



## THE CONTRIBUTION OF PAKU ALAM VIII TO EDUCATION IN INDONESIA DURING THE COLONIAL ERA

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### ABSTRACT

*Serangan awal entitas Eropa ke kepulauan Indonesia sebagian besar dimotivasi oleh aspirasi komersial dan upaya perdagangan, yang kemudian berkembang menjadi monopoli komprehensif dan sistematis atas perdagangan rempah-rempah yang menguntungkan, sebuah usaha yang tidak hanya mencari keuntungan ekonomi tetapi juga berfungsi untuk menyebarkan ideologi asing, kepercayaan agama, dan kerangka pendidikan. Integrasi dan implementasi pengajaran bahasa Belanda dalam lanskap pendidikan Indonesia dapat secara komprehensif dikategorikan menjadi dua zaman sejarah yang signifikan, khususnya era Perusahaan Hindia Timur Belanda, yang biasa disebut sebagai VOC, dan periode berikutnya yang ditandai dengan pemerintahan Hindia Belanda. Struktur pembelajaran pendidikan selama ini digambarkan menjadi dua klasifikasi yang berbeda, yang dikenal sebagai Kelas I dan Kelas II, yang berhubungan dengan pendirian berbagai lembaga pendidikan di seluruh pulau Jawa. Tujuan menyeluruh dari penyelidikan akademis ini adalah untuk secara menyeluruh menilai dan menjelaskan kontribusi yang dibuat oleh Paku Alam VIII terhadap kemajuan dan peningkatan pendidikan dalam konteks Indonesia. Untuk mencapai pemahaman yang ketat, penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan metodis yang terutama didasarkan pada tinjauan literatur dan analisis ilmiah dari teks yang ada. Temuan penelitian ini menerangi beberapa kontribusi penting, yang meliputi pembentukan dasar program pendidikan panahan dan penciptaan yayasan Roro Jonggrang, yang keduanya memainkan peran penting dalam lanskap pendidikan. Inisiatif pendidikan ini terutama ditujukan untuk memberikan kesempatan belajar kepada masyarakat kurang mampu dan terpinggirkan yang tinggal di Yogyakarta, dengan demikian berusaha untuk menciptakan lapangan bermain yang setara di sektor pendidikan yang dapat secara efektif bersaing dengan lembaga pendidikan asing.*

**Keywords:** *Contribution of Paku Alam VIII, Education during the colonial period*

### A. INTRODUCTION

The 16th and 17th centuries marked a significant era in which European powers, driven by commercial aspirations, ventured into the Indonesian archipelago with the primary aim of engaging in trade activities that would ultimately reshape the region's socio-economic landscape (Rachman Assegaf; 2005). This era of exploration and expansion is marked by intense competition among various European countries, each striving to exert dominance over the lucrative spice resources highly coveted worldwide, while simultaneously attempting to spread their own ideological frameworks, religious beliefs, and educational paradigms, thereby laying the foundations for what would later develop into a comprehensive system of colonialism. Before the onset of colonization, the common educational practices in Indonesian society were heavily influenced by the convergence of customs, religious teachings, and deeply held beliefs, reflecting a rich tapestry of cultural heritage that supported the transmission of knowledge (Absiroh Ulil; 2017). The process of acquiring important knowledge and skills is largely familial, where parents play a crucial role as primary educators, imparting wisdom and practical abilities to their offspring, thereby building a strong interconnection between education and life experiences in society. Thus, the educational paradigm of this period is closely linked to the broader life

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experiences of individuals, ensuring that learning is not just an academic endeavor but a vital aspect of community participation and identity (Apsari Windiya;2012).

During the Dutch colonial period, the educational landscape can be categorized into two distinct yet interconnected phases, namely the era of the Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC), translated as the United East India Company, and the subsequent period of governance under the Dutch East Indies, referred to as Nederlands Indie (Beeby; 1982). The VOC era was marked by the establishment of educational institutions throughout the island of Java and in other regions, with the fundamental aim of promoting Christianity among the local population. In addition to these religious-oriented schools, there are also institutions that focus on providing various subjects, including basic literacy, Latin, theology, navigation, and even Mandarin, thus striving to meet diverse educational needs. However, it is very important to note that the scope of education provided during this time was very minimal and limited, reflecting the limited ambitions of colonial administrators regarding the intellectual development of the indigenous people (Djoko; 2009).

Transition to the broader Dutch Colonial Era, one observes the continuation of the educational deficiencies that characterized the VOC period, where the colonial government sought to address these shortcomings by integrating liberal ideologies emerging from the Enlightenment movement, also known as enlightenment in the local context (Ellis;1986). In this framework, significant progress was made, such as the establishment of the first midwifery school in Jakarta by the colonial official Deandles, along with the founding of another educational institution known as Ronggeng in Cirebon, marking the beginning of a systematic approach to education in various urban centers in Java. This period also witnessed a significant paradigm shift in educational stratification, with the emergence of the concept of "children of the earth," leading to differentiation within the education system that sought to categorize schools into two distinct classifications: a) Class I Schools, which were exclusively reserved for the children of nobility and prominent figures in society, and b) Class II Schools, which were made accessible to the general public (Goenawan Ryadi;1993).

In terms of the structure of this educational institution, the first-class schools usually last for five years, where the qualifications for teachers primarily come from the Output Kweekschool, covering a diverse curriculum that includes important subjects such as reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, history, natural sciences, drawing, and geometry, all conducted in the local language or Malay (Harulaksono;2007). In contrast, Class II schools operate on a much shorter timeline, usually lasting for three years, with much more lenient requirements for teacher qualifications, focusing primarily on subjects that are not yet perfected such as reading, writing, and arithmetic, also using the local language or Malay as the medium of instruction. In the end, it can be observed that the educational initiatives carried out during this colonial period were primarily designed to strengthen the position of the Dutch colonial authority in Indonesia, with the clear intention of shaping societal structures in a way that would perpetuate their hegemony and influence in the region (Idris;2018).

In the year 1900, the governing authorities of the Dutch East Indies took a significant step towards modernizing the educational landscape by establishing a series of Western-

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style educational institutions, which included but were not limited to, the Europeesche Lagere School (ELS), Hollandsch-Inlandsche School (HIS), Eerste Inlandsche School (EIS), Meer Uitgebreid Lager Onderwijs (MULO), as well as vocational training facilities known as Vervolg (Vocational School), and further educational establishments such as the Algemeene Middelbare School (AMS), Hogere Burger School (HBS), Schakelschool, and the Holland Inlandse Kweekschool (HIK) (Artanayasa;2014). The defining features of the policies that were implemented during this transformative period in the educational sector can be summarized as follows: (1) there existed notable disparities in the administration and governance of educational institutions, which were distinctly organized between the ruling Dutch authorities and the indigenous populace; (2) the educational system was characterized by a stringent central control mechanism that left little room for local autonomy; (3) there was a conspicuous limitation placed on traditional forms of education, which were marginalized in favor of Western pedagogical models; and (4) a glaring absence of systematic planning for the integration of customary education into the broader educational framework (Jalaludin;1990).

In light of these prevailing conditions, Paku Alam VIII found himself increasingly troubled and deeply concerned about the multifaceted issues surrounding the educational, social, and economic circumstances that were affecting the community of Yogyakarta in a significant manner (Tauchid;1955). Within this context of concern, it is essential to recognize the existence of three distinct groups that experienced varying degrees of discrimination: the European group, which represented the ruling authorities; the mixed group comprising individuals of Indonesian, Chinese, and Arab descent, often referred to as the middle class; and finally, the indigenous group, which occupied the lowest tier of the socio-economic hierarchy (Sumarsono;1979). To address these disparities, financial and material assistance was provided to Hamengku Buwono IX, particularly in the economic domain, which involved the distribution of essential commodities such as kerosene, diesel, candles, and lamps, all of which served to alleviate the burdens faced by the community, albeit to a limited extent. In the realm of education, Paku Alam VIII took proactive measures by establishing programs that focused on archery education, alongside the creation of the Roro Jonggrang foundation, initiatives that were specifically designed to support and assist those individuals and families who were unable to afford educational opportunities, thereby promoting greater access to learning and development among the less privileged segments of society (Mufaiqoh;2015).

## **B. RESEARCH METHOD**

Qualitative research that employs historical methodologies represents a distinctive approach that is dedicated to the thorough examination and analysis of events that have transpired in the past, with the primary objective of gaining a deeper understanding of their intricate context, intricate processes, and profound impacts on the evolution of specific phenomena over time. In the course of this scholarly investigation, researchers meticulously engage with a diverse array of historical sources, which encompass documents, archival materials, personal letters, official records, and pertinent literature, all of which serve as vital instruments for the comprehensive analysis of the phenomena that the researchers seek to scrutinize (Creswell;1998). This particular methodological

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framework enables researchers to diligently trace and document the various transformations that have occurred within social, political, economic, or cultural contexts, thereby facilitating the drawing of insightful conclusions regarding the influences of the past on the present circumstances that we encounter today (Leo Agung;2012).

The procedural steps involved in historical research are extensive and include the meticulous collection of data from a broad spectrum of both primary and secondary sources, which together provide a robust foundation for analysis and interpretation (Nasution;1994). Primary sources, which are invaluable in their authenticity, may consist of original documents, artifacts, or firsthand interviews with individuals who have direct historical knowledge, all of which are crucial for providing an unfiltered and genuine perspective of historical events. In addition, secondary sources, which typically take the form of literature that reviews significant periods or topics, can greatly enhance the researcher's understanding and contextualization of the phenomena under investigation. Furthermore, researchers are compelled to engage in a critical examination of these sources, assessing both their credibility and relevance, in order to ascertain that the data utilized is not only accurate but also consistent with the contributions of the IIV natural nail during the era of Colonialism, a significant historical context that warrants careful consideration (Nasution;2008).

Upon the successful collection and thorough analysis of the relevant data, researchers subsequently adopt an interpretive approach that seeks to unravel the underlying meanings and implications of the historical events that have been studied. This interpretative process is conducted with a keen awareness of the social and cultural contexts that prevailed during the time under investigation, ensuring that the resulting findings yield insights that are not only relevant but also deeply meaningful to contemporary research endeavors. The application of historical qualitative research methodologies yields significant contributions in enhancing our understanding of how events and phenomena from the past continue to shape and influence the circumstances we encounter in the present day, while also serving to inform and guide the development of strategies aimed at addressing future challenges that may arise in an ever-evolving societal landscape.

### **C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Sri Paku Alam VIII, who was originally named Soerjo Soelarso Koento Soeratno, made his grand entrance into the world on the auspicious date of April 10, 1910, marking the beginning of a life that would be characterized by significant contributions to his community and society at large (Rimawan Sestodirjo;2015). Subsequently, on April 13, 1937, he ascended to the esteemed position of Sri Paku Alam VII, thereby inheriting a legacy that demanded both respect and responsibility (Pradipta Oscar D;2018). With a solid foundation in education, he cultivated his intellect through his attendance at various prestigious institutions, such as ELS (Elementary School), MULO (Middle School), and AMS-B (Higher Secondary School), all of which he engaged with fervently from a young age, showcasing his commitment to scholarly pursuits. In essence, he can be aptly described as an ardent educator, whose primary dedication has consistently revolved around the enhancement and advancement of societal education, which he viewed as a fundamental pillar for the progress of his community (Neti Mufalqoh;2015).

1. The establishment and progressive development of the organization known as Perpani, which took place from 1953 to 1977, is a testament to his enduring commitment to the promotion of archery as a sport within the community. By integrating himself into the organizational structure of PORI, Paku Alam VIII demonstrated a profound dedication

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to fostering the sport of archery, which ultimately led to the founding of Perpani in the culturally rich city of Yogyakarta on July 12, 1953. This initiative was not a mere coincidental occurrence; rather, it was a well-thought-out movement that involved teachers who organized inter-school competitions in a systematic rotation across five districts, thereby ensuring widespread participation and engagement. To facilitate the growth of this burgeoning sport, adequate facilities and infrastructure were meticulously provided, complemented by transportation assistance for a contingent of 30 participants who were eager to compete at the national championship, known as Kejurnas (Salindri D;2015).

The fruits of these laborious efforts were evident when several accolades were attained during the inaugural National Championship held in Surabaya in the year 1959, which served to further legitimize the sport within the national consciousness. As time progressed, specifically in 1975, PERPANI DIY extended an invitation to the Mardisoro Traditional Archery Group, encouraging their participation to celebrate the important occasion of the Lustrum commemoration. The LPP competition, which was organized on January 21, 1975, took place at the Kolombo field, featuring competitive distances of 50 meters, 40 meters, and 30 meters, thereby showcasing the skills of the participants. Over the years, Perpani evolved into a cherished tradition, celebrated with competitions that coincided with the birthdays of the kings, particularly the event known as Wiyosa, which continued to be held every Saturday during the Pahingan period in Yogyakarta.

2. Furthermore, Paku Alam VIII's profound interest in the art of dance education, which was nurtured from his early childhood, served as the catalyst for the establishment of the Roro Jonggrang Foundation, an initiative that came to fruition on May 28, 1968. This foundation was entrusted with the pivotal responsibility of managing and organizing the renowned Prambanan Ramayana Dance, a culturally significant performance that encapsulates the rich tradition of Indonesian performing arts. (Sari Ninda P;2012)

The performances orchestrated by the foundation are frequently held in an array of venues, including luxurious hotels, delightful restaurants, and popular tourist destinations, thereby ensuring a diverse audience is engaged with this artistic expression. Even to this day, the Sendratari Ramayana performance continues to captivate audiences, with regular presentations divided into four distinct episodes, each lasting approximately 90 minutes and narrating a captivating tale, which includes: 1). The Abduction of Dewi Shinta, 2). Hanoman's Fire, 3). Kumbakarna's Fall, and 4). Shinta's Fire. Additionally, there are performances that are designed to be staged in a single evening, presenting the entire narrative from beginning to end in one continuous spectacle. Notably, in the year 1967, Paku Alam VIII took on the distinguished role of leading an overseas performance, thereby further promoting Indonesian cultural heritage on an international stage (SartonoKartodirdjo;1987).

3. Developing Archery Sports (Jemparingan)Jemparingan, or traditional archery, is often played by Sri Paduka Paku Alam VIII and even targets renowned experts; usually, he shoots with relatives and palace attendants from Puro Kukualaman. As someone who lives in the region of the Pakualaman principality, Javanese culture has somewhat permeated him. As explained above, he has liked archery since childhood. His love for traditional archery eventually led Paku Alam VIII to establish an archery club at Puro Pakualaman named Mardisoro. Mardisoro is derived from the Javanese language, originating from the words Mardi and Soro, where Mardi means to educate and Soro means arrow. Like most organizations, this organization also has an organizational structure. He formed an administration that helped him run and develop the Mardisoro Traditional Archery Association in 1953 (Sawa Suryana;2007).

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Jemparingan has different rules from archery competitions. This Jemparingan uses simple tools made from bamboo, strong strings, and arrows made from wood with iron tips, and for balance, chicken feathers or sticks are usually used. However, in its development, the arrows are made from fibers and the balance is synthetic feathers. The Jemparingan competition has a rotating trophy called the Bramastro trophy. This trophy is said to be given only to true archers who can shoot 4 arrows that hit the target in one sequence or one string, a phenomenon known as clothing 4. For 4 years, no one could make these 4 shirts again. The development of archery sports is also happening in the community, such as archery training for school teachers, a movement carried out through teachers, especially in the Yogyakarta municipality. Paku Alam VIII always organizes archery competitions held in rotation for schools in five districts in Yogyakarta. He immediately coordinated with local officials to ensure the event went smoothly. The method of developing archery was first carried out at Puro Pakualaman, then implemented at the district level, delegated to the Regent, and subsequently continued by the Department of Education and Culture, which teaches the participants, most of whom are school teachers. As a means of exchanging information, getting to know each other, and chatting. between the regent, mayor, and governor, he organized a relay race for the districts in Yogyakarta. Not only government officials, but also teachers are involved in the event, usually the Head of the Education and Culture Office is also present.

4. Pioneers of the Establishment of the Yogyakarta Struggle Museum On the significant date of December 2, 1952, Paku Alam VIII ascended to the pivotal position of interim chairman, thereby spearheading the foundational efforts for the establishment of the Struggle Museum, a cultural and historical institution located in the city of Yogyakarta. Subsequently, on May 20, 1958, he assumed the esteemed role of Deputy Chairman I within the Half-Century National Awakening Monument Committee, which was also based in Yogyakarta, indicating his ongoing commitment to the commemoration of national heritage and historical significance (Tamrin M I;2019).

This initiative was aimed at honoring and recognizing the contributions of the pioneering heroes of independence, along with other distinguished figures, while also ensuring that the museum's architecture would embody educational, cultural, and historical values, as well as reflect the grandeur of the nation and its rich legacy. In a further demonstration of his dedication, on August 17, 1959, he officiated the ceremony that marked the laying of the first stake, symbolizing the commencement of the construction of the Struggle Museum in Yogyakarta, thus laying the groundwork for a monument of cultural significance. Following this event, on October 5, 1959, he conducted the groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of the Yogyakarta Struggle Museum, which was a significant milestone in the realization of this ambitious project. Ultimately, the culmination of these efforts came to fruition on November 17, 1961, when the official inauguration of the Yogyakarta Struggle Museum took place, marking a historic moment in the preservation of the nation's memory and the celebration of its heroes.

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

From the comprehensive analysis presented in the preceding discussion, one can draw the conclusion that the alteration in the motivations and intentions of various European nations was fundamentally rooted in the significant wealth derived from the abundant spice resources that the region possesses, which served as a substantial incentive for colonial endeavors. This motivation was further compounded by the strategic implementation of

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ideological influence, as well as religious beliefs and educational frameworks, which were purposefully designed to ensure the continuous existence of foreign power structures within Indonesia, ultimately aiming to establish it as a colony under the dominion of foreign entities. The manifest disparities in educational stratification within society incited considerable anxiety in Paku Alam VIII regarding the precarious future and overall well-being of the lower strata of society, prompting him to take decisive action in addressing these inequalities.

This concern subsequently culminated in the founding of institutions such as the archery school, known as Perpani, alongside the establishment of the dance arts foundation, referred to as Rorojongrang. Within the pedagogical frameworks of these institutions, there exists a deliberate emphasis on the cultivation and instillation of positive attitudes and ethical values, which encompass the principles of good manners, a sense of nobility, unwavering firmness, a profound sense of responsibility, and a commitment to social welfare. Additionally, these educational initiatives prioritize the preservation and appreciation of local cultural heritage, which is integral to the identity of the community, while also fostering the development of strong character, emotional regulation, and adherence to high moral standards among the individuals who partake in these two educational programs. In essence, the initiatives led by Paku Alam VIII represent a concerted effort to mitigate the adverse impacts of colonialism by empowering the lower classes through education and cultural preservation, thereby ensuring that these communities retain their dignity and cultural identity in the face of external pressures. Ultimately, these endeavors reflect a profound understanding of the pivotal role that education plays in societal development and the safeguarding of cultural values amidst the tumultuous backdrop of colonial influence. Thus, the legacy of such educational frameworks is not only significant for the individuals directly involved but also holds broader implications for the community as a whole, as they strive to navigate the complexities of their historical context while maintaining their unique cultural integrity.

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