

RETHINKING THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF ISLAM INDONESIA

Dr. Sulasman, M. Hum

Abstract

Diversity in the writing of history is not just about the topic but also about the object of study or research the history of writing. Spanning the history of the Muslim community in Indonesia since the vast stretches of the process of Islamization and form of power-economic and political power to the resistance movement against the occupation of Western nations with a peak of Indonesia's Independence Proclamation. Therefore, it is in the historiography of the Islamic community in Indonesia is very Improbable that the Historian with all its limitations Able to describe or reconstruct the whole history of Muslims from the beginning until now. Nevertheless, the works of the writing on the history of Islam in Indonesia has been widely written, Both by Indonesian and foreign writers. One side of the history of Islam is still rarely in Indonesia touched in the historiography of the world the which includes boarding schools, religious scholars and students. Yet, if we go back to the fold resistance to the penetration of Western history, many events in the which is a resistance movement of the students.

Key Words :

Kyai, Pesantren, Historiography, History, Islam.

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Introduction

Interest in history was not only happening among academics, but also came from other professions. The whole of Indonesian Historiography then enlivened also along with the development of the theory and methodology of science. Another thing that also enliven the writing of the history of Indonesia is the emergence of some interest that requires historical legitimacy. This development is interesting because the writing of history to be diversified. Diversity in the writing of history is not just about the topic but also about the object of study or research the history of writing. This phenomenon then gave birth to a lawsuit against the National History of Indonesia, one from among the Muslims who questioned how the position of the Islamic Society of Historiography in Indonesia in the context of the National History of Indonesia.

Historical Background of Muslims in Indonesia

At least until the middle of 15th century, Muslims had not only expanded to the whole Indonesian archipelago, but socially, had been the agent of change in the history. At that time, even though Islam did not reach to the back country completely, they had built what it was called as “*trading diaspora-diaspora*” especially in the territory of coastal area. With the support of merchant class, the process of Islamization was taking place great fully and almost became the dominant history landscape in Indonesia at that time.

Being in agreement with A. E. Priyono (1991), although the track of Islamic history could be identified since the 11th however, the development of Islamization seemed begun to start in the late of the 13th century and especially in the 14th and 15th century when the center of the greatest natives power, Majapahit was being in the decline. Islamic religion had been being in the rapid progress at that time. The rapid development of Islamic religion was because that new religion had attractiveness. The attractiveness of this new religion was on the idea of similarity, it was a very interesting idea for the merchant classes which was increasing, and not possessed within the concept of Hindu social stratification.. Thus, Islam provided “*blue print*” for organization “*politiko-ekonomi*” which then opened the way for the march of new structural change process from the system “*agraris-patrimonial*” toward what was called by Van Leur as “*politic-capitalism*” (Van Leur, 1960) This *politiko-ekonomi* blue print which caused many classes of native traders believed on Islamic religion to participate within international Muslim traders’ community (Christine Dobbin, 1980).

Lately, international Muslim traders community in Indonesia developed since the late of the 14th century, it was since Malaka developed becoming a “*entrepot-state*”. Moslems merchants in the coastal area of the north Java beach, such as in Gresik, Giri, Tuban, Jepara, Demak, and Jayakarta arranged trading relationship with the international trading center such as in Mediterania, Siam and even Japan. This development showed that the Islamization had resulted the middle class of Muslim merchant with the center of international Muslim trading integrated, therefore it gave basis material for the emerging of new political institutions which was signed by the establishing of Demak maritime state as the first Islamic Kingdom in Java in the beginning of the 16th century (H.J.de Graaf and Th. G. Pigeaud, 1985). This proved that at that time Islam appeared as the integrative element which was able to unite the power of economy, politic, and religion in a state. Along the first middle of the 16th century, Demak Islamic Kingdom attempted to consolidate its authority through various conquests both military and economy to the area along North Java coastal area, or even to the back country of eastern Java which had not been Islamized to bent down under the new sultanate (M.C.Ricklefs, 1986). After that, appeared the power of other Islamic politics among them, such as Islamic Kingdom of Banten and Islamic Kingdom of Cirebon which was located in the district of Western Java.

The goal of Demak Sultanate to integrate between religion, economy, and politic gained many challenges, both from outside and inside. These challenges came along with the emerging of new power; it was Western penetration which was signed by occupying the Malaka by Portuguese as the result of *mercantilism politic* expansion which was developing in Europe to the whole of the world. The expansion of Europe’s mercantilism which was supported by the military power had wished off Asian International context toward mercantilism capitalist all at once tarnished what was called by Anthony Reid (1988) as the era of Asian trading which then entered the new era, it was colonialism era (Immanuel Wallerstein, 1974).

In regional context which is got “historical transition” Demak appeared and developed in short time and just existed for approximately a half of century, shorter than the three centuries Majapahit’s hegemony. According to A.R.T. Kemasang (1985), the happening of great transition in Asian, Islamic Kingdom of Demak international trading system caused by western penetration was not only losing the base of its maritime trading, but also losing the base of material for its legitimating claim whether politically or ideologically. Thus in the other word based from the statements explained above, the integrative power of Islam was failed in playing its role in its history. The ruin of Demak, internally was caused by the growing back of the local ideology, and externally was caused by the western capitalism expansion.

After the happening of western capitalism expansion which was later substituting the social order, culture, and tore down the supremacy of Islamic policy, then appeared the reaction of Indonesian Moslem society, indicated by the resistance movement of santri society came from *pesantren* world with *Kyai* as a “causal mechanism” in several historical event lied from Western to Eastern of Indonesia.

Historiography of Islam in Indonesia

If we see the description above, therefore it will be seen the spread of Indonesian Moslem Society’s history lied along widely since the process of Islamization later built the economical and political supremacy until the resistance movement against the western colonialism with the Indonesian proclamation of independence as its top. The power of economy was indicated by the establishment of international trading bases such as Malaka, Banten, Jakarta, Cirebon, Tuban, Makasar, and many more. The power of politic was indicated by the establishment of the Islamic Kingdoms in Indonesia such as Islamic kingdom in Aceh, Demak, Cirebon, Banten, Goa, Makasar, Tidore. The resistance movements against the western penetration were indicated by the santri society resistance movement. According to Clifford Geertz (1960), the resistance movement of santri society happened in several area such as *Perang Diponegoro* in Central Java led by Pangeran Diponegoro, *Kyai Madja*, Sentot Alibasyah in 1825-1830, *Perang Paderi* in West Sumatera led by Tuanku Imam Bonjol in 1821-1828, *Perang Aceh* led by Teuku Umar in 1873-1903, and in West Java exactly in Banten in the year of 1834, 1836, 1842, then risen again in 1880, and 1888 led *Kyai Haji Wasid* (Ahmad Mansur Suryanegara, 1995), also the resistance movement in Singaparna led by K. H. Zenal Mustofa 1942, and etc. Therefore, based in historiography of Indonesian Islamic society, it is impossible if the historian with its lack of ability can dissect or reconstruct the whole history of Islamic follower from the beginning until now. Despite of that, there are so many written works about Islamic history in Indonesia has been made, whether written by the Indonesian writer itself or the foreigner writer.

Among the works about Islamic history in Indonesia, for instance the work written by Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah or known as HAMKA entitled *Sejarah Umat Islam* volume IV . He wrote the Indonesian Islamic history as a part of Islamic history itself. In writing aspect, Hamka was more interested in periods than the state. Besides that, he was more emphasizing in the heroes and sultans role in dissecting the appearance and disappearance a sultanate in the archipelago of Nusantara. Hamka as an clergy and historian was giving valuable information about the sources he used, such as *Sejarah Melayu* by Tun Sri Lanang, *Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai* by Syaikh Nuruddin Ar Raniry, *Tuhfat Al-Nafis* by Ali Haji, *Sejarah Cirebon*, *Babad Giyantidan*, and etc (A. Muin Umar, 1988). Beside *Sejarah Umat Islam* jilid IV, the written works about the history of Indonesian Islam is also existed in *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia* volume III. The book edited by Uka Tjadrasasmita who approached the Indonesian Islamic history as a part of Indonesian National History. He was different with Hamka who emphasized in individual factor, so Uka Tjadrasasmita was more emphasized that the history is a process in a society happened by the transition of elements which stay in society (A. Muin Umar, 1985). In writing the Indonesian Islamic history as in *Sejarah Nasional* Volume III, Uka Tjadrasasmita used sources such as book, articles, or manuscripts, state story and foreigner used released. Last, the writing of Indonesian Islamic history was written by the researcher team includes the historians such as Prof. Dr. Taufik Abdullah made by Majelis Ulama Indonesia entitled *Sejarah Umat Islam Indonesia*. Although the three works above do not fulfill hope of the written of Indonesian Islamic history totally, but they had put the basic form of the historiography of Indonesian Islamic History to be discussed more comprehensive.

In discussing about the Indonesian Islamic historiography, we can use the framework from Franz Rosental (1968) they are:

1. The theme which is based on the local historical written, such as Hikayat Bandjar, Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai, Hikayat Kutaiand etc.
2. The theme which is based on Islamic history written works generally. This model can be seen by the works such as the written work created by Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah or HAMKA in *Sejarah Umat Islam* for four volumes.
3. The theme which is based on the military written works such as Civil War created by T. Ibrahim Alfian who wrote *Perang di Jalan Allah : Aceh 1873-1912*.
4. The theme which is based on biographical written work such as the written work of Sulasman who wrote *K. H. Ahmad Sanusi Berjuang Dari Pesantren ke Parlemen*.
5. The theme which is based on historical novel such as the work of Muhammad Daud entitled *Hikayat Putra Baren*.

Beside Franz Rosental's model, the historical writing step is also can be made based on its period as stated by Muin Umar (1988) as follow:

1. Historiography of Islam in the period of the entering of Islam to Indonesia until 16th century.
2. Historiography of Islam in the period of the resistance to the colonialism, especially in the period of the western political penetration which raise the reactions such as in Aceh, Banten, Mataram, Banjar Goa and other places.
3. Historiography of Islam in the period of the beginning of 20th century AD, such as written work created by Deliar Noer about *Gerakan Moderen Islam di Indonesia 1900-1942*.
4. Historiography of Islam in the contemporary period such as the written work created by B. J. Boland *The Struggle of Islam in Modern Indonesia*.

Islam in Indonesia is an interesting phenomenon to be written continually, and also the written of the history of Islam in Indonesia, generally has become an interesting subject for the historian or any other experts who have interested on that problem based on each perspective. There are plenty of written works about the Indonesian Islamic history, for instance the written work created by Taufik Abdullah who wrote *Adat and Islam An Examination of Conflict in Minangkabau* year 1961, D.A. Rinkes *De Heiligen van Java I. de Makam van Sjech Abdoelmoehji* year 1910, J.J. Ras, *Hikajat Bandjar: A Study in Malay Historiography* year 1968, J. Noorduyn *De Islamisering van Makasar* year 1956, H. A. Mukti Ali *An Introduction to the Government of Acheh's Sultanate* year 1970, J. P. Moquete, *Mohammedansche Inscriptie van de Java* year 1921, R. L. Mellema, *Een Interpretatie van de Islam* year 1958, and etc.

Variation of theory, and methodology, philosophical view or the establishment of the science especially social disciplines as a support discipline in approaching Indonesian Islamic history has made a variation in historiography of Islam in Indonesia. It is not too different with Indonesian national history; historiography of Islam has also space to be researched and to be written in many perspectives. An example of the untouchable Indonesian Islamic history's side in historiography is a world of *pesantren* includes pesantren itself, kyai and santri. Whereas, if we open up the history of the resistance movement against western penetration there were so many events which was actually the resistance movement of santri society.

Kyai and Pesantren in Indonesian Islamic Historiography

One of the "great traditions" in Indonesia is the teaching of Islamic religion which appeared in pesantren. The primary reason of the pesantren appearance was making the transmission of traditional Islam (Mastuhu, 1994) as told in classical book or *kitab kuning*. Pesantren's tradition as a framework of traditional educational system has interested the experts to write it such as Karel A. Steenbrink, J. F. B. Brumund, van den Berg , Hurgronye , Geertz, A. H. John, Zamakhsyari Dhofier, Dawam Rahardjo, Sartono Kartodirdjo, Muhammad Iskandar, Mastuhu. They aware about the strong influence of pesantren in creating and maintaining the social, cultural, political, and religious life.

As long as the colonial time, pesantren was a *Grass Root People* educational institution unite with the people life. In revolution time, pesantren who's led by kyai or ajengan was one of the guerilla centers in war against Netherland to take over the independence or also in the revolution time. Kyai is the calling for the Islamic preacher who are smart,

intelligent, in the term of religion or a calling for pesantren leader. They are a group of society who are expert in the law of religion and possesses intelligent skill within reading the minds of people surrounding. On the basic of that skill, Kyai are able to place them as a charismatic local leader, who are obeyed by the society surrounding them. Ajengan is the other name Kyai, In West Java district, such as in Banten, Bogor, Sukabumi and Priangan there were other calling for the elite of Islamic religion, it is "Ajengan" generally, who gained the title of 'Ajengan' are the kyai as the leaders of pesantren who are charismatic in their territories. In fact, for a famous 'ajengan' usually, that title is bunched with the name of his territory, for instance, in Sukabumi H. Ahmad Sanoesi a famous ajengan in Bogor and Priangan are well known by the calling as "Ajengan Gunung Puyuh". In Pesantren, there was also created Hisbullah which was later became an embryo of Indonesian National Army (B.J.Boland, 1985).

According to P. A. A. Djajadiningrat the life at pesantren life is full of regularity, loyalty, and fidelity. Pesantren is a self community where kyai, santri, and the holder, lived in a neighborhood. Pesantren basically is a boarding college of a traditional Islamic education whose the students stay and learn together under the guidance of one or more kyai or ajengan. They are a big family beneath a control of a kyai. In pesantren, santri has two parents and two kinds of brother. At pesantren santri possesses two parents, they are their siblings parents and kyai who takes care of them, he also possesses two kinds of brother, they are sibling brother and brother of school (fellow). Basically, pondok pesantren is a boardinghouse, the students live and study together under a guidance from the kyai. Pondok or boardinghouse is a special trait of pesantren. The reason why pesantren gives boardinghouse for santri are: **The first** the famous and the knowledge of a kyai interests its santris from far, to get the knowledge, santri must stay and settle in pesantren. Santri who studies at pesantren consists of two kinds: (1) *Santri mukim*, they are santri who come from far place from pesantren and stay in the group of pesantren. (2) *Santri kalong*, they are santri who don't live and stay at the pesantren. Usually, they come from the place surrounding pesantren. **The second** There is a take and give relationship between santri and kyai, where the santri consider the kyai as their father and the kyai consider the santri as a deposit from god who need to be protected, therefore kyai has a responsibility to give a place to live for the santri. Thus, in santri life there will grow a dedication to the kyai, therefore kyai has a source of power for the pesantren interests. The relationship between kyai and santri in the revolution time had made easy of mass mobilization as a power of revolution..

The very important element on a pesantren is kyai. The term of Kyai and Ulama was introduced by Clifford Geertz (1960) in the year of 1960s. Since that, there were so many researcher who wrote about Kyai dan Ulama in Indonesia, for example Leonard Binder, Deliar Noer, Hiroko Harikoshi, Zamakhsary Dhofier, Karel, Stenbrink, Huub de Jonge, Elly Touwen Bouwsma, and Muhammad Iskandar.

Specially for West Java, especially in Priangan state for example in Sukabumi, there is the other name to call a kyai it is ajengan. Generally, someone who get ajengan degree is a charismatic kyai in his state. A famous ajengan commonly connected where the ajengan himself come from (Mohammad Iskandar, 2001), for example K. H. Abdurahim known as Ajengan Cantayan, K. H. Ahmad Sanoesi known as Ajengan Gunung Puyuh, K. H. Hasan Basri known as Ajengan Cicurug. The image about a kyai in Sukabumi came from a Netherland secret police's report about K. H. Ahmad Sanoesi. Based on his report, K. H. Ahmad Sanoesi was more famous as Ajengan Gunung Puyuh and was a most famous and influenced kyai in West Priangan state. The sum of santri and his sympathizer was thousands. His house was never quiet being visited by the guests who came to ask questions about problems, especially the questions about religion. Gobee, *adviseur voor inlandse zaken* praised him as a kyai with high intelligence. Approbation also came from Pijper the successor of Gobee, he described that the clergy like K.H. Ahmad Sanoesi will not decrease his influence just because imprisoned by the government. He seemed light shining wherever he is

According to Zamakhsary Dhofier (1982), the factor which made kyai as a social leader of people is very strong and well honored, because kyai is a teacher. In pesantren neighborhood appeared a paradigm that forgetting the relationship with the teacher is claimed as a big mistake and also losing teacher bless. Then if santri forget the relation with the teacher, therefore the knowledge of the santri will not be useful. In the tradition of pesantren, a kyai doesn't have a status and popularity because of the personality of him. The status and popularity can only be reached if there is any ratification on his knowledge through a series of knowledge (certain knowledge web) which approved through 'sanad'. Sanad itself is usually written tidily and justified by kyai – A popular kyai in his grade. That Sanad all at once as a confession of the relationship between teacher and his student, according with what is written

inside. Kyai who doesn't have a chain-link of knowledge like it will not be acknowledged or will not be popular especially in pesantren of tarekat.

The aspect which make kyai influences in the people life are because the institution of pesantren itself, where in pesantren there has just stayed thousands santri who come from many area. Santri in practically is not only a student of a kyai, but also as a campaigner who support the kyai and the pesantren where they stay and dig knowledge. Whereas for the people around the pesantren, santri role as a mediator between people with the kyai. Beside teaching santri, kyai also hold a "temporal" studying for common people which is held in or out the pesantren neighborhood or even far from pesantren. The temporal studying has double function, they are as a media of religious illumination, and a media in maintaining the good relationship between kyai and the people surrounding (Mohammad Iskandar, 2001).

About the relationship between kyai and the people of pesantren was described by a police in his report that people attention to the kyais who had a place in their heart; they seemed had no distance. Wherever that kyai stayed moving or out casting they would try to visit him as long as possible. As an example was K.H. Ahmad Sanoesi, although he was out casted to Batavia Centrum in the year of 1927, his santri and followers were loyal maintaining relationship with him. According to Dutch secret police journal as long as K. H. Ahmad Sanoesi imprisoned, more than ten thousand visitor visit him there. The paragon manner in leadership made a magnet power which was used by the kyai in controlling mass to face the colonial power especially in the revolution time.

Kyai is an important element of pesantren. The establishment of a pesantren depends on the ability of its kyai itself. According to Zamakhsyari Dhofier (1982) the life of pesantren depends on the ability of that pesantren to have a high ability successor kyai. There are two probabilities of the pesantren viability after being left by the founder kyai. *First*, the big and famous pesantren then will ruin and disappear. *The second*, pesantren will grow bigger and more famous, because there is prepared a successor to keep tracking the struggle of the founder.

There are several efforts done by the kyai leader of pondok pesantren in preserving the tradition of the pesantren, they are establishing pesantren network through strong partnership solidarity between them. The way doing by kyai is establishing a tradition that a close relative would become a candidate of leader successor of the pesantren. Kyais always put attention in their kin education to get the successor. If a kyai has kin more than one, the older son will be prepared to become a leader of the pesantren after he pass away, whereas the other sons and daughters is trained to establish the new pesantren or can be as a successor of their parent in law who most of them are the leader of the pesantren (Zamakhsary Dhofier, 1982). For kyai or ulama who have obstacle in doing the regeneration, to keep his authority as a order and tradition taker they establish an endogamous marital network between kyai's family or marry his daughter with his clever student (santri), especially if that santri is son or relative of a kyai therefore potentially to become a successor himself. The existing of inter kyai's family marriage is not only making an authority of the kyai's family maintained, but also their precept (Mohammad Iskandar, 2001). Through this way the relationship between kyais is maintained in a strong relative relationship. More famous a kyai, wider the relationship rope with the other kyais. Pesantren network which is tied in relative relationship, or knowledge transmission is very helpful in revolution happened in Sukabumi.

The very important thing for the pesantren course is released a Dutch colonial government rule as "*Ordonansi Guru*" which give a responsibility to a kyai to get a teaching license. Kyai must explain the lesson who taught to his student and his follower in line with the government rule, teaching activity of the Kyai always be supervised by the Dutch colonial government by placing a secret police. The suspicion of the colonial government to the pesantren was just because there was a signal arrived to the government, in pesantren there was always teaching a material which taught and raised of anti Netherland feeling especially in a pesantren which became a center of a tarekat activity. This discussion was described by P.A.A. Djajadiningrat that in pesantren where he studied, there was always raised an anti Netherland feeling by the kyai, therefore the santri commonly hated Dutch people and hated the people who work for Netherland interests (P. A. A. Djajadiningrat, 1936). Nationalism around the pesantren had born a rebellion led by kyai like rebellion in Sukamanah Tasikmalaya.

The growing of nationalism awareness in pesantren was in line with the feeling of brotherhood and equality among the santri. According to Rakhmatullah Ading Afandi (1982), among santri there is no difference in social status or parental status, therefore the relationship among the santri is just like with their brother without level.

Pesantren which rebelled, most of these are pesantren which taught or even become a center of tarekat activity. In this pesantren always be taught tarekat rituals such as dzikir, wirid, ratib, and many more. Pesantren people who do tarekat rituals believing strongly about the ability of supernatural power likes power, invulnerability, agility, and everysupernatural skill taken from tarekat rituals (Martin Van Bruinessen, 1995).

Amulets, agility training, latent energy and other skill in the normal situation are just only unimportant aspects in tarekat, but in unsecured situation and in war and rebellion situation, these aspects become very important. In many rebellion cases which involve tarekat activity, it was not that tarekat which became a volunteer in rebellion but the rebels who enrolled in tarekat activity to get the supernatural skill. In several cases closed to war and rebellion, there were people who came to famous kyai's place to get supernatural skill and to be accepted as a student.

In the revolution time there was the same phenomenon. There were youth who were ready to involve in war with Netherland practicing martial art and latent energy. In Sukabumi for example K.H. Ahmad Sanusi was very famous as a teacher of agility and additional martial art (his students supernaturally mastering martial art skill they didn't learnt). Most of the Sukabumi youth asked for promised by him. In the other pesantrens wirids, hijibs like Hijib Akbar, Hijib Rifa'i, taught to the santri, and also the agility skill were given to santri to become a martial art supply. When heading to the battle these rituals were useful for the sentry or even common people. They were also asking bless from kyai to be having salvation in the battle. When the battle happened there were kyai showering and blessing them who were ready to go to the battle by the holy water. After being showered with the holy water, they were given drinks and isims or wafak (kind of amulets) which they believed has a mythical power on it. The conviction of the power of prays, wirid, isim and the other amulets was a self power in battle especially for them who came from pesantren.

Conclusion

There are many interesting phenomenon on the journey of the Indonesian Islamic society history. Multiple theories or methodologies also the existing of local wisdom make the historiography of Indonesian Islamic society becomes colorful. The variation in historiography of Indonesian Islam shows the space side in historiography of Indonesian Islam itself can be filled with the other written work and also as reflection material to do the reposition and redefinition of Indonesian historiography.

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About the Author:

Dr. Sulasman, M. Hum, is a lecturer of Islamic History and Civilization Departement at Adab and Humanities Faculty at State Islamic University (UIN) Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung. Undergraduate at the Department of History State Islamic Religious Institute (IAIN) Bandung, Masters of History at the Indonesia University and Doctor of History at the University of Indonesia. To be able to contact via email: sulasman14@yahoo.com
