Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Studies on Islamic religious leaders or *kiai* in Indonesia (Geertz, 1959a and Horikoshi, 1976) reveal that they have a strategic and central position in their society. The centrality of their position is related to their being educated and wealthy people in their community. As an educated elite, the *kiai* provide knowledge of Islam to villagers. The *pesantren* as a traditional Islamic educational institution is an important means through which the transfer of knowledge to each *kiai’s* local society takes place. Through their wealth, on the other hand, the *kiai* become patrons on whom many villagers depend. The centrality of the *kiai’s* position can be seen in the pattern of patronage, especially as it relates and ties the *kiai* to his *santri* or students (see Fox and Dirjosanjoto, 1989).

As an informal Islamic leader, the *kiai* is a man perceived by villagers to have great worth and charismatic authority. This is because he is a holy man endowed with *baraka* or blessing. As this type of authority is “outside the realm of the everyday routine and profane sphere” (Weber, 1973:53), the *kiai* is seen to have exceptional qualities which make his leadership popularly acknowledged. Furthermore, in addition to his personal qualities, the *kiai’s* authority in the eyes of his community and his involvement in a pattern of tight relationships with its members, are shaped by his concern for, and orientation toward, the interests of the *umma* or Islamic community.

The *kiai*, because of his position, plays a brokerage role for Muslims to give them an understanding of what is going on at the national level (Geertz, 1959a). Villagers who usually call themselves *wong cilik* or ordinary people, realise that they are not well equipped with knowledge to understand events at a national level. Their close relationship with the *kiai* makes him a translator who provides illumination in a religious context and clarifies Indonesian problems in general. The *kiai’s* prominent position has been particularly evident when party politics have been intense, penetrating rural Javanese communities. This is because the *kiai* is also part of a political elite, a position related to the religious significance of having legitimate power to unify the *umma* in the face of real and imagined threats from other groups.

Recent studies, however, suggest that changes in regard to the *kiai’s* position in society (Usman, 1991) and their socio-political perspective (Abdullah, 1988 and Bruinessen, forthcoming) require a new approach. The role of the *kiai* in rural Java, which was previously decisive and charismatic and long encompassed all aspects of village life, is beginning to erode. Usman (1991) in his study of villages
in Jombang has illustrated this point by showing that most religious leaders he studied were less popular in their villages compared to other village elites, such as the village headman or wealthy villagers. The religious leaders were less involved in local government projects to improve village standards. This study also reveals that the *kiai* have a smaller network, either within their own midst or in relation to other village elites. In many cases, according to Usman, people did not go to religious leaders to discuss matters relating to their worldly lives but, rather, went to bureaucratic officials at the village level.

Although Usman's focus is more general and outside the field in which the *kiai* traditionally and culturally has been involved, his findings reveal that the leadership of the *kiai* is in general undergoing change. The inevitable processes of *pembangunan* or development taking place throughout villages in Java have resulted in a change in the Muslims' broad socio-political situation and perspectives. This has affected Muslim perception in relation to the leadership role of *kiai* as well.

As a result of the introduction of development programs or modernisation in general, there are three factors which give rise to challenging the leadership role of the *kiai*. The first is the emergence of a younger *santri* generation in the *pesantren* who are modern in character. By modern I mean they have a greater capacity and a greater freedom to think about and evaluate the *kiai*'s attitude, at least in the domain of politics. Such a change raises a legitimacy problem for the leadership role of the *kiai*. This is a result of the modernisation program in the *pesantren* system of education, which is marked by an increase in the number of the schools in its environment. As will be discussed, some modern *pesantren* in Jombang provide a modern schooling system from primary to tertiary level.

The second factor is the increase in the number of educated middle class Muslims in Javanese society. The emergence of younger scholars, both secular and religious among Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) members has not only made the *kiai*'s position as legitimator competitive, but has also led to his credibility and authority being examined. This situation indicates that in Javanese villages and within NU, people can now go to a variety of agents who provide them with knowledge of Islam and leadership in a more general sense. The third factor is the enlargement of the sphere of operation of the state under the guise of

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1 What Usman means by ‘religious leader’ is a *kiai* in my terminology. Usman’s term ‘religious leader’ is more general in meaning, and does not follow local terminology. This is so since Usman’s focus of study was not on religious leaders per se, but rather on village elites, like the wealthy or the village officers. So, ‘religious leader’ in Usman’s study is a general category to contrast with these other elite groups.

2 My definition of modernisation here is concerned with attitudes and behaviour. I am affected by what is conceptualised by Inkeles (1966) and Tamney (1980). Modernisation, however, does not occur only at the level of attitude but also at the level of structure as well (see Weiner, 1966).

3 Nahdlatul Ulama is an Islamic organisation established in 1926. The *kiai* of this organisation are usually considered traditionalist orthodox Muslims. They are different from those commonly called Modernist Muslims, who belong to such organisations as Muhammadiyah.
enhancing the quality of Muslim life. The state, among others, became concerned with inequality and involved in matters previously under the kiai's concern. The introduction of birth control has involved the state in the definition of social knowledge about birth, which was traditionally subsumed under the religious domain in which the kiai play an important role.

These factors have not only produced younger Muslims who are critical to the kiai leadership but have also provided an alternative in the existence of other forms of leaderships. The kiai's position and his charismatic leadership is therefore inevitably challenged. It is no accident, for example, that a kiai whom I knew well was accused of being corrupt for taking money from a waqf property (endowment) which he had managed. In this particular case, the kiai's respected position was shaken, not only because he committed a religiously prohibited act, but also simply because of the changes in social norms which dominate social relationships among villagers. This type of accusation had never occurred before because villagers would not have considered it appropriate to criticise a kiai. The same holds true for the case of some santri of the Pesantren Darul Ulum in Jombang who held a demonstration, protesting against their kiai's policy on education in the formal schools of his pesantren. Such instances confirm Usman's findings that the kiai are becoming less influential compared to the government's officers.

Even though the problem faced by the kiai is not new, its intensity and capacity to shake their position are relatively recent. The problem faced by the kiai in Javanese villages is similar to that experienced by religious leaders in other Islamic countries. It has become a general problem encountered by religious leaders throughout the Islamic world. It is also a problem faced by leaders of other religions, since the problem of acceptability, in the sense of how the religion's values and norms are internalised and applied by people in their daily lives, is a problem faced by many religious leaders.

Seen from a more popular perspective, these changes in the kiai's social position and in the Muslim perception of the kiai leadership seem to be taken for granted in the sense that it is a logical result of the intense changes in social structure which have been occurring in Java lately. These changes in social structure have also changed the pattern of kiai leadership since they need to adapt to the changing situation if they want their leadership to be continually accepted by Muslim society.

Despite being influenced by the development of society in general, the leadership of kiai continues to influence the development of Muslim society itself. There are two reasons which sustain this. Firstly, the kiai is traditionally an influential elite in Muslim society. Secondly, the kiai is also a political elite with great influence on the political attitudes of Muslim society. As some kiai from Jombang, where my study took place, also held political leadership at provincial and
national levels, the changes brought about through their leadership have a national character. In other words, changes which occurred at the local level are often the result of changes which occurred in the wider society. In the political domain, this matter was more obvious. The acceptance of Pancasila by the kiai through NU as their ideological base has not only altered political views among kiai at all levels but also Muslim society at its grassroots. Thus, in the political field the change at the grassroots is a reflection of a change in the wider society.

This study tries to look at the leadership of kiai generally by focusing on the cultural and political aspects of their leadership. As the relationship between the kiai and society is governed by norms derived from their understanding of Islam, the changes in their relationship are not only affected by changes at the wider social level, but also by changes in these existing norms. The shift in the latter is very much related to the process of Islamic reinterpretation. As the Javanese attachment to Islam is “the dominant force of their religious belief and rite and by which the character of their social interactions in daily life are shaped” (Woodward, 1989:3), changes in the wider social realm are closely related to the new Javanese understanding of Islam. These changes in the norms and in the wider social structure are crucial. They raise questions about the emergence of a new order, which regulates a new pattern of relationships between the kiai and society or between various segments of Javanese society. This, in turn, involves the recognition by these different groups of their new “social location.”

A general question pertaining to this study is to what extent social change influences the change in Muslim religious belief and understanding, and to what extent this change contributes to change in the wider social and cultural domains. A more specific question relates to the leadership of the kiai in general. How far do these changes influence the pattern of relationships between the kiai and Muslim society? As these changes are assumed to impinge on the norms and values underlying the kiai’s relationship with society, a second important question is directed to understanding the political influence of the kiai: to what extent can the kiai influence socio-political action within Muslim society? The study also tries to clarify the problem of the relationship between the kiai and his own colleagues and the kiai with other Muslim groups.

1.2 Review of the Literature

In this section, I will review the literature that examines the changes and development of Islam in Java, especially studies concerned with the pesantren and the role of the kiai. These sources examine (1) the system of pesantren

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4 Pancasila is a national ideology, which consists of five principles: believe in one God, humanitarianism, nationalism, representative government and social justice.
education and its role in the formation of the pattern of Islamic belief and culture in Indonesia; and (2) the kiai's efforts in maintaining the pesantren and their social and political role in spreading and maintaining Islam in general. All of these studies were conducted in Javanese villages. The researchers used anthropological and sociological approaches, with participant observation and interviews as their main methods of collecting data.

An interesting study on Islam, especially on the Javanese kiai, was conducted by Geertz in the 1960s. The study has drawn the attention of both Indonesian and Western scholars interested in Islamic development in Indonesia. This study is of great significance since it laid a framework for understanding Javanese Islam. Geertz's study also illuminated the political problems of modern Indonesia in general. Nevertheless, this study has been criticised by some scholars (see Pranowo, 1991). Woodward (1989), for example, contends that Geertz failed in understanding the nature of the development of Islam in Java. Hodgson (1974) sees this failure as derived from his being too influenced by modernist Muslim perspectives. Notwithstanding this criticism, Geertz has pioneered modern Javanese Islamic studies. Later studies on Islam in Java always refer to Geertz's study.

These later studies differ from Geertz's approach in many respects, although they use his framework in a loose way. Horikoshi (1976) conducted research on the role of the kiai of West Java in maintaining the social order, while Dhofier (1980) focused on the kiai and pesantren, or what he calls “the pesantren tradition”. Dhofier presented the pattern of kiai-santri relationships and of traditional Islamic education. He also discussed the network of relationships between kiai in a wider geographical territory, and their reliance on close family relations. Other studies were conducted by Mansurnoor (1990), Usman (1991) and Pranowo (1991). These studies respectively analysed the kiai and the ‘ulama of Madura either as agents of change, the ‘ulama as religious elites, and the role of kiai and pesantren in creating the Islamic tradition. From these analyses, it is evident that the same cultural patterns exist for the ‘ulama in Javanese, Sundanese and Madurese society. The ‘ulama in these areas constitute an elite who have a strong influence in establishing a religious community. The pattern of value transmission which is institutionalised through the education system is also based on similar processes. Pondok (dormitories for santri) or madrasa (Islamic schools) in these areas are the main educational institutions and are seen by these researchers to be an important means of socialisation. Informal institutions of religious instruction are also a significant means in transmitting values, norms and religious symbols to the society.

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5 The term kiai and ‘ulama have much the same meaning. The term ‘ulama derives from Arabic, while the term kiai derives from Javanese. I will discuss this in Chapter II.
In addition, ‘ulamaship in various regions in Java is hierarchical. Although the hierarchy is not formally created, there is a general recognition from Muslim society which influences the position of the ‘ulama. A higher ‘ulama will receive different treatment from those within society compared to a lower ‘ulama. According to these three latter studies, the hierarchical pattern of ‘ulamaship is sustained and institutionalised by the fact that ‘ulamaship or kiaiship is ascriptive in nature. This pattern is more evident in Madura, as observed by Mansurnoor, where the ‘ulamaship is inherited geneologically. An educated or erudite Muslim who would like to run a pesantren but does not come from a kiai family will have difficulty gaining the recognition of society since he does not have the proper social status (Mansurnoor, 1990:217). However, it should be realised that in areas other than Madura, there is a distinction between ‘ulamaship at a lower level and a higher level in relation to this question of ascription. At the higher level, as in Madura, ‘ulamaship in Java is mostly inherited, especially among those who run pesantren. This is because at a lower level, ‘ulamaship can be obtained by any Muslim in so far as he receives social recognition, while at a higher level ‘ulamaship requires considerable wealth. Almost all pesantren which complement a higher ‘ulamaship, for example, were built with the ‘ulama’s own money. Also, because at a higher level ‘ulamaship needs a more extensive background of Islamic knowledge (most of the earlier great Javanese ‘ulama, for example, studied in Mecca for years before they reached their ‘ulamaship), it was only the ‘ulama with rich family backgrounds who could acquire that.

Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), an organisation established by the kiai, provides a forum for the discussion of all important issues facing the Muslim community in Indonesia. It has also produced a wide ranging network among kiai and has become a symbol of solidarity between them (Mansurnoor, 1990:319). It is through NU that the brotherhood and friendship between kiai are institutionalised; and it is also through NU that one's kiaiship is legitimised. A kiai who establishes a new pesantren, for example, needs recognition from his senior kiai for society to recognise his kiaiship. These networks of kiai relationships are not confined to the regency level; rather they constitute a national network, through which the kiai receives a variety of information which illuminates problems ranging from the religious to the political.

From these studies, it is evident that the critical role of the kiai lies in their position as religious leaders and teachers. The kiai are members of the village elite, who try to bring their community into an idealised situation as conceptualised by Islam. Each kiai also tries to interpret developments and changes in the socio-cultural and political fields in order that the people in villages can understand them.

While an ‘ulama in the past had quite a comprehensive role in his community, this role now seems to be eroding in contemporary Javanese society. The ‘ulama
is another functionary, whose position is in competition with other social leaders. Usman (1991) in his research in Jombang, for example, found that some religious leaders are now less influential than some other functionaries, such as village heads. People do not ask the ‘ulama for advice about worldly matters as they did before. This change in the ‘ulama position may be caused by modernisation through which traditional values are threatened and lose their meaning being replaced by modern values. In addition, the change may also be caused by the fact that many ‘ulama cannot meet all the needs of people because of their limited secular knowledge — most of their knowledge is religious. Therefore people now turn to other functionaries, such as village heads, when they face problems relating to developments in their villages and their worldly lives.

In brief, it is evident that the studies under review explored the nature of the ‘ulama's world and described the general pattern of relationships between the ‘ulama and their followers. Although some of the ‘ulama's traditional relationship with their followers continues to the present, Usman's research shows that there are some changes occurring in the ‘ulama's position in the wider society. Thus the pattern of relationship between the ‘ulama and society in general is in the process of change.

It should be stressed that Usman's findings are worth noting since they contradict the views of other scholars. Compared to other studies, Usman's findings indicate changes in relation to the ‘ulama's role in general, which give rise to a change in their position in the wider society. Nevertheless, there are many questions which remain unanswered, since Usman only focused on the role of the religious leader in relation to that of other functionaries in development projects conducted in three villages. Usman's study does not consider how the kiai exercises his power in Javanese society in general. This study will attempt to address this question by focusing on the kiai's role in politics. This issue is important because, at the formal level of organisation, Muslim society conceptualises no separation between politics and religion, and maintains that political decisions and attitudes should be religiously legitimate. One aspect I will consider in detail in this thesis is the extent to which the kiai's political actions influence their followers.

I chose Jombang as the place of research because it is often regarded as a 'microcosm' of Indonesian Islam. Firstly, Jombang has a large number of pesantren located in certain districts. Secondly, it has three active tarekat (sufi orders) organisations which involve thousands of Muslims. Finally, kiai in Jombang have long been involved in politics. Because of their close relations with the kiai, a situation which made them imitate the kiai's political example, the majority of Muslims in Jombang are affected by politics, and in general are ‘active’ in

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6 Included in what I have mentioned as the modernisation process (see footnote 2) is the transformation of Indonesian politics. This transformation, as will be discussed in this thesis, is influential in changing the kiai leadership.
politics. The long existence of pesantren has enabled them to perform what is called ‘Islamic politics’. In addition, some kiai in Jombang were, or are still active politically in NU’s national leadership. This means that very often political change among Muslims in Jombang is a result of political change at a national level.

1.3 The Fieldwork
I had not been to Jombang before I began my PhD research, starting in October 1992 and continuing until September 1993 (see Figure 1.1 and 1.2). My knowledge of Jombang came from reading scientific reports, especially those by Dhofier (1982), and newspapers and magazines. This knowledge stemmed from my work in the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI), the government institution conducting research in various disciplines.

Actually I had a roomate, a santri from Jombang, when I studied in IAIN (State Institute for Islamic Studies) in Yogyakarta from 1974 to 1980. However, I was not interested in Jombang at that time, having no desire to do research. Jombang later came to my attention when my interest in Islamic studies was aroused at my work place. This was because Jombang is a medium size city which has a large number of pesantren. In addition, some famous Islamic leaders and intellectuals were and are natives of Jombang.

Based on such general knowledge, Jombang offered the impression of a Muslim city in which Islamic life flourishes. It is a place where Islamic studies are well developed in the pesantren, and where some highly regarded kiai provide religious leadership for their communities. This impression was borne out by my discovery, while taking a walk on my first day in Jombang, of a sign on the bank in the main street of Jombang city on which was written “Jombang Kota Santri” (Jombang is the City of Santri). Labelling a city with a certain characteristic is a common pattern that holds throughout Java. Every regency in Java characterises its capital city with a metaphor that marks the nature of the life of its people. In West Java, for example, there is a city called, or at least its people gave it the name of, “The City of Rice”, because it produces huge amounts of rice compared to other places in Indonesia. The same holds true for the metaphor “The City of Civilization” given to Yogyakarta because in this city, local culture and civilization are well developed and maintained. For me, the sign I found in the heart of Jombang city, describing Jombang as “the City of Santri” is not merely a facet of the Javanese trend to label cities, but also indicates something of the social reality of the people of Jombang.
Figure 1.1. Map of East Java
Figure 1.2. Jombang: Kecamatan
Nevertheless, my assumptions about the santri-ness (piousness) of Jombang was disturbed and threatened by another fact I encountered in the first week of my stay. On the same main street in Jombang I saw a large poster hanging on a cinema. The poster, which depicted a pair of naked humans was, in my judgement, most disturbing in the moral sense. The sociological question that arose was: what sort of santri-ness is it that actually surrounds the people of Jombang?

Such a question seemed to be partially answered when I began to talk with a public figure from Jombang. This person used to be an activist in NU, the biggest religious organisation in Jombang and Indonesia in general, which is currently embroiled in a tarekat-like movement. When I talked with him in his hotel, he suggested that it is not actually appropriate to call Jombang “the City of the Santri”. In his opinion, Malang \(^7\) would be more a suitable candidate for this title.

Syifa, the person I talked to, seemed to be right in his judgement about Jombang, for after two months I found that Jombang is similar to other cities in East Java. It does not seem to have any specific character associated with the piousness of its inhabitants. It is not a city dominated by devout members of society as the metaphor describing it, but rather it can be called a mixed city, since neither it nor the life of its people are characterised by the life of the santri and devout Muslims in general. Under the cloak of santri-ness attributed to Jombang society live a substantial number of Javanese whose practice of Islam is minimal. This population could be higher in number than the devout Muslims in Jombang. While not all devout Muslims in Jombang studied Islam in pesantren, it should be noted that the metaphor “the City of Santri” is related to the fact that Jombang has so many pesantren which attract a large number of students from outside Jombang.

The difference between Jombang and other cities in East Java and, at the same time, what leads it to be known as “the City of the Santri” is the existence of four large pesantren which have been run by well known kiai. When NU was established, its early top leader was a kiai from Jombang. It is little wonder that Jombang impresses other Indonesians as “the City of Santri”.

I need to comment on my impressions to explain why I came to change the direction and scope of my study. When I wrote my research proposal, I planned to conduct the research in a kecamatan (district) of Jombang characterised by pluralism in relation to the nature of the people's attachment to their religion or their orthodoxy. In other words, I was concerned with Javanese piousness

\(^7\) Malang is a neighbouring city to the southeast of Jombang. In Malang, according to Syifa, people are more santri because the tradition of santri in the life of people generally is more obvious. It is common, for example, for people to go to the city wearing sarong (traditional Muslim dress). This situation does not happen in Jombang.
concerning their Islam. Here one needs to differentiate Muslims into two categories related to their attachment to Islam. The first category consists of devout Muslims. Devout Muslims consistently carry out what is prescribed by Islam, such as performing prayer five times a day and fasting during ramadan. This category comprises both Javanese Muslims in general and the santri in the pesantren. The second category are those whose attachment to Islam is loose and their practice of Islam is minimal. Some people in Jombang call the latter abangan.

Concerning the variation in Muslim orthodoxy, I refer to the different religious orientations among what is called the devout community. Such variation is commonly characterised by patterns of affiliation with various Islamic organisations. I thus intended to focus on the members of these organisations, for example Muhammadiyah and NU, to see how they interacted with and perceived each other. For this purpose I chose Ngoro as a suitable kecamatan for my research. This choice was supported by an Indonesian Muslim scholar, Dr Nurkhohis Madjid, who is from Jombang and knew much about Ngoro, since he grew up in a village in the neighbouring kecamatan. Ngoro has a long established kauman area in which a large mosque was established. The mosque is an important characteristics of a Muslim community anywhere.

In addition, Ngoro has a number of pesantren run by kiai. These pesantren, however, are not located in the areas around the kauman, since it is more common for pesantren to be erected in less Islamic environments. Ngoro has a fanatical Muslim community which inhabits the centre of its town and spreads throughout its villages. By fanatical I mean that their concern about Islam, its importance and its role on everyday behaviour, assumes immense priority in their lives. It is important to note that it is this community which has given rise to Ngoro's being regarded as a pious district in Jombang. The piousness of the Ngoro community in general is evidenced by their long affiliation with the Islamic political party, another indication of their concern about Islam.

When I was told about the piousness of Javanese Muslims in Ngoro, I questioned what maintains this state of affairs and the process of socialisation there. I received my answer when I tried to examine the tarekat (sufi order) which has a huge number of followers throughout Jombang and the nearby regency. After I had been in Ngoro for three months, I found that people's piousness was connected to several factors, such as their submission to a kiai's leadership, their membership in a tarekat or their view of Islam. These factors were interrelated and affected people's attitudes and behaviour. Muslims in Ngoro are affiliated with various tarekat and their allegiance to a kiai is not always related to the

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8 Kauman is a Javanese word referring to a place in which a big mosque is established, so that it becomes a centre of Islamic activity. Due to its centrality to Islamic religious activity, people who live around it are commonly devout Muslims. Kauman is derived from Arabic, qaum, which means people or group of people.
local *murshid*\(^9\) (a common word referring to the spiritual leader of a *tarekat*), but could be connected to a *murshid* (or *kiai*) in another area in Jombang. I was therefore determined at that time to look at the role of the *murshid* in the *tarekat* itself. This meant that I had to observe the religious practice of certain *tarekat* and the relationship between the *murshid* and his followers.

The *tarekat* is a widespread religious movement in Jombang. I was told by an informant that the *tarekat* is embraced widely both in Jombang and the neighbouring regency, Kediri. After being in Jombang for three months, it became apparent that around one third of the devout population in Jombang were involved in or were members of one of the *tarekat* there. There are three different centres of *tarekat* which happen to be on three different sides of the Jombang regency. The first is the *Tarekat Qadiriyah Wa Naqsyabandiyah*, which is located on the eastern side of Jombang. This *tarekat* is affiliated with the *Jam’iyah Ahli Thoriqoh Al-Mu’tabaroh Indonesia*. The second is the *Tarekat Qadiriyah Wa Naqsyabandiyah* coordinated by *Jam’iyah Ahli Thoriqoh Al-Mu’tabaroh An-Nahdliyah*, which is centred in south Jombang. The third is the *Tarekat Shiddiqiyah*, which established its central activity in the northern area of Jombang. In addition, there is also a *tarekat*-like movement, *Penyiar Sholawat Wahidiyah*, which is located around ten kilometres to the south of the second *tarekat*.

In brief, the *kiai* leadership in Jombang in general is an important and longlasting religious leadership. People's affiliation to certain *kiai* is apparent when it is related to politics, and the term “Kiai Saya” (my *kiai*) is a common metaphor that indicates people's connectedness to certain *kiai*. If *kiaiship* in other areas of Java (see Horikoshi, 1976; and Mansoornur, 1990) has produced a pattern of patronage in relation to followers in general, it is important to note that in Jombang a stronger patronage is more likely to be established through *murshidship*\(^10\). Although such patronage could be built through *kiaiship*, as far as I found in Jombang, it seems to be looser than that related to *murshidship*. In other words, the relationship between a *murshid* and his followers is stronger than that between another type of *kiai* and his followers.

These insights gained after spending three months in Ngoro prompted me to change my research scope and focus. As Jombang is often regarded as a microcosm of Indonesian Islam, everything that transpires in Jombang could be seen as a reflection of what is happening in the wider Javanese or Indonesian context. Relocating my case study to Jombang would help to understand changes among all Indonesian Muslims. But I realise that to have limited this study of

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\(^9\) In North Africa, the common term with a similar meaning is *sheikh*.

\(^{10}\) As I will discuss in Chapter II, there are various types of *kiai* in term of their leadership in society, that is the *pesantren kiai*, *tarekat kiai*, *political kiai* and *stage kiai*. The *murshid* as the *tarekat kiai* is thus only one category among others.
Indonesian Islam to Ngóro would not have represented Jombang as a whole due to the various intertwined socio-religious phenomena described above. Therefore I broadened the locations of my study to include Diwek, Peterongan and Ploso, the three kecamatan which are centres of tarekat movements and pesantren. I realised that I could not help studying the development of pesantren and tarekat in Jombang, since these two institutions are closely related to the people's lives. In addition, studying kiai leadership would be inadequate without taking these institutions into consideration, since they are led by kiai. Also, I was reminded by an Islamic intellectual, who comes from Jombang and is the leader of the biggest socio-religious organisation in Indonesia, Abduurrahmaan Wahid, that studying a Muslim community in Java would be inadequate without taking into consideration the political situation. I therefore tried to focus my study not simply on the transformation of people's beliefs and how they are applied in their behaviour but on the Muslims' changing attitudes and behaviours related to kiai socio-political leadership in general.

In general I did not encounter any serious problems in the course of my fieldwork. The people I interviewed or surveyed by questionnaires understood what I was doing and cooperated with the study. I was able to attend tarekat activities, and the murshid welcomed my research on their tarekat. The same held true for the pesantren. In general, no kiai hesitated to answer my questions about his pesantren. The kiai seemed to be happy that their pesantren or tarekat was being examined. They even told me that they welcomed some input from outsiders in order to develop their pesantren or tarekat. In their opinion, research could provide information about what is lacking or what should be done in relation to their pesantren or tarekat. The one exception to the above was the Pesantren Shiddiqiyah in Ploso whose kiai, Kiai Muchtar Mu’thi, who also leads the Tarekat Shiddiqiyah, did not allow me to research his tarekat and pesantren. I therefore have little information about this tarekat, as described in Chapter II.

1.4 Source of Data

My research in Jombang was largely taken up with indepth interviews and observation. The data I gathered therefore were mostly qualitative in nature. The data in this thesis mostly derives from interviewing kiai and other NU members. Also I have some notes from field observations of religious rituals of the Tarekat Qadiriyyah Wa Naqsyabandiyah affiliated with the Jam’iyah Ahli Thoriqoh Al-Mu’tabaroh Indonesia, the Tarekat Qadiriyyah Wa Naqsyabandiyah coordinated by the Jam’iyah Ahli Thoriqoh Al-Mu’tabaroh An-Nahdliyah and the Penyiar Sholawat Wahidiyah. In addition, I interviewed people who were not kiai but were involved in politics. They were activists in NU Since a variety of formal lines or attitudes related to the political situation were launched by various NU leaders, the different perceptions, attitudes or steps taken by some NU activists came to the surface. Such a phenomenon was of great importance
since it helped to illuminate frictions which had arisen among NU members as well as the network among kiai.

In addition to qualitative data, I also collected quantitative data through a questionnaire. The questionnaire was concerned especially with politics, that is the politics of Islam as understood by Muslims, and the politics of the kiai. Questions related to the latter tried to identify the effect of the politics of kiai on Muslims in general in Jombang. In other words, they focused on the relationship between charismatic kiai and Muslims’ general political and social behaviour. As political activities at the village level in Java are evident only during general elections, and the period of my fieldwork did not include such an election, I was not able to collect direct data about these activities during my stay in Jombang. Using the questionnaire, however, I was able to ask people about their voting attitudes and behaviour during the last four general elections (1977, 1982, 1987 and 1992), their perceptions of Islamic politics and the motivation for their political behaviour.

The scope of my research covered a variety of kiai leaders in Jombang. I focused my analysis on kiai leadership in particular in two tarekat movements, that is two Tarekat Qadiriyyah Wa Naqsyabandiyah coordinated by the Jam’iyyah Ahli Thoriqoh Al-Mu’tabaroh Indonesia and the Jam’iyyah Ahli Thoriqoh Al-Mu’tabaroh An-Nahdliyyah. Data from the questionnaire were confined to those Muslim respondents living in three kecamatan, that is Diwek, Peterongan and Ploso, especially those who lived in the towns of these kecamatan. The data I collected from the pesantren and the kiai, however, were not confined to those located and living in these three kecamatan. The data were mainly derived from the Pesantren Tebuireng (Diwek), Pesantren Cukir (Diwek), the Pesantren Darul Ulum (Peterongan), the Pesantren Bahrul Ulum (Jombang district), and the Pesantren Attahdhib (Ngoro). In addition, I interviewed kiai who had no pesantren and were not involved in a tarekat.

The categories of informants from whom I collected the data through in-depth interview are as follows:

A. Pesantren Kiai:
1. Kiai As’ad Umar
2. Kiai Aziz Masyhuri
3. Kiai Shohib Bisri
4. Kiai Faruq
5. Kiai Hamdan Adlan
6. Kiai Hasib Wahab
7. Nyai Musta’in Romly
8. Kiai Mahfuz Anwar
9. Kiai Sultthon
10. Kiai Mochammad Dawam Anwar
B. Kiai with no pesantren:
   1. Kiai Abdurrahman
   2. Kiai Ismail
   3. Kiai Mahalli

C. Tarekat Kiai:
   1. Kiai Makki Ma’shum
   2. Kiai Abdullah Sajad
   3. Kiai Khoerul Anwar
   4. Kiai Rifai Romly
   5. Kiai Arwani
   6. Kiai Ihsan Mahin
   7. Kiai Arifin Khon

D. Political Kiai and Politicians:
   1. Kiai Abdurrahman ‘Usman
   2. Hajj Yusuf Hasyim
   3. Muhammad Baidlowi
   4. Hafidh Ma’shum
   5. Kiai Abdurrahman Wahid
   6. Thoyyib

E. NU Activists:
   1. Fauziah
   2. Masykuri
   3. Hanafi
   4. Ibu Masrurah
   5. Cak Mat
   6. Ibu Sholihah

F. Intellectuals:
   1. Sukamto, SH., MA.
   2. Drs. Nachrowi, MA.
   3. Drs. Mahfudh Karim
   4. Adil Amrullah
   5. Dr. Nurkholis Madjid
   7. Drs. Musin

G. NU members:
   1. Lurah Ihsan
2. Mahfudh Effendi
3. H. Syifa
4. Ibu Hindun
5. Abdul Hamid
6. Kusnan

H. Muhammadiyah Members:
1. Shiddiq Abbas
2. Azhar
3. Cak Arifin

1.5 The Survey

The quantitative data used in this thesis derives from the survey I conducted in four villages of the three kecamatan. The four villages were deliberately chosen. As the survey aimed to collect data on the political affiliation of Muslims and the role of kiai in influencing Muslim politics, it was conducted in villages in which the influence of kiai and Islam in general is perceived to be great. I chose four villages which are very close to a pesantren but which also represent the two categories of Muslims, that is, devout and less devout Muslims. This choice was made to obtain a variety of Muslim perceptions and viewpoints on kiai leadership and Islamic politics. Three of the villages, that is Cukir, Puton and Peterongan, were under the influence of the Pesantren Tebuireng, Pesantren Cukir and the Pesantren Darul Ulum respectively; and the fourth, Rejoagung, was near the Pesantren Shiddiqiyah. The four villages are under the jurisdiction of the Kecamatan Diwek, Peterongan and Ploso.

Devout villages (or kecamatan) are those in which the Islamic influence on people's life was perceived to be great, while the less devout are those in which Islamic influence was less perceptable. In addition, a devout village (or kecamatan) can be defined as one in which the number of devout Muslims is greater than the less devout, so that Islamic life flourished. How I categorised a village was based on my interview with Islamic figures who gave me a general description of various villages in the three kecamatan. They pointed out that a village, like Cukir in Diwek, was devout because the Muslim practice of Islam is maximal. On the other hand, they called a village as less devout, such as Puton in Diwek, because Muslim's attachment to Islam is minimal. I tried to relate the explanation I received from these Islamic figures to the 1971 general election results in Jombang. I assumed that because of their greater concern with Islam, devout Muslims were more likely to affiliate with the Islamic party than other parties. The 1971 general election results in Jombang revealed that the average share of

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11 A close relationship between religious attachment and politics has been widely discussed by scholars (see Geertz's, 1959a; Feith, 1974).
votes for the Islamic parties in Jombang as a whole was 43 percent. In the *kecamatan* which are commonly known as devout *kecamatan* more than 50 percent of the share of votes was cast for the Islamic parties, while the share of votes for these parties in less devout districts was less than 30 percent. On this basis, two *kecamatan*, Diwek and Peterongan, were chosen to represent devout *kecamatan* and Ploso was chosen to represent a less devout *kecamatan*. However, this is only a general categorisation. Each district, in fact, contains a variety of villages in terms of religious attachment. For example, Diwek, a devout *kecamatan*, can contain a village classified as less devout. Of the four villages chosen as my survey sample, I considered two, Cukir in Kecamatan Diwek and Peterongan in Kecamatan Peterongan to represent devout villages. Two other villages, Puton in Kecamatan Diwek and Rejoagung in Kecamatan Ploso, represented the less devout villages.

I tried to survey around 200 respondents spread throughout these four villages. Unfortunately, data from only 182 respondents could be collected: 45 respondents from Cukir, 42 respondents from Puton, 45 respondents from Peterongan and 50 respondents from Rejoagung. These respondents were chosen from sub-village areas which were close to pesantren or to kiai in order to understand the extent of people's attachment to Islam. The respondents were chosen randomly from the list provided by local ‘Ketua RT’ (sub-village heads).

**1.6 The Importance of the Study**

It has been some time since Geertz conducted his monumental research in Java. Changes have since taken place as indicated by more recent studies and by my own observation. New studies are therefore worth conducting to delineate religious influence on Javanese life and its ability to govern social relations. The same holds true of the role of the ‘ulama or kiai, as informal Muslim religious leaders. Changes in Muslim life will impinge on kiai leadership in general and their relationship with society.

My study describes the general pattern of kiai leadership. It delineates the limitations of the kiai’s influence on society. Although, in general, the kiai’s position remains unchallenged, their influence in politics shows a change. The influence of kiai in politics is confined to those having strong emotional attachments with their followers. The finding of this study may not only illuminate the difference between the ‘ulama leadership in Indonesia and other Islamic countries but should also shed light on the extent to which Muslims use Islam to guide their worldly lives.

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12 Muslims in Jombang commonly referred to certain *kecamatan* as abangan, meaning less devout, and santri, meaning more devout *kecamatan*. Sometimes, as Professor Fox informed me, local villagers also referred to *kecamatan* as either hijau (green), meaning 'more devout' or merah (red), meaning 'less devout'. Abangan in Javanese means 'red'. Hijau and merah also indicate the degree of people's affiliation with the Islamic and other parties.
1.7 Organisation of the Thesis

This thesis has nine chapters, including an introduction (Chapter I) and conclusion (Chapter IX). Chapters II and III describe the nature of the pesantren and the tarekat. These institutions are attached to kiaiship and are managed informally by NU. Almost all the great kiai have a pesantren, and some of them are also members of tarekat. These chapters are generally descriptive and focus on pesantren and two tarekat organisations.

The nature of kiaiship and how the kiai leadership is accepted by society are discussed in Chapter IV. The chapter also describes how Muslims in Jombang are socially fragmented under a variety of kiai leadership. Although their affiliation with certain tarekat has reduced this fragmentation, since the tarekat can accommodate a large number of Muslims from various districts of Jombang, the fragmentation still exists. This is not only because there are various tarekat movements, but also because the affiliation of Muslims with a tarekat is affected by politics. The politics of the tarekat are discussed in Chapter V and clearly show this fragmentation. The chapter also describes the involvement of NU in the conflict between the kiai managing the tarekat and the strict affiliation of NU with one political party which has resulted in widespread conflict among kiai in Jombang.

Chapter VI discusses the influence of Islam on electoral behaviour, and Chapter VII analyses the influence of the kiai’s politics. If the kiai is a charismatic figure, to what extent can he influence Muslims’ political behaviour? This chapter also discusses the change in the kiai’s perception of the government. Chapter VIII discusses the effort of the kiai to remould their relationship with other Muslim groups. They are in the process of reformulating the essence of ukhuwa Islamiya (Muslim brotherhood). The chapter also describes Muslim efforts to expand da’wa (preaching) activities. These efforts, for NU members, are a manifestation of their determination to use NU as a socio-religious organisation as it was originally conceptualised when NU was established. For Muslims in general, this is a religious duty.