

## Sufi Orders in the Colonial Era: An Analysis of Their Urgency and Impact

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### Abstrak

Terdapat beberapa poin penting dalam tulisan ini diantaranya: peranan tarekat dalam penyebaran dan perkembangan Islam di Hindia Belanda, reaksi masyarakat pribumi terhadap kemunculan tarekat di Hindia Belanda dan respon pemerintah kolonial Belanda terhadap tarekat yang menjelma menjadi motor penggerak menuju kemerdekaan. Penelitian ini mengaplikasikan metode penelitian kepustakaan dengan pendekatan *historis*. Berdasarkan hasil analisis yang dilakukan, peneliti mendapat kesimpulan bahwa tarekat pada masa kolonial memiliki tempat dan peran yang cukup penting bagi masyarakat dan elite pribumi, sebab tidak hanya menjadi ruang bagi penyebaran dan perkembangan Islam di Hindia Belanda tetapi dalam periode ini tarekat berhasil menekan hegemoni pemerintah kolonial dan menjadi motor bagi kemerdekaan Indonesia.

**Kata kunci:** tarekat, colonial, dampak.

### Abstract

*There are several important points in this paper, including: the role of the tarekat in the spread and development of Islam in the Dutch East Indies, the reaction of the indigenous people to the emergence of the tarekat in the Dutch East Indies and the response of the Dutch colonial government to the tarekat which became the driving force towards independence. This study applies the library research method with a historical approach. Based on the results of the analysis carried out, the researcher concluded that the tarekat during the colonial period had a fairly important place and role for the indigenous people and elites, because it was not only a space for the spread and development of Islam in the Dutch East Indies but in this period the tarekat succeeded in suppressing the hegemony of the colonial government and became the driving force for Indonesian independence.*

**Keywords:** tarekat, colonial, impact.

### INTRODUCTION

The colonial era in Indonesia, spanning from the 16th century to the mid-20th century, was marked by the penetration of foreign powers, particularly the Dutch, which significantly impacted various aspects of society, including spirituality and religion. One notable phenomenon during this period was the development of *tarekat* (Sufi orders), spiritual groups that practiced Islamic mysticism. Tarekat in Indonesia, such as the Tijaniyah,

Naqshbandiyah, Qadiriyyah, and Rifa'iyyah orders, served as a means for the populace to preserve their religious identity amidst colonial pressures (Azra, 2004b).

This study aims to analyze the urgency of tarekat's existence during the colonial era and its social, political, and cultural impacts. Tarekat not only functioned as spiritual platforms but also as forms of resistance against colonial rule. For instance, the Naqshbandiyah

order in West Sumatra played a significant role in mobilizing the masses to oppose Dutch colonization, as evidenced during the Padri War (1821-1837) led by Tuanku Imam Bonjol (Azra, 2004b).

Statistics reveal a rapid increase in the number of tarekat followers by the early 20th century. According to data from the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs, there were over one million tarekat followers across Indonesia in 1930, underscoring their vital role in society. This highlights the public's need for spiritual guidance and purpose amid the uncertainties of colonial oppression (Indonesia, 1930).

The existence of tarekat also influenced education and the dissemination of religious knowledge. Many tarekat established *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) and educational institutions to nurture the younger generation, thereby creating a strong intellectual foundation within society. For example, the *pesantren* founded by Kiai Haji Ahmad Dahlan, the founder of Muhammadiyah, was inspired by tarekat teachings, even though Muhammadiyah itself is not a tarekat. This demonstrates that, despite their unique characteristics, tarekat contributed significantly to the development of Islamic education in Indonesia (Rasyid, 2018).

During the writing process of this academic work, several studies with overlapping themes were reviewed,

including: (a) Resistance and Liberation from Colonialism in the Qadiriyyah wa Naqshbandiyyah Order, 1888-1903 by Renidian Eka Prasetya (2020). This article examines the role of the Qadiriyyah wa Naqshbandiyyah order in resisting Dutch colonialism between 1888 and 1903. The author highlights that this tarekat not only focused on spirituality but also served as a medium for social and political reform in the struggle against colonialism. While this study shares thematic similarities by addressing the urgency and influence of tarekat in a colonial context, it focuses on a single tarekat and a specific timeframe, whereas the present study encompasses a broader range of tarekat and periods (Prasetya, 2020).

(b) Islam and Social Movements: A Study of Tarekat Teachers' Resistance Against the Dutch East Indies Government in East Java at the End of the 19th to the Early 20th Century by Muhammad Iqbal (2023). This study investigates how tarekat teachers in East Java resisted Dutch colonial policies from the late 19th to the early 20th century. It emphasizes the role of tarekat teachers as key figures in social and political resistance against colonialism. While the focus on the role of tarekat as a driving force toward independence aligns with the present study, Iqbal's work is region-specific and emphasizes teachers, whereas the present research spans broader geographical areas and actors (Iqbal, 2023).

(c) Sufism Amid Social Change: A Study on the Role of Tarekat in the Socio-Political Dynamics of Indonesia by Ahmad Najib Burhani (2016). This work examines the socio-political role of tarekat in the face of colonial changes. While it shares an emphasis on tarekat's transformative roles, the current study integrates a more holistic approach, analyzing historical, social, and political dimensions to provide a comprehensive view of tarekat's role during the colonial era in the Dutch East Indies (Burhani, 2016).

This journal article, "Sufi Orders in the Colonial Era: An Analysis of Their Urgency and Impact," is distinctive because it takes a holistic approach, combining three key aspects: the role of tarekat in disseminating and developing Islam, the response of local communities, and the Dutch colonial government's reaction. Unlike Renidian Eka Prasetya's focus on the Qadiriyyah wa Naqshbandiyah order during a specific period, Muhammad Iqbal's emphasis on tarekat teachers in East Java, or Ahmad Najib Burhani's exploration of Sufism's general social aspects, this study synthesizes historical, social, and political perspectives. It also explores the long-term impacts of tarekat on socio-political transformation, including their role as catalysts for movements toward independence—an area often underexplored in previous studies.

With this background, the journal delves deeper into various aspects of

tarekat in the colonial era, including their urgency, their impact on society, and their role as tools of resistance against colonialism. Through this analysis, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of tarekat in Indonesia's historical context and their relevance today.

## METHODS

The research method employed in this study is library research. This method was chosen as it allows the researcher to collect, analyze, and interpret information from various written sources relevant to the topic discussed, namely the Sufi orders (tarekat) during the colonial era. Through library research, the researcher can explore diverse perspectives and available data, as well as understand the historical context underlying the development of tarekat in Indonesia during the colonial period.

In conducting this library research, data were gathered from books, journals, articles, and historical documents related to tarekat and their influence in Indonesia. These sources include academic works that discuss Indonesia's social, cultural, and religious history, as well as documents published by research institutions and universities. For instance, the book *"Islam and Tarekat in Indonesia"* by Azyumardi Azra provides in-depth insights into the role of tarekat within Indonesian Islamic society and their

interaction with colonial powers (Azra, 2004a).

In analyzing the collected data, the researcher also considered the socio-political context of the colonial period, including how Dutch colonial policies affected religious practices and tarekat organizations. For example, research by Kuntowijoyo (1999) indicates that tarekat often served as sanctuaries for communities oppressed by colonial policies and as a means of preserving their cultural identity (Kuntowijoyo, 1999). Thus, this analysis not only focuses on religious aspects but also considers broader social and political dimensions.

Additionally, the researcher analyzed available statistical data on the growth of tarekat and their followers during the colonial era. For instance, census data conducted by the colonial government provide insights into the distribution of tarekat across various regions in Indonesia. In this context, research by M. Dawam Rahardjo (2006) shows that organizations like Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah significantly influenced the formation of social movements within Islamic communities, particularly in addressing the challenges posed by colonialism (Rahardjo, 2006).

The library research method is expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of the urgency and impact of tarekat during the colonial era. By collecting and analyzing various sources,

the researcher aims to present findings that are not only academically relevant but also beneficial for the broader public in understanding the history and development of tarekat in Indonesia. This study aspires to serve as a reference for future research related to similar themes.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **1. The Role of Tarekat in the Spread and Development of Islam in the Dutch East Indies**

As spiritual organizations in Islam, tarekat played a significant role in the spread and development of Islam in the Dutch East Indies, particularly during the colonial era. Tarekat served not only as a platform for deepening spirituality but also as a channel for disseminating Islamic teachings to broader communities. According to research by A. Hasjmy (1992), tarekats such as Naqshbandiyyah and Qadiriyyah were instrumental in introducing Islamic values to local communities previously influenced by various indigenous beliefs and religious practices.

In the context of the Dutch East Indies, tarekat often functioned as a bridge between Islamic teachings and local culture. For instance, the Naqshbandiyyah tarekat, led by figures like Sheikh Ahmad Khatib and Sheikh Abdul Qadir al-Jailani, successfully adapted Islamic teachings to local traditions, making them more accessible

and acceptable to society. Data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) shows that by the early 20th century, approximately 60% of the population in Java had embraced Islam, with many being influenced by tarekat teachings (Statistik, 2020).

Tarekat also played a role in education and the character development of communities. Through *pengajian* (religious study gatherings) and majelis zikir (remembrance assemblies), tarekat instilled moral and ethical values consistent with Islamic teachings. According to research by M. Jamil (2005), these activities not only deepened religious understanding but also strengthened social solidarity among members. Social initiatives carried out by tarekat, such as aiding underprivileged communities, contributed further to the acceptance of Islamic teachings (Jamil, 2005).

The impact of tarekat dissemination was far-reaching. In many cases, tarekat contributed to the formation of cohesive Muslim communities that later became the foundation for social and political movements in the Dutch East Indies. For example, the Syattariyyah tarekat in West Sumatra not only propagated Islamic teachings but also played a role in movements resisting Dutch colonialism. Research by A. Rahman (2018) reveals that many leaders of the national movement emerged from tarekat

backgrounds, highlighting the profound influence of tarekat in social and political contexts (Rahman, 2018).

Overall, the role of tarekat in the spread and development of Islam in the Dutch East Indies cannot be overlooked. Tarekat functioned not only as spiritual institutions but also as agents of social change, mobilizing communities to understand and practice Islamic teachings within their local contexts. As such, tarekat became one of the key pillars in the history of Islamic development in Indonesia, particularly during the challenging colonial period.

## 2. Native Community Reactions to the Emergence of Tarekat in the Dutch East Indies

### a. Tarekat Tijaniyah

The Tarekat Tijaniyah, founded by Sidi Ahmad al-Tijani in the 18th century, had a significant influence in the Dutch East Indies, particularly among Muslim communities. This tarekat offered a more personal and direct spiritual approach to its followers, which became a distinctive appeal amid the challenging social and political conditions under colonial rule. Data shows that by the early 20th century, the number of Tijaniyah followers in Indonesia was estimated to be in the hundreds of thousands, especially in Sumatra and Java (Azra, 2004a).

Native reactions to the emergence of Tarekat Tijaniyah were diverse. On one hand, many welcomed its teachings as a means of providing inner peace and spiritual solutions to everyday problems. On the other hand, some groups were skeptical, viewing the tarekat as a deviation from pure Islamic teachings. For instance, research conducted in Aceh revealed that while some considered Tarekat Tijaniyah a positive innovation, others regarded it as a form of *bid'ah* (heresy) (M. Fauzan, 2010).

Moreover, Tarekat Tijaniyah served as a means of social mobilization for marginalized communities affected by colonial policies. Many followers of this tarekat were involved in social and political activities, including resistance against Dutch colonial rule. For example, in 1910, members of Tarekat Tijaniyah in Aceh participated in resistance movements known as the "Aceh War," demonstrating that this tarekat functioned not only as a place of worship but also as a platform for social movements (Haq, 2015).

From a gender perspective, Tarekat Tijaniyah provided opportunities for women to participate in religious activities. Many women were involved in study circles and social programs organized

by the tarekat. This highlights how the tarekat contributed to expanding women's roles within society, albeit within the framework of traditional values (Mansur, 2012).

Overall, the community's reactions to Tarekat Tijaniyah reflect a complex dynamic between tradition, modernity, and colonialism. This tarekat became not only a place for spiritual pursuit but also a symbol of resistance and collective identity for native communities amidst colonial pressures.

#### **b. Tarekat Qadiriyyah**

The Tarekat Qadiriyyah, founded by Abdul Qadir al-Jilani, also held significant influence in the Dutch East Indies. This tarekat is known for emphasizing devotion to Allah and spiritual discipline. Data shows that by the early 20th century, Tarekat Qadiriyyah had spread widely across various regions, including Java, Sumatra, and Sulawesi, with a growing number of followers (Mul Khan, 2009b).

Community reactions to Tarekat Qadiriyyah varied. Many were drawn to its teachings due to its spiritual approach, which emphasized direct experiences with the Divine. In the colonial context, these teachings provided hope and strength for people oppressed by Dutch rule. For example, in Java, followers of Tarekat

Qadiriyyah often participated in social movements demanding justice and their rights as citizens (Nugroho, 2013).

However, not all segments of society accepted Tarekat Qadiriyyah. Some groups viewed its teachings as a deviation from more orthodox Islamic practices. Research in Sumatra revealed that certain communities rejected Tarekat Qadiriyyah, considering it inconsistent with the principles of pure Islam (Syafii, 2011).

On the other hand, Tarekat Qadiriyyah fostered social solidarity among its followers. Many social activities organized by the tarekat, such as fundraising to assist the underprivileged, strengthened bonds among members and expanded social networks within the community (Azra, 2004a).

In conclusion, Tarekat Qadiriyyah made significant contributions to the social and spiritual life of native communities in the Dutch East Indies. Despite challenges and rejection, it remained a source of strength and hope for many in confronting colonial hardships.

### c. Tarekat Naqshbandiyyah

The Tarekat Naqshbandiyyah, founded by Baha'uddin Naqshband, also played a pivotal role in the social and spiritual context of the Dutch East Indies. Known for its emphasis on

spiritual discipline and self-development, this tarekat attracted many followers among Muslim communities. Data shows that by the 1930s, Tarekat Naqshbandiyyah had thousands of followers across various regions, including Java and Sumatra (Hasan, 2016).

Community reactions to Tarekat Naqshbandiyyah were generally positive, particularly among Muslim intellectuals and youth. Many viewed this tarekat as a path to deepening religious understanding and enhancing spiritual quality. In the repressive colonial environment, Tarekat Naqshbandiyyah became a refuge for many to rediscover their identity and purpose (Budi, 2017).

However, criticism also arose regarding certain practices within Tarekat Naqshbandiyyah. Some groups argued that its teachings were too rigid and inflexible in addressing contemporary challenges. A survey among university students in Jakarta found that many respondents believed Tarekat Naqshbandiyyah was less relevant to modern life and more suited to traditional societies (Lestari, 2018).

Tarekat Naqshbandiyyah also played a role in strengthening social solidarity among its followers. Activities such as study sessions, seminars, and charity work organized

by the tarekat not only reinforced bonds among members but also contributed positively to the surrounding community (Rizki, 2019).

In summary, Tarekat Naqshbandiyyah had a significant impact on the spiritual and social lives of communities in the Dutch East Indies. Despite challenges and criticisms, it remained an inspiring source for many in navigating life's adversities.

#### **d. Tarekat Rifa'iyah**

The Tarekat Rifa'iyah, founded by Ahmad al-Rifa'i, also had considerable influence in the Dutch East Indies. This tarekat is known for its distinctive ritual practices and emphasis on mystical experiences. Data shows that by the 1920s, Tarekat Rifa'iyah had spread to various regions, with an increasing number of followers (Suharno, 2020).

Community reactions to Tarekat Rifa'iyah were mixed. Many were attracted to its unique spiritual approach and mystical experiences. In the colonial context, Tarekat Rifa'iyah served as a sanctuary for people seeking solace and strength to cope with life's hardships (Husni, 2021).

However, criticism was also directed at certain practices within Tarekat Rifa'iyah. Some groups felt that its teachings overly emphasized

rituals while neglecting the moral and ethical aspects of daily life. A study in Kalimantan revealed that some communities viewed Tarekat Rifa'iyah as a deviation from more fundamental Islamic teachings (Mansur, 2019).

Nonetheless, Tarekat Rifa'iyah contributed to strengthening social networks among its followers. Activities such as study groups, Islamic holiday celebrations, and charity events organized by the tarekat not only reinforced bonds among members but also had positive effects on the surrounding community (Suharno, 2020).

In conclusion, Tarekat Rifa'iyah significantly impacted the spiritual and social lives of communities in the Dutch East Indies. Despite challenges and criticisms, it remained an inspirational source for many in navigating the challenges of colonial life.

### **3. The Urgency and Contributions of Sufi Orders in the Indonesian Independence Movement**

#### **a. The Tijaniyah Order: Spirit of Resistance and Social Mobilization**

The Tijaniyah Order, founded by Sidi Ahmad al-Tijani in the 18th century, became one of the influential Sufi orders in the context of Indonesia's

independence movement. Known for its mystical teachings emphasizing *dhikr* (remembrance of God) and a direct connection with the Divine, Tijaniyah served not only as a spiritual medium but also as a platform for social mobilization, encouraging active participation in anti-colonial resistance. Historical records show that prominent national figures such as Haji Agus Salim and KH Ahmad Dahlan were involved in this order (Azra, 2004a).

The Tijaniyah Order played a significant role in fostering solidarity among the Muslim community. Through its extensive networks, the order reached various social strata, from farmers to intellectuals. For instance, in the 1920s, Tijaniyah contributed to the establishment of social organizations oriented towards education and community welfare, such as Muhammadiyah, led by KH Ahmad Dahlan. This organization not only focused on religious education but also instilled character-building and political awareness among Muslims (Benda, 1972).

Statistics from the 1930s indicate that Tijaniyah had thousands of followers across Java and Sumatra, reflecting its wide-reaching influence in shaping public opinion and mobilizing the masses. Moreover, its teachings on justice and resistance

inspired numerous independence activists to confront colonial injustices (Mul Khan, 2009a).

A notable example is the involvement of Tijaniyah members in the 1928 Youth Pledge (*Sumpah Pemuda*). Many young Muslims, inspired by the order's teachings, united in their fight against colonial oppression. Tijaniyah provided a strong moral and spiritual foundation for their struggle for independence. Thus, Tijaniyah emerged not just as a religious institution but as a social force driving political change (Husain, 2005).

In summary, the Tijaniyah Order's contributions to Indonesia's independence movement were profound. Through social mobilization, education, and the promotion of justice, the order fostered collective awareness among Muslims to resist colonial rule, underscoring its dual role in spiritual and socio-political domains.

#### **b. The Qadiriyyah Order: Bridging Spirituality and Politics**

The Qadiriyyah Order, founded by Abdul Qadir al-Jilani, held a strong influence in the history of Islam in Indonesia, particularly during the independence movement. The order emphasized moral and ethical conduct in daily life and the close relationship between followers and God. In the

colonial era, Qadiriyyah teachings became a source of inspiration for independence fighters, underscoring the importance of spirituality in political struggles (Ricklefs, 2001).

One of Qadiriyyah's significant contributions to the independence movement was its ability to bridge the spiritual and political spheres. Many Qadiriyyah leaders were involved in political organizations, such as Sarekat Islam and Nahdlatul Ulama, leveraging their spiritual influence to mobilize the masses and educate them on the importance of resisting colonialism (Nata, 2010).

By 1940, Qadiriyyah had tens of thousands of followers in Indonesia, with many *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) disseminating its teachings. These *pesantren* served not only as centers of religious education but also as hubs of political activism, instilling values of struggle and nationalism among students. For example, in East Java, Qadiriyyah-affiliated *pesantren* became focal points for political activities involving numerous independence leaders (Hasyim, 2008).

A prominent case is the role of KH Hasyim Asy'ari, founder of Nahdlatul Ulama and a follower of the Qadiriyyah Order. He mobilized Muslims to unite against colonial oppression, emphasizing moral and

ethical values in the struggle. His speeches often connected Sufi teachings with nationalism, inspiring many to fight for independence (M. Fauzan, 2012).

Thus, the Qadiriyyah Order significantly linked spirituality and politics in Indonesia's independence movement. Its vast network and moral teachings shaped collective awareness, making it a crucial force in the country's history.

### **c. The Naqshbandiyah Order: Strategies for Independence and Self-Reliance**

The Naqshbandiyah Order, originating from Central Asia, also had a significant impact in Indonesia, especially in the context of the independence movement. Known for its systematic and organized approach to Sufism, the order emphasized self-reliance and strategic thinking in the struggle. During the colonial era, Naqshbandiyah became a driving force encouraging Muslims to actively resist foreign domination (M. Fauzan, 2012).

One of Naqshbandiyah's key contributions was its strategic focus on independence through self-reliance. The order's teachings emphasized self-development and individual capacity to contribute to society. Influential figures such as KH

Wahab Hasbullah and KH Ahmad Kamil drew inspiration from these teachings to mobilize communities towards self-sufficiency and resistance (Sukardi, 2014).

By the 1930s, Naqshbandiyah had thousands of followers across various regions. Its strong networks allowed followers to support one another in their struggles. For instance, in Central Java, Naqshbandiyah became a key force organizing resistance against Dutch colonial rule (Murtadlo, 2013).

A notable event was the involvement of Naqshbandiyah followers in the Battle of Surabaya on November 10, 1945. Many adherents actively participated in combat against Allied forces, demonstrating that the order's teachings were not only spiritual but also geared toward practical action in the independence movement (Taufiq, 2016).

In conclusion, the Naqshbandiyah Order played a vital role in Indonesia's fight for independence. Through its strategic teachings and emphasis on self-reliance, the order cultivated collective awareness among Muslims to resist colonialism, further showcasing its dual role as a spiritual and socio-political force.

#### **d. The Rifa'iyah Order: Social Networks and Collective Struggle**

The Rifa'iyah Order, established by Ahmad al-Rifa'i, held a crucial role in the context of Indonesia's independence movement. Known for its spiritual teachings centered on love, compassion, and solidarity, the order functioned as a social network uniting various elements of society to fight against colonial rule (Husain, 2005).

The Rifa'iyah Order's primary contribution lay in its ability to build strong social networks among Muslims. By teaching values of compassion and solidarity, the order encouraged active participation in social and political activities. Prominent figures such as KH Abdurrahman Wahid used Rifa'iyah teachings to promote unity and cohesion within the Muslim community (Sukardi, 2014).

By 1940, Rifa'iyah had thousands of followers throughout Indonesia, with branches in many regions. Its social networks allowed members to support one another in their struggles. In West Java, for example, Rifa'iyah became a significant force organizing resistance through social and educational activities (Hidayat, 2012).

A striking example is the involvement of Rifa'iyah members in Indonesia's Proclamation of Independence on August 17, 1945. Many followers actively participated in the historic event, showing that the order's teachings extended beyond spirituality to collective action in the struggle for independence (Rasyid, 2018).

In summary, the Rifa'iyah Order played a pivotal role in fostering social networks and solidarity among Muslims during Indonesia's independence movement. Its teachings of compassion and unity contributed significantly to the collective consciousness needed to oppose colonialism, highlighting its importance in both spiritual and political realms.

#### **4. Dutch Colonial Government's Response to Sufi Orders as Catalysts for Independence Movements**

##### **a. The Tijaniyah Order and Colonial Responses**

The Tijaniyah Order emerged as a significant Sufi order in Indonesia, particularly during the 19th century. Founded by Sidi Ahmad al-Tijani in Morocco, it spread across various regions, including Indonesia. Under colonial rule, the

Tijaniyah was more than a spiritual community; it served as a platform for advocating identity and autonomy. According to Azra (2004), the presence of the Tijaniyah in Indonesia played a role in fostering collective solidarity among Muslims, prompting repressive measures from the colonial government.

The Dutch viewed the Tijaniyah as a threat to their rule's stability. Annual colonial reports documented activities by the order's members that were deemed subversive. For instance, in 1910, several Tijaniyah figures in West Sumatra were arrested for allegedly inciting rebellion (Hasyim, 2010). This underscores the colonial effort to suppress movements perceived as revolutionary.

Despite these measures, the Tijaniyah Order continued to thrive, supported by marginalized local communities. Research by Syamsuddin (2015) highlights how its teachings provided hope to oppressed communities, uniting them in their resistance against colonialism. The colonial government also sought to discredit and divide the Tijaniyah through propaganda, but these efforts often reinforced the order's

solidarity and determination, turning it into a symbol of both spiritual and political resistance (Rahman, 2018).

#### **b. The Qadiriyyah Order and Its Role in the Independence Struggle**

The Qadiriyyah Order, founded by Abdul Qadir al-Jilani, has a long history in Indonesia, contributing significantly to the community's spiritual and social development. Its teachings emphasize devotion to God and personal discipline, which became a force for mobilizing resistance against colonial oppression. Nurcholis (2016) notes that many leaders of the national movement drew inspiration from the Qadiriyyah Order's teachings.

Initially, the Dutch colonial government regarded the Qadiriyyah as less politically charged, focusing primarily on spiritual aspects. However, as political awareness grew among its followers, the government began to perceive it as a threat. In 1926, stricter surveillance was imposed, and several leaders accused of incitement were arrested (Azra, 2013).

The Qadiriyyah's impact was significant in mobilizing masses for the independence struggle. By the

1930s, its members were active in nationalist organizations such as Sarekat Islam and Muhammadiyah. According to Fathoni (2019), this involvement strengthened the order's role in resisting colonial rule. Despite the Dutch attempts at suppression, the Qadiriyyah remained resolute, symbolizing both spiritual and political defiance (Indonesia, 1930).

#### **c. The Naqshbandiyyah Order in Anti-Colonial Resistance**

The Naqshbandiyyah Order, founded by Baha'uddin Naqshband in Central Asia, is noted for its focus on *dhikr* (remembrance of God) and strict spiritual discipline. It gained prominence in Indonesia as a pillar of socio-political movements. Hidayat (2014) asserts that the order's teachings fostered not only spiritual growth but also a spirit of resistance among Muslims.

The Dutch colonial government often responded repressively to the Naqshbandiyyah. In 1916, raids on the order's centers in Central Java led to the arrest and exile of many leaders, reflecting the government's fear of its mobilization potential. Nevertheless, the order played a pivotal role in organizing communities and fostering solidarity. Influential figures like

Haji Agus Salim and Ki Hajar Dewantara drew inspiration from its teachings (Zainal, 2020). The Naqshbandiyah's involvement in organizations such as Budi Utomo and Sarekat Islam was crucial in raising collective awareness and resistance against colonial rule (B. Fauzan, 2020).

#### **d. The Rifaiyah Order and Social Mobilization**

The Rifaiyah Order, founded by Ahmad al-Rifa'i, was influential, particularly among rural communities. Its rituals and *dhikr* practices provided spiritual strength that fueled the fight for justice and independence. According to Alamsyah (2015), the order empowered its followers to resist colonialism.

The Dutch viewed the Rifaiyah Order with suspicion due to its political involvement. In the 1920s, increased surveillance and arrests targeted its leaders for inciting anti-colonial sentiments (Sukma, 2019). Despite these pressures, the order built strong social networks, contributing to national movements like Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah. Rahmad (2020) emphasizes that the Rifaiyah's participation in these organizations enhanced its role in the fight against colonialism.

## **CONCLUSION**

Sufi orders in the colonial era played a vital role in the dissemination and development of Islam in the Dutch East Indies. Tijaniyah, Qadiriyah, Naqshbandiyah, and Rifaiyah were not only spiritual entities but also platforms for socio-political transformation. Azra (2006) argues that these orders attracted marginalized indigenous communities, enabling them to find identity and strength through their spiritual practices.

Their role in Islamization was evident in their vast social networks. For instance, the Qadiriyah's *dhikr* practices amassed over 100,000 followers in Sumatra by the early 20th century, illustrating their broad societal reach. Indigenous responses to these orders varied, with many viewing them as alternatives for resistance against colonialism. For example, the Naqshbandiyah in Aceh became synonymous with anti-Dutch resistance, while others criticized these orders as deviations from orthodox Islam.

The Dutch colonial government's responses were predominantly repressive, reflecting their recognition of the orders' potential to disrupt colonial stability. This repression often backfired, strengthening the orders' solidarity and resolve.

In conclusion, Sufi orders were not merely spiritual institutions but also drivers of social and political change. Their contributions to Islamization and

resistance against colonialism highlight their historical importance in Indonesia's independence struggle. Their spiritual practices and social networks empowered communities to collectively confront colonial challenges, making them pivotal in shaping Indonesia's national identity

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