

From Islamic Purification to Anti-Colonial Solidarity: Reframing the Padri War as the Early Expression of Nationalism through the Tandikek Agreement

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Abstract

The Padri War (1803–1837) in Minangkabau represented a multidimensional conflict involving social, political, and religious dynamics. The global problem addressed in this research is the reductionism of historical narratives that only view the Padri War as a binary conflict between religious and traditional groups, without accommodating the role of Dutch colonialism and the transformation of religious movements into an early expression of nationalism in Minangkabau. The objective of this study is to analyze the transformation of the Islamic movement into an early expression of nationalism in a colonial context. The method used is qualitative with historical discourse analysis based on primary and secondary sources, including the notes from Tuanku Imam Bonjol and colonial records. The findings reveal that colonial domination functioned as a catalyst that redefined the Padri's theological mission into a broader vision of communal liberation. The Tandikek Agreement emerges as a symbolic synthesis of faith and nationhood, transforming Islamic purification into anti-colonial solidarity, which at the end shaped the early expression on nationalism in Minangkabau. By examining the Padri War through this perspective, the study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between Islamic reform, colonialism, and collective political solidarity, and nationalism in nineteenth-century Minangkabau.

Keywords: Padri War, Islamic reform, anti-colonial solidarity, colonialism, Minangkabau

Introduction

The Padri War in Minangkabau, which took place between 1803 and 1837¹, was not only an armed conflict between the Padri and the traditionalists, but also reflected the complex social, political, and religious dynamics within Minangkabau society during the transition from local tradition to Islamic reform and, later, early nationalism. This topic is crucial to re-examine because the historical narrative of the Padri War has been seen as reductionist, showing only the battle between religious and traditional without fully revealing the transformation of identity and the role of Dutch colonialism. The author argues that the Padri War was an important historical episode in Minangkabau that reflected the interaction between Islamic reform, local social change, and colonial intervention.

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¹ J. P. Schomaker, *Verhalen Uit De Oorlogen In Nederl. Oost-Indie*, n.d., <https://www.delpher.nl/nl/boeken/view?query=Padri+oorlog&objectsearch=padri&coll=boeken&identifier=M MKB35:170737000:00140.>, 139. The year 1803 marked the return of three Minangkabau hajj pilgrims from Mekkah. This year is also regarded as the starting point of the Padri War, signifying the beginning of Islamic reform initiated by the early Padri movement.

Before evolving into a broader socio-political conflict under colonial intervention, the Padri War emerged from internal religious and social tensions within Minangkabau society regarding Islamic practice and customary traditions. In this context, Tuanku Nan Tuo occupies an important position as an early reformist figure who initiated Islamic preaching and moral purification through a gradual and accommodative approach. His call for a return to Islamic principles (sharia-oriented reform) did not yet take the form of coercive or militant action, but was instead implemented through da'wah networks by sending preachers to various nagari in Minangkabau. These efforts contributed to a gradual process of religious reorientation in several areas, although they also encountered varying degrees of resistance from local communities. Within the broader trajectory of the Padri movement, Tuanku Nan Tuo can thus be understood as representing the pre-conflict phase of Islamic reformism, which later developed in different directions as tensions intensified and the movement became more confrontational during the Padri War period.²

The struggle for the purification of Islam was then continued by the Padri movement, particularly through figures who had been directly influenced by Tuanku Nan Tuo's teachings, one of whom was Tuanku Nan Renceh. As a former student, Tuanku Nan Renceh inherited the reformist concern for religious purification, but reinterpreted it in a more assertive and uncompromising manner. This shift highlights a significant divergence in approach between teacher and student: while Tuanku Nan Tuo is generally associated with a gradual, Sufi-oriented, and persuasive method of dakwah, Tuanku Nan Renceh became more closely linked with a stricter and more confrontational strategy aimed at enforcing religious reform more rapidly.³ This transformation illustrates how the early reformist ideas of Tuanku Nan Tuo evolved within different social and political contexts, eventually contributing to the escalation of tensions that characterized the Padri War.

Several previous studies have touched on important aspects of the Padri War, for example the oldest was conducted by Cristine Dobbin in *Islamic Revivalism in a Changing Peasant Economy Central Sumatra, 1784-1847*.⁴ Dobbin highlighted the economic and social factors behind the Padri movement. He described it as a response to the old social structure beginning to falter. Meanwhile, Muhammad Radjab explained the historical context of how the Padri War unfolded.⁵ HAMKA also spoke about the Padri war clearly in his book *Antara Fakta dan Hayal Tuanku Rao*.⁶ Mardjani Martamin is also one of the oldest researchers who studies the Padri war from the perspective of the character of Tuanku Imam Bonjol.⁷

The Padri war from the perspective of religious and intellectual revolution has also become a hotly discussed study by contemporary researchers. One of them is Haedar Nashir who sees more specifically religious turmoil as the main characteristic of the Padri war.⁸ The latest is also a study by Safwan Rozi. In his research, Rozi takes a closer look at the connectivity of religion and culture in the final episode of the Padri war which gave birth to the adage *Adat Basandi Syara', Syara, basandi kitabullah*. The infiltration of religion as the main foundation of Minangkabau society according to Safwan Rozi is the peak of the Padri struggle in

² Sabilla Hidayani Br. Tarigan, "Kaum Modernis Di Nusantara: Gerakan Paderi," *Islamijah: Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 3, no. 3 (2024): 205. <https://doi.org/10.30821/islamijah.v3i3.17046>.

³ Schomaker, *Verhalen Uit De Oorlogen In Nederl. Oost-Indie*, 140.

⁴ Christine Dobbin, "Islamic Revivalism in a Changing Peasant Economy," *Islamic Revivalism in a Changing Peasant Economy*, no. 47 (1983): 1784-1847, 117-209. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315398181>.

⁵ Muhamad Radjab, *Perang Paderi Di Sumatera Barat (1803-1838)* (Jakarta: Perpustakaan Perguruan Kementerian P.P. dan K, 1954), 50.

⁶ HAMKA, *Antara Khayal Dan Fakta Tuanku Rao* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1974), 278.

⁷ Drs. Mardjani Martamin, *Tuanku Imam Bonjol, Sejarah Dan Tradisional*, 1984, 41-73.

⁸ Haedar Nashir, "Purifikasi Islam Dalam Gerakan Padri Di Minangkabau," *Unisia* 31, no. 69 (2008): 219-230. <https://doi.org/10.20885/unisia.vol31.iss69.art1>.

Minangkabau which still persists to this day.⁹ However, the author believes that many of these studies sharply separate the religious and political dimensions of conflict, without considering the possibility of a transformation from a religious movement towards collective political awareness.

The author views the Padri War not merely as a historical narrative of the Minangkabau people. The dynamics of the Padri War cannot be separated from the roles of three main actors in the war: traditional groups, religious groups, and Dutch colonialism. The Dutch presence on the Padri War chessboard in fact brought about significant changes in the direction of the war. The final account of the Padri War not only gave birth to a complete unification of custom and religion in the form of a consensus on customary law, as Rozi notes. Furthermore, the unification of custom and religion also gave birth to a new spirit that had not previously occurred during the series of wars. This new spirit was a sense of nationalism, which was born from the dynamics of colonialism.

From the previous explanation, it is clear that there is still a significant gap in the academic literature: there is a lack of research that explicitly explains the transformation of the Padri identity from an Islamic reform movement to an embryonic nationalism. Furthermore, Dutch colonial intervention during and after the war is often viewed as an external factor, even though colonialism was actually a crucial actor in modifying the form and direction of the conflict. Therefore, this paper aims to fill this gap by examining how the dynamics of the Padri War conflict were not merely a battle between religion and tradition, but also a process of collective identity formation that led to a broader national consciousness.

The author notes that the discussion of nationalism as a spirit born at the end of the war has not been widely discussed by previous researchers. Most research on the Padri War only examines the course of the war from a descriptive historical perspective, such as the research conducted by Muhammad Radjab,¹⁰ Martamin,¹¹ HAMKA,¹² Christen Dobbin,¹³ and the latest is Haedar Nashir.¹⁴ Also Padri's discussion of the aspects of religious and cultural consolidation researched by Shafwan Rozi.¹⁵ From previous literature searches, the author has not found much discussion of the Padri War from the perspective of its rise in nationalism. However, the author observes that the nationalism that emerged during the final period of the Padri War contributed to the sustainability of nationalism in the Indonesian context, particularly when linked to the many independence fighters from Minangkabau, who shared the same characteristics as the late Padri (religious-nationalist) groups. Therefore, this research is important to examine in more depth the historical context and periodization of the Padri War (1803-1837), as well as the dynamics of the Padri War, which transformed into a total nationalist movement among the Minangkabau people.

This paper is expected to be contributed for scholars in several aspects. First, historically, it offers a reinterpretation of the Padri War using a multidisciplinary approach, combining historical studies, the sociology of conflict, and identity theory. Second, theoretically, it contributes to the growing literature on the transformation of Islamic movements toward nationalism in a colonial context. Third, methodologically, it proposes a socio-critical historical approach that can serve as a model for examining similar conflicts in other regions of Indonesia. For these reasons, this research is crucial.

⁹ Safwan Rozi, "Negosiasi Islam Kultur Dalam Gerakan Paderi Rao Di Sumatera Tengah (1820-1833)," *Kalam* 6, no. 1 (2017): 85-104. <https://doi.org/10.24042/klm.v6i1.396>.

¹⁰ Muhamad Radjab, *Perang Paderi Di Sumatera Barat (1803-1838)*, 55.

¹¹ Martamin, *Tuaniku Imam Bonjol*, 41-73.

¹² HAMKA, *Antara Khayal Dan Fakta Tuaniku Rao*, 278.

¹³ Dobbin, "Islam. Revivalism a Chang. Peasant Econ", 117-209.

¹⁴ Nashir, "Purifikasi Islam Dalam Gerakan Padri Di Minangkabau", 219-230.

¹⁵ Rozi, "Negosiasi Islam Kultur Dalam Gerakan Paderi Rao Di Sumatera Tengah (1820-1833)", 85-104.

Methodology

This study employs qualitative research with a historical and sociological approach to examine the transformation of the Padri movement from an intra-religious reform initiative into a broader socio-political struggle under Dutch colonial intervention in nineteenth-century Minangkabau. Primary sources derive from the autobiographical manuscript of Tuanku Imam Bonjol, written in Malay-Arabic script¹⁶ and Dutch colonial archives and reports from authoritative Dutch websites, particularly from <http://www.nationaalarchief.nl/> using the search keyword Padri Oorlog.^{17 18} Secondary sources include scholarly books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and historiographical studies discussing Islamic reformism, colonial intervention, and the socio-political dynamics of the Padri movement. Data collection was conducted through systematic literature review and historical documentation by identifying, selecting, and cross-checking sources specifically related to reformist conflict, Dutch military expansion, shifts in adat and Padri relations, and the political significance of the Tandikek Agreement.

The analysis was conducted in three sequential stages consisting of chronological reconstruction, process-tracing, and historical discourse analysis. First, the historical data were chronologically mapped to identify structural changes in the conflict across three phases: internal conflict between Padri and adat groups, Dutch colonial intervention, and anti-colonial political consolidation. Second, process-tracing was employed to identify causal mechanisms linking colonial intervention to the transformation of the Padri movement.¹⁹ The analysis traced causal links between Dutch military expansion, changes in political alliances, and the emergence of cooperation between Padri and adat elites. Indicators used in identifying causal relationships include changes in patterns of alliance, references to joint resistance in the agreement, and shifts in the political objectives of the movement before and after Dutch intervention. The Tandikek Agreement was therefore analyzed not merely as a diplomatic settlement but as evidence of political realignment caused by colonial pressure.

Third, historical discourse analysis was applied to examine how the language of Islamic purification gradually evolved into expressions of collective resistance, territorial defense, and anti-colonial solidarity within colonial records and indigenous narratives. Through these analytical stages, the study demonstrates that Dutch colonial mediation fundamentally transformed the Padri conflict from an internal religious dispute into a broader political struggle reflecting the emergence of regional nationalism in Minangkabau society.

Padri War Period in Minangkabau

In historical records, the Padri war in Minangkabau occurred in three periods, with different patterns and directions of resistance in each period. The first period occurred around 1803-1821. This was the first phase of the civil war between the Padri and the traditional people, and the issue of religious purification became the main motive for this war. The second period occurred in 1821-1832. In this period, the war was no longer between religious and traditional people, but was a war between religious people and two united camps, which are the traditional people and the Dutch. With the increasing number of camps that joined the war, the motive for the war from the Padri side also increased. From what was initially only to eradicate religious

¹⁶ Tuanku Imam Bonjol, *Naskah Tuanku Imam Bonjol*, Arab-Melay, n.d, 89-91.

¹⁷ Schomaker, *Verhalen Uit De Oorlogen In Nederl. Oost-Indie*, 121-190.

¹⁸ H. Peschar G.J.W. de Jongh, "Inventaris van Het Archief van J. van Den Bosch [Levensjaren 1780-1844], (1788) 1805- 1844 (1911); Enige Nakomelingen, 1819-1888," 1968, 14-15. <https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.21.028>.

¹⁹ Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (The MIT Press, 2005), 223-232.

apostates, it increased to the desire to expel the Dutch colonialists at the same time. While the third period occurred in 1832-1837. This period was marked by the rise of a sense of complete nationalism throughout Minangkabau society. The traditional and religious groups, which had initially been at odds with one another, began to cooperate during this period and united in their efforts to expel the colonial forces. In this period there was no longer any desire to get rid of one's own brothers as in the two previous periods, there was only a determination to seize the independence of the Minangkabau land from Dutch colonialism.²⁰

Table 1: The Periodization of the Padri War²¹

Period	Year	Characteristics
I	1803-1821	• The main actors in the war were the traditional and religious groups • The war was triggered by identity conflicts between the interests of traditional and religious groups • Purification of Islam became the main mission of the war on the part of the religious groups.
II	1821-1832	• The main actors in the war were religious groups against the Dutch coalition and traditional groups • It was a continuation of the war caused by the defeat of traditional groups in the previous period • The mission of the Padri in this war was not only for purification but also to fight against Dutch colonialism.
III	1832-1837	• The war took place between a coalition of traditional and religious groups against the Dutch • It was a war with a new formation between the colonial and the Minangkabau people, marked by the signing of the Tandikek Agreement • The main motive for the war was solely to expel the Dutch

In the first period of war, the traditional group who fought the Padri suffered a crushing defeat. The defeat was unacceptable to the traditional group who were very ambitious to get rid of the Padri and take over control of society. However, the traditional group also became aware of the military strength of the Padri forces and therefore sought external assistance in their struggle against them. Their initial appeal to the British proved unsuccessful, as the conditions required by the British could not be fulfilled. Consequently, they sought support from the Dutch colonial authorities.²² In the Dutch archives it is stated that in 1820 the Minangkabau people who called themselves as a traditional group asked for help from the Dutch:

*De Padrioorlog was omstreeks 1820 ontstaan door het optreden van een groep radikale Islamieten, tegen wie de Minangkabause hoofden de hulp van de Nederlanders hadden ingeroepen, maar die door velen onder de bevolking werden gesteund.*²³

The opportunity was not wasted by the Dutch because they had long wanted to control the Minang land. The Dutch were also willing to help the traditional group with one condition: if they succeeded in defeating The Padri people then the Minangkabau region must be handed

²⁰ Martamin, *Tuanku Imam Bonjol*, 41-54.

²¹ Proyek Penelitian dan Pencatatan Kebudayaan Daerah, *Sejarah Daerah Sumatra Barat* (Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Proyek Penerbitan Buku Bacaan dan Sastra Indonesia dan Daerah, 1978), 65-72.

²² Danil Mahmud Chaniago, Umi Rusmiani Humairah, and Rengga Satria, "Nasionalisme: Akar Dan Pertumbuhannya Di Minangkabau," *Khazanah: Jurnal Sejarah Dan Kebudayaan Islam* 10, no. 1 (2020): 25-40.

²³ G.J.W. de Jongh, "Inventaris van Het Archief van J. van Den Bosch [Levensjaren 1780-1844], (1788) 1805-1844 (1911); Enige Nakomelingen, 1819-1888", 15.

over to them. With a heavy heart the traditional people accepted the conditions because they had a grudge against the Padri people ²⁴.

The contents of the agreement also included that the penghulu would surrender Pagaruyung, Sungai Tarab and several other areas if the Dutch occupied Simawang with 100 soldiers. Then on February 18, 1821, Simawang was occupied by the Dutch. Simawang is a nagari on the edge of a lake which is one of the very important entrances to Pagaruyung. By controlling Simawang, Pagaruyung can be monitored well.²⁵ The conflict between traditionalist and religious groups became more complex and layered, especially when Dutch colonial forces intervened and fundamentally changed the structure of the conflict.²⁶ This event was the turning point of the war. The Padri people became aware of the enemy they were facing and the reasons that would be the basis for their subsequent attacks. It was no longer just to subdue the traditionalist people who wanted to perpetuate disobedience in religion, but also the Dutch who were ambitious to colonize.

Colonialism: A Dialectical Catalyst in Reconstructing Collective Identity

In its initial phase, the Padri War was fundamentally a project of internal moral reordering rather than a struggle over political authority. It can be seen on how this movement at first placed greater emphasis on regulating the daily lives of common people, with religious rulings increasingly addressing matters related to family relations, sexuality, and proper social behavior.²⁷ This meant that violence in the Padri context was initially directed toward redefining communal boundaries of orthodoxy, not defending collective existence from external threat.

This inward orientation was fundamentally disrupted once Dutch colonial power entered the arena on 18th February 1821.²⁸ In this time, the Padri War entered the second period of the war that focused the movement not only to the traditionalist people but also on the Dutch Colonial army who wanted to control Minangkabau. However, this is precisely the critical point that must be noted that the presence of Dutch colonial power not only introduced a new enemy in the Padri War, but more fundamentally transformed its ideology from religious authenticity into a struggle over political survival.²⁹

The Dutch felt this ideological transformation fully, especially after the simultaneous attack on January 11, 1832.³⁰ This unexpected attack was quite a shock to the Dutch, because the indigenous people who were initially hostile to the Padri and willing to cooperate, now acted the opposite, hostile to the Dutch and defending the Padri. Describing this change on 2 February 1833 Resident Elout wrote to Governor-General van den Bosch:

²⁴ Dkk Amrin Imran, *Menelusuri Sejarah Minangkabau* (Padang: Yayasan Citra Budaya Indonesia dan LKAAM Sumbar, 2002), 132-133.

²⁵ Martamin, *Tuaniku Imam Bonjol*, 56.

²⁶ Sanne Ravensbergen, "Meetings and Minutes : Spaces of Lawmaking and Legal Translation in Colonial Indonesia," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 54, no. December 2023 (2023): 736–59. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022463423000711>.

²⁷ Jeffrey Hadler, "A Historiography of Violence and the Secular State in Indonesia : Tuaniku Imam Bondjol and the Uses of History," *The Journal of Asian Studies*, no. 2008 (2015): 971–1010, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0021911808001228>.

²⁸ Martamin, *Tuaniku Imam Bonjol*, 56.

²⁹ Hadler, "A Historiography of Violence and the Secular State in Indonesia : Tuaniku Imam Bondjol and the Uses of History", 971-1010.

³⁰ Rusli Amran, *Sumatra Barat Hingga Plakat Panjang* (Jakarta: Penerbit Sinar Harapan, 1981), 551.

What was once a possibility, that once we had succeeded in destroying the power of the padris, there might arise a combination of all the natives against the Europeans, is now a reality.³¹

The change in ideology from division to the unification of all elements of society as felt by the Dutch in this letter is proof of how crucial the role of Dutch colonial power in the chessboard of the Padri War, not only as a new player in its second phase but also as a decisive catalyst in shaping the course of the war until its end. In this sense, Dutch colonial intervention did not simply intensify conflict but reshaped how religion functioned within it.³² In the context of the Padri, the presence of the Dutch as a colonial power transformed the Islamic purification movement into a spirit of collective liberation. Thus, the Dutch cannot be understood merely as a background to the conflict, rather they functioned as an agent that redefined the enemy, reshaped the form of solidarity, altered the objectives of the war, and most importantly reconfigured the identity of the movement itself.

Table 2: Transformation of the Padri Movement before and after Dutch Colonial Intervention

No	Aspect	Before colonialism	After colonialism
1	Form of Enemy	The conflict was primarily directed toward internal traditional and religious groups, especially the tensions between the Padri reformists and the adat communities within Minangkabau society.	The Dutch colonial government gradually became the main external enemy, transforming the conflict into an anti-colonial struggle.
2	Form of Solidarity	Solidarity remained fragmented and sectarian, as society was divided between competing religious and customary authorities.	The emergence of colonial domination encouraged the reconstitution of solidarity between Padri and adat groups through a shared anti-colonial alliance.
3	Objective of the war	The movement initially focused on Islamic purification and the enforcement of religious reform based on sharia principles.	The objective of the war later expanded into collective liberation and resistance against Dutch colonial oppression.
4	Identity of the movement	The movement was initially shaped by a moral-religious identity centered on Islamic orthodoxy and reformist ideals.	The movement gradually developed a broader collective identity that united Muslims and Minangkabau people in the struggle against colonialism.

The redefinition of the enemy did not fully materialize during the second phase (1821-1832) of the Padri War, largely because a genuine and total alliance between the adat authorities and the religious reformists had yet to emerge. It was only in the third phase (1832-1837) of the conflict that a decisive transformation took place. Under the leadership of Tuanku Imam Bonjol, the Padri movement consciously moderated its earlier theological ambitions and

³¹ Dobbin, "Islam. Revivalism a Chang. Peasant Econ.", in Chapter VI Minangkabau Nationalism and the Dutch Commercial Challenge, 1833–1841, 194.

³² David Kloos, "Dis / Connection : Violence , Religion , and Geographic Imaginings in Aceh and Colonial Indonesia , 1890s – 1920s," *Itinerario* 45, no. 3 (2021): 389–412. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0165115321000255>.

rearticulated the structure of conflict itself.³³ The arrival of the Dutch fundamentally altered the axis of hostility. The colonial power was redefined as the external opponent, marking a critical shift in which the struggle moved from intra-communal purification toward collective resistance against foreign domination.

As the definition of the enemy evolved, solidarities that had long remained fragmented began to reorganize. The shared experience of confronting colonial intrusion created a new basis for alignment between groups that had once defined themselves in opposition to each other. Rather than emerging from doctrinal reconciliation, this convergence was rooted in a defensive logic, the preservation of communal space in the face of an external power, by having the Tandikek Agreement in 1832.³⁴ Colonialism thus functioned not merely as an additional enemy but as the structural condition that enabled the reconstitution of solidarity, shifting the conflict from a fragmented religious struggle toward the early formation of a collective front grounded in shared vulnerability rather than shared belief.

The next shift that the colonial made was identity. Although oppressive, colonialism in the Padri Context, indirectly acted as a catalyst for the consolidation of Islamic identity. This transformed Islam from merely a spiritual belief into a social force that united the community and mobilized resistance, while also laying the foundation for later nationalist movements.³⁵ In many cases, the values inherent in religion are often associated with the emergence of nationalism.³⁶ However, in the context of the Padri War, the seeds of nationalism in Minangkabau would never have emerged without the presence of colonial intervention.

Colonial intervention fundamentally disrupted the social equilibrium of Minangkabau society by introducing a form of power that could not be negotiated through existing moral frameworks. Faced with an authority that stood outside both Islamic reformism and adat tradition, the meaning of identity began to shift from normative distinction toward questions of collective positioning and continuity. The issue was no longer simply which moral order should be followed, but how society could endure under foreign domination. As a result, Islam in Minangkabau at Padri moment increasingly functioned as a shared symbolic resource through which previously divided groups could imagine themselves as part of a broader collectivity.

In line with this shift in the meaning of identity, the orientation of the conflict also underwent an important transformation. What had initially focused on moral purification gradually developed into an effort to safeguard the integrity of communal life.³⁷ Religious identity in Padri context changed when facing greater political and social threats, causing religion to be used as the basis for collective solidarity and shared mobilization.³⁸ In this process, Islam came to function not only as a normative system regulating social behavior, but also as a shared

³³ Ravensbergen, "Meetings and Minutes : Spaces of Lawmaking and Legal Translation in Colonial Indonesia", 736-759.

³⁴ Zaiful Anwar Mardjani Martamin, Azmi MA, Syafnir Abu Nain, *Sejarah Perlawanan Terhadap Kolonialisme Dan Imperialisme Di Daerah Sumatera Barat* (Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Direktorat Sejarah dan Nilai Tradisional, 1983), 57.

³⁵ Ahmad Nabilul Maram Ibnu Hajar, Imam Ghazali Said, "Resisting Colonialism And The Formation Of Islamic Identity In Nusantara-Indonesia," *Miqot Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 49, no. 2 (2025): 374–399. <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.30821/miqot.v49i2.1347>.

³⁶ Rogers Brubaker, "Religion and Nationalism : Four Approaches," *Nations and Nationalism: Journal of The Association For The Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism* 18 (2012): 2–20. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-8129.2011.00486.x>Digital Object Identifier (DOI).

³⁷ Hadler, "A Historiography of Violence and the Secular State in Indonesia : Tuanku Imam Bondjol and the Uses of History", 971 – 1010.

³⁸ Zulfadli, "Book Review Leonard C. Sebastian, Syaqq Hasyim and Alexander R. Arifianto (Eds.) (2021). Rising Islamic Conservatism in Indonesia Islamic Groups and Identity Politics. London & New York: Routledge. 230 Pages. ISBN: 978-1-003-01092-0," *Journal of Al-Tamaddun* 18, no. 1 (2023): 291–95. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.22452/JAT.vol18no1.22>.

language for responding to foreign domination. During the Padri War, Islam assumed this role not because its reformist impulse was inherently political, but because the conditions introduced by colonial authority expanded its functional significance within society

Lastly, this transformation in the orientation of conflict also reshaped how the boundaries of collective identity were imagined. Dutch colonialism did not simply redirect the course of the conflict it altered the horizon within which solidarity was formed. The emergence of a collective Minangkabau consciousness was not the linear outcome of religious reform, but the consequence of confronting an external power that disrupted the internal logic of dispute. In response to colonial pressure, the Minangkabau community began to reshape its identity by drawing a clearer boundary between “us” as muslims and Minangkabau people and “them” as foreigners, that makes their collective identity became more firmly defined and consolidated.³⁹ This newly consolidated identity took shape during the third phase (1832 - 1837) of the Padri War, marked by the signing of the Tandikek Agreement that involved all civil elements in Minangkabau.⁴⁰

The Tandikek Agreement

As a Sign of Early Expression of Nationalism in Minangkabau

The Tandikek Agreement initially emerged from a series of secret meetings between the Padri and traditionalist groups led by Sultan Alam Bagagar Syah as the King of Minangkabau during the Dutch colonial in Minangkabau. Through meetings with Padri leaders in various regions of Minangkabau, an agreement was reached to unite their forces against the Dutch. The peak of these meetings took place in Tandikek, Malalak, Agam, at the end of 1832, resulting in a collective decision to launch simultaneous attacks against Dutch positions in Minangkabau, which began on January 11, 1833.⁴¹ Other historical accounts suggest that the coordinated attack was planned during a meeting attended by Tuanku Imam Bonjol, Tuanku Muda, Tuanku Tambusai, and Tuanku Damassiang.⁴²

Although the term Tandikek Agreement does not appear explicitly in primary sources such as the Naskah Tuanku Imam Bonjol, it has been widely used by later historians, including Muhammad Radjab,⁴³ Hamka,⁴⁴ Rusli Amran,⁴⁵ Amir Sjarifoeddin,⁴⁶ and Marjani Martamin⁴⁷ to refer the secret meetings held in late 1832 that united the Padri and adat factions and led to the coordinated attacks against Dutch positions on 11 January 1833.⁴⁸ Thus, the agreement became an important symbol of Minangkabau unity and anti-colonial resistance. The Tandikek Agreement in 1832 represents a critical turning point in the trajectory of the Padri War in Minangkabau. The agreement was the result of a long historical process of Dutch colonial intervention beginning in 1821, which marked the beginning of the conflict between the Padri

³⁹ Imam Ibnu Hajar, Imam Ghazali Said, “Resisting Colonialism And The Formation Of Islamic Identity In Nusantara-Indonesia”, 374-399

⁴⁰ Audrey Kahin, *Perjuangan Kemerdekaan Sumatera Barat Dalam Revolusi Nasional Indonesia 1945-1950* (Sumatera Barat: MSI, 1997), 105.

⁴¹ Alfian Jamrah et al., *Perjuangan Sultan Alam Bagarsyah Dalam Melawan Penjajahan Belanda Di Minangkabau Pada Abad Ke-19*, *Balai Pelestarian Nilai Budaya Sumatera Barat* (Balai Pelestarian Nilai Budaya Sumatera Barat, 2016), 96.

⁴² Rusli Amran, *Sumatera Barat Hingga Plakat Panjang* (Jakarta: Sinar Harapan, 1981), 551.

⁴³ Muhamad Radjab, *Perang Paderi Di Sumatera Barat (1803-1838)*, 50.

⁴⁴ HAMKA, *Antara Khayal Dan Fakta Tuanku Rao*, 35.

⁴⁵ Rusli Amran, *Sumatra Barat Hingga Plakat Panjang* (Jakarta: Penerbit Sinar Harapan, 1981), 551.

⁴⁶ Proyek Penelitian dan Pencatatan Kebudayaan Daerah, *Sejarah Daerah Sumatra Barat* (Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Proyek Penerbitan Buku Bacaan dan Sastra Indonesia dan Daerah, 1978), 70.

⁴⁷ Martamin, *Tuanku Imam Bonjol*, 73.

⁴⁸ Bonjol, *Naskah Tuanku Imam Bonjol*, n.d, 89-91.

and the colonial forces.⁴⁹ The presence of an external power threatening local autonomy fostered a new awareness that internal disputes only weakened the overall position of Minangkabau society.

This awareness initially emerged among the Adat community, who could no longer tolerate the Dutch authority disrespect toward Minangkabau Muslims, particularly their practice of converting mosques into military headquarters, hospitals, and even prisons. Combined with other forms of injustice committed by the Dutch, this situation prompted the Adat leaders to take the initiative in approaching the religious faction in order to pursue reconciliation.⁵⁰ Islamic sacralisation possesses an integrative social function, as shared religious values and ethical commitments can foster solidarity, collective identity, and social cohesion within Muslim communities. The common existential threat prompted both factions to reconsider their antagonism and agreed to sign the Tandikek Agreement in 1832. In this agreement Minangkabau people gathered from various villages: Tanah Datar, Lawang, Rao, Lubuk Suhung, Tanah Dua Belas, Nagari Danau, Sipisang and Orang Alahan and agreed to work together to expel the colonials from the land of Minangkabau.⁵¹

Although Abd A'la generally portrays the Padri leaders as radical,⁵² even labeled it as the root of radicalism in Indonesia,⁵³ accusing them of manipulating religious symbols for political purposes and even refusing reconciliation in the later phase of the Padri War,⁵⁴ the Tandikek Agreement suggests otherwise. Tuanku Imam Bonjol, as the final leader of the Padri War, expressed regret over the radical stance of his predecessors and instead agreed to unite with all elements of Minangkabau society. In Hadler's account, Tuanku Imam Bonjol set aside some of his radical stance when dealing with local communities,⁵⁵ demonstrating his ability to adopt an accommodative approach in response to demanding circumstances and agreed to initiate consolidation through the Tandikek agreement.

The agreement then brought together customary leaders and Padri religious elites in a negotiated political settlement. Its principal outcome was the cessation of internal hostilities and the establishment of a shared commitment to confront colonial domination by these two following actions: *first*, recognizing and declaring Tuanku Imam Bonjol as the principal leader of the war against colonial forces,⁵⁶ and *second*, continuing the consolidation between the Adat and religious (Padri) groups in Minangkabau through a coordinated agreement to launch a joint offensive against colonial power across the Minangkabau region, scheduled to take place on January 11, 1833.⁵⁷

⁴⁹ Fatimatuz Zuhroh et al., "Perlawanan Tak Kunjung Padam : Adat , Agama , Dan Resistensi Terhadap Kolonial Dalam Sitti Nurbaya," *SULUK: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, Dan Budaya* 4, no. 2 (2022): 80–93. <https://doi.org/10.15642/suluk.2022.4.2>.

⁵⁰ Dobbin, "Islam. Revivalism a Chang. Peasant Econ", 135.

⁵¹ Mardjani Martamin, Azmi MA, Syafnir Abu Nain, *Sejarah Perlawanan Terhadap Kolonialisme Dan Imperialisme Di Daerah Sumatera Barat*, 73.

⁵² Abd A'la, "The Genealogy of Muslim Radicalism in Indonesia A Study of the Roots and Characteristics of the Padri Movement," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 02, no. 02 (2008): 267–299. <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2008.2.2>.

⁵³ Adam James Fenton, "Change And Continuity In Indonesian Islamist Ideology And Terrorist Strategies," *Al-Jāmi'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 52, no. 1 (2014): 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2014.52.1>.

⁵⁴ A'la, "The Genealogy of Muslim Radicalism in Indonesia A Study of the Roots and Characteristics of the Padri Movement", 267-299

⁵⁵ Hadler, "A Historiography of Violence and the Secular State in Indonesia : Tuanku Imam Bondjol and the Uses of History", 971-1010.

⁵⁶ Ralph Adolph, *Minangkabau Dari Dinasti Iskandar Zulkarnain Sampai Tuanku Imam Bonjol* (Jakarta: PT Gria Madia Prima, 2016), 451.

⁵⁷ Mardjani Martamin, Azmi MA, Syafnir Abu Nain, *Sejarah Perlawanan Terhadap Kolonialisme Dan Imperialisme Di Daerah Sumatera Barat*, 75.

To follow up on the outcomes of the meeting, Sultan Alam Bagagar Syah, as the King of Minangkabau at that time, issued letters of proclamation to the tuanku and penghulu throughout the Minangkabau region, calling for unity and coordinated resistance against the Dutch forces.

Figure 1: The Proclamation Letter by Sultan Alam Bagagar Syah⁵⁸

"Kami mempermaklumkan kepada tuanku-tuanku dan semua penghulu, bahwa semua yang telah diputuskan tempo hari harus kita lanjutkan dengan segenap kekuatan, supaya kita tidak menanggung kerugian. Kita Raja nan Sedaulat dan penghulu dari Sawah Duku anak kemenakan dari daratan dan lautan inilah adat kita. Kini saya meminta kepada tiga saudara saya, dan juga kepada semua penghulu, bahwa ninik mamak sekalian akan bersatu padu dan jangan gagal, yaitu dalam menghadapi Kompeni.

Pergunakanlah semua kepandaian Tuanku, supaya kita tidak celaka. Engku-engku mulailah dan teruskan. Jika Tuanku mendapat salah satu rintangan surutlah selangkah, tetap janganlah melakukan gerakan yang keliru, sewaktu berjalan ke laut atau ke darat. Bersatulah semua raja dan datuk, baik yang di Utara maupun yang di Selatan, dan begitu pula rakyat yang di darat dan di laut. Inilah permintaan saya kepada saudara semuanya.

Adapun bangsa Batak dan Melayu janganlah takluk kepada pemerintah Kompeni. Baik sekali kita memerintah mereka, supaya mereka jangan berperang melawan kita. Kami yang dari Tiga Luhak telah bersatu dengan Daulat Yang Dipertuan di Pagar Ruyung, dan Alibasyah Raja Jawa, yang telah kita muliakan, seperti Daulat Yang Dipertuan di Pagar Ruyung, dan ia telah berjanji akan mengusir Kompeni dari Pagar Ruyung hingga kita ada harapan akan hidup bahagia. Inilah persetujuan kita dengan Alibasyah.

Translation: We announce to all tuanku and penghulu that all decisions we agreed upon before must now be carried out with all our strength, so that we do not suffer defeat. We, the King and the penghulu of Sawah Duku, together with our people from the inland and coastal areas, hold firmly to this commitment. I ask my three brothers and all penghulu to unite and remain steadfast in facing the Dutch Company. Use all your wisdom and abilities so that we may avoid disaster. Let the leaders begin and continue this struggle. If obstacles appear, step back carefully if necessary, but do not make careless moves, whether traveling to the coast or inland. Let all kings and datuk unite, both in the North and the South, along with all the people of the inland and coastal regions. This is my appeal to all of you. The Batak and Malay peoples must not submit to the Dutch Company. It is better that we guide them, so they will not fight against us. We from the Three Luhak have united with the ruler of Pagaruyung and with Ali Basya, the Javanese leader, whom we honor as we honor the ruler of Pagaruyung. He has promised to drive the Dutch Company out of Pagaruyung, giving us hope...

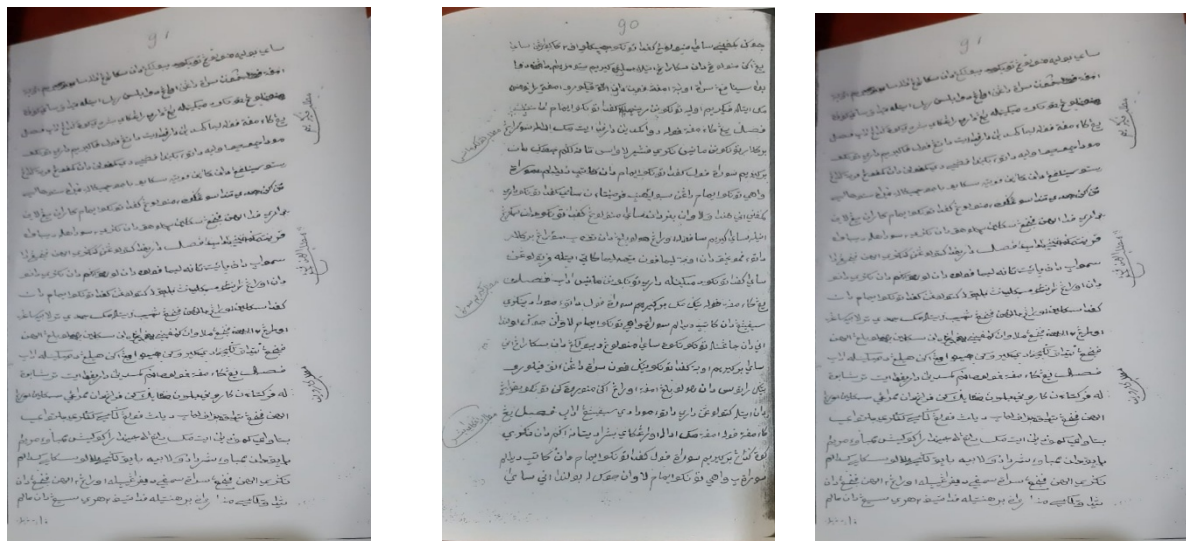
The phrase "*semua yang telah diputuskan tempo hari*" or "all decisions we agreed upon before" suggests that the attacks of 11 January 1833 were based on a prior collective agreement among Minangkabau leaders. The proclamation called for the implementation of decisions that had already been reached. This supports later historiographical interpretations that identify the

⁵⁸ Mardanas Safwan, *Sultan Alam Bagagar Syah (1789–1849)* (Panitia Pelaksana Pemindahan Makam Sultan Alam Bagagar Syah, 1975), 13.

secret meetings of late 1832 as the Tandikek Agreement. Moreover, the letter's repeated calls for unity among adat and religious leaders suggest that the agreement was intended to foster the consolidation of Minangkabau society into a cohesive anti-colonial movement opposing Dutch rule.

The impact of this agreement can also be seen in the memoirs of Tuanku Imam Bonjol. Following the Tandikek Agreement, many penghulu who had previously opposed the Padri movement during the early phase of the war began to offer assistance and support to Tuanku Imam Bonjol. By the third phase of the Padri War, these former opponents had become important allies in the collective struggle against Dutch colonial forces. Their support is evidenced by a number of

Figure 2: Letters Sent to Tuanku Imam Bonjol⁵⁹



The following evidence of the impact of the Tandikek Agreement can be found in the *Naskah Tuanku Imam Bonjol*, particularly in pasal or sections 42–48, which contain a collection of letters sent by various tuanku and adat leaders from different regions of Minangkabau. These letters came from Tuanku Nan Tinggi of Sungai Puar and Tanah Dua Belas Koto, Tuanku Nan Renceh of Agam and Nagari Tujuh Lurah, Tuanku Nan Manis of Pasir Lawas, Datuk Mudo of Sipisang, Orang Kaya Besar of Agam and Koto Gadang, Tuanku Mudo, grandson of Datuk Baginda Qadhi of Kumpulan and Parit Gadang, and Tuanku Imam of Alahan Panjang. Despite originating from different regions, the letters conveyed a common message: a collective request for Tuanku Imam Bonjol to lead the war on behalf of the people of Minangkabau against Dutch colonial rule. As a sign of their commitment, the authors of these letters also pledged and sent various forms of material and logistical assistance to support the struggle.⁶⁰ These letters demonstrate that the reconciliation achieved through the Tandikek Agreement extended beyond political symbolism and generated tangible support across Minangkabau. They also provide evidence that Tuanku Imam Bonjol's leadership was recognized by a broad coalition of adat and religious leaders, reflecting the emergence of a unified anti-colonial movement following the agreement.

The evidence of collective actions following the Tandikek Agreement demonstrates that the agreement marked an early expression of nationalism in Minangkabau. The reconciliation between adat and Padri leaders not only ended a period of internal conflict but also created an

⁵⁹ Bonjol, *Naskah Tuanku Imam Bonjol*, 89-91.

⁶⁰ Tuanku Imam Bonjol, *Naskah Tuanku Imam Bonjol*, ed. dan tr (Jakarta: Proyek Penerbitan Buku Sastra Indonesia dan Daerah, 1987), 89-91.

anti-colonial solidarity and commitment to resist Dutch colonial rule. The coordinated attacks of 11 January 1833, the widespread support expressed in letters from penghulu and religious leaders across Minangkabau, and the mobilization of material and military assistance all indicate the emergence of a collective consciousness that transcended local and factional loyalties. For the first time, diverse elements of Minangkabau society acted together under a common leadership and a common objective, defending Minangkabau from colonial domination. In this sense, the Tandikek Agreement was more than a political settlement, the transformation represented the emergence of a shared identity and collective struggle that can be understood as an early expression of nationalism in Minangkabau.

Further, the transformation also demonstrates processes of cultural accommodation, social dialogue, and the integration of collective interests, rather than merely religious purification, as the agreement functioned not simply as a military pact but also as an act of ideological consolidation.⁶¹ It means that the unity between the Adat and the religious factions did not stop at symbolic reconciliation but evolved into a collective political project oriented toward liberation. The question, then, is which ideology or identity proved more powerful in giving meaning to this collective political project: Minangkabau identity itself, or Islamic identity?

This question cannot be answered in a dichotomous manner. Franz and von Benda-Beckmann mentioned that Islam and adat in Minangkabau constitute a central and inseparable identity for most Minangkabau.⁶² Because historically, both played roles in strengthening the mission to liberate Minangkabau from colonial rule. When Dutch colonialism emerged as an external threat that endangered the overall social structure of Minangkabau. Their ethno-political identity as Minangkabau people created space for reconciliation. However, this unity did not stop at cultural identity alone. In the early phase of the conflict, religion served as a source of division, however, by the time of the Tandikek Agreement, it had become a symbol of political unity and collective resistance. Islam then became an integrative force that fostered solidarity, collective identity, and social cohesion within Minangkabau society in confronting colonial domination.⁶³ Thus, the Tandikek Agreement reflected the interaction of two layers of identity: Minangkabau identity as the basis of social solidarity, and Islam as the basis of struggle legitimacy. Minangkabau identity made reconciliation possible, while Islam made it possible to turn that reconciliation into nationalism in Islamic political action.

The Dutch recognition of the strength of the Padri troops above, of course, illustrates the success of the Minangkabau people in uniting their strength in the spirit of nationalism which was also driven by the spirit of religion. For the Padri fighters, death in the war to defend religion and the nation was not a vain death but rather a martyrdom *fi sabilillah*, or the war as *jihad fisabil Allah*, as mentioned by Syaifuddin Zuhri.⁶⁴ So it can be said that the spirit of nationalism in Minangkabau during the war was a struggle between a strong Islamic spirit accompanied by an equally strong national spirit. These two spirits made the Minang people's struggle unending and endless, even feeling long and heavy for the Dutch. This spirit is similar

⁶¹ Yunika Triana & Rustam Ibrahim Moh. Ashif Fuadi, Abd Faishol, Andi Arif Rifa'i, "Religious Moderation in the Context of Integration Between Religion and Local Culture in Indonesia," *Journal of Al-Tamaddun* 19, no. 1 (2024): 47–59. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.22452/JAT.vol19no1.4>.

⁶² Franz and Keebet von Benda-beckmann, "Ambivalent Identities: Decentralization and Minangkabau Political Communities," in *Renegotiating Boundaries Local Politics in Post-Suharto Indonesia*, ed. H.G.C. Schulte Nordholt and Gerry van Klinken (Brill, 1983), 417–442. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004260436_019.

⁶³ Muhammad Ahmad Ibrahim Aljahsh & Sonia Lotfy Abdulrahman Desouky Alhelbawy, "Religious Rooting of Sacralisation Phenomena in Human Thought: An Islamic Perspective Muhammad Ahmad Ibrahim Aljahsh," *Journal of Al-Tamaddun* 21, no. 1 (2026): 31–50. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.22452/JAT.vol21no1.3>.

⁶⁴ Syaifudin Zuhri, "The Changing Paradigm of Indonesia Jihadist Movements From Al-'Aduww Al-Qarib to Al-'Aduww Al-Ba'i," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 4, no. 2 (2010): 240–267. <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2010.4.2.240-267>.

to the concept of Jamaluddin Al-Afghani's nationalism which made the spirit of nationalism and religion the backbone of the unity of the people.⁶⁵ In the Padri war context, which was initially just a dualistic struggle between religious Islamic and traditional groups, turned into a nationalist movement without eliminating the religious Islamic spirit within it. This is in line with the view of Ahmad Syafii Maarif, who argues that the Padri movement was not merely a religious war, but rather "an important anti-colonial force that later contributed to the emergence of Indonesian nationalism."⁶⁶

Conclusion

This study rejects the reductionist interpretation of the Padri War as solely a conflict between Islamic reformists and traditional adat groups. The findings indicate that Dutch colonial intervention played a decisive role in transforming the structure and orientation of the conflict during its later phase. Rather than remaining solely a religious confrontation, the Padri movement gradually developed broader forms of anti-colonial political solidarity, particularly after the signing of the Tandikek Agreement (1832). The agreement reflected an important process of political realignment in which previously divided groups began to cooperate in response to the expansion of Dutch colonial power.

A central finding of this research is that the Tandikek Agreement functioned as a political turning point in the late Padri War. Through the analysis of Tuanku Imam Bonjol manuscript, colonial records, and historical narratives, this study finds that Dutch intervention encouraged the consolidation of fragmented social and religious groups within Minangkabau society. In this context, colonialism acted not only as an external military force but also as a catalyst that reshaped local political relations and intensified collective resistance against colonial domination.

Theoretically, this article contributes to the historiography of the Padri War by offering a more nuanced interpretation of the relationship between Islamic reform, colonialism, and political solidarity in nineteenth-century Minangkabau. Rather than interpreting the conflict solely through the framework of religious confrontation, this study emphasizes the role of colonial intervention in reshaping political alliances and transforming the social dynamics of the war.

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⁶⁵ Ariff Aizuddin Azlan, "Islam and Nationalism in the Thought of Jamal Al-Din Al-Afghani," *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization* 12, no. 2 (2022): 212–224. <https://doi.org/10.32350/jitc.122.15>.

⁶⁶ Ahmad Syafii Maarif, "Indonesian Islam and Its Relations With Nationalism and the Netherlands in the Early Decades of the 20 Century : Some Important Notes," *Al-Jāmi'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 65, no. VI (2000): 65–77. <https://www.aljamiah.or.id/ajis/article/view/3804/486>.

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