

# ISLAM NUSANTARA: TRACING THE TRACES OF KH SHOLEH DARAT THOUGHT IN *PESANTREN* LITERATURE

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**Abstract.** KH. Sholeh Darat is a cleric figure who has a big share in the spread of Islam on the North Coast of Java, especially in Semarang and its surroundings. His father, KH Umar, was a prominent scholar whom Prince Diponegoro trusted in the Javanese war against the Dutch in the north coast of Java. After receiving religious knowledge from his father, little Pious began to wander, studying from one scholar to another. KH Syahid Waturaja was recorded (studying fiqh books, such as *Fath al-Qarib*, *Fath Al Mu'in*, *Minhaj al-Qawim*, and Syarb al-Khatib. Kartini was amazed by *Al-Fatihah's* interpretation in Javanese so that Kartini understood. R.A. Kartini urged her uncle to meet KH Sholeh Darat. After meeting, to the kiai, Kartini asked that the Al Quran be translated. At the call of the da'wah and Kartini's request, KH Sholeh Darat translated it using Arabic Pegon. The book is recorded as the world's first translation of the Quran in Javanese. The first book of interpretation in Javanese Arabic Pegon is named *Faidhur Rohman*. *Faithur Rahman's* tafsir book is a Javanese interpretation, written the world's first pegon. Together with the manuscript *Syarah Al Hikam* KH Sholeh Darat *Al Faithur Rahman* kept by the takmir of the Sholeh Darat Mosque, Dadapsari, Semarang. What is interesting about *Faithur Rahman* is his translation in the letter *Al Fatihah* which explains how the belief system and tarekat (the straight path) in Islam. In conclusion, Islam Nusantara is an Islamic worldview and Islamic performance that is have balancing about aqidah and syariah, and haqiqat then tarekat. Actually, the ease of learning Islam is what gives a wind of harmony in religion and moderation in the attitude.

## 1 Introduction

As recorded in history, the success of Islamic da'wah (Islamization) in Java occurred because of the role of the scholars of Islam, in which their great works were able to transform Islamic values. Through the work of this *Pesantren*, Islamic thought and intellectual traditions are passed down from generation to generation, from one generation to the next. From this segment, the network of Indonesian Islamic intellectuals grows and develops. This happened in the era of great scholars such as Sheikh Abdus Samad Al-Palembani, Sheikh Abdur Rauf As-Singkili, Sheikh Yusuf Al-Makassari, Hamzah Fansuri, Syamsuddin As-Samatrani, Nuruddin Ar-Raniri, Muhammad Arsyad Al-Banjari, and others until Finally, the generation

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of Imam Nawawi Al-Bantani, Kyai Ihsan Jampes, and Kyai Saleh Darat (Salih bin Umar Al-Samarani, w.1321/1903), around the 17-19 century AD emerged. After the 19th century, the names of *Pesantren* books and literature writers appeared, such as KH Mahfudz from Tremas, who lived and taught in Mecca around the 1900s. Then another scholar is KH Ihsan bin Muhammad Dahlan from Jampes Kediri, who wrote the book *Siraj Al-Thalibin*. In addition, there is a very productive Javanese scholar, namely KH Bisri Mustofa (father of KH Mustofa Bisri) from Rembang. He wrote more than twenty *Pesantren* works. Other writers from Javanese scholars were KH Muslikh from Mranggen (Muslikh bin Abd Al-Rahman Al-Maraqi, w. 1981), who wrote various treatises on the Qadiriyyah wa Naqshabandiyah order, and Ahmad 'Abdul Hamid Al-Qandali from Kendal [1-2]

This Islamic intellectual tradition is revealed through the written tradition in the form of Islamic education, thought, and culture. That is why the traces of Islamic intellectuals appear in the form of classical religious texts that contain various Islamic teachings, such as *tauhid*, *tafsir*, *ahlak*, *fiqih*, and the teaching of *tasawuf*, called *Pesantren* literature [3]. However, in Indonesia this literacy tradition has decreased after the triumph of the thought of Imam Nawawi Al-Bantani from Banten. His works are widely used in India and Middle Eastern countries. The factors influencing the decline in the writing tradition among Indonesian scholars at that time until recently are (1) the increasingly strong influence of oral culture (oral tradition), institutionalized in the traditions of Islamic society so that kyai or scholars preferred to actualize their knowledge through recitations and lectures, (2) the weakness of the literacy ethos in the *Pesantren* tradition in Indonesia, mainly due to the habit of doing oral teaching, either in the form of religious lectures or delivering the yellow book teaching in *Pesantren* in a *manqul* and *sorogan*, (3) and the shift in people's orientation from the world of science to other fields, such as the world of politics and economics [4; 2; 5]

In its development, coastal literature is divided into written traditions and oral traditions. The written tradition in *Pesantren* literature includes texts about (1) *Pesantren* verses, (2) Al-Barzanji poetry, (4) Burdah poetry, (5) *nadhoman*, and others. *Pesantren* Verses are usually made based on sources, for example, from the holy book Al-Quran, Al-hadith, Burdah, Syaraful Anam, and others, mixed with the imagination of the author. For example, Verses Abu Nawas contains the prayer of Abu Nawas to Allah SWT to get His pleasure. The works of Verses Tomba Ati, Verses Erang-erang Sekar Panjang by Kyai Siradj Payaman Magelang which tell of the torments of hell and pleasures in heaven, and others.

Although many people have already done studies on Javanese literature, only a few have researched the type of Verses literature. So far, Verses literature is less attractive to researchers. This fact is evident from various Javanese literary studies conducted by experts, such as Padmosoekotjo (1960), Zoetmulder (1991), Geertz (1981), Robson (1978), Nielsmulder (1986), Sutaarga (1972), Zuhri (1974), not talking about Verses literature. Surprisingly again, in various catalogs of Javanese manuscripts, such as the Pigeaud Catalog (1973), the Girardet Catalog (1983), and the Behrend Catalog (1993), there is no record of Verses (Javanese: Singir). Academic research on Verses can still be counted on the fingers. Such works include an undergraduate thesis (Muayyanah, 1996), and a master's thesis (Muzakka, 1999).

Based on these reasons, this research wants to explore and reveal the values of the past by revitalizing the potential of the literary work by digitizing and re-actualizing the old script scription. Thus, it can be seen to what extent the role of *Pesantren* literature as a literary work of the past in coastal culture to improve the quality of community empowerment. In other words, how can the potential of coastal literature and folklore be an alternative for the creation of a creative industry that can create new jobs, become a guide for the community, and a new means for understanding various local wisdom in the context of modernity? In addition, with the potential for coastal literary works packaged with creative industries, they will be able to provide a special attraction for the development of the coastal tourism industry.

## 2 Methods

The methods used in this research are philological methods and oral tradition research methods. The philological method was used to describe the text and edit the text. Meanwhile, the oral tradition research method was used to obtain data in the field related to text reading and text transmission and to record oral text reading activities in the *Pesantren* tradition.

## 3 Results and Discussion

This research begins with a spiritual phenomenon that lives and develops within the scope of the *Pesantren*. One of the spiritual activities that develop in *Pesantren* is *Pesantren* literature. What is meant by the term *Pesantren* literature is a literary work, born and developed in the *Pesantren* environment, both in the physical environment and in the spiritual environment. Among the characteristics of *Pesantren* literature are (1) *Pesantren* literature is usually in Arabic and written in Arabic, (2) sometimes the *Pesantren* literature is in new Javanese language with Arabic-*pegon* writing, (3) born and developed around the 18th century, and developed rapidly around the 19th century, (4) *Pesantren* literature contains oral and written traditions, (5) usually *Pesantren* literature is read in certain ceremonies and sometimes performed as performing-art, and (6) *Pesantren* literature is also more or less influenced by Arabic literature or Persian literature.

Among the *Pesantren*'s literary works in the form of written and oral literature are the *Manakib Syeikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jailani*, *Naskah* (script) *Al-Barzanji*, *Nadlaman*, *Nashar*, *Qasidah Burdah*, *Syi'ir* (Verses), *wirid*, *hizb*, *wifik*, and *raja*. Such literary texts are read on religious ritual occasions, such as birth ceremonies, circumcisions, and other celebrations. In these ritual events, the texts of literary works are often read in performances accompanied by tambourine music as performing art. As a means of communication between humans and their God, the reading of *wirid* and prayers also functions as a means of worship and an effort to defend oneself in society. Therefore, it survives and maintains and preserves its existence in the face of various challenges of the times.

Human attitudes to maintain their lives are carried out in various ways in the form of different social behaviour. One human behaviour in the context of dealing with the health of his life is done by approaching the shamans. Dukuns are "smart people" who are considered capable of helping patients to intercede for healing or find solutions to the problems of life that suffocate them. In reality, the practice of shamanism in society is loaded with various local contents, is magical, multi-ethnic, and even multi-cultural. That is, the existence of the shamanism model is largely determined by belief, the religious system, world view (*wheltaanschauung*), and the cultural ground that gave birth to it.

One of the cultural heritage works of coastal communities is the literary work of *Pesantren*. *Pesantren* literature is a collection of literary works of books (religious literature), oral literature, and poetry literature that were born and developed in the *Pesantren* environment, both regarding dogmatic-ritual teachings and rational-spiritual teachings. Among the characteristics of *Pesantren* literature are (1) *Pesantren* literature is usually in Arabic and written in Arabic, (2) sometimes the *Pesantren* literature is in new Javanese language with Arabic-*pegon* writing, (3) born and developed around the 18th century, and developed rapidly around the 19th century, (4) *Pesantren* literature contains oral and written traditions, (5) usually *Pesantren* literature is read in certain ceremonies and sometimes performed as performing-art, and (6) *Pesantren* literature is also more or less influenced by Arabic literature or Persian literature.

In the context of *Pesantren* literature, there are some *Pesantren* literary texts translated literature. An example is Arabic-language works translated into Javanese. Among the works of the book were written by *Pesantren* scholars, such as KH Sholeh Darat, KH Bisri Mustofa,

KH Abdul Chamid, KH Abul Khoir, and so on. As a result of the process of translating the book into Javanese, it was this which brought a breath of fresh air to the birth of a new nuance of Islam Nusantara. Among the translated books is *Faithur Rahman* by KH Sholeh Darat As Samarani. The book of *Faithur Rahman* is the first Arabic commentary in the world. Together with the book *Sarah Al Hikam*, Al Fathur Rahman bridged the understanding of Islamic teachings for the Javanese people. The result of Islamization through Arabic-language books has led to the emergence of a new face of Islam in Indonesia, which adapts to the culture, language, and local wisdom of the archipelago. This is what gave rise to the birth of Islam Nusantara.

Islam Nusantara is Islam that was born and developed in Indonesia, with all the local wisdom that accompanies it. With local wisdom, the face of Islam Nusantara is more accommodating and accepted by the community. KH. Sholeh Darat is a figure of Nusantara scholar, playing a role in strengthening the face of Islam Nusantara by translating Arabic books into Javanese, including the *Faithurrahman Book*. Kyai Sholeh's works belong to the genre of *Pesantren* literature that was born in coastal communities. This coastal community has produced many literary works of *Pesantren*, which are a reflection of the face of Islam in the archipelago.

On the other hand, a prominent Central Java scholar, KH Ahmad Rifai, initiated the theory of Islam Satu. Islam Satu is the pillar of Islam, summarized into one pillar. Not following the five pillars of Islam, KH Ahmad Rifai made the pillars of Islam into one, namely reading the shahada. This is stated in the Book of *Syarikhul Iman*. Despite the controversy, KH Ahmad Rifai still holds to his principles. From these two scholars, it will be traced how the traces of Islamic thought, especially Islam Nusantara and Islam Satu, in the history of Islamic thought in the archipelago. KH Sholeh Darat, in a Javanese *da'wah* and Islamization model, combines the harmony between the teachings of the Shari'a and the tarekat in his recitations.

This research has gone through catalog studies and field studies in the National Library Catalog and the private collections of Kyai Sholeh's family, manuscripts, and books of *Faithur Rahman*. Also, this study uses the *Syarah Al Hikam* manuscript of KH Sholeh Darat, kept by the guide of the Sholeh Darat Mosque, Dadapsari, Semarang. This research is based on the consideration that the manuscript is part of the cultural wealth of the archipelago left by the past century, still salvageable. Therefore, this manuscript needs to be studied philologically and thematically, especially the values of KH Sholeh Darat's *da'wah*, providing harmony in religion.

## Conclusion

In Conclusion, Islam Nusantara is Islamic worldview and Islamic performance that is have balancing about *aqidah* and *syariah*, and *haqiqat* then *tarekat*. Actually, the ease of learning Islam is what gives a wind of harmony in religion and moderation in the attitude. Islam Nusantara is actually a term for the understanding and application of Islamic religious teachings that are more accommodative and eclectic in Indonesian society. This happened due to the persuasive manifestation of Islamic teachings in his *da'wah*. Among the initiators of this religious understanding are the many translations of Arabic books into Javanese. Among them were carried out by KH Sholeh Darat who had translated Arabic-language books, such as *Syarah Al Hikam*, *Faithur Rahman*, and other books.

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