

HUMANISTIC EDUCATION IN ISLAM: A STUDY OF AHMAD SYAFII MAARIF'S THOUGHTS

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Abstract

Education in Indonesia, especially Islamic education, has not been sufficient to form a humanist personality and is still primordialistic and sectarian in character. This study aims to show the values of humanistic Islamic education in the thought of Ahmad Syafii Maarif's. This research is qualitative research with descriptive analysis using library research, and in-depth interviews. This research shows that the essence of education in Ahmad Syafii Maarif's perspective is the process of humanization (a process that liberates and humanizes humans) which directly has an organic link with the spiritual-transcendental dimension. In Ahmad Syafii Maarif's thought, it is found that the values of humanistic Islamic education can be summarized in six points, namely: the value of egalitarianism, the value of tolerance, the value of pluralism, the value of justice, the value of universal brotherhood, and the value of peace or non-violence. The results of this study are expected in addition to increasing the wealth of intellectual treasures in the study of the thought of figures in the field of Islamic education, but also can be considered in developing a more humanistic educational foundation and practice.

Keywords: *Islamic humanism, Humanistic Education in Islam, Ahmad Syafii Maarif Thoughts.*

INTRODUCTION

Although the concentration of Ahmad Syafii Maarif's thoughts is not on the level of education, especially Islamic education, Syafii Maarif has philosophical and conceptual views on Islamic education itself. This could be because of Syafii Maarif's background, who is an educator, an activist with the Muhammadiyah organization, and was the Chairman of PP Muhammadiyah, an organization that is mostly engaged in education in Indonesia, and is even opening its educational institutions in several countries such as Malaysia and Australia. Syafii Maarif is also active in interfaith discussions

and dialogues. Muslim scholar Dawam Rahardjo said that Syafii Maarif, with a background in education, history, and Islamic thought, is in an authoritative position to talk about the terms of reference for education and civilization (M. Dawam Rahardjo, 2005)

Syafii Maarif's concern about the problems of education in Indonesia, especially problems related to Islamic education and his dream for the birth of Indonesian people with complete personalities is still far from reality. According to Amin Abdullah, what Syafii Maarif dreams of is still far from reality, because the methodological and institutional requirements of religious education and Islamic education in the country still do not support the achievement of that dream.

Syafii Maarif's anxiety about education in Indonesia is not without reason, at least it is confirmed from the results of existing surveys and research that it turns out that opinions about acts of violence and anti-humanitarian attitudes do not only occur in the social environment. However, the school environment is also rife. Schools that are supposed to be laboratories for the formation of human beings who are humane often take actions that are not friendly to humanity (Arifin dkk., 2022). The growing trend of religious radicalism in the world of education involving the younger generation also needs special attention. The National Survey on "Gen Z Religious Attitudes" conducted by the Center for the Study of Islam and Society (PPIM) UIN Jakarta in 2017, showed that at the opinion level, students tend to have intolerant religious views, radical opinions (58.5%), intolerance opinions internal (51.1%), and external intolerance opinion (34.3%). In terms of action, students have religious behavior that tends to be moderate/tolerant, 7% radical action, and 17.3% external intolerant action. However, the internal intolerance of the Islamic community tends to be higher, at 34.1" (Ali Munhanif and Jajang Jahroni, 2018).

Humanism in the context of Islamic education is an individual's strength or potential to measure and achieve the realm of divinity and the resolution of social problems (Tukiyo dkk., 2022). Islamic education has two dimensions, namely the divine dimension and the human dimension (Arifin, 2021;

Santoso dkk., 2021). The divine dimension concerns the cultivation of a sense of piety to God, while the human dimension concerns the development of a sense of humanity towards others (Nuscholish Madjid, 1999). This educational model has been practiced by the Prophet Muhammad. Rasulullah is a role model in learning, namely teaching about a complete, comprehensive, and perfect life system. The vision of the Prophet's education is to realize mercy for all human beings. Its mission, among others: is a compulsory education program, that elevates human dignity, and aims to guide humans to have noble character (Robingun, 2016).

As for the practical aspects of humanistic education, according to Nimrod Aloni, five characteristics must be considered, namely: (1) a holistic approach to students who strive to encourage and develop their various abilities, intelligence, and literature; (2) interpersonal relationships based on genuine caring, kindness, fairness, and reciprocity; (3) a social climate of security, trust, acceptance, and multiculturalism, along with controlled and tolerant pluralistic behavior; (4) an intellectual climate that encourages and grows the breadth of knowledge and cultural wealth along with autonomous, responsible, critical and creative thinking; (5) teaching methods that provide students with meaningful and experiential learning to turn the "tree of knowledge" into a "tree of life" (Nimrod Aloni, 2013).

Meanwhile, in the context of Islamic education, there are six main things, namely common sense (common sense), individualism towards independence, thirst for knowledge, and pluralism education, contextualism is more concerned with function than symbols, and a balance between reward and punishment (Abdurrahman Mas'ud, 2022, Abidin dkk., 2022). Departing from the description above, the values or principles that become indicators of humanistic Islamic education are intended in this paper, namely: (1) humanist Islamic education that emphasizes tolerance; (2) non-violent education or peace education; (3) education that emphasizes justice; (4) equality (egalitarian); and (5), education that respects and cares for plurality; (6) education that emphasizes universal brotherhood (Amirullah, 2018).

In fact, there are several articles that have studied Syafii Maarif's thoughts, including the research of Endang Ayuningtyas A. (2014) with the title: "Islamic Education in Ahmad Syafii Maarif's Thought." This research discusses quite broadly, and does not specifically touch the aspects of humanist education thought. Muhammad Qorib's research (2012) entitled, Ahmad Syafii Maarif's Thoughts on Religious Pluralism. M Qorib's writing focuses on examining the thoughts and actions of Syafii Maarif as a pluralist figure, but does not touch the aspects of his humanist education. Nuraini's writing (2019) with the title Islamic Humanism in the Thought of Syafii Maarif. This research focuses on examining the aspects of Syafii Maarif's concern for human rights, justice, Pancasila, democracy, gender equality, and religious plurality as well as for creating an Islam that is rahmatan lil'alamin. Then the latest is the writing of Riki Saputra, Rido Putra & Endrika Widdia Putri (2021) entitled, Syafii Maarif's Moderation of Islam (His Contribution to Religious Pluralism in Indonesia). This research focuses on examining the thoughts and contributions of Syafii Maarif to Islamic moderation in Indonesia.

This research is different from previous studies that examine the thoughts of Syafii Maarif as mentioned above. The focus of this study is to examine how the values of humanistic Islamic education in Ahmad Syafii Maarif's thoughts? By researching and revealing thoughts about the values of humanistic Islamic education from national figures or teachers, this can be input, considerations, and even expected to be a reference for policies for the development of education in general and the foundation of Islamic education in Indonesia in particular

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is qualitative research with descriptive analysis using library research and in-depth interviews with informants related to this discussion. The literature sources studied in this research are limited to Ahmad Syafii Maarif's written works and videos related to the theme of this research. There are at least 26 books that have been written by Syafii Maarif. From Syafii Maarif's

writings, 9 books discuss Islamic education which is the focus to be studied in this research. Meanwhile, efforts to collect data through interviews were carried out directly to the figure of Ahmad Syafii Maarif himself when the character was still alive. Interviews were also conducted with people at MAARIF Institute to complete the required data.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Biography of Ahmad Syafii Maarif

Ahmad Syafii Maarif, fondly called Buya Syafii Maarif, is an influential Muslim scholar in Indonesia. Syafii Maarif including a prolific Indonesian Muslim scholar who gave birth to various writings. Both in the form of books, journals, articles, resonance in various media, as well as in the form of book introductions. Through his various writings and actions, Buya Syafii is a figure who steadfastly voices Islam that blends seamlessly with Indonesia and humanity at the same time. For Buya Syafii Maarif, authentic Islam is Islam that upholds and fights for human values. Because of this, he maintains good relations and defends various groups, especially minority groups who are often discriminated against and persecuted as a form of implementation of the authentic teachings of Islam. Because of that, he hopes that the role of education, especially Islamic education, must be oriented to form a humanist and Pancasila Muslim generation.

Buya Syafii Maarif was born in Nagari Calau, Sumpur Kudus, West Sumatra on May 31, 1935, to Ma'rifah (father) (1900-1955) and Fathiyah (mother), (born around 1905-1937) as the youngest of four children brothers (Ahmad Syafii Maarif, 2006). Syafii Maarif started his formal education when he was seven years old and studied at the People's School Ibtidaiyah Sumpur Kudus from 1942 to 1947. After graduating from the People's School, with various shortcomings, Syafii Maarif was forced to discontinue his education. It was only in the early 1950, with all his struggles that he returned to continue his education at Madrasah Muallimin Lintau, West Sumatra, and finished in 1953.

Syafii Maarif obtained his Baccalaureate degree in 1964 in the field of history at Cokroaminoto University and obtained his Bachelor of History degree in 1968 at the Teaching and Social Sciences Faculty (FKIS) IKIP Yogyakarta. He successfully completed his master's program in 1980 at Ohio University, Athens, United States. Then he continued his doctoral program at the Near Eastern Language and Civilization Study Program, in the field of Islamic thought at the University of Chicago in 1982 (Ahmad Syafii Maarif, 2006).

At 10.15 WIB, Friday 27 May 2022, Syafii Maarif died at the PKU Muhammadiyah Gamping Hospital. Muslims and the Indonesian nation have lost a great thinker and a simple, humanist, and humanitarian fighter. The thoughts and values that he strives for are a legacy that needs to be continuously developed by the next generation of Muslims.

Humanistic Islamic Education in the Thought of Ahmad Syafii Maarif

The vision and essence of Islamic education in Ahmad Syafii Maarif's view is the process of humanization (a process that liberates and humanizes humans) which directly has an organic link with the spiritual-transcendental dimension. With a thought that education must be able to marry the demands of the brain (the power of *fikr*) and the demands of the heart (the power of *zikr*). Islamic education must be built in its entirety with a paradigm that is spiritually solid, intellectually superior, and morally elegant which in the end will give birth to the figure of *ulul al-albab* which is a human figure who is the goal of Islamic education (Ahmad Syafii Maarif, 2000). Syafii Maarif's view is in line with the perspective of Seyyed Hossein Nasr who said that the ontology of Islamic religious education is based on divine values. then epistemologically it is built based on the unity between the intellectual, mental, spiritual, and moral dimensions. Meanwhile, the axiology of Islamic religious education aims to create Islamic values. (Arifin and Amirullah, 2022).

Syafii Maarif's thought of humanistic Islamic education departs from his view that Islam is a universal teaching that crosses space and time. According to him, Islam can reflect human values as

long as it is accompanied by moral and legal responsibilities (Ahmad Syafii Maarif, 2000). All actions that lead to the destruction of the values of humanity (humanity) and life are opposed to Islam. Islam, in his view, implies that its presence gives mercy to all nature, including the environment, animals, plants, and all human beings without distinction of religion, class, ethnicity, and civilization. (Ahmad Syafii Maarif, 2006).

Syafii Maarif's construction of thought above is in line with the view of Ahmad Dahlan (founder of Muhammadiyah) when understanding the meaning of the Koran, especially when interpreting Surah Al Maun, in Ahmad Dahlan's view, this Surah Al-Maun becomes the ethos of *ta'awun* (partisanship) over the oppressed. A model of interpretation that is somewhat different from previous Islamic thought. Where the Qur'an must be understood with a pure mind and heart and practiced with compassion (love). Ahmad Dahlan's main question is how the practice of Islamic teachings is beneficial for everyone, as a solution to the universal problems of human life. For Ahmad Dahlan, the measure of the truth of the interpretation of the Qur'an and the findings of science and technology are a number of evidences of their usefulness for solving universal problems of humanity. The ideas and practices of Ahmad Dahlan's humanity are referred to by Munir Mulkhan as the application of Humanistic-Pragmatism. (Amirullah, M. A., Arifin, S., & Fajri, M. D, 2021).

The ideal pattern of religiosity according to Syafii Maarif is a struggle between fulfilling the interests of God and humans. This means that the implementation of individual religious rituals must synergize with efforts to defend human values. For him, purifying God can be seen from how human existence is respected and upheld because God sent down religion for the benefit of mankind (Muhammad Qorib, 2012). According to Syafii Maarif, the Koran itself is the last heavenly message conveyed by Muhammad's mouth for the happiness of all mankind (Ahmad Syafii Maarif, 2000).

In Syafii Maarif's thought, the essence and vision of Islamic education is the process of humanizing humans, the process of human liberation, and the process of building the center of human consciousness in the brain and heart. Because of that, For Syafii Maarif, education is a process of

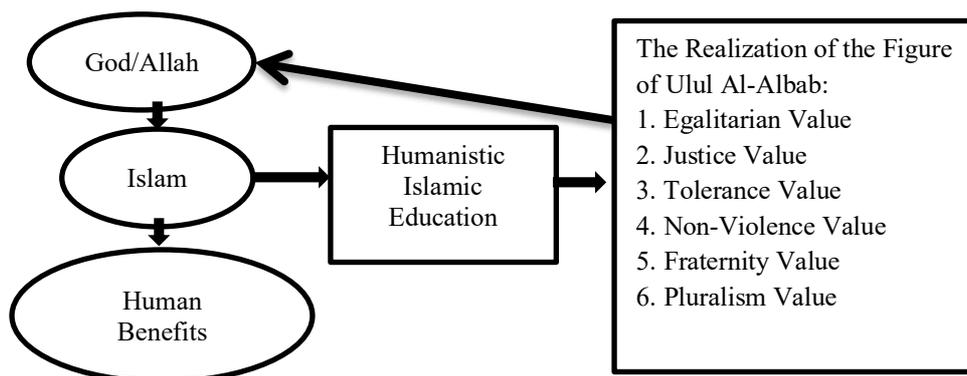
growing and developing the good potential of students to a very far limit, while the evil potential is monitored through directives so that it is not actualized.

The Values of Humanistic Islamic Education in the Thought of Ahmad Syafii Maarif

Based on the literature review that the author did, in Syafii Maarif's thinking, it was found the values of humanistic Islamic education can be summarized in six points, namely: the value of egalitarianism, the value of pluralism, the value of tolerance, the value of justice, the value of universal brotherhood, and the value of peace (non-violence).

Understanding Syafii Maarif's Islamic thought in relation to humanistic Islamic education can be seen in the schematic image as follows:

Figure 2:
The Concept of Humanistic Islamic Education by Ahmad Syafii Maarif



Source: Formulated from various writings, both from books and articles or forewords.

The following is a further description of the six values The main points of humanistic Islamic education in Ahmad Syafii Maarif's thoughts are:

Egalitarian Value

According to Syafii Maarif, education, especially Islamic education, must instill egalitarian values in its students. This has a strong foundation because Islam as a monotheistic religion declares an egalitarian message to raise the banner of equality and justice for the benefit of mankind. Tawhid

is the source of egalitarianism itself (Ahmad Syafii Maarif, 1985). In Syafii Maarif's thought, mankind has the same position in front of God and history. If there are differences here and there, it is because one has succeeded in developing his physical and spiritual potential, while the other has neglected that potential in vain. The only difference lies in the issue of performance. This ethical foundation also strengthens Syafii Maarif's belief about the importance of egalitarianism (Ahmad Syafii Maarif, 1985).

According to Syafii Maarif, the egalitarian message that raises the banner of equality and justice for the benefit of human beings comes fully from the principle of monotheism. The Qur'an with the teachings of monotheism explicitly challenges the principle of monopoly which is enforced based on polytheism. According to him, if humanity is to be established based on equality and justice, then polytheism must be destroyed (Ahmad Syafii Maarif, 1985).

Pluralism Value

In terms of religious pluralism, according to Syafii Maarif, the Qur'an not only recognizes the diversity of religions embraced by mankind, but even those who are not religious must also have a place to live their lives on earth. In this matter, the Koran in the eyes of Syafii Maarif is more tolerant than most Muslims. The Koran has strictly prohibited Muslims from forcing others to believe. The Qur'an confirms that: indeed the truth has been revealed from error. Therefore, whoever disbelieves in al-Taghut (the god who exceeds the limits that Allah has determined) and believes in Allah, then indeed he has held on to a very strong rope, which will not be broken forever. And Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

Based on his understanding of several verses of the Koran, Syafii Maarif said, there is no strong argument to force other people to become religious or convert to Islam. Surah Al-Baqarah verse 256 explicitly says *la ikraha fi al-din* (there is no compulsion in embracing religion). That is every form of coercion that people believe is the same as going against the Koran. However, Syafii Maarif said, people who do not believe or have no religion are certainly obliged to comply with the constitution

and regulations agreed by a country. But may not contradict the provisions of the paragraph above. He is of the view that people who choose the deviant path should not be ostracized, as long as they are willing to maintain the pillars of harmony in life together (Ahmad Syafii Maarif, 2009).

According to Syafii Maarif, the importance of religion is in an honest, sincere, and open-minded manner. He said that being open-minded means that the principle of pluralism is important in terms of our willingness to recognize the right of others to hold the opinion that the religion they embrace is the most correct, even if we need to disagree. At the same time, other people should also respect the position of Muslims who say that Islam is the true religion. According to Syafii Maarif, the phrase "the most correct" here must be returned to the beliefs of each adherent. It is an uncivilized attitude if someone says: "Our religion is the right one, your religion is full of myths and confusing beliefs" (Ahmad Syafii Maarif, 2009). According to Syafii Maarif, this pluralistic attitude must continue to be formed through the educational process. Namely the educational process that instills awareness of pluralism in students.

Tolerance Value

The issue of tolerance is an important issue that is the concern of Syafii Maarif. The ideas of Islam, Indonesianness, and humanity are very focused on the values of true tolerance. In his view, tolerance is an inseparable part of Islamic teachings. In fact, according to him, people will not be able to live a good life without a tolerant attitude (Ahmad Syafii Maarif, 2009). According to Syafii Maarif, the need to create a culture of tolerance for Indonesian Muslims is driven by two important things, namely: First, the Koran and, second, the condition of the Indonesian nation (Muhammad Qorib, 2012). In the eyes of Islam, the Koran is a holy book that contains the values of tolerance. In fact, according to him, the Koran is more tolerant than Muslims themselves. Therefore, the best and most legitimate way for a Muslim in social life according to Syafii Maarif is to develop a culture of tolerance. Because the Qur'an reinforces the existence of various ethnic groups, nations, religions,

languages, and history, all of this is only possible to live in harmony, security, and peace, if there is an open-minded culture that is used as the main glue (Ahmad Syafii Maarif, 2009).

Syafii Maarif divides there are two kinds of tolerance. First, tolerance between fellow Muslims in the form of attitudes and behavior to help each other respect each other, love each other, advise each other, and do not suspect suspicion. Second, tolerance for non-Muslim humans, such as respecting their rights as human beings and members of society in one country. Within the body of Muslims themselves, there are differences in views and groups, even in the history of Islam, accusations are not new, even further than that, differences in interpretation often trigger wars among people. According to Syafii Maarif, this is among the black spots that often reveal the history of Muslims, even though the Koran forbids it, an eternal prohibition that should not be violated. It is in this context that tolerance is understood as an open-minded attitude in accepting everyone's various backgrounds. For Syafii Maarif, tolerance is an absolute requirement for the realization of a harmonious society (Ahmad Syafii Maarif, 2009).

Justice Value

Among the segments of Syafii Maarif's thoughts is how Muslims can truly uphold justice on earth. This is because the indicator of a believer in Syafii Maarif's eyes is when his conscience is sharp towards issues of morality and justice. He said that belief in God will only have meaning if its impact on people's lives in the form of upholding justice and togetherness is felt steadily by all groups. Without this social impact, according to him, the principle of monotheism will only be in the air (Ahmad Syafii Maarif, 1985).

In Islam, faith and justice are inseparable. People whose faith is true and functioning properly will always treat others fairly. In addition, according to him, the presence of the Prophet Muhammad with the doctrine of justice as one of the elements of Islamic teachings teaches the value of very radical liberation (radical monotheism), namely liberating humans from various types of false divinities that can stifle human dignity (Ahmad Syafii Maarif, 2005). From a historical perspective,

he wants to emphasize that the prophet Muhammad himself still places human values as an integral part of the purpose of the revelation of religion.

Fraternity Value

According to Syafii Maarif, the halal choice for Muslims is brothers. While other options will only lead to humiliation and disaster (Ahmad Syafii Maarif, 2000). In Syafii Maarif's view, religion if understood correctly and honestly can certainly be the first and main source for knitting true brotherhood for mankind. But the religion that is understood superficially, then misused can also be a source of the great calamity that can destroy the housing of universal humanity. This is where, according to him, lies the biggest challenge that must be faced and answered bravely and effectively by believers, if the faithful are still serious and sincere in their religion. (Ahmad Syafii Maarif, 2014).

According to Syafii Maarif, efforts to build a universal brotherhood are possible provided that we agree on several principles of social ethics that are respected by all parties. First, it must be admitted that this Planet Earth is for all human beings, believer or not. No one has a monopoly over it for any reason. Second, there must be an acknowledgment of the principle of the unity of mankind, even though it consists of various tribes, nations, and historical backgrounds. This recognition must be accompanied by a willingness to uphold justice and sincere brotherhood between humans. Third, a broad culture of tolerance must be developed among human beings (Ahmad Syafii Maarif, 2018). If the three conditions proposed by Syafii Maarif above can be transferred and internalized in our education process, especially Islamic education, then generations can come to be able to fight for universal humanitarian problems.

Non-Violence Value

According to Syafii Maarif's, the culture of violence has no place at all in Islamic teachings. Therefore, the bearers of the banner of peace must believe in the truth of Islam with all their heart to remain steadfast in carrying out their humanitarian mission without stopping, without hesitation, and

tirelessly. Islam today, according to Syafii Maarif, requires many peacekeepers to carry out a prophetic mission, because the prophet was sent to the earth with a great mission to spread mercy and establish true peace in the midst of universal association (Ahmad Syafii Maarif, 2009). He emphasized that the message of the Koran in the packaging of *rahmatan li 'l'amin* must always be a reference and guide for every movement of a Muslim, when, where, and under any conditions (Ahmad Syafii Maarif, 2005). Islam in the view of Syafii Maarif, Peace itself can be interpreted as a positive concept and perspective both towards oneself and others (Ahmad Syafii Maarif, 1993).

According to Syafii Maarif, to build a glorious future for Muslims and the Indonesian nation, the values of humanistic Islamic education above must be grounded in educational practice in Indonesia. As Syafii Maarif said: "The glorious future of a nation is never built on ignorance and greed but is built on intelligence and morality. To build it, educational institutions are one of the most basic and effective means. Educational institutions are not enough to only emphasize aspects of human intelligence or intellectuality but also must be able to build noble and responsible human characters. (Ahmad Syafii Maarif, 2009).

CONCLUSION

The conclusion that can be drawn as an answer to the research problems in this paper is that the essence of Islamic education in Ahmad Syafii Maarif's view is a process of humanization (a process that liberates and humanizes humans) which directly has an organic link with the spiritual-transcendental dimension. With a thought that education must be able to marry the demands of the brain (the power of *fikr*) and the demands of the heart (the power of *zikir*). In the view of Ahmad Syafii Maarif, humanistic Islamic educational values were found which can be summarized in six things, namely: Egalitarian Value, Justice Value, Tolerance Value, Non-Violence Value, Fraternity Value, and Pluralism Value. If you want to see a bright future for the nation and humanity, then these values in Ahmad Syafii Maarif's view must be grounded in the practice of Islamic education in particular,

and education in general if you want to solve national and humanitarian problems such as the phenomenon of intolerance and acts of violence, divisions to social conflicts, and radicalism to terrorism that threatens national life and humanity.

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