

The Yellow Book Women in Indonesia: Exploring the Experience of Ustadzah Zaimar

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Abstract: This study discussed Yellow Book Women in Indonesia with a focus on the existence of a female ulama, Ustadzah Zaimar, who has made a major contribution to continuing the yellow book tradition. The research aimed to describe the Yellow Book Woman in Indonesia through a study of the Ustadzah Zaimar figure. The phenomenon was discussed using qualitative methods and a historical approach with the following steps; heuristics, source criticism, analysis, and historiography. The research findings were that Ustadzah Zaimar was a scholar who had a strong desire to continue the Yellow Book tradition formed through interaction, and socialization in a long historical process. Therefore, she had the cognition and intellectual capital needed in the field of yellow books in a reproduction of roles, such as yellow book teacher and halaqah guide.

Keyword: Yellow Book, Indonesian Women, Ustadzah Zaimar

Introduction

The Yellow Book Woman is an interesting study today that has not received special attention in scientific studies for the last decade. Even though there have been many studies about women and Islamic boarding schools, the discussion still revolved around the spectrum of role, empowerment, feminism, and gender. Therefore, the previous academic discussion placed the study of yellow-book women in Indonesia in a historical space that needed special attention. The discussions of Nor Ismah and Dwi Ratnasari were studies that explained the relationship between women and Islamic Boarding Schools in Indonesia. Nor Ismah conducted a study on Young Women Writers from The Traditional Islamic Boarding School: Self-Initiative, Learning Environment, and The Education System. By using a qualitative approach, Nor Ismah could explore findings about the role of Islamic Boarding Schools in giving emergence to a new generation of women writers. The main factor that supported it was the Islamic boarding school environment which provided them with dormitory facilities and instilled strong self-esteem in women (Nor Ismah, 2012).

Dwi Ratnasari carried out a discussion on the issue of the role of Islamic Boarding Schools in empowering women. The Empowerment of Women in the Education of Islamic Boarding Schools was the title given by the author to his study with a focus on the Uqud al-Lujjain book by Nawawi al-Bantani. The discussion used a text analysis, resulting in the finding that the discussion of the Uqud al-Lujjain indicated a gender-biased study. To understand gender equality, Islamic Boarding Schools might interact with the world of modern knowledge (Dwi Ratnasari, 2016). The Uqud al-Lujjain Book was also researched by Ainaul Mardhiyyah who discussed the construction of female sexuality in classical Islamic Boarding School literature. As a book that presented the rights and obligations of husband and wife couples in Islam, Nawawi al-Bantani put forward four main forms of discussion about women's sexuality; self-identity, sexual acts, sexual behavior, and women's sexual orientation. He explained these four forms under the spirit of the times that surrounded him. However, efforts to see Nawawi al-Bantani's views on women's sexuality in Islamic Boarding Schools were not simple and required re-reading other texts in Islam (Ainaul Mardhiyyah, 2013).

Geographically, discussions on the relationship between women and Islamic boarding schools were mostly carried out by academics on the Island of Java. However, other areas outside Java also have Islamic scientific traditions that need attention. Minangkabau, for example, has a matrilineal social system that supports the emergence of women as custodians of the Yellow Book tradition in the Islamic Boarding Schools in Indonesia. They do not come from a social elite group as is the case with Nyai in Islamic boarding schools on the Island of Java, but are ordinary women who were willing to spend their time and age to continue the teachings of the Yellow Book. These are what are called Yellow Book Women in Minangkabau who not only teach at Islamic Boarding Schools but also guide halaqah in their respective homes (Erman, 2020). Ustadzah Zaimar was a Minangkabau woman who had spent more than half her life maintaining the continuity of the Yellow Book tradition at the Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah (MTI) Pasir IV Angkat Candung (Radhiati, 2023). This Islamic Boarding School was founded by Haji Husin Amin in Pasir, Agam Regency, West Sumatra, Indonesia in 1937 (Madjalah Soerti, 1938).

The efforts made by Ustadzah Zaimar did not suddenly appear but through a long historical process. Interaction with both parents was the initial process of forming an inner habitus within Ustadzah Zaimar so that she upheld the sacred values of the Yellow Book. Wider interaction with the Yellow Book was obtained when he

continued his education at the MTI Pasir, Islamic Boarding School. During education, Ustadzah Zaimar interacted with the first generation of ulama who had extraordinary abilities in understanding the Yellow Book, such as Sheikh Haji Husein Amin, Muhammad Dalin, and Muhammad Adamsar. They were students of Sheikh Sulaiman al-Rasuli, the ulama who founded the first traditional madrasa in Minangkabau, Indonesia. Therefore, the MTI Pasir was a social field that internalized the values and functions of the Yellow Book so that they became embedded in the cognitive structure of Ustadzah Zaimar (Syamsiar, 2023).

The Ustadzah Zaimar phenomenon was a unique socio-historical reality in the Islamic scientific tradition in Indonesia. The majority of rulers of the Yellow Book tradition were men. Apart from that, the Yellow Book was a men's book and the value of women in the discourse it promotes was half that of men. Martin Van Bruinessen explained that the Yellow Book, in its language aspects and women's life choices which were the subject of its discussion, had a very deep and transparent gender bias. The benchmark for everything was men so women's interpretation of reality in history couldn't possibly achieve the dignity of men. It is as if the existence of women in fiqh books was only to serve and fulfill the sexual needs of men. The status of men both in the world and in the afterlife was far above the dignity of women. The dignity, value, and weight of a man in the Yellow Books passed down in the several Islamic Boarding Schools and Traditional Madrasas were equivalent to two women (Martin Van Bruinessen, 1993).

The discussion of Yellow Book Women in Indonesia used qualitative methods with a historical approach. Data collection was carried out using observation techniques, interviews, and focus Group Discussion (FGD) involving a representative group of people. Data collection was also carried out using documentation techniques related to archival sources, books, and articles. Because it used a historical approach, historical research steps were used in this research, such as heuristics, source criticism, synthetic analysis, and historiography (Renier, 1997). All data was also discussed with the theory of social practice put forward by Felix Bourdieuë habitus, capital, and field (Marco Schirone, 2023).

History and Tradition of the Yellow Book

The Yellow Book is one of the elements in constructing traditional Islamic scientific traditions in Indonesia. The term Yellow Book is used to refer to classical books written by Middle Eastern scholars. This term did not originate from Islamic boarding schools and madrasah educational institutions. The use of the yellow book term had pejorative and suspicious meanings, thus degrading the quality of the knowledge it contained and the main cause of the stagnation of thought experienced by Muslims (Affandi, 1999; Ali Yafie, 1989). Therefore, the use of the yellow book term caused anxiety among Muslim scientists. Zamakhsyari Dhofier did not want to use the yellow book term (bald) and replaced it with the classical Islamic book term (Zamakhsyari Dhofier, 2011). Although the term yellow book was considered a term that did not originate from the traditional Islamic scientific tradition, this terminology had gradually begun to undergo a process of enculturation to be used as a technical term in the scientific traditions of Islamic boarding schools and madrasas. Because of this, observers of Islamic boarding school issues in general have begun to define the yellow book as religious books and products of the thoughts of past ulama, (salaf). These books were written in Arabic, and in a special format that was different from modern books (Ahmad Chozin Nasuha, 2015). The definition of the Yellow Book has a wide spectrum of meanings. Its use today is not only limited to books written by Middle Eastern scholars in the classical and medieval periods (al-Kutub al-Qādimah) but also the books written by Muslim scientists in the modern period (al-Kutub al-Aṣriyyah), including Indonesian scholars. The two types of Yellow Books, because they were written in a typical era, have fundamental differences in their technical and writing methods. Modern books were written using punctuation and lines (Harkat) in certain texts to make them easier to understand. The collection of pages by pages had been bound using a cover that blended with all the sheets to form a complete book that could be carried anywhere.

Classical books did not have technical writing yet that used punctuation (dots, commas, and lines), giving the impression that the language was relatively heavier than modern books. The writing design (layout) of classical books consisted of the original text (matan) and explanations or comments (syarḥ and ḥāsiyyah) which were in different columns in the text structure. The original text (Matan) was generally placed on the right, left, top, and bottom edges which were bounded by a square line that extended from top to bottom. Explanations (syarḥ) and comments (ḥāsiyyah) were placed in the middle and the box formed from square lines that extended from top to bottom. Writing the text as a whole was almost the same as writing a romance and did not have bodynotes and footnotes. The collection of pages had not been bound collectively and it was still in sheet form (Khorasan-Khorasan) so that certain parts could be carried separately according to study needs (Affandi Muchtar, 1999). The yellow book had become an Islamic scientific tradition in Indonesia in line with the Islamization process which had a strong influence since the 13th century AD. In several places in Indonesia (Sumatra, Java, and Kalimantan) the yellow book has been used by Islamic communities to understand religious teachings. Minangkabau as one of the regions in Indonesia is a network of ulama who were familiar with the

yellow book in the Surau scientific tradition after Sheikh Burhanuddin built Surau Ulakan, Pariaman, in the second half of the 17th century. From Surau Ulakan, Islamic scientific traditions also developed in Minangkabau surau with different scientific distinctions in the following period (Azyumardi Azra, 2003). Even though the introduction of the Yellow Book took place at Surau Ulakan, the information regarding the names and types of religious books taught at the surau was still difficult to know for certain. This condition was caused by limited historical sources that could be referred to reconstruct complete information about the Islamic scientific tradition at Surau Ulakan. Surau II Catalog, Guide to the Collection of Heirloom Manuscripts of Sheikh Burhanuddin Ulakan, and Surau Pondok Tanjung Medan were a few sources that opened up space to find out that the yellow book had been introduced in Minangkabau since Sheikh Burhanuddin. One of the text variants found was the *Tazkīr al- Ghabī* text by Sheikh Burhanuddin which was written using Minangkabau script and language to translate and interpret the book *al-Hikam*, by Ibnu 'Athailah al-Askandari (Taufik, 2014).

The 17th and 18th centuries were the Sufistic era in Minangkabau and the books spread in the surau were related to the teachings of the tarekat. Apart from the Syattariyyah order, the Naqsyabandiyyah, Qadariyyah, and Samaniyah orders were thought to have developed in the Minangkabau area. Of the four types of orders, the Syattariyyah order was indeed easier to trace the history and genealogy of its teachers. At the end of the 18th century, a religious movement was born that aimed to return the practice of Islam to pure Sharia. This movement was pioneered by Tuanku Sheikh Nan Tuo who taught halaqah at Surau Cangkiang Koto Tuo, Empat Angkat, Luhak Agam. Initially, Tuanku Sheikh Nan Tuo was a follower of the Syattariyyah order but was influenced later by the teachings of the Naqsyabandiyyah order after studying from surau to surau. He was a figure of ulama who firmly stood for reconciliation between Sufism and Shari'a (Christine Dobbin, 1992). In line with the spirit of reconciliation, the slogan put forward by Tuanku Nan Tuo and his students was a return to sharia. This slogan reflected that fiqh books have become a source of religious study at the surau in Minangkabau. From that time until the end of the 19th century, as mentioned by Sheikh Sulaiman al-Rasuli, halaqahs appeared in surau to study the science of fiqh, and the book discussed was the book *Minhāj al-Ṭālibīn* by Imām Nawāwī. In the second half of the 19th century, other fiqh books began to be found as teaching materials in Minangkabau surau (Sulaiman al-Rasuli, 1309). The same view was expressed by Mahmud Yunus who provided a broader explanation of the history of the Yellow Book in the Islamic scientific tradition which was discovered in the second half of the 18th century until the 19th century. After the Minangkabau clerics returned from the holy land of Mecca, they brought Arabic books in handwritten form as a result of their studies with the ulama while in the cities of Mecca and Medina. These books could be classified into several scientific dimensions and distinctions which include Sharaf science, nahwu (introduction to Arabic), fiqh, and tafsir (Mahmud Yunus, 1979).

The teaching of the yellow book in Minangkabau surau before the 20th century began with the teaching of spiritual sciences which mostly used rote memorization methods. The book commonly used at that time was the *Ḍammūn* book in handwritten form and was anonymous. The material in the book of *Ḍammūn* revolved around changes in Arabic words (*taṣrīf*), including *taṣrīf* of nine (*fi'il māḍī*), *taṣrīf* of fourteen (*fi'il muḍāri'*), *taṣrīf* of isim fā'il, isim maf'ūl and so on. The length of time for studying the book of *Ḍammūn* was not determined and depended on how quickly the students mastered the material provided by a teacher. Once mastery of Sharaf science was deemed adequate, the next lesson continued with teaching nahwu science using a system of memorizing, reading texts (*matan*), translating, and concluding. The nahwu book used in Minangkabau surau for beginners was the *al-'Awāmil* book which was still handwritten. The time for studying the book of Nahwu was very conditional and depended on the progress of the students. The follow-up book to the *al-'Awāmil* was *Matnu al-Ajrūmiyyah* written by Abū 'Abd al-Allāh Muhammad bin Daud al-Shanhājī bin Ajurrūm (Mahmud Yunus, 1979).

After the students' knowledge was sufficient in mastering the Arabic language (Nahwu and Sharaf), the teaching of the yellow book in the surau was continued with the study of fiqh and discussion of the book *Minhāj al-Ṭālibīn* by Imam Nawāwī. The study of tafsir had also developed in surau and used the *tafsir al-Jalālain* by Imam Jalāl al-Dīn al-Maḥallī and Jalāl al-Dīn al-Sayūṭī. Teaching fiqh and tafsir took a relatively long time because these two sciences were not taught simultaneously. To study tafsir, students might master fiqh and continue with the study of tafsir (Mahmud Yunus, 1979). Therefore, education in Minangkabau surau only studied a certain discipline of knowledge. Students who wanted to understand various aspects of Islamic teachings might study by moving from one surau to another. At the beginning of the 20th century, the teaching of the yellow book began more neat and orderly in line with the transformation of several surau into madrasas. This condition is still ongoing today at the MTI Pasir Islamic Boarding School in West Sumatra, Indonesia. This institution was where Ustadzah Zaimar started adapting to the yellow book.

Internalization of The Yellow Book

The traditional Islamic scientific tradition in Indonesia is constructed from several important elements, each of them having a close relationship and being interdependent. One of these elements was the teaching of

religious books oriented towards the use of works by Middle Eastern scholars and written in the classical period (al-Kutub al-Qādimah). These works were called Yellow Books in the traditional scientific tradition of the Malay Archipelago world. Even though the term Yellow Book is a term that does not originate from the traditional Islamic scientific tradition, this terminology has gradually begun to experience enculturation and is used as a technical term in the scientific traditions of Islamic boarding schools and madrasas. Because of this, observers of Islamic boarding school issues in general have begun to define and understand yellow books as religious books and products of the thoughts of past ulama, (salaf) which use Arabic and are written in a special format that is different from modern books (Ahmad Chozin Nasuha, 2015).

For traditional Muslims in Indonesia, the yellow book is an intellectual treasure that has an important meaning in studying Islamic teachings. Therefore, the Yellow Book is a source of truth and universal values that must be at stake and fought for in the contestation of social life. Everyone does not have the same opportunity to understand the holy Qur'an directly because it is related to several strict requirements. The most likely way to understand Islam is by studying the Yellow Book. This view has become embedded in the culture of traditional Islamic Boarding Schools and madrasa communities in Indonesia. The majority of them view the function of the yellow book as a source of universal truth (Affandi Mochtar, n.d). This deposition process forms a habitus which was part of the cognitive structure of traditional Muslims. As history progresses, the process of habitus formation has been going on for a long time, since the process of Islamization of the archipelago in the 13th century.

The attitudes and views of the majority of traditional Muslims towards the Yellow Book have been internalized in the structure of Ustadzah Zaimar's thinking since childhood through a dialectical process. She was a Minangkabau female ulama who was born on November 13, 1934, to Buya Ibrahim and mother Zainab. Both of his parents were graduates of traditional madrasas who understood the Yellow Book tradition well. Buya Ibrahim was a halaqah student of Sheikh Sulaiman al-Rasuli at Surau Baru before it changed to MTI Candung. Formally, Buya Ibrahim was a graduate of MTI Candung and Mrs. Zainab was an alumna of MTI Panca Batu Taba which was located in Minangkabau. Based on suggestions from Sheikh Sulaiman al-Rasuli, Buya Ibrahim started teaching the Yellow Book at MTI Kubang, Luhak Agam. Unfortunately, his father was taken too quickly by the Almighty and did not see Ustadzah Zaimar grow into a daughter who had a strong desire to deepen her religious knowledge. The rapid passing of his father meant that the process of advanced religious learning and the yellow book tradition had not yet been accepted by Ustadzah Zaimar from Buya Ibrahim. Since the age of 10, he has been under the care of his mother and grandfather, who guide him every night with the basics of religious knowledge, including reading and writing the Koran, worship, and divinity (Radhiati, 2023).

Buya Ibrahim in Radhiati's explanation was an intelligent and loving man. As a child, Ustadzah Zaimar was often taken by Buya Ibrahim to MTI Kubang to know the madrasas for the first time. Ustadzah Zaimar was perhaps difficult to understand because she was still small at the time. At least, the introduction has transmitted values and created a strong desire in herself to continue her education at a madrasa which maintained the tradition of teaching the Yellow Book. This wish was often conveyed by Ustadzah Zaimar to Buya Ibrahim on various occasions. Without the presence of a father, she still had a strong desire to continue her education at a school that taught the Yellow Book. Before finishing elementary school, she had already registered as a student at the MTI Pasir Islamic Boarding School. Even though she was still young, Ustadzah Zaimar had no difficulty at all in following religious lessons whose sources came from classical books and works by Middle Eastern scholars. She was recorded as a diligent and intelligent female student who was loved by her teachers and liked by her friends (Radhiati, 2023).

During her education at MTI Pasir, she met the first generation of teachers who had extraordinary abilities in understanding the Yellow Book. Among them were Sheikh Haji Husein Amin, Buya Muhammad Dalin, and Buya Muhammad Adamsar. They were students of Sulaiman al-Rasuli, the ulama who founded the first traditional madrasa in Minangkabau. Buya Haji Husein Amin was a very impressive teacher and greatly influenced her life. Simplicity, determination, worship, and knowledge of the Yellow Book inspired her to continue the Islamic scientific tradition. The types of Yellow Books studied by Ustadzah Zaimar with Sheikh Haji Husein Amin, Muhammad Dalin, and Muhammad Adam Sar while studying at the MTI Pasir Islamic were as follows;

Table. 1 Yellow Book Types

No	Types of Science	Name of Book
1.	Sharaf	Matnu al-Binā' wa al-Asās, Al-Salsal al Mudakhal, Syarh Al-Kailānī, Syarh Tashrīf al-'Izzī, and Al-Matlūb bi Syarh al-Maḡsūd fī al-Taṣrīf
2.	Nahwu	Matnu al-Ajrūmiyyah, Syarh Mukhtaṣar Jiddan, Kawākib al-Dūrriyyah, Ḥāsiyyah al-'Alāmah Abi al-Najā', Qaṭr al-Nadā, Al-Khudārī and Syarh Ibnu al-'Aqīl

3.	Balaghah	Bidāyah al-Balāghah, Al-Tasyhīl, Al-Jauhar al-Maknūm and Syarh Ḥilyah al-Lub al-Muṣawwin
4.	Mantiq	Mafātih al-fikriyyah
5.	'Arudh	Mukhtaṣar al-Ṣāfi
6.	Science of Monotheism (tawhid)	Matnu al-Sanūsiyyah, Al-Aqwāl al-Marḍiyyah, Al-Jawāhir al-Kalāmiyyah, Al-Dūrr al-Farīd, Ḥāsiyyah, Kifāyah al-'Awām, Fath al-Majī, Ḥāsiyyah al-Dasūqī and Al-Husūn al-Hamīdiyyah
7.	Fiqh Science	Safinah al-Najā, Matnu al-Ghāyah wa al-Taqrīb, Syarh Fath al-Qarīb al-Mujīd, I'ānah al-Ṭalibīn and Ḥāsiyyah Qalyubī wa Umairah
8.	Qawa'id Fighiyah	Mubādi' al-Awāliyyah and Al-Asybāh wa al-Nazāir
9.	Ushul Fiqh	Al-Waraqāt, Syarh Laṭāif al-Isyārah, Ḥāsiyyah al-Dimyāfi, Jam' al-Jawāmi' and Syarh Ghāyah al-Uṣūl
10.	Sufism (Thasawwuf)	Al-Akhlāq li al-Banīn, Marāqī' al-'Ubūdiyyah, Waṣāyah al-Abā' li al-Abnā', Ta'līm wa al-Muta'allīm, Durah al-Nāsihīn, Minhāj al-'Ābidīn, Syarh al-Hikam, Daqāiq al-Akbār and Al-Mawa'iz al-'Aṣfuriyyah
11.	Tarekh al-Taysri'	Khulaṣah Nūr al-Yaqīn and Tarīkh Tasyrī'
12.	Tafsir/ Science of Tafsir	Al-Jalālain, Al-Khāzin and Mabāhiṣ fi 'Ulūm al-Qur'an
13.	Hadist/ Science of Hadist	Matnu al-Arba'in, Mukhtār al-Hadiṣ, Ḥāsiyyah al-Syanwānī, Al-Jawāhir al-Bukhārī and Taisir fi Muṣṭalah al-Hadiṣ

Source: List of Yellow Book Subjects at MTI Pasir 2018-2023

The Women Role Reproduction

The Yellow Book Tradition has been going on in Indonesia for a long time in line with the Islamization process whose influence has been so strong since the 13th century AD. In several places in Indonesia (Sumatra, Java, and Kalimantan), the Yellow Book was used by the community as a textbook, reference, and curriculum in the traditional Islamic education system. Minangkabau, as one of the ulama network areas in the Malay Islamic Archipelago world, was already familiar with the Yellow Book which was developed by ulama at the Surau Traditional Education Institute after Sheikh Burhanuddin founded Surau Ulakan, Pariaman, in the second half of the 17th century. Surau Ulakan also developed Islamic scientific traditions in the form of halaqah in Minangkabau surau in the following period (Azyumardi Azra, 2003). The process of teaching the Yellow Book in Minangkabau surau before the 20th century only consisted of a certain discipline of knowledge so students who wanted to deepen various aspects of Islamic teachings had to study by moving from one surau to another. Following the beginning of the 20th century, the teaching of the Yellow Book began to become more neat and orderly, which took place in line with the transformation of surau-surau into madrasas. The conditions are still ongoing today at the MTI Pasir Islamic Boarding School located in Luhak Agam, Minangkabau. This institution is still relatively strong in studying the Yellow Book to continue the traditional Islamic scientific traditions. The books studied at Madrasah Perti are generally the works of scholars who adhere to the beliefs and understandings of Ahlu al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah.

The tradition of the Yellow Book has crystallized in the history of traditional Islamic scholarship where it was championed as a source of religious knowledge and universal values. The teaching of the Yellow Book not only developed in the history of Islamic scholarship in Minangkabau but also in Islamic boarding schools and other traditional educational institutions in the archipelago. Dayah in Aceh and Islamic Boarding Schools on the Island of Java a long time ago were deliberately built by ulama to maintain the continuity of the Yellow Book tradition. The same institution as the Dayah and Islamic Boarding School is the surau which has experienced an expansion in function since the strengthening of Islamic influence in Minangkabau. Before Islam, the surau was only an institution that culturally functioned as a companion to the Rumah Gadang which was provided as a place to stay for boys and a place to pass on Minangkabau traditions and traditional values to the next generation. The function of the surau experienced expansion after the strengthening of Islamic influence used by ulama as a medium for conveying Islamic preaching, religious teaching, and tarekat practice, as well as the teaching of classical books which were usually called Yellow Books in the Malay Islamic World of the Archipelago (Amir Syarifuddin, n.d.).

The transformation of the surau into a madrasa since the beginning of the 20th century placed the Yellow Book tradition in Minangkabau as the collective property of the community. All elements, both men and women who wanted to study and deepen the Yellow Book Tradition had the same opportunity to pursue education. That was why women were starting to be involved in maintaining and teaching the Islamic scientific traditions constructed from the teachings of classical books: works of Middle Eastern scholars. The role of

women as students had increased year after year and contributed to maintaining the continuity of the Yellow Book tradition in Indonesia. Through the education process, women were not only introduced to the learning schemes and teachings of the Yellow Book but were also prepared as the next generation who wanted to maintain the continuity of traditional Islamic scientific traditions to the next generation. After independence, women began to develop their role as Yellow Book teachers. One of them was Ustadzah Zaimar who became a teacher at the MTI Pasir Islamic Boarding School.

The Yellow Book teacher was an important position occupied by Ustadzah Zaimar. This position was achieved in a long historical process that began with the interaction, socialization, and internalization of traditional Islamic scientific structures. After going through a series of habitus formation processes, Ustadzah Zaimar began to reproduce roles following the intellectual model she acquired during her education. She started teaching the Yellow Book at MTI Gassan Besar, Padang Pariaman Regency. On the orders of the teacher who she admired, Buya Haji Husein Amin, she carried out this work for seven years as part of the cadre process for teachers who were prepared to maintain the continuity of the yellow book tradition at MTI Pasir. This cadre training, which was usually called an assistant teacher, aimed to ensure that she could not only gain recognition from the madrasa where he studied but also from other madrasas in Minangkabau. Ustadzah Zaimar carried out this process patiently for seven years and she was given the opportunity by the leadership of MTI Gassan Besar to teach only the first class which still used basic books, such as *Matnu al-Binā' wa al-Asās* (Sharaf) and *Matnu al-Ajrūmiyyah* (Basic Arab Grammar). The events of the Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia (PRRI) which rocked West Sumatra in 1958 prompted MTI leader Gassan Besar to return Ustadzah Zaimar to MTI Pasir and taught at the school until she married Baharuddin on October 13, 1961. Post-wedding she followed her beloved husband to live together in the Tembilahan area, Riau Province until 1970. After returning to Minangkabau in 1970, she taught again at MTI Pasir until she died in 2020. More than half of his life was spent serving religion and teaching the Yellow Book at MTI Pasir. Some of the subjects held by Ustadzah Zaimar were Arabic (nahwu and sharaf), monotheism, and Sufism. Her expertise was monotheism and Sufism which received recognition from MTI Pasir as a place where she taught.

Ustadzah Zaimar was not only a Yellow Book teacher at the madrasa but also a halaqah (ḥalqah) guide at his home. Previously, this position in Minangkabau was a job dominated by men. Sheikh Sa'ad Mungka in Luhak Lima Puluh Kota, Sheikh Muhammad Khatib Ali in Padang City, and Sheikh Sulaiman al-Rasuli in Luhak Agam were among the halaqah instructors who were very popular among traditional Muslims in Minangkabau, Indonesia. Even though the surau educational institution had changed to Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah (MTI) at the beginning of the 20th century, the halaqah system was still maintained as a teaching model for transmitting Islamic teachings. Halaqah was the oldest system of teaching Islamic studies in Indonesia which was carried out by students sitting on the floor and forming a circle to listen to a teacher (Kiyai) read and explain a certain book (Hanum Asrohan, 1997; Haidar Putra Daulay, 2009). The halaqah system held by Ustadzah Zaimar was an informal learning process, not part of the madrasa program. This system was implemented voluntarily based on requests from students who wanted to study the Yellow Book. Since 1970, Traditional Islamic Boarding Schools in Indonesia have experienced a reduction in Yellow Book study hours because they have to study the State Madrasah curriculum. The implementation of the Three Ministerial Decree Number 6 of 1975 concerning Improving the Quality of Education in madrasas in Indonesia raised dilemmatic problems faced by almost all traditional Islamic Boarding Schools. This condition was very contrary to the hopes of parents who sent their children to traditional madrasas so that they could master the Yellow Book.

The difficulties caused by the implementation of the Three Ministers' SKB gave rise to the initiative of female teachers to hold halaqah voluntarily in their respective homes to support the teaching process in madrasas. This initiative grew along with the development of students at traditional madrasas which from year to year became increasingly crowded and needed new halaqah places to study and deepen the Yellow Book Tradition. The first initiative emerged from Ustadzah Zaimar, who since the 1970s began accepting MTI Pasir students to attend halaqah at her house in the evenings. Students who had the desire, both male and female, came to Ustadzah Zaimar's house and took part in the learning process in the halaqah system. The implementation of halaqah at Ustadzah Zaimar's house was also attended by other female teachers, such as Ustadzah Husna, Syamsiar, Syamsiar, and Tasliatul Fuad (Tasliatul Fuad and Herneli, 2023). The role of the teacher and the Yellow Book halaqah guide played by Ustadzah Zaimar had an important meaning in maintaining the teachings of *Ahlu al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah* in Indonesia. This teaching was built from the thoughts of Imam Abu Hasan al-Ash'ari in theology, Imam Syafi'i in fiqh, and Imam al-Ghazali in Sufism. Therefore, the theological books taught by Ustadzah Zaimar, both in madrasas and halaqah at home, were books that were in line with the thoughts of Imam Abu Hasan al-Ash'ari. One of its thoughts is the problem of the attributes of God whose existence is eternal and inherent. According to Imam Abu Hasan al-Ash'ari, God knows with knowledge, rules with qudrat (authority), lives with hayāh (life), wills with irādah (will), speaks with kalām (talking), hears with *sama'* (hearing), and sees with baṣar (sight). Even though these qualities are

eternal, their existence is neither God nor other than Him. This view was put forward by Imam Abu Hasan al-Asya'ari to avoid the impression of eternal numeracy (Ta'addud al-Qudāma) (al-Taftazani, 1985; al-Kalabazi, 1960).

The book *Al-Aqwāl al-Marḍīyyah* written by Sheikh Sulaiman al-Rasuli is one of the books taught by Ustadzah Zaimar at MTI Pasir. This book explains the attributes of Allah in the framework of a discussion of 50 creeds which consist of 20 obligatory attributes, 20 impossible attributes and 1 must attribute (jāiz). The discussion is complemented by a study of the 4 characteristics that are mandatory for the apostle, 4 impossible characteristics, and 1 mandatory characteristic (jāiz) (Sulaiman al-Rasuli, 1933). The book *Matnu al-Sanūsiyyah*, written by a Sunni ulama from Morocco; Imam Muhammad bin Yusūf al-Sanūsī (born 832 H/1428 AD), is a book containing the teachings of Ahlu al-Sunnah wa la-Jamā'ah. Imam Muhammad bin Yusūf al-Sanūsī as the author of the book was a scholar and follower of Imam Abu Hasan al-Asy'ari (al-Sanusiyah, 2010). Other theological books studied in the higher class of MTI Pasir are an expansion of the discussion of the basic books that describe the attributes of God and are also equipped with studies on the apostolate, holy books, angels, the Day of Judgment and destiny (al-Bajuri, n.d.). The style of moral Sufism thought developed by Imam al-Ghazali is the main consideration in determining the Sufism books taught by Ustadzah Zaimair at MTI Pasir. This style of Sufism is very different from the philosophical Sufism that appeared previously because the construction of its teachings combines mystical and philosophical views. Philosophical Sufism, which began to develop in the 4th century H, was generally introduced by Sufis who were also philosophers. Meanwhile, moral Sufism is more oriented towards moral education because its teachings were developed by Sufis to regulate mental attitudes and discipline behavior without using complicated theories and philosophical views (al-Taftazani, 1985). The used of books *Durah al-Naṣihin*, *Minhāj al-'Ābidīn*, *Syarh al-Hikam*, *Daqāiq al-Akhhbār*, and *al-Mawā'izh al-'Aṣfūriyyah* which revealed more of the sagas and stories reflected the worldview of the Ahlu al-Sunnah wa al-Jamaah.

Conclusion

Ustadzah Zaimar's interaction with the Yellow Book Tradition, apart from being a momentum for adaptation and socialization, was a space that provided an ongoing internalization process. Through internalization, she could understand the knowledge that she had learned, thus growing awareness to see, assess, and face the teaching tradition of the Yellow Book which was full of certain schemes and patterns. At that time, Ustadzah Zaimar already had the intellectual capital to follow the field of teaching competition in the Yellow Book Tradition in Indonesia. The amount of intellectual capital possessed by Ustadzah Zaimar encouraged the leadership of the MTI Pasir Islamic Boarding School to recruit her as a Yellow Book teacher. Over time she got greater legitimacy in teaching Arabic grammar books, Theology, and Sufism. After obtaining a position as a teacher, Ustadzah Zaimar developed a new role as a halaqah guide and defender of Ahlu al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah.

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