

# ORTHODOXY HAS BEEN CHALLENGED: THE STRUGGLE FOR ISLAMIC EDUCATION REFORM MADRASAH TARBIYAH ISLAMIYAH

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## Abstract

This research discovered that the Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah was established to uphold the Islamic orthodoxy that has been mainstream in Minangkabau since the 16th century AD. This Islamic orthodoxy was initially transmitted through surau and eventually evolved into the Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah we know today. In maintaining the existence of Islamic orthodoxy, Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah had to overcome challenges from Madrasah established by young ulama and public schools founded by the Dutch colonialists. This research used a qualitative approach, utilizing both historical and phenomenological methods. The data collection process involved observation, interviews, and documentation search. Observations were made by directly observing the day-to-day learning activities at Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah. Interviews were conducted with the Shaikh, teachers, students, and the community surrounding the hall, using an interview approach that was neither formal nor rigid. The data was also collected through document searches, archives of Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah, and academic literature related to the Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah, especially documents to support the historical analysis. The research concludes that despite encountering challenges from various quarters, Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah has been successful in upholding the existence of Islamic orthodoxy as a mainstream religion in Minangkabau.

## INTRODUCTION

Islamic Education has a long-standing history in Southeast Asia, and is referred to as "dayah" in Aceh, "surau" in Minangkabau, "pesantren" in Java, "pondok" in Malaysia, and "pho no" in Southern Thailand (Ahmad, 2015). All types of Islamic educational institutions are subject to updates based on their respective dynamics.

The Minangkabau Reformation Movement was the first Islamic Reformation movement to take place in Indonesia. At the time, Minangkabau was the first region to witness signs of renewal, while other areas were still submerged in traditional religious practices. Sheikh Ahmad Khatib al Minangkabawi played a significant role in the process of Islamic renewal in Minangkabau through his disciples (Abdullah, 2018; Ilyas, 2023). This renewal movement, in its development, emerged with two large factions fighting each other in open conflict. These factions are the young ulama and the old ulama. The young ulama are the disciples of Sheikh Ahmad Khatib who are more open to renewal, such as Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah, Abdullah Ahmad, and Sheikh Muhammad Jamil Jambek. The elderly are scholars, such as Sheikh Abbas, Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli, and Sheikh Mohammed Jamil Jaho, who want to maintain Islamic orthodoxy oriented towards fiqh-sufistic (Satria, 2019; Satria et al., 2024). The modernization of Islamic education in Minangkabau cannot be separated from the collusion of educational institutions with the religious dynamics between the young and the old, other than the public school system introduced by the Dutch colonial (Latif, 2013).

The renewal has led to tension and social unrest, as educational institutions have been used to socialize and mobilize people. The youth have made the madrasah the centre of the consolidation of ideas and the mobilization of the masses, while the elderly made the *surau* the centre for the same interests (Abdullah, 2018). Young ulama like Abdullah Ahmad founded Madrasah Adabiyah in 1909 in Padang, while Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah founded Sumatera Thawalib in the Jambatan Basi of Padang Panjang, and Sheikh Ibrahim Moses changed his *surau* to Sumatera Thawalib in Parabek Bukittinggi (Chaniago et al., 2020; Seno, 2010). The traditional principle is that the elders are responsible for preserving surau education, which has been a traditional transmission of Islam. Old ulama like Sulaiman Arrasuli, Abbas, Tabek Gadang, and Jamil Jaho each had a surau in their dwelling place. The old ulama, such as Sulaiman Arrasuli, Abbas, Tabek Gadang, and Jamil Jaho, each had a *surau* in their dwelling place (Muhammad Kosim, Martin Kustati, 2021).

Besides the young ulama, the existence of traditional Islamic education also threatened by public schools introduced by the Dutch colonialists (Latif, 2013). The conflict between traditional Islamic education and the public schools established by the Dutch colonials occurred not only in Minangkabau but also throughout Indonesia (Zaini, 2022). This has led to practitioners, surau, and other traditional Islamic educational institutions using a strategy of rejection while taking examples as an attempt to preserve their existence, as Azra has noted. (Azra, 2012, 2017).

The old ulama started a step toward education renewal with a movement that began in Canduang. In 1926, Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli (1871–1971) received a letter from Sheikh Abbas of Bukittinggi. The letter suggested that he should update his teaching system to a madrasah, following in the footsteps of young ulama. This suggestion started the renewal of the Islamic education system in Surau Baru Canduang, which was established in 1327 H/1908 M. This madrasah was equipped with modern amenities such as tables, chairs, and desks. Soon, other elderly scholars who also had surau institutions, such as Sheikh A. Wahid Tabek Gadang, Sheikh Muhammad Jamil Jaho in Padang Panjang, and Sheikh Arifin in Batu Hampar, followed the steps taken by Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli.

## METHOD

This research is qualitative (Conroy, 2018). In terms of study approach, this research uses a historical and phenomenological analysis approach (Peter Connolly, 2001). These two approaches are used in this research to ensure that the object of study, Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah, is studied comprehensively. Given the complexity of the object of study, a historical approach has been utilized to examine the dynamics of Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah, as it cannot be separated from its historical dimension. With a historical approach, this research endeavours to ensure that the transformation of Islamic education can be substantiated through data that can be traced in historical documents or verified through interviews with knowledgeable informants. By taking a historical approach, this research assumes that all events can be traced by exploring how and when they occurred, where, why, and who was involved in them, thus providing a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.

The phenomenological approach is utilized to observe the occurrences within the reality of the Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah. The research is focused on collecting data through various methods, including direct observation of day-to-day learning activities,

conducting free interviews with sources such as Shaikh, teachers, students, and the community surrounding the hall, as well as documenting relevant archives and academic literature. These efforts aim to strengthen the research findings without imposing a formal or rigid structure on the interview process.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah and Penetration of Young Ulama

The establishment of the Islamic Tarbiyah Madrasah was to respond to the movement of Islamic modernism brought by young ulama. The old ulama believed that the movement of Islamic modernism brought by the young students could cause divisions and disturbances among the Minangkabau people (Alfurqan, et. al.: 2024). The young ulama is the group responsible for the renewal of Islam in the Minangkabau region in the 20th century. It generally known that the Islamic renewal movement brought about by scholars among the young ulama originated from the spirit of Muhammad 'Abduh's renewal in Egypt, which is commonly called the Islamic Modernism movement (Azyumardi, 2020).

The influence of 'Abduh's thoughts was very significant in the pattern of the progressive youth ulama movement, but on the other hand, the young ulama was also heavily influenced by Ibn Taimiyah's thoughts, which were developing at that time in Haramain. This contact between young ulama and Ibn Taimiyah's thoughts is very possible because these young ulama also delve further into the sources used as main references by 'Abduh, such as the books of Ibn Taimiyah and Ibn al-Qayyim. Abul Fadl explained in his research that Muhammad 'Abduh was indeed very inspired by Ibn Taimiyah's thoughts, as was 'Abduh's student, Rashid Rida. Although, on the one hand, 'Abduh was also influenced by Western intellectual traditions, it can be said that the source of 'Abduh's thought was a combination of Ibn Taymiyah's puritanical thinking and, on the other hand, 'Abduh's admiration for the Western intellectual tradition (Brown & Fadl, 2006). Sheikh Sulaiman himself revealed that Ibn Taimiyah's influence was very dominant in the understanding of young ulama, so they tended to be radical in carrying out reforms and rejecting the traditional Islamic authority that had been established in Minangkabau.

Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli was concerned that the issue could lead to divisions and disputes among Muslims in Minangkabau. Schrieke, an expert on the matter, emphasized that the religious disputes at that time were a result of a religion upheaval. However, Apria Putra disagreed with Schrieke's view and believed that the conflicts between older and younger ulama were more visible in the issue of khilafiyah (Apria Putra, 2014). Apria Putra also disagreed with Schrieke's use of the term religious upheaval, considering it to be an exaggeration. Nonetheless, Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli himself admitted that the religious dynamics at that time led to divisions among the Minangkabau people. Apria's conclusion was not accepted as it was revealed later that the conflict between the old and young ulama resulted in prolonged polemics in Minangkabau in the 20th century AD.

The main agenda of the 'Abduh Islamic modernism movement brought by young ulama in Minangkabau is as follows: first, the purification of Islamic teachings from heresy. Second, protection of Islamic law from taqlid, but against the authority of traditional ulama. Third, Ijtihad is the best way to bridge between Islam and modernity. Fourth, the use of a modern education system for Islamic educational institutions. Fifth,

the revival of the Arabic language as a means of creating authentic interpretations of the Koran and Sunnah (Abushouk, 2007).

One model of this youth movement is to modernize the education sector. Sheikh Thahir Djalaluddin (1869–1959) was a young cleric who pioneered the modernization of Islamic education. In 1908, Sheikh Thahir, together with Sayyid Sheikh al-Hadi, founded the first modern-oriented madrasah under the name madrasah al-Iqbal al-Islamiyyah in Singapore (Mafri Amir, 2008). Sheikh Thahir also created the al-Imam journal, and through this journal, Sheikh Thahir voiced the modernization of Islamic educational institutions that have existed in the archipelago. Al-Imam paid great attention to efforts to modernize Islamic education, both aspects of the curriculum and madrasa institutions. Several writings in al-Imam emphasize the need to include general subjects in the curriculum, apart from Islamic religious subjects. For Sheikh Thahir, the modernization of the Islamic education system is the key to the progress of a nation, specifically Malay-Nusantara Muslims (Azyumardi, 2020). The modernization of Islamic education also aims to integrate classical Islamic traditions with modern educational models (Osman, 2013).

Surau, the most popular Islamic educational institution in the Islamic intellectual tradition in Minangkabau, was modernized by turning it into a madrasah. They modernized it by changing the surau education system by building a madrasah. The first surau to be transformed into a madrasa was the Padang Panjang iron bridge surau in 1915 AD. This madrasa was later named Sumatra Thawalib.

Sumatra Thawalib developed into a social organization that houses several madrasas owned by young people. Madrasah Sumatra Thawalib is a modern Islamic educational institution that prioritizes and voices the spirit of Islamic modernization in Minangkabau. As a general context, among researchers who were interested in looking at the dynamics of Islam in Minangkabau, it is stated that Madrasah Sumatra Thawalib is a model of modern Islamic educational institutions in Minangkabau (Abdullah, 2018). This means that the modernization of Islamic education only occurs in Islamic educational institutions managed by young ulama.

In Sumatra Thawalib, Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah's efforts to modernize the education system encountered significant difficulties that precluded immediate change. Initially, the system consisted of three classes - Class One, Class Two, and Class Three. However, as the system evolved, these three levels underwent further division into more levels. Class One was divided into Class Four, while Class Two remained unchanged, and Class Three maintained its original structure. Ultimately, Sumatra Thawalib's education system consisted of seven classes (Hamka, 1982).

Mahmud Yunus said that the modernization that occurred in Thawalib was completed in 1921. This year, Sheikh Karim Amrullah changed the reference books used by using new books, especially for class VII. The *al-Mahalli* book used for class VII has been replaced with the *Bidayatul Mujtahid* book, the *Jam'ul Jawami'* book has been replaced with *Hushulul Makmul*, the *Fathul Mu'in* book has been replaced with the *al-Muhazzab* book. According to Taufik Abdullah, students in grades VI and VII have studied books written by scholars and philosophers such as al-Ghazali, Ibn Rushd, and Ibn Sina. In the Sumatran Tafsir lesson, Thawalib uses a book written by Muhammad 'Abduh, namely *al-Manar* from Egypt. Even though Sumatra Thawalib has experienced modernization by adopting the classical system, during the leadership of Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah, the curriculum used in Sumatra Thawalib still used 100% religion.

General subjects were only included in the curriculum when Sumatra Thawalib was led by Abdul Hamid Hakim. The modernization carried out at the Sumatran Thawalib madrasah at this time was only at the method and class leveling stage. Meanwhile, the curriculum remains oriented towards *Tafaqquh fi al-din* (Yunus, 1996).

The influence of the Islamic modernism movement, which was spearheaded by 'Abduh, is apparent in the education system at Madrasah Sumatra Thawalib, where the teachings of reforming scholars are incorporated into the curriculum. Specifically, in the field of theology, Sumatra Thawalib utilizes *Risalah Tauhid* by Muhammad 'Abduh (Afrianty, 2006). The primary learning resources for this madrasah are books imported from Egypt. However, this approach may pose some challenges, as students may struggle to contextualize the reality of religion in Minangkabau. Moreover, the direct influence of young people's interaction with Islamic modernism in the Middle East can lead to exclusivity, and the spirit they display can eventually lead to puritanization. This is a concern for older ulama, particularly Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli, who apprehends that the movement of young ulama could cause divisions in Minangkabau society.

The modernization of education that occurs in madrasas for young ulama, such as Sumatra Thawalib, does not seem to be running consistently. It is interesting to observe that Sumatra Thawalib's students seemed more radical and confrontational towards customs, Dutch colonialism, and even towards the Indonesian government itself after independence. Apart from that, Thawalib student also has anti-Western tendencies. Sumatra Thawalib's students preferred to continue their education in the Middle East and refused to continue their education in Western countries. This attitude was driven by the fact that Western countries colonized all Islamic countries (Afrianty, 2006).

Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli also modernized their *surau* system by establishing the Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah. The modernization of Islamic education carried out by older ulama seems to be too late compared to young ulama. This is not because Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli is anti-modernization; in fact, he is more accommodating towards negotiations with modernization. Yudi Latif said that older ulama and their traditional educational institutions are not static at all because they always creatively adapt to environmental changes

Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli demonstrated a commitment to modernizing the *surau* system and Islamic education by establishing the Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah. Unlike some older ulama, Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli was open to negotiating with forces of modernization. Yudi Latif stated that the traditional educational institutions and older ulama are not stagnant as they are constantly adapting to environmental changes with creativity (Latif, 2013). However, these adjustments are kept in line with established traditions. Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah is an educational institution that has local historical roots. *Surau* was modified to become an institution that continues to teach Islam, accommodating local traditions while actively accommodating advances in modern educational methods and systems.

The modernization carried out by Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli on his *surau* system started contestation in the field of Islamic education. Young Ulama first formed an educational network called Sumatra Thawalib. Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah has also developed into an educational network for older ulama. (Nelmawarni, 2013). Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah maintains the books of the Shafi'i school of thought as the main



reference in the learning process. Even books written by local scholars such as Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli and Sheikh Muhammad Jamil Jaho are also considered the main references, such as the book of monotheism *al-Aqwal al-Mardiyyah* and the book *Tadhkirah al-Qulub* in the field of morals. Like Sumatra Thawalib, Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah also uses the *Bidayatul Mujtahid* book as a reference for students in class VII. The book *Al-Ashbah wa al-Naza'ir fi al-furu'*, which contains the views of four schools of thought related to fiqh, is also used as a reference book. This is done to encourage Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah students to have an open and critical view of different schools of thought.

**Picture:**  
**MTI diploma signed by Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli**



The students who graduated from Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah had their diplomas signed by Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli. In the diploma, he advised his students to firmly adhere to the I'tiqad Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah. When it comes to sharia and worship, we refer to the four schools of thought, but in giving fatwa and enacting laws, we must follow the Imam Shafi'i school of thought. Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli's message is known for its moderate views, and he wants to avoid divisions or upheaval in society due to ulama fatwas that are not in line with the traditional Islamic style that has been established in Minangkabau. Even today, Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah maintains the message on this diploma, indicating their commitment to preserving Islamic orthodoxy.

Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli wrote in *al-Mizan* magazine on March 23, 1938, as follows:

“Many religious books began to circulate, tablighs were widely carried out, and even the works of Ulama were widely published, including in magazines, both in Arabic and Latin. However, differences of opinion are increasing and ironically causing divisions among the people: children are disobedient to their parents, students are disobedient to their teachers, and friendships are broken between one another, including between warring villages and villages. Not only that, the practice and worship of the people are also decreasing (Arrasuli, 1938).”

In *al Mizan* magazine, the author responded to Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli's observations about the religious changes that took place in Minangkabau during the 20th century. These changes led to the division of society into two groups: those who

followed the old ulama and those who followed the younger ulama. Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli believed that the differences in opinions between the older and younger ulama only created divisions within Minangkabau society. However, both groups shared the same view about the importance of modernization in Islamic education, particularly in terms of Islamic education (Kushimoto, 2012). Young ulama aimed to promote the spirit of modernization to transmit Islamic modernism, while the older ulama carried out modernization to maintain the transmission of Islamic orthodoxy that had already been established in Minangkabau.

### Contestation Amid Colonization

During the early 19th century, the educational institutions in Minangkabau were similar to those in traditional religious-political systems across the Islamic world (Latif, 2013). The primary educational institutions for the Minangkabau people were traditional Islamic institutions, such as surau. At the time, the Dutch colonialists focused on capital accumulation policies and believed in maintaining differences in status between the indigenous people and those of Dutch descent, seeing it as an economic interest. It was only towards the end of the 19th century that the Western education system began to expand in the Islamic world, picking up momentum in the 20th century AD (Herrera, 2004).

The victory of the Dutch liberals in the early 1900s was the beginning of a change in Dutch colonial direction and policy in the archipelago, including Minangkabau. The liberals in the Dutch parliament forced the colonial government to issue an "ethical politics" policy as a form of retribution for the Dutch colonial service to the indigenous people. This ethical political policy requires the government to establish more educational institutions for natives. The period 1900–1921 was a period of building public schools for natives using the Western education system (Latief, 2022). During this period, the Dutch colonial era encouraged the construction of public schools intended for the indigenous Minangkabau community. Even though this policy in the education sector was not very successful in Minangkabau when compared with the policy of the Dutch colonial government on the island of Java.

**Table 1: List of the first schools built by the Dutch colonialists in Minangkabau**

Number	Year	Information
1	1853	The first school was founded in Padang, namely <i>Gouvernements Inlandsche School (Second Class School)</i> .
2	1856	In Bukittinggi, <i>Kweekschool</i> was founded, better known as "King's School."
3	1910	The first <i>Gouvernements Inlandsche de Eerste Klasse (First Class School)</i> was founded.
4	1912	The first <i>Volksschool</i> was founded which was known as the Village School (people's school).
5	1916	For the first time, I am opening <i>Vervolgschool. Normal school</i> was also first established in Padang Panjang.
6	1918	Established a special Normal School for women in Padang Panjang.
7	1921	The first <i>Schakelschool</i> was founded in Padang Panjang.

Source: Mardanas Safwan dan Sutrisno Kutoyo (ed.), *Sejarah Pendidikan Daerah Sumatera Barat*, (Padang: Published by the West Sumatra Cultural Inventory and Documentation Project, 1980/1981).

Along with the increase in the number of schools established by the Dutch colonial government in Minangkabau in the early 20th century AD, this led to a decline in public interest in *surau* education. Parents are increasingly less likely to want to send their

children to *surau* education. The decline in public trust in *surau* institutions is because *surau* institutions are unable to be a solution to the community's economic problems. This folk school was founded to provide English and Dutch language skills to its students. This was to prepare experts or employees who worked for the Dutch colonial government. Yudi Latief saw that the interest in public schools created by the Dutch colonialists was starting to grow due to the emergence of awareness among male families and rich families who thought that mastering Dutch was a new way to elevate social status (Latif, 2013).

Below are details of the school models established by the Dutch colonial government in Minangkabau (Kutoyo, 1981):

- 1) Schools with Dutch as the language of instructions
  - a) European Primary School (ELS), which is intended for Dutch people, Dutch descendants, foreign Easterners, and prominent people.
  - b) The Dutch Chinese School (Hollands Chinese School/HCS), specifically for people of Chinese descent and perhaps also foreign Eastern descent, and the Ambonsche School for Ambonese (Dutch soldiers) who lived in West Sumatra at that time; both schools were in Padang.
  - c) Bumiputera-Dutch School (Hollandsch-Inlandsche School/HIS), was only for Dutch and Indonesian people who came from aristocrats, Dutch officials, or respected people, such as the Tuanku Laras, Demang, and Prosecutor families. This HIS existed in Padang and Bukittinggi.
- 2) Schools with regional languages as the language of instruction; these schools are all intended for the indigenous Minangkabau community:
  - a) Bumiputera School (Inlandsche School) is a second-class school with a duration of 5 years.
  - b) Village School (Volks School): the length of education is 3 years.
  - c) Connection School (Vervolgschool), which is a continuation of the Village School with a duration of 2 years.
- 3) Transitional School (Schakelschool), namely the transition from a 3-year village school to a 7-year HIS.

The construction of public schools in Minangkabau with an ethical approach implies a notable increase in the number of locals who receive Western-style education. This has raised concerns among the ulama (Islamic scholars), both young and old. The education system followed by these schools does not permit teaching religious subjects to the students. As a result, there is a possibility that the younger generation of Minangkabau may grow up distanced from Islamic teachings.

Yudi Latief, in his book *Intelegensia Muslim dan Kuasa*, explains very well the influence of Dutch colonial general education on the creation of a new generation of natives who are influenced by Western and modern ways of thinking. Apart from establishing public schools, the Dutch colonial era also provided opportunities for rich and prominent families to study directly in the Netherlands. Muhammad Hatta, for example, a descendant of Sheikh Arsyad Batuhampa, is one of those who experienced this program. Yudi Latief added that the new generation who received



Western education would later become intellectual actors who filled the government when Indonesia became independent (Latif, 2013).

During the Dutch colonial era in Minangkabau, seven educational principles were implemented. These principles included dualism, which separated education for children of Dutch descent from native children. The second policy involved an extreme gradualism strategy, slowing down the establishment of schools equivalent to ELS and limiting the education level of native children. The third policy required all schools to align with the Dutch colonial education model. Fourth, there was no systematic educational planning. The fifth policy was told that the primary goal for native children was to produce low-level employees. The sixth policy involved establishing public schools to increase economic and social prestige, which aimed to compete with the development of madrasas. Finally, strict central control over religious schools and the development of educational implementation and religious teachers were enforced through political ordinances.

This educational model developed by the Dutch colonialists turned out to be a strong impetus for Minangkabau ulama to modernize Islamic educational institutions. This was first responded to by young ulama who founded educational institutions like the educational model developed by the Dutch colonialists. Minangkabau clerics see that if there are no Islamic educational institutions that can compete with the public schools established by the Dutch colonialists, traditional Islamic educational institutions will increasingly be abandoned, and more and more people will study in public schools. Ulama in Minangkabau has especially seen that modernizing the existing education system is very important to compete with the Western education system implemented by the Dutch colonial government (Nurbaiti, 2020). Among the ulama of the elderly, this awareness first emerged from Sheikh Qadi Abbas Bukittinggi. So, Minangkabau ulama, both young and old, built their educational institutions with a more modern style. Young ulama are quicker to respond to this phenomenon. On the one hand, the development of Dutch colonial public schools created contestation among young ulama and older ulama about modernizing their educational institutions. Muslims in Minangkabau continue to strive to build madrasas with Islamic nuances and do not depend on the public schools provided by the Dutch colonial government for the indigenous community.

There are several reasons why ulama in Minangkabau, both young and old, continue to develop their madrasas and compete with Dutch colonial public schools. First, the existence of a diversity of competing beliefs and value systems in Minangkabau under Dutch colonialism and Islamic schools (*Surau* and *Madrassa*) played a key role in building a clear and positive identity for the development of Islam in Minangkabau. Second, Islamic education is an essential Muslim ideological apparatus for responding to discrimination and giving birth to Dutch colonial policies. Third, there is a lack of opportunities for children from Santri circles, who come from farming families, to enter public schools. Fourth, the Dutch colonialists were not interested in helping and developing Islamic educational institutions managed by local Minangkabau clerics (Latif, 2013). The existence of public schools is increasingly popular with the public, which has an impact on the decreasing number of students in Islamic educational institutions run by the older ulama. Moreover, the character of the Minangkabau people, which is open and easy to accept change, has also caused public schools to be in great demand by the public, especially those with financial means. So Islamic educational institutions for older scholars not only faced challenges from young people

but also from Dutch colonial government public schools (Muhammad Kosim, Martin Kustati, 2021). The increasing development of Dutch colonial public schools was one of the triggers for Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli to modernize his educational institutions by establishing the Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah. By adopting Western educational methods, curriculum, and apparatus, the emergence of Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah shows that there is a new effort from Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli to face the challenges posed by the Western education system (Nelmawarni, 2013). Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah, which was developed by the elderly ulama, could be said to be an educational institution that was in an ideal position at that time. This statement is certainly not an exaggeration because Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah, on the one hand, adopts a modern education system such as methods and curriculum that includes several general subjects. Meanwhile, on the other hand, Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah continues to strive to maintain the authority of traditional Islam, which is the style of Islam adhered to by the majority of Minangkabau society. The modernization of Islamic education carried out by Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli by establishing Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah is the result of a continuous dialectic of their attitude towards the legacy of the past, western traditions, and current realities (Arief, 2008).

Other Dutch colonial policies, such as the Teacher Ordinance and the Illegal School Ordinance, also influenced the Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah. Ulemas in Minangkabau have the same view about rejecting discriminatory policies against teachers and madrasahs built by Islamic organizations in Minangkabau. Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli was known as someone clever in diplomacy with the Dutch colonial authorities. So whatever Dutch colonial policies could be detrimental to Muslims, he chose the path of diplomacy and dialogue with the Dutch. Meanwhile, young Ulama, as represented by Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah, chose the path of confrontation with the Dutch colonial authorities. The two patterns of the approach taken by that ulama benefit Muslims by cancelling these regulations. However, on the one hand, the method used by Sheikh Karim Amrullah has hurt the development of the Sumatran Thawalib madrasa in Minangkabau (Daya, 1995). On the other hand, the path taken by Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli had a positive effect on the development of Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah. Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli's diplomatic skills were very visible when he met the assistant resident named W. Groeneveldt. At that time, he said: "In the past, we had two *mamak*; the first was Jas Datuak Batuah. And the second *mamak* is the master himself—the young *mamak* and the old *mamak*. Now that the young ones are gone, of course we complain to the old *mamak*."

This diplomacy was carried out by Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli so that the Dutch colonial government could help the development of the Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah. The mention of Mamak towards the resident assistant indicates that Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli is very clever at dialogue and attracting the attention of his interlocutor. At that time, the Dutch colonial authorities helped build iron pipes at the Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah. The communication pattern and approach used by Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli to the Dutch colonialists provided benefits to the development of the Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah. In 1931, Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli received an award from the Dutch colonial government because he was considered instrumental in maintaining harmonization between Islam and Minangkabau customs. Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli's attitude in choosing the path of dialogue and diplomacy in responding to the policies of the colonial government shows the moderate view of the older ulama in responding to the differences and changes that came because of the progress of the times. So

Sheikh Sulaiman Arrasuli still has a dynamic view in implementing the Islamic education system that was built like Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah. Through the modernization of Islamic education, Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah is in demand by the Minangkabau people and shows its progress (Kosim, 2019).

## CONCLUSION

*Surau* was originally the most popular Islamic educational institution in the Islamic intellectual tradition in Minangkabau. *Surau* is a traditional Minangkabau Islamic education institution that transmits Islamic orthodoxy. The *surau* experienced modernization by turning into a madrasa, modernizing by changing the *surau's* education system by establishing a madrasa. Modernization is an inevitability that cannot be avoided. The old clerics modernized their *surau* into a Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah to maintain the intellectual traditions of Islamic orthodoxy and respond to challenges from young clerics and the expansion of Dutch colonial general education.

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