hadi, who was influenced by the influence of this modern movement when he sailed to Egypt. The spread of Abduh's idealism was partly pioneered by his efforts to spread his writing through the translation of his works such as *Kitab Ugama Islam dan Akal* and his feminist ideas, which he carried in *Hikayat Faridah Hanum* (1925) or *Hikayat Setia Asyik kepada Masyuknya, Kitab Alam Perempuan* (Pulau Pinang, 1930) and so on where "in telling this story, the opportunity is taken to emphasize the importance of education and wider freedom for women as well as the high value of chastity and loyalty".⁸⁶

Al-Hadi translated Kitab Qasim Amin Bey, *Tahrir al-Mar'ah*, and part of *Tafsir al-Manar* and *Tafsir al-Fatihah*, serialized in *al-Ikhwān* in 1928 with additions here and there. It has also introduced modern religious schools and championed progressive beliefs that are significant and influential in the modern context.

Abduh's rational understanding also influenced thinkers in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago, such as Harun Nasution (1919-1998/1337-1419) and Zainal Abidin Ahmad (1895-1973) - Reverend Za'ba - who frankly stated that he including the group "sailing in a new ark" which is the young.⁸⁷ Harun Nasution has effectively formulated the influence of the theology he developed in his book *Muhammad Abduh dan Teologi Rasional Muktazilah*, who felt "the time has come to introduce Muhammad Abduh's theology to the Indonesian Muslim community, which is currently actively developing. In development, a rational and dynamic attitude, as contained in the theology of Muhammad Abduh, a figure of reform in Islam who has influence in Indonesia, is very necessary".⁸⁸ *His Risalat At-Tawhid* clearly outlines the principles of rational thought developed in the Koran, according to which he says: "The Qur'an directs us to apply rational procedures and intellectual research in this celestial manifestation, as far as possible, in all its details, so that it can lead to confidence in the things it guides".⁸⁹ According to Siddiq Fadzil, the text of monotheistic knowledge produced by al-Shaykh Muhammad 'Abduh, the figure of the reform movement from Egypt, was evaluated by Dr. Muhammad 'Imarah as an effort to elevate *al-'Aqlaniyyat al-Islamiyyah* by emphasizing the aspect of freedom of will (*istiqlal al-iradah*) and freedom of thought (*istiqlal al-ra'y wa al-fikr*).⁹⁰

CONCLUSION

For prospective future research, this paper has briefly discussed the influence of Muhammad Abduh and his contribution to Islamic reform in the Nusantara. The history of his significant struggle has impacted the modernization movement, including interpretation activities, the production of magazines, newspapers, and journals, the Islamic schooling and teaching system, and the da'wa movement. In upholding a modern Islamic worldview, he has adapted to modern needs in forming a dynamic culture and civilization and mobilizing the unity of the ummah with an emphasis on the principles of *islah*, *maslahah*, *wasatiyah*, and *Maqasid Syariah*, which has sparked a new dynamic in the broad intellectual tradition.

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