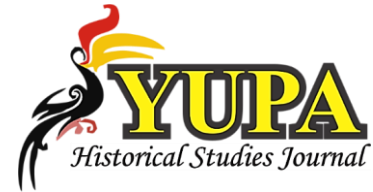


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## Sultan, Plantations, and Islam: Dynamics of Social-Political Life in East Sumatra (1900-1942)

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**Abstract** This research explores the dynamics of social and political life in East Sumatra from 1900 to 1942, focusing on the role of the Sultan, plantations, and Islam. The research employed historical research methods in four steps: heuristic, criticism, interpretation, and historiography. Data were collected from relevant archives, books, articles, and reports on the research topic. The research is grounded in three hypotheses: 1) the Sultan and local elites played a significant role in the development of plantations in East Sumatra; 2) Islam served as a crucial factor in shaping political and social identities in East Sumatra; and 3) conflicts of interest between local elites and the colonial government influenced the dynamics of social and political life in East Sumatra during the studied period.

**Keywords:** Sultanate, plantations, Islam, East Sumatra.

**Abstrak** Artikel ini mengkaji tentang dinamika kehidupan sosial politik di Sumatera Timur tahun 1900-1942, yang melibatkan tiga faktor yakni Sultan, perkebunan, dan Islam. Fokus kajian meliputi peran sultan dan peralihan sentralisasi pusat kota, perkembangan industrialis di Kota Medan serta Islam sebagai impuls perubahan utama. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian sejarah dalam empat langkah, yaitu: heuristik, kritik, interpretasi, dan historiografi. Data dikumpulkan dari arsip, buku, artikel, dan laporan yang relevan dengan topik penelitian. Kajian ini menghasilkan dua kesimpulan yakni, pertama bahwa dalam aspek politik sultan memainkan peran penting terkait perkembangan industrialis di Kota Medan. Kedua, Islam menjadi nilai-nilai yang mampu mengakomodasi kehidupan multikultural serta menjaga stabilitas sosial di tengah proses perubahan sosial politik di Kota Medan

**Kata kunci:** Sultan, perkebunan, Islam, Sumatera Timur.



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## INTRODUCTION

East Sumatra was an administrative region of the Dutch East Indies, established in 1873 after separating from the Residency of Riau. It was situated on the eastern coast of Sumatra Island and bordered the Residency of Tapanuli. The region had Labuhan as its capital, which was later relocated to Medan. During the Dutch colonial period (1900-1942), this area was encompassed within an administrative region adjacent to the Residency of Tapanuli. Serving as the central hub, this region significantly facilitated economic and political activities (Kartodirjo & Suryo, 1991, p. 35). During that period, this region's social and political life dynamics were significantly influenced by the Sultan, plantations, and Islam. The presence of the Sultan and the establishment of plantations played crucial roles in shaping East Sumatra's economic and social landscape. Furthermore, Islam exerted its influence on both the political and religious dimensions of the region.

In the early 20th century, East Sumatra was a region under the control of sultans, who depended on plantations as one of their primary sources of income (Pelzer, 1985, p. 87). The presence of Islam also influenced the dynamics of social and political life in this area. Between 1900 and 1942, East Sumatra experienced significant transformations in multiple facets of life, with particular emphasis on the social and political spheres (Suwirta, 2002, p. 119). These socio-political changes were driven by the reorientation of the administrative center to the city of Medan as part of a more extensive process of industrialization, which was propelled by the active participation of political elites. Moreover, Islam emerged as an inseparable element within these socio-political transformations, deeply intertwined with the dynamics of change. This phenomenon can be attributed to Islam's multifaceted roles, as it not only provided support but flourished within the complex tapestry of the industrialized city center, characterized by its multicultural environment.

The early 20th century constituted a pivotal era in the historical trajectory of East Sumatra, characterized by profound transformations in its governance system. During this time, the region was subject to the dominion of an all-powerful Sultan who exercised absolute authority (Takari et al., 2012, p. 20). However, in 1908, the Dutch implemented the Local Government Act, which bestowed autonomy upon various regions within the Dutch East Indies. Consequently, the Sultan's authority declined, while the Dutch progressively exerted more significant influence over the governance of East Sumatra (Akbar, 2018, p. 72).

One crucial facet of the social-political dynamics in East Sumatra during that period was the prominent presence of the Sultan. Acting as the paramount authority in the region, the Sultan assumed a leadership role in overseeing various facets of the community, including its social, political, and religious dimensions. However, the presence of the Sultan also engendered conflict and tension, particularly in the context of Dutch colonial rule (Wibowo, 2015, p. 36).

Furthermore, the presence of plantations also held a pivotal role in shaping the dynamics of social and political life in East Sumatra during that period. The region experienced significant growth in industries, specifically rubber and tobacco plantations, which profoundly impacted the local economy (Purwanto, 2009, p. 45). Nevertheless, the plantations also became a source of discontent and discord, especially concerning labor rights and land administration.

The influence of Islam in East Sumatra's social and political life from 1900 to 1942 grew increasingly prominent. As the region's prevailing religion, Islam significantly impacted both the political and religious realms. In the political sphere, Islam influenced the appointment of the Sultan and the political decision-making processes. Simultaneously, in the realm of religion, Islam played a formative role in shaping the identity and values of East Sumatran society (Soiman, 2019, p. 207).

The social and political changes that transpired in East Sumatra during the period 1900-1942 are inherently intertwined with the influence of colonialism (Reid, 2012, p. 265). The Dutch played a significant role in reshaping the social and political frameworks within this region. However, the dynamics of social and political life in East Sumatra during that period were not solely influenced by colonialism. The roles of the Sultan, plantations, and Islam also played significant parts in shaping these changes.

To facilitate the discussion and fill the existing research gap, several prior studies related to this research topic are presented. One notable survey by Harahap explores the political landscape, plantations, and power structure of the Deli Sultanate in early 20<sup>th</sup>-century East Sumatra. The author examines the Deli Sultanate's role in overseeing plantations, the local economy, and its relationship with the Dutch colonial government. The study further investigates the impact of the Sultanate on the social and political dynamics of the region (Harahap, 2017).

Another pertinent study by Firdausy delves into the political history of the Deli Sultanate in East Sumatra during the colonial period, spanning from 1861 to 1941. The author meticulously examines the intricate relationship between the Deli Sultanate and the Dutch colonial government, including the conflicts and power negotiations between the two entities. This research further explores the Sultan of Deli's role in local and national politics, meticulously examining their influence on the economy and culture (Firdausy, 2018).

Furthermore, Kadir's research concentrates on the significant role played by Malay sultans in the politics of plantations in East Sumatra from 1900 to 1942. The author delves into how these sultans influenced the development of plantations, encompassing aspects such as capital investment, land management, and their interactions with the Dutch colonial government. This study also scrutinizes the role of the sultans in shaping social and political relations within the region and their impact on the local community (Kadir, 2014).

Furthermore, Lubis's research delves into the intricate relationship between Islam, modernity, and politics in East Sumatra from 1920 to 1942. The author effectively demonstrates how Islam in East Sumatra progressed alongside the modernization process and how it influenced local politics. This study also delves into the roles played by the ulama (religious scholars) and Islamic figures in advancing modernization ideas, as well as their utilization of political issues to advocate for the interests of the Muslim community (Lubis, 2012).

The final reference is a study by Saragih, which thoroughly investigates the role of the Sultanate government in East Sumatra and its far-reaching impact on socio-cultural transformations from 1900 to 1942. The author demonstrates how the Sultanate government played a significant role in maintaining social and political stability in the region, leading development policies, and expanding plantations in the area. This research also discusses the consequences of socio-cultural changes resulting from plantation development and modernization initiatives implemented by the Sultanate government (Saragih, 2015).

Based on the above elaboration, this research aims to elucidate the dynamics of social and political life in East Sumatra from 1900 to 1942. It involves the Sultan as a social and political actor, plantations as an economic factor supporting the city's transformation towards industrialization, and Islam as a dominant element in social and political life changes. This study also aims to contribute to understanding the Sultan's role, the socio-economic background, and the political orientation changes in the city of Medan within the historical dynamics of East Sumatra during the Dutch colonial period.

## **METHOD**

In this research, the author employs the method of historical research. According to Abdurahman (1999), historical research consists of systematic rules for effectively collecting historical sources, critically evaluating them, and presenting a synthesis of the findings in written form (Abdurahman, 1999). Meanwhile, according to Kuntowijoyo (1995), historical research involves five stages: topic selection, source collection, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography (Kuntowijoyo, 1995). In the source collection process, the author employs the library research method with a descriptive-analytical approach. This method is used for gathering literary sources, reading them, taking notes, and analyzing the obtained sources (Zed, 2014).

The sourcing for this research encompasses the Sultan, plantations, and Islam, which are three pivotal factors in the socio-political dynamics of East Sumatra during the 20th century. The primary sources utilized in this study are derived from colonial reports and other government documents issued by the East Sumatra Residency and the Deli Sultanate, based in the region's capital city, Medan. Secondary sources encompass books, journals, contemporary newspapers, and other written documents aligned with and relevant to the research theme.

The subsequent stage in the research process is source criticism, crucial in validating historical sources. During this stage, the researcher engages in two types of source criticism: internal and external. Internal criticism aims to ensure the coherence and consistency of historical facts among various sources, facilitating the presentation of precise and reliable historical data. The second type is external criticism, which focuses on the authenticity of the physical sources. For instance, colonial reports undergo reevaluation to confirm their originality and verify that they have not been altered or rewritten. The subsequent stage is interpretation, wherein the acquired historical sources are analyzed to logically and critically reconstruct historical events. Lastly, there is the process of historical writing or historiography. This study employs a descriptive-analytical approach situated within the framework of modern historiography.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **From Labuhan to Medan: The Transfer of the Administrative Center of East Sumatra Residency**

The administrative center of East Sumatra Residency relocated from Labuhan Deli to Medan in 1918. Before that, Labuhan Deli functioned as a strategic administrative hub, benefiting from its thriving port and significance as a vital trade route. However, in the early 20th century, Medan witnessed rapid growth due to new industries' emergence and robust infrastructure establishment (Aziz, 2009, p. 32). This development positioned Medan as a more promising economic and political center than Labuhan Deli.

The decision to transfer the administrative center of East Sumatra Residency from Labuhan Deli to Medan was motivated by various factors, including geographical, economic, and strategic considerations. Geographically, Medan is located at the center of the East Sumatra Residency, rendering it more accessible to all districts and cities within the residency. Furthermore, Medan is well-connected through railway routes to other important cities in Sumatra, including Aceh, Padang, and Pekanbaru (Aziz, 2009, p. 33).

Meanwhile, from an economic perspective, Medan functioned as the hub of economic and trade activities in East Sumatra during that period, thanks to numerous plantations and factories. The relocation of the administrative center to Medan was anticipated to bolster the economic and trade development in the region. Moreover, the establishment of the administrative center in Medan was also expected to positively impact the advancement of infrastructure and public facilities, including roads, bridges, and educational institutions (Sinar, 1991, p. 30).

The relocation of the administrative center to Medan was also undertaken for strategic purposes, aiming to enhance the colonial government's control over the East Sumatra region. During that period, the Dutch colonial government sought to safeguard the area against potential

threats and disruptions that could arise from the burgeoning nationalist movement. The establishment of the administrative center in Medan enabled the colonial government to more effectively monitor and exert control over the East Sumatra region (Sinar, 1991, p. 37).

Additionally, Sultan Deli and the local elite's role in advancing Medan was also a pivotal factor in the relocation of the administrative center. Sultan Deli played a significant role in the city's development by expanding its territory and enhancing infrastructure, including roads, railway lines, government buildings, and residential areas. Furthermore, the local elite played a significant role in Medan's progress by constructing office buildings, hotels, and shopping centers (Muhajir et al., 2020, p. 5).

In addition to economic factors and the involvement of the Sultan and local elite, the Dutch colonial government's aim to centralize administration in an easily accessible and controllable area was a significant impetus for relocating the administrative center to Medan. Due to its proximity to Tanjung Balai and Sibolga, Medan was regarded as a strategically advantageous hub for effectively overseeing the entire territory of the Keresidenan of East Sumatra.

The relocation of the administrative center of the Residency of East Sumatra from Labuhan Deli to Medan was motivated by a combination of economic factors, the influential role of the Sultan and local elite, and the Dutch colonial government's objective to centralize administration in a more accessible and manageable area. The relocation positively impacted the development of Medan as an economic and political center in East Sumatra during the colonial period.

In addition to the relocation of the administrative center of the Residency of East Sumatra, the Deli Sultanate also moved its seat of power to Medan around the same time. This relocation was carried out by Sultan Amaluddin, the 8th Sultan of Deli, intending to expand and enhance the city of Medan as the economic and administrative hub of the Deli Sultanate (Takari et al., 2012, p. 115).

The Deli Sultanate relocated its seat of power from Labuhan Deli to Medan primarily due to Medan's strategic location as a center of government and trade. Furthermore, Medan had better access through improved land and river transportation routes, unlike Labuhan Deli, located at the mouth of the Deli River. The relocation of the administrative center was also connected to Sultan's endeavors to consolidate his authority in the East Sumatra region and augment his influence in political and economic matters (Sinar, 2006, p. 312).

Apart from those mentioned above, economic and strategic reasons, several other significant factors drove the relocation of the Deli Sultanate's administrative center from Labuhan Deli to Medan. One of these factors was the substantial population growth in Medan during the early 20th century, which elevated its status as an increasingly vital economic and trading center.

This growth also catalyzed infrastructure development in the city, such as the construction of highways and railway stations, resulting in enhanced accessibility and transportation.

Furthermore, political factors also substantially influenced the relocation of the administrative center. During that period, the Netherlands, as the colonial power, pursued a goal of centralizing power in Medan. Consequently, transferring the Deli Sultanate's administrative center to the city facilitated greater control and oversight over political and economic activities in the region.

After relocating the seat of power from Labuhan Deli to Medan in 1915, the Deli Sultanate accomplished several noteworthy advancements. In the realm of governance, the Sultanate bolstered surveillance and law enforcement by establishing a security oversight body known as "Polsweer." Furthermore, the Deli Sultanate enhanced its administrative services by inaugurating many government offices in Medan (Batubara et al., 2020, p. 120).

In the economic domain, the Deli Sultanate advanced the development of plantations and trade by establishing a new port in Belawan and engaging in partnerships with private companies. Moreover, the Deli Sultanate achieved considerable growth in plantation revenues by implementing a highly efficient land taxation system, attracting many foreign investors.

In education, the Deli Sultanate established multiple schools and Islamic boarding schools to elevate the educational standards within society. Furthermore, the Deli Sultanate reinforced the teachings of Islam and promoted a more devout Islamic way of life in the community. In general, relocating the seat of power from Labuhan Deli to Medan yielded many advantages for the Deli Sultanate regarding regional progress. The Sultanate witnessed governance, economy, education, and religion enhancements after the power transfer to Medan (Aziz, 2009, p. 34).

However, the relocation of the Deli Sultanate's seat of government was not devoid of controversy and challenges. Certain factions, particularly within the Deli Sultanate nobility, disagreed with this decision, perceiving a loss of their status and political influence. Nonetheless, the Deli Sultanate successfully surmounted these challenges and persisted in its endeavors to expand its territory and bolster the economy of the city of Medan.

### **Plantations and the Transformation of Medan as an Industrial Area**

The introduction of plantations in the early 20th century marked Medan's transition into an industrialized region, as these plantations supplied the essential raw materials for various industries, most notably the swiftly expanding tobacco industry in Medan. Tobacco and rubber plantations were established by the Dutch during the early 20th century and experienced rapid expansion in the East Sumatra region, including the surrounding area of Medan. Moreover, Dutch companies owning these plantations constructed essential infrastructure, such as ports and railway networks, to facilitate harvest transportation (Breman, 1997, p. 177). This development

played a crucial role in enabling the shipment of plantation products beyond East Sumatra, extending even to foreign markets.

The progression of Medan's transformation into an industrialized region continued unabated, with the simultaneous growth of related sectors such as tobacco and rubber processing, shipbuilding, and transportation industries, all of which played instrumental roles in facilitating the shipment of plantation products. This solidified Medan's position as the industrial nucleus of East Sumatra and a swiftly emerging city during that era. In tandem with this progress, the transformation of Medan into an industrialized zone also engendered significant social and economic changes in the region, such as the emergence of the working class and a burgeoning trend of urbanization (Breman, 1997, p. 180).

The conversion of Medan into an industrialized region was also propelled by political factors, notably the policy implemented by the Dutch colonial government to stimulate the growth of plantations and industries as the primary sources of revenue. The Dutch colonial government regarded East Sumatra as a region with promising fertility for cultivating plantations and establishing industries, thanks to its ample fertile land. With the growing global demand for plantation products, expanding plantations and industries in East Sumatra became a paramount concern for the Dutch colonial government (Pelzer, 1985, p. 63).

In the 20th century, plantations in East Sumatra underwent rapid development, specifically in palm oil, rubber, and tea production. Throughout the colonial period, plantations were established by the Dutch government and private companies, which exercised control over the land and natural resources in East Sumatra. After attaining independence, the Indonesian government assumed ownership of the plantations and subsequently developed them as the primary economic resource within the region.

The development of plantations in 20th-century East Sumatra was influenced by various factors, including economic growth, policies implemented by the Dutch colonial government, and alterations in land ownership patterns. In the early 20th century, plantations in East Sumatra underwent substantial expansion, with commodities like rubber, tea, and tobacco dominating the industry. Among these, rubber emerged as the paramount commodity in East Sumatra, with its production experiencing rapid growth (Ghani, 2019, p. 80).

The policy implemented by the Dutch colonial government also exerted a substantial influence on the development of plantations in East Sumatra. In the early 20th century, the Dutch colonial government introduced the forced cultivation system, which mandated local farmers to cultivate particular commodity crops on their lands. This system aimed to bolster commodity export production and fortify Dutch influence in the region. Moreover, the colonial government constructed crucial infrastructure, including highways, ports, and railways, which facilitated the transportation and distribution of plantation products.



Shifts in land ownership patterns also shaped the development of plantations in 20th-century East Sumatra. Initially, the ownership of plantation lands in East Sumatra was concentrated among nobles and local elites. However, in the mid-20th century, numerous plantation lands were acquired by the Indonesian government after attaining independence. Consequently, there was a transition in land ownership from the Indonesian government to private companies.

Alongside the progression of plantations, East Sumatra emerged as a prominent industrial region in Indonesia during the 20th century, with notable advancements in sectors such as textiles, oil, and food processing. Cities like Medan and Binjai accommodated many operational factories that offered employment prospects for the local populace. This phenomenon simultaneously spurred urban expansion and modernization in East Sumatra, a trend that endures to the present day.

The development of plantations in East Sumatra profoundly influenced the region's social and political dynamics. Debates and conflicts emerged regarding land ownership and the rights of plantation workers. Moreover, nationalist sentiments played a significant role in the endeavor to secure control over plantations and enhance the welfare of farmers and workers within the plantation sector (Purwanto, 2009, p. 57).

Presently, plantations continue to constitute a pivotal sector in East Sumatra's economy, with palm oil production serving as a prominent export commodity. Nevertheless, considerable attention is now directed toward the environmental and social ramifications associated with the plantation industry, encompassing concerns about deforestation, soil degradation, and labor rights. The government and society in East Sumatra persistently endeavor to strike a balance between economic development and environmental and social sustainability.

With the advancements in plantations and the heightened engagement of the Dutch East Indies government in East Sumatra during the 20th century, profound transformations occurred in Medan. One of the primary transformations entailed the development of modern infrastructure and the expansion of the trading sector. The colonial government constructed highways and bridges to facilitate transportation between regions and streamline the distribution of plantation products such as coffee, rubber, and tobacco.

The 20th-century development of plantations in East Sumatra significantly impacted the Deli Sultanate. The establishment and expansion of plantations within the Deli Sultanate's jurisdiction involved the Sultan's and local elites' active participation in plantation development. Consequently, the Sultan and local elites reaped substantial financial and political advantages as they assumed the role of landlords who leased land to plantation companies and received lucrative rental payments in return.

However, these positive impacts were accompanied by negative consequences, particularly concerning the economic conditions of small communities within the Deli Sultanate. The swift expansion of plantations resulted in the conversion of lands owned by small communities and farmers into plantations, thereby diminishing the agricultural lands previously utilized to fulfill the needs of the local population. Furthermore, the escalated labor demand in the plantations triggered population migration from other regions to the Deli Sultanate, instigating social and cultural transformations within the local community.

### **The Influence of Islam on Social and Political Changes in East Sumatra**

In the 20th century, East Sumatra emerged as a region distinguished by abundant plantations and a predominantly Muslim population, with the Sultan playing a prominent role. The involvement of the Sultan and Islam in East Sumatra's social and political life during that period was noteworthy, particularly in connection with the plantation industry (Suwirta, 2002, p. 122). As the leader of the Deli Sultanate, the Sultan of Deli assumed a pivotal role in the administration of the plantations. The Sultan exercised control over the land within the Deli Sultanate's jurisdiction and possessed the authority to grant permission for plantation companies to operate in the region. Additionally, the Sultan regulated employment and social relations among the plantation workers.

The involvement of Islam in the social and political aspects of East Sumatra during that era was of considerable significance, particularly concerning employment within the plantations. The majority of plantation workers were Muslims, forming a distinct socio-economic group. Islam was pivotal in their lives, shaping their social identities and influencing social interactions among their fellow plantation workers (Tanjung et al., 2017, p. 64).

However, the involvement of the Sultan and Islam in the social and political aspects of East Sumatra during this period encountered several challenges. One of these challenges pertained to the unstable economic conditions confronted by the plantation workers. This was attributed to insufficient wages and the absence of legally recognized rights for plantation workers. Additionally, the relationship between the plantation workers and the plantation companies was frequently influenced by political and religious factors, potentially resulting in conflicts between them.

In such circumstances, Islam serves as a moral and value-based foundation, contributing to harmonious social relationships between plantation workers and plantation companies. This mitigates potential conflicts and divisions in the multicultural environment of the capital that may arise in the field (Mailin, 2016). Islam assumes a crucial role in fostering harmony between the Sultan and the plantations, aligning their interests to promote the progress of Medan as a multicultural and dynamic region in the 20th century (Reid, 2011, p. 370).

First and foremost, as the predominant religion in East Sumatra, Islam assumes a pivotal role in preserving harmony between the Sultan and the plantations. Both entities depend on the backing of the Muslim community to carry out their respective endeavors, and Islam acts as a unifying force that binds these two groups together in the pursuit of shared objectives.

Secondly, Islam is a governing force in the socio-political relationship between the Sultan and the plantations. The principles enshrined within Islam, which advocate for justice, equitable policies, and peace, contribute to maintaining a balance of power between the Sultan and the plantations. Furthermore, Islam's value system and ethics, which emphasize tolerance, respect for differences, and foster a sense of brotherhood among human beings, can serve as a foundation for cultivating a multicultural region in Medan.

Thirdly, as a Muslim leader, the Sultan bears a moral responsibility to champion the interests of the Muslim community within his jurisdiction. In this context, the rapid development of plantations can catalyze economic growth and employment opportunities, consequently contributing to poverty alleviation and enhancing the standard of living for the Muslim population.

Therefore, with the influence of Islam, the Sultan, and the plantations can collaborate to propel Medan as a progressive and multicultural region in the 20th century. Islam is a unifying force that fosters harmony between these two entities and upholds principles of justice and tolerance within their socio-political relations. During the 20th century, East Sumatra emerged as a prominent center of Islamic civilization in Indonesia, where the profound impact of Islam on the region's social and political landscape became evident. The interplay between Islam, the Sultanate, and the plantations marked significant milestones in the development of Islamic civilization in East Sumatra (Takari et al., 2012, p. 93).

The Islamic civilization in East Sumatra during the 20th century positively impacted the region's socio-political and economic development. Firstly, Islam played a crucial role in providing economic opportunities for the Muslim community and strengthening the Sultan's position as a leader advocating for the rights of Muslims. Secondly, the prevalence of religious institutions, notably Islamic boarding schools, and mosques, functioned as pivotal centers for education and the propagation of Islam in East Sumatra. These establishments played a crucial role in disseminating Islamic teachings and bolstering the profound influence of Islam in the social and political spheres of the region. Thirdly, the evolution of Medan into an advanced and multicultural region was facilitated by a tolerant and respectful Muslim society. This societal disposition played a significant role in fostering an atmosphere conducive to progress and harmonious coexistence among diverse cultural groups. This was exemplified by the construction of magnificent mosques and places of worship, officially inaugurated by Sultan Deli, symbolizing the success of promoting Islam and nurturing a diverse community.

Overall, the Islamic civilization in East Sumatra during the 20th century yielded positive outcomes for the socio-political and economic development of the region. The presence of Sultan Deli, the establishment of plantations, and the existence of a tolerant Muslim community were crucial factors that collectively contributed to East Sumatra's emergence as a center of advanced and multicultural Islamic civilization.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the above discussion concerning the Sultan, plantations, and Islam in the socio-political dynamics of East Sumatra, this research draws two conclusions: First, the participation of the Sultan in the political realm provided an impetus for a shift in the community's socioeconomic orientation. Additionally, the plantations in the East Sumatra region served as the primary foundation for the centralization of industrialization within the Muslim community. Second, Islam played a significant role in the socio-political dynamics of East Sumatra from 1900 to 1942, propelling social, economic, and political transformations towards a progressive and multicultural city, thereby showcasing the advancement of Islamic civilization in East Sumatra. In this context, Islam, the majority religion in East Sumatra, assumed a pivotal role in shaping the guiding principles that influenced the Sultan's policies, thereby impacting the development of plantations and contributing to economic and socio-political progress. Furthermore, the influence of Islam also extended to the moral and value systems prevalent in the lives of East Sumatran society during that period. Despite witnessing significant changes in the socio-political dynamics of East Sumatra between 1900 and 1942, Islamic values and heritage persist as integral components of the region's rich and complex cultural and historical identity.

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