

CHAPTER 2

HAMKA'S LIFE, CONTRIBUTIONS, AND SOCIO-RELIGIO-POLITICAL CONTEXTS OF HIS THOUGHT

2.1 Introduction

HAMKA is one of the important Muslim scholars in the Malay world. His legacy endures through his literary works and religious teachings. Moreover, his life and works illuminate the intellectual richness of Indonesian Islamic scholarship. This chapter discusses the biography of HAMKA, his contribution, and socio-religio-political contexts during his lifetime in the history of Indonesia.

2.2 HAMKA's Profile and Contribution

2.2.1 Early Life and Education

This chapter focuses on HAMKA's early life and education. His name is Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah, known as HAMKA, was born in Sungai Batang, Minangkabau on February 16, 1908, which also corresponds to the 13th of Muharram 1326 on the Hijra calendar. Moreover, He was the oldest son of Abdul Karim Amrullah (Haji Rasul) and Safiah.⁷⁵ Haji Rasul and HAMKA were a prominent figure in the Minangkabau region of Indonesia, known for their efforts to promote pure Islamic teachings through their involvement with the Muhammadiyah movement.⁷⁶ Additionally, Noer, as cited in Nasrullah, noted that Haji Rasul was a part of the *kaum*

⁷⁵ Kamal, T. Choerul & Agus Mulyana. 2019. "Peranan Buya HAMKA Dalam Gerakan Pembaharuan Muhammadiyah Tahun 1925-1966". *FACTUM: Jurnal Sejarah dan Pendidikan Sejarah*. Bandung: UPI. Vol. 8. No. 2. p. 217.

⁷⁶ *ibid.* p. 218.

muda movement. They rejected the traditionalist approach of *taqlīd al-a'mā*. They believed that Islam is a moderate and rational way of life, and they understood Islam as a progressive religion in the contemporary context through *ijtihād*.⁷⁷ His great-great-grandfather Tuanku Pariaman was an early Wahabbist-Padri reformer in Minangkabau who fought against Dutch colonialists. However, his grandfather, Muhammad Amrullah, was a member of the Naqshabandiyyah movement.⁷⁸

HAMKA is one of the few Indonesians whose history and works are widely known throughout the archipelago. He is an extremely prolific writer. His writings were reprinted numerous times. Moreover, HAMKA's ideas are well-known, particularly among Muslims who either attend his lectures or listen to him on the radio. He also occasionally participated in scientific seminars, particularly those dealing with religion and history, either as a regular participant or a presenter.⁷⁹

In Tafsir Al-Azhar, he stated that the school of thought that he followed is the Salaf school both in *'Aqīdah* and *fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence), which is the *madhhab* of the Prophet Muhammad, his companions, and the scholars who followed their path. In matters of faith and worship, it is based purely on *taslīm* (submission), meaning surrender without asking too many questions. However, it is not about blindly following human opinions but rather evaluating which views are closer to the truth and abandoning those that deviate significantly. Even when such deviations occur, they are not necessarily the result of bad intentions by the one offering the opinion.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Nasrullah. 2016. "Respons dan Tantangan Kaum Tua Atas Kritik Kaum Muda Terhadap Tarekat di Minangkabau Awal Abad 20". *'Anil Islam: Jurnal Kebudayaan dan Ilmu Keislaman*. Sumenep: Institut Ilmu Keislaman Annuqayah. Vol. 9. No. 2. p. 215.

⁷⁸ Rush, James R. *HAMKA's Great Story: A Master Writer's Vision of Islam for Modern Indonesia*. Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press. p. 44.

⁷⁹ Alfian. 1979. "HAMKA dan Bahagia". In *Kenang-kenangan 70 Tahun Buya HAMKA*. Jakarta: Yayasan Nurul Islam. p. 125

⁸⁰ HAMKA. 2001. *Tafsir al-Azhar*. Singapore: Pustaka Nasional Pte. Ltd. Vol. 1. p. 41.

When Hamka left Minangkabau for Java, he met several Indonesian Muslim figures. Among them, he deepened his knowledge of Islam and socialism with HOS Tjokroaminoto. He studied Islamic studies with Haji Fachruddin and learned sociology from R.M. Soeryopranoto. Hamka also had the opportunity to study logic with Ki Bagus Hadikusomo and further enriched his Islamic knowledge with Buya Sutan Mansur.⁸¹

HAMKA's influence extended to a wide range of individuals and leaders both in Indonesia and beyond. One notable figure is Khairudin Aljunied, who frequently referenced Hamka's thoughts and ideas in his speeches and writings. He is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, at the National University of Singapore. According to Khairudin, HAMKA was a Muslim reformer who has been campaigning for a total transformation of how Islam is imagined in the Malay world. He admired HAMKA and wrote a book about him.⁸²

Another prominent figure greatly influenced by HAMKA is Yunahar Ilyas. He was a Minangkabau scholar, a teacher, and an important figure within the Muhammadiyah movement, as well as the Deputy Chairman of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) for the 2015-2020 period. Yunahar extensively explored HAMKA's intellectual contributions through his non-fiction works and deeply admired HAMKA's artistic spirit, as well as his perspectives on Sufism and philosophy. HAMKA's influence on Yunahar's thought is evident in his dissertation, which examines HAMKA's views on gender.⁸³

⁸¹ Hamka, Irfan. 2013. *Ayah: Kisah Buya Hamka*. Jakarta: Republika. p. 233.

⁸² Aljunied, Khairudin.

⁸³ Yunahar Ilyas. 2003. *Konstruksi Gender dalam Pemikiran Mufasir Indonesia Modern (Hamka dan M. Hasbi Ash-Shiddiqy)*. (Dissertation). UIN Sunan Kalijaga.

Another figure who was significantly influenced by HAMKA is Adian Husaini, a Muslim intellectual, academic, and author. He has held positions in various organizations, including serving as the Chairman of the Indonesian Islamic Propagation Council (Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia). Adian frequently references HAMKA's thoughts and ideas in his speeches. According to Adian, HAMKA embodied the spirit of both a scholar and a hero. He greatly admired HAMKA and even wrote a book collaboratively with Bambang Galih Setiawan elaborating HAMKA and M. Natsir's ideas in education.⁸⁴

HAMKA attended the Diniyyah school founded by Zainuddin Labai in the evening and a government-run school in the mornings. Zainudin was the only teacher he truly loved. He understood the character of HAMKA and he was a teacher who inspired joy, not fear. Later, when Haji Rasul converted the surau Jembatan Besi into Sumatra Thawalib madrasah, HAMKA had the opportunity to study there as well.⁸⁵ Moreover, HAMKA also studied Islam in Parabek with Sheikh Ibrahim Musa.⁸⁶

Yunan in Noramira mentioned that although HAMKA did not complete his formal education and did not receive a diploma from the schools he attended. He continued learning and expanding his knowledge independently. He was highly motivated to learn as much as he could, and this behavior helped him to overcome the obstacles he faced in his educational journey.⁸⁷

HAMKA served as the Chairman of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) for two terms. However, during his second term, he resigned from his position. This decision

⁸⁴ Husaini, Husaini & Bambang Galih Setiawan. 2020. *Pemikiran dan Perjuangan M. Natsir & Hamka. dalam Pendidikan*. Depok: Gema Insani.

⁸⁵ Rush, James R. *HAMKA's Great Story: A Master Writer's Vision of Islam for Modern Indonesia*. p. 60.

⁸⁶ HAMKA. 2009. *Kenang-kenangan Hidup*. Shah Alam: Pustaka Dini. p. 48.

⁸⁷ Nooramira. 2012. *A study of HAMKA's concept of virtue based on his selected works*. p. 18.

was made due to his refusal to comply with the government's request to revoke an MUI fatwa prohibiting Muslims from participating in Christmas celebrations.⁸⁸

A few days after announcing his resignation as Chairman of MUI, HAMKA fell ill and was taken to the hospital. After several days of treatment, he passed away on Friday, July 24, 1981, at 10:37 AM. He was laid to rest at the Tanah Kusir Cemetery.⁸⁹

2.2.2 Contributions

HAMKA was an extremely prolific writer, and his magnum opus was Tafsir al-Azhar. His writings span across various genres and subjects. According to the Department of Education and Culture of Agam, HAMKA's writings can be categorized into several categories: 1) Articles in magazines, 2) History, 3) Novels, 4) Politics 5) Religion.⁹⁰ Nearly all his writings were reprinted posthumously. One of his notable novels, *Tenggelamnya Kapal van der Wijk* has received extraordinary responses since its initial publication and has even been adapted into a film.⁹¹ Here are some of his notable books:

Tafsir al-Azhar is HAMKA's most important work. The specialty of this tafsir is that it is written in Malay. He completed the interpretation of it in 1971 during his exile in prison. The presence of this exegesis is highly significant in elucidating Islamic teachings to society. There are two distinctive advantages of tafsir al-Azhar. Firstly, it aids general readers who lack an understanding of the Arabic language. Secondly, it assists preachers in explaining the lessons within the Qur'an to the community.⁹²

⁸⁸ Hamka, Irfan. 2013. Ayah: *Kisah Buya Hamka*. Jakarta: Republika. pp. 273-279.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Dinas Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Kabupaten Agam. 2021. *7 Keistimewaan Museum Rumah Kelahiran Buya HAMKA*. Agam: Dinas Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Kabupaten Agam.

⁹¹ Vindya Adiah Tama. 2021. "Politik Kekuasaan Dan Ekonomi "Dalam Film Tenggelamnya Kapal Var der Wijk". *Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*. Pekanbaru: Universitas Riau. Vol. 10. No. 1. pp. 97-105.

⁹² HAMKA. 2001. *Tafsir Al-Azhar Jilid 1*. Singapore: Pustaka Nasional Pte Ltd. p. 4.

1001 Soal Kehidupan (1001 Life Question) is a compilation of HAMKA's articles from various magazines, including "*Membahas Kemusykilan Agama*," "*Soal Jawab Agama Islam*," and "*1001 Soal-soal Hidup*." These articles, originally published in "*Pedoman Masyarakat*," "*Panji Masyarakat*," and "*Gema Islam*," are presented in a question-and-answer format. The book discusses addresses numerous religious issues originating from society. The first edition of this book was published in 2016 by Gema Insani. It is organized into four main chapters. it begins with discussions on topics such as faith, Islam and modern science, Islam and women, Islam and corpse management, pilgrimage, *khurāfāt*, shaman, and religious deviation.

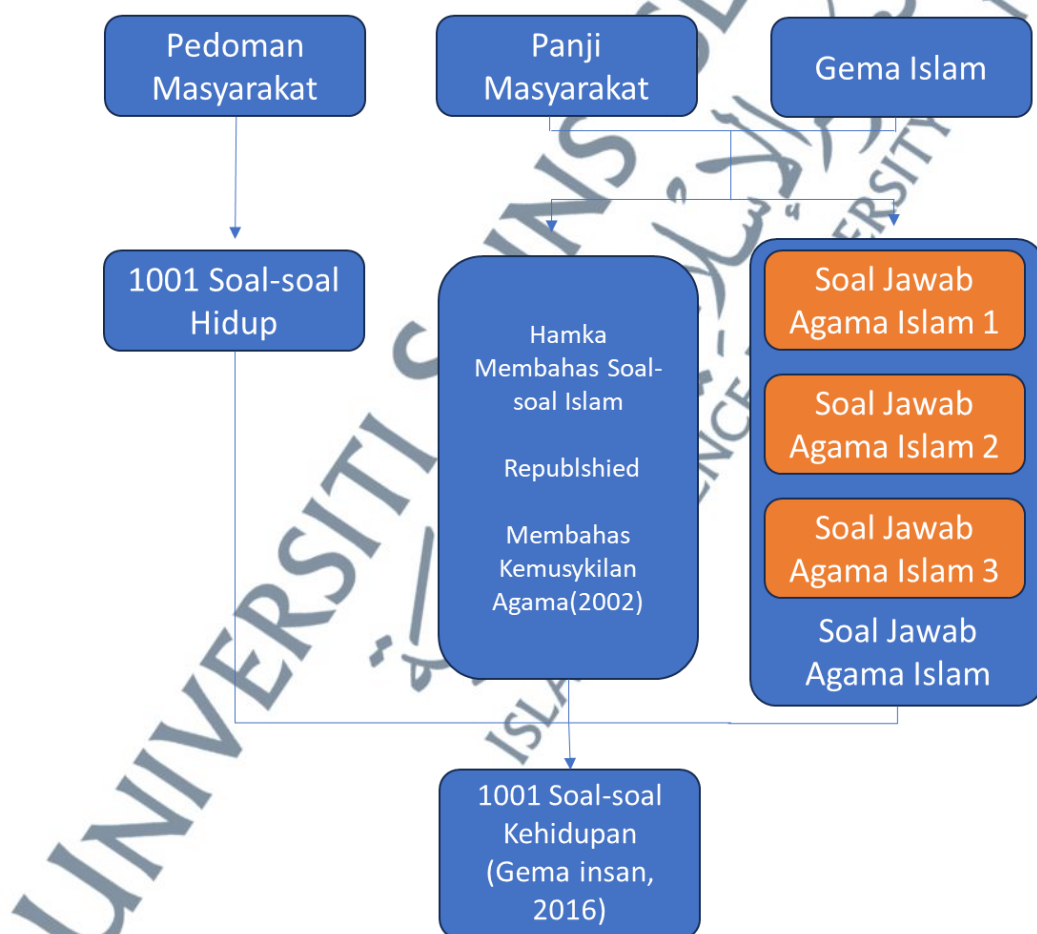


Figure 4: The Origin of 1001 Soal Kehidupan



Figure 5: Front cover of magazine *Gema Islam*

Tasauf Modern (modern sufism). This book is a collection of the “Bahagia” (happiness) column in the *Pedoman Masyarakat* magazine since 1937. Due to community demand, the articles were compiled as a book. The first edition of this book was published in 1939. The high response to this book on Sufism is because there have not been many translations of religious books about Sufism into Indonesian. The essence of this book is how to achieve happiness in this world and the hereafter. It begins with an explanation of Sufism and then proceeds to present various topics, including the opinions of scientists about the meaning of happiness, happiness and religion, happiness and excellence, mental and bodily health, wealth and happiness, the nature of contentment (*qanā’ah*) and reliance on God (*tawakkal*), the relationship between contentment and satisfaction, and the beauty of nature, as well as the steps to achieve happiness and dealing with misfortune.⁹³

⁹³ HAMKA. 1981. *Tasauf Modern*. n.pl: Yayasan Nurul Islam.

Pelajaran Agama Islam (Islamic studies). The first edition of this book was published in 1956. This book primarily discusses HAMKA's view on *Tawhīd* particularly on the six pillars of faith with two extra chapters, 1) human and religion 2) from which angle we seek God. The characteristic of this book is that it explains *Tawhīd* using a revelation and reason approach. so, this book cannot be separated from a slightly philosophical approach.⁹⁴ This book is an improvement upon the previously published three books entitled *Filsafat Ketuhanan, Iman dan Amal Saleh*, and *Pandangan Hidup Muslim* with some additions.

HAMKA's writings have been featured in several magazines, including "Khatibul Ummah," "Kemajuan Masyarakat" (1928), "Tentera" (1932), "Al Mahdi" (1932), "Semangat Islam" (1943), "Menara" (1946), "Pedoman Masyarakat" (1940), "Mimbar Agama" (1950), and "Panji Masyarakat" (1959).⁹⁵

In field of history, he wrote *Sejarah Umat Islam* (1950), *Ayahku* (1950), *Pembela Islam*, *Tarikh Abu Bakar Siddiq* (1929), *Ringkasan Tarikh Ummat Islam* (1929), *Sejarah Islam Sumatera, Dari Perbendaharaan Lama, Fakta dan Khayal Tuanku Rao*, *Sayid Jamaluddin Al-Afghani*, *Kenang-Kenangan Hidup, Muhammadiyah Melalui Tiga Zaman, Kenang-kenangan di Malaysia*.⁹⁶

In the field of literature, HAMKA wrote *Si Sabariah* (1928), *Laila Majnun* (1932), *Di Bawah Lindungan Ka'bah* (1936), *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van der Wijk* (1937), *Merantau ke Deli* (1940), *Mati Menanggung Malu* (1934), *Terusir* (1963), *Margaretha Gauthier* (1940), *Tuan Direktur* (1979), *Dijemput Mamaknya* (1939), *Menunggu Bedug*

⁹⁴ HAMKA. 1996. *Pelajaran Agama Islam*. Jakarta: Bulan Bintang.

⁹⁵ Dinas Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Kabupaten Agam.

⁹⁶ *ibid*.

Berbunyi (1949), Mandi Cahaya di Tanah Suci (1950), Empat Bulan di Amerika, Mengembara di Lembah Nil (1950), Di Tepi Sungai Dajlah (1950).⁹⁷

Beyond his contribution in literature and history, HAMKA wrote on politics such as Revolusi Agama (1946), Negara Islam (1946), Merdeka (1946), Islam dan Demokrasi (1946), Revolusi Fikiran (1946), Dilamun Ombak Masyarakat (1946), Adat Minangkabau Mengalami Revolusi (1946), Sesudah Naskah Renville (1947), Urat Tunggang Pancasila (1952), Expansi Ideologi (Ghazwul Fikri) (1963), Pidato Pembelaan Peristiwa Tiga Maret (1947), Revolusi Islam Revolusi Adat Cita-cita Kenegaraan dalam Ajaran Islam (1970), and Falsafah Idiologi Islam.⁹⁸

Last but not least, HAMKA's contribution in religion also need attention such as Keadilan Illahi (1939), Tasawuf Modern (1939), Falsafah Hidup (1949), Lembaga Hidup (1940), Lembaga Budi (1940), Perkembangan Tasauf dari Abad ke Abad (1952), Lembaga Hikmat (1953) Islam dan Kebathinan (1972), Pandangan Hidup Muslim (1960), Mengembalikan Tasauf ke Pangkalnya (1942), Renungan Tasauf, Kumpulan Ceramah (1985), Pribadi (1950), Muhammadiyah Melalui Tiga Zaman (1946), 1001 Soal Hidup, compilation of Pedoman Masyarakat (1950), Soal Jawab, compilation of Gema Islam (1960), Di Lembah Cita-cita (1952), Himpunan Khotbah-khotbah (1952), Bohong di Dunia (1952), Do'a-do'a Rasulullah SAW (1974), Kedudukan Perempuan dalam Islam (1970), Muhammadiyah di Minangkabau (1975), Mutiara Filsafat (1956), Mutiara Teraweh dan Idul Fitri (1991), Akhlakul Karimah, Beberapa Tanya Jawab Umat Islam di Masa Kini, Dari Hati ke Hati, Mengembara di Lembah Nil (1950), Tasauf, Perkembangan dan Pemurniannya (1984), Adat Minangkabau dan Agama

⁹⁷ ibid.

⁹⁸ ibid.

Islam (1929), Perkembangan Kebatian di Indonesia Keadilan Illahi (1946), Di Dalam Lembah Kehidupan (1939), Gairah, Cemburu, Di Dalam Lembah Cita-cita (1946), Tafsir Al-Azhar, Kepentingan Melakukan Tabligh, Arkanul Islam (1932), Pedoman Mubaligh Islam (1937), Agam dan Perempuan (1939), Islam dan Demokrasi (1946), Keadilan Sosial dalam Islam (1950), Pelajaran Agama Islam (1956), Pengaruh Ajaran Muhammad Abduh di Indonesia (1958), Lembah Nikmat (1959), Angkatan Baru (1962), Cermin Penghidupan (1962), Kerana Fitnah (1966), Hak Asasi Manusia Dipandang dari Segi Islam (1968), Studi Islam (1973), Hikmat Isra' Mi'raj, Prinsip dan Kebijaksanaan Dakwah Islam, Falsafah Ketuhanan, and Kesepaduan Iman dan Amal Saleh.⁹⁹

2.2.3 His Methodology Used for the Interpretation of Religion

HAMKA highlighted the problem of intellectual stagnation that was everywhere in Southeast Asian Muslim societies during his lifetime. This crisis was a consequence of the ideas propagated by groups that were sceptical of using reason to get new understandings of Islam. These groups displayed an unquestioning attitude toward views about religion (*taqlīd al-a'mā*).¹⁰⁰

HAMKA was open-minded, rational, and moderate, promoted the tradition of discussion, and condemned blind imitation. This led to his satisfaction in studying religion under the supervision of reformist figures in Java. Here, the teachers welcomed discussion, even encouraging students to think independently.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ Dinas Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Kabupaten Agam.

¹⁰⁰ Khairudin Aljunied. 2017. "In Defense of Guided Reason: HAMKA and the Reconstruction of Southeast Asian Islam". *History of Religions*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. Vol. 57. p. 109

¹⁰¹ Ahmad Nor. 2022. *Pesan HAMKA Kepada Pendidik*. Bandar Baru Bangi: JT Publishing House. p. 103.

Due to his negative experiences, in many of his writings, HAMKA strongly condemned *taqlīd al-a'mā*. Among his messages were:

*... if everything that is read is just swallowed without thought, the critical spirit within us is lost”.*¹⁰²

Hamka appreciates reason which is guided by the fact that knowledge can be obtained with reason, but reason has limitations, particularly in matters of faith and belief. Therefore, reason must be guided by revelation through the sacred text of Islam (Qur'ān and Sunnah), good character, changing contexts, and introducing new forms of knowledge to redefine how Islam was supposed to be practiced.¹⁰³ It is necessary to understand that reason can find the truth, but reason must be guided by revelation.

Hamka views fanaticism (*ta'aṣubbiyyah*) toward specific religious views as a long-term issue in the Malay world. He refers to this as doctrinal fanaticism. Such extremism and fanaticism have fragmented the Malay Muslim community into antagonistic groups, particularly between those educated in secular institutions and those from Islamic schools. Muslim groups criticize and oppose Western knowledge, with some even labelling all Western-educated Muslims as enemies.¹⁰⁴

As a moderate scholar, HAMKA firmly opposed hard-line attitudes towards Sufi beliefs, doctrines, and followers. He observed attacks towards Sufism to label them with terms such as *kāfirūn* (disbelievers), *sesat lagi menyesatkan* (led astray and leading others astray), *mu'tazilah* (extreme rationalists), and *zindīq* (heretics). HAMKA saw these attacks as counterproductive because they made the intended reform targets

¹⁰² HAMKA. 2023. *Pribadi Hebat*. Depok: Gema Insani. p. 119.

¹⁰³ Khairudin Aljunied. 2017. "In Defense of Guided Reason: HAMKA and the Reconstruction of Southeast Asian Islam". *History of Religions*. Vol. 57. p. 97.

¹⁰⁴ Aljunied, Khairudin. 2018. *Hamka and Islam: Cosmopolitan Reform in the Malay World*. London: Cornell University Press. p. 44.

defensive. However, he was also aware that corrupted forms of Sufism could harm Islam and Muslims. Instead of aligning with either the anti-Sufi reformists and modernists or the Sufis and traditionalists, he aimed to reconcile the two. He sought to create a bridge based on what he called “Reorienting Sufism” (*mengembalikan tasawuf ke pangkalnya*), which involved re-examining old understandings and practices of Islamic mysticism.¹⁰⁵

From the above explanation, it can be concluded that HAMKA is a moderate figure. This is evident from his approach to using revelation as the foundation for religious practice. However, HAMKA does not marginalize the role of reason; instead, he ensures that it is guided by revelation. As an influential thinker, HAMKA demonstrates that balancing revelation and reason is key to forming a solid defense against the spread and influence of *khurāfāt* in society.

2.2.4 His Influence and Legacy in Indonesia

In 1935, HAMKA established and led a *da'ī* (preacher) training institution for the Muhammadiyah movement in Padang Panjang. This institution was named the *Kulliyatul Muballighīn*. The institution, established by HAMKA, provided an opportunity for graduates of the School of Tawalib, Diniyah School, and other educational institutions. The establishment of *Kulliyatul Muballighīn* was, therefore closely linked to the growth of the Muhammadiyah movement in West Sumatra. The curriculum is primarily focused on leadership and the dissemination of the teachings of the Islamic religion, with an emphasis on the strategies and techniques required for

¹⁰⁵ Aljunied, Khairudin. p. 106.

effective *da'wah*. The teaching staff at the institution comprised HAMKA, Sutan Mansur, Abdullah Kamil, and S.Y. St. Mangkuto.¹⁰⁶

Universitas Muhammadiyah Prof. DR. HAMKA (hereafter referred to as UHAMKA) is a private university owned by the Persyarikatan Muhammadiyah in Jakarta. UHAMKA itself represents a transformation from Institut Ilmu Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan (IKIP) Muhammadiyah Jakarta. In 1997, it underwent a further change of name to UHAMKA. The name Prof. DR. HAMKA was selected in recognition of his exceptional dedication to lifelong learning. Prof. DR. HAMKA was a multifaceted individual with expertise in various disciplines. He was a prominent Islamic scholar and intellectual, a highly regarded figure in the field of literature, a skilled and distinctive writer, and a skilled journalist and public speaker for the Muhammadiyah movement.¹⁰⁷

Moreover, Dwi Fajri and others have observed that HAMKA's influences on 'Aqīdah education are reflected in the Semester Lesson Plan at UHAMKA University. HAMKA's thoughts on 'Aqīdah, which is taught at UHAMKA on a substantive basis, posit that 'Aqīdah is not merely a dogma and theory; rather, it must be implemented in the lives of individuals, professions, families, communities, and even nations and humanity. The 'Aqīdah learning at UHAMKA, which is oriented towards strengthening the implementation of character in life, is aligned with HAMKA's view that a strong 'Aqīdah Tawhīd will have an impact on the life of a Muslim in two dimensions: the

¹⁰⁶ Agus Hakim. 1979. "Kulliyatul Muballighin Muhammadiyah dan Buya Hamka". in *Kenang-Kenangan 70 Tahun Buya Hamka*. Jakarta: Yayasan Nurul Islam. p. 46-54.

¹⁰⁷ Rush, James R. 2016. *Hamka's Great Story: A Master Writer's Vision of Islam for Modern Indonesia*. Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press. p. 198. UHAMKA. 19 July 2024. *Sejarah*. UHAMKA. <https://fisip.uhamka.ac.id/>

vertical dimension with Allah and the horizontal dimension with fellow humans and the environment.¹⁰⁸

Furthermore, the establishment of the Pondok Modern Terpadu (PMT) Prof. DR. HAMKA Pesantren also serves as tangible evidence that the legacy of Hamka has been realized, transcending temporal and generational boundaries. It offers a curriculum comprising several levels, including elementary, middle, and secondary education. The objective of this institution is to provide an integrated religious and modern education system, which should start at the earliest possible age to produce a generation of young people who are both intelligent and possess a comprehensive understanding of religion. The rationale behind the name of its institution demonstrated HAMKA's commitment to religious, educational, and scientific pursuits, as well as to the younger generation of Indonesians.¹⁰⁹

The author's analysis suggests that establishing UHAMKA and PMT HAMKA represents a significant development. HAMKA's legacy should be carried to future generations as a source of inspiration.

Furthermore, Azyumardi Azra has identified HAMKA as an influential figure in establishing modern Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia. The establishment of the al-Azhar Islamic School constituted a starting point in the evolution of modern Islamic schools in Indonesia. Such a legacy marks a shift towards greater progress and advancement. Islamic schools, including those affiliated with the Muhammadiyah movement, have a history dating back to the early 20th century. Nevertheless, they were

¹⁰⁸ Fajri, D. et al. 2022. "Integrasi Pemikiran Hamka Dalam Pembelajaran Akidah: Studi Di Universitas Muhammadiyah". *MUADDIB: Studi Kependidikan dan Keislaman*. Ponorogo: UMPO. Vol. 12. No. 2. p. 167.

¹⁰⁹ Seno Tri Sulistiyono. 22 May 2018. "Jokowi: PMT Prof. Dr. Hamka II Bukti Nyata Cita-Cita Buya Hamka Tembus Waktu dan Generasi". *Tribunnews*. <https://www.tribunnews.com/>.

unable to enhance the quality of their institutions until the conclusion of approximately three decades after Dutch and Japanese colonial rule.¹¹⁰

There were some obstacles and shortcomings faced by the authority of the institutions such as there is an absence of sufficient financial support, which impedes efforts to enhance the quality of these institutions. The unavailability of requisite resources and qualified leadership to effectively manage and develop these Islamic schools. Consequently, a considerable number of affluent parents and officials are not interested in enrolling their children in Islamic schools, or indeed in public schools. The evidence shows that the lower socioeconomic groups send their children to Islamic schools or public schools. The educational establishments that were most favoured by these parents were Catholic or Christian schools that offered a superior standard of education and discipline, while still applying the Dutch discipline model. Until the late 1970s, it was perceived as a highly prestigious decision for the wealthy and elite to send their children to these schools. This contributed to the schools becoming one of the status symbols of the time.¹¹¹ Therefore, HAMKA can be regarded as the father of modern Islamic schools in Indonesia.

Nurcholis Madjid considered HAMKA to be one of the most influential figures in Indonesia and has authored the most significant body of work. In addition to his role as chairman of the MUI, HAMKA served as the Imam of the grand Al-Azhar Mosque in Kebayoran. One noteworthy legacy of HAMKA's success is the range of influence he practiced, reaching diverse social and professional circles. His *da'wah* was also directed towards the elite. During the colonial period, Muslims were closely associated

¹¹⁰ Azra, Azyumardi. 2012. *Pendidikan Islam: Tradisi dan Modernisasi di tengah Tantangan Milenium III*. Jakarta: Kencana. p. 83.

¹¹¹ Selvia, N. Liyana et al. 2023. "Al Azhar Hamka Islamic Education Institute: Past, Present, and Future". *Scaffolding: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam dan Multikulturalisme*. Ponorogo: INSURI. Vol. 5. No. 3. p. 264.

with the *sarungan* and *bakiyak*¹¹². Therefore, HAMKA played an important role in facilitating the acceptance of Islam by the upper classes, many of whom had received a Dutch education. It is accurate to describe HAMKA as a moderate *‘Ālim*.¹¹³

Because of his tremendous contribution to education and *da‘wah*, HAMKA was awarded the title “Doctor Honoris Causa” by Al-Azhar University in Cairo in 1959. This led him to use the title “DR” before his name. He was similarly honoured in Malaysia in 1974 and was referred to as “Hamza Fansuri Zaman Baru” due to his dedication to Islamic literature.¹¹⁴ He was also granted the title of professor by Prof. Moestopo Beragama University.¹¹⁵ Following his passing, for his contribution to social development, the Indonesian government bestowed him with the Mahaputera Madya Star in 1986.¹¹⁶ Lastly, in 2011, he was honoured by the Indonesian government as a national hero for his contribution to the nation.¹¹⁷

2.3 Socio-Religious-Political Contexts of HAMKA’s Thought

Indonesia has the world’s largest Muslim population, where at least 87% of the population adheres to Islam.¹¹⁸ Indonesia is often identified as an Islamic country, though it is not officially an Islamic republic; rather, it is a multicultural and multi-religious nation. Consequently, Indonesia’s study is closely linked to the study of Islam.¹¹⁹

¹¹² *Sarungan* and *Bakiyak* refer to group of traditionalist and poor Muslims.

¹¹³ Nurcholis Madjid. 1979. “Buya Hamka, Profil Seorang Ulama Berjiwa Independen”. in *Kenang-Kenangan 70 Tahun Buya Hamka*. Jakarta: Yayasan Nurul Islam. p. 252.

¹¹⁴ HAMKA. 1981. *Tasauf Modern*. Jakarta: Yayasan Nurul Islam. p. 8.

¹¹⁵ Badan Bahasa. 8 February 2022. “HAMKA”. *Badan Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Bahasa*. <https://badanbahasa.kemdikbud.go.id>.

¹¹⁶ Hamka, Irfan. 2013. *Ayah: Kisah Buya HAMKA*. Jakarta: Republika Penerbit. p.290.

¹¹⁷ *ibid*. p. 244.

¹¹⁸ Bagian Data. 24 August 2022. “Jumlah Penduduk Menurut Agama”. *Satu Data Kemenag RI*. <https://satudata.kemenag.go.id/>.

¹¹⁹ Abdul Wahid. 2016. “Sosial Politik dalam Tafsir Hamka”. *Proceeding ARICIS: Ar-Raniry International Conference on Islamis Studies*. Banda Aceh: Ar-Raniry. p. 331.

However, Indonesian Muslims are not homogeneous because there is no official *madhab* (Islamic school of thought) that represents Indonesia's Islamic identity. This diversity stems from the unique backgrounds of different regions. Consequently, the Muslim community in Indonesia exhibits significant diversity.

2.3.1 Political Condition

The political landscape of Indonesian Muslims was significantly influenced by the party Masyumi (Majlis Syuro Muslimin Indonesia), established as the sole Muslim political party on November 7, 1945. Masyumi emerged from the collaborative efforts of prominent Muslim political figures and religious leaders, including Agus Salim, Prof. Kahar Muzakkar, Abdul Wahid Hasyim, Mohammad Natsir, Mohammad Roem, Prawoto Mangkusasmito, Dr. Sukiman Wirjosandjojo, Ki Bagus Hadikusumo, Mohammad Rosedi and Dr Abu Hanifah.¹²⁰

HAMKA's involvement with the Masyumi party from 1955 to 1957 closely relates to his initial opposition to Pancasila as the state basis. As a constituent member of Masyumi, he played a significant role in shaping the political landscape of Indonesia. The party, known for its advocacy of an Islamic state, aligned with his preference for the state basis of Islam over Pancasila.¹²¹

During his lifetime, another challenge faced by Muslims was the presence of *Partai Komunis Indonesia* (PKI). PKI spread much slander and undermined the Islamic movement. HAMKA was one of the victims of the PKI. On the 12th of Ramadan 1385, he was seized by the police at his home and detained as a political prisoner. He was suspected of being a counter-revolutionary, plotting against Sukarno's regime in

¹²⁰ Samsuri. 2004. *Politik Islam dan Anti Komunis*. Yogyakarta: Safiria Insania Press. pp. 9-10.

¹²¹ Hamka, Irfan. 2013. *Ayah: Kisah Buya Hamka*. p.258.

collaboration with Malaysia. Despite the clear falsehood of these accusations, HAMKA was pressured into confessing.¹²²

2.3.2 Social Condition

It is worth noting that HAMKA was grown in Minangkabau society. it is regarded as one of the most Islamic regions in Indonesia. The Minangkabau people adhere to the principle of *adaik basandi syara, syara basandi kitabullah* (custom is based on Islamic law and Islamic law is based on *kitābullāh*).¹²³ Hence, Islamic law forms the foundation of life for the Minangkabau people. Interestingly, Minangkabau society still follows a matrilineal structure. Thus, tribal lineage is passed down through the maternal line.¹²⁴ Moreover, Minangkabau is recognized as the world's largest matrilineal community.¹²⁵

One of the Muslim prominent figures in Minangkabau was Abdul Karim Amrullah, also known as Haji Rasul (HAMKA's father). He was involved in purifying Islam in Minangkabau once he completed his studies in Egypt. He criticized traditional leaders' attempts to revitalize tambo (the traditional history of Minangkabau), which still contained myth and superstition, particularly those about the history of creation, which deviated from historical reality and contradicted logical reasoning. He accused traditional leaders of disturbing the Islamization process of Minangkabau customs.

2.3.3 Education and Religious Condition

Before Indonesia's independence, the Dutch administration established a secular educational institution that lacked a formal religious curriculum. The Dutch government showed little interest and discrimination in Islamic schools. However, the Dutch placed

¹²² Huda, Nur Cholis. 2012. *Anekdote Tokoh-tokoh Muhammadiyah*. Surabaya: Hikmah Press. p. 19.

¹²³ Akmal Sjafril. 2022. "HAMKA dan Dakwah Kebudayaan". *Republika*. Jakarta, Indonesia. 15 September. p. 13

¹²⁴ Hadler, Jeffrey. 2008. *Islam and Matriarchs*. Itacha: Cornell University Press. p. 25.

¹²⁵ Jones, Gavin W et al. 2009. *Muslim-non-Muslim Marriage*. Singapore: ISEAS Publishing. p. 161.

restrictions on allowing the establishment of private religious institutions. Consequently, religious schools split into two groups in response to pressure from the Dutch government. The first group took an offensive stance, and the other took a defensive position, fighting for the freedom of religious educational institutions.¹²⁶ Haji Rasul (HAMKA's father) exemplified the second group.

The Dutch government imposed rules, known as ordinance (*ordonansi*) at the time, to regulate religious schools. These regulations were implemented in 1905. The Dutch government obliged religious teachers to get permission before engaging in teaching activities. Subsequently, in 1925, the second ordinance underwent minor adjustments, merely requiring notification before engaging in educational activities. The ulama in Minangkabau, represented by Haji Rasul (HAMKA's father), objected to the ordinance. Given the existence of the ordinance, the Minangkabau ulama believed that the ordinance posed a threat to Islamic education but blessed Christian educational institutions.¹²⁷

Indonesia, as a Muslim-majority country, lies distant from the Islamic heartland, the Middle East and does not enjoy the achievements of Islamic civilization and culture in the past. Because of the location, which was relatively far away for people, there was also no suitable means of transportation to travel to the archipelago. This situation delayed speeding up the process of Islamization in the region. Moreover, Islam arrived in the archipelago during a political and civilizational decline within the Islamic world. Consequently, Islam lacked the influence to reshape indigenous beliefs and customs in this region. Conversely, Islam entered Indonesian territory via trade routes that often-

¹²⁶ Mohammad Kosim. 2006. "Pendidikan Agama Islam Di Sekolah Umum (Perspektif Sosio-Politik-Historis)". *Tadrîs: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*. Madura: IAIN Madura. Vol. 1. (2): p. 122.

¹²⁷ *ibid.* 121.

assimilated Islamic principles into local culture and tolerated practices contrary to Islamic teachings. Thus, Islam was perceived merely as a superficial layer imposed upon animist and/or Hindu-Buddhist beliefs.¹²⁸

A historian Harry J. Benda explained that the history of Islam in Indonesia primarily revolves around the spread of *Santri* (student of Islamic institution) culture. However, Islam has been compelled to conform to centuries-old traditions that are partly indigenous and partly Hindu-Buddhist. Given these circumstances, it is unsurprising that a significant portion of those who embraced Islam in Java were merely nominal Muslims, and they continued to practice customs (*adat*) to a significant extent.¹²⁹

2.4 Conclusion

HAMKA was a prominent figure in Indonesia, known for his efforts to promote pure Islamic teachings through his involvement with the Muhammadiyah movement. He contributed mainly to the field of writing and Islamic teaching. Indonesians honored him for his legacy and contributions. Furthermore, the socio-religio-political conditions before and during life in HAMKA significantly shape his personality.

¹²⁸ Saleh, Fauzan. 2001. *Modern Trends in Islamic Theological Discourse in 20th Century Indonesia: A Critical Survey*. Boston: Brill. p. 1.

¹²⁹ Harry J. Benda. 1955. "Indonesian Islam Under the Japanese Occupation, 1942-45". *Pacific Affairs*. Vol. 28. No. 4. p. 2.