NEGOTIATING TRADITIONAL RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY IN INDONESIAN ISLAM: THE CASE OF MADANI VILLAGE

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Abstract

This article deals with traditional religious authority in a given context, namely the village of Madani in Riau, Sumatra, Indonesia. It specifically asks how this traditional religious authority is established and shaped in the context of an Indonesian rural Muslim society. This article uses observation and interviews to collect data based on an ethnographic study. This village is selected to be the place of study because it represents the typical characteristics of Indonesian villages. This article finds that traditional religious authority in Indonesia is not established and shaped linearly. However, it is compromised and contested. Although Muslims in this community regard a Kiai as a respected man having a religious charisma, this society also contests his religious authority to contribute to the resignation of the kiai from the Pesantren (Islamic Boarding School). This resignation supports him in developing his Tariqah (Sufi Order), followed by many community Muslims. Although he does not own a Pesantren, it indicates that his religious authority has been negotiated through the Tariqah. This negotiation implicates that traditional religious authority in Indonesia is not given without contestation from the Muslim community. Furthermore, it also indicates that traditional religious authority's trajectory and shape in rural areas are not monolithic, depending on society's social and cultural context.

Keywords: *Religious Authority, Indonesian Islam, Kiai, Tariqah*

Abstrak

Artikel ini membahas otoritas keagamaan tradisional dalam konteks tertentu, yaitu desa Madani di Riau, Sumatra, Indonesia. Artikel ini secara khusus menanyakan

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bagaimana otoritas agama tradisional ini didirikan dan dibentuk dalam konteks masyarakat Muslim pedesaan Indonesia. Artikel ini menggunakan observasi dan wawancara untuk mengumpulkan data berdasarkan studi etnografi. Desa ini dipilih menjadi tempat penelitian karena mewakili ciri khas desa di Indonesia. Artikel ini menemukan bahwa otoritas keagamaan tradisional di Indonesia tidak dibentuk secara linear. Namun, ia dikompromikan dan diperebutkan. Meskipun umat Islam di komunitas ini menganggap seorang Kiai sebagai sosok terhormat yang memiliki kharisma religius, masyarakat ini juga menggugat otoritas keagamaannya yang berkontribusi pada pengunduran diri kiai tersebut dari Pesantren. Pengunduran diri ini memberikan kesempatan bagi Kiai untuk mengembangkan Tariqah yang diikuti oleh banyak Muslim di desa tersebut. Meski tidak memiliki Pesantren, ia tetap dianggap kiai. Hal itu menandakan otoritas keagamaannya telah dinegosiasikan melalui Tariqah. Negosiasi ini berimplikasi bahwa otoritas keagamaan tradisional di Indonesia tidak diberikan tanpa adanya kontestasi dari komunitas Muslim. Lebih lanjut, hal itu juga menunjukkan bahwa lintasan dan bentuk otoritas keagamaan tradisional di pedesaan tidak monolitik, tergantung pada konteks sosial dan budaya masyarakat.

Kata Kunci: *Otoritas Keagamaan, Islam Indonesia, Kiai, Tariqah*

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مستخلص

تتناول هذه المقالة السلطة الدينية التقليدية في سياق معين ، أي قرية ماداني في رياو ، سومطرة ، إندونيسيا. يسأل على وجه التحديد كيف يتم إنشاء هذه السلطة الدينية التقليدية وتشكيلها في سياق مجتمع مسلم ريفي إندونيسي. تستخدم هذه المقالة الملاحظات والمقابلات لجمع البيانات بناءً على دراسة إثنوغرافية. تم اختيار هذه القرية لتكون مكان الدراسة لأنها تمثل الخصائص النموذجية للقرى الإندونيسية. تجد هذه المقالة أن السلطة الدينية التقليدية في إندونيسيا لم يتم تأسيسها أو تشكيلها بشكل خطي. ومع ذلك ، فقد تم اختراقها والتنازع عليها. على الرغم من أن المسلمين في هذا المجتمع يعتبرون كياي رجلاً محترماً يتمتع بكاريزما دينية ، إلا أن هذا المجتمع ينافس أيضًا سلطته الدينية للمساهمة في استقالة كياي من بيسانترين) المدرسة الداخلية الإسلامية. (هذه الاستقالة تدعمه في تطوير طريقته الصوفية (الطريقة) ، تليها العديد من الجالية المسلمة. على الرغم من أنه لا يمتلك Pesantren ، إلا أنه يشير إلى أن سلطته الدينية قد تم التفاوض عليها من خلال Tariqoh. تشير هذه المفاوضات إلى أن السلطة الدينية التقليدية في إندونيسيا لا تُمنح دون اعتراض من المجتمع المسلم. علاوة على ذلك ، فإنه يشير أيضًا إلى أن مسار السلطة الدينية التقليدية وشكلها في المناطق الريفية ليسا متجانسين ، اعتمادًا على السياق الاجتماعي والثقافي للمجتمع.

الكلمات المفتاحية: المرجع الديني ، الإسلام الإندونيسي ، كياي ، طارقات

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A. Introduction

Religious authority embodied in Indonesian Islam is apparent because Indonesian Muslims need meaningful interpretations of Islamic texts written in Arabic. Islamic texts and sources are difficult to be understood by 'common' Muslims without the interpretation of authoritative persons like kiai (a title given to religious and respected Javanese Muslim) and

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ust d (Muslim religious teacher). Kramer and Schmidtke[1] state "religious authority further involves the ability (chance, power, or right) to compose and define the canon of "authoritative" texts and the legitimate methods of interpretation ."Religious authority, however, is not given to a person by government or state but by Muslim society. As a result, religious authority in Indonesian Islam is democratic[2]. This is because it can be acquired by anyone having Islamic solid knowledge and competence. However, having Islamic knowledge and competence is meaningless without Muslim society's support and recognition. In this case, Muslim society is central in making religious authority.

Most studies discussing religious authority do not focus on Muslim society in which it is established and shaped.   They primarily discuss religious authority focusing on its holders, such as kiai and ust d . Rina S. Kusuma[3] analyzes religious authority focusing on two ust d , Yusuf Mansur and Arifin Ilham. She studies these Muslim preachers who use Facebook to disseminate their preaching. Rahman[4] also discusses religious authority holders concentrating on the views of kiai to the internet. Solahudin and Fakhruroji[5] Explain the contestation of traditional religious authority due to the rise of digital media. They describe that online religious practices mediated on the internet challenge the conventional ones. The former is mainly used by populist preachers, while traditional religious authority holders do the latter. Their study is actually in line with Turner's analysis which explained that the new media shape religious authority. There is no discussion in the above research on how traditional religious authority is shaped and negotiated in a given context of the Muslim community. It is true that the coming of new media contests traditional religious authority. However, the new media is not the only factor challenging and contesting traditional religious authority. It is established, shaped, and negotiated by Muslim society so that it is not given to a person linearly without contestation from Muslim society.

Furthermore, Muslim society is not monolithic. It consists of active actors with different educational backgrounds, contributing to the religious authority contest. Even in rural areas, Muslim communities are not passive agents. This article then aims to know how

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[1] Gurdun Kramer and Sabine Schmidtke, "Introduction: Religious Authority and Religious Authorities in Muslim Societies A Critical Overview," in *Speaking for Islam: Religious Authorities in Muslim Societies* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 1–2.

[2] Brayen S Turner, "Religious Authority and the New Media," *Theory, Culture & Society* 24, no. 2 (2007): 117–34.

[3] Rina S Kusuma, "Religious Authority and Social Media: Indonesian Da'i Use of Facebook," in *International Conference on Islam and Muslim Society* (Salatiga, 2017), 1–2.

[4] Fazlur Rahman, "Internet and Kyais in Indonesia: Negotiation of Authority in Mediatized Environment Online," *Journal for Religion on the Internet* 29, no. 1 (2015): 81–106.

[5] Dindin Solahudin and Moch Fakhruroji, "Internet and Islamic Learning Practices in Indonesia: Social Media, Religious Populism, and Religious Authority," *Journal of Religion* 11, no. 19 (2019): 1–12.

this traditional religious authority is established and shaped in the context of an Indonesian rural Muslim society. Studying traditional religious authority in a rural Muslim society in Indonesia is advantageous to identify its complicated and dynamic presence.

This article is based on an ethnographic study done from January to February 2018 and December to January 2019. There are nine informants selected in this study in which their names are pseudonyms to be interviewed. It focuses on Madani village as the place of observation because it represents Muslim villages in Indonesia. Traditional religious authority has been visible to interpret Islamic sources and texts meaningful for ordinary rural Muslims. It is a typical Indonesian village. The existence of its traditional religious authority resembles the broad context of traditional religious authority in Indonesia. Although some villages have different names to mention this traditional religious authority, most Muslim villagers in Indonesia use the symbol of kiai to call this traditional religious authority. In this study, the presence of kiai reflects the broad representation of traditional religious authority in Indonesia. However, it must be stressed that the unique presence of religious authority negotiation in this village might be different from other rural areas in Indonesia. Furthermore, the selection of this village is based on a consideration in which Javanese villages outside Javanese island are not peripheral in Indonesian Islam study. This is to avoid the domination of Indonesian Islam research focusing on Javanese island as the study site.

This article was developed using structuration theory analysis. Structuration theory is a sociological theory proposed by Anthony Giddens. This theory attempts to bridge two extreme views in sociology, namely the view that human action is completely determined by social structure and the view that human action is completely determined by agents or individuals. According to structuration theory, human action is influenced by interactions between social structures and agents who are active in producing and reproducing these structures. Social structures are understood as patterns of social relations that are organized in society, while agents are understood as individuals or social groups that have the ability to act and influence the social structure.[6]

In structuration theory, active agents are seen as subjects who are active in producing and reproducing social structures. Agents are not only seen as objects formed by the social structure, but also as subjects who are active in influencing and changing the social structure. Thus, agents are considered to have an important role in the process of production and reproduction of social structures, and cannot be seen as mere passive objects.

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[6] Anthony Giddens, *Teori Strukturasi : Dasar-Dasar Pembentukan Struktur Sosial Masyarakat,* (Yogyakarta : Pustaka Pelajar, 2016).

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In the context of structuration theory, the relationship between social structure and active agents is dynamic and interrelated. Social structures cannot be understood without regard to the role of active agents in producing and reproducing them, and conversely, active agents cannot be understood without regard to the social structures that shape and limit their actions. In this case, structuration theory emphasizes that social structure and active agent cannot be separated from each other, and both influence each other in the process of production and reproduction of social structure. In this article, the social structure is religious authority and agents are members of Madani society who actively negotiate the religious authority.

B. Discussion

1. The Village of Madani

This village is located in a border area of Riau and Jambi province in Sumatra Island. To reach this area from Pekanbaru, the capital city of Riau, one should spend more than eight hours due to the deficient infrastructures. Most government officials who want to visit this village prefer using a boat to a car due to the inadequate access. Madani was previously a part of the Pulau Kijang village. It is then now separated from Pulau Kijang. It is different from Pulau Kijang, which is a multi-ethnic society; the village of Madani is a homogenous community. Javanese people dominate the population of this village. All of them are Muslims. Most of them were born in this village. Their ancestors generally come from East Java and Central Java. During the colonial period, they migrated from Javanese Island, so their migration was not initiated and supported by the New Order Indonesian government called the 'Transmigrasi' (transmigration) program like in other regions. Their ancestors came to Madani society personally and voluntarily due to economic reasons. They want to get a better life in this region.

Most villagers graduate from Islamic Senior High School (Madrasah Aliyah). Some graduated from Islamic universities and Islamic boarding schools (Pondok Pesantren). Regarding religiosity, Madani villagers can be divided into two groups. The first group is Muslim teachers who have a high level of religious knowledge and observe religious teachings. This group graduated from Islamic universities, mainly from Java. They generally work in Islamic schools to teach Islamic and non-Islamic subjects. The second group is the majority of villagers. They graduated from Islamic senior high schools and junior high schools. Generally, this group of villagers works in coconut gardens for a living.

Because all people living in this society are Javanese, the language spoken in daily life is Javanese, not Indonesian. Although it is a single ethnic community, it is a plural society regarding educational background, political affiliations, and economic advantages. However, traditional Islam is preserved in Madani society in 'tahlilan,' 'selametan, ' visiting tombs, reciting Yasin verse, and other activities identical to traditional Islam.[7] The general characteristic of traditional Islam is " the adoption of local tradition in the sphere of Indonesian Islam. One example is the celebration of the seventh month of a woman's pregnancy."[8]

The traditional religious authority in this village is also supported by Javanese tradition. This tradition respects a man having mystical power. A man called kiai in Javanese tradition is regarded as having it so that he is believed to heal or cure one's disease. In Javanese tradition, " one of the Kiai has fasted for more than twenty…this allows the mystic to establish contact with saints, spirits, and sources of magical power and in some cases with God."[9]

2. Producing and Deconstructing Kiai

In this village, kiai is a symbol of traditional religious authority. kiai, as mentioned by Pringle[10] is " a man of learning, deriving stature from his reputation for scholarship and the success of his pesantren." Unsurprisingly, kiai and pesantren are inseparable.

Its early presence in the village is because kiai can disseminate Islamic knowledge among children in this community. This kiai is hoped to lead and manage a pesantren which became the place of Islamic knowledge production. This pesantren was named 'Jazirotul Munir'. Jazirotul Munir Islamic boarding school was established in 1962 by people in Madani village of Riau, Sumatra. In the first year of its establishment, the teaching and learning process was not managed by a kiai but by local people who were considered to have Islamic knowledge. However, with the progress of time, it was not sufficient to improve the pesantren education. There was a need to invite a religious and knowledgeable man to manage the pesantren. Some people then went to Javanese island to seek a kiai.

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[7] Abudin Nata, *Peta Keragaman Pemikiran Islam Di Indonesia*, *Rajawali Press* (Jakarta: Rajawali Press, 2001).

[8] Azyumardi Azra, "Distinguishing Indonesian Islam: Some Lessons to Learn," in *In Islam in Indonesia: Contrasting Images and Interpretations*, ed. Jajat Burhanuddin and Kees van Dijk, 1st ed. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2013), 63–74.

[9] Mark Woodward, *Java, Indonesia and Islam* (London and New York: Springer, 2011).

[10] Robert Pringle, *Understanding Islam in Indonesia: Politics and Diversity*, ed. Didier Millet (Singapore, 2010).

This pesantren was hoped to ful fill the religious education need of the society. It is then different from a pesantren in Javanese island in which it is established by a kiai so that a kiai is the pioneer of a pesantren.[11] Siregar, Setiawan and Setio[12] mention that a kiai commonly " is the initiator of establishing a pesantren in which he must lead the pesantren and become the policy and decision-maker in it. Kiai is the founder of the pesantren in common."

In this context, people of the society are active agents. This is because they made and produced both the pesantren and kiai. However, kiai is not a vacant symbol without power. kiai also produced his authority by leading religious activities and managing the pesantren established. Because Madani society is a traditional Javanese society, it regards a kiai as a religious and authoritative symbol of a man.[13]

Kiai as a symbol is not free from non-religious elements. This can be seen from the economic and political benefits of this symbol. When a man is named kiai before his name, he gets economic and political benefits from Muslim society. Since he has a higher social status in Muslim society, he has many followers. He can get economic and political benefits from them. They give economic and political support to kiai due to some reasons. One of them is religious reasons like to get 'berkah' or spiritual feedback.[14] However, others provide economic support due to political interest. In this case, there is a mutual connection. When a politician comes to kiai to get political support from his followers, kiai supports this politician to get economic feedback.

Kiai Hamid is approached and visited several times by politicians to get political support from him and his followers. When he was given some cows from a politician, local people gossiped about it. There was a common perception among Muslims that politics is a 'bad thing.' Kiai is a religious man, should not have any connection with politics. Furthermore, he was given political gratification. This contrasting perception and reality caused 'trouble' for his religious authority. Some local people view this negatively. It can be seen from the

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[11] Zamakhsyari Dhofier, *Tradisi Pesantren: Studi Pandangan Hidup Kiyai Dan Visinya Mengenai Masa Depan Indonesia* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 2015); Yanwar Pribadi, "RELIGIOUS NETWORKS IN MADURA: Pesantren, Nahdatul Ulama and Kiai as the Core of Santri Culture," *Al-Jami'ah Journal of Islamic Studies* 51, no. 1 (2013): 1–31; Martin Van Bruinessen, "Traditionalist and Islamist Pesantrens in Cotemporaty," in *The Madrasah in Asia* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Perss, 2008), 217–45.

[12] Ferry M. Siregar, Setiawan Nurchloish, and Setio Robert, "Religious Leader and Charismatic Leadership in Indonesia: The Role of Kyai in Pesantren in Java," *Kawistara* 3, no. 2 (2013): 117–226; Dhofier, *Tradisi Pesantren: Studi Pandangan Hidup Kiyai Dan Visinya Mengenai Masa Depan Indonesia*; Siti Mariatul Kiptiyah, "Ulama Jawa, Otoritas Agama, Dan Tafsir Al-Quran," Dalam Islam Antara Teks, Kuasa Dan Identitas," in *Islam Antara Teks, Kuasa Dan Identitas*, ed. Sunarwoto (Yogyakarta: Arti Bumi Intara, 2018), 16.

[13] Sukamto, *Kepemimpinan Kiai Dalam Pesantren* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1999).

[14] Abdul Latif Bustami, *Kiai Politik, Politik Kiai: Membedah Wacana Politik Kaum Tradisionalis* (Malang: Pustaka Bayan, 2009).

statement proposed by Ilham. He states, " I do not think it is acceptable. He should be able to take a distance with politics. I disagree with him….we all know politics is dirty. In fact, he is a religious man".[15]

The gossip about 'kiai got cows from a politician' was sharpened by the technology instrument, namely a mobile phone. The fast dissemination through SMS (short message service) put him in a complicated situation. His religious authority was challenged so that his agency as a 'common' man was countered. He technically accepted the content of the gossip, but he searched the person who first had disseminated the gossip through his mobile phone. He hoped that someone could acknowledge him voluntarily. However, his hope vanished when there was no one admitting it.

In this context, the people of Madani society did contest kiai's religious authority and deconstructed it. Kiai was regarded as a 'religious' man having religious charisma, but he was a 'common' man. He was gossiped. Local people were not afraid of receiving 'kutukan' (magical punishment) from kiai Hamid. He threatened those who disseminated the gossip getting 'magical punishment'. For some local people, kiai Hamid was not 'a true' kiai or kiai Sapi (a 'cow' kiai) because the politician gave him some cows. Zahid, for instance, said, " he is a kiai Sapi because he was given a cow. I think it is an appropriate symbol for him".[16]

A ' cow' Kiai was disseminated quickly with the assistance of mobile phones. Kiai as a religious symbol given to a religious man is deconstructed. It is not only used to respect a man, but it is also used to humiliate a man. A cow kiai labeled to kiai Hamid is not a respectable symbol. This is because a cow is an animal that its owner can order anywhere and anytime. This icon is then a degradation symbol given to him. Due to this fact, kiai Hamid made a 'shocking 'decision. In front of local people during 'takl m' or housewife Islamic learning club, he announced that he stopped being 'a kiai .'This declaration was distributed speedily from mouth to mouth.

His oral decision was then followed by his action in which he did not want to be an 'imam' or a prayer leader in the mosque. When he was still a kiai, he was constantly a mosque's Imam. During Ramadhn month, he is constantly being a 'makm m ' or prayer followers during ' tr wy and witir ' prayers or night Rama hn prayers. It looks peculiar since previously, he was always being an ' im m.' (a leader in a prayer). During Jum'at (a weekly

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[15] Ilham, "Personal Interview" , June 29th (Pekanbaru, 2019).
[16] Zahid, "Personal Interview" , July 4th, (Pekanbaru, 2019).

prayer in friday), he also rejects being ' im m'. The mosque congregations sometimes joke about 'mantan kiai' or ex-kiai.

He is also not willing to be a person who leads 'tahlilan' or Islamic religious activities held both in the mosque and society. Tahlilan is a weekly tradition held by the community and mosque. In the mosque, it is commonly conducted before Jum'at prayer. In society, it is held in turn from one's home to another every Thursday night. In the mosque, someone donates to a mosque called 'inf k,' but the mosque congregation gives him and his family a reward in the form of 'tahlilan .' In society, 'Tahlilan' is similar to 'Selametan' in Java. It is held in one's house, and its members are given cakes or food. This 'tahlilan' is a spiritual 'remittance' sent to the dead person. A Kiai, a respectable man, usually leads this religious activity. Kiai speaks Islamic chantings, and then his members follow to say ' al-Fatihah" (the first verse in the Qur'an) and other Qur'an verses. This religious activity is commonly ended by praying together led by a kiai. Because kiai Hamid does not want to be an 'imam' and 'tahlilan' leader, some local people replace him in turn.

Another shocking decision he made is that he stopped leading and teaching in the pesantren. Regarding this behavior, most people in this village were disappointed; for instance, Agus[17] who states, "how come a kiai left his community like that. It is not good. I am disappointed". This view reflects that traditional religious authority is not respected, so it is also contested. Kiai Hamid's decision indicates the above withdrawal; he stops being Imam, pesantren's leader, and teacher. Indeed, he declared clearly that he had stopped being a kiai. However, this declaration cannot stop local people and followers from respecting him. He is still kiai because there is no ex-kiai or retired kiai. One of the local people, Mustafa[18], states, "funny, there is no ex-kiai. You may see ex-'penjahat' (criminals) but no ex-kiai. Pak kiai yes remains Pak kiai".

When he says that he stops being a kiai, it symbolizes his rejection of kiai for the Madani village. He does not want to be kiai in Madani society. He does not want to manage the pesantren because it belongs to Madani society, not his own. He does not want to be an 'imam' in the mosque because it belongs to Madani society. As a result, everything related to Madani society does not belong to his task and responsibility as kiai. However, when he leads his Tariqah, he is willing to be its kiai. This is because the latter personally belongs to him.

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[17] Agus, "Personal Interview", July 7th, (Pekanbaru, 2019).
[18] Mustafa, "Personal Interview", July 11th, (Pekanbaru, 2019).

Therefore, this withdrawal is the strategy of this kiai to negotiate his religious authority in Madani society through another habitus called Tariqah (Sufi path).

3. Negotiating Religious Authority through Tariqah

Kiai and his pesantren have a close relationship because he uses the latter as his habitus to disseminate religious authority through teaching and preaching activities.[19] In further development, because kiai Hamid does not lead and manage the pesantren, he needs a place where his religious authority can be kept.

Therefore, his declaration is not related to his Tariqah. It is different from the pesantren, which was initiated and developed by Madani society. His Tariqah is built and developed by himself, not by Madani society. He then has a personal connection with his Tariqah, which later becomes his last defense as **khalifah** (Tariqah leader) in keeping his religious authority in Madani society. Ubaedillah also acknowledges this.[20] Stating that "Sufi orders (Ar. Tariqah / Ind. Tariqoh) have over the centuries developed their own models of religious authority embodied in the persons of shaykhs and khalifahs. Religious sources of authority have been beneficial for reinforcing the khalifah's prestige…".

His Tariqah is a part of 'mu'tabarah' (legal and popular) Tariqah named Qadiriyah wa Naqsabandiyah. This Tariqah has a link with Tariqoh Qadiriyah wa Naqsabandiyah in Java. His Tariqah, since its establishment in 1990s, does not have connection with pesantren Jazirotul Munir. It is located in his home circle, not in the pesantren. It is about 500 meters from the pesantren building. He then built a particular home for his Tariqah members to practice religious activities related to Tariqoh. His members are not only Javanese but also non-Javanese.

It is different from the pesantren, which was not placed closely with his home. This makes 'a a gap' between this kiai and the pesantren. This gap causes the 'pseudo-relationship between Kiai Hamid and the pesantren. Because it is ' a pseudo-relationship, his religious authority built and kept is not solid.

The problem of authority in the Madani society supports him to focus on his Tariqah. Through this Tariqah, he develops and maintains his religious authority. After leaving the

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[19] Muhammad Latif Fauzi, "Traditional Islam in Javanese Society: The Roles of Kyais and *Pesantren* in Preserving Islamic Tradition and Negotiating Modernity," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 6, no. 1 (2015): 125–44. See also, Mochammad Achfandhy, "Model Dakwah Compliance Gaining oleh Kyai Pesantren (Compliance Gaining Dakwah Model by the Kyai of Islamic Boarding School)." *Jurnal Dakwah Risalah*, 31, no. 2 (2020): 252-268.

[20] Achmad Ubaedillah, "Khalwatiah Salman Tariqa in South Sulawesi, Indonesia (the 1920s – 1998): Exercising Authority in an Era of Change," *Asian Journal of Social Science* 42 (2014): 620–40.

pesantren, he has a full time to manage and develop his religious authority in Madani society through his Tariqah. Supported by the Sufi tradition of traditional Islam, Tariqah is also a way to reconcile his religious authority. As known, in Tariqah tradition, a Khalifah is a respectable man. He is commonly given a magical power. Kiai Hamid is considered to have 'Kesakten' (magical power), like knowing one's desire even though this person does not talk. He also has a magical ability to heal someone's disease. Every day, he is visited many people. Most of them are his Tariqah members. They visit him due to some reason. They come to him because they want to get 'berkah .'They believe that the intensive interaction or ' il turra m ' with a religious man like kiai Hamid positively impacts and contributes to their career and life (selamet). Another reason is that they want to cure or heal their disease.

Kiai Hamid, therefore, is still visited by local people to cure or heal their diseases though he declared that he retired or stopped being a kiai. With his 'magical' power, many people acknowledge that their diseases are cured and healed after drinking a glass of water or eating rice or other goods given by him. In return, he is given money or food or other things which are not physically shown both by kiai Hamid and a giver.

Traditional Islam commonly puts Tariqoh, besides pesantren, as its trademark.[21] It is banal that, in Madani society, Tariqah is supported and preserved, including the Tariqah led by kiai Hamid. Some local people join and follow the Tariqah, which then supports the religious authority of kiai Hamid. Kiai Hamid is not the pesantren's leader. He does not also teach there. He has already resigned or retired. In this sense, the religious authority developed by kiai Hamid is changing. Now, his religious authority is based on his tariqah, not pesantren. This case means that a kiai without a pesantren is still respectable.

The mystical practice of traditional Islam and Javanese culture has supported kiai Hamid as a respectable kiai though he does not have a pesantren. This, however, does not eliminate the debate in Madani society about kiai Hamid's attitude and behavior as kiai. The debate is about his status as kiai, but he does not want to be an 'Imam' in the mosque. This debate becomes a 'heated' gossip when several housewives talk about it informally. His religious authority is then contested but also respected. He is still respected because he has many followers in his Tariqah. Even his Tariqah members come from different villages and regions. However, Javanese people tend to be reluctant to directly say 'honestly' about every 'bad' thing. The debate and gossip about kiai Hamid's attitude and behavior are not informed

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[21] Fauzi, "Traditional Islam in Javanese Society: The Roles of Kyais and Pesantren in Preserving Islamic Tradition and Negotiating Modernity."

directly to kiai Hamid. This indicates that his religious authority is contested but also respected.

4. Traditional Religious Authority and Economic Feedbacks

In Java, it is well known that a pesantren is owned personally by a kiai to get many benefits from it. Even, it can be inherited from one generation to the following generations. Pesantren Jazirotul Munir was not owned by a person. Its establishment was initiated by society so that everything related to financial issues should be consulted to society heads. This pesantren did not ask tuition fees for its students. This is because the learning process in the pesantren was informal. The learning process in the pesantren usually was done after formal learning in Islamic schools (Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, Madrasah Tsanawiyah and Madrasah Aliyah). However, this informal learning was done occasionally because it depended on kiai's management. Kiai's management was informal, based much on the personal style of a kiai. This kind of management is practiced in most Islamic institutions in Indonesia. Therefore, the lack of the implementation of modern management has become a complicated problem in these Islamic institutions.

In the pesantren Jazirotul Munir, students coming from other regions outside Madani society were given a dormitory to stay freely. They only pay for their formal study in Islamic schools, but they do not pay for their informal study in the pesantren. Because of this, kiai Hamid, who taught some *Kitab Kuning* (classical books) at night, was never paid. It means that what he did in the pesantren was based on ikhl   (sincerity) feeling. It might be normal and accepted for him but not for his family, especially his wife.

After leaving and retiring from the pesantren Jazirotul Munir, he recruits many members for his Tariqah. Even his Tariqah members are more than his previous students in the pesantren. Every Tuesday, this Tariqah conducts 'Selasan' (special ritual held in Tuesday), like jum'at prayer in Islam. During Selasan, kiai Hamid leads the religious activities in a building not far from his home, about 10 meters. This building is a standard physical construction and a symbol of his 'new authority' construction. This building was constructed by his Tariqah members, which is only intended for religious activities of the Tariqoh. Because it is located within kiai Hamid's land, it represents a distinct religious authority.

Personal ownership of the land provides a sense of belonging to his Tariqah because his Tariqah is physically within his power. This is a distinct symbol that may not exist in his 'old'

religious authority developed in the pesantren. One of Madani people, Hakim,[22] says, "I do not understand why pak kiai prefer developing his Tariqah to the pesantren in this society. Maybe he does not get much income from this school".

When an educational institution is owned personally, the economic benefits and advantages can be distributed to a person or person's family. However, when a kiai does not own it, he and his family cannot enjoy the economic benefits. Therefore, it is unsurprising that kiai Hamid did not get support from his family when he was leading and teaching in the pesantren Jazirotul Munir. His wife, who should support him, even opposed kiai Hamid. This is because he and his family did not receive 'sufficient economic feedbacks' from Madani society. He was not paid when he was teaching, leading, and managing the pesantren. His wife states that this is not a reasonable condition since her husband already contributed to the development of pesantren Jazirotul Munir in Madani society. This circumstance is in line with Hadits concept that discriminating economic distribution among members of society can become a stimulating factor for social cohesion destruction in it.[23] His wife, Aminah,[24] says, " Madani society is a bad society. Its people are awful because Bapak already gave everything to improve this society. However, you know what he gets. Nothing. Even he was called 'Kiai Sapi' (a cow kiai). I hate this society. I ask Bapak to stop being kiai".

Religious authority is mainly developed and sustained to gain political and economic benefits.[25] Hoesterey[26] provides a clear explanation of how an Islamic preacher, Aa Gym, develops his religious authority 'by branding himself as a preacher mastering his qolbu. Through the 'Manajemen Qolbu' brand, he becomes a famous preacher with economic benefits. Even, he also develops television and publishing book companies and other economic sources.

Religious figures such as kiai are " believed to possess mystical attributes and magical abilities that gave them charismatic power and high social standing in society."[27] Using his Tariqah as his habitus of religious authority, kiai Hamid extends religious authority based on

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[22] Hakim, "Personal Interview", July 8th, (Pekanbaru, 2019).

[23] Vedi R. Hadiz, *Populisme Islam Di Indonesia and Timur Tengah* (Depok: LP3ES & Lab Sosio UI, 2019).

[24] Aminah, "Personal Interview", July 8th, (Pekanbaru, 2019).

[25] Andi Rahman Almansyah, *Islam, Jawaran & Demokrasi: Geliat Politik Banten Pasca Orde Baru* (Jakarta: Dian, 2010).

[26] James B. Hoesterey, "Marketing Morality: The Rise, Fall and Rebranding of Aa Gym," in *In Expressing Islam: Religious Life and Politics in Indonesia*, ed. Greg Fealy and Sally White (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2008), 95–112.

[27] Yanwar Pribadi, "Strongmen and Religious Leaders in Java: Their Dynamic Relationship in Search of Power," *Al-Jami'ah Journal of Islamic Studies* 49, no. 1 (2011): 159–90.

charismatic power. This invites Muslims in this village to visit and ask for 'berkah' (divine grace of Allah). Sometimes, the 'berkah' is given, and these Muslims contribute economic feedbacks like money, rice, and other goods. However, this economic feedbacks from Muslims are voluntary. This might not be different from what was disseminated and sustained through the pesantren, which did not give him much economic feedback. Through this Tariqah, he gets economic feedback from his followers and Muslims who want to get 'berkah' from him.

C. Conclusion

This article shows that Muslims in rural areas are not passive ones. They are active agents producing as well as contesting kiai. Kiai is a symbol given to a man respected in traditional Islam and Javanese society. This symbol, however, is not accepted linearly, but it is negotiated in a society having the above cultural identities. In this local context, kiai is genuinely produced, kept, and contested.

The activeness of local Muslims in producing religious authority can be seen when the pesantren in this society was built and initiated by local people. They also recognize and support a Muslim named Hamid to be the kiai. This kiai, however, is passive in managing the pesantren due to the absence of his sense of belonging to the pesantren. The sense of belonging is the basis of developing the Tariqah, which becomes another habitus to negotiate his religious authority after leaving the pesantren.

Through this Tariqah, kiai Hamid has become a respectable kiai though he does not have a pesantren. This, however, does not eliminate the debate in Madani society about this status. This debate indicates that his religious authority is then contested. However, he is still respected because he has many followers in his Tariqah. Even his Tariqah members come from different villages and regions.

It indicates the dynamic relationship between the kiai and his *umma* (Muslim society). In this context, Muslim society is central in making religious authority. They establish, shape, and contest it. In its further development, a kiai always tries to hold his religious authority through any habitus. In this article, he negotiates his religious authority through the Tariqah after leaving the pesantren. This negotiation implicates that traditional religious authority in Indonesia is not given without contestation from the Muslim community. Furthermore, it also indicates that the trajectory and shape of traditional religious authority in rural areas is not

monolithic, depending on society's social and cultural context. This then needs to be examined in another given context in Indonesia. Further study on this issue focusing on another rural area in Indonesia can be conducted in the future.

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