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The Ottomans and the Malay World:
Contemporary Reflections on History,
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Fostering Hope: The Presence of the Ottoman Consulate in Batavia, 1882-1924

Alwi Alatas*

Introduction

Diplomatic relations and the opening of consulates in the 19th century were nothing new for the Ottoman Empire, as diplomatic relations between the Ottoman Empire and several European countries had begun in the 16th century. However, the characteristics of the diplomatic world at that time were not entirely the same as those that existed in the 19th or 20th centuries. The situation in the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century was also not the same as in previous centuries. In the 16th and 17th centuries, the position of the Ottoman Empire was strong and more prominent compared to many European powers, but it developed into a reverse situation in the following centuries. In the 19th century, when European powers such as Britain, France, and the Netherlands were able to increase their influence in the world, the Ottoman Empire experienced serious setbacks. This decline would lead to the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in the early 20th century. However, in the 19th century, the Ottoman Empire still had hope for revival and tried to improve this unfavorable state of affairs. The *ummah* in that century, driven by its reformist scholars, also aspired for the same hope. These reciprocal hopes intertwined around the ideas of pan-Islamism, or Islamic unity, and some other reformist ideas. This hope did not only connect the Ottoman government with its citizens, or distanced further due to the spread of secular ideology, but also with the Muslim *ummah* living in distant lands, including in the Dutch East Indies (colonial Indonesia). Amid this atmosphere, the Ottoman administration opened its consulate in Batavia in the 1880s, which continued until the end of the Ottoman era.

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Relations between the Ottoman Empire and the Netherlands existed since the early 17th century, primarily to safeguard the trade interests of both parties. The relationship was relatively amicable and peaceful. Even during the First World War, the Netherlands opted for neutrality and refrained from involvement in the conflict, which helped maintain good relations with the Ottomans. In the 19th century, diplomatic ties between the two parties extended to the colonies. The Dutch East Indies government established a consulate in Jeddah, an Ottoman territory, to oversee the flow of pilgrims from the Dutch East Indies. Conversely, at the end of the 19th century, the Ottoman government opened its consulate in Batavia. The Hadramis, who regarded themselves as Ottoman citizens in the Dutch East Indies, eagerly anticipated this move. During the subsequent periods, the Ottoman consulate in Batavia performed its duties amid controversy surrounding the idea of pan-Islamism, which was closely monitored by the Dutch East Indies government with great suspicion and worry.

There is not much literature that explains the presence and activities of the Ottoman consulate in Batavia. For example, the article of Soekarba and Supratman, mentions several activities of the Ottoman consulate in Batavia in the era of Sultan Abdul Hamid II in the context of pan-Islamist policy and movement.¹ Frial Supratman previously wrote about the role of the Ottomans in the Dutch East Indies at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries in relation to pan-Islamism and modernization.² His other article discusses the tenure of Rafet Bey, the last Ottoman consul in Batavia. The article mentions several previous consuls, but not all of them.³

1 Siti Rohmah Soekarba and Frial Ramadhan Supratman, "From Abdul Hamid II until Erdoğan: Pan-Islamism Movement in Indonesia and Turkey," *Journal of Middle East and Islamic Studies* 9, no. 1 (2022): 1-21.

2 Frial Ramadhan Supratman, "Before the Ethical Policy: The Ottoman State, Pan-Islamism, and Modernization in Indonesia 1898-1901," *Al-Jami'ah; Journal of Islamic Studies* 54, no. 2 (2016): 447-475.

3 Frial Ramadhan Supratman, "Rafet Bey: The Last Ottoman Consul in Batavia during the First World War 1911-1924," *Studia Islamika* 24, no. 1 (2017): 33-67.

One of the book chapters by Jan Schmidt⁴ examines in detail the events that occurred at the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries relating to the Ottoman Empire and the Dutch East Indies. The names of the consuls and their roles, including the sending of a few students from Java to Istanbul, are discussed in depth, but the names of a few consuls have not appeared in the study. Another article by Alatas & Tekin⁵ discusses the sending of students to Istanbul and their relations with the Hadrami people in the Dutch East Indies. However, this study does not focus on the Ottoman consulate as a whole. İsmail Hakkı Kadı's article mentions the sending of a letter from the Sultan of Aceh to the Ottoman government via the Turkish consulate in Batavia as an attempt by Aceh to get support in the face of Dutch colonialism.⁶ The activities and roles of the Ottoman Consulate in Batavia are highlighted in several other studies, but, as far as this article concerned, no one offers a complete reconstruction of the Ottoman Consulate in Batavia from its beginning to the end. Therefore, using historical methods and primary sources from Indonesian and Dutch newspapers, this study comprehensively discusses the development and roles of the Ottoman Consulate in Batavia from 1882 to 1924, or from the beginning to the end of its existence. To understand this well, this article also utilizes several studies that explain the development of diplomatic relations in the world, especially those that occurred between the Ottoman Empire and the Netherlands before the 19th century.

4 Jan Schmidt, *Through the Legation Window 1876-1926: Four Essays on Dutch, Dutch-Indian and Ottoman History* (Istanbul: Netherlands Historische-Archaeologisch Instituut, 1992).

5 Alwi Alatas-Alaeddin Tekin, "The Indonesian Hadrami's Cooperation with the Ottoman and the Sending of Indonesian Students to Istanbul, 1880s-1910s," *Tarih İncelemeleri Dergisi* 37, no. 1 (2022).

6 İsmail Hakkı Kadı, "An Old Ally Revisited: Diplomatic Interactions Between the Ottoman Empire and the Sultanate of Aceh in the Face of Dutch Colonial Expansion," *The International History Review*, 2020.

Development of Diplomatic Relations in the World and Between the Ottomans and the Netherlands

A consulate is a consul's office, while a consul is a government official working in a foreign (host) country and, with its permission, giving consular services to the citizens of his country. Its functions fall within the scope of diplomacy. Diplomacy itself is considered as a part of international relations. While its definition can be varied, it pertains to the relationship between states, and the diplomat's roles usually include negotiation, persuasion, and mediation.⁷ Diplomacy is "concerned with the management of relations between states and between states and other actors" and "is concerned with advising, shaping and implementing foreign policy."⁸ The word diplomacy comes from the Greek *diploun*, which means "to fold". This word later developed into "diploma", which more or less means an object folded in half. In the Roman era, this word was used for double ("folded") metal plates that were stamped and used as travel documents. In later periods, official documents made from materials other than metal were used to represent dealings with foreign communities.⁹ This reminds us of today's travel documents and passports, the issuance of which is part of the consular function, along with the promotion of commercial and cultural relations and some other functions.¹⁰

Diplomatic relations and the sending of diplomatic missions have existed since ancient times, although the structure and nature of the profession in the past were modest. Louis J. Nigro, who broadly describes diplomacy as "peaceful dialogue between political units," gives examples of a peace treaty between the King of Ebla and King of Assyria in 2300 BC and diplomatic letters between

7 Asaf Siniver and Dan Hart, "The Meaning of Diplomacy," *International Negotiation: A Journal of Theory and Practice* 26, no. 2 (2021).

8 R. P. Barston, *Modern Diplomacy* (London: Longman, 1997), 1.

9 I. Callus and R. Borg, "Deconstruction and Undoing of Diplomacy," *DiPLO* (2001), accessed April 14, 2025.
<https://www.diplomacy.edu/resource/deconstruction-and-the-undoing-of-diplomacy/>.

10 R. G. Feltham, *Diplomatic Handbook* (Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff, 1998).

Ancient Egypt and Syria as recorded in Amarna tablets.¹¹ Other scholars, such as Hamilton & Langhorne, suggest Ancient Greece as an early civilization with reliable examples of what can be described as a diplomatic system, even an embassy with partial immunities.¹² For the early modern era, some scholars think that diplomacy started in Renaissance Italy when the competing states concluded that war could not sufficiently serve their interests and therefore turned to a diplomatic approach, which led in the following centuries to a more permanent and structured embassy system.¹³ G. R. Berridge accepted the view that points to the importance of Rome and Italy in the 15th century as the place and period of the birth of the diplomatic corps.¹⁴ However, he suggests that Istanbul in the 17th century also played a substantial role in the early formation of the diplomatic corps. Istanbul, or Constantinople, became a host to many foreign ambassadors, Europeans and others, a role that had already started since the Ottoman capture of that city but was widening in that century. The Ottoman Empire itself, however, had not sent its permanent embassy anywhere before the end of the 18th century. A diplomatic relationship between the Ottomans and the Netherlands also began at the beginning of the 17th century, more precisely in 1612, through the mission of the Dutch ambassador, Cornelis Haga, and the intermediary help of local Sephardic Jews.¹⁵ The relationship between the two, with its ups and downs, was particularly driven by economic interests and sometimes by a common enemy. The Netherlands is among a few European

¹¹ Louis J. Nigro, "Theory and Practices of Modern Diplomacy: Origins and Development to 1914," in *Theory of War and Strategy*, ed. J. B. Bartholomees, Volume I (Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 2010), 173.

¹² K. Hamilton & R. Langhorne, *The Practice of Diplomacy: Its Evolution, Theory and Administration* (London: Routledge, 1995).

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ G. R. Berridge, "Notes on the Origins of the Diplomatic Corps: Constantinople in the 1620s," *Discussion Papers in Diplomacy*, no. 92 (May 2004). https://www.clingendael.org/sites/default/files/2016-02/20040500_cli_paper_dip_issue92.pdf

¹⁵ J. Van der Krieke, "Establishing 'Friendship', a Dutch-Ottoman Alliance for Trade and Jewish Settlement Rights," *Studia Rosenthaliana* 48, no. 2 (2022).

countries that maintained diplomatic ties with the Ottomans during the First World War.¹⁶

In the 19th century, the consulate offices of the two empires were extended beyond Europe, especially in the strategic outer regions ruled by each country. The Dutch opened their consular office in Jeddah in 1869 or 1872. However, it was not alone; some other European countries also sent their consuls to settle in the city in that century. The Red Sea, where Jeddah is located, became commercially vibrant after the operation of the Suez Canal. The European imperialists also had an interest in monitoring the pilgrimage flow of the Muslims, whose territories increasingly fell under their control.¹⁷ This latter objective is particularly true for the Dutch, whose Indies possession galvanized many Muslim populations to go for *hajj*, and they might return home with the impulse of resistance against the colonizer. Around the same period, the Ottoman Empire opened its consulates in British India and Singapore in 1849 and 1864, respectively. It also opened a consulate in Dutch Batavia at the beginning of the 1880s the details of which are to be discussed below.¹⁸

The Ottoman Consulate in Batavia

a) The Background of Its Opening

The Ottoman cause for the opening of the consulate in Batavia was the existence of the Hadrami people as Ottoman "citizens" living in the Dutch East Indies. The Hadrami people came from Hadramawt, Yemen, which was nominally under Ottoman control. The Hadrami people in the Dutch East Indies who were influenced by pan-Islamism actively demanded equality with the Europeans by claiming to be the citizens of the Ottoman Empire. They felt oppressed by the rigid race-based social stratification in the Dutch

16 E. Zweiffel and B. Langer, "Over Four Centuries of Relations Between the Netherlands and Türkiye," *Historia i Polityka* 42, no. 49 (2022).

17 Ulrike Freitag, "Helpless Representatives of the Great Powers? Western Consuls in Jeddah, 1830s-1914," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 40, no. 3 (2012).

18 Soekarba and Supratman, "From Abdul Hamid II until Erdoğan."

East Indies and by the district system and travel policy, which restricted their movement.

The Hadramis, along with the Chinese and Indians, were categorized as Foreign Orientals in the Dutch East Indies. They had to live in certain districts in big cities and needed to apply for travel documents every time they traveled. Their status was different and lower than that of Dutch and European people, including the Ottomans, all of whom occupied the highest social stratification in the Indies. Therefore, through the emerging pan-Islamic spirit, the Hadrami people asserted their status as Ottoman citizens in order to escape the infuriating situation they faced. On the other hand, the Ottoman Empire, under the leadership of Sultan Abdul Aziz and Abdul Hamid II, was interested in promoting pan-Islamism and reaching out to the extended Islamic world to gain broad support from Muslims in various parts of the world as an effort to revive itself from a serious setback.¹⁹ Both parties fostered hopes for the unity and revival of the Muslim *ummah* under the leadership of the Ottomans.

The status of the Hadrami people as Ottoman citizens and the inequality they experienced in the Dutch East Indies were mentioned in the news of the appointment of the first Ottoman (honorary) consul in Batavia, Sayyid Abdul Aziz ("Turkije" 1882). Abdul Aziz was a trader from Baghdad who had settled in Batavia, not a career diplomat sent from Istanbul. His son-in-law, Sayyid Abd Allah bin Alawī al-Attās was a third-generation Hadrami migrant and a Batavian wealthy merchant who is also a strong supporter of pan-Islamism.²⁰ The subsequent consuls were not from Hadrami circle, and they were usually Ottoman career diplomats sent to Batavia. However, the relationship between the Ottoman consulate and the Hadrami people was most of the time intimate with one another. The Indies Hadramis could be considered as the closest associates to the consulate. When the Ottoman consulate facilitated the sending of several students to

¹⁹ Alatas and Tekin, "The Indonesian Hadrami's Cooperation with the Ottoman."

²⁰ Ibid.

study in Istanbul, all the students were actually Hadrami children.²¹ Some of the other consulates' activities were also related to or directly involved the Hadramis. The consulate, of course, built communication and became a beacon of hope for the Indies local Muslims as well. In fact, the Ottoman Empire portrayed itself as the protector of all Muslims, not just the Hadramis. The Hadrami community in the Dutch East Indies and their claim to citizenship had become a gateway for the realization of this pan-Islamic patronization.

The Dutch East Indies government never recognized the Ottoman citizenship and equal status of the Hadrami people, despite the Ottomans' insistence that their position should be equalized to that of the Europeans ("Uitsluitend" 1882). For the Dutch, only those born on the European side of the Ottoman Sultanate were recognized as equal to the Europeans, but not those from the Asian side of the sultanate, including those born in Hadramawt and the Arabian Peninsula.²² The family of Abdul Aziz, the consul mentioned above, was only truly recognized as Turkish citizens on par with Europeans by showing proof that Abdul Aziz was born in Istanbul ("Nederlandsch Indie" 1889). In 1914, a few Arabs attempted to enter the Dutch East Indies using Ottoman passports, but their documents were rejected and they were expelled by the Dutch Indies government ("Onze oost" 1914). In the Ottoman region itself, the citizenship status of the Hadrami people was not automatically accepted. The Hadrami students in Istanbul could not directly continue their studies in certain colleges established specifically for Ottoman citizens. To fully become Ottoman citizens, they needed to apply first.²³ The main issue for the Hadramis in the Dutch East Indies was not actually their citizenship status but rather the discriminatory treatment they received from the colonial government. This can be seen, for

21 C. S. Hurgronje, E. Gobée and C. Adriaanse, *Nasihat-Nasihat C. Snouck Hurgronje Semasa Kepegawaiannya kepada Pemerintah Hindia Belanda, 1889-1936*, vol. 9. (Jakarta: INIS, 1994). See also Jan Schmidt, *Through the Legation Window 1876-1926*.

22 Hurgronje, Gobée and Adriaanse, *Nasihat-Nasihat*.

23 Alatas and Tekin, "The Indonesian Hadrami's Cooperation with the Ottoman."

example, in the case of the Hadrami students in Istanbul. While studying in that city, they considered themselves citizens of the Dutch East Indies. However, some of them wore Turkish attire and identified themselves as Ottoman citizens when returning to Batavia, which aroused the annoyance of the colonial government.²⁴ Association with the Ottomans, therefore, became a symbol of hope and resistance to oppressive colonialism.

The Dutch colonial government initially rejected the presence of an Ottoman consulate in Batavia. They had already complained about the presence of the Ottoman consulate in Singapore several years earlier, which was feared to increase unwanted Ottoman influence in Southeast Asia. Because of this, they urged the British government in the Straits Settlements not to continue the consulate in Singapore.²⁵ However, the Dutch colonial government was ultimately unable to refuse the Ottomans' wishes to establish a consulate in Batavia, fearing that the Ottomans would even the score by closing the Dutch consulate in Jeddah ("Nederlandsch Indie" 1897). The Dutch colonial government finally accepted the opening of the Ottoman consulate in Batavia by limiting the consulate's role only for commercial purposes and not for political activities, including the promotion of for pan-Islamist agendas ("Een Gevaarlijke Gaast" 1898). Differences in expectations regarding the function of the consulate would cause friction and protests between the two parties, but not to the point of the closure of the consulate.

b) The Names of the Consuls in Order

This study found out that no less than 11 Ottoman consuls had been appointed and carried out their duties at the Batavia consulate. Their names and the year of their appointment are as follows: Sayyid Abdul Aziz (1882), Ali Galip Bey (1883), Rifki Bey (1887), Veli Şemsi Bey (1891), Fuad Bey (1895), Kamil Bey (1897), Emin Bey (1899), Sadik Bey (1900), Haji Rassim/Bassim Effendi (1904), Erched Rachid Bey (1909), and Rafet Bey (1911). The

²⁴ Jan Schmidt, *Through the Legation Window 1876-1926*.

²⁵ Anthony Reid, "The Ottomans in Southeast Asia," Singapore: Asia Research Institute, 2005, accessed June 20, 2023.

appointment of the first consul, Sayyid Abdul Aziz, was not approved by the Dutch colonial government,²⁶ although Sayyid Abdul Aziz is still remembered among some Hadramis as an Ottoman consul. Because of this, in the following year, the Ottoman government decided to appoint and send its official, Galip Bey, to serve in Batavia, which the Dutch reluctantly accepted.²⁷ If Sayyid Abdul Aziz is not to be counted as an Ottoman consul, then the list of consuls starts with Ali Galip Bey.

Apart from the names above, there are a few Turkish consuls who could not materialize their appointment, and there were several Europeans who were appointed as Ottoman consuls. In the mid-1886, the name of Ismail appeared as Ottoman consul ("Telegrammen" 1886), but there is no further information about him, while in January 1887, Rifki Bey was appointed as the new consul in Batavia ("Benoeminen" 1887). Was Ismail really appointed as consul, or did his name emerge as a result of misinformation received by the media at that time? Unfortunately, this study cannot answer this question. In 1895, Rifki Efendi was appointed as the Ottoman consul ("Nederlandsch Indie" 1895, September 28), but he died before his departure to Batavia, so at the end of that year, Fuad Bey became the new consul ("Nederlandsch Indie" 1895, December 17). In early 1886, Mr. Jouslain, French consul in Batavia, was appointed as a temporary consul ("Nederlandsch Indie" 1886). In 1895, J. C. Kraft was mentioned as an Ottoman consul, but in the middle of that year another European, W. H. Schulz, was named as consul ("Nederlandsch Indie" 1895, June 26). Schulz was a German dealer, an agent of the firm Hills and Manke in Batavia, who was appointed as Ottoman consul more than once. In early 1897, he was named consul while Fuad Bey was on leave for Europe for almost half a year ("Telegrammen" 1897). He returned as consul in 1898, apparently replacing Kamil, who was very unpopular with the Dutch and was forced to leave Batavia immediately ("Pan-

²⁶ Jan Schmidt, *Through the Legation Window 1876-1926*.

²⁷ I would like to thank Dr. Alaeddin Tekin for the reuse of a few Turkish sources from our previous research in this article. See, İsmail Hakkı Göksoy, *Güneydoğu Asya'da Osmanlı-Türk Tesirleri* (Fakülte Kitapevi, 2004).

Islamitische" 1898). Schulz returned as consul in mid-1906 while Haji Rassim was on leave ("Consulaatwezen" 1906). These Europeans were apparently appointed as temporary consuls when there was a time gap in the replacement of Ottoman consuls or when a consul took leave. The appointment of a foreigner as an Ottoman consul did not only apply to the Dutch East Indies. In the late 19th century, a Scottish entrepreneur became an Ottoman consul in Edinburgh and Glasgow, maintaining Ottoman economic interests in the region.²⁸

Apart from Sayyid Abdul Aziz and Schulz—and perhaps also Kraft—who worked as traders, the other Ottoman consuls were diplomats or officials in the Ottoman Empire. Ali Galip Bey, for example, worked as a translator at the Ottoman court before serving as consul in Batavia²⁹ and, in mid-1886, as a diplomat in Bombay ("Telegrammen" 1886). Rifki Bey appeared to have been a diplomat in Europe and departed from Marseille in 1887 to undertake duties as consul in Batavia ("Nederlandsch Indie" 1887), and in 1891 he was transferred to Barcelona ("Nederlandsch Oost-Indie" 1892). Veli Şemsi worked at the St. Petersburg consulate before becoming consul in Batavia at the end of 1891 ("Plaatselijk Nieuws" 1891).

The Ottoman consuls in Batavia were generally seen as political supporters of pan-Islamism and collaborated with the Hadramis and other Muslims in that cause. The consulate also did not pay enough attention to the trade sector as expected by the Dutch colonial government. Colonial government officials monitored the activities of these consuls with great suspicion. Ali Galip Bey, for example, was reported by Snouck Hurgronje to have done provocative actions by inquiring into local problems related to the *Hajj* and the Banten rebellion. Of all the Ottoman consuls in Batavia, the one considered the most aggressive in pursuing a pan-Islamist agenda and therefore referred to as a "dangerous guest" was Kamil Bey ("Een Gevaarlijke Gaast" 1898).

²⁸ M. Talbot and P. Mc Cluskey, "Introduction: Contacts, Encounters, Practices: Ottoman-European Diplomacy, 1500-1800," *The Journal of Ottoman Studies*, no. 48 (2016).

²⁹ Göksoy, *Güneydoğu Asya'da Osmanlı-Türk Tesirleri*.

However, the political attitudes of the consuls were not exactly the same as each other. There was even a consul, namely Rifki Bey, who was considered indifferent to the issue of pan-Islamism and was therefore criticized by a Hadrami people in Singapore. Likewise, at the beginning of the 20th century and as the collapse of the Ottoman Empire approached, the echo of pan-Islamism increasingly disappeared, and some consuls paid attention to different issues. Sadik Belig Bey, who became consul in 1900, paid attention to commercial activities, which were further developed during Rassim Bey's tenure (1904-1910), while in the following years the consulate was busy with other issues, especially the First World War.

c) Its Activities

The Ottoman Consulate carried out many activities during its presence in the Dutch East Indies. Apart from the things mentioned previously, the Ottoman consulate became a recipient of people's complaints against the Dutch colonial government and became an advocate for those who needed it. Other than the Hadrami community, the Aceh Sultanate, which in the last quarter of the 19th century was invaded by the Dutch, tried to ask for Ottoman help, some of which came through the intermediary of the consulate. Aceh once had diplomatic relations with, and even asked to be considered a vassal state of, the Ottomans in the 16th century and is now trying to rebuild it. This was actually in line with the idea of pan-Islamism, but the decline experienced by the Ottoman Empire made it impossible for it to provide military assistance other than just minimal attention. In this regard, Ali Galip Bey, as the Ottoman consul, had departed from Batavia for Aceh and prayed at the Baiturrahman Mosque while he was in that region, but it is not known that there was any real support from the Ottomans for Aceh at this time.³⁰ The Ottoman consulate also received a request for help from the local people of Condet, Batavia, who resisted the Dutch landlords who burned their houses in 1916.³¹ This illustrates

³⁰ Supratman, "Before the Ethical Policy."

³¹ Supratman, "Rafet Bey: The Last Ottoman Consul."

the high expectations of the local people towards the Ottoman consulate.

The consulate played certain roles in religious service. On certain occasions, the Ottoman consul distributed Turkish printed Holy Qur'an to some people in the Dutch East Indies, as well as financial help to repair certain mosques in Batavia. Education-related activities could sometimes be seen as controversial and political. At the end of the 19th century, the Ottoman consulate facilitated a number of Hadrami students to study in Istanbul. The first batch of students from the al-Attas family, consisting of six students, departed in 1895 via Egypt and without the intermediary of the consulate in Batavia. However, the next two batches of students, four and seven students, respectively, left for Istanbul in 1898 through the intercession of consul Kamil Bey. The departure of the students caused excitement among the supporters of pan-Islamism as well as irritation for the Dutch East Indies government. Kamil himself was dismissed from his post at the pressure of the Dutch colonial government, and he left Batavia at the end of 1898 along with the seven Hadrami students who departed for Istanbul ("Een Gevaarlijke Gaast" 1898). In fact, Kamil had been accused of active incitement against the Dutch colonial government and encouraging local Muslims to oppose the Dutch.³²

With regards to the economy, in the middle of 1903, a wealthy Turkish businessman came to Java after performing a pilgrimage in Mecca. He looked for business opportunities in Java, particularly the export of rice from Java to the Ottoman region, and approached the Ottoman consulate to obtain information. For that, Sadik Bey invited interested suppliers through the media ("Handelsbetrekkingen" 1903). Attention to the economy increased in the era of the next consul, Rassim Bey. He did not only facilitate the export of Indies products to the Ottoman region but also the import of Ottoman products to the Indies. He initiated a limited business partnership that included a number of Batavian businessmen as shareholders. This business, under the name of "Bazar de Stamboul", focused on the marketing of Ottoman products in the Dutch East Indies and had succeeded in getting a

³² Jan Schmidt, *Through the Legation Window 1876-1926*.

number of orders at the end of 1905 (“Turksche handel” 1905). Apart from the economy, Sadik and Rassim Bey were also involved in raising funds for the Ottoman modernization project, in this case, the construction of the Hijaz Railway. They invited Muslim entrepreneurs in Batavia to provide financial support for this project, which was welcomed by some of them.³³

Raising large amounts of funds from the Dutch East Indies to channel to Istanbul also occurred during the era of the last consul, Rafet Bey, but just for humanitarian aid, rather than modernization projects. In this case, the Ottoman Consulate only assisted the process, while the initiative and implementation were carried out in an organized manner by a number of Hadrami people in Batavia and Surabaya, who were also supported by Muslim communities, even non-Muslims, in the Dutch East Indies (“Alhilaloel Ahmar” 1915). This humanitarian association is the Dutch East Indies branch of the Red Crescent (al-Hilal al-Ahmar) organization, whose role is to collect funds for victims of the Balkan War and victims of the First World War. In 1912-1913 and in 1915, the Red Crescent in Batavia and Surabaya each sent a total amount of tens of thousands of francs to Istanbul for the above purposes (“Oentoek” 1915; “Vereeniging” 1913). The chairman of Red Crescent Surabaya, who was also the Secretary General of Sarekat Islam, Hasan bin Semit, on a certain occasion met Rafet Bey in Batavia to discuss the role of Red Crescent in the Dutch East Indies (“Perdjalanannja” 1916).

The Ottoman consulate has been involved in certain educational activities in the Dutch East Indies. In 1917, for example, Rafet Bey was invited to attend student examinations at al-Irshad school and saw directly the development of education at that school, which he greatly appreciated (“Soerat.Kiriman” 1917). In the previous year, when Alatas School received criticism related to the Alawi-Irshadi conflict, Rafet Bey joined in voicing this criticism and therefore disappointed the director of that school (“Al-Atas School” 1916). This illustrates how the Ottoman consulate's views in this regard were seen as very important, particularly by the Hadramis.

33 See Göksoy, *Güneydoğu Asya'da Osmanlı-Türk Tesirleri*; Hurgronje, Gobée and Adriaanse, *Nasihah-Nasihah*.

During the First World War, Rafet Bey was active in providing news about the development of the war as well as necessary refutations, especially regarding accusations or provocations from the British or French who became the enemies of the Ottomans during the war ("Turkye" 1916). However, the Ottomans ultimately lost the First World War, and the Ottoman Empire collapsed in the 1920's, so the existence of the Ottoman consulate ended.

From the various activities above, it can be seen how the Ottoman consulate in Batavia played an active role in carrying out various activities in the Dutch East Indies and in fostering hopes of the revival of the Ottoman Empire and the *ummah*. Kamil Bey, for example, continued to encourage the Hadramis to demand equality with the Europeans ("Uit de Indische Bladen" 1900), and Rafet Bey on one occasion described the Ottomans as the head of Islam, and if this head was cut off, the enemy would be able to easily control Islamic countries ("Turkye. II" 1916). Fostering hope was basically the main Ottoman interest carried out through its diplomatic agency in Batavia, though this agenda was unacceptable for the Indies colonial government. The Muslims in the Dutch East Indies, especially the Hadrami community, also echoed this hope on various occasions, though this hope ultimately did not materialize. It was not completely extinguished but was redirected towards different forms of struggle in the subsequent periods.

It also seems inappropriate to say that the existence of the Turkish consulate in Batavia only offered hope without any real contribution. Several consulate activities, such as donating Holy Qur'ans and repairing mosques, were direct contributions to Muslims in the Dutch East Indies. Several other things were likely to have a real impact on the Hadrami and Muslim communities in the Dutch East Indies, although they may not be the only causes. The Hadrami people protested against the colonial government's policies that restricted their movements, and this was voiced from the start by the Ottoman Turkish consulate. We know that the support from the Ottoman consulate did not immediately cause the Dutch colonial government to change its policies. These restrictions were reduced by the colonial government in the 1910s and abolished

completely by the end of the decade.³⁴ Hadrami protests and support from the Ottoman consulate had become a topic of discussion among the Dutch colonial officials, as indicated in Snouck Hurgronje's letters.³⁵ These protests reached their peak during the era of consul Kamil Bey at the end of the 19th century. In the following years, especially in the 1910s, the activities of the Hadrami people experienced a significant expansion. In those activities, their interaction with indigenous figures was strengthened, and the connection with the Ottoman consulate was maintained and embraced in a new dimension, thus increasing the annoyance of the colonial government. It is possible that these developments influenced, albeit slowly, changes in colonial government policies that restricted the movements of the Hadrami people. It can be seen at the beginning of the 20th century that the restriction policy intended for racial separation between the locals and the Hadramis (and other Foreign Orientals) was not effective enough to continue. It can be said that their cooperation and struggle thwarted the effectiveness of colonial racial segregation.

The Ottoman Consulate also appears to have contributed to the early development of modern Islamic education in the Dutch East Indies. The sending of Hadrami students to Istanbul in the late 1890s was very limited and cannot be said to have had a satisfactory impact. However, this experience seems to have contributed to the impetus for the emergence of the Jamiat Kheir organization in 1901 and its schools a few years later. The difficulty of accessing modern education in Istanbul may have motivated this community to establish their own schools in the Dutch East Indies. Jamiat Kheir organization and schools were not only joined and enrolled by Hadrami figures and children but also local Muslims. Even though the Ottoman consulate was not directly involved in the establishment of Jamiat Kheir organization and schools, the attention and views of the consul were still expected and referred

³⁴ H. de Jonge, "Dutch Colonial Policy Pertaining to Hadhrami Immigrants," in *Hadhrami Traders, Scholars, and Statesmen in the Indian Ocean, 1750s-1960s*, eds. Ulrike Freitag and W. G. Clarence-Smith (Leiden: Brill, 1997).

³⁵ Hurgronje, Gobée and Adriaanse, *Nasihah-Nasihah*.

to. This can be seen in the Alatas School controversy in 1916 and the invitation of the Ottoman consul to al-Irshad School in 1917, as explained above.

Besides education the Ottoman consulate also received reports and was asked for assistance in terms of humanitarian donations from the Dutch East Indies channeled through the Red Crescent in Batavia, Surabaya, and Istanbul. In this case, the Ottoman consulate had become a kind of patron for the social and educational activities of the Muslim community in the Dutch East Indies. At least in terms of modern Islamic education, which continued to last and develop far into the following eras, the Ottoman consulate had quite an important initial contribution.

Conclusion

Diplomatic relations and the opening of consulates have been going on for quite a while in world history. In this regard, the Ottoman Empire had dealt with foreign consuls since the 16th century, and in the 17th century, Istanbul became a gathering place for European consuls, including the Dutch consuls, who began diplomatic relations with the Ottomans at the beginning of that century. In the 19th century, the opening of consulates expanded to regions outside Europe. The Dutch East Indies and several European countries opened consulates in Jeddah, in line with the increase in commercial maritime traffic in the region after the opening of the Suez Canal. Likewise, the Ottoman Empire opened consulates in British Singapore as well as in Dutch Batavia, shoring up its pan-Islamic policy.

Opening a consulate in a place as far away as the Dutch East Indies in the midst of serious decline did not look like a normal policy for the Ottomans. However, this policy can be seen as fostering hope for the unity and revival of the Ottomans and the Islamic world. The Ottoman Empire needed support from the Islamic world, including the Malay world, and Muslims in the Dutch East Indies hoped for Ottoman backing over a number of problems that bothered them from the Dutch colonial government. Thus, a consulate was opened in Batavia while voicing advocacy for the Hadrami people living in the Dutch East Indies, who claimed

Ottoman citizenship and demanded equality with European citizens. The Dutch colonial government accepted the opening of the Ottoman consulate with reluctance and emphasized that it had only a commercial, and not a political, function. These differences in interests gave rise to a number of controversies, but the Ottoman consulate in Batavia remained in existence until the end of the Ottoman era.

More than ten Ottoman consuls served in Batavia, most of whom were Ottoman diplomats or officials sent to the Dutch East Indies. However, there were also consuls who were appointed temporarily in between substitutions of consuls or when certain consuls were on leave. Some of the temporary consuls were European traders in Batavia or were appointed from another European consulate. The Ottoman Consulate, among other things, played a role in distributing the Holy Qur'an to Muslim residents in the Dutch East Indies and helping to repair local mosques, facilitating several Hadrami children studying in Istanbul, seeking exports and imports of products between the Ottoman and the Dutch East Indies, raising funds for the Hijaz Railway project, assisting the activities of the Batavia and Surabaya branches of the Red Crescent, providing information and rebuttals relating to the First World War, and receiving requests for political intervention. Most of these activities demonstrate the great hopes of the Ottomans and the Muslim community for a mutual revival. Their ultimate hope did not come true, for the Ottoman Empire and its consulate came to an end in the 1920s. However, some of the consulate's contributions have indeed benefited Muslim society, and its initial assistance in education inspired Muslims in the Dutch East Indies to develop it further. Therefore, while the Ottoman Empire collapsed, the Muslim *ummah* endured, and the hope of its revival continued into subsequent generations.

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