

UNVEILING THE ROLES OF SUNAN AMPEL IN THE NUSANTARA: AN ENGAGING HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract:

History is not just about the past, but it carries a diverse array of human cultural practices that continue to shape contemporary culture. This awareness makes historical approaches crucial for advancing human cultural processes from material progress to the formation of non-material components, such as culture, ethics, and morality. In this context, it is necessary to reexamine Sunan Ampel's role in preaching on the island of Java in the 14th century created a breakthrough by combining local culture with the educational concepts he taught. The philosophy of *Moh-Limo*, which is known as Sunan Ampel's teaching, is one of the many wisdoms of Sunan Ampel in educating his community. The application of *Moh-Limo's* is considered successful in improving moral conditions during that era, when moral decay was seen as a cause of the downfall of The Majapahit era. This writing will focus on discussing Sunan Ampel's efforts to educate morality with *Moh-Limo's* teachings, as well as contextualizing *Moh-Limo's* philosophy in contemporary contexts amidst the poor state of morality in society. To elaborate on this, the writers uses functionalism theory. This theory emphasizes the importance of understanding how every aspect of culture and society has a function in maintaining balance and the sustainability of society. The approach used in this writing is historical theory, biographical, and social-cultural. The results of this research show that education during Sunan Ampel's era, which implemented *Moh-Limo* and established pesantren as a center of religious education, is considered capable of producing strong leaders who have an impact on the process of Islamization in Nusantara

Keywords: *Sunan Ampel, Moh -Limo, Moral Education*

Abstrak:

Sejarah bukan sekedar masa lalu, tapi memuat beragam praktik kebudayaan manusia yang terus membentuk kebudayaan terkini. Kesadaran ini yang kemudian pendekatan sejarah menjadi penting untuk memajukan proses kebudayaan manusia dari kemajuan material hingga terbentuknya teknologi membuat komponen non-material, yaitu budaya, etika dan moral. Dalam konteks ini, maka perlu membaca ulang upaya-upaya Sunan Ampel dalam berdakwah di pulau Jawa pada abad ke-14 menciptakan terobosan dengan cara memadukan budaya setempat dengan konsep pendidikan yang diajarkannya. Falsafah *Moh-Limo* yang merupakan ajaran Sunan Ampel yang dikenal masyarakat adalah salah satu dari sekian kearifan Sunan Ampel dalam melakukan proses pendidikan kepada masyarakatnya. Penerapan ajaran *Moh-Limo* dipandang berhasil dalam memperbaiki keadaan moral pada zaman itu, ketika rapuhnya

moralitas dipandang ikut menjadi sebab runtuhnya kerajaan Majapahit. Tulisan ini akan berfokus pada pembahasan terkait dengan upaya Sunan Ampel mendidik moral dengan ajaran *Moh-Limo*, sekaligus kontekstualisasi falsafah *Moh-Limo* dalam konteks kekinian di tengah wajah moralitas masyarakat juga tidak baik-baik saja. Untuk mengelaborasi hal tersebut penulis menggunakan teori fungsionalisme. Teori ini menekankan pentingnya memahami bagaimana setiap aspek budaya dan sosial memiliki fungsi dalam menjaga keseimbangan dan kelangsungan masyarakat. Pendekatan yang digunakan dalam tulisan ini adalah pendekatan sejarah, biografi dan sosial-budaya. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwasannya pendidikan di zaman Sunan Ampel, yaitu dengan cara mengimplementasikan *Moh-Limonya* serta mendirikan pesantren sebagai pusat pendidikan keagamaan dipandang dapat menghasilkan kader-kader tangguh yang berpengaruh dalam proses islamisasi di Nusantara

Kata Kunci: *Sunan Ampel, Moh-Limo, Moral Education*

INTRODUCTION

The figure of Wali Songo is famous as a figure who spread Islam through culture. With the expertise of the Wali Songo figure, they succeeded in carrying out Islamization, which was well received by the community. Incorporating religious values into art, music, and literature is a characteristic of the da'wah method carried out by the Wali Songo. Just like what Wali Songo did in the archipelago, who rewrote the *Mahabharata* story and made it into a book of Sufism, which has the meaning of social sufism as interpreted by Imam al-Ghazali and Sheikh Ibnu Arabi. (Ahmad Baso, 2023) *Bima*, or *Werkudara*, is depicted studying sufism with a teacher named *Dewaruci*. *Bima* reached the highest level of ma'rifat, but he still remembered his purpose in the world. *Bharatayuda* is waiting to uphold justice and spread prosperity. The story is published in the *Serat Dewaruci* manuscript, which describes Islam as integrated with cultural practices, the arts, and local wisdom.

Raden Rahmat or Sunan Ampel is one of the Wali songo who took part in the Islamization process in the archipelago. It is common knowledge that Sunan Ampel was a Wali songo who pioneered the first Islamic kingdom in Java in Bintaro Demak. The new power in Demak was Sunan Ampel's plan. The opportunity given by the weakening of the Majapahit kingdom gave Islamic rulers the opportunity to establish independent power under the leadership of Sunan Ampel. (Agus Sunyoto, 2016) He also founded the Great Mosque of Demak, which is also one of the great legacies of Sunan Ampel and is still preserved to this day.

When Sunan Kalijaga wanted to propose the practice of *Selamatan*, *Sesaji*, etc. to be included in Islamic values, this made Sunan Ampel worried that one day this practice would be considered Islamic teachings and would lead to heretical behavior. Sunan Kudus answered this concern that, in the future, there would be someone who would perfect the teachings of Islam. (Solichin Salam, 1960)

المَحَافِظَةُ عَلَى الْقَدِيمِ الصَّالِحِ وَالْأَخْذُ بِالْجَدِيدِ الْأَصْلَحِ

"Preserving old culture or something that is still relevant and taking new breakthroughs or innovative (better) steps."

Sunan Ampel not only had intelligence in preaching but also had special privileges in the Majapahit kingdom. Sunan Ampel was also part of the Majapahit kingdom. His preaching in Ampel Denta started when he and his older brother, *Raden Santri Ali (Sunan Gresik)* and *Raden Alim Abu Hurairah (Sunan Majagung)*, visited his aunt in Majapahit. (Wiji Wicaksono, 1995) When he wanted to return to Champa, King *Brawijaya* forbade him and made Sunan Ampel settle down and become a local resident. Here, the Islamization process carried out by Sunan Ampel began in various ways, starting with the Islamization of the Pancamakara ritual, which became *Moh-limo's* philosophy, establishing *pesantren*, and also establishing mosques as centers for the spread of Islam.

This article will discuss how Sunan Ampel was able to create to values in *Moh-limo's* philosophy that were based on the state of morality at the time. Apart from the public, this article will also discuss Sunan Ampel's example in educating his students to make them scholars who spread Islam throughout the archipelago and also how each value in *Moh-Limo's* philosophy can be contextualized today. As *Spengler* understood it, modernity is a realm devoid of the spirit of life and moral values. (Moeflih Hasbullah & Dedi Supriadi, 2012). So, this contextualization can be applied at this time to save civilization from destruction because many events in history were destroyed due to moral decline.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research was written using library research, namely that the object of this research study is based on library data such as books as the data source. Analyze, reduce, and examine various existing sources in the form of books and research results in the form of human thought. The authors then interprets before finally writing down his thoughts.

DISCUSSION

History of Moh-Limo's Philosophy

Raden Rahmat, also known as Sunan Ampel, is the son of *Sheikh Maulana Malik Ibrahim (Sunan Gresik)* and *Dewi Condro Wulan*. *Dewi Condro Wulan* is still one of the daughters of King Champa, a descendant of the late Ming Dynasty. Sunan Ampel was born

in 1401 AD, died in 1478 AD, and began migrating to Java in 1443 AD. In order to spread the teachings of Islam, Sunan Ampel preached at Ampel Denta Surabaya.

Sunan Ampel is the founder of Ampel Denta in Surabaya. So, he is known as the first person to establish an Pesantren in East Java. From this Islamic boarding school, Islamic youth will spread throughout almost all of Indonesia. Sunan Ampel has a big role in society. Not only was he a propagator of Islam, but he also created legal products in society that were adopted by many people. (Agus Sunyoto, 2004)

As previously mentioned, Moh-limo's philosophy was born from the transformation of Islamic teachings or rituals by Sunan Ampel. The Moh-Limo philosophy originates from the religious traditions of followers of the *Tantrayana* sect. This sect believes that humans will gain the highest and eternal spiritual freedom if they have passed the five stages of the Pancamakara ritual. The word *Moh-Limo* is an adaptation of the word Mo-Limo, namely the 5 ritual stages of *Pancamakara*, which include *mamsha* (meat), *maithuna* (sexual intercourse to your heart's content), *madya* (liquor), *matsya* (fish), and *mudra* (meditation).

Sunan Ampel is known as a scholar who is active in preaching. He has a unique way of preaching called "falsafah *Moh-Limo*." "*Moh*" comes from Javanese, which means unwilling or refused, while *limo* also comes from Javanese, which means five. Which means that Sunan Ampel applies the principle of strongly rejecting the five prohibited acts. The contents of *Moh-Limo* are:

1. Moh Main

Moh main means not wanting to gamble. When Sunan Ampel arrived in East Java, the Majapahit Kingdom was no longer under any military threat. This made the Dukes complacent about the safe situation.

2. Moh Ngombe

Moh ngombe means not wanting to drink intoxicating drinks.

3. Moh Madat,

Moh Madat means not wanting to smoke opium or erem, narcotics, or other additives.

4. Moh Maling

Moh Maling means not wanting to steal or collude.

5. Moh Madon

Has the meaning of not wanting to play with a woman who is not his wife (adultery).

Islamizing the *Mo-Limo* tradition of Shiva-Buddhist teachings is actually not only proselytizing behavior but also very political. This is part of the political element of Majapahit. Sunan Ampel's personality can be described in the Babad Tanah Jawi, namely:

Ora dhahar ora guling,

Anyegah ing hawa,

Ora sore ing wengine,

Nibadahmaring Pangeran,

Fardhu sunat tan ketinggalan,

Sarwa nyegah haram narka,

Tawajube muji ing Allah,

It has the meaning "not eating, not sleeping, preventing lust, not sleeping at night (to worship Allah), not missing anything that is fardu and sunnah, preventing what is haram and makruh, tawajuh praising Allah." (Agus Sunyoto, 2011) Character This is attached to the memory of the Muslim community during the Majapahit era at that time. This personality led to the Moh-Limo philosophy, which was used as a weapon against the previous Moh-Limo tradition to be successful in society and as part of Sunan Ampel's political stance. Not only through words, Sunan Ampel spread his message through his example in everyday life so that he gained the trust of the community.

Sunan Ampel's Role Model as A Teacher

The word sunan comes from ancient Javanese, which is based on the word "*suhun*," which means upheld. The word "*Suhun*" received an affix to become "*su-suhun-an*," which then became "*Sunan*." Previously, Islamic boarding schools were places of Hindu education in Java (V–XVI centuries), namely *Mandala Kadewaguruan*. Kadewaguruan became a place where Sastri studied with his master and lived together to pursue his education. This concept is the same as the current *Pesantren* concept. The word "*Sastri*" is hereinafter referred to as the word "*Santri*." The word pesantren is the result of the affix "*pe-sastrian*", which is called "*pesantren*" in the Javanese language. *Pesantren* are

places where students and kiyais live together to study, like the Kadewaguruan Mandala in Hinduism.

To continue *Sunan Gresik's* struggle by establishing an *Pesantren* in Ampel Denta Surabaya. Thanks to this, Sunan Ampel is famous as the builder of the first Islamic boarding school in East Java. It was in this place that Sunan Ampel formed and educated many preachers who would spread throughout the archipelago. Among his Santri were those who succeeded in becoming religious figures who spread to various places on the island of Java, namely, *Sunan Giri*, *Raden Fatah*, who became the first founder of the Demak kingdom, *Sunan Drajat*, and *Maulana Ishak*, who converted the people of Blambangan to Islam. *Sunan Ampel's* role in the Islamization process in the archipelago is centered on Ampel Denta Surabaya, from which the Islamic boarding school provides cadres of students to preach and spread Islam throughout the archipelago.

Sunan Ampel was one of the Wali Songo and an important figure in the spread of Islam in Java, known for his very wise approach and way of educating. Sunan Ampel's example in educating his students includes several important aspects that became the basis for the development of Islamic education in Java. Sunan Ampel's approach to preaching in Java is by adapting, absorbing, being pragmatic, and taking a gradual approach. (Nur Hamiyatun, 2019) So that people really accept his teachings. The following are several points that illustrate Sunan Ampel's example in educating his students:

Inclusive and Open Approach

Sunan Ampel is known for his inclusive and open approach to educating his santris. He not only taught Islamic religion to his students but also interacted with the wider community, so that the community was open and very accepting of Islamic teachings. Sunan Ampel educated him by understanding the conditions of his society at that time. One example is when Raden Fatah stated that he wanted to study religion with Sunan Ampel. Raden Fatah was asked first whether he already had a basis. After knowing the basics, Raden Fatah was no longer required to enter the Islamic boarding school but was immediately placed in the wirid circle. (Muslimah & Laylatul Maskhuroh, 2019)

Character formation and ethics

Sunan Ampel's example can also be seen in his efforts to shape the character and ethics of his students by establishing pesantren and teaching his students to become individuals who have good morals, are polite, and care for others, which can produce a cadre of leaders with good morals. Among some of his students at that time were *Raden Paku*, who later became known as *Sunan Giri*; *Raden Patah*, who later became the first sultan of the Islamic kingdom in Bintoro Demak; *Raden Makdum Ibrahim*, who was known as *Sunan Bonang*; *Raden Kosim Syarifuddin*, who was known as *Sunan Drajat*; *Maulana Ishak*, who was sent to the *Blambangan* area to convert the people there; and many other preachers who had a big role in the Islamization of Java Island. (Tarwilah, 2006) From there, Sunan Ampel educated his students to become successors to his message and spread it widely to other areas. to practice and expand Islamic teachings.

Comprehensive Teaching of Religious Knowledge

Sunan Ampel provides comprehensive teaching in religious knowledge, including the Koran, hadith, fiqh, and others, by creating pegon letters, or Arabic writing that reads Javanese. Because of these pegon letters, it is easier for people to understand the basics of Arabic to learn Islamic teachings and, at the same time, encourage students to develop a deep understanding of Islamic teachings and be able to implement them in everyday life. Even now, pegon letters are still used as material for teaching Islamic religion in Islamic boarding schools. (Nasrudin, 2015)

Exemplary behavior

There are so many things that damage the nation's future, which, at the time of Sunan Ampel, was the answer to maintaining how to form a society to be able to maintain itself with its own cultural Indonesian character. Indonesia is very steeped in Islamic culture, and the teachings of *Moh-Limo's* philosophy from Sunan Ampel are capable.

Contextualization of Moh Limo's philosophy

For example, one of the Moh-Limo philosophies is *Moh main*, which means not wanting to gamble. When Sunan Ampel arrived in East Java, the Majapahit Kingdom was no longer under any military threat. This made the *Adipati* complacent about the safe situation. So people at that time gambled, which caused a decline in moral values at that time and could lead to the destruction of Majapahit. Therefore, Sunan Ampel created Moh Main to stabilize morals at that time. With today's sophisticated technology, the practice

of gambling is no longer carried out in meetings; nowadays, gambling only requires a device equipped with internet access via online gambling pages. A survey conducted by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII) in January 2023 can provide an overview of the situation of online gambling sites in Indonesia. The results of the survey of 8,510 respondents in 35 provinces showed that at least 34.26% of respondents were aware of the existence of gambling sites on the internet. Meanwhile, the number of respondents who accessed it was relatively small, namely 5.61% . If this figure is assumed to be proportionally real, the number of Indonesian people who actively gamble online is estimated to reach 15.5 million. This figure shows the high losses caused by online gambling.

Decreasing morality figures can cause society's functionalism value to decline. So efforts are needed to save the moral awareness of Indonesian society in order to avoid the decline of civilization. Based on this phenomenon, there is a need for a more modern approach to the implementation of *Moh-Limo's* philosophy today. The current increase in digital literacy in Indonesia can be used as an effort to incorporate the value of *Moh-Limo* in the current context. The increasing interest in digital literacy in Indonesian society can influence the way people think in social situations, especially the younger generation. Community organizations are moved to do something not based on the truth of something, but external influences are more able to move the community. For example, consider the influence of influencer behavior on social media. So, to increase Indonesian people's digital reading interest in the values of *Moh-Limo's* philosophy, it is necessary for influential figures to recommend these values in the form of articles, books, or educational content that is part of its principles. So the community is motivated to participate in implementing these principles.

CONCLUSION

From the discussion, it can be concluded that: *first*, *Moh-Limo's* philosophy did not immediately appear without a process that Sunan Ampel went through. With various considerations, thoughts, and Sunan Ampel's intelligence, which came from socio-cultural observations of the pathology of Majapahit society at that time and also with caution in Islamicizing a tradition so as not to fall into heretical behavior, *Moh-Limo's*

philosophy also became a tool. Sunan Ampel's politics towards Shiva-Buddhist teachings in the era of the Majapahit kingdom.

Second, Sunan Ampel's success in forming a large cadre of ulama throughout the archipelago is a result of his strategy and example as a teacher. The contextualization of Sunan Ampel's example needs to be emulated by today's teachers so that they can not only educate intellectuals but also educate students' morals with an understanding of and approach to the students themselves.

Third, every value from the Moh-Limo philosophy has been taken into account and has become a value that maintains the value of cultural functionalism with the aim of creating balance in society so that social inequality does not occur. Sunan Ampel's teachings save society from the decadence and moral degradation that characterize people's lives. This is where the results of the analysis were made in an IMRAD-based paper. The result should be based on the chosen research method presented and discussed. The discussion also covers the implications of the research on other fields as well as the possible improvements that can be made in order to further develop the concerns of the research.

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