

TWO ISLAMIC WRITING TRADITIONS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Kitab Jawi and *Kitab Kuning* with Reference to the Works of Da'ud al-Fatani and Nawawi al-Bantani¹

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Abstract

In reference to the works of Da'ud al-Fatani and Nawawi al-Bantani, this article analyses two Islamic writing traditions in Southeast Asia, Malay kitab Jawi and Arabic kitab, which turned to be called more recently kitab kuning. Da'ud al-Fatani wrote his works in Malay, while Nawawi al-Bantani's kitab were written in Arabic, despite they had similar experiences learning in Mecca. These two writing traditions contributed to the formation of Islamic knowledge among Southeast Asian Muslims, leading the two 'ulamā' to emerge as the intellectual fathers of Islamic dynamics in respectively Patani-Malaya and Java in the 19th century. As well, both grew alongside the rise of different Islamic leadership in two major Muslim areas in the region, affirming the crucial role of language option, a sort of cognitive liberation, in the socio-religious movement. The writing of kitab is not just an intellectual undertaking, but it is strongly grounded in mental attitudes which determined the nature of leadership of Malay and Javanese Islam.

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[Artikel ini membahas dua kitab berbahasa Melayu Jawa dan Arab di Asia Tenggara yang merupakan karya Da'ud al-Fatani dan Nawawi al-Bantani. Da'ud al-Fatani menulis dalam bahasa Melayu, sedangkan Nawawi menulis kitab dalam bahasa Arab meskipun keduanya sama-sama belajar agama di Mekkah. Dua kitab ini berkontribusi dalam formasi pembentukan pengetahuan keislaman muslim di Asia Tenggara dan kedua orang tersebut menjadi tokoh utama serta pembimbing kemunculan intelektual yang dinamis di Patani dan Jawa abad 19. Keduanya juga terkenal pada dua kepemimpinan Islam mayoritas yang berbeda wilayah sehingga berpengaruh dalam pemilihan bahasa, semacam liberasi kognitif, dalam gerakan sosial keagamaan. Penulisan kitab ini bukan sekedar kegelisahan intelektual semata, tetapi mengakar kuat dalam sikap mental yang dominan dalam karakter kepemimpinan Malayu dan Jawa Islam.]

Keywords: *Da'ud al-Fatani, Nawawi al-Bantani, kitab, Malay, Java, Southeast Asia, Mecca.*

A. Introduction

Southeast Asia has a number of Islamic writing traditions, alongside the translation of Islam into variety of local culture, in order to make the religion could be understood and hence the Muslims religiously literate. Of the writing traditions established in pre-modern period of Southeast Asian history, *kitab Jawi* and *kitab kuning* were the most leading ones, which continue to exist until today.

Historically speaking, *kitab Jawi* was the first Islamic writing to appear. It refers to the religious books written in Malay classical language using Arabic script, which began to exist in the 16th century. Hamzah Fansuri (d. 1527) is the first *'ālim* (scholar, plural, *'ulamā'*) ever known to be attributed to the rise of *kitab jawi*. He wrote his works in Malay, with the intention that the people of Aceh and Malay Archipelago, who had no knowledge of Arabic and Persian, could understand his message.² The writing of *kitab jawi* continued in the hands of Malay *'ulamā'* in Southeast Asia, leading it to emerge as a well-established media to convey Islamic teachings, and constitutes a well-known Islamic vocabulary which

² Syed Muhammad Naguib Al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansuri* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1970), p. 297.

denotes the religious books (*kitab*s) used in Muslim circles and are closely associated to Muslim scholars.

Da'ud al-Fatani (Shaykh Dā'ūd 'Abd Allāh al-Faṭānī, 1769-1847), the *'ālim* this article will give special attention to, had major contribution to the development of *kitab Jawi*. His intellectual journey ending up with a career as an *'ālim* of Mecca, as will be shown below, inspired the mainly Patani scholars, as well as those of the Malay areas in Southeast Asia, to have advanced Islamic learning in the Holy City. Next to having been a teacher who lectured his students in the Harm Mosque, Da'ud al-Fatani wrote more than twenty *kitab*s.³ More importantly, he encouraged especially his Patani students to write *kitab Jawi*, leading “al-Fatani” to appear as the author's last name of the majority of *kitab Jawi* in the 19th and the early 20th centuries. Along with this development, Da'ud al-Fatani was recognized as the father of Patani and Malay *'ulamā'*.⁴

While *kitab jawi* increasingly advanced, new development began to emerge in Java in the late 19th century, which in turn led to the rise of *kitab kuning* (yellow religious book), denoting yellow tinted papers of Arabic books used in *pesantren* (traditional institution for Islamic learning). The *pesantren*, which had initially existed out of *perdikan* villages founded by the Mataram kingdom for religious services,⁵ developed into an established centre of Islamic learning. The Javanese *'ulamā'* in Mecca, who formed an important segment of the *Jawa* (Southeast Asians) in the Holy City, returned to their home countries and established *pesantren*. At the same time, the printed Arabic books the *'ulamā'* learned in Mecca began to circulate and were used as sources of learning. One of the leading *'ulamā'* of the period, Nawawi al-Bantani (Shaykh Muḥammad Nawāwī al-Jāwī al-Bantānī, 1813-1897), made major contribution to this process. He wrote his works in Arabic in the form of commentary (*sharḥ*)

³ Francis R. Bradley, *Forging Islamic Power and Place: The Legacy of Shaykh Daud bin 'Abd Allah al-Fatani in Mecca and Southeast Asia* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2015), pp. 75–82; W. Muhd Shaghir Abdullah, *Syeikh Daud bin Abdullab Al-Fatani: Ulama' dan Pengarang terulung Asia Tenggara* (Shah Alam, KL: Hizbi, 1999); Virginia Matheson and M.B. Hooker, “Jawi Literature in Patani: The Maintenance of an Islamic Tradition”, *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 61, no. 1 (1988), pp. 20–1.

⁴ Ahmad Fathy al-Fatani, *Ulama Besar dari Patani* (Kota Bharu, Kelantan: Majlis Agama Islam dan Adat Istiadat Melayu Kelantan, 2009).

⁵ F. Fokkens JR, “Vrije desa's op Java en Madoera”, *TBG*, vol. 31 (1886), pp. 477–517..

to the standard *kitab*s recognized in the Arab world, leading him to be described as to have popularised the Arabic books in *pesantren* milieu.⁶ The Dutch survey on this subject in 1886 reveals the above fact of *kitab* circulation. All the religious books used in *pesantren* in Java and Madura in the late 19th century were in Arabic.⁷

Taking the works of Da'ud al-Fatani and Nawawi al-Bantani as the subject of discussion, this article presents an historical analysis of the ways how cultural background directed the two '*ulamā*' to write Islamic subjects into different languages and writing styles, respectively the Malay *kitab Jawi* and the Arabic books which came to called *kitab kuning*. The establishment of these two writing traditions denotes the prominent role, but still neglected, of '*ulamā*'s cultural origin and affiliation in Southeast Asia in the transmission of Islam from the Holy City.⁸ The Malay culture of Patani led Da'ud al-Fatani to write his works in *kitab Jawi*, different from Nawawi al-Bantani's background of *pesantren* sub-culture of Java which made him to take Arabic as the language of his works.

This article also deals with the ways how these two writing traditions played such important roles in the Islamic development in 19th century Patani-Malaya and Java. They emerge as the leading Islamic sources in close relation to different leadership of the '*ulamā*' in three Muslims areas in Southeast Asia, linked to different experiences under the power of Siam, British and Dutch respectively. In the perspective of social movement theory, the *kitab*s served what is stated as "cognitive liberation", which is of strategic role in mediating the two pillars in the movement, political opportunities and organizational strength,⁹ which

⁶ Martin Bruinessen, "Kitab kuning: Books in Arabic script used in the Pesantren milieu", *Bijdragen tot de taal-, land- en volkenkunde*, vol. 146, nos. 2–3 (1990), p. 236; Alex Soesilo Wijoyo, "Shaykh Nawawi of Banten: Texts, Authority, and the Gloss Tradition", PhD. Dissertation (New York: Columbia University, 1997)..

⁷ L.W.C. van den Berg, "Het Mohammedaansche Godsdienstonderwijs op Java en Madoera en de daarbij gebruikte arabische boeken", *BKI*, vol. 31 (1887), pp. 518–55.

⁸ See Azyumardi Azra, *The Origins of Islamic Reformism in Southeast Asia: Networks of Malay-Indonesian and Middle Eastern 'Ulamā' in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Hawai: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004).

⁹ Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward, *Poor People's Movements: Why They Succeed, How They Fail* (New York: Random House, 1977); Doug McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982).

can be translated here into colonial power relations and the knowledge and authority the *'ulamā'* held in defining Islam for Southeast Asian Muslims. As such, *kitab Jawi* existed alongside the struggle of Patani *'ulama'* of *pondok* in Siam-dominated Patani and the careers of Malay scholars to become religious officers in Malay states, while *kitab kuning* became inherent part of Javanese *'ulamā'* of *pesantren* who emerged as a “consolidated other” and, in the early 20th century, as a civil society movement in Indonesian history.

B. Turning to Mecca: Biographical Notes

Subsequent to the fall of local kingdoms, the homes of traditional culture and worldview, learning Islam in Mecca emerged as the rising trend of mainly educated elites of Southeast Asian Muslims in the 19th century. Da'ud al-Fatani represented the growing Patani diaspora who turned to Mecca, and Islam, searching for new system of values that enabled them to struggle after their defeat and destruction with the fall of Patani kingdom.¹⁰ Similar story also was also true with Nawawi al-Bantani. Since he first landed in Mecca in 1828, once Nawawi returned to Banten in 1831. However, after three-year staying in his hometown, he did not find any good option for his future career. As a result, instead of following his father who had served the Dutch colonial government, as his brother (Hadji Ahmad) did when he became *penghulu* (religious official), he decided to leave Banten for the Holy City.¹¹

With the above background, Da'ud al-Fatani and Nawawi al-Bantani joined the *Jawa* in Mecca in the 19th century. Da'ud Fatani was born in Patani, southern Thailand today, and came from religious elite of Patani kingdom. After studying Islam from several *'ulamā'* in his hometown, Da'ud al-Fatani went to Mecca for the *haji* and seeking for Islamic knowledge. Arrived in the Holy City in around 1780s, he joined Malay-speaking circle of the *Jawa*.¹² The same also occurred with Nawawi

¹⁰ Bradley, *Forging Islamic Power and Place*, pp. 33–64.

¹¹ Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka in the Latter Part of the 19th Century: Daily Life, Customs and Learning of the Moslems of the East-Indian-archipelago* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1931), p. 271.

¹² Bradley, *Forging Islamic Power and Place*, pp. 70–3; Abdullah, *Syeikh Daud bin Abdullah Al-Fatani: Ulama' dan Pengarang terulung Asia Tenggara*, pp. 20–5.

al-Bantani almost fifty years later. Born in Banten in the north west of Java, he came from a family of religious leaders. His father, ‘Umar b. ‘Arabi, was a Dutch-appointed *penghulu* of Tanara. Nawawi went to Mecca in 1828 when he was fifteen, after spending few years studying Islam with some pesantrens in Java.¹³

The two scholars established their careers as the ‘*ulamā*’ in Mecca. Da’ud al-Fatani, with the support of the then *mufti* of Mecca, Shaikh ‘Atā’ Allāh, was elevated to be a gifted teacher in Haram Mosque of mainly Patani circle of the *Jawa* and then, in the period of 1831, of some areas with strong cultural affinity with Patani, Kelantan and Terengganu. His teaching activities continued to grow to the extent that in his retirement in 1845, his students came from broader Malay-speaking countries in Southeast Asia, namely throughout Malay Peninsula, major parts of Sumatra and also Borneo.¹⁴ Similar story can also be gleaned from the experience of Nawawi al-Bantani. Besides giving lectures for his students in the learning circle in the Harm Mosque, which caused him to accept “the hand-kiss from almost all Javanese living in Mecca”, Nawawi al-Bantani was as also described as “the author of many learned Arabic works”.¹⁵ Further, he was also acknowledged as “Sayyid ‘Ulama’ al-Hijaz”,¹⁶ a respected intellectual achievement in the Middle East.

Alongside the teaching, writing *kitab*s became the main concerns of the two scholars. In line with the knowledge they learned, the *kitab*s of both Da’ud al-Fatani and Nawawi al-Bantani comprised almost all aspects of Islamic teachings, ranging from manual for ritual practices to theology and Sufism, which led them to emerge as the leading ‘*ulamā*’ of *Jawa* in Mecca in the 19th century. Next to providing the students with lectures, the two ‘*ulamā*’ also sourced the formation of Islamic knowledge among the Muslims in Southeast Asia, which led them to become increasingly connected to the religious intellectual dynamics in the Islamic heartlands in the Middle East. The *kitab*s of both Da’ud al-Fatani and Nawawi al-

¹³ Hurgronje, *Mekka in the Latter Part of the 19th Century*, pp. 268–9..

¹⁴ Bradley, *Forging Islamic Power and Place*, pp. 100–2.

¹⁵ Hurgronje, *Mekka in the Latter Part of the 19th Century*, p. 271.

¹⁶ Anthony H. Johns, “Islam in the Malay World: An Exploratory Survey in Some Reference to Qur’anic Exegesis”, in *Islam in Asia, Vol. 2: Southeast and East Asia*, 1st edition, ed. by Raphael Israeli and Anthony H. Johns (Jerusalem: Boulder, Colo: Westview Press, 1984), pp. 131–2.

Bantani appeared to function as a means of transmitting Islam from Mecca to Southeast Asia. They facilitated the currently Meccan-based Islamic discourses reached the audiences among Muslims in the region.

This transmission strengthened with print technology, which began to be introduced to the *kitab* production. Print technology, precisely lithography, contributed to make the *kitab*s appeared in printed form and could easily be distributed. As a result, the *kitab*s that were printed in the Middle East widely circulated in Southeast Asia, making the transmission process to the latter mentioned areas in the late 19th century intensified. This began with the establishment of printing press in Cairo, Egypt, in which the works by Da'ud al-Fatani and Nawawi al-Bantani were lithographed.¹⁷

C. Da'ud al-Fatani and Malay Intellectual Legacy

Da'ud al-Fatani had strong connection to the Islamic intellectual heritage of pre-colonial Malay Archipelago. The kingdom of Patani, the cultural home of Da'ud al-Fatani, had close connection with Aceh, the place where *kitab Jawi* first appeared, alongside of its rising since the 16th century as the centre of political power and maritime commerce. Through the works of the '*ulamā*' of Aceh, Da'ud al-Fatani was exposed to not only the Islamic ideas current in the period, neo-Sufism, but also the trend of writing *kitab jawi*. Besides studying the works of Nuruddin al-Raniri (Nūr al-Dīn al-Ranīrī d. 1658) and Abdurrauf Singkel ('Abd al-Ra'ūf al-Sinkīlī, d. 1693), which appeared in Patani and Terengganu respectively in the 18th and 19th centuries,¹⁸ Daud al-Fatani was familiar with the way the '*ulamā*' adopted in writing their works. Therefore, Daud al-Fatani wrote his works in Malay, following the Malay '*ulamā*' of previous generations in Archipelago.

The '*ālim*' which was of special role was al-Falimbani ('Abd al-Ṣamād bin 'Abd Allāh al-Jāwī al-Falimbānī). He contributed to the formation

¹⁷ Hurgronje, *Mekka in the Latter Part of the 19th Century*, p. 271.

¹⁸ Bradley, *Forging Islamic Power and Place*, pp. 69–70. It is of importance to state that the spread of 'Abdurrauf Singkel's works in Terengganu is due to his student 'Abd al-Malik bin 'Abd Allah al-Tarkanu, better known as Tok Pulau Manis, as a member of leading '*ulama*' family of Terengganu kingdom in the 18th century. Thanked perhaps to his students and descendants, the works of this '*ālim*', especially those related to family issues, were circulated in the kingdom and in the *pondok* in Patani in the 19th century.

of intellectual knowledge of Da'ud al-Fatani, as well as to the tradition of his writing of *kitab Jawi*. Al-Falimbani was the 'ālim whom Da'ud al-Fatani learned Islam as he arrived in the Holy City, and it lasted for more than four years. According to Bradley,¹⁹ the time when Da'ud al-Fatani started studying with al-Falimbani, the latter mentioned 'ālim was "at the height of his long career" as he was "completing his well-known work *Syar al-Sālikīn* (Path for the Travelers) in 1203/1789". For Da'ud al-Fatani, presumably the time he learned to al-Falimbani was very crucial in his long experience of studying in Mecca, and therefore al-Falimbani was of great influence in determining his intellectual path. In addition to learning al-Falimbani's thought of neo-Sufism, Da'ud al-Fatani also witnessed the language his teacher adopted in composing *kitab*, the Malay. *Syar al-Sālikīn* is a four-volume and leading *kitab Jawi* of al-Falimbani, next to *Hidāyat al-Sālikīn* (Guide for the Travelers).

One other point to note is that Malay language and *Jawi* (Arabic) script had evolved to denote cultural marker that bounded Malay-archipelago. In the 19th century, Malay emerged already as an established language in the region, in the fields of social life, political diplomacy, commerce, and in religious intellectual discourse. The *kitab Jawi* evidenced the use of Malay in religious writings. The script was adjusted to Malay, including the standardization of phoneme, spelling, and the shift of punctuation.²⁰

This cultural circumstance appeared to be the backdrop of Da'ud al-Fatani to write his works in *kitab Jawi*. He inherited Malay cultural legacy of *kitab* writing by the 'ulamā' of the previous centuries. As well, he encountered the condition in which Malay language and *Jawi* script were already established as the medium of Islamic intellectual expressions. This circumstance strengthened as he lived in Mecca as a student of al-Falimbani, which led him to engage in the writing tradition of the Malay Islamic world.

D. *Kitab Jawi*: Writing Format and Style

Now we look at one of the *kitab Jawi* of Da'ud al-al-Fatani, *al-Durr al-Thamīn*. This *kitab* has its complete title *al-Durr al-Thamīn fī 'Aqā'id*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

²⁰ Hashim Haji Musa, *Sejarah Perkembangan Tulisan Jawi* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1999), p. 36.

al-Mu'minīn (The Precious Pearl on the Creed of the Believers). It was completed in 1232/1816 and first printed in Mecca in 1880s. Having appeared in bookshops in the Holy City of the period, this book was included in the list of *kitab jami* provided by Snouck Hurgronje.²¹ And this work was then printed, without date, in Southeast Asia and is still available in contemporary Patani, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia.

As the title suggests, the *kitab* deals with dogma. Da'ud al-al-Fatani states that this *kitab* is “to compile the thought of ‘*ulamā*’ as the truth seekers concerning the foundation of religion (*uṣūl al-dīn*) and the creed of those who hold religious belief (*abl al-tawḥīd*)”.²² Da'ud al-al-Fatani continues the discussion with explaining the Sunni theological school as laid down by Abū Ḥasān al-Ash'ārī (d. 936), the intellectual father of the school. From this, he continues with the issue which is said as “more significant” in the field of dogma, to know God (*ma'rifaḥ*), on which he states that it is an obligatory for the Muslims who have reached the age puberty (*mukallaḥ*). This point is then elaborated with the concept of God's attributes, as well as those of the Prophet, which arose to be a leading Islamic subject in Southeast Asia in the 19th century. With the attributes of God, the *kitab* highlights the issue on the relation between God as the creator and the universe as the created. The book also devotes a special section, entitled “*Fā'idah fī Faḍīlat al-'Ilm*” (Advantage on the superiority of knowledge), to expound the significance of knowledge in Muslims' life, especially those concerning with the subjects of the creed (*'aqīdah*).

As regards the language of this *kitab*, Da'ud al-Fatani, as Malay '*ulamā*' of the previous centuries had done, noted in the introductory page that he delivered his ideas in Malay. He wrote “I mention the pearls and throw away the shields as to encourage those who seek for knowledge; and I render them [the contents of the *kitab*] in Malay in order to be easily comprehended by the people who do not know Arabic”.²³ With this fact, Da'ud al-Fatani affirmed that he belonged to the Malay intellectual tradition, in which the translation of Islam into Malay language formed a salient aspect, which can be traced back to

²¹ Hurgronje, *Mekka in the Latter Part of the 19th Century*, p. 287.

²² Dāwud ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Faṭānī, *al-Durr al-Thamīn fī 'Aqā'id al-Mu'minīn* (Patani: Matba'ah Fatani), p. 2.

²³ *Ibid.*

similar wording of the mentioned Hamzah Fansuri in the 16th century. And this kitab was written in an established writing format and style of *kitab Jawi*,²⁴ when Malay evolved already into an established Islamic supra language of Southeast Asia.²⁵

In addition to the language issue, other point to emphasize is the style of writing. Da'ud al-Fatani appeared as an author who composed the majority of his works in the form of what is known in modern literature as “independent books”, based on a variety of Arabic sources, not translations and commentaries of certain Arabic texts. As such, the works of this *‘alim* are different from those of Nawawi al-Bantani which are in Arabic and are commentaries in nature, as will be discussed below.

Turning to *al-Durr al-Thamīn*, this *kitab* represents the “independent books” just cited. The author presented the discussions in a way in which references to a variety of Arabic sources were made, to support the arguments he tried to convey. To the above subjects outlined, Da'ud al-Fatani mentioned a number of sources, three of which were the leading scholars, Shaykh Najm al-Dīn al-Nasafī (d. 1142/537) with his *Aqā'id al-Nasafī* (The Creed of al-Nasafī), Shaykh Muḥammad Yūsuf al-Sanūsī (1435-1490) with his well-known book *Umm al-Barāhīn* (The Mother of Proofs), and Shaykh Ibrāhīm al-Laḳānī (d. 1631/1041) who wrote *Jan'har al-Tawḥīd* (The Gem of Monotheism). These scholars with their books mentioned had great influence in the formation of Islamic thought on theology in Malay-Archipelago and Southeast Asia.

To explain only one example, *Umm al-Barāhīn* by al-Sanūsī has enjoyed being one of the major sources of Southeast Asian Muslims. The attributes of God (*ṣifat Allah*), the main subject of the book's discussion, was one of the most celebrated issues of Islamic intellectual thought in the region in the 19th century. The book was translated and commented in Malay by six Malay *‘ulamā'* of the period: Muhammad Zayn bin Faqih Jalal al-Din of Aceh with his *Bidāyat al-Hidāyah* (The Beginning towards the Guidance); Muhammad Tayyib bin Mas'ūd al-Banjārī with *Miftāḥ al-Jannah fī Bayān al-'Aqīdah* (The Key to Paradise in Clarifying the Creeds);

²⁴ See Mohd. Nor bin Ngah, *Kitab Jawi: Islamic thought of the Malay Muslim Scholars* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1983), pp. 1–2.

²⁵ Philipp Bruckmayr, *Cambodia's Muslims and the Malay World: Malay Language, Jawi Script, and Islamic Factionalism from the 19th Century to the Present* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), pp. 9–24.

Muhammad Zayn al-Dīn bin Muhammad al-Badawi of Sumbawa, *Sirāj al-Hudā fī 'Aqīdah Abl al-Taqwā* (The Light of the Guidance concerning the Creeds of Those who are Pious); Muhammad Azhari of Palembang, *'Atiyah al-Rahman fī Bayāni Qawā'id al-Īmān* (The Benevolent Present in the Explanation on the Foundation of Faith); Zayn al-'Abidin bin Muhammad al-Fatani, *'Aqīdah al-Nājin fī 'Ilm Uṣūl al-Dīn* (The Creeds of the Firm Believers Concerning the Science of the Foundation of Religion), and Ahmad bin Muhammad Zayn al-Fatani with his work, *Farīdat al-Farā'id fī 'Ilm al-'Aqā'id* (The Precious Gem of Gems in the Science of Creed).

In *al-Durr al-Thamīn*, Da'ud al-Fatani cited al-Sanūsī several times, referring to some issues in relation to God's attributes, namely the division of twenty attributes, based on the legal reasoning, into necessity (*wujūb*), inadmissibility (*istihālah*), and admissibility (*jawā'iz*); and the obligation for the Muslims of *mukallaf* to have knowledge on the attributes.²⁶ As well, Da'ud al-Fatani consulted al-Sanūsī on the subject of knowing God and His Messenger, to which the people are requested to do so on the basis of having knowledge on the attributes.²⁷ Reference to al-Sanūsī was also made in relation to the factors that may cause the people to fall into unbeliever (*kāfir*) and to be committed to unlawful religious innovation (*bid'ah*). This is especially the case with the people who do not believe with God's attribute of oneness (*waḥdaniyah*).²⁸

The above subject of *ma'rifah* was elaborated further in reference to *Jawbar Tawḥīd* of al-Laḡānī. Da'ud al-Fatani, with the quotations from *Jawbar Tawḥīd*, tried to expound the importance of knowing the self and observing the universe as a way to know God. In this respect, the term *naẓara* was introduced with the meaning not just an eyes sight, but also an intellectual perception and understanding to the natural phenomena in the universe—which are various and changing in character; and those phenomena denote the existence of the Creator with the attributes of perfection, which is different from the universe. The book continues quoting *Jawbar Tawḥīd*, saying that everything which has the attribute of non-existence (*'adam*) is inadmissible to be attributed to Allah as the Creator.²⁹

²⁶ al-Faṭānī, *al-Durr al-Thamīn fī 'Aqā'id al-Mu'minīn*, pp. 9–10.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ al-Faṭānī, *al-Durr al-Thamīn fī 'Aqā'id al-Mu'minīn*, pp. 16–9..

The quotations to the book of al-Laḳānī continues after enumerating the twenty attributes of God, on which Da'ud al-Fatani presumably referred to *Umm al-Barāhīn* of al-Sanūsī. Here, Da'ud al-Fatani gave emphasis on the necessity of holding the belief in the attributes of God, with the argument that it has strong ground in the Sunni school; as well, and more importantly, it also leads the people to know that God has all the attributes of perfection, different from human being. As such, Da'ud al-Fatani, on the basis of *Janbar Tamḥīd*, put the attribute of power of God as an explanation. Taking the perspective of Sunni school, he was in the opinion that God has power (*qudrab*) above the people, including their deeds, amidst the recognition of free-choice (*ikbtiyār*) being a part of human capacities.³⁰ To be mentioned in this regards the reference to al-Nasafī concerning the difference between the created (the universe) and the creator (Allah), next to the subject of truth (*ḥaqā'iq*) the Muslims have to believe, which is taken as a fundamental point of the creed.³¹

In addition to *al-Durr al-Thamīn*, to be mentioned another work which appear as independent book of Da'ud al-Fatani is *Bugyat al-Ṭullāb* on *fiqh*. With complete title *Bugyat al-Ṭullāb li Murīd Ma'rīfat al-Abkām bi al-Ṣawāb* (The Goals of the Seekers in the Knowledge of Laws and Truth), this book is the most extensive work of Da'ud al-Fatani on *fiqh*, focusing on the rituals of religious devotion (*'ibādah*). References to the well-known *fiqh* books of the Shafi'ite school were made. In introductory pages, Da'ud al-Fatani notes that he (described himself as being poor and weak and not having sufficient comprehension and knowledge) compiled religious teachings, some of which were derived from such leading books of the school, like *Minḥāj al-Ṭālibīn* by Nawāwī (d. 1277-8) with its commentaries *Tuḥfāt al-Muḥtāj* by Ahmad bin Hajar (d. 1565-6), *Nihāyat al-Muḥtāj* by Sham al-Ramlī (d. 1595-6) and *Mughnī al-Muḥtāj* by Khātib Sharbīnī (d. 1569-70). Da'ud al-Fatani also mentions *Fath al-Wābbab* and *Tahriir tanqih li al-lubāb fi fiqh al-Imām al-Shafi'i* by Zakariya Anṣārī. These are the chief sources of *Bugyat al-Ṭullāb*.³²

With all those explained, Da'ud al-Fatani strengthened the creed (*'aqīdah*) of *ahl al-sunnah wa al-jamā'ah* and simultaneously contributed

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 44–7.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 6, 17.

³² Dāwud ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Faṭānī, *Bugyat al-Ṭullāb li Murīd Ma'rīfat al-Abkām bi al-Ṣawāb* (Pulau Penang: Muhammad al-Nahdī), p. 5.

to the advance of writing tradition of the *kitab jawi*. As the father of Patani and Malay 'ulamā', the works of Da'ud al-Fatani sourced the Islamic dynamics in mainly Thai-Malay areas, major parts of Sumatera and Borneo, and in Southeast Asia at large, and the *kitab jawi* evolved into an established style of writing of Muslims scholars in the region.

E. Nawawi al-Bantani and *Kitab Kuning*

Nawawi al-Bantani, unlike Da'ud al-Fatani, had no connection with Malay Islamic intellectual tradition. As his brief biography reveals, his knowledge formation was based on the Arabic *kitab*s, which in turn determined his future writing style of his books. No such intellectual circumstance in Aceh in the 16th and 17th centuries, to which Da'ud al-Fatani had close linkage, appeared to be a cultural legacy to which Nawawi al-Bantani belonged and affected his intellectual life.

To be noted here that *pesantren*, where he had learned Islam before he left for Mecca, had ideological distance from the Javanese kingdoms. Although in its inception it grew out of *perdikan* villages, as already noted, *pesantren* developed in a way that dissociated it from the royal palace, the home of *priyayi* (native aristocracy) culture. In the 19th century, as network with Mecca strengthened, the 'ulamā' who had graduated from the Holy City became more firmly consolidated as Muslim leaders with great authority amongst the Muslims. They emerged as the heart of what came to be known as *kaum santri*, a distinct Muslim community that identified themselves in specific religious terms and social behaviour, different from the *priyayi*.³³ This ideological distance can also be seen in term of language. The *pesantren* appeared as an established centre of learning based on Arabic books, different from the royal palace of Mataram kingdoms where the *priyayi* increasingly delved into Javanese literature in Javanese language.

With the above condition, Nawawi al-Bantani wrote his works in Arabic, joining the Islamic intellectual tradition in the Arab world. He provided mainly the students of *pesantren* with commentaries on the standard works by Arab 'ulamā' concerning various subjects of Islamic knowledge. In the field of *fiqh*, he wrote *al-Tawshih* (Composition), an

³³ Jajat Burhanuddin, "Islamic Knowledge, Authority and Political Power: The 'Ulama in Colonial Indonesia", PhD. Dissertation (Leiden: Leiden University, 2007), pp. 138–9.

annotated work of *Fath al-Qarib al-Mujib* (Remarkable Success on the Recognisable Affairs) by Muḥammad ibn al-Qāsim al-Ghazī, which is a commentary on *Taqrib (al-Ghāya wa al-Taqrib* [The Destination and the Approximation]) by Abū Shujā' al-Isfahānī. Another *fiqh* work is *Kāshifa al-Sajā* (Revealing the 'Tranquil), a commentary of the *Safīna al-Najā fī Uṣūl al-Dīn wa al-Fiqh* (Boat to Rescue Concerning the Dogma and *Fiqh*) by Salīm ibn Samīr. Several commentaries were also made in the field of dogma, such as *Dhā'i'ā al-Yaqīn* (The Renowned Firm Belief) on a popular book *Umm al-Barāhin* by al-Sanusi, and *Tījān al-Durārī* (The Crown of the Pearls). While in the field of mysticism, Nawawi wrote *Salālim al-Fudāla* (Ladders of Excellence), a commentary on *Mandhūma Ḥidāya al-Adhkīyā' ilā Tariq al-Awliyā'* (Tidy Pure Guidance to the Paths of the Saints) by Zayn al-Dīn al-Malībārī. With regards to this fact, Nawawi is considered as to have provided the audiences in *pesantren* with bridging texts to understand the standard Arabic books of Middle Eastern and Indian 'ulamā'.

Of the above-mentioned works, *Tījān al-Durārī* is to be paid attention to here. This work is a commentary on *Risāla fī 'Ilm al-Tawḥīd* (The Treatise of the Science of Monotheism) by Shaykh Ibrāhīm al-Bājūrī (d. 1861). As a commentary, this *kitab* of Nawawi al-Bantani was written to elaborate the treatise just cited, being a basic text (*matn*). Like other commentary books, the basic text is attached in the margin, showing that it sourced the intellectual undertaking of another 'ālim, Nawawi al-Bantani, and it also marked the centralized figure from whom the religious authority was gained. In fact, Nawawi in the preface notes this *kitab* as such, and therefore he hopes to gain the benefit of commenting the treatise and looks for Shaykh al-Bājūrī's blessing, including for those who read, listen and study it.³⁴

From this, the author presents the discussions to expound the points outlined in the basic text, which deal with the issues of God's, as well as the Prophet's attributes. The twenty attributes of God, which are widely accepted as the core substance of Sunni Islamic belief, are interpreted and elaborated. For instance, the attribute of existent (*wujūd*), which is necessary to God, is given with a much more extensive explanation than the one found in the basic text which comprise of just

³⁴ Muhammad Nawawi al-Jawi al-Bantani, *Tījān al-Dūrārī* (Semarang: Toha Putra), p. 2.

few sentences. In the *Tījān al-Durārī*, Nawawi al-Bantani explains that the term *wujūd* refers to the condition that Allah exists by His essence and He is not to be attributed as being non-existent (*'adam*) eternally and for ever. *Wujūd* belongs to personal attributes (*nafsīyyah*) of God. With the universe as the proof of argument, Nawawi emphasizes the necessity for the Muslims of *mukallaf* to have knowledge and to believe in this attribute in particular.³⁵

The universe-related argument is also elaborated as the author deals with the attributes of *mukhālafah li al-ḥawādith* (difference from the created). With this attribute, Allah is different from all those He created (*makhluq*); none of Allah—His essence and His attributes—is similar to any of them in this universe, otherwise He would certainly have been created. In consequence, it is inadmissible (*mustahīl*) for Allah of being resemblance to the created (*mumāthalah li al-ḥawādith*). This difference is elucidated with the argument that Allah is completely different in terms of essence, qualities, and in having any particularities (*qubūl al-aqsām*); neither is Allah similar with honour (*'ird*) and no honours have the place in Him; Allah is different in His existence which is not measurable; as well, Allah is not surrounded by the earth and the sky which are above else. Nevertheless, Allah is very much closer to his servants than the veins is to human body.³⁶

With the above fact, it is clear that the intellectual undertaking of Nawawi al-Bantani was in close relation to the one of Da'ud al-Fatani. Both expound the Sunni doctrine of God's attributes and the shafi'i *madhhab*. Nevertheless, in terms of language and writing style, the difference of the works of the two scholars can be founded. Nawawi al-Bantani invited the Muslim leaders of *pesantren* to learn the works of Arab '*ulamā*' through his commentaries, before they studied further directly the standard works that are regarded as the very authoritative sources of Islamic knowledge (*mu'tabara*). Nawawi urged the students to learn and to master the Arabic. The difference can also be identified in printing format, especially concerned with the relation between the *kitab* and the work which is attached in the margin of its pages. In the *kitab jami*, the attached work is not related in substance to the content of the main *kitab*. While in the *kitab kuning*, it is the basic text (*matn*) which is

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 3–4.

commented on. In reference to *Tījān al-Durārī*, the work in the margin is *Risāla fī 'Ilm al-Tawḥīd* by Shaykh Ibrāhīm al-Bājūrī.

So important is the commentary in the Arabic *kitab*, that some explanations should be made. In lexical term, *sharḥ* refers to notion of opening, expansion, explanation, and finally commentary of a basic text, which came to be regarded as the original source of Islamic teachings. The commentaries function as an interpretive elaboration of a basic text. And this elaboration is necessitated for its transformation into becoming the heart of Islamic intellectual discourse and finally the formation of Muslim religious life. Thus, the *sharḥ* becomes inherent parts of the *matn* interpreted and elaborated. They “open up” the substance of the *matn*, and disclose them in a more detailed manner and for broader audiences. As such, the *sharḥ* are associated with basic texts, ascribing them as the authoritative original sources. And this proceeds further as the *sharḥ* in turn evolve into becoming the authoritative sources in their own right.³⁷

Nawawi al-Bantani was an *'ālim* who engaged in writing commentaries of the standard texts. And his works in the long run evolve into becoming the basic texts in the Islamic learning of *pesantren*. In the case of *Tījān al-Durārī*, Nawawi begins the discussions with citing the author of the work he comments on, Ibrāhīm al-Bājūrī, attributing him as important source of his religious knowledge. He attributes his *kitab* as being part, as an expanded discussion, of the basic text, *Risāla fī 'Ilm al-Tawḥīd*, which he describes as being “small work” and therefore insufficient.³⁸ Also, Nawawi’s mentioning the author of basic *kitab* points to the traditional order of learning, in which the student-master relationship was so closely intimate as the *sharḥ* and its *matn*.³⁹ Although not in physical appearance, Nawawi with his *Tījān al-Durārī* declared that Ibrāhīm al-Bājūrī was the spiritual master and therefore contributed to enhancing his authority.

The *'ulamā'* whose *kitab* Nawawi al-Bantani commented on had prominent position in the intellectual landscape of both Mecca and Cairo. Ibrāhīm al-Bājūrī was the Shaykh of al-Azhar and a leading

³⁷ Brinkley Messick, *The Calligraphic State: Textual Domination and History in a Muslim Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), p. 31.

³⁸ al-Bantani, *Tījān al-Durārī*, p. 2.

³⁹ Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), pp. 80–4.

theologian of 19th century Egypt. Shaykh Ah ad al-Nahrāwī, the author of *al-Durr al-Farīd fī 'Ilm al-Taw Sh* (The Precious Gem on the Science of Monotheism), on which Nawawi al-Bantani's commentary *Fath al-Majīd fī Sharn al-Durr al-Farīd* (Divine Triumph in Commentary on *al-Durr al-Farīd*) was based, was his teacher in Mecca. The same was also true of Shaykh As ad al-Marzūqī, the author of *'Aqīda al-'Anwam* (The Creed of the Commoners), which became the basic text of Nawawi's *Nūr al-'Zulām 'alā Manzūmat al-Musammāt bi 'Aqīdah al-'Anwam* (Light of the Darkness on the Treatise with the name *'Aqīdah al-'Anwam*). He was a leading *'ālim* and a respected Meccan teacher of Southeast Asians, and of Da'ud al-Fatani, in the 19th century.

As such, the works of Nawawi al-Bantani have enjoyed such popularity, sourcing the Islamic learning of *pesantren*. The cited *Tījān al-Durārī* has been reprinted several times after it was first published in Cairo in 1883 and then Mecca in 1911. And this work is still used as one of the main teaching materials of present day *pesantren* in Indonesia. So have his other works been. From the forty books he wrote, some of them are still reproduced and used in the *pesantren* at present. Nawawi al-Bantani emerged as a leading intellectual master whose students, mainly the Javanese, facilitated the transmission of his ideas with his *kitab* to Java and the Dutch East Indies.⁴⁰

F. *Kitab* and Islamic Leadership

As briefly stated in the outset, the *kitab* has special significance in the making of socio-religious life within the Muslims. The growth of *kitab jawi* and *kitab kuning* in the 19th century pointed to the Islamic dynamics in mainly Patani-Malaya and Java. These areas witnessed the increasing numbers of *'ulamā'*-led institutions of *pondok* and *pesantren*, the circulation of religious books, and the rising Islamic intellectual discourses.

The students of Da'ud al-Fatani engaged actively in scholarly and

⁴⁰ In the *pesantren* tradition, there are two others, beside Nawawi al-Bantani, who hold such important position in the genealogy of the so-called "traditionalist" Islam in Indonesia. They are Shaykh Ahmad Khatib Sambas (d. 1875) from Kalimantan, the founder of a newly combined two Sufi brotherhood, Qadiriya wa Naqshbandiya, and Shaikh Abdul Karim from Banten, the follower of Shaikh Ahmad Khatib Sambas. These three *'ulamā'* are acknowledged as the intellectual fathers of Javanese kiyai. See Zamakhsyari Dhofier, *Tradisi Pesantren: Studi tentang Pandangan Hidup Kyai* (Jakarta: Lembaga Penelitian, Pendidikan, dan Penerangan Ekonomi dan Sosial, 1980), pp. 66–9.

social activities. Teaching in *pondok*, in both Patani and Malaya, was one of the fields among the students opted to be their careers after Meccan learning. They established the institutions for the studying Islam after returned to Patani and Malay Peninsula with *kitab jawi* taken as learning materials, next to the Arabic books which were also known in *pesantren* of Java of the period. The students became the ‘*ulamā*’ of *pondok*, locally called *tok guru*. They took the works of Da’ud al-Fatani to be used among the learning sources in the institutions, namely *Īdāḥ al-Bāb*, *Ghayāt al-Taqrīb*, and *Sullam al-Mubtadī* on *fiqh*, as well as *Jam‘ al-Fawā’id* and *al-Bahja al-Saniyya* on Sufism.⁴¹

In 19th century Patani, as the kingdom ruined following the siege of Siam, the role of *pondok* strengthened, leading it to include as well serving an institutional foundation for the maintenance of Malay language and culture of Patani Muslims. This occurred amidst the policy of Siam in 1898 which attempted to integrate ethnic minority into Buddhist-based Siamese national identity. The kingdom promulgated, among others, Thai to be the formal language of the nation and was compulsory in the education system.⁴² In such a situation, *pondok* became the arena where the Muslims had to cope with the Siamese power. The *tok guru*, and the Patani Muslims at large, engaged in upholding what were believed as the main pillars of their identity as Malay-Muslims in the increasingly Siam-dominated region. In *pondok*, both learning instruction and social communication were in Malay. The narrative of being pure Malay continued to be upheld, and was transferred to the later generation. As such, the education of *pondok* was of significance in this cultural preservation.⁴³

While the struggle of *tok guru* continued in motion, a number of Da’ud al-Fatani’s students appeared as *kitab* writers, which held such an important role in the transmission of Islamic scholarship from the

⁴¹ Bradley, *Forging Islamic Power and Place*, pp. 106–9; Hasan Madmarn, *The Pondok & Madrasah in Patani* (Bangi: Penerbit Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 1999), pp. 22–3.

⁴² David K. Wyatt, *Thailand: A Short History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), pp. 209–20; Raymond Scupin, “Education and Development for Muslims in Thailand”, in *Aspects of Development: Islamic Education in Thailand and Malaysia*, ed. by Raymond Scupin (Bangi: Institut Bahasa, Kesusasteraan dan Kebudayaan Melayu, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 1989), p. 107.

⁴³ Joseph Chinyong Liow, *Islam, Education and Reform in Southern Thailand: Tradition and Transformation* (Singapore: ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, 2009), p. 17.

Holy City to Patani, Malay Peninsula, and beyond. One of them to pay attention to here is Ahmad Zain Fatani (Aḥmad bin Muḥammad Zayn bin Muṣṭafā al-Faṭānī, 1856-1906). He represented the rising trend of Mecca-trained Patani *'ulamā'* who returned to Malay Peninsula and contributed to the rise of Islamic dynamics in the area, leading him to be described by Matheson and Hooker as “the most influential and versatile of the long line of Patani scholars”.⁴⁴

Born in Kampung Jambu, Yaring, Patani, in southern part of Thailand today, Ahmad Zain al-Fatani came from an *'ulamā'* family. His father, Muhammad Zain, was the brother of Da'ud al-Fatani. Like other scholars of the period, Ahmad pursued his further Islamic studies in Mecca and then Cairo, Egypt. In 1884, he was entrusted as a supervisor of Turkish government printing press in Mecca for Malay section, leading him to hold such a central role in the *kitab*-printing activities, including to aid the works by Patani *'ulamā'* printed in 1885-1886.⁴⁵

He established his career as an *'ālim* in Mecca, where he wrote few books. In addition to *Ṭibb al-Aḥsān fī Ṭibb al-Iḥsān* (The Better Medicine in the Treatment of Beneficence) on medicine, his books also deal with Islamic teachings, namely *Farīdat al-Farā'id fī 'Ilm al-Aqā'id* (The Precious Gem of Gems in the Science of Creed), which discusses Islamic theology, *Abniyat al-Asmā' wa al-af'āl* (The Structure of Nouns and Verbs) on Arabic grammar, and *Bahjat al-Mubtadīn wa Farḥāt al-Mujtadīn* (The Joy of the Beginners and the Pleasure of Those who Seek Answers) on Islamic doctrines (*ushul al-din*) and *fiqh*. To be mentioned here is the collection of his fatwas (legal edicts), *al-Fatāwa al-Faṭāniyah*, which deal primarily with *fiqh*-related issues, namely ritual practices (on praying-related topics), religious alms (*ṣakat*), system of inheritance (*farā'id*), marriage and divorce (*nikāḥ* and *ṭalaq*), economic transaction (*mu'amalat*) and social relation. Next to writing books, Ahmad Zain engaged in teaching activities for mainly Malay-speaking students of the *Jawa* in Mecca. And, some of them later emerged as Muslim leaders in their countries of origin. They were Nik Mahmud bin Nik Ismail (became Prime Minister of Kelantan), Haji Ibrahim (Grand Mufti of Kelantan), Shaikh Mahmud Sa'id (Senior Mufti of Negeri Sembilan), Khatib Jabar (Maharaja Imam of Sambas, Kalimantan), Haji Muhammad Salih (Grand Qadi in Cambodia), and

⁴⁴ Matheson and Hooker, “Jawi Literature in Patani”, p. 26.

⁴⁵ Hurgronje, *Mekka in the Latter Part of the 19th Century*, pp. 286–7.

many other who became religious teachers of *pondok* in Patani and Malaysia.⁴⁶

Muhammad Yusuf, better known as Tok Kenali (1868-1933), was one of Ahmad Zain's students to note here. He was a leading 'ālim of Malay Peninsula at the turn of the century. Beside teaching his students in a *pondok* in his hometown and then Masjid Kota Bharu in Kelantan, Tok Kenali was also engaged actively in journalism with the journal *Pengasoh*. As well, he was one of the leading figures behind the establishment of Majlis Ugama dan Adat Isti'adat Melayu Kelantan (Kelantan Council of Religion and Malay Custom) in 1915, alongside his being appointed as the head of Islamic education and assistant to the state *mufti* of Kelantan.⁴⁷

In this respect, it is important to note that Malay states seems to have had a crucial role for other career of Patani diasporas in Southeast Asia, becoming the 'ulamā' of state (*kerajaan*). The states served "new home" for returned Patani 'ulamā', in the place of Patani kingdom. And, some students of Da'ud al-Fatani established their careers as religious leaders of Malay states, becoming state *mufti* (advisor), *kadi* (judge) or *imam* (prayer leader) of grand mosques. One of them who was of great influence was Shaykh 'Abd al-Qadir bin 'Abd al-Rahim al-Tarkanu (1790-1864). As Bradley notes, he came from a Patani family who had opportunity to learn Islam to Daud al-Fatani in Mecca in 1819. Afterwards, he returned to Terengganu and established mosque and *pondok*. His career as an 'ālim culminated as he was appointed as the *mufti* of Terengganu under Sultan Omar (r. 1839-1876).⁴⁸

With state-appointed positions, the 'ulamā' in the Malay states, especially those under the training of Da'ud al-Fatani, gained political support and facilities to have their Islamic ideas disseminated and in turn influenced Muslims' religious knowledge and practices. As state officials, it is important to emphasize, religious and intellectual activities of the 'ulamā' became part of religious bureaucracy under the ruler. This was in line with the British colonial policy which was directed to maintain and strengthen Malay states, including their roles in Islamic affairs; both the

⁴⁶ Matheson and Hooker, 'Jawi Literature in Patani', pp. 28–30.

⁴⁷ Abdullah al-Qari Salleh, "To' Kenali: His Life and Influence", in *Kelantan: Religion, Society and Politics in a Malay State*, ed. by William R. Roff (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1974), pp. 85–100.

⁴⁸ Bradley, *Forging Islamic Power and Place*, p. 107.

doctrinal and administrative religious authority were to be concentrated in the hands of state officials directly under the rulers.⁴⁹ As a result, the Malay *'ulamā'* were, and are, under the aegis of Malay rulers, affirming the Malay political notion of *kerajaan*, the condition of having *raja* (ruler).⁵⁰

The students of Nawawi al-Bantani had different socio-political experiences linked to the historical circumstance of 19th century Java, and the Dutch East Indies in general. They appeared to become part of the rising independent *'ulamā'* who were concentrated in Islamic learning, termed here the *'ulamā'* of *pesantren*. They differed from the *'ulamā'* who served the Dutch government, *penghulu*, which was increasingly associated with native aristocracy, *priyayi*, notwithstanding their strong background in *pesantren* and even Meccan Islamic learning.⁵¹ As well, they had different line of development from the *'ulamā'* of *pondok* in the Malay world, in that the *'ulamā'* of *pesantren* grew to be independent Muslim leaders with strong religious network and social relation.

One of Nawawi's students to discuss is Khalil Bangkalan (1819-1925). Few years after having further Islamic learning as he landed in Mecca in 1859, Khalil Bangkalan returned to Bangkalan in East Java and founded a *pesantren* in his hometown, where he established his career as an *'ālim*.⁵² With his *pesantren*, and the experience learning in Mecca, the reputation of Khalil Bangkalan as an *'ālim* was widely acknowledged. He achieved the position as a high-ranking *'ālim* at the turn of the century, to whom almost all leading *'ulamā'* of Java of the period studied and paid high respect.⁵³ In this *pesantren*, he was responsible for giving his students

⁴⁹ William Roff, *The Origins of Malay Nationalism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), pp. 72–4.

⁵⁰ Anthony Milner, *Kerajaan: Malay Political Culture on the Eve of Colonial Rule* (Tucson, Arizona: University of Arizona Press, 1982).

⁵¹ Burhanuddin, "Islamic Knowledge, Authority and Political Power", pp. 113–5.

⁵² H. Abdul Rachman, "Pesantren Architects and their Socio-Religious Teachings (1850-1950)", PhD. Dissertation (California: University of California, 1997), pp. 166–70.

⁵³ Among Khalil's students to mention were Hasjim Asj'ari, the founder of Pesantren Tebu Ireng in East Java, Manaf 'Abdul Karim of Pesantren Lirboyo, Kediri, East Java, Muhammad Siddiq of Pesantren Jember, also in East Java, Muhammad Munawwir of Pesantren al-Munawwair in Krapyak, Central Java, Kiyai Maksum of Pesantren Rembang, Central Java, Abdullah Mubarrak of Pesantren Suralaya, West Java, Wahab Chasbullah of Pesantren Tambak Beras in East Java, Bisri Shansuri of

Islamic learning and simultaneously educating the future Muslim leaders of Java. His students, following Khalil, established *pesantren* in their areas of origin. As a result, he was then acknowledged as to have laid down an initial strong ground for the formation of a well-organized network and solidarity among the *'ulamā'* of Java, which culminated in the hands of his student, Haşim Asj'ari (1871-1947), in the establishment of an *'ulama* association, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in 1926.

Another *'ālim* who was also of crucial role in the strengthening of *'ulama* network was Muhammad bin Salih bin 'Umar al-Samarani or popularly known as Saleh Darat (1820-1903). Like Khalil Bangkalan, he had experience learning in Mecca under the courses of both Arab and Jawi *'ulamā'*, including Nawawi al-Bantani. In 1880s, he returned to Java and then founded a *pesantren* in Darat in northern part of Semarang, after which his name and his *pesantren* were named. Also like Khalil Bangkalan, Saleh Darat became the teacher of leading *'ulamā'* of Java at the turn of the century. Besides those who studied with Khalil Bangkalan, to be mentioned in the list of Saleh Darat's students were Kiyai Idris of Solo, Surakarta, who established Pesantren Jamsaren, Kiyai Sya'ban bin Hasan of Semarang, Kiyai Abdul Hamid of Kendal, Kiyai Dimiyati of Tremas, and Kiyai Basir of Rembang, Central Java.⁵⁴

As the above short biographies reveal, the “luxury” of being part of ruling elites, as the Malay *'ulamā'* enjoyed, was not the case with the *'ulamā'* of *pesantren*. Instead, they had to cope with the condition of being “stateless” as the Dutch colonial authorities directed their policies to support and to draw the *priyayi* circles into their own behest, and pushed the *'ulamā'* of *pesantren* to live outside colonial knowledge.⁵⁵ With the exception of the *'ulamā'* who involved in the protest movement,⁵⁶ in

Pesantren Denanyar in East Java, and Bisri Mustafa of Pesantren Rembang, East Java. See *Ibid.*, pp. 171–2.

⁵⁴ Burhanuddin, “Islamic Knowledge, Authority and Political Power”, p. 125..

⁵⁵ On the ideas and the policies of the Dutch, see Jajat Burhanudin, “The Dutch Colonial Policy on Islam: Reading the Intellectual Journey of Snouck Hurgronje”, *Al-Jāmi'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies*, vol. 52, no. 1 (2014), pp. 25–58.

⁵⁶ This can be seen in the cases for instances of Banten revolt in 1888 and of Ahmad Ripangi Kalisalak in Central Java. See Sartono Kartodirdjo, *The Peasants' Revolt of Banten in 1888: Its Conditions, Course and Sequel: A Case Study of Social Movements in Indonesia* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966); Kuntowijoyo, “Serat Cabolek dan Mitos Pembangkitan Islam”, in *Paradigma Islam: Interpretasi untuk Aksi* (Bandung:

which case the Dutch jailed or sent them in exile, the ‘*ulamā*’ of *pesantren*, who concentrated in Islamic learning, had ample space to grow in their own and somehow in distinctive ways.

Located in rural setting, the site of most *pesantren*, the ‘*ulamā*’ became firmly consolidated as an authoritative Islamic body amongst the Muslims. They emerged as the heart of what came to be known as *kaum santri*, a distinct Muslim community in which Islamic practices can obviously be observed. And the meaning of *santri* extended from only student of *pesantren* to denoting the community as such, as the experiences a Dutch missionary in East Java attested. He was Samuel Eliza Harthoorn (1831-1883), who was sent to Malang in 1854 to preach the Christian faith among the local people. Based on direct observation of the Javanese Muslims, he stated that the institution of *pesantren* formed one leading category of Islamic education. Much more importantly, Harthoorn also identified the *santri* as being a self-conscious community who presented themselves as being different from the majority of the Javanese. The *santri* named themselves “*bongso poetiban*”, denoting their being pure and pious in term of religious orientation, and called the majority of Javanese “*abangan*”, meaning red and religiously impure.⁵⁷

The above condition continued to develop to the extent that the *santri* represented a specific cultural system in which Islamic doctrine emerged profoundly—more than in the cases of both *abangan* and *priyayi*—“to serve, for an individual or for a group, as a source of general, yet distinctive, conception of the world, the self, and the relations between them”.⁵⁸ Although not always exclusive, the *santri* cultivated their own mode of religious knowledge and ritual practices. And the Arabic *kitab*, including those written by Nawawi al-Bantani, constituted a central element in the development of Javanese ‘*ulamā*’, as the afore-mentioned Dutch survey of 1886 affirmed.

The *kitab* served the foundation of ‘*ulamā*’s intellectual activities and formed an important pillar in the religious revival within the *pesantren* community, which in the late 19th century turned into the seed of what

Mizan, 1991).

⁵⁷ Samuel Eliza Harthoorn, *De Toestand En de Behoefden Van Het Onderwijs Bij de Volken Van Neerlands Oost-Indie* (Haarlem: Kruseman, 1865), pp. 39–40.

⁵⁸ Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), p. 123.

is termed as *kaum santri*.⁵⁹ In term of socio-politics, they emerged as a non-state society and therefore had ample space to grow as non-state movement. And the Arabic *kitab*s, which turned to be called more recently in Indonesia as *kitab kuning*, served the intellectual sources for the '*ulamā*'s engagement in the life living within the Muslims, including those of liberal wing who promote progressive ideas of Islam in contemporary Indonesia.

G. Concluding Remarks

The establishment of two writing traditions Southeast Asia in the 19th century, *kitab jawi* and *kitab kuning*, is to be attributed to two leading '*ulamā*' of the region. Da'ud al-Fatani wrote his works in Malay, in the same *kitab*-writing that could be traced back to the intellectual tradition of Malay '*ulamā*' in the 16th century. While Nawawi al-Bantani, who had strong ground in the *pesantren* tradition of Java, made Arabic as the language of his works and in the form of *sharḥ*, following the '*ulamā*' of the Arab world, instead of Javanese which increasingly became a cultural identity of the *priyayi*. These two writing traditions evolved to become established forms of Islamic thought among the '*ulamā*' of Southeast Asia. Both continued to develop in the early 20th century, leading *kitab jawi* and *kitab kuning* are still printed and available in the bookshops in contemporary Southern Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia.

Turning to the above theory of social movement, the *kitab*s were of strategic roles in the creation of ideas relevant with the colonial contexts the '*ulamā*' had to deal with. The fall of Patani kingdom created the condition where the '*ulamā*' were concentrated in *pondok*, preserving *kitab jawi*, which appeared to be the resilience of Malay culture amidst the Siam-dominated policy. For some, especially those who returned from Mecca, Patani was not a good choice to have careers as '*ulamā*'. They migrated to Malay states in the Peninsula which, thanked to British colonial policy, continued to exist and strengthened. They joined Malay '*ulamā*' who lived under particular ruler (*raja*), and dedicated their works of *kitab jawi* for the greatness of Malay culture and politics. The Dutch

⁵⁹ M.C. Ricklefs, "The Middle East Connection and Reform and Revival Movement among the Putihan in 19th Century Java", in *Southeast Asia and the Middle East: Islam, Movement, and the Longue Durée*, ed. by Eric Tagliacozzo (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), pp. 111–34.

colonial policy, which was in favour of the native aristocracy (*priyayi*), led the 'ulamā' of Java to emerge as independent Muslim leaders. In such condition, the Arabic *kitab kuning* became part and parcel of non-state 'ulamā' institution of *pesantren*, providing them with cultural capital to develop as an independent civil society movement in the history of Islam in Indonesia.

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