KIAI, USTAZ, AND GHURU MOROK: CONTESTATION AND TOLERANCE OF THREE RELIGIOUS AUTHORITIES IN KANGEAN ISLAND, MADURA

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ABSTRACT

Socio-religious movements are intrinsically linked to religious autho-rities within a society, including those of traditional Islamic movements in Madura which significantly shaps the power dynamics of local religious authorities. The influence of the kiai, a local Muslim leader, extends well beyond religious authority, shaping political, social, economic, and cultural life in significant ways. However, the roles of other authorities, such as the Ustaz, often go overlooked in the Madurese society. This article delves into the roles of three religious authorities in Kangean Island, Madura: the Kiai, Ustaz, and Ghuru Morok (Kiai Langgar). This ethnographic research was conducted through in-depth interviews and active involvement in various activities of these religious authority figures. The researcher also made extensive observations of the activities of these religious authority figures through direct engagement. The data was collected and analyzed with a keen focus on understanding the unique roles and influences of these religious authorities within the cultural and societal context of Kangean Island. The study finds that the Kiai, identified with Traditional Islam and affiliated with Nahdlatul Ulama, maintains a dualistic approach towards local traditions, encompassing both mystification and demystification. In

contrast, the Ustaz, associated with Puritan Islamic groups affiliated with Persis and Muhammadiyah, tends to demystify local traditions. Meanwhile, the Ghuru Morok, although similar to the Kiai from traditional Islam, leans closer to Syncretic Islam in practice. The Ghuru Morok tends to mystify local traditions.

Keywords: Religious authority, Contestation, Tolerance, Islamic Culture, Indonesian Muslim

ABSTRAK

Gerakan sosial keagamaan memiliki relasi kuat dengan otoritas keagamaan dalam masyarakat. Dominasi gerakan Islam tradisional di Madura misalnya, ikut serta membentuk kuasa otoritas keagamaan daerah ini. Kontrol kiai terhadap berbagai persoalan-persoalan masyarakat telah menjadi bagian inheren yang membuktikan bahwa kiai memiliki peran cukup kuat tidak saja dalam otoritas keagamaan, akan tetapi kuasa dan peran karismatik kiai juga memainkan peran dinamik dalam kehidupan politik, sosial, ekomomi dan budaya. Kendati demikian otoritas Ghuru Morok (Kiai Langgar) dan Ustaz kerap kali diabaikan atau diperlakukan sebagai otoritas lain dalam masyarakat Madura. Artikel ini menganalisis tiga otoritas keagamaan dalam masyarakat Pulau Kangean, Madura yakni: Kiai, ustaz dan Ghuru Morok (kiai Langgar). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Kiai merupakan otoritas keagamaan yang identik dengan Islam Tradisional yang berafiliasi dengan Nahdlatul Ulama. Kiai merupakan otoritas keagamaan yang melakukan dua hal secara bersamaan terhadap tradisi lokal: mistifikasi dan demistifikasi. Sementara Ustaz identik dengan kelompok Islam Puritan yang berafiliasi dengan Persis dan Muhammadiyah. Ustaz merupakan otoritas keagamaan yang cenderung melakukan demistifikasi terhadap tradisi lokal. Sementara sebaliknya, Ghuru Morok yang cenderung sama dengan Kiai dari kalangan Islam tradisional walaupun secara praktik lebih dekat dengan varian Islam Sinkretik. Ghuru Morok adalah otoritas keagamaan yang cenderung melakukan mistifikasi terhadap tradisi lokal. Penelitian ini adalah penelitian etnografis, data penelitian didapatkan melalui wawancara mendalam dan keterlibatan peneliti dalam berbagai kegiatan-kegiatan ketiga otoritas keagamaan di lapangan. Pengamatan mendalam terhadap aktivitas-aktivitas ketiga otoritas keagamaan juga dilakukan dengan keterlibatan langsung peneliti.

Kata Kunci: *Otoritas keagamaan, Kontestasi, Toleransi, Budaya Islam*

INTRODUCTION

The exploration of the evolution of Islam in Indonesia is closely tied to the local Islamic context, including those in Madura and its surrounding islands. The discourse on Madurese Islam is inherently incomplete without a reference to Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the largest organization in Madura. Traditional Islam is the pattern of Islam predominantly embraced by the Madurese people, with the kiai (local Muslim leaders or clerics) emerging as the leading religious authority among traditional Islamic adherents.

The role of the *kiai* in Madurese society extends beyond the religious sphere. The *kiai* in Madura hold control over political, social, economic, and cultural realms.[1] They are perceived as both religious and social elites. The public attributes the k*iai* in Madura with a profound understanding of life sciences, encompassing morality, religious values, and in certain contexts, even magical sciences. These roles have led to the formation of the charismatic power of the kiai in Madura, establishing their authority as socio-cultural brokers and religious elites.[2]

Pesantren, the Islamic boarding school, led by a kiai, serves as a religious education institution. The emergence of pesantren, synonymous with traditional Islamic patterns, plays a pivotal role in establishing the legitimacy and religious authority of a kiai. This is achieved through the pesantren network, as well as the kinship pattern and family network of the *kiai*.[3] In the context of the Kangean island community, traditional surau or

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[1] Muhammad Turhan Yani et al., "Advancing the discourse of Muslim politics in Indonesia: A study on political orientation of Kiai as religious elites in Nahdlatul Ulama," *Heliyon* 8, no. 12 (Desember 2022): e12218, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2022.e12218.

[2] Yanwar Pribadi, "Kiai in Madura: Their Roles in Local Politics in Indonesia," *American Journal of Islam and Society* 29, no. 3 (2012): 1–22, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.35632/ajis.v29i3.316.

[3] Yanwar Pribadi, "Religious networks in Madura: pesantren, Nahdlatul Ulama, and kiai as the core of santri culture," *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 51, no. 1 (2013): 1–32, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2013.511.1-32.

langgar function as local religious education institutions.[4] These institutions introduce a "kiai langgar" or "ghuru morok" or some-one who teaches to read and recite the Quran as a religious authority actively involved in shaping Islamic identity in society.[5]

Both the *kiai pesantren* and the *ghuru morok*, as local elites, adhere to and preserve traditional Islam, although a *kiai langgar* or *ghuru morok* tend towards syncretic Islam. This inclination is mirrored in their accommodating and affirmative stance towards local mystical cultures. The dominance exerted by the kiai remains a distinctive point of interest in explaining local religious authority within the context of the development of Islam in Indonesia.[6] However, the lively discourse surrounding the *kiai* often overshadows the role played by a religious authority from the modernist-puritanical group. In Kangean, the term *ustaz* serves as the third discourse of religious authority, following the *kiai pesantren* and *ghuru morok*. The emergence of the *ustaz* aligns with the later arrival of this group on Kangean Island.

This research seeks to probe into Geertz's division of Javanese society typology into three groups: *abangan*, *santri*, and *priayi*. Geertz's viewpoint suggests that the abangan group is more inclined towards syncretism compared to the orthodox santri group. Geertz appears to equate santri from Puritan, modernist Muhammadiyah circles with the traditionalist Islamic group Nahdlatul Ulama. Despite this, Geertz's insights into cultural systems have stirred a multitude of discussions around Islamic culture.

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[4] Naufil Istikhari and Ulfatur Rahmah, "NGAJHI KA LANGGHÂR: The Educational Nursery of Moderation of Islam in Madura," *Islamuna: Jurnal Studi Islam* 7, no. 2 (2020): 106–24.

[5] Muhammad Endy Saputro, "Muslim localizing democracy:a non-pesantren village in Madura as a preliminary study," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 1, no. 2 (1 Desember 2011): 297, https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v1i2.297-316.

[6] Wiwik Setiyani, "The exerted authority of kiai kampung in the social construction of local islam," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 14, no. 1 (2020): 51–76.

Studies investigating the complexities and conflicts between these two groups are exemplified by works such as Woodward's exploration of nominal Islam and kebatinan (spirituality),[7] Sutiyono's study on puritanical and syncretic Islam,[8] Budiwanti's research on Islam *wetu telu* and Islam *wetu lima,*[9] and Syamon's research on coastal Islam.[10] These studies continue to reflect a dichotomous perspective on Islamic culture, which this paper argues to be far more intricate. This paper aims to refocus this dichotomy on three variants of Islamic culture: Syncretic Islam, Traditionalist Islam, and Puritanical Islam. The paper will endeavor to present a fresh dimension and viewpoint in understanding the dynamics of Islamic conflict.

Religious authorities such as *kiai pesantren*, *ghuru morok*, and *ustaz* were identified as key religious agents within each group. The interaction and conflict between the three Islamic movements are, to a certain extent, predicated on the struggle for domination by these three religious authorities. Traditional and puritanical Islam are social realities that reflect the Madurese people, who are known for their rigid understanding of Islamic traditionalism, and the Javanese society, which leans towards a pluralistic Islamic society.

The study was conducted on Kangean Island, a remote island located in the eastern part of the Madura archipelago. The island's inhabitants are primarily fishermen, with a minority involved in farming, industry, and government sectors. As a region associated with maritime life, the island's populace exemplifies coastal-rural communities. These communities are typically steeped in syncretic traditions like *slametan*. However,

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[7] Yusnia I'anatur Rofiqoh et al., "Islam and Syncretism in Java: Reflections on the Thought of Geertz and Woodward," *MUHARRIK: Jurnal Dakwah Dan Sosial* 4, no. 01 (2021): 47–61.

[8] Sutiyono, *Benturan Budaya Islam: Puritan dan Sinkretis* (Jakarta: Kompas, 2010), 60.

[9] Erni Budiwanti, *Islam Sasak; Wetu Telu versus Waktu Lima* (Yogyakarta: Lkis Pelangi Aksara, 2000), 60.

[10] Nur Syam, *Islam pesisir* (Yogyakarta: Lkis Pelangi Aksara, 2005), 60.

puritanical Islamic groups have also emerged on the island, as indicated by the presence of Muhammadiyah and Persis.

The study's participants included some religious authorities of *kiai*, *ustaz*, and *ghuru morok* ain two districts, Arjasa and Kangayan. It also involved fishermen, farmers, santri, and figures from Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama. The research employed an ethnographic approach to explore the competition between religious authorities within the cultural framework of the Kangean people. The data collected, predominantly qualitative, were obtained through documentation, observation and in-depth interviews. The analysis involved identifying patterns, concepts and interconnections from the data, categorizing them into specific themes and units for analysis. The cultural context and conditions were key considerations in interpreting the data. The data were sorted according to the research's sub-themes for accuracy, with verification and validation conducted through data cross-checking. Peer discussions were also conducted to enhance the depth of interpretation and analysis of the findings.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
KANGEAN ISLAND: SOCIAL, CULTURAL, AND RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES

Situated in the eastern waters of Madura, Kangean Island is a prominent constituent of the Kangean archipelago. Falling under the jurisdiction of Sumenep Regency, Kangean is geographically positioned between East Java and the eastern parts of Indonesia, including Sulawesi, Bali, and surrounding islands. This unique location fosters multiculturalism among the inhabitants, bearing strong resemblance to the socio-cultural composition of the Madurese populace. Islam emerges as the predominant religion on the island.[11]

The demographic distribution of Kangean Island is diverse, with the Madurese forming the majority. On the other hand, the Bugis tribe primarily resides in the eastern part of the island, with a small Chinese ethnic group and some Javanese people.

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[11] "Kabupaten Sumenep dalam Angka 2020" (Sumenep: BPS: Badan Pusat Statistik Sumenep, 2020), 5.

Social stratification on the island aligns with its geographical distinction, separating the inhabitants into o*reng polo* (island people) and *oreng deratan* (urban people).[12] The term *oreng polo* pertains to individuals residing on the smaller islands around Madura waters, and are generally perceived as belonging to a lower social and economic class. Conversely, *oreng deratan*, who inhabit the Madura region, are associated with urbanity, higher social status, and superior economic standing.

The construction of social layers in Kangean society not only relies on lineage but also factors in ability, wealth, success, and power. People who wield power and are believed to possess magical abilities, such as the *kiai pesantren*, *Ghuru morok*, *kiai langgar*, and *dhukon* (shaman), are termed as *oreng sakte*. The affluent upper class, identified by their economic prowess, are referred to as *jhuregen*. The term *oreng naghera* is used to denote individuals who have achieved career success within government bureaucracy. In contrast, those engaged in professions like fishing and farming are classified as *oreng dumik* (lower class), and the upper class is referred to as *oreng naghera*. The terms *priyayi* and *oreng dhumik* are used for the upper class and ordinary people, respectively.

The cultural framework of Kangean society mirrors Geertz's concept of syncretic Islam or in Woodward's notion, it called *kebatinan*.[13] This is evident in their varied cosmological knowledge, rituals, traditions, ceremonies and syncretic religious practices. These traditions include rites of the living circles, tolak balak ceremonies (intended to ward off evil), commemorations of Islamic holidays, and observances of auspicious days.[14] Notably, the Kangean people uphold the slamet toronan, a religious ritual of coastal fishing communities, as part of the living circle rites. The *tolak bala* cycle also encompasses the annual *sadekka bhumi*, a religious ritual conducted in specific

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[12] Abdul Latif Bustami, "Islam Kangean," *Antropologi Indonesia* 0, no. 72 (2014): 72–82, https://doi.org/10.7454/ai.v0i72.3475.

[13] Rofiqoh et al., "Islam and Syncretism in Java: Reflections on the Thought of Geertz and Woodward."

[14] Syam, *Islam pesisir*, 80.

villages for their safety. Additionally, the Kangean people observe the *slamet kandungan*, a ceremony held when a baby reaches seven months of gestation.

There are also religious rituals commemorating Islamic holidays, such as *Molotan,* a religious ceremony commemorating the birth of the Prophet Muhammad. There is also *a Me'ratan* ceremony commemorating the events of *isra' mi'raj* in Islamic tradition. Among the various religious rituals, the three religious authorities played a contestation and struggle for claims of religious authority through religious spaces such as mosques, *majelis taklim*, sacred tombs, coastlines, sacred places, and houses where certain *slametans* were held.

THE EMERGENCE AND STRUGGLE OF SOCIO-RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

Traditional Islam, exemplified by Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), is a socio-religious organization that first took root on the island of Kangean.[15] With its traditional educational approach, NU has been established in Kangean since 1960, brought by the charismatic figure KH Abdul Adhim Khalil and the founder of the Nurul Huda Islamic boarding school in the Arjasa sub-district in the same year.[16] *Langgar*, the oldest form of traditional education on the island,[17] was the only Islamic educational institution chosen by the community for religious learning before the advent of Islamic boarding schools, or pesantren. The *langgar* is led by a *ghuru morok* or *kiai langgar*, who maintains syncretic religious traditions in society.[18] Traditional Islam is

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[15] Abdul Latif Bustami, "Konflik dan Integrasi: Interaksi Antarorganisasi Keagamaan di Pulau Kangean," *Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial* 39, no. 1 (2009).

[16] Adhimah Syafiqah, *Jejak Cahaya K.H Abdul Adhim Chalil* (Probolinggo: Pustaka Nurja (LP3M) Universitas Nurul Jadid, 2019), 30.

[17] Abdul Moqsith Ghozali, "K.H Abdul Adhim Cholil, Pejuang Islam Aswaja dari Sumenep," NU Online, 2017, Accessed on February 20, 2021., https://www.nu.or.id/post/read/80207/kh-abdul-adhim-cholil-pejuang-islam-aswaja-dari-sumenep.

[18] Mohsi Mohsi, "Langghar, Kophung, and Bhaqaf: Konservasi Kebudayaan Khazanah Keislaman Madura," *Sabda : Jurnal Kajian Kebudayaan* 14, no. 1 (2019): 14, https://doi.org/10.14710/sabda.14.1.14-20.

known for being relatively permissive towards local culture. Therefore, in Kangean, *ghuru morok* can establish a good relationship with traditional Islamic circles such as *kiai pesantren*. However, the *ghuru morok* have significant differences with an *ustaz* from the Puritan Islam, sometimes leading to conflict and tension.

Religious organizations with a puritanical Islamic style arrived later, around 1974, introduced by a figure from the Muhammadiyah organization named Abdul Kadir Muhammad.[19] Other puritanical Islamic patterns, such as Persatuan Islam (Persis), were spread by ustaz Ad-Dailamy through a network of Islamic boarding schools.[20] The development of Muhammadiyah and Persatuan Islam was further propagated through a network of educated students (santri) spread across the island.[21] With the basis of developing modern education, Muhammmadiyah established Islamic schools, Islamic boarding schools, and spread Muhammadiyah Islam. The establishment of the educational institutions of the Muhammadiyah al-Islamiyah Education Foundation (YPMI) marked the beginning of Muhammadiyah's development on Kangean Island. In the following years, the Muhammadiyah organization was structurally established on the island.

The network of puritanical Muhammadiyah students spread to remote villages on Kangean island. Pesantren At-Taqwa Muhammadiyah, a subsidiary of YPMI, was established in Kalikatak village, the same village as YPMI. Pesantren Muhibbin was founded by *ustaz* Hasan in an Angon-Angon village. Pesantren Darul Hawariyin was built by *ustaz* Imad in Torjek village and Pesantren As-Salam by *ustaz* Mukennap in

[19] Bahrus Syurur, "Haji Abdul Kadir Muhammad Tokoh dakwah Muhammadiyah dari Surabaya," pwmu.co, 2020, Accessed on Mei 27, 2021., https://pwmu.co/161862/09/13/haji-abdul-kadir-muhammad-tokoh-dakwah-kangean-dari-surabaya/.

[20] Limas Dodi, "Power-Based Economic Politics In Persatuan Islam (Persis) In Sapeken, Sumenep-Madura," *Madania: Jurnal Kajian Keislaman* 25, no. 1 (2021): 45–58.

[21] Nurul Fatimah, "Gerakan Puritanisme Persatuan Islam di Kepulauan Sapeken-Sumenep Madura, 1972-2016," *JUSPI (Jurnal Sejarah Peradaban Islam)* 2, no. 1 (2018): 71, https://doi.org/10.30829/j.v2i1.1534.

Torjek village. The founders of the pesantren are alumni of the YPMI institution. *Ustaz* Hasan and *ustaz* Imad are alumni of Pesantren Al-Mukmin Ngruki in Central Java along with *ustaz* Abu Hurairah, the leader of Pesantren At-Taqwa who is both alumni of the Pesantren Al-Mukmin Ngruki. The genealogy of *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) is so visible from the movement of the puritanical Muhammadiyah group to spread puritanical dawah on this island. Before establishing their *pesantren*, *ustaz* Hasan, *ustaz* Imad, and *ustaz* Abu Hurairah were teaching staffs at Muhammadiyah's YPMI Islamic school, while Mukennap was from the Muhammadiyah Branch Management (PCM) in Arjasa district.

CONTESTATION OF RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY: FROM DISCOURSE TO CULTURAL ACTION

Differences in the religious rituals of puritanical and traditional groups lead to conflicts and tensions within the community. These conflicts and tensions arise in religious and cultural spaces, such as *majelis taklim* (Islamic forum), *pengajian umum* (public recitations), and the Maulid Nabi (birth of the Prophet Muhammad). On occasions, the discourse presented can be provocative, causing further tensions in the religious sphere.

The socio-religious struggle in Kangean is primarily between two groups: traditional Islam and puritanical Islam. However, in certain cases, *ghuru morok*, identified as syncretic Islam, acts as a religious authority. This authority serves to preserve, defend, and maintain syncretic religious traditions within Kangean society. Although a *kiai pesantren* shares similarities with a *ghuru morok*, there are instances where conflicts arise between the two. Purification of religion, typically associated with figures from Muhammadiyah, can also be found among *kiai pesantren* who oppose the religious traditions of the syncretic group represented by *ghuru morok*.

Syncretic Islam: Mystification of Ghuru Morok

Kiai langgar is a term referring to Islamic religious leaders in the village. Various terms are attached to the religious leader in the rural culture, especially ini Madura culture, such as *ghuru*

tolang, ghuru deging, ghuru lip-alipan, ghuru mak kaeh, and *ghuru morok.*[22] The figure of *kiai langgar*, hereinafter referred to as *ghuru morok*, refers to the village's religious elite who have authority for religious teaching, carrying out prayers for the village community, to the primary teaching of the Quran. In specific contexts, *ghuru morok's* involvement in syncretic Islamic religious ceremonies such as *slametan* makes him a man called "*keaji*" (a term for religious ceremonial leaders).[23]

Syncretic Islam refers to a pattern of Islam used by Geertz to identify the *abangan* Islamic group that blends Islamic and Hindu-Buddhist traditions. The presence of *ghuru morok* on Kangean Island is linked to historical aspects and the construction of the island's old culture. Before the emergence of pesantrens (Islamic boarding schools), *ghuru morok* was the only religious authority in the community, with *langgar* (a local traditional educational institution) serving as the basis for traditional education and a place to learn to read the Quran. In religious rituals such as *slametan*, *ghuru morok* is considered the main leader.

Ghuru morok sanctifies places such as the holy tomb, the coast, and the well. They believe that conducting *slametan* rituals in these places will result in "salvation" or *barakah*, known as *bherkah* in Madurese. The community believes that by performing *slametan*, they will be protected from dangers and the wrath of Allah. This belief also extends to religious ceremonies commemorating Islamic holidays, completed with *sajen* (a type of food deliberately prepared for certain ceremonies).

A *ghuru morok* perceives the mystification of sacred places as an attempt to interpret nature as a subject.[24] For *ghuru morok*, nature possesses power, mystery, and the ability to regulate human survival. Hence, every natural environment has its "own

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[22] A R Samsul and Moh Supriyadi, "Peran Kiai Langgar dalam Merawat Ajaran Islam Wasatiyah di Madura," in *Proceedings of Annual Conference for Muslim Scholars*, vol. 6, 2022, 679–90.

[23] Yanwar Pribadi, "The Klebun , the Kiai and the Blater : Notes from Western Madura, Indonesia," *South East Asia Research* 23, no. 3 (18 September 2015): 303–17, https://doi.org/10.5367/sear.2015.0267.

[24] Syam, *Islam pesisir*, 180.

guard." In an interview conducted by the researcher with Ghuru Hasan, a *ghuru morok* in Kangayan village, he stated that every natural environment like *Tasek* (sea) and *deratan* (land) has its guards, each requiring different safety rituals. *Ghuru morok* also partakes in traditional Islamic religious rituals like *tahlilan* (commemorating a person's death) at various stages such as *tellok-tellokna* (third day of death), *pettok-pettokna* (seventh day of death), *nyatos* (hundredth day of death) and *saebuna/sadekka* (thousandth day of death). *Ghuru morok's* role in these commemorations is as a *keaji* (leader of the tahlil). Sometimes, a *ghuru morok* also serves as a *pangolo* (a person in charge of marrying two bridal couples).

The mystification of sacred places, such as holy tombs, in traditional Islamic groups' conception serves a function in preserving old holy tombs. They believe that by caring for and restoring the holy tomb, they would receive *barakah* (salvation) from Allah through the intermediary of the wali in the tomb.

Traditional Islam: The Mystification and Demystification of Kiai Pesantren

Traditional Islam in Nusantara context refers to those who preserve, maintain, adhere to, and spread the teachings of Islam based on local interpretations. This group typically bases its teachings on the interpretations of previous scholars, such as the *kitab kuning*, the actions of kiai/wali, and the cultural heritage of Indonesian scholars. Traditional Islam is generally affiliated with the socio-religious organization Nahdlatul Ulama (NU).[25] The concept of "Islam Nusantara" that this organization promotes is the most convenient way to describe traditional Islam.

The *kiai* and the presence of Islamic boarding schools (pesantrens) form a cultural basis for explaining the existence of traditional Islamic groups in the Indonesian context. Sufism is the teaching most synonymous with the dawah approach taken

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[25] Zakiya Darojat, "Islam Berkemajuan And Islam Nusantara: The Face Of Moderate Islam In Indonesia," in *2nd Internasional Conference on Culture and Language in Southeast Asia (ICCLAS 2018)* (Atlantis Press, 2019), 60–63.

by this group. The presence of Wali Songo (nine clerics) in the
Nusantara around the 16th century marked a significant point in
the existence of traditional Islamic groups, which later became
the most dominant base of Islamic patterns in Indonesia.[26]

The dawah approach taken by traditional Islamic groups
attempts to reconcile local traditions with the legitimacy of
interpretations of texts in the Quran. Thus, these Islamic groups
tend to be permissive towards local traditions as long as they do
not conflict with Islamic teachings.

The *kiai* is the religious authority of traditional Islamic
groups. The mystification of *kiai* in Kangean also applies to the
local traditions of the community. As a result, the *kiai* is a crucial
agent in various religious activities, such as leading certain
slametan ceremonies and preserving the traditions of *ziarah
kubur* (tomb pilgrimage). The involvement of *kiai*, for example,
can be seen in certain *slametan* ceremonies. *Kiai* also became
agents who preserved the traditions of grave pilgrimage, became
leaders of religious rituals such as death memorials or *tahlils,*[27]
and various religious activities such as those carried out by *ghuru
morok*. However, some *kiai pesantren* disagree with some of the
syncretic religious traditions preserved by Islamist groups, such
as the tradition of slaughtering buffalo heads in the *sadekka
bhumi* ceremony and preparing offerings in the form of treasures
like money and gold in the *slamet toronan* ceremony.

The dawah approach by a pesantren *kiai* shows a tendency
to approach by changing the cultural terrain of certain rituals. For
example*,* the *sadekka bhumi* ceremony, previously held at the
tapak deng-deng (crossroads) site, used a buffalo's head as an
offering material. A *kiai pesantren* will shift the cultural terrain
to the Mosque, *Mushalla*, or Langgar and remove the elements of

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[26] Aqmarina Bella Agustin, "JAVANESE MUSLIM LOCAL
CULTURE AND TRADITION IN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE," *Sunan
Kalijaga International Journal on Islamic Educational Research* 3, no. 1 (16
Desember 2019): 15–24, https://doi.org/10.14421/skijier.2019.2019.31.02.

[27] Mohamad Abdun Nasir, "Revisiting the Javanese Muslim Slametan:
Islam, Local Tradition, Honor and Symbolic Communication," *Al-Jami'ah:
Journal of Islamic Studies* 57, no. 2 (24 Desember 2019): 329–58,
https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2019.572.329-358.

offerings in it. Likewise, in the *slamet toronan* ceremony for fishermen, it was previously synonymous with the offerings of money and gold, then was reduced only to take the form of recitation and *salawat.*

Puritan Islam: Demystification of Ustaz puritan

Meanwhile, *ustaz* was originally a term referred to a religious figure whose position was below that of a *kiai* in pesantren. The definition of *ustaz* as a religious figure whose position is below that of a *kiai* is still generally used by the Kangean people to identify the capacities of the religious figure. In simple terms, *ustaz* for the Kangeans is a religious figure who only understands religion without having special abilities like a *kiai*. Therefore, puritanical Islamic groups that generally reject the concept of Sufism and mystical religious teachings, their religious authority is referred to as *ustaz* to distinguish it from a *kiai pesantren* from among the Nahdlatul Ulama.

A puritanical Muslim has a view of a cultural system that aims to a return of an authentic (original) pattern of Islamic religious life by being guided by the cultural system derived from the holy text (Quran and hadith).[28] The excavation of such a life system for a puritanical Muslim must be in the form of Islamic law guided by the Quran and the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad. In its application, the Islamic legal system is called *sharia*. This view is applied in the form of religious rituals, referred to as "normative piety," which is a picture of behavior through the intermediary of Muhammad as a messenger of God. In socio-religious activities, the practice of purification of Islam is reflected through the movement of prohibitions against religious rituals that are considered to deviate from Islamic orthodoxy *(bidah)*.[29]

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[28] Wildani Hefni, Rizqa Ahmadi, and Imam Mustofa, "Reinventing the Human Dignity in Islamic Law Discourse: The Wasatiyah Approaches from Khaled Abou El-Fadl to the Interreligious Relation," *Al-Manahij: Jurnal Kajian Hukum Islam*, 25 November 2022, 239–54, https://doi.org/10.24090/mnh.v16i2.6928.

[29] Mochammad Rijaal Soedrajad and Naupal Asnawi Tohir, "Indigenous Islam and Puritan Islam in Indonesia through Nasr Hamid Abu

These puritanical Islamists generally carry narratives of rationality in their *dawah*. Weber's conception of "disenchantment of the word" is often used to describe the view of rationality.[30] They view sacred places such as sacred tombs, *Karamat,* coastlines and other sacred places as ordinary places (desacralization). Therefore, for them, such places do not need to be given excessive respect or offerings. In contrast to syncretic Islam, puritanical Islam views nature and sacred places as objects (demystification). This view guides a rational action, such as the purification of Islam with the implementation of movements of rejection of heresy, superstition, and *khurafat* such as *tahlil, slametan, ziarah, sesajen, berkah bumi,* and so on.

Genealogically, the emergence of *ustaz* from puritanical circles of both Muhammadiyah and PERSIS came later on the island of Kangean. Its presence was in line with the arrival of Muhammadiyah *dawah* and the Persatuan Islam (Persis). Rather than *ghuru morok* and *kiai* pesantren, *ustaz* was the new religious authority in the context of the island's people. The religious complexions and views of the puritanical *ustaz* can be easily identified from their affiliation to religious social organizations. Although the *ustaz* is a religious authority affiliated with Muhammadiyah and Persatuan Islam (Persis), their views on syncretic religious traditions tend to be expansive and doctrinaire, in contrast to the views of the *kiai* pesantren, which is more permissive towards local traditions. An *ustaz* categorically rejects syncretic religious traditions and considers them to be practices of *bidah* (heresy), superstition, and *khurafat* (a culture that does not exist in Islamic teachings). That is why an *ustaz* believes that purifying Islam from the local mystical tradition is necessary.

The basis of the purification movement carried out by the *ustaz* generally occurs in the aspect of spreading doctrines

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Zayd's Hermeneutic Studies," *Jurnal Islam Nusantara* 6, no. 1 (2022): 44–57, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.33852/jurnalnu.v5i2.307.

[30] Galen Watts and Dick Houtman, "The spiritual turn and the disenchantment of the world: Max Weber, Peter Berger and the religion–science conflict," *The Sociological Review* 71, no. 1 (21 Januari 2023): 261–79, https://doi.org/10.1177/00380261221096387.

through *majelis taklim*, *pengajian* (recitation in Islamic local tradition), and education (Islamic school, *pesantren,* and *langgar)*. Even in specific contexts, an *ustaz* is not reluctant to engage directly in certain *slametan* rituals and give lectures on the importance of returning to the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah. The *dawah* approach taken bypuritan *ustaz* tends to give religious lectures and traditional educational institutions, both Islamic boarding schools and *langgar*. In Angon-Angon village, Arjasa district, one of the *ustaz* made efforts to build violations affiliated with puritanical pesantren deliberately. However, it is a traditional education with the tendency *of ghuru morok* as its leader. Puritan *ustaz* thought that establishing his *dawah* on Islam could expand to the primary school-aged children in the village.

Tensions arose in the village of Angon-Angon between one of the puritanical Islamic figures and a *ghuru morok*. This was triggered by a lecture given by a puritan *ustaz* in the *majelis taklim*, in which he declared that *tahlil* and *slametan* traditions were *bidah* rituals and deviated from Islamic values. Upon hearing this, a *ghuru morok* became angered, leading to a debate between the *ustaz* and the *ghuru morok*. The ghuru morok's rejection of the *ustaz*'s views was not an isolated incident. The *ustaz*'s rejection of religious traditions such as *slametan*, *sesajen*, and *tahlil* has been a source of ongoing conflict between these two religious authorities. These tensions often lead to competition between the two in influencing societal discourse. A *ghuru morok* often views the *ustaz* from puritanical circles as young individuals who have not completed their religious studies and have not fully read the *kitab kuning* (the classic books of Islamic studies). Similarly, the *ustaz* often accuses the *ghuru morok* as a group who preserves syncretic religious traditions, of being heretics (*bidah*).

In a discussion with one of the Puritanic ustaz, he stated that the *dawah* approach of the Wali Songo was incomplete or "unfinished", and those who return to the Quran and the Sunnah are responsible for continuing the *dawah* efforts of the Wali Songo. This highlights the deep-seated ideological differences and contestations between these religious authorities.

Table 1.

Tendencies of religious authority

Religious Authority	*Ghuru morok*	*Kiai Pesantren*	*Ustaz*
Discourse	Mystification	Mystification and Demystification	Demystification
Cultural Action	Maintain *Tahlil, Slametan, Sesajen, etc.*	Maintain *Tahlil, celebrations of Islamic holidays, etc.* Reject *Sesajen, animal serving, etc.*	Reject *Tahlil, maulid nabi celebration (the birthday of Prophet), tahlil, slametan, sesajen etc.*

Source: Personal Documentation

TOLERANCE AND ACCOMMODATION AMONG RELIGIOUS AUTHORITIES

In agrarian-rural societies, strong cultural ties often coincide with syncretic traditions. This is particularly evident in Madurese society, where traditionalist Islam, specifically Nahdlatul Ulama, is held as the only true Islamic identity. The cultural solidarity among the Madurese people is largely based on this shared religious view that "the true Islam is the Nahdlatul Ulama Islam." The existence of religious authorities like kiai and ghuru morok, who share a more harmonious relationship than the ustaz, makes the Islamic purification movement of puritanical Islamic groups more challenging. Both traditional and syncretic Islam are more acceptable in rural societies than puritanical Islam, which is considered more suitable for urban societies.

The *dawah* movement of puritanical groups in rural areas often leads to cultural clashes, with puritanical Islam frequently being stigmatized as a heretical sect of Islam. This is also the case in Kangean, where clashes with traditionalist and syncretic groups involve religious authorities and are evident from the contestation of cultural discourses and actions. While an *ustaz* still commands trust in the community, their rigid *dawah* approach often relegates them to being considered the third authority after *kiai* and *ghuru morok*.

Consequently, an *ustaz* often displays a more dynamic and lenient attitude in their *dawah*. They adopt this attitude to carefully spread the puritanical Islamic mission to avoid conflict in the community. In some cases, their approach shows a tendency towards radical movements. Interactions and clashes with the old authorities (*kiai* and *ghuru morok*) have forced them to change their *dawah* strategies over time. Social pressures from religious authorities like *kiai* and *ghuru morok*, who have relatively more followers, seem to compel the *ustaz* to be more accommodating. This accommodating attitude towards traditions they regard as *bidah*, *khurafat*, and *munkarat* emerges along with interactions with religious authorities. The previous radical *dawah* approach turned into communalism towards other religious authorities, both *kiai* and *ghuru morok*. This attitude of communalism and tolerance is exemplified by the involvement of *ustaz* in the *molotan* tradition (the commemoration of the birth of the Prophet Muhammad), which is carried out in Nahdlatul Ulama pesantrens, mosques, houses and places of worship of traditionalist Muslims in Kangean. Some cases even saw the ustaz involved as a speaker in the *molotan* tradition.

Several Muhammadiyah youth activists from the Muhammadiyah Student Association (IPM) were also involved in helping student activists from the Nahdlatul Ulama Student Association (IPNU) prepare the *molotan* tradition. Another accommodating attitude was shown by an *ustaz* from puritanical Islam circles who was heavily involved as a speaker in the *slametan* activities held by the local community. However, the religious lectures given by a puritan *ustaz* still show a tendency to invite traditionalist and syncretic Islamic groups to return to the teachings of the Quran and hadith (puritans).

The accommodating and tolerant attitude exhibited by puritanical Muslims, as noted by Suseno, is more akin to an attitude of *tepa selira pakewuh* in Javanese culture, or *tak nyaman* and *sungkan* (reluctant) in the local language. This group of puritans participated in traditions such as *molotan* (the celebration of the birth of Prophet Muhammad) and *slametan* (commemoration rituals) as a form of *pseudo-participation* or

what Ritzer refers to as *false consciousness*.[31] Although they
appear to support syncretic and traditionalist traditions exter-
nally, they fundamentally oppose them.

The gradual development of accommodation and tolerance
between religious authorities in Kangean resulted from intense
interactions. The accommodating attitude of a *kiai* pesantren
towards *ghuru moro* , for example, occurs with the principle of
respecting *ghuru morok* as a parent whom, in the culture of
Madurese society, must be respected. Although a *kiai pesantren*
disagrees with the details of the syncretic group's religious
rituals, the dissent was conveyed politely, without forcing a
ghuru morok to follow the opinion of the *kiai* pesantren. On the
other hand, the religious scientific genealogy of *ghuru morok,*
which is the Islamic heritage of Sufism such as *wali songo* shows
the permissive attitude of a *ghuru morok* towards the views of
kiai pesantren. This is presumably also due to the hierarchical
culture in the tradition of *santri* in the Nahdlatul Ulama environ-
ment causing *ghuru morok*'s accommodating attitude towards the
kiai pesantren to be more visible than his attitude to an *ustaz*
from puritanical circles.

The position of *kiai*, according to Geertz is as a cultural
broker.[32] His accommodating views and attitudes towards the
ustaz and *Ghuru morok* show the position of the *kiai,* which
tends to be moderate as a religious authority in Kangean. *Kiai*
serves as the link between the two religious authorities. This is
what causes the figure and charisma of a *kiai* pesantren respected
by the Kangean people as religious figures who have a variety of
complex knowledge, religious knowledge, healing method, life
wisdom, social, cultural, economic, and even political know-
ledge. Therefore, the presence of *kiai* pesantren is more accep-
table to the community as their patrons in various religious
matters.

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[31] Ivo Ritzer, "Particularized Universality: From Aesthetics to Politics,
and Back (in Ten Notes)," in *Decolonial Aesthetics II: Modes of Relating*
(Springer, 2023), 57–70, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-662-66222-9_5.

[32] Clifford Geertz, "The Javanese Kijaji: the Changing Role of a
Cultural Broker," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 2, no. 2 (3
Januari 1960): 228–49, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417500000670.

As per Sutiyono's views, religious teachings tend to display two attitudes: fanaticism and tolerance. A balance between these two concepts is crucial, as imbalances can lead to social insta-bility. High levels of fanaticism coupled with weak tolerance can cause hostility towards followers of other religions and display intolerant attitudes. On the other hand, strong tolerance coupled with weak fanaticism can weaken the existence of a religion due to a lack of confidence and pride in one's faith[33]. The *ustaz* exhibits high fanaticism, *Ghuru morok* shows higher tolerance than fanaticism, while the *kiai pesantren* tends to balance these two religious authorities. The moderate attitude of kiai pesantren reflects cultural accommodation between the two religious authorities. However, fanaticism and tolerance are complemen-tary among the three religious authorities. The tug-of-war of cultural discourses and actions among these authorities deter-mines societal acceptance of their existence as subjects of power in the social classification.

CONCLUSION

The struggle among the three religious authorities on Kangean Island indeed illustrates the dynamic interplay between cultural patterns and traditions. The syncretic and traditional Islam, which identifies with local Islamic traditions, and puritan Islam, seen as an external Islamic group, display a contestation of religious authority. This contestation is reflected in their discourse and their power in interpreting ideal Islamic practices. The religious style of *Ghuru Morok*, a representative of syncretic Islam, tends to mystify local traditions. G*huru Morok* respects local traditions, believing that every place (nature) has a guardian who must be given its prayer. This mystification is not solely for ensuring well-being but is an integral part of their faith tradition.

In contrast, the Ustaz, representing puritan Islam, considers the mystification of local culture to be b*id'ah* (heresy), *khurafat* and *munkarat*, and not in line with Islamic teachings. The Ustaz tends to demystify local traditions. The Kiai from Traditional Islam seems to strike a balance between these two tendencies.

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[33] Sutiyono, *Benturan Budaya Islam: Puritan dan Sinkretis*, 4.

The Kiai appears to accommodate certain aspects of the way
Ghuru Morok sacralizes local traditions, while also rejecting
other local traditions that they believe should not be considered
sacred. Thus, the Kiai tends to be dynamic, both accommodating
and rejecting local traditions in the contexts of mystification and
demystification.

The mystification by *Ghuru Morok*, demystification by
Ustaz, and both mystification and demystification by the Kiai are
phenomena that seek to reinforce the boundaries of the social
groups of each faction. Extreme levels of contestation can lead to
stressful cultural actions, prejudices, and conflicts. However, on
Kangean Island, the accommodating attitudes and tolerance of
the religious authorities from each faction have prevented pro-
longed conflicts. The emergence of traditionalist Islamic groups
in Kangean society offered a new religious alternative with the
arrival of puritanical Islam. The interaction and struggle of the
three religious authorities have given birth to a tolerant and
pluralistic society, contrasting with the general view of Madurese
Islam, which is said to be dominated solely by traditional Islamic
patterns affiliated with Nahdlatul Ulama.

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