

The influence of Islamic modernization on Islamic education in Egypt in the early 19th century

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ABSTRACT

Education is essential in the life of a society because, through it, people can learn science and technology. Modernization in Islamic education needs to be carried out to catch up with backwardness in all fields in Egypt. This article aims to describe the history of Islam and the modernization of Islamic education in Egypt. Starting from modern ideas from the West brought by the colonizing nation, Egypt was able to rise from adversity and catch up by giving birth to modern reformers. Reforms in education made Al Azhar a leading center for studies in the Middle East.

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1. Introduction

The term modern period is characterized by the emergence of the industrial revolution in the 18th century AD (1789-1799 AD) in France which had a major impact on social, political, economic and scientific progress in the Western world (Anshary & Haisy, 2023). On the other hand, in the Eastern (Islamic) world, there has been a very significant decline in social, political, economic and scientific life since the collapse of the Abbasid power (750-1258 AD) which was destroyed by the Mongol army led by Hulagu Khan (1217-1265 AD), grandson of Genghis Khan (1162/1167-1227 AD) (Anshary & Haisy, 2023) and the Umayyads in Andalusia in the 15th century which was caused by conflict between Muslims themselves who wanted to become rulers, thus giving Christian forces the opportunity to rise and unite to seize power. Islamic kingdom (Refileli, 2017).

Three large Islamic empires were quite advanced, namely the Ottoman Empire in Turkey, the Safavid Empire in Persia, and the Mughal Empire in India (Abubakar, 2020), but did not have a significant influence on the Islamic world as a whole because wars often occurred to control certain powers. Seeing the conditions mentioned above, in the 19th century AD Islamic renewal movements and ideas emerged from several Islamic figures to respond to the crisis faced by the people since the century of decline. This crisis includes the scientific, political, economic, social and cultural setbacks experienced by the Islamic world as a result of Western colonialism and imperialism. Muslims feel left behind and threatened by the domination of the more advanced and stronger West. Apart from that, Muslims also face internal problems such as sectarian conflicts, madhhab fanaticism, deviation from the creed, and neglect of *ijtihad-ijtihad*. To overcome this crisis, Muslims need reforms that can revitalize their potential and strength.

The reform in question is not just administrative or structural reform, but also intellectual and spiritual reform that can raise awareness and the spirit of Islam. Reform must also be able to integrate Islamic values with the realities of the times without sacrificing its basic principles. The emergence of Islamic reform movements and figures has become an important part of the development of Islamic education in the modern period.

This article will discuss the influence of Islamic modernization on education in Egypt in the early 19th century. In addition, this article will analyze the concept of Islamic education as applied by reforming Egyptian figures which made Egypt a center of science in the Middle East.

2. Method

This research method is a historical method using a literature review. This review takes readings from books and articles from journals. These writings were analyzed and adapted to the topic of discussion of this research and presented in descriptive form.

3. Result and Discussion

The success of Europeans in all fields made Islamic society rise from its downturn. In Egypt, the presence of Napoleon Bonaparte, the French conqueror of Egypt, not only brought major changes in politics, but also in education. Napoleon Bonaparte, who entered Egypt in 1798, brought brilliant ideas such as a republican system of government, egalite (equal rights in government and the spirit of nationalism (Nasution in (Anshary & Haisy, 2023).

The conquest of Egypt under Bonaparte's rule changed the mindset of Egyptian society to rise. The condition of Egyptian society at that time was very backward due to the struggle for power so that science was neglected. Almost all fields in Egypt fell, especially in the field of education. A number of universities are still operating in deplorable conditions and teaching has stopped (Sottadard in (Anshary & Haisy, 2023). This is very different from conditions in European countries which are full of light and science.

Apart from bringing new ideas to Egyptian society, such as in the fields of politics and government, Bonaparte also raised the spirit of rationalism in the fields of science and technology. He brought a number of military troops, a number of civilians including scientists in the fields of physics, mathematics, literature and economics and two sets of printing presses with Latin, Arabic and Greek letters and research experiment tools (Anshary & Haisy, 2023; Supradi, 2020). The fundamental change in the modernization of Islam in Egypt is the renewal of the thinking system, and efforts to build a collegial spirit to apply the Islamic teachings that have been studied and not focus on religious dogmas (Karo, 2017). Bonaparte's success in organizing Egypt has created Egyptian thinkers such as Muhammad Ali Pasha, Rifa'ah Badawi at-Tahtawi, Jamaluddin al-Afgani, Muhammad Abduh, etc. to continue to innovate and reform in Egypt.

1. The Influence of Reform on Islamic Education in Egypt

Colonization did not always have a negative impact on the colonized country. Egypt under French colonialism led by Bonaparte provided positive things for the development of science and technology for Egypt. According to Supradi (2020) Islamic modernization in Egypt has opened the eyes of Egyptians to the outside world. Islam is no longer known as what they have been living for so long. Apart from that, the culture, science and military strength of the Mamluk kingdom which controlled Egypt were not comparable to the strength and knowledge possessed by France. This made Egypt wake up from its sleep to catch up.

The decline experienced by Egypt was caused by several factors. An Egyptian reformer, Sayyid Jamaluddin Al-Afghani, said that Muslims in Egypt were left behind

because Muslims no longer understood the teachings of qada and qadar according to their true meaning (Abubakar, 2020; Supradi, 2020). According to Al Afghani, a reform figure, the understanding that leads Muslims to apathy needs to be reinterpreted so that Muslims are more dynamic and progressive (Anshary & Haisy, 2023). Apart from that, the spread of the concept of taqlid among Muslims has caused them to become apathetic. The shackles of taqlid attitudes among ulama make Muslims closed to carrying out ijhtihad, even though the door to ijhtihad is always open so that rational ideas and attitudes based on religious norms can develop better (Anshary & Haisy, 2023).

Apart from that, the decline of Islam was also caused by the Islamic state being controlled by the West and consisting of small countries. Al Afghani assured that Muslim unity must be built in the spirit of Pan-Islamism. This idea is intended to make Muslims care about Muslims in other countries. Islam will be united based on the solidarity of the faith in order to establish harmonious relations including Sunnis and Shiites (Anshary & Haisy, 2023). Building a democratic country is something that can change the minds of the Egyptian people. The elimination of despotism can reduce the full power of the king or ruler in an autocratic government (Anshary & Haisy, 2023).

Although Al Afghani opposed colonialism in Egypt, he encouraged Egyptians to learn from Western countries. Muslims must unite by studying the things that make Western countries developed. The success of Western countries in all fields is because they master technology and science (Anshary & Haisy, 2023). Muslims must learn so that the glory of Islam can be reclaimed from the classical period. The above factors made Egyptian thinkers to solve it. Various efforts have been made, such as uniting the Islamic community by reconciling the differences between them and Muslims must return to their religion better (Supradi, 2020).

2. The concept of Islamic education in Egypt

Science and technology are one of the reform ideas targeted in Egypt. Several Egyptian thinkers such as Muhammad Ali Pasha, Al Tahtawi, Jamaluddin Al Afghani and Muuhammad Abduh, etc. changed the concept of traditional education to a modern one. Some concepts of Islamic education in Egypt are:

a. Modern Schools.

One of the Egyptian reformers who initiated the idea of establishing a modern school at that time was Muhammad Ali Pasha. Even though he was illiterate, he tried to improve the quality of education by establishing a ministry of education and building modern schools (Anshary & Haisy, 2023). The first school to be established was a military school (Supradi, 2020), followed by technical, pharmacist, agricultural and translation schools with teachers from the west.

The education system is divided into two, namely the traditional and modern secular education systems which are implemented separately. The traditional education system is focused on madrasas and studying religious knowledge, while modern secular schools teach science other than religion in the form of vocational schools so that graduates from this education system are different (Ihsan, 2007). Muhammad Ali Pasha focuses on coaching and developing teachers, students and reading materials (Anshary & Haisy, 2023). Teachers are taken from abroad who can speak Arabic and translators are provided for those who cannot speak Arabic. Apart from that, students were given incentives to want to study and they were sent abroad to study engineering, military, shipbuilding and printing sciences and when they returned to Egypt they could practice their knowledge in Egypt. The countries they went to were England, France, Italy and Austria (Anshary & Haisy, 2023; Karo, 2017).

b. Translating books.

One of the things that Pasha emphasized was reading material for students in Egypt. Students who have returned from abroad must translate the books into Arabic. This idea of reform was also continued by other Egyptian reformers such as Rifa'ah Badawi Rafi' al-Tahtawi by establishing a translation school. At Tahtawi focuses himself on translating books in the fields of history, mining, morals and customs, earth sciences, engineering, human rights and physical health (Supradi, 2020).

c. Schools for Women

At Tahtawi gives full attention to education. According to him, basic education must be universal for all groups and secondary education must be of high quality (Anshary & Haisy, 2023). In addition, education is also wide open to women. Women must be given the widest possible access to study so that they can accompany their husbands in intellectual and social life and can work together with men according to their abilities (Anshary & Haisy, 2023; Supradi, 2020) and can educate their children (Karo, 2017). Women's education as the emancipation of women in Egypt is makruh as exemplified by the Prophet to his wife Aisyah and Hafsa who were good at reading and (Anshary & Haisy, 2023; Supradi, 2020).

The aim of education according to at-Tahtawi is not only to teach knowledge, but to form a sense of personality and to form Egyptian patriotism (Anshary & Haisy, 2023; Habibi, 2018). Anshary and Haisy (2023) argue that patriotism is a principle that supports society to have a good civilization. This attitude of patriotism also fosters an attitude of brotherhood, whether brotherhood among one religion or brotherhood within one country.

d. Reform of Educational Systems and Institutions

Education during the era of Islamic renewal emphasized dualism education. Separate traditional and modern secular education. Muhammad Abduh, an Egyptian reformer at that time opposed and abolished educational dualism. Education in madrasas must include scientific education in addition to religious education. Meanwhile, education in modern schools must also include religious studies. Science is based on natural law or sunatullah and does not conflict with religious law (Anshary & Haisy, 2023; Arikarani, 2019; Habibi, 2018; Karo, 2017).

e. Reform curriculum reform

Educational reform in the educational curriculum colors education at Al Azhar University. Al Azhar University not only teaches religious knowledge, but also teaches philosophy, theology, logic and science. Muhammad Abduh's thoughts are very well-founded because universities are the heart of science in Egypt (Anshary & Haisy, 2023). Ijtihad must continue in accordance with the Qur'an and hadith and close the door to taqlid.

Modernization of education at Al Azhar is realized by changing the educational curriculum. The Idarat al-Azhar Council (administrative council) formulates the learning period and curriculum at AL Azhar. School is divided into two periods, namely 8 years for primary education and 12 years for secondary-higher education. The curriculum is divided into two classes, namely al-'Ulum al-Manqulah (religious studies) and al 'Ulum alMa'qulah (general studies). Primary (ibtidaiyyah) and secondary (tsanawiyyah) education focuses on sharia science and Arabic, while higher education emphasizes other sciences. Only certain faculties such as the Ushuluddin, Shari'ah and Arabic language faculties provided Shari'ah and Arabic (Habibi, 2018). In addition, Arikarani (2019) emphasized that the curriculum is made according to students' needs so that when they graduate, students can carry out their

duties by religious demands. To fulfill this, vocational schools were formed (Pohan, 2019). Muhammad Abduh's thoughts influenced the development of education in Egypt.

f. Incorporate rationalism

Muhammad Abduh's struggle was continued by his student, Rasyid Ridha. The first thing he did was to publish the al-Manar magazine which was the same as 'Urwah al-Wusqa as a media for reform in the fields of religion, social, economic, political and educational (Tambak, 2016). Furthermore, so that Muslims avoid backwardness, Rasyid Ridha changed the ideology of heresy and fatalism to a dynamic and active ideology (Anshary & Haisy, 2023) as a result, they realize that they determine the progress of their own lives (Tambak, 2016). The door to ijihad is opened as wide as possible and we are trying to eradicate the door to taqlid by learning from the West. Science from the West must be reclaimed as was achieved by Islam in classical times. To support this, Rashid Ridha asked his teacher, Muhammad Abduh, to interpret the Qur'an in a modern way (Tambak, 2016).

In the field of education, Rasyid Ridha added a modern curriculum at Al Azhar. The subject matter included is theology, moral education, sociology, earth sciences, history, economics, arithmetic, health sciences, foreign languages and the science of managing a household, namely in addition to fiqh, tafsir, hadith and others (Anshary & Haisy, 2023; Tambak, 2016). Ridha believes that building educational institutions is more important than building mosques in terms of their function, because education can eradicate ignorance so that prosperity in the world and the hereafter can be achieved (Anshary & Haisy, 2023; Tambak, 2016).

4. Conclusion

The renewal of ideas in the world of Islamic education in Egypt has brought its own blessings to Egyptian society. Even though they were colonized by France, Bonaparte's ideas made Egyptian society open to science and emerge from a life of fatalism, simplisiticity, heresy and taqlid and become a dynamic and active society. The birth of Egyptian figures such as Muhammad Ali Pasha, Rifa'ah Badawi at-Tahtawi, Jamaluddin al-Afgani, Muhammad Abduh and Rasyid Ridha in the early 19th century has made Al Azhar the center of world education in the Middle East. Education is no longer delivered traditionally, but is managed in a modern way by producing thinkers and students who are universally competent in their fields, both men and women.

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