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# KYAI MUAFI ALIF ZAINI, MODERNIZATION THOUGHTS AND MOVEMENTS FOR BOARDING BOARDING EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN SAMPANG, MADURA

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#### **Abstract**

Education and politics are two aspects that are closely related and intersect each other, so that both education and politics are indispensable in determining the characteristics of a country's education. Starting from the lack of appreciation of the future generations of the nation in the modern era for important figures who have contributed greatly to the development of education and politics, especially in Sampang Regency, it is a very important and unique issue to review. Therefore, this study aims to determine how the background, role and influence carried out by Kyai Mu'afi Alif Zaini in the world of education and politics in Sampang District in 1947 - 2006, there was also no complete biographical writing on this figure. The historical research method used in this research is divided into four parts, namely Heuristics (searching and finding data), criticism (source criticism), interpretation (interpretation), and historiography (writing history). The results showed that Kyai Muafi Alif Zaini is a scholar or community leader who was born on August 10, 1947 and died on January 27, 2006, he became a role model for the community because of his role and contribution in advancing education at the Nahzatut Thulab Islamic Boarding School in Sampang Regency. Among them were the driving force for the establishment of formal schools such as: MTs Nazhatut Thullab, SMP Nazhatut Thullab, MA Nazhatut Thullab, Nazhatut Thullab High School, Nazhatut Thullab Vocational School, IAI (Institut Agama Islam) Nazhatut Thullab, and STIKES Nazhatut Thullab so that the level of welfare in Sampang Regency has increased because it is based Comprehensive (PBB) and Cultural (PBKu). In addition, he was a cleric figure who was able to change the stigmatization of the Sampang people and the bad image of the Pilitik Party at that time.

**Keywords:** Kyai Mu'afi Alif Zaini, Role and Islamic Modernization Education

#### INTRODUCTION

KH. A. Mu'afi A. Zaini, adalah seorang kyai alim ulama' yang memiliki charismatic, wise, and wise in fighting for education and religion. As a kyai who cares about the development of the world of education and religion, one of the efforts made by KH. A. Mu'afi A. Zaini is trying to improve the Nazhatut Thullab Islamic Boarding School which was inherited by his parents, namely KH. Ahmad Zaini Syabrawi.

The natural conditions, religious behavior and traditions of Madurese people are the main factors that shape the character of Madurese people who are known as people who are tenacious, brave, like challenges, are religious and prioritize self-respect. This is reflected in the novel Matahari Di Atas Gili by Lintang Sugianto. In this novel, the social conditions of Madurese society are told, with the various twists and turns of life that surround them and how Madurese people face life's challenges.

The personality of the Madurese people is shaped by various factors such as natural conditions, religion and past traditions, so that a distinctive attitude is formed, namely a religious attitude, namely giving rise to religious behavior, a social attitude of caring for each other and helping each other, an attitude towards nature, namely respecting nature, a work ethic attitude, namely hard work, tenacity, never giving up, traditional attitude, namely maintaining and upholding dignity and self-respect.

In the field of education, Madurese society in general is a society that is open to change, but everything that enters their lives must go through a strong filter in the form of tradition, religion, and the norms that apply in Madurese society that have crystallized. One of the open attitudes of Madurese society is regarding formal education that is included in the lives of Madurese children. When education is in line with the life of the Madurese people, the community will accept it with open arms, but on the other hand, if it is not in line with the prevailing values, then it cannot be denied that the education will be rejected.

Also in terms of education, the position of Madurese women is slightly different from that of boys. Boys are given the freedom to choose their educational path, while girls are more directed towards religious education. Boys are allowed to pursue the highest possible education while only a few girls can receive education up to university. Indeed, there are slightly different views regarding the education of boys and girls. For girls, because they mostly help the family economically, of course the education they receive rarely reaches university. Even though education for Madurese women is important, it can still be put aside, especially since they will also be in the kitchen if they are married..<sup>1</sup>

The view towards education in traditional society is generally still apathetic, because society's needs for the realities of existing life are unbalanced, because the lack of knowledge obtained from education is less practical and less useful. for the lives of fishing communities. So the need for formal education is still less than the need for religious education which is considered more important, so that education (other than religious education) is considered only as a support or support after religious education for the Madurese people. In this case, figures are really needed who are able and need to provide understanding to traditional society regarding

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Bani eka Darti Ningsi, "Budaya dan Masyarakat Madura" (Indramayu: Jawa Barat, Maret 2022) hal. 41.

the importance of education to change the mindset of Madurese society which is still traditional.

Madurese society has quite prominent advantages compared to Javanese society. Madurese people are seen as having a fairly strong social character and are firm in upholding tradition and religion. Kuntowijoyo describes their devotion to religion and their strength in upholding traditions as saying that Madurese are more "naive", because what is dominant is cultural and religious homogeneity. Therefore, obedience and fanaticism in religion is always the image of Madurese society.

As for religious fanaticism, it was developed in the Islamic boarding school world, which is the oldest educational institution in Indonesia, which includes traditional and modern education which has contributed a lot to the development of Islamic education in this country. In fact, the existence of Islamic boarding schools is really needed by the community because it is believed that Islamic boarding schools are places that produce many of their students to become good individuals and have high morals. The existence of Islamic boarding schools in the era of globalization which is full of modernization is very helpful in the progress of the educational process, whether social or moral education, so it is no surprise Islamic boarding schools are an important milestone in the level of morality of the students within them, which in fact will produce a young generation that has a religious mental formation and high potential so that they are able to compete in the current era of modernization. Currently, the existence of Islamic boarding schools as Islamic educational institutions is starting to develop rapidly and is very accepted among society in general, so that education in Islamic boarding schools which previously only referred to traditional education is now starting to also apply modern education..

The application of traditional education is still maintained with the study of the yellow book which of course is taught directly by the kyai. In reality, traditional educational practices are not able to compete with the quality of modern education because in terms of the infrastructure used, they are not very effective, but the question now is why the results of traditional educational practices That's very satisfying, are the students even able to compete in the world of modernity like now? It's all because of the belief, sincerity and will of the teacher and students.

A student can gain useful knowledge if he has a high level of confidence and willingness to seek knowledge without forgetting the intention to receive blessings from the teacher. The progress of Islamic boarding schools cannot be separated from the struggles and prayers of a kyai who sincerely imparts his knowledge to his students, so indirectly in the realm of Islamic boarding school education it is always covered by sincerity and blessings which of course can create extraordinary students' personalities.<sup>2</sup>

The Madurese community's obedience to the Ulama as authorities (authoritative) involves a different spirit, submission and voluntary obedience full of awareness of abandoning their personal opinions because they submit to authority holders who are seen as having better knowledge, wisdom or understanding. The existence of ulama (especially traditional ulama) has unique eternal power as an intermediary between faith and the

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 $<sup>^2</sup> Sriwahyuni, https://iainmadura.ac.id/site/detberita/100-opini-eksistensi-pesantren-dalam-ranah-pendidikan-moral$ 

ummah and between the ummah's goal of salvation and its efforts to achieve that goal. then Horikoshi explained it as a Patron Client relationship between Ulama and the Community.<sup>3</sup>

A cleric in Madura does not lose ownership of Islamic boarding schools, they pioneer their knowledge at Islamic boarding schools, then forge themselves to build and develop their religious authority also at Islamic boarding schools. Because ulama are an important element in the continuity of Islamic boarding schools, Islamic boarding schools maintain the determination of public trust as religious institutions that are competent in carrying out the process of understanding what God wants and what society needs.

Islamic boarding school according to M. Arifin is an Islamic religious educational institution that is growing and recognized by the surrounding community, with a dormitory system (complex) where students receive religious education through a recitation system or madrasah which is completely under the sovereignty of the leadership of one or several kiai. with distinctive characteristics that are charismatic and independent in all things.<sup>4</sup>

In 1882 the Dutch government established the Priesterreden (Religious Court) which was tasked with supervising religious life and Islamic boarding school education. Not long after that, Ordinance was issued in 1905 which contained regulations that religious teachers who would teach had to obtain permission from the local government. Even stricter regulations were created in 1925 that limited who could give Koran lessons. Finally, in 1932 regulations were issued that could eradicate and close Madrasas and schools that did not have permits or that taught lessons that the government did not like. These regulations prove the unfairness of the Dutch government's policy towards Islamic education in Indonesia. However, Islamic boarding school education also faced challenges during Indonesia's independence. After the transfer of sovereignty in 1949, the Government of the Republic of Indonesia encouraged the development of public schools as widely as possible and widely opened positions in modern administration for Indonesians who were educated in these public schools. The impact of this policy is that the strength of Islamic Boarding Schools as Islamic Education Centers in Indonesia is decreasing. This means that the number of young people who were previously interested in Islamic boarding school education is decreasing compared to young people who want to attend the recently expanded public school education. As a result, many small Islamic boarding schools died because there were not enough students.

Madura is a place where Islamic boarding schools are very easy to find. Because almost every corner of Madura has Islamic boarding schools. Madura's religious culture and still upholding classical Islamic values makes the presence of Islamic boarding schools necessary. The influence of Islamic boarding schools is very large in the pattern of social relations. The existence of Islamic boarding schools with Kyai as the main figure is highly regarded in Madurese culture. Kyai as a representation of Ulama are highly respected figures in public life. Kyai's statements are often considered a kind of "Fatwa" for the community. The influence is so great. Kyai's views are often used as a benchmark for several attitudes among Madurese people, such as political

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Hiroko Horikoshi, Kyai dan Perubahan Sosial, (Jakarta: P3M, 1987).hal. 187

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> M.Arifin, Kapita Selekta Pendidikan (Islam dan Umum), (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 1991), hal. 240

and religious references.5

Madurese culture can be said to be very synonymous with the influence of Islamic Boarding Schools. Madura's great figures all came from Islamic boarding schools. That's why Islamic boarding schools in Madura have their own respected place in the social strata of Madurese society. The Islamic boarding school learning model is indeed different from public schools. There are also several traditions that make Islamic boarding schools even more different and unique. The traditions in question are a representation of Islamic boarding school cultures. Almost every Islamic boarding school has different traditions. The tradition in question is created based on sociological or environmental conditions. That's why usually these traditions are similar to the conditions of the surrounding environment, such as social patterns in society. The traditions in question are not routine rituals that only pursue grandeur. However, it contains deep social messages. In tradition there are usually social expressions conveyed.<sup>6</sup>

Madura, with its numerous and fairly even distribution of Islamic boarding schools, is easy to find several unique traditions. Usually this tradition becomes a kind of habit to commemorate or welcome holidays, Islamic boarding school year-end activities and so on. This tradition has certain sociological content because it is engineered as social glue values between the Islamic boarding school and its surrounding environment. In this tradition, the local community and Islamic boarding school merge into one. There are no separation ties. Both of them are immersed in this tradition. One of these traditions is imtihanan which contains competitions before the long holiday which is usually held before entering the month of Ramadan..7

Islamic boarding schools are institutions that are able to play a role in carrying out education in an integral way between cultivating akhlakul karimah (morals) and intellectuals. Meanwhile, up to now the typology of Islamic boarding schools is very varied. Zamakhsvari Dhofier, for example, divides Islamic boarding schools into two types; Salafi and Khalafi. Meanwhile, Abdullah Syukri Zarkasyi divides it into three, namely; first, traditional Pondok (similar to Salafi); second, modern Islamic boarding school, third, a combination of traditional and modern with the principle of "al-muhafadzatu 'ala qadimisshalih wal akhdu 'ala Jadidil Ashlah" (maintaining traditions that are considered still relevant and adding new and better things to support existing ones). In this case, classical books are no longer the only material taught in Islamic boarding schools but have included general lessons by forming madrasas or schools.

The establishment of Madrasas and schools within Islamic Boarding Schools was motivated by the desire to implement a balance between religious knowledge and general knowledge in Muslim education activities.

The above can be used as a comparison that the arrival of Islam to Indonesia was not only connected with trade and shipping. Shipping and trade relations between the nations inhabiting Asia, both the western, eastern and southeastern parts, have existed since the first century AD. History proves that Islam entered Indonesia in the 7th century AD/1 AH, but only

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Departemen Agama RI, *Profil Pondok Pesantren Mu'adalah* (Jakarta: Direktorat Jenderal Kelembagaan Agama Isam, 2004), hal. 55.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup>Ibid. hal. 55

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Yanwar Pribadi, "Religious Networks in Madura: Pesantren, Nahdlatul Ulama, and Kiai as the Core of Santri Culture", Al-Jami'ah Journal of Islamic Studies, Vol 51, No 1 (2013).

spread in the 13th century AD. The expansion of Islam was marked by the existence of the oldest Islamic kingdoms in Indonesia, such as Perlak in 1292 and Samodra Pasai in Aceh in 1297 Through trade centers in the coastal areas of North Samodra and the trade veins in Malacca, Islam then spread to the island of Java and on to Indonesia to the east..<sup>8</sup>

In Madura, Islamic boarding schools are actually built from social construction and social epistemology of society which creates a tendency towards a social historical journey. As a center of knowledge, in social society, Islamic boarding schools experience metamorphosis which is rooted in epistemological construction from variations in understanding among Muslims. The important point is the fact that Islamic boarding schools exist as one of the triggers for the realization of social cohesion. This is inevitable because Islamic boarding schools exist openly with a spirit of simplicity, kinship and social care. The concept of social behavior displayed by this Islamic boarding school has high social cohesion and is difficult to find in other educational institutions.

The development of Islamic boarding schools in Madura is inseparable from the history of the arrival of Islam on the Salt Island. Islamic education in Indonesia began when people who converted to Islam wanted to know more about the contents of the teachings of the religion they had just embraced, both regarding the procedures for worship, reading the Koran and knowing Islam more broadly and deeply. They study at home, surau, langgar or mosque. It is in these places that people and their children learn to read the Koran and other Islamic religious knowledge, individually and directly..9

Initially, Islamic boarding schools only touched communities in remote villages and outskirts. Starting in the 1980s, Islamic boarding schools began to become known to urban communities because they had begun to adopt modern education in the form of schools and madrasas. That is why, Zainal Alim stated that there was a shift in institutional orientation in Islamic boarding schools. Islamic boarding schools are experiencing changes in paradigm and behavior with their openness and acceptance of formal education into the education system in Islamic boarding schools which initially had a traditional character. The existence of Islamic Boarding Schools is an ideal pathway for government institutions to jointly improve the quality of education in the regions as a basis for implementing social transformation through the provision of qualified human resources with good morals. Moreover, the process of social transformation in the era of autonomy requires regions to be more sensitive in exploring local potential and the needs of their communities so that existing capabilities in society can be optimized. That growth and development is based on the needs of the community in an effort to improve the quality of education, both religious and general, with good character and benefits for the environment. These are the dreams of Nyai Hj Nur Jihan Mu'afi, Caretaker of the Nazhatut Thullab Girls Islamic Boarding School, which has now become a reality. Even though it is in the middle of the village and far from the hustle and bustle of city development, the efforts of the Islamic boarding school leadership to advance its students never fade. Located in Prajjan Village, Camplong District, Sampang Regency, Madura, East Java, the Nazhatut Thullab Islamic

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Enung K Rukiati dan Fenti Hikmawati, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia* (Bandung : CV. Pustaka Setia, 2006), hal. 20.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Afif Amrullah, "Islam di Madura", Islamuna: Jurnal Studi Islam, Vol. 2 No. 1 (2015).

boarding school never stops teaching its students various modern sciences. Apart from religious sciences and general knowledge, the Islamic boarding school, which was founded 300 years ago, also teaches various skills. Starting from embroidery, sewing, culinary arts, make-up, typing, calligraphy, hadrah art, computers, and other skills. Of course, it is not without reason that the Islamic boarding school, which was founded by the late Kyai Abdul 'Allam in 1702 until the present ninth generation, combines religious sciences, general knowledge and various skills that are really needed in society. This reason can be seen from the explanation of Nyai Hj Nur Jihan Mu'afi, wife of (the late) Kyai Mua'fi Alif Zaini, head of the Putra Nazhatut Thullab Islamic Boarding School. "Islamic boarding schools as institutions of education, social teaching and da'wah, should have their own characteristics. "Pon-Pes carries out the scientific mission of ethics, social aesthetics that is intellectually religious," said Nyai Hj Nur Jihan Mu'afi as quoted by the Al-'Allam Bulletin. The name Nazhatut Thullab itself comes from Arabic: Nazhatun means garden or park and At-Thullab means student or pupil..

So Nazhatut Thullab Islamic Boarding School means Student Park. This naming may be related to the term Siswo Park which was founded by Ki Hajar Dewantoro (founder of Taman Siswa). Starting from the ninth period, the Nazhatut Thullab Islamic Boarding School improved itself by establishing several formal education institutional units which were based in several departments: the Department of National Education and Culture, the Department of Religion, and the Department of Health. Namely by establishing Madrasah Diniyah Ibtidaiyah (1933), PGA 4 years (1969), MTs State Examination (1984), MA State Examination (1986), SD Pamong (1988), SMU State Examination (1988), STITNAT (1988) to become IAI NATA (2018), SMP (1995), MAK (2000), MTs Diniyah (2002), MA Diniyah (2001), AKPER NATA (2002) became UNT Al-Muafa (2022).

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