

Muchtar Lutfi's Thoughts on Religion And National Understanding (1931-1950)

Wulan Agitha Suryani¹, Jarudin², Kaksim³

¹²³ Universitas PGRU Sumatera Barat, Padang, Indonesia

E-mail correspondence: wulanagitha@gmail.com, jarudin@upgrisba.ac.id, kaksim010983@gmail.com

Abstract

This study discusses Muchtar Lutfi's Thoughts on Religion and Nationalism (1931-1950). The problems of this study are: (1) factors that influence Muchtar Lutfi's thoughts (2) Muchtar Lutfi's thoughts on Islam and nationalism. The purpose of this study is to analyze the factors that influence Muchtar Lutfi's thoughts and also analyze how Muchtar Lutfi's Political thoughts. This study was conducted using the philosophical approach method and the historical approach (Historical Approach). The results of the study conducted, the findings of this study conclude; Muchtar Lutfi's thoughts did not happen by themselves. This means that there are those that influence Muchtar Lutfi's thoughts, including the influence of (1) education, (2) the influence of figures and (3) his involvement in various organizations, one of which is the Indonesian Muslim Association (PERMI). Muchtar Lutfi is one of those who helped formulate the understanding of Islam and Nationalism. For Muchtar Luthfi, acceptance of the understanding of nationalism is a logical compromise with other religious elements to fight for Islam together.

Keywords: *Mycthar Lutfi, Nationalism, Pthoughts, Religion*

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Corresponding Author:

Wulan Agitha Suryani
wulanagitha@gmail.com

1. Introduction.

National understanding is a collective consciousness that connects each individual with a common identity, values, and goals as part of a nation. This includes an understanding of history, culture, and the basic principles that are the foundation of the state. In Indonesia, for example, national understanding is very closely related to Pancasila as the basis of the state which contains the values of unity, social justice, and humanity (Pangestu, F. P., 2021). In addition, the national language used by all Indonesian people is an important symbol in strengthening unity in the midst of ethnic and ethnic diversity. An understanding of the history of the nation's struggle is also important so that every citizen can appreciate the services of heroes and understand the struggle that has brought the country to independence (Santoso, G., et al. 2023). More than that, national understanding also invites every individual to have a sense of responsibility for the country's progress by strengthening social solidarity and working together for the common good. With a deep understanding of these aspects, a nation can maintain its integrity and advance common ideals. (Mahmudah, H., et al. 2023).

A sense of responsibility for the progress of the state invites citizens to realize that the development and progress of the nation is not only the responsibility of the government, but also the shared responsibility of the entire community (Aisy, D. R., & Santoso, G. 2022). Every individual, through his or her work, education, and role in society, can contribute to the progress of the nation. For example, by working hard in their profession, maintaining order, participating in social activities, and supporting policies that bring good to many people (Patton, A., et al. 2021). Strengthening social solidarity means creating a sense of togetherness among citizens, regardless of differences in ethnicity, religion, race, or class. This social solidarity is important to maintain the unity and unity of the nation, especially in the midst of existing diversity. By supporting and respecting each other, communities can face various challenges together, such as natural disasters, economic crises, or other social problems (Ghofir, J., & Umam, H. 2020).



Working together for the common good is an important principle in achieving common goals as a nation. Progress in a country can only be achieved if every individual works together and helps each other, both at the level of small communities and on a national scale. This cooperation can be realized in various forms, such as collaborating on infrastructure development, supporting government programs, maintaining social peace, or improving the quality of education. With a deep understanding of these aspects, each individual will not only understand the importance of their role in building the country, but will also feel motivated to contribute for the common good (Nurhaliza, S. 2024). This will strengthen the nation's unity—the ability to remain united despite challenges and differences—and realize common ideals, which include economic progress, social welfare, justice, and peace for all people. With this spirit, the nation will be able to face the changes and challenges of the times and achieve long-term development goals.

In early 1926 when Muchtar Lutfi arrived in Cairo he met Ilyas Yakub, Secretary of the Devotion Association. After that Muchtar Lutfi became a close friend of Ilyas Yakub. Because Ilyas Yakub's association was non-political and also had Malay members, Muchtar and Ilyas founded a new group to achieve political goals. The organization named the Indonesian Guard Association was founded on April 12, 1926 with Muchtar as its chairman and Ilyas Yakub as an advisor. All of its members were Indonesian, with the majority being Minangkabau.

In 1931, Muchtar returned to West Sumatra and joined the Indonesian Muslim Association (PERMI). In the party, he was appointed as the Chairman of the Permi Propaganda Council. He also took an interest in education, and founded the Normal School for women. Due to his radical political activities, in 1932 the Dutch government arrested him and two years later he was exiled to Boven Digoel with Jalaluddin Thaib and Ilyas Ya'kub. Since 1932, the political temperature in West Sumatra has been heating up. Every day, raids on Permi members occurred. The leaders of the organization were ready to be imprisoned and exiled. Between July and September 1933, the Permi Three Musketeers were arrested by the Dutch. The three of them, Ilyas Yacoub, Muchtar Luthfi, and Haji Djalaluddin Thaib, were criminalized under various pretexts. Meanwhile, Ilyas Yacoub and Muchtar Luthfi were detained in Padang. Meanwhile, Haji Djalaluddin Thaib was put in Bukittinggi prison.

After the Proclamation he was repatriated from Australia to Makassar where he later became chairman of the Sulawesi branch of the Indonesian Muslim Consultative Council (MASYUMI) and initiated the construction of the largest mosque in Eastern Indonesia. In 1945, together with other Islamic leaders, Lutfi founded an Islamic organization called Madjelis Islam or Majelis Islam. As a cleric, Lutfi never stopped spreading Islamic teachings, both through direct delivery to the community and writings in newspapers published at that time. Muchtar Lutfi's persistence was not only shown in West Sumatra, but also when he was in Makassar. Muchtar Lutfi's thoughts on politics are almost the same as M. Natsir, in the book *Kisah Hidup Muhammad Natsir* by Jarudin, in this book it is explained that Muhammad Natsir agrees with Pancasila which is inspired by religion but rejects Pancasila which is given a secular interpretation. Muhammad Natsir maintains Pancasila which still contains the spirit of the Jakarta Charter by giving a monotheistic interpretation to the principle of Belief in the Almighty God and the following principles. Muchtar Lutfi also has the same opinion, namely that the Indonesian state must be based on Islamic law. Nationality is merely achieving Indonesian independence. And with an independent Indonesia, we can achieve noble Islam, without Indonesian independence, the ideals of noble Islam cannot be achieved.

2. Method

In this study, the research method used is the Historical Research Method. Where this historical method consists of four stages, namely: heuristics, criticism, interpretation, and historiography (historical writing). The first stage is heuristic, according to its terminology heuristic comes from the Greek *heuristik* which means collecting or finding sources. Historical sources are divided into two types, namely primary sources and secondary sources. First, primary sources are the main sources for writing history, where the primary sources can be archives or writings and manuscripts obtained through library studies and national archives. In addition, there are also secondary sources that I obtained, namely books entitled *Schools and*

Politics (Youth Movements in West Sumatra 1927-1933) by Taufik Abdullah, From Rebellion to Integration of West Sumatra and Indonesian Politics 1926-1998, Audrey Kahin, 101 Minang People on the Stage of History, by Hasril Chaniago, Modern Islamic Movement in Indonesia 1900-1942, Deliar Noer and several journals including, Polemik A. Hassan and Muchtar Luthfi Regarding Nationalism 1929-1935 (Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Padjadjaran University), and The debate between Mochtar Lutfi and Nadjamoeddin Daeng Malewa regarding the ministry of religion within the State of East Indonesia (The State of East Indonesia),

3. Results and Discussion

In the early 20th century, West Sumatra was marked by a period of social and intellectual turmoil. Dozens of polemical books, both in Arabic and Malay, began to be published in various magazines and newspapers reporting on matters of turmoil in thought and schools of thought in understanding Islamic law began to emerge. In addition, practices in customs as indicated by the rules of Islamic law were specifically discussed. In this case, the modernist Islamic movement or better known as the youth played a very large role.

When Haji Rasul moved to Padang Panjang to teach at Surau Jembatan Besi in 1911, Muchtar Lutfi was also brought along, so he also studied there. That was when he began to develop his talent in giving speeches and showed his ability to debate on religious issues. Muchtar Lutfi's intelligence earned the trust of Zainuddin Labay, the founder and leader of Diniyah School, Padang Panjang. So he was trusted and appointed to lead Diniyyah School Sibolga Branch. Upon his return from Sibolga, he was appointed as a teacher at the Raja School (Kweekshool) and OSVIA (Opleiding School van Inlandsche Ambtenaren) in Bukittinggi together with Sheikh Muhammad Jamil Jambek. But he also taught at Sumatra Thawalib and Diniyyah School Padang Panjang. Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah, also known as Haji Rasul, had a great influence on Muchtar Luthfi's intellectual development. He recruited Muchtar Luthfi to lead the Diniyah School branch in Sibolga, Tapanuli, and then assisted Haji Rasul in Sumatra Thawalib.

Although there is no direct record that Haji Rasul recruited Muchtar Luthfi to lead the Diniyah School branch in Sibolga, Tapanuli, Haji Rasul's influence in Islamic education and renewal is very large. Muchtar Luthfi, as someone who was educated in the Islamic religious tradition strengthened by Haji Rasul, was most likely influenced by the ideas and educational methods introduced by Haji Rasul. Muchtar Lutfi's involvement in various organizations also influenced his way of thinking. Muchtar Luthfi was involved in the Indonesian Muslim Party (PERMI), an organization that focused on the struggle for Islam and nationalism. PERMI tried to integrate Islamic principles with Indonesian nationality, which then influenced his thinking about the role of religion in the struggle for independence. Permi, formerly known as Persatuan Sumatra Thawalib, was formed at a conference held on November 17-19, 1928 in Padang Panjang. According to its temporary charter, this organization fought for the dissemination of Islamic knowledge in order to maintain and revive the soul and spirit of Islam.

Starting from the book "Hikmatul Muchtar" written by Muchtar Lutfi with the aim of opposing the Dutch colonial government. The contents are Muchtar Lutfi's thoughts which are anti-Imperialism and anti-colonialism, which in essence attack the Dutch colonialism in Indonesia. Therefore, the Dutch government confiscated the book and named Muchtar Lutfi as a wanted person for disturbing peace and order. Thanks to the help of Haji Rasul, Muchtar Lutfi managed to escape and fled to Egypt in 1926. Upon his arrival in Cairo, Muchtar had a wider opportunity to come into contact with political movements in the Middle East when the Caliphate Congress (Mu'tamar al-khilafah) was held in Cairo from 13 to 19 May 1926. The congress was held to discuss the possibility of reviving the Caliphate, and was attended by Haji Abdullah Ahmad and Haji Rasul. Muchtar was elected as the official representative of the Devotion Association and also served as Haji Abdullah Ahmad's personal secretary during the congress. In 1933, PERMI was an organization centered in West Sumatra. Muchtar Lutfi, who was the leader of the Indonesian Muslim Party (PERMI), emphasized that the nationalism embraced by PERMI was a path to achieving a further goal, namely noble Islam. Nationality is merely achieving Indonesian independence. And with an independent Indonesia, we can

achieve noble Islam. Without Indonesian independence, the ideals of noble Islam cannot be achieved.

Muchtar Luthfi explained that the nationalism adopted by PERMI was only a strategy of struggle. The nationalism was only used as a tool to fight for Indonesian independence, so that the Indonesian people would have the same concern and effort to achieve its goals. After independence, he had the same goal as Hassan, who wanted Islam to be the basis of the state. In mid-1931, Muchtar Luthfi joined the Permi party. Permi was a radical and anti-government political party. The ideological basis according to the Permi constitution was "Islam and Nationality. When Iyas Yakub put forward this slogan at the 1st Permi Congress in October 1931, he introduced a new ideological issue in Minangkabau. The experience in Egypt encouraged him to become an ideology that could be applied and accommodate both elements into the Indonesian independence movement. Muchtar Luthfi there played a role as the most effective spokesman for the ideology of Islam and Nationality of Permi.

In general, Permi implemented a non-cooperative political policy by aspiring to noble Islam and an independent Indonesia. This party strongly opposed capitalism and imperialism because they were considered to have caused misery to the Indonesian people. Therefore, the only way to elevate the status of the Indonesian people was to gain Indonesian independence. The ideals of independence had been embedded in the members of Permi and continued to be fought for through political activities.

Muchtar Luthfi added that Islam and nationality are not contradictory, in fact both are like the left foot and the right foot, if one is weak, then the establishment of a nation will be paralyzed. A sense of nationality cannot be separated from a person, just as a shadow cannot be separated from the body. Luthfi emphasized that love for one's country is a feeling bestowed by God, regardless of whether one is stupid or smart, one is still born with a feeling of love for one's nation. Love for one's nation is not prohibited by religion. Muchtar Luthfi strengthened his argument with the words of the Prophet when he migrated to Medina: "My love for Medina is the same as my love for Mecca". Based on this statement, Luthfi concluded that the Prophet also loved his country. Another reason is that the socio-economic development of the Indonesian nation actually depends on the Indonesian nation. The thoughts held by Muchtar Luthfi are also the same as those of Haji Abdul Latif Syakur. According to Abdul Latif Syakur, nationality is something that is inseparable from his ideas of Islamic renewal. He even believes that the spirit of nationality must be instilled early on through education.

4. Conclusion

Muchtar Luthfi as a fighter and thinker, where this condition does not happen by itself. This means that there are those who influence Muchtar Luthfi's thinking, including the influence of education, Muchtar Luthfi studied at a prayer house with his teacher Haji Rasul (Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah), at the prayer house Muchtar learned a lot about Islam and also learned about politics, the influence of figures such as Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah who influenced his political thinking and also involvement in various organizations such as the Indonesian Muslim Party (PERMI). In mid-1931, Muchtar Luthfi joined the Permi party. Permi was a radical and anti-government political party. The ideological basis according to the Permi constitution was "Islam and Nationality. When Iyas Yakub put forward this slogan at the 1st Permi Congress in October 1931, he introduced a new ideological issue in Minangkabau. The experience in Egypt encouraged him to become an ideology that could be applied and accommodate both elements into the Indonesian independence movement. Muchtar Luthfi there played a role as the most effective spokesman for the ideology of Islam and Nationality of Permi. Muchtar Luthfi, who is the leader of PERMI, also emphasized that Islam and Nationality adopted by PERMI are only a strategy of struggle. The concept of Nationality is only used as a tool to fight for Indonesian independence, so that the Indonesian people have the same concern and effort to achieve its goals. For Muchtar Luthfi, acceptance of the concept of nationalism is a logical compromise with other religious elements to jointly fight for Islam. According to Muchtar Luthfi, "nationalism in PERMI is not ashabiyah nationalism which is not approved in Islam, it is not a blind and deaf nationalism, but PERMI nationalism is a way to ground noble Islam". This method is considered by Muchtar Luthfi to be very effective in embracing nationalism and Islam to jointly fight for

independence in an equal position. Muchtar Lutfi added that Islam and Nationality are not contradictory, in fact both are like the left foot and the right foot. A sense of nationality cannot be separated from a person, just as a shadow cannot be separated from the body. Lutfi emphasized that love for the homeland is a feeling given by God, regardless of whether he is stupid or smart, he is still born with a feeling of love for his nation. Love for the nation is not prohibited by religion.

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