

## EXPLORING THE CONTRIBUTION OF PRINT MEDIA TO THE ISLAMIC RENEWAL MOVEMENT: A HISTORICAL REVIEW

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### Abstract:

This study aims to determine the contribution of print media to the Islamic renewal movement from the perspective of al-urwatul wustqa, al-manar, al-imam, and al-munir, as well as the contribution of the voice of Muhammadiyah as a derivative of Al-Manar magazine. This article reviews the important role of print media in the Islamic renewal movement, especially through magazines such as al-urwatul wustqa, al-manar, al-imam, and al-munir. Through qualitative research methods of a type of literature study with a descriptive nature of analysis using data from related literature, this article highlights how the four magazines spread ideas of renewal, educated the public, and built awareness about Islamic teachings in accordance with the demands of the times. This research shows that this print medium has made a significant contribution to re-exploring the universal message of Islam in the context of the new age and disseminating it comprehensively. Suara Muhammadiyah is identified as a continuation of the spirit of renewal brought by Al-Manar, a magazine that has an important role in the Islamic renewal movement in Indonesia. The main focus of Suara Muhammadiyah is to spread the ideas and efforts of Islamic renewal that have been carried out by the Muhammadiyah Association. Suara Muhammadiyah also serves as a means to raise the importance of education, the unity of Muslims, and the relevance of Islam in modern life.

**Keywords:** Print Contribution 1; Islamic Renewal Movement 2; Suara Muhammadiyah 3

### Abstrak:

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui kontribusi media cetak gerakan pembaruan Islam perspektif al-urwatul wustqa, al-manar, al-imam, dan al-munir, serta mengetahui kontribusi suara Muhammadiyah sebagai turunan dari majalah Al-Manar. Artikel ini mengulas peran penting media cetak dalam gerakan pembaruan Islam, terutama melalui majalah-majalah seperti al-urwatul wustqa, al-manar, al-imam, dan al-munir. Melalui metode penelitian kualitatif jenis studi kepustakaan dengan sifat deskriptif analisis yang menggunakan data dari literatur terkait, artikel ini menyoroti bagaimana keempat majalah tersebut menyebarkan ide-ide pembaruan, mengedukasi masyarakat, dan membangun kesadaran tentang ajaran Islam yang sesuai dengan tuntutan zaman. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa media cetak ini telah memberikan kontribusi yang signifikan dalam menggali kembali pesan universal Islam

dengan konteks zaman yang baru serta menyebarkan secara komprehensif. Suara Muhammadiyah diidentifikasi sebagai kelanjutan semangat pembaruan yang dibawa oleh Al-Manar, sebuah majalah yang memiliki peran penting dalam gerakan pembaruan Islam di Indonesia. Fokus utama Suara Muhammadiyah adalah menyebarkan pemikiran dan usaha pembaharuan Islam yang telah dijalankan oleh Persyarikatan Muhammadiyah. Suara Muhammadiyah juga berperan sebagai sarana untuk mengangkat pentingnya pendidikan, persatuan umat Islam, dan relevansi Islam dalam kehidupan modern.

**Kata Kunci:** Kontribusi Media Cetak 1; Gerakan Pembaruan Islam 2; Suara Muhammadiyah 3

## INTRODUCTION

The intellectual panorama in the Islamic world, the contribution of print media in spreading thought and renewal have been integral parts of the history of Islamic thought movements. Islamic magazines, as a form of print media, have played a significant role in driving renewal and inspiring Muslim communities in various parts of the world.

The Islamic context provides three magazines that appeared in the early 20th century period, namely Al-Manar, Al-Munir, Al-Imam, and Al-Urwatul Wutsqa, which became the main highlights in the study of the contribution or role of print media to the Islamic renewal movement. The four magazines not only serve as a means of information but also as a platform for conveying ideas of renewal, critiquing socio-political issues, and proposing new discourses in Islamic thought.

The exploration of the role of these three magazines is not only relevant to understand the historical dynamics of Islamic thought in Indonesia but also to explore how print media can be agents of change in society. Through an analysis of the writings in these three magazines, we can gain deeper insight into how print media shapes and influences the narrative of Islamic thought and how these thoughts contribute to social and cultural change.

The renewal of Islam in the early 20th century in Minangkabau had an impact on a number of fields, such as the press, journalism, education, and organization. At this time, the field of press gave birth to the magazine Al-Munir. In contemporary times, Al-Munir magazine gave birth to a renewal journal, Al-Muslimun.

The results of previous research show that Muhammad Abduh is an inspirational figure of writers with his rational views who are able to produce works and ideas in the political and social landscape, Al-Manar magazine is one of the magazines initiated by Muhammad Abduh (Amir, 2022). Al-Imam and Al-Munir magazines are two magazines that are the center of young horizons commonly called Islamic renewal in Nusantara. The relationship between the two magazines is easily examined only through the figures involved in them and the similarity of form, content, and intellectual discourse (Azizah et al., 2022). Al-Imam magazine was published after Al-Manar; Al-Manar magazine was published after Al-'Urwatul Wutsqa; and Al-'Urwatul Wusqa magazine was published by

Sheikh Jamaluddin al-Afghani from France (Sarwan, 1915). Al-Munir magazine cannot be separated from Al-Imam magazine, published in Singapore, with the aim of continuing the relay of Malay-Indonesian ideals in terms of religion and social (Sarwan, 2019). The history of Muhammadiyah's educational reform is driven by the condition of Muslims in Indonesia and the influence of the thoughts of reformers from the Middle East (Aly & Thoyibi, 2020). At the beginning of the 20th century, the development of the press developed more rapidly, which was managed by natives with the aim of being a tool of struggle used by various social, political, and religious organizations. The development of the press began with Al-Munir magazine (Rosyidah et al., 2023).

Previous research provided information related to the history of the Islamic renewal movement through Islamic print media, but no previous research has been found that discusses the contribution of print media in the Islamic renewal movement from the perspective of al-manar, al-munir, al-imam, and al-urwatul wustqa, especially in the print media that was born in each of these magazines. So, this article is written on the basis of in-depth research with the aim of knowing the contribution of the print media of the Islamic renewal movement from the perspective of al-urwatul wustqa, al-manar, al-imam, and al-munir, as well as knowing the contribution of the voice of Muhammadiyah as a derivative of Al-Manar magazine. Through a literature search, this article will provide a comprehensive view of approaches that can be applied in the context of the Islamic renewal movement.

## METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with library research methods. Qualitative research is research with a focus on literature studies from book sources, journals, and proceedings relevant to the research topic (Dr Sugiyono, 2012). This literature research method is used to infiltrate the concept of the contribution of the print media "Suara Muhammadiyah" perspective of Al-Manar and the print media of the Islamic renewal movement perspective of Al-Munir, Al-Imam, Al-Manar, and Al-'Urwatul Wustqa.

The literature method involves collecting data, analyzing, and drawing conclusions from the literature related to the problem described, this research is descriptive analysis with the aim of concluding the results of the analysis systematically, factually, and accurately from the facts and data obtained (Mirzaqon & Purwoko, 2017).

Data collection is obtained based on library texts with writing techniques using primary data obtained from secondary sources, namely scientific articles, journals, and several relevant books, and explaining an object in detail. This research was conducted on February 4, 2024. The subjects of this study include the following texts; the first is a text related to the contribution of the print media "Suara Muhammadiyah" from the perspective of Al-Manar. The second is the contribution of the print media to the Islamic renewal movement perspectives of Al-'Urwatul Wustqa, Al-Manar, Al-Imam, and Al-Munir.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The birth of the renewal or revival movement in the Islamic world is inseparable from the situation of Muslims worldwide, who experienced decline after the passing of the heyday or golden age in the 7th to 13th centuries AD. The 13th century AD was an era of decline in Islamic civilization after Islamic power in Spain (Cordova) fell to the Christians after the defeat of Islamic forces at Las Navas de Tolosa in 1213 AD and culminated again after the fall of Baghdad in 1258 due to the Mongol army. After the fall of Islam, the political world and the Islamic military continued to experience defeat and weakening, which also affected the crisis of aqidah and religious beliefs that experienced deviations and shock.

The Islamic renewal movement has been an integral part of the history of the development of Muslims since the beginning of the emergence of the religion. One aspect that played an important role in this movement was print media. Print media has become a major tool in spreading ideas of renewal, educating the public, and building awareness about Islamic teachings in accordance with the demands of the times. In the perspective of Al-Munir, Al-Imam, Al-Manar, and Al-Urwatul Wustqa, these four print media have made significant contributions to exploring the renewal of Islam.

Federspiel discovered the habit of reformers who spread religious ideas through the publication of magazines and books to members and the public at large (H, 2004). The dissemination of ideas and programs through print magazines became the main function of the renewal (A, 2002).

***Print Media Contributors Islamic Renewal Movement Perspectives Al-Urwatul Wustqa, Al-Manar, Al-Imam, Al-Munir, and Suara Muhammadiyah***

Al-'Urwatul Wustqa was published by Sheikh Jamaluddin Al-Afghany with his student Shaykh Muhammad 'Abduh on March 13, 1884. This magazine was founded with the aim of being a means to channel his ideas and activities. This magazine not only shook the world but also caused anxiety in the Western world because it was able to generate the spirit and unity of Muslims. This magazine contains scientific articles, inflames the spirit of the Ummah to return to the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet, and calls for the struggle of Muslims to escape the shackles of European colonialism. This led to the British colonial ban on the magazine from Egypt and India, and the Ottoman government (fearing the idea of Jumhuriyah or Jamaluddin's proposed republic) also banned it from circulating in his territory, so Al-'Urwah al-Wustqa lost his marketing area.

The magazine was eight months old because the Western world banned its circulation in Islamic countries, and it ended on October 18, 1884. Everywhere, especially in the markets of the Eastern world, the magazine was destroyed by the British rulers. In Egypt and India, the magazine was banned from circulation. However, the magazine continued to circulate, albeit illegally.

This periodical quickly developed, becoming a gauge of imperialist opposition to the Islamic world and documenting the thoughts, feelings, and evaluations of Western scholars and Islamic leaders around the world. World leaders, as well as Western academics, were attracted and amazed by Al-Afghany's intelligence, so that he became one of the respected authors of this journal. Moderate conversations and submissions from Western intellectuals, especially those based in the United States, required Al-Afghany to go back and forth between Paris and London to organize these publications.

In addition to writing many books and articles, Al-Afghany also published the magazine Al-Urwatul Wustqa, among them "Bab Ma Ya'ulu Ilaihi Amr Al-Muslimin" (A

discussion of things that weaken Muslims), *Makidah Ash-Sharqiyah* (Orientalist Deception), *Risalah fi ar-Radd 'Ala al-Masihiyyin* (Treatise to Answer Christians; 1895), *Diya' al-Khafiqain* (The Loss of East and West; 1892), *Haqiqah Al-Insan wa Haqiqah Al-Watan* (The Nature of Man and the Nature of the Fatherland; 1878), and *Ar-Radd 'Ala al-Dahriyin*.

The incident of *Al-'Urwatul Wustqa* provided a profound experience that made Sheikh Muhammad Abduh leave his exile in Paris, France. However, at the urging of his student, Ridho finally agreed to publish *Al-Manar*, which eventually became the main forum for the dissemination of his ideas.

*Al-Manar* is an Islamic scientific journal published by Rashid Rida in the period 1898–1935. In its time, this publication became an influential medium in the development of thought in the Muslim world, so that it is now one of the sources of information about important events that occurred in the Muslim world during that period. The purpose of *Al-Manar* magazine was to articulate and disseminate ideas of renewal and preserve the integrity of Muslims who had previously been hindered. The inaugural issue of *Al-Manar* magazine aims to spread ideas of renewal in the fields of Islam, social, and economic religion. In addition, the editorship of this magazine also wants to enlighten readers so that they are free from superstitious tendencies, heresies, fatalistic attitudes, and excesses of orders that distance people from the objective world. Although not firmly carrying democratic diction, there is also a spirit of opposition to the absolutism of the rulers of the *Al-Manar* editors. In particular, the articles written by Rashid Rida are contained in it.

Rashid Rida was one of the critics of the arbitrariness of the Ottoman Sultan. Rashid Rida also invited Muslim leaders to prioritize consensus deliberation so that a policy comes from really paying attention to the complaints of the people, not the will of the nation alone. *Al-Manar's* influence in the renewal movement is undeniable. Even because of this strong influence, its spread was prevented in Malay-Indonesia. The spread of *Al-Manar* occurred through several means, namely smuggling in ports, pilgrims from Malay, students returning from the Middle East, and officially appointed agents in Singapore.

Al-Imam magazine is the first magazine in Southeast Asia. This Jawiy-language Islamic magazine was published in Singapore on July 23, 1906, and ended on December 25, 1908. Al-Imam voiced renewal for the revival of Muslims and young people in Nusantara. Al-Imam magazine was among the first magazines published in Nusantara because no Islamic magazine preceded the publication of Al-Imam. The publisher of Al-Imam magazine is Thahir Jalamudin Al-Azhari.

Al-Imam aims to remembrance those who have and awaken those who are asleep, guide those who are lost, and give voice to those who speak with wisdom (wisdom). Al-Imam is the most important intellectual consciousness in Malay, especially among young people. Among the influential editors were Sheikh Muhammad Thahir (an important figure behind the publication of Al-Imam), Haji Abbas bin Muhammad Thaha, Sayyid bin Ahmad Al-Hadi, and Sayyid Muhammad bin Aqil.

The main focus of Al-Imam's studies is the relationship between religion and social change. The backward state of society is discussed in a special section of this magazine. Al-Imam called for the importance of education for all Muslims. Because knowledge, according to Al-Imam, is the main thing, introducing a new system of education, compiling the curriculum, encouraging young people to continue their studies, and encouraging the ruler to pay attention to education. Al-Imam also spoke of the importance of the unity of Muslims throughout the world, as advocated by Sultan Abdul Hamid, the sultan during the Ottoman Caliphate. Al-Imam advocated modernist thought in Islam, including an emphasis on rationality, education, and the relevance of Islam in modern life. Al-Imam's contribution lies in his efforts to rediscover the universal message of Islam in the context of the new age.

Al-Munir is one of the magazines born in Indonesia at the beginning of the 20th century. The magazine was founded by Abdullah Ahamd in early April of 1911. Al-Munir magazine became one of the main platforms for the Islamic renewal movement in Indonesia as one of the biweekly Islamic magazines in Arabic-Malay script. Al-Munir's writing uses Arabic-Malay writing because there are still many Minang people who are only good at writing and reading Arabic-Malay writing. However, the spelling used followed the standard spelling used in colonial government schools.

Through its writings, Al-Munir magazine advocates Islamic modernization, modern education, and criticism of traditions that are considered obsolete. Al-Munir's contributions to the Islamic renewal movement included efforts to develop the minds of people who were open to science and social change. The purpose of establishing Al-Munir magazine was to encourage the advancement of Islam based on the Qur'an, maintain peace, spread Islam with an organizational system, emphasize the necessity of ijtihad, and prohibit taklid.

Al-Munir magazine carries the mission of containing articles that raise Islamic religious issues, a question-and-answer forum that generally deals with jurisprudence, the development of Islamic thought in the world, and chronicles that are usually translated from Middle Eastern Islamic magazines. The birth of Al-Munir magazine is often associated with Al-Imam magazine; in addition to Abdullah Ahmad, several names such as Abdul Karim Amrullah, Muhammad Thaib Umar, and Sutan Salim have also been listed on the editorial board. This magazine is used as a medium for the da'wah of Minangkabau Youth, which has had considerable influence on the development of Islamic da'wah in Indonesia. Al-Munir magazine is controlled by Young People's scholars, while professional figures who participate in the success of this magazine serve as technical implementers.

Due to funding constraints, Al-Munir magazine was discontinued in 1915. Even so, the birth of Al-Munir was soon followed by similar publications by various Islamic movements in the archipelago. According to Syamsuri Ali, Al-Munir magazine suffered a setback due to economic difficulties, prompting Inyiah Rasul to go to Malaysia to find donors in 1916 so that Al-Munir magazine could be operated again.

The tool circulating in contemporary times in Al-Manar magazine is Suara Muhammadiyah. Suara Muhammadiyah has been present since 1915, exactly three years after Muhammadiyah was established. The voice of Muhammadiyah continues to be published to this day, meaning that its age has now reached more than a century. Suara Muhammadiyah is a magazine that helped shape a new generation of Indonesian Muslim intellectuals in the second half of the 20th century. The beginning of the journey, before discussing the development of the situation of the people in Yogyakarta in particular and

in Indonesia or the Dutch East Indies after 1917, His early soul was integrated with the establishment of the Taman Pustaka Division, which developed a tradition of literacy (iqra).

### ***Suara Muhammadiyah***

Suara Muhammadiyah carries the mission of broadcasting the thoughts and work of Islamic renewal carried out by the Muhammadiyah Association, for example in the article "Islam as a Religion of Reason," which indicates that this magazine is spreading ideas or reasons for progress. According to the historical tracing of the evolution of Javanese language use, initially Suara Muhammadiyah used Javanese language and letters between 1915 and 1916. Although still speaking Javanese in 1920–1921, Suara Muhammadiyah already used Latin letters. In 1922, a mixture of Javanese-Indonesian and Latin script began to be applied, and one year later it used Malay, later known as Indonesian. Still under the leadership of KH. Ahmad Dahlan, this magazine pioneered the use of Indonesian. In fact, the use of Indonesian at that time was certainly not widespread; it was still quite far from the occurrence of the Youth Congress (1928). The transition confirmed the growth of original Indonesian consciousness, and Muhammadiyah, from the beginning, had been fed by the spirit of the struggle for independence.

Suara Muhammadiyah was born as a continuation of the spirit of renewal brought by Al-Manar, who had a significant role in the Islamic renewal movement in Indonesia. Al-Manar magazine, founded by Rashid Ridha, became one of the main media that championed the renewal of Islam by spreading modern and progressive ideas. Suara Muhammadiyah has a da'wah focus to spread Islamic ideas and renewal works carried out by the Muhammadiyah Association. Suara Muhammadiyah carries a mission to spread the thoughts of Islamic renewal that have been carried by the Muhammadiyah Association. Through his writings, Suara Muhammadiyah spread ideas oriented towards reasoning progress, supporting Islamic modernization, modern education, and critiquing traditions that were considered obsolete. The magazine is also a platform to voice the importance of education, the unity of Muslims, and the relevance of Islam in modern life.

## CONCLUSION(S)

Print media has played a very important role in the Islamic renewal movement, whether in Indonesia, Egypt, Arabia, or Persia. Through the magazines Al-'Urwatul Wutsqa, Al-Manar, Al-Imam, and Al-Munir, modern and progressive thoughts in Islam have been widely spread, shaping the awareness of Muslims about the importance of adaptation and renewal in facing the challenges of the times. The contributions of these four print media have become an integral part of the history of the development of modern Islamic thought, reflecting the dynamics of Islamic renewal movements in different parts of the world.

## Acknowledgments (Optional)

Thank you to those who have participated, supported, and helped in the authorship of this article until this article is finished and can be published. Without help from these parties, maybe the writing cannot be fully completed into an article. Special thanks to our parents who always motivate us to continue studying and always accompany their prayers every step of the way. Not forgetting the lecturer who supervised the writing of this article, namely Mr. Mutoharun Jinan, we thank you for your guidance and direction. We would also like to thank the ICONITIES 2 committee for organizing this very useful activity.

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