

K.H. Ahmad Hanafiah and His Intellectual Networks With Other Muslim Scholars in the Malay Islamic World

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ABSTRACT

KH. Ahmad Hanafiah is recorded as one of the Indonesian Sufi martyrs during the war against the Dutch colonial army, in what is now the province of Lampung, Sumatera, in 1947. Yet, his role as a prominent ulama and Islamic thinker in Lampung is not widely known due to the scarcity of research and publication about his intellectual biography. Based on this gap, this paper is aimed at studying the biography of KH. Ahmad Hanafiah both as a sufi-hero and a Muslim scholar (ulama'). In doing so, it will use a descriptive and qualitative method, focusing on collection of his books stored in Sukadana, and analyzing their contents by way of hermeneutics and historical analyses toward his socio-political and intellectual backgrounds. This study emphasizes the entitlement of KH. Ahmad Hanafiah as a Lampung Sufi-hero is acknowledged by both the government's and scholar's records and by oral traditions of the Lampung people. His intellectualism is represented not only by his works but also by his book collections existing in Sukadana, Lampung. In this regard, this study finds out that his intellectual oeuvre is closely connected to the thoughts of some prominent scholars of the 18th and 19th Malay Islamic world, such as Syeikh Abd al-Shamad al-Jawi al-Palimbani, Syeikh Yusuf al-Makassari, Syeikh Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari, and K.H. Hasyim Asy'ari.

Keywords: Muslim scholars from Lampung, the Malay-Islamic world, intellectual networks, Ahmad Hanafiah

1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, when discussing the historical role of Indonesian Islamic leaders who were members of the *Jawi* community[1] it is very rare to find Islamic intellectual figures from Lampung. So far, little has not been known about a figure from Lampung who is considered capable of speaking about intellectual discourse of Islam in the contexts of both national's and international's Islamic scholarship. This scarcity is even more obvious when such figure is limited to native Lampungnese individuals.[2]

As such is due not only to the lack of direct evidences so far has found, but also to the fact that the Indonesian archipelago consists of thousands of islands, in turn making it impossible for each islands to have similar experience of encountering with Islam.[3]

Therefore, studying the intellectual biography of Kyai Haji Ahmad Hanafiah [abbreviated here as KHAH], in the context of the present study, is significant. This is because his presence and action could not only be an antidote to the Islamic community in Lampung and Indonesia, but also their existence could become a new chain in the process of transmission of the intellectual traditions of Islam, through

the network the *Jawi* community, which is very monumental in the history of Islam in the archipelago. The figure of KHAH feels so complete and perfect because it adorns two sides of the stage of Indonesian Islamic history: namely, the history of the struggle and movement of Islam on the basis of structural understanding, and the social history of Islamic intellectuals in Indonesia that is based on cultural approach.

In several physical confrontations between Indonesian against the Dutch colonial government after the proclamation of August 17, 1945, there emerged the so called the Sabilillah movement, the Hizbullah forces, or the "Laskar Golok" (the sword troop), from various regions in Lampung, all of which had used Jihad doctrine as a tag-line for their movements. KHAH was significantly involved in these movements.

Based on the above explanation, this paper will focus on discussing the figure and activism of KHAH as a Sufi-warrior in Lampung, and to what extent is his intellectual oeuvre connected to the intellectual network of the Malay Islamic world, in particular, and in the Islamic world in general?

2. DISCUSSION

2.1. Biographical Sketch K.H. Ahmad Hanafiah

The name and figure of KHAH reemerged in the national landscape after his name was proposed by the Lampung province government to be crowned a National Hero in 2015.[4] He was born in Sukadana, East Lampung, in 1905, under the name Ahmad Hanafiah (nicknamed Ali Hanafiah or "Alfiah"). His father, KH. Moehammad Noer, is known as Islamic figures and leaders, especially in Sukadana areas. KHAH has strong leadership potentials and talents, among others, as a chairperson of the Lampung Islamic Students Association in Mecca, Saudi Arabia in 1934-1936. Meanwhile, since his intellectual capability exceeding that of other students, he was assigned to teach Islam in the Grand Mosque.

From 1937 to 1942, beside him being a preacher, KHAH was also involved in a number of Islamic organizations in Lampung, particularly the Islamic Trade Association (SDI), the *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU) and Masyumi, in all of which he was appointed as the chairperson (1942). This has made him suspicious to the Dutch colonial government.

As a bureaucrat, KHAH also had an important career in the office of the Sukadana government in East Lampung (1945-1946) and in the office of the Islamic Section at what is now the department of Religious Affairs for the Residency of Lampung (1947), in Bandar Lampung.

Peak of the recognition of KHAH's figure was manifested in an effort made by the local governments of East Lampung and the Lampung province government, in 2015, of proposing him to the national government to be awarded a title of National Hero. In one of the letters for such effort, it is stated the following:

"... is true that the late Ahmad Hanafiah was a soldier who died during his fight for the independence of Indonesia at the Lampung-Palembang borders. He was captured and killed by the Dutch colonial army in a battle in the front of Kemarung, Sepancar and Kemelak/Baturaja, and his grave was not yet to be found". On the basis of the above it is proposed to be awarded the National Hero Title to KHAH."[5]

This statement was reaffirmed by one of the main figures of the *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU) in Lampung, KH. Arief Mahya, a charismatic Ulama, a community leader across the ages, and a warrior who is now more than 90 years old. KH. Arief Mahya was a friend and fellow soldier of the late KHAH when he was young. In a letter written by his own hand he stated the following: "if Mr. President wants to give a title of "National Hero" to Lampung citizens, please give the title to Mr. Gele Harun and KHAH."

He also stated in his letter dated back in November 20, 2014, which stated:

"During the 1947 and 1949 revolution in defense of the independence of the Republic of Indonesia against the Dutch military aggression, Gele's and KHAH's service to

their country was very concrete and factual. Their patriotism is proved to be formidable as they were involved in the war against the intruders, for the dignity and status of their nation, the Republic of Indonesia. Now, I am 89 years old, I am afraid that in the future, no one will remember the heroism of these two warriors."

Referring to the historical record of war against the first Dutch military aggression, written A. H. Nasution, the former general of the national army, it was said:

"Various attempts were made to reclaim and create disruption in many bigger cities along Lampung through Baturaja, which were led by Kyai Ratu Penghulu, Patih Nawawi, and Kyai Hanafiah from Sukadana, and several other leaders who remained in Martapura. Kyai Hanafiah was captured and then killed by the enemy".[6]

Apart from being known as a warrior, leaders, ulama, bureaucrats, and politicians, KHAH is recognized as a commander of war (leader of the "Hezbollah Army") known as Laskar Bergolok, because they are armed with Ciomas Golok (sword from Ciomas).

Fauzie Nurdin quoted the statement of a teacher, Gustam Effendy, born in 1917, who wrote a manuscript entitled "Navigating the Three Seas Ocean", in his own handwriting and deliberately intended for his brother named Haji Muhammad Nur Helmi (biological son of KHAH) in Sukadana, dated 4 February 1996. The manuscript was completed with newspaper clippings, accompanied by statements, criticisms and personal statements. There is one topic in the manuscript, written his statement:

I left Palembang back to the Lampung on December 19, 1945. So, since the beginning of 1946 I had resettled in my own hometown of Sukadana. At that time the civil government in Sukadana was led by Ki. Hajj Hanafiah. Next explained, "Wedana Hanafiah is a man who is valiant to become the leader of the people of Lampung in the Sabilillah army. The effect is significant. At the beginning of 1946, there was a gang of troublemakers from Banten, which he could apprehend. There were also Japanese soldiers who had been kidnapped and had their weapons seized. He was uninjured by weapons (Summary from pages 38-39).[7]

Then in the next section, on page 40 it states:

"In the first war for independence, on July 21, 1947, Lampung remained resisting the Dutch invasion who sent its troops from Palembang. The Sabilillah paramilitary army from Lampung confronted Dutch troops in the Baturaja battlefield. This is where Ki Hanafiah died (his martyrdom). He did not want to step down. The fierce Hanafiah ignited the people's enthusiasm by saying, "Martyrdom against infidels is the shortest way to heaven". Rumor had it his body was not injured by the Dutch weapons, but he was arrested and sunk into the Ogan river. Still the Dutch captain was killed in a duel against him. His message to the family is that his name should not be exalted, because he fought in the name of God for the independence of this county. His body was lost, never found."

The data from Gustam Effendy confirm the historical facts about KHAH significant roles as a warlord, a head of government, an ulama, and a Muslim leader in Lampung. Data related to the social intellectual history of Islam of the figure presented so far are still fragmentary. Still the presence of KHAH with its two original works ("*al-Hujjah*" and "*Tafsir Sirr al-Dahr*") is allegedly capable of breaking the assumption that Lampung has no historical roots in the Islamic intellectual tradition, and its lack contribution to the formation of the locus of Islamic civilization and intellectualism in the Malay Islamic world .[8]

2.2. K.H. A. Hanafiah in Kelantan (Malaysia)

As explained in the research that the researchers had done previously[9], after completing his studies at Jami 'ah al-Khair, Jakarta, in 1925, KHAH also studied in the neighboring country, Malaysia, namely in Kelantan.

Amrullah (son of KH Zubeir from Lampung who now resides in Malaysia), said that in Malaysia, KHAH studied with one of the most famous Kelantan scholars in the country with the original name Haji Muhammad Yusof bin Muhammad (1868-1933) with the nickname Tuanku Tok Kenali[10], which is said to be one of the Waliyullah (saints) in the Malay Peninsula region. From, Kelantan, KHAH continued his studies to Mecca, by the same time of which KH Zubeir came to study with Tuanku Tok Kenali .[11]

In addition to studying with Tuanku Tok Kenali, both of them also taught Islamic education at the Old Mosque in Kelantan, the Great Mosque of Diraja, which is named the Al-Muhammadi Mosque. It was even mentioned by Amrullah that among the students who were taught and mentored by both KHAH and KH Zubeir, there were those who came from the Kelantan palace family. This was also confirmed by Amrullah during his visit to Kelantan in 1979. There were still a number of old figures in Kelantan, who remembered this and even they testified of his admiration for the greatness of the two teachers from Lampung (KHAH and KH Zubeir).

The books (Arabic literature) studied by KHAH in Kelantan are still preserved and inherited even though institutionally the name of the place has changed into Pondok Pasir Tumbuh. Some books that become the main study material are: Riyadus Solihin, al-Hikam, I'anat al-Thalibiin, Furu' al-Masa'il, Kasyf al-Lisaam, Kifaayat al-Muhtad, Bughyat al-Thalab, Sair al-Saalikiin, Al-Iqnaa', Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Jalaa, and others.

In fact, according to Kemas M. Thohir Hanafi Masputra, there were really a lot of books belonging to KHAH which had to be burned down in order to eliminate the leader's footsteps and to avoid suspicion from the Dutch army. This must be done because until the Dutch second aggression in 1949, the family members of KHAH were kept being interrogated, even being offered a protection and welfare by the reigning Dutch Queen as long as they accepted the latter's invitation for cooperation. But all that was rejected by the whole family members of KHAH.

The personal book collection of KHAH is historically valuable. The collection was once used as a main source of Arabic literature in the early establishment of what is now the biggest Islamic university in Lampung, UIN Raden Intan Lampung, in 1968. So big was his influence to this Islamic university that his name was nominated to be the latter's name.

2.3. Personal Library of K.H. Ahmad Hanafiah

Jamaluddin's study (2016) strongly suggests a connection between KHAH's Islamic scholarship with that of other Muslim scholars in the archipelago. Now with the books in his personal library and the results of the interview with Amrullah mentioned above, the researcher gets additional evidence and basis that reinforces the allegations as will be described below.

KHAH studied a number of Islamic books to Tok Tokali Kenali in Kelantand, collection of which is preserved in his private library in Sukadana, East Lampung. From the list of his private collection, it can also be seen that KHAH had extensive knowledge in various fields of Islamic scholarship, including Tafsir and its branches, Hadith and its branches, Fiqh and Usul Fiqh, Qira'at, Arabic language science, Kalam science and Sufism (Sufism)[12]. Below is some of his book collection.

Al-Hikam by Ibn 'Atha'llah al-Sakandari. This book is widely studied in Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia, and in several neighboring countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei Darussalam, the Southern Philippines and Southern Thailand. In addition, researchers also find another book of the same scientific discipline, namely *Ayqaz al-Humam fi Sarh al-Hikam wa al-Futuh al-Ilahiyyah fi Sarh al-Maba his al-Asliyah*. [13] This book is very important because it is substantially an advanced book for those who have studied Ibn 'Ataillah. What is more important about the book of his collection is that it contained a clue that KHAH had studied about Sufistic thoughts by then popular in the Malay Islamic world, as the front page of the book contained a handwriting in Arabic Jawi letters that reads, "...It is infidel for those who practiced the teaching of books written by Hamzah Fanshuri and Syamsuddin Sumatrani and Saifur Rijal and those who practiced secret science called science... (unreadable because the writing is not clear, pen)".

It seems that KHAH agrees with contemporary Sufism experts who refer to Shaykh Hamzah Fansuri and Shaykh Syamsuddin al-Sumatrani as heterodox Sufi groups in the archipelago which are forbidden to be followed and studied, even though there are actually many experts who do not dispute it. [14] Based on these handwritten notes, we can surmise that he had a good knowledge about the main Sufism figures, who were recorded as having enlivened the network of Nusantara scholars before his time (15-19 century AD) such as Sheikh Hamzah Fansyuri, Syamsuddin al-Sumatrani, Nuruddin al-Raniri, Abd al-Rauf al-Singkili, Sheikh Yusuf al-Makassari al-Bantani, to Sheikh Abd al-Shamad al-Jawi al-Palimbani. [15]

He also owned the book of Sair al-Salikin, one of the masterpieces of Sheikh Abd al-Shamad al-Jawi al-Palimbani (18 AD). Sair al-Salikin, together with Hidayat al-Salikin, were believed by experts to be the ultimate work of al-Palimbani, who had managed to harmonize different thoughts and schools in Islam related to orthodoxy and heterodoxy, especially in the field of Sufism (Sufism), by putting together Ghazalian Sufism with that of Ibn Arabi's peacefully.[16]

His other collection is the book of Riyad al-Salihin Kalam Sayyid al-Mursalin by Imam al-Nawawi, published by the printing press Mu'assasah Manahil al-riffaan. It is a hadith book that is very well known and widespread in the Islamic world, especially in the archipelago.

Still another is the book of I'anah al-Talibin. The book, a print of the publisher Musthafa al-Babi al-Halabi wa Awlaaduh in Egypt dated back in 1345 H, is a work of al-'Allamah al-Fadil al-Salih al-Kamil al-Sayyid Abu Bakr al-Mashhur bi al-Sayyid al-Bakri ibn al-'Arif billah al-Sayyid Muhammad Syata 'al-Dimyati naziil Makkah al-Musyarrafah. It concerns on fiqh science (Islamic jurisprudence) in the category muta'akhkhirin, which until now has been widely spread among Muslim students. Almost all Islamic educational institutions in the archipelago, especially Aceh (Dayah) and most Islamic boarding schools throughout Indonesia use this book as a mandatory reference.[17] Martin van Bruinessen's study of various *Kitab Kuning* literature also perpetuated this fact. For example, researchers found that in several trials *Lembaga Bahtsul Masa'il* (LBM) Nahdlatul Ulama in Lampung and other court forums, this literature was often referred to by K.H. Muhsin Abdillah (Rais Syuriah PWNU Lampung 2018) who also head of Darussa'adah Islamic Boarding School in Central Lampung.

Similarly, in the field of Qur'anic interpretation, Amrullah mentioned that one of the commentaries studied by KHAH in Kelantan, was Tafsir al-Quran al-Jala, written by Imam Abu Fadl 'Abd al-Rahman ibn Abi Bakr ibn Muhammad Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti. Researchers found other commentaries in KHAH's personal library collection, such as al-Sawi 'ala al-Jala, a description of Shaykh Ahmad al-Sawi al-Ma liki of another Tafsir al-Jala. This book consists of several volumes and was published by Dar Ihya 'al-Pole al-Arabiyyah li Asha biha 'Isa al-Ba bi al-Halabi, with no year of publication.[18]

Another book, is Furu 'al-Masa'il, which is the work of Sheikh Daud ibn Abdullah al-Fatani, published in two volumes by Daar al-Fikr. In the upper left-hand corner of the front page of this book is an Arabic handwriting explaining that this book was given as an endowment from the uncle for the Nahdlatul Ulama Islamic boarding school "Al-Nur" Sukadana.

Researchers also found the book of Kasyf al-Litsaam 'an As'ilat al-Anaam, the work of al-'Alim al-'Allamah al-Mudaqqiq al-Fahhamah Siraj al-Islam wa al-Din al-Sheikh Zain al-'Abidin ibn Ahmad al-Fatani. Researchers strongly suspect that this book might actually be the book of KHAH's father, because as such is clearly written in Jawi (Arabic Pegon) at a middle top of the book's first page. Stipulated in the upper left-hand edge of the same page is

the following information: "Must forgive [memorize, pen.] The book with this ...". It seems that the writing was a message from his father for him to memorize the book by heart.

From the books described above, it is safe to agree that there is an interconnection between the list of books studied by KH Ahmad Hanafiah in neighboring Malaysia, precisely in Pondok Bunut Payung or Pondok Pasir Tumbuh under the guidance of Tuanku Tok Kenali as reiterated by Amrullah bin Zubeir (direct nephew of KH Ahmad Hanafiah), with the collection of his books in his personal library.

The results of this study not only show the existence of relationships and linkages but also reveal logical continuity of stages of learning that have been passed by KHAH linearly and systematically. The departure of KHAH to the holy land of Mecca for continuing his study, after his studies in Kelantan, Malaysia, is crucial to the formation of the character of his Islamic scholarship.

3. CONCLUSION

KHAH is a Sufi-martyr figure who had lived in Lampung, even though his tomb is unknown, since his body was drowned alive by the Dutch soldiers in the Kemelak river (Komereng) on the border of Lampung and South Sumatra province. His political work adorns the history of struggle and the political stage of Lampung society.

KHAH's knowledge about Islam reflects that his scientific character and scholarship is closely linked to the chain of transmission of Muslim scholars in the archipelago, thus in turn indicating the existence of scientific networks of the Lampung ulama with those of ulama in the entire archipelago, such as in Java, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Sumbawa, and with the neighboring Malaysian ulama (Kelantan) and even those of the Middle East (Mecca). The figure of KHAH is an embodiment of the wealth of literacy tradition, local patriotism, and Islamic intellectualism of a local Muslim scholar in Lampung: a fact that is crucial to break the wrong but widespread assumption about the marginal position of Islam in Lampung.

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