

Reconstruction of Islamic Education in Java: Historical-Pedagogical Study of the Role of Walisongo

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Abstract

The history of Islamic education in Java not only reflects changes in religious teaching approaches and methods, but also is a mirror of broader changes in Javanese society. Islam first entered Java in the 14th century, precisely in 1399 AD. Islam was introduced by Maulana Malik Ibrahim, an Arab who once lived in Gujarat, India with his nephew named Mahdum Ishaq. He and his nephew were in Gresik, East Java to start spreading Islamic education. Walisongo is reviewed from the personality classified as a lover of Allah when viewed in terms of the strategy of his duties and functions in the Demak kingdom he is the ruler of the government, that's why he obtained the title Walisongo was given the title of "Sunan" which has the meaning of "respected" because in spreading Islam the guardians always provide solutions to the problems that exist in people's lives through friendly practice and teaching. The Guardians have their respective karomah and uniqueness in the view of the community. Walisongo who has a very broad knowledge and understanding of religion so that the spread of religion in Java is very easy. In addition, the combination or synergy between ulama and Umara makes the spread of Islam in Java wider even outside Java, namely the eastern part of Indonesia and Kalimantan whose influence is wider until now.

Keywords: *Islamic Education; Javanese; Walisongo*

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Introduction

Islamic education in Java has become an integral part of the history and socio-cultural development of this region. As an island rich in tradition, culture and history, Java has been a fertile ground for the spread and growth of Islam since its arrival. The development of Islamic education in the early days in Java was an inseparable part of complex dynamics involving interactions between religion, politics and society.

The historical journey of Islamic education in Java not only reflects changes in approaches and methods of teaching religion, but is also a reflection of broader changes in Javanese society. From the early days of Islam to the golden period of Islamic kingdoms in Java, such as Majapahit and Demak, Islamic education continued to develop and adapt to changing times.

It is important to explore the journey of the development of Islamic education in the early days in Java, from the early days of Islam to the early era of the Islamic kingdom in Java. By analyzing factors such as the spread of religion, the establishment of Islamic boarding schools, the role of ulama, and their social impact, we can get a complex picture of how Islamic education has become an important element in shaping Javanese identity and civilization.

By understanding the process and dynamics of the development of Islamic education in Java in the early days, a better understanding of the historical foundations of the Islamic educational institutions that exist today can be gained. Apart from that, knowledge about the relevance and continuity of the development of Islamic education in the early period towards the context of Islamic

education in Indonesia in the modern era is an important part of the history of Islamic education, especially in Java.

Through this analysis, it is hoped that it can provide an understanding of how Islamic education has become one of the main pillars in the formation of cultural and religious identity in Java, as well as how the legacy of Islamic education at that time still influences and contributes to Indonesian society today.

Methodology

In the field of education, which is constantly changing to innovate, implementing various methods in learning is important to strengthen students' understanding and creativity. Through integrated learning, students can gain direct experience, which enhances their ability to receive, retain, and apply learned concepts. This approach not only fosters a deeper comprehension of academic subjects but also encourages critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Furthermore, integrated learning helps students make meaningful connections between different disciplines, promoting a more holistic educational experience. This research is qualitative in nature, using a literature study approach, with books and literature as the main sources. By analyzing existing studies and theoretical frameworks, this research aims to identify effective strategies for integrating different subjects and activities in the classroom. This research uses a qualitative approach with a literature review method (Kajian Pustaka) to analyze each existing problem formulation and explore information regarding the entry of Islam in Java through books, videos, articles, and other documents related to the role of Walisongo in spreading da'wah and education. This study is expected to contribute to the implementation of integrated learning to enhance creativity in elementary school students. Ultimately, the findings of this research could provide valuable insights for educators and policymakers, guiding them in developing curricula that better support student creativity and lifelong learning skills.

Results and Discussion

The Early Period of the Entry of Islam in Java

Before the arrival of Islam, for centuries the Javanese people were familiar with Hinduism and Buddhism. The establishment of many Hindu kingdoms in Java shows that Hinduism already had adherents and was a very strong political force. Hindu Buddhism not only gave birth to many large kingdoms in Java, this religion also gave birth to many very distinctive traditions and these traditions can still be seen today. (Baidawi, 2020).

Islam first entered Java in the 14th century, precisely in 1399 AD, brought by an Arab who had lived in Gujarat named Maulana Malik Ibrahim with his nephew named Mahdum Ishaq who lived in Gresik. (Rama, 2011).

When Maulana Malik Ibrahim arrived on the island of Java, the person holding the reins of power of the Majapahit kingdom was Putri Cempa. His arrival had a good impact on the development of Islam, on the other hand, Princess Cempa gave birth to a son, Raden Fatah, who was the first king in the Islamic kingdom in Demak (Java).

The birth of the first Islamic kingdom was not due to the conflict between Hinduism which was believed by the Majapahit kingdom and Islam. However, this was caused by the internal destruction of Majapahit and the weakness of the central government, as well as a civil war between the 6 heirs for 30 years after Gajah Mada and the King of Majapahit or Hayam Wuruk died.

Before the founding of the Demak Kingdom, through the peaceful and friendly attitude of Princess Cempa, Islam was known to the King of Brawijaya's family. Apart from that, the people of Majapahit view the Islamic Kingdom of Demak as a new hope for the future. This kingdom was expected to be a force to protect against all the suffering that the people of Majapahit were feeling at that time.

Raden Fatah has the title Sultan Alamsyah Akbar who is the successor to the rule of his father, Kertabumi, who fought to save the kingdom from destruction caused by civil war. At that time Kertabumi was not killed but taken to Demak. Furthermore, da'wah on the island of Java is getting better and more focused with the existence of nine figures or Wali Songo leading Islamic da'wah in Java. (Rama, 2011).

History of Walisongo and its Role

When Islam began to enter Java, one of the challenges faced by the spreaders of Islam was the fact that Javanese society was already a religious society, however, some other Javanese people still believed in animism and dynamism so that their beliefs were mixed with the teachings of this religion. gave birth to the term *Kejawen*. Later, when Islam entered Java, there were still people who adhered to Islam who maintained their traditions, so from this situation the term *Kejawen Islam emerged*. (Baidawi, 2020). So the presence of Walisongo is important in preaching Islam peacefully and using a cultural approach.

Wali Songo or nine figures are important figures in the history of the spread of Islamic education in Java. The spread of Islamic education was carried out by Walisongo in a subtle and persuasive way, both through arts, culture and trade. This is why Walisongo was given the title "Sunan" which means "respected" because in spreading Islam the saints always provided solutions to problems that existed in people's lives through friendly practices and teachings. The Guardians have their own character and uniqueness in the eyes of the people, especially on the island of Java. (Marzuki, 2023).

In line with this, in the Qur'an there are many words wali which means lover, for example in the Koran surah al Baqarah verse 257 it is explained:

اللّٰهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ ۚ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَوْلِيَا۟هُمُ الطَّاغُوتُ يُخْرِجُوهُمْ مِّنَ النُّورِ إِلَى الظُّلُمَاتِ ۗ أُولَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

Translation:

Allah is the protector of those who believe. He brought them out of various darknesses into light (faith). Meanwhile for those who are kufr, their protectors are tagut. They (tagut) took them (the disbelievers) out of the light into various darkness. They are the inhabitants of hell. They remain in it.

In another verse it can be in Surah Yunus verses 62-63:

إِنَّا إِنَّا أَوْلِيَا۟ءَ اللّٰهِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ
الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَكَانُوا يَتَّقُونَ

Translation:

Know that indeed (for) the saints of Allah there is no fear that befalls them and they do not grieve.

(They are) people who believe and are always devout.

Based on this verse, it can be interpreted that individuals who are very obedient in carrying out their worship can be said to be lovers of Allah SWT. Walisongo, when viewed in terms of his dedication to preaching, is included in the beloved of Allah SWT. However, in the context of the Demak Kingdom, Walisongo is considered to be the holder of government authority. The title Sunan given to this guardian is a manifestation of his role as advisor and assistant to the king. So it can be said that Walisongo has a dual role, namely as an individual who is close to Allah SWT. because of his spirituality and as a highly dedicated government political leader.

Thus, the target of Islamic education for guardians covers all elements of society. The profiles on Walisongo are as follows:

1. Sunan Gresik

Sunan Gresik, known as Maulana Malik Ibrahim, is a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad saw, who was the first saint to preach Islam on the island of Java. (Marzuki, 2023). For 20 years, Maulana Malik Ibrahim has produced a cadre of preachers (threaders of Islamic da'wah) through the Islamic boarding school system. He even has the nickname as a teacher of other saints. (Rama, 2020)

Sunan Gresik is not only dedicated to Islamic da'wah but also plays an active role in improving community welfare. The teaching carried out by Sunan Gresik includes new methods in agriculture, building huts for studying in Leran, and helping coastal communities in Leran Gresik which are hit by the economic crisis. Together with Admiral Cheng Ho, he cleared rice fields and made irrigation which

helped coastal communities economically. Sunan Gresik's friendly and useful approach to preaching made Islam widely accepted and became the majority religion among society.

2. Sunan Ampel

Sunan Ampel or known as Raden Rahmat is a descendant of Maulana Malik Ibrahim. He received the nickname "Ampel" from the students and the people of Surabaya. The nickname refers to the swamp area that the king of Majapahit gave to Raden Rahmat, called "Ampel Denta". The area then developed into a center for Islamic da'wah, teaching and education, and finally a boarding school called the Ampel Denta Islamic Boarding School was founded in the center of Surabaya City. This Islamic boarding school is an important icon in the history of the spread of Islamic education in Pahlawa City. (Marzuki, 2023).

Sunan Ampel is known to have lived around the 15th century. Sunan Ampel was a figure from the Majapahit kingdom who later converted to Islam. He was born in Champa (now Vietnam) and then moved to East Java, Indonesia. (Hastuti, 2023).

3. Sunan Bonang

Sunan Bonang, commonly known as Raden Makhdum Ibrahim, is the son of Sunan Ampel. He studied Islamic teachings in Malacca through a teacher's association through Sunan Giri's father, Maulana Ishaq. After completing his studies, he returned to Tuban to preach to spread Islamic education and art with Islamic nuances. He founded an Islamic boarding school and then modernized the Javanese gamelan by including bonang and rebab in its rhythms and poetry so that it was nicknamed Sunan Bonang. (Marzuki, 2023).

4. Sunan Drajat

Sunan Drajat or known as Raden Qasim Syarifuddin is the son of Sunan Ampel and younger brother of Sunan Bonang. He is known for his da'wah approach which focuses on moral education based on Islamic law for the community. Sunan Drajat also has high empathy for the poor, has a high work ethic, prioritizes the welfare of the people, alleviating poverty, creating prosperity, solidarity and mutual cooperation in society. In fact, so that his preaching could be better conveyed to the community, Sunan Drajat even taught various techniques for making houses and palanquins that were needed by the community. (Marzuki, 2023)

5. Sunan Giri

Sunan Giri or known as Ainul Yaqin is the cousin of Sunan Ampel. His father, Maulana Ishaq, was a cleric and his mother was a Palembang princess of royal blood. Sunan Giri was nicknamed Raden Paku because his personality was like a "nail" which was a stabilizer and unifier. (Rama, 2020)

In fact, students from all over Eastern Indonesia came to the place of study and also came from Kalimantan. He became a messenger for the guardians to meet Siti (Sidi) Jenar's father, teaching the science of Sufism to people who were still laymen.

Sunan Giri focuses on the field of education by designing a curriculum adopted from the Pasai Kingdom in Aceh which is in accordance with the Syafi'i School of thought implemented in his Islamic boarding school. The students who come to Sunan Giri's Islamic education center come from all over Eastern Indonesia. Apart from that, he has a role as a guardian representative in communicating with Siti Jenar's father and teaching Sufism to every level of society. (Rama, 2020).

6. Sunan Kudus

Sunan Kudus or commonly known as Sheikh Ja'far al-Sadiq or Raden Amin Haji is Sunan Bonang's son-in-law and has deep knowledge of sharia. Sunan Kudus's main task was to become military commander and high judge in Demak. He pays attention to sharia science, especially in the field of muamalah. (Rama, 2020).

7. Sunan Muria

Sunan Muria or commonly known as Raden Said or Raden Prawoto is the brother-in-law of Sunan Kudus. He is an expert in Sufism and dedicates himself to teaching Sufism to his followers. Even though he was quiet, his fatwa was very sharp and influential. He was nicknamed "Muria" because he lived in a quiet place and far from the crowds, precisely at the foot of Mount Muria. Such a

quiet place is considered ideal for practicing contemplation or silence as a spiritual practice for Sufis who study Tariqat. (Rama, 2020).

8. Sunan Kalijaga

Sunan Kalijaga or known as Raden Sahid is Sunan Ampel's brother-in-law. His childhood was spent in the palace of Tumenggung Aria Tejo (Duke of Wilwaktikta) in Tuban. His expertise is not only in the fields of government and military, especially the naval sector, but also includes building ships made of teak wood. One of his phenomenal dedications is the design of the pillars of the Demak Mosque which are made from teak wood which is the main pillar and arranged precisely and firmly. (Rama, 2020).

Sunan Kalijaga's da'wah was aimed primarily at farmers and labor groups. He was different as a wandering preacher who used shadow puppets as a performance to preach and the story in the wayang came from the Mahabrata book but Sunan Kalijaga included the breath of Islam in the story. In the government structure, Sunan Kalijaga has responsibility for information and domestic administration. One of his dedications that has developed to this day is a city planning system that places the square (or square) as the center, where the square is surrounded by palaces (kratons), places of worship and markets as the economic center of society. (Rama, 2020).

9. Sunan Gunung Jati

Sunan Gunung Jati or known as Syarif Hidayatullah, or Raden Abdul Qodir, Fatahillah, or Falatehan is the son of Maulana Ishaq or the younger brother of Sunan Giri but has a different mother (his mother is from the Quraish tribe in Arabia). He spread the teachings of Islam in West Java. In 1527 he succeeded in capturing Jakarta from the Portuguese. Sunan Gunung Jati became the son-in-law of the Sultan of Demak and was later appointed ruler of West Java based in Cirebon. He was also appointed as viceroy in Cirebon and Banten under the protection of the central government in the Kingdom of Demak . (Rama, 2020).

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that Walisongo is a pious cleric whose level of devotion to Allah is very high, where his role in the spread of Islam in Java is very influential to this day and the various ways of preaching and the focus of preaching for each of these saints are very varied. Of course, the spread of Walisongo Islam was inseparable from the synergy between the ulama and Umara at that time so that the spread of Islam was accepted more quickly and also had a wider scope.

Development of Islamic Education Institutions in Java

The development of Islamic education in Java began with the founding of the Bhayangkare Islah organization (improvement pioneer force) which had a focus on activating Islamic education efforts through an organized plan. This organization played an important role in making Bintara a center for the development of Islamic education in Java.

Before the formation of Bintara Regency, which was the center for educational development, there was a figure named Raden Fatah in 1475 AD who founded an Islamic boarding school in the Glagah Arum forest south of Jepara, whose Islamic boarding school was so advanced that Glagah Arum village also developed and that is where Bintara Regency was formed.

In 1500 AD the first Islamic kingdom was established in Demak with its first King being Raden Fatah. In this way, Islamic education and teaching advances because it is fully supported by the government and is easily accepted by society. Then after the Demak kingdom there was the Islamic kingdom of Mataram-Central Java in 1575 AD

At that time, boys and girls aged seven years were required to be able to recite the Koran. In addition to places for reading the Koran, recitation of the book was also opened for children who had already mastered the Koran, both students and students all lived in Islamic boarding schools, there were also mosques and the teaching system in Islamic boarding schools was in the form of halaqah and Sorogan and Bandongan lessons are written in Arabic.

According to history, the Islamic boarding school was first founded by Maulana Malik Ibrahim, from where he trained religious teachers and preachers who spread Islam throughout Java. The period of change in the Islamic learning system in Java began in 1900. Kiai Haji Hasyim Asy'ari began actively teaching in 1319 Hijriah or 1092 AD, he brought new changes in Islamic education from Mecca by opening the Tebuireng Islamic Boarding School (1899 AD) in Jombang, East Java . At the Tebuireng Islamic Boarding School, not only do they teach religious knowledge and Arabic, in the

field of politics, the struggle to seize and maintain Indonesian independence is the work of the Tebuireng Islamic Boarding School itself.

Then there is the Rejoso Jombang Islamic boarding school which holds madrasa-style classes in addition to maintaining the halaqah system. Then there is Pondok Modern Gontor Ponorogo, East Java. Students are accustomed to speaking Arabic and the language of instruction in learning is also Arabic. Apart from Arabic, English is also important at Pondok Modern Gontor.

There is also a madrasa in Kudus, Central Java called Aliyatus-saniyah Mu'awalatul Muslimin with 8 years of study. There is also the Muhammadiyah Association in Yogyakarta which prioritizes education and teaching based on Islam, both education in schools or madrassas, education in the household and education in the community. There was also a Krapyak Islamic boarding school built in Jogjakarta and also a Manbaul Ulum madrasah in Surakarta.

Meanwhile, at the university level there is the Indonesian Islamic University which was previously called the Islamic High School which was founded by Masyumi in Jakarta during the Japanese occupation then changed its name and this is where Iya Ien was born as a continuation of the Islamic High School or STI which became UII to PTAIN but more from that, it has its own, more complicated and complex history.

Thus, the development of Islamic education in Java was very complex and started from the saints of Allah or commonly known as Walisongo who had very broad knowledge and understanding of religion so that the spread of religion in Java was very easy. Apart from that, the combination or synergy between ulama and Umara allowed the spread of Islam in Java to be wider and even outside Java, namely the eastern part of Indonesia and Kalimantan, where its influence is even wider today.

Conclusion

Islam first entered Java in the 14th century, precisely in 1399 AD. Islam was introduced by Maulana Malik Ibrahim, an Arab who once lived in Gujarat, India with his nephew, Mahdum Ishaq. He and his nephew were in Gresik, East Java to start spreading Islamic education.

Walisongo in terms of personality is classified as a lover of Allah. If viewed from the strategic perspective of his duties and functions in the kingdom of Demak, he is the ruler of the government. That's precisely why he received the title Walisongo. He was given the title "Sunan" which means "respected" because in spreading Islam the saints always providing solutions to problems that exist in people's lives through friendly practices and teaching. The Guardians have their own character and uniqueness in the eyes of the people, especially on the island of Java

Wali Songo had very broad scientific knowledge and religious understanding so that the spread of religion in Java was very easy. Apart from that, the combination or synergy between ulama and Umara allowed the spread of Islam in Java to be wider and even outside Java, namely the eastern part of Indonesia and Kalimantan, where its influence is even wider today.

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