



The Educational Values of Athiyyah ar-Rahman Book

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Abstract

Athiyyah ar-Rahman is an influential book which written by Muhammad Azhari al-Palembani ibn Abdullah ibn Ahmad or also known as Kemas Azhari (1811-1874). The book was written in 1842 and until today is learned by Islamic community in Palembang. This article tries to elucidate the values of Athiyyah ar-Rahman book from education perspectives. The discourse-historical approach of Reisigl and Wodak (2008) is used to analyze the book. The findings show that Athiyyah ar-Rahman describes six pillars of Islam. The six pillars of Islam are framing three dimensions, including personal dimension, social dimension, and transformative dimension. The personal dimension relates to the core of the education to construct the self of student. The social dimension relates to the visions for harmonizing among humans and between humans and nature. Meanwhile, the transformational dimension relates to the effect of education to solve the problems in human life as well as transform the society. Based on the analysis, the educational values of Athiyyah ar-Rahman could be summarized as follows: religiosity, spirituality, morality, solidarity, tolerance, environmentalism, pragmatism and transformational.

Keywords: Athiyyah ar-Rahman; Kemas Azhari; Educational values

Introduction

Muhammad Azhari al-Palembani ibn Abdullah ibn Ahmad or also known as Kemas Azhari (1811-1874) is an influential *ulama* in Palembang (Syarifuddin., 2017). Kemas Azhari was born in Kampung Pedatu`an, Kampung 12 Ulu, Palembang. His father is Kemas Haji Abdullah (1755-1848), who was one of the great *ulama* of Palembang (Amin., 2009). Kemas Azhari moved to Hejaz to learn Islamic knowledge at the young ages. By 1839, Kemas Azhari returned to Palembang and brought a title “*sheikh*” and “*al-Palembani*” which means *ulama* from Palembang.

Kemas Azhari also known as the pioneer of early Islamic printed in Nusantara. In 1839, Kemas Azhari stopped by in Singapore on his way to Palembang and brought a lithographic printing device. By this printing device, Kemas Azhari published his Al-Qur`an in 1848 (Laffan., 2015; Twyman., 1998). Kemas Azhari wrote books during his intellectual journey in Hejaz as well as when he lived in

Palembang. The books were *'Athiyaturrahman* (Makkah., 1842), *Qur'an al-'Azhiem* (Palembang., 1848), *Tuhfat al-Muridien* (Jami`ah Syulhandar., 1859), *Siroj al-Huda* (Makkah, no year), *Fadloil read Shalawat Muhammad SAW* (Ulu Palembang, no year), and (6) *Dala-il al-Kahirat* (Ulu Palembang, no year).

Athiyyah ar-Rahman is a remarkable book of Kemas Azhari. *Athiyyah ar-Rahman* written in Arabic fonts in Malay language and describes the six pillars of Islam. Since the handwriting version (1842), the book was republished by Syaikh Daud al-Fathoni in 1868 (Amin A. A., 2009). Furthermore, the followers of Tarekat *Samaniyah* in Palembang used the book. Until today, the book is still learned continuously by the Islamic community in Great Mosque of Palembang. The book not merely echoes Islamic values but also contain contextual values which reflect the condition of Palembang society in the middle of 19th century.

As a valuable heritage, the authors perceive that *Athiyyah ar-Rahman* is valuable for educational purposes. Following the concept of Jan Assmann (1995), the book posits as modes of potentiality that should be actualized in order to transmit the values from the past to the present generations. Based on this argumentation, this article elucidates the educational values of *Athiyyah ar-Rahman* book. Through education, the values of the book can be actualized and redefine in present generations. From this point of view, this research could become the bases for the future educational research. Besides that, this research could help teachers and students to take values from *Athiyyah ar-Rahman*.

Methodology

Athiyyah ar-Rahman book which owned by Kemas Andi Syarifuddin become our research corpus. Abdul Azim Amin (2009) had translated the book. Based on his shoulder, the author then analyzed the book by discourse-historical analysis approach of Reisigl and Wodak (2008). The approaches covered three layers of analysis: textual analysis, contextual analysis, and prospective critique analysis. The focus of analysis is from the perspectives of educational values. Educational value is defined as the precise meaning from any objects, which could be used to educate and develop the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects of students. Textual analysis refers to the contents of the book. Contextual analysis refers to the socio-political and historical background on the books, which affected the contextual interpretation. Prospective critique analysis refers to the process of reflecting the book in educational perspectives to reveals the values of the book.

Finding and Discussion

Textual Analysis of Athiyyah Ar-Rahman Book

Athiyyah ar-Rahman consists of 19 unnumbered pages. Textually, the book is consisting of three parts. The first part contains the introduction of the book. The second part contains the description of six pillars of Islam. The third part contains the description of the practice of Tarekat Samaniyah.

The first page of the book is the title page and contains information about the origin of the writer as well as date and place of publication. The second and third page started with the word "*bismillahirrahmanirrahim*" or can be translated loosely as "in the name of Allah, who the most merciful and the most benevolent". Besides that, the pages also contain an introduction that mention praises to Allah and Muhammad as the prophet. In the fourth page, the book tells the reasons Arabic-Malay language was used in the book regarding with the purposes of the book to reach all Palembang people. The words "*Athiyyah ar-Rahman*" itself can be translated loosely as "a gift from a loving God". It could mean that *Athiyyah ar-Rahman* is the gift from God.

The fifth page contains an instruction to the Palembang people, to obey the six Islamic faiths. The six pillars of Islam are: (1) have faith to Allah SWT.; (2) have faith to the Angles (*malaikat*) of Allah SWT; (3) have faith to holy books; (4) have faith to prophets; (5) have faith to apocalypse; and (6) have faith to the concepts of destiny: *qada* and *qadar*. In addition, the six Islamic faiths should be accompanied by knowing the greatness of Allah. Furthermore, those should be balanced to reach the perfection of faith. The further texts explain one by one the nature of Allah, from obligatory nature and impossible nature of God.

In the ninth page, the book instructs to believe in the prophets and mention the debate over the number of prophets. The tenth page explains 25 prophets` name with three essential natures and the inconceivable nature of the prophets. The next eleventh page describes nature of angels and their duties. In the twelfth page, the book describes the Islamic faith and instruct the people to follow the holy books, from Torah, Injil, Zabur, and al-Qur`an. The thirteenth to fifteenth explains the judgment day in the afterlife for immoral as well as for obedient people. In the sixteenth to the eighteenth page, the book instructs the people to believe in the concepts of Islamic destiny: *qada* and *qadar*. Furthermore, the pages also provoke the people to do not give up and always prying in facing the problems. The nineteenth page emphasizes the people to obey the six pillars of Islam with a sincere heart.

Based on those descriptions, the textual meaning of *Athiyyah ar-Rahman* is the instruction to have faith in six pillars of Islam. The six pillars of Islam is the core of the book. It relates to the morality construction or *aqidah Islamiyah*. The six pillars are as follows: (1) have faith to Allah SWT; (2) have faith to the Angles (*malaikat*) of Allah SWT; (3) have faith to holy books; (4) have faith to prophets; (5) have faith to apocalypse; and (6) have faith to the concepts of destiny: *qada* and *qadar*.

Contextual Analysis of Athiyyah Ar-Rahman Book

Athiyyah ar-Rahman was written in 1842 when the Dutch colonialism penetrating Palembang society. Until the early of 19th century, Palembang was the capital of Palembang Darussalam Sultanate. However, since 1825, the status of Palembang was diminished into a residency area by Dutch Colonial government, due to the liquidation of Palembang Darussalam Sultanate. Palembang then entered the transition era, which caused political, economic, social, and cultural changes. Since then, the resident and commissaries had an authority to administer the Palembang. Physically, the fall of Keraton Palembang affected the aristocrats. The aristocrat`s houses and properties were confiscated. They were moved forcedly to Kampung 26 and Kampung 27 Ilir, near the Keraton (Peteers., 1997). Besides that, the colonial government tried to build new buildings to distract the power and charisma of the Keraton. One of colonial government policy was changed the landscape orientation of Palembang society from “water-space”, which was used by Palembang Darussalam Sultanate, into a “land-space” (Irwanto., 2011). Consequently, the landscape of Palembang totally changed, from the capital of Sultanate into a colonial town in the middle of 19th century.

Furthermore, the shifting power from Sultanate`s aristocrat to the Dutch Colonial Government not only affected to the political and geographical aspect but also affected to the culture of Palembang society. The impact could be seen clearly from the language change in Palembang. In the Sultanate era, the *Jawa Krama* or the highest level of Javanese language becomes the official language that was used in ceremonial as well as constructs the etiquette of aristocrats and peoples (Marsden., 1999). The changes come greater after Sultan Mahmud Badaruddin II, as the guard of Javanese literacy in Palembang Darussalam Sultanate, was exiled to Ternate (Team Perumus hasil-hasil diskusi sejarah perjuangan Sultan Mahmud Badaruddin II, 1981).

The changes disturbed the mentality of Palembang society. It drove the crises of identity and morality because of the penetration of colonial power, with their cultural and social elements, to the old order of Palembang society. The crises of identity and morality seemed like disorientation to the worldview as well as uprooted the society from their Islamic bases (Wulandari & Ibrahim., 2001). This condition was aggravated by the economic dependence of Palembang society to the foreign traders, which weakened the position of the natives. However, the *uluan society*, a group of native society in Palembang, took benefit and rise as one of economic power in Palembang.

These period marked as a hard transition era for Palembang`s Moslem society, particularly when the Dutch colonizing Palembang, caused clashes between the colonial ruler and Islamizing movement (Cabaton., 2015). In this situation, *ulama* represented the Islamizing movements and took an important role as counter-elite in criticize to the colonial government. The presence of colonial power provoked the *ulama* to initiate religious movements; even some of the movements were not purely in political dimension but also touched “the self” of Moslem society (Gadjahnata., 1986). However, as stressed by Taufik Abdullah, the pressure of colonialism also strengthened Islamic identity of Palembang society. By the presence of colonialism, the character of Palembang changed from cosmopolitanism society to be more orthodox (Abdullah., 1987). Sartono Kartodirdjo (1966) depicted that the colonialism provoked the *jihad* as well as the willingness to implement the Islamic rules. Meanwhile, in wider context, the presence of colonialism and orthodoxy flowed to Pan-Islamism movements during the 19th century in Southeast Asian areas (Reid., 2003).

In this context, the *Athiyyah ar-Rahman* book acted as one of guideline for Palembang Moslem. The six pillars of Islam had a social and political meaning. The social and political meaning of the book is *aqidah Islamiyah* (Islamic self-improvement), *ukhuwah Islamiyah* (Islamic collectivism), and *jihad* (Islamic movements). The *aqidah Islamiyah* relate to self-aspect of the Moslem in facing the problems of moral degradation and crises identity. The elements of self-improvements cover of entire books relate to the relation to the God and self-management. The *ukhuwah Islamiyah* relate to the Moslem solidarity across the world. The solidarity provokes the collectivism of Moslem as one global community as well as constructs in-group solidarity in facing the Dutch colonialism. The *jihad* reflects the Islamic movement to fight against the Dutch in any field of life, especially in politics and economic field.

The contextual meaning of *Athiyyah ar-Rahman* is in line with the Jajat Burhanudin (2012) argumentation about the appearance of radicalism inside of neo-Sufism in the 19th century. The book provoked the Moslem society to improve their morality and identity in Sufism way, and in the other side fight against the Dutch. However, the book does not lead the Moslem into mysticism. The influence of al-Gazali and Abd Samad Al Palembang through tarekat Sammaniyah could be identified in the book. Thus, the book more oriented to the morality than mysticism. It means as mentioned by Martin van Bruinnesse, the book is on the line of the continuity of tarekat sammaniyah in Palembang (Bruinnesse., 2012; Jamaluddin., 2005).

Educational Values of Athiyyah Ar-Rahman Book

The content of the *Athiyyah ar-Rahman* is reflecting three important dimensions of human: the personal dimension, social dimension, and transformative dimension. The personal dimension covers God-human relationship and the self of the human. The relation to God represents in how the human believing and obey all the God`s rules as the book mentioned in the first to fourth pages. The God-human relationship intermingles with the self of human. The self of human relates to how they understanding, interpreting and presenting the presence of themselves. It related to the mentality, morality, humanity, and other self-aspect of a human. The book mentioned *aqidah Islamiyah* as a representation of the ideal self when the people believing and implementing the six pillars of Islam. From our discussion, the educational

values of the personal dimension are covering the religiosity and spirituality, morality, and humanity. The core of the education should be able to construct personal dimension of the students based on those values.

The social dimension is covering the relationship and coexistence among humans and between human and nature. The book mentioned that the Moslem should have faith in five holy books. The humans' relationship is not limited to the in-group relationship but also covers relations with others groups. Meanwhile, the relationship between human and nature is also important. The human has a responsibility to keep the nature alive as well as have responsibilities to minimize the exploitations of nature. Thus, the social dimension is reflecting the concept of solidarity and tolerance, as well as environmentalism. The values can be posited as the vision and learning topic in the learning process.

The transformative dimension becomes the praxis aspect of the personal and social dimension. The transformative dimension can be defined as an effort of human to reach personal and social objectives in form of any movements. It means the social and personal dimension should be used to solve the problem and in addition help the progress of humanity in the future. The book instructs implicitly *jihad* as a movement in facing the crises identity and the Dutch colonial penetration. However, the movements could be realized in the context social, religious, political, or cultural in these days. In the educational field, the movement can be translated as a pragmatism and transformative educational. Pragmatism and transformative education are a focus on the problems and how education is can resolve them.

Based on the analysis, the educational values of *Athiyyah ar-Rahman* could be summarized as follows: religiosity, spirituality, morality, solidarity, tolerance, environmentalism, pragmatism and transformational. Those values can be used in theoretical or practical dimension in educational fields, such as in the learning paradigm, learning model, learning material, or learning media.

Conclusion

Athiyyah ar-Rahman is reflecting textual and contextual meaning. Textually, the *Athiyyah ar-Rahman* explains six pillars of Islam. The Islamic values could be found in entire part of the books, especially from ninth to the nineteenth page. The six pillars of Islam contextually are framing three dimensions, including personal dimension, social dimension, and transformative dimension. The three dimensions could become the bases or the paradigm of educational policy and praxis. The personal dimension relates to the core of the education to construct the self of the student. The social dimension could become the visions for harmonizing humans and nature. Meanwhile, the transformative dimension relates to the effect of education to solve the problems in human life. The findings show that the book is valuable for educational purposes. Thus, the book should be more analytical in any field of educational research, for instance in management, learning model, learning material, learning media and so on. The authors are suggesting to use the book as learning material or learning model in order to transmit the values of the book to the students.

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