



THE SOCIAL AND INTELLECTUAL HISTORY OF SANTRI IN INDONESIA

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Abstract

This research explores the social and intellectual history of *Santri* in Indonesia as an integral part of the country's religious and cultural life. This research seeks to reveal the role of *Santri* in shaping the social dynamics of society, as well as to understand their intellectual contributions to social change in Indonesia from pre-independence to the present day. The research method involves the analysis of historical documents and literature studies to compile a comprehensive narrative of the social and intellectual journey of *santri*. In this context, the role of the *santri*, the madrasah, and the pesantren as traditional centers of education that play a vital role in the spread of Islam and the formation of the *santri* character is analyzed. This research shows that *Santri* has a dual role as an agent of social and intellectual transformation. The findings of this study are expected to provide in-depth insights into the dynamics of *santri* in social and intellectual aspects, their role in social change, and the intellectual impact that has been generated. Along with the times, understanding the social and intellectual history of *Santri* is expected to contribute positively to Indonesian society's understanding of cultural and religious diversity.

Keywords: *Santri*, intellectual history, Islam Nusantara, Islam Indonesia, pesantren

A. Introduction

Indonesia remains the country with the largest Muslim population in the world. In 2022, there will be approximately 229 million Muslims or 87.20% of Indonesia's total population. Indonesia's Muslim population accounts for 12.70% of the world's population (Muslim Population by Country 2022, 2022). This achievement has been a long process. Indonesia became a Muslim-majority country because Islam developed here as an embryonic community in the 7th and 8th centuries. The influence of Islam became more evident and then accelerated between the 12th and 16th centuries when Islamic kingdoms developed in different parts of Indonesia (Ricklefs, 2010). The emergence of these kingdoms replaced Hindu-Buddhist kingdoms that had collapsed.

One of the parties that cannot be separated from the rapid development of Islam in Indonesia is the *Santri*. *Santri* is interpreted as an Islamic intellectual. CC Berg argues that the word *santri* comes from the Indian language *shastri*, which means people who know holy books or books of knowledge (*shastra*) (Yatim, 2012). Therefore, *Santri* refers not only to someone engaged in learning about Islam but also to a group of Islamic intellectuals. *Santri* is interpreted as a figure who is 'being' (it becomes) or in the process of becoming an intellectual, as well as something that is 'finished' (it has been) being an intellectual.

After Islam was institutionalized and developed, there was a shift in the meaning of *santri*. After independence, *santri* was no longer interpreted as an Islamic intellectual but experienced an expansion. *Santri* refers to a collective identity that incorporates Islamic practices into everyday life.

Clifford Geertz's idea of the *abangan-santri-priyayi* trichotomy in his classic 1960 book *The Religion of Java* illustrates this. Geertz (1960) says a deep concern with religious doctrine characterizes the *Santri* group. Because of these two characteristics, their substantial religiosity manifests in education, law, and the state (Burhani, 2017). In the political sphere, *santri* is synonymous with Islamic support groups. During the era of liberal democracy, supporters of Islamic parties such as Masyumi and Nahdlatul Ulama were identified as *santri* (Feith & Castles, 1988). It means that *Santri* is seen not only as a Muslim intellectual but also as figures who passionately implement Islamic doctrine and is a supporter of Islamic parties.

The birth of the *santri* in Indonesia can be traced back to the establishment of Islamic educational institutions in various locations. The mosque is the most critical place for *santri* to learn elementary Islamic knowledge. For more complex knowledge, *santri* can go to a higher level of education. In Aceh, there are institutions called *dayah* and *ranggang*. *Dayah* refers to a place of worship usually taught by ulama. Some of the famous scholars who organized education through *dayah* are Hamzah Al-Fansuri (d. 1590 AD), Syamsuddin Al Sumatrani (d. 1630 AD), Nuruddin ar-Raniri (d. 1658 AD), and Abdur Rouf as-Singkili (1615-1693 AD). If the place of education provided a kind of dormitory for the students to stay in, the place was called *ranggang*. On the other hand, in West Sumatra, Islamic education relies on *surau*, which is run by ulama who educate religious knowledge (Yatim, 2012).

Pesantren in Java teaches complex Islamic knowledge. Poerbakawatja (1970) found that the educational model was

similar to the gurukula system. A part of Islam also originated in Gujarat, India. Meanwhile, Koentjaraningrat argues that the pesantren continues the mandala model. The mandala has a dormitory that students inhabit around the teacher's house.

The history of *santri* in Javanese literature is told in Serat Centhini. There is mention of a famous school called Karang in Pandeglang, Banten. A man called Danadarma studied there for three years. Another person, Jayengresmi alias Among Raga, who was a contemporary of Sultan Agung (1593-1645 AD), studied at the Karang paguron under an Arab teacher named Sheikh Ibrahim bin Abu Bakar alias Ki Ageng Karang (van Bruinessen, 2020, p. 94).

Despite its roots in pre-Islamic times, the pesantren model that has developed to the present day, at least in Java, began in 1742. At that time, Paku Buwono II (1711-1749 AD) gave a token of gratitude to Kiai Hasan Besari (1729-1867 AD) in Tegalsari, Ponorogo (National Team for Writing Indonesian History, 2010). Based on a Dutch survey in 1819, the existence of pesantren still needed to be improved, reportedly in Priangan, Pekalongan, Rembang, Kedu, Surabaya, Madiun, and Ponorogo. In Madiun and Ponorogo, many children from the north coast went to continue their education (van Bruinessen, 2020, p. 93).

The birth of *Santri* became increasingly massive in the 19th century when the Islamic spirit developed by forming a global network of intellectualism through the Hajj. In the second half of the 19th century, Islam's position was further strengthened by the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. (Niel, 2009) It impacted the number of European ships traveling through the Arabian Peninsula to Java. After that, the

development of pesantren education accelerated. In the 20th century, the development of Islamic education changed with the emergence of the madrasah system. The development of the madrasah cannot be very connected to the growth of people in the archipelago who made the Hajj and stayed in Mecca in the 19th century. In West Sumatra, several madrasahs were established, which adopted more progressive thinking. In Java, the development of Islamic education, which introduced a modern system, was pioneered by Jamiat Khair, who founded it in Jakarta on 17 July 1905 (Noer, 1982). Yudi Latif (2020) concludes that the establishment of madrasahs had strategic value during the national movement. Madrasahs became a breeding ground for the emergence of clerical intelligentsia and ulama intellectuals. They are religious experts who are also well-versed in modern scientific knowledge. Therefore, it is the contribution of the ulama and *santri* in the national movement period.

B. The Social and Intellectual Role of the *Santri*

***Santri's* role before independence**

The role of the *Santri* is not only as a pillar of Islamisation in Indonesia. This role can be seen in the involvement of *santri* in every episode of Indonesian history. During the colonial period, the *santri* were part of the resistance against colonialism by implementing *jihad fi sabilillah* (Ismail, 1997, p. 42). Islam began to develop in Indonesia with the arrival of European influence at various points. Islam began to develop in Indonesia, impacting the friction between the two forces. During the colonial period, Islam was transformed into a

social force that could give impetus to the community to make changes. This impetus is evident in the various popular uprisings with an Islamic background and the efforts to build a systematic movement organization. Islam became a magnet and attraction for people to carry out social transformation and resistance against colonialism (Ahmad, 2018). The colonial government recognized this position through a decree issued by the Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies on 19 May 1820. The decree required the regents to supervise the religious activities of the Kiai and Penghulu (Ismail, 1997, p. 45). However, the power of Islam remained unstoppable.

Several events in the 19th century evidence the resistance of the *Santri* to colonial power. Some of them were the Padri War (1819-1832), the Diponegoro War (1825-1830), and the longest was the Aceh War (1873-1912). According to Laffan (2016, p. 52), in the Diponegoro War, the most prominent supporters came from the Perdikan *santris*. The *santri* group became one of the mass bases of Diponegoro's supporters. They came from palace students such as Suranatan and Suryogomo, residents of civilized villages in Yogyakarta, and various Islamic boarding schools. Kiai Mojo (1792-1849), one of Diponegoro's followers, brought a large group of *santri* from the Mojo, Baderan, and Pulo Kadang areas. A survey produced a list of around 200 *santri* who had joined Diponegoro. Twenty-two of the names came from people returning from the Hajj pilgrimage. Many of them held the title of sheik or sharif. There were also Diponegoro supporters from mosque officials and boarding school leaders from Bagelen, Kedu, Mataram, Pajang, Ponorogo, and Madiun (Carey, 2017, pp. 316-317).

In addition to these rebellions, there were also rebellions led by followers of Tarekat, such as those in Cianjur (1885), Cilegon Banten (1888), and Garut (1919). (Suminto, 1985, pp. 64-74) The resistance of the *santri* is also seen through the tariqah movement, as happened in Cianjur (1885), Cilegon Banten (1888) and Garut (1919) (Suminto, 1985, pp. 64-74). In the Cilegon incident, *santri* played a central role in resisting colonialism. This event was motivated by the fact that for several decades, there had been an increase in fanaticism among the pesantren in Banten, and a hostile and aggressive attitude towards foreigners and the priyayi had been instilled in the *santri* (Kartodirdjo, 1984). As the Tarekat movement strengthened, it became a nexus that unified the vision of resistance. Thus, Haji Marzuki, a Tarekat figure, became the engine of resistance against the colonialists.

According to Wahjoetomo, *santri* took action against the Dutch in three ways. First, *uzlah* (seclusion), they retreated to villages and remote places far from colonial reach. Second, they were non-cooperative and resisted in secret. Apart from studying or analyzing the Yellow Book, the Kiai fostered the spirit of jihad in their *santri* to defend Islam and oppose the colonizers. Third, they rebelled and fought frontally against the colonizers (Muhammad, 2015).

In addition to its role in resisting the colonizers, the role of the *Santri* can be seen in the intellectual movement to promote national consciousness. In the 19th century, many *santri* in the archipelago began to become aware of the importance of Muslim unity worldwide. Among the motivating factors was the British annexation of several Muslim-populated areas such as Aden, Cyprus, Egypt, Sudan,

and India between 1830 and the 1910s. Russia also took control of the Caspian Sea region and parts of Persia. France conquered Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco (Ricklefs, 1986, p. 3). On the other hand, with Russia's help, all the Turkish colonies in Eastern Europe revolted for independence, such as Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania, and Greece, around 1913 (Simbolon, 2007, p. 256). As a result, the Ottoman Empire of Turkey began to decline.

The weakening of Islam as a political force in various countries encouraged Jamal Al-Din Asadabadi (1839-1897 AD), also known as al-Afghani, to initiate the concept of an Islamic state. Al Afghani's concept promoted the pan-Islamic movement as a counter to Western colonialism and imperialism (Abdurrahman, 2006, p. xii). He promoted the idea of reviving and uniting Islamic forces. It was done by updating the concept of Islamic thought so that it could survive in modern civilization. It was then implemented with the development of *ijtihad* by Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905 A.D.) and Rashid Ridha (1865-1935 A.D.).

One of the ideas of these reformers was spread through international associations formed through the activity of Hajj, followed by a stay in Mecca. After performing Hajj and spending some time in Mecca, the Hajjis returned home and became scholars. These ulama then play an essential role in disseminating the new knowledge and ideas they have acquired during their stay in Mecca.

In the intellectual sphere, *santri* plays an essential role in expanding scientific networks and global Islamic connections. It is done through the Hajj activity. In the second half of the 19th century, Islam's position was strengthened

by the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. It affected the number of European ships traveling through the Arabian Peninsula to Java (Niel, 2009). As a result, people from the archipelago had more access to the Holy Land. The number of people making the Hajj increased. In the 1850s and 1860s, the average number of pilgrims from the archipelago reached 2700. In the 1870s, the average number of pilgrims increased to 4400 (Putuhena, 2012). The increase occurred again in 1880-1900 when the average number of pilgrims reached 6000. Between 1900 and 1939, the average number of pilgrims reached 14,000.

For the Dutch East Indies government, the people who made the pilgrimage became a problem, as it could be a motor for revitalizing the community's religious life. Sartono Kartodirdjo revealed that the European community assumed that "Mecca is only a breeding ground for religious fanaticism, where people who make the pilgrimage are instilled with feelings of hostility towards the Christian rulers in their homeland" (Kartodirdjo, 1984, pp. 224-227). One piece of evidence that supports this assumption is the persistent riots that occurred in Indonesia in the second half of the nineteenth century due to the influence of the Hajjis coming from Mecca. It led to the Dutch East Indies government's tightening up of Hajj affairs.

Some people who performed Hajj put themselves back in the position of *santri*. It happened because some people decided to stay for a few years after the Hajj to deepen their religion. Thus, pilgrims who decided to stay in the Arabian Peninsula for a while acted as *santri*. The effect is that Islamic scholarship grows because those who go on Hajj wait to

return to their home countries. They stay in the Holy Land for several years to study religion before returning. It can be concluded that Hajj has turned its pilgrims into *santri* because they study and learn Islam more deeply with the scholars in Haramain. Thus, Hajj plays a role in producing students with a global intellectual level.

Among the Indonesian scholars who performed Hajj and became *santri* in Makkah and Madinah before the 19th century was Sheikh Yusuf Makassar (1626-1699 AD), who stayed in Arabia from 1644-1670. He brought the influence of the Khalwatiyah order to Indonesia and the spirit of resistance against the colonizers, which resulted in his exile to Sri Lanka. Another scholar was Abdur Rouf as-Singkili (1615-1693 AD), who later brought the Syattariyah order to Indonesia. He translated and edited the Tafsir Jalalin into Malay (van Bruinessen, 2020). This *mukimin* significantly influenced the Islamic social movement in the Dutch East Indies. Even in the 19th century, the *Mukimin* of the archipelago in Mecca constituted the largest and most active part there (Suminto, 1985, p. 95). The *Mukimin* of archipelago in the colonial period became a component that spread the idea of pan-Islamism and drove social movements in the archipelago.

The Hajj and *mukim* performed by the *santri* were influential in developing Islamic educational institutions. Azyumardi Azra reviewed that in the early 19th century, there were 1,853 pesantren with 16,556 students (Isbah, 2020). Around the 1860s, Sartono Kartodirdjo (1984) found only about 300 pesantren in Java. However, there was a sharp increase to 14,929 pesantren with 222,663 students by the

20th century (Isbah, 2020). Thus, the quantity and quality of *santri* proliferated.

The Hajj and the *Mukim* activities led to the rapid development of Islamic intellectualism in the archipelago. It led to reforms in religion and education. In West Sumatra, madrasahs began to emerge with more progressive thinking. Some of the reform scholars who came from this area were Sheikh Muhammad Taher Jalaluddin (1869-1956 A.D.), Sheikh Muhammad Djamil Djambek (1860-1947 A.D.), Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah (1879-1945 A.D.), and Haji Abdullah Ahmad (1878-1933 A.D.). This finding is in line with the thoughts of Steenbrink (1991), who stated that the emergence of Islamic educational reform, including madrasahs, occurred because of (1) the spirit of resistance to colonial rule; (2) the efforts of Muslims to strengthen their organization in the field of education; and (3) dissatisfaction with traditional educational methods of learning the Qur'an and religious studies. These factors were combined with the progressive thinking brought by people returning from the Hajj.

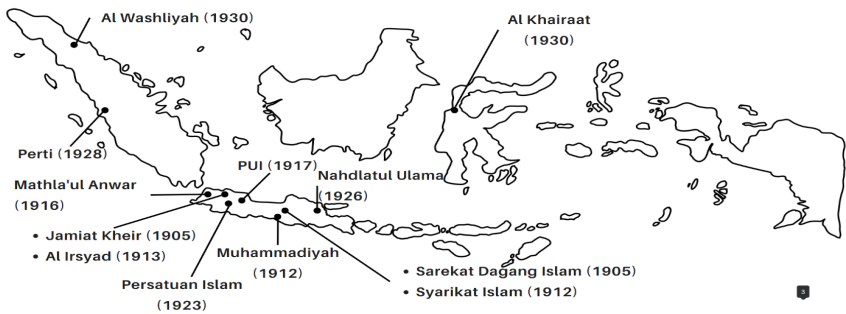
Hajj has encouraged the development of Islamic intellectualism and Islamic solid networks. This is because, in the Arab countries, the pilgrims met the Muslim community of the world. They learned from the same teachers and learned about different movements in other Muslim countries. Moreover, in Mecca, the Hajis and Mukmin were under an Islamic government free from colonial interference. This situation encouraged a growing awareness of anti-colonialism (van Bruinessen, 2020, pp. 10-11).

The Mukimin of the archipelago during the colonial period became a component that spread the idea of pan-

Islamism and drove social movements in the archipelago. From there, a modern Islamic movement emerged during the national movement, giving rise to various Islamic organizations. The founding of the Sarekat Dagang Islam by Haji Samanhudi is evidence of this. He went on Hajj in 1904 and returned the following year. After returning from the pilgrimage, he desired to form a social organization, eventually forming Sarekat Dagang Islam (Noer, 1982, p. 120). In the early 20th century, after its metamorphosis into Sarekat Islam, it became a mass organization with enormous support. During the colonial period, the *Santri* became part of the social and intellectual movement promoting resistance to colonialism.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the development of Islamic education continued. The real impact of the progress of Islam at this time was the awareness of establishing a movement organization. Islamic communities formed for centuries were brought together into a more structured movement through *Jam'iyah*. The importance of *Jam'iyah* is in line with the thoughts of Sayyidina Ali K.W., who stated that united falsehood can defeat scattered truth. Therefore, goodness and truth must be combined and organized, and establishing organizations was inevitable. Beginning with the Islamic Trade Union (1905) and the Muslim Brotherhood (1912), several Islamic organizations shaped Indonesian history in the early 20th century. Some of these organizations are Muhammadiyah (1912), Al Irsyad Al Islamiyah (1913), Persatuan Umat Islam (1911), Mathla'ul Anwar (1916), Persatuan Islam (1923), Nadhlatul Ulama (1926), Persatuan

Tarbiyah Indonesia (1928), Al Washliyah (1930), Al Khairaat (1930) and so on.



Islamic Organisations in the Early 20th Century

The role of *Santri* after independence

In the run-up to independence, Islamic intellectuals became an essential part of the preparations for Indonesia's independence. Around the revolution, *santri* were part of the struggle movement, defending sovereignty. Earlier, *santri* was also involved in PETA membership. Some boarding schools sent their *santri* to join PETA (Ahmad, 2018). They were also involved in Laskar, such as Hizbullah and Sabilillah, which played an active role in the revolutionary war for independence.

Laskar Hizbullah was a paramilitary force established by the Japanese in West Java in December 1944, affiliated with Masyumi, as a counterpart to the Muslim Defence of the Land (Peta) (Cribb & Kahin, 2004). By 1945, the force had around

50,000 members. An essential element of Hizbullah was the paramilitary organization of the N.U., later known as Banser (Barisan et al. Guna) (Ricklefs, 2012). Masyumi appointed Zainul Arifin, an N.U. delegate, as chairman. Other figures who held important positions in Hizbullah included Muhammad Roem, Anwar Tjokroaminoto, Jusuf Wibisono, and Prawoto Mangkusasmito. The presence of Hizbullah is essential for the development of the Indonesian National Army (TNI) because it helps the presence of *santri* in military careers in Indonesia (Iskandar et al., 2015).

One of the critical milestones of the role of *santri* during the revolution was the birth of a resolution on 22 October 1945 by Hadratussyaikh K.H. Hasyim Asy'ari (1871-1947 A.D.). It contained the idea of a jihad resolution for every *Santri* to defend independence, even if the law is *fardhu 'ain*. According to van Bruinessen (1994), in the book *N.U., Tradition, Power Relations, the Search for New Discourse*, analyses the Jihad Resolution as a patriotic agreement between *Kiai* and *Santri* in the struggle to uphold the ideals of the Proclamation. In the book, Van Bruinessen argues that the main reason for issuing the resolution was the increasingly urgent situation and the obligation to defend Muslims against attacks by "infidels" with evil intentions. This resolution became the greatest motivation for Muslims in East Java to defend themselves.



A copy of the Jihad Resolution published in Kedaulatan Rakjat newspaper on 26 October 1945.

After the revolution subsided, the role of the *santri* manifested itself in the emergence of political parties. The *santri* are involved in the Islamic political movement. At the beginning of independence, the strength of Islamic political parties in Masyumi, which was still a continuation of the MIAI formed during the Japanese era, was overshadowed. Gradually, however, the force became fragmented, eventually

leading to various parties. In general, in terms of their mass base, there are Islamic parties that are traditional and orthodox, such as Nahdlatul Ulama, which has a mass base among the pesantren, and Perti, which is based in Bukittinggi. This orthodoxy can be seen in presenting thoughts derived from classical Islamic treasures.

On the other hand, there was also the strength of a more modernist party, Masyumi. Masyumi tended to have urban supporters and followers of modernism in Islam. The tendency to move towards the social democratic system is also evident in the figures in Masyumi, some of whom were Western educated. The PSII, on the other hand, was more of a mixture of orthodoxy and modernism (Feith & Castles, 1988). Although these parties had contested the 1955 elections, they shared the idea of making Islam the basis of the state in the debates of the Constituent Assembly. However, the Islamic parties began to lose their existence when Sukarno issued the decree and dissolved the Constituent Assembly. Later, during the Suharto era, they were merged into the United Development Party. This event signaled the diminished political role of the *Santri* in the national arena. However, the weakening of *Santri's* political role during the New Order did not diminish their contribution in other areas.

In the social sphere, *santri*, as part of the pesantren, has been able to promote the social transformation of society. In the social field, *santri*, as part of pesantren, has been able to promote the social transformation of society. An interesting case is what happened in the Krapyak area of Yogyakarta. Based on the study by Adib & Sumantri (2022) entitled "From Rural Abangan to Urban *Santri*: Social And Physical

Transformation of Kampung Krapyak, Yogyakarta 1910-1980s”, it was concluded that the Krapyak Islamic Boarding School transformed Krapyak from a peripheral village area based on *abangan* community groups into a *santri* village with strong Islamic religious characteristics. The physical and social transformation of Krapyak from the 1910s to the 1980s illustrates significant spatial changes and new values influenced by the presence of pesantren. The socio-cultural changes from an agrarian rural society to a modern urban society occurred in a complex manner due to the significant influence of pesantren. As a religious educational institution, Pesantren can be a transformative force for the development of a society from the social, cultural, political, and even physical spaces as a whole. In this case, the pesantren functions as a religious educational institution and as a cultural institution that promotes the existence of Islamic values. Thus, it can be concluded that the establishment of Krapyak Pesantren acts as a religious and educational institution and significantly impacts the transformation of its community’s locality (Adib & Sumantri, 2022).

Pesantren also became a driving force in the movement of nationalism and national Islam. National Islam means a movement based on Islam that prioritizes the interests of the nation and the state. The national Islam movement stresses the importance of preserving diversity. Diversity in each country must be maintained in government decisions and policies. Maintaining diversity is a strategy for achieving national unity. *Santris* also plays a role in the literacy movement. *Santris* plays an active role in raising awareness on the issues of intolerance and radicalism and spreading tolerance and

peace in the community. From this program, the *santris* have acted as agents who have successfully managed the media for peace (Ismah, 2014).

On the issue of nationality, *santri* plays a pioneering role in the movement of nationalism and national Islam. National Islam means a movement based on Islam that prioritizes the interests of the nation and the state. Therefore, the echoing spirit is the love for the homeland and the nation. The promoted policy is not a partisan policy for specific groups or interests but a national one that puts nationalism first. The National Islamic Movement stresses the importance of preserving diversity. Diversity in each country must be maintained in government decisions and policies. Maintaining diversity is a strategy for achieving national unity.

The manifestation of the role in realizing and strengthening national Islam is done through Jam'iyah. Forming the congregation into Jam'iyah is the key to promoting the national movement and supporting the pillars of unity. The Jam'iyah strategy transforms Islam into a national movement organization. Islam is contextualized with the spirit of the times and is part of the solution to the problems. Islam offers national solutions that are being faced and will continue to be faced in the future. Islam is becoming part of the solution, not part of the problem.

Since the pre-independence period, *Santri* has been involved in various Islamic organizations. For example, *santri* are involved in the national Islamic movement in Nahdlatul Ulama, Al-Washliyah, Nahdlatul Wathan, or the Islamic Tarbiyyah Association. In Muhammadiyah, *Santri* is involved in the progressive Islamic movement, particularly in

education, health, and social issues. In Jamiat Kheir, Perti, and Al-Irsyad, *santri* is involved in education. In Syarikat Islam, *santri* are involved in business and politics. In Persis, *santri* are involved in Islamic renewal.

The role of the *santri* as a pillar of the national Islamic movement is relevant in Indonesia because of the diversity of tribal identities. This condition certainly poses a challenge to the collective realization of national identity. Therefore, strengthening nationalism is a necessity for Indonesia. In addition, there are various challenges in strengthening Indonesian nationalism. At present, Indonesian nationalism is experiencing deterioration with the increase of inter-ethnic and inter-religious conflicts, the exploitation of neo-imperialism, and other phenomena of national disintegration. Another challenge is the younger generation's erosion of national values and morals. The historical state of the nation can also be seen in the social behavior of students.

Since the beginning of the reform era, the *Santri's* involvement in politics has increased, with *Santri* joining various parties. In every general election, the *santri* community is a factor that counts. Several figures from the *Santri* community have had the opportunity to occupy public and political positions. Abdurrahman Wahid, chairman of Nahdlatul Ulama (1984-1999), successfully held the presidency in 1999. He founded the Forum for Democracy (Fordem), which was critical of the New Order. In the 2019 general election, KH Ma'ruf Amin, the Rais Aam of Nahdlatul Ulama, was elected vice-president to accompany Joko Widodo.

In the 21st century, *santri* has become the driving force behind various movements in different fields and

strategic issues. One example is the *Santri* social movement in the environmental field through the Nahdliyin Front for the Sovereignty of Natural Resources (FNKSDA). The FNKSDA movement emerged in response to the conditions of the socio-ecological crisis resulting from the development of extractive capitalist industries in Indonesia (Murtadho, 2019). In his dissertation, Murtadho concluded that FNKSDA activists are *santri* with progressive views who fight against extractive capitalism that damages the environment and natural resources and causes a socio-ecological crisis. This movement is based on the spirit of progressive Islam, Ahlussunah Waljama'ah Nahdlatul Ulama (N.U.) values, and uses the social analysis tools of the 'left' paradigm. The ideology of the FNKSDA movement is "Progressive Aswaja." Progressive Aswaja in this social movement is related to the environment and natural resources (Murtadho, 2019).

In the field of the creative economy, centers have started to develop many business units to strengthen their independence (Ryandono, 2018). *Santri* also plays a role in the literacy movement. *Santri* plays an active role in raising awareness on the issues of intolerance and radicalism and spreading tolerance and peace in the community. From this program, *Santri* has acted as agents who successfully manage media for peace (Ismah, 2014).

Their involvement in various fields shows that *santri* can ground their knowledge, thus making their helpful knowledge. Valuable knowledge is a manifestation of *santri's* concern for human values. Through valuable knowledge, *santri* try to provide solutions to Islamic problems.

C. Intellectual Footsteps of *Santri*

As intellectuals, *santri* and Pesantren leave legacies that signify their struggle for knowledge. Sya'ban (2017) notes that over the centuries, hundreds of intellectual works and literary treasures have been produced by the archipelago's Muslim scholars in various fields, such as kalam science, fiqh, Sufism, philosophy, government, ethics, history, grammar, to mathematics and medicine.

This intellectual legacy can be traced throughout most of the Indonesian archipelago. In Sumatra, there were Nuruddin ar-Raniri (d. 1658 AD), Sheikh Abdur Rouf as-Singkili (1615-1693 AD), Sheikh Abdus Shamad al-Palimbani (1704-1789 AD), Sheikh Ahmad Khathib al-Minangkabawi (1860-1916). Sheikh Dawud Pattani (d. 1845 A.D.) was also there. From Kalimantan, there were Sheikh Arsyad al-Banjari (1710-1812 AD) and Sheikh Ahmad Khatib as-Sambasi (1803-1875 AD). Sheikh Khatib as-Sambasi is known as the founder of the Qadiriyyah Naqsyabandiyah Tariqah. From Makassar is the figure of Sheikh Muhammad Yusuf al-Makassari (1626-1699 AD). From Bima, West Nusa Tenggara, there is the figure of Sheikh Abdul Ghani al-Bimawi (1780-1853 AD). In Betawi, there was Sayyid Uthman (1822-1913 A.D.), and in Central Java, Sheikh Sholeh Darat (1820-1903 A.D.) (Sya'ban, 2017; van Bruinessen, 2020).

The intellectual footprint of the *santri* can be seen in the works produced by the pesantren. The pesantren were able to produce intellectual works in various scientific fields, which became international references. Sya'ban (2017) noted that over the centuries, hundreds of intellectual works and

literary treasures were produced by the Muslim scholars of the archipelago in various fields such as kalam science, fiqh, Sufism, philosophy, government, ethics, history, grammar, to mathematics and medicine.

Several Nusantara scholars have produced well-known works in fiqh. Nuruddin ar-Raniri (d. 1658 A.D.) wrote the Malay classic *al-Shirâth al-Mustaqîm* (1644 A.D.). Sheikh Abdur Rouf as-Singkili (1615-1693 AD) followed with the book *Mirât al-Thullâb* (1663 AD). The next generation was Sheikh Arsyad Banjar (1710-1812 AD) with the book *Sabîl al-Muhtadîn* (1779 AD). This book, written in Malay, was viral then and can be found throughout Sumatra, Kalimantan, and Malaysia. Then there was Sheikh Dawud Pattani (d. 1845 A.D.) with his book *Sullam al Muhtadî* (1836 A.D.), *Bughyah al-Thullâb* (1836 A.D.), which was then continued by his disciple Sheikh Nawawi Banten (1813-1897 A.D.) with his book entitled *Nihâyah al Zain*. This book was written in Arabic. Another fiqh book was written by a disciple of Sheikh Nawawi Banten, namely Sheikh Mahfuzh Termas (1868-1920 A.D.), with his book *Hâsyiah al Tarmasî* (1909 A.D.) and *Mauhibah Dzawi al-Fadl*. In Betawi, there is the book *Irsyad al Anam* by Sayyid Uthman (1822-1913 A.D.), and in Java, there is the book *Majmû'ah al Syarî'ah* (1892 AD) written in Javanese by Sheikh Sholeh Darat (1820-1903 A.D.) (Sya'ban, 2017; van Bruinessen, 2020).

In the pesantren treasures, one of the central figures whose works are often referred to is Syeh Nawawi Banten. He became a reference for students from Indonesia when they wanted to deepen Islam in the land of haram. All kiai today consider him as their intellectual ancestor. At least

22 works are still in circulation and used in pesantren. Syeh Nawawi stands at the transition point between two periods in the pesantren tradition. He introduced and reinterpreted its intellectual heritage and enriched it by writing new works based on books unknown in Indonesia at the time (van Bruinessen, 2020, p. 107).

Besides Sheikh Nawawi, another Indonesian scholar in Arabia who was influential in developing pesantren was Sheikh Mahfuzh Termas. Van Bruinessen (2020, p. 108) mentions that he was the first Indonesian scholar to teach the Hadith book of Sahih Bukhari. Later, KH Hasyim Asyari, as his disciple, brought this tradition to Indonesia. Hence, the Tebuireng Pesantren in Jombang became a leading Hadith school. It shows that *Santri*, who have deepened their Islamic knowledge through Hajj and *mukim*, returned home with new traditions adapted from Haramain to be applied in Indonesia. The *santri* play a role in spreading new intellectual traditions that further strengthen the Islamic foundation in Indonesia.

In the more modern period, several scholars were prolific writers. From Kediri, KH Ihsan b. Muhammad Dahlan (1901-1952 AD) wrote *Siraj al Thalibin*, as a syarah of Al Ghazali's *Minhaj al 'Abidin*. KH Bisri Mustofa (1915-1977) wrote many books in various disciplines, including the three-volume *Tafsir Al Ibriz* (1964 C.E.). In the field of Sufism, KH Misbah b. Zain (1919-1994 A.D.) of Bangilan and KH Ahmad Subki Masyadi (1933-2011 A.D.) of Pekalongan often translated classical texts into Javanese. In the field of Sufism, KH Muslikh (1908-1981 A.D.) of Mranggen wrote many treatises on the Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah Tariqah. In the field of beliefs, there were also Minangkabau Prof Mahmud

Yunus (1899-1982 A.D.), who wrote *Al Fiqh al Wadhih*, and Sheikh Abdul Hamid Hakim (1893-1959 AD), who once headed the Thawalib College. (van Bruinessen, 2020, pp. 160-163) There was also H Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah, or HAMKA (1908-1981 A.D.), who was very prolific in writing in various scientific fields.

In their creative process, scholars often relied on their students as scribes. KH Abdul Qoyyum Manshur, Rembang, told one of them about KH Thoifur Mawardi when he was a *santri*. It is said that when Kiai Thoifur was a student at the pesantren, he was responsible for being the scribe of the kiai. (Gus Qoyyum "Karomahnya Kh. Toifur Mawardi Purworejo", 2018) A similar story is also found in writing *Maulid Simtudduror* or *Maulid Al-Habsyi* (1909 A.D.), composed by Al-Habib Ali bin Muhammad bin Hussein Al-Habsyi (1839-1915 A.D.). Habib Ali recited the paragraphs of the *Simtudduror* in several meetings. Habib Al-Habsyi's disciples later recorded and disseminated it (Shakira, 2020).

Not all ulama wrote when they became central figures in pesantren. Some of them wrote books while they were still students. An example is the book *Faidh al barakât fî sab' al qirâ'ât* (1930 A.D.) written by KH Arwani Amin Kudus (1905-1994 A.D.). He wrote a book on the science of *qira'at sab'ah* when he was a student of KH Munawwir Krapyak (1870-1941 A.D.). Here, the author seeks to present a new method of learning the science of *qira'at* so that students can better understand and apply it (Sya'ban, 2017, pp. 443-444). A scholar who has also been productive since his student days is KH Sahal Mahfudz (1937-2014 A.D.). He wrote a lot when he was a *santri* of Pesantren Sarang at a relatively young age,

around 24-25 years old. First, *Tariqat al-Hushul ala Ghayat al-Wushul* (1961M) is a *syarah* (explanation) of *Lubb al-Ushul*, a book in the field of *usul fiqh*. Second, *ats-Tsamarat al-Hajayniyah* (1961 C.E.) explains the meaning of terms commonly used in *fiqh* books. Third, *al-Fawaid al-Najibah* (1961 C.E.). This book is a *syarah* on the *matan* written by Kiai Sahal himself, namely *al-Faraid al-Ajibah fi Bayan Irab al-Kalimat al-Gharibah* (Tejomukti, 2019).

The pesantren environment also realized the intellectual movement by implementing several reforms. For example, as done by KH. A. Wahid Hasyim (1914-1953). The reforms carried out concern the efficiency and effectiveness of the use of learning time or those related to the management of the pesantren without eliminating the identity of the pesantren itself. The aspects of Islamic education that were updated included (1) educational objectives to form pious and open-minded *santri*, (2) curriculum or “learner plan” with the inclusion of various non-Islamic teaching materials such as science, mathematics, English, and Dutch, and (3) teaching methods to form the critical power and initiative of *santri* in pesantren (Nurfadilah et al., 2020).

During the period of independence, the *santri* played a role in the struggle for national thought. Intellectual traces of the *santri* can be seen in the debates in the Constituent Assembly when the state’s foundations were being discussed (Maarif, 1985). During the New Order period, although *Santri* were marginalized in the political arena, they played a role in affirming Pancasila as the basis of the state. There are at least three reasons why *santri* accepts Pancasila: (1) Pancasila does not contradict Islamic *Sharia*, (2) Pancasila is

said to be in harmony with *Sharia* because the teachings in it teach goodness and are made for the benefit of the people, (3) Pancasila reflects the implementation of some Islamic sharia (Muhajir, 2017).

The intellectual movement of *santri* is also evident in the development of student and student organizations. For students, there is the organization of Indonesian Islamic Students (1947), IPNU (Nahdlatul et al. Association (1954), and Nahdlatul Ulama Student Association (1955). Among students, the Islamic Student Association (HMI) was developed in 1947, the Indonesian Islamic Student Movement or PMII (1960), and the Muhammadiyah Student Association (1964). PMII is an organization founded by Nahdlatul Ulama students. These organizations became a forum for intellectual and social movements for *Santri*, and they continue to exist today. Some intellectual organizations founded by the *Santri* community include P3M, LKiS, JIMM, Maarif Institute, Wahid Institute, MASIKA-ICMI, Ulumul Qur'an Journal, etc.

The traces of *Santri* intellectualism can also be seen in the lively popular Islamic discourse that develops in society. The channel is usually through the mass media. It can be seen in the discourse of Islamic 'renewal,' which is opposed to primordial Islamic politics. One of its motors is Nurcholish Madjid (1939-2005 A.D.). From his student days, he emerged as an eloquent spokesman for Islamic and Indonesian ideas. He saw Indonesianism as a legitimate dimension of Islamic identity (van Bruinessen, 2020, p. 72).

The new *Santri* intellectual movement, often called Gus Dur, was also promoted by Abdurrahman Wahid (1940-2010 A.D.). His idea was genuine because it combined secular

education with traditional Islamic education. Van Bruinessen notes that while Gus Dur remained close to traditional discourse, he formulated ideas on gender and group equality, secularism, national unity, and democracy. He became a prolific columnist in various media, including Prisma and Tempo. His move to become chairman of the PBNU in 1984 stimulated unprecedented intellectual activity within traditional Islam (van Bruinessen, 2020, p. 73). In short, he succeeded in combining traditional Islamic perennialist ideas with modern social concepts and theories that made Islamic practice more contextual and soluble for global challenges.

The above explanation shows that the intellectual traces of *Santri* are legacies that enrich Indonesia's scientific treasures. The intellectual traces of *Santri* are increasingly easy to find in various fields because the *Santri* movement is increasingly differentiated in various aspects. It indicates that *Santri* has essentially become an inseparable part of Indonesian history.

D. Conclusions

The *Santri* are an indispensable part of modern Indonesian history. *Santri* are agents of social change and significant contributors to expanding religious and cultural understanding. *Santri* are the pillars of religious and social support in Indonesia. They are involved in every critical chapter of Indonesian history. As a traditional educational institution, the pesantren has played a central role in the spread of Islam and the formation of the *santri* character. Throughout their historical evolution, *santri* have not only fulfilled religious

duties but have also made intellectual contributions that have influenced the development of Indonesian society. This paper highlights the importance of understanding and appreciating the social and intellectual heritage of *santri* as an integral part of Indonesia's cultural diversity. With a deeper understanding of the role of *santri*, society can build an inclusive framework of thought and respect the contributions of different religious groups in enriching the nation's identity.

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