

The Role of the Muslim Community in the Establishment of the Jayapura's Jami Mosque during the Dutch East Indies Era in 1943

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Abstract

This study examines the role of the Muslim community in the establishment of the Jayapura Jami Mosque in 1943 and its significance in the socio-religious life of the Muslim community in Jayapura during the Dutch East Indies era. This study uses a qualitative approach with historical methods through the stages of heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography. The results show that the existence of the Muslim community in Jayapura is related to the migration process from Eastern Indonesia regions such as Buton, Ternate, Tidore, Halmahera, Waigeo, and Salawati, which was influenced by Jayapura's development as a colonial center and port. The Muslim community then built social solidarity in maintaining religious identity amidst colonial domination and Christian missions. This was manifested through the independent establishment of the Jayapura Jami Mosque in 1943. The mosque serves not only as a place of worship, but also as a center for education, preaching, and social activities, and has important historical value in the development of Islam in Papua, including the period of Papua's integration into Indonesia. This study confirms the significant contribution of the Muslim community in shaping socio-religious life in Jayapura and enriches the historiography of Islam in Papua.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The presence of Islam in eastern Indonesia, including Papua, is part of the process of its spread across the archipelago, which has occurred through trade routes, migration, and social and cultural interactions since pre-colonial times. Despite this, the history of Islam's development in Papua has received relatively little attention compared to studies of the development of Christianity, which is more dominant in Papuan historiography. Consequently, the role of Muslim communities in shaping Papuan social and religious life has not been explored in depth.

Before the arrival of the Dutch colonial government, Islamic influence had entered Papua through political and trade relations with the Sultanates of Tidore, Ternate, and Bacan. The presence of Muslim traders and political relations with Islamic kingdoms in Maluku became one of the initial routes for the spread of Islam in coastal Papua. According to Mashad Dhurorudin (2020), the early traces of Islam in Jayapura can be traced through the trading activities carried out by Prince Amir of Tidore in Humboldt Bay in 1853 and the role of Muslim figures such as Habib Muhammad Kecil

(Habib Asghar) and Sheikh Ahmad, who founded a prayer room (mushalla) and madrasah (Islamic school) around 1867.

During the Dutch East Indies era, Jayapura, then known as Hollandia, developed into a colonial administrative center and an important port in the Papua region. This development encouraged increased population mobility from various regions in the archipelago, particularly from Eastern Indonesia. According to Wekke (2023), the colonial government's increasing attention to the exploitation of Papua's natural resources also contributed to the flow of labor migration to the region. According to accounts from Muslim community elders gathered by Mr. Syaiful, these Muslim immigrants came from Ternate, Tidore, Halmahera, Buton, Waigeo, and Salawati. They worked as dockworkers, traders, fishermen, and service workers supporting colonial economic activities.

The presence of the Muslim community in Hollandia not only demonstrates the process of population migration but also demonstrates their efforts to maintain their religious identity amidst the dominance of the Dutch colonial government, as well as Protestant missionary activities and Catholic missions. As a minority group, Muslims strengthened social solidarity through religious study activities, celebrations of Islamic holidays, and informal religious education. Wekke (2023) notes that the strengthening of Islamic institutions also occurred in various other regions of Papua, such as the development of Hizbul Wathan in Merauke since 1920 and the establishment of the *Openbaar Vervolg Islamic School* in Fakfak.

One tangible manifestation of the solidarity and existence of the Muslim community in Jayapura is the establishment of the Jayapura Jami Mosque in 1943. This mosque is the oldest in Jayapura City and a symbol of the presence of Muslims in Papua (Putra, 2022). In addition to serving as a place of worship, the mosque also serves as a center for education, social activities, *da'wah*, and community development. According to Mirdad (2019), the existence of the mosque reflects the quality of life of Muslims and serves as a center for the formation of Islamic brotherhood, contributing to the development of social life in the community.

The establishment of the Jayapura Jami Mosque was not only based on the need for a place of worship, but also a manifestation of the solidarity of the Muslim community, which came from various ethnic backgrounds. Despite the limitations of the colonial period, the Muslim community was able to establish a religious institution that later became a center of social activity and Islamic education in Jayapura. However, studies on the role of the Muslim community in the establishment of the Jayapura Jami Mosque are still relatively limited. Most research focuses on the political history and religious missions in Papua, while the Muslim community's contribution to the development of social and religious life in the region remains understudied.

Based on this description, this study aims to examine the role of the Muslim community in the establishment of the Jayapura Jami Mosque during the Dutch East Indies era in 1943. The focus of the research is directed at the social, religious, and cultural contributions of the Muslim community in the mosque's construction process and the significance of the Jami Mosque's existence for the development of Islam in Jayapura. This research is expected to contribute to the development of local history studies, the history of Islam in Papua, and the historiography of Eastern Indonesia.

2. METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with a historical method. This method was chosen because it allows researchers to reconstruct past events systematically, critically, and objectively based on relevant historical sources. Through this approach, the research seeks to obtain a comprehensive picture of the Muslim community's role in the founding of the Jayapura Jami Mosque in 1943.

The application of the historical method in this research is also based on the principle of historical thinking, namely the ability to understand and interpret past events critically and contextually. Historical thinking encompasses an understanding of chronology, causality (cause-and-

effect relationships), source interpretation, and historical empathy. By using a historical framework, the researcher not only describes past facts but also analyzes the meaning, background, and social dynamics underlying the Muslim community's involvement in the establishment of the Jayapura Grand Mosque.

As stated by Pangarungan and Bahri (2026), historical thinking is the ability to construct an understanding of the past through critical analysis and interpretation of various historical sources. Therefore, in this study, all data and information obtained from primary and secondary sources were analyzed in depth to produce a historical reconstruction that is valid and scientifically accountable.

According to Kuntowijoyo (2013), historical research is conducted through four main stages: heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography. The heuristic stage involves collecting various sources related to the history of the Muslim community and the Jayapura Grand Mosque, including books, scientific journals, documents, archives, and oral sources through interviews with community leaders and mosque administrators.

The next stage is source criticism, which aims to test the authenticity and credibility of the source through external and internal criticism. Once the source is deemed valid, the interpretation stage is carried out to interpret the historical facts and relate them to the social, political, and religious context of the Dutch East Indies. The final stage is historiography, which involves compiling the research results in a systematic, logical, and chronological historical narrative.

Through these stages, this research attempts to reconstruct the role of the Muslim community in the establishment of the Jayapura Jami Mosque and explain its contribution to the development of the religious and social life of the Muslim community in Jayapura during the colonial period until the beginning of the integration of Papua into the Republic of Indonesia.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Existence of the Muslim Community in Jayapura during the Dutch East Indies Era

The research findings indicate that the presence of the Muslim community in Jayapura during the Dutch East Indies era was closely linked to the development of Hollandia (now Jayapura) as a colonial administrative center and an important port in the Papua region. Since the early 20th century, the city has developed into a center of government and economic activity, attracting residents from various regions across the archipelago. This development was inseparable from the Dutch colonial government's increasing attention to Papua's natural resource potential. According to Wekke (2023), the activities of the colonial government, Protestant missionaries, and Catholic missions occurred in tandem with efforts to exploit natural resources of economic and strategic value. The increasingly intensive exploration of natural resources drove an increasing need for labor and population mobility from various regions of Eastern Indonesia to Papua.

According to Mr. Syaiful's account, obtained from Muslim community elders in Jayapura, the Muslim immigrants to Hollandia came from Ternate, Tidore, Halmahera, Buton, Waigeo, Salawati, and several other regions in Eastern Indonesia. Most of them worked as dockworkers, traders, fishermen, and service workers, supporting the colonial economy. These migrants formed a thriving Muslim community that played a vital role in Jayapura's social and religious life.

However, the presence of Islam in Jayapura actually has historical roots that extend back beyond the Dutch colonial period. Before the arrival of the colonial government, Islamic influence had already entered Papua through trade, political, and cultural ties with the Sultanates of Tidore, Bacan, and Ternate. The trading activities of Muslim traders became a crucial route for the spread of Islam in coastal Papua. Thus, Islam was not a new religion introduced during the colonial period, but rather had been a part of Papua's historical dynamics for centuries prior.

The presence of Islam in Jayapura is believed to predate the arrival of Christianity in the region. Historical records indicate that Islam has been present since the 19th century through the

influence of the Tidore Sultanate. In 1853, Prince Amir of Tidore was recorded as conducting trade activities in Humboldt Bay, now known as Jayapura. Traces of this Islamic influence can still be traced through the names of villages such as Hamadi, Tobati, Nafri, and Gurabesi, which are linked to the traditions and political influence of the Tidore Sultanate. Furthermore, the development of Islam in Jayapura was also marked by the presence of Muslim figures such as Habib Muhammad Kecil or Habib Asghar, who came from Baghdad, and Sheikh Ahmad from Yemen. Both figures are known to have established a prayer room (mushalla) and a madrasah (Islamic school) around 1867 as a means of spreading Islamic teachings to the local community. Although the building was later burned down by the Dutch colonial government, the Islamic traditions that had developed remained and were passed down from generation to generation until finally the Jayapura Jami Mosque was built in 1943 as the oldest mosque in the city and a symbol of the development of Islam in Jayapura (Mashad Dhurorudin, 2020).

These findings align with Azyumardi Azra's (2004) argument, which explains that the spread of Islam in the archipelago occurred through trade networks, migration, and interregional social relations. In the context of Jayapura, these networks are evident in the relationship between Papua and Muslim regions in Maluku and Sulawesi, which subsequently fostered the formation of a relatively strong religious community. The presence of Muslim migrants not only introduced Islamic practices but also built social solidarity that became the foundation for the development of the Muslim community in Jayapura.

Amidst the dominance of the Dutch colonial government and the activities of Protestant missionaries and Catholic missionaries, the Muslim community in Jayapura managed to maintain its religious identity. This is evident in various independently organized religious activities, such as religious study groups, commemorations of Islamic holidays, and the formation of faith-based social groups. These activities demonstrate that religion serves not only as a belief system but also as a means of unifying the community and an instrument for maintaining social identity within a pluralistic society.

In response to these challenges, Muslims have strengthened internal solidarity through religious study groups, celebrations of Islamic holidays, and informal religious education. These activities serve as an important means of maintaining the continuity of Islamic teachings while strengthening social ties among members of the Muslim community. Similar phenomena have occurred in other parts of Papua. Wekke (2023) notes that the Islamic organization Hizbul Wathan has been developing in Merauke since 1920, while in Fakfak, *the Openbaar Vervolg School Islam, an Islamic educational institution*, plays a role in fostering and educating Muslims. These developments demonstrate that the Muslim community in Papua is not only striving to maintain its existence but also actively developing social and educational institutions as a means of strengthening religious life.

The Muslim community's success in building social networks and maintaining its religious life laid a crucial foundation for the subsequent development of Islam in Jayapura. The growing Muslim population and the growing need for religious facilities prompted the idea of establishing a more permanent place of worship. This process ultimately led to the establishment of the Jayapura Jami Mosque in 1943, which subsequently became a center of religious, social, and educational activities for the city's Muslim community.

2. The Role of the Muslim Community in the Establishment of the Jayapura Jami Mosque in 1943

The need for a place of worship prompted the Muslim immigrant community to establish the Jayapura Jami Mosque in 1943. Most of the Muslims who came to Hollandia (Jayapura) came from various regions in Eastern Indonesia, such as Ternate, Tidore, Buton, Halmahera, Waigeo, and Salawati. They worked as dockworkers, traders, fishermen, and service workers supporting the colonial economy. Although their primary purpose in arriving was to earn a living, the need to

practice their religion and maintain their religious identity became an important part of their daily lives.

The arrival of Muslim workers to various colonial activity centers, including Hollandia, showed that their needs were not only limited to economic aspects, but also included spiritual needs. According to Dute, H. (2021), an old warehouse that had not been used for a long time was then used by the Muslim community as a place of worship. However, the use of this place did not occur without obstacles. In the period 1910–1963, Jayapura was still under Dutch colonial rule so that various community activities, including Muslim religious activities, were under strict supervision. However, the Muslim immigrants initially did not have the aim of establishing a permanent mosque. They only sought to provide a place that could be used to carry out worship as a form of obedience to Allah SWT while maintaining their identity as Muslims in the midst of a pluralistic colonial environment. This condition then encouraged the emergence of the idea of establishing a more representative place of worship for the Muslim community in Jayapura.

The establishment of the Jayapura Jami Mosque in 1943 was the result of self-help from the Muslim immigrant community. Interviews with Muslim community leaders revealed that the mosque's construction was carried out through mutual cooperation by Muslim dockworkers, traders, and fishermen living in Hollandia. Various Muslim ethnic groups, including Buton, Bugis, Ternate, Tidore, and Halmahera, participated in the mosque's construction. This cross-ethnic involvement demonstrates that Islamic identity is a unifying factor that transcends differences in regional origins.

However, during its early development, the Jami Mosque was not fully functional. According to H. Suyono, this was due to the limited number of worshippers and the weak Islamic institutions at that time. As a result, the mosque building was misused by some non-Muslims as a bar. In front of the mosque at that time, there was a Mission and Pastoral complex, currently occupied by the family of Pastor Saparai. Aware of this situation, the Mission and Pastoral issued a warning to those using the mosque as a bar, emphasizing that the mosque is a place of worship for Muslims and must be respected. Following this warning, the use of the mosque as a bar was stopped and the mosque building was returned to its proper function as a place of worship for Muslims.

This incident demonstrates that the Jami Mosque had gained recognition as a religious symbol for Muslims in Jayapura. Although the number of Muslims at that time was still relatively limited, respect for the mosque's function was maintained by various parties. This situation also demonstrates the relatively harmonious social relations between the Muslim community and other social groups in Jayapura during the colonial period.

This phenomenon can be explained through Emile Durkheim's theory of social solidarity. According to Durkheim, social solidarity is formed due to collective awareness stemming from shared values and beliefs. In the case of the Muslim community in Jayapura, Islam was the primary factor uniting the various ethnic groups, enabling them to collaborate in building a place of worship. This shared belief created a sense of community belonging and encouraged active participation in the mosque's construction.

Besides being a place of worship, the Jami Mosque also symbolized the presence of Muslims in Jayapura. During a time when social and religious space was still restricted by the colonial government, the mosque represented the collective identity of the Muslim community. Thus, the Jami Mosque's construction not only had religious significance but also contained social and cultural dimensions crucial to the existence of Muslims in Jayapura.

3. Jami' Mosque as a Center for Social, Educational, and Islamic Organizations

Since its founding in 1943, the Jayapura Jami Mosque has served not only as a place of worship but also as a center for social and religious activities for the Muslim community in Jayapura. The mosque serves as a space for interaction, bringing together Muslims from various

ethnic backgrounds, including those from Buton, Ternate, Tidore, Bugis, and Halmahera. Various religious and community activities, such as religious study groups, deliberations, commemorations of Islamic holidays, and other social activities, are held within the mosque grounds. Through these activities, the Grand Mosque plays a role in strengthening social ties and solidarity among members of the Muslim community.

The role of the Jami Mosque grew after West Irian officially became part of the Republic of Indonesia in 1963. During this period, the government assigned religious figures such as KH. Muslich and H. Mansyur D. Rahmad to foster and develop the religious life of Muslims in Jayapura. The presence of these figures encouraged the optimization of the mosque's function as a center for community development, both in the fields of religion, education, and community organizations. The Jami Mosque then became the center of various da'wah activities aimed at strengthening the understanding and practice of Islam among the Muslim community in Jayapura.

In the field of education, the Jami Mosque has made a significant contribution to the development of Islamic education in Jayapura. From the mosque's environment, various Islamic educational institutions emerged, playing a role in instilling Islamic values in the younger generation. One concrete example of this contribution was the establishment of the Nurul Huda Islamic School in 1966, followed by the Nurul Huda Elementary School in 1967. The presence of these educational institutions demonstrates that the mosque serves not only as a place of worship, but also as a center for the transmission of knowledge and the formation of the character of the Muslim generation. Through education, the Muslim community not only maintains its religious identity but also strives to improve the quality of human resources in Jayapura.

In addition to its role in education, the Jami Mosque also serves as the birthplace and growth base for various Islamic organizations in Jayapura. From this mosque complex, religious organizations such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and various Muslim community associations have emerged, serving as a forum for strengthening Islamic brotherhood. These organizations play a vital role in expanding Islamic outreach activities, increasing community participation, and strengthening the social networks of the Muslim community in Papua. The presence of these Islamic organizations demonstrates the mosque's broader function as a center for community organization and the development of religious life.

The findings of this study align with Nottingham's view that religion plays a crucial social role in fostering social integration and order. In the Jayapura context, the Jami Mosque serves as a social institution that connects various Muslim groups from diverse ethnic backgrounds through a shared religious bond. Educational, preaching, and organizational activities centered at the mosque have strengthened the sense of brotherhood, social solidarity, and collective identity of Muslims in Jayapura. Thus, the Jami Mosque serves not only as a symbol of the Muslim community but also as a center for social development, education, and religious organizations, contributing to the development of the Muslim community in Papua.

4. The Historical Significance of the Jami' Mosque in Papuan History

The Jayapura Jami Mosque holds significant historical significance in the development of Islam in Papua. As the oldest mosque in Jayapura, this building has witnessed various social and political changes in the region. Its existence reflects the Muslim community's long journey in maintaining its identity and existence amidst the dynamics of colonialism and political change.

The Jami Mosque's historical significance became even more apparent during the transition of power in Papua from the Netherlands to Indonesia in 1962–1963. During that period, the mosque was used as a place of worship by Pakistani troops serving in the United Nations Security Force (UNSF). This event demonstrates that the Jami Mosque not only served

a local role for the Muslim community of Jayapura but also played a role in the international historical context related to the integration of Papua into the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

The research also shows that the existence of the Jami Mosque serves as historical evidence that Islam is an integral part of Papuan history. Papuan historiography has traditionally focused on the development of Christian missions, leaving the Muslim community's contributions often overlooked. Yet, the Muslim community has played an active role in the development of Papuan social, educational, and religious life since the colonial era.

Thus, the Jayapura Jami Mosque can be understood not only as a religious building but also as a symbol of history, identity, solidarity, and the continuity of the Muslim community in Papua. Its existence enriches understanding of Papua's diverse history and emphasizes the contribution of Muslims to the development of society in the region.

4. CONCLUSION

This research shows that the Muslim community in Jayapura during the Dutch East Indies era was formed through migration from various regions of Eastern Indonesia, such as Buton, Ternate, Tidore, Halmahera, Waigeo, and Salawati. This migration was related to Jayapura's development as a colonial administrative center and port, attracting population mobility. In this process, the Muslim community successfully built social solidarity and maintained its religious identity amidst Dutch colonial domination and other religious mission activities.

The Jayapura Grand Mosque, built in 1943, was the result of self-help from the Muslim immigrant community. The mosque's construction served not only as a means of fulfilling religious needs but also as a symbol of collective identity, a center for socio-religious activities, education, and the strengthening of Muslim organizations. Over its development, the Grand Mosque has also acquired significant historical significance in Papuan history, particularly during the political transition leading to integration with Indonesia.

Thus, the Jayapura Jami Mosque can be understood as a representation of the Muslim community's concrete contribution to shaping the social, religious, and historical life of Papuan society. This research also confirms that the history of Islam in Papua is an integral part of Indonesian historiography that deserves continued study and development.

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