



Sheikh Abdul Wahid; Strategy and Contribution to The Establishment of The Buton Sultanate in The 16th Century

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ABSTRACT

The propagation of Islam by Sheikh Abdul Wahid in the kingdom of Buton had the same peculiarity as the spread of Islam in other regions, namely the use of magic. This paper is a historical analysis of Sheikh Abdul Wahid's Islamization of the Kingdom of Buton in the sixteenth century AD. This researcher employs the historical research method's four phases: heuristics, source critique, interpretation, and historiography. The findings indicated that Islamization of the Buton Kingdom began in the sixteenth century AD. This process of Islamization occurred fast and without conflict because the Sufi priests who carried out Islamization in the kingdom of Buton were neither radical nor heroic. Rather, their goal was to inculcate the Islamic faith in society. The acceptance of Islam in the kingdom of Buton followed a top-down model, with the elite class accepting Islam first, followed by the development and acceptance of Islam by the lower classes of society.

1. Introduction

The initial step on the path to Islamization through trade is contact with outsiders who conduct trading links with the archipelago (Burhanudin, 2018). In Islam, there is no distinction between a merchant and his faith, and it is a Muslim's obligation to impart the teachings of Islam to others, hence trading is one of the most profitable paths of Islamization (Karan, 2018).

The Buton kingdom became a sultanate during the reign of the sixth king, La Kilaponto or King Murhum (1491-1537) (Tim Editor Tribun Timur, 2021). There are various perspectives on the introduction and development of Islam in Buton (Alifudin et al., 2020). First, the notion that the Bone sultanate in South Sulawesi was responsible for the expansion of Islam in Buton (Peacock, 2001).

In 1412 H., a Middle Eastern priest named Sayyid Jamaluddin al-Kubra introduced the notion that Islamic doctrines had infiltrated Buton. Sheikh Abdul Wahid bin Syarif Sulaiman al-Fathani of Johor then continued, successfully converting King Marhum to Islam (Said, 2017). Sultan Zainal Abidin presented the notion that the teachings of Islam in Buton originated in the Sultanate of Ternate (Fatgehipon & Utomo, 2020).



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In the region of the Sultanate of Buton, Islam is rapidly expanding, and its teachings are extensively followed by both the government and the populace. The laws and regulations of the Sultanate of Buton are referred to as Murtabat Tujuh, which has strong ties to Sufism (Rosdin, 2015a). This statute formalizes the sultanate's duties, activities, and posts. During the reign of the sixth King of Buton, Timbang Timbangan or Lakilaponto or Halu Oleo, the kingdom of Buton formally became an Islamic country. Your Majesty was converted to Islam by the Johor-born Sheikh Abdul Wahid bin Syarif Sulaiman al-Fathani ([Faharudin et al., 2020](#)).

Sheikh Abdul Wahid bin Syarif Sulaiman al-Fathani reportedly resided in Johor prior to his arrival in Buton. The couple then relocated to Adonara (East Nusa Tenggara). Then, he and his family relocated to the Buton-governed Upper Batu Island. On the Upper Batu Island, Buton, Sheikh Abdul Wahid bin Syarif Sulaiman al-Fathani met Imam Pasai who was returning from Maluku to Pasai (Aceh). Sheikh Abdul Wahid bin Syarif Sulaiman al-Fathani was encouraged by Imam Pasai to travel to Buton Island to confront the King of Buton ([Rijaal, 2020](#)).

Sheikh Abdul Wahid agreed with this excellent proposal. After the King of Buton adopted Islam in 948 H/1538 AD, Sheikh Abdul Wahid instantly anointed His Majesty Sultan of Buton. Other sources assert that Sheikh Abdul Wahid migrated from Patani-Johor to Buton in 1564 A.D., hence the year is still contested.

Hasaruddin, ([Hasaruddin et al., 2019](#)) chairman of the Archipelago Manuscript Society (Manassa) Buton, explained that a preacher named Sheikh Jalaluddin al Qubra introduced Islam to the Butonese population in 1412 AD, based on historical evidence. It is thought that his da'wah was the initial wave to introduce Islam to the Buton region.

The second wave was introduced by Sheikh Abdul Wahid in 1527 A.D. or 933 Hijriyah, the same year he departed the Buton region before returning in 948 Hijri. According to him, the second entrance of Sheikh Abdul Wahid simultaneously transformed the Buton Kingdom into the Buton Sultanate. Since then, Islam in the Sultanate of Buton has become increasingly established and sophisticated ([Rijaal, 2020](#)).

Before Buton became a sultanate, it existed as a kingdom. The first King of Buton was named Wa Kaa Kaa, and the second King was named Bulawambona; both were women. Bancapatola, also known as Bataraguru, was the third king, who held the title of Bataraguru. The fourth king's name was Tua Rade, whereas the fifth king's name was Mulae ([Ochtaviani, 2017](#)).

The sixth ruler of the Kingdom of Buton was identified as La Kilaponto or Timbang Timbaga. The sixth king established the Buton Sultanate as its first sultan. People recognize him by his title, Sultan Murhum Kaimuddin Khalifatul Khamis.

Hasaruddin ([Hasaruddin et al., 2019](#)) stated that after Islam invaded Buton, the native inhabitants understood the fundamentals of the faith. Some of them reached the level of Sufism in their understanding of Islam. Then, the Buton-based intellectuals or Islamic intellectuals took the initiative to spread Islamic teachings throughout the region.

Sultan Halu Oleo, who held the titles Sultan or Ulil Amri and Sultan Qaimuddin, is regarded as the first Sultan of Buton. This term refers to the Founding Power of Islam. In another account, the person who inaugurated the Sultan of Buton ([Melamba & Hafsa, 2014](#)), who was the first to convert to Islam, was not Sheikh Abdul Wahid, but rather his teacher from Patani who had been sent there on purpose. After being anointed the first Sultan of the Islamic Kingdom of Buton, King Halu Oleo was given the title Sultan Murhum.

When the IV International Archipelago Manuscript Symposium was held 18-20 July 2000 in Pekanbaru, Riau, one of the working papers delivered by La Niampe, who is from Buton, examined numerous features of the language. The following are the outcomes of my interview with him:

"In 933 H/1526 AD, Sheikh Abdul Wahid initially arrived in Buton. In 948 H/1541 AD, Sheikh Abdul Wahid returned to Buton for the second time"

The second arrival of Sheikh Abdul Wahid at Buton, in the year 948 H/1541 AD, was accompanied by his instructor, Imam Fathani. Then, there was a massive migration to the Buton Sultanate Palace, and Sultan Murhum was inaugurated as the first Sultan of Buton.

2. Research Method

The types of research employed in this study include qualitative research and library research. Qualitative research is a method of inquiry that stresses the pursuit of meaning. This form of inquiry is a historical investigation into past events. This paper's references are drawn from library books, archives, and periodicals.

1. Heuristic

Several stages must be completed during the research procedure, including the research method. The research method involves various components, including heuristics. Heuristics is a technique used in the research process to collect data pertinent to the topic under study.

2. Source validation

Source validation is a phase in which the collected data is filtered and then examined. From this data, the author will verify and critique the data based on historical facts.

3. Interpretation

At the stage of writing history, the third element of the writing process is termed interpretation. In this section, historical researchers play a crucial role, since the writer will evaluate and compare the gathered data before interpreting it. At this point, the author employs the following technique:

a. The inductive process, which proceeds from the particular to the general, entails analyzing the evidence received from the particular and then drawing generalizations.

b. Deductive approach, this method is drawing conclusions from general to specific, which means the author analyzes broad data and then derives specific conclusions.

4. Historiography

Historiography is the final step in the writing process. It is the process of compiling scientific data that have been gathered and selected to generate an Islamic historical writing style. The written results of historical research can be presented or read, as well as employed as a data source for further study.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. The islamization process of the kingdom of Buton

In the context of the spread of Islam, historians present a variety of hypotheses regarding the process of Islamization in various archipelagic regions ([Feener et al., 2021](#)). There are six theories of Islamization in Nusantara ([Salapudin et al., 2021](#)), the first being that Islam entered the archipelago via the commercial route. Second, local aristocratic merchants, politicians, and scholars involved in trade, such as Shabandar, married members of the local population in order to promote Islam. Third, competition between Muslims and Christians increased the spread of Islam in diverse places, particularly from the ninth century to the fifteenth century and from the eleventh century to the seventeenth century. Fourthly, favorable political situations prompted the conversion to Islam. Conversion is primarily influenced by Islamic philosophy that is appealing and compatible with the sociocultural surroundings of the people of the archipelago. Sixth, there is the Sufi and tarekat influence, which is the primary attraction for conversion.

Islam did not arrive simultaneously in diverse places of the archipelago ([Ibrahim, 2018](#)). When Islam arrived, the political and social conditions of each kingdom were always distinct. In the 7th and 8th centuries A.D., as the Srivijaya kingdom grew in strength, Muslim traders began to transit via the Malacca Straits on route to Southeast Asian and East Asian kingdoms.

Because the island of Buton is located on the trade route between Makassar and Maluku, it came into touch with Muslim traders who brought Islam to the island ([Mendez et al., 2010](#)). Then, a preacher by the name of Abdul Wahid arrived from the Malay peninsula and campaigned to spread Islam in Buton.

During the reign of the sixth king of Buton, Lakilaponto, the kingdom of Buton formally became the Sultanate of Buton in the sixteenth century. The conversion of the king to Islam was accomplished by Sheikh Abdul Wahid. According to multiple accounts, Sheikh Abdul Wahid bin Syarif Sulaiman al-Fathani resided in Johor prior to his arrival in Buton. The couple then relocated to Adonara (East Nusa Tenggara). His family relocated to the island of Batu Gatas, which was administered by the Buton Kingdom ([Hasanuddin, 2020](#)).

Sheikh Abdul Wahid visited Imam Pasai, who had recently returned from Maluku to Pasai, on the island of Batu Gatas (Aceh). Sheikh Abdul Wahid was encouraged by Imam Pasai to travel to the island of Buton to confront its monarch. Sheikh Abdul Wahid subsequently agreed with the recommendation. After the sixth king of Buton, Lakilaponto, converted to Islam. In 948 H/1542 AD, he was instantly crowned the first sultan of Buton by Sheikh Abdul Wahid.

In an effort to advance Islam in Buton, the sultan of Lakilaponto adapted the principles of Islam to the structure and system of Buton's governance. What was the initial form of government between a kingdom and a sultanate? After the country became a sultanate, the king assumed the title of sultan. The Sultanate led by Lakilaponto was known as Sultan Qaimudin Khalifatul Khamiz, and it was renamed "Murhum" after his death. During the

reign of Sultan Qaimuddin, Islam's development was defined by its impact in a variety of political, economic, and sociocultural spheres ([Rosdin, 2015b](#)).

In his endeavors to propagate Islam, Sultan Qaimuddin also built the Kaliwu-Liwuto Mosque. This mosque has the name of its founding location. This mosque served as the focal point for Islamic broadcast festivities and the coronation of Buton's sultan.

The effect of Islam in politics during the reign of Sultan Qaimuddin was to modify the provisions of his palace in accordance with Islamic law; this became the motto of the Sultanate and the foundation for the Sultan's authority over the government. This viewpoint is ([Purwanto, 2016](#)):

1. *Bolimo arata samanamo karo* (No need for treasures, the important thing is safe);
2. *Bolimo karo somano lipu* (No need for self as long as the country is safe);
3. *Bolimo lipu somano agama* (No need for self as long as religion is alive).

During the reign of Sultan Qaimuddin, the Great Mosque of Keraton Buton appointed three teachers/ Imams with the following titles:

1. *Ngaji king Sangia Manuru* was named Imam of the Mosque with the title Wa Ero-Ero;
2. *Ngaji king Sangia Yi Tete* with the title of king of Sangia becomes Na'ib Imam, i.e., if the imam of the Ngaji Body of Sangia Manuru Mosque is elderly or unable to attend the mosque during prayer, Ngaji king of Sangia Yi Tete replaces him as Imam of Prayer;
3. *Labe Pangulu* is a teacher/priest who is tasked with traveling throughout the Sultanate of Buton's domain to teach Islamic law.

Islamic law was applied by modifying the Sultanate of Buton's circumstances as follows ([Purwanto, 2016](#)): Pulanga desires that after the first sultan dies, his sons who have been nominated by the sultan himself have the right to succeed him. The major issue is that the murderer must be slain, and he must also be stabbed in accordance with his deeds.

For those who violate the rights of others, such as raping another person's wife, the culprits are placed half-alive in front of the mosque and stoned without favoritism by each *muqim* (local people), or each person is struck with a heavy stone until he dies. After committing a hundred rapes against a girl or widow in the village, the culprit felt relieved. The finger of a thief is severed.



Figure: Map of the Kingdom/Sultanate of Buton

3.2. The model of acceptance of islam in the kingdom of Buton

The adoption of Islam in various sections of the archipelago followed two distinct trends (Alifudin et al., 2020). First, the Islam is accepted by the lower classes or common people, and then it evolves and is embraced by the upper classes, the governing elite, or royal officials. This initial design is referred to as the bottom up. Second, the ruling elite of the kingdom was the first to accept Islam, which was subsequently institutionalized and nurtured until it was accepted by the common people. This design is referred to as top down. The adoption of Islam in the Buton Kingdom followed a top-down pattern, beginning with Timbang-Timbangan, the sixth monarch of the Buton Kingdom, who converted to Islam in 948 H/1511 AD and assumed the title of sultan Kaimuddin. Islam became the official religion of the country after the monarch of Buton converted to Islam and was crowned sultan, followed by royal officials. The Buton people and places under the sovereignty of the Buton Kingdom thereafter converted to Islam in accordance with the royal faith. This occurred because to the people's submission and obedience to their king.

The propagator of Islam makes numerous attempts to disseminate and expand Islam in Buton (Pelras, 1985), including:

1. The propagation of Islam via a conventional strategy

The scholars who promote Islam and establish Islamic da'wah in a region constantly take into account the local customs. *Pobinci-binciki Kuli* consists of four parts: a. *Pomamasiaka*, which means caring for one another; b. *Poangka-angkataka*, which means mutual

respect; c. *Popia-piara*, which means caring for one another; and d. *Pomae-maeka*, which means shame when committing immoral acts ([Mahrudin, 2014](#)).

Islam did not enter the archipelago in a cultural void. Islam entering every region of the archipelago has discovered that each region already has its own culture or tradition; therefore, Islamic broadcasters entering a region must be able to integrate Islamic features into the culture or tradition that has already evolved. Using this technique, the community can readily adopt Islamic da'wah ([Safei, 2021](#)).

This cultural approach is taken because the Butonese community has combined Islamic principles and customs to the point where they cannot be separated, since Islamic law has been incorporated with customary law ([Aziz et al., 2020](#)). In regions where Islamic law has become customary law, however, this law is not recognized. As in the Buton Kingdom region, there is a traditional law of stoning individuals found guilty of adultery in the presence of witnesses in line with the requirements of the Qur'an, and the law of amputation for thieves. Alongside the palace of the king of Buton is a stone that is still used for stoning and slashing the hands of individuals. According to him, the Dutch government did not wish to acknowledge customary law since it violated the Dutch East Indies government's great regard for human rights.

2. Islam's propagation through diplomacy or discourse

Before the introduction and acceptance of Islam by the kings, intellectuals who disseminated Islam in Buton engaged in discourse or diplomatic attempts. Prior to his conversion to Islam, the king of Lakilaponto held regular question-and-answer sessions with Abdul Wahid. The morality and demeanor exhibited by Abdul Wahid during the question-and-answer session captivated the king, who did not hesitate to accept and convert to Islam.

When the monarch of Lakilaponto met Sheikh Abdul Wahid for diplomatic purposes, he was captivated by the Sheikh's speech, personality, and conduct. At the time of the dawn prayer, Sheikh Abdul Wahid typically recited Surah AR-Rahman in the first rak'ah and Surah Al-Ghasiyah in the second rak'ah with a voice that charmed the king's heart.

3. The spread of Islam through supernatural means

The magical sciences acquired by scholars who propagate Islam are always superior to the knowledge owned by monarchs and other charismatic individuals in the country. Therefore, kings invariably concede defeat and desire Islam conversion. In other words, the monarchs were willing to convert to Islam or become its followers and were eager to learn from the ulama about many topics. This is evidenced by the fact that when Haji Pada arrived in the Wabula region, he was able to smoke on the seafloor without putting out the fire. In addition, he can pray while standing on the reeds. This knowledge's enchantment then convinced the king and the populace to convert to Islam.

As a method of da'wah, Islamic propagandists utilize magic to advance Islamic doctrine. This is evidenced by the fact that Haji Pada displayed his knowledge by smoking

on the seafloor, yet interestingly, the fire did not die or go out. For the residents of Wabula, Buton, Haji Pada's feats of magic have become an inherited legend.

4. The Spread of Islam during the Life Cycle

One of the attempts undertaken by the syara' institution to increase people's belief in and affection for Islam is the performance of religious rites throughout the entire life cycle, from birth to death. Since the advent of Islam in Buton, religious rituals associated with the cycle of life have been maintained and practiced to the present day. This is evidenced by the celebrations of Pidoano Kuri in Wabula, Pigandaa in Karyaa Baru, and Kande-Kandea in Tolandone.

Religious ceremonies pertaining to the home are still observed and fiercely enforced by the Butonese, particularly in rural areas. Typical religious ceremonies consist of customs for constructing a new home or relocating. Every community that constructs a new home or relocates always has a religious ceremony by inviting the priest (lebe) to read a prayer before building begins.

5. Islamic propagation through marriage

Marriages between Islam-spreading clerics and the offspring or families of businesspeople or kings are one of the methods used to spread Islam in Buton. With this marriage, Islam's acceptance and development within the Butonese community grows.

In the context of the promotion of Islam through marriage, one of Sheikh Abdul Wahid's methods when he was accepted in Buton was to increase his position in the da'wah by employing the marriage technique. The marriages of his sons Nyai Hibah and Nyai Pulan to officials of the Sultanate of Buton are evidence of this. When Sheikh Abdul Wahid's child gave birth, if a girl was born, she was given the name Wa Ode and if a boy was born, he gave him the name La Ode, with the expectation that he would eventually establish Islamic teachings in Buton according to Sheikh Abdul Wahid's teachings.

In contrast to other regions in South Sulawesi, the traditional approach, magic, diplomacy or discourse, and the life cycle were used to promote Islam in Buton ([Bosra, 2020](#)). The role of the tarekat cannot be isolated from the evolution of Islam in the archipelago. Islam evolves in particular societies through a sequence of tarekat teachings created by instructors or tarekat adherents with a relatively high level of religious understanding and experience, in the sense that they have generally practiced their religious beliefs. The Islamization of a number of communities in the archipelago was significantly influenced by this method of Islam's propagation.

The presence of tarekat teachers was a significant component in the process of Islamization and the establishment of Islamic communities in Indonesia, particularly from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries ([Bruinessen, 1994](#)).

In addition to the tarekat strategy, education is an effective method of advancing Islam. The first Islamic da'wah movement in Indonesia did not immediately demolish the existing

education system, but it did imbue it with an Islamic tint ([Sulaeman, 2017](#)). Thus, the institution's shape remains unchanged, but its contents have changed.

Through educational institutions or institutions, the expansion and growth of Islamic teachings in the country of Buton is also achieved. At the end of the sultanate, in the late 17th century AD or during the reign of Sultan La Jampi, educational institutions were built in Buton (1763-1788 AD). In the history of Buton, at least some *zawiyah* served as a location or vehicle for the advancement of religious knowledge, particularly in the science of Sufism. Among them are *Zawiyah Muhammad Umar*, *Zawiyah Muhammad Idrus Qaimuddin*, and *Zawiyah Kinepulu Bula*.

4. Conclusion

Buton is among the major islands lying south or southeast of the Southeast Sulawesi peninsula. The island of Buton in Southeast Sulawesi is home to the Buton monarchy. Wolio serves as the seat of government for the kingdom of Buton. The Wolio region is comprised of numerous islands and is bordered by mountains, forests, and the ocean. Kabaena Island, Muna Island, Wowoni Island, and the Wakatobi Archipelago surround Buton Island (Wanci, Kaledupa, Tomia, Binongko). These islands are located in the southern portion of the island of Buton and are part of its territory, along with other small islands such as Tikola Island, Tobeya Island, Kadatua Island, Makassar Island, Batauga, Masiri, Siompu, and Talaga, as well as the Poleang and Rumbia regions located at the southwestern tip of Southeast Sulawesi. The Buton kingdom was created around the year 1332. The Buton kingdom is comprised of four *Limbo* (*Gundu-gundu*, *Barangkatopa*, *Peropa*, and *Baluwu*) and a number of smaller kingdoms, such *Tobe-tobe*, *Kamaru*, *Wabula*, *Todanga*, and *Battuga*. At that time, these minor kingdoms chose a lady named *Wakaka* to be the kingdom's first ruler. Prior to adopting Islam, Buton adhered to Animism and Dynamism, and they were also inspired by the Hindu-Buddhist faiths of Majapahit.

The process of Islamization in the Kingdom of Buton occurred peacefully since the spread of Islam in the Buton Kingdom was not the result of territorial conquest. The adoption of Islam in the Buton Kingdom followed a top-down pattern, beginning with *Timbang-Timbangan*, the sixth monarch of the Buton Kingdom, who converted to Islam in 948 H/1511 AD and assumed the title of sultan *Kaimuddin*. *Sheikh Abdul Wahid* was responsible for converting the king to Islam. The spread of Islam in Buton cannot be distinguished from the elements that facilitate the spread of Islam in Buton and those that impede the spread of Islam in the archipelago. The intervention of the royal rulers, especially the sultan who had proclaimed Islam the official religion of the realm, contributed to the development of Islam in Buton. And one of the causes preventing the expansion of Islam in Buton is the political power of the Dutch East Indies, which has resulted in Islam in Buton being restricted to instruction and not being reinforced.

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