

Sambas Sultanate and the Development of Islamic Education

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To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v8-i11/4972>

DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v8-i11/4972

Published Date: 06 December 2018

ABSTRACT

Sambas is an area located in the northern part of West Kalimantan. The district was once ruled by several governments including the Sambas Sultanate. This sultanate plays an important role in the development of Islam and education. Thus, this study was conducted to identify the history of Islam's arrival to Sambas and the development of educational aspects during the reign of this sultanate. In order to achieve these objectives, this study uses a historical approach by analyzing multiple documents to obtain related data. The findings show that Islamic education has grown significantly during the reign of the Sambas Sultanate. This is driven by governmental factors urging the importance of knowledge to society and the state. The study is expected to contribute in the pursuit of historical writing materials especially relating to Islamic governments in the Malay Archipelago.

Keywords: Sultanate of Sambas, Islamic Education, Development of Education

INTRODUCTION

Sambas is located in the northern part of West Kalimantan. In the development of Islamic history, this area witnessed the establishment of the Islamic sultanate of the Sambas Sultanate in 1630. The area has been recognised to be the centre for many leading scholars in both the Malay and Islamic world. Among them are Syeikh Ahmad Khatib Sambas (1803-1875) and Muhammad Basiuni Imran (1885-1976) (Sunandar, 2012). Indeed, the Sultanate of Sambas had reached its peak when it was called "the Serambi Mecca" (the porch of Mecca) due to its development of Islamic scholarship (Mardiyati, 2011). Historically, the Sultanate of Sambas had formally existed in the history for three centuries (1630-1943) and was led by 15

sultans. Acknowledging Islam as an ideological basis for the sultanate, the Sambas sultan adopted the concept of community development based on the customs of Islamic law (Jaelani, 2014). The development of education is among the prioritized agendas for the sultanate to enhance the quality of its society.

THE ARRIVAL OF ISLAM TO SAMBAS

Regarding the history of the advent of Islam, there are some difficulties in proving the exact date of Islam's entry into Sambas. This is due to the lack of authentic evidence that can indicate the beginning of Islam in this area. The oldest information confirms the arrival of Islam to Sambas started back in the 15th century. The source mentions that Islam was brought by one Chinese merchant who was famously known as the admiral of Cheng Ho. This fact is based on the China's record that a settlement was set up by the Chinese Muslim Hanafi community in West Kalimantan in 1407 until 1477 (Sunandar, 2017). They then settled in Sambas and assimilated with the locals in the purpose of spreading the Islamic teachings (Murtadlo, 2014). Around the 15th century, it is also claimed that there are Chinese, Arab and Indian Muslim traders living in Sambas. The majority of these traders made Sambas as port for stopover during trading activities whereas some others opted to settle down there. Therefore, the port area was accepted to be the growth area which later resulted to the growth of Islam in Sambas (Risa, 2014).

Although local sources have not yet mentioned the presence of Muslim locals in Sambas at the time, but some Muslim merchants and traders who stopped-over for business activities have successfully attracted local people to accept Islam. It is known that intermarriage between locals and Chinese or other Muslim traders is one the contributing factors to Islamic growth. However, the presence of Muslims at that time has not changed the image of Sambas as a former Hindu kingdom. The reason is due to the fact that the development of Islam is limited around ports area and expanded to small cities which were regarded as the centre for economic activities (Risa, 2014).

Moreover, there is only little information or preliminary data from the Chinese records that came to Sambas in 1407 regarding the existence of the Muslim Chinese community in West Kalimantan. The available data and evidence on the existence of this community is practically limited and put some question marks on its validity. This limitation is likely due to the hypothesis that the converted Chinese have generally perceived to immerse their identity into Malay. In addition, no proof of the existence of Chinese in Sambas such as Chinese Muslim tombs yet to be found. Another assumption is perhaps due to situation that whenever early Chinese pioneers died, the funeral was made public according to local Muslim culture and their original Chinese identity has vanished (Murtadlo, 2014).

In another similar account, proper evidence of the existence of Islamic religious activities in Sambas until the 15th century has not been found. Only by the end of the 16th century does the new evidence proved the acceptance of local community to Islam due to the discovery of a mosque founded by Raden Sulaiman. The mosque is located in Kota Bangun, a village built by Raden Sulaiman during the process of searching the strategic location for establishing the Sambas government (Murtadlo, 2014; Erwin, 2017). Later, the sultan lived for three years in the town of Bandir before migrating to Lubuk Madung and then settled in Muare Ulakkan. It was here where Raden Sulaiman officially inaugurated as the first Sultan of Sambas Sultanate by the title of Sultan Muhammad Safiuddin at 10 Zulhijjah 1040H / 9 July 1631 (Pabali, 2005).

The presence of that mosque in Sambas supported the fact that the Islamic community has grown significantly and Islam is claimed to have developed well. Perhaps this evidence has turned Azyumardi Azra to claim that Muslims have arrived in Sambas as early as 1580 (Mahrus, 2007). Oliver de Noor a Dutch citizen who visited Borneo in the 16th century also mentioned that Islam is a popular religion along the coast of the island (Risa, 2014).

Another source which described the arrival of Islam at Sambas was also stated by Eric Mjoberg, a Western writer in his book "Borneo Het Lander Koppernsneller". He stated that the Majapahit Hindu Kingdom, which had dominated East Kalimantan for a number of centuries, was overthrown by the Malay troops who converted to Islam in 1478. Then the Malay army continued the movement until it reached West Kalimantan (Effendy, 1995). This information is in fact confirmed by another evidence which stated that many Sambas Muslims have already embraced Islam during the reign of King Gipang in the beginning of 1484 (Risa, 2014).

SAMBAS SULTANATE

The existence of Islam in West Coast of West Kalimantan clearly took place during the formation of Sambas Sultanate government in the 17th century. Islam was brought to Sambas by Sultan Tengah from Brunei who was the first sultan of Sarawak. During that time, Sambas was under the rule of Queen Sapudak, who was the ruler of Sambas Penembahan kingdom or famously known as Sambas Tua Kingdom. It was during this time that the Sultan Tengah arrived at the Sambas River region and later settled here (it is now known as Kembayat Sri Negara). The eldest son of Sultan Tengah, named Sulaiman, was married to the youngest daughter of Ratu Sapudak, named Mas Ayu Bungsu which later changed his name from Sulaiman to Raden Sulaiman (Risa, 2014).

This marriage became a significant factor in spreading Islam in Sambas. After Queen Sapudak died, the government was taken over by Queen Anom Kesuma Yuda. At that time, Raden Sulaiman held the position of the Second Wazir who administered matters pertaining to foreign policy of the government of Sambas. The First Wazir was held by the Queen's younger brother, Prince Mangkurat who administered the national treasury and becomes Queen's representative during her absence. Shortly thereafter, a dispute took place between Prince Mangkurat and Raden Sulaiman. This dispute was not caused merely by the First Wazir's fear on the spreading of Islam in the region, but also due to the economic factor. Raden Sulaiman, who was in control over the river and its banks was perceived to be on the advantage side compared to Prince Pangeran Mangkurat's control over the palace and its surrounding (Risa, 2014).

To avoid bigger disputes and bloodshed, Raden Sulaiman with his family followers decided to leave Kota Lama. They stopped at Kota Bangun before they finally moved to Kota Bandir. In the new place, Raden Sulaiman built a house for his family, and later became the center of the Sambas Islamic government until today (Risa, 2014).

With the departure of Raden Sulaiman, Kota Lama was hit by a crisis. The spreading news of Raden Sulaiman's departure to a new place influenced the residents of Kota Lama to follow him in settling in this very new place. However, Prince Mangkurat continued with his stubborn attitude in the lonely Kota Lama and continued his ignorant in disobeying Queen Anom's order. Eventually Queen Anom gave up and decided to leave Kota Lama and moved to Selakau. Before arriving Selakau, Queen Anom had stopped at Kota Bangun to hand over her power to Raden Sulaiman (Risa, 2014).

After some time, Raden Sulaiman moved the central government to Lubuk Madung, which became the second center of the kingdom after Kota Lama. Here, Raden Sulaiman was crowned as Sultan Sambas with the title of Sultan Muhammad Safiuddin I in 1630 on Monday 10 Zulhijjah 1040H. Then, the central government of the Sambas Sultanate was transferred to Muare Ulakkan during the reign of Raden Bima (Pitria, 2017).

The history of Sambas Sultanate has survived more than three centuries. During that period, Sambas was ruled by 15 sultans who started with Raden Sulaiman until the last sultan of Sultan Mulia Ibrahim who killed by Japan in 1943 (Mahrus, 2007). The list of sultans who ruled the Sambas Sultanate is as follows:

Schedule 1

No	Government Name	Duration of Government
1.	Raden Sulaiman/ Sultan Muhammad Safiuddin I bin Sultan Ibrahim Ali Omar Shah	1630-1666
2.	Raden Bima/ Sultan Muhammad Tajuddin bin Sultan Muhammad Safiuddin I	1666 - 1702
3.	Raden Maya/ Sultan Umar Akamaddin I bin Sultan Muhammad Tajuddin	1702 - 1727
4.	Raden Bungsu/ Sultan Abu bakar Kamaluddin bin Sultan Umar Akamaddin I	1727 - 1757
5.	Raden Jamal/ Sultan Umar Akamaddin II bin Sultan Abu bakar Kamaluddin	1757 - 1782
6.	Raden Gayung/ Sultan Muda Ahmad Tadjuddin bin Sultan Umar Akamaddin II	1783 - 1798
7.	Raden Mantri/ Sultan Abu bakar Tajuddin I bin Sultan Umar Akamaddin II	1798 - 1813
8.	Raden Pasu/ Sultan Muhammad Ali Safiuddin I bin Sultan Umar Akamaddin II	1813 - 1826
9.	Raden Timba/ Sultan Usman Kamaluddin bin Sultan Umar Akamaddin II	1826 - 1829
10.	Raden Semar/Sultan Umar Akamaddin III bin Sultan Umar Akamaddin II	1848 - 1853
11.	Sultan Abu Bakar Tajuddin II bin Sultan Muhammad Ali Shafiuddin I	1846 - 1854
12.	Raden Tokok/ Sultan Umar Kamaluddin bin Sultan Umar Akamaddin III	1853 - 1866
13.	Raden Afifuddin/ Pangeran Adipati Sultan Muhammad Safiuddin II	1866 - 1922
14.	Raden Muhammad Aria Diningrat/ Sultan Ali Safiuddin II	1922 - 1931
15.	Raden Mulia Ibrahim/ Sultan Muhammad Ibrahim Safiuddin	1931-1943

Source: Mahrus (2007).

Education Development during the Sambas Sultanate

In terms of education, educational institutions at Sambas are not much different with institutions in other parts of the archipelago. Prior to the establishment of madrasah, Islamic education in West Kalimantan took place at home, surau or mosque, teachers' houses and palace. Religious education at home is provided in the form of studying the Qur'an among children aged five to ten years. For children who have mastered and completed *Juzuk 'Amma*, parents usually send gifts of rice, coconut and cloth according to their ability (Mahrus, 2007).

Other educational institution that exists in Sambas is surau or mosque. During the second Sambas sultanate Sultan Muhammad Tajuddin, almost every village established a

surau which was not merely a place of worship, but it also became a place of study in religious knowledge. Studies in surau or mosques are carried out by those who are recognized as proficient in religion. At this stage, adolescent children are sent to the pious people to pursue religious knowledge. They usually learn the basic of nahw, sarf, fiqh and tasawuf (Mahrus, 2007).

In Sambas, the surau of Raden Sulaiman has been recognized to be the place for religious study. It was founded by Raden Sulaiman, titled Sultan Muhammad Safiuddin I, located in Kota Bangun. During the reign of Sultan Akamaddin I (1702-1727), a surau named "Kamasallaita" was built. At that time, a prominent scholar from Patani, Syeikh Abdul Jalil al-Fatani has come and taught Islam at Sambas. Surau Sirajul Islam located in Sambas Selakau also plays an important role in spreading the teachings of Islam. This surau was founded by Haji Muhammad Saad, a student of Syeikh Ahmad Khatib Sambas and he himself was a teacher at the surau (Mahrus, 2007).

Religious studies grew simultaneously as Jami Mosque was built during the time of Sultan Muhammad Safiuddin II (1866-1922). The mosque was built in 1888 as requested by his beloved mother Queen Sabar. Religious teaching was conducted by Maharaja Imam as the supreme authority in the field of religious affairs in Sambas kingdom. On a regular basis, Maharaja Imam Muhammad Basiuni Imran will provide religious teaching using some turaths' books for every Friday starting from 10am until Friday prayer. At Sambas, such teaching is referred as tashwir (Mahrus, 2007).

Apart from mosques and suraus, teachers' houses are also used as places for teaching the religion of Islam. For example the Haji Nurdin Tekarang house and the house of Muhammad Basiuni Imran in Kampung Dagang Timur.

Other educational institution in Sambas is the palace. The royal palace is also the place for Islamic teaching but the accessibility is limited to the sultan's family. During the reign of the fifth sultan, Sultan Umar Akamaddin II (1762-1798), the sultan had a royal cleric named Imam Ya'kob. His responsibility is to provide religious and moral studies to the family and relatives of the sultan. In the days of Sultan Abu Bakar Tajuddin (1798-1813), another prominent scholar Syeikh Ahmad Khatib Sambas, the founder of the Qadriyah-Naqsyabandiyah Tarekat, was born in 1803. Although he did not return to Sambas after settling in Mecca in the 19th century, his influence has been spread by his students in Sambas, Pontianak and throughout the archipelago. During the reign of Sultan Muhammad Ali Safiuddin (1813-1826), Islamic religious institutions were created in the palace by appointing Haji Nuruddin Mustafa as Imam of the Sultanate. The duty of the Imam is to provide daily religious instruction especially on the study of the Quran to the sultan's relatives (Mahrus, 2007).

Surau, the teacher's house, and the palace are the institutions to study religious knowledge in a relatively narrow scope such as the study of Qur'anic science, pillar of faith and ritual worship like prayer, fasting and zakat. Those who have participated in this institution for quite some time did involve themselves in learning the tarekat knowledge at the same time. The reading book is not yet available and the process of delivery the knowledge depends on the teacher. The teaching system is in the form of halaqah where students and teachers sit together on the floor forming a circle. The students comprise of teenagers, youth and adults. The study session is normally conducted in the evenings and nights. There is no specific time limit for the study where it can go up to one or two years or even longer (Mahrus, 2017).

Educational institutions formally appeared in Sambas at the end of the 19th century. The Dutch government has established several schools that implement Dutch curriculum such as Primary School (1872), Secondary School Bumiputera (1903), Byzondere School (1910) and Hollands Chineesche School (1915) (Muhammad Rahmatullah, 2003). After a year later, sultan Muhammad Safiuddin II built a school under the name of Madrasah al-Sulthaniyah in 1916. This Madrasah was the first madrasah in West Kalimantan (Mahrus, 2007).

Another institution established by Sultan Muhammad Safiuddin II to play a role in education and religious affairs is the institution of the Maharaja Imam established in 1872. This highest religious institution in the Sambas government was headed by Haji Muhammad Arif Nuruddin who is the first Maharaja Imam (Rahmatullah, 2003).

The intellectual progress of the Sultanate of Sambas in the era of Sultan Muhammad Safiuddin II was at peak by sending some outstanding students to pursue education in Egypt and Mecca. Among the succeeded students in pursuing studies in Egypt was Muhammad Basiuni Imran. The encouragement to study abroad, especially in the intellectual centers, is aimed at preparing the potential forces that will fill religious posts in the government such as cadres and mufti as well as teaching staff at Madrasah al-Sulthaniyah (Mahrus, 2007).

The development of education in the days of Sultan Muhammad Safiuddin II was continued by the sultans after him until the reign of Sultan Muhammad Mulia Ibrahim. At present, the education sector has not undergone significant change and continues its previous educational system so that the entire community of Sambas has the opportunity to receive education at its best (Mario, 2016).

CONCLUSION

The arrival of Islam to Sambas has had a great impact on the Sambas community. Among the biggest impacts was the formation of the Sambas Sultanate who ruled Sambas for about three centuries. Apart from making Islam the basis of governance, the sultanate also paid attention to the development of intellectual institutions. One of the factors that made Sambas's advancement was due to the concern of the Sambas government in the field of religion that eventually turned Sambas to be a center of knowledge and Malay-based Islamic culture.

Acknowledgement

We express our deepest gratitude to the Centre for Research Management, Innovation & Commercialization (RMIC) as well as Faculty of Islamic Contemporary Studies, Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, Terengganu, Malaysia for supporting the publication of this article

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