Chapter 4: The Social Reality of Kiaiship

This chapter discusses important aspects of kiai leadership. Having described two important institutions attached to kiaiship, that is the pesantren and the tarekat, in the previous chapters and the social conditions under which the kiai, as a traditionalist group, relate to other Islamic groups, I would like now to discuss the social reality of the kiai world. The first section of this chapter highlights the position of the kiai in society in general. The second section illuminates the basis for society's relationship with the kiai. This second section gives us a basic understanding of why the society affords the kiai such a respected position so that the relationship is marked by unequal position. I will then discuss general features of kiai leadership. As there are so many kiai in Jombang, either leading tarekat or running the pesantren, Jombang society is socially fragmented, since it is divided between various centres of authority. Since followers have such strong emotional ties to their kiai, any conflict between kiai is reflected in antagonism between their followers. This is salient to the field of politics (which I will discuss in Chapter VI), since the followers allegiance to their kiai entails agreement with their kiai's political views. The final section discusses the development of the kiaiship itself in terms of educational attainment and background and how society views these differences. I consider the question of whether the emergence of modern kiai has given rise to changes in society's perspective in regard to kiaiship. This question is important not only because some kiai have a modern educational background but also because this situation has led to a decrease in the number of qualified kiai in a more traditional sense.

4.1 The Kiai's Role in the Society

Before presenting a framework to assist in the understanding of social relations between the kiai and his community or between the former and society at large, let me first discuss the general picture of social and interpersonal relationships among Javanese. It is widely accepted that Javanese society acknowledges differences between individuals in their social status and that this has become the norm that governs social relations among Javanese (see Guinness, 1986). Social status is largely defined by age, wealth and occupation, so that an older Javanese in a village, for example, will receive respect from a younger person, just as wealthy Javanese receives homage from the poor. The same holds true for a highly educated individual who will receive respect from less educated Javanese.

Although differences in social status are in fact more complicated and overlap in practice, Javanese social life is typified by the operation of such norms of
differentiation. A Javanese is socialised into such norms at an early age. The system works efficiently, especially in rural areas where most people know each other, so that the “social location” of any individual Javanese is easily identified. This culture of social difference among Javanese is perpetuated and institutionalised by the operation of the informal control of social sanctions. The concept of wis Jawa (finally become Javanese), for example, reflects the existence of idealised behaviour which requires compliance by any Javanese; and the “culture of shame”, moreover, encourages a Javanese to conform to such an idealised norm of behaviour. A Javanese villager will feel ashamed if he or she does not comply with the requirements of established etiquette. A wealthy villager, for example, should not only receive respect from the poor but should also behave in certain accepted ways\(^1\)

In line with such notions of differences in social status, the ‘ulama, especially the kiai, in Javanese villages receive high respect from society. Compared to other local elites, like wealthy farmers, the kiai, who usually run a pesantren, have a more respected position. This has made him a leading figure in society. His leadership, moreover, is in fact not confined to the religious sphere but also extends to the political field. His success in these leadership roles has resulted in his being regarded as a man of great worth who can easily induce social action. The kiai have therefore long been a powerful elite.

Two main factors have contributed to the kiai’s powerful position. First, the kiai is a knowledgeable person from whom villagers learn Islamic knowledge. His erudition and higher level of knowledge of Islam mean that the kiai always has followers, both informal audiences, who always attend his pengajian or lectures, and his santri, who stay at pondok around his house. Secondly, it is common for a kiai to come from a well-to-do family. Even though it is not rare to find a kiai who was a poor ‘ulama at the time he commenced teaching Islam, as evidenced by the small size of his first pesantren building, the average kiai is classified as coming from a rich family. These two factors have led to the kiai being seen as an elite figure in a Javanese village. The santri and his obedient villagers, as his followers, constitute human resources which sustain his position and his leadership in society. Furthermore, the economic resources he usually owns have made villagers and his santri dependent on him in many senses. Through his wealth, a kiai creates a pattern of patronage which ties him to certain people in his community. Because of his huge land holdings, he can employ villagers to work either as labourers or as land tenants. In addition he strengthens his relationship with his santri by allowing some of them, who come from poor families, to work on his land (see Fox and Dirjosanjoto, 1989). In modern pesantren

\(^1\) It is common that such norms are applied in any traditional society. In this society, a wealthy villager should also take care of his poor neighbours or fulfil social obligations such as holding lavish celebration at weddings. This will not only prevent malicious gossip, but strengthen and legitimise his social position in many respects (see Scott, 1977).
the patronage is evidenced in a different pattern. The kiai may recruit his former qualified santri or other members of society to work in his university and other modern educational institution. These santri receive a formal salary. The kiai, for these people, is a person who can provide economic subsistence, and a patron who can be a good friend in need. It is not accidental, however, that in few cases these santri were fired because they did not fulfil what was needed by the kiai family.

Having these two human and economic resources at hand, the kiai has become a respected person in a village. As the pattern of relationship between the kiai and villagers is not based on egalitarianism, the former often receives an exaggerated amount of respect from the latter. This unequal position is not only because the former has a higher social status, as conceptualised by Javanese culture, but also because he is a leader who has a wide network. The kiai who runs a pesantren will automatically get support from people from the surrounding villages and other cities. Since most of the kiai are also involved in politics in a more general sense at a higher level, their position in the eyes of society goes unchallenged.

Furthermore, it is important to add that a kiai is often endowed with an ability which is unusual to ordinary Muslims. The extraordinary ability is commonly found in individual kiai even before they commence their kiaiship. It is often evident when they are very young and still learning Islam at certain pesantren. It is a truism that a kiai candidate often has what is called ilmu laduni, that is knowledge acquired without learning. Such knowledge, which may precede one's kiaiship or be shown after becoming a kiai, gives legitimacy to the kiai's leadership. It seems as though God has given a sign to choose him as an Islamic leader. It is thus understandable if a kiai becomes a charismatic leader, since he is deemed the holder of divine authority, which in turn has made him very different from society at large.

The relationship between the kiai and his community (the umma) is bound by religious emotion which makes his legitimate power more influential. The charisma which surrounds the kiai's actions also imbues the relationship with emotion. Since the kiai has become the avenue through which people in villages solve their problems, which are not just those confined to spiritual but also to wider aspects of their lives, people also endorse the kiai as their leader and representative in the national system (cf. Horikoshi, 1976). His success in performing such an important role “…tends almost inevitably to lead to his being regarded not merely as a mediator of law and doctrine (of Islam), but of holy power itself” (Geertz, 1962:238).

Under these conditions, the kiai in a Javanese village has a very strong influence on society and plays a crucial role in inducing social and even political actions. But his important position and role are not confined to the village level. As can
be seen through the NU, especially when it was a political organisation comprising a variety of members, including intellectuals and politicians, the centrality of the kiai’s position was evidenced by his having the highest prestige and influence compared to the professional politician (Samson, 1978:201). The approval of the kiai guarantees popular support for a political party since the kiai in general “…are believed to be acting legitimately in their utilisation of power so long as they act for God” (Samson, 1978:201).

The relationship between the kiai and society is similar to that between ‘ulama or saints in other societies of the Islamic world (see Bruinessen, 1992:246–249). This similarity may be due to the fact that Muslims share concepts and religious experiences which have created the same style of leadership. The idea influencing the establishment of such a pattern is found in Islamic precepts. The kiai’s respected position basically derives from the fact that Islam emphasises the importance of knowledge, which should be pursued by all Muslim. In the Qur’an and hadith (the tradition of the Prophet), it is always stressed that seeking for knowledge is a necessary part of Muslim life and that knowledgable Muslims have a higher status before Allah\(^2\). It is no exaggeration to say that this notion has encouraged Muslims to seek knowledge. Thus, possession of scientific curiosity has become part of Muslim duty, and those who succeed in obtaining such needed knowledge will be appreciated by society. This perspective has given rise to the creation of a culture which appreciates the ‘ulama since he is a man who has acquired such knowledge.

The establishment of the sufī order in North Africa almost always begins with the society’s acceptance of the presence of an ‘ulama (see Gellner, 1969). What is interesting to note from the sufī leadership as well as ‘ulama is the fact that the relationship between the leader and his society is cemented by close emotional ties. The intimate relationship between the ‘ulama and his society derives from the society’s perception that the former leadership is the real leadership, and that the ‘ulama is the expert who can understand and explain the precepts of the Qur’an. It so happens that most of the saints or sheikh (leader) of the sufī orders in North Africa are ‘ulama who have a genealogical linkage with the Prophet Muhammad. Their leadership is thus regarded as legitimate. Apart from the fact that genealogy plays an important part in society’s recognition of one’s ‘ulamaship, the Islamic concept of ‘ulama as waratha al-anshiya (those who inherit prophecy) is of great significance. It is this conception which encourages Muslims in Jombang to accord high respect to the kiai and to submit to his leadership. Furthermore, such a belief has endowed the kiai with certain symbolic attributes which make him different from the rest of society. The kiai, for example, is

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\(^2\) The hadith stresses that “seeking knowledge is obligatory for all Muslims”. In the Qur’an it is mentioned that “Allah respects and ranks Muslims and those knowledge seekers at a higher degree”.
conceived of as having grace or baraka which is simply given by God due to his being close to God.

The discussion helps explain why the ‘ulama in Islamic countries and the kiai in Java receive high respect from society and occupy powerful positions. Their central position is nonetheless very much dependent on societal recognition. In certain regions, like Madura, society's acceptance is based on genealogy, which means that a kiai should come from a kiai family (Mansurnoor, 1991). Another factor is performance by the kiai. This is decisive in preventing him from losing his popularity. The kiai's power and position therefore depend entirely on the continued recognition of society, which means that ‘ulamaship and kiaiship are not merely inherited but also need to be achieved.

In addition to similarities, it is important to acknowledge that ‘ulamaship and the social relationship between an ‘ulama and society can vary from one country or region to another. In Java, for example, the emotion which characterises society's relationship with its ‘ulama is more discernible than in other regions of Indonesia. Thus, at very minimum, one would expect some variation in the nuances of meaningfulness of such relations. This notion is of great importance in understanding Muslim society in general. Muslims in Java and their relations with their ‘ulama should thus be treated, analytically, differently from those in other regions in order to avoid misleading generalisations. The difference which marks ‘ulama relations with their society in various regions results from different factors which influence and shape such relationships. It is also related to the existing situation when Islam was introduced to those regions. It is commonly suggested that the coming of a religion into a society not only results in changes in the belief system of that society, but also in shifts in some aspects of that religion as adopted by that society. This is so because the religion is locally coloured by cultures of that society. These two processes, that is the adoption of a new religion and subsequent changes to that religion, are commonly found when a world religion, like Islam or Christianity, spreads and is accepted by a local people. As the Islamic concepts written in the Qur'an are revealed in more general terms, it is common for them to be localised or nativised when they are accepted by local people without destroying their essential meaning. It is therefore understandable that Islam in various regions is marked by differences in practice and other aspects of local culture.

4.2 The Underlying Principle of Relationship: Baraka

The kiai in Java usually have supra-village influence. Some have national influence. A kiai’s position in a pesantren and involvement in NU can make him a national leader of the Islamic community in Indonesia. The pesantren is an important institution attached to one’s kiaiship. It is through the pesantren that a kiai builds a pattern of patronage which relates him to his community. The
pattern of patronage can easily be established since most, if not all, pesantren are privately owned by kiai, a fact which can tie society to its kiai.

The kiai's wider influence and his supra-village pattern of leadership have enabled him to keep in touch with private and government agencies. The kiai sometimes plays a brokerage role in transmitting development messages, and the society may accept a government program more easily when they are approached by the kiai. The elevated position of the kiai is indeed inherent in the nature of Islamic society, since in a society where religious knowledge constitutes an important part of life, the kiai is the source of this necessary knowledge. The kiai also fulfils societal needs in relation to religious life. He performs birth and death rituals and other religious ceremonies. It is evident that the critical role of the kiai stems from his position as both religious leader and teacher, often coupled with charismatic leadership. The kiai, as a group, try to bring their communities into an idealised situation as it is conceptualised by Islam. They also try to interpret all developments and changes in the socio-cultural and political fields in order that Muslims, especially in the villages, can understand the situation.

I would argue that there is no kiai whose death is not followed by the society's sadness or, at least, a sense of loss at his death. Institutionally, the kiaiship ideally comprises those Muslims who are very close to their God, happy to undertake the duty given by God to do His will. They can be grouped with those holy men who always relate worldly matters to religious norms. It is understandable, therefore, that kiaiship has a respectable place at the heart of the society, since it is through the kiai that the spirituality of the society is established and guarded. Al-'ulama waratha al-anbiya (lit. the 'ulama is the inheritor of the Prophets), said the hadith (saying of the prophet). The hadith suggests that characteristics that commonly attach to the Prophets, such as honesty and cleverness and even the willingness to save society, either on earth or beyond, are part of the 'ulama's personality. Due to these characteristics and the power of his leadership, the kiai is always surrounded by loyal and trusted followers who ask him to lead them in religious and worldly matters. In addition, the leadership of certain kiai is reinforced through their leadership role in the pesantren, since they are not only spiritual agents but also intellectuals who provide knowledge. The kiai can therefore become a centre of power. However, this situation can also create a polarisation of power since the existence of many kiai in a village can create several centres of power. In Jombang, for example, no one kiai has overarching influence. Each kiai's influence is limited by location and political factors. A kiai in Jombang is usually popular only in certain districts, especially his own. A common phrase among Muslims in Jombang, bukan kiai saya ("not my kiai"), expresses the limited sphere of influence of each kiai.
This situation, however, does not necessarily mean that a certain group in society will only give respect to the kiai they call ‘my kiai’. All kiai in Jombang are generally respected. It should nonetheless be emphasised that there is a difference in the pattern between the relationship of the pesantren kiai and society, and that of the tarekat kiai and his followers. The level of submission of tarekat followers to their murshid in the tarekat is greater than that in the general kiai world. The tarekat followers give exaggerated respect to their kiai. In the tarekat world the loyalty or submission of the murid (pupil, but is used to mean ‘follower’) to his murshid comes close to absolute. Accordingly, in all circumstances, the tarekat followers would support the action of their murshid.

The difference between this attitude and the attitude of the followers of pesantren kiai can be seen in the case of the Pesantren Darul Ulum when Kiai Musta’in, the former leader of this pesantren, joined the government political party (I will discuss this matter at length in Chapter V). Joining government party during the 1970s seemed to be taboo for Indonesian Muslims. Some parents of children studying in the pesantren of Kiai Musta’in tried to withdraw their children and send them to another pesantren.

Although Kiai Musta’in was condemned by Muslim society in general in Jombang, he was still respected by thousands of followers of the Tarekat Qadiriyah Wa Naqsyabandiyah which he led. These followers remained loyal and supported his leadership in the tarekat. It can even be assumed that the latter followed Kiai Musta’in’s steps and supported the government party, an action which was deemed as haram (religiously prohibited) at the time, since it deviated from what was called ‘the struggle for Islam’. It is interesting to note further that those followers who left him did not regard the action of Kiai Musta’in as wrong; at least no tarekat follower dared to express such an attitude. Accordingly, Kiai Musta’in still received respect from them although they were no longer his formal followers.

One can ask the question: what actually bound Kiai Musta’in and his followers together? The answer lies in the ‘Islamic’ concepts of baraka and karama, which are deeply embedded in the belief of the people in general and in that of the santri in pesantren and the followers of the tarekat in particular. Baraka (cf. Ahmed, 1976) is usually related to the karama. Karama is a characteristic attributed to a holy man, who can transfer God’s blessing to the people who need it. Due to his being karama, a saint can do things khawariqu’l-‘ada

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3 My use of the word ‘Islamic’ with quotation marks is to emphasise that this understanding of baraka is not held by all Islamic groups. In Indonesia, only traditionalist Muslims believe in baraka.

4 Ahmed in his Millenium and Charisma among Pathans (1976:103–130) equates the concept of baraka with that of charisma.

5 The subordination of the society to the kiai is commonly expressed by people kissing his hand. ‘Kissing the hand’ is culturally meant to signal high respect. Moreover, at the same time, it aims to obtain baraka. ‘Kissing the hand’ never seems to occur among the Muhammadiyah members. This may indicate that
(contradictory to the normal human situation). In the traditional orthodox perspective, the *hijab* (lit. curtain) hides divine things or creatures from human sight. The secrets of Allah were only revealed by Allah to certain chosen people such as the saints. With the power they receive from Allah, saints can thus do things which from the normal human perspective are unusual. Folklore or local Muslim stories tell us, for example, that those who reach the stage of saintship can perform their *Friday prayer* in Mecca, while at the same time they are also seen visibly conducting the prayer at their local mosques. Because of this, it is believed that one can receive God's blessing through the intermediary of a holyman such as a saint or the *murshid*. Some Muslims believe that “a great saint's *karama* is effective even after his death”\(^6\) (Bruinessen, 1992:215). Since the *kiai* and *‘ulama* in general are close to God, they can reach the stage of *karama*. As a result, a request by a *kiai* to God either for himself or for others, may be more readily received.

Those who have *karama* can give *baraka*, that is the positive effect which arises from interaction with a holy man. A life filled with *baraka* can be exemplified in a *hidup yang cukup* (a life where we make ends meet). My informant gave me the following example. A poor man might be living at subsistence level, but because of *baraka* this condition does not result in any trouble. On the other hand, a rich man, who lives *serba kecukupan* (lit. at a higher standard), could have problems that disturb his mental condition due to his not having *baraka*. An informant told me about a person who graduated from the faculty of economics but had been jobless for a couple of years. One might have thought, from his discipline, the person would have had more chance of being recruited into an administrative positions than graduates from other disciplines. It appeared that this person was the son of a policeman who often accepted money from people working in a ‘dirty place’. The money was used by the policeman to fund his son's education. In the opinion of this informant, such money did not incur *baraka*. As a result, his son could not get a job, despite the fact that he had graduated from university. The informant ever considered that this tainted education had even hindered the son in his attempts to find employment.

they are more egalitarian since kissing another's hand may imply an unequal position. In their opinion, exaggerated respect is not encouraged by the Prophet. Even the Prophet himself did not want to be treated exaggeratedly by his followers. For example, the Prophet said: “do not call me *sayyid*”. *Sayyid* is a term referring a very respected person. The NU members, on the other hand, do not interpret such a hadith as a prohibition. It just illustrates the low profile attitude of the Prophet. In the view of NU members, therefore, it is not prohibited to call him *sayyid*, which shows the high respect which the Prophet deserved. Respecting others is a matter of degree. It is not different from the case when a Catholic bowed down, kissing the pope's feet. The *kiai* or the *murshid*, they suggest, deserves high respect from society due to their knowledge and dedication in developing and guarding Islam.

\(^6\) Among *kiai* and, especially, *tarekat* followers in Jombang there is a tradition of attending the grave of *keramat kiai*, i.e. the *kiai* having *karama*. This is the *ziyara* (a spiritual journey to the grave of the dead). Hundreds of Muslims from Jombang, led by their *kiai*, come to the grave of *walisongo*, the nine saints, who are buried in different cities. The *ziyara walisongo* is carried out once a year. The aim is among other things to get *baraka*. For more detail about this tradition, see Fox (1991).
In brief, *baraka* is a quality which is reflected through people, such as the *kiai*, who are endowed with *karama*. The *kiai*’s followers believe that he can give *baraka*, especially if he himself says a prayer. In any *ziara* (visit) to a *kiai*, the *tarekat* followers usually ask for his prayers for a secure life. In addition, they try to avoid disappointing the *kiai*, and certainly avoid opposing him, since either could result in the loss of *baraka* in their lives. In an extreme case, a follower could even become *kualat* (fairly cursed). It is acknowledged that the state of *baraka* may stem from having a good relationship with the *kiai* or other holy men who have *karama*. However, *baraka* can also be derived from the prayer of common people, who perform extremely good religious acts, such as those returning from *hajj*. Such a prayer is easily accepted by God. This is a tradition, of course, but it also relates to people’s belief systems which underly their actions.

On two evenings I visited two Javanese Muslims who had just arrived from undertaking *hajj*. The first one was a *lurah* (village head), and the other was a *kiai*, who heads a *pesantren* under the collective leadership of other *kiai* on the west side of Jombang. When I arrived at the *lurah*’s house, there were some people chatting with him. I then became involved in a conversation with them. When a young woman among them was about to leave, she asked the *lurah* for a prayer. She said: *Pak lurah, kulo nyuwun barakahipun lan do’ane panjenengan* (Mr. Lurah, I would like to get *baraka* from your having undertaken the *hajj*. Please say a prayer for me). The same situation occurred when I visited the *kiai* in his house. People who came there shook the *kiai*’s right hand (some kissed it) and then embraced him, an action indicating closeness or brotherhood. It should be noted first that such embraces happened only between the *kiai* and male Muslims, or between *nyai* (the *kiai*’s wife) and female Javanese, and only between Muslims and those just finishing their *hajj*. On this occasion, I also noticed that before people left the *kiai*, they always begged for his prayer, just to get *baraka*.

The happenings in the *kiai*’s house were not too surprising me, since begging *kiai* for *baraka* is very common. However, asking the *lurah* for *baraka* led me to ask certain questions. I later received an answer which, although not satisfying, gave me a logical understanding of these actions. The Javanese Muslims believe that doing *hajj* is symbolically similar to cleaning the soul of sin. At the very least, those who do the *hajj* have completed their Islamic obligation. For a short

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7 Islam has five pillars according to which Muslims perform their religious rituals. These are *shahada*, that is stating that there is ‘No God but Allah and Muhammad is his messenger’, performing *salat* (prayer), giving religious alms, fasting during *ramadan* (the name of a month in the Muslim calendar), and finally, performing *hajj*. Of the five pillars, four are reachable by any Muslim because they are common practice. One pillar, that is doing *hajj*, needs a lot of money to carry out. For most Muslims doing *hajj* is very difficult because of its economic dimension. That is why Islam only asks its adherents to conduct *hajj* once during one’s life time. Due to its special place in Islam, performing *hajj* is highly rewarded by Allah. Those who perform it have a high social position among Muslims.
time after one completes his hajj, this being clean enables him to be a person whose prayer is easily accepted by Allah.

The tradition of baraka is more prevalent among those Muslims who orient their ideologies through the traditionalist Islamic organisation, NU. Among Muhammadiyah\footnote{Some scholars have conceptualised the terms traditional and modern orthodox Muslims to refer to the Islamic organisations represented by NU and the Muhammadiyah respectively. This conceptualisation, however, is no longer adequate. The basis for this conceptualisation was initially the educational background of both groups, NU society being more pesantren oriented and Muhammadiyah tending to be modern educated. However, this situation has changed significantly. Both societies are now modern in terms of their education. Many NU leaders both locally and nationally are university graduates; and their concern for modern education for NU members is great. As I discussed earlier, some pesantren provide their santri with university and other modern institutions.} followers or sympathisers, such a tradition is less known. In the NU’s tradition such beliefs and practices of baraka have been embedded for a long time. My informant (a lecturer at the Universitas Darul Ulum, who used to be a santri of Kiai Musta’in) told me about a santri of Pesantren Darul Ulum who disagreed with his kiai (Musta’in) because of the latter’s affiliation with Golkar. He was one of those santri who sharply criticised his kiai. This santri was a muballigh (preacher). While PPP was the Islamic party, such criticism could impinge on an area that could discredit the kiai. Some years later, the santri had a psychological problem, which according to some sources had no clear cause. Since he was a muballigh his mental illness was known to many people, who often came or heard his preaching. Some people thought that his illness was due to the kualat (indirect curse) that resulted from his discrediting his teacher, Kiai Musta’in. Hence, the muballigh was sent to face Kiai Musta’in and beg for his forgiveness. After this visit, the muballigh recovered from his mental illness.

The problem of baraka or karama has indeed been embedded in the practice and culture of Javanese Islam. These practices have produced attitudes that might be exaggerated and ‘not allowed’, from an Islamic perspective\footnote{This heretical situation is what worries the Muhammadiyah members. The Muhammadiyah movement tries to throw away any practice classified as khurafat (heretical), even though, as I discuss in another part of this thesis, they are in essence also involved in such things as bid’a, which is beyond their awareness. The words khurafat and bid’a are Arabic. They mean heresy respectively. Nevertheless, there is a different understanding between NU and Muhammadiyah concerning how bid’a things are seen from the Islamic perspective. NU grounds its understanding in the principle of al-muhafaza bil-qadim al-salih wa'l-akhdhu bil-jadid al-aslah (maintaining existing good religious practice, and adopting any new practice which is religiously better). It thus encourages the spread of Islam and even the adoption of other practices as far as they can be coloured by Islam. On the other hand, Muhammadiyah is more concerned with purification, and tries to remove any heretical practice from Islam.}. The Javanese Muslims, for example, differentiate some things in terms of their karama, incurring baraka. A respondent who used to be the khaddam (servant) of a well known kiai in Jombang, but is now a lecturer at the Universitas Darul Ulum after obtaining his M.A from the government university, Gadjahmada, gave me an illustration drawn from a Javanese whom he had interviewed. This
Javanese, who works in the Jogjakarta palace, considered his salary to have a special value. While realising that his salary was not sufficient to support his family, he was convinced that accepting such a salary would incur baraka, which might give him a chance to obtain additional employment outside the palace. He thus deemed the salary a sacred thing that merited special treatment. A person with such a belief would not put the salary into the same pocket or wallet as money coming from other sources. He would physically separate such salary from other money if he put them in the same pocket.

In Jombang my field assistant told me about a kiai who has a karama. The karama of this kiai, however, is often related to a certain accident experienced by someone but which was not known by the kiai himself. This example is to indicate that the result of a kiai’s karama, either baraka or kualat, is automatic. The karama responds to a certain attitude of a Muslim in accordance with his relation with the kiai. Thus, any good perception about kiai would incur baraka on the Muslim’s part, and any bad attitude (kurang ajar) would cause kualat. Thus, the baraka is not only obtained by the kiai’s prayers, but can also be elicited by those who have good relations with the kiai.

This culture of subordination does not seem to be characteristic only of traditional Javanese, since we can find its parallels in the culture of sainthood in general, such as in North Africa. The notion of baraka has resulted not only in the existence of small kingdom-like groupings established by a kiai or saint, but has also created a culture of inequality in social relations. The kiaiship in Java has become a small kingdom-like entity that exerts a type of informal rulership; and gatherings to obtain the kiai’s baraka have become a routine ritual. In Jombang, where people’s emotional attachment to the kiai is sufficiently strong, the culture of subordination not only marks the relationship between the kiai and his society but is extended to the society’s relationship with the kiai’s family. The people’s view of the kiaiship leads them to foster good relations with the kiai’s family as well. Treating the kiai’s family well, in one informant’s opinion, is a necessity since the family is the inheritor of one’s integrity (cf. Sukamto, 1992).

There are several media through which the relationship between the kiai and his community is perpetuated. Firstly, it is important to look at the pesantren culture (see Dhofier, 1982) within which the kiai provides Islamic studies for his santri. The relationship between the kiai and his santri is very close and, in some cases, very emotionally laden because of the charismatic position of the kiai in his community, informed by a culture of subordination. Since these close relationships are not confined to the pesantren but continue after the santri become members of society, the perpetuation and the spread of such culture is assured. This unequal relationship is perpetuated because former santri continue to visit their kiai regularly. The alumni of a pesantren commonly make regular visits to former kiai just to do silaturrahmi (lit. to connect one’s kindness to
others) and obtain the *kiai*’s blessing. Such regular visits do not stop even after a *kiai*’s son succeeds his father in leading the *pesantren*. This is because the position of the *kiai* and his son is the same in the *santri* perspective. In addition, by the time the son occupies the *kiaiship*, the former *santri* are usually sending their own sons to the *pesantren* now managed by the *kiai*’s son.

A second factor which helps bind the *santri* to the *kiai* relates to certain important religious rituals, which are held by the *kiai* and are attended by former *santri*, including those from other provinces. These rituals range from the commemoration of the death of the founder of the *pesantren* to the festival at the end of schooling. In the *tarekat* world, there are religious rituals, like *mujahada kubro* (great ritual) which are attended by thousands of followers. On the one hand, such rituals provide a forum where people can practise their religious beliefs. On the other hand, it is the medium through which the relationship between the *kiai* and his *santri* or followers can be strengthened. A number of people, some of them very young, whom I met in Jombang, had come from other provinces just to attend such religious rituals. “I feel I must attend such an important event as the *mujahada kubro*”, said a young member of the *Penyiar Sholawat Wahidiyah* who had come from Jakarta. Although he had to spend four nights attending this ritual, he was very happy. What was important for him was that his attendance at this ritual would incur *baraka*.

However, we can find some changes in this culture of submission with regard to people’s relationships with their *kiai* and in relation to the notion of *baraka* itself among the younger *santri* community. The more secularly educated young *santri* have different notions, reflecting changes in society and general attitudes toward the institution of the *kiaiship* itself. The changing pattern of *pesantren* education, especially in relation to the motivation brought by the *santri* to the *pesantren*, has given rise to changes in their perception of the *kiaiship*. Although such changes have not been pronounced, they affect the pattern of relationships between members of the community and the *kiai*. I will discuss this further in a later chapter of this thesis.

### 4.3 The Fragmented Organisation of Islam

The *pesantren* in Jombang are well developed in comparison to those in other cities. It is thus understandable that Indonesian Muslims call Jombang the *city of santri*. This development is related to the efforts of the *kiai* to spread Islam. These efforts were initially begun by individual *kiai* who extended *pesantren* education through familial connections. Thus the increase in the number of *pesantren* in Jombang is in many respects a result of the expansion of the *kiai* families. It is common for a son of a *kiai* to establish another *pesantren* after he is mature and has his own family. This pattern of expansion usually occurs when the *kiai* has many children. As the leadership of most *pesantren* is inherited, with the leadership being passed down from father to son, the availability of many
children has enabled the kiai to extend the pesantren through the establishment (by their children) of other pesantren in nearby villages or other cities.

Despite the familial connections between many pesantren in Jombang, the authority of individual pesantren kiai is autonomous in that each has unfettered rights in terms of the management of his pesantren. He is not influenced by other kiai. Such independence is more in evidence when we consider the political affiliation of various pesantren. Since 1977, for example, the Pesantren Darul Ulum has had a different political orientation from that of the Pesantren Bahrul Ulum, despite the fact that both have close familial connections.

Each kiai has certain santri and a section of society as his followers. This leads to a situation where Muslims in Jombang are socially fragmented. There are various groups in society, each following the leadership of their kiai. However, these groupings, in many respects are not acknowledged, since in people’s daily lives there are few situations of open conflict. Nevertheless, the existence of such groupings becomes apparent if one compares the present situation to that of the 1950s, when the conflicts in society were obvious. Each group tried to humiliate each other, so that people called this conflictual situation in the 1950s zaman poyok-poyokan, a period of humiliation (Pranowo, 1991).

There are two interesting points concerning the leadership of the kiai and the grouping of Muslim society in Jombang. The first concerns the institution of kiaiship which acts as a ‘small kingdom’, independent of others in terms of the connection with its community and its structural existence in relation to NU. The followers of, or sympathisers with, such a ‘kingdom’ are not only derived from the local area but also from other districts of Jombang. There is no spatial limitation concerning the influence of a local kiai since he can attract followers from other areas which might be within the sphere of influence of another kiai. By the same token, it is very likely that some people living in the same district as a kiai would be followers of other kiai living in other districts. I need to stress this point because in Jombang there are a large number of kiai 10. One result of this is that individuals in Jombang often move beyond their district boundaries. This situation is promoted by NU, especially its tarekat groups, which often hold ritual activities attended by thousands of members from different parts of Jombang. In this situation people from other districts are introduced to the local kiai leadership, which makes it possible for them to come under this local kiai’s influence.

The same holds true in the tarekat world. In Jombang, there are at least four tarekat movements, each with its own followers. Although there is no open conflict between members of these tarekat, the allegiance of the members would

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10 As I mentioned there are three categories of kiai, the stage kiai (preacher) also has strong influence in society. Due to the mobility of the stage kiai, his followers are spread throughout Jombang.
be definitely given to their respective leaders, the murshid. Members always regard their tarekat as the best. Their allegiance has been strengthened through ritual practices led by the murshid which assist the establishment of an emotional relationship. The relationship between tarekat members and their murshid is stronger than that between the pesantren kiai and their followers (see the case of Kiai Musta’in’s joining Golkar).

The emergence of local authority and its strong influence among its followers was encouraged after the internal conflict which occurred in NU early in the 1970s and in the second half of the 1980s. The phrase kiai saya (my kiai) is commonly uttered to show allegiance toward certain kiai and indifference toward others. This fact, on the other hand, shows us that in present-day Jombang no one kiai has influence which extends throughout the entire society. The emerging local powers of the pesantren kiai, independent of each other, could lay the seeds of social tension or even conflict if each of them directs its followers in different directions. A kiai in Jombang told me that there is no one kiai who has the power to unify these local authorities, so that tension often occurs when they take different political stands. This statement indicates that familial connectedness notwithstanding, the relationship between the pesantren kiai in regard to politics is rather fragile. NU, to which most are affiliated, only coordinates the pesantren. It is incapable of directing the kiai politics.

From the fact that NU has two (informal) affiliated institutions, the pesantren and the tarekat, we can infer that within NU there exist various sub-cultures, each of which is different from the other in many respects. The world of the santri in the pesantren, for example, may be different from that of tarekat followers. Although all of these institutions remain under the umbrella of NU, their performance as expressed through the attitude and behaviour of their followers, especially with respect to politics, continues to indicate differences. This situation means that the NU's strength in practice lies in its sub-institutions. In other words, the strength of NU leadership has been established and centred on the kiai leadership in these two institutions.

Thus I would venture to say that the situation in regard to the kiai-followers relationship in Jombang might be different from other regions in Java where the role of the pesantren and the tarekat is less dominant. In Jombang, the allegiance of the NU members is given to the pesantren and the tarekat rather than to NU itself. Popular emotional attachment toward NU has for a long time been built through the pesantren and tarekat. It is the kiai, as leaders of the pesantren and tarekat with close ties to local society, who have established an ideological commitment among their followers and related them to NU as an organisation. Accordingly, it is the kiai who run the pesantren or lead the tarekat, not NU, who have mass followers identified as NU members. We can understand from this perspective that NU in Jombang as an organisation of kiai does not
have a monopoly on power. In certain cases it may even be powerless, since the existing power is spread among kiai running the pesantren or heading the tarekat. The equilibrium of this structure can easily be disturbed by social tension or even conflict, when the different attitudes of the kiai of pesantren or the kiai of tarekat cannot be reconciled.

This perspective is significant if we want to understand the social tension occurring at the grassroots level in Jombang. Such tension, which usually does not impinge on the ideological domain, actually constitutes an expression of the tension existing among the kiai. NU as an organisation would be powerless to induce societal action unless the kiai gave their approval. In the case of deciding the day of the ‘idul-fitr festival, for example, Muslims in Jombang would not follow any decision made by NU unless their kiai were in accord. Accordingly, if there is any contradiction between a decision made by NU and that of local kiai, the Islamic society in Jombang would turn to the kiai.

I need to emphasise and give further detail of the existing power dispersion, especially in the tarekat. In contrast to tarekat kiai, the pesantren kiai does not delegate his power to his assistants, so that he is not threatened by the power of others. His assistants in many respects lack direct relations with the society. The assistant’s position in a pesantren differs from that of khalifa in the tarekat. The kiai’s assistant’s position in the pesantren is a formal structural position in the management of the pesantren, which may include teaching, while the position of the khalifa involves serving the followers’ spiritual needs, moulding their unity under the leadership of the murshid and promoting emotional attachment toward the leaders of the tarekat in general. Furthermore the relationship between the pesantren kiai and society is less formal and looser than that of tarekat kiai. The assistant in the pesantren does not have an intense relationship with the society. The khalifa, on the other hand, devote themselves to the tarekat and assist the murshid in running any istighatha (religious ritual in the tarekat) and building emotional unity among the followers. It is the khalifa who actually have direct relationships with members since, with dozens of places for ritual practice established in Jombang, where istighatha is held once a week, the murshid cannot attend all sessions. He needs the khalifa to fulfill his duty in conducting the istighatha. The establishment of one’s membership in the tarekat is thus dependent on the efforts of the khalifa through their public practice of istighatha; and the internal conflicts that occur in the tarekat in Jombang are very much fostered by the attitudes of these khalifa.

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11 One needs to differentiate between the kiaiship and NU institutionally. NU is a socio-religious organisation run by the kiai; but since not all the personnel in the NU leadership are kiai, the influence of NU is not dominant. That is why in Jombang it is the individual kiai, not the NU, who are more influential in inducing popular action.
Within the existing structure, the centralisation of a murshid’s leadership in a tarekat is not provided with adequate power, since the charismatic authority accrued by his being the leader is, among other things, determined by the khalifa’s assessment of his legitimacy. The situation means that the murshid, as the sole leader\(^\text{12}\), distributes his charismatic authority to his khalifa. Although the khalifa are actually only the conductors of tarekat rituals and do not occupy a position which determines the legitimacy of the tarekat as the murshid does, they still have power. Their religious authority to conduct istighatha, which is given by the murshid, can be the means of opposing the charismatic power of the murshid himself.

Compared to that of the pesantren kiai, the relationship between the tarekat kiai and their followers is stronger. The emotional attachment, imbued with religious colour, is more clearly expressed. The murshid in the tarekat, being seen as a spiritual guide who can bring the society or those individuals involved in the tarekat closer to Allah, is very decisive in establishing this relationship. The ideology of murshidship is institutionalised through the process of ‘indoctrination’. The murshid or his assistants, the khalifa, usually give brief talks before any istighatha is held, emphasising the importance of obedience to the murshid and the need to follow in the murshid steps. The guru or the murshid is not only regarded as a means for society to approach Allah, but he is also deemed to be a kind of ‘doctor\(^\text{13}\) who can cure social diseases. That is why the influence of the murshid in the tarekat is so strong, enabling the mursyi and his khalifa to build a cohesive community, held together by strong emotions.

Due to this emotion, it is understandable if religious gatherings held by the tarekat, not to mention the gathering to commemorate the haul (a yearly religious commemoration for the death) of the previous murshid, are always attended by a huge number of followers. A tarekat kiai\(^\text{14}\) told me one day that the haul for Kiai Wahab Chasbullah, one of the NU founders, was usually attended by an insignificant number of people, despite the fact that Kiai Wahab was a great kiai. One of his sons contacted this kiai, asking him to encourage the Jombang population to come to the next haul. Due to the kiai invitation, the haul was attended by thousands of people, the majority of them tarekat members.

Nevertheless, there are some interesting points to explore in terms of the close relationship between the murshid and his followers and the kiai and Muslim

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\(^{12}\) During Kiai Musta’in’s leadership in the Tarekat Qadiriyah Wa Naqsyabandiyah, he was the sole murshid of this sufi order in Jombang. The same held true with Kiai Rifai and Kiai Dimyati. It should be noted, however, that the Tarekat Qadiriyah Wa Naqsyabandiyah centred in Cukir, Jombang, currently has three murshid. Nevertheless, the murshid cannot attend all istighatha attended by members. They, too, have to delegate their khalifa to lead such istighatha.

\(^{13}\) I received this explanation when I attended a religious sermon delivered by a khalifa of the Tarekat Qadiriyah Wa Naqsyabandiyah in the Pesantren Darul Ulum.

\(^{14}\) Interview with Kiai Khoerul Anwar, 28 May 1993.
society in general. The split of the Tarekat Qadiriyah Wa Naqsyabandiyah into two groups\(^ {15} \) has great significance for our understanding and reviewing of conceptual frameworks which relate to the limitation of charismatic authority, as modeled by Weber, or to the fragility of the norms inducing social action. The charismatic authority, as applied through the leadership of a murshid\(^ {16} \) in the tarekat, has some boundaries which determine the areas or circumstances for its legitimate application. The holder of charismatic authority is usually deemed as powerful. However, such authority in certain situations can be powerless when its entrenched usage is overstepped. At this point the followers have “a possible basis for a challenge to the leader’s legitimacy and sometimes a motive for his replacement” (Hill, 1987:154).

For the tarekat followers, these boundaries are fairly normative although blurred. It is loosely formulated in the concept of memperjuangkan Islam (to struggle for Islam). According to this concept, tacit evaluation is made by any tarekat member or society in general of a tarekat kiai. The exaggerated respect, or even ‘kissing the hand’ to gain baraka from a kiai, afforded by a member of a tarekat, would cease if the kiai was devoid of this memperjuangkan Islam attitude. Possession of this quality is sustained by the leadership structure of the tarekat itself. The tarekat followers in Jombang are grouped according to different istighatha headed by the khalifa. The khalifa, through conducting weekly local istighatha have cemented good relationships with their tarekat members, an intimacy which might be stronger than that which marks members' closeness to their murshid. Any deviation by a khalifa would hence affect the followers' attitude towards their murshid\(^ {17} \).

From the above discussion it is evident that the decline of legitimacy of the murshid in the tarekat derives mostly from his overstepping the boundary; and the khalifa\(^ {18} \), because of their closeness to the members, have responded to the murshid's excesses by challenging his leadership. So it is very likely that the

\(^{15} \) As I discussed in Chapter II, the former Tarekat Qadiriyah Wa Naqsyabandiyah in Jombang is now divided into two, that is the Tarekat Qadiriyah Wa Naqsyabandiyah organised by the Jam’iyah Ahli Thoriqoh Al-Mu’tabaroh An-Nahdliyah, which was established through the NU congress in Semarang in 1979, and the Tarekat Qadiriyah Wa Naqsyabandiyah coordinated by the Jam’iyah Ahli Thoriqoh Al-Mu’tabaroh Indonesia which was formally headed by Kiai Musta’in.

\(^{16} \) I apply the charismatic authority to the leadership of a murshid since he is regarded as a holy man through whom people can obtain baraka. See discussion in section 2 of this chapter.

\(^{17} \) In addition, I do not rule out the possibility of direct evaluation from members themselves in regard to the attitude of memperjuangkan Islam of the murshid. Such a possibility, however, seems to be hindered by the existence of a culture of ‘obedience’ to the murshid which exists among the tarekat members.

\(^{18} \) It is interesting to compare the khalifaship in the tarekat in Jombang and in Indonesia in general with that in Kurdistan as noted by Bruinessen (1992). In the latter the political dynamic of khalifaship is apparent. In the former the khalifaship is merely concerned with assisting with religious rituals in the tarekat which are mostly those which cannot be conducted by the murshid. In the latter the function of the khalifa is the same as in the former. However, in the latter it is very likely that a khalifa, in Bruinessen’s (1992:245) words, “declared himself a sheikh against the wish of his murshid” for his own political interests.
exodus of the followers of Kiai Musta’in, which will be discussed in Chapter V, was motivated by some of his khalifa, whose political perspective was different from Kiai Musta’in’s. By the same token, the continuous allegiance of some followers in the tarekat led by Kiai Musta’in was because some of his khalifa were very loyal to him. The political defection of Kiai Musta’in, in the view of this loyal group of followers, did not have any connection with the tarekat, since their loyalty to him did not necessarily mean that they had to follow his political steps. Such a structural perspective holds only for our understanding of the leadership in the tarekat movement.

4.4 The Modern Kiai and Santri

There are two types of kiai in the pesantren based on their educational background, that is the traditional kiai who have undertaken Islamic studies in traditional pesantren and modern kiai whose Islamic knowledge was acquired through a formal modern Islamic tertiary institution. The traditional kiai usually has more knowledge of Islam than a modern kiai. The modern kiai, on the other hand, has a better methodology in teaching Islam than a traditional kiai. The difference is generational. Most of the traditional kiai derive from an older generation who had no opportunity to acquire a formal modern education. It was not until the second half of the 1960s that the pesantren in Jombang and other parts of Indonesia provided the santri with a modern system of education (see discussion on pesantren in Chapter II). Although this categorisation may be blurred in the sense that both traditional and modern kiai can have the same quality in their teaching, their difference in educational background has created a different image of them among the santri. In the future it is probable that all kiai in any modern pesantren will be modern kiai. This is because modern Islamic learning at a formal university or other institution is becoming a necessity from the perspective of the santri. Modern santri need modern kiai who have a broader educational background and range of skills. In addition, there is a trend among kiai families to obtain a formal degree from a university.

The presence of some modern kiai in the pesantren has hence resulted in no problems. Although their knowledge of Islam is doubted by their senior kiai, they are accepted by the santri and society in general. In my observation, some of them (people call them ‘secular kiai’) are equal in ability to senior kiai, since they have acquired sufficient knowledge of Islam. The santri give them the same respect as they do to the traditional kiai. The point is not whether a kiai is secularised in the sense of being educated in a modern Islamic institution, but whether or not he is equipped with Islamic knowledge. According to Idham

19 Interview with Idham Khalid, a student of the Institut Keislaman Hasyim Asy’ari and a local leader of PMII, 15 September 1994.
kiai has nothing to do with formal educational attainment. Idham feels he has to give homage to any kiai to the extent that he is well equipped with Islamic knowledge. In the view of other santri, it is essential for a kiai to have received a modern Islamic education, which can raise the position of the kiai in the eyes of his santri. Exposure to modern education makes the kiai more open and gives him a wider perspective than those traditional kiai who completed their education in traditional pesantren. These are qualities appreciated by modern santri.

It should nonetheless be noted that the leadership of a modern kiai is different from that of a normal traditional kiai. The emotional attachment between him and his following is less strong in many respects. Some modern kiai, however, still invoke strong emotional feelings in their followers in so far as they are supported by other factors, such as the genealogy of kiaiship or certain institutions with which they are affiliated. I found, for example, that a santri kissed the hand of a younger modern kiai who had graduated from a certain university. Although this kiai is not particularly erudite in Islam, he is treated the same as the older traditional kiai. This is so because he is the son of a well known kiai in Jombang. In certain institutions, such as the tarekat, the position of the modern kiai does not incur any problem in the sense that they hold the same position in the eyes of their followers. Kiai Rifai Romly, to mention only one example, was a modern kiai who was able to build emotional ties with his followers. He was a modern kiai for he graduated from a modern Islamic institution, obtaining a degree of Sarjana Hukum (Master of Law). He also assumed a murshidship in the Tarekat Qadiriyah Wa Naqsyabandiyyah, and his leadership in this tarekat ran well.

Although there is little difference between traditional and modern kiai in respect of the attitude of the santri in general toward them, the perspective of the santri on kiaiship in general is changing. This change not only relates to the santri interpretation of pesantren education but also impinges on their world view, especially the values underlying their social relationship with their master, the kiai.

While the perspective of the santri toward their kiai within the context of the pesantren is changing, the change in the perspective of Muslim society towards the kiai is taken for granted. The modernising process which contributes to such change is greater in society generally than in the pesantren world. The changing pattern of kiai relationships within the broader society relates especially to the continuing process of social mobility in Muslim society in Indonesia. The emergence of more educated individuals, who have either graduated from Islamic or secular universities, has made available agents other than kiai who can give professional religious advice and who possess Islamic learning. The kiai is no longer the sole agent who provides Islamic learning, since society can obtain
such learning from other agents, such as Muslim scholars\textsuperscript{20} who teach in tertiary educational institutions. Another important factor which impinges on existing norms of relationship, especially between the santri and their kiai, is the availability of a greater flow of information which can give rise to the emergence of modern values. The santri now have access to a variety of books, magazines or newspapers provided by the pesantren, a situation which exposes the santri to a modernising world outside the world of the pesantren.

The following account describes the change in the attitude of a santri in terms of his relationship with the kiai:

Barghowi is a lecturer at the Universitas Darul Ulum. He has just finished his MA in sociology at the Gadjahmada University, one of the few prestigious universities in Indonesia. He used to be a khaddam of Kiai Musta’in. His promotion to his current job at the university is due to his closeness to this kiai who established the university. Khaddam is an Arabic term which literally means servant; but the term is commonly used to refer to a special servant, since the khaddam serves the kiai in such matters as taking his drink or receiving his guests. Barghowi’s position as a khaddam indicates that he did not come from a well-to-do family. Becoming a khaddam was thus a way by which Barghowi could afford his life and education during his stay in the kiai’s pesantren. In addition, being a khaddam enables one to obtain baraka. Being a khaddam not only involves being in a subordinate position (facing the kiai) but also being part of the culture of obedience or giving exaggerated homage to the kiai and his family.

Together with other khaddam, Barghowi was sent to the local school owned by the kiai until he finished high school. Later the kiai married him to a woman of Barghowi’s choice. While he was working as a teacher in a local madrasa, he continued his study at the university owned by the kiai. Again, due to his closeness to the kiai family, he was accepted as a lecturer at the Universitas Darul Ulum after he finished his sociology study at this university.

Teaching at the university and living in a Javanese social environment as head of a family has introduced Barghowi to life which is different from that of the pesantren. His involvement in academic activities widened his perspective, a situation which encouraged him gradually to change his accustomed behaviour as a santri formed during his service as a khaddam. He dared to propose more openness in the university environment, making some criticisms about undemocratic practices occurring in it. This is an action which he was unlikely

\textsuperscript{20} It is even often suggested that the service or explanation of Muslim scholars concerned with Islam is more satisfying. They usually give explanations which are acceptable to common sense and the logic of the educated. There is also no superior-subordinate pattern in their relationship with society in contrast to the relationship between a kiai and his followers or his santri. The role of these scholars can be seen in the religious activities on some campuses, which are organised by Muslim scholars rather than by kiai.
to have undertaken while he was a *khaddam*. Barghowi made his criticism at a meeting presided over by the *kiai*’s wife (who happened to be the one who had sent him to school during his service to her husband). When he was told that the *nyai* was disappointed and even felt offended by his criticism, Barghowi just smiled. He did not feel uncomfortable when the *nyai* called him *kemelinti* (a Javanese term which means *tidak tahu diri*, that is one who does not acknowledge that he was supported by the person whom he criticised). Later he came to the *nyai*, asking her apology. He said: “Nyai, saya mohon maaf karena saya kemelinti” (I apologise for my being *kemelinti*). It is said that when he said *kemelinti*, he emphasised the word (by stressing its sound and displaying no shyness), an attitude which in *santri* culture expresses a rather rude and arrogant manner. He emphasised the word *kemelinti* because it was the word which was spoken by the *nyai* to someone else when she talked about Barghowi’s unacceptable behaviour.

This example shows how the change in attitude of the modern *santri* toward the *kiai* can occur. Barghowi is the personification of those who grew up and were socialised in a culture of respect but have subsequently changed. The Barghowi case also provides an example of the response of a *kiai* family to such change.

Such occurrences are becoming less rare. At the end of February 1994, according to a fortnightly magazine\(^1\), hundreds of high school (SMA) students of the *Pesantren Darul Ulum* in Jombang held a demonstration. They asked the *pesantren* leader to establish a more democratic situation in their school environment. The leader of the *pesantren* responded to this action by expelling 15 of the students involved. “Diukur dengan uang puluhan milyaran pun tak cukup untuk mengobati kekecewaan kami. Di pondok tidak pernah ada demonstrasi” (“Millions of rupiah cannot heal our disappointment. In the *pesantren* no demonstration has ever been carried out”), he said. Furthermore, a senior *kiai* of this *pesantren* suggested that “Kalau murid sudah berani menilai guru nya, hubungan rohani antara mereka bisa tertutup. Murid tidak akan tambah pandai, tapi akan bodoh” (“If a student evaluates his teacher, the spiritual relationship between them is closed off. The student will not become clever but become stupid”).

The action taken by the *kiai* to expell some of the students involved did not stop other *santri* from holding similar protests. As reported by a newspaper\(^2\), a number of students of the *Universitas Darul Ulum* held a similar protest at the *Pesantren Darul Ulum*. The protest was clearly directed at the head of the *pesantren*, Kiai As’ad Umar. The *kiai* was reported to have given political support to President Suharto’s candidacy for another term in office (1998). Not only did the student consider that the support had been given too early, but they also

\(^1\) Forum Keadilan, 2 March 1995.
\(^2\) Media Indonesia, 2 July 1995.
saw such support as the *kiai’s* effort to gain certain political ends. The student thus felt that the *kiai* had exploited Islam for political purposes.\(^{23}\)

What I have described above is a new phenomenon in the *pesantren* world. Modernisation of the *pesantren* has not only produced a favourable condition for the emergence of modern *santri*, but has also distorted the character of the *pesantren* world. The characteristics of *keihklasan* (lit. willingness to serve for Islam), which have for a long time been the foundation of *pesantren* education, have been replaced by a more profit-making one. The secular school-based system, which has been established in the *pesantren*, differs on a basic level from that of the traditional *pesantren*. The former stresses the transference of skill based knowledge, while the latter emphasises character building. The relationship between the teacher and the student in traditional *pesantren* is marked by exaggerated respect. In modern schools, however, such a pattern of relationship is less likely to occur, making it feasible for a teacher to be criticised by his students.

\(^{23}\) As the *kiai’s* influence on Muslim society is still great, the *kiai’s* decision (*kebulatan tekad*, means political determination) to support Suharto’s next presidency, from the *santri’s* point of view, will influence Muslim society’s political attitude. The political manoeuvre of Kiai As’ad Umar was launched after he held a meeting with around 70 *kiai* throughout Jombang, discussing the possibilities of accepting some funding which would be offered by the government and Golkar for the *pesantren*. Some *kiai* protested against Kiai As’ad Umar since such political support was not discussed at the meeting. It is important to note that this protest which was held by the students of Universitas Darul Ulum incurred reaction from the *santri* of the Pesantren Darul Ulum. Some of the students of the Universitas Darul Ulum are *santri* who stay at the Pesantren Darul Ulum. Many of them, however, live outside the *pesantren* environment.