

## PESANTREN BETWEEN GLOBALIZATION AND POLITIZATION: *Maduranese Pesantren After the Fall of New Order (1998-2007)*

By Fathol Haliq

Lecture at State Institute for Islamic Studies Pamekasan, Madura, East Java, Indonesia

Email: [fathol3000@gmail.com](mailto:fathol3000@gmail.com)

---

### KEYWORD

Pesantren  
New Order  
Maduranese

---

### ABSTRACT

After the fall of the Soeharto regime, there has been political euphoria and paradoxical strategies, between populist idealism and political pragmatism. Political pragmatism leaves acute problems in the world of pesantren. Culture-shock, the unpreparedness of pesantren leadership transformation led to a number of interesting strategies from the elders to give the mandate to the young keyae. In this context, there is a tug of war between change and status quo, idealism and educational pragmatism, so that the globalization agenda is not answered anticipatively and progressively. The strategy carried out by pesantren seems unsustainable, broken, pragmatic, and only answers a momentary agenda. On the other hand, pesantrens answer international problems - problems of human rights, humanity, poverty, environment, and global political economy - with steps that are typical of pesantrens, namely "pesantren cultural politics" and community empowerment. The pesantren community argues that moving locally answers global problems. Because the issue of globalization is very close to the pesantren community which covers the community around the pesantren. Here, the face of globalization is "subdued" with a religious cultural identity that is progressive, pluralist, and sides with weak communities. Not only is the pesantren an agent of globalization, it also reproduces globalization into an empowering face for the community with a pesantren cultural identity. This empowering face can be seen in the empowerment model, at the end of this paper.

---

### INTRODUCTION

During the new order, pesantren faces difficulties in their survival. Pesantren was dominated to support the status-quo. This institution often was supported but to some extent it was regarded as enemy. Pesantren was considered as enemy when it supported the idealism of human values so that it is in opposition with the new order, even the state always put pesantren in a difficult position and make an enemy for pesantren from pesantren itself. It can be seen when the new order held a general election, pesantren (read:kiyai) was appointed as the speaker during the campaign. In 1990s, the Maduranese authority sent an army with a complete weapon in three open trucks to watch the general election. The state authority felt worry about so that it sent to watch TPS (a place to vote) about 200 meters from the pesantren of An-N uqayah. In the pesantren, it was not allowed to build TPS since it was regarded that pesantren was an enemy for the state. The state wanted to control the vote to win the government party.

Because he wanted to get the electricity, a kiyai from a pesantren in Sumenep supported Golkar in the 1989 general election. This kiyai always was used by Golkar during its campaign, even some its speakers sometimes quoted his name for being a good and loyal kiyai who was different from others. His step, however, was considered as in opposition with the society so that the majority of his students went home and did not return to his pesantren. Other pesantren which did not support Golkar was regarded as red institutions.

Not only by using this strategy, the state authority also made national curriculum to be its control for pesantren. Even though this strategy was not effective enough because pesantren had strong historical root as a basis for educational struggle against the Dutch but this strategy has gradually influenced pesantren.

The loyalty of pesantren to national curriculum does not destroy its identity. In fact, political authority known as ABG (Army, Bureaucracy, and Golkar) controlled social, economic, religious, individual, and pesantren activities. Pesantren, however, still had its independence and strong people basis.

The role and function of pesantren are rich. They do not only contribute to religious decision (fatwa), but provide pesantren with its heterogeneous identity. In the last decade, the heterogeneity can be seen from pesantren which graduated some intellectual Muslims such as Pesantren Salafiyah Syafi'iyah (Sukerejo Situbondo), al-Munawwir (Krapyak Yogyakarta) and Pesantren al-Hikmah (Sirompog Brebes) (Wahid, 2005), and Pesantren Maslakhul Huda (Matolek) Pati Jawa Tengah known with its social economic organization, as well as Pesantren an-Nuqayah Guluk-Guluk Sumenep known as social environment basis contributing for the survival of education and social relation as well as environment in the society.

The existence of pesantren under state domination has provoked this institution to concentrate on substantial aspects of pesantren such as transformation of values and religious teaching, as well as its role in education, social, and environment. It can not be avoided that transformation of religious teaching stressing on fiqh, Sufism, and Arabic grammar has brought its graduates to enter in some Islamic Universities in Indonesia. The existence of its graduates has contributed greatly for the development of religious knowledge. This fact indicates that the development of Islamic intellectualism has been supported by the basic competence of pesantren. The ability of Muslim Intellectuals on understanding classical Islamic books from pesantren and using modern methodology from Islamic universities support the development of pluralist and progressive religious knowledge. This is as a result of integration between learning in pesantren and Islamic higher education. It is stated by Greg Barton (2006:67) as follows:

*“Pada saat yang sama, meskipun kaum tradisionlais pedesaan tetap konservatif secara budaya, banyak dari putera-puteri mereka, setelah lulus dari pesantren dan menempuh pendidikan yang lebih tinggi, menempatkan diri mereka sebagai garda depan pemikiran progresif dan reformasi agama. Ada banyak alasan, tapi yang paling penting adalah pendidikan. Pesantren dan Institut Agama Islam Negeri (IAIN), di satu sisi tetap mempertahankan pendidikan Islam termasuk sufisme, namun di sisi lain ia juga memperkenalkan siswa dan mahasiswa yang bisa mendorong terjadinya sintesis antara dua tradisi keilmuan ini”*

(at the same time, even though the rural traditionalists remain conservative culturally, most of their sons and daughters, after graduating from pesantren and studying in higher education, put themselves in the front line of progressive thought and religious reformation. There are many reasons, but the most important is education. Pesantren and State Institute for Islamic Studies (IAIN), on the one hand, remain keeping Islamic education including Sufism, but on the other hand, they also introduce to the students (modern methodology) which can force the synthesis between these traditions of knowledge)

According to Greg Barton, at the same time, the New Order got support from conservative-modernists, since 1990s, so that the authority used it as a part of developing a sectarian hatred between traditionalists and modernists. However, the new order also can not avoid the existence of pesantren which become more independent and always takes part in solving the social and religious problems. When the new order became stronger in all aspects of society, pesantren an-Nuqayah, for instance, took part in empowering people. The presence of *Biro Pengabdian Masyarakat* (Bureau of Empowering People) has made pesantren and people close so that it contributes significantly, not only to the development of pesantren, but also mutual symbolism between pesantren and people. Poor people who was always used as political jargon during the campaign of New Order, on the hand of BPM they were humanized through economic, social, religious and environmental, as well as, healthy empowerment.

The presence of pesantren as subculture in the society has different values and symbols. People regard this institution as alternative ideal in education (Wahid, 1984). The rising existence of pesantren in the society made the new order realize the role of pesantren. In environmental aspect, pesantren an-Nuqayah through BBP-PPA, -in 1990-, got the Kalpataru award from the government (Siddik, 1997).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Kiyai-Politician and Cultural Politics of Pesantren

The fall of New Order, 21 May 1998, changed the patterns of social relation in the society. In Maduranese society, the relation of kiyai-santri in the form of patron-client became stronger. The presence of kiyai in political arena caused the polarization between social idealism and political pragmatism. The democratization has become strong expectation of maduranese people. The existence of kiyai to solve the social problems has provoked people support kiyai to be a regional head in Sumenep. The 1999 general election placed kiyai and their santri became leaders of DPRD (Regional representatives) and Bupati (regional head). In the 1999 general election, Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (PKB) was the single majority. Almost 80% of the representatives came from , used Geertz's term, kiyai and santri, while 20% of the representatives came from priyayi and abangan. This winning placed KH Ramdhan Siraj as Bupati (regional head) and KH Abuya Bushro Karim as the head of representatives (Ketua DPRD).

This expectation can be seen from the proportion of santri and kiyai as the regional representatives in Sumenep. This expectation was still great in the 2004 general election which placed Islamic parties (PKB and PPP) in the top rank. In the 2004 general election, people's expectation to kiyai and santri as politician and executive was split. People were disappointed because the change did not happen. Even, there were many corruption and collusion in regional secretariat (sekda) Sumenep which were not touched by the law. The big party did not do anything. It appeared an issue that members of the representative became the broker of project so that they got the income from the corruption and collusion in Sumenep. Finally, PKB had to pay its cost when this political party lost 6 votes taken by PPP. The winning of PPP made some political leaders of PKB moved from PKB to PPP. It can be seen from KH Ramdhan Siraj who proposed himself as Bupati from PPP in the 2004 election. K.H Ramdhan won the election from his rival, KH Abuya Busro Kasim from PPP, in the election because all of regional officials were mobilized to win KH Ramdhan.

In this case, kiyai still are hoped by maduranese people for political changes in Sumenep. People wanted the maximal role of kiyai as politician. The double role of kiyai, as kiyai and

politician, put pesantren in a dilemmatic position. It was both a part of education and mobilization of politics. This paradox should be run by kiyai by becoming a member of representatives and a leader of pesantren. This double role sometimes overlaps. As a result, a kiyai takes a pragmatic choice by concentrating his role as a member of representatives and appointing his son or other persons as caretaker of pesantren so that he still becomes a politician.

The involvement of kiyai in political arena forced kiyai to participate more activities outside pesantren. There is a tendency that kiyai sepuh (an elderly kiyai) do not participate in pesantren's activities. The tasks of pesantren are always delivered to younger kiyai. This means that the involvement of kiyai in politics forces the transformation of leadership in pesantren. In charismatic leadership, transformation is always stagnant because there is no trust or avoidance to leave the old pattern of leadership so that the transformation of leadership is done unnaturally though it was prepared before. This fact caused that young kiyai do not have self-confidence to participate in social activities in the society. Young kiyai do not have a direct position with the society due to their weak social relation. They tend to get position in education institution. In this case, the researcher mentioned this process as "cultural politics of pesantren".

This fact proved that there is a double leadership with different roles. Young kiyai are given trust but, related to decision, elderly kiyai still have the great authority. Crucial problems which were already decided by elderly kiyai do not involve the idea of young kiyai. This condition is worsened by unfinished regeneration from the center of leadership. The harmony as a jargon in social relation makes the relation between elderly kiyai and young kiyai bad in solving the problems of pesantren. In the case of harmony, the agreement is crucial to enforce the existence between these two groups and the survival of regeneration. In this case, it is interesting to see Shiddiqi's research on the debate of *furu'iyah* between young group (young kiyai) and old group (elderly kiyai) getting agreement in the contexts of the pillars of Islam (rukun islam) and the pillars of faith (rukun iman) (Siddik, 1975:19-27).

### **Pesantren under Globalization**

How is the dynamics of pesantren constructed by community, state (new order/reformation) and market (globalization)? How is the identity of pesantren constructed in the dynamics of global economy and politics? How do young kiyai and elderly kiyai of pesantren construct new identity in global environment?

Social construction of pesantren has come from the long history since the era of colonial, old order, new order and reformation order. This historical reality formed pesantren to get its true identity in the society. Pesantren is not a part of elitism of elderly kiyai, it socializes with people and empowers people. Pesantren has become open educational institution. As an open text, it can be interpreted, deconstructed, and reconstructed as a part of identity for empowering people. With its new identity, pesantren plays multi-talented role in which its figures become an agent of change and empowerment of people.

In this contexts, pesantren do the process of deconstruction and reconstruction to be 'other identity and face' of globalization and identity of empowerment. In this case, as a part of institution (organization), pesantren enforce and empower for social scope. Pesantren do not oppose globalization but it formularize as 'other identity and face' which is beneficial for the survival of empowering people.

In this case, pesantren have many roles, as educational institution, political institution and globalization filter. This multi talented role provokes kiyai to have 'many faces' for empowerment. This role is different from what Geertz says that kiyai are 'cultural brokers' (Wahid, 1987:xvi), as elite they show as people organizers who are sensitive to religious problems, social, economic, and

political problems, as well as the globalization problems by making earthly strategy and empowering people.

Kiyai as pesantren organizers have driving force in the society. According to Alinsky (1971), he said that organizer is a person who has a high imagination and creative and engineers in a community, a person who has vision of change suitable with the reality, without looking at geography and constituent. However, it is criticized by Aronovitz (1964). He says that such definition and suggestion will have controlling potency and demagoguery as well as negative implication. Mondros and Wilson (1994:11) agree with the idea that organizer has actor potency in organization and suitable person in investigation. An organizer has skill and characteristic recorded on three criteria, change vision attributes, technical skills, and interactional skill Mondros and Wilson (1994:19-27).

Change vision is intended to how an organizer has orientation of change and vision for marginal and traditional people or the odds they face. An organizer should be able stand based on the strength of dedication and commitment. The vision of an organizer is integration among doggedness, dedication, and discipline. In this context, pesantren is a part of an active organizer for social change (Horikosi, 1987:8). In this case, agent in pesantren has vision of community and environment change.

A role played by pesantren becomes globalization and state filter in creating new identity and role, namely changing and keeping traditionalism. In this context, pesantren involve in the unfinished conflict in changing society and global world so that pesantren always create its identity based on, not only community construction but, the reality. In this case, there is a dialectic between identity constructed by a community and the reality so that it creates the construction of new identity in the pesantren world.

This identity of pesantren can be seen from its ideology under globalization world. This ideology becomes a part of pesantren movement as a center of strength and weakness in the social reality of people. This is confirmed by Mandros and Wilson (1994:216) on how ideology has an important role in an organization, including in this context educational pesantren.

“Organizational ideology is another attribute that we believe influences the organizing process. Ideology can be thought of as a set of principles designed to give an organization and its participants an explicit, unified worldview from which to operate...at issue is the utility of an ideology for organizing, and the extent to which ideology guides the social action organization.”

### **Traditionalism as an Ideology of Education**

Samuel Bowels ever analyzed the politics of economic education. For Bowels, American education is reproduction to the system of capitalism (Fakih, 1981). If Bowels proposes pessimism in American education, how about education in Pesantren? Do Pesantren become the agent of capitalism? Or is there special formulation about ideology of educational pesantren? Can traditionalism as educational ideology of pesantren become an enemy for American global capitalism? How does traditionalism become educational ideology of Pesantren?

The understanding of capitalism is always connected with tradition. A tradition can be a part of culture in which there is potency of thought, creativity, and effectiveness in it. It also refers to a collection of behavior and community culture which mean the diversity of character, thought and behavior of group with its sacred things (Hidayati, 2002).

Based on Mann's terminology by Gorski (2000:103-104) he divides ideology into two important aspects, namely transcendent and immanence. Transcendental ideology is related to the feeling of socio-spatial with ontology and phenomenology in other sides.

"...the world religions were transcendent, not in the sense that they divided the cosmos into mundane and otherworldly spheres, but rather insofar as their power networks encompassed and cross-cut political and economic ones, such as empires or classes. Immanence is also used in a strictly a sociological sense. Immanent ideological power refers to the solidarity or morale of a specific social group. An example would be the sense of identity and purpose which members of the working class have derived from socialist ideology."

Solidarity and morale become a part of traditionalism ideology in pesantren based on religious values. As a part of educational ideology, traditionalism is a driving force in learning organization, in which it will influence to the movement of organization (Mondros and Wilson, 1994:216). In this context, Modros (1994) says that ideology becomes important as a driving force and guide in a social organization. It can be exclusive and inclusive in understanding social reality.

In this last two decades, pesantren have been in the conflict between the ideology of traditionalism and capitalism. In pesantren, this conflict was started from the presence of concept "link and match" and "the best school" applied in educational world. This kind of educational model was begun by the ideology of developmentalism applied by the new order, in which all of social activities, social organizations, religious organizations, political and educational organizations were oriented for development without looking at the ideological substance of development itself (Fakih, 1981:xi). Capitalism as a core of western education, for pesantren, is not only interpreted, deconstructed, but given a large scope for new face of capitalism.

### **Education as a Mode of Cultural Reproduction**

The values of traditionalism can be seen from the culture and curriculum applied in some pesantrens in Madura. Traditionalism which comes from the values of *ahl-sunnah wa al-jama'ah* studies classical books in the form of modern systems and *bandongan* or *sorogan*.

*Santri* or students do not only study Islamic teaching in *pesantren* but also spread it in the society. They teach in some Islamic schools or *madrasah*, establish Islamic education institutions which are similar with the educational systems of pesantren. This fact provides the opportunities in learning process based on tradition of pesantren so that pesantren develop fast in Madura. This development comes from the graduates of pesantren who spread their knowledge. In fact, this development is not balance with the population in Madura.

In this context, educational institutions have become a mode of cultural education. An agent plays an important role in social reality of society. As an agent of culture, pesantren do not only spread culture but also create new inventions in the society by defending, developing, and renewing culture based on the diversity, citizenship, nationalism, and culture of pesantren. However, recently people criticize pesantren since some kiyai involve in the political arena. People tend to view that the process of cultural reproduction is related to cultural channels which do not connect with political pragmatism.

People consider that the universal values of pesantren were reduced as individual values. Pesantren lost their identity and independence. The vision of pesantren to liberate people in the village from stupidity and poor cannot be avoided. This vision, however, became weak since pesantren involve in political orientation. Besides, the effect of globalization influences pesantren to be powerless in rural communities. In this case, globalization which provides hedonism and

economic capitalism which causes transformative culture and cultural reproduction made by pesantren have become ineffective since pesantren do not become an agent of single production from social reality. Pesantren have become an arena of consumption mode for the survival of globalization and economic capitalism. Each product has been absorbed fast by pesantren. Productive pesantren have been changed by consumptive pesantren.

In this context, education of pesantren is considered as an agent of capitalism. The sale of academic books has been mobilized by madrasah in the form of LKS (student's work paper), unclear tuition fees, and other unsubstantial cost decided by madrasah and pesantren. This supports the learning tradition which avoids the sense of crisis among people. The education in pesantren, then, does not have special characteristics from globalization which has become the culture of pesantren. Pesantren is a cultural creator in which they are waited by people for making social changes.

### **A Model of People Empowerment: Bringing Pesantren, State, and Market Closer**

Pesantren have special social and religious characteristics. Historically, pesantren live together with people specifically rural community. This supports pesantren to stay closer with social problems of rural communities. The problems of poverty, limited information access, knowledge, and marginalization have made rural communities powerless. Education of pesantren become a main basis since they are near, cheap, believable to change people through religious education. In fact, people consider that it is not enough by learning in pesantren. They then continue their education in UIN or state Islamic University, IAIN o State Institute for Islamic Studies which are similar with Pesantren tradition.

Pesantren in the early were separated from national education. This is because pesantren were private institutions led by kiyai in which they opposed the new order's jargon, namely developmentalism. However, they work hard to encourage the government so that the government acknowledges them as part of nationaeducation. Even, education in pesantren has become an important reference in learning process. Educated people consider that pesantren are alternative educational institutions for their children. It can be seen from the presence of ramadhan pesantren for students in public or secular schools or pesantren for police in East Jave. This means that pesantren have been acknowledged as the centre of education for children in the future.

Moreover, it indicates that state plays an important role in empowering education of pesantren. In the past, the new order always put pesantren under its authority for preserving status quo. In the future, peasntren should be regarded as important institutions in the cultural reproduction and people empowerment. This aims at providing more roles for pesantren in the people development by humanizing students in learning process. People are not object of knowledge and technology but they are subject of knowledge and technology. This is because basically people are controllers of knowledge and technology. If people are object of technology, people will be controlled by technology (Hasan, 1999:151). This will avoid the principles of humanization and people empowerment.

In this context, empowerment becomes an important factor of two aspects, namely eradicating poverty and stupidity and enforcing civil society in power structure (Kartasasmita, 1999:194). This opinion shows that domination and exploitation is not in line with the principles of educational liberation for people which is important aspect in empowering people by classifying and solving the social problems of people called as problem-solving education (Friere, 1993).

For Parsons, power is a circulating medium in political subsystem of state or people system by doing collective ability to fulfill the achievement of building obligation by referring to collective purpose (Kartasasmita, 1999:192). The state always uses the power as a tool of legality and justification in collective purpose by giving pseudo fact which is always based on social jargons. This

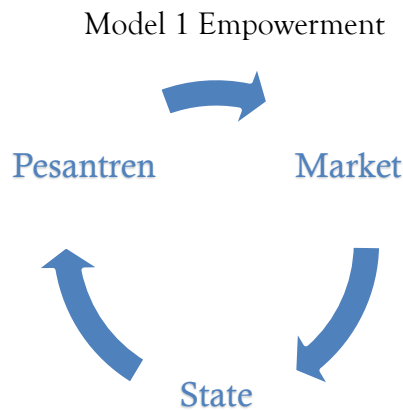
should be avoided as a part of joining three important poles in empowerment, namely pesantren, state, and market.

Market which is based on economic efforts can not be avoided from social fact. Therefore, reformulation of global capitalism is needed (Soros, 2006). For Soros, the involvement of government in economic aspect is a crime (Rahardjo, 2006), which is for him the government has strategic meaning particularly for people in the developing countries. This thesis puts Indonesia as a part of economic policy which decreases subsidy for the poor.

Market should be controlled as a part of an effort to protect people as the state task and obligation. People paid tax which can be defined as 'bribe' for the protection of their rights to get protection and survival of empowerment from the government. In this context, empowerment is a collective effort from many sectors; government, educational institutions, non-government organizations, local figures and communities. In this case, empowerment is a collective work with participation from all social elements by providing the chances for people to answer and classify their need and problem based on the principles of equality and justice. With the same language, empowerment is defined as :

“...psychological state, a sense of competence, control, and entitlement that allows people to pursue concrete activities aimed at becoming powerful. Empowering members constitutes the work of the organization in its environment.” (Rahardjo, 2006:xxii)

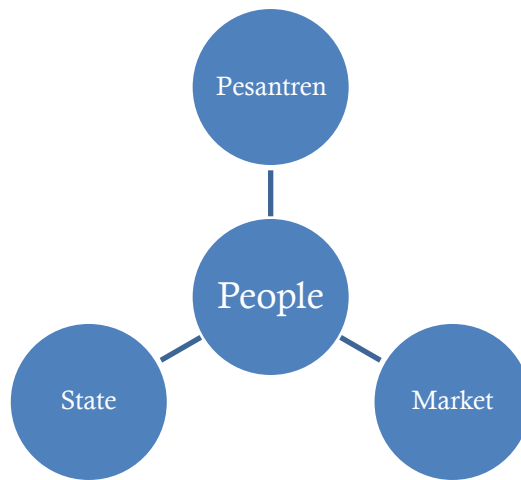
In this empowerment, some models, such as grassroots model, and lobbying model are needed (Rahardjo, 2006:233-241). In this context, their success is still dependant on the responsiveness of politicians (Rahardjo, 2006:242). Therefore, there is a synergic relation between pesantren as the basis of people empowerment (social modal), market which has capital modal, and state or government which has policy modal to protect each policy supporting people empowerment.



The above picture shows about the struggle of empowerment meaning, particularly justification done by state with some projects on poverty at rural communities which finally put those communities at edge. The research done by IRE Jogjakarta shows that there is an indication of discriminating to poor people in seven Indonesian cities (Rahardjo, 2006:240). Pesantren may do the same thing when there is a crisis of identity or political pragmatism. Market always intervenes by giving margin of profit for people empowerment. In the name of community-development, company takes profit from other communities. Profit is used by company to compensate people since the company exploits natural resources in Indonesia.



### Model 2 Empowerment



This second model is different from the first model. The struggle of meaning does not become justification for program or project of poor people. In together, pesantren, state, and market make agreement through empowerment models namely grass root model, lobbying model, and mobilizing model (Mondros dan Wilson, 1994). With this agreement, the second model does not refer to each representation of power (pesantren, state, and market) but it refers to a commitment for people empowerment.

### CONCLUSION

Finally, today people live alone. They do not have friends. State, market, and pesantren should reformulate commitment of people empowerment so that they are not alone from their communities.

## REFERENCES

- Barton., Greg, (2006), *Biografi Gus Dur: The Authorized Biography of Abdurrahman Wahid*, Yogyakarta : LKiS
- Fakih., Mansour, (1981), "Ideologi dalam Pendidikan", in William F O'neil, *Ideologi-ideologi pendidikan*, Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar
- Freire., Paulo., (1993), *Pendidikan Kaum Tertindas*, Jakarta: LP3ES.
- Gorski., Philip S., *Mann's Theory of Ideological Powers : Sources, Applications and Elaborations*
- Hidayati., Tatik Hidayati, (2002), "Pendidikan dalam Perspektif Islam Tradisional Seyyed Hossein Nasr: Telaah Kritis Terhadap Tujuan dan Kurikulum Pendidikan Islam", *Tesis.*, Yogyakarta: PPs UIN Sunan Kalijaga.
- Hasan., Fuad., (1999), "Kebudayaan, Teknologi dan Teknorasi" in Agus R Harjono, 1999, *Pembebasan Budaya-Budaya Kita*, Jakarta:Gramedia
- Harjono., Agus R., (1999, *Pembebasan Budaya-Budaya Kita*, Jakarta:Gramedia
- Mondros., Jacqueline B and Wilson., cott M., (1994), *Organizing for Power and Empowerment*, New York: Colombia University Press
- Siddik., Mahfuz., (1997), *Kompetensi Dasar Pendidikan Anak-Anak Kiyai Pengasuh Pondok Pesantren di Madura*, Jember: Universitas Jember
- Shiddiqi., Nourouzzaman, (1975), *The Role of the Ulama' during the Japanese Occupation of Indonesia (1942-1945)*, Canada: McGill University
- Wahid., Marzuki, (2005), *Ma'had Aly: Nestapa Tradisionalisme dan Tradisi Akademik yang Hilang* *Jurnal Istiqro'* Vol. 04, No. 1
- Wahid., Abdurrahman, (1984), *Bunga Rampai Pesantren*, Jakarta: CV Dharma Bhakti.
- Wahid., Abdurrahman., (1987) "Benarkah kiyai Membawa Perubahan Sosial?: Sebuah Pengantar" in Hiroko Horikosi, *Kyai dan Perubahan Sosial*, Jakarta: P3M.