

The Padri Movement and The *Adat*: A Comparative Analysis

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ABSTRACT

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The Padri Movement was an Islamic puritan movement at the turn of the 19th century in West Sumatra (Indonesia). The leaders wanted to purify the Minangkabau society from un-Islamic influences. The growing conflict led to the Padri war (1821-1838). In this research paper, the author analyzes why many major elements of the matrilineal Minangkabau *adat* (customary rules) could maintain their significant functions. The author concentrates on three theoretical concepts that intend to answer these questions. Furthermore, the author also wants to offer a new perspective on the Padri movement, namely by using a structuralist way that includes a diachronic and synchronic way of looking at the Padri War. By looking at one concrete historical event, it is intended to get a better understanding of the Minangkabau *adat*. It was detected that there was not a strict dividing line between the adherents of the traditional system and the puritan movement. However, both sides gradually adjusted to the given situation, and the *adat* accepted more Islamic norms.

Contribution/Originality: This research contributes to the existing literature by looking into detail how the matrilineal *adat* of the Minangkabau reacts to events that enter the Minangkabau world. It analyzes the Padri movement in detail in order to see how the matrilineal way of life could maintain its core features.

1. Introduction

The Padri war (1821-1838) was one of the most important incidents in Indonesian history. It showed the strong will of the local population to protect Islam and the wish to act independently. Two of the Padri leaders, namely Tuanku Imam Bonjol and Tuanku Tambusai, got the status of national heroes. Nonetheless, the Padri movement itself is controversial. Some people claim that some of its leaders were adherents of the Wahhabi movement, and many of its religious scholars were considered to follow a radical understanding of Islam. In this article, it is not intended to analyze whether their religious understanding is radical or not. The author wants to look in depth at how the matrilineal *adat* could adjust itself to the new situation. Furthermore, it must be considered that most of the Padris were Minangkabau too. So, it is interesting how they interfered with traditional society.

It is not clear why the movement was called Padri movement. There are two explanations for the origin of the term '*Padri*'. One explanation is that the term is derived from the Indonesian word *padri*, which was used for priests. It should stress that the famous representatives were a kind of 'Islamic priests.' Most of its leaders had the title *tuanku*, which refers to the highest Islamic scholar in one place. The other explanation stresses that the word Padri is derived from the word *Pidie*. This is the name of a harbor in Aceh. The pilgrims to Mecca had to depart from that place. They were called *orang pidari*. It could be possible that this term was changed to *orang padri* (the Padri people).

Many scientists look at the Minangkabau society and are interested in the interplay between the matrilineal elements on one side and the Islamic features on the other side. In the scientific community, this discussion can be subsumed as 'change and continuity of the Minangkabau society' (Thomas & Benda-Beckmann, 1985). This discussion is still ongoing, and there are some explanations on how matrilineal customs and Islamic rules can co-exist. In this article, the author looks at one specific historical incident (namely the Padri movement) and analyzes how the two systems could adapt to the new situation. It is intended to get a better understanding of the Minangkabau customs and the historical event of the Padri movement.

1.1. A General Overview of the Padri Movement

In this part, the author wants to give a general overview of the Padri movement. The main sources of the historical facts were taken from Radjab (2019), Dobbin (1983), and Sjarifoedin (2020).

The Padri Movement lasted from 1784 to 1841 (Masdison, 2018, p. vi). It became a famous Islamic movement that started to implement its ideas in some areas. Slowly it led to a civil war between the Padri movement and its opponents. The conflict became extensive, even the Dutch became involved, and the Padri war became a famous struggle for independence.

Geographically West Sumatra can be divided into two main areas, namely the coastal areas and the interior, which is a highland surrounded by volcanoes. Islam came to the West coast of Sumatra via merchants, probably from India and the region of Aceh. In the interior, the Islamic regulations were not that influential, and pre-Islamic ideas were still widespread. Furthermore, there were many problematic elements like robbery, cockfighting, opium, etc. It could happen that travelers were kidnapped and sold as slaves.

Tuanku Nan Tuo was a famous Islamic preacher and had many students. He decided to protect the traders and free the people who were enslaved. Therefore, he was called 'the patron of traders' (Dobbin, 1983, p. 127). One of his students was Jalaluddin, who built a famous *surau* (prayer house) in Kota Lawas. He protected the tradesmen; sometimes, he even sent some of his students to free kidnapped persons.

In Mecca, the Wahhabi movement became more and more influential. In the year 1803, they conquered Mecca, and one year later, they controlled the whole Hijaz area. Some Minangkabau pilgrims returned, and they probably were influenced by the Wahhabi movement. There were three Hajis who can be considered the founding fathers of the Padri movement. The most famous one was Haji Miskin. He was a member of Tuanku

Nan Tuos movement (Dobbin, 1983, p. 129). For four years, he preached in the village of Batuebal, in the region of Agam. Later, he moved to Pandai Sikat. He was supported by the local Datuk Batuah. In the Minangkabau culture, society is organized in a matrilineal way. The matrilineages are represented by different heads (the *penghulu*) who get the title *Datuk*. In one incident, Haji Miskin burnt down the *balai adat* (assembly hall) of Pandai Sikat, and he had to flee to Kota Lawas. He stayed in the *surau* of Tuanku Mensiangan (Radjab, 2019). However, the adherents of the *adat* were not satisfied, and Haji Miskin had to leave Kota Lawas.

Haji Miskin went to Bukit Kamang, which was controlled by Tuanku Nan Rinceh. He was one of the sternest representatives of the Padri Movement. He and his followers conquered many villages in the surrounding areas. Sometimes there were some battles. In the conquered villages, he announced new Islamic regulations. Slowly the Padri movement expanded. The whole district of Limapuluh Kota followed, so the movement was in control of many areas. However, some regions were still reluctant, particularly the district of Tanah Datar. In this area, there were many adherents of the *adat*, and it was also the home of Sultan Raja Muning Alamsyah.

One incident was very influential: In Kota Tengah, Tuanku Lintau and the aristocrats had a meeting.¹ Suddenly, there was a kind of turmoil. Tuanku Lintau accused the aristocratic family of being not Islamic. The Padris killed many of them, but Raja Muning Alamsyah could escape.

1819, the Dutch arrived in Padang after the English left the city. During the Napoleonic war, the English were responsible for Sumatra's West coast. Slowly, the Dutch were involved in skirmishes with Padri groups in the interior as the Dutch built up some posts in Tanah Datar. More and more villages were conquered, and large-scale fights were fierce. In the following years, the Dutch managed to conquer many villages. The adherents of the *adat* supported them, and together with the Dutch, they conquered the regions in the interior. However, some areas showed strong resistance, particularly those that were controlled by Tuanku Nan Rinceh and Tuanku Lintau.

In the year 1830, the Dutch organized a large-scale attack. As a consequence, the Padri lost Kamang (the area of Tuanku Nan Rinceh) and, in the following year Lintau. Both leaders died shortly after. There was still some resistance in the Northern regions like Bonjol, which Tuanku Imam Bonjol ruled. In the year 1832, the Dutch controlled most of the regions. However, due to their misconduct (like the disrespect of mosques, rape of local women etc.), new battles arose, and this time, many leaders of the *adat* joined the Padri forces. Nonetheless, in the year 1838, the Dutch forces were victorious and controlled nearly the whole area.

1.2. The *Adat* and Social Organization in West Sumatra

In this part, the social structure of the Minangkabau will be briefly described. The author will describe the traditional understanding, even though there are many changes nowadays. This is necessary to understand the situation during the Padri movement. The Minangkabau are matrilineally organized, which means the family side of the mother forms so-called matrilineages. Each matrilineage and sub-lineage is represented by a head (the *penghulu*) within the village community.

¹ According to other authors, the meeting was not between the Raja and Tuanku Lintau himself but merely with the followers of Tuanku Lintau.

The Minangkabau differentiate between the interior regions in the highlands and the outer region. The interior can be considered a traditional center. The interior consists of three areas: Agam, Tanah Datar, and Limapuluh Kota.

The typical houses are the so-called *rumah gadang*. The roofs are formed in the shape of buffalo horns. In each house, a sub-lineage resides. In general, the Minangkabau are matrilineal, and the husband moves to the wife's house. Furthermore, the oldest brother of the wife (the *mamak*) is responsible for the education and well-being of his nieces and nephews.

In the Minangkabau society, there are two main *adat* traditions that have slightly different understandings. These are the *Koto-Piliang* and *Bodi-Caniago*. The reason is that there were two forefathers who, according to the legends, formed the Minangkabau *adat* (customary regulations). *Koto-Piliang* is, in general, more hierarchically organized, and *Bodi-Caniago* is quite egalitarian. In each village, there are communal halls (*balai adat*). The *penghulu* assemble in such halls and discuss matters related to the village. Generally, each village community follow one of these traditions.

1.3. Theories about Minangkabau Adat

Some social scientists asked themselves how the Minangkabau *adat* could persist. In the year 1966, Taufik Abdullah analyzed the co-existence of *adat* and Islam in an intriguing way (Abdullah, 1966). He wrote that there was a way of living in a 'usual' way, and suddenly a kind of anti-structure with opposing values came up and challenged the traditional way of life. By doing so, Taufik Abdullah used a well-known cultural-anthropological concept, however, in a different context.

In a ritual process, there are three different stages. However, if a person gets to a new stage, he or she has to enter a stage that is called anti-structure and is directly opposed to the original concept (Turner, 1989). Finally, the person is at a new level. A good example is the rites that are implemented to distinguish a child from an adult. Interestingly, Taufik Abdullah uses this terminology on a macro-sociological level.

Errington (1984) looked at the Minangkabau *adat* from another perspective. He argues that there are different types of *adat* and that some elements are open for change while the so-called core elements remain unaltered. It can be assumed that the matrilineal way of life and inheritance belong to this category, as many of these regulations can still be found today.

The author also offered a theoretical explanation using a general concept and a structuralist approach (Stark, 2013). However, the inner dynamics were not explained, so the reader might get the impression that the whole discussion is very static. In this paper, the author wants to illustrate in a detailed way how the Minangkabau *adat* was able to adjust to a new situation. Furthermore, the historical event of the upcoming Padri movement and the Padri war will be analyzed in greater detail to make the inner dynamics of the Minangkabau *adat* visible.

2. Literature

This research was done through an analysis of the literature. It must be differentiated between literature that thematized the Padri movement and literature that analyzed the Minangkabau *adat*.

Arguably the most significant historical publications regarding the Padri movement were written and published by Christine Dobbins (1974, 1983). She looked into the economic situation. The Minangkabau highlands were attractive to many traders, and there were coffee plantations and other products. The local *nagari* (village communities) were relatively autonomous, and so were the regulations. The traders could not trade in a safe environment. Robberies and kidnappings were widespread. Consequently, they supported the Muslim movements so that they could pursue their trade. Dobbins's (1983) book is fascinating as she provides interesting background information about trading activities and the different economic interests that culminated in the Padri war.

There are some remarkable publications about the Padri movement that local authors wrote. The most detailed work which focused on the Padri war and which became a major work was written by Radjab (2019). His book is very detailed and became a significant reference for many authors. Moreover, his publication uses an intriguing writing style that is easy to read and makes his book unique.

Sjarifoedin (2020) wrote about the history of West Sumatra until the Padri war. His book is valuable as he considers the newest sources regarding the Padri movement. A book that looks at the display of *adat* and Islam is the book of Hadler (2009). His book is intriguing and gives a good overview. Masdison (2018) wrote a book about the major figures of the Padri movement. This book is very useful as it helps to understand the work and tasks of each major person.

Hamka wrote about the Padri movement in many of his publications (Hamka, 2006, 2010). One of his primary interests is the interplay of *adat* and matrilineal society (Stark et al., 2022). Some elements seem to be not according to Islamic law and should be adopted.

Some authors like Abd A'la (2008) and Kappelhof (2011) look at the greater context and see the Padri movement as one main source of an upcoming Islamic radicalization. Therefore, the historical discussion about the Padri movement is still of major interest to Indonesian society. In recent years some movements stressed the brutal actions of the Padri movement and wanted that the government withdraws Imam Bonjol the title 'National Hero'.² However, many proponents of such petitions refer to the book of Parlindungan (2007) who writes about the brutal killings of the Padri movement. Yet, according to Hamka, this book is quite problematic (Hamka, 2017). This discussion shows that the Padri movement is quite controversial.

In the traditional understanding, the Minangkabau society consists of three major groups, the heads of the matrilineages (the *penghulu*), the intellectual (the *cerdik-pandai*), and the religious scholars (the *ulama*). All of them wrote about the Minangkabau *adat* and its historical developments.

² For example, the article *Kontroversi Kebrutalan Kaum Padri* gives a good impression of the discussion. (<https://www.datatempo.co/MajalahTeks/detail/ARM20180612133936/kontroversi-kebrutalan-kaum-padri>, retrieved 08/02/2023)

There are books that were written by the *penghulu*. The books of [Rajo Penghulu \(1994\)](#) are widespread in the whole area of West Sumatra. One of his books is a kind of reference book which explains the duties of a *penghulu*. In another book, [Rajo Penghulu \(1997\)](#) explains the philosophical understanding of the Minangkabau *adat*. The reader gets the impression that the *adat* is very flexible and in accordance with the Indonesian philosophy of the *Pancasila*. It must be stressed that the *Pancasila* was formulated in the 20th century. So, if Rajo Penghulu is correct, then the values of the *adat* can adjust to new situations. He stresses that the *penghulu* should work together with the government system.

A typical book of a Minangkabau intellectual is the book of [Navis \(1984\)](#). He analyzes the Minangkabau philosophy in a systematic way and looks at the wedding ceremonies from a perspective that includes an etic and emic perspective. The German sociologist [Mannheim \(1954\)](#), one of the founders of the sociology of knowledge, mentioned that intellectuals are somehow 'levitating'. He means their social position does not determine their thinking. The intellectuals of the Minangkabau can be characterized in such a way. The intellectual can analyze the *adat* in an interesting way.

3. Research Method

In this research, the author uses a method that analyzes the literature. The first step was to understand the Padri conflict and the role of the main actors. After that, the major elements were carved out, and some peculiarities could be seen.

In this research, a structuralist approach was chosen. However, in this case, the author looks at a historical event. Two ways can help to detect unique features that cannot be seen at first glance. The research looks at the historical events in their chronological order (in a diachronic way), but it also looks at certain periods to detect things (i.e. looks at the events in a synchronic way).

The Research Objectives are as follows:

- i. To analyze the relationship between the Minangkabau *adat* and the Padri movement
- ii. To understand the way how the *adat* reacts to changes
- iii. To get a new perspective on the Padri movement

The researcher looks at both groups, the Padri movement and the representatives of the *adat*, in detail. First, both groups will be illustrated separately and afterwards, the interplay of both groups will be analyzed. The main interest is to find out how the matrilineal system maintained its unique features.

4. Discussion and Analysis

In this part, some interesting details will be analyzed. First, the researcher will look at the Padri movement and the central figures. After that, there will be a look at the regulations that were implemented by the new movement, and finally, the relationship towards the *adat* will be analyzed.

4.1. The Influential Groups of the Padri Movement

Certain groups were important during the historical developments of the Padri movement. This development is illustrated in [Table 1](#).

Table 1: Influential Groups within the Padri Movement

No.	Name of the Group	Members of the Group	Role in the Padri Movement
1	<i>Tiga Haji</i> (The three Hajis)	Haji Miskin (from Agam) Haji Abdur Rahman (from Limapuluh Kota) Haji Muhammad Arif (from Tanah Datar)	The three Hajis returned from their pilgrimage and wanted to purify the villages of un-Islamic influences like opium, cockfighting, etc. Therefore, they formed a movement.
2	<i>Harimau nan delapan</i> (the eight Tigers)	Tuanku Nan Rinceh, Tuanku Lubuk Aur, Tuanku Berapi, Tuanku Ladang Lawas Tuanku Biaro Tuanku Padang Luar Tuanku Kapau Tuanku Galung	They conquered with their movement other villages. In these villages, new regulations were implemented.
3	<i>Tuanku Nan Berempat</i> (The four Tuanku [also called: <i>Berampek Selo Bonjol</i>])	Tuanku Imam Bonjol Tuanku Gapuak Tuanku Keluat Tuanku Hitam	This group of Tuanku had the task of implementing Islamic regulations and secure positions in the area around Bonjol. However, two of them died soon.
4	<i>Rajo Tigo Selo</i> (the three Rajas)	Tuanku Imam Bonjol Datuk Sati Datuk Bandaro (the young)	They took over the government tasks from the <i>Tuanku Nan Berempat</i> .

Table 1 can be read in a synchronic and diachronic way. In a diachronic way, the three Hajis started the movement, and the other groups extended the sphere of influence. However, Table 1 can also be read by looking at one period at one time. In this case, the reader detects that the famous protagonists originate from another group.

The different groups show an interesting transfer. If we look at the titles, it can be seen that the founders of the Padri movement were Hajis. This means they performed their pilgrimage. During that time, the travel to Mecca was burdensome and long. The three Hajis brought new ideas that contained ideas of the Wahhabi movement. The three Hajis themselves influenced the 'eight tigers' who supported them. In particular, Tuanku Nan Rinceh was influential. However, he could not convince all Islamic scholars.

The eight 'tigers' consisted of local Islamic scholars (*tuanku*). They were influential in the local community and could install new regulations. In their villages, the *kadi* got power, and he could decide whether the way of life was according to Islamic principles. The eight tigers opposed the usual *adat* rulings, which stressed the discussion and consensus.

The third and fourth group consisted of important persons who were influential in the Northern region. In the beginning, the Islamic scholars made the last decision. Slowly, many *adat* representatives joined the Islamic movement. There were some reasons for that. The Wahhabi movement lost its influence in the Arabic peninsula, and the adherents of the *adat* became more influential. When the Dutch did not behave properly after they conquered many parts of West Sumatra, a lot of *adat* representatives supported the Padri movement.

4.2. Regulations that the Padri Movement introduced

In the areas that were controlled by the Padri movement, some new regulations were implemented:

- a. For men: They are not allowed to shave their beards. The clothes must cover the knees. The men are not allowed to wear silk.
- b. For women: They must cover their faces (or wear a scarf).
- c. For all: It is required to pray five times per day. It is not allowed to let the nails grow. Gambling, cockfights, and consumption of drugs are forbidden. Interest on loans is prohibited.

The administration was changed too. The Padri implemented two posts: the *imam*, responsible for religious affairs, and the *kadi*, looking for jurisprudence. By doing that, the traditional system was changed. There were religious representatives within the matrilineages. However, with the installation of two foremost Islamic scholars, they were also responsible for affairs that were normally controlled by the *penghulu*. A good example is the inheritance rules. In the past, the inheritance of communal property did not consider the role of the father. Now, this changed (Martamin, 1985).

4.3. The Representatives of the Adat and the Padri Movement

Many adherents of the *adat* movement supported the Dutch at the beginning of the conflict. They felt threatened by the implementation of new positions and the introduction of new regulations and prohibitions. The Sultan (*Raja Alam*) held a peculiar position in Pagarryung. He was responsible for the affairs of the government. However, his government was not really powerful, as the villages were quite autonomous. In an incident, most of the family members of the Sultan were killed by the Padri, and he himself had to flee. The position of the Sultan was never restored any more.

The three interior districts did not follow the Padris in the same way. Agam and Limapuluh Kota supported the Padri movement, while many areas of Tanah Datar supported the traditional customs and the king. It can be speculated about the reason. One of the reasons could be that mostly mountainous regions followed the *Bodi Caniago* tradition. The majority of Tanah Datar followed the rules of the more hierarchical *Koto-Piliang* tradition. The Padri did not focus on whether a person originated from a noble family or not. For them, the Qur'an and Sunnah were their main guidance.

Some *penghulu* supported the Padri movement from the beginning. These included persons who were involved in trade and whose business activities were endangered. The trade routes were insecure, but the merchants needed a reliable way to pursue their trading activities, and the strict enforcement of law and order by the Padri was promising.

4.4. Tuanku Imam Bonjol

Tuanku Imam Bonjol (1772-1864) was the most famous representative of the Padri movement. He was a student of Tuanku Nan Rinceh, and he built a famous fort in Bonjol. After Tuanku Nan Rinceh passed away, he was the leader of the Padri movement. In his area, he installed the four Tuanku (he and three other Tuanku) to implement an Islamic rule that was based on the Qur'an and the Sunnah. The nephews of these scholars were sent to Mecca to learn more about the developments there (Dobbin, 1972, p.12). They

witnessed that the Wahhabi movement had lost its influence, and they informed the people about these developments.

It is also remarkable that the four Tuanku sent their nephews on this journey and not their children. It is an indication that they followed the traditional understanding that the brothers of the sister (the *mamak*) support the *kemenakan* (the nieces and nephews of the matrilineage). There are other hints that Imam Bonjol was not a tough opponent of the traditional system.

The Padri movement, under the leadership of Tuanku Imam Bonjol, controlled the trade on the West Coast of Sumatra (particularly in the area of Pasaman). However, when the Dutch decided to enter the interior, an armed conflict was the consequence. Bonjol remained a Padri stronghold for a long time. After Lintau was defeated, the Dutch focused on the Northern regions. Interestingly, Imam Bonjol sometimes held meetings and listened to the opinion of the other villagers. Before he was deported, he gave advice to his son:

One thing more: recognize the authority of the *adat-penghulu*; if he cannot be obeyed, he is not a true *penghulu* and only bears the title. Abide as faithfully as possible by the *adat*, and if your knowledge is not sufficient, then learn the twenty attributes of Allah (Dobbin, 1972, pp. 12-13).

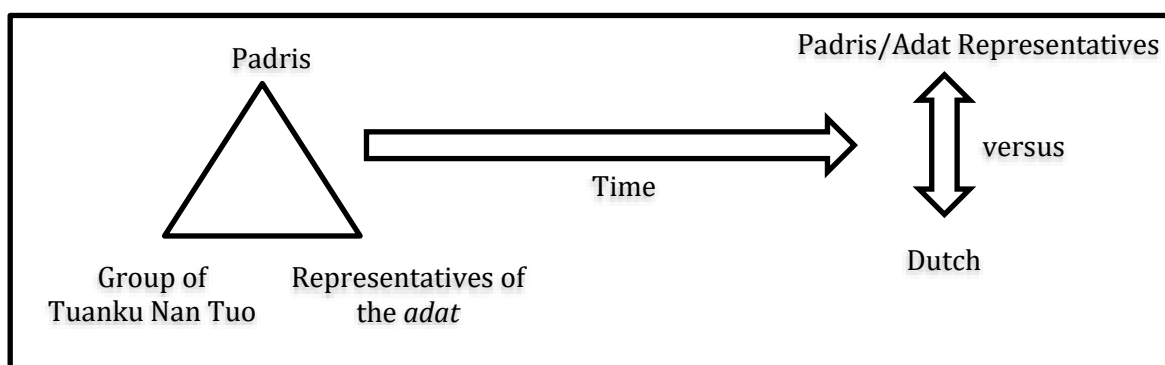
These sentences of Imam Bonjol are remarkable. He accepted the role of traditional leaders. It must be mentioned that he uttered these remarks later in his life. Nonetheless, it shows that the Padris did not intend to destroy the whole traditional system but the elements that were forbidden in Islam.

In the year 1837, the troops in Bonjol surrendered, and the Dutch could conquer most areas in Western Sumatra. Imam Bonjol was deported and lived his final years in Manado (Sulawesi). In the year 1864, he passed away.

4.5. The Matrilineal *Adat* and the Padri Movement: A Structuralist View

In this part (4.5.), it is intended to look at the Minangkabau *adat* and the Padri conflict from a structuralist perspective. The conflict looks in a schematic way, like in Figure 1.

Figure 1: The Padri Conflict in a Schematic Way.



In Figure 1, it can be seen that the conflict started with the formation of three groups. Tuanku Nan Tuo wanted a peaceful purification of the religion. However, sometimes his

group attacked the villages that imprisoned tradespeople. The Padris, on the other side, wanted that the charismatic Tuanku Nan Tuo should become their leader, but he rejected their radical approach. In the following years, there were not only armed conflicts between the Padris and the followers of the *adat* but between the two Islamic groups too.

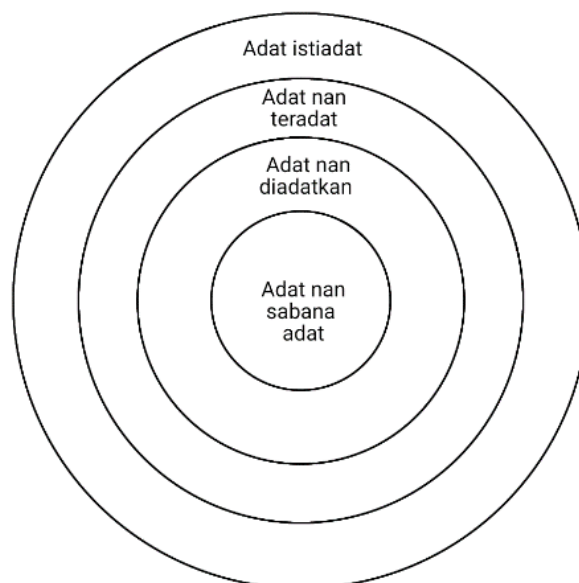
The conflict changed when the Dutch intervened. In the beginning, many followers of the *adat* supported the colonial army militarily. However, after the Dutch had conquered many places and behaved in an inappropriate way, many adherents of the *adat* switched sides and followed Tuanku Imam Bonjol. Therefore, it can be said that it was a kind of independence war.

The *adat* consists of four components (Anwar, 1997, pp. 56-66):

- a. *Adat nan sabana adat*. This is the 'true' *adat* and consists of all the regulations and natural laws that originate from Allah.
- b. *Adat nan diadatkan*. This *adat* contains the regulations that were given by the Minangkabau forefathers Datuk Katumanggungan and Datuk Perpatih Nan Sabatang. In general, it comprises the way how people should live together, for example, the matrilineal social order.
- c. *Adat nan teradat*. This component includes the customary regulations that differ from one village to another.
- d. *Adat istiadat*. This part contains the customs that are different in the villages.

It is possible to imagine the *adat* as four concentric rings. It was mentioned that Errington (1984) assumed that there is a core element of the *adat* that cannot be changed. By looking at Figure 2, it can be said that *adat nan sabana adat* and *adat nan diadatkan* form these core elements. The rules of Allah exist, and no human being can change them. However, the customs can be changed 'easily'. In the case of the Padris, it became clear that they changed the clothing regulations.

Figure 2. The Components of the Minangkabau *Adat*.



The *adat nan diadatkan* must be analyzed in detail as it contains different elements. Some parts could be changed by adding certain features. For example, the law is considered to be part of the *adat nan diadatkan*. The Padri movement implemented

certain Islamic regulations that did not contradict the matrilineal way of life. The *imam* and the *kadi* got a stronger position under the Padris. However, after the Padri war, the *adat* was strengthened by the Dutch.

The other parts of the *adat*, the *adat nan teradat* and *adat istiadat* differ from village to village, and can adopt features that do not challenge the Minangkabau way of life like as it was prescribed by the forefathers. For example, the Padri movement implemented white clothes for its adherents.

The Padri movement and the Padri war show in an exemplary way how the *adat* could adjust and that some elements remain unchanged.

5. Conclusion

In this article, the author looked at the Padri movement and the Padri war from a structuralist perspective. It looked at one historical event in great detail in order to understand the inner dynamics of the *adat*. Some theories explain the reason why the matrilineal system could persevere over a long period of time.

Taufik Abdullah stressed that during the historical development, new systems came up and formed a kind of anti-structure. The Padris implemented Islamic regulations. However, the example of Tuanku Imam Bonjol showed that he was not opposed to all traditional regulations. In the later years of the Padri war, many adherents of the *adat* switched sides and supported the Padri movement.

[Errington \(1984\)](#) stated that there are core elements of the *adat* that remain unaltered. This assumption seems to be true. The Padri conflict shows that some elements of the matrilineal *adat* did not change.

This article looked at one historical incident, namely the Padri conflict, and how the *adat* could persist even though it was faced with much pressure. In the case of the Padri, it showed two main reasons: First, there are parts of the *adat* that cannot be changed, and second, there is no strict dichotomy between the adherents of the *adat* and the Padri movement. Many *penghulu* supported the Padri movement.

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Conflict of Interest

The author reported no conflicts of interest for this work and declare that there is no potential conflict of interest with respect to the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

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