

The Five *Bai'at* of the Sheikh Musthafa Husein: Contextualization of National Values in the Current Era

Faisal Musa*, Datuk Imam Marzuki, Susanti Hasibuan

Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri Mandailing Natal, Indonesia

*Correspondence: ✉ faisalmusa@stain-madina.ac.id

<https://doi.org/10.51214/biis.v4i2.1614>

ABSTRACT

This study explores the meaning of the bai'at of Sheikh Mustafa Husein and relates it to the contemporary context at Pesantren Musthafawiyah Purba Baru. The research employs a qualitative approach using functional theory, which views society as a system consisting of interconnected parts that work together to maintain the stability and balance of the whole. This theory was developed by sociologists Émile Durkheim, Talcott Parsons, and Robert K. Merton. The content of the bai'at emphasizes commitments such as refraining from adultery, not taking human life, avoiding immoral acts, worshiping none other than Allah forever, and pledging not to betray the homeland and religion until the end of time. In relation to the present context, this bai'at is effective in fostering a spirit of nationalism among the santri. They continue to uphold their dignity in interactions with non-mahram individuals, exercise patience to avoid conflict, and preserve the purity of their monotheistic faith in Allah, affirming Him as the one and only God on earth.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini menjelaskan tentang makna *Bai'at* Syekh Mustafa Husein dan menghubungkannya dengan kondisi kekinian di Pesantren Musthafawiyah Purba Baru. Dengan pendekatan kualitatif menggunakan teori fungsional yang melihat masyarakat sebagai suatu sistem yang terdiri dari bagian-bagian saling terhubung. Berfungsi untuk menjaga stabilitas dan keseimbangan keseluruhan sistem. Teori ini dikembangkan oleh sosiolog Émile Durkheim, Talcott Parsons dan Robert K. Merton. Adapun makna isi *bai'at* tersebut tidak akan melakukan zina, tidak membunuh jiwa manusia, tidak berbuat kemaksiatan, tidak menyembah selain Allah untuk selama-lamanya selama-lamanya dan terakhir tidak mengkhianati tanah air dan agama sampai akhir zaman. Adapun kaitannya dengan kondisi kekinian yaitu efektif dalam membentuk semangat kebangsaan di kalangan santri. Santri tetap menjaga marwah dan harga dirinya dihadapan yang bukan muhrimnya. Santri juga selalu menjaga kesabaran untuk menghindari konflik. Selanjutnya santri menjaga kemurnian tauhidnya kepada Allah, menjadikan Allah sebagai Tuhan satu-satunya di muka bumi.

ARTICLE INFO

Article History

Received: 10-09-2025

Revised: 05-10-2025

Accepted: 10-10-2025

Keywords:

Bai'at;
Functional Theory;
Islamic Education;
Nationalism;
Santri;
Sheikh Mustafa Husein.

Histori Artikel

Diterima: 10-09-2025

Direvisi: 05-10-2025

Disetujui: 10-10-2025

Kata Kunci:

Bai'at;
Nasionalisme;
Pendidikan Islam;
Santri;
Syekh Mustafa Husein;
Teori Fungsional.

© 2025 Faisal Musa, Datuk Imam Marzuki, Susanti Hasibuan



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/).

A. INTRODUCTION

Bai'at is essentially an expression of loyalty and moral commitment deeply rooted in Islamic tradition. In the past, it served as a bond between leaders and followers, as well as “a glue” between community members in achieving common goals. Today, the meaning of *bai'at* is no longer limited to ritual aspects, but can be reinterpreted as a social, spiritual, and ethical

value that remains relevant to addressing the challenges of the times.¹ *Bai'at* can be understood as an inner fortress that safeguards a community's beliefs, identity, and commitment. While a physical fortress serves to protect a region from external threats, *bai'at* serves as a guardian that strengthens the community against internal rifts and ensures that noble values remain steadfast.

This pledge of allegiance (*bai'at*) is not merely a traditional ceremony or a promise between fellow human beings, but also a manifestation of obedience to God Almighty. As His creatures, we have obligations and responsibilities not only to God but also to the universe. Therefore, our various activities, both within institutions and in our daily lives, are always based on religious norms. This pledge serves not only as a confirmation but also as a guideline for life that we must uphold.

A solemn oath of allegiance serves as a bulwark of faith for students. It serves as a filter, protecting them from various deviant views, whether radical, liberal, or other ideologies that could potentially shake their faith. By taking oath of allegiance, students affirm their commitment to remaining on the straight path of Islamic teachings, preventing them from being easily swayed by misleading currents of thought.²

Along with developments, currently, the *bai'at* in Musthafawiyah Purba Baru is not only carried out through direct oath-taking, but has developed into other forms that are more relevant to the current context. In addition to being a ceremonial ritual, *bai'at* in Musthafawiyah is also taught in formal education through a number of subjects. The inheritance of the values of *bai'at* is carried out through the teaching of books that teach nationalism and love of the homeland, particularly the book '*Idotun Nasyii'in* by *Musthafa al-Ghalaya'in*. Furthermore, the pledge of allegiance is also carried out through national activities and the instilling of nationalistic values in the daily lives of students. This transformation reflects that the pledge of allegiance remains part of a living tradition, a tradition that not only survives but also continues to adapt to the dynamics of the times.³

The tradition of *bai'at* at Musthafawiyah Purba Baru serves as a reminder that every student has a relationship not only with God and religion, but also with the homeland. The tradition of *bai'at*, called *the five bai'at* taught by Sheikh Musthafa Husein al Mandily, is unique compared to traditions in other Islamic boarding schools. In this tradition, students make a promise or loyalty or what is called *bai'at* before their teacher and is part of the graduation procession. *Bai'at* in this context is not merely ceremonial, but part of the educational system that instills discipline and obedience to the *kiai*. The tradition of *bai'at* inherited at the Musthafawiyah Purba Baru Islamic Boarding School contains values relevant to the spirit of nationalism, where students promise and swear to never betray and commit crimes against the nation and state forever. Therefore, from the introduction above, we want to examine the meaning of Sheikh Musthafa Husein's *bai'at* and connect it with the current conditions at the MustafawiyahPurba Baru Islamic Boarding School.

The urgency of this research lies in the importance of understanding how the long-standing tradition of *bai'at* (pledge of allegiance) in Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) in Indonesia can adapt and function in facing the challenges of the times, particularly in shaping

¹H Khaeriyah, "Baiat Dan Perilaku Beragama," *Tasamuh: Jurnal Studi Islam* 9, no. 1 (2017): 291–316.

²Samsul Bahri, Zainuddin, and Muhammad Husni bin Ismail, "*Bai'at* Dalam Al-Qur'an Menurut Pandangan Ibnu Katsir Samsul," *Tafse: Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 4, no. 2 (2019): 182–94.

³(Hobsbawm, Eric & Ranger, 1983)

nationalism among students (*santri*). Amidst rapidly evolving social, political, and ideological challenges, the understanding and practice of *bai'at*, which prioritizes loyalty to religion and nation, is highly relevant. *Bai'at* in Islamic boarding schools, previously understood merely as a religious ritual, must now be able to address the need for character education and nationalism in the increasingly complex context of globalization and pluralism.

Several previous studies have highlighted the role of *bai'at* in social and religious contexts, but approaches linking *bai'at* to national values are still limited. Research conducted by Sulastrri & Badrus shows that *bai'at* can function to strengthen nationalism among Islamic boarding school students (*santri*), but their focus is more on the role of *bai'at* in the context of strengthening the moral and spiritual character of students. This study shares similarities in examining *bai'at* as a means of character education, but differs in its context, which places more emphasis on transforming the meaning of *bai'at* into a form of intellectual nationalism relevant to the challenges of the times.⁴ Another study by Musa reveals that *bai'at* in the Musthafawiyah Islamic Boarding School has a dual role, namely as a pledge of religious loyalty and a form of strengthening nationalism. This study is in line with Musa's findings, but offers a deeper perspective on how *bai'at* transforms in the context of Islamic education that focuses on nationality.⁵ Furthermore, research by Syaefuddin on the preaching of love for the homeland by KH. Habib Luthfi also shows the importance of the role of da'wah in fostering national spirit, but emphasizes more on the dimension of da'wah as a means of political mobilization, while this study highlights the allegiance as an educational instrument.⁶

Hidayat's research on the influence of Islamic boarding school education on nationalism is also relevant, with findings indicating that Islamic boarding schools play a significant role in instilling national values. However, the difference lies in the focus of this research, which is more specific to the tradition of *bai'at* (pledge of allegiance) at the Musthafawiyah Islamic Boarding School and how this tradition serves as an instrument for fostering nationalism among students within the context of formal and non-formal education at the boarding school.⁷ This finding is also in line with research by Tubagus Surur, which discusses the integration of national values into da'wah (Islamic preaching), but this article emphasizes this integration in the form of a more structural *bai'at* tradition.⁸

Overall, this article offers novelty in explaining how *bai'at*, which in many previous studies was understood as a religious ritual or moral strengthening, is now presented in the form of intellectual nationalism that prioritizes students' critical understanding of the nation. This research shows that *bai'at* is not merely a ritual, but functions as a tool for internalizing national values that are applicable in social, cultural, and educational life. This novelty offers a new perspective in the study of Islamic education and the pesantren tradition, by highlighting

⁴Sulaiman Sulastrri and Badrus, "Peran Kyai Dalam Membentuk Kemandirian Santri Broken Home," *Indonesian Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* 2, no. 3 (2021): 183–196, <https://doi.org/10.33367/ijhass.v2i3.2197>.

⁵Faisal Musa, "Pesantren Musthafawiyah Purbabaru: Studi Kontinuitas Tradisi Pesantren Di Tapanuli Bagian Selatan" (Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, 2023).

⁶M Syaefuddin, "Dakwah Cinta Tanah Air Oleh KH," *Habib Luthfi*. "Journal of Islamic Leadership and Politics, n.d.

⁷Muhamad Taufik Hidayat, "Pengaruh Pendidikan Pesantren Terhadap Nasionalisme Santri," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 20, no. 1 (2020): 45–58.

⁸Surur Tubagus, "Transformasi Nasionalisme Habib Luthfi Dalam Dakwah," *Jurnal Dakwah Dan Kebangsaan* 10, no. 2 (2020): 234–245.

the changing dynamics of *bai'at* that are able to adapt to the challenges of globalization and social change without losing its essence as a religious and national commitment.

The purpose of this study is to examine and analyze the meaning of the *bai'at* tradition of Sheikh Mustafa Husein at the Musthafawiyah Purba Baru Islamic Boarding School, and to explore its relevance in the contemporary context. This study also aims to understand how *bai'at* can function as an instrument in fostering a spirit of nationalism among students and how this tradition is transformed according to the challenges of the times. In addition, this study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the role of *bai'at* in Islamic education and nationalism, as well as offer new perspectives in social and cultural studies in Indonesia.

B. METHODS

This research focuses on *bai'at*, a teaching that is at the heart of the Pesantren Musthafawiyah Purba Baru. Using a qualitative approach and historical methods,⁹ we trace the journey of this teaching, from its formulation by the founder of the *pesantren*, Sheikh Musthafa Husein, to how this teaching is brought to life in teaching and learning activities at the pesantren today. Pesantren Musthafawiyah Purba Baru was chosen because of its long history in Islamic education and its commitment to national values. This research process follows four important stages in the historical method: heuristics (collecting data from various sources), verification (assessing the authenticity and credibility of sources), interpretation (critically analyzing data), and historiography (composing all findings into a historical narrative).

The data we collected came from three main sources: interviews, observations, and documentation. By studying the original manuscripts of *Hizbul Musthafawi*, documents related to *Bai'at*, and other references about the concept of *Bai'at* in the Islamic boarding school tradition in Indonesia. Informants in this study include: Islamic boarding school caretakers and *kiai* figures who are directly involved in the implementation of the *bai'at* tradition. Students who have followed the *bai'at* tradition in depth, and alumni of Islamic boarding schools who can provide historical perspectives and the impact of tradition on the formation of nationalism. In an effort to verify the data, researchers conduct in-depth internal and external criticism of data obtained from various sources, both primary and secondary. To analyze the sustainability of *the five Bai'at*, researchers use functional theory, a sociological perspective that views society as a system consisting of interconnected parts. Where each part has a function to maintain the stability and balance of the entire system. This theory was developed by classical sociologists such as Émile Durkheim and later refined by figures such as Talcott Parsons and Robert K. Merton.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. History of the *Bai'at* and a Short Biography of Sheikh Mustafa Husein

The loyalty and steadfastness of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad recorded as one of the most amazing stories in history. In fact, their initial intention was only to perform the Umrah peacefully. In fact, before leaving, they asked the Messenger of Allah to be allowed

⁹ Sharan B. Merriam and Elizabeth J. Tisdell, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, 4th Edition (California, United States of America: Jossey Bass, 2015).

to carry weapons as a form of precaution, but he firmly refused, "*I'm not going to war, I just want to perform Umrah*," he stated.

The Muhajirin and Ansar leaders also expressed their views, but the Prophet Muhammad remained steadfast. Then, in a tense situation, he called on his companions to prepare to face the enemy, even if it meant dying. This call was met with great enthusiasm. The companions flocked to declare their allegiance with such enthusiasm that the crowd became so dense that even their belongings were trampled underfoot.¹⁰

As the Islamic army prepared to conquer Mecca in the 8th year of the Hijriah, a historic event occurred. This journey began on the 10th of Ramadan, with the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) leading 10,000 Muslims from Medina. Initially, both the Prophet and his army fasted. However, upon reaching Kadid, an area between Usfan and Amaj, the Prophet broke his fast. This act exemplified the leniency of fasting for travelers.

The journey continued until they finally rested at Marru Zhahran. There, the troops grew in size with the joining of the Banu Sulaim and Banu Muzainah. Many other tribes also sent representatives who had converted to Islam to join the journey. Most importantly, not a single Muhajirin or Ansar was left behind. They all faithfully accompanied the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) on this important expedition.

History records a crucial moment following the death of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). A sense of grief enveloped the Companions, but amidst this sadness, an important tradition revived: the tradition of *bai'at* (pledge of allegiance). This tradition was not merely a pledge of allegiance, but also a pledge of support for the election of a new leader. Uniquely, this process began even before his body was buried. M. Ayoub describes in detail how the Companions worked together to gain support from various parties. The story begins with Al-Abbas, a figure full of concern and curiosity. He met with Abu Bakr and Umar, asking if there was a special message from the Prophet regarding who would succeed him as leader. Not stopping there, Al-Abbas also met with Ali ibn Abi Talib with the same question. In fact, M. Ayoub notes that Al-Abbas was the first to pledge allegiance to Ali, an act that demonstrates the dynamics and complexity of the relationships between the Companions at that historic moment. By retelling this story, we not only present the facts but also present the human side of the characters. This story is not only about succession, but also about trust, commitment, and a sincere search for truth in difficult times.

Sheikh Musthafa Husein is the founder of the oldest Islamic boarding school and has had a wide network in almost all regions of Indonesia.¹¹ As a pioneer of the Islamic boarding school tradition in North Sumatra, Sheikh Musthafa Husein was the founder of the Musthafawiyah Purba Baru Islamic Boarding School in 1912. In its more than a century of age, the Musthafawiyah Purba Baru Islamic boarding school is still one of the main preferences of the community in pursuing religious knowledge, not only in North Sumatra but also in Indonesia in general. Currently (2025), the Musthafawiyah Islamic boarding school fosters no less than 14,000 students, and graduates thousands of students every year.

As a Muslim intellectual, Sheikh Mustafa Husein's thinking transcended that of his contemporaries. He was not only known as a prominent scholar and educator who contributed greatly to the propagation and transmission of Islamic knowledge in North

¹⁰(Al-Ghadban, 1992)

¹¹(Musa, 2023)

Sumatra, but he was also a fighter, thinker, academic, organizer, economist, and even a highly accomplished politician of his time.

Sheikh Musthafa Husen al Mandily (1886-1955) as a prominent cleric in North Sumatra, Sheikh Musthafa Husein was a Nusantara cleric from Mandailing. This can be seen from the *nisbat* al Mandily that accompanies his name. As a great cleric, fighter and a very influential figure in the development of Islamic da'wah and education in North Sumatra, the name Sheikh Musthafa Husein is certainly familiar to the Muslim community in Southern Tapanuli and in North Sumatra in general. After 13 years of studying in *Harāmāin* (1900-1912), precisely on the 1st of Muharram in 1332 H/1912 AD, Sheikh Musthafa Husein returned to Nusantara (Indonesia). Exactly in 1912 after completing the Hajj pilgrimage, he then left to return to Nusantara, to his birthplace in Mandailing.

2. The Meaning of the *Bai'at* of Sheikh Musthafa Husein

Muhammad succeeded in making one of the greatest achievements in the history of leadership: uniting the nation through *bai'at*, a sacred vow that binds hearts and souls. This pledge of allegiance is not only a political tool, but also animates every aspect of the people's lives, permeating worship, muamalah and sharia. In fact, in order to maintain and protect this unity, they are not afraid to face war as a form of self-defense¹².

In the context of Indonesian Muslims, the tradition of *bai'at* (pledge of allegiance) has long been a part of religious and social practices, including in Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), where it serves as a means of spiritual development and strengthening national commitment (nationalism). During the struggle for independence, *bai'at* played a strategic role in fostering loyalty and fighting spirit among students (*santri*). Through *bai'at*, students are taught to develop a strong sense of patriotism, and it even becomes a pledge of loyalty to jihad on the battlefield for religion and nation.

One form of national pledge that is part of the Islamic scholarly tradition in the archipelago is the five pledges, taught by Sheikh Musthafa Husein al-Mandily at the Musthafawiyah Purba Baru Islamic Boarding School. This teaching is documented in *Hizbul Musthafawi*, a manuscript compiled in 1987 by his student, Sheikh Ali Hasan Ahmad. The manuscript contains various teachings, such as the Five Prayers, the Five Fatihahs, the *Five Bai'ats*, the Five Oaths, the Five Istighfars, as well as the hizb and others. One of the main aspects of the *five pledges* is the promise of loyalty not to betray religion, nation, and state.

The following are the five pledges of allegiance taught by Sheikh Musthafa Husein as contained in the *Hizbul Musthafawi* text :

بيعة ليم :

1. اباع الله ان لا أزنى ولا الوط مدى الاوقات وطول الزمان
2. اباع الله ان لا أقتل النفس التي حرم الله في جميع الاوقات والاولان
3. اباع الله ان لا أرتكب المحرمات والمنهيات وجميع العصيان
4. اباع الله اني لا أشرك بالله شيئاً ولا اعبد الا الله ما تحرك المملوك
5. اباع الله ان لا أخون الوطن والدين من الان الى اخر الزمان

¹²(Black, 2006)

Five Bai'at:

1. I pledge allegiance to Allah that I will not commit adultery and sexual intercourse forever.
2. I pledge allegiance to Allah not to kill souls which Allah has forbidden at all times and ages.
3. I pledge allegiance to Allah that I will not do things that are forbidden, things that are prohibited, and all forms of disobedience.
4. I pledge allegiance to Allah, do not associate anything with Allah, and I worship none other than Allah, forever.
5. I pledge allegiance to Allah that I will not betray my homeland and religion from now until the end of time

In particular, the Qur'an mentions the allegiance of believers to the Prophet Muhammad in Surah al-Mumtahanah: 12, which means: "*O Prophet, when believing women come to you to promise allegiance - that they will reject all forms of shirk, will not steal, will not commit adultery, and will not neglect their children - and promise to tell the truth and always obey you in kindness, then accept their promise warmly. Ask for forgiveness from Allah for them, because indeed Allah is Forgiving, Most Merciful* (Al-Mumtahanah: 12).

In line with an interview with Ustad Amir Husein, "*The first point of the pledge of allegiance discusses adultery, because it addresses honor for us, as students, at that time, when we were still teenagers. Therefore, it was obligatory for us to distance ourselves from such attitudes and behaviors*" (Interview with Mr. Amir Husein, Sidempuan, July 20, 2023).

Adultery, as an act that violates the sanctity of marriage, fundamentally undermines the very foundation of society: the family. The family is the pillar that supports the continuity of a civilization. When adultery is allowed to continue, we are allowing destruction to creep into the very fabric of society, eroding the noble values that should be preserved. Islam, as a religion that promotes harmony and strength, strongly opposes this practice. The prohibition of adultery is not merely a rule, but a form of protection to ensure a strong and sovereign society. The impact of adultery not only damages the social and spiritual fabric but also has detrimental consequences for physical health. By avoiding adultery, we maintain personal purity, protect our families, and ultimately, create a healthy, peaceful, and blessed society.

The second pledge addresses intentional murder. This occurs when a person is aware that their actions could lead to death, but they still do so. This is a heinous act that takes a life. In a slightly different case, there is also a similar intentional murder, where the initial intention was not to kill, but the act went beyond the bounds and resulted in death. This can occur when someone injures another person but goes too far, resulting in death. The perpetrator remains responsible because they intentionally committed a dangerous act.

Killing is eliminating, killing, taking someone's life. As in Surah Al-An'am: 151. Meaning : *Say (Muhammad), "Let me read to you what God has forbidden you. Don't associate anything with Him, be good to your parents, don't kill your children because they are poor. We are the ones who provide sustenance to you and to them; Do not kill people whom Allah has forbidden except for a valid reason. Thus He commanded you so that you understand.*

The discussion is in accordance with the interview with Syafrizal, a 2017 alumnus. He said, "*Bai'at in our time is still carried out, as for the Ustad's explanation in the second point regarding the prohibition on murder, it is forbidden for us to kill a human soul. The explanation of the evidence is given by many of our ustads* (Interview with Syafrizal in Medan, July 10, 2025).

Next, we discuss the fourth point of *bai'at*, saying the pledge of allegiance to make Allah the only God and the Prophet Muhammad as His messenger. He requires us to actually practice all His commandments and avoid all His prohibitions in everyday life, not just words without deeds. Unfortunately, many Muslims today understand allegiance only as an initial formality. In fact, true Islam must be reflected in every step. The attitude of associating partners with Allah or committing shirk is one of the biggest sins and Allah will not forgive those who commit shirk as He says in Surah an-Nisa: 116. Meaning: *Allah will not forgive the sin of shirk (associating partners with Allah with something), and He forgives other sins for whom He wills. And whoever associates (something) with Allah, then indeed, he has gone very far astray* (An-Nisa: 116).

This statement was confirmed by Mr. Maratua Simanjuntak: *"We were indoctrinated that there is nothing to fear but Allah in this world. There is no God worthy of worship except Allah. The faith instilled in us at this Islamic boarding school was so strong that we truly upheld our monotheism until the end of our lives"* (Interview with Dr. Maratua Simanjuntak, Chairman of the North Sumatra MUI, Medan, July 11, 2025).

The vow of *syahadatain* is not just a word, but a sacred bond, a covenant (*bai'at*) between a servant and Allah and His Messenger. When this promise is understood and embraced wholeheartedly, religious violations will disappear from the lives of Muslims. Because, with the shahada, a person has vowed to avoid shirk, the biggest unforgivable sin. As emphasized by Ahmad Mustafa al-Maraghi, Allah will not forgive the sin of shirk. Because it is like poison that destroys the main foundation of Islamic teachings. It damages the soul and mind of the perpetrator, and can even poison harmony in society. Therefore, the wisdom behind the unforgivable sin of polytheism is that humans strive to cleanse themselves of all forms of polytheism, purify monotheism, and maintain the purity of their religion.

The fifth point of the oath of allegiance discusses love for one's homeland. This pledge and promise of allegiance are not merely traditional ceremonies or promises between fellow human beings, but also a manifestation of obedience to God Almighty. As His creatures, we have obligations and responsibilities not only to God but also to the universe. Therefore, all activities we undertake, both in bureaucracy and daily life, are always based on religious norms. This pledge serves not only as a confirmation but also as a guideline for life that must be upheld.

Among the five pledges of allegiance taught by Sheikh Mustafa Husein that contain strong nationalistic values is the fifth pledge, namely, *"Ubayi'u llaha an la akhuna al-wathan wa al-dina min al-ana ila akhir al-zaman."* The translation of the sentence is *"I promise to Allah that I will not betray the nation and religion forever."* This pledge explicitly contains nationalistic values that integrate religious and national identities. Meanwhile, the state becomes a "big house" where this solidarity develops. Through rules and laws that regulate, the state encourages the growth of a sense of nationalism. This is a deep feeling that ultimately gives rise to a "moral obligation" to protect and defend the homeland, transcending ethnic, tribal, or other background barriers. The pledge or promise of allegiance, which we often call *bai'at*, has extraordinary power as a glue. It is not just a promise, but a knot that unites individuals within the framework of religious and national solidarity. Both religious and state ties complement each other and form a solid foundation.

Cultivating nationalism among young people is a crucial foundation for sustainably shaping the nation's character. In Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), nationalism can be

implemented in daily life through education. By integrating national values into the learning process, Islamic boarding schools can play a crucial role in education, thereby gaining greater recognition from the government.

This is in line with an interview with Prof. Pagar Hasibuan, who revealed: "*At the Musthafawiyah Islamic Boarding School, we are still taught to love this country. One of the ways we do this is by holding ceremonies and raising the red and white flag. This proves that we love the unity of Indonesia*" (Interview with Prof. PagarHasibuan at UIN SU Medan, July 11, 2025).

Islamic boarding schools, as traditional educational institutions led by *kiai* (Islamic scholars), have unique ways of instilling these values. One way is through history lessons, which are an effective means of building national character. Teachers also continually encourage students to practice nationalism in their daily lives. Essentially, the nationalism taught is rooted in the values of Pancasila. Nationalism in Indonesia is grounded in a spirit of nationalism, which is expected to guide the behavior of every citizen. Its implementation can be done both formally and informally, ensuring these values are truly ingrained in each individual.

3. *Bai'at* and Its Relationship with Nationalism

The national pledge procession at Musthafawiyah Purba Baru is currently also carried out through certain moments, such as National Santri Day which is commemorated every October 22nd, where at the santri day ceremony, the santri reiterate the pledge of allegiance to the santri as a national commitment. In addition, the pledge of allegiance is also carried out through state ceremonies, in this case the pledge is one of a series of events at the Islamic boarding school to remind the students of the struggle of the ulama and santri in seizing and fighting for independence. On the other hand, the national pledge is also carried out through the song "*Yalalwathan*" which is sung every day and especially at the opening of every official Islamic boarding school event, as a form of 'cultural pledge' to the homeland. Through the tradition of pledge of allegiance, the role of the *kiai*, and education that integrates Islam and nationality, the Musthafawiyah Purba Baru Islamic boarding school continues to contribute to forming a generation of students who are religious, have integrity, and love their homeland.

As Dr. Salamudin put it, "*The Hizbul Musthafawi text not only contains the doctrine of the oath of allegiance, but also the 'hizb' (the teachings of Islam). It is like a sturdy fortress for each student to live their life. They are taught to love their country and protect it from traitors*" (Interview with Dr. Salamudin in Medan, July 10, 2025).

In this context, the doctrine of *bai'at* taught at Musthafawiyah is not only about devotion to God, but also includes devotion to the nation and fellow human beings. This *bai'at* serves as a means to instill a sense of responsibility in students, ensuring that they are fighting not only for religion and family, but also for the nation and state. This factor aligns with *the fervor* of nationalism that developed among students and ulema (Islamic scholars) during the time of independence. The teachings of Sheikh Musthafa Husein in this book clearly emphasize the importance of a spirit of nationalism and love for the homeland. Furthermore, students are also equipped with weapons and self-defense skills, both physical and spiritual.

Nationalism is a belief that every citizen is part of a nation and has an obligation to defend their country and love their homeland. According to Azra,¹³ nationalism is a psychological

¹³(2003)

state in which a person's total loyalty is directly committed to the nation-state in the name of the nation. Thus, nationalism is a national consciousness committed to collectively achieving, maintaining, and preserving the identity, integrity, prosperity, and strength of a nation. According to this belief, an individual's highest loyalty must be given to the nation-state. In other words, a nationalist is someone who is willing to die for the sake of the nation and is willing to sacrifice for the interests of the country and nation. Indonesian nationalism encompasses values such as rejecting imperialism, patriotism, independence, religiosity, humanity, and democracy.

Hizbul Musthafawi manuscript clearly reflects Sheikh Musthafa Husein's ideology related to national commitment or spirit. This national commitment (nationalism) further emphasizes that Sheikh Musthafa Husein is a scholar, leader, and nationalist who can no longer be doubted. Sheikh Musthafa Husein, in the context of North Sumatra, is a symbol of the struggle of a scholar who not only teaches religion but also serves as a fortress of defense of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia,¹⁴ through the Islamic educational institutions he founded. One of the efforts he took to instill the value of nationalism among his students was through the oath of allegiance and loyalty to the nation and religion. With this oath of allegiance and loyalty, nationalism was ingrained in the souls of the students.

Unlike the general pledge of allegiance, which focuses solely on religious ties, the pledge of allegiance at the Musthafawiyah Purba Baru Islamic Boarding School has broader dimensions, namely religious and nationalism. The pledge taught by Sheikh Musthafa Husein is not merely a spiritual promise, but also a strong commitment to the Indonesian state and nation. Sheikh Musthafa Husein believes that true students are those who not only master religious knowledge but also possess a high spirit of sacrifice for the nation and state. Therefore, through this pledge tradition, students who will graduate from the Islamic boarding school are trained to always steadfastly defend the nation, religion, and homeland.

An interview with Dr. Maratua Simanjuntak stated, "*When we were studying at the Islamic boarding school, at Musthafawiyah in the 1960s, Indonesia was facing a communist movement, where religious teachers or ulama were one of their targets. So at that time we prepared by participating in self-defense, the goal was so that we could defend the Islamic boarding school and the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia*" (Interview with Dr. Maratua Simanjuntak, at the North Sumatra MUI Office, Medan, July 11, 2025).

In modern society, the concept of *bai'at* has undergone significant evolution. The pledge of allegiance, once synonymous with the spiritual realm, has now become a political endorsement embodied in the electoral system. Through democracy, the principle of one man, one vote provides every individual with an equal opportunity to choose their leader. This phenomenon is not unique to Western countries but is also deeply rooted in Muslim-majority countries, including Indonesia, where collective pledges of allegiance are now realized at the voting booth.

Nationalism It is a manifestation of the loyalty and commitment of every Indonesian citizen to love and maintain an idealistic attitude in maintaining the identity and strength of the nation.¹⁵ Since the colonial era,¹⁶ Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia have played a significant role in the struggle for independence. Students, who have historically often been at

¹⁴(Musa et al. 2025)

¹⁵(Alamsyah, 2021)

¹⁶(Dinawati & Hidayat, 2023)

the forefront of resistance against colonialism, have demonstrated that religious and nationalist fervor can coexist.

Among the five pledges taught by Sheikh Musthafa Husein which contain strong nationalist values is the fifth pledge, namely, "*Ubayi'u llaha an la akhuna al-wathan wa al-dina min al-ana ila akhir al-zaman.*" The translation of this sentence is, "*I promise to Allah that I will not betray the nation and religion forever.*" This pledge explicitly contains nationalist values that integrate religious and national identities.

The role of *kiai* in instilling nationalism can be seen from several key aspects. First, *kiai* serve as moral and spiritual role models, whose behavior tends to be emulated by their students.¹⁷ Second, *kiai* play a role in political education and national awareness by providing an understanding of citizenship and political participation. Third, the paternalistic relationship between *kiai* and students creates an emotional bond that fosters a love for the homeland. Fourth, *kiai* shape the morals and character of students, ultimately supporting the spirit of nationalism. Furthermore, *kiai* also play a role in maintaining local traditions and culture that align with national values, so that students have a strong national identity.¹⁸

In the modern era, marked by globalization, digitalization, and complex socio-political dynamics, nationalism often faces new challenges. Changing mindsets among the younger generation, the rapid flow of information, and the emergence of various transnational ideologies have led some to question the meaning of nationalism in everyday life. In some traditional Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), especially those that still maintain an educational system based on old values, the tradition of *bai'at* (pledge of allegiance) is still taught to students. However, its form may be modified to suit the needs of the times. While *bai'at* was once emphasized more in a physical context—namely, a willingness to fight against colonialism—now its meaning is more directed toward defending the nation through educational, economic, social, and cultural channels.

Émile Durkheim and later refined by figures such as Talcott Parsons and Robert K. Merton stated that Tradition is not always a static legacy from the past, but is often created or reshaped to adapt to the social, political, or cultural needs of a group. For Islamic boarding schools, defending the country does not have to be through war, but can be done by maintaining national unity, rejecting radical ideologies that are contrary to nationality, and contributing to national development. In the current conditions, the tradition of *bai'at* among Islamic boarding schools, especially in Musthafawiyah Purba Baru, has experienced a shift in meaning from merely an oath of loyalty to the state to a more intellectual form of nationalism. Students are not only required to be loyal to the state, but also to understand how nationalism can be realized in various aspects of life.

According to Émile Durkheim's structural functionalism perspective, which was later refined by Talcott Parsons and Robert K. Merton, tradition cannot be understood merely as a static legacy from the past, but is a social construction that is constantly reproduced, modified, and adapted according to the social, political, and cultural needs of a community. In the context of Islamic boarding schools, defending the country does not have to be realized through physical warfare, but by playing a broader social function, such as maintaining

¹⁷(Sulastrri & Badrus, 2021)

¹⁸(Kurniati, et al., 2019)

national cohesion and unity, rejecting radical ideologies that threaten national integration, and actively participating in development.

In line with Durkheim's theory of the social function of tradition as a unifying force in society, the tradition of *bai'at* (pledge of allegiance) at the Musthafawiyah Purba Baru Islamic Boarding School has undergone a transformation in meaning. From a mere pledge of allegiance to the state, *bai'at* has evolved into a form of intellectual nationalism, where students are not only required to be loyal to the state but also to understand how national values can be implemented in various dimensions of social, cultural, and educational life.

These findings align with research conducted by Musa, which demonstrates how *bai'at* (pledge of allegiance) in Islamic boarding schools is not merely a religious ritual but also a key component in shaping the character of students who love their homeland.¹⁹ Research conducted by Sulastri & Badrus found that *bai'at*-based education can strengthen nationalism among students, adapting to current developments without diminishing its spiritual significance.²⁰ Furthermore, Tubagus Surur demonstrates how da'wah (Islamic outreach) can be a medium for fostering a sense of nationalism. Surur emphasizes the importance of religious activities packaged in a more contemporary format to address national issues.²¹ A similar finding is found in Sakdiah's study of the Naqsyabandiyah order, which teaches national values to its students in North Sumatra, demonstrating that Islamic boarding schools play a role not only in religious education but also in shaping national character.²² Furthermore, Alamsyah's research, which discusses Indonesian nationalism in the ASEAN context, is also relevant, considering how the national values instilled in Islamic boarding schools can contribute to the formation of a broader identity, both nationally and regionally.²³

Meanwhile, Nasir revealed that the fatwas of ulama, which have a significant impact on the political attitudes of the community, are also relevant in the context of *bai'at* as part of the teachings that shape political and national awareness.²⁴ Furthermore, Situngkir & Prasetyo show that traditions that function as social glue, such as in the practice of '*gantangan*', can strengthen community cohesion.²⁵ *Bai'at*, although in the form of a religious ritual, also plays a role in strengthening social cohesion between students and the community. Research by Santoso & Astuti on the synergy of business institutions, formal educators, and ulama in the socialization of Islamic banks in Indonesia also shows that collaboration between educational and religious institutions, such as those occurring in Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), is crucial for disseminating national values to the community.²⁶ Overall, these findings indicate that *bai'at* at the Musthafawiyah Purba Baru Islamic Boarding School is not only a matter of religious commitment, but also a strategic means to instill a national spirit that can adapt to

¹⁹Faisal Musa, "The Living Tradition of 'Bay'at Lima': Sustaining Sheikh Musthafa Husein Al Mandily's Teachings in Shaping Santri Nationalism," *International Journal of Islamic Studies* 49, no. 2 (2025): 293–313.

²⁰Sulastri and Badrus, "Peran Kyai Dalam Membentuk Kemandirian Santri Broken Home."

²¹Tubagus, "Transformasi Nasionalisme Habib Luthfi Dalam Dakwah."

²²A Sakdiah, "Sejarah Tarekat Naqsyabandiyah Syekh Sulaiman Di Sumatera Utara," *Jurnal Sejarah Dan Pendidikan Islam* 6, no. 1 (2021): 78–88.

²³Alamsyah, "Lesson Learned from Indonesia Nationalism Making for Contemporary ASEAN Regional Identity Development."

²⁴Muhammad Nasir, "Fatwa Ulama Dan Tantangan Demokrasi: Studi Kasus Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Politik Dan Agama* 3, no. 2 (2024): 112–125.

²⁵R Situngkir and A Prasetyo, "Tradisi 'Gantangan' Sebagai Perekat Sosial," *Jurnal Sosiologi Indonesia* 8, no. 4 (2015): 415–432.

²⁶J Santoso and R Astuti, "Sosialisasi Bank Syariah Di Indonesia: Kolaborasi Lembaga Pendidikan Dan Ulama," *Jurnal Ekonomi Dan Pendidikan* 7, no. 3 (2020): 153–166.

the demands of the times. This tradition, although originating from the past, continues to be reproduced and adapted to meet current social, political, and cultural needs, in accordance with the theory of structural functionalism put forward by Durkheim, Parsons, and Merton.

Specifically, the results of this study provide significant contributions both theoretically and practically in understanding the practice of *bai'at* in the context of the Musthafawiyah Purba Baru Islamic boarding school. Theoretically, this study enriches the study of the social function of tradition in society, especially in the context of religious education in Islamic boarding schools. By using the functional theory of Émile Durkheim, this study shows how *bai'at* not only functions as a religious ritual, but also as a tool to maintain social cohesion and shape nationalistic identity among students. *Bai'at* in this Islamic boarding school functions as a means to instill moral and national values, which are not only relevant in a religious context, but also in the context of the socio-political life of Indonesian society.

Practically, this research contributes to the development of character education in Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) and other Islamic educational institutions. The pledge of allegiance (*Bai'at*) at the Musthafawiyah Purba Baru Islamic Boarding School can serve as a model for integrating religious education with fostering a strong sense of nationalism. Consequently, Islamic boarding schools, as educational institutions, can play a more active role in shaping a young generation that is not only religious but also possesses a strong sense of social responsibility and nationalism. This is crucial amidst the challenges of globalization and social change that can influence the religious ideology and values of the younger generation.

D. CONCLUSION

This study confirms that the allegiance of Sheikh Musthafa Husein is not merely a religious ritual tradition, but a social construct that has an important function in maintaining stability, integration, and continuity of values in the Islamic boarding school community. This is in line with Émile Durkheim's functional theory which states that tradition functions as a social glue, as well as the development of Parsons' concept which emphasizes adaptation and integration in a tradition. The content of the oath of allegiance, which prohibits adultery, murder, sin, worship of other than Allah, and betrayal of one's homeland and religion, demonstrates that the religious values taught by Sheikh Musthafa Husein are strongly relevant in shaping religious nationalism. In the contemporary context of the Musthafawiyah Purba Baru Islamic Boarding School, the oath of allegiance has transformed from a mere oath of allegiance into an instrument for internalizing national and religious values. This is evident in the behavior of students who maintain self-respect, prioritize patience, reject radicalism, and affirm monotheism as the moral foundation of national and state life. Thus, the tradition of *bai'at* serves not only as a religious heritage but also as an instrument for character education and strengthening nationalism. This relevance demonstrates that Islamic boarding schools play a strategic role in maintaining social cohesion and building a national civilization that is both religious and nationalistic.

However, this study has limitations in terms of geographical coverage, focusing only on the Musthafawiyah Purba Baru Islamic Boarding School, thus not encompassing perspectives from other Islamic boarding schools in North Sumatra or Indonesia as a whole. Furthermore, the use of historical data and interviews as the primary sources of this research may be influenced by the subjectivity of the informants. Therefore, further studies are recommended

to expand the scope of the research by comparing the *bai'at* tradition in other Islamic boarding schools with different historical and social backgrounds. More in-depth research with a quantitative approach could also enrich this analysis, resulting in a more comprehensive understanding of the role of *bai'at* in shaping nationalist identity among students.

References

- Al-Ghadban, M. M. *Al-Manhaj Al-Haraki Lis-Sirati Al-Nabawiyah*. Jakarta: Robbani Press, 1992. [Google](#)
- Alamsyah, Mirah. "Lesson Learnt from Indonesia Nationalism Making for Contemporary ASEAN Regional Identity Development." *Journal of Politics and International Studies*, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.4108/eai.9-10-2020.2304714>.
- Azra, Azyumardi. *Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan*. Jakarta: Prenada Media, 2003. [Google](#)
- Bahri, Samsul, Zainuddin, and Muhammad Husni bin Ismail. "Bai'at Dalam Al-Qur'an Menurut Pandangan Ibnu Katsir Samsul." *Tafse: Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 4, no. 2 (2019): 182–94. <https://doi.org/10.22373/tafse.v4i2.13178>
- Black, Antony. *Pemikiran Politik Islam Dari Masa Nabi Hingga Masa Kini*. Jakarta: Serambi Ilmu Semesta, 2006. [Google](#)
- Dinawati, Silviana, and Muhamad Taufik Hidayat. "Tinjauan Pustaka Sistematis: Penanaman Sikap Nasionalisme Melalui Kegiatan Upacara Bendera Di Sekolah Dasar." *Jurnal Inovasi Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran Sekolah Dasar*, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.24036/jippsd.v7i1.122437>.
- Hidayat, Muhamad Taufik. "Pengaruh Pendidikan Pesantren Terhadap Nasionalisme Santri." *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 20, no. 1 (2020): 45–58. <https://doi.org/10.47971/tjpi.v2i1.119>
- Hobsbawm, Eric & Ranger, Terance. *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983. [Google](#)
- Khaeriyah, H. "Baiat Dan Perilaku Beragama." *Tasamuh: Jurnal Studi Islam* 9, no. 1 (2017): 291–316. [Google](#)
- Kurniati, Mia, Miftahus Surur, and Ahmad H Rasyidi. "Peran Kepemimpinan Kyai Dalam Mendidik Dan Membentuk Karakter Santri Yang Siap Mengabdikan Kepada Masyarakat." *Al-Bayan Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadist* 2, no. 2 (2019): 194–203. <https://doi.org/10.35132/albayan.v2i2.80>.
- Merriam, Sharan B., and Elizabeth J. Tisdell. *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation, 4th Edition*. California, United States of America: Jossey Bass, 2015. [Google](#)
- Musa, Faisal. "Pesantren Musthafawiyah Purbabaru: Studi Kontinuitas Tradisi Pesantren Di Tapanuli Bagian Selatan." Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.30821/miqot.v49i2.1392>
- . "The Living Tradition of 'Bay'at Lima': Sustaining Sheikh Musthafa Husein Al Mandily's Teachings in Shaping Santri Nationalism." *International Journal of Islamic Studies* 49, no. 2 (2025): 293–313. <https://doi.org/10.30821/miqot.v49i2.1392>
- Musa, Faisal, Ahmad Fauzi, and Abdul Hamid. "The Living Tradition Of " Bay ' Ah Lima " : Sustaining Sheikh Musthafa Husein Al Mandily ' s Teachings in Shaping Santri Nationalism" 49, no. 2 (n.d.): 293–313. [Google](#)
- Nasir, Muhammad. "Fatwa Ulama Dan Tantangan Demokrasi: Studi Kasus Di Indonesia."

- Jurnal Politik Dan Agama* 3, no. 2 (2024): 112–125. [Google](#)
- Sakdiah, A. "Sejarah Tarekat Naqsyabandiyah Syekh Sulaiman Di Sumatera Utara." *Jurnal Sejarah Dan Pendidikan Islam* 6, no. 1 (2021): 78–88. [Google](#)
- Santoso, J, and R Astuti. "Sosialisasi Bank Syariah Di Indonesia: Kolaborasi Lembaga Pendidikan Dan Ulama." *Jurnal Ekonomi Dan Pendidikan* 7, no. 3 (2020): 153–166. [Google](#)
- Situngkir, R, and A Prasetyo. "Tradisi 'Gantangan' Sebagai Perekat Sosial." *Jurnal Sosiologi Indonesia* 8, no. 4 (2015): 415–432. [Google](#)
- Sulastri, Sulaiman, and Badrus. "Peran Kyai Dalam Membentuk Kemandirian Santri Broken Home." *Indonesian Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* 2, no. 3 (2021): 183–196. <https://doi.org/10.33367/ijhass.v2i3.2197>.
- Syaefuddin, M. "Dakwah Cinta Tanah Air Oleh KH." *Habib Luthfi. Journal of Islamic Leadership and Politics*, n.d. [Google](#)
- Tubagus, Surur. "Transformasi Nasionalisme Habib Luthfi Dalam Dakwah." *Jurnal Dakwah Dan Kebangsaan* 10, no. 2 (2020): 234–245. [Google](#)