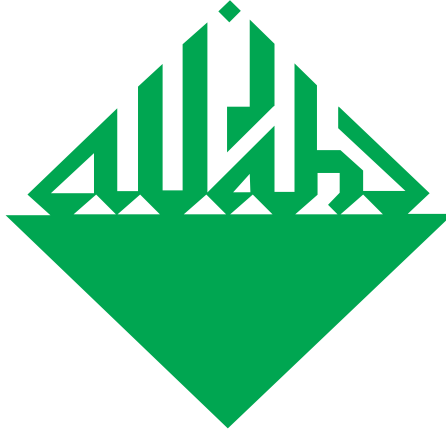


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INDONESIAN IMAGE OF THE OTTOMAN CALIPHATE AND THE NEW REPUBLIC OF TÜRKIYE 1918–1925

Mehmet Özay & Nia Deliana

THE RISE OF TAHFIZ SCHOOLS IN CONTEMPORARY INDONESIA

Jajang Jahroni

الحراك الصوفي والدعوة الإنسانية في إندونيسيا:
حالة العبيد أبي بكر العطاس الزبيدي

شمس الرجال وموسى الكاظم الحبشي

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Mehmet Özay & Nia Deliana

Indonesian Image of the Ottoman Caliphate and the New Republic of Türkiye 1918–1925

Abstract: *This article is a preliminary study on Indonesians' perceptions on the decline of the Ottoman Caliphate, and the rise of the Turkish Republic based on the highlights in vernacular press printed in Java and Sumatra. By scrutinizing textual discourse on the Caliphate and the Turkish Republic, this paper examined Indonesians' views delivered in newspapers, such as Poestaka Hizboel Wathan, Medan Prijaji, Soera Islam, Zaman Baroe, and Bintang Islam. These newspapers informed on the consecutive political changes, including a total 'weltanschauung' during the ruling era of Mustafa Kemal, which drew the significant attention of Indonesian readers, contradictory responses on the complexities of the developments among the intellectuals. Through qualitative methodology and content analysis, this paper gives additional contribution to the study of historical relations between Indonesia and Türkiye.*

Keywords: Vernacular Press, The Ottoman State, Republic of Türkiye, Political Revolution, Indonesian Perceptions.

Abstrak: Artikel ini merupakan studi awal mengenai persepsi masyarakat Indonesia mengenai kemunduran Kekhalifahan Utsmaniyah dan kebangkitan Republik Turki berdasarkan berita-berita utama di media massa lokal yang terbit di Jawa dan Sumatra. Dengan meneliti wacana tekstual mengenai kekhalifahan dan Republik Turki, makalah ini meneliti pandangan masyarakat Indonesia yang disampaikan dalam surat kabar, seperti Poestaka Hizboel Wathan, Medan Prijaji, Soeara Islam, Zaman Baroe, dan Bintang Islam. Surat kabar-surat kabar tersebut menginformasikan perubahan politik yang terjadi secara berurutan, termasuk perubahan total (*total weltanschauung*) pada masa pemerintahan Mustafa Kemal, yang menarik perhatian besar pembaca Indonesia, dan menimbulkan tanggapan yang kontradiktif terhadap kompleksitas perkembangan yang terjadi di antara para intelektual. Melalui metodologi kualitatif dan analisis isi, tulisan ini memberikan kontribusi tambahan dalam studi hubungan historis antara Indonesia dan Turki.

Kata kunci: Pers Vernakular, Ottoman, Republik Turki, Revolusi Politik, Persepsi Indonesia.

ملخص: هذه المقالة هي دراسة أولية لتصورات الشعب الإندونيسي فيما يتعلق بتراجع الخلافة العثمانية وصعود جمهورية تركيا بناءً على الأخبار الرئيسية في وسائل الإعلام المحلية المنشورة في جاوة وسومطرة. من خلال فحص الخطاب النصي المتعلق بالخلافة والجمهورية التركية، تتناول هذه الورقة آراء المجتمع الإندونيسي المنقولة في الصحف، مثل بوستاكا حزب الوطن، وميدان بريايي، وسوارا إسلام، وزمان بارو، وبينتانج إسلام. يبحث هذا البحث في آراء الشعب الإندونيسي حول الدولة العثمانية وجمهورية تركيا الحديثة والتي تمثل المناقشات الرئيسية بين الصحفيين والمثقفين الإندونيسيين. وأطلعت هذه الصحف على التغيرات السياسية التي حدثت تباعاً، بما في ذلك التغيير الشامل (*total weltanschauung*) في عهد مصطفى كمال، الذي جذب اهتمام القراء الإندونيسيين بشكل كبير، وأدى إلى استجابات متناقضة لتعقيد التطورات التي حدثت بين المثقفين. من خلال المنهجية النوعية وتحليل المحتوى، تقدم هذه الورقة مساهمات إضافية لدراسة العلاقات التاريخية بين إندونيسيا وتركيا.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الصحافة العامية، الدولة العثمانية، الجمهورية التركية، الثورة السياسية، الإدراك الإندونيسي.

Numerous photographs discovered during the Ottoman era called for a closer scrutiny. Among these, the photograph that first piqued curiosity was a picture of Sultan Murad V (r. 1876), who died in 1904, displayed in *Bintang Hindia* (1904a). Besides Sultan Murad V, there were also the photographs of Sultan Mehmed Reşad V (d. 1918), and Mehmed II (d. 1481) in the upper left corner of the page seen in one issue of *Medan Prijaji* in March (1910, 123). Some photographs from İstanbul were also published in an article about the Balkan Wars, while a snapshot from the Bosphorus showing foreign warships and the general landscape of the city drew attention to a historical cemetery and masjid in Üsküdar (Bandera Wolanda 1912a, 3).

In a 1912 issue of the magazine *Bandera Wolanda*, a photograph of Abdullah Pasha is seen in an article discussing the Ottoman State's war in the Balkans.¹ The same article provided a map showing the Ottoman lands in the Balkans, and Western Anatolia, with some shots of the Balkan War. There was a photograph of the then Minister of Defense Nazım Pasha, and Şükrü Pasha, who was a commander in the Balkan War, with a group of soldiers (Bandera Wolanda 1912a, 5).

There was another photograph showing Turkish soldiers allegedly seizing a train that was found in Serv (Bandera Wolanda 1912b, 4), and one of a group of mounted Turkish soldiers taken from the field after a battle (Bandera Wolanda 1912b, 6; Bandera Wolanda 1912c, 4). In another issue of the same magazine, there was a photograph of Turkish soldiers who had fallen ill with cholera on the battlefield (Bandera Wolanda 1912d, 3, 6).

Bintang Hindia often included materials related to the Ottoman State, and its capital city, İstanbul in its various issues. For instance, in a copy from 1904, "İstanbul Song" (*Lagoe Setamboel*) was included with music notes (Bintang Hindia 1904b, 18) although there was no explanation for the song, which appeared to be quoted from the drama İstanbul Comedy. In another issue of the same magazine in 1904, a photograph of Sultan Murad V was included on the occasion of his death (Bintang Hindia 1904a No 22, 240). There were two photographs from İstanbul in an issue in 1906. The first was of Sultan Abdülhamid II's five sons, namely Burhaneddin, Ahmed, Abdülkadir, Mehmed Selim, and İbrahim, who were at the Yıldız Mansion at the time, in formal attire on the veranda.² The second showed Yıldız Mansion and the Hamidiye Mosque from afar. In its caption, it stated that it was an

oil painting called “Star Palace” (Yıldız Palace) (Bintang Hindia 1906 No. 2, 19).

In 1923, a photograph of Sultan Mehmed VI (Vahdeddin) (r. 1918-1922) was also included in the January issue of *Bintang Hindia*. The caption stated that the then sultan, who had to leave İstanbul due to the developments after World War I, left on a British ship named *Malaya*. It also said that Abdülmecid Efendi then replaced Mehmed VI as the new Caliph during this time. However, it also mentioned that the new Caliph had no political power but was merely symbolic. At the same time, there was mention of Sultan Mehmed Vahdeddin’s upcoming pilgrimage (or Umrah) to Mecca (Bintang Hindia 1923, 9 No. 1).³

In an issue of *Bintang Islam* published in 1923, Sultan Vahdeddin’s visit to Mecca was announced in a letter sent by a Javanese Muslim in the region. Sultan Vahdeddin had come to Jeddah from İstanbul. It was stated that he was welcomed at the port of Jeddah by the Sharif of Mecca, his son, and a group of Bedouin soldiers, accompanied by Arabic music. Sultan Vahdeddin then stayed in the Sharif’s house. This letter also mentioned that Abdullah, the Sharif’s son, had just returned from England (Bintang Islam n.d., 157–58).⁴

These visual documentations bear witness to the vernacular press’s interest in the Ottoman’s geopolitical turbulences, and the new era of the Republic of Türkiye. They are the portraits of individual leaders, particularly Caliphs, and war photos taken during the time of the Balkanian War.

Departing from this, there was strong interest on the development of Türkiye in the newspapers in Indonesia. Nevertheless, Indonesian perceptions on the decline of the Ottoman and the emerging new Türkiye in 1918 to 1925 had not gained the attention it deserved. This significant interest was presumably triggered by the revolutions of the religio-political institutions in the Ottoman State and the Republic of Türkiye. The vernacular press that debated this issue could be categorised into two types. The first was Caliphate institutional polemics in the late era of the Ottoman State, and the second was on the paradigmatic changes in the political scene under the ‘New Türkiye’.

Through content analysis, the author selected newspapers that discussed modernism, conservatism, Caliphate institutionalism, and international politics that were published from 1900 to the 1950s as the subjects of this research. These included *Kemadjoean*, *Bintang*

Islam, Poestaka Hizboel Wathan, Medan Prijaji, Zaman Baroe, Bandera Wolanda, Bintang Hindia, Dewan Islam, and Soeara Atjeh.

These newspapers were known to be the major ideological media that played an important role in building ethno religious nationalism in Indonesia within anti-Dutch colonial narratives. Interestingly, at the same time, the newspapers functioned as propaganda tools, especially when positioned opposite ideological narratives. In this sense, news articles about the drastic political transformation in the newly emerging Republican Türkiye took centre stage among the pages of various newspapers, where a contest took place between the Ottoman State's religio-political structures, and its modernisation. These changes, including the abolition of the Ottoman dynasty, and later the Caliphate institution itself, executed by the core group of political elite in the newly founded Republic of Türkiye (October 29, 1923), had found its audience, that drew the attention of both the editors and writers in the vernacular press (Kemadjoean 1929).

The vernacular press provided ample space for issues on the Caliphate, modernisation, and secularisation. In particular, the latter materialised symbolically and concretely in issues involving women, and their appearance and representation in public life, which are not addressed in this article. Furthermore, educational institutions that were restructured based on the fundamentals of the Republican political epistemology aimed to prepare women as social agents to adapt to the new social habitus. The drastic change in Türkiye was fundamentally based on *laicism* (not secularism),⁵ which meant there was a strict separation between state and religion, and enforcement of state apparatus upon religious institutions and believers.⁶ If the state observed any functions of religious institutions, it would restructure them to meet the demands and interests of the political regime. Hence, although the news and some articles in the vernacular press did not expressly deal with this, they emphasised implementing modernisation processes through various steps.

Although some researchers have published similar articles, this article contributes to the field by accumulating such data for further studies. Since this article is an initial venture to evaluate the reflections of the vernacular press in the Archipelago upon the developments in the late era of the Ottoman State, and the early decades of the Republic of Türkiye, detailed content analysis and interpretation was conducted.

However, the relevant sources of the vernacular press, accessed from the archival department of the National Library of Indonesia, Jakarta, had its restrictions and limitations that had to be addressed accordingly. One obstacle was the incomplete collections of certain newspapers in the library's archives, where many issues were missing. This was due to the lack of regular compilations of these publications by the authorities in the past. Another obstacle was the poor physical conditions of the existing issues. Generally, due to climate conditions, written and printed documents would not survive unless a particular conservation process is applied.

The vernacular press in the Jawa and Sumatra islands represented various political and religious factions and movements during that period. It is interesting to note that the objective of those newspaper editors in depicting the socio-political changes in the early Republican era in Türkiye was to align with the gradual rise in independence movements in the Archipelago. In other words, these news outlets delivered messages to significant segments of society to either emulate the social changes in Turkish society, or to support the moral independence movements and supply strategies against colonial rule.

However, although there was confusion and frustration among the Malay public about the drastic changes in the late Ottoman era, particularly at the beginning of the New Republic, there was also evident admiration and praise for the Turks' independence war led by Mustafa Kemal and İsmet İnönü against the colonial Western nations. Some newspapers portrayed these struggles and developments very positively, but as they progressed, they gradually caused confusion and frustration among the Malay audience due to the public degradation of Islamic culture in Türkiye (Bintang Islam 1928, 240–41). This article looks further into the transformative images of Indonesian newspapers on the developments in Türkiye between the years 1918 to 1925.

Indonesians' Understanding of the Caliph and Caliphate Institutions

Before the abolishment of the Caliphate institution by the leadership cadre of the New Republic of Türkiye on March 3, 1924, as part of their revolutionary political efforts, there were several minor crises during the recent years of the Ottoman State. Since the 1908 revolution of the CUP (Committee of Union and Progress, or İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti) that caused a crucial deviation from the rule of

Abdülhamid II, he and his successor were compared in the context of their approaches to science and religion. In fact, this was as a result of the political change and acquisition of new *weltanschauung*, which had been introduced by the Young Turks in the second part of the 19th century.

In this context, an article was published in an issue of *Medan Prijaji* in 1909 that could be translated as “The Birth of the Princess”, which was considered a critical piece of writing. In it, there was debate that “Turks are also a different nation from us. So is the ruler... The ruler of the Turks colonised the Arabs of the same religion”, which raised a valid question. The rest of the article went on to argue that the Archipelago Muslims could no longer remain loyal to Abdülhamid II, who had lost his sovereignty after being dethroned by the Young Turks, and replaced by Mehmed Reşad V.

The difference between Abdülhamid II and Mehmed Reşad V was that the latter understood the close relationship between scientific development and the Islamic religion. However, the fanatics, or supporters of the old regime, did not agree. The article also claimed that thousands of Muslims from the Malay Archipelago visiting the Holy Land had been subjected to the pressures of the Pasha, the Ottoman governor and the Sharif, and that those of the old regime ignored this. Instead of religion, attention was drawn to the brotherhood among nations. This statement in the journal should be evaluated within the framework of the journal’s publication management and policies (Tirtoadisoerjo 1909, 287).

Another article titled “Turkey Today” (*Turki pada masa ini*) was published by *Medan Prijaji* (1910), which seemed to further the discourse on the same subject. The comparison between Abdülhamid II and Mehmed Reşad V was based on an analysis of the modernists, the Young Turks, and the traditionalists, or those of the old regime. Similarly, in the Archipelago, there were the modernists, Kaum Muda, and the traditionalists, Kaum Tua. Their differences were in terms of in their policies towards Muslims from other nations in the Hejaz.

The Caliph, as a religio-political figure, and the Caliphate, as an institution, continued to be globally significant for both Muslim societies, and non-Muslim states, such as Europe, for many different reasons, including historically, politically, and sociologically. Beyond that, the Caliphate institution was also considered reasonably important

to epistemological fundamentals. On these grounds, it can be argued that this institution had two fundamental aspects. The first one was the relationship between individual Muslims and the Caliph. The second involved the Caliphate institution and other Muslim polities in diverse geographies.

Epistemologically, the abolishment of the Caliphate institution caused significant cleavage among Muslim societies, psychologically and politically. It was no doubt an epistemological blow to the realities of these societies. In this regard, there was an ontological basis for the Muslims to question the abolishment of the Caliphate institution. In addition to this, one could ask about the reactions of the other Muslim communities to this historical moment of change. In this paper, the authors preliminarily reveal some of these reactions that appeared in the vernacular press in the Archipelago. Although certain news articles directly tackled the Caliphate issue, not much analytical effort was made in their perspectives. Nevertheless, these publications are significant in comprehending the messages that were delivered to Muslim communities in the Archipelago.

This theme was also relevant to the political reforms and developments during the late period of the Ottoman State. For instance, the Küçük Kaynarca Treaty (1774), signed after the Ottoman-Russian war, included a clause introducing the Sultan's "spiritual jurisdiction over Muslims outside the Ottoman State." In continuity of this, almost one century later, the Ottoman Constitution in 1876 referred to a similar clause: "His Majesty, the Sultan, as supreme Caliph, is the Protector of the Muslim religion" (Landau 1992, 10–11).

The revolutionary abolishment of the Caliphate institution based on new political epistemology no doubt caused the departure of the Türkiye Republic from the history of the Ottomans and, to some extent, Islamic history. Since the revolutionary processes in the Republic's early years contained almost every social sphere through its politically structured mechanisms, there were no significant internal reactions to the Caliphate's abolishment. On the one hand, one can regard, to a certain extent, the separation of the Republican establishment from the Ottoman and Islamic past as a domestic affair for Türkiye. On the other hand, considering that the Caliph is significant as an Islamic institution for all Muslim societies, it would be more meaningful to regard the reactions of the Muslims in the Archipelago. These reactions

appeared as the understandings, evaluations, and interpretations in the news, editorial writings, and articles of columnists, intellectuals, and politicians in the Malay Archipelago. Political, intellectual, and religious discourses were disseminated through these publications, which were printed primarily in Malay, and some in other languages, such as Dutch and Javanese.

The issue of the Caliph became a significant discussion in the vernacular press published by intellectual circles with diverse ideological backgrounds, including Islamists and nationalists in the Java and Sumatra islands. This issue was of concern due to consecutive political changes, such as World War I in Hejaz (*the Sacred Land of Islam*), and Anatolia (*Asia Minor*). Concerning this, the relationships between the British and some Arab religio-political leaders, and the initiatives taken by the Ankara government against the Caliph and dynasty in İstanbul seemed complementary, though they were not precisely planned, but occurring organically. Although the latter was back in the 1890s during close relations between Wilfrid Scawen Blunt and Mohammad Abduh in Egypt, the period under study was limited to after the end of World War I, in 1925.

These concepts of the Caliph, and the Caliphate institution were understood and transmitted through various vernacular press, such as *Bintang Islam*, and *Poestaka Hizboel Wathan*, which were published in the Java and Sumatra islands. These publications, which were considered the vehicles of various socio-religious and political organisations in the early 20th century, seemed to be under-utilised. Again, it is essential to emphasise that these publications functioned to transmit the political changes and developments in the late Ottoman era. No doubt, the publications about the Caliphate policies energised the political discussions among intellectual circles in the Malay Archipelago, for both the supporters and opposition. Nevertheless, due to the complexity of the religio-political situations in the late Ottoman era and early New Turkish Republic, these discussions about the Caliphate institution caused a contradictory and unparalleled response among the intellectuals.

There were significant influences on the issue and discourses of Pan-Islamism in the reconstruction of the political environment in the Dutch East Indies (*Hindia Belanda*), in which diverse political tendencies were looking for independence from the Dutch colonial

regime although these are not discussed in this paper. The data showed how new political ideas had emerged during the colonialism period in the Malay Archipelago. The publications selected reflected direct connection through hajjis, and translations of news and articles from journals mainly printed in India, Arabia, Egypt, and Constantinople, and partly from Europe, that were regularly followed by educated circles and schools, through both subscriptions and individual efforts. In addition, some prominent leaders or members from Java had traveled to Hejaz to participate in Caliphate congresses. This resulted in fruitful discussions analysing the Middle East developments, which impacted the religio-political circles in the Malay Archipelago.

The Malay Archipelago and the Middle East were connected over discourse on the Caliphate issue, which was particularly popular in vernacular publications in both the Java and Sumatra islands in the early decades of the 20th century. The relevant data exposed crucial stages of the Caliphate issue and its developments in the Ottoman State, particularly during World War I onwards, particularly those in line with the foundation of the New Turkish Republic.

One can assert that the reasons for the increasing interest of the Muslim communities in *Hindia Belanda* in the religio-political transformation of the newly established Turkish Republican State were related to the Islamic context, the nationalists' struggle against the Dutch colonial rule, and modernisation. Nevertheless, this political and intellectual interest of the Archipelagic peoples in the Ottoman State was not new. Throughout the 19th century, for instance, in the times of the Crimean War (1853-56),⁷ Ottoman-Russian War (1877-78), Tripoli and Benghazi War in Libya (1911-12), the Balkanian Wars (1911-12), and World War I (1914-1918), there was growing interest in the Ottoman and Arab world, and their politics among the journalists and intellectuals in the Malay Archipelago. Hence, this interest in the Caliphate issue was no doubt an extension of interest in the region. All this ultimately reflected the growing political consciousness among the people in the Malay Archipelago through the vernacular press. The communication, correspondence, and interpretations shed light upon the discussions on the Caliphate and Pan-Islamism.⁸

Muslim communities in *Hindia Belanda* had significant Pan-Islamic discourses, particularly during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This political inclination was explicitly observed in the

vernacular press in various cities in the Java and Sumatra islands. These publications were the chief vehicles of various political and socio-religious community organisations to voice Islamic unity among Muslim communities worldwide. In addition, this created a new phase of political consciousness among Muslim societies, which was directed and reflected in the independence struggle against the Dutch rule in the Archipelago. In a monthly paper called *Poestaka Hizboel Wathan*, published in Javanese in the city of Yogyakarta on Java Island, which was the centre of the movement in the early periods of Muhammadiyah, references were made to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, with both visual and short explanations. In the copy published in 1924 after ‘Mawlid’ (*Bāda Maulid*), a short note was made under the title “Pangandikane Al Ghazie Moestafa Kemal Pasja” (*Poestaka Hizboel Wathan* 1343, 61).

Between Ottoman Conservatives and Türkiye’s Modernism

When Indonesian Muslims first learned of the appointment of the new Caliph through the hajjis’ witness in Egypt, as seen in *Bintang Islam*, they did not seem to have completely understood this change and felt frustrated.

After Mehmed Vahdeddin⁹ (Mehmed VI) lost the throne on 1 November 1922, the national parliament appointed Abdülmecid Efendi as the new Caliph following the decision by the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye (*Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi*) on 19 November 1922, which signified a new leadership. The new Caliph was formally announced, his name declared during a Friday sermon in the Fatih Mosque on 24 November 1922 (*Bintang Islam* 1922, 37). The letter about the appointment of the new Caliph was released and sent to İstanbul by Al-Azhar scholars, providing a legitimation process in an international context. This endorsement by the Al-Azhar, as a vital traditional Islamic learning centre, might have been a strong reason why the Malay communities accepted this change while still feeling religiously bound to the Ottoman-Turkish Caliph (*Bintang Islam* n.d., 72).

Newspapers then requested information about this change from a representative of the Turkish government in Egypt. However, Abdülmecid II was later ousted from his position as the Caliph¹⁰ and Sultan because he had colluded with Vahdeddin to eliminate Mustafa Kemal as a political figure during the British occupation of İstanbul (*Bintang Islam* No. 7, 8, 9, 142).¹¹

The developments after Abdülhamid II's dethronement in 1908 by a *coup d'état* staged by the *İttihad ve Terâkki Partisi* (Committee of Union and Progress, CUP) were considered in an article in *Medan Prijaji* in 1909. Sultan Mehmed Reşad V (1909-1918), appointed as a result of the political efforts of Young Turks, was different from Abdülhamid II, who argued that the former believed that scientific development did not contradict with Islamic principles. Furthermore, the misadministration of thousands of Muslims under the pressure and corrupt rule of Pasha and the Sharif of Mecca in Hejaz due to the oversight of those of the old regime (as opposed to the Young Turks). Owing to this, religious brotherhood was criticised (Tirtoadisoerjo 1909, 287).

The title "Gazi Mustafa Kemal Paşa ve Halife Hazretleri" in *Bintang Islam* reflected a sort of fusion of the leaders of the modern Republic of Türkiye, and the classical religio-political figures that emerged just after the demise of the Ottoman State. Since a significant portion of the relevant pages of this newspaper were damaged or could not be read, the report's details could not be understood. Nevertheless, the remaining visible texts described the sessions in the new National Assembly in Ankara about the demolishing of the Ottoman dynasty, and the continuity of the Caliphate institution ("Ghazi Moustapha Kemal Pasha dan Jang Amat Moelia Chalifah", *Bintang Islam*, 24). *Bintang Islam* released a similar piece of short news about the removal of Sultan Mehmed VI (Vahdeddin) from the Caliphate institution following a decision by the parliament (*Bintang Islam* 1923, 23).¹²

This issue of the comparison between Abdülhamid II (1876-1909) and Mehmed Reşad V, reflecting the dichotomy of conservative and modernist reckoning, was discussed in another writing under the title of "Contemporary Turkey" in March 1910 in *Medan Prijaji*. Whereas Abdülhamid II presented as conservative, Mehmed Reşad V was seen as representing the modernists, or the Young Turks, in Ottoman society. This resembled the *Kaum Muda* and *Kaum Tua* dichotomy among the Malay Muslims in the Archipelago. The recent appointment of Mehmed Reşad V was considered positive for the modernisation of Türkiye, and a hope for the modernisation of other Muslim nations throughout the Hajj and Umrah. This new era resulted in a bilateral relationship between Türkiye and the Archipelago peoples for trade. The Ottoman consul appointed from Russia to Batavia was said to be a member of the Young Turks, although he was not an influential figure in Batavia politics (*Medan Prijaji* 1910, 121–23).

The emergence of “Young Turks”¹³ as a novel ideological stance in the political sphere in the late decades of the 19th century was the consequence of certain disputes, such as Abdülhamid II’s Pan-Islamic policy. At the beginning of the 20th century, the declaration of Meşrutiyet (*Parliamentary Monarchy*) in 1908, the subsequent developments, such as territorial dissolutions in North Africa and the Balkans, and the non-participation of the Arabs in the declaration of jihad (*Holy war*) in World War I were considered Pan-Islamic regression, at least in the context of *reelpolitik* (Harahap 1938, 254–55).

Despite the drastic abolishment of the Caliphate institution in Türkiye, Abdülmecid was declared as the Caliph at Jum’at prayers in some mosques, and the rationale for this was questioned (“Loear Hindia: Choetbah Djoem’at”, *Bintang Islam*, 25 November 1924, 442–3). Moreover, this abolishment created incredible frustration among the Muslims since they were deprived of Islamic or *ummatic union*. For this reason, two international meetings were organised in 1926. For the first, which was held in Cairo in May (Nafi 2004, 50; Zaman Baroe 1929, 400).¹⁴

Caliphate Abolishment, Foreign Intervention, and Laicism

The editors and writers of the vernacular press closely followed the developments in the Middle Eastern and even Indian contexts, evaluating these ideas. Some believed that, in the Malay Archipelago, the Caliphate was not perceived as significant as much as in the Middle East and India. Certain individuals, such as Sayyid Amir Ali and Sayyid Aga Khan from British India, also touched on the the issue of the Caliphate. In their letters to İsmet İnönü, the then prime minister of the Republic of Türkiye, they reminded him that the issue was not only a religious matter, but also a political one, as can be seen during the Ottoman rule. The sentiment in these letters was echoed in the political circles in Ankara. After they were published in several newspapers, such as the *Tanin*, *Tevhid-i Efkâr*, and *İkdam* in İstanbul, the editors of these newspapers were investigated in court. Among the editors was Lütfi Bey, 59 years old, who was consequently imprisoned for five years (Begroonic 1924, 100).¹⁵ Other letters were also sent to Ankara. For instance, according to *El-Quazir*, an Arab newspaper (April 1924), the Ankara government’s decision about the Caliphate at the National Assembly was aimed at abolishing it. The *Djam’ijatoel Oelama* (Ulama

Council) declared in the meeting attended by global religious scholars that the final decision on the issue should be based on the Qur'an (Bintang Islam 1924, 133).

There is no doubt that one of the most interesting writings belonged to Muhammad Hatta. Hatta, a prominent political activist who later became the vice president of the new Republic of Indonesia, wrote a paper about the issue of the Caliphate in *Bintang Islam*. He stated that the victory secured on 26 August 1922 in Afyonkarahisar, and the political gain at peace talks in Lozan in 1923 opened new opportunities for Türkiye. After the political change, there was a normalisation process. While emphasising the abolishment of the Caliphate, Hatta asserted that this had happened because of foreign influences. He also highlighted facts about Vahdeddin's visit to Mecca after he had lost his power in İstanbul. He pointed out how the new mufti, who is elected by the parliament in Ankara, and in charge of the Caliphate, had claimed that Caliph Vahdeddin's (Mehmed VI) actions were a betrayal to Islam, and consequently, he should not continue as the leader of the Muslim ummah. Subsequently, a new Caliph would be elected (Hatta 1924, 155–56).

The revolutionary changes in the initial stages of the Republic of Türkiye, and the resulting social changes that overlapped with Islam, had caused a kind of confusion in the perceptions of Türkiye in the Malay Archipelago. Because those changes during the time of the Ottoman State were perceived as distancing from Islamic fundamentals, the titles and contents of the news reflected that, for instance, the remarkable news in *Bintang Islam* with the title "Religion and State: Turkey is Moving Away from Religion". This newspaper had been referring to the speeches by party chairman Mustafa Kemal at the congress of the People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*-CHP) held at the end of October (1927). Apparently, Mustafa Kemal had spoken for five or six hours daily during the party congress. In his speeches, Mustafa Kemal provided details about the developments in the nationalist struggle to the recent ones about the new Republic.¹⁶

Mustafa Kemal's speech on October 20, in particular, was crucial for the Muslim societies of the Archipelago because it reflected the breaking ties of Islam, both individually and politically. This was supported by details of his practices and suggested policies in parliament. In one incident, one of the ministers criticised his religious policy during a

parliamentary session, chastising him for not going to the mosque since the War of Independence. Mustafa Kemal had taken the Holy Quran, slammed it against the wall, and said that development cannot be prevented by laws (referring to the Sharia law) that no longer exist (*kemajuan itu tidak boleh terhalang oleh undang yang diadakan untuk keperluan teroenan yang sudah musnah*). The editor then stated that the Turkish people's response towards this incident, whether regarding it as right or wrong, would be closely observed (*Bintang Islam* 1927, 25–26).

Prospective International Allies

Historically, Indonesia had pursued the Ottoman State as an international ally, evident in their anti-imperialism and colonialism policy. Hence, it was not a surprise to find numerous ideas deliberately calling for the strengthening of international relations with Türkiye when the latter began progressing in scientific advancements. The argument put forth was that, due to its prolonged relation with Indonesia, Türkiye had begun to understand the valued importance of trade with the Archipelago. Therefore, the development of Türkiye ultimately affected Muslims in the region positively, initiating commercial ties. The news also drew attention to the fact that the Young Turks had focused on the Turkish consul in Batavia, without them realising that the consul had no influence. While it was indirectly necessary for the Turkish consul to take a positive step in this direction, it was not known whether he was aware of the Arab-origin merchants trading in the Archipelago (*Medan Prijaji* 1910, 121–23).

In a 1923 issue of *Bintang Hindia*, there was a news article about the Langkat Sultanate in the east of the Sumatra island. While the issue of the sultan receiving an order from the Chinese government in Langkat, known for the presence of critical agricultural plantations in East Sumatra, was raised, he had previously received a decoration from the Ottoman Sultan. However, no information was given about the year or the Sultan under whose reign this had taken place (*Bintang Hindia* 1923, 467).

To keep up with international affairs of Türkiye, it was not surprising that numerous points had been made on the republic approach on the global-order polemic encountered by Yemen, Hejaz and Bosnia. These territorial affairs emerged as geo-political problems to be tackled accordingly by the Western powers, which were related, to some extent,

to the sovereignty of the Caliphate institution. In addition, the Yemen issue was closely connected to the Hejaz since both regions were mostly populated by the Arap, and historically, Yemen, at the border of Ottoman territory, connected the Ottomans to the Indian Ocean context. On this issue, a news story about Türkiye's presence in Yemen, and the loss of Yemen was published in *Bintang Islam*. The article titled "Yemen and Turkey" (*Negri Yaman dan Toerki*) pointed out that Türkiye did not want to lose territorial sovereignty over Yemen. However, after the Mudanya peace talks, the Ottomans' military and political presence in Yemen ended (*Bintang Islam* 1923, 19).

The Hejaz issue was the reason for the hostility of the Arabs towards the Turks, especially before and after World War I. Sharif Hüseyin's efforts to establish Arap's political sovereignty in the Hejaz region forced the Ottoman administration and the people to leave the region. *Bintang Islam* brought up certain issues of that period, referring to verbal accounts of those who had returned from the Hajj, and articles published in the regional media. Abu Bakar, a writer for the newspaper *Djoem'ijatoel-l Chilafah*, described about the supporters of Sharif Hussein abusing pilgrimage taxes to collect extra money. Some local rulers, such as Abjar Bani Hasan, demanded a toll from the hajjis in their territories, justifying it by saying that it had been a right previously given to them during the Ottoman period.

In addition, the Turks living in Medina, fearing hunger and the oppression of Sharif Hussein's administration, migrated to Damascus. Although the conditions in Mecca were relatively better, some people were economically affected. As such, while Sharif Hussain minted new currency to prove his political legitimacy, which automatically invalidated Ottoman currency, the people living in the region suffered much, owing to the information provided by the Sharif administration (*Bintang Islam* 1924, 505).

In a news article titled "Islam in Yugoslavia" in *Bintang Islam* in 1930, it was stated that Bosnia and Herzegovina were more developed than other Muslim communities in the region, especially since the presence of the Ottoman State. During the Ottoman Caliphate, they had cooperated closely with the Turks, and fought under the Islamic flag. However, after Mustafa Kemal abolished the Caliphate, a congress was held to discuss the issue in Egypt. The Bosnians were worried about Mustafa Kemal leaving his sick bed to attend the congress in Egypt, so

the head of the Sharia court, Kadı Muhammed Cemaleddin Efendi, attended instead (Aidid 1930, 51–52).

It was claimed that Kadı had also gone to Türkiye at that time. Upon his return, he thought about Mustafa Kemal's views on development, and decided that Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina should comply with Mustafa Kemal's goals (Aidid 1930, 53). In the meantime, references to Türkiye continued to be made in the news about Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the past, students were sent to Türkiye to specialise in religious sciences; however, after the political and social changes, Bosnian students began to be sent to Egypt instead of Türkiye, with seven students studying at Al-Azhar in Cairo at the time. However, Kadı Cemaleddin tried sending Bosnian students to Türkiye instead of Egypt. The newspaper then commented that the best place for the field of religious sciences was the al-Azhar. In the last part of the article, a doctor from Bosnia and Herzegovina was mentioned, Dr. Saffet Başgıç. As an intellectual, and a graduate of Fina University, he was an expert in Eastern sciences who had written dictionaries in Arabic, Persian, Turkish, and German, and translated works from Arabic, Persian, and Turkish into Bosnian (Aidid 1930, 54).

Conclusion

The vernacular press in the Malay Archipelago played crucial roles through their editors, chief editors, and opinion writers to inform their readers about the developments and changes in Turkish society during the early Republican period. Since they belonged to distinct religious, nationalist, and even leftist ideological establishments in various cities, their perceptions and opinions seemed to be diverse. Among others, the characteristics of the latest Caliphs, the nature of the Caliphate institution, the leadership of Mustafa Kemal and his struggle and nationalistic approach against the Western colonial powers, and some territorial issues, such as the Balkans, Yemen and Hejaz, were the most popular issues discussed. The vernacular press was mostly interested in the transformation of the Ottoman State to the new Republican Türkiye within the context of the Caliphate institution. Although this change was also referred to as a form of secularism, the religio-political stance of the new Republic was not from the context of secularism, but rather laicism.

It is obvious that the journalists and intellectuals in the Malay Archipelago who contributed significantly to the development of the vernacular press were aware of the wars, including the Balkanian Wars, World War I, and later, the independence war (*İstiklal Savaşı*), in which the Ottomans had to defend against the Western powers. All these significant events in determining the future of the Ottomans happened in almost one-and-a-half decades, from the latest era of the Ottoman State till the pre-Republican era. Besides that, the revolutionary changes in Türkiye from 1923 onwards -and their political and psychological impacts- that brought with it a distance between Islamic society and the new Turkish State were followed by Muslim nations all over from Egypt to Indonesia. Furthermore, during the early 1920s, there were just a few independent Muslim countries, among which Türkiye was considered a strong role model.

There seemed to be a specific gap in the knowledge about what the Archipelagic people thought about the political and social dynamics, changes and transformations in the beginning of the 20th century in Türkiye. Thus, this article, as a preliminary paper, wished to explore the perceptions developed by the journalists and intellectuals through the vernacular press from diverse political stances in the Archipelago. As a general understanding, one could argue that there were frustrations among the Muslim communities about the changes and revolutions that emerged from the socio-political transformation in Türkiye. These frustrations were caused by the disconnectivity between the Ottoman political heritage and its epistemology based on Islam, and the newly emerging Republican era. The Archipelagic communities, who considered themselves under the protection of the Ottoman Caliphs, even nominally, had seemed to have gained some insights, and developed certain judgements about these issues.

It is obvious that the journalists and intellectuals who contributed to the vernacular press published in the Java and Sumatra islands promoted nationalist and Islamic-oriented thoughts and movements. These efforts were intended to pursue independence ideas to some extent. The journalists' and intellectuals' political interpretation of the developments in Asia Minor was crucial in developing new strategies and policies to gain sovereignty from the yoke of colonialism. What was observed was that the developments in the late Ottoman and the early Republican era in Türkiye were utilised as materials to disseminate

information and consciousness among the public in the Archipelago. It is hoped that this preliminary article will lead to more fieldwork on the journalistic and intellectual engagements of the Archipelagic peoples who tried to understand the drastic political and cultural changes in Türkiye during the early decades of the 20th century.

The Indonesian interest in the development of Türkiye remained strong even after 1925. A significant number of publications emerged following crucial events that occurred in Türkiye even during Indonesia's independence period. *Bintang Islam*, for instance, highlighted the Ottoman demise, and other relevant developments, such as World War I, and the emergence of the new Republic in detail in a January 1938 issue. The editors had enlightened its readers about issues from almost twenty years before.

Referring to the role of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) in the Ottoman State's participation in World War I, an alliance was established by the Ottomans with Germany. In order to overcome land transportation, the focus was on a project that would connect İstanbul-Baghdad-Basra with railways that would allow the Germans to conduct trade affairs, and other mobilities reaching the Persian Gulf. Attention was drawn to the political turmoil in the last years of the Ottoman State within the framework of the war and the political cleavage between Enver, Talat, and Cemal Pashas, and the Sultan himself. In the news, the rivalry of the European nations in the Middle East, and the Arabs' efforts to gain their independence were discussed (Harahap 1938, 253).

In one of the July 1931 issues of *Soeara Atjeh*, an article was titled "Mustafa Kemal and the Religion of Islam". In a newspaper called *Al-Mufid*, there was a reference to Amin Afandi's interview with Mustafa Kemal. The interview discussed Mustafa Kemal's views on Islam and Islamism. Mustafa Kemal's response to these issues was quite interesting: "We live in the name of Islam and sacrifice our lives in the name of Islam. Our aim, at the expense of our lives, is to bring Islam to the best point, and we are ready to sacrifice our lives for this cause voluntarily. As the Turkish nation, we are slaves of Islam, and we are ready to serve Islam wholeheartedly. Until today, we have not refrained from fighting on this path, and have waged a jihad struggle on the path of Islam. We do not want war, but we will not refrain from fighting even if circumstances force it. We, as Turks, are a nation that has put our lives on the path of Islam since the beginning of Islam and

has never refrained from sacrificing everything for the sake of Islam” (Soeara Atjeh 1931, 3). Looking at the continuous Indonesian news coverage on Turkiye, the study of the Indonesians’ perspectives on Turkiye remains crucial for further research activities.

Endnotes

1. Abdullah Pasha was a capable military commander in the later decades of the Ottoman State. He was the commander of the East Thrace Army, although he criticised the war against the Balkanian states during those years. His army was defeated in 1912 in Lüleburgaz and Kırklareli. After World War I, he was appointed as minister of war for a short period of time (DIA 1988, 128).
2. Abdülhamit II had eight sons from different wives. However, the name 'İbrahim Temlife' mentioned in the caption of the photo in this source is not called among them.
3. This happened because of the conflict between the Republicans in Anatolia, and the Ottoman family in İstanbul. Once the Republican leaders founded the new political regime in Ankara and gained sovereignty in İstanbul, the whole family of the Ottomans were exiled.
4. As additional information in the letter, it was stressed that Meccan traders visiting Java Island contracted dengue. And the number of the Javanese hajjis declined in that year (DIA 1988, 158).
5. These are the two distinct political concepts developed in the context of the European societal changes throughout the past centuries. However, the term secularism, as suggested by researchers such as Evered and Evered (2010, 2) does not explain the political and epistemological changes in the early few decades of the Republic of Türkiye.
6. Some authors prefer to remark 'radical secularism'. In fact, this concept, whose intellectual origins were "entirely European" as argued by Lewis, was the Soviet Russia policy implemented by the state apparatus towards the Muslim societies after the Revolution. It was a form of political and religious crack (Lewis 1993, 29).
7. The first Ottoman consul was Abdullah al-Junied who was originally from Hadhramaut, but was living in Singapore in 1864 (Peeters 1997, 27). It would not be wrong for one to describe him as the first honorary consul of the Ottomans in the region. There are enough documents about Sayyid Abdullah al-Junied who passed away while he was conducting pilgrimage in Mecca in 1865 and his brother Sayyid Omar bin Sayyid al-Junied was trying to get appointment by the Ottoman official by sending letters to Sublime Porte as the new consul in Singapore in Ottoman Archives. For details see BOA (1881) and BOA (1886).
8. The author would like to share one example from the British Malaya to portray how a Malay ruler responded towards the developments during World War I. It is obvious that World War I is one of the final stages of the transformation of the Caliphate institution. While the Ottoman government in İstanbul was an ally of the German Empire, the ruling elite under the British dominions in the Malay World had opposing ideas about whom they would support. For instance, Sultan Zainal Abidin of Terengganu constantly acquired information about the Sharif of Mecca, and his anti-Turkish forces and Indian principalities. Once he was informed of Aga Khan's decision to be loyal to the British, Zainal Abidin followed in the same steps (Allen 1968, 10).
9. He is also known as Mehmed VI and ruled between 4 July 1918 and 1 November 1922. He was the 36th, or the last sultan of the Ottoman dynasty.
10. After the abolishment of the Ottoman sultanate system on 1 November 1922 by the Grand National Assembly in Ankara, and the exile of the last Ottoman sultan Mehmed Vadeddin on 16 November 1922, Abdülmecid Efendi was chosen as the new Caliph on 19 November 1922 by the National Assembly of the new Turkish

- Republic. Although he was mistakenly seen as “Abdülmeçid II (or Abdülmeçid-i Sâni)” as the last Ottoman Caliph by some religiously inclined Muslim circles, especially those outside Türkiye, he had only religious (or spiritual) power however granted by the National Assembly, not political.
11. The year is not mentioned in the publication. (Note: Although the Caliphate institution was abolished, and the dynasty had ruled for more than six centuries, the Ottoman family were exiled by the Law of the new Republic, but the members of the family had ambitions to return after Mustafa Kemal and regain political power in Türkiye. However, they were divided into two major factions as follows: the Vahdeddin faction that wished to be allied with the British, and the Abdülmeçid faction that was seen as closer to the Germans (Koçak 1996, 131).
 12. It was stated that after the British occupation of İstanbul, Sultan Vahdeddin left İstanbul on the British warship ‘Malaya’, in accordance with the instructions of the British representative in İstanbul, Henderson, accompanied by his sons, and some members of his staff (Bintang Islam 1922, 37).
 13. The Young Turks movement is said to have lost its political influence once World War I ended in 1919 (Zürcher 2010, viii).
 14. Since the page was torn in this issue of *Zaman Baroe*, the rest of the article cannot be read. The second congress in the same year was held on July 5, 1926, in Mecca (Nafi 2004, 50).
 15. A ‘Caliph Committee’ was announced in India on the same issue. Although there were some preparations, the planned visit of the committee to Ankara for talks was delayed, and it was discussed whether the Ankara government caused obstacles (Bintang Islam 1924, 258). (Note: It is interesting to note that Sayyid Amir Ali and Sayyid Aga Khan’s thoughts were in fact real in the practical politics of Mustafa Kemal. As such, the latter’s correspondence with Muslim nations, such as the Indians, was also observed in some news. Moreover, there was mention of Mustafa Kemal’s correspondence to Chotani, the head of the Indian Khalifa Committee, on 15 January, thanking the support of the Indian Muslims living under British colonialism for their assistance during the war against the Greeks. Mustafa Kemal stated that it was crucial for the success of the Turkish army. Moreover, it is interesting that Mustafa Kemal argued that the victory did not just belong to the Turkish nation. Instead, it had encouraged other nations in similar struggles. Moreover, as understood from the last statement written by the editor, Mustafa Kemal’s letter was intended to instigate the fighting spirit of the Indian Muslims against British rule (Bintang Islam n.d., 132).
 16. For details see Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı Cumhuriyet Arşivi (1927).

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ستوديا إسلاميكا (ISSN 0215-0492; E-ISSN: 2355-6145) مجلة علمية دولية محكمة تصدر عن مركز دراسات الإسلام والمجتمع (PPIM) بجامعة شريف هداية الله الإسلامية الحكومية بجاكرتا، تعنى بدراسة الإسلام في إندونيسيا خاصة وفي جنوب شرقي آسيا عامة. وتستهدف المجلة نشر البحوث العلمية الأصيلة والقضايا المعاصرة حول الموضوع، كما ترحب بإسهامات الباحثين أصحاب التخصصات ذات الصلة. وتخضع جميع الأبحاث المقدمة للمجلة للتحكيم من قبل لجنة مختصة.

تم اعتماد ستوديا إسلاميكا من قبل وزارة البحوث والتكنولوجيا والتعليم العالي بجمهورية إندونيسيا باعتبارها دورية علمية (رقم القرار: 32a/E/KPT/2017).

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