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Pride and Grade

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Pride and Grade: Ma'had Aly in the Dilemma of Sincerity

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Abstract

Ma'had Aly today have a big deal with government. In May 2016 the Ministry of Religion Affair legitimates 13 Ma'had Aly in Indonesia to be equivalent with undergraduate program at university. Meaning, Ma'had Aly graduates will have a degree (S.Ag / *Sarjana Agama* / Bachelor of Religion), equal with an undergraduate degree in particular Islamic universities. The question raised then addressed to the student of Ma'had Aly. Since the beginning of their enrollment in Ma'had Aly, they didn't have any intention to persuade degree or title from Ma'had Aly. Since Islam teaches it's follower that learning is obligatory, the Muslim should do that for the sake of God, not for obtaining degree or another profane. The questions will be adressed are; (1) What's the meaning of degree according to Ma'had Aly student? (2) What's the meaning of degree in Islamic literature? This study will examine student from legitimated Ma'had Aly and compared with student from Pesantren that have illegitimate Ma'had Aly. The research will be conducted qualitatively through observation, interviews, and supported by the literature related to the discourse. The results of this study supposed to be a guide of future direction of student in Islamic education.

Keywords: Ma'had Aly, Degree, Sincerity

A. Introduction

Pesantren is an Islamic institution that has a long history. Pesantren have done many things in educating and preparing a generation prepared with knowledge in science and faith. Pesantren oftenly identified and affiliated with Nahdlatul Ulama, an Islamic mass organization in Indonesia, although many other organizations that have a boarding or a similar system but in different name. Pesantren recognized as the best system compared to modern systems from the west, so that it becomes a characteristic that is identically belong to Nahdlatul Ulama which is engaged in cultural and traditional education. (Azra, Afrianty & Hefner, 2007). Nahdlatul Ulama, also known as a moderate organization that teaches its followers to belong and strengthening the country. It was realized by the proximity of Nahdlatul Ulama government. Indonesian president who was elected in 2014-2019 proved the connectedness of Nahdlatul Ulama in Indonesia with many ministers and cadres of Nahdlatul Ulama in the government and council. It makes the mission of Nahdlatul Ulama is further supported by the government, such as the establishment of the National Santri Day.

NU as moderate religious organizations trying to survive amid a siege of the fundamentals. One attempt campaigned is education. For organizations that have affiliates in many schools, Nahdlatul Ulama urge people to learn or send their children at the boarding school. The campaign started with the Ayo Mondok movement in 2014. In 2015, NU held a conference with the theme of Islam Nusantara (nu.or.id). Then in 2016, the state legalized the Ma'had Aly to give a degree in order to gain more interest from people to go to pesantren.

Pesantren could not be far away from modernity although they claim as traditional institution. Ma'had Aly is one of the way to modernize pesantren and adapt to public interest. Rosidin (2012) observing some important aspects of the modernity in pesantren, and some conclusions could be drawn up. First, pesantrens with their long

and significant roles in Indonesia history face steadily growing challenges in negotiating with ongoing changes as the results of modernization, if not secularization, of national education system and of the growing demands of Muslim parents to have better as well as future promising education for their children. The role of state is very important. Many pesantrens, mostly small *salafiyah* typed ones, failing to encounter this continuing developments suffer and in many cases even bring about their total shutting down. The shift to survive is a new habit and adaptation through modernize in the system or the stakeholder. Second, the foundation of the Ma'had Aly by several pesantrens is one of the ways taken by the pesantrens to response to the current developments within Muslim communities, to define or even maintain their central roles as well as to preserve their tradition in producing kiyais in such a modernized and globalized Indonesia.

The state policy to authorize Ma'had Aly provide new discourse about the independence of the boarding school. It will have a large impact. For example, technically, it means teachers in Ma'had Aly must have minimum education level of master. Though many clerics or teachers at the school who never attended college. Then morally, it would change the orientation of intention for Ma'had Aly students which are supposed to study as a form of worship to God, sincerely without expecting to get a degree (Zakaria, 2010).

B. Literature Review

1. Pesantren

Indonesia as a Muslim majority expresses Islamic teaching in various method. Hefner (2009) said there are three types of Islamic education in Indonesia. First is pengajian Quran. It is basic teaching for all student to read Quran in arabic text

through read and recite but not literally understand the meaning. Second is study at a pesantren or pondok, an Islamic boarding school for students aspiring for students usually in early childhood or youth to study deeper in Islamic teaching, doctrines, and rituals. Third is enrollment in a madrasa or modern day school which is similar with public school, using grades, certificates, textbooks, examination, and certain curriculum.

Pesantren is a knowledge-rooted tradition in the history of Indonesia. Pesantren, according Zamakhsyari Dhofier (1980), an Islamic education system which is growing since the early arrival of Islam in Indonesia. To browse the emergence of schools, closely related to the original search of the arrival of Islam in the archipelago. The process of commercial interaction led to the establishment of settlements in the beach and gave birth to boarding institutions that foster a sultanate's capital. It is certain that the scholars came accompanied the Muslim merchant or even the merchant were once scholars. Interaction maritime that was happened at that time not only commercial but also the interaction of science and propaganda (Pohl, 2006).

Dhofier (1980) mention at least five components into a pattern typical of Islamic tradition, there are: dormitory, mosque, students (Santri), cleric (Kyai) and the yellow book (*kitab kuning* / Islamic Traditional Literature). Dormitory for students is a hallmark of Islamic tradition, which distinguishes it from the traditional education system in mosques growing in most other Muslim countries. The education system called surau or dayah in Minangkabau or Islamic boarding school in Aceh, basically the same as the dormitory system, just different names. The mosque is an element that can not be separated from the boarding school, and the

most appropriate place to educate the students, perform prayers five times a day, the Friday prayer and studying Islamic teaching. Mosques function as an educational center of Islamic education system is a legacy of the Prophet Muhammad. The scholars are teaching books of classical Islam. Santri are students who came from various regions to study the religion from the scholars. They come and study in boarding schools with the aim of becoming a scholar. Typically, students are divided into two, *Mukim* students and *kalong* students. *Mukim* are students who come from areas far from the school and settled in quite a long time to learn the religion from the Kyai. While *kalong* is students who come from villages around the *pesantren* and follow the teaching in *pesantren* by means of alternating or do not live in boarding schools. While Kyai is the most essential component in the tradition of *pesantren*. Often kyai are so properly a founder of *pesantren* or his descendants and growth depends on the ability and person of the kyai. Although most kyai living in rural areas, they are part of an elite group within the social structure, political and economic in Indonesia. The kyai have strong influence in society, which is becoming an important force in the political life. The task of the kyai as teachers and advocates of Islamic teachings so that it has an important position in the community, while Yellow Book is the classic Islamic literature which became a reference in the science of religion (Dhofier, 1980).

Since its influence as getting bigger in the society, Porter (2001) observed that education in Indonesia experienced a dualism because it is managed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MORA) for religious education and the Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud) for public education. Besides the modernists of new order regime see there are two major obstacles in implementing the standardization of education in Indonesia, that is political Islam and traditional Islam. But in 1970,

the Ministry of Religious Affairs issued a policy that is a major concern for so long, that is modernizing the system of religious education with an interdisciplinary curriculum from the west. Then in 1975, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Ministry of Education and Culture, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs to sign agreements with the religious education curriculum standardization. That means that religious education should not only study religion, but there must be science, social, and more. The new order business in carrying out national development and maintain stability in the country made new order run some policies that change the orientation of the national education system. Murtopo as one of the top officials in the new order has a mission to remove officials leaning of NU because it is considered not in line with the new order agenda. In addition, the centrist party, Golkar, the new order has a political maneuver to place his people in strategic positions, including in the ministry. People who are not in line with the new order as NU would be deposed. Many santri also doctined the knowledge of modern curriculum and schooled in the West to study such Islamic Studies at McGill University. After that, they returned to Indonesia to teach in moderate and modern way. They even sent back to boarding schools to bring a change in the orientation of religious education. The government's aim at that time was that religious people can support national development and avoid the possibility of the formation of an Islamic state that can potentially damage the inter-religious harmony. The first way is the standardization of curriculum religious education institutions to include a general curriculum as much as 70% and 30% for religious education. In addition, Harun Nasution elected as rector of IAIN Jakarta and brings new changes and brought the Shiite doctrine and Mu'tazilite teaching and assessed by it strongly supports the advancement of

the nation, is inversely proportional to understand Ash'ari-Syafiiyah and sunni which are represented by the NU.

2. Ma'had Aly

Ma'had 'Aly was established to maintain the tradition of academic boarding school increasingly faded. Ma'had 'Aly there to maintain the existence of the academic tradition of boarding schools for higher education or Ma'had 'Aly is one form of business institutionalization academic tradition forerunner boarding school with *takhassus* (specialization) study program that has been developed over time. Establishment of Ma'had 'Aly motivated by the need to improve the quality of education boarding school so it could produce a high level cleric in the middle of the advancement of science and technology. The education process in Ma'had 'Aly actually a merge between the model of pesantren and a model of university. In line with the directions and government policy in the development of higher education, Ma'had 'Aly seen as one alternative to higher education because of their special religion. Ma'had 'Aly is a typical form of higher education boarding school which is different from the university in general. Ma'had 'Aly intended as a forum for continued study of the level of education and teaching diniyah Ulya, Madrasah Aliyah or equivalent (Ghazali & Malik. 2009).

3. Ministry of Religious Affair Legitimation

News of ma'had 'aly in kemenag.go.id begins on Tuesday, March 5, 2011. At that time, the ministry can not allow ma'had 'aly to issue the degree diploma level as in university. The reason, according to the Law on National Education System, the title can only be issued by the college as a university, college and high school. The Directorate General of Islamic Education, Mohammad Ali in Jakarta, Tuesday (15/3/2011) was responding to a request from pesantren which have

ma'had 'aly, for the government to allow the provision of a college degree for students of ma'had' aly. Because of the educational process that has been taken is also equivalent to higher education. According to Mohammad Ali, it could be students ma'had 'aly obtain the official diploma, but issued by higher education institutions. For diploma level public school or madrasa, Director General said, pesantren students also have to follow the national exam. However, the composition of the subjects tested are not the same as formal educational institutions such as madrasas (kemenag.go.id).

On Thursday, August 18th, 2011, Minister of Religious Affairs Suryadharma Ali recognizes the need for standardization for Ma'had 'Aly, so the future to obtain clarity of education in higher education institutions of Islam stretcher. With standardization according to Suryadharma Ali, then the public will know the book and literature are studied. It also includes a curriculum of Ma'had 'Aly (kemenag.go.id).

On Wednesday, March 21, 2012, the Director General of Islamic Education Ministry of Religious Affairs, Nur Syam states for strengthening religious education and religion, it will perform the reconstruction of education schools, among other things by formalizing the education agency as ma'had 'aly. To that end, the arrangement will be done on ma'had 'aly existing ones, both in the curriculum, national standards and budget. The minister said the government seeks to formulate standardization ma'had 'aly. *Mu`adalah* or equalization process is being introduced. Thus, graduates have the competence mastery in ma'had besides religion and have a certificate in common with other university. Without losing the characteristic of ma'had. For the development of ma'had, government is ready to provide support (kemenag.go.id).

On Friday, October 17, 2014, kemenag.go.id reported that the pesantren especially Ma'had 'Aly hopes and encourages the Ministry of Religious Affairs to immediately issue a regulation or Peraturan Menteri Agama (PMA) on Ma'had' Aly. This message is revealed in intense discussions on the forum of Ma'had 'Aly Administrative Arrangement Workshop organized by the Directorate of Education Diniyah and boarding school. The participants agreed that Ma'had 'Aly as Islamic religious educational institutions that produce a cadre of scholars needs to be given a strong regulatory base. This push back revealed considering publishing the PMA, has been through a long process of discussion and quite a long time, since the Minister of Religious Affairs chaired by Prof. KH. Tolchah Hasan. PMA Ma'had 'aly future is a derivative of the Government Regulation No. 55 Year 2007 on Religious Education, which also received the affirmation of the Regulation of the Minister of Religion No. 13 of 2014 concerning Islamic Religious Education. Preparation of PMA have also been adjusted and synchronized with the Law No. 12 Year 2012 on Higher Education, Government Regulation No. 4 of 2014, even with the legal drafting the Draft Regulation on Higher Education of religious (kemenag.go.id).

Finally, on Saturday, May 28, 2016, after a long process, university-based Islamic religious schools are often called Ma'had 'Aly finally gained recognition from the Government. This recognition stems from the signing of the Regulation of the Minister of Religion No. 71/2015 on the organization Ma'had 'aly by the Minister of Religious Affairs Lukman Hakim Saifuddin. In this regard, the Director General of the Islamic Educational Kamaruddin Amin said the Minister of Religious Affairs Lukman Hakim Saifuddin will soon inaugurate 13 Ma'had 'aly by providing at the same time permit the establishment of statistics are numbers. Amin

explained, Ma'had 'aly is the education unit was established and developed from and by the community and are in boarding schools. Even so, the presence of Ma'had 'aly not only for the benefit of the public schools, but also the needs of the Indonesian people. According to Kamaruddin, the presence of PMA 71/2015 not only ensure the legality Ma'had 'aly within the national education system. Moreover, this PMA clarify the Government's commitment to realize Ma'had 'aly equivalent of religious higher education institutions and public higher education institutions. Equality referred, both in the recognition, status, graduates, as well as the Government's attention to the sustainability and development. The presence of PMA will also facilitate measures to realize the Ma'had 'aly as a permanent institutional instruments to address the fundamental problem of Indonesian Muslims as the scarcity of clerics-scholars of integrity, character, and nationality insight, he said. The inauguration of the 13th Ma'had 'aly is the first step in the revitalization process Ma'had' aly by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Looking ahead, continued Kamaruddin, MORA (Ministry of Religious Affair) will be sought to educational services is expected to print undergraduate (S1) with qualified cadres-ulama clerics can be opened in every province throughout Indonesia. Not only mastered the yellow book from pesantren intellectual tradition, they are expected to contextualized in contemporary life, and capable to dialogue with the social sciences, humanities, and or the natural sciences to realize human life is fair, serious benefits, and dignity. In addition to being pesantren, Bachelor Ma'had 'aly can be a university professor, a professional teacher, head of KUA, religious judges, government officials in the field of religion, and Sharia Supervisory Board and other professions. In the field of science, graduate Ma'had 'aly can also work as a writer, researcher, preacher, and academia. From there, it is expected the graduates of

ma'had 'aly could fill the needs of the society against the clergy are qualified (kemenag.go.id).

On Monday, May 30, 2016, Ministry of Religious Affairs has issued a decree on the establishment license for 13 Ma'had 'aly following statistical numbers. This license granted by the Minister of Religious Affairs Lukman Hakim Saifuddin in Pondok Pesantren Tebuireng, Jombang. Director General of the Islamic Educational Kamaruddin Amin said licensing is a form of recognition that ensures the legality Ma'had 'aly within the national education system. Looking ahead, the Ministry of Religious Affairs will continue to provide affirmation, not only on the regulatory aspects but also the facilitation in the form of a budget and more. MORA initially planned to allocate each Ma'had 'aly Rp 1 billion. But because there is a reduction in the budget, to 500 million. According to Kamaruddin, one of the monumental achievements of the Ministry of Religious Affairs under the chairmanship of Minister of Religious Affairs Lukman is to realize the revitalization process Ma'had 'aly as a formal educational institution. It aims to further mainstream the role of schools in the religious life of Muslims in Indonesia. As for the 13 Ma'had 'aly that have won permits the establishment of these statistics and numbers, namely: (1) Ma'had 'aly Saidusshiddiqiyah, Pondok Pesantren As-Shiddiqiyah Kebon Jeruk (DKI Jakarta), (2) Ma'had 'aly Sheikh Ibrahim Al Jambi, Pondok Pesantren Al Asad Jambi, (3) Ma'had 'aly Parabek Thawalib Sumatra, Pondok Pesantren Parabek Thawalib Sumatra, Agam (West Sumatra), (4) Ma'had 'aly Mudi Mesjid Raya, Pondok Ulum Ad Diniyyah Mahadul pesantren Al Islamiyah (Mudi) Mesjid Raya, Bireuen (Aceh), (5) Ma'had 'aly Asadiyah, Pondok pesantren Asadiyah Sengkang (Sulawesi), (6) Ma'had 'aly Rashidiyeh Khalidiyah, Pondok Pesantren Rashidiyeh Khalidiyah Amuntai (Kalimantan), (7) Ma'had 'aly

salafiyah Syafiiyah, Pondok Pesantren salafiyah Syafiiyah Situbondo (East Java), (8) Ma'had' aly Hashim Al-Asyary, Pondok Pesantren Tebuireng Jombang (East Java), (9) Ma 'had' aly At-Tarmasi, Pondok Pesantren Tremas (East Java), (10) Ma'had 'aly Maslakul Huda Pesantren fi Usul al-Fiqh, Pondok Pesantren Maslakul Huda Kajen Pati (Central Java), (11) Ma'had' aly PP IQNA ath-Thalibin, Pondok Pesantren Al Anwar Sarang Rembang (Central Java), (12) Ma'had 'aly Al Hikamussalafiyah, Pondok Pesantren Madrasah Hikamussalafiyah (MHS) Cirebon (West Java), and (13) Ma'had' aly Miftahul Huda Pondok Pesantren Manonjaya Ciamis (West Java). Minister of Religious Affairs Lukman Hakim Saifuddin has given permission to the establishment of 13 Ma'had 'aly boarding school. In his speech, Minister of Religious Affairs affirmed that the existence Ma'had 'aly not just the interests of the public schools as such, but the need for Indonesia (kemenag.go.id).

According to MORA, the presence of Ma'had 'Aly is part of a larger scenario makes the implementation of Islamic education in Indonesia, especially schools, as an destination of educational world. Boarding school has an incredible power to become the mouthpiece to the world community. Islamic Boarding School institution is typically Indonesian and capable of producing moderate Muslim intellectual character. To maintain the quality of Ma'had 'Aly, MORA ensure that it only limits the courses for each Ma'had' aly. It is thought that each Ma'had 'Aly focus steeped respective study programs as well make it as excellence and uniqueness. After five-ten years into the future, this policy will be reviewed so that study program can be added or revised (kemenag.go.id).

On Thursday, June 2, 2016, Minister for Religious Affairs Lukman Hakim Saifuddin confirms that Ma'had 'Aly not only educational institution that examines the science of religion. Moreover, as an institution of higher education based religious schools, Ma'had 'Aly should be able to keep the tradition and develop national awareness taught predecessors. MORA hope Ma'had 'Aly can be trained leading clerical powerful and competence to the challenge of the times. He sees pesantren where Ma'had 'Aly is to have a role and responsibility in the face of the current global era. Therefore, the existence of Ma'had 'aly is an effort to answer this challenge. MORA ensure that despite giving decree of Establishment Permit, but it would not intervene in pesantren. Therefore, MORA consideration to the needs of the Board of Ma'had 'aly filled in pesantren to direct and ensure Ma'had 'aly still running on its primary purpose (kemenag.go.id).

4. Academic Degree

Indonesia is a society with a high power distance (Sumantri & Suharnomo, 2007). In a society with a high power distance such as Indonesia, status symbols accepted as a natural thing. Religious titles, academic and respect of others is seen as something important. A person's status is determined by formal titles, which shows who the person is (ascribed status) and not what has been achieved by the person (achieved status). Indonesian society, according to Mochtar Lubis (2001) is a society with characteristics that are less good is a weak character. The less powerful characters shown by the community less tenacious in defending or fighting for his beliefs. It is easy especially with a little coercion, in order to survive, a person change his beliefs. Intellectual prostitution such as the purchase of both the academic degree for master or doctoral level is usually done, even by officials

such as uncovered a few times lately. The titles are perceived to raise the status of the holder, although obtained by the illegal and unlawful. Buying and selling of academic degree is a clear example of the bad side of the feminine nature of the society that less emphasis on achievement.

C. Research Method

This study uses a qualitative method. Data taken with observation and interviews. Informants there are two people from two pesantrens which has ma'had aly. The first is the informant who come from pesantren that have obtain ma;had aly legitimacy. The second is an informant of pesantren that do not obtain ma'had aly legitimacy. To support data, literature study was also conducted as additional information. The data that has been collected and analyzed to obtain the results and draw conclusions.

D. Analysis

1. Interview

First informant said that the academic degree is something important. She has its own reasons.

"The degree is important, today those who have a degree are more acceptable in society. Because it is a scientific justification that we are recognized and have been qualified. Although it does not guarantee the quality, but the academic degree could be a motivation for students to be eager to complete his studies. " (1st informant)

She also said that the academic degree was not against the rules of religion, as many Muslim scholars who have degree, whether academic or not.

"The title was common in the Islamic tradition. Most of the pupils are given to teachers as a form of respect. For example, title of Sayyid or Habib for the descendants of the Prophet Muhammad. Al-Muhaddith title for scholars in the field of hadith. Al-Faqih title for scholars in the field of jurisprudence. In addition, there are many scholars who have the title of professor such as Wahbah Zuhayli, Muhammad Al-Maliki, Said Ramadan Al-Buthi, Ali Gomaa, Yusuf Qaradawi and others. It made their credibility recognized, both in the Islamic world as well as in the western world. " (1st informant)

While second informant has a different opinion. According to him, the degree should not be the orientation of students.

"In a lot of books, it is explained that the purpose of the study is to obtain the blessing of God. Additionally, intended to eliminate the ignorance so that we can pray properly. After eliminating ignorance, then intended to intisyarul ilmi, to spread knowledge with preaching or teaching. People who seek knowledge for other purposes, he will be mislead, even shirk because worship to other than Allah. Because learning is worship, as the Prophet Muhammad said that seeking knowledge is obligatory for every believer." (2nd informant)

Nonetheless, second informant not to blame if there is a boarding school that gives title to its graduates.

"If there is a boarding school that gives title to the graduates, the boarding school must be responsible for the policy. That is, schools should implement the ideal educational system and discipline since the administrators, teachers, and students. " (2nd informant)

2. Literature Research

From the literatures, there are two classifications in discussing the meaning of academic degree in Islamic literature.

a. Heresy

According to Al-Ghazali (2004), studying is pure worship of God. Al-Ghazali rely on a hadith of the Prophet Muhammad who said that learning is the duty of every believer. If someone is looking for knowledge with a view to becoming famous, seeking praise, or to gather possessions, then he had walked to destroy religion, ruin himself, and has been sold to the world hereafter. From this it can be concluded that people who studied for other than Allah then he is heretic and stray from the straight path.

b. Intermediator

Some scholars say that studying for a degree are allowed, but the goal is the hope and the blessings of God. This is because a degree is something that can open many doors in the modern world. To be able to teach, one must have a bachelor's degree. With the title, the more trusted the public to convey their knowledge so that it can be a means of propaganda. The fiqh rule states that *maa laa yatimmu al-wajibu illa bihi fahuwa wajib*. Obligations that can not be done for any reason, then the reason is obligation also (As-Suyuti, 2002). Teaching is mandatory, preaching is mandatory, thus, an academic degree is required as intermediary in order to teach and preach.

E. Conclusion

Ma'had Aly as the highest educational institution in Pondok Pesantren should be the image of the institution could become a precedent in Islamic education discourse, whether traditional or modern. Students who study in Ma'had Aly is a reflection of Islamic students which are have high quality and could be an example. In this respect,

sincerity is a prerequisite of a student in order to make God as the goal of learning. Ministry religions seek to attract people to learn in Pondok Pesantren. In order not to envy with universities outside, students in pondok pesantren will get a degree which is equal to particular universities. It can be useful to continue their education at a higher level, or to get a job that can guarantee a better life.

There are some who approved the plan of ma'had aly by religious ministries, some are refused. One of the main problems is about the concept of a degree. Is title important? From the results of this study concluded that there were two groups. The first is forbid studying for a degree because it is an act that leads to heresy, do something to other than Allah. It was based on a number of hadith of the Prophet Muhammad. In addition, many scholars busy studying without keen to get an academic degree.

The second group said that seeking a degree it is allowed, but as an intermediary, should not be the goal. It comes from the fiqh rules which allow it. In addition, many Islamic scholars who have an academic degree such as a doctorate or a professor. Having allowed a degree of origin used for good purposes, such as teaching, preaching, or others.

In the end, chose to seek a degree or not is something that is tolerated in Islam. This is refer to what the goal of ma'had aly itself. If ma'had aly goal is to produce graduates who are ready to teach in official institutions, or a place that need the title, then ma'had aly could support it. But if otherwise, ma'had aly could be a boarding school with a specialization (*Takhasus*) is not limited to age or time to learn, and do not recognize the term finished.

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