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Arabian Society in Kaili Lands, Central Sulawesi: Arabic Education and its Movement

ABSTRACT: *The presence of the Arabs in the land of Nusantara (Indonesian archipelago) has been a debatable fact up until today. However, experts suggest that they have played a particular important role ever since the early time they came to Nusantara. In the context of Indonesian modern history, the Arabian society is also a pillar of Indonesian citizens to support Indonesian independence. They took a part of independence the nation at large. One of the instruments is educational institution. Therefore, it is a need to discover the development and expansion in Arabian community on education activities. This article explores the historical period of Arabian society in Palu, Central Sulawesi. In-depth interview and non-participant observation were employed to collect data. Three months data collection was conducted, another three months was extended to ensure data collection through triangulation activities. Madrasah Alkhairat was launched from Arabian family on the first era of growth. This research finding shows that there are many social factors force the people to take a progress step in developing spiritual awareness. The colonial situation was instrumental factor. Furthermore, Islamic education became a catalyst. It answered various problems in the society. Indeed, there is an effort to expand the institution from exclusive establishment to organization at large participation from the surrounding society. Finally, the article concludes that education was defined to extend society contribution. This case arises from Arabian people, the further development deliver the Madrasa Alkhairat to meaningful processes beyond ethnic and race.*

KEY WORDS: *Arabian society, spiritual awareness, education institution, colonial situation, beyond ethnic and race, and support to Indonesian independence.*

INTRODUCTION

The presence of the Arabs in the land of *Nusantara* (Indonesian archipelago) has been a debatable fact up until today. However, experts suggest that they have played a particular important role, ever since the early time they came to *Nusantara*. L.W.C. van den Berg (1989) explains that in the middle era, there was a relationship of trades which was

quiet smoothly going on between the south Arabs, especially Maskat, Gulf of Persia with *Nusantara*. Most of them are known to have settled in the important ports of *Nusantara* and some of them even have a great influence for the political situation of the indigenous groups and the establishment of the Arab colonies in this region (Berg, 1989:67). The spread of Islam in the indigenous population

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How to cite this article? Wekke, Ismail Suardi. (2015). "Arabian Society in Kaili Lands, Central Sulawesi: Arabic Education and its Movement" in *TAWARIKH: International Journal for Historical Studies*, Vol.7(1) October, pp.63-74. Bandung, Indonesia: Minda Masagi Press, ISSN 2085-0980.

Chronicle of the article: Accepted (April 18, 2015); Revised (July 28, 2015); and Published (October 28, 2015).

is one of the most prominent parts of the activities of Arabs in *Nusantara*. This is evidenced from the opinion of some scientists who have attributed the arrival of the Arabs to the Islamization of the *Nusantara* (cf Berg, 1989; Azra, 2002; and Ricklefs, 2008).

Arab nations have been exploring the world and they met with other ethnic, one of them was in the field of trade. When the interaction takes place, then, later also spread religious ideology. Least understood directly and then in some areas to be accepted as a belief too. Solange Montagné Villette & Irene Hardill (2007) explained the arrival of the Arabs in Paris. In terms of cutting-edge, then in the citizenship status referred to as immigrants. But, in the vast system as in the days of the nation state was not established, the displacement and journey was a way to establish connectivity. Trade was as a form of interaction (Villette & Hardill, 2007).

At that time, Arab traders had a value that was inspired by the spirit of Islam (Dean, 2014). Inclusive human relations became another community's interest to contribute to study the religious affiliations of the Arab nation. Along with the spread of Islam to the various parts of the world, thus, made Arabic language into a language that must be mastered for a Muslim. At least, the ability to read the *Al-Qur'an* and *Hadith* should be learned from the early stage of year. Therefore, the Arabic language learning takes place from generation to generation (Ismail, Possumah & Kadir, 2014). With such claims, then learning Arabic has always been demanding in the need for an innovative and also an approach that can help students to master the language skills in a shorter time (Taha-Thomure, 2008) and environment support (Wekke & Sahlan, 2014).

Learning Arabic in Malaysia, for example, explained that the Arabic language learning is influenced by religious practices (Tamuri *et al.*, 2013). Explanation of Rahimah Haji Ahmad (1998) is also giving an earlier assessment that the development of the Malaysian education relies heavily on the considerations of Islam (Ahmad, 1998). When studying Arabic, cultural aspects cannot be left alone (Jamous & Chik, 2012). While Islamic education in Indonesia was initiated by the community.

Arabic language learning in the context of Indonesia has always been applied in a form of learning that is adapted to their respective environments (Wekke & Lubis, 2008). In addition, it is a need to apply recent development from information technology (Wekke & Lubis, 2011; and Wekke & Sanusi, 2013). In a further development, there is the role of government to participate in providing reinforcement in the form of regulatory and institutional strengthening. However, the strength of the community has become the initiator that although without the help of the government, this education can be run because from the beginning, it was built and developed for internal purposes of society. Typical Indonesian *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) always be a part of community empowerment (Wekke, 2013).

Pesantren education studies, specifically, were examined by Raihani (2008) in terms of leadership. While the study conducted by Risti Permani explains the religious organization (Permani, 2011). *Pesantren* is also an institution that is very concerned about the development of character (Izfanna & Hisham, 2012). In the *pesantren* of Darun Najah in Jakarta, Indonesia, for example, character education is not done in the form of special programs (Izfanna & Hisham, 2012). But, learning takes place with one output to form the character of students.

Meanwhile, A. Khurshid (2015) describes Islamic education in connection with gender. In educational institutions in Pakistan, for example, the community became part of the management of education (Khurshid, 2015). So, the social classification in the form of gender and caste is not a considered factor. As for Islamic education in secondary schools, it has begun to apply the use of technology in helping teachers to implement the learning process (Nawi, Hamzah & Rahim, 2015). Meanwhile, research on Arab society in general assess the condition of children and youth in connection with the management of education (Tekin, 2015).

The arrival of Arab traders to Palu, Central Sulawesi, Indonesia does not mean that there is no civilization that existed before they came. This study examines how

educational institutions were implemented by the Arab communities in Palu. Previous studies did not specifically examine the links between the Arab communities with Islamic education. While the topics of Islamic education, *pesantren*, and the Arab has been done extensively. But, specifically, a study describes the role of the Arab community in the development of education has not been done comprehensively (cf Kroef, 1954; Mobini-Kesheh, 1999; and Pohl, 2006).

Implications arising from the introduction of Islam in *Nusantara* were very spacious. One is the establishment of a social organization working in the field of Islamic education as part of the efforts of the Islamic reform movement. Unfortunately, little is known about the social organization of education, which was established by the Arab community in Indonesia; and is limited only in the area of Java. The question, then, is how was the development of social organization founded by the Arab communities in other areas? This article is going to discuss about social educational organization founded by the Arabs in Palu, Central Sulawesi, Indonesia.

This study is a research conducted in Palu, Central Sulawesi, as one ground part of the development of *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah* (beautiful Islamic modern school). Started from Palu, then, developed to other regions, such as Manado and Bitung in Sulawesi throughout Ternate in North Maluku. In fact, in the process of its development, there was some sort of effects coming from the communities constructed there, where there was a sort of social-political relations widely. In a shorter form, it could be in a form of practical political power in placing an individual to sit on a chair, where that person gains the power to control.

THE ARRIVAL OF THE ARAB IN NUSANTARA

The arrival of the Arabs in the region of *Nusantara* (Indonesian archipelago) has always been an interesting debate among scholars, both in Indonesia and abroad. Each conveys the theory based on the data they had managed to obtain (cf Kroef, 1954; Berg, 1989; Algadri, 1996; Mobini-Kesheh, 1999; Azra, 2002; and Ricklefs, 2008). C. Snouck Hurgronje, for example, stated that

in the history books, there have not found evidence that the Arabs have any knowledge of Indonesia based on their own knowledge (cited in Algadri, 1996:47).

C. Snouck Hurgronje concluded that during the four centuries of Islamic religious leaders in Indonesia were in the hands of the Indians; and in the sixteenth century, Arabic influenced into Indonesia without competition and the influence was entered through two pathways, namely Hadramaut and Mecca. He does not believe that there was a trade relationship between Indonesia and the Arab countries since centuries ago, and everything that comes from Arabia arrived in Indonesia through India. In short, the main point to be conveyed by C. Snouck Hurgronje is that the arrival of the Arabs in *Nusantara* occurred just in the sixteenth century (cited in Algadri, 1996).

In contrast to C. Snouck Hurgronje, M.C. Ricklefs (2008) argues that long before the sixteenth century, the Arabs had arrived and settled in *Nusantara*. His opinion was based on several historical facts, one of which is the discovery of the tomb contained in Leran at Gresik, East Java, near Surabaya. Arabic writing on the headstone tomb was explained that the tomb is the tomb of a woman named Fatima binti Maimun bin Hibatallah, who died in 475 AH (*Anno Hijriah*) or 1082 AD (*Anno Domini*). This tomb proves clearly that the XI century, there were already at least Arabs or Arab descent in Java. Therefore, M.C. Ricklefs concludes that the first arrival of the Arabs in *Nusantara* was not much different (related) to the history of Islam in this region (Ricklefs, 2008:27).

Regardless of differences of opinion about when the influx of Arabs as mentioned above, the experts agree on one thing, namely that the Arabs who live in *Nusantara*, more or less, were from Hadramaut (Berg, 1989:1). The Arabs who came from Maskat, Yemen, Syria, Egypt, or the east coast of Africa who came to *Nusantara* rarely settled, because wandering was indeed the characteristic of many Arabs after they left the land of his birth. Regarding other Arabs who did not come from Hadramaut and settled in *Nusantara*, they quickly assimilated into the mass that comes from Hadramaut, and this influenced their

opinion. Given their common interests, then, there is no reason to feuding (*cf* Kroef, 1954; Berg, 1989; Algadri, 1996; Mobini-Kesheh, 1999; Azra, 2002; and Ricklefs, 2008).

Prior to 1859, there was no clear data available on the number of Arabs who lived in the Dutch East Indies area, because the official statistics are often mixed purposely with those of Bengal and other foreigners who were Muslims. Hadramaut population movements became easier since 1870, because at that time, the cruise line using steam ships between the Far East and the Arab experiencing rapid development, so that the distance to reach *Nusantara* was getting shorter (Ricklefs, 2008:67-68). This is very different from what happened before, where the journey was using a sailing ship that reached for months and felt very long time.

Just as with the Europeans and other Asian nations, Arabs who decided to move to another country were not the richest group in Hadramaut. Most of those who lived comfortably in his native country did not go abroad to tempt fate. The Arabs who did move were seeking a better life; or as the Arab proverb says, "look for the ring of Solomon" and some are accompanied by efforts for Islamic communication (*da'wah*). Generally, the Arabs who settled in *Nusantara* married to local women, because of the risk of bringing the wife from Arab land was not small. Most Arabs in *Nusantara* tended to assimilate with the indigenous peoples. Even, after several generations often difficult to know its origin, except those belonging to a respectable family or *Sayid*. Well adapted and even diverting their identity and became indigenous. The difference between the offspring or descendants no longer cannot be recognized if only looking at the pattern of interaction in the community (Kroef, 1954; Berg, 1989; Algadri, 1996; Mobini-Kesheh, 1999; and Azra, 2002).

On the Arab Community in the Land of Kaili. The Arabs who were in *Nusantara* (Indonesian archipelago) did not just stay in one place or region alone, but soon spread and form colonies in all regions of *Nusantara*. One area that was used by the Hadramaut Arabs, as their daily activities, was Palu (capital of Central Sulawesi Province now in Indonesia).

Initially, they came in a number or a small contingent. Arabs first entered the valley of Palu (precisely in Wani) were of Arab descent from *Sayyid* group originating from South Sulawesi, namely *Sayyid* Agel al-Mahdali. He and his wife, and three children, came to Wani, approximately 30 km north of the city of Palu, in the 18th century (Nainggolang, 1997; and Syakir *et al.*, 2009).

Geographically, Wani is a coastal area which at that time was the center and the port of loading and unloading goods and spices well-known in Palu valley, thus was chosen as the Arabs to support their trading activities. In terms of settlement patterns, Wani area is divided into two parts, namely Wani I and Wani II. Wani I is home to native tribes (Kaili), while Wani II is home to migrants that most of them were the Arabs, even more this place was also known as the Arab village or also called as *Malambora* (Kutoyo, 1986; and Nainggolang, 1997).

In this new place, the family of Al-Mahdali immediately mingles with the locals without any trouble at all. This happened because they have previously been assimilated with the Wajo, South Sulawesi, so they were already familiar with the life of Wani environment that was not much different from where they used to live. The locals called *Sayyid* Agel al-Mahdali as *Puang Natuambulu*, which means "Mr. Hair". The nickname was given because *Sayyid* Agel al-Mahdali was indeed a high-big man with a body that had a lot of hair (Nainggolang, 1997; and Syakir *et al.*, 2009).

The second wave of Arabs, who entered in Palu valley, was a family of Al-Haddad, namely *Sayyid* Husen bin Ahmad al-Haddad. His arrival is expected around the end of the 19th century. Just as *Sayyid* Agel al-Mahdali, *Sayyid* Husen bin Ahmad al-Haddad was of Arab descent that came from South Sulawesi. He was reported to come to Wani and his wife and children. In addition, he also accompanied by an *Attah* or bondsmen, who will later work in plantations (mostly coconut plantations), which they will work on. The children of *Sayyid* Husen bin Ahmad al-Haddad were then likely married to the descendant of Al-Mahdali (Nainggolang, 1997; and Syakir *et al.*, 2009).

In a report from *Memorie van Overgave*

(Memorandum of Duty Transfer) in 1935, it stated that since the 20th century, every year the number of people (traders) of the Arabs who came to Palu valley continued to increase and more than the previous ones, among others: the family of Al-Habsyi, Assegaf, Al-Athas, Al-Idrus, Al-Amri, and Al-Djufrie (cited in Nainggolang, 1997). They were still considered as groups of *Sayyid* (except the family of Al-Amri) and some of them were married to fellow descendants of *Sayyid*, some were married with the children of local king. In terms of marriage, there seems to be some sort of "caste system" that applies to the Arabs *Sayyid* group (cf Kroef, 1954; Berg, 1989; Mobini-Kesheh, 1999; and Syakir *et al.*, 2009).

Marriage between the groups of *Sayyid* has become a tradition upheld by the Arabs, not to be excluded the *Sayyid* in Palu valley. This is because they are maintaining the honor and purity of "blood". Male Arabic *Sayyid* could marry Arab women whom are non *Sayyid* even local indigenous women, due to their position are considered higher. This is different from what has been experienced by Arabic *Sayyid* women who are required to marry fellow *Sayyid*, if they violate the "rules", then its position will be considered to decline (Kroef, 1954; Berg, 1989; and Syakir *et al.*, 2009).

The influence of the Arabs against the indigenous population and local authorities became greater with the increase of their economies. In the 20th century, it was reported that almost all export-import trade in Palu valley was dominated by the Arabs, who also controlled most of the small trades in these markets. In addition to the trade sector, they also obtained control over the plantation sector, particularly coconut that was of excellent materials at that particular time. The way they use to control this plant was to allow residents (who holds a coconut plantation) took some basic commodities in the shops belonging to them (left indebted) with provision that after their coconut crop harvest, the results must be paid in exchange for the payment of the basic commodities which they had taken. In Hirschman's 1935 report, even mentioned that almost all coconut owners were indebted to the Arabs or Chinese and routinely had to submit copra to deposit of

interest according to the market price (cited in Nainggolang, 1997).

One of the data that can be used as an indication or an idea of the wealth of the Arabs in Palu, in the 20th century, was the income reports of the *Onderafdeeling* government of Palu in 1934, through taxes paid by the Arabs amounted to f 1,060.10 (one thousand and sixty Dutch *Gulden* and ten cent); while the indigenous population was only f 796.15 (cited in Nainggolang, 1997). Meanwhile, the social status of Arabs in Palu can be seen from the relics of their homes. The search results by the writer, who saw the remains of houses relics of the Arabs in Wani and Donggala in the 19th century and 20th century showed that the houses of Arabs were great, even bigger than the *Souraja* (house king) and local natives houses. The shape resembles the manor houses of Bugis in South Sulawesi.

MADRASAH ALKHAIRAT AL-ISLAMIYAH

The birth of *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah* (beautiful Islamic modern school), as an Islamic education in Palu, Central Sulawesi, Indonesia cannot be separated from the role of the Arabs who lived in this region. Note that before the establishment of *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah*, Islamic education in this region was largely taught by Bugis people and Makassar (Syakir *et al.*, 2009:64). However, the learning method used was simple. Where there is a religious teacher than there would be people gather together to learn the knowledge of Islam. These activities also took place at the home of local community leaders, where teachers were asked to come to teach there.

At this time, the teaching and learning activities were not familiar with the class system as implemented in schools and *madrasah*. The material taught was how to read the *Al-Qur'an* or recite the *Al-Qur'an* by mimicking and memorizing. The teacher sat facing his students while reading the *Al-Qur'an* and then followed by the students by mimicking what was said by the teacher. In this recitation, students were taught only to read, not taught to write (Nainggolang, 1997:28-29).

One thing that can be felt on the effect of the Bugis in Islamic education in Palu was on how to read the *Al-Qur'an* by using the spelling

of Bugis, “*alefu ri asena A, alefu ri asena I*”, and so on. The recent development of reading *Al-Qur’an* expands to new method and various ways. Upon the arrival of *Sayyid Al-Idrus* in 1929, a scholar from Hadramaut, only then *madrasah* education system was introduced to the local population (Nainggolang, 1997; and Syakir *et al.*, 2009).

Before the establishment of *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah* in 1930, schools in Palu valley was entirely managed by the Dutch colonial government and Christian organizations, *Zending Leger December Heils*, or who is now better known by the name of the *Balai Keselamatan* (Salvation Army). In *Memorie van Overgave* (Memorandum of Duty Transfer) in 1925, it is mentioned that in the region of *Onderafdeeling Palu*, there were three types of school, namely: (1) the Regional School managed by self-government authorities in Lasuani, Biromaru, Dolo, Sidondo, Kaleke, and Ngatapapu; (2) the People’s School managed by Salvation Army in Padende, Bomba, Bora, KapiroE, Manusi, Sibalaya, Kalawara, Rarampadende, Lemo, Lindu, Winatu, Gimpu, and Kantewu; and (3) the Salvation Army School in Wayu, Porame, Karere and Towoelu (cited in Nainggolang, 1997).

Those schools had the support and financial support (subsidies) from the Dutch colonial government, so there were no significant difficulties in the implementation of teaching and learning. For the benefit of this school in the 1926, budgetary provided funding f 8,000 (eight thousand Dutch *Gulden*) for new buildings in other places considering that the old building had been in bad condition and the yard, where the building stood a lot of them were in such a bad condition because of floods. In fact, the schools run by the Salvation Army earned a subsidy in the form of school fees (such as scholarships) that on average of 7 (seven) cents per student per month. In addition to education, the Salvation Army also managed health facilities in the form of regional polyclinic located in Palu in Rowiga, Kalawara, Bora, Palelo, Lemo, and Kantowu. For the benefit of these posts in 1925 and 1926, f 100 per post was paid in the budgetary of expenditure to purchase drugs needed (Nainggolang, 1997; and Syakir *et al.*, 2009).

The opening of schools by the Salvation Army was always accompanied by Christianizing mission of the local population. This was the sort of thing that caused restlessness and response of the Arabs, that then appears the desire to establish a *madrasah* in order to stem the rate of Christianization and simultaneously wanted to Islamize the population who were still not religious in the countryside. These developments showed a kind of contestation of “race” between Christianity and Islam in Palu valley, in terms of gaining new followers which would impact the control of other resources.

The Arabs and Madrasah Alkhairat.

Speaking of *Alkhairat*, we cannot be separated from the figure of *Sayyid Idrus bin Salim Aljufrie*, because from his hand there established *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah* (beautiful Islamic modern school) and capable of developing not only in the Central Sulawesi, but also included other eastern parts of Indonesia. Azyumardi Azra (2002) even mentioned that *Sayyid Idrus bin Salim Aljufrie* was an educator of Hadrami, who was the most prominent in Indonesia in the 20th century and the one who established *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah*, which now has the widest network of *madrasahs* (more than 1,280 in total) in the eastern parts of Indonesia (Azra, 2002:165).

Sayyid Idrus bin Salim Aljufrie was born on Monday, 14 *Sha’ban* 1309 AH (*Anno Hijriah*) or March 15, 1891 AD (*Anno Domini*) in Terim, a small town which is geographically not far from the city of Saiun, Hadramaut, South Yemen (Berg, 1989:20-29). In genealogy, *Sayyid Idrus bin Salim Aljufrie* had the lineage of *Ba’alawy*, which was in genealogy in line with Ali bin Abi Talib, the fourth caliph, a nephew and son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad of Fatimah al-Zahra. His father was *Sayyid Salim bin Alawi Aljufrie* as a mufti in Hadramaut, while his mother was *Syarifah Nur*, an Arab-Bugis descent who still have family ties with the nobleman *Arung Matowa* in Wajo, Sengkang, South Sulawesi (Kutoyo, 1986:102). *Syarifah Nur* was the descendant of *Arung Matowa Wajo* the 42nd, namely La Pawellangi Pajung Paroe Datu ri Akkajeng (1854-1859).

In 1929, *Sayyid* Idrus bin Salim Aljufri headed to Wani upon the invitation of the Arabs who were in that particular area to open and lead the *madrasah*. Upon his arrival in Wani, *Sayyid* Idrus bin Salim Aljufri immediately used the time for the propagation of Islam and teaching activities of a number of his students. The students learned with a free of charge. The place where they were learning too was still uncertain, sometimes in the mosque, sometimes also held in turn from one house to another house. This is in line with what is expressed by Haidar Putra Daulay (2007) that in the early stages of Islamic education, it was started from personal and collective contacts between *da'i* (educators) with their students (Daulay, 2007:1).

Prior to the establishment of mosque, *surau* (a kind of mosque), the Islamic boarding school which was the scene of teaching and learning for Islamic education, knowledge transfer was performed in the house of the *kyai* (educators) or *ulama* (scholars), and in the houses around the surrounding areas in turns. In these early days, the core of the lesson material was teaching the religious sciences which were concentrated by reading classic books (cf Dhofier, 1994; and Daulay, 2007).

The Arabs desire to immediately open *madrasah* was hindered by the Dutch colonial government's decision by prohibiting the opening of *madrasah* in Wani, because the Arabs in that particular area was thought to be involved in the uprising of Salumpaga in Toli-Toli in the year of 1919 (Noer, 1987). Seeing this situation, *Sayyid* Idrus bin Salim Aljufri, then, decided to change his activities to Palu; and with the help of Sayyed Abd Ar-Rahman Aljufri (Arabs in Palu) and Madika Malolo Palu, Tjatjo Ijazah, *Sayyid* Idrus bin Salim Aljufri successfully established the first Islamic school in Palu valley, on 30 June 1930, with the name *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah* (Nainggolang, 1997; Daulay, 2007; and Syakir *et al.*, 2009).

Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah at first was a *madrasah* that only used a small store and then moved to a terraced house in the implementation of teaching and learning. At first, the one who became a teacher in the *madrasah* was just *Sayyid* Idrus bin Salim

Aljufri alone. Learning method used was *halaqah* system and did not yet to recognize the existence of level of education as it is now. At this stage, students were taught about the knowledge in the field of religion. In addition, it also taught Arabic by using visual aids, for example, when pronouncing stone (in Arabic), *Sayyid* Idrus bin Salim Aljufri grasped a rock, as well as when pronouncing wood, he would also grasp a piece of wood in his hand. The number of students at that time was about 60 people, and they learned at no charge. The place where they were learning was still uncertain, sometimes in the mosque, sometimes also held in turn from one house to another house. The language used was Arabic. This kind of education system survived for approximately 18 years (Daulay, 2007).

The significance of the use of the education system should not be underestimated, because through that method, *Sayyid* Idrus bin Salim Aljufri managed to build strong personal relationships and became a bond that connected them between one and the other, that the teacher then gave authority to the disciples to teach and open *madrasah* up to the hinterland of Central Sulawesi. In the end, through his students, *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah* network grew and evolved until remote areas of Central Sulawesi and the surrounding areas. Students who study in *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah* came from different communities, because indeed it was not intended for one particular community, but open to the public (Daulay, 2007).

It was not hard to figure out that the Palu and the surrounding communities tended to prefer to send their children to *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah*, because the school at that time was not that many and managed entirely by the Dutch government. The reluctance of the people, especially Muslims, to send their children to schools established by the Dutch was due to the presence of concern that their children would be Christianized (Noer, 1987). In addition, schools that were built by the Dutch mostly intended for noble children or the authorities, and still had to be burdened by the tuition of school, that ordinary people did not have access to such facilities. At times like this, *Madrasah Alkhairat*

al-Islamiyah emerged as an alternative for the people who wanted to send their children to school (Daulay, 2007).

Early 1934, *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah* under the leadership of *Sayyid* Idrus bin Salim Aljufri accommodated 125 students. In this year also, the school produced the first graduates' as many as two persons, namely M. Qasim Maragau and *Sayyid* Abd Rahman Aljufrie. A year later produced more graduates, which were in total more than the previous graduates, among others: Alwi Intje Ote, Abdullah Hay Abdullah, Hasjim Samsuddin, Sa'ad F. Basjir, Zahrani, M. Mohammed, B. Daeng Malino, Hasan Intje Ote, M. Noh Lawewa, D.M.P. Djaelangara, Zainuddin, S. Aidid al-Hasni, Zainal Abidin Betalembah, Rustam Arsjad, M. Nawawian Abdullah, and Mahfud Godal. After that, there came again the next graduates. These graduates were the cadres from *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah*, who were given trust and authority by of *Sayyid* Idrus bin Salim Aljufri to become teachers and *mubaligh*, because they already obtained adequate knowledge. They were then sent to the rural areas or villages in various places in Palu in particular, and Central Sulawesi in general, to establish branch of *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah*. Some of them were even sent to the East Kalimantan, North Sulawesi, Gorontalo, and Maluku (cf Nainggolang, 1997; Daulay, 2007; and Syakir *et al.*, 2009).

As time goes by, in 1948, the system of education in *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah* began to rise, because the class system was held in accordance with the level of intelligence of students. Upon the return of K.H. (*Kyai Haji* or *Haji Ulema*) Rustam Arsjad, a *Sayyid* Idrus bin Salim Aljufri's disciple who was in charge of teaching at the *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah* of South Kalimantan, to Palu, he wanted to start a *madrasah* which was one stage higher level of Elementary School. The desire of K.H. Rustam Arsjad appeared mainly, because of his experience meeting with K.H. Idham Chalid while still in Kalimantan, especially in dealing with and developing religious education (Daulay, 2007).

Therefore, in 1951, it was established what was called *Madrasah Muallimin* (Islamic

modern school of teachers), which was devoted to produce teachers that will be placed on the branches of *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah* that in need of teachers. The curriculum which was taught in this *madrasah* covered 75% of Islamic education and 25% of public education. As a support given additional subjects, such as: English, Indonesian, science of teaching, citizenship, history, and earth sciences (Kutoyo, 1986; and Daulay, 2007).

To hire the teaching staff in *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah*, *Sayyid* Idrus bin Salim Aljufri requested some secondary school teachers in Palu, among others: *Pastor* Entoh (Christian) taught English and S.A. Abubakar (*Muhammadiyah* Islamic organization) taught the lesson of citizenship and Indonesian. With the opening of *Madrasah Muallimin*, it indicated that the level of *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah* had undergone development, not only at the elementary level course, but also the education system and the teaching was adapted to public schools. *Madrasah Muallimin* was led by K.H. Rustam Arsjad and the duration of the education to be finished was three years (Kutoyo, 1986; and Daulay, 2007).

In 1953, upon his return, *Sayyid* Idrus bin Salim Aljufri, from a trip visiting the branches of *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah*, he established a new two-stairs building, because every new school year, many students enrolled in *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah*. This two-stairs building consisted of 10 classrooms and one office construction that the costs came from non-governmental funding and results of business activities performed by *Sayyid* Idrus bin Salim Aljufri himself (Kutoyo, 1986; and Daulay, 2007).

In 1956, there was opened a *Madrasah Lanjutan Pertama* as equal as to SMP (*Sekolah Menengah Pertama* or Junior High School) led by *Ustadz* (Islamic teacher) Abas Palimuri, an alumnus of *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah*, which at the time had just returned from studying in the SGA (*Sekolah Guru Atas* or Higher Teachers School) in Jakarta. In the same year, also opened the PGAP (*Pendidikan Guru Agama Pertama* or Junior Religious Teacher Education) led by *Ustadz* Bachren Thajeb. The curriculum was adapted to PGAN (*Pendidikan Guru*

Agama Negeri or State Religious Teacher Education)'s curriculum, for four-year managed by the Department of Religious Affairs (Kutoyo, 1986; and Daulay, 2007).

In 1964, *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah* development had reached college level with the opening of the UNISA (University of Islam Alkhairat), which consisted of three faculties, namely: Faculty of *Tarbiyah* (Education), Faculty of *Shariah* (Law), and Faculty *Adab* (Humanities). In 1977, *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah* was nurturing the schools that have been adapted to the state school curriculum (Kutoyo, 1986; and Daulay, 2007).

ARABIC EDUCATION: ITS MOVEMENT AND RECENT DEVELOPMENT

This study shows that there was a role run by the Arab community in the development of Islamic education. In the process, they were then eliminated ethnicity and Arabism making it extends into Islamic movement. The development of Islamic education of *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah* (beautiful Islamic modern school) became part of religious communication. Furthermore, with the development of Islamic education, it also made social and political moves within the Muslim community. Islamic education goes beyond the primary task from the beginning just to be in the domain to educate. But, in the development of education and then show that the *political role* (Pohl, 2006); *entrepreneurship* (Wekke, 2012); *environment* (Saniotis, 2012); *multicultural* (Raihani, 2012); and *conservation* (Mangunjaya, 2011) has become part of the task which was also carried out by *pesantren*. Even, in the colonial period, *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) also became a fighter to fight for Indonesian independence (Abdullah, 1971).

There is a condition of Arab minority in a Muslim environment (Kroef, 1954:257; and Federspiel, 1996:19). This situation becomes a challenge as well as an opportunity to develop socially with people from other ethnic groups. Moreover, the encounters with the other ethnic and inter-ethnic relation strengthen Arabian identity. Education becomes a tool for inter-ethnic disparities glue. Although the earlier phase, when days of the struggle

for independence, was began to awaken awareness of Indonesian identity (Mobini-Kesheh, 1999).

In addition, the status of minority presents a condition to accelerate participation and difference among societies (Reitz, Phan & Banerjee, 2015). In the study of *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah*, this institution then spread to North Sulawesi. The school was not only in Central Sulawesi environment, but reaching to Bitung City and Minahasa, also with the city of Gorontalo and Bolaang Mongondow, before expanded into part of Gorontalo Province now.

Although the Arabs always closely related to the Arabic language itself, in this case, this was not a factor that became a barrier to the unity of Arab society with other communities in *Nusantara* (Indonesian archipelago). Arabic became the language of religion and go hand in hand with the development of Islam itself, where Arabic is the language of unity of Muslims. Religious ritual was performed only using this language.

In educational activities, Arabic became the language studied specifically not addressed to other languages. Arabic language learning purposes associated with the need to understand Islam more deeply. Without knowing it, the opportunity to understand Islam will not be perfect. In this process, a borderless curriculum was established without interfere form ethnicity (Wekke, 2014).

Furthermore, the beginning of the Islamic learning started from recognizing the letters of *hijaiyah* itself. Through religious authorities is seen as primary tool to enhance social capital (Belge & Blaydes, 2014). By mastering the Arabic alphabet, then, it will help in the study of the *Al-Qur'an*. It shows how the actual status of the Arab society was easier to be accepted and, then, be able to mingle with other people who had accepted Islam. This position explains that religion plays a specific significance to position in diversity varies (Walseth, 2015).

In the end, it can no longer be distinguished assertively in which the differences between Islamic education and Arab education, because both are united in the same form. We can see it in the context of *Nusantara* communities especially. The arrival of Arab society was not

seen as a form of expansion. The beginning of their arrival started in the form of trade. Educational activities follow like education, because it is the result of the interaction with the surrounding community. With assimilation and Islamic identity, then, can no longer distinguish between the Arab communities with other communities. Identity which raised to the top was Muslim.

In relation to education, the institute was then transformed into a means of *da'wah* (propagation) among Muslims. *Madrasah* (Islamic modern school) became a place to learn religion. *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah*, for example, was started from the Arab community. But, it is not to the Arabs alone. The institute was open to anyone to learn regardless of ethnic and demographic backgrounds. As long as they were Muslims, the institution always opens the opportunity to learn. In this context, the institution was then cast in the form of *da'wah* (religious proselytizing) institution. Although not leaving its primary role, the institution also served as a means of *da'wah* for the better of Muslims. Contemporary of Indonesia was supported the past experiences (McGregor, 2009).

Kyai, as an activator of education institution of *pesantren*, is existed in Java (Dhofier, 1994). While in the practice of *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah*, the family of Aljufrie became the motor of development only, then *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah* served as a Muslim institutional asset widespread. The participation did not longer confine within the family in particular. *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah* institutions present before independence, when it was still in the struggle against colonialism.

The existence of such institutions, then, there was a change in line with the enactment of the setup process performed by the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Religious Affairs. This approach is a collaboration to tackle problem of division in society (Hughes, 2014). The persistence of educational institutions of *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah* to date, it indicates that the adaptation process goes hand in hand with the demands of the times. The establishment of *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah* contributes to cultural development

through education and enhances religious institutions. These expansions correlate to cultural conservation (Rashkow, 2015).

This action was taken to contribute to the development of education. In these circumstances, the Arabs no longer became an important part of that management institutions play a significant role. This study reinforces that *pesantren* alumni not only become the driving force in the field of religion. With the initial goal that has been reached, alumni of *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah* also reach other institutions in society, such as social position, political, bureaucratic, and other societal roles.

This findings support the results of the study presented by Robert W. Hefner (2000), which is always in the process of democratization, there is the role played by citizens as a form of expression of Islam in Indonesia (Hefner, 2000). In the case of Bangladesh, it seems that Indonesia has the typical experiences that there is a significant contribution to the development thorough education (Nath, 2012).

Finally, this study empowered the view that the existence of Indonesia and Islam later on mingled together and eliminated ethnic walls. Arab society is no longer paying attention to their status as Arab descent, but be individuals with a more mainstream Islamic identity. Their existence does not establish a new order, but it plays the same role as the acceptance of Islam in the context of the widespread acceptance of religion. In the role as citizens, Arab society then participates in contributing to the development of society at large. Further development did not circulate longer to confine within their circle only.

CONCLUSION

This article shows the role of the Arabs in Palu valley which has also adds to the dynamics of the history of Central Sulawesi. They did not just play a role in the economy, but to bring humanitarian mission by establishing a *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah* as the container to educate Muslims to the remote region of Central Sulawesi. Thanks to the cooperation with the various parties of growth and development, this *madrasah*

(Islamic modern school) continues today. Education which was activated by *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah* has become a religious institution to the Arab community in Palu. As an educational movement, the *da'wah* (religious proselytizing) carried out to strengthen the internal capacity of the Muslims; so as to the provision of education, as well as a means to Muslim society at large.

The development of *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah* although initiated from the Arab community to raise their quality on education, but in the next phase of development, it would no longer just focus on the Arab community and their internal people alone, also to provide an opportunity for Muslims in general. While the Arab identity is only maintained internally only within the family circle. It was not institutionalized in connection with educational institutions of *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah*. Although the founder and his family retained the Arab tribes in their name, it's just that it does not affect anything in the educational institutions. Including curriculum structure and also the management of the institution.

This study is also limited to the culture of Arab society in the development of education. The study area covers only urban areas and Palu, Central Sulawesi. The study did not develop studies in other *Madrasah Alkhairat al-Islamiyah* region, where also already in an established stage. This study was carried out only in the Arab community of Central Sulawesi. For that, it needs a broader assessment of how the Arab community conditions elsewhere. Thus, it would obtain a comprehensive overview. Meanwhile, there should also be a study of Arab identity that accompanies their activity.¹

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¹**Statement:** I, hereby, declare that this article is my own writing, not a product of plagiarism, and not being sent, reviewed, or published in other scholarly journals.

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