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ISLAM, STATE AND SOCIETY IN INDONESIA

LOCAL POLITICS IN MADURA

Yanwar Pribadi

ROUTLEDGE

Islam, State and Society in Indonesia

Islamic powers in secular countries have presented a challenge for states around the world, including Indonesia, home to the largest Muslim population as well as the third largest democracy in the world.

This book explores the history of the relationships between Islam, state, and society in Indonesia with a focus on local politics in Madura. It identifies and explains factors that have shaped and characterized the development of contemporary Islam and politics in Madura and recognizes and elucidates forms and aspects of the relationships between Islam and politics; between state and society; between conflicts and accommodations; between piety, tradition and violence in that area, and the forms and characters of democratization and decentralization processes in local politics. This book shows how the area's experience in dealing with Islam and politics may illuminate the socio-political trajectory of other developing Muslim countries at present living through comparable democratic transformations. Madura was chosen because it has one of the most complex relationships between Islam and politics during the last years of the New Order and the first years of the post-New Order in Indonesia, and because it is a strong Muslim area with a history of a very strong religious as well as cultural tradition than is more commonly understood and is largely ignored in literature on Islam and politics.

Based on extensive sets of anthropological fieldwork and historical research, this book makes an important contribution to the analysis of Islam and politics in Indonesia and future socio-political trajectory of other developing Muslim countries experiencing comparable democratic transformations. It will be of interest to academics in the field of religion and politics and Southeast Asian Studies, in particular Southeast Asian politics, anthropology and history.

Yanwar Pribadi is Assistant Professor of Local History at the State Islamic University (UIN) Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten, Indonesia. His research interests include the study of Muslim politics and cultures, citizenship, political and cultural violence, and rural studies.

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Local Politics in Madura

Yanwar Pribadi

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For Sarri, Zanky, and Zoltan

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A note on the transliteration system

In this book, all terms in Indonesian languages such as Javanese and Bahasa Indonesia (the official language of Indonesia) are written according to their modern spellings as they are used in Indonesia today. All terms in Madurese and Arabic are spelled and transliterated into Indonesian spellings. Therefore, instead of using *blatèr* and *fatwā*, I have used the Indonesian forms, *blater* and *fatwa*. For the plural forms of Arabic words that have been adopted in Bahasa Indonesia and for other non-English words in this study, I have not added an 's'. The words *kiai* and *ulama* can be used as both singular and plural forms. For names of people that have several versions, I have opted to employ their most common variant. Consequently, instead of writing *Kiai* Cholil or *Kiai* Khalil, I have written his most common name, *Kiai* Kholil.

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List of Abbreviations

Bakorstanas	Badan Koordinasi Keamanan dan Stabilitas Nasional (Body for the Coordination of National Security and Stability)
Bassra	Badan Silaturahmi Ulama Pesantren Madura (The Association of Friendship of Madurese *Pesantren Ulama*)
BPD	Badan Permusyawaratan Desa (Village council)
BPN	Badan Pertanahan Nasional (National Land Body)
BPPT	Badan Pengkajian dan Penerapan Teknologi (Body of the Application and Assessment of Technology)
BUMN	Badan Usaha Milik Negara (State-owned enterprises)
DMP	Dhipa Madura Pradana (A private company that would be part of the consortium that built the Suramadu Bridge)
DPC	Dewan Pimpinan Cabang (Sub-district leadership council)
DPD (a)	Dewan Pimpinan Daerah (District leadership council)
DPD (b)	Dewan Perwakilan Daerah (The Regional Representative Council)
DPR	Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat (The People's Representative Council, The national parliament)
DPRD	Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah (The Regional People's Representative Council)
DPW	Dewan Pimpinan Wilayah (Provincial leadership council)
Gali	Gabungan anak-anak liar (Groups of wild boys)
Golkar	Golongan Karya (The ruling government party during the New Order)
Golput	Golongan putih, non-voters who have the right to vote but do not vote
GP Ansor	Gerakan Pemuda Ansor (The Youth Movement of Ansor)
IAIN	Institut Agama Islam Negeri (State Institute for Islamic Studies)
Kodam	Komando Daerah Militer (Military provincial command)
Kodim	Komando Distrik Militer (Military district command)
Koramil	Komando Rayon Militer (Military rayon command)
Korem	Komand Resor Militer (Military resort command)

KPPS	Kelompok Penyelenggara Pemungutan Suara (General elections organizing committee for polling stations)
LBH	Lembaga Bantuan Hukum (The legal aid organization)
Masjumi or Masyumi	Madjelis/Majelis Sjuro/Syuro Muslimin Indonesia (Consultative Council of Indonesian Muslims)
MPR	Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat (People's Consultative Assembly)
MUI	Majelis Ulama Indonesia (Council of Indonesian Muslim Scholars)
MWCNU	Majelis Wilayah Cabang Nahdlatul Ulama (The Branch District Assembly of Nahdlatul Ulama)
NU	Nahdlatul Ulama (The largest Islamic association in Indonesia)
P4	Pendidikan, Penghayatan, dan Pengamalan Pancasila (The Education, Internalization, and Implementation of Pancasila)
PAN	Partai Amanat Nasional (National Mandate Party)
PDI	Partai Demokrasi Indonesia (The Indonesian Democratic Party)
PDIP	Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan (The Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle)
Pemilu	Pemilihan Umum (General elections)
Petrus	Penembak(an) Misterius (The mysterious rifleman/shooting or the mysterious killer/killing in 1982–1985 against mostly tattooed people who were considered criminals)
Pilkada	Pemilihan Kepala Daerah (Elections to vote for provincial or municipal/regency head)
Pilkades	Pemilihan Kepala Desa (Village head elections)
PKB	Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (The National Awakening Party)
PKI	Partai Komunis Indonesia (The Indonesian Communist Party)
Polsek	Polisi Sektor (Sub-district police command)
Polres	Polisi Resor (District police command)
Polda	Polisi Daerah (Provincial police command)
PPP	Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (The United Development Party)
Repelita	Rencana Pembangunan Lima Tahun (The Five Years Development Plan)
SDSB	Sumbangan Dana Sosial Berhadiah (State-sponsored lottery)
TPS	Tempat Pemungutan Suara (Polling stations)

1 Introduction

Islam, state, and society

> 'Without a *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) a Madurese *kiai* (religious leaders/teachers) is like a captain without a ship'.
>
> (Interview with *Kiai* Mashduqie Fadly (d. 2010) on 1 December 2009)

This former local parliament member as well as a leading *kiai* in Bangkalan's comment clearly signifies the importance of the *pesantren* as the main traditional Islamic education institution and also *kiai*'s vehicle in Madura's socio-political life. For many urban middle-class Muslims this precisely contradicts today's growing perception of an ideal and appropriate preacher who is often closely associated with Islamism, Salafism, ultra-right, or pop-style approach, and aptly counters the widespread increasing perception of an ideal and desirable Islamic education institution in urban areas that is commonly described as modern, expensive, and exclusive.

Contrary to most recent scholarship on Islam that tends to focus on modern, urban, and middle-class Muslims' thoughts, practices, rituals, and traditions, this book shows that traditional understanding and practices of Islam and politics in democratizing and decentralizing Indonesia in the midst of the rise of more modern understanding and urban-style practices of Islam is still persistent. Madura is clearly a place where its residents share the communal concerns and interests and that many local authorities and Islamic institutions are not simply traditional elements of pre-colonial and colonial legacies that are to be subordinated by modernity.

This book is about the history of the relationships between Islam, state, and society in Indonesia with its focus on local politics in Madura.[1] It covers two periods; the first is the last years of the New Order (1990–1998) and the second is the first years of a period that is known in Indonesia as *Era Reformasi* or *Reformasi* (the Reformation Era or Reformation) or, more neutrally, the post-New Order period (1998–2010). The materials in this book are based on library research and two sets of fieldwork from July 2009 until January 2010, and from October 2010 until July 2011. The periods were selected because the last years of the New Order in Madura exhibit a number of polemics and conflicts between the governments and some segments of society, that include two notorious cases of the Nipah Dam incident and the strong opposition of Bassra

(Badan Silaturahmi Ulama Pesantren Madura – The Association of Friendship of Madurese *Pesantren Ulama*) towards *industrialisasi* (industrialization)[2] and a riot in the 1997 elections in Sampang, and because the first years of the post-New Order show the fascinating dynamics of the ongoing processes of democratization and decentralization in the area, that include a number of local elections. In short, this book shows continuities and changes of the development of Islam and politics in the two periods. While most studies on Islam and local politics in Indonesia focus on one period only, either the New Order or the post-New Order, this book, by analyzing the two periods, offers insights into the relationships between Islam, democracy, authoritarianism, centralization, and decentralization. This book addresses some of the concerns of political science, rural sociology, political anthropology, development economics, Islamic studies, and history. The main actors discussed are local leaders: the *kiai* (religious leaders), the *blater* (local strongmen), and the *klebun* (village heads), the people who successfully claim a domination over the use of religious authority, physical force, and formal leadership, respectively, within a given territory. The events underlined include the 1993 Nipah Dam incident, the strong opposition of Bassra towards *industrialisasi*, elections at all levels, local-Islamic traditions, and cultural festivities.

This book has two main focuses. They are, *firstly*, to identify and explain factors that have shaped and characterized the development of contemporary Islam and politics in Madura; and *secondly* to recognize and elucidate forms and aspects of the relationships between Islam and politics; between state[3] and society; between conflicts and accommodations; between piety, tradition and violence in that area, and the forms and characters of democratization and decentralization processes in local politics. The broader idea of this book is to identify and explain how and why Islamic powers in secular countries have presented a challenge for states around the world, including Indonesia, home to the largest Muslim population as well as the third largest democracy in the world. This book is expected to show how the area's experience in dealing with Islam and politics may illuminate the socio-political trajectory of other developing Muslim countries at present living through comparable democratic transformations. Madura was chosen because it has one of the most complex relationships between Islam and politics during the last years of the New Order and the first years of the post-New Order in Indonesia, and because it is a Muslim area with a history of a very strong religious as well as cultural tradition than is commonly understood and is largely ignored in literature on Islam and politics.

This book is not necessarily a description of one specific culture or one certain people and their life. Instead, it is a socio-political and socio-cultural history of the development of the relationships between Islam and politics that looks at Madurese society through the analysis of state–society relations, authoritarianism, democracy, and regionalism, in which religion and culture are highly significant in the development and dynamics of Indonesia's fledgling democracy.

As the theme of this book suggests, I concentrate on identifying and analyzing particular categories of individuals and groups of local leaders. Concise biographical information of particular individuals and a thorough description of types of local leaders is one of the main points. Madura as an island, Bangkalan and Sampang as regencies, two villages in Bangkalan, Tapal Kuda (the East Java Eastern Salient) areas as the main migration destination of Madurese, and the East Java province, which Madura is part of, make up the geographical context of the book. Before that, however, the structures and configurations that form and influence Madurese society and groups of local leaders are elucidated in order to provide a foundation for this book; or, more specifically, Islam in Madura is observed to build the foundation. Finally, having sketched the foundation, the actors, and the setting of the book, the other main discussion concerns major socio-political events of the past and present at the sub-national (provincial level), regency, and village levels.

By focusing on the sub-national level, I also show how Islamic symbols and cultural elements are employed and promoted to reinforce the influence and position of local elites in local politics, and that they can also be found in other places in Indonesia. Actors such as the *kiai*, the *blater*, and the *klebun* who concern themselves with conflicts and accommodations within society can be found, for instance, in Banten where *kiai* traditionally have a strong influence in society, where the *jawara* (local strongmen) act as private security forces and political actors, and where the *jaro* (village heads) are responsible for guiding and guarding the village. Moreover, the complex relationships between Islam and politics that involves, among other things, on-going processes of democratization, identity politics, the creation of civil society, and Islamism can also be found in other Muslim-majority states, such as Malaysia, Bangladesh, Turkey, and Senegal. Therefore, it might be argued that despite the narrow geographical focus, this book offers a broader analysis of how Islam and politics coexist, flourish, interlace, and strive in complex, pragmatic, and mutually beneficial relationships in a rather neglected and peripheral area that in fact might be useful in examining the relationships between Islam and politics in other places in Indonesia and other Muslim-majority states.

Islam and politics in the changing world

Contemporary Muslim politics is not monolithic; it is very diverse and evolving, although its dynamics vary in many countries. Religion is a determinant of political identity, a focus of loyalty, and a source of authority in the Muslim world (Vatikiotis, 1991, p. 36). One of the most continuously discussed aspects of Islam and politics in recent international debates has been Islam's compatibility with democracy. In fact, there has been an effort in many countries to give 'Muslim politics a civic, pluralist and even democratic face' (Hefner, 2005, p. 4). The notion arose in the West in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 and the subsequent U.S. and its allies'

'War on Terror' (WoT) in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, Syria, and other countries. Islam, as a religion, interacts with social, political, economic, and cultural determinants and is shaped by them. Hence, there does not exist a homogenous and unchanged Islam that overrides politics and society. If we take politics to be about relations of power, then we should be concerned with how Islamic discourses and traditions are mobilized in contestation activities and in power struggles, whether involving formal political institutions or wider societal forms and processes (Ismail, 2004, p. 163).

A number of developments in Muslim-majority states since the Second World War demonstrate that all major political currents that include Islamism, authoritarianism, fascism, secularism, liberalism, populism, and many others exist, thrive, and form political environments. These environments are dominated by movements attempting to transform the state and question the legitimacy of existing governments, public participation, and access to governments. The first obvious example of state transformation was the 1978–1979 Iranian Revolution when a Muslim cleric, Ayatollah Khomeini, rallied a mass movement and began a revolution to overthrow the Pahlavi dynasty under Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi, who was supported by the United States and replaced it with an Islamic government. An example of questioning the legitimacy of existing governments was the assassination of Muslim state leaders, such as Anwar al-Sadat in Egypt, Benazir Bhutto in Pakistan, Ziaur Rahman in Bangladesh, Rashid Karami in Lebanon, and Mohammad Najibullah in Afghanistan following turbulent political disputes, confrontations, and upheavals. The last and the most recent example of state transformation was when Islamism really came to the fore when the Taliban emerged in 1994 as a prominent faction in the Afghan Civil War, held power from 1996 to 2001 in Afghanistan, and enforced a strict interpretation of *sharia* (Islamic laws); and the involvement of Al-Qaeda, a multi-national organization founded in 1988 by Osama bin Laden and other Arab volunteers who fought against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the 1980s, in numerous attacks on civilian and military targets in various countries, including the September 11 attack in the United States and the 2002 Bali bombings in Indonesia.

The events have signified the entanglement of Muslim-majority states in dealing with the challenges of adapting politics and governance to the requirements of Islam. The existence of Islamic governments, radical Islamist political groups, and terrorist attacks is now irrecusable (Brown, 2000, p. 2). All over the Muslim world, the advances of political Islam and the Islamists have been aided by the blunders of the secular modernizing post-colonial elites. The rise of Islamism was partly due to weak, corrupt, and essentially discredited elites who turned to Islam as a discourse of legitimation to perpetuate their own power and right to rule (Noor, 2004, pp. 750–751).

Islam continues to act as a key mobilizing ideology and social movement frame in Muslim-majority states. Islam, however, is not only a subject of political contention, but also its object (Bayat, 2010, p. 8). It is true that political

trends in Muslim-majority states are often violent and contradictory, due in part to the authoritarian regimes. However, 'public Islam'[4] for the most part works against violence. Armando Salvatore and Dale Eickelman suggest that advancing levels of education, greater ease of travel, and the rise of new communications media throughout the Muslim-majority states have contributed to the emergence of a public sphere in which large numbers of people want a say in political and religious issues. The result has been challenges to authoritarianism, the fragmentation of religious and political authority, and increasingly open discussions of issues related to the 'common good' in Islam (Salvatore and Eickelman, 2004, p. xi). It is obvious, therefore, that Muslim politics comes in various backgrounds, purposes, forms, and sizes. Differences among Muslim politics can be noticeably perceived not only among regions or among countries but also within countries as well.

Southeast Asia has often been regarded as a region of 'peripheral' Islam compared to the 'centre' in the Middle East despite the fact that the region is home to Indonesia as the largest Muslim state in the world and the fact that it has had some of the more dynamic and also syncretic, mostly non-violent manifestations of Islamic social and political life for centuries (Saravanamuttu, 2010, p. 3). In fact, the four biggest Muslim states in terms of population with over 100 million Muslims are all located outside the Middle East: Indonesia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and India. Southeast Asia has more significant diversity in cultures, customs, and historical patterns that have traditionally militated against the emergence of a unified realm with Theravada Buddhism, Sunni Islam, Catholicism, animism, tribal religions, as well as Daoism, Mahayana Buddhism, Confucianism, Judaism, Hinduism, Christian denominations, and all forms of New Age religions flourishing as people's religions (Schottmann and Camilleri, 2013, p. 5).

Given the fact that the Southeast Asian nation of Indonesia is the largest Muslim-majority state in the world, and has a Muslim population of around 88 per cent or 202 million in 2011 (Pew Research Center, 2009, p. 5), it offers examples of a Muslim politics as plural and contested as its counterparts in recently-transforming Muslim-majority states, such as Turkey, Egypt, Tunisia, and Iran. Indonesia shows the articulation of Muslim politics within the context of the authoritarian (the New Order) and democratic (the post-New Order) politics in recent years despite being frequently overlooked in discussions of Muslim societies. The country, along with others in Southeast Asia, such as South Korea and the Philippines, has been a 'newcomer' in the 'Third Wave' of democratization. In the final years of the New Order administration under the Suharto presidency (1966–1998), a powerful movement for a democratic Muslim politics took shape. The movement succeeded in May 1998 in toppling the long-ruling and formerly unassailable Suharto, solidifying the movement's alliance with secular Muslims and non-Muslims. Since the end of the long authoritarian regime, Indonesia has implemented a vast number of political reforms that one may arguably place it among healthy electoral democracies. What is also remarkable was Muslims' participation in

the democracy campaign dedicated themselves to formulating religious arguments in support of pluralism, democracy, women's rights, and civil society (Hefner, 2005, p. 4; Bertrand, 2010, p. 45). Be that as it may, Indonesia has generally been on the periphery of discussions of comparative and international politics. More importantly, the interaction between Islam and politics in the country has received somewhat little attention by experts focusing on state–society relations compared to countries in the Middle East. In the Indonesian case, Madura has generally been in the same position, overshadowed by its dazzling neighbour: Java. The findings in this book show the entanglement of Islam, state, and society in Madurese socio-political and socio-cultural life and the role of particular groups (the *kiai*, the *blater*, and the *klebun*) in shaping and characterizing the development of Islam and politics in two different periods in Indonesia.

The arguments: Culturally-embedded Islam in Madura

While many authors suggest that there seems to be a single face of Islam in Madura (cf. Koentjaraningrat, 1972; Mansurnoor, 1990; Moesa, 1999), I would argue that in terms of religion, culture, and politics, Madura should be understood as an island of piety, tradition, and violence. Like other religiously-associated regions, such as Aceh or Banten, casual observers may note that Madura is an island of Islamic piety. Indeed, it is an island of piety. However, the findings in this book show that the island is not only an island of piety, but also an island of tradition and violence in different forms. *Kerapan sapi* (bull racing), *sabung ayam* (cock fighting), *remo* (feasts characteristic to the *blater* community), and *carok* (distinctive Madurese forms of fighting using sharp weapons, and the last resort in terms of defending one's honour), among other things, appear highly visible in everyday life. Piety, tradition, and violence are extremely apparent in everyday life; they entwine within a single arrangement, and Madurese socio-cultural-political life is an everyday display of their reciprocation. Nonetheless, the religious aspects of the Madurese lead us to acknowledge that Islam in Madura is culturally embedded in all aspects of life. The efforts of the Madurese to maintain and preserve their identity have resulted in the fact that Islam is well and truly embedded in the cultural as well as social, political, and economic terrain of Madura. Furthermore, the developments of everyday relationships between Islam and politics and between state and society in Madura have been mixed: one the one hand they show largely cultural characters, while on the other hand, they also demonstrate significantly political traits. The religious and cultural identities of the Madurese have accumulated in powers that have presented a culturally political challenge for the state in local politics, especially in elections, economic and community development, and religious affairs.

Madura may be one small spot not only in the big map of Muslim-majority states, but also in Indonesia. Nonetheless, the issues in political and cultural discourses there are large. The culturally-embedded Islam on the island has

not only directly and indirectly affected state formation and governance in the area but also in the wider regions of East Java and Indonesia as we can see from various polemics and conflicts between the state and society, tumultuous affairs in a number of elections, poverty, violence, and many other things. In order to illustrate this culturally-embedded Islam, I elaborate it in following explications and analyze it based on a broader perspective that operationalizes notions of the relationship between (1) Islam and politics; (2) between state and society; (3) between conflicts and accommodations; and (4) between piety, tradition and violence. The arguments are built up through case studies which allow us to explore (1) Islam; (2) groups of leaders; (3) structures and configurations of societies; (4) socio-political and socio-cultural events; (5) elections as the intersection of a variety of social, political, and cultural processes; and (6) possible political trajectories of Muslim-majority countries currently undergoing similar developments based on the three features of life of the Madurese (piety, tradition, and violence) and socio-political features of Indonesia in two different periods.

In Madura, Muslim politics encourages people to involve themselves in alliances and competitions over the interpretation of Islamic and cultural symbols, and of control of state and public institutions. The alliances and competitions with definite goals to ensure the upholding of Islam that have been constantly articulated, are common in Muslim-majority states, although they are varied in conceptions and forms. The relationships between Islam and politics have been highly intricate when they are transformed into public symbols, discourses, and practices. Groups of religious elites and individuals pose a challenge to state authority in the quest for social order. The relationships between Islam and politics vary in each area and there are diverse traditions of the relationships between Islam and politics.

In view of these socio-political developments, there have been efforts by various Muslim organizations, such as the Indonesian chapter of Hizb ut-Tahrir (HTI) and Salafi-inspired groups, to idealize Muslim-majority states or Muslim-majority areas, including Indonesia and Madura, as the myth of the Islamic state, religiously based, and defined and governed by God through political means. In post-New Order Indonesia, it is seen in an Islamization of politics expressed in, among other things, the adoption of local Islamic laws in the context of democratization; the rise of political Islam; and the growth of modern political Islamic fundamentalism that claims to (re)-create a true Islamic society. The processes that have been marked by continuous debates on secular conceptions of citizenship and that have been involved a dialectical relationship between the state and society, encourage the continuous production of Muslim politics and thus signify the importance of Muslims to use the existing political system to reflect their political views. Elsewhere, the transformations of Muslim-majority states are not identical. As a result, there are secularly-administered states, such as Turkey, Senegal, and Azerbaijan; Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Pakistan that have incorporated Islamic law in part into their legal systems and are commonly recognized as Islamic states; and Somalia

and Bangladesh that have declared Islam to be their state religion in their constitutions, but do not necessarily apply Islamic laws in their courts.

Moreover, a contemporary Indonesian and Madurese experience with culture, religion, and politics may illuminate the future socio-political trajectories of Muslim-majority states currently undergoing similar democratic transitions – i.e. the engagement with the democratic political experience that appears to have presented an enigma. On the one hand, the overall electoral support for Islamic parties has been in steady decline since 1999 when the country became a democracy. On the other hand, there has been an Islamization of politics as expressed in hundreds of *sharia* laws that have been adopted across the country. Moreover, on the one hand, the developments of Islam in law and politics seem to indicate that Indonesian Islam has become more rigidly conservative or radical. On the other hand, the driving of rapid Islamic commodification and the growth of urban middle-class Muslims have shaped a more resilient religious culture and thinking. Elsewhere, in many Muslim-majority states, conflicts and accommodations between Islam, state, and society have frequently been shaped and characterized by Islamic religious movements which have created Islam as an intense ideological force which challenges territorial rule. Indonesia's more peaceful experience than that of the Middle Eastern countries in the aftermath of the Arab Spring in negotiating and re-arranging institutionalized patterns of political practices with populist movements claiming to represent an *ummah*/*umat* (religious Islamic community) can become a constructive indicator in possible future trajectories of Muslim politics.

We have to remember that the relationships between people's leaders and between them and the state in Muslim-majority-states, including Indonesia, have been more complex since the encounters with democracy. In typical Madura, people's leaders are defined as religious leaders (the *kiai*), local strongmen (the *blater*), and village officials (the *klebun*). The struggle for influence within these elites is not only centred on opportunities for private material benefits, but also on political competition which is loosely organized, pragmatic, and often mutually beneficial in nature. Their continuous presence in the New Order and the post-New Order period reflects their constant influence over society. There are two rather different reasons for that. Firstly, it shows that they are highly capable of adjusting to the continuously changing political atmosphere of the Indonesian state. Secondly, they continue to be needed by society to safeguard and preserve its values and norms. The first reason indicates that the creation of a strong and autonomous civil society is still hampered by the presence of an ineffective state system, while the second reason suggests that the religious and cultural values and norms of the Madurese are their last strongholds in coping with modernity.

Furthermore, the characters of traditional Islam in Indonesia remain the driving force that has preserved Islam in Indonesia – recently often articulated as Islam Nusantara – as a more peaceful religion unparalleled with its counterpart in many seethed Middle Eastern, African, and South Asian parts, and

has contributed to the transformation of Indonesia's polities from centralized authoritarian control to the decentralized democracies that the *Reformasi* required. Despite its complex consequences, Islamization and re-Islamization in Muslim strongholds is not necessarily a setback. It appears to have been an on-going Islamization process for centuries, and it has actually gained public support due in part to the euphoria of democracy. Meanwhile, substantive challenges to the state authority under the banner of Islam have yet to be realized.

In sum, in comparing the New Order and the post-New Order, Indonesia as a new democracy in Asia[5] has successfully intertwined decentralization process with the process of democratization, despite the abundance of strong evidence that decentralization is not synonymous with the process of democratization. It thus means that compared to the New Order, the Indonesian nation-state is arguably stronger now. Although the country is called into question in terms of the quality of democracy in aspects such as the lack of autonomous and strong civil society, the frequence of ethnic and religious violence, and the prevalence of populism, clientelism, and corruption, Indonesia has arguably been successful in creating good governance in the post-New Order; in realizing the mantra 'bringing the government closer to the people'; in the sense of electoral politics and decentralization; in the reinforcement of local identities; and in the high numbers of local regulations that signify a core in decentralization.[6]

Based on the above arguments, this book shows that there have been continuities and changes and repetitions and developments in the relationships between Islam, state, and society in local politics in the New Order and the post-New Order Madura. This book is expected to fill a gap in the literature on Islam and politics due to its focus on (1) the *continuity* and *change* conditions of local politics; its highlight in (2) the *incorporation* of Islamic and local beliefs; its concentration on (3) *local history* that amplifies the debates in broader history; its emphasis on (4) *the roles of local leaders* in state–society relations; its stress in (5) *developmental aspects* of the largest economy in Southeast Asia; and its illustration of (6) *the ongoing state-building processes* in the third largest democracy in the world.

Madura and overviews of previous studies

Setting

Despite its proximity to Java, and in fact, it is part of the East Java Province, Madura is peripheral. During the New Order, Madura for the most part was neglected, and so the island has become one of the disadvantaged areas in the larger Java–Madura region, despite the implementation of a number of developmental projects. However, the 1998 political reformation, particularly the decentralization, has brought far-reaching changes to the regions beyond Java.[7]

When we look at Madura, it would be incorrect to consider the island a leftover from traditional Java. Madura started to become Islamized in the sixteenth century. The island has since become known to have developed a distinctive feature of mixed culture of predominantly local elements, Java, and Islam, despite various penetrations of European cultures brought by the Dutch and the British, as well as various influences of the Chinese. It is true, however, that Madura has since colonial times become highly dependent on economic developments on Java.

Madura is an island located off the north-eastern coast of Java, separated from Java by the Madura Strait. Administratively, it is part of the East Java Province. The island consists of four regencies, from west to east: Bangkalan, Sampang, Pamekasan, and Sumenep. It comprises an area of approximately 4,250 km^2. Geographically, Madura is a lowland area with only a few hills up to 500 metres above sea level. Compared to Java, Madura is arid and infertile. According to the 2007 census, the island has a population of 3,751,977, most of whom are Muslims.[8] The number had slightly decreased to 3,633,287 in 2010 but then increased to 3,775,158 in 2015.[9] The population was larger during the colonial times. For instance, a British report mentioned the inhabitants of Madura in number was roughly over 5,000,000 in 1920 (H.M. Stationery Office, 1920, p. 8).

The main language spoken on the island is Madurese. There are two dialects of Madurese: that of the western part (roughly Bangkalan and Sampang), which is considered less refined (*kurang halus*), and that of the eastern part (roughly Pamekasan and Sumenep), which is considered more refined (*lebih halus*). Many Madurese people are bilingual, with the other language being Javanese. Nowadays, Bahasa Indonesia (the official language of Indonesia) is widely spoken and in some places and among educated people, this language has replaced Javanese as the second language. However, among higher status Madurese (both nobility and non-nobility), the Javanese lifestyle still prevails. The manners and attitudes of noble Javanese are seen as the main symbols of Madurese grandeur. These symbols are exhibited mostly in rite of passage ceremonies, such as a child's first haircut, circumcision, wedding, and pilgrimage.

Madurese people are often stereotyped by the Javanese and also the Europeans as crude, impolite, extrovert, outspoken, ill-mannered, and unrefined (De Jonge, 1995, p. 11). These stereotypes stem from colonial times and were used by the Dutch, yet they have survived to this day, reinforced by other ethnic communities in Indonesia, particularly those on neighbouring Java who consider themselves to be 'more refined'. Moreover, Madurese have traditionally been associated by many people with touchiness, suspiciousness, being temperamental, fierceness, vengefulness, combativeness, and violence (De Jonge, 1995, p. 13). Aside from this negative image, Madurese have also been perceived by many outsiders to have positive characteristics such as courage, bravery, adventurousness, faithfulness, loyalty, diligence, thrift, cheerfulness, enthusiasm, and humour (De Jonge, 1995, p. 14).

Due to its strong bond with Islam, the island has been labelled by Indonesians and the Madurese themselves as '*pulau santri*' (the *santri* island).[10] Due to its history as the major producer of salt in the colonial period, it has also been called '*pulau garam*' (the salt island), and thanks to its famous bull racing (*kerapan sapi*) tradition, it has also been dubbed '*pulau kerapan*' (the *kerapan* island). These labels show that Madura has a strong religious character and a distinctive culture, and became a major salt producer.

In general, the great majority of the inhabitants on the island function primarily within the context of their local community. Besides showing a strong Islamic character, Madurese also firmly hold on to syncretist traditions that are a mix of Islamic cultures and influences from Javanese and local Madurese perspectives. This is apparent in syncretist religious activities such as *slametan* (religious meal feasts), *khaul* (annual celebrations held on the anniversaries of the death of religious leaders), and *ziarah* (pilgrimages to graves) and in cultural forms associated with fraternity, wealth, status, and violence, such as *remo*, *kerapan sapi*, *sabung ayam*, and *carok*. This wide range of cultural forms has provided the Madurese with ample opportunities to express their identity, while making sure that their cultural and religious values do not clash.

Muslim politics

The work of Iik Mansurnoor (1990) on Madurese *kiai* is significant in understanding, among other things, the characters and functions of the *ulama* (Muslim scholars of Islamic disciplines)[11] of Madura. Mansurnoor distinguishes between *ulama* in other Muslim regions who operate as 'bureaucratic *ulama*' and those in Indonesia who are mostly non-bureaucratic. Mansurnoor, however, seems to neglect the existence of other variants of Islam in Madura, besides the *santri* variant. He suggests that 'with the exception of occasional eccentrics, religious uniformity among the Madurese makes it difficult for us to observe overt representatives of a strange [*sic*] tradition comparable to Javanese *abanganism*' (1990, p. 4). In fact, my book reveals that the *abangan*-like[12] culture is central to the identity of some segments in Madurese society.

In his all-encompassing study, Huub de Jonge (1989) demonstrates that tobacco merchants in Sumenep are entrepreneurs and intermediaries all at once. With these dual roles, they have a central position in society, giving them significant influence. Like Mansurnoor, he seems to overlook the roles of local strongmen and hardly accounts for the *klebun* (village head) and the role he plays in village politics. More importantly, unlike Mansurnoor, he does not differentiate between the hierarchical levels of the *kiai*, which I deem crucial in determining the roles different *kiai* play in society.

The significance of Madurese religious leaders has been depicted in other works. The roles of Madurese *kiai* in Bassra were discussed by Ali Maschan Moesa, a university teacher, *kiai*, and politician (1999). In this book, I also deal with *kiai* in Bassra and their rejection of the government's plan for

industrialisasi in Madura. The *industrialisasi* plan was included in the gigantic project to build the Suramadu Bridge that would connect the islands of Java and Madura and become the country's longest bridge. Moesa, however, argues that, in principle, the *kiai* of Bassra supported *industrialisasi* (1999, p. 5). As I will show, the *kiai* of Bassra supported the establishment of the bridge while still rejecting *industrialisasi* because (1) they saw that the plan to establish industrial estates on the island was seen to lack adequate preparation, (2) there were concerns about the negative impacts of *industrialisasi*, (3) all the plans and ideas came directly from the central government, while neglecting opinions from the people and the Madurese religious figures, (4) some *kiai* were sincerely concerned with the fate of the Madurese in the rapid *pembangunan* era, and (5) some *kiai* also feared that when the *industrialisasi* plan was realized, the *ulama* might not be able to maintain their religious authority.

The polemics between the *kiai* of Bassra and the authorities in the Suramadu Bridge affair are discussed in more detail in an important work by Muthmainnah (1998). She argues that debates concerning *industrialisasi* centred on, firstly, the polemic in the central government's plan to make *industrialisasi* an inseparable part of the construction of the bridge. Secondly, the polemic in the types of industry that would be introduced in Madura. Thirdly, the polemic in the land acquisition for the bridge and the industrial estates (1998, p. 72). Unlike Moesa, she argues that the *kiai* of Bassra accepted *industrialisasi* conditionally, demanding that their opinions be taken into consideration before its implementation (1998, pp. 117 and 128). Once again, however, her work also contradicts my own analysis in which I would maintain that the *kiai* of Bassra supported the establishment of the bridge but rejected *industrialisasi*.

Strongmen

One of the groups discussed in my book are the *blater*. The *blater* seem to resemble the mafiosi in Sicily. Indeed Elly Touwen-Bouwsma (1989) compared the violence in Madura to that in Sicily. In the Indonesian version (the original article was published in Dutch in *De Gids* in 1983), she mentions '*orang berani*' (brave men) who in my book are identified as the *blater*. De Jonge (2002) also mentions '*orang berani*'. The *blater* have some things in common with the Sicilian mafiosi. Both groups came into being as rural phenomena. Nevertheless, it must not be forgotten that they differ in certain respects. In his study (1988), which discusses the rural mafiosi in western Sicily in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Anton Blok reveals the conditions under which mafiosi became a powerful force in the western Sicilian hinterland and relates them to the distinct stage of development reached by Italian society at large (1988, pp. xxvii–xxviii). According to Blok, mafiosi are rural entrepreneurs who were an outstanding feature of peasant communities in Sicily's western interior. Recruited from the ranks of peasants and shepherds, and entrusted with tasks of surveillance on the large estates (*latifunda*) of absentee landlords, they

constituted a particular variety of middlemen (1988, pp. xxvii–xxviii), while the mafia itself is a form of unlicensed violence (1988, p. 46).

Moreover, according to Diego Gambetta (1993), the mafia is 'a specific economic enterprise, an industry which produces, promotes, and sells private protection' (1993, p. 1). Gambetta highlights an important link between the mafia and the state. He argues that 'the parallel between the mafia and the state has clear limits, and consequently, that the view of the mafia as a legal system in its own right does not actually stand up' (1993, p. 7). His study contributes to the study on strongmen groups by emphasizing that 'mafiosi are not entrepreneurs primarily involved in dealing with illegal goods, nor are they entrepreneurs in the sense of handling violently the production of legal goods' (1993, p. 9). This proposition is also undoubtedly found in the characteristics of the *blater*; they are not simply criminals as some authors mentioned below suggest.

The most important study on the *blater* to date is the work of Abdur Rozaki (2004). Rozaki argues that the *blater* are an important actor in society as village elites (2004, p. 9). However, he seems to have a very negative opinion about the *blater*. For instance, he mentions that '[*b*]*later* are the representatives of another "social world", which is closer to the criminality and violent actions (*carok*) (2004, p. 13)'. In my book, I will first demonstrate that, in principle, the *blater* are not criminals, though some of them may be involved in criminal activities. They are local strongmen who become part of the general Indonesian phenomenon of strongmen, which includes the vanished *jagoan* of nineteenth-century Java and the *jawara* in Banten. In general, these strongmen resemble the mafiosi in Sicily in that they offer protection to those who need it or those who are thought to need it. They act as power brokers in local politics, as fixers in relations between the people and security forces (*aparat*), and as the main guardians and supporters of the *abangan*-like culture on the *santri*-dominated island. Secondly, contrary to what Latief Wiyata notes (in the following paragraph), I will show that *carok* is not a distinctive characteristic of the *blater*. In Madura, anyone, including women, can commit *carok* if they feel insulted and wish to regain their honour by killing or injuring their adversary. More importantly, the winner of a *carok* action is not automatically regarded as a *blater*.

Although Wiyata's (2006) main focus is actually *carok* actions, Wiyata, like Rozaki, also argues that in order to become a *blater* who is held in awe (*disegani*), someone must first commit murder. He also states that someone will not be considered a *blater* if he has not committed *carok* (2006, p. 114), and that *carok* is considered by some perpetrators as a tool for obtaining a higher position or social status as a *blater* in their community or within the *blater* community (2006, p. 230). Moreover, Wiyata also incorrectly says that *carok* actions are only committed by men, never by women (2006, pp. 176–177 and 184). As I will show, these violent actions are also known to have been committed by women, and *carok* is not a decisive factor for one to be recognized as a *blater*.

Local politics

Talking about localness, Minako Sakai, Glenn Banks, and J.H. Walker show that the people in the Indonesian archipelago have negotiated, created, or are trying to form a region as a distinctive entity against the nation – even beyond the nation – and are seeking to locate and secure the region through organic, local, bottom-up processes in the face of concerted efforts by the centre to integrate them into the modern nation (Sakai, Banks, and Walker, 2009, p. 5). Meanwhile, Hans Antlöv (1995) argues that the key to understanding the distinctive features of local politics on contemporary Java lies in recognizing that the rural elite is not really a pure capitalist class but rather privileged clients (*anak mas*, favourite children) of the state, whose opportunities to accumulate and rule depend on their crucial links with higher authorities (1995, pp. 6–7). The situation in West Java, as demonstrated by Antlöv, is quite different to that in Madura. As I will show, even though in the second half of the New Order administration Golkar was victorious in Madura, Golkar did not influence the life of the villagers to any significant extent, since the influence of the PPP (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan – the United Development Party) and religious leaders associated with the party was stronger.

Henk Schulte Nordholt and Gerry van Klinken (2007) deal with the dynamics of decentralization in the post-Suharto era. The most important argument derived from this study is that decentralization does not necessarily result in democratization, good governance, and the strengthening of civil society at the regional level. Instead, the authors argue that what is prevalent is the decentralization of corruption, collusion, and political violence that once belonged to the centralized administration of the New Order, and is now transferred to the existing patrimonial patterns at the regional level (2007, p. 18).

In general, the main shift involved in decentralization is one from relocating principal administrative powers from central government directly to local government rule. Legislative changes on administrative and fiscal reform have mainly focused on practical objectives for decentralization (Holzhacker, Wittek, and Woltjer, 2016, p. 6). Moreover, democratization processes are making patron–client relations less asymmetrical but not less pervasive. Democratization is improving the bargaining position of clients and their brokers vis-à-vis their political patrons, but democratization does not seem to lead to a reduction of clientelistic practices (Berenschot, Schulte Nordholt, and Bakker, 2017, p. 14). Indeed, these are common conditions that we will see in the following chapters.

Methods and sources

The approach of this book is diachronic. Historical and anthropological approaches are jointly employed. Historical events in complex societies like the Madurese are undoubtedly impossible to understand without consulting

historical information. However, chronological data alone are insufficient in grasping the complexities and relationships between actors in all the social, political, cultural, and religious events under study. In order to explore past events, library research with special attention given to periodicals was conducted in a number of libraries in Leiden and a national archive in The Hague in the Netherlands; libraries in Jakarta, Surabaya, and Bangkalan and a national archive in Jakarta in Indonesia; and libraries in Canberra, Australia. 'Present' events were captured from two sets of fieldwork from July 2009 until January 2010, and from October 2010 until July 2011. These periods of fieldwork also included library research in the cities in Indonesia mentioned above.

This is a study with a historical-anthropological perspective. While staying on the island, I not only dealt with the experience of the people at the particular point in time when I was staying there, but also concentrated on past events within living memory. Nevertheless, 'present events' became my concern as well. Within Madura, I mainly focus on two regencies in the western part of the island, the Bangkalan and Sampang regencies, with more emphasis on Bangkalan. For example, in my discussions of village politics, I examine a village head election and politics at the village level, and two regency head elections in 2003 and 2008. All the geographical contexts here are derived from Bangkalan. In addition, there is particular emphasis on Sampang when I examine the Sampang riot in the 1997 general elections and the 1993 Nipah Dam incident. Further, this study includes a general discussion of Islam in Madura, descriptions of the *kiai*, the *blater*, and the *klebun*, coverage of the Suramadu Bridge affair, and an explanation of the 2008 gubernatorial elections in the two regencies specifically, but with two other regencies on Madura, the Pamekasan and Sumenep regencies, also in mind.

Library research can be tedious. For instance, my survey of periodicals in search of the word '*blater*' proved troublesome. Despite my expectations that a search for the word would yield many results, in fact, it is seldom mentioned, even in regional and local newspapers. Moreover, it is difficult to approach the best direct sources or to gain access to the most interesting areas of enquiry since many *kiai, blater*, and *klebun* initially refused to talk to me. Local politicians and local notables were often equally reluctant. Only after I was represented or accompanied by 'trustworthy' intermediaries or informants, was I able to approach several sources. While a number of them did not mind their identity being revealed as a result of the interviews and chats, the majority preferred to remain anonymous, and so names of certain villages and people are camouflaged. Although I stayed in a number of places in Bangkalan, I never stayed in two of the villages I observed; rather, I stayed in the periphery and visited the villages by appointment. The reasons are obvious: the two villages are not the only subject of my study, but part of a bigger scheme. For obvious reasons, I also stayed in Surabaya where the majority of the written data were collected. A great deal of my anthropological research method involved unstructured and informal interaction with the people. All in all, I conducted most interviews

with particular objectives; most chats, hang-outs, attending religious meetings, social gatherings, and cultural events without any particular objective; and most observations and participations in between.

The structure of the book

This book is divided into eight chapters. In the first chapter, the introduction (this chapter), focus of the book, theoretical concerns and broader framework of analysis, arguments, description of the setting and previous studies, methods and sources of this study, and the structure of this book are presented. The foundation of this book is presented in Chapter 2. It provides a general description of Madurese society, the distinctive aspects of Islam in Madura, the eminence of Islamic educational institutions, Islamic mass organizations, and the background of the emergence of the *kiai* on the island.

Chapters 3 and 4 sketch the main actors of this study, namely the groups of local leaders. Chapter 3 gives an analysis of Muslim politics with Madurese *kiai* as the main actors in which the socio-political roles of two prominent *kiai* of Bangkalan and Sampang are presented as an example. Chapter 4, meanwhile, describes another main actor: the *blater*, cultural forms associated with them, some aspects of local belief, and the *blater*'s relationship with religious and cultural aspects and segments of Madurese society.

Chapters 5, 6, and 7 constitute the main parts of this study. Chapter 5 is devoted to discussions on development aspects of the New Order and its resistance by the people, with special focus on the Nipah Dam incident and the Suramadu Bridge affair. The two *kiai* discussed in Chapter 3 played vital roles in the two events. Sketching these events is important due to the nature of the roles played by the *kiai* in New Order Madura.

Chapter 6 concentrates on electoral politics in Madura with several elections serving as the basis. The 1997 *pemilu* (general elections) in Sampang that was marked by a riot provides a Madurese case study about violence surrounding elections in the New Order. The 2008 East Java gubernatorial election shows how the *kiai*, the *blater*, and the *klebun* play important roles in influencing elections. The 2003 and 2008 regency head elections in Bangkalan are outlined in order to discover how a *kiai-blater* figure (Fuad Amin Imron) was able to tap into wide-ranging networks. Finally, a village head election in the 'present' time is depicted in order to show politics at the village level.

Chapter 7 focuses on politics at the village level. Specifically, a village in Bangkalan becomes the setting. The village can be seen as a microcosm of villages on Madura, or at least in Bangkalan, since the presence and influence of local leaders is very evident. Finally, the last chapter, the conclusion, discusses the findings in the context of the relationships between Islam and politics in Madura during the New Order and the post-New Order eras, and reflections of experiences that may be useful in comparing the socio-political trajectory of other developing Muslim countries at present living through comparable democratic transformations.

Notes

1 In its broad meaning, politics comprises all the activities of co-operation, negotiation, and conflict, within and between societies, whereby people go about organizing the use, production, or distribution of human, natural, and other resources in the course of the production and reproduction of their biological and social life (Leftwich, 2004, p. 103).

2 *Industrialisasi* means to introduce industrialization and to create industrial estates. This is specifically explained in Chapter 5.

3 I follow Pierre James's concept of 'state', which is defined as the government, bureaucracy, and other instruments of the government (1990, p. 15). Other concepts of 'state' in this book can also follow Hans Antlöv's description (1995, p. 7), i.e. 'an apparatus embracing the legislative, executive, and judicial arms of central and local governments, including their offices, office holders and resources' and from John Migdal: 'a field of power marked by the use and threat of violence and shaped by the image of a coherent, controlling organization in a territory, which is a representation of the people bounded by that territory, and the actual practices of its multiple parts' (Migdal, 2001, pp. 15–16).

4 'Public Islam', according to Salvatore and Eickelman, refers to 'the highly diverse invocations of Islam as ideas and practices that religious scholars, self-ascribed religious authorities, secular intellectuals, students, workers, and many others make to civic debate and public life' (Salvatore and Eickelman, 2004, xii).

5 In 1999 Indonesia became an electoral democracy – in the simple sense that people could participate in free and fair elections – and implemented decentralization. According to Dwight Y. King, electoral democracy is a minimalist definition that descends from Joseph Schumpeter, who defined democracy as a system 'for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote' (King, 2003, pp. 6 and 10). Indonesian democracy is progressing, but not nearly as well as the comparative data sometimes suggest. If democracy is really to become 'the only game in town', it must continue to become a better – more accountable, transparent, lawful, inclusive, fair, and responsive – democracy for ordinary Indonesians (Diamond, 2010, pp. 47 and 49).

6 According to the 2006 Freedom House report, for the first time since 1998, Indonesia's political rights rating improved from 4 to 2, its civil liberties rating from 4 to 3, and its status from Partly Free to Free, due to peaceful and mostly free elections for newly empowered regional leaders, an orderly transition to a newly elected president that further consolidated the democratic political process, and the emergence of a peace settlement between the government and the Free Aceh movement (https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2006/indonesia, accessed on 2 January 2017). However, in 2014, for the first time after 2006, its status declined from Free to Partly Free due to the adoption of a law that restricts the activities of non-governmental organizations, increases bureaucratic oversight of such groups, and requires them to support the national ideology of Pancasila (https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2014/indonesia, accessed on 2 January 2017). The 'Partly Free' status has remained since. In terms of corruption, Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index classified Indonesia in 1995 as the most corrupt country (41 out of 41 countries surveyed) (http://www.transparency.org/files/content/tool/1995_CPI_EN.pdf). When decentralization came into effect in 2001, the country was still very close to the bottom (88 out of 91 countries surveyed) (http://www.transparency.org/research/cpi/cpi_2001/0/). Indonesia has, however, since recorded significant improvements (143 out of 179 countries surveyed in 2007 and 88 out of 167 countries surveyed in 2015) (http://www.transparency.org/research/cpi/cpi_2007/0/ and http://www.transparency.org/cpi2015).

7 Despite its proximity to Java, Madurese people often consider their homeland as a periphery. While they are often, but not necessarily, located at great distances from a centre, people living in such places express feelings of isolation and can be subject to distressing situations that are strongly linked to the physical characteristics of these locations (Haug, Rössler, and Grumblies, 2017, p. 15).
8 Badan Pusat Statistik Provinsi Jawa Timur, http://jatim.bps.go.id/?cat=60, accessed on 29 December 2011.
9 Badan Pusat Statistik Provinsi Jawa Timur, https://jatim.bps.go.id/linkTabelStatis/view/id/330, accessed on 12 December 2016.
10 The term *santri* has several meanings (as explained in the following chapters). Here it simply refers to devout Muslims.
11 The use of the terms of *kiai* and *ulama* is further elaborated on in Chapter 2.
12 The term *abangan* has several meaning (as explained in the following chapters). It often refers to less devout Muslims. The *santri* and *abangan*-like cultures in Madura are further explained in Chapter 4.

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2 Islam and *santri* culture in Madura

Introduction

Since independence, the main locus of political and economic power in Indonesia has been centred on Java, whereas other areas have hardly ever claimed such a privilege. *Daerah* (or regions, that range from provincial to municipal regions) exist in the social as much as the physical sense, and are highly differentiated and frequently forced by *pusat* (the centre-Jakarta) to deal with dynamic tensions of exclusions and marginality. Regions in Indonesia seem to be actively creating themselves as distinctive socio-political entities (Sakai, 2009, p. 5). Seen from these perspectives, Madura as an island, region, and locality in Indonesia, has played various roles in socio-political-economic-cultural spheres that shape and characterize the notions of Islam and politics that may be unique as an entity but at the same time less so in the broader Muslim world.

A stronger religious tradition appears to have emerged as a result of a long-term Islamization process in Madura, somewhat comparable to what has occurred in Aceh and Banten. Although the island is not entirely different to other parts of Indonesia with regard to socio-religious characteristics, at least two forms of Islam can be identified on Madura: the *santri* culture and the non-*santri* culture. In this book, the latter is taken as being an *abangan*-like culture due to its resemblance to the *abangan* culture in Java. In the *pesantren* tradition, *santri* [1] are pupils of *pesantren*. However, in this book, as well as referring to as the term in relation to the *pesantren* tradition, *santri* is used primarily to refer to the majority of Madurese Muslims who are proponents of a more orthodox Islam based on the global influences of Sunni Islam, the largest denomination of the religion. In comparison, people of the *abangan*-like culture are in the minority among Madurese Muslims. While this last group also adheres to Sunni Islam, they are proponents of a less orthodox form of the religion that is influenced more by local mystical belief systems. This *abangan*-like culture is further sketched in Chapter 4.

I would maintain that the *santri* culture in Madura can be represented by three main elements: Islamic education institutions, Islamic groupings and Islamic leaders. Like other religiously-associated regions, such as Aceh

(Morris, 1983, p. 22; Saby, 1995, xix) or Banten (Van Bruinessen, 1995a, p. 165), in Madura, where the society is traditionally linked to a religious world view, many of the traditions and customs have become linked with religion, and thus, I would also argue that Islam in Madura is culturally embedded in all aspects of life. Recent scholarship has shown that the political salience of communal identities – such as Madura – should not be seen as a pre-modern attachment to one ethnic or religious community, as it seems a feature of the political landscape generated by a weakly institutionalized state (Berenschot, Schulte Nordholt, and Bakker, 2017, p. 18).

This chapter focuses on the foundation of this book, aspects of *santri* Islam in Madura. It deals specifically with the principal ways in which three main elements of the Madurese *santri* culture – the *pesantren* that represent Islamic education institutions, the Nahdlatul Ulama (the NU) that represent Islamic groupings, and the *kiai* that symbolize Islamic leaders – have characterized and have become central elements of both Islam and politics in Madura. Two major questions addressed in this chapter are: what are the nature and characters of the *pesantren*, the NU, and the *kiai* within the whole tradition of *santri* Islam in Madura? How does each of these elements form relationships with the others?

Clearly, the *kiai* are the main actors in state–society relations in Madura. Along with other groups of local leaders, such as the *blater* and the *klebun*, they are social, political, economic, and cultural brokers, a function which, as this book will show, carries its own rewards. These social groups are often seen – borrowing Edward Aspinall's words – playing the role of clients to those who are above them in the patronage pyramid and as patrons of those who are lower down (Aspinall, 2014, pp. 567–568).

Pesantren as the core of Islamic education

In the history of Islam in Indonesia, *pesantren* are generally regarded as traditional Islamic educational institutions. *Pesantren* have generally sought forms of accommodation with the government in power while maintaining a certain distance from it. *Pesantren* are traditional in terms of the content of education, which is primarily religious; in terms of teaching and learning processes; and of management, which is mainly in the hands of traditional *ulama*. There are at least three important roles of *pesantren* within the Muslim community: first, as a centre of transmission of religious knowledge; second, as a guardian of Islamic tradition; and third, as a centre of *ulama* reproduction. *Pesantren* and similar institutions in other parts of Southeast Asia, such as *surau*, are the centres of rural religious life and they tend to be tradition-oriented and socially conservative (Noor, Sikand, and Van Bruinessen, 2008, p. 26; Azra and Afrianty, 2005, p. 1; Van Bruinessen, 2008, p. 218). *Pesantren* have been a crucial force in the *santri* culture since the nineteenth century Dutch East Indies. Despite their traditional characteristics, *pesantren* as the centre of education developed into a central component of modernization.[2]

In the contemporary period in Indonesia, there are around 50,000 Islamic schools. Of the total number, 16,015 of them are *pesantren*, 37,000 of them are *madrasah* (Islamic day schools) and a small minority are Sekolah Islam (reputed as elite Islamic schools, mostly urban-based, and offer a high academic standard in general subjects within an Islamic environment). Islamic schools in Indonesia can be divided into three main types: *pesantren, madrasah*, and Sekolah Islam (Tan, 2011, p. 92). The Ministry of Religious Affairs has reported that in the whole country there were 4,195 *pesantren* with around 677,384 *santri* (the pupils) in 1977, while in 1981 the numbers grew to 5,661 and 938,397, respectively. The number increased again in 1985, when the total number of *pesantren* and *santri* were 6,239 and 1,084,801. This increasing trend was also evident in 1997, when the number reached 9,338 for *pesantren* and 1,770,768 for *santri* and by 2003–2004 the ministry noted that there were 14,647 *pesantren* (Departemen Agama RI, 1997; 2004, cited in Burhanudin, 2007, p. 2). In the Indonesian archipelago, the East Java Province has been acknowledged as one of the centres of the *pesantren* world. In Madura, Bangkalan and Pamekasan even label themselves *kota santri* (*santri* town), whereas other regencies in Madura, Sampang and Sumenep, have frequently voiced their strong adherence to Islam.[3]

In Bangkalan alone, based on statistical records, the number of *pesantren* in 2000 was 169, a growth from 145 in 1995. The number of male *santri* in 2000 was 21,131 and female *santri* numbered 20,013. In 1995, the number of male *santri* was 13,711, while the number of female *santri* was 12,314. In 2000, the number of *pesantren* custodians, that is, the main *kiai* and other *guru ngaji* (teachers of Islamic knowledge and Quran reciting), was 2,323 males and 258 females, while in 1995 the custodians had numbered 734 men and 455 women (Bangkalan dalam Angka 2000, p. 83). In 2006, the number of *pesantren* in Bangkalan was 305 with 34,013 male *santri* and 30,013 female *santri*. The number of male custodians in *pesantren* was 2,427, while there were 1,283 female custodians (Bangkalan dalam Angka 2007, p. 146).

In Sampang, the number of *pesantren* in 2000 was 106. The number of male *santri* in the same year was 17,612, while female *santri* numbered 11,934. There were 1,055 male and 426 female *pesantren* custodians (Sampang dalam Angka 2000, p. 48). The number of *pesantren* in Sampang in 2009 grew to 282, while male *santri* in the same year counted 33,650 and the number of female *santri* was 22,745. The number of custodians in 2009 was 3,907 males and 316 females (Sampang dalam Angka 2010, p. 97).

As we can see, despite the introduction of secular public and private schools in villages in Madura in recent years, the number of *pesantren* has grown, rather than shows signs of decline. One of the most important factors in the survival of *pesantren* in the history of Islam in Indonesia is their ability to accommodate the rapidly changing situation without losing some of their fundamental distinctions (Azra and Afrianty, 2005, p. 2). This is to some extent unsurprising, given the historical fact that religious education has played a significant role in the history of education in Indonesia. For example,

pesantren were the only form of education in Java prior to the twentieth century (Abdullah, 1986, p. 100). In nineteenth-century Madura, religious education fulfilled the need for Islamic knowledge, which was also seen as general knowledge. There were hardly any mosques in nineteenth-century West Madura, only one in Bangkalan and one in Sampang (Touwen-Bouwsma, 1992, p. 111).[4] However, *langgar* (small mosques) were abundant. *Langgar*, besides functioning as houses of prayer, also served as the lowest level education institutions and belonged to local religious teachers. In 1893, there were more than 50,000 institutions like this in Madura where children were introduced to basic Quran recitation (Kuntowijoyo, 1989, p. 43).

It was probably in the eighteenth century that religious leaders founded religious centres, particularly in Madurese rural areas.[5] Touwen-Bouwsma has outlined two reasons which explain why religious centres were able to develop independently of the ruling powers. Firstly, unlike the political elite, *kiai* had to support themselves and perhaps they expanded to new places with the help of villagers. Secondly, it seems that the villagers gave them land since they believed that the *kiai* were members of the elite group (Touwen-Bouwsma, 1992, p. 114).

Touwen-Bouwsma seems to follow the notion of *desa perdikan* (villages during the time of the traditional kingdoms and afterwards under Dutch colonial rule which were exempted from paying taxes to the government) as being the places where *pesantren* originated. *Desa perdikan* were granted special status, they functioned primarily for religious purposes and were exempted from tax. This began in the pre-Islamic time, where almost two hundred such villages seem to have existed in Java during the Majapahit era. It continued during the Islamic kingdom of Mataram (Steenbrink, 1984, pp. 165–172; Geertz, 1960, p. 231). The idea that villagers provided *kiai* with land may well be in line with the fact that Javanese rulers gave land to religious people, land that was later transformed into *desa perdikan*.[6] Nevertheless, only a small number of *pesantren* in Java have a *desa perdikan* background (Van Bruinessen, 1994). Since we have no reliable statistical records regarding *desa perdikan* in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Madura, we may assume that the situation in Java regarding the small number of *pesantren* which have a *desa perdikan* background is similar in Madura, with only a small number of *pesantren* having a *desa perdikan* background.

Pesantren in Madura are similar to those in Java and on the Malay Peninsula. These institutions are centres of the transmission of traditional Islam with *kitab kuning* (the yellow books) serving as classical texts of various Islamic knowledge taught by the teachers (Van Bruinessen, 1994, p. 121) in order to maintain tradition as well as to mould human beings who will guard the tradition. These Islamic education institutions did not emerge before the eighteenth century, and in fact, they only became widespread in the latter half of the nineteenth century in the Dutch East Indies (Van Bruinessen, 1994, pp. 131–133; 1995a, pp. 173–176; Ricklefs, 2007, p. 52).

Pesantren exclusively belonged to *kiai* or a *kiai* family and were seen as religious centres for the education of *santri* who wished to become religious

leaders or for those who were simply sent by their parents to study Islamic knowledge. *Pondok* (lodges) as part of *pesantren* were built in order to facilitate *santri* who came from afar to reside in the *pesantren*. In Pamekasan, according to oral tradition, *Pesantren* Batuampar was established around the second half of the nineteenth century, and in Bangkalan, *Pesantren* Syaichona Kholil Demangan of the famous *Kiai* Kholil, was also said to be founded at the around the same time. In the nineteenth century, there were statistical reports about the number of *santri* in Madura. For instance, in 1865 there were 2,504, in 1866 9,674, and in 1871 there were 18,106 (Kuntowijoyo, 2002, p. 331).

Children of the Madurese elite had more options in schooling when the Dutch administration introduced secular education among the ruling aristocracy in the late nineteenth century. Even though the establishment of secular schools somewhat affected the number of *pesantren* pupils, religious learning was still well-suited to the prevailing expectations among the *priyayi* (local aristocracies) who wished their heirs to have wide-ranging knowledge of both worldly and religious concepts.[7] It was apparently common for assiduous *santri* to undertake lessons in different *pesantren*. Studying in *pesantren* in Java became the next phase for highly motivated *santri* who, subsequently, would go to Mecca if their families could meet the expense.

Many modern *pesantren* in Madura have attempted to combine secular subjects and Islamic teaching. According to Ronald Lukens-Bull, mixing the two is a way in which *kiai* and other *pesantren* figures (who together make up the *pesantren* custodians) are arranging 'Islamic modernity' (Lukens-Bull, 2000).[8] Like those in Java, *pesantren* in Madura emphasize certain Islamic teachings in their curricula, including, among others, Arabic learning, canonical collections of traditions (*hadith*), Quran recitation, and Quranic exegeses (*tafsir*). Some offer Madurese mystical Islam exercises. Some offer Quranic memorizing[9] or martial arts lessons[10] as key subjects, in addition to the regular textual tutorials. Although many *pesantren* in Madura now run their education systems in a more modern manner, in keeping with their more traditional counterparts, strict obedience to the *kiai* remains a distinct tradition that is maintained in every *pesantren*.

Most *pesantren* hold an annual celebration on the anniversary of the death of their founding *kiai* (*khaul*). Renowned *pesantren*, such as *Pesantren* Demangan Bangkalan, are visited regularly during *khaul*. Such an event sometimes takes place in locations outside the *pesantren* itself and is also frequently arranged together with politically associated events.[11] For the most part, many *pesantren* keep devotional and mystical elements in their religious traditions, such as *khaul*, as a means of maintaining the *pesantren*'s reputation of being sacred. Therefore, *khaul* are usually held in their own *pesantren*, instead of in other places.

After Suharto came to power, most *pesantren* leaders developed a more dynamic mindset in response to the challenges posed by the New Order administration to fulfil the rising demands of employment in the business and government sectors following the development plans established by the new

administration. *Pesantren* have been modernized, including in terms of their education system; for example, by setting aside 70 per cent of the curriculum for secular subjects. As a result, many *pesantren* graduates have been involved in various sectors and governmental services, as well as modern business structures (Hasan, 2009, p. 5). The modernization process has also been evident in the participation of some *pesantren* people in politics.

The involvement of *kiai pesantren* (*kiai* who lead *pesantren*) in politics during the New Order, however, does not indicate a change in stance among traditionally conservative *kiai* into reformed and progressive ones. Although there is a tendency for *kiai* to give their political support to Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP – the United Development Party), most Madurese *kiai* kept their distance from political parties during the New Order. Only a certain number of *kiai* openly participated in politics. The new patterns of *kiai* in politics, such as guiding older *santri* to opt for a certain political party, were only evident in *pesantren* where these elements were highly appreciated by the *santri*. Stephen Lyon provides us with a good comparison in a Pakistani case. There, the *ulama* stand in a unique position to attempt to challenge the relationship between the state and them for various reasons. They are not able to stand completely outside the state, so they cannot achieve the kind of independence which might allow them to truly establish a kind of rational-legal authority in which their office holds the power rather than themselves (Lyon 2004, p. 222). In the Indonesian case, R. William Liddle reminded us about popular participation when the country had recently began to cement its 'new order' policies. He argued that in the developmental formula preferred by the New Order government, the dimension of popular participation – in my case, the participation of *pesantren* people in politics – was conspicuous by its apparent absence. The formal model did not encompass the whole of social reality as perceived by the governing elite, who were well aware that their situation differed from that of their colonial predecessors in, among other things, the clientele that had to be taken into account in the decision-making process (Liddle, 1973, p. 288).

In Bangkalan, the celebrated *Pesantren* Demangan and its associated *pesantren* [12] as well as *Pesantren* As Shomadiyah were places that affirmed people's political aspirations during the Suharto administration. In Sampang, *Pesantren* Attaroqqi of *Kiai* Alawy Muhammad (this figure is further described in Chapter 5) served a similar function. So long as the *kiai* of these *pesantren* remained as functionaries or at least supporters of the PPP and championed the party, their constituents would likely vote for the PPP. A number of *kiai* whom I talked to emphasized the vital position of the *Kiai* Kholil family in this regard. During the New Order, the entire *Kiai* Kholil family openly supported the PPP. Some *kiai* in the family, such as *Kiai* Amin Imron, *Kiai* Makmun Imron, and *Kiai* Abdullah Schal (Schal is an abbreviation of Syaichona Kholil, Syaichona is an honoured title for *Kiai* Kholil) became central figures of the PPP, not only in Bangkalan, but also at the national level. Most, however, endorsed the party in a more moderate way.

In other regencies, Sumenep for instance, not all areas are strongly influenced by orthodox Islam or the *santri* culture. For example, places in Sumenep such as Saronggi, Kalianget and Gapurana have preserved the *tayub*[13] tradition up to the present (Saputro, 2009, p. 54). Nevertheless, Sumenep is still highly regarded as a centre of religious schooling, for there are many respectable *pesantren*, such as those in Guluk-guluk and also *Pesantren* Al Amien in Prenduan, which is worthy of note, as it is particularly famous for its Arabic-oriented orthodoxy.

Pesantren Al Amien is located on the southern Madurese main road that connects Pamekasan with Sumenep, approximately 32 kilometres east of Pamekasan in the Prenduan sub-district of Sumenep. Since this institution is located on *tegalan* soil (dry and not irrigated land), people also call it 'Pondok Tegal'. Syarqawi, a man of religion who was influenced by Arabic orthodoxy, established the *pesantren*, perhaps in the second half of nineteenth century, although exactly when is unclear. *Kiai* Achmad Chotib, a renowned *kiai* in Prenduan, ran the *pesantren* in its early years. He seems to have had a good vision about the future of his *pesantren* by sending his six children to study under the guidance of prominent *kiai*, such as those of Tebu Ireng, Panji Sidoarjo, and Gontor in Java, so that in the future they would have wide knowledge about Islamic teachings and managing *pesantren*. Among his children, *Kiai* A.H. Jauhari Chotib went to Guluk-guluk in the 1930s and then to Tebu Ireng and finally, following the tradition within wealthy *kiai* families, he undertook Islamic learning in Mecca for three years. Shortly after, he returned home, got married, and helped by his brothers, he became the leader of the family *pesantre*n after his father's death. During his study in Mecca, *Kiai* Jauhari became familiar with Tijaniyah *tarekat*. In addition to his duty as *pesantren* leader, he also acted as a teacher of *tarekat* (Van Bruinessen, 1995b, p. 108).

In the 1950s, *Kiai* Jauhari rearranged the education system and made several changes to his *pesantren* in order to bring it more in line with the current situation of the education system in Indonesia. Gradually, formal schools teaching general subjects, such as Madrasah Mathlabul 'Ulum Diniyah (MUD), Madrasah Wajib Belajar (MWB), and Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI), were set up. Following the establishment of these formal schools, the *pesantren* as the larger institution that encompassed all the schools, developed quickly and became famous not only in Madura, but also in Java. *Kiai* Jauhari seems to have paid close attention to forming future cadres for his *pesantren*. His three sons are known to have been leading figures in the development of Islam in Madura. *Kiai* Tijani Jauhari once worked at the office of the Secretary of Rabitat al-Alam al-Islami (Muslim World League) in Mecca, while *Kiai* Idrus Jauhari and *Kiai* Makthum Jauhari are both regarded as influential *kiai* in the vast religious sphere of Madura. In 1970, before *Kiai* Jauhari passed away, another formal school, Sekolah Menengah Pertama Islam (SMPI) was established. Since the 1970s, with *Kiai* Idrus Jauhari in charge, the *pesantren* became a leading Islamic centre, not only in Madura, but also

beyond the island. Due to, among other things, the fame of this *pesantren*, the three sons of *Kiai* Jauhari Chotib became prominent, and one of them, *Kiai* Tijani Jauhari participated in the establishment of Bassra, the organization that is discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

With regard to this *pesantren* and the *kiai* in this religious network, it is worth noting how different the development of Islam was in Sumenep. The areas of Prenduan and possibly Guluk-guluk may be considered more orthodox in terms of religious orientation compared to the rest of Madura. Syarqawi, the founder of the *Pesantren* Al-Amien was a learned man whose ancestors came from Kudus, Central Java. However, his leadership of the *pesantren* was short-lived, because people in the area with a more traditional religious view rejected his strong Arabic orthodoxy and did not approve of the fact that he came from outside Madura. Following his expulsion, he established a *pesantren* in Guluk-guluk. His old *pesantren* in Prenduan was passed down to his disciple, *Kiai* Achmad Chotib (De Jonge, 1989, pp. 242–244). The expulsion of Syarqawi from Prenduan by local people is similar to the situation the Muhammadiyah (the second largest Islamic organization in Indonesia) has faced since its introduction on the island. The traditional features of Islam in Madura indicate that many modernist Islamic ideas, like the Muhammadiyah's attempts to 'purify' invented Islamic traditions (*bid'ah*), will not be well accepted. For outsiders, the differences between the Arabic orthodoxy of Syarqawi and the modernist ideas of the Muhammadiyah compared to the traditional features of Madurese Islam may not seem great. For Madurese Muslims, however, these seemingly small differences matter significantly.

The Nahdlatul Ulama as the 'religion' of the Madurese

The NU has had a great political impact in Madura. For instance, in the 1971 general elections (*pemilu*), of the total number of votes in all regencies in Madura, 817,561 went to the NU party and 300,399 to Golkar, while in the East Java Province only 4,379,806 went to the NU and 6,837,384 to Golkar (Panitia Pemilihan Daerah Tingkat I Jawa Timur 1971, pp. 170–171). At a glance, these figures show us how central the association (and the political party in 1971) to the Madurese in general and to the Madurese *kiai* in particular is, since the *kiai* were the most important factor behind the success of the association in persuading people to vote for the NU.

The NU is by far the largest Islamic organization in Indonesia, with approximately thirty to fifty million followers who are heavily concentrated in the Central and East Java provinces (Nakamura, 1983; Feillard, 1999; Mujani and Liddle, 2004, p. 111). The organization, which has had close connections with the countryside and the *pesantren* established there, was founded on 31 January 1926 in Surabaya by a number of renowned *kiai*, most of whom owned Islamic boarding schools, including *Kiai* Hasyim Asyari of Jombang and *Kiai* Wahab Hasbullah of Surabaya. The NU sees its function as being

the guardian of sacred tradition by maintaining the four *madhhab* (Muslim school of law) teachings, although it is the Shafi'i religious school that has been predominantly embraced by Indonesian Muslims (Boland, 1982, p. 11; Feillard, 1999, p. 13).

The foundation of the NU was, on the one hand, a reaction against the growth of reformist groups. The Muhammadiyah and Sarekat Islam were seen as a threat to traditionalist religious beliefs of Islamic jurisprudence, which depended strongly on strict devotion (*taqlid*) to the *madhhab* rather than *ijtihad* (the making of a decision in Islamic law by personal effort as opposed to *taqlid*) of the Quran and *Sunnah* (the practice of the Prophet, which is derived from the *hadith*). More importantly, however, it was founded in response to the changing global developments in the Islamic world in the 1920s: the eradication of the caliphate, the invasion of Wahhabi into Mecca, and the search for a new Islamic internationalism (Van Bruinessen, 1994, p. 18, 28; Samson, 1978).[14] From its inception, the NU's main base of support has been rural East Java, including Madura where traditional Javanese practices and ways of life absorbed elements of Islam. Rural *kiai* have authority especially where their influence is bolstered by a web of marital alliances between leading *kiai* families and a network of *kiai–santri* relationships throughout East Java (Samson, 1978).

Under the auspices of notable *kiai* and their *pesantren* network, the NU spread its wings during the colonial era. By 1929, its branches in Central Java already outnumbered those in East Java and West Java, with 31 branches in Central Java, 21 in East Java and ten in West Java. It claimed to have 40,000 members in 1933 and 100,000 in 1938. (Feillard, 1999, pp. 18–19; Fealy and Barton, 1996, pp. xix–xxvi; Van Bruinessen, 1994, pp. 48–49). After independence, at its National Congress in 1952, the leaders of the NU decided to establish their own party named Partai Nahdlatul Ulama.[15] The vast majority of NU followers perceived the NU primarily as a religious organization, rather than as a political party. Their political support was channelled through the actions of the traditional Javanese and some Madurese *kiai*, whose support provided religious legitimacy to the NU (Samson, 1978; Boland, 1982, p. 50).

We now turn to the NU in Madura. As I have mentioned earlier, the SI in Madura played a significant role in introducing Madura to the modern world. In the first quarter of the twentieth century, the SI had a reasonably successful period when the association drew quite a number of sympathizers in Madura. However, in Surabaya, in the early stages of the SI, Madurese were refused membership due to their bad reputation for drinking alcohol and being volatile (Korver, 1985, p. 52). The SI leadership in Madura provided religious leaders with opportunities to occupy vital positions, although SI leaders disapproved of charismatic styles of leadership, which it regarded as incompatible with modern leadership. Another group in the SI was the local *priyayi*. In addition, the importance of religious teachers, *haji* (a title given to a person who has completed pilgrimage to Mecca) and merchants were crucial in

forming the SI leadership and membership (Kuntowijoyo, 2002, pp. 472–473). In the meantime, the Muhammadiyah found it hard to expand its influence in rural areas, since support from the *kiai* and their *santri* were not easy to gain. In fact, most *kiai* and their followers resisted the Muhammadiyah's movements.

In the later period after the establishment of the NU in 1926, the decline of the SI in Madura marked a new era in Madurese history. The association of the SI with modern and reformed attitudes was unsuccessful in drawing Madurese people to get involved in politics. Following the decline of the SI, the NU replaced it as the organization with the most rural followers who actively participated in politics. Nevertheless, the diminishing role of urban intellectuals eventually led to difficult circumstances in Madura, where the dominant roles of countryside *kiai* slowed down the modernization process (Kuntowijoyo, 1986). NU devotees seemed to be attracted to the NU primarily because of the non-political orientation of the organization during its early years, whereas the political orientations of the SI were responsible for the Sarekat gradually losing followers (Van Bruinessen, 1994, pp. 47–48). As in Java, in Madura most *nahdliyin* perceived the NU primarily as a religious organization, rather than a political association. The NU became popular and took over the SI's position in the late 1920s as an organization that was able to spread out to rural areas.

After the SI lost its influence, the religious movement in Madura was dominated by the NU. One of the founding members was *Kiai* Doromuntaha of Bangkalan (Alfian, 1969, p. 356), and the NU in Madura was dominated by *kiai* from Bangkalan. Meanwhile, although the Muhammadiyah was able to reinforce its influence among the younger generation, membership was still limited, with only sixty members in Pamekasan and 116 in Sumenep (Kuntowijoyo, 2002, p. 545). Even in the contemporary period, the Muhammadiyah has never succeeded in planting roots in the villages. In his findings, Mansurnoor reveals that in the 1980s a number of individuals in Pamekasan were able to gain information from outside their village and consequently showed interest in the Muhammadiyah, yet they did not dare to openly declare their allegiance to the organization (Mansurnoor, 1990, p. 200).

The NU in Madura was often organized by local aristocrats rather than by *kiai*. For instance, Raden Prawirowicitro became the NU commissary of Madura in 1937 (Kuntowijoyo, 2002, p. 553), a situation that was reversed after independence when it was *kiai*, rather than local *priyayi*, who held central positions within the NU in Madura and elsewhere. The emergence of the NU in the colonial era can also be seen as a 'rural' answer to an urban-oriented challenge posed by the reformists and modernists (Van der Kroef, 1958, p. 45). This corresponds to the general situation with *kiai*, both NU and non-NU, maintaining strong ties within their local village domain, rather than with the outside world.

The NU was able to attract local *kiai* and many villagers primarily due to its perspective that appreciated more traditional and syncretist aspects of

Islam in Madura. In addition, the prominence of *Kiai* Kholil of Bangkalan was also used by NU leaders to encourage a sense of pride among Madurese religious leaders by signifying that *Kiai* Hasyim Asyari, *Kiai* Wahab Hasbullah, *Kiai* Bisri Syansuri, and *Kiai* Maksum, all founding members, were once students of the eminent *kiai*. NU leaders expected, therefore, that Madurese *ulama* would be proud of their legendary *kiai*. The NU was also far more hospitable than the SI or the Muhammadiyah to mystical-magical practices and it kept strictly to the old traditions, showing a lack of interest in shifting direction towards a more modern stance. The NU's conception of Islam seems to have fit the Madurese *santri* culture.

During the period of Indonesian Independence, the NU participated in the anti-colonial battles only after the Japanese occupation (Feillard, 1999, p. 19). Nevertheless, it became partly involved in the national struggle against Dutch power through its younger activists, such as Mahfudz Shiddiq and Wahid Hasyim, before the Japanese occupation (Anam, 1985, p. 91). On 21 and 22 October 1945, representatives of the NU from Java and Madura gathered in Surabaya and declared the struggle to gain independence as a holy war. This declaration was known as 'Resolusi Jihad'. This resolution urged the Indonesian government to declare a holy war (Van Bruinessen, 1994, pp. 59–60).

Under Suharto's authoritarian administration, Indonesia experienced the enforced adoption of Pancasila (the official five pillars and philosophical foundation of the Indonesian state) as the state ideology. The Suharto administration used Pancasila to curb religious freedom, forcing Indonesians to accept it and to value it in a standardized way (Colbran, 2010, p. 682). All Muslim associations, either in the form of political parties or socio-cultural movements, were forced to accept Pancasila as their sole philosophical base. In fact, according to Nurcholish Madjid, most Muslim groups concentrated themselves on ritual and social programmes or education, without entering the political arena (Madjid, 1998, p. 78). Meanwhile, some Muslim groups, such as the Muhammadiyah accepted this ideology without any real serious institutional problems. The NU, in the meantime, accepted the idea to varying degrees. Within the association, *kiai* and politicians competed with each other for ultimate leadership of the NU. This struggle was prominent after the 1982 general elections (i.e. in the immediate aftermath), when a group of Madurese *kiai* demanded that the NU avoid interfering in politics by leaving the PPP and becoming neutral. Despite its acceptance of Pancasila, a number of Madurese *kiai* in the NU refused to officially adopt Pancasila as the ideological base of the organization (Mansurnoor, 1990, p. 379). Even today, many of the *kiai* in Madura whom I had conversations with are still not fully in favour of Pancasila and consider the philosophical ideology a legacy of secular governments. In general, the NU was the most problematic of the Islamic associations to analyze in terms of Suharto's political strategies. The reasons include NU's large, sprawling organizational structure, and mass membership, as well as NU's position that remained largely outside of state structures (Porter, 2002, p. 105).

For many Madurese *santri*, being a Muslim means being a sympathizer of the NU. This strong identification with the NU does not automatically mean that they have to officially become a member of the organization. They are considered to be born true *nahdliyin* who will guard the principles of Sunni Islam and obey instructions from *kiai*. In Madurese politics, this means that not voting for the NU party or NU-associated political parties is considered a sin.[16] During the New Order, it was even worse if political allegiance was made with Golkar, a government representative that was seen as the major threat to Islam.[17] Nonetheless, although there was a political barrier between the leaders of NU and the government, NU elites in Madura were aware that recognition from the state was crucial in promoting their organization in the villages. For instance, prior to the 1984 Situbondo *muktamar* (congress), leading figures of NU Pamekasan repeatedly emphasized the recognition they had received from the government, which included the President's permission to hold the 1984 congress (Mansurnoor, 1990, pp. 123–124).

During the New Order, despite its departure from politics, the NU continuously attempted to maintain its dominance in the PPP. As a result, the government could not neglect NU activities in villages. Under the Suharto administration, this uneasy relationship manifested itself in the government limitation imposed on NU social activities. One of the most conspicuous consequences was preventing the NU from posting signs in front of any NU office or its leader's home in villages (Mansurnoor, 1990, pp. 203–204).[18] Today, it is common to see NU signs in many places in Madura, including every fifty to one hundred metres along the main road in Bangkalan, which connects the regency with Sampang. Moreover, it is now beneficial to have a strong identification with the NU, especially for new and young cadres who have just become involved in politics, as the NU – despite its 'repression' by the New Order administration – has always been a favourable political vehicle capable of placing its cadres in various important posts.

The withdrawal of the NU from the PPP after the 1982 elections caused bewilderment in the local context.[19] While in other places the removal was somewhat less problematic to accept, in Madura, NU followers were undecided on whether to vote for the PPP in the 1987 elections. The uncertainty was generated by many *kiai* who, unlike most *kiai* in Java, were still strongly affiliated with the PPP. A number of *kiai* in Madura believed that voting for Golkar would mean treachery to Islam, while giving preference to the third party, the PDI was unlikely. As a result the PPP remained the only feasible party to pick. To avoid confusion, the *kiai* decided to employ a more pragmatic attitude and persuade the *nahdliyin* to vote for a party that defends and promotes Islamic values. This was taken by the *nahdliyin* as a plea to vote for the PPP.

Muslim organizations like the NU were not explicitly democratic when they were founded. Despite its undemocratic character, the NU was remarkably successful in gathering many followers, especially in rural areas. This was mainly due to the *kiai* networks and, as a result, the NU was successful in

mustering *kiai* devotees into a more integrated group. In the New Order period in Madura, a more united group within the NU became the major force in rallying votes for the NU party and later for the PPP. After the NU decided to depoliticize its agenda, these local religious leaders acted as political advisors for villagers' political concerns, primarily because of their awareness of the world outside the village. The higher-ranking *kiai* or *kiai* from large *pesantren* remained observant and applied a 'wait and see' strategy, although in the end most Madurese *kiai* kept their allegiance to the PPP.[20]

After the New Order collapsed, many Madurese *kiai* became more pragmatic in their political orientation. In the first two elections of 1999 and 2004, Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (the PKB – the National Awakening Party), as the party most-backed by NU leaders, enjoyed victory in all regencies in Madura.[21] The PKB in return provided the NU with opportunities and financial support. In the 2009 elections, although the party still won, the margin was insignificant.[22] Apparently, the atmosphere in the Madurese political context has changed.

Despite the accusation by some *nahdliyin* that the NU in Madura has been too involved in politics, some segments of the NU in Madura remain orthodox in terms of attitudes towards *sharia* issues. A number of *ulama* in Madura, such as those of the MUI (the Indonesian Council of *Ulama*), the Muhammadiyah, and the NU have responded negatively to and publicly disapproved of the discourse on Rancangan Undang-undang Hukum Terapan Pengadilan Agama Bidang Perkawinan (Legal Draft of Religious Court's Applied Law in Marriage Section), which penalizes people who conduct an unofficial marriage (*nikah siri*), a marriage that is not recorded at the Office of Religious Affairs (Kantor Urusan Agama – KUA). Even though many Madurese *ulama* do not wish their daughters to become victims of *nikah siri*, they believe that *nikah siri* is lawful according to *sharia* (www.nu.or.id, 23 February 2010, accessed on 6 September 2010). It should also be remembered that some *kiai*, predominantly those of lower rank in rural areas, still practice polygamy. The marriages that take place after the first official one are usually *nikah siri*. It thus seems that disapproval of the Rancangan is not solely derived from a religious point of view. According to Michael Buehler, local *sharia* policymaking is a good indicator for how changing relations within the state subsequently shape relations between the state and society (Buehler, 2014, p. 159).

Furthermore, *ulama* in Bangkalan, such as those of the NU and Bassra have mutually supported the proposal of regional regulation (Peraturan Daerah – Perda) on the obligation for female government officers and female students above nine years old to wear *jilbab* (veil, headscarf), proposed by the NU of Bangkalan. The proposal has been frequently quoted as compatible with the characteristic of Bangkalan as *kota santri* (www.nu.or.id, 31 July 2009, accessed on 7 September 2010). The proposal has generated various reactions. Many are in support, and some schools in Bangkalan openly support the proposal (www.swarapendidikan.com, accessed on 22 August 2011),

while only a minority of non-governmental organizations and academics are against it (http://cmars.synthasite.com/syahadah, accessed on 22 August 2011).

In addition to matters of dress, the *ulama* of NU Sumenep have voiced concerns about love affairs conducted via mobile phones. The *ulama* are convinced that these 'vulgar' conversations are incompatible with *sharia*. The concern is not only restricted to what is said over the phone, as it is believed that the individuals involved usually decide to meet and have illegal and illicit relationships. It has been argued that many married couples have divorced because of these types of affairs (www.kabarmadura.com, 19 December 2009, accessed on 13 September 2010). Nevertheless, these attitudes towards *sharia* should not be seen solely as absolute indications of strict orthodoxy by all *kiai* of the NU in Madura, as many tend to show no overt objection to traditional cultural elements such as *kerapan sapi* that contradict strict *sharia* points of view. This is in line with Buehler's argument that in areas with strong Islamic characters, the rapprochement between 'the state' and 'society' finds its expression in the adoption of *sharia* regulations (Buehler, 2014, p. 174).

As described in Chapter 1, there have been efforts by various Muslim organizations, such as the Indonesian chapter of Hizb ut-Tahrir (HTI) and Salafi-inspired groups to idealize Muslim-majority areas, including Madura, as the myth of the Islamic state, religiously based, and defined and governed by God through political means. In post-New Order Madura, it is mostly a small number of more conservative NU members who have conducted the task.

In general, the NU *kiai* are highly regarded among the *nahdliyin*. Many of them blindly obey *kiai*'s words without further questioning the meaning behind the speech. However, despite their participation in religious occasions, some *nahdliyin* are also familiar with *kemaksiatan* (sin, immoral acts).[23] Regardless of this, the level of obedience among NU followers in Madura to NU *kiai* and the NU itself is so high that the NU can be considered the 'religion' of the Madurese. There is a popular anecdote that illustrates the strong connection between the Madurese and the NU. It is said that the late Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur, a former chairman of the NU and President of Indonesia) once visited Madura. A Madurese person proudly told Gus Dur that 99 per cent of Madurese people are Muslims, while only one per cent are Muhammadiyah followers. The story, despite its exaggeration, indicates that even today, the rejection of the Muhammadiyah and also of reformed and modern Islam is evident. It signifies a strong acknowledgement of the NU in Madura, because the NU in Madura, as has been demonstrated elsewhere, is fundamentally moderate in nature and has been triumphant in establishing political moderation (Barton, 2001, p. 252; Mujani and Liddle, 2004, p. 122). It clearly indicates a high degree of accommodation and adaptation, and how, as delineated in Chapter 1, in the struggle for influence, Islamic symbols and cultural identities are extensively used by Madurese leaders to win the support from the people, while patronage and personal relations become the prevalent pattern in relationships with the state and the people.

The emergence of *ulama* as religious leaders

A strict distinction between the term *ulama* and *kiai* does not appear in this book. According to Deliar Noer, the term *kiai* might indicate two kinds of people. The first comprises those whose knowledge of Islam surpasses that of the ordinary man, and who typically devote themselves to teaching. The second type is more closely related to a *dukun* (healer) who teaches mystical and secret doctrines and practices all kinds of medicine (Noer, 1973, p. 8). Hiroko Horikoshi distinguishes between the terms *kiai* and *ulama*. For Horikoshi, the difference lies primarily in the more extensive charisma that *kiai* possess. The *ulama* play more roles in the social system and the social structure of villages and their ultimate status is legitimized by hereditary factors. Among the people, the *kiai* are higher than the village *ulama* and their presence is regarded as a unifying symbol in society, since their moral and spiritual leadership is not tied to the normative structure of a village (Horikoshi, 1987, pp. 211–212). In Madura the term *kiai* also has a meaning in terms of leadership. In a broader context, the term *ulama* refers to men of Islamic learning and Islamic religious leaders in general. Hence, I use both terms, *ulama* and *kiai,* interchangeably.

The number of people who performed the pilgrimage increased every year. In Madura in 1880 there were 896 *haji*, while in 1885 there were 1,111, and five years later in 1890 there were 1,364. *Haji* who were not in charge of a *pesantren* were highly regarded, not because of their capability in religious knowledge, but mainly because of their financial ability to afford the expensive journey (Kuntowijoyo, 2002, pp. 333–335). *Haji* constituted the reformist movement that first took root at the turn of the twentieth century. Noer and Justus M. van der Kroef reveal that the reformist ideas stressed a return to the Quran as the main source of Islamic belief, contesting folk Islam and traditional eclecticism, and aiming to bring Islam in line with modern scientific advances and empiricism (Noer, 1973, pp. 30, 296, 308; Van der Kroef, 1958, p. 87).

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, *haji* and *kiai* formed central elements of the religious circles in Madura. It is not easy to separate *haji* and *kiai* in that period, but Kuntowijoyo believed that *haji* and *kiai* were different in many ways. He argued that *kiai* were not appropriate figures for organizing modern social movements. Their charisma alone was not sufficient if it was not accompanied by the capability to arrange social movements. On the other hand, *haji* were able to positively contribute to the ongoing social changes due to their high mobility and exploration of areas outside their places of origin. Even if a *haji* did not have adequate abilities in the religious realm, his socio-religious status was highly appreciated. In distinguishing *kiai* and *haji*, Kuntowijoyo gives an example of a rebellious *kiai* in the village of Prajan in Sampang. This *kiai* acted not only as a religious teacher, but also as a *dukun* and a fortune teller. He delivered provocative sermons, requesting that villagers take an active role in combating discrimination from the Dutch

(Kuntowijoyo, 2002, pp. 337–345). Moreover, Kuntowijoyo argued that *haji* were more orthodox in identifying themselves with universal Islam. As an example from the *haji* group, he pointed to the *haji* of Sarekat Islam, asserting that *they* were pious individuals as well as being merchants and urban citizens. Meanwhile, *kiai* belonged to the peasantry and village elites. In sum, he considered the *kiai* to be power brokers able to mobilize the people, whereas *haji* were cultural brokers in an Islamic revival (Kuntowijoyo, 1986, p. 108). These suggestions seem to be inaccurate since it is not that simple to draw a distinction between *kiai* and *haji* in the late nineteenth- and twentieth-century Madura.

For example, although the well-known reformist *Kiai* Jauhari of Prenduan, Sumenep, was a teacher of Tijaniyah *tarekat*, he associated his *pesantren* with an Arabic-oriented orthodoxy and sent his sons to the modern *Pesantren* Gontor. One of his sons even studied in Mecca and became a staff member of Muslim World League. To a large degree *Kiai* Jauhari was considered more progressive than most other Madurese *kiai* (Van Bruinessen, 1995b, p. 91) and played a pivotal role in Islamic resurgence by adopting modern methods in his *pesantren*, which was rare in the Madurese *pesantren* circles at that time. *Kiai* Jauhari as both a *kiai* and a returned *haji*, along with other religious leaders in Prenduan, established a branch of the Hizbullah guerrillas who were actively involved in the resistance against the Dutch during the Military Aggression of 1947 (De Jonge, 1989, p. 256). Under Kuntowijoyo's classification, *Kiai* Jauhari acted as both a power broker and a cultural broker. Nowadays, all *kiai* from *pesantren* have to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca in order to gain the respected title of '*Kiai Haji*' (K.H.), which indicates the *kiai*'s pre-eminence in both religious and economic realms.

Another example of *kiai* who acted as both a power broker and a cultural broker is the legendary *Kiai* Muhammad Kholil of Bangkalan, the most celebrated *kiai* in the history of Madura. There are many stories about this legendary figure, and most are marked by myth. *Kiai* Kholil is probably one of the best examples of a returned *haji* who served as a religious teacher as well as a religious leader who spread his influence in society. He was born in the first half of the nineteenth century (between 1819 and 1835) and died around 1923–1925.[24] Among his fellow students in Mecca were the famous Nawawi and Abdul Karim of Banten and Mahfudh Tarmisi of Tremas, East Java. He was known not only as a *wali* (saint), but also as an expert in classical Arabic grammar, as well as a master in *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) and supranatural power. He is regarded as an essential figure in the formation of a *santri* community in the Indonesian archipelago, where he produced *kiai* and laid down a strong foundation for the creation of a *kiai-pesantren* network. Today, a considerable number of Madurese and Javanese *kiai* consider him their indirect guru, because many leading *kiai* in Java, such as *Kiai* Wahab Hasbullah and *Kiai* Hasyim Asyari, two of the founders of the NU, studied in his *pesantren* (Dhofier, 1982; Van Bruinessen, 1995b; Rachman, 2001; Bakhri, 2006). *Kiai* Kholil is still alive in the minds of the Madurese, both those who

live on the island and those who have moved away. To many pilgrims, his grave is considered the final place in a pilgrimage which runs from Banten to Madura. When I visited Bangkalan in the last quarter of 2009, the mosque and the surrounding area of his grave was under construction. When I went to Bangkalan again in the first quarter of 2011, the project was completed and several new facilities had been added. Therefore, it is not uncomplicated to draw a distinction between *kiai* and *haji* in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as Kuntowijoyo has, since a number of *kiai* in Madura, like *haji*, were identified with Islamic modernism and orthodoxy.

For the present-day Madurese, religious leaders are equated with *kiai*. However, the term *kiai* in Madurese tradition has not been static throughout time. In earlier periods, *kiai* was a title for people who had a special characteristic, either in a positive or a negative sense. Therefore, a criminal or even a Chinese Muslim merchant could be called a *kiai* if he demonstrated a special characteristic compared to commoners. *Kiai* was also a Madurese noble title (Zainalfattah, 1951, pp. 68–69). The Madurese noblemen, especially the regents, had close relationships with each other as they had family ties. In Pamekasan, for instance, a significant number of the descendants of Adikoro (one of the rulers of Pamekasan in the eighteenth century) became *ulama* in Pamekasan (Sumberanyar, Banyuanyar, Batuampar, and Tattango), Sampang (Prajan), and even in some places in Java, such as Bondowoso (Blindungan, Pancagati, and Prajekan), Situbondo (Panjhi, Sukorejo,

Figure 2.1 Muslims pray in front of *Kiai* Kholil's grave in Bangkalan

Asembagus, and Bajulmati) and Probolinggo (Klapasawit, Randupangger, and Kebonsari) (Zainalfattah, 1951, pp. 107–108).

In contemporary Madura, there are several types of *kiai. Kiai pesantren* are generally regarded as the highest in rank. There are also *kiai tarekat* who usually lead a *pesantren* too, but who are more commonly recognized as *tarekat* teachers. The next category is *kiai dukun*, shamans or medicine men. The last and the lowest in the hierarchy of *kiai* in Madura are *kiai langgar,* who run small mosques in villages. The discussion in this book is focused for the most part on the first type of *kiai*, since they are the real agents of socio-political-economic-cultural life in Madura and are the most ideal representatives of the *santri* culture. They are what Eric Wolf identified as cultural brokers, people who 'connect the local system to the larger whole' (Wolf, 1956, p. 1075) and who select what is appropriate for the local society. *Kiai* take advantage of their possessions, which may be in the form of materials, such as land or money, or non-material capital, such as the accumulation of knowledge.

In the nineteenth century, *kiai tarekat, kiai pesantren* and other religious figures, such as *guru ngaji, imam* (leaders of prayer), and *juru kunci* (custodians of graveyards) were able to improve their positions within villages. They were needed especially during ritualistic festivities, events that have been preserved until the present day.[25] Meanwhile, under pressure from the Dutch colonial administration, local elites were slowly incorporated into the administration during the nineteenth century. For religious figures and villagers, this meant that the elite had allied themselves with the infidel power. As a result, religious leaders and villagers were disappointed and dissatisfied, as they had viewed the elite idealistically as autonomous and influential leaders. This situation changed in the nineteenth century when they became mere tools of the colonial bureaucracy.

However, people did not accept their leaders being integrated into the colonial administration. Unlike the local political elites, the religious figures such as *kiai* succeeded in preserving their independence. Villagers gradually turned to these religious figures. The decline of the local elite's legal leadership led the *ulama* to reinforce their position in society. The changes to the local hierarchy due to the Dutch colonial government in Madura can be seen as the main factor in the *ulama* strengthening their position as religious leaders.[26]

In the Indonesian archipelago during the nineteenth century when the implementation of colonial power became effective, the emergence of religious leaders primarily appeared on the periphery and frequently acted against the local and Dutch authorities (Van Bruinessen, 1999, p. 164). In Madura, Islam in the nineteenth century reached a more systematic stage. Old *pesantren* grew fast and new ones were built. A number of well-off villagers became followers of *kiai* and facilitated them by financing their *pesantren*, a pattern that has continued until today. Hence, the emergence of *kiai* as religious leaders was, to some extent, a utilization of local assets (Mansurnoor, 1990, p. 36). The discussion by the *kiai pesantren*, along with *pengajian* (Islamic congregations),

gave *kiai* a sense of Islamic religious authority. Therefore, the patron–client relationship between *kiai* and their followers was predictable (Horikoshi, 1987, p. 174).

The ties between elements of the santri culture

The oldest and most perceptible tie that has been present for hundreds of years is perhaps the relationship between *pesantren* and *kiai*. Highly motivated *santri* with financial aid from *kiai* parents and who have finished their studies tend to build *pesantren* in their area of origin if they are able to do so. This often depends on support from the *kiai* of the *pesantren* where they studied, or marriage to a *kiai*'s daughter. The latter means that the future *kiai* will be supported by two families. These new *kiai* will uphold a continually unbroken tie with their old *pesantren*. If they study at various *pesantren*, there will be more than one bond between the new *kiai* and their *pesantren*. Certainly, the *kiai–pesantren* relationship also involves the *kiai–kiai* relationship, which ultimately forms the *kiai* networks. As is the case among the great *kiai* families in Java, in Madura this pattern is widespread.

The second important tie is between *pesantren* and the NU. Unlike the Muhammadiyah, whose formal schools are spread all over the country, the NU has never had many formal schools. NU *kiai* remain convinced that *pesantren*, even in their most modern form, are still the most appropriate place to undertake religious learning and secular education. They also believe that establishing a *pesantren* will help maintain a *kiai*'s personal reputation as a guardian of Islamic values. During the New Order, Gus Dur was even highly critical of the state's encroachment on the NU's rural network of *pesantren* (Porter, 2002, p. 111). It is not surprising, thus, that until 1974, the number of religiously-based educational institutions (*pondok pesantren* and *madrasah*) in Madura was higher than the number of general schools (Mansurnoor, 1990, p. 170). To a large degree, NU *kiai* have encouraged the *nahdliyin* to educate their children in *pesantren*, rather than in general schools. The NU followers, in turn, have enjoyed the services of *kiai* in form of religious festivities and personal links and consultation when needed.

Last but not least is the tie between the NU and *kiai*. The NU has provided the *kiai* with extensive networks which link *kiai* to the wider world. The organization has also introduced *kiai* to the world of politics and social welfare. In turn, the NU has enjoyed a large following due to *kiai* attracting villagers to the party and later on to NU-associated political parties such as the PPP, the PKB or the PKNU. *Kiai* support has also been instrumental in financing the NU's regular events, such as the grand *pengajian* or *tabligh akbar* (grand *tabligh*, as a term *tabligh* means propagation of the messages of Islam). This perhaps indicates what Eric Wolf discusses in terms of group relations. He argues that the reliance of communities on a larger system affects them in two ways. Firstly, whole communities play specialized roles within the larger whole. Secondly, special functions pertaining to the whole

become the tasks of special groups within communities in what Wolf calls nation-oriented groups (Wolf, 1956, p. 1065). The NU *kiai* rely heavily on the NU as the larger system. Along with the *nahdliyin*, the *kiai* preserve Islamic values as well as the sacred values of the Madurese.

Conclusion

Madurese people have continuously preserved their own sacred values, as the three main elements of the *santri* culture, the *pesantren*, the NU and the *kiai* have had a great influence over society, in both religious and worldly domains. Moreover, these three main elements of the *santri* culture form religious networks in Madura. The networks are controlled by the *kiai*. Consequently, the *kiai* appear to have become a vital connector between the three elements of *santri* culture.

It is argued here that the ties between elements of the *santri* culture have long been intertwined to show the *santri* culture of the Madurese, or more broadly, to show the culturally-embedded Islam in Madura. The ties have been of importance since the colonial period, more strongly-bound during the New Order, and more consciously emphasized in the post-New Order. As Marcus Mietzner argues, long-suppressed local identities have been allowed to flourish, but this has not come at the cost of heightened inter-ethnic tensions. As a matter of fact, these are now better managed that decentralization and the renaissance of local identities have curtailed rather than catalyzed centrifugal tendencies and major communal tensions (Mietzner, 2014, p. 54). Furthermore, an effect on the reliance on such ethnic and religious associations, such as the case of the Madurese, to deal with the state, is that membership of local communities gets its importance as a constitutive element of citizenship, because the everyday mediating functioning of such associations create the impression that the protection of one's livelihood and access to state resources is not just a product of one's right as a citizen, but also a product of one's membership of a cultural community (Berenschot, Schulte Nordholt, and Bakker, 2017, p. 18). Apparently, the strong ties between the three elements have placed them as a strong aspect for the Madurese to identify themselves, to claim their identity, and to deal with their citizenship rights.

Notes

1 In the Indonesian languages, such as Javanese, Madurese, and Bahasa Indonesia (the official language of Indonesia), the term *santri* can be used in both singular and plural forms. Other non-English terms in this book can be used as both singular and plural forms as well.

2 Along with *pesantren*, the Sarekat Islam (the SI) in the early twentieth century introduced Madurese to the modern world. The SI provided Madurese with a new alternative in vertical relations between villagers and those who resided in town areas. A new alliance between urban intellectuals and rural religious leaders marked a new phase in the history of Indonesian politics (Kuntowijoyo, 1986, p. 109).

3 Nowadays such claims are rather common in Java. Pandeglang in the Banten Province has called itself a *santri* town, while in the provinces of West Java and East Java, the regencies of Tasikmalaya and Jombang have strongly pushed the same claim.

4 Mosques usually had *penghulu* (state religious officials) attached to them. At the end of the eighteenth century, *penghulu* at the regency level were appointed by the VOC as court advisors. In Java and in Madura *penghulu* were religious officials in Islamic kingdoms and in regencies under Dutch rule (Hisyam, 2005). In West Madura in the nineteenth century, *penghulu* were appointed and paid by the West Madurese rulers like most of the officials (Touwen-Bouwsma, 1992, p. 111).

5 It is more appropriate to say religious centres rather than *pesantren* since the term *pesantren* might have emerged in the later period, and not before 1500, even though in Madurese legendary history, the term *santri* is widely used to refer to people who studied under the guidance of a religious teacher during the early generations of the Madurese (before 1500) (Zainalfattah, 1951, p. 31).

6 In Aceh, *dayah* (the local name for *pesantren*) were separated from the village. *Dayah* frequently owned lands that were lent out to villagers or worked by the pupils. Such lands were commonly donated by well-off people (Siegel, 1969, p. 48). It seems that it was rather common for people to provide *pesantren* with land in the Indonesian archipelago in the nineteenth century.

7 One example is Pangeran Aria Achmad Djajadiningrat, who spent some time in *pesantren* in the 1880s before the Banten revolt in 1888. He went on to continue his studies at the Willem III School in Batavia (Burhanudin, 2007, pp. 121–122). Meanwhile, several members of the *kraton* (palace) of Yogyakarta were also educated in *pesantren* (Pemberton, 1994, pp. 48–49).

8 In his study of three *pesantren* in East Java, Lukens-Bull suggests that *kiai* are redefining modernity, which is rather different from that in the West. Modernity in the *pesantren* world is seen as a set of normative values that must be compatible with Islamic norms. For *pesantren* people, modernity is the combination of religious learning, development of character, and secular schooling. These variables are designed to make Muslims capable of living in a material world without losing their Islamic values (Lukens-Bull, 2000, pp. 34, 38, 42).

9 Such as *Pesantren* Bustanul Ufat Assyaiin in Sampang.

10 Such as *Pesantren* Nuril Islam Gili in Kamal sub-district of Bangkalan, established in 2000 by *Kiai* A. Bazids. Unlike many contemporary *pesantren* which offer formal education recognized by the government, this *pesantren* does not offer such a formal education. At Nuril Islam Gili, the *santri* may have formal education outside the *pesantren*. Nuril Islam Gili applies *taqror* (memorizing) and *tahfidul quran* (reciting and memorizing the Quran) methods in its tutoring system. Both are conducted every evening, except Thursday evening when martial arts lessons and inner power practices are taught.

11 Prior to the 2008 Bangkalan regency head election (*pilkada bupati*), a *khaul akbar* (grand *khaul*) for *Kiai* Kholil and *Kiai* Mahsin was held at *Pesantren* Al As'adiyah in the sub-district of Blega, Bangkalan, on 30 November 2007 (*Radar Madura*, 2 December 2007). Thousands of visitors gathered in the most eastern sub-district of Bangkalan not only to commemorate the legendary *Kiai* Kholil, but also to welcome Fuad Amin Imron (this figure is described further in Chapter 6), a descendant of the *kiai*, as well as the incumbent regent and candidate regent who would participate in the 2008 *pilkada*.

12 There are a number of *pesantren* that have close connections, or claim to have interrelated ties with *Pesantren* Demangan. These connections are not exclusively based on family bonds, though these are common. To name a few, *Pesantren* Syaichona Kholil 2, *Pesantren* Ibnu Kholil, and *Pesantren* Al Muntaha Al Cholili.

13 *Tayub* or *tayuban* is a traditional Central and East Java performing art whose dancers are called *tledhek, taledhek, ledhek, tandhak*, or *tandak*. It is not only a recognized form of entertainment, but also an integral part of spirit shrine ritual associated with the annual *bersih desa* (spirit shrine ritual) festivity (Hefner, 1987, p. 75; Hughes-Freeland, 1990, p. 39). The *tledhek* themselves claim to be Muslim, with some insisting quite vigorously that they are good Muslims (Hefner, 1987, p. 77). *Tayuban* is also related to the traditional Javanese wedding ceremony, being performed soon after the ceremonial meeting of the bride and groom. This tradition is believed to have started in pre-Islamic times (Brakel-Papenhuyzen, 1995, p. 546). *Tayub* in Madura is associated with that in Tengger, Pasuruan.

14 Wahhabism remained marginalized until the rise of 'Abd al-'Aziz ibn Sa'ud (d. 1953) at the beginning of the twentieth century. He created a nation-state by relying on a combination of force and ideological mobilization based on Wahhabism (Hasan, 2007, p. 86). Frédéric Volpi suggests that to characterize the Muslim community as the loci for political Islam, is to stress that the Muslim world is not best conceived as a geographical entity composed of Muslim-majority countries, but rather as a composite of polities where Islamist movements are a main transformative force (Volpi, 2004).

15 In those days, during the Sukarno administration, the religious nature of the NU and Masyumi (Majelis Syuro Muslimin Indonesia) was also apparent in their organizational structure. In religious organizations, such a function devolves on a special board. A *Majelis Syuriah*, or *Majelis Syura*, Religious Advisory Board, safeguards the integrity of the party or organization, supervising its actions to ensure that its religious doctrine is honoured (Van Dijk, 2009, p. 54).

16 After 1973 the support turned to the PPP, and in the post-Suharto period the majority support was given to the PKB with some to the PKNU. Prior to the 1971 elections, *Kiai* Bisri Syansuri issued a *fatwa* (non-binding opinion concerning Islamic law) stating that it was an obligation for Muslims to participate in general elections and to vote for the NU (Van Bruinessen, 1994, p. 98). He issued another *fatwa* before the 1977 elections, this time asking Muslims to vote for the PPP (Van Bruinessen, 1994, p. 105).

17 Other areas showed a similar attitude. For instance, in Jombang, *Kiai* Musta'in Romly (d. 1985) of Pesantren Darul Ulum, Rejoso, was of Madura origin and never occupied a vital position within the NU. His choice to represent Golkar in the DPR (the national parliament) led to discrimination by his colleagues (Van Bruinessen, 1995b, p. 99). In his findings in Pakistan, Lyon shows us that *pirs* (saints) are perceived as a potential threat to the secular authorities. Ayub Khan's government in the 1960s went to great lengths to disempower *pirs* with large followings, a practice which Z.A. Bhutto's government continued (Lyon, 2004, p. 210).

18 This consequence seems to be a clear indication of the prevalence of the state doctrine of *massa mengambang/lepas* (floating mass) introduced in 1971. The doctrine was the ideological foundation of suppression of political activity of the people. According to this semi-official principle, people should be released from the restraints of political party activities that prevent them from devoting their full energy to economic development (Antlöv, 1995, pp. 36–37). The floating mass doctrine was not necessarily effective in de-politicizing the rural populace, not least because it did not target religious practices that often linked the supporters of non-government parties, especially the PPP, to their actual leaders, such as Friday mosque attendance and religious congregations (*pengajian*) (Ward, 2010, p. 27).

19 Musyawarah Nasional Alim Ulama NU (Munas Situbondo 1983 – the 1983 Situbondo Convention) and Muktamar ke-27 Situbondo 1984 (the 1984 27th Congress) indicated reconciliation between the NU and the Suharto administration as well as marking the emergence of new elites onto the NU board. The 1983 Convention resulted in two decisions: the departure of the NU from politics and the

adoption of Pancasila as its sole ideological base. The 27th Congress stressed this decision (Vatikiotis, 1993, p. 124; Raillon, 1993; Van Dijk, 1996; Van Bruinessen, 1994, pp. 113–115). Prior to the 27th Congress, the chairman of the NU, *Kiai* Idham Chalid encouraged *nahdliyin* to have free political aspirations, being able to align themselves not only to the PPP, but also possibly to Golkar or the PDI (*Jawa Pos*, 31 August 1984).

20 In other places, there were more *kiai* who were in favour of the departure of the NU from the PPP. For instance, prior to the 1983 Convention and after the 1982 elections, several regional-national functionaries of the NU, such as Yusuf Hasyim, supported the plan for the official withdrawal of the NU from the PPP (Van Bruinessen, 1994, pp. 165–166).

21 The collapse of the New Order also meant the end of a controlled three-party system. This is further explained in Chapter 6.

22 The number of seats in the DPRD Bangkalan achieved by political parties in the 2009 elections was as follows: PKB 10 seats, PPP 5, PKNN 5, Demokrat 4, PBR 3, PAN 3, Hanura 3, PDIP 2, PPD 2, PNBK 2, Republikan 2, Golkar 1, Gerindra 1, PDP 1, PKS 1 (*Radar Madura*, 22 April 2009).

23 *Kiai* Mashduki Fadly (a former parliament member as well as a leading *kiai* in Bangkalan) told me that he often noticed *nahdliyin* gambling and drinking alcohol. When approached, these individuals vowed never to repeat these actions, and proudly showed the NU identity card in their *peci* (prayer hat) (Interview with *Kiai* Mashduki Fadly on 1 December 2009).

24 No one knows the exact date of birth or death of this *kiai,* as his lifetime is not well documented. A recent book by Ibnu Assayuthi Ar-Rifa'i (2010), gives a story from *Kiai* Muhammad Ghozi Wahib praising *Kiai* Kholil's heroic role in the struggle against the 'aggressors' on 10 November 1945 in Surabaya (p. 101). However, on an earlier page, the author writes that *Kiai* Kholil died in 1925 (p. 82). Many lower ranking *ulama* I have met often mentioned *Kiai* Kholil's epic participation in the struggle against the colonialists, both the Dutch and the Japanese, without being aware of the anachronism.

25 The most famous are *rokat desa* and *rokat bandaran*. The former is an annual ritual to bless a village and to provide village inhabitants with harmony, safety, and prosperity. The latter is a sea-based feast to sanctify the fishermen and ensure a great catch as well as safety. Despite the strong association with pre-Islamic beliefs, religious leaders are needed to lead these ceremonies. In turn, the religious leaders enjoy a highly respected position among the villagers as well as receiving economic benefits.

26 In Aceh, a different situation occurred, as the *ulama* appeared to live outside the village world and were therefore not a natural outgrowth of the rural society (Siegel, 1969, p. 48).

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3 Muslim politics

Religious leaders in Medina's veranda

Introduction

This chapter deals with the roles of Madurese *kiai* as both traditional and modern leaders. As I have elaborated some aspects of *kiai* in the previous chapter, including the background of the emergence of *kiai* as religious leaders, in this chapter I focus on how *kiai*, who symbolize Islamic leadership and are the main supporters of the *santri* culture, have shaped and characterized the dynamics of Islam and politics in Madura and have used their position to enhance their social standing and political well-being in state–society relations. By looking at identity politics, I emphasize the processes of power, alliances, competitions, accommodations, negotiations, and claims that the *kiai* make to attain or reaffirm power. In doing so, I portray two prominent NU *kiai* figures. Among the questions posed in this chapter are: How do *kiai* preserve their position in society? What factors guide the interaction between *kiai* and the political world? To what extent have traditional *kiai* adapted to the modern political world?

In this chapter I demonstrate that *kiai* with their *pesantren* and their organizational networks, such as that of the NU and Bassra, have cautiously responded to state power by establishing multifaceted relations with the state. These relationships range from distancing themselves from the government to forming mutually beneficial relations with the state when the power of the state is too strong to oppose, or when making an alliance with the government is seen as a useful choice. Certainly, *kiai* have become the social, cultural, economic, and political brokers in Madura. This is in line with Salwa Ismail's proposition on *ulama* that historically the *ulama* played an advisory role, and their involvement in politics and power struggles was shaped by their position in the social and political hierarchy at a given time. However, they contributed to the definition of the public sphere through pronouncements on issues of public interest, provision of *fatwa* (non-binding opinions concerning Islamic law), and through preaching to both rulers and ruled (Ismail, 2004, p. 153).

The *ulama* are certainly one of the key actors in Muslim politics. This is what we have witnessed in Madura, Indonesia, and the Muslim world in

general. We should, however, distinguish Muslim politics and political Islam or Islamism, a relatively recent vibrant phenomenon in Indonesia. Mohammed Ayoob suggests that political Islam or Islamism is Islam as political ideology rather than religion or theology (Ayoob, 2007, p. 2). Olivier Roy defines Islamism as the brand of modern political Islamic fundamentalism that claims to re-create a true Islamic society, not simply by imposing *sharia*, but by establishing first an Islamic state through political action. The supporters of Islamism, Islamists, see Islam not as a mere religion, but as a political ideology that should reshape all aspects of society, such as politics, law, economy, social justice, foreign policy, and others (Roy, 2004, p. 58). Furthermore, Guilain Denoeux argues that politics lies at the heart of Islamism, which ultimately has far more to do with power than with religion. To Islamists, Islam is more a political blueprint than a faith, and the Islamist discourse is to a large extent a political discourse in religious garb. Accordingly, while fundamentalists are usually concerned first and foremost with ideas and religious exegesis, Islamists are action-oriented; they are preoccupied primarily with changing their world. Moreover, he stresses that Islamism is a form of instrumentalization of Islam by individuals, groups, and organizations that pursue political objectives (Denoeux, 2002, pp. 61, 63). Meanwhile, Bassam Tibi maintains that one should focus, not on the religion of Islam and its beliefs, but rather on the political concepts developed on the grounds of the politicization of Islam in order to understand political Islam. He puts it that it is not the substance of religion that is of interest for the exponents of political Islam; not spirituality, but religious symbolism employed in the pursuit of political ends (Tibi, 2000, p. 847). Nonetheless, the 'political' character of political Islam cannot simply be attributed to a strategy by various Islamist movements to capture state power. It must also be seen as a re-interpretation of various social activities that were previously not considered to be political by state authorities and by those analysing social life from a statist perspective (Volpi, 2010, p. 12). In Madura, Muslim politics is a more appropriate term to define how religious leaders form alliance and competition in local politics in order to spread their influence not only in the religious realm, but also in all aspects of society.

The world of *kiai*

Kiai are religious elites. M.C. Ricklefs defines religious elites as those who are defined, legitimated, and inspired by their religious standing. They are – particularly in Indonesia – the learned scholars of the faith recognized as such by their community (Ricklefs, 2013, p. 18). The importance of Madurese *kiai* has attracted a number of authors. Mansurnoor, for instance, signifies the importance of *kiai* and makes a link between *kiai* and *rato* (old Madurese rulers) by outlining the decline of *rato* as a direct cause of the rise of the *kiai*'s societal role (Mansurnoor, 1995). Touwen-Bouwsma traces the historical processes that led to the development of *ulama* and their organizations in Madura,

which up to now have formed a counterbalance against the intervention of the state. She argues that the present strong social position of Madurese *ulama* is closely bound up with the process of state formation and the islamization of Madurese society (Touwen-Bouwsma, 1992).

The Madurese culture that becomes part of the larger East Javanese culture is one of the ten most prominent sub-cultures in East Java. The grouping of the ten sub-cultures is classified based on their distinctive areas. Of these ten sub cultures, five are worthy of note: Mataraman, Pesisiran, Arek, Madurese, and Pendalungan (Tapal Kuda).[1] Religious leaders in these areas show distinctive characteristics in terms of political attitude. According to Abdul Chalik, due to their distinctive sub cultures, the NU *kiai* in the five areas have their own distinctive preference when it comes to supporting political parties. He argues that Mataraman NU elites tend to maintain a relationship with formal religious issues and there is a tendency to separate religion from politics, while the NU elites of Pesisiran, Arek, Madura, and Pendalungan tend to combine religion and politics in their political attitude (Chalik, 2010). Therefore, it seems likely that Islamic political parties will have significant support in Pesisiran, Arek, Madurese, and Pendalungan areas, while non-Islamic political parties (such as the PDIP), besides receiving support from their traditional supporters, the *abangan* people, also draw support from a number of NU elites and followers in Mataraman. Besides forming a large part of the ethnic composition of Pendalungan, the number of Madurese who live in Arek and Pesisiran is not insignificant, and therefore it seems likely that Madurese also play a central part in contributing to the support for Islamic political parties in these areas.

In explaining the phenomenon of Madurese *kiai*, Mansurnoor maintains that the *kiai* should be looked at as an institution, in the sense of a cluster of attributes. This consists of the personal holder of the position and an indispensable set of characteristics such as family background, resources, religious centres, and a network of followers (Mansurnoor, 1990, p. 238). Meanwhile, in Java, many *kiai* are often wealthy. A *kiai*'s wealth does not constitute a religious problem as long as it is used for religious purposes. A *kiai*'s wealth may be acquired through various sources, including from minor trade, small landholdings, school fees, and donations from disciples and *kiai*'s guests. However, not all *kiai* are rich. Some are simply well-qualified religious men struggling to make a mark as teachers. Some are less wealthy and so are forced to take jobs as manual labourers, or their family members may sell goods at the market to make ends meet (McVey, 1983, pp. 206–210; Woodward, 1989, p. 144). If we look at the categorization of *kiai* in Madura in the previous chapter, we may have a clearer view why some *kiai* are rich, while others have modest means. Although he does not mention it specifically, in Woodward's study, it is perhaps *kiai pesantren* or *kiai tarekat* who are often wealthy because they frequently receive donations from their disciples or from their guests. *Kiai dukun* and *kiai langgar* may be less well off because they are less exposed to outsiders, and therefore they receive fewer guests than *kiai pesantren* and *kiai*

tarekat, and in turn receive fewer donations. It is also in Java that many leading *kiai* have family ties with other *kiai*. The ties are made possible due to, among other things, the tradition of intermarriage among *kiai* families. The *kiai*'s interventions are evident when it comes to matters of marriage and a *santri*'s leadership (Dhofier, 1982, p. 59).

Unlike in Java, in Madura, someone who has finished his *pesantren* training usually has to 'complete' a number of more complex steps prior to becoming a *kiai*. In present-day Madurese religious spheres, in order to be acknowledged in religious circles, it is common for a *kiai* to fulfil three essential requirements: he has to belong to a *kiai* family; he has to lead a *pesantren*; and he has to belong to the NU. If one of the three requirements cannot be met, then he will not be fully considered *kiai* in the vast network of *kiai* in Madura (Interview with a member of a renowned *kiai* family in Bangkalan on 11 November 2009).

Exceptions, however, do occur. *Kiai* Fuad Amin Imron (this figure is further described in Chapter 6), the regent of Bangkalan (for the periods 2003–2008 and 2008–2013) is widely regarded as a *kiai* even though he has never led a *pesantren*. The fact that he is held in such high regard seems to be because he is a great-grandson of *Kiai* Kholil and a son of *Kiai* Amin Imron, a leading *kiai* of the NU and the PPP. Moreover, there are three kinds of *kiai* in Madura based on their sources of income: firstly, *kiai* who depend primarily on their own resources to finance their *pesantren*; secondly, *kiai* who besides depending on their own resources, also rely on financial aid from other parties; and thirdly, *kiai* who depend primarily on financial aid from other parties to manage their *pesantren*.

The community does not expect Madurese *kiai* to support themselves. Therefore, *kiai*'s trading or farming activities are always managed by other people. These activities are not expected to be performed by the *kiai* themselves because they are considered as tasks beneath the *kiai*. The *kiai* are expected to be different from ordinary people because by appearing to be so, they show special characteristics that commoners do not have. *Kiai* also uphold their sacred position by preserving a prevalent belief in society that people will receive their *barakah* (blessing) and *karamah* (dignity) if they visit *kiai* to ask for guidance on any matter.

In general, it is commonly acknowledged that the *kiai* in Madura today have a great influence over society. *Kiai* are seen as people who have extensive knowledge of Islam, and whose capability in the religious realm goes beyond that of the commoners. They are respected as the most authoritative source within the Islamic dominion. The high esteem in which the public holds *kiai*, places them as commanding figures and the people's leaders, a position which has been largely achieved since at least the early nineteenth century when the local aristocracies gradually lost their influence. It is mostly in villages and sub-districts that the great power of *kiai* has been noticed, not only by villagers but also by state officials. The authorities have, on the one hand, been contested by *kiai*, and on the other hand, they have also enjoyed the benefit of

Figure 3.1 Holy water from Royal Pasarean (sacred burial grounds) Ratu Ebu in Bangkalan

kiai leadership among the people. Without the support of the *kiai*, it would have been less possible to involve the villagers in the implementation of development programmes during the New Order era. Both state authorities and the *kiai* are certainly aware of this situation.

The high status of the *kiai* is also enjoyed by their families. People's regard for *kiai* families is central to the *kiai* and his family's success in winning sympathy. Their institutions and personalities have also played significant roles in successfully gaining followers. Although exceptions occur, the position of *kiai* in Madura is an ascribed status, in which the children of *kiai* (especially, but not exclusively, the sons) also enjoy the high status bestowed upon their father – a position that they will assume, voluntarily or otherwise, later in life.

Moreover, the prestige of a *kiai* is garnered from the gathering of visitors. Top *kiai* are aware that they can get a more accurate image of society by meeting people not only from their own region, but also from other areas. During the New Order era, when only a minority of educated people in the villages had access to radio, television, newspapers, and magazines, *kiai* were able to disseminate up-to-date issues to their visitors. Armed with the latest information, they could create more concern among their visitors about the socio-political world outside their place of origin. However, they were also aware that by presenting their independence, *kiai* could prove that they were

responsible only to God. By distancing themselves from the irreligious realm, *kiai* gained the trust of their followers. As long as a *kiai* was independent, he would enjoy leadership among his followers. Possessing information is certainly essential in socio-political life for a *kiai*, as Anna Tsing puts it, the news is the information one needs in order to be participants in public groups and political issues. One becomes a public and political subject as one reads, responds to, and remakes the news. Yet, news making and news interpreting constructs lines of difference and exclusion as well as spheres of participation (Tsing, 2003, p. 192). What we should remember is that as religious elites, *kiai* are able to embrace, challenge, and transform imposed ideologies and policies; this is what most common people are incapable of.

Kiai as the leaders of people's power

In this section, I describe the participation of *kiai* in politics. The emphasis is put on the roles played by *Kiai* Alawy Muhammad, a prominent *kiai* in Sampang. In this regard, the first important event was his protest against the violence in the Nipah Dam incident (details of the incident are given in Chapter 5). The second important role he played was during election campaigns at the national and regional levels.

A prominent *kiai* in Sampang, recognizable by his distinctive turban and robe-style clothing, *Kiai* Alawy (d. 2014), is a striking figure for many Madurese. He is the fourth son of eleven siblings and was born when the Dutch powers still occupied his fatherland.[2] His father was a small, low-level *kiai* who possessed extensive knowledge of Islam. When *Kiai* Alawy was a teenager, due to hard times on Madura, he escaped from the island and lived in Malang, East Java. In Java, he gained a more respectable status (than he had as a small trader in Madura) by becoming a merchant. During the Sukarno administration, he went to Mecca not only for pilgrimage, but also to study. Like many Madurese *kiai* who had studied in this period, as soon as he returned to his homeland, he led a *pesantren* and began to spread his influence.

Although *Kiai* Alawy comes from a *kiai* family, it was not a large, high-level *kiai* family. He did not have the extensive privileges enjoyed by a *lorah* (an honorific title for the son of a high-status *kiai*). However, he still enjoyed a number of advantages in his father's *pesantren*, especially among the *santri*. Although leading a *pesantren* is possible for people who do not have a big *kiai* lineage, those living in western Madurese regencies face difficulties vis-à-vis the dominant position of other *kiai*, particularly that of *Kiai* Kholil's descendants. Moreover, running a *pesantren* requires sufficient resources and in Madura, traditions are also an important factor. Therefore, in the beginning, it is likely *Kiai* Alawy was under tremendous pressure to win over public opinion.

Kiai Alawy first became known at a national level in September 1993, after the Nipah[3] Dam incident in the Banyuates sub-district of Sampang,

approximately sixty kilometres north of the capital of the regency. The Nipah Dam incident was a bloody confrontation between the residents of Banyuates sub-district and police officers and soldiers. It resulted in the death of four people (details of the incident are given in Chapter 5).

After the incident, *Kiai* Alawy, together with Sampang residents, demanded justice. Vice President Try Sutrisno asked *Kiai* Alawy to calm the fiery situation in Sampang (*Jawa Pos*, 16 October 1993). *Kiai* Alawy's involvement in the violent Nipah Dam incident can be interpreted as a demand from the public: the people have great expectations of their leaders. Moreover, because *Kiai* Alawy was a prominent *kiai* in Sampang, the government asked him to help resolve the incident. The government realized that it was easier to ask a *kiai* to pacify the heated situation than to cope with the tense circumstances without involving local leaders. The situation indicates three important aspects. First, the position of *kiai* in society is so high that the people request them to be their representatives and to voice their concerns. Second, the government saw the *kiai* as mediators in disputes with the people, and this clearly indicated the importance of *kiai* as intermediaries. Third, following the incident, the position of *Kiai* Alawy and other *kiai* who were involved in the mediation process became stronger in society and in the eyes of the government. It was clearly very good for their reputation, especially in the political realm.

In Indonesia, the involvement of people's leaders such as the *kiai* and the inability of the people to speak for themselves could happen because as a weakly institutionalized state the attitudes associated with ideas of participatory citizenship frequently make little sense for citizens whose experience is that the realization of their rights depends on the collaboration of various political intermediaries. For the people, expressions of 'civic engagement' are often motivated by the need to preserve and build relationships with influential political patrons (Berenschot, Schulte Nordholt, and Bakker, 2017, p. 13). *Kiai* Alawy showed the government that reputation was a vital concept in spreading influence. In Indonesia, reputation is as important as formal office. The neo-patrimonial relation is no longer an abstraction. It is the one concrete reality upon which the state sits like an elaborate myth. The loose political alliances that have been busily deploying strategies are today also forming dynamic centres in the provinces and districts (Van Klinken and Barker, 2009, pp. 9–10). *Kiai* Alawy was an important actor in this case.

During the New Order, it seems that *Kiai* Alawy had more complex relationships with the government compared to other *kiai* of the PPP. Unlike many other *kiai* of the PPP, *Kiai* Alawy did not necessarily experience economic exclusion from the government. This seems to be a result of his closeness to the authorities in Surabaya and Jakarta. Following his involvement in the Nipah Dam incident, the government was aware that there were certain *kiai* in Madura who should not be overlooked; one of them was *Kiai* Alawy. Rumours spread that *Kiai* Alawy was awarded financial aid to renovate his *pesantren* (Widjojo and Fawzia, 1999, p. 68). In a private conversation with

one of Bassra's *kiai*, I was told that despite *Kiai* Alawy's involvement in the initial gatherings of Bassra, *Kiai* Alawy was not asked to participate in Bassra's later programmes and meetings because the Bassra *kiai* suspected that *Kiai* Alawy had made certain agreements with the government that would make other Bassra *kiai* feel uncomfortable. The complex relationships between *Kiai* Alawy and the state and other *kiai* are not surprising for religious leaders who also act as brokers or political actors. Renato Rosaldo suggests that the extension of state powers creates tension between two popular desires: a desire to build a state that promises modernity, material well-being, and a rational and just political order on the one hand; and a desire to make the state recognize citizens' identities and accept them as responsible social agents whose aspirations, actions, and opinions must be taken seriously on the other hand (Rosaldo, 2003, pp. 4–5).

In terms of the wider community, *Kiai* Alawy was perceived by many with suspicion as well as with respect. Following the 1997 Sampang riot, which occurred after the general elections (this riot is further described in Chapter 6), *Kiai* Alawy's residence became a meeting place where PPP functionaries and the government discussed the riot. This led to a perception that *Kiai* Alawy had been 'bought' by the government to ensure that he would be less critical in his response to the riot. Others held the view that *Kiai* Alawy was an influential figure in the PPP and in Sampang in general, and so the government needed to pay attention to this *kiai* if they wanted to tackle the riot effectively.

According to Muridan S. Widjojo and Diana Fawzia, there were three types of political attitude among *kiai* during the New Order. The first was those who were critical and anti-government; secondly, those who were critical but moderate and open towards the government; and finally, those who always supported the government (Widjojo and Fawzia, 1999, p. 69). This categorization is similar to that above describing types of *kiai* in Madura. In Sampang the third category was very small, and, in fact, these *kia*i were usually secluded from the vast religious network in Sampang. One of the *kiai* who belonged to the third category was *Kiai* Muafie, the then chairman of the Sampang branch of Golkar. Like other *kiai* of Golkar, he was rewarded with financial support and privileged access to government's resources. The majority, however, fell into the first category. *Kiai* who belonged to this category seemed to enjoy the benefits of a prestigious religious circle in Sampang and gained much respect from the people. Nevertheless, they also experienced discrimination from the government in the form of the difficulties getting financial aid or qualified teachers from the Ministry of Religious Affairs for their *pesantren*. One of the *kiai* who belonged to the first category was *Kiai* Ersyad who was known as a critical PPP cadre (Widjojo and Fawzia, 1999, p. 69).

In Sampang and also in Madura in general, given their status, *kiai* are expected to provide their followers with religious services and advice, including guidance in issues of marriage, divorce, and inheritance. In political spheres, utilizing his rhetorical abilities, *Kiai* Alawy attempted to convince his

followers that participation in politics was compulsory for Muslims. As a Madurese *kiai*, his support for the NU is almost unquestionable. The NU, from its establishment until the present day, has provided numerous Madurese *kiai* with a great political network. The traditional network based on kinship and marriage certainly remains important, but it was through the NU network that *Kiai* Alawy was able to reach higher levels in the political world. *Kiai* Alawy criticized the NU for the decision made at its 1984 congress to return to its 1926 charter (the 1926 *khittah*). He also repeatedly stated his opposition to the attempt to secularize the organization by accepting Pancasila as its sole ideology. The board of the Pasuruan branch of the NU reported that when he delivered a sermon in Pasuruan on 1 March 1997, he publicly slammed the NU for its decision to return to the 1926 *khittah* (*Jawa Pos*, 18 March 1997). However, in the same paper, *Kiai* Alawy denied the accusation. He said that 'I did not slam the NU; there is no way that a *kiai* smears (*mencoreng*) Islam' (*Jawa Pos*, 18 March 1997).

The withdrawal of the NU from the PPP caused bewilderment in Madura. While in other places the dissociating of the NU from the PPP was accepted relatively easily, NU followers in Madura, who were mostly villagers, were undecided about whether to vote for the PPP or for other parties in the next elections in 1987. They were waiting for instructions from their *kiai* on whether they would vote for the PPP again or whether the *kiai* would ask them to give support to other parties. A situation of confusion was generated by many *kiai* who, unlike most *kiai* in Java, were still strongly affiliated with the PPP. The strong affiliation of many *kiai* in Madura with the PPP, while in Java and other places some *kiai* openly supported Golkar, confused the NU followers after the withdrawal. A number of *kiai* in Madura believed that voting for Golkar would mean a betrayal of Islam, while giving preference to the PDI was unlikely to reap rewards. As a result, according to many *kiai*, the PPP remained the only feasible party to pick. However, prior to its 27th Congress, the chairman of the NU, *Kiai* Idham Chalid, encouraged *nahdliyin* to have free political aspirations, and to support not only the PPP if they wanted to, but also Golkar or the PDI (*Jawa Pos*, 31 August 1984). To avoid perplexing NU followers, the *kiai* decided to be more pragmatic by persuading *nahdliyin* to vote for a party that defends and promotes Islamic values. This was seen by *nahdliyin* as a plea to vote for the PPP. However, the results of the 1987 elections in Madura were disappointing for the PPP. For the first time during the New Order era, Golkar gained a victory on the whole island.

Like many *kiai* in Madura during the Suharto administration, *Kiai* Alawy believed that the PPP was a party for Muslims. He insisted that it was a great sin for Muslims to vote other than the PPP. However, he rejected the idea that Islam had to be implemented in an Islamic country. The rejection was a significant notion that Islam in Madura has much less been influenced by political Islam or Islamism compared to other strongly-associated areas of Islam, such as Aceh and Banten. Due to his strong political character, *Kiai* Alawy might believe that the creation of an Islamic state, borrowing Volpi's words, is

an intensely problematic – and unrealistic – aspect of Islamism (Volpi, 2010, p. 9). Apparently, this point of view led him to support a prominent secular figure, Megawati Sukarnoputri (daughter of Sukarno, Indonesia's first president) during the 1997 general elections.

Following the *Sabtu Kelabu* incident (the Grey Saturday incident),[4] the popularity of Megawati was boosted. She was seen as a symbol of people's resistance against the government. As a result, she gained the support of a PPP branch in Surakarta (Solo), Central Java. The term 'Mega-Bintang' (a term to denote the imaginary coalition between Megawati as the PDI's leader and the PPP whose symbol is a *bintang* (star)), which came to the fore during the campaigns subsequently became a powerful symbol of Islam and nationalism. *Kiai* Alawy was believed to be the mastermind of the idea, although many people also suspected it had come from Mudrik Sangidu, a functionary of the PPP of Surakarta.

During the 2008 *Pilkada* (*Pemilihan kepala daerah* – elections in a province or regency/municipality to elect a governor or a regent/mayor) of the East Java province, *Kiai* Alawy was a commanding figure in terms of his support for one of the pairs of candidates (the *Pilkada* is further sketched in Chapter 6). Khofifah Indar Parawansa, the only female candidate for governor, paired with Mudjiono (a general at the Kodam V/Brawijaya, the military area command of the Indonesian Army in the East Java province) under the acronym KAJI (**K**hofif**A**h and Mud**JI**ono) to run in the elections. This partnership was legitimated by a *fatwa* from the *kiai* in 2008. The *fatwa* was issued in response to his followers and a number of *kiai* who questioned the legality of voting for a female candidate. In the *fatwa*, the *kiai* declared that a woman has the right to struggle like a man. He also rejected the view that forbids a woman to be a leader. Consequently, he appealed to the people of Sampang and Bangkalan to vote for the couple. Moreover, he gathered several *kiai, klebun*, public figures, and thousands of people from Sampang and Bangkalan together at a wedding feast for his grandchild to rally support from his devotees.

Kiai Alawy, like many other *kiai* who supported their own candidate during the *Pilkada*, was aware that his open yet observant attitude could significantly boost the fame of his candidate among visitors who happened to visit him. For some *kiai*, such as *Kiai* Alawy, supporting certain candidates or certain political parties in elections – as long as it was not support for Golkar during the New Order – was a vital way to preserve their position in society.

In view of these socio-political developments, we have seen the importance of the *kiai* as central actors in local politics in Indonesia and reflected the significance of the *ulama* as key actors in Muslim politics in other Muslim-majority states. In many places, they 'assert their right to exist and resist the coercive conformity of a state that would deny them resources and recognition' (Hall and H[illegible] 1989, p. 175). This could happen because Muslim politics involves the competition and contest over both the interpretation of symbols and control of the institutions, formal and informal, that produce and sustain them. The interpretation of symbols is played out against the

background of an underlying framework that is common to Muslims throughout the world. A political system, whether in the Muslim world or elsewhere, inevitably involves the management of competing interests. The distinctiveness of Muslim politics may be said to lie rather in the specific 'values, symbols, ideas, and traditions that constitute "Islam"' (Eickelman and Piscatori, 1996, p. 5). It is clear now that as delineated in Chapter 1, Madura is an obvious place where conflicts and accommodations between Islam, state, and society have frequently been shaped and characterized by Islamic religious movements which have created Islam as an intense ideological force which challenges the state. This, in turn, may be useful in illuminating the future socio-political trajectories of Muslim-majority states currently undergoing similar political configurations, such as Turkey or Malaysia.

Kiai as the ultimate moderate leader

In this section, I illustrate the beneficial factors that attract *kiai* to become involved in politics and the ability of *kiai* to adapt to the modern political world. *Kiai* Nuruddin Rahman is a notable figure not only in Bangkalan, his place of origin, but also in the East Java Province. Although he never formally associates himself with any political party, his influence goes beyond his *pesantren*, and he is an eminent religious leader in the world of Madurese *kiai*. His influence in Bassra, first as the leading spokesperson and then as member of the Central Coordinator Council, has been demonstrated not only in the religious realm, but also in socio-political spheres. Moreover, his leadership in two *pesantren* in Bangkalan has attracted certain political parties to try to recruit him as a leading cadre of these political parties. However, these political parties failed as *Kiai* Nuruddin did not join any political party.

Kiai Nuruddin was born in 1957. Like many other *santri*, he studied in several *pesantren*, including *Pesantren* Al Khozini in Sidoarjo and *Pesantren* Darul Ulum in Jombang. As a child, he spent some years in a number of *pesantren* in Madura, such as *Pesantren* Darul Hikmah and *Pesantren* Al-Hamdaniyah. He later attended two universities: a private university in Surabaya where he obtained a bachelor's degree in law, and then in a private university in Bangkalan (now a state university) where he obtained another degree in law. *Kiai* Nuruddin comes from a lower *kiai* family. His study times in Java were the early stages of the formation of his thought on social and religious issues.

Kiai Nuruddin's early participation in the socio-political realm can be traced to his membership of several organizations, such as Komite Nasional Pemuda Indonesia (KNPI – The National Committee of Indonesian Youth), Ikatan Pelajar Nahdlatul Ulama (IPNU – The Student Association of Nahdlatul Ulama), Gerakan Pemuda Ansor (GP Ansor – The Youth Movement of Ansor) and Majelis Wilayah Cabang Nahdlatul Ulama (MWCNU – The Branch District Assembly of Nahdlatul Ulama). The second and the third

organizations are the NU's wing organizations. *Kiai* Nuruddin's contributions to the NU led him to take a number of strategic positions within the organization. For instance, he was one of the board members of the NU branch in Bangkalan and he was also one of the vice chairmen of the *syuriah* (the Advisory Board in the field of religion) of the NU branch of East Java Province. During the period from 2004 to 2009, he was a member of Dewan Perwakilan Daerah (DPD – The Regional Representative Council) representing the East Java Province. *Kiai* Nuruddin was also appointed a member of the Central Coordinator Council of Bassra. During the opposition of Bassra to the *industrialisasi* scheme, which emerged with the plan to erect the Suramadu Bridge (details of this opposition are described in Chapter 5), *Kiai* Nuruddin acted as the general secretary of Bassra as well as its main spokesperson.

As part of its development, Bassra has also become a medium by which the Madurese *kiai* are able to voice their socio-political concerns. One of their early concerns was their rejection of Porkas/SDSB (the state-sponsored lottery). The organization is also concerned with *aliran sesat* (religious deviation) as well as other *kemaksiatan* (something in violation of God's law). The strong opposition of Bassra to the *industrialisasi* scheme highlighted it as a rival to the government during the Suharto administration; indeed, its action had a significant impact on the public.

Bassra consists of *kiai* who lead *pesantren* in Madura. The unofficial membership is spread all over the island. *Kiai* Muhammad Kholil A.G., a charismatic *kiai* of Madura from the legendary *Kiai* Kholil dynasty, and *Kiai* Tijani Jauhari of *Pesantren* Al-Amien Prenduan, Sumenep from the renowned *Kiai* Chotib family of Sumenep were the main architects of Bassra. As a non-formal organization, Bassra does not have fixed members. Any *kiai* in Madura is said to be able to join the organization. *Kiai* Nuruddin claims Bassra has 90 per cent of *kiai* in Madura as its supporters (Interview with *Kiai* Nuruddin on 1 December 2009).[5]

According to Ali Maschan Moesa, *Kiai* Dhovier Syah of Sampang explained that at a gathering in 1989 a number of *kiai pesantren* in Madura started to think about 'intensifying' the ties between them. During a *khaul* in Batuampar, Pamekasan in February 1991, the idea of uniting the forces of Madurese *kiai pesantren* became stronger, so that concomitant with a *khaul* of *Kiai* Kholil in *Pesantren* Demangan, Bangkalan in March 1991, a number of *kiai pesantren*, such as *Kiai* Kholil A.G. and *Kiai* Abdullah Schal of Bangkalan, *Kiai* Rofi'i Baidlowi of Pamekasan, and *Kiai* Tijani Jauhari of Sumenep, discussed the idea more intensively (Moesa, 1999, p. 117). However, although Bassra was said to have been established because of the desire of Madurese *kiai* to strengthen the ties between *kiai* who lead *pesantren* in Madura (Interview with *Kiai* Nuruddin on 18 December 2009), it seems very likely that there were other motives behind its establishment. Among these motives was the *ulama*'s concern about the fate of the Madurese in the *pembangunan* (development, modernity) era, the fear of immorality that might accompany *pembangunan*, or the worry that when the *industrialisasi* plan

came to fruition, the *ulama* might lose some of their religious authority. In relation to these three motives, one of the early indications of Bassra's concerns was the presence of *Kiai* Kholil A.G. as a speaker in a seminar about the *industrialisasi* plan on 31 August 1991 in the Bangkalan Regency Hall. In his speech, *Kiai* Kholil A.G. pointed out that the government should ask Madurese *kiai* to discuss the plan together with the government before they implemented it.

In its draft of statutes, which was issued in 2009, Bassra derives its conceptual considerations from the agreement of Madurese *kiai* in a meeting held in *Pesantren* Al-Amien Prenduan, Sumenep on 1 November 1992; the declaration of a number of Madurese *kiai* (a proposal from the Sampang branch of Bassra in the mentioned meeting in Sumenep, which was later known as Tafsir Azas Bassra); and the outcome of a meeting in *Pesantren* Al Hamidy Banyuanyar, Pamekasan in August 2009. Moreover, in the draft, Bassra is also said to be a medium of communication, consultation, and coordination for *kiai pesantren* from all groups in Islam. Bassra is an association which does not belong to any organization, political party, or group. While Bassra does not have fixed members, it has a Dewan Penasehat (Advisory Council), Dewan Koordinator Pusat (Central Coordinator Council), Dewan Koordinator Daerah (Regional Coordinator Council), and Dewan Perwakilan Bassra (Bassra Representative Council). All councils are represented by Madurese *kiai pesantren*. Of these councils, all *kiai* involved in Bassra's activities are identified as participants (*Draft Pokok-pokok Pikiran Reorganisasi Bassra*, the document is in my possession).

While it is not clear why Bassra chose the name '*ulama pesantren*' (or *kiai pesantren, kiai* who lead *pesantren*), it seems that the *kiai* of Bassra wanted to underline the hierarchy in the vast religious circles of Madura. As I have explained in the previous chapter, in contemporary Madura, there are several types of *kiai. Kiai pesantren* are generally regarded as the highest rank. There are also *kiai tarekat* who usually lead a *pesantren* too, but are recognized primarily as *tarekat* teachers. The next category is *kiai dukun* and *kiai langgar*. These last two are considered the lowest in the hierarchy. The notion that *kiai* have to have *pesantren* is very important in Madura. Therefore, Bassra only consists of *kiai* who lead *pesantren*, as its name suggests. Certainly, alliance and competition are crucial factors over the interpretation of Islamic symbols and of control of public institutions in Madura as shown in Chapter 1.

While during the New Order the main political manoeuvre of Bassra was the unremitting opposition to the *industrialisasi* scheme, in the post-Suharto era, Bassra has, among other things, attempted to call the formation of a province of Madura. For example, in December 1999 the organization brought together the governor of East Java, Imam Utomo, three of four Madura's regents, and other segments of society in Sumenep to discuss the specific issue of gaining provincial status for the island (Quinn, 2003, pp. 168–169).

We return now to *Kiai* Nuruddin. In another case, *Kiai* Nuruddin and a number of *kiai* from Bassra – *Kiai* Abdullah Schal, *Kiai* Imam Buchori

Kholil and *Kiai* Syafik Rofi'i – were accused of making the Sanggau Ledo inter-ethnic conflict between the Madurese and the Dayaknese more hostile after they came to the conflict area in early 1997.[6]

Kiai Nuruddin and some members of the Bassra board visited West Kalimantan from 9 to 15 January 1997. General R. Hartono, the Staff Commander of the Army, accused some members of the Bassra board of making the conflict worse. *Kiai* Nuruddin insisted that their trip was aimed at calming the critical situation, particularly for the Madurese. Ismail Hassan Metareum, the General Chairman of the PPP, denied the involvement of *Kiai* Abdullah Schal and *Kiai* Imam Buchori Kholil – well-known for their association with the PPP – as the masterminds of the new turmoil (*Bisnis Indonesia*, 23 February 1997). *Kiai* Nuruddin stated that it was a big mistake to accuse them of being the provocateurs of the conflict. According to him, the NU Bangkalan was raising funds by issuing posters of leading Madurese *kiai* of the NU, such as *Kiai* Amin Imron and *Kiai* Abdullah Schal. The posters were also distributed in Kalimantan. During the riot, there was a dead Madurese holding the poster. General Hartono accused the *kiai* in the posters as well as other Madurese *kiai*, including *Kiai* Nuruddin, of being the provocateurs. Nonetheless, *Kiai* Nuruddin admitted that he was responsible for the making of the posters (Interview with *Kiai* Nuruddin on 4 March 2011).

Despite *Kiai* Nuruddin's lack of allegiance to any particular political party, in two interviews with me, he stated that he was a sympathizer of the PPP during the New Order era (Interviews on 18 November and 1 December 2009). During the Suharto administration, many *kiai* were concerned that they could have been alienated and isolated from their networks if they had or were considered to have certain ties with the government. The reluctance of most *kiai* to join various state-sponsored associations generated problems for those organizations in terms of attracting prominent *kiai*. On a bigger scale, the unwillingness of well-known *kiai* to join Golkar was caused by a concern about the possibility of being neglected by and excluded not only from their extensive religious networks but also from society. Even though it was not unusual in many parts of Indonesia for prominent *kiai* and other religious figures to maintain a close relationship with Golkar and even campaign for the party during the general elections,[7] in Madura it would be incorrect to state that most *kiai* served as partners of the government. Most *kiai* remained outside the structure of central power. They were very much aware that such an alliance with the government could be disadvantageous in respect of their influence over the people. Such a situation could include the departure of *santri* from their *pesantren* and more importantly, a loss of some of their religious authority.

Kiai Nuruddin's non-aligned position during the New Order era seemed to be derived from this point of view. He claimed that being a *kiai* means belonging to the public. As a public religious figure, he distanced himself from affirming his support for the Suharto administration during the New Order era; however, he was also aware that secular groups and government-backed

public religious figures might criticize him for basing his neutrality on political expediency. Certainly, he consciously recognized the benefits and the disadvantages of his position. He was frequently asked to link with the PPP as well as to join Golkar, and he enjoyed the freedom to be acknowledged by the population as well as other *kiai* and the government who invited him for religious festivities. His relationships with diverse groups, in fact, strengthened his influence over society and increased his religious power. Moreover, he did not enjoy the privilege of 'state-sponsored' *kiai*, who were seen to have good positions in state-initiated Islamic organizations, such as Majelis Dakwah Islamiyah, which were composed of civil servants, teachers, and a small number of religious leaders. However, he claimed that he did not resent this as these state-sponsored Islamic organizations were viewed in a somewhat negative light, because they voiced the government's ideas.

After the Suharto administration collapsed, the relationships between the central government and the religious leaders changed. Alongside the rise of more independent religious leaders, the sole authority of the state, as well as its coercive force, began to disappear. *Kiai* Nuruddin, who was never officially endorsed by the government,[8] began to take advantage of his independence from political parties in the New Order as a valuable tool in order to maintain and even to acquire a strategic position in the newly democratic and decentralized circumstances as well as to gain access to economic resources. In sum, *Kiai* Nuruddin's political manoeuvres have been more complex since the collapse of the New Order. This is in line with a proposition articulated in Chapter 1 that the relationships between people's leaders and between them and the state in Muslim-majority-states, including Indonesia, have been more complex since their encounters with democracy.

During the Konferensi Wilayah NU Jawa Timur (the Regional Conference of the NU East Java) on 11–13 October 2002, *Kiai* Nuruddin was a strong candidate for the position of chairman of the NU of East Java. He was backed by supporters from the Tapal Kuda area, perhaps unsurprising, considering the region is known as a migration area[9] for the Madurese. However, the support was not sufficient, and the supporters began to question Imam Nahrawi's (the Minister of Youth and Sports in the Joko Widodo presidency since October 2014) endorsement of *Kiai* Nuruddin. At that time Imam was the head of Garda Bangsa of East Java, a paramilitary group affiliated with the PKB. He was known to be a supporter of Matori Abdul Djalil in the internal conflict between Matori's PKB Batutulis and Alwi Shihab's PKB Kuningan (with Abdurrahman Wahid as its central figure). Most *nahdliyin* were against Matori in the dispute, and apparently this hatred also manifested itself during the conference. They did not want to vote for *Kiai* Nuruddin since Imam's affiliation with the *kiai* might lead to a failure and further hostilities. In an interview, *Kiai* Nuruddin admitted that he had a close relation with Imam and believed that the closeness was due to their shared place of origin (Bangkalan).[10] *Kiai* Nuruddin claimed that an inadequate lobbying of the board of the NU branches was the main factor behind his defeat

(Interview on 4 March 2011). As a result, Ali Maschan Moesa, a teacher from IAIN (State Institute for Islamic Studies) Sunan Ampel Surabaya became the winner; he defeated *Kiai* Nuruddin by a wide margin.

Following the loss, however, *Kiai* Nuruddin became even more involved in politics. His involvement in politics marks his new political orientations. Nevertheless, he was still aware that he could support any political party or give preference to certain political figures as long as he carried it out under the banner of Islam and as long as he remained outside the state power. Certainly, as I have postulated in Chapter 1, Islam in Madura is culturally embedded in all aspects of life, including in politics.

In supra-Madura politics, for instance in the first direct presidential election of 2004, *Kiai* Nuruddin bluntly showed his political stance. In the presidential election, the incumbent president Megawati paired with Hasyim Muzadi, the general chairman of the NU. During the election, Megawati became the target of several *fatwa* forbidding votes for a female presidential candidate. Indeed, the radical Islamic group Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI – The Indonesian Mujahedin Council) issued a *fatwa* against a female president. The organization had already been clear on this subject three years before, when Megawati replaced Abdurrahman Wahid in 2001 (*Tempo Interaktif*, 7 June 2004). Meanwhile, on 3 June 2004 a group of fifteen old *kiai*, known as '*Kiai Sepuh*', gathered in *Pesantren* Raudlatul Ulum, Pasuruan to issue a *fatwa* not to vote for a female president. Among the *kiai* were *Kiai* Abdullah Faqih of *Pesantren* Langitan, Tuban; *Kiai* Chotib Umar of *Pesantren* Raudlatul Ulum Jember; and *Kiai* Mas Subadar was the host. They argued that women could become leaders of a country only when there were no eligible male candidates, and stated that it could be made possible only in an emergency situation (*Suara Merdeka*, 21 June 2004). The *fatwa* from *kiai* of the NU was the outcome of a contest for legitimacy, not only in terms of scriptural understanding of the Quran and *hadith*, but also in a socio-political framework between the supporters of Megawati–Hasyim and Wiranto–Salahuddin Wahid, a younger brother of Abdurrahman Wahid, and a top NU figure. Therefore, such *fatwa* were not really surprising, given the large number of *nahdliyin* who could potentially be convinced not to vote for Megawati–Hasyim.

As an elite in the NU, *Kiai* Nuruddin believed that he had to take a stand on one of the two options, i.e. to give support to Megawati–Hasyim or Wiranto–Salahuddin. On 11 August 2004, Hasyim, along with twenty *kiai* including *Kiai* Nuruddin, *Kiai* Masduqi Mahfudz of Mergosono, Malang, and *Kiai* Idris Marzuki of Lirboyo visited Syeikh Muhammad bin Alawi bin Abbas Al-Maliki Al-Hasani in Medina. The purpose was clear: they searched for theological justification for a female leadership. Syeikh Muhammad was said to have given valuable advice to his visitors, such as stating that Indonesia is not a country with a caliphate system and, therefore, it is not a problem if Indonesia has a female president.

Based on his advice, the *kiai* who went to Medina justified their support for Megawati by arguing that the great reputation of Syeikh Muhammad would

guarantee the validity of his advice about a *fatwa* in their country. *Kiai* Masduqi Mahfudz stated that the visit was purely for *umrah* (a pilgrimage that can be undertaken at any time of the year), not to seek a *fatwa* (*Gatra*, 20 August 2004). However, *Kiai* Nuruddin admitted that he was aware of the hidden agenda behind the pilgrimage. He claimed that Hasyim had financed the trip in his role as the general chairman of the NU, not as the presidential candidate. Surprisingly, in an interview with me, he asserted that the *kiai* who went to the Middle East in fact opposed a female presidential candidate, and stated that they would not support Megawati.[11] He argued that if Hasyim paired with a male candidate, such as Wiranto or Jusuf Kalla, many *kiai* would surely have endorsed him (Interview on 4 March 2011).

Kiai Nuruddin's political aspirations in the post-Suharto period seem to indicate the flexibility, pragmatism, and populism of religious leaders as power brokers. When beneficial opportunities knock, *kiai* do not waste them, although they do risk their respected position in society. The *kiai*'s flexibility and pragmatism also show the ability of religious leaders as individuals who are capable of placing themselves in the public eye. They tend to seek secure places within communities in order not to become trapped in the wrong political choice, so that when there is a political change (as was the case after the Suharto administration collapsed, and in another Muslim-majority state, was the case after Necmettin Erbakan became Prime Minister of Turkey in 1996 that signalled the new era of Islamization in the country), they know how to voice their political aspirations or they know how the people will voice theirs. We have to remember that, according to Vedi Hadiz, Islamic populism constitutes a specific form of 'social mobilization based on asymmetrical multi-class coalitions'. These coalitions advance economic and political agendas. Therefore, rather than being rigidly predetermined by dominant values within the *ummah*/*umat*, these agendas are continually and dynamically being reshaped by the imperatives of operating within particular constellations of social power and interests, as well as pressures emanating from participation in a contradiction-laden neoliberal global economy (Hadiz, 2016, p. 20).

The process of gaining legitimacy from abroad was crucial since many NU followers demanded guidance from their *kiai*. As one author notes, Islamic political leaders are supposed to act legitimately in their use of power and act for God. Such a leader is able to act in a pragmatic manner, including seeking relations with secular factions if this is believed to advantage the groups he stands for (Samson, 1978, p. 203). In the Megawati–Hasyim case, the visit to Medina was said to have generated approval from the prestigious and influential *ulama*, which in turn would guarantee popular support from the *nahdliyin*, although in this case the result was ultimately fruitless because of the confusion over who to elect.

Kiai Nuruddin's political involvement in the 2004 presidential election marked a new political orientation. During the Suharto administration, he was known for his supposedly neutral attitude and did not formally join any political party. In the post-Suharto period, representing the NU, he was

elected as member of the DPD for the period of 2004 to 2009. *Kiai* Nuruddin is not a product of the New Order. Although his socio-political capability was built during that era, it was his choice to be politically neutral while remaining sympathetic to the PPP, which brought him into the national level. For the seat in the DPD, he gained 1,268,498 votes or 7.8 per cent of the total of 17,533,390 votes, which placed him in third place after *Kiai* Mahmud Ali Zain and *Kiai* Muzib Imron (*Lima Tahun Perjuangan DPD RI Jawa Timur 2004–2009*, pp. 16–18). *Kiai* Nuruddin's participation in both the NU and Bassra is not regarded as two overlapping tasks. In fact, the maintenance and renewal of the personal ties he constructed in those organizations have been for his benefit. Moreover, since *kiai* regard themselves as guides for commoners, they are continuously required to adjust to new situations in order to maintain their positions. Arguably, *Kiai* Nuruddin has proved successful in this.

Conclusion

Religious leaders in Indonesia respond in various ways to ideological and political developments, in part because in each area they relate to localized political situations. In present day Indonesia, religious life has not been integrated into the political state. Although a number of religious leaders occupy bureaucratic positions, most religious elites in Indonesia are not affiliated with bureaucracy, and thus it means that political authority does not depend on religious authority. Be that as it may, they continue to play important roles in Indonesia.

The high level of obedience of the *nahdliyin* to the NU and the *kiai* has been a key factor in terms of leading the *kiai* in Madura to interact with the political world. This is because the *kiai* know quite well that they will benefit significantly from the *nahdliyin*, not only in the political world, but also in terms of economic well-being. Certainly, the *kiai* are well adapted to the modern political world. This has helped to explain why the religious and cultural identities of the Madurese have presented a culturally-political challenge for the state in local politics, especially in elections, economic and community development, and religious affairs.

Kiai Alawy and *Kiai* Nuruddin are only two examples of how Madurese *kiai* have played important roles in society. There are many more *kiai* that have also coloured the life of the Madurese. The *kiai* are undoubtedly the ultimate factor in terms of the continuation of the sacred values of the Madurese. Recently, these values have been promoted by religious leaders and regency officials on the island that has been labelled Medina's veranda.

Notes

1 Mataraman is an area that roughly covers Madiun, Magetan, Nganjuk, and Kediri. This area is influenced by a syncretist Islam as a result of the long rule of the Mataram Kingdom. Pesisiran is an area that exists in the regencies of Gresik,

Lamongan, and Tuban. This area was the first in touch with Islam and therefore is highly influenced by a more orthodox Islam. Madura is an island that consists of four regencies, Bangkalan, Sampang, Pamekasan, and Sumenep. Like Pesisiran, Madura is also heavily influenced by a more orthodox Islam, and in my study, that form of Islam is defined as *santri* Islam. Pendalungan is also known as Tapal Kuda. This has been the main migration area of the Madurese for hundreds of years. This area covers (approximately) Jember, Banyuwangi, Bondowoso, Situbondo, and Probolinggo. As a result of extensive migration from Madura, the culture of people of Pendalungan is influenced by that of the Madurese. Arek is a metropolitan area that covers Surabaya, Sidoarjo, and Malang. As an urban area, Arek has become a place where many people from other sub cultures migrate to, and their religious orientation is best represented as rational and pragmatic (Chalik, 2010, pp. 138–139).

2 No-one, including *Kiai* Alawy himself, knows exactly when he was born, as is often the case for many leading *kiai*. It is often said that the *kiai* was born in 1926 when the NU was founded.

3 According to legend, the name is derived from a *sakti* (possessing magical power) *kiai, Kiai* Nipah who is claimed as the ancestor of the Nipah villagers. His grave was venerated for various purposes (mostly for acquiring wealth) before the site was to be flooded.

4 The attack of the PDI headquarters occupied by Megawati's supporters by Soerjadi's supporters (the elected chairman of the PDI in the congress in June 1996) and security forces on Saturday, 27 July 1996 resulting in a number of Megawati's supporters being killed or injured.

5 In another interview with *Kiai* Mashduqie Fadly, a *kiai* who represented the PPP in Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah Tingkat I and Tingkat II (DPRD I and II – The Regional People's Representative Council) of the East Java Province and the Bangkalan Regency, respectively, I found out that some leading *kiai* have never been asked to participate in Bassra. *Kiai* Mashduqie, however, did not reveal why he was not asked to participate in Bassra (Interview on 1 December 2009).

6 The inter-ethnic conflict in West Kalimantan began in at least 1968 in Toho, Pontianak regency. In the 1996–1997 conflict, the trigger was a quite insignificant matter: a quarrel in a *dangdut* music concert between Madurese and Dayaknese youth at the end of December 1996. By the end of March 1997, there were 6,000 refugees and 670 destroyed houses in Sambas. Meanwhile, there were 3,122 refugees and 225 burned houses in Sanggau (*Gatra*, 27 October 2000). An author questions whether the 1998 political reformation was a factor to escalate regional conflicts, such as Dayaknese – Madurese series of conflicts (Kahn, 2009, p. 17).

7 For instance, *Kiai* Chalid Mawardi, an influential member of the NU opted for Golkar, while *Kiai* Musta'in Romly of *Pesantren* Darul Ulum, Jombang became active spokesperson of Golkar, and even *Kiai* Abdurrahman Wahid was appointed as a member of the People's Assembly representing Golkar.

8 Yet, he admitted that the older of his two *pesantren* once received aid from the government as a result of his victory in a P4 simulation (Pendidikan, Penghayatan, dan Pengamalan Pancasila – the Education, Internalization, and Implementation of Pancasila, a state doctrine for its citizens as the sole philosophical base of life to adopt) as the best tutor and facilitator of P4 in East Java (Interview with *Kiai* Nuruddin on 1 December 2009).

9 The Madurese migration to East Java took place primarily during the last decades of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. It was significantly stimulated by the development of private plantations in that area (Elson, 1984; Khusyairi, 1989). According to Van Goor, other reasons for the Madurese migration during the colonial era included the high number of crimes, poor jurisdiction, and extortion

of the island's inhabitants by the regents and their relatives (Van Goor, 1978, pp. 196–197).

10 Imam Nahrawi comes from Konang sub-district in Bangkalan. He and several other members of the East Java local parliament from the PKB Fraction sporadically donated a small part of their salary to the NU of East Java in early 2000s. Many pundits then made a link between Imam's support of the NU and support for *Kiai* Nuruddin (Interview with *Kiai* Nuruddin on 4 March 2011).

11 There was a story making the rounds among leading *kiai* of the NU on the Megawati–Hasyim candidacy, which said that on the election day they would mark the picture of Hasyim, not that of Megawati, though both pictures were in the same ballot paper, so that they could claim that they were not in favour of female president.

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4 Local strongmen, traditions, and overlooked aspects of the Madurese[1]

Introduction

Besides *kiai*, there are other variants of local leadership in Madura, particularly in the western part of the island. This includes *klebun* (village heads) and *blater*. The *blater* are feared local strongmen who have a relatively high position in society, who are held in awe (*disegani*), and who benefit from insecurities and uncertainties to obtain an occupation in protection, gain their reputation through the fear they spread amongst the local population, and accumulate social and political influence when they become involved in politics. It should be noted that these local strongmen differ from the strongmen of politics who are defined as political leaders who rule by repression and exercise an authoritarian administration.

Like many other places in Indonesia, Madura has long experienced the lack of control over violence by central and local authorities. Consequently, the inability of state institutions in the pre-colonial and colonial era to enforce the law has allowed local strongmen to emerge, spread their influence, and challenge influential actors: state officials and religious leaders. However, like the *kiai*, the *blater* are also known to be very adaptive and responsive to socio-political transformations. Indeed, they may form mutually beneficial relations with the state and religious leaders when the power of the state and the influence of religious leaders are too strong to oppose or when making such an alliance is seen as a helpful option. As Aspinall and Van Klinken put it, throughout contemporary Indonesia, as in many other countries, the involvement of state officials in illegal activity is both ubiquitous and a matter of public knowledge (Aspinall and Van Klinken, 2011, p. 2).

This chapter deals with the nature and characteristics of the *blater*, forms of violence associated with the Madurese, and aspects of the *abangan*-like culture in which the *blater* are its most avid supporters. In doing so, I focus on the *blater*'s origin, resources, and commodities in the larger Madurese society. Furthermore, I also examine the role of *blater* in *remo* and distinct violent cultural forms associated with wealth, status, and honour that are embodied mostly in *kerapan sapi* and *carok*. Finally, I also discuss several aspects of local beliefs and the *blater*'s religious aspects. Among the questions addressed

are: What is the origin and what are the characteristics of the *blater* in society? How does *remo* contribute to the way of life of the *blater* and distinguish them from *santri* Muslims? What are the nature and characteristics of forms of violence in Madura? How have the religious beliefs of the *blater* adapted to *santri* Islam in daily life?

These ranges of socio-cultural aspect have provided the *blater* with opportunities to strengthen their role as perpetrators of cultural violence in Madura. Johan Galtung defines cultural violence as '[a]ny aspect of a culture that can be used to legitimize violence in its direct or structural form. Examples of cultural violence are indicated, using a division of culture into religion and ideology, art and language, and empirical and formal science' (Galtung, 1990, p. 291). According to Blok, the view on violence is always bounded with time and place, and largely depends on those involved in it, whether they are the offenders and victims, spectators and bystanders, or witnesses and authorities (Blok, 2001b, p. 106). Indeed, as Freek Colombijn argues, people are enculturated in the practice of violence through a process that is best described as 'social learning' (Colombijn, 2005, p. 266). In *blater* traditions such as *remo*, a *blater* can commit acts of violence (for example fighting using sharp weapons) if he is interrupted by another *blater* when he is dancing with a *tandhak* (dancer). This act of violence is legitimized by a set of rules for *remo* that all *blater* are expected to follow. Moreover, besides *remo*, they are also highly engaged in *kerapan sapi* and *sabung ayam*, other *blater*-style symbols of machismo and violence which are frequently exploited to amplify their influence.

Clearly, while the *kiai* are the main actors in the religious realm who use their religion-based position to enhance their social standing and political well-being in state-society relations, the *blater* are local strongmen in the socio-cultural realm who can act as power brokers and have mutually beneficial relationships with authorities and religious leaders as well as develop a complex relation with Islam. This shows us that, as affirmed in Chapter 1, in terms of religion, culture, and politics, Madura should be understood as an island of piety, tradition, and violence in many forms and that in Madura Islam is culturally embedded, whether in religious traditions or in their cultural counterparts.

Origin and characteristics of the *blater*

Origin and nature

Despite the emergence of the *blater* not being well documented, the *blater* world is not a new phenomenon. Nevertheless, the *blater* do not have a distinctive institution, such as the *pesantren* for the *kiai*, and *blater*-ship itself cannot be considered as an official occupation; hence, it is never recorded in official statistics. Consequently, counting the number of *blater* is impossible because we simply do not know how many of them there are. Moreover, there

is no 'official' organization with a central leadership for *blater*. They may form a small group, consisting of tens of *blater*, whose members are those who share, among other things, the same working area or the place of origin. However, it is in *remo* that the presence of *blater* in groups is obvious. By and large, they do not appear in a group on a daily basis.

Blater are particularly active in the western Madurese regencies of Bangkalan and Sampang. In the regencies of Pamekasan and Sumenep, they are less conspicuous because the eastern part of the island appears to have better developed in a societal sense, while Western Madura has not really functioned well in state formation.[2] While the *blater* mainly exist in Madura, they are actually part of the general Indonesian phenomenon of strongmen – including the vanished *jagoan* of nineteenth-century Java and the *jawara* in Banten – who offer protection to those who need it or those who are thought to need it including petty traders in traditional markets as well as big entrepreneurs.[3]

In Madura, many of the local traditions and customs, such as *tellasan topa'* (an extra celebration of Eid al-Fitr on the eighth day of Shawwal month after voluntarily observing six days of fasting) and *padusan* (a communal bathing performed one day before the fasting month of Ramadan to purify one's heart and soul), have become linked with the common *santri* culture. However, there are also several local traditions that are closely-related to non-*santri* culture, such as *kerapan sapi* and *sabung ayam*. These latter traditions are deeply embedded in the lives of many non-*santri*, which I identify as *abangan*-like people.

According to Clifford Geertz's renowned trichotomy (the *santri*, the *abangan*, and the *priyayi*), *santri* are orthodox Muslims in Java. The *santri* religious tradition consists not only of a set of basic Islamic rituals, but also includes a whole complex of social, charitable, and political Islamic organizations. Meanwhile, *abangan* is a variant within the general Javanese religious system whose religious tradition is made up primarily of the ritual feast called the *slametan*,[4] as well as an extensive and intricate complex of spiritual beliefs, and a whole set of theories and practices of curing, sorcery, and magic (Geertz, 1960, pp. 5–6). Unlike Geertz, however, I do not describe *blater* practices as un-Islamic. There are several similarities between Javanese *abangan* and *blater* as far as cults, spirit beliefs, and ritual practices are concerned, which lead me to identify them as *abangan*-like. *Blater* are groups who are very close to the *abangan* tradition. In the *pesantren* tradition, *santri* are pupils of *kiai*. In this book, as I have explained in Chapter 2, *santri* refers primarily to the majority of Madurese Muslims as the proponents of a more orthodox Islam that is based on the global influences of Sunni Islam, while the *blater*, the *abangan*-like group, are primarily a minority of Madurese Muslims and proponents of a less orthodox Islam that is largely based on local perspectives. We have to remember, however, that there are a lot of religious variations in Madura. Certainly, *blater* are not the only *abangan* group in the island – they are an example of an *abangan* group in Madura – as there are also some people who adhere to *abangan* tradition, but who are not *blater*.

Therefore, I would argue that Madura is not only a home for *santri* groups, but also for non-*santri* groups, like the *blater*.

Several authors seem to neglect the existence of other variants of Islam in Madura besides the *santri*. They suggest that:

> [t]he conceptual distinction between *abangan* and *santri* does not exist; the Central Javanese *abangan* religion, with its many magico-mystical influences from Hinduism and Buddhism, never developed to a large extent on Madura.
>
> (Koentjaraningrat, 1972, p. 54)

> With the exception of occasional eccentrics, religious uniformity among the Madurese makes it difficult for us to observe overt representatives of a strange [*sic*] tradition comparable to Javanese *abanganism*.
>
> (Mansurnoor, 1990, p. 4)

> *Dalam masyarakat Madura tidak dikenal adanya pembagian golongan abangan dan putihan, sebagaimana di masyarakat Jawa* (In the Madurese society, the division of *abangan* and *putihan* [a term also denoting *santri*] like in Java is not recognized).
>
> (Moesa, 1999, p. 53)

Unlike these three authors, I would maintain that the whole island cannot be completely characterized by *santri*-style orthodoxy.

Madurese Islam is, in fact, plural and at least two forms of Islam can be identified. The first is based more on the global viewpoints of Sunni Islam and the other is based more on local perspectives. The former adheres more to the largest denomination of Islam, *Ahl as-Sunnah* or Sunni Islam and the latter, while also adhering to Sunni Islam, is influenced more by local mystical belief systems. According to Mark Woodward (1989) and Martin van Bruinessen (1999), traditions similar to those of Indonesia's supposedly non-Islamic local culture can be found in other Muslim civilizations as well. Furthermore, it is important to note that, as in Java, each form of Islam in Madura itself shows heterogeneous characteristics. Therefore, the categorization of *blater* as an *abangan*-like group does not mean that they are the same group as the one identified by Geertz on Java. What I intend to do is to make a distinction between the two different groups: the *santri* and the *blater*.

In tracing the origin of the concept of *blater*, one cannot find the word *blater* in Madurese–Dutch dictionaries. In H.N. Kiliaan (1905) and P. Penninga and H. Hendriks (1936), one can find the word '*badjingan*' (a word that is used to refer to *blater* by many Madurese today) that means *landloper* ('tramp' in English). In an older Dutch–Madurese dictionary (1898), Kiliaan translates *schurk* (meaning ruffian or scoundrel in English) as *bangsat* or *bhangsat* (a word

that is sometimes used to refer to *blater* today) and *dhurjhana* (meaning evil or wicked in English). In two Madurese–Indonesian dictionaries written by Asis Safioedin (1975; 1977), I did not find the word *blater* or *bajingan* (thug, an alternative word for *blater*, see below). Only in the most recent Madurese–Indonesian dictionary can one find the word *blater* (Pawitra, 2009). According to this dictionary, *blater* means a figure who is regarded as a charismatic *jagoan* (*jago*) due to his strong influence in his place of origin, and that the term has a negative connotation.

Moreover, I have not been able to trace the emergence of *blater* in the colonial records. No newspapers of the colonial period appeared to provide accounts on *blater*. Today's East Javanese papers also hardly make any reference to *blater*. Even local Madurese newspapers, which came into existence mainly after the New Order, seldom talk about *blater*. It is fair to say that the media fear the repercussions of being critical of the *blater*. If a *blater* commits a crime, the media will refer to the perpetrator only by his name without explaining that he is a *blater*. However, it seems that the lack of appearance of the *blater* in local newspapers is largely as a result of journalists' perception that the word *blater* is less popular than other similar terms in Madura and East Java, such as *bajingan* or *preman* (hoodlum, this term has become more popular since the 1980s).

It appears that *blater* is a relatively new word, at least when we compare it to the older word of *jawara* that might have existed in the nineteenth century. Nonetheless, the *blater* or the *blater*-ship are not new phenomena. In Kiliaan (1904), one can find the words *remo*(*h*) and *tjarok* (*carok*). This obviously indicates that these cultural forms already existed, at least in the first decade of the twentieth century. These traditions are in fact older and were already recorded in Dutch sources.[5] In a general sense it is possible to suggest that the *blater* came into being some time before the twentieth century. More importantly, since *remo* and *carok*, which play an important part in *blater* life, were already prevalent in the nineteenth century, it is possible that *blater* first appeared around the same time. A possible argument is that *blater* might have another name that was not recorded by the Dutch,[6] or that the distinction between *bajingan* and *blater* did not exist yet (see the following paragraph for the distinction between *bajingan* and *blater*).

Today's *blater* frequently assert when the term first appeared. In interviews with several *blater*, many of them claim that the word already existed when they were young. Some of them were children in the 1930s and 1940s and are convinced that the word *blater* was used at that time to identify strongmen in villages. Although such claims are unverified, it is still useful to indicate that *blater* wish to highlight their presence by stressing their historical significance. Many Madurese actually identify *blater* as *bajingan* or *preman*: the first is a common but not exclusive term for a thug in Madura and East Java, while the latter is commonly used in Jakarta. *Blater* will almost certainly object to being categorized as *bajingan* since this term has negative connotations, while *blater* has an honorific meaning to them.

According to Rozaki (2004, pp. xx, 9), *blater* are a social community who possess habits or customs that are different to those of *kiai* or *santri*. They engage in *remo sandur* (Madurese dancing), *sabung ayam*, gambling, and what he incorrectly defines as other forms of crime. Moreover, Wiyata defines a *blater* as someone whose behaviours tend to committing crimes, such as gambling. Like Rozaki, he incorrectly defines the *blater*'s alcohol consumption and womanizing (*main perempuan*) as forms of crime (Wiyata, 2006, xix). Meanwhile, Moesa defines *blater* as people who do not want to be bound by religious norms and who like gambling, consuming alcohol, and *carok*. He also suggests that they tend to avoid conducting such practices in front of the *kiai* and state officials, and that they usually repent their sins when they become old (Moesa, 1999, p. 151). Both Rozaki's and Wiyata's identification of *blater* as having the tendency to indulge in what they define as criminal activities is not constructive. It seems that these views are based on the writers' general perception that the *blater* have a negative image in society. The views of these Madurese authors, that the standing of the *blater* in their own society is unequivocally negative, seem, however, exaggerated.

Blater, however, are not simply local gangsters as Rozaki, Wiyata, Moesa, or Pawitra suggest. They cannot be explicitly associated with crimes or amoral conduct. Rather, *blater* are a group of people who are able to sustain their distinctive norms and values in society using their charisma and by intimidating potential enemies, which includes other *blater* from other communities, common *preman* groups, or low-level village *kiai* who criticize their participation in *remo, kerapan sapi*, or *sabung ayam*; indeed, anyone who is considered an obstacle.

Resources

The *blater* seem to resemble the mafiosi in Sicily and, certainly, to make a link between Madura and Sicily is not a novel idea. Touwen-Bouwsma in *De Gids* (1983) compared violence in Madura to that in Sicily. In the Indonesian version (1989), she mentions:

> '*Orang berani*' *merupakan sumber ancaman yang paling besar dalam situasi di mana mereka harus mempertahankan martabat mereka. Apa yang berlaku untuk orang mafia di Sisilia di Itali, juga berlaku untuk* '*orang berani*' *di Madura.*
>
> (Touwen-Bouwsma, 1989, p. 178)

> 'Brave men' are the biggest threat in situations where they have to defend their dignity. What applies to the mafiosi in Sicily, Italy also applies to the 'brave men' in Madura.
>
> (Touwen-Bouwsma, 1989, p. 178)

She also states:

> *Perkumpulan remo, yang secara terbuka mendukung kekerasan, makin lama makin berkembang menjadi pusat kejahatan di bawah tanah yang terorganisir. Pengaruh 'orang berani' dalam bidang ekonomi dan politik menjadi kabur dan teror yang mereka lakukan menjadi lebih sulit untuk diatasi. Madura dengan cepat mengarah menjadi Sisilia Jawa.*
>
> (Touwen-Bouwsma, 1989, p. 179)

> *Remo* groups, which openly support violence, increasingly develop into a centre of crime in an organized underworld. The influence of 'brave men' in the fields of economy and politics becomes blurred and the terror that they spread becomes more difficult to handle. Madura rapidly transforms to become the Sicily of Java.
>
> (Touwen-Bouwsma, 1989, p. 179)

De Jonge (2002, p. 147) also mentions *orang berani*:

> A person who succeeds in committing *carok* after being seriously insulted is acclaimed as an *orang berani*, a courageous person. *Carok* can be revenged if the relatives of the person wounded or killed do not agree with the 'verdict'. This failure to acquiesce could eventually lead to a vendetta (*carok berantai*) between the families involved. In case of *amok* there is usually no feeling of vengeance.

In the Madurese tradition, the '*orang berani*' will be identified as *blater*. The *blater* have some things in common with the Sicilian mafiosi. Both groups came into being as rural phenomena. Nevertheless, it must not be forgotten that they differ in certain respects.

The significance of the mafia has been highlighted, among others, by Blok. According to Blok, the central characteristic of the mafia is 'the private use of unlicensed violence as a means of control in the public arena' (Blok, 1988, p. xiv). Unlike Hobsbawm (1965), who puts both bandits and mafia in the same form of primitive movements, Blok argues that the mafia is 'more similar to regular government and more dependent on regular government than is banditry' (Blok, 1988, p. xx). Moreover, Blok also suggests that bandits often terrorize the poor and the weak and that interdependencies between lords, peasants, and bandits are far more complex than social banditry (Blok, 1972, p. 496; 2001a, pp. 17, 20, 22).

Furthermore, Gambetta reveals the significance of the mafia. He defines the mafia as an industry, an enterprise which offers private protection as its main product (Gambetta, 1993, p. 1). He argues that protection can become a genuine commodity and that it plays a crucial role in the economy of Sicily due to the fact that there are always people who need protection at all levels

of the economy. Furthermore, he rejects the idea that many people become victims of extortion when they deal with mafiosi; he suggests that actually there are people who are willing to buy protection from mafiosi (Gambetta, 1993, p. 2).

Relating to the concepts of mafiosi in Sicily, the *blater* in Madura are not bandits. In studying the Sicilian mafiosi, Blok and Gambetta make a clear distinction between mafiosi and bandits. In another context, a work by Margreet van Till also clearly signifies the difference between *jagoan* who had dual roles and Batavian robbers who were bandits (Van Till, 2011, pp. 14–15). Nevertheless, exceptions do occur. Some of them may be involved in criminal activities although in principle the *blater* are not criminals.

Borrowing Blok and Gambetta's concepts together, I argue that the *blater* can also be described as entrepreneurs of protection, individuals who offer protection to various groups, ranging from commoners to political parties, in order to get political and economic benefits. Moreover, the relationship between the authorities and strongmen groups depends on mutual understanding, especially in economic sectors. In order to give the impression that without strict controls society would descend into chaos, the New Order administration made use of 'fine and elegant' methods to convey its message, including the use of local strongmen as agents to discredit opposition movements. By the late 1980s, this state–gang relationship was often categorized as one of *perdekkingan*/*perbekkingan* (the backing system). One obvious example is how police can have very close ties with criminal organizations; that the police may treat criminal practice as acceptable and legitimate (Nooteboom, 2011, p. 217). In practice, it was a privatization or franchising of state power, which allowed the state to distance itself from excesses conducted on its behalf (Wilson, 2011, p. 244). Furthermore, protection surely involves money, and according to Van Klinken and Barker, protection money, circulating through neo-patrimonial networks and reinforcing trust, is an alternative way of coping with insecurity (Van Klinken and Barker, 2009, p. 13). In addition, since the 1999 elections, many regions have seen expanding operations of the political party-affiliated *preman* groups in criminal activities such as racketeering and debt collection to generate income for the party and their own members (Choi, 2007, p. 329).

Commodities

Although *blater* are known to possess characteristics of bravado and bullying, they are actually needed by commoners, village officials, religious leaders, and local authorities for various purposes. One of the most likely reasons behind the existence of *blater* before Indonesian independence was the absence of certainty in almost all aspects of life[7] and law enforcement by the authorities. Schulte Nordholt asserts that it was the inability of the Dutch to strengthen the colonial administration at the local level and the geographic isolation in the countryside that created favourable conditions in which *jagoan* could establish themselves in Java (Schulte Nordholt, 1991, p. 89). A similar explanation

seems also to be possible for the existence of *blater* in Madura. Madurese rulers had been reliable allies of the Dutch since the eighteenth century when they supplied armed forces to fight in the Third Succession War (1746–1755) (Lombard, 1996, p. 46), in the Surapati War (1767) (Kuntowijoyo, 2002, p. 146), and for the Barisan. Barisan was a paramilitary organization established in 1816[8] following a request from the Dutch to the ruler of Bangkalan (Kuntowijoyo, 2002, pp. 146–148).

The king of Bangkalan provided the Dutch with 1,000 soldiers to be stationed in Java and Madura. In the following year, the ruler of Sumenep supplied 1,080 soldiers. In 1831, Barisan consisted of infantry, cavalry, artillery, and pioneer troops/pikemen with 95 officers and 2,881 soldiers or 2,976 in total. As a result of their allegiance, the VOC bestowed self-government on Madurese rulers (De Jonge, 2002, p. 149). Despite the introduction of direct rule in Java, which resulted in a number of changing policies, the colonial government could not interfere with the administration at the local level. In Madura, where self-government was maintained until the end of the nineteenth century (Pamekasan principality was abolished in 1858, while the Sumenep and Bangkalan principalities were brought to an end in 1883 and 1885, respectively), feudal relations continued to exist, and at the village level, local leaders were able to impose their power on society; a situation that resembled that in Java.

Meanwhile, a lack of security increased due to the absence of faith in the abilities of village leaders. Consequently, private protection might be offered by individuals who had physical capabilities and were able to deal with insecurity. It is likely that the protection was offered to the village's rich dwellers who had to make sure that their resources were secured. In many cases, the protection was actually provided against the protectors' allies who also protected rich landowners in other villages. Meanwhile, people who did not have adequate resources to buy protection relied heavily on self-help (De Jonge, 2002, p. 150).

Nowadays, the *blater* are not deprived commoners. Indeed, most of them are more prosperous than most villagers. They can be successful traders or wealthy farmers, professions that can lead to occupying a *klebun*-ship. Although they may become clients of higher status patrons, they can also become patrons for the clients beneath them, the villagers, and so they can employ villagers in their businesses, their shops, or their farms. Nevertheless, running an 'ordinary' business is not an occupation that turns them to *blater*-ship. Like the mafiosi in Sicily, they offer protection. The violent aspects of the *blater* are, in fact, outcomes of the protection. Therefore, *blater* activities have two aspects: protection and violence.

Many *blater* become private security forces for entrepreneurs not only in Madura, but also in neighbouring cities in the East Java Province. More often than not, they are seen by entrepreneurs as being more reliable than the police. Many *blater* who are unable to find a 'job' in the private security world opt for offering pseudo-protection at lower levels, such as in bus

terminals, traditional markets, or seaports. Their clients are *taksi-* (small van used as public transport, in Java it usually called *angkot*), *ojek-* (motorcycle taxi used as public transport), and bus drivers in bus terminals or retailers in markets. These people, whether regularly or irregularly, give *jatah preman* (*japrem* – illegal rents) to the ruling *blater* in their working area. *Blater* claim that *japrem* must be paid because their clients receive threats from irresponsible people. They like to claim that it is their duty to protect their clients and, as a consequence of the protection that they provide, the clients have to pay a certain amount of money. In reality, however, the clients are protected from the *blater* themselves. This pseudo-protection may be called protection racketeering.[9] Here, we can see that the distinction between the *blater* and the *bajingan* is quite hazy and that is how many people see it in reality.

There is usually a strong agreement between groups of *blater* who control certain areas not to interfere in each other's territory. Disputes after the 1967/1968 and 1973/1974 conflicts have hardly occurred (the conflicts will be discussed below). Clashes involving *blater* in Surabaya, however, are known to have taken place. Nevertheless, the clashes usually involve groups of *blater* and other strongmen from other ethnic groups in Indonesia, not between Madurese *blater*. Although threats to the clients are rare, it seems that the *blater* will most surely take action if their clients are in danger. Unlike many common *preman* in Jakarta, who only collect payment without necessarily protecting their clients, the *blater* will likely prevent their clients from falling victim to potential extorters, whether it be *preman* or other *blater* groups, without possibly being aware that the clients are under the protection of certain *blater*. To the majority of *blater*, protecting their clients means a way to preserve their dignity and honour in their vast *blater* network and a way to maintain their reputation. In return, their reputation as a reliable protector is useful when a *blater* is involved in the private security business at a higher level, protecting big entrepreneurs or ensuring the smooth running of political parties' campaigns (Khoirul, a *blater* who is a former head of security in Perak, Surabaya is a perfect example of how *blater* offer 'real protection', instead of 'protection racketeering'. See the illustration in Chapter 7). In the post New Order, as has been shown, the growing presence and power of criminal networks is rooted in the government's incapacity to manage security in the context of democratization and decentralization (Honna, 2011, p. 266). Those who are retired from the private security world, mainly because of old age, usually start up new businesses in trade and commerce as a means of earning a living. In Madura, like the *jawara* in Banten, once someone is recognized as a prominent *blater*, he is likely to maintain this status even when retired from the private security world or no longer active in *remo*.

Blater can offer protection because of their fearsome reputation. In several interviews with people from various backgrounds, the *blater* are portrayed with both negative and positive images. For those who perceive them as having a negative image, the *blater* are no more than *bajingan* or *preman*. This view seems to be generated for two main reasons. Firstly, this view is formed because

of a lack of personal interaction with the *blater*. Secondly, it is formed as a result of the activities of *blater*. Those who have a more positive image of the *blater* regard them as influential individuals, especially those who show hospitality and politeness towards the community where they live. However, those who hold positive views are mainly individuals who benefit from forming patron–client relationships with the *blater*. These people are employed in various *blater* businesses. The high degree of instability and insecurity, and the inability of security forces to enforce the laws that protect society, have created communities who apply patterns of violence to solve problems. At some point, the *blater* appear to be the only solution for solving problems or conflicts and for offering economic security, whether it is through violence or via compromises. These explanations indeed indicate the importance of local strongmen who offer protection when certainty and trust of the authorities and between commoners and, more importantly, confidence in law enforcement by the authorities, are absent.[10]

Remo

What palpably distinguishes *blater* from other strongmen in Indonesia is *remo*. *Remo* is an exclusive all-*blater* meeting that signifies the importance and existence of *blater* in Madurese society. *Remo* is a feast for *blater*, which also serves as a rotating savings and credit association. A guest has to give money (*bhubuwan*) to the host and, in return, when he becomes a host, he will receive money from the former host and other guests, who will eventually become hosts as well. In this sense, *remo* may have significant economic benefits for the host. Nevertheless, it does not mean that the host will become affluent from the gathering. In principle, when he becomes a guest for a *remo* being held by a fellow *blater*, he has to provide the host (who was himself a guest at an earlier occasion) with more cash than he received from him before (*ngompang*). If he gives the same amount of money or even less, the host may consider this as an insult. Consequently, he may be removed from the membership of *remo*. However, exceptions frequently do occur, as many hosts show no real objection if they receive the same amount of money, taking into consideration the possibility that some people may not have sufficient funds to attend a *remo* held by a fellow *blater*. Furthermore, money is not the main reason why a *blater* holds a *remo*. *Remo* is a means of establishing new fraternities or fortifying old brotherhoods (*nyareh taretan* or *nyareh kancah*).[11]

Remo also entails performances such as a *tayub*.[12] Unlike *tayub* in Java, *tayub* in *remo* is not performed by female dancers. The dancers are men dressed as women. According to the *blater*, replacing female dancers with male performers is said to reduce unwanted trouble that may arise if the dancers are women. Nonetheless, as in Javanese *tayub*, the act of *napel* (giving money to the dancer(s) by putting it on the dancer's chest) is prevalent and, in fact, symbolizes the level of affluence of the cash-giver. In general, the dancers are not really important for *blater* since the most essential aspect of *remo* is the

opportunity to show their existence to other *blater* and other people. However, in the mass *carok* in Surabaya (see the following paragraph), it was the dancers who triggered the dispute between bands of *blater* from Bangkalan and those of Sampang.

Between 1973 and 1974 there were a series of conflicts between *blater* from Bangkalan and those of Sampang in Surabaya. These conflicts were known as Bhara Songai vs Temor Songai.[13] The clashes began in 1967 and 1968 when a participant of a *remo* from Bangkalan had a quarrel with one from Sampang. The dispute happened in a *remo* hosted by a certain Delan in Tambak Sari, Surabaya. The dispute developed into an open clash between the two groups of *blater*. This *remo* resulted in mass *carok*, although shortly afterwards the tension was mitigated by elderly (*sesepuh*) and religious leaders of both regencies. The second conflict appears to have taken place in 1973. It centred on a man called Mattingwar, a *tandhak* from a *sandur* group led by Mak Dol of Bangkalan, whose popularity attracted the attention of a *sandur* group led by Mak Selor of Sampang. Mattingwar turned down a proposal to join Mak Selor's group and subsequently Mak Selor became angry. In response to his refusal, Mattingwar was stabbed when he was walking in Perak, Surabaya. Mattingwar survived the assassination attempt, but the stabbing escalated into a broader and more terrible conflict between the Madurese from the east and west banks of the Kalimas River.

While the first clash in 1967–1968 involved *remo* participants, this second clash saw *sandur* groups as the main actors. Like the first clash, however, the second one also turned into a wider conflict that involved many parties from the West and the East. A couple of days after the attempt to assassinate Mattingwar, Mak Selor was murdered in a *remo* in Krembangan, Surabaya. The conflict escalated and generated tensions among the general population. Madurese people from Bangkalan, living in Surabaya were beaten by those from Sampang and vice versa. The peak of the conflict was a mass *carok* in Gundi Street in Surabaya that took several lives and left several injured. To solve the problem, an arbitration process took place in the Ampel Mosque in Surabaya, mediated by *Kiai* Nawawi Ampel; the governor of East Java, Mohammad Noer; the regents of Bangkalan and Sampang; and *kiai* and other public figures (Faishal, 2007, pp. 75–82; Siahaan and Purnomo, 1997, pp. 111–113). Similar conflicts do not appear to have occurred since the arbitration.

In *remo*, the position of *klebun* is of importance since, in the first instance, they are always invited to dance with the dancers. This seems to have created jealousy among other participants. Since a *remo* was held in Kamal in 1977, many participants of *remo* have added the title *klebun* to their name so that they have opportunity to be invited to dance earlier. Consequently, those with the pseudo *klebun* title received such positive reactions, that almost all *blater* decided to put the title *klebun* in front of their name. Nevertheless, the addition of the title *klebun* cannot be freely done. Usually, the title of *klebun* is based on the place where the *blater* lives. For instance, the title *klebun* of

Jembatan Merah means that the person lives in the area of Jembatan Merah. The title also has another consequence. It symbolizes the territory that a pseudo *klebun* holds. Here we see the importance of the title of pseudo *klebun*. Since it relates to one's territory, only certain individuals are able to posses this title. The title can be obtained based on an agreement among other *blater*. If there is another *blater* using the same title, it means a challenge to the *blater* who held the title earlier. Interestingly, since it is a pseudo title, people can bid and buy the title for a high price (Faishal, 2007, pp. 68–70). However, over time, this pseudo title has become ineffective in terms of its original intention – to be invited to dance earlier. This is due to the fact that almost all *blater* have the title now, so all participants in *remo* are invited in the same order as before they obtained the pseudo title.

Blater who come to *remo* usually, but not exclusively, wear *pesa'an* (traditional Madurese black-coloured shirts), typically with a red-and-white striped T-shirt (*sakera*) underneath. In addition, they wear *gombor* (traditional Madurese black-coloured trousers), *odheng* (traditional Madurese head accessories), and carry a sharp weapon. Another significant characteristic of *remo* is the consumption of alcohol, mostly beer, which likely serves to fuel the fights between *blater*. Touwen-Bouwsma reveals that since *blater* are expected to carry sharp weapons, the chances of *carok* occurring are high (Touwen-Bouwsma, 1989, p. 169). Nevertheless, when Touwen-Bouwsma conducted fieldwork in Madura in the late 1970s, tensions from the Bhara Songai vs Temor Songai conflicts were still ubiquitous. Perhaps it explains why she argues that *carok* actions are likely to happen in *remo*. Nowadays, it seems that despite the heavy consumption of alcohol and the permission to carry sharp weapons in *remo*, the feast rarely ends in *carok*.

To many villagers, *remo* is considered an entertaining feast. To the host, rain is the archenemy. It is said that, in the past, *remo* was held for 24 hours. It usually began at 7 am and ended the next morning. Nowadays, it usually starts at 9 or 10 pm and ends at 5 am. Although *remo* is exclusive to its members, villagers can watch *remo* from outside the arena. There are usually many spectators from other villages at a *remo* party. Indeed, if it is a big *remo*, sometimes the crowds come from other regencies. For villagers who do not often get an opportunity to enjoy entertainment, *remo* is seen as an amusing event. Like many other traditional events in Madura or Java, *remo* also attracts gambling. Both *blater* and commoners who come to *remo* frequently entertain themselves with gambling, whether it is card games or dice. Unlike gambling at a *klebun* election (which will be further discussed in Chapter 6), the sums of money circulating are small. The purpose of the gambling for *blater* is actually to spend some time before *remo* begins and, most importantly, to demonstrate affluence to other *blater* and commoners. Meanwhile, for commoners the gambling is a rare opportunity to entertain themselves. While gambling is legally prohibited in Madura and in other places in Indonesia, during *remo*, gambling usually takes place without interference from the police. In fact, police officers or members of the armed forces are

unofficially invited to 'ensure the smooth running' of *remo*. The security forces are clearly aware of the gambling. Nevertheless, the host usually supplies them with a range of services, from providing them with various kinds of food to giving them money (*memberi amplop*). Consequently, the gambling goes on undisturbed (Wiyata, 2006, pp. 79–80). A villager highlights the importance of the *remo* feast:

> I enjoy the *remo* party because it is a folk entertainment (*hiburan rakyat*). Indeed it is a *blater*'s feast, yet commoners (*orang awam*) can also see *remo* from outside. If I have much money, I usually buy *sate* (traditional Indonesian food) and play a dice game (*main dadu*). My wife never tells me not to gamble. I do not know why. I have never seen a fight at a *remo*. *Blater* are usually polite. They do not want to have a fight if there appears to be no big problem. Moreover, there are many *blater* who become a *klebun*. If they have a fight, they will be embarrassed in front of their underlings [their people]. The police and Koramil (sub-district military office) [*sic*] are usually there as well and they will be ashamed if they have a fight in front of the police.
>
> (Interview with H, a petty trader, on 24 April 2011)

Blater may form a small group consisting of tens of *blater*. Such a group is usually headed by an influential *blater*. He collects a regular contribution (*iuran*) from each member of the group for various purposes, such as providing a donation if a fellow *blater* has a rite of passage ceremony for a family member. The leader also ensures that his group is invited to every *remo*. To be the head of a *blater* group is not an easy task. He must have certain characteristics, one of the most important of which is commanding respect from other members. To get respect, he must be feared by other *blater*. Reputation plays an important part here. A number of *blater* told me that, in the past, such a reputation could be gained by committing *carok*, actions that they claim were committed only for good reasons, never for meaningless motives. In recent times, especially during the New Order, having close ties with Golkar was seen as advantageous in terms of gaining a good reputation and a good position as well. An established link with *kiai* and entrepreneurs was also beneficial for their status. In the post-Suharto era, various parties replaced Golkar as the most sought after political party to be associated with. Initially, it was the PKB that became the largest political party on the island. In the last elections in 2009, there was no dominant party. However, despite their declining results in the last elections, the PKB remains the most influential political party due to its association with the NU. Another important condition for becoming a leader is wealth. The *blater* head must be affluent enough to protect and help his men if they cannot give money to the *remo* host. Indeed, he will lose face if his underlings cannot come to a *remo* due to a lack of money. Therefore, he will try his best to provide the less fortunate members with resources. In this case, wealth plays important part in determining a *blater*'s reputation.

In general, *remo* is essential for *blater* in terms of showing their existence. Although many Madurese will deny the accusation that they like to show off, in fact, Madurese are stereotyped by many outsiders as individuals who like to do so. The involvement of *blater* in *remo* – showing their money to the host and other *blater*; the ability to dance with the *tandhak* and to *napel*; and the ability to drink large amounts of beer – actually confirm this stereotype. While many *kiai* and people will condemn the gathering, *blater* ignore such complaints and continue to preserve their tradition and cultural identity in order to assert their existence in society. As in Madura, in post-New Order identity is very important in the *daerah*. Sakai argues that several factors have affected the resurgence of interest in regional identity. Firstly, it is the absence of an absolute centre in post-Suharto Indonesia. Secondly, it is a popular expectation that regional autonomy will transfer power to *putra daerah* (literally 'sons of the region'). Thirdly, it is the ongoing Islamization in Indonesia, which particularly influences the country's urban middle class (Sakai, 2009, p. 79). Certainly, the devolution of state power has been accompanied by a series of unintended consequences, such as an increase in ethnic and communal conflicts and greater administrative and political fragmentation (Bünte, 2009, p. 102).

Forms of violence associated with the Madurese

Carok

There is perhaps no single thing more notorious and more associated with crime in Madura than *carok*. When I read a series of 1980s editions of an East Java newspaper, I was astonished at the frequency with which reports on *carok* appeared. What was more remarkable was the fact that police officers always stated that the numbers of *carok* actions were declining at that time (see for instance, *Jawa Pos*, 3 January 1983 and *Jawa Pos*, 11 April 1984). Despite these police officers' unsubstantiated reports, it seems very likely that the numbers of *carok* actions in earlier periods were high. It is also interesting to note that while Indonesian law identifies *carok* as a form of crime, one that can be categorized as murder or severe physical abuse (*penganiayaan berat*), many Madurese do not consider *carok* to be a criminal act, but rather a form of defending honour.

Wiyata (2006, pp. 176–177; 184) discusses *carok* in detail and argues that *carok* is never committed by women. I will demonstrate, however, that his argument is inaccurate. *Carok* is normally, but not exclusively, committed by men. There are at least three *carok* cases – in my findings – that involved women as the perpetrators. In the first case, it was reported that two women, Hosni and Erru, residents of the sub-district of Bluto in Sumenep, committed *carok* because of a misunderstanding over garbage. As a result, Hosni was severely wounded and received medical treatment (*Jawa Pos*, 12 August 1992). Eight years earlier, in 1984, a certain T assassinated S in a bloody duel

in the sub-district of Konang, Bangkalan. T killed S because she was convinced that the latter had had an affair with her husband, who was actually S's uncle. T used a sickle in the duel, while S carried a small knife (*Jawa Pos*, 4 May 1984). The last case occurred in the sub-district of Blega, Bangkalan in 2002. It was a mass *carok* that involved around twelve people, several of which were women. The frenzy was caused by a dispute over the inherited land of two related families. During the *carok*, some people were injured, including several women (*Radar Madura*, 8 September 2002). *Carok*, for Madurese, either committed by men or women, is considered to be the ultimate vindication of honour following an insult; or, in other words, *carok* is a last resort in terms of defending one's honour.

Not all *carok* cases are triggered by 'more serious' events, such as adultery. In fact, many cases show that *carok* is triggered by disputes over insignificant matters, such as the dispute over garbage (*Jawa Pos*, 12 August 1992) mentioned above, a misunderstanding over cow dung that led to an assassination (*Jawa Pos*, 21 November 1992), or an insult generated by flatulence (*Jawa Pos*, 1 September 1983). These three cases, along with many others, which may seem trivial to outsiders, are taken very seriously by many Madurese. These apparently insignificant causes all lead to an insult to one's honour, which for Madurese is essential, and the loss of honour must be avenged with a fight, often to the death.

Madurese use sickles and other sharp weapons to kill, or at least attempt to injure, their adversary in *carok* fighting. According to oral tradition, the act of *carok* was usually performed like a real duel, one side against the other. In the later period, attempts to kill or to injure adversaries when they are unprepared or unarmed are also considered to be *carok* as long as the main reason is to defend one's honour. At this point, *carok* has lost its meaning in terms of being seen as a daring action. In contrast, when one conducts a crime and injures or kills his victim, when the main reason is not defending one's honour, the act cannot be considered as a *carok* action. At this point, we can say that *carok* is not simply a criminal action, as many outsiders see it; it is a tradition that has been entrenched in Madurese society.

Despite the decreasing trend for *carok* actions in daily life, the tradition is still widely perceived as a legitimate demonstration of honour. The saying '*ango'an poteya tolang etembang poteya mata*', which means 'better dead than ashamed/dishonoured' appears to legitimate the phenomenon. This saying is known in almost every Madurese household, at least in Bangkalan.[14] Thus, I would argue that *carok* is deeply institutionalized in Madurese society. It is true that crime rates have dropped drastically since Indonesian independence, due chiefly to stronger law enforcement (compared to that in the colonial era), yet since *carok* is approved by the social environment and the righters of wrongs dare to challenge weak law enforcement, *carok* actions have apparently often been seen as the answer in matters of honour. It is also important to note that many Madurese who live outside the island, mostly in Tapal Kuda areas and on Kalimantan, still practice *carok* towards fellow Madurese

or other people from other ethnic communities as a last resort in defending their honour. The saying is certainly still alive and well in the minds of the migrated Madurese:

> We are called hotheads by Dayak people and Javanese; Malay and Buginese confirm the viewpoint. We never want to have disputes with those people but we cannot just remain silent (*tidak bisa tinggal diam*) if we are bothered (*diganggu*). For us, it means someone is threatening our existence and our existence means our honour. If someone violates our honour, no matter where we live, we have to defend it. We would rather die than lose face (*kehilangan muka*). We are always Madurese, wherever we live. There is nothing else we can do [to overcome the shame] than committing *carok*.
>
> (Interview with MZ, a refugee from Palangkaraya who now resides in Bangkalan, on 3 December 2009)

In general, Bangkalan and Sampang populations in western Madura are considered less refined (*halus*) than those of Pamekasan and Sumenep in eastern Madura, and the residents of the eastern regencies usually assert the difference proudly. However, it would be a mistake to see *carok* as being exclusive to the people of the western regencies. Based on data collected by Wiyata (2006, pp. 237–238), there were 286 cases of murder and 591 cases of severe physical abuse between 1985 and 1994 in Bangkalan and Sampang. In the same period, there were 198 murders and 922 cases of severe physical abuse in Pamekasan and Sumenep. *Carok* is never recorded as a separate case in the police statistics. It can be classified either as murder or severe physical abuse. Although not all murders and severe physical abuse in the statistics can be categorized as *carok*, it clearly indicates that the use of violence in Madura, compared to that in the East Java Province or in Indonesia as a whole, is high. Table 4.1 shows the violence rates in Madura, the East Java Province, and Indonesia.

Although it is clear that any Madurese can commit *carok*, their motives are predominantly driven by attempts to take their honour back. Madurese who commit *carok* believe that their honour, taken away by insults, will be regained if they act in revenge. Meanwhile, for many *blater*, committing *carok* can serve as the ultimate means of strengthening their *blater*-ship. However, it does not mean that *carok* can be committed indiscriminately. There always has to be a reason to perform *carok*. The most important reason, as stated, is the need to defend honour when, for instance, a *blater*'s spouse has been pestered. Incidentally, how the spouse reacts to this attention, favourably or otherwise, is irrelevant. For many Madurese, not only for *blater*, harassment of a spouse is considered to be an extremely serious offence.[15] For newcomers to *blater*-ship, *carok* can be seen as an important way to reinforce their reputation.

Carok can also involve gangs of *blater*. Bangkalan and Sampang are notorious for *blater*-ship. The relationships between the *blater* of these two

Table 4.1 The 1994 percentage of criminal acts of violence against the population of each regency, Madura, the East Java Province, and Indonesia

Region	*Population*	*Murder and severe physical abuse*	*Percentage*
Bangkalan	719,086	53	0.00007
Sampang	704,081	28	0.00004
Pamekasan	633,173	55	0.00008
Sumenep	920,173	49	0.00005
Madura	2,976,934	185	0.00006
East Java	32,370,441	955	0.00003
Indonesia	194,754,808	8,267	0.00004

Source: Wiyata, 2006, p. 6.

regencies have varied over time. In Surabaya, the Kalimas River is seen as a tacit border between the two groups. The west side of the river belongs to the band from Bangkalan, while the east side belongs to those from Sampang. Traditional markets, bus and *angkot* terminals, and train stations in Surabaya 'belong' to these groups. Despite the presence of *jagoan* from other ethnic communities, such as those of the Javanese, Bataknese and Moluccans, the existence of the Madurese groups is very tangible. Bataknese and Moluccans may well be clearly visible in those areas due to their distinct physical appearance compared to the Madurese or Javanese, and also because they mostly operate in the front line, bullying bus and *angkot* drivers or street vendors. However, it is the Javanese and the Madurese who are the criminal masterminds behind operations. The relationship between Madurese and Javanese *jagoan* is not always mutually beneficial. Nevertheless, it is the tensions between the *jagoan* of Bangkalan and Sampang which are most notorious. These tensions manifest themselves in wars of words, intimidation, invasions of territory and the kinds of mass *carok* that I have described above.

According to Touwen-Bouwsma, *carok* can occur not only during *remo*, but also during village head elections (Touwen-Bouwsma, 1989, p. 163). Nowadays, disputes over village head elections can be solved with more options than *carok*. One of these options is reporting possible fraud in a *klebun* election to the local parliament.

In Lajing village, in the Arosbaya sub-district of Bangkalan, three former *klebun* candidates went to the regency parliament in order to complain about alleged *klebun* electoral frauds in their village. The frauds were supposed to have ranged from vote rigging and bribery to illegal voters being brought in from outside the village. The three asked the parliament not to inaugurate the winning candidate. It is also reported that three individuals spent a lot of money on winning the election (*Radar Madura*, 14 March 2005). The report to the parliament indicates a new way of problem solving, avoiding the need for committing *carok*.

Moreover, adultery does not always lead to *carok*. Other solutions are also possible. For instance, in recent times, a non-violent solution to this insult has emerged. Two married couples, Khoirul Anwar (46) and Kamariyah (38), and Sugianto (40) and Jamilah (38), both living in Pamekasan, had a dispute over an illegal love affair. Sugianto cheated by having an affair with Kamariyah. As a result, Kamariyah became pregnant and gave birth to a child. Khoirul, a good friend of Sugianto, demanded that Sugianto give Jamilah to Khoirul. According to Khoirul, rather than assassinating Sugianto, who had four children, he believed it was better for him to ask for his wife to be given to him. The case was brought to the Pamekasan court.[16]

However, *carok* is not the most significant way to be regarded as an influential *blater*. It is actually the ability to become a broker and a fixer that is likely to improve one's status as a prominent *blater*. This indicates a changed perspective in Madurese society in which direct physical violence is not the only way to solve problems. Instead, there is more emphasis on the illicit practices that form a *blater*'s skills, such as intimidation, informal lobbying with local officials, distribution of *amplop* (bribery), and the ability to manipulate villagers due to their inability to cope with recent developments.

Kerapan sapi

Kerapan sapi has significance not only for *blater*, but also for many non-*santri* in Madura. Unlike *remo*, which is exclusive to the *blater, kerapan sapi* or *kerapan* is a festivity for everyone. From the lowest levels in *kecamatan* (sub-district), to the highest rank on the island, *kerapan* always attracts a great deal of attention. Besides *kerapan*, there is another type of cultural form, one which exploits cattle in Madurese tradition, namely *aduan sapi* (bull fighting). Although it once existed in Madura, at least until the first decade of the twentieth century, this tradition can now only be found among Madurese in East Java, particularly in the Tapal Kuda area (De Jonge, 1990, p. 424).

Cattle are very significant to the Madurese. Cattle for *kerapan* purposes are different from those with an agricultural purpose. These cattle are never used to cultivate the land. Today, the cost of having special cattle for *kerapan* is so high that only affluent people can afford it (Smith, 1989, pp. 279–280). It is important to note that there is a variety of 'localness' in Indonesia, as is the case with *kerapan*, that may be very much unique to a certain area. As Anna Tsing puts it, local cultures are constituted in situated interpretations of the world – including national and transnational flows of commodities and information (Tsing, 2003, p. 219).

Legend reveals that the origin of *kerapan* can be traced back to the Majapahit age, during the twelfth or thirteenth centuries (Dewo and Maduratna, 1983, p. 15). Another oral tradition suggests that *kerapan* originated on Sapudi Island in the regency of Sumenep. The word '*kerapan*' was also believed to originate from the word '*gharabhan*', which means '*menggarap*' or to work the land

(Interview with MS and TH, owners of *kerapan* cattle, on 14 November 2009). It signifies the importance of agriculture during the initial era of *kerapan*. Over time, the race gained popularity and from colonial reports we discover that Prince Notokoesoemo initiated the first official races in the 1870s. With the aim of improving livestock in Madura, the colonial administration in Sumenep organized and financed the race on a regular basis after 1895 (Munnik, 1929, pp. 116–117, cited in Smith, 1995, p. 166). Despite the popularity of the race in east Madura, *kerapan* only came to the western part of the island at the beginning of the twentieth century (Leon, 1901, p. 463, cited in Smith, 1995, p. 166). *Kerapan sapi* was also found in the Tapal Kuda area. In Situbondo and Jember, *kerapan* still existed in the 1960s (Sutjitro, 1992, p. 10).

The transformation of *kerapan* from a minor event to a major spectacle had many consequences. One of the most crucial changes is the level of competitiveness. Initially, it was a race for farmers; nowadays, it is a demonstration of wealth and honour by well-to-do individuals. Another central shift was the insertion of gambling into the arena. We should also notice that magic used by owners of bulls in order to win the race became an integral part of *kerapan*. *Kerapan* is commonly divided into four levels. The sequence from low to high is *kerapan adat* or *kerapan nazar, kerapan pesanan, kerapan insidental*, and *kerapan besar* (Sutjitro, 1992, pp. 15–22).

Let us now discuss the three aspects of competitive *kerapan* in which many *blater* take part. Firstly, one of the reasons why there are many honourable individuals involved in *kerapan* is that they wish to demonstrate their higher position in society compared to commoners. Secondly, *kerapan sapi* is not a *kerapan* if it is held without gambling. Although there is no clear correlation between *kerapan* and gambling, like *remo, kerapan* is a perfect event for gambling. While only a small amount of money is gambled during *remo*, and the purpose of these games is purely entertainment, gambling in *kerapan* is, for many people, a serious business. Large amounts of money are in play and gambling is a crucial aspect of the race. Thirdly, the last aspect of the *kerapan* is the use of magic. The most obvious aim of using magic is to make a bull win. Bull owners attempt to win races by consulting with *dukun* or even *kiai-dukun*, visiting sacred graves, and conducting ritual activities that range from fasting for several days to bathing in sacred waters or with holy water.

The three aspects outlined above are obvious examples of the characteristics of *blater*, which demonstrate their need to show off their wealth, to gamble, and their familiarity with certain aspects of magic used to make them invulnerable. Indeed, the public gambling at *kerapan sapi* is essential for the acknowledgement of *blater* in society. In fact, *kerapan* incorporates two of the most vital characteristics of *blater*: bragging and violence. While the former is represented in the way in which a *blater*'s participation in *kerapan* is directed to show his wealth and in the way in which *blater* take part in costly betting, the latter can be seen in the way in which the *kerapan* is a form of animal torture and an event that is likely to stir up *carok*.

Nature and characteristics of the *abangan*-like culture

Some aspects of local belief in Madura

The belief system of the common Madurese villagers centres on, among other things, supernatural powers. While *kiai*, as the core of the *santri* culture, sustain close connections with Islam, villagers at the grassroots level recognize the supernatural powers of spirits that mediate between them and God. From this point of view, common Madurese believe that several events occur because of God's will, while others occur according to a set of unknown powers or according to the laws of nature. Therefore, in order to put everything in order, the supernatural powers of spirits have to be gratified regularly. We know that in Java collective ritualistic festivities, such as *bersih desa* (spirit shrine ritual) are held to keep the Javanese safe, fortunate, and free from trouble. It also holds true for the Madurese who hold *rokat* festivities, such as *rokat bandaran* or *rokat tase* (both fishermen's celebration) and *rokat desa* (annual ritual to bless a village) to ask for protection from the spirits of their ancestors, to avoid calamities, and to receive blessings so that they will benefit from their farm if they are farmers or the sea if they are fishermen. According to De Jonge, *slametan* are mainly held to signify rite of passage ceremonies such as births, deaths and weddings, and to bless certain important events, such as putting a boat into the water and building a house. During certain months considered appropriate for holding wedding ceremonies, *slametan* are held very frequently (De Jonge, 1989, p. 270).[17]

Mansurnoor, who conducted ethnographic research in Pamekasan, points out that *se areksa*, the immanent supernatural powers, are a key element in the everyday relations between villagers and the supernatural world (Mansurnoor, 1990, pp. 3–4). This holds true for many Madurese in daily life. They pray five times every day and adhere to other pillars of Islam (*Rukun Islam*) and believe in the six articles outlined in *Rukun Iman*.[18] Nevertheless, supernatural powers play key roles in the Madurese belief system as well. *Dukun* (shamans, healers, or fortune-tellers) are the primary mediators between the real world and the unseen world. It is true that *kiai* are also regarded as the ultimate mediators between the two worlds, yet some *kiai* reject the idea of this identification because this has associations with *shirk* (the sin of polytheism) practices. They are afraid that the deification of anyone or anything other than God will lead to *shirk* practices, which are a serious sin. Therefore, for instance, some *kiai* will refuse to see someone who wants to ask for a *jimat* (amulet) or for their business to be blessed. Other *kiai*, however, believe that they are the intermediaries between the two worlds and, in fact, they attempt to maintain this status by remaining aloof and keeping away from lower-level villagers, so that villagers are convinced that they are different from common people. For instance, they uphold their sacred position by preserving a prevalent belief in society that people will receive a *kiai*'s *barakah* (blessing) and *karamah* (dignity) if they visit them and ask for guidance. These *kiai* are usually called

kiai dukun. Meanwhile, other *kiai* are a mixture of the two kinds of *kiai. Dukun*, on the other hand, frequently incorporate Islamic elements, such as recitation of Quranic verses (often blended with Madurese and Javanese words, considered un-Islamic) and declaring that their practices are approved by Allah and the Prophet. As in many Muslim societies, incorporating Islamic practices is a compulsory practice among Madurese *dukun*. Even though many Madurese still visit *dukun* today, they do not wish to be labelled as un-Islamic individuals and therefore they always believe that they are visiting *dukun Islami* (Islamic *dukun*), not un-Islamic *dukun*, which is not regarded as an un-Islamic practice.

Moreover, despite the presence of many medical doctors in sub-districts and midwives in villages, villagers still visit *dukun* if a family member is ill. Some believe that it is still expensive to visit medical doctors or midwives although the government has provided the less well-off with medical insurance, such as Jamkesmas.[19] Some, however, believe that *dukun* are the best option since they are believed to be the best mediators between the two worlds where many of the illnesses appear to be present. For example, illness is believed to occur when visitors violate the territory of unseen owners, i.e. cultivating paddy fields without asking permission from the owner (the unseen) or fishing in forbidden sacred places. Some *dukun* have a specialization, such as in the world of *akik* (*aqeeq*/*hakeek*) ring.[20]

> I am a big fan of the *akik* ring because it is a Prophet's *sunnah* (a practice taught by the Prophet). Many *kiai* also wear an *akik* ring. An *akik* ring has many advantages, most importantly it gives self-confidence to whoever wears it [and they will also be] free from calamities if it is filled (*diisi*) [with magical mantra]. My rings also bring luck. Ever since I have had these rings, my business has been smooth (*lancar*), although once I got a heavy blow during the financial crisis [the 1997–1998 Asian financial crisis], but it did not last for a long time. I have many rings and I wear them for different purposes. He (pointing at the *dukun*) always knows what is best for me to wear on any occasion.
>
> (Interview with a well-off trader in the house of a *dukun* whose specialization is filling (*mengisi*) rings with mantra (magic formula), on 20 December 2009)

The reason I emphasize this is that the perceived power of mystical beliefs and practices are embedded in supernatural practitioners, whether it be *dukun* or *kiai*, and they have great power associated with them. This great power is said to have bridged worlds and to heal spiritual diseases, such as spirit possession (*kesurupan*), and to predict the future using divination practices or the interpretation of dreams. It has been a trend for a long time in Madura to incorporate Islam into indigenous practices and all the parties involved – *kiai, dukun*, and common people – are all supporters of the tradition. This is precisely what is elucidated in Chapter 1 that in terms of religion, culture and

politics, Madura is an impeccable place with a mixture of piety, tradition, and violence, and that the three aspects are highly apparent in everyday life.

Religious aspects of the blater

Like Javanese *abangan*, the *blater* religious worldview is composed primarily of syncretist religious activities, such as *slametan, khaul*, and *ziarah*, as well as predilections for magic, invulnerability skills, and martial arts. Despite their claim that they are Muslims, many *blater* may not practice Islamic values suggested by *kiai* since they may not perform *salat* (prayer) or fast during Ramadan. They also enjoy drinking alcohol and gambling, contrary to what the *kiai* preach. In several interviews conducted with a number of *kiai*, it became clear that they are aware of these *blater* tendencies. However, all of the *kiai* indicated that they do not want to interfere in these matters. These *kiai* gave the impression that they are ambiguous when it comes to the *blater*. On the one hand, they hold the *blater* in awe, and on the other hand, they disapprove of their activities.[21]

Blater like to claim that they are Muslims; yet, unlike most Madurese, they are not *santri* who practice the common *santri* culture. They possess a mystical syncretist belief about Islam that, to a large degree, is different from that practiced by *kiai* and *santri*. In fact, they tend to promote their own tradition, especially *remo*. Nevertheless, following a series of interviews with a *kiai* and a number of *blater*, it became clear that many *blater* study in a *pesantren* or at least informally in a village *langgar* during their childhood (Interviews with *Kiai* Mashduqie Fadly on 1 December 2009; R, a *blater* on 13 January 2011; K, a *blater* on 21 February 2011; and MG, a *blater* on 24 February 2011). They may be *santri* in the sense of having been pupils at *pesantren* during their childhood. For several reasons, mainly wealth, influence, and fame, at some time in their life these young *santri* leave the *pesantren* and transform into *blater*. Therefore, it is not uncommon that *blater* have the ability to read the Quran, although like many other Madurese, they do not understand the meaning of the words.

They attend religious activities, such as *khaul, slametan*, and *ziarah* not only for religious purposes, but also for social, political, and economical purposes. Most prominent *blater* do not wish to be in the shadow of the *kiai*. For political purposes, for example during the New Order, they could cooperate with the *kiai* who were supporters of Golkar because both groups had been co-opted by the ruling party. In the post-Suharto period, they cooperate with *kiai* because they share similar goals, i.e. obtaining power. Indeed, most prominent *blater* will only cooperate with like-minded *kiai*. If they have no common goals and are unable to make alliances with *kiai*, they will look to forging relationships with officials, including *bupati* (regent) and *camat* (head of sub-district). We have to remember that since the 1950s, political parties have used strongmen, thugs, and gangsters to mobilize support and intimidate rivals. PKI and PNI were among the first to integrate local strongmen and gangsters into their party structures (Wilson, 2010, p. 201).

The *khaul* held for prominent *kiai*, such as that of *Kiai* Kholil, the *Kiai* of Batuampar, and the *Kiai* of Guluk-Guluk, are believed to bring blessings for those who attend the events. These *khaul* even tempt prominent *blater*, who perhaps dislike certain *kiai* because of their ambiguous feelings toward the *blater*, to appear at the celebration to seek blessings and to acquire the charisma of the deceased *kiai*. In a way, the attendance of the *blater* at such events functions as a free 'advertisement' and it is good for their standing to show up. Moreover, the idea of assuming charismatic power does not only appear within the religious elites but also among strongmen leaders. Prominent *blater* who have petty *blater* as their underlings, build leader–follower relations that mirror those of *guru–murid* (teachers–disciples) in religious circles of the *pesantren* or *tarekat* world. Such relationships serve to enhance the power of the leader. Besides *khaul*, another means of obtaining charisma is via *ziarah* to the holy graves of *kiai* or royal families or other holy places, such as *gunung keramat* (sacred mountains), huge old trees, or big stones. The charisma of the leaders ensures the loyalty and obedience of their followers (Pribadi, 2011, pp. 177–178).

Aside from the aforementioned reasons, all these visits are pragmatically implemented for social, political, and economic motives. The local or regional state officials are usually invited to the grand *khaul* of a legendary *kiai*. Their attendance also indicates how such *khaul* are politically-economically commoditized. The presence of local or regional officials helps enhance the level of such *khaul*. For instance, although for a long time the *khaul* of *Kiai* Kholil had already attracted a great number of visitors, the appointment of Fuad Amin Imron, a great-grandson of *Kiai* Kholil, as the regent of Bangkalan for the periods of 2003–2008 and 2008–2013, increased the significance of the occasion more than ever because Fuad frequently asserts the importance of his ancestor. The patron–client relationships that the *blater* form with state officials, in which the former are the client and the latter are the patron, constitute a good sign of 'obedience' to the officials. For the *blater*, aside from maintaining their good relationship with the bureaucrats, it is not uncommon for them to obtain governmental or partisan 'projects', such as controlling the security of a sacred burial ground (*pasarean*),[22] as a result of their attendance at a *khaul* or other such event.[23] Such practices mirror the traditions in other places in Indonesia, especially in Jakarta.[24] The involvement of strongmen in public affairs shows that clientelistic dependencies on political intermediaries have shaped the nature of public authority. In the context of a remote and 'mediated' state, the capacity to 'get things done' – that is arranging access to state resources – is an important constitutive element of local leadership and authority. This is strengthened by the way state institutions regularly rely on such local leaders or strongmen to facilitate and mediate the implementation of state institutions, since these institutions often lack the capacity to do so without their intercession (Berenschot, Schulte Nordholt, and Bakker, 2017, p. 16).

Ziarah to holy graves provide *blater* with opportunities similar to those obtained from attending *khaul*. During Muslim holidays, such as Eid Al-Fitr

and Eid Al-Adha, famous *pasarean* attract many pilgrims from all over Madura and Java.[25] Like the event of *khaul, ziarah* also attract both state officials and *blater*. Royal Pasarean Ratu Ebu in Bangkalan or Royal Pasarean Asta Tinggi in Sumenep, like the graves of renowned *kiai*, are known to attract tens of thousands of pilgrims every month. Officials and *blater* meet, apparently coincidentally, on these occasions. However, since *blater* have a network of informants, they can easily find out when the officials will visit the cemeteries. Not surprisingly, the officials – whether or not they are aware that *blater* will come – actually expect that they will meet their clients there at a certain time and location. In other words, the *blater* are expected to know when state officials will visit. The meetings that take place in the *pasarean* are not necessarily intended to discuss significant matters between the two sides. Instead, they function primarily as a form of *silaturahmi* (good relationship). It should be noted, however, *silaturahmi* between patron and client also indicates a high degree of obedience from the *blater* to officials.

Other occasions that attract many important pilgrims are elections, be they general elections (*pemilu*), gubernatorial, and regency/municipal head elections (*pilkada*) or village head elections/*klebun* elections. Prior to the elections, many candidates running for various positions will visit holy graves of *kiai* or royal families. This is believed to bring luck and confidence to the candidates. The *juru kunci* (the custodians of graveyards) of Pasarean Ratu Ebu, Makam Agung, and Makam Tengah, all located in Bangkalan, claim that famous national figures generally visit their *pasarean* prior to general elections. Although such claims are unreliable – these kinds of stories can be heard frequently in many graveyards and although some famous national figures may indeed come, the numbers are in fact never revealed – many Madurese pass this story on to other visitors. For them, this justifies visiting such graves: if important people can have their wishes granted, then there is also a chance for other visitors to receive blessings. However, when asked whether *blater* come to these last resting places, *juru kunci* strongly deny it. They claim that bad people (*orang jahat*) never come to holy places because their wishes will not come true and, more importantly, instead of receiving blessings, they will have bad luck if they dare enter the cemeteries with unholy wishes:

> *Blater* never come here. They do not dare to ask [for anything] because their bad intentions are already known when they enter the grave. Their bad intentions are unveiled by the holy people who are buried here, not by me. Those who come here are important people (*orang besar*). If they come here, they usually become someone important (*jadi orang* – here means they occupy important positions). If not governor, at least regent or member of parliament. But bad people will not have their wishes granted (*dikabulkan*).
>
> (Interview with the *juru kunci* of Makam Agung, 24 February 2011)

It is important to note, however, that it is an open secret that many *blater* regularly visit the holy graves of *kiai* or royal families, the reasons for which I

have already explained. The denials of the *juru kunci* are actually part of an unobserved contestation between the *blater* and the *santri*. In fact, the *blater* have been promoting an *abangan*-like counter-culture, which is apparent in the objections of supporters of the *santri* culture, in particular the *juru kunci* of these holy graves. *Juru kunci*[26] is an inherited position in Madura. The holders of this position are the auxiliary staff of religious leaders. In order to keep their places sacred, religious leaders need to keep them clear of unwanted people. *Blater* who do not practice *santri* culture are regarded by some *kiai* as their latent enemies. While on some occasions the two sides can cooperate in a loose relationship, it is exactly in the religious domain that the two have conflicting opinions.

While it seems trivial, attending nearby *slametan* can also have a political-economic impact. *Blater* who run in *klebun* elections need to broadly socialize their campaign. By attending *slametan*, their presence can win the support of the public. Villagers need to know the candidates of their *klebun* and attending *slametan* indicates that the candidates are good Muslims despite their predilections for 'immoral' activities. Furthermore, attending *slametan* can serve as a means of approaching *kiai langgar* who have a number of followers, in the hope that these low-level village *kiai* will at least not oppose the candidate's campaign.

In order to learn *ilmu* (it can be both magic and martial arts) and possibly *ilmu kebal* (invulnerability), *blater* have to visit certain *kiai* believed to be masters of esoteric sciences. As Wiyata argues, they also come to *kiai* to receive a blessing and an amulet when they want to commit *carok* (Wiyata, 2006, p. 50). Nevertheless, it seems that it is only low-level *kiai* in villages who give approval (*restu*) to those who wish to commit *carok*. A number of high-ranking *kiai* whom I have spoken to reject the idea of *carok*, or at least do not overtly support the violent action. Mansurnoor also reveals that a high-ranking *kiai* in Bettet showed his disapproval of *carok*. In 1984, an individual wanting to take revenge, a certain young man Muja, had a quarrel with another young man, Barlekeh, as the result of an insignificant matter. Muja went to see a *kiai* who had been his teacher. Muja complained about the humiliation and insisted that the *kiai* should provide him with formula to retain his confidence. The *kiai* agreed to bless Muja but issued an ultimate warning of excommunication from his realm against Muja if he should decide to commit *carok* against Barlekeh. For some time, the *kiai*'s threat against Muja succeeded in preventing the imminent *carok*. Not so long after the quarrel between Muja and Barlekeh, the *kiai* died. When the *kiai* went for treatment in Surabaya, Muja and his core kinsmen attacked those of Barlekeh, killing two and seriously injuring one (Mansurnoor, 1990, p. 360). Here we see that an influential *kiai* remains an effective deterrent for some villagers, but when he is absent, the *kiai*'s disapproval has little effect.

All the above examples seem to indicate that the *blater* are pragmatic individuals. However, their supposed pragmatic attitudes would not last very long if they were not sustained by a strong sense of their identity. As I have

mentioned earlier, *blater* have been pushing their *abangan*-like counter-culture vis-à-vis the *santri* culture, which is very influential in Madurese society, even at the lowest level. Nevertheless, the *blater* do not openly attack the *santri* culture since its main supporters, the *kiai*, are highly regarded by many segments of society, including the *blater* themselves. Even though they leave the *pesantren* after they graduate, *blater* still consider the *kiai* as their teachers. In Banten, for example, to oppose a *kiai* was a serious breach of etiquette, with both social and spiritual consequences. On a spiritual level, a rebellious pupil runs the risk of *kawalat* (being cursed and struck down by calamity) (Tihami, 1992, pp. 99–100; Wilson, 2003, p. 246). This situation also holds true in Madura. We have to remember how pragmatic *blater* can be, they keep a complex relationship with Islam in Madura because they are part of a larger landscape of culturally-embedded Islam in the island.

Conclusion

Blater have demonstrated a variety of roles, from entrepreneurs of protection and perpetrators of cultural violence, to their leading roles as power brokers. As with many other strongmen groups in the Indonesian archipelago, the origin of the *blater* is not fully understood. It seems that it is a relatively new phenomenon (perhaps older than a hundred years) and the emergence of the *blater* in Madura may show parallel patterns with other groups of strongmen in the Archipelago, like the *jagoan* and the *jawara*. Like other strongmen in Java, they are strongmen who have acted as cultural and political brokers and intermediaries.

Meanwhile, *remo* is the distinctive *blater* characteristic that counteracts the dynamics of piety that *kiai* and *santri* promote. In fact, seen together with *kerapan sapi* and *sabung ayam*, which play an important part in *blater* life, these cultural forms are so distinctive that it seems that no other strongmen in Java are counteracting the *santri* culture as much as *blater* do, at least when we look at the special feast of *remo*, which other strongmen such as *jawara* do not have. *Blater* have their sets of religious beliefs that, to a large degree, differ from those of *kiai* and *santri* individuals. It shows us that Madura is also home to less orthodox Muslims and a place where *abangan*-like spiritual beliefs as a variant of Islam are appreciated by some segments of society.

Even though in terms of religious ideas and practices *blater* are a minority, in daily life they have adapted well to the mainstream *santri* Islam of the Madurese. They have never really experienced pressure as a minority among the majority *santri* adherents. There are, in fact, many Madurese, who, apart from their adherence to the *santri* culture (the prayers, the fast, and the almsgiving), visit *dukun* or *kiai dukun* on a regular basis and perform collective ritualistic festivities, such as the *rokat* traditions. While *kiai* and other main supporters of the *santri* culture, such as the pupils and others in the *pesantren* network, openly promote their religious orientations, *blater* and other less orthodox Muslims do not explicitly demonstrate their religious

views. In fact, most *blater* do not seem to directly oppose the *kiai*'s religious authority. What they actually promote are their distinctive institutionalized characteristics, *remo*, and violent traditions, such as *kerapan sapi* and *sabung ayam*. With these cultural forms, the *blater* and the supporters of the *abangan*-like culture clearly signify the difference between the common *santri* culture and their own counter-culture.

Notes

1 Part of Chapter 4 was, with some amendments, published as 'An Abangan-like group in a Santri Island: The Religious Identity of the Blater', first published in *Religious Diversity in Muslim-majority States in Southeast Asia: Areas of Toleration and Conflict*, edited by Bernhard Platzdasch and Johan Saravanamuttu, Chapter 11. This work is reproduced here with the kind permission of the publisher, ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute (https://bookshop.iseas.edu.sg).

2 Personal communication with Huub de Jonge.

3 Onghokham suggests that *jagoan*'s historical roots lie in the pre-colonial period, during the time of royal wars and in a period of violence in Javanese history (Onghokham, 1984, p. 336). In colonial times, the *lenggaong* (another name for *jago* in Pemalang area and its surrounding regencies) were in general looked up to by the people, who were not bothered by their actions.. It was the colonial administration and the landlords who were obstructed (Lucas, 1981, p. 37).

4 As a comparison to *slametan*, in Pakistan, *dég* is a public meal linked to some benevolence on the part of God, to give thanks for a particular incident (for example the birth of a child or to honour the *hajj*) in which the host arranges a large quantity of rice to be prepared and distributed to anyone who comes (Lyon, 2004, pp. 146–149).

5 Regarding *carok*, Dutch sources mention: 'When a Madurese was made to be ashamed (*malo*), he pulled his knife and immediately avenged the insult or waited until an opportunity arose to avenge himself. Fights, murder, and homicide (*carok*) were the order of the day, if one can believe it' (*De Java-Post* 1911, 9–22: 345), and 'Even "small insults" were "answered with a knife"' (Wop, 1866, p. 284) (both are cited in De Jonge, 1995, p. 13) and 'Before the prohibition of carrying weapons in 1863, *carok* was also committed with spears, lances, swords, broadswords, and *kris*' (De Jonge, 2002, p. 147). Regarding *remo*: 'The Madurese are also crazy about festivities. That is when they kick over the traces, followed again by a long period of saving. It is often said about the inhabitants of the western part of the island that they drink *tuak* or palm wine ('the population of West Madura is addicted to alcohol') and that festivities there often got out of hand' (Surink, 1933, p. 196; Van Gennep, 1895, p. 270, cited in De Jonge, 1995, pp. 15–16).

6 It is possible everywhere to have many names for one particular thing. For instance, the word *gali* in Indonesia (*gabungan anak-anak liar* – literally, groups of wild boys) was not popular before the 1980s although individuals who acted like *gali* already existed in the 1960s and 1970s. The word became popular only during the *petrus* (*penembak*(*an*) *misterius* – the mysterious rifleman/shooting or the mysterious killer/killing) period and shortly afterwards (personal communication with Robert Cribb).

7 Personal communication with Amrih Widodo.

8 The name of Barisan might appear only after 1831, yet it does not mean that in 1816 the garrison was not established yet. It was rather a matter of naming (Kuntowijoyo, 2002).

9 According to Vadim Volkov, protection racketeering is 'an institutionalized relationship whereby tribute is collected on behalf of a criminal group that, in

exchange, claims to offer physical protection from other such groups' (Volkov, 2000, p. 491).

10 After the *petrus* period, thugs and gangsters were increasingly institutionalized through various nationalist and youth organizations such as Pemuda Pancasila. Traumatized by the brutality of the killings, many joined out of fear. With the eventual unravelling of the New Order in 1998 and the fracturing of patron–client networks, they were forced to seek new places of refuge and opportunity (Wilson, 2010, pp. 202–203).

11 As a comparison, in Pakistan, gift giving is an elaborate process. Individuals remember the amounts of every gift. Gifts must be reciprocated and when this is not possible the nature of the relationship shifts; it may develop into a clear patron–client relationship. The act of giving and receiving is calculated and involves voluntary participation by all parties (Lyon, 2004, p. 152).

12 In the *blater* world, such performances are called *sandur* or *sandhor* instead of *tayub*.

13 Bhara Songai is a term to denote people from Bangkalan who reside in the west bank of Kalimas River in Surabaya, while Temor Songai is a term to indicate those from Sampang who inhabit the east bank of the same river.

14 I had a number of chats with housewives and young females, mostly students, in villages in Bangkalan. They stress the importance of fighting for honour as a true indication of real human beings (*manusia sesungguhnya*) and good Muslims. The housewives believe that there have to be differentiations between boys and girls in their home. For instance, boys play football, war simulation, marbles or with toy cars, while girls are limited to playing with their dolls or playing hopscotch or skipping. When asked about honour, they are convinced that it is a highly important aspect that must be respected and when honour is violated, either men or women have to defend it. They intensify the importance of fighting for honour by transmitting this saying to their children, boys and girls, and expect that their children will do the same when they have their own children. The reason for talking to these women is obvious. If women have a strong tendency to emphasise the significance of the saying, then it follows that men, as the main actors of forms of violence in Madura, are highly likely to believe in this maxim.

15 Wiyata (2006) describes four main motives behind *carok* cases in Bangkalan: the most notorious is adultery, followed by misunderstandings, land disputes, and unpaid debts. Adultery in this case does not exclusively involve sexual intercourse. Flirting with someone's wife or partner can be considered as a serious offence and will provoke *carok*.

16 http://regional.kompas.com/read/2010/10/22/0758309/Istriku.Kau.Hamili..Aku.Tukar.Istrimu, accessed on 22 October 2010.

17 In another place, in Banyuwangi, the purpose of *slametan* is generally to create a state of well-being, security, and freedom from hindrances of both a practical and spiritual kind – a state which is called *slamet*. Like in Madura, specific reasons for holding *slametan* range from the celebration of rites of passage, housewarmings, and harvests, to safeguard a new motorbike, and – among the commonest of reasons – to redeem a vow (Beatty, 2003, pp. 30–31).

18 *Rukun Islam* or the Five Pillars of Islam are five acts in Islam considered obligatory by Sunni Muslims. They are: 1. The *shahada* (creed,) 2. *Salat* (daily prayers), 3. *Sawm* (fasting in Ramadan month), 4. *Zakat* (almsgiving), and 5. *Hajj* (pilgrimage to Mecca) if it is affordable. *Rukun Iman* or the Six Articles of Faith is a set of articles of faith in the Islamic creed consisting of: 1. Belief in God, 2. Belief in the Prophets, 3. Belief in the Angels, 4. Belief in Divine Books, 5. Belief in the Day of Judgment, and 6. Belief in *Qadr* (fate).

19 Jamkesmas or Jaminan Kesehatan Masyarakat (Public Health Insurance) is a governmental programme of health insurance to help Indonesians (mainly the poor) to get better access to health care institutions. This programme commenced

in 2004 and has provided millions of Indonesians with health costs in many health institutions across the Archipelago. Yet, many people claim that they never receive such insurance or, if they do, many Puskesmas (Pusat Kesehatan Masyarakat – Public Health Centre) will neglect them due to the health practitioners' preference for people who pay with other methods, mainly with cash.

20 An *akik* ring is a type of jewellery made of agate, worn mostly but not exclusively by men. In Islamic tradition, wearing an *akik* ring is believed to be important. This view is based on the belief that the Prophet wore an *akik* ring on his right hand and therefore it is considered as *sunnah* by a number of *ulama*.

21 In interviews with two *kiai*, one *kiai, Kiai* Nuruddin states that 'we never touch on (*mengusik*) them [the *blater*] as long as they do not touch on us either. Even though they are *blater*, they still *mengaji* (learn to read the Quran, sometimes with Arabic lessons) and respect *kiai* and *santri*. Whether they do not pray, it does not matter, as long as it [that they do not pray] is not in front of the *kiai*. What is important is that we have to respect their braveness. We have to remember that there are two kinds of [public] figures, the *ulama* and the *blater*. The two must not clash (*bentrok*) in Madura. What is negative about the *blater* is that sometimes they give *kiai* money from the thefts they commit, but we have to think that stealing is a sin' (Interview with *Kiai* Nuruddin on 1 December 2009). Meanwhile, *Kiai* Mashduqie Fadly reveals that, 'in my opinion, *blater* are a group whose professions are unpleasant for the people (*tidak menyamankan masyarakat*), but from another side [they] bring many benefits […] in my opinion, from one side the *blater* can be utilized as security forces. If one who is facing a threat of being robbed (*ditodong* – by a *preman*, for instance) mentions a certain *kiai* or *blater* name, he will be safe [from the robbery]' (Interview with *Kiai* Mashduqie Fadly on 1 December 2009).

22 In Chapter 6 I describe the story of a *blater* who was promised the job of controlling the security of a *pasarean* by Fuad's people because he was seen to be loyal and that sometimes Fuad's people saw him in the *Kiai* Kholil *pasarean* (Interview with MK, a *blater* on 23 April 2011).

23 William R. Liddle reveals how political parties in Sumatra wanting to be successful at the local level have to adapt to local socio-economic and cultural configurations (Liddle, 1972, p. 126). In Banten, through Tubagus Chasan Sochib, the general chairman of PPPSBBI (a *jawara* organization), *jawara* acted as a bridge between the military, bureaucracy, and Golkar, and many governmental projects came into their possession, since they maintained closed patron–client relationships with the officials (Pribadi, 2008, p. 59).

24 In Jakarta and also other provincial capitals, many governmental or partisan projects are obtained on informal occasions, such as during golf games. It is while playing golf that deals are done (Lucas, 1997, p. 237).

25 For instance, in the 1983 Eid Al-Fitr celebration, Royal Pasarean Ratu Ebu in Bangkalan attracted thousands of visitors. While during regular periods many people who visit the *pasarean* come mostly for religious purposes, during Eid, those who visited the burial ground were said to do so for recreational purposes (*Jawa Pos*, 18 July 1983).

26 Based on colonial records, *juru kunci* had a distinctive position among those who had to provide service to royal families. They were awarded tax-exempted land (*pakuncen*) as rewards for their service (De Jonge, 1989, p. 71).

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5 Development, Islam, and resistance

Introduction

This chapter discusses the government's plans to 'modernize' Madura during the New Order administration and how segments of society responded to these plans. Specifically, it is concerned with two conflicts between the government (at central, provincial, and regency levels) and the powerful Islamic elites together with the people. The first is the Nipah Dam incident and the second is the rejection of the *industrialisasi* scheme (to introduce industrialization and to create industrial estates in Madura) in the mega project of the Suramadu Bridge by the *kiai* of Bassra (Badan Silaturahmi Ulama Pesantren Madura – The Association of Friendship of Madurese *Pesantren Ulama*).[1] Among the questions posed are: what is the origin and nature of the Nipah Dam incident and the Suramadu Bridge affair? What were the government's efforts in implementing plans to 'modernize' Madura? How did the *kiai* and the people respond to the government's approaches? How were Islamic symbols used in order to convey messages of rejection?

During much of the history of Indonesia since independence, the regions (*daerah*) had neither influence over national government policies nor the power to control their own affairs. Local politics and power constellations reflected the interests of the centre rather than those of the regions (Aspinall and Fealy, 2003, p. 2). As the largest archipelagic state and island state in the world by area and population, the regions are central to an understanding of Indonesia (Hill, 2014, p. 1). After the New Order regime collapsed, the highly centralistic government of the Suharto administration was soon seen as exerting a stranglehold on the lives of the Indonesian people, especially outside Java (Sulistiyanto and Erb, 2005, p. 1). Thanks to the *Reformasi*, the regional autonomy laws of 1999 were implemented in January 2001 and brought along the decentralization spirits.

We have to remember, however, that during the New Order, the lack of state capability to implement its policies was often demonstrated in pressures towards the people. Nevertheless, the inability of the state to govern was not the only factor generating resistance in society. Indeed, there was another significant factor: the structure of society. The structure of Madurese society

affected state capability during the New Order, for instance, as it influenced the state when the state wished to implement its policies. The structure of society in Madura has been dominated by religious facets, which have often generated difficulties for the state in terms of getting the people to comply. The important position of religious leaders in society places them as commanding figures that the people follow. Although according to Pierre James '[…] the *santri* group has not emerged as a significant threat to the administration due to their dependence upon the government for subsidies and other benefits, and their vulnerability vis-à-vis the peasantry' (James, 1990, p. 20), in Madura, religious leaders, who compose the main element of the *santri* group, actually posed a constant threat to the government during the Suharto administration. Their strong identification with Islam was applied politically in the form of support for the PPP, and they were seen by the state as a regular menace, especially during elections. This situation is in line with an argument in the previous chapters that in Madura during the New Order, it would be incorrect to state that most *kiai* served as partners of the government, since most *kiai* remained outside the structure of central power.

The New Order was an era of '*pembangunan*' (development, modernity) and, according to Robert Cribb, it was characterized by unity, uniformity, and conformity, contrary to the colonial era, which was characterized by a thoroughgoing fragmentation of society, culture, and politics (Cribb, 2010, p. 70). *Pembangunan* has been an important concept in nationalist thought since the last years of the Dutch colonial government in 1930s. What has made it such a powerful term, as Joshua Barker argues, is that it can be used to signify both a physical act of building or construction and a mental process of awakening or becoming conscious. Acts of physical construction – especially when they take place 'in the name of the people' – are thus invested with a deeply political and even spiritual significance (Barker, 2008, p. 523). In this chapter, we shall see it in the following Madura cases.

It was during the Suharto administration that *pembangunan* became a hot subject in the Repelita (Rencana Pembangunan Lima Tahun – the Five Years Development Plan).[2] According to Hans Antlöv, the New Order built a centralized economy system, and rural development programmes were textbook examples of a centralized and top-down modernization approach (Antlöv, 1995, p. 35). Moreover, if Pancasila represented the political character of the New Order, then *pembangunan* represented the economic character. Opposition to *pembangunan* was seen as being as political as opposition to Pancasila (Antlöv, 1995, p. 43). Through the propaganda of the New Order, the process of change was conceived as a process of modernization, with the government as the innovator and the people as the object of modernization (Soemardjan and Breazeale, 1993, p. 197).

As Michael van Langenberg puts it, the New Order can be perceived as a network of institutions, through which the rulers of the government attempted to control civil society and manipulate the means of production, distribution, and exchange, in pursuance of declared national and community interests

(Van Langenberg, 1990, p. 122). The state was concerned with constructing a continuous economy. The expectation was to create a modern industrial and service-based economy. In fact, economic *pembangunan* could be viewed as the main goal of the era and all parts of society were to work towards this objective (Wie, 2002, p. 196; Wood, 2005, p. 89). The main positive aspect learnt from the New Order experience is that an open trade and investment regime and efficient supply-side investments were beneficial for Indonesia. However, while the country has benefited from its more open economic policies, deep crises are economically very disruptive and socially painful (Hill and Narjoko, 2010, p. 63). Under Suharto's rule Java was depicted as the political, economic, and cultural centre of Indonesia, while the surrounding islands were seen as a vast uncivilized periphery and were framed through a discourse of marginality, backwardness, and the need for 'development' (Haug, Rössler, and Grumblies, 2017, p. 10).

During the New Order, the central government targeted Madura as one of the many areas to be *pembangunan*-ized. The process, however, was not smooth. There were several rejections of plans to build mega-projects on the island. Two major cases arose from these rejections. The first was the people and the *kiai*'s rejection of the Nipah Dam and the other was the *kiai*'s refusal to accept the government's plan for *industrialisasi*. The Nipah Dam incident was marked by four deaths, while the Suramadu Bridge affair passed without physical violence. Both of these events, however, were characterized by the involvement of *kiai* as the leaders of the people's power.[3]

One of the most obvious aspects that can be highlighted from these rejections is the inability of state officials, especially at regional levels, to cope with the high expectations of the central government. In the Nipah Dam incident, the regent of Sampang failed to accommodate the voices of people at the grassroots level who did not want their land and property to be taken away and did not want to be forced to accept the government's plans. In relation to the Suramadu Bridge affair, for much of the 1990s, the central and regional governments did not succeed in convincing the *kiai* of Bassra to approve the *industrialisasi* as had been expected.

Another central aspect underlined by these rejections is the undemocratic approach of the government towards the implementation of its plans. In the Nipah Dam incident, the government theoretically saw village inhabitants as those who needed the dam and who needed *pembangunan*. The dam was meant to benefit farmer-dominated villagers, ensuring that farm lands would be well irrigated. For those who did not depend on agriculture, it was meant to create work opportunities in other sectors that would possibly be generated from the dam, such as in the tourism or fishery sectors. Therefore, the government, in this case the Sampang Regency administration, believed that all efforts to build the dam would be endorsed by the villagers. In fact, the regional government was unable (or perhaps did not want) to conceive a *pembangunan* plan that would place the villagers as equal partners whose opinions would be taken into consideration. In the Suramadu Bridge affair,

the central and regional governments seem to have neglected the power of the religious leaders in society. For some non-state sponsored *kiai*, the *industrialisasi* was seen as a fearsome threat that would possibly diminish their influence and may even deprive *kiai* of their authority; for others, the *industrialisasi* was seen as a deep concern for the Madurese who lacked adequate education to fulfil positions in industry. To show that the *kiai* were influential and to try to maintain their authority, the *kiai* responded to the government's plan by launching a series of rejections. As we shall see, the government's plans to 'modernize' Madura eventually created resistance among some segments in society and these segments made extensive use of Islamic symbols in resisting the government's plans.

The Nipah Dam incident

The origin and nature of the incident

Like other regencies in Madura, Sampang has extensive areas of arid and infertile land that make it difficult to grow rice plants. According to the statistical records for 1971, of the total area of the Sampang regency (1,152.04 km^2), only 15,863 hectares or 158.63 km^2 or 13.76 per cent was harvested areas of wetland paddy (*Jawa Timur dalam Angka tahun 1971*, p. 84). In 1983, the harvested areas increased to 22,329 hectares or 223.29 km^2 or 19.38 per cent (*Jawa Timur dalam Angka 1983*, p. 147), and in 1991, the harvested areas increased to 23,005 hectares or 230.05 km^2 or 19.96 per cent (*Jawa Timur dalam Angka 1993*, p. 91). In comparison, of the total area of East Java province (47,922.00 km^2), the harvested areas in 1971 were 1,195,818 hectares or 11,958.18 km^2 or 24.95 per cent (*Jawa Timur dalam Angka 1971*, p. 84), while in 1983 these figures increased to 1,469,654 hectares or 14,696.54 km^2 or 30.66 per cent (*Jawa Timur dalam Angka 1983*, p. 147). In 1991 this reached 1,480,801 hectares (14,808.01 km^2) or 30.90 per cent (*Jawa Timur dalam Angka 1993*, p. 91).

For the New Order government, these figures showed that Sampang and also other regencies in Madura needed more paddy fields in order to achieve

Table 5.1 Harvested (wetland paddy) and total areas of the East Java Province and Madura in 1971, 1983, and 1991

Harvested areas	*1971, hectare/ percentage*	*1983, hectare/ percentage*	*1991, hectare/ percentage*	*Total area (km^2)*
East Java	1,195,818/24.95	1,469,654/30.66	1,480,801/30.90	47,922.00
Bangkalan	29,702/25.94	30,880/26.97	30,199/26.38	1,144.70
Sampang	15,863/13.76	22,329/19.38	23,005/19.96	1,152.04
Pamekasan	9,556/13.03	9,994/13.63	12,166/16.60	732.85
Sumenep	16,971/9.13	17,984/9.68	21,068/11.34	1,857.59

Source: *Jawa Timur dalam Angka 1971, 1983*, and *1991*.

self-sufficiency in rice. Food security – articulated in the press as self-sufficiency in domestic rice production (*swasembada pangan*) – remains a potent idea in Indonesia, where it has always been a political issue. In 1984, for instance, when Indonesia temporarily achieved *swasembada pangan*, 41 per cent of all planted areas were planted with rice. By contrast, in Malaysia, the total area planted with rice declined from 25 per cent in 1972 to 13 per cent in 1998 (Timmer, 2004, p.2, 11).

The Banyuates sub-district in the Sampang regency, with an area of 141.23 km^2 or 11 per cent of the total area of the Sampang Regency, was seen by the central government as a potential location for the introduction of an irrigation system by building a new dam. The idea was based partly on the fact that the Nipah River, 21.77 km in length and flowing primarily through the sub-district, could be the main source of the dam. In addition, the rainfall in the sub-district was relatively high for Sampang.[4] The fact that the area was also dry and un-irrigated prompted the government to transform the area with plans to build a dam. The idea was to flood the areas surrounding eight villages in the sub-district, namely the villages of Planggaran Barat, Planggaran Timur, Tolang, Nagasareh, Lar-Lar, Tapa'an, Montor, and Tebanah. Only one of these villages, Nagasareh, would be completely inundated. After the site was flooded and the dam was constructed, it was expected that the farmers in the area would change their cropping pattern (the selection of crops to be made depending on the soil and the source of water) so that eventually they would benefit from the dam.[5] It was also expected that the dam would become a tourist attraction that would benefit many people in the surrounding area.

According to the 1993 plan, the government aimed to build a number of dams in East Java Province. Some of these dams were already under construction, while some projects were not yet implemented.

The plan to build the Nipah Dam had been on the table since the fiscal year of 1981/1982. Indeed, it was implemented from that fiscal year until the fiscal year of 1985/1986 with funds from the Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Negara (APBN – Budget Revenue and Expenditure) through the project Pembangunan Jaringan Irigasi Sedang Kecil Jawa Timur (Small Medium Irrigation Development in East Java). The project was halted due to lack of funds and was scheduled to restart in the fiscal year of 1986/1987 (Hardiyanto, 1995, p. 10). In 1982, the government started the process of acquiring land with a total area of 53 hectares. This land acquisition, however, was postponed since the government decided to reschedule the project in 1984 (*Kompas*, 17 October 1993). In the end, no further action was executed until a decade later and the fiscal year of 1993/1994.

In the fiscal year of 1993/1994 the Nipah irrigation development project was scheduled to recommence. The proposal came from Dinas Pekerjaan Umum Pengairan Daerah Jawa Timur (DPUPD Jawa Timur – the East Java Public Works Office of Irrigation Areas), the East Java provincial government, and the Sampang regency government. The proposal was approved by the Minister of Public Works (Menteri Pekerjaan Umum) and was drawn up by

Table 5.2 List of dams under construction and awaiting construction in 1993 in three river areas (*wilayah sungai*) in the East Java Province

A	*Wilayah Sungai Bengawan Solo*	*Size*
1.	Gongseng Dam (Bojonegoro)	13 million m^3
2.	Kerjo Dam (Bojonegoro)	11 million m^3
3.	Cawah Dam (Bojonegoro)	13 million m^3
4.	Nglambangan Dam (Bojonegoro)	12 million m^3
5.	Belah Dam (Bojonegoro)	11 million m^3
6.	Jipang Dam (Cepu)*	560 million m^3
7.	Bugel Dam (Tuban)	14 million m^3
8.	Tawun Dam (Bojonegoro)	32 million m^3
9.	Lamong Dam (Lamongan)	13 million m^3
10.	Sangiran Dam (Ngawi)	15 million m^3
	Sub-total	694 million m^3
B	*Wilayah Sungai Brantas*	*Size*
1.	Wonorejo Dam (Tulungagung)	120 million m^3
2.	Sejawe Dam (Tulungagung)	1 million m^3
3.	Tugu Dam	40 million m^3
4.	Bagong Dam (Trenggalek)	9 million m^3
5.	Kampak Dam (Trenggalek)	19 million m^3
6.	Beng Dam (Jombang)	100 million m^3
	Sub-total:	289 million m^3
C	*Wilayah Madura*	*Size*
1.	Blega Dam	70 million m^3
2.	Samiran Dam	60 million m^3
3.	Nipah Dam	2.5 million m^3
	Sub-total	132.5 million m^3
	Total:	1,115.5 million m^3

Source: DPU Pengairan Daerah Propinsi Daerah Tingkat I Jawa Timur, 1993, cited in Hardiyanto, 1995, p.5.

Note: *the location is in Central Java province, but the benefits are also felt in East Java.

Surat Pembantu Gubernur Wilayah VI (the Decree of Regional Governor Assistant VI) in Pamekasan No. 092/3134/440.11/1989 dated 10 May 1989 (Hardiyanto, 1995, p. 10). During the New Order, the district-level governments were very dependent on grants and on the land tax, which was centrally assessed, although most of the revenue was assigned to the districts. Meanwhile, most provinces depended on central grants for around 80 per cent of their total revenues (Booth, 2014, p. 39).

In order to build the dam, the government needed to acquire land, and that included people's property, such as houses, mosques, and burial grounds. The land acquisition issues turned out to be a major problem. The government did not publicly explain the plan to the residents, and despite the fact that the land belonged to the people, the villagers were not invited to discuss the land acquisition process. The land acquisition began with a measurement of the land instead of a discussion of the plan with the landowners. The land measurements caused unrest among the villagers, and they felt that they were not given adequate information regarding the plans.

According to the statistical records for 1992, the population of Banyuates was 60,837 people or 8.65 per cent of the total population of Sampang.[6] The total number of households within the eight villages was 11,424, while the types of work undertaken by the inhabitants were farming (87.63 per cent) and trading (8.16 per cent) (Hardiyanto, 1995, p. 13). For the farmers, their land was not only a source of income, but also a sacred possession. There were graveyards and *langgar* (small mosque) on their lands. These places were regarded as sacred, and together with their houses and their paddy fields they constituted a connected family property. Khudori, who was considered the ringleader of the people's protests, revealed that his property was inherited land and that he had no desire to sell it: 'If I sold it, how would I visit (*ziarah*) the graves of my parents?' (*Tempo*, 16 October 1993). Moreover, Musa, the father of Nindin (one of the victims who died in the incident), stated that he had two hectares of land and that he did not want to sell: 'The land was inherited from my parents. I was afraid to get *kualat* (being cursed and struck down by calamity) if I sold it; what's more, it was my only property' (*Kompas*, 17 October 1993).

In the process of land acquisition, on 5 April 1993 the head of DPUPD asked permission from the regent of Sampang to conduct a land acquisition amounting to an area of approximately 120 hectares in Banyuates. The proposal was approved by the regent on 30 April 1993 through letter No. 593.82/914/442.11/1993 (Hardiyanto, 1995, p. 23). A couple of weeks later, on 19 May 1993, the regent issued SK No. 89/1993 establishing the Tim Pembantu Pelaksana Pembebasan Tanah (the land acquisition supporting team) for the Nipah Dam project. In the letter, we find the beginnings of the involvement of local security forces in the process of land acquisition. It is stated in the letter that Aliwafa, the sector police chief (Kapolsek) of Banyuates and Sudjak, the military rayon commander (Danramil) of Banyuates were members of the support team along with other officials from the regency office (Hardiyanto, 1995, pp. 25–26).

The measuring of the land by the officials of the Badan Pertanahan Nasional (BPN – the National Land Board) started on 5 July 1993 in the villages of Nagasareh and Tapaan and ended on 31 July 1993. On 2 August 1993, around 35 landowners came to the local parliament of Sampang to ask about the measuring process. They also demanded that the regency parliament clarify the plans to build the dam. However, they did not receive a clear answer (Hardiyanto, 1995, p. 27).

On 25 August 1993, around 32 landowners went to the regency parliament once again. They complained about the unrest being caused by the measuring. Reports by the fact-finding team of Lembaga Bantuan Hukum (LBH – Legal Aid Organization) Surabaya indicated that landowners were restless and uneasy because village officials were forcing them to give their approval (to give *cap jempol*, literally a thumb mark) to the measuring. The landowners discovered that this thumb mark was being used as a sign of approval of the measuring, whereas they were initially told that the thumb mark would be a sign that their land would not be measured. As a result, the following day, four landowners, Khudhori, Makruf, Masruki, and Mar'i were ordered to come to Koramil (the military rayon command) Banyuates. They were taken to Kodim (the military district command) Sampang and stayed there for two days. They were accused of: 1) being the masterminds behind the rejection of the Nipah Dam; 2) being ringleaders in terms of organizing other villagers to come to the local parliament; 3) leading the way in the rejection of the measuring process; and 4) influencing people to not sell their land. Furthermore, the four men were forced to accept the land prices set by the government and were forced to influence fellow landowners to sell their land. The measuring then continued on 27 August 1993; this time in the villages of Planggaran Barat and Planggaran Timur (Hardiyanto, 1995, pp. 27–28). The arrest of these four landowners was actually part of a rather common pattern in many places in Indonesia. As Anton Lucas has indicated, the 'mysterious' arrests of activists or people labelled as activists who tried to organize resistance and change the security forces' perception of its own role in land acquisition disputes, also happened in Plumpang, north Jakarta and Tubanan, north Surabaya (Lucas, 1997, p. 255).

During the measuring on 8 September 1993, officials from the BPN, accompanied by the *klebun* of Planggaran Barat, two police officers from Polsek (the sector police in the sub-district) Banyuates and a soldier of Koramil Banyuates were intercepted by around one hundred villagers. Asdin, the *klebun*, armed with a machete, threatened the villagers not to disrupt the measuring. The villagers demanded that the measuring be stopped and, after a heated debate, this is indeed what happened (Hardiyanto, 1995, p. 28).

This disturbance on 8 September annoyed the regent who ordered a briefing (*penyuluhan*) be held among the villagers.[7] On 20 September 1993, the regent conducted a briefing in Planggaran Timur village hall. A local *ulama, Kiai* Jauhari was also spotted at this briefing. The regent was angry because the measuring process was not going smoothly. He threatened that anyone who obstructed the Nipah Dam project would be shot (Hardiyanto, 1995, pp. 30–31; Elsam, 1996, p. 5). Makruf, a villager who would later be suspected of being a provocateur, voiced his disapproval of the project. He was supported by the majority of villagers who eventually left the hall as a sign of protest (Elsam, 1996, p. 5). He and other villagers said that they did not want to sell their land because there were a number of mosques and graves of their ancestors there (*Surabaya Post*, 22 September 1993). According to *Kiai* Moh

Ismail Muzakki, one of the vice chairmen of the regency's parliament, on 20 September 1993, in a meeting with residents of Banyuates in Planggaran Timur village, Bagus Hinayana, the regent of Sampang, intimidated villagers who disagreed with the plan to build a dam in their area by threatening to shoot anyone who rejected the plan (*Jawa Pos*, 19 October 1993).

On 23 September 1993, the regent held a coordination meeting (*rakor*) with the regency parliament head, the police chief of Sampang (Kapolres), the commander of Kodim Sampang (Dandim), BPN, and other officials. One of the outcomes of this *rakor* was the replacement of police officers (Polres Sampang) in the measuring process with the military forces (Kodim 0828) (Hardiyanto, 1995, p. 31). According to *Tempo* magazine, in a meeting on 15 September 1993 with Muspida (a group of officials of the Sampang Regency), the regent asked the Dandim to provide security for the measuring. The anonymous source claims that: 'since the regent is more senior [his military rank was colonel] than the Dandim, of course the request is approved by the Dandim. In ABRI [the Indonesian Armed Forces], a request from a senior is an order' (*Tempo*, 23 October 1993).

To conclude, it seems that the government consistently attempted to measure the land despite a number of protests from landowners. Lucas reveals that this kind of situation has been common in the period since the late 1980s, when land disputes involving the authorities and landowners became a major source of local and national tension in Indonesia. The disputes were usually concerned with compensation offered for the land at rates well below market value (Lucas, 1997, p. 230). The low prices of the land were caused by, among other things, landholders' failure to register their lands, because of both the costs and the bureaucratic procedures involved. Therefore, the only proof of ownership or cultivation rights is the length of time they had been cultivating the land and their payment of all financial obligations (Lucas, 1992, p. 84). Nevertheless, the problems are far bigger than that. Renato Rosaldo suggests that postcolonial states have created systems of ordering people that promote, if not produce, a sense among peripheral minority groups that they live in an ever receding mode of pre-contact existence. Such peripheral groups are, in the view of state officials, 'primitive' – provincial or local – and, as such, an embarassment (Rosaldo, 2003, p. 2). In the context of Indonesia's New Order, challenges to the state were obliterated, giving the state total control (Nyman, 2009, pp. 254–255). In a way, this political circumstance has perpetuated the patronage pattern that was institutionalized during the New Order administration. In New Order Madura, this was particularly true.

The shooting

After 24 September passed without incident, the officials of BPN and the Social and Politics Office (Kantor Sosial Politik) of Sampang and around 20 security officers, recommenced measuring on 25 September. Unlike the day before, this time hundreds of villagers had gathered on the site where officials were attempting to measure the land and protested against the process. There

are several different versions of the incident reported in the media. One of the reports mentions that the villagers were armed with sharp weapons and tried to attack the officials. They forced the officials back until the distance between them was only five metres, and then, following a number of warning shots, which were ignored by the protesters, the security forces fired on the villagers. As a result, three villagers, Mutirah, Nindin, and Simuki, died on the spot, and one, Muhammad, died in a hospital a couple of days later (30 September 1993) (*Surya*, 26 September 1993; *Tempo*, 16 October 1993).

The findings of LBH Surabaya reveal another story. According to this organization, the villagers of Planggaran Timur, Lar-Lar, Tolang, Nagasareh, Tapaan, Montor, and Planggaran Barat, came to the site to ask why their property was being measured while the question of whether they were willing to sell their property or not, and whether the prices being offered were appropriate had not been resolved. Moreover, according to this version of the story, the villagers were not carrying any weapons and were shot from a distance of 125 metres, rather than five metres (Hardiyanto, 1995, p. 36). It is also said that village officials, such as Asdin, the *klebun*, wore headbands of yellow coconut leaves and weeds (*janur kuning* and *ilalang*) (Hardiyanto, 1995, p. 36; *Tempo*, 16 October 1993). Despite its prevalent use in wedding ceremonies in Java and Madura, for some people *janur kuning* is a symbol of *tolak bala* (to avoid calamities). Therefore, the use of *janur kuning* by the village officials was a sign that they were expecting or hoping that calamities could be avoided. According to *Tempo*, there were rumours that *calo tanah* (land brokers) were aware of the signs (such as the *janur kuning* and *ilalang* headbands worn by the village officials) that on 25 September, during the measuring process, there would be a bloody incident in which people would be killed (*Tempo*, 16 October 1993).

After the incident, the Coordinating Minister for Politics and Security (Menko Polkam), Susilo Sudarman, stated that the guilty parties would be prosecuted (*Surya*, 29 September 1993). Meanwhile, twenty *kiai* from Sampang issued a statement demanding that the perpetrators be charged in accordance with the applicable laws. The statement from the *kiai* of Sampang was directed against the regent (Hardiyanto, 1995, p. 45). One day after the statement from the *kiai*, Pangdam V/Brawijaya (the commander of the military provincial command) Major General Haris Sudarno asserted that there would be an investigation into the shooting (Hardiyanto, 1995, p. 45).

Consequently, the soldiers who had shot the four people were brought to court and punished. Furthermore, Dandim 0828 Sampang, Lieutenant Colonel (Artillery) Sugeng Wiyono and Kapolres Sampang, Lieutenant Colonel (Police) Siswinarto, were dismissed from their posts (*Suara Karya* and *Jayakarta*, 16 October 1993).

Kiai *in power*

One of the most active *kiai* in the protest was *Kiai* Alawy Muhammad. After the incident, *Kiai* Alawy, together with Sampang residents, demanded justice.

Vice President Try Sutrisno asked *Kiai* Alawy to calm the fiery situation in Sampang. Meanwhile, other *kiai* also responded to the incident. *Kiai* from the NU of East Java, represented by its board members, *Kiai* Imron Hamzah and *Kiai* Hasyim Muzadi, stated that: 'the NU of East Java deeply regrets the three persons shooting incident. The suspects in the Nipah Dam incident must be thoroughly investigated under applicable laws, taking the public interest into account'. The NU of East Java also urged the *nahdliyin* to perform *shalat ghaib* (a funeral prayer performed when the corpse is not in the same location as those performing the prayer) and *tahlilan* (a prayer performed on six consecutive nights to facilitate a deceased person entering paradise) for the victims. Moreover, Ikatan Keluarga Madura (Ikama – Association of the Madurese) via its advisor *Kiai* Amin Imron also stated its concern about the incident (*Jawa Pos*, 30 September 1993; *Surya*, 30 September 1993).

Meanwhile, on Saturday, 2 October 1993 twenty *ulama* from Sampang who had signed a statement of concern and regret over the Nipah incident were invited by Muspida Sampang to an event titled 'Pertemuan Ulama-Umaro Sampang' (the meeting of *ulama-umaro* (the government) of Sampang). However, only one of the twenty invited *ulama* attended, *Kiai* Busyiri Nawawi, the *kiai* of *Pesantren* Asy-Syirojiyah Sampang (*Surya*, 3 October 1993; *Surabaya Post*, 3 October 1993).

In the meantime, *Kiai* Alawy, one of the *ulama* who had signed the statement, stated that he did not have to attend the meeting because the regent, Bagus Hinayana, had not apologized, and had instead persisted in blaming the citizens for being 'puppeteers' of the incident and the on-going protests to reject the dam. *Kiai* Alawy claimed that he did not know about the government's plan to build the dam: 'I have never been asked to consult about the plan, Mister Bagus [Hinayana] has only been here once, at the opening of Penataran P4 (the Upgrading of the Guidance to the Perception and Practice of Pancasila) some time ago'. Another *ulama, Kiai* Marzuki Djufri, the chairman of the education foundation Al Jufri, Blumbungan, Pamekasan, supported *Kiai* Alawy's statement, saying that 'the eruption of the incident is proof that the role of *ulama* and public figures is not taken into consideration' (*Jawa Pos*, 4 October 1993; *Surya*, 4 October 1993).

The statements of a number of *ulama* were later taken into consideration by the authorities. Around seventeen *ulama*, led by *Kiai* Alawy, were invited to meet with the governor of East Java. In the meeting with the *ulama*, the governor was accompanied by the chairman of the MUI (Majelis Ulama Indonesia – the Council of Indonesian *Ulama*) of East Java, *Kiai* Misbach. According to *Kiai* Alawy, the main purpose of the meeting was to deliver ten points of concern from the Madurese *ulama* on the incident. These points included the handling of the incident. The *ulama* voiced their concern that to deal with the incident, peace must first be created in the villages surrounding the dam, people's lives must be put back to normal, people's trust had to be restored in the government's plan, and mutual suspicion between the various parties must be eliminated (*Jawa Pos*, 6 October 1993; *Surya*, 6 October 1993).

Two days later, a larger meeting was held in the Grahadi building (a state building built by the Dutch in 1795) in Surabaya. Among the participants were: *Kiai* Alawy, the chairman of the MUI of East Java, and a number of Madurese *ulama*. Representing the authorities were, among others, the governor of East Java; Pangdam V/Brawijaya; and Kapolda (the commander of provincial police) of East Java; and Mohammad Noer, a Madurese public figure (*Jawa Pos*, 8 October 1993).

The incident generated concern from a number of quarters, including from other *ulama* in other places. From Rembang, Central Java, around forty *ulama* expressed these concerns in a letter to President Suharto (*Suara Merdeka*, 13 October 1993). Meanwhile, the incident was also discussed in a Bassra meeting in *Pesantren* Raudlatul Muta'allimin, Bangkalan on 17 October 1993. Around 75 *ulama* were present to hear an explanation from *Kiai* Jauhari of Banyuates (*Surabaya Post*, 18 October 1993). Following the incident, there was also a plan by a number of *ulama* to conduct a *tahlilan akbar* (grand *tahlilan*) to commemorate forty days since the death of the victims. However, this plan was abandoned for security reasons following a recommendation from Pangdam V/Brawijaya. As an alternative, *Kiai* Busyiri Nawawi recommended that a *tahlil* be performed in every mosque, *langgar*, and home (*Jawa Pos*, 22 October 1993).

In an interview with the *Surabaya Post, Kiai* Alawy asserted that the plan to build the Nipah Dam was not crystal clear for the people surrounding the site. He added that the villagers did not completely understand the benefits of the dam and that they only knew that their land was being measured, so it was easy to see how the misunderstanding had surfaced. He urged the officials measuring the land to have direct meetings with the villagers and demanded that the villagers be provided with clear explanations about the benefits of the dam, the price of their land and, finally, why the land should be measured. He also mentioned that the incident happened because the government had not approached the *ulama* and other public figures about this matter adequately. He lamented that the government did not invite the *ulama* to discuss the plan prior to the measuring (*Surabaya Post*, 4 October 1993). The important role *Kiai* Alawy played was approved by the governor of Lemhanas (the National Resilience Institute), Major General R. Hartono, who publicly voiced his unhappiness about the plan that had not involved the *ulama*, including *Kiai* Alawy (*Jawa Pos*, 4 October 1993).

It is interesting to observe that the role of the *klebun* is absent. Even though the *klebun* position was formally acknowledged by the villagers, during and prior to the incident, the *klebun* of the eight villages were seen as aligned to the government, and not on the side of the people. *Klebun* were perceived as not having the right and authority to be involved in the land affairs of the landowners. *Klebun* were seen as 'individuals above the village', even though they lived in the neighbourhood. Moreover, in the Nipah incident, *klebun* were thought to have favoured the interests of the '*orang kota*' (townsmen), such as the *camat* (head of sub-district) or the regent, instead of their own

people. This became clear when some *klebun* (Montor, Tapaan, and Nagasareh villages) became members of the land acquisition committee.

The position of the *klebun* on the opposite side from the people was actually not surprising at all. The New Order administration engaged in a process of sub-district and village level state building that had the explicit goals of surveillance and social control, that included building a system of authorities and incentives that would ensure that village and sub-village leaders monitored citizens and reported protest or any hint of left-inspired political activity (Bebbington et al., 2006, p. 1963).

After the incident, the villagers turned to other leaders who they expected would be able to solve the problems. During this time, the *ulama* showed their influence and became involved for two reasons. Firstly, they became involved because the people called on them to help solve the problems, and secondly – and this is actually more important – it was because the *ulama* felt the need to involve themselves in the conflict. They believed that their capacity as leaders of the people would be preserved if they were seen to be on the villagers' side, supporting the people, and criticizing the government. This certainly is the case that, as I have shown in Chapter 1, Islam in Madura is culturally embedded in all aspects of life, and that the religious and cultural identities of the Madurese have accumulated in powers that have presented a culturally-political challenge for the state in local politics, such as in terms of *pembangunan*. This is also in line with a proposition delineated in Chapter 1 that groups of religious elites and individuals pose challenge to state authority in the quest for social order, as is the case in the Nipah Dam incident.

Land acquisition and the problems of 'provocateurs'

Fresh water is a much-contested resource. Industry, households, and farmers make competing demands on available water resources, using them diversely for, among other things, transport, a source of drinking water, and a key resource for agriculture and fish farming. The 1990s saw governments worldwide experimenting with market-mimicking devices for water management (Braadbaart, 2007, p. 297). The incident over land acquisition in Sampang was actually part of a series of wider land disputes in Indonesia. During the New Order, land dispossession was guarded under the strict control of the bureaucracy and the military, justified by utilitarian ideas of development and public purposes (Fauzi and Bachriadi, 2006, pp. 3–4). According to Lucas, during the early 1990s, an enormous increase in land disputes was caused by the rapid expansion of foreign and domestic private investment. The government had to facilitate the acquisition of land by investors for the building of factories and public projects such as housing, dams, roads, and urban renewal schemes (Lucas, 1997, pp. 231–232). Prior to the Nipah Dam incident, the most infamous land dispute regarding a public project and involving thousands of families is perhaps the Kedung Ombo Dam dispute in Central Java in the 1980s.

the Nipah Dam incident, which cost the lives of several villagers, there was a common attitude among the civil and military authorities, which was asserted in various statements, that the incident was masterminded (*didalangi*) by third parties (*pihak ketiga*) or outsiders (*orang luar*). The governor insisted that the incident happened because there were third parties encouraging landowners to reject the dam. Pangdam V/Brawijaya even accused three villagers of being ring-leaders in opposing the measuring team and the security forces (Hardiyanto, 1995, p. 46). The regent suspected 'outsiders' of being the actors behind the protests: 'I suppose that the protests were driven by outsiders, not by the local people, but I do not know who drove it' (*Kompas*, 28 September 1993). According to the special report of the DPUPD, the protesters, including the three dead victims, were mostly not the landowners, and that the protests from 2 August 1993 to 25 September 1993 were masterminded by Makruf of Lar-lar, Khudhori of Talang, and Siseh of Talang (Hardiyanto, 1995, p. 50).

One year after the incident, a team from Balai Kajian Sejarah dan Nilai Tradisional Yogyakarta (Centre for Research of History and Traditional Values Yogyakarta) investigated the incident and visited the site. According to their report, officials returned to the site to install markers on the acquired land. They were accompanied by security forces and measured the land in the villages of Lar-lar, Talang, and Nagasareh. These activities were said to have generated anxiety amongst the villagers who still hoped, indeed, expected, that the incident would be settled (Nurhajarini *et al.*, 2005, p. 99). Moreover, the report also stated that a number of people benefited from the project, including a number of *klebun*, such as the *klebun* of Montor, who is said to have provided lodging for the construction workers and to have supplied building material (Nurhajarini *et al.*, 2005, pp. 108–109). At last, however, construction of the dam started in 2004 and finished in 2008 and started to be flooded in 2015, and was inaugurated on 19 March 2016.

What about the regent?

In the midst of the pressure from the *ulama* and the general public to investigate the incident thoroughly, the Minister of Home Affairs, as the regent's ultimate superior, appeared hesitant. Up until 15 October 1993, the minister was still waiting for the report from the governor (the official report of Bakorstanas of East Java), which was necessary before any punishment could be imposed. He said that punishments could vary from being discharged of duties, demotions, to cuts in salary. Four days earlier, the governor also stressed that he would punish the regent over the incident. To that end, the governor formed a special team to evaluate the regent's involvement in the incident. The team was composed of the Deputy Governor of the People's Welfare section, the Itwilprop (provincial inspectorate) of East Java, and the first assistant of the Sekwilda (provincial secretary). The team was to operate based on the report of Bakorstanas of East Java and the opinion of DPRD Sampang (Hardiyanto, 1995, p. 53).

Prior to 15 October 1993, the regent released a statement that he would take full responsibility for what happened in the incident (*Suara Merdeka*, 13 October 1993). This did not prevent the governor from asserting that he would bear the ultimate responsibility for the incident: 'It is not fair to blame others in the incident. This is completely my responsibility as the governor of East Java; do not blame the regent of Sampang Bagus Hinayana in this case because he was only the executor [of the project] in the *daerah* (region, here it means in Sampang)' (*Merdeka*, 15 October 1993; *Tempo*, 23 October 1993; Hardiyanto, 1995, p. 53). Two days previously, the governor had stated that he would punish the regent: 'but what kind of sanctions, we shall see later, as we are still waiting for the results of the investigation by Bakorstanas of East Java, so that I shall be able to find out about his mistakes and how far he was involved. Certainly, Bagus as the regent made some mistakes in the incident that took four lives' (*Suara Merdeka*, 13 October 1993).

Following the hesitation of the higher authorities, such as the Ministry of Home Affairs and the governor, to dismiss the regent, residents of Sampang demanded justice by protesting in front of the regent's office on 9 September 1993. They did not have simply one demand. They also called for the abolishment of the SDSB (state-sponsored lottery) and for the Bahari movie theatre to be closed down because it was undermining people's morality (*Surabaya Post*, 9 November 1993; *Jawa Pos*, 10 November 1993). A number of *santri* who claimed to be representatives of *Pesantren* Tanwirul Islam and Darul Ulum also came to the DPRD II Sampang in order to request that parliament dismiss the regent (*Surya*, 16 November 1993).

The protests were not only voiced by those who were against the regent. Twelve *kiai* from Omben, led by *Kiai* Asyari Munir, came to the DPRD II Sampang to give their support to the regent. They asked the DPRD not to dismiss Bagus Hinayana and, in fact, requested that parliament let him keep his position until the end of his tenure. However, they also requested that the SDSB in Sampang be abolished (*Surya*, 16 November 1993). It seems that there was a political agreement between the regent and his supporters that would allow the regent to retain his position as long as the SDSB was abolished. It is also possible that these *kiai*, in order not to appear to be direct supporters of the regent, raised the issue of abolishing the SDSB so that their disagreement with the SDSB indicated their support for Islamic law.

Meanwhile, in an interview with *Surya, Kiai* Alawy stated that the regent must be punished: 'Not only has he to be sanctioned in the form of dismissal from his position,' he said, 'but he also has to be brought to court'. He also condemned the twelve *kiai* who gave support to the regent, saying that those who supported the regent could not claim to be *kiai*. He suggested that those who supported the regent were driven by contractor companies; if they did not support the regent, he reasoned, they would not get government projects. The same opinion was also voiced by the FPP (the United Development Fraction) of DPRD II Sampang who demanded that the regent resign from his position (*Surya*, 18 November 1993).

Nevertheless, on 17 November the DPRD confirmed that the regent would remain in his position until the end of his tenure in 1995. This decision was made for several reasons, such as the fact that the regent was still needed to rule the regency and that during his tenure he had achieved much for the regency. The FPP, who had voiced their disagreement with other factions in the parliament, ultimately had to agree with the decision. However, they made sure that their opinions on the regent would be inserted into the statement that would be sent to the governor (*Surabaya Post*, 18 November 1993). Subsequently, there were no further attempts to bring the regent to court or to dismiss him from his position for the remainder of his tenure.

The Suramadu Bridge affair

The origin and nature of the project

Authoritarian regimes exercise substantial control over society. One of the main characteristics of such regimes is their capacity to maintain themselves in power through direct repression in which the army and police play major roles. In addition, there is another significant way in which authoritarian regimes dominate society; that is to say, the development of political methods to maintain control (Crouch, 1990, pp. 115–116). In short, local politics during the New Order was controlled by the trinity of Golkar, the military, and bureaucracy (Honna, 2010, p. 135). According to this description, the New Order administration in Indonesia was a typically authoritarian regime.

During the New Order, political methods were also used to manipulate government projects. Foreign and domestic private investment rapidly entered Indonesia in the name of *pembangunan*. Many government projects, such as high-rise buildings, roads, and bridges were financed by such investments in which the government facilitated the investors as part of the industrialization programmes. Frequently, in order to implement a project, another project had to be executed by the government in order to meet all the requirements by the investors. It could also be the case that the government felt it necessary to execute another related project in order to accelerate development or regain capital. Meanwhile, if there was any disagreement about such projects from society or opposition parties, the authoritarian New Order administration responded with manipulative methods.

The plan to build the Suramadu Bridge, which would connect the islands of Java and Madura, was characterized not only by such manipulative methods of the New Order administration, but also by a division among the Madurese religious elite where the use of ideologies, institutions, and organizations was prevalent. At the same time, both the government and the religious elite targeted the people to gain support.

At the end of 1990, through the Keppres No. 55/1990, dated 14 December 1990, the government stated that it would build the Suramadu Bridge. The government also asserted that the development of the bridge would go hand

in hand with the establishment of industrial estates on the island, especially in Bangkalan. In other words, both plans were arranged in one policy package. According to the governor of East Java, Soelarso (r. 1988–1993), in the future all industrial activities would have to be concentrated in one area in order to avoid the annexation of fertile agricultural land. In order to do this, the development of the Madura region was seen as an alternative option to the development of other industrial areas in East Java, alongside the existing industrial estates such as in Surabaya, Sidoarjo, Gresik, and Pasuruan (*Surabaya Post*, 4 December 1991).

The idea to build a bridge had, apparently, been there long before the government issued the decree. In the 1960s, Professor Sedyatmo, a notable engineer, raised the idea of bridging the islands of Java and Sumatra and Java and Bali.[8] He named these bridges after Ontoseno (Antasena), a mythical figure in the Javanese version of the Mahabharata epic (Effendi and Aksan, 2009, p. 235). The idea then developed into a plan to build a bridge connecting Java and Madura since this was more practical in terms of implementation.[9] Another early idea concerning the bridge is said to have come from R.P. Mohammad Noer, known as Pak Noer (b. 1918, d. 2010). Noer claimed that the idea came to him when he served as *patih* (deputy regent) of Bangkalan between 1950 and 1959 (Siahaan and Purnomo, 1997, p. 46, 53, 179). The idea became stronger during his tenure as the governor of East Java between 1971 and 1976. He claimed that he never officially stated his idea when he held the position of governor, because he feared that people would accuse him of giving preference to his home island, Madura.[10] A third idea about the bridge seems to have arisen during the Sukarno presidency. The initial plan was to build the bridge between Kebomas, Gresik (Java) and Kamal, Bangkalan (Madura). Due to the left-wing officers' coup (G30S/PKI) in 1965, the plan was not implemented (Subaharianto *et al.*, 2004, p. 103). In 1965, a blueprint of the Sumatra–Java bridge was formulated by Sedyatmo at ITB Bandung. The blueprint was seen by Suharto in June 1986, two years after Sedyatmo passed away (Effendi and Aksan, 2009, p. 239).

The idea to include the establishment of industrial estates was determined mainly by economic reasons. The development of the bridge was estimated to cost around Rp. 500,000,000,000 (roughly US$ 300,000,000) or Rp. 1,000,000,000,000 including the establishment of industrial areas (Muthmainnah, 1998, p. 54; Siahaan and Purnomo, 1997, p. 181; *Surabaya Post*, 2 August 1991). As is the case in other investments, investors expect a quick return on their capital. However, depending on the bridge to deliver immediate profit was not considered an appropriate or suitable option. There had to be a way that investors would be attracted to investing in the bridge based on economic calculations. *Daerah* were forced to find creative ways of attracting investors by *pusat* (the centre-Jakarta). Therefore, in the ambitious plan to build the bridge, the government believed that industrial estates had to be established along with the development of the bridge as a way for investors to be able to obtain a quick profit.

Two years after Sedyatmo passed away, his wife, Sumarpeni Sedyatmo, wrote a letter to one of the personal assistants of President Suharto, Ario Darmoko, about the blueprint for a project called the Trinusa Bima Sakti Bridge (the Trinusa project). Based on the basic concepts outlined by Sedyatmo, in July 1986 Suharto assigned Menteri Negara Riset dan Teknologi (Menristek)/ Kepala Badan Penerapan dan Pengkajian Teknologi – BPPT (the State Minister of Research and Technology/Chairman of Body of the Application and Assessment of Technology), B.J. Habibie, to conduct research on the feasibility of building the Java–Sumatra, Java–Bali, and Java–Madura bridges. The Japan Indonesia Science and Technology Forum (JIF), a cooperation forum comprising of Japanese private companies and BPPT, supported the research project between 1986 and 1989 by conducting a number of preliminary studies on the feasibility of building the bridges. Based on these studies, the most feasible plan seemed to be to build a bridge that would connect Java and Madura. On 9 January 1989, a committee, led by Wardiman Djojonegoro, an official at the BPPT, was established to implement the Trinusa project (Effendi and Aksan, 2009, pp. 239–241).

Mohammad Noer saw many opportunities in the Trinusa project. He was aware that local people should be involved in the project, and that such a plan would end Madura's relative isolation from Java. On 3 May 1989, Noer established P.T. Dhipa Madura Pradana (DMP), a private company that would be part of the consortium charged with building the Suramadu

Figure 5.1 The Suramadu Bridge seen from the Madura side

Bridge. Summa Group, a large conglomerate group, was also part of P.T. DMP and Noer became the director president. P.T. DMP was given a significant role in surveying the location, executing land acquisition, and financing the mega project (Siahaan and Purnomo, 1997, p. 182; Muthmainnah, 1998, p. 69).

On 20 November 1990 in Tokyo, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between P.T. DMP and a Japanese consortium, consisting of the Mitsubishi Corporation, C. Itoh & Company (now known as Itochu Corporation), the Long-Term Credit Bank of Japan,[11] and the Shimizu Company. The agreement was intended to implement further research on the feasibility of the project, and it was expected that the project would commence in 1992 (Siahaan and Purnomo, 1997, p. 182). After Summa Bank, a major company within the Summa Group, collapsed in 1992, due to highly concentrated intra-group lending, the Indonesian government expected that a new consortium would be established. Habibie explained there would only be three groups in this new consortium: the BPIS (Badan Pengelola Industri Strategis – the Strategic Industries Management Board), the provincial and municipal government, and national private companies (*Jawa Pos*, 3 July 1992). In order to get national private companies involved in financing the project, the governor of East Java, Soelarso, asked Bimantara Group, a business emporium belonging to Bambang Trihatmojo (a son of President Suharto), to be included in the consortium. Bimantara, however, turned down this invitation (*Surya*, 17 July 1992).

The governor of East Java supported the plan because the bridge and the industrial areas were predicted to accelerate the development of Madura as well as being a perfect solution to the problem of limited space for industrial estates in Surabaya. Madura was seen as the ideal plan because the fertile agricultural areas in the south of Surabaya would not be disturbed. In other words, Madurese people had no choice. This could happen because, as Tsing puts it, if those living in periphery want to participate in democracy, they are simply going to have to learn nationally and internationally sponsored democratic standards. This is very close to the government's position on development: to achieve development, the government sets uniform national standards and expects rural people to learn them (Tsing, 2003, p. 218).

Although the development of the bridge was arranged in one package with the establishment of industrial estates, the governor Basofi Sudirman and ex-governor Soelarso expected the bridge to be built first, because in order to build the industrial estates the bridge was required to be fully functional. This was because the only transport system at the time, a number of ferries, could not support the creation of the industrial estates (*Surabaya Post*, 17 February 1994; *Bisnis Indonesia*, 17 February 1994).

The start of the project was postponed a couple of times. After it was realized that the project could not be inaugurated in 1992, it was expected that the plan would start in March 1994. In 1994, however, in a meeting between Menristek, Kasospol (Kepala Staf Sosial Politik – Chief of Social and Politics of the

Indonesian Armed Forces), Lieutenant General R. Hartono, the governor of East Java, and Madurese public figures, it was decided that the project would begin in April 1995 (*Surya*, 24 September 1994). When the Asian financial crises occurred in 1997, government projects worth, in total, around Rp. 135,000,000,000,000 (roughly US$ 67,500,000,000) were postponed or re-scheduled under Keppres No. 39/1997 on the suspension/reconsideration of government projects by BUMN (Badan Usaha Milik Negara – state-owned enterprises) and private sectors attached to BUMN. The Suramadu Bridge project was included in these postponements (Siahaan and Purnomo, 1997, p. 183; Muthmainnah, 1998, p. 107; *Memorandum*, 17 September 1997; *Karya Darma*, 17 September 1997; *Surabaya Post*, 17 September 1997).

The stances of Bassra and non-Bassra ulama

From the beginning of the plan, a number of *ulama* in the group of Bassra objected to the idea of combining the bridge with the establishment of industrial estates. They wanted the bridge to be built, but thought that the plan to establish industrial estates, which later became known among them as *industrialisasi*, should not be implemented for various reasons. Bassra's opinions became a point of argument among the decision-makers at a national as well as regional level. Through Habibie, the central government attempted to influence the *ulama* and get them to change their opinion. Such attempts included holding national seminars to which Bassra members were invited, making visits to industrial areas in Surabaya and Batam, and inviting Bassra to P.T. IPTN (Industri Pesawat Terbang Nusantara – Nusantara Aircraft Industry). State officials from the central government (Jakarta), such as the Pangab and Minister of Religious Affairs, visited Madura frequently to hold talks with the *ulama*. Objections also came from a number of *ulama* who lived in the area surrounding where the bridge would be built. In a meeting with members of the regency parliament, around fifty *kiai* of several *pesantren* in Sukolilo Barat village, Labang sub-district, Bangkalan, requested that the government keep the educational institutions in the area. In the village, there were around seventeen educational institutions, such as *Pesantren* Al-Ittihad Yasi and *Pesantren* K.H. Ishak. According to the RUTRK (Rencana Umum Tata Ruang Kota – urban spatial planning) of Labang, all educational institutions were to be demolished should *industrialisasi* be introduced (*Surabaya Post*, 10 December 1991).

Meanwhile, on 31 August 1991, IMABA (Ikatan Mahasiswa Bangkalan – the Bangkalanese Student Association) held a seminar entitled 'Persepsi Masyarakat tentang Industrialisasi di Madura' (People's Perceptions of *Industrialisasi* in Madura) in the Bangkalan Regency Hall. *Kiai* Kholil A.G. was one of the speakers (Moesa, 1999, p. 118). In the following year, on 13 and 14 January, IMABA held another seminar 'Menyongsong Industrialisasi di Madura' (Welcoming *Industrialisasi* in Madura) in Bank Jatim, Surabaya. On 14 and 15 December 1993 Bassra held a seminar entitled 'Pembangunan dan Pengembangan Madura Memasuki Pembangunan Jangka Panjang Tahap II

(PJPT II)' (The Development and Construction of Madura in Entering the Second Period of Long-Term Development) (Moesa, 1999, p. 119).

The attempts by top-level officials to encourage Bassra to support the plan were not successful. On 18 August 1994, Bassra sent 'Sembilan Pokok Pikiran Bassra' (the Nine Opinions of Bassra), regarding the *industrialisasi* plan, to Habibie and related government officials, such as the Pangab, the governor of East Java, Pangdam V/Brawijaya, the Regional Governor Assistant in Madura, all regents in Madura, the DPRD I (the provincial parliament) East Java and the DPRD II of all regencies in Madura. Bassra had high expectations that the government would implement policies that would benefit the Madurese. The fundamental issues were, among other things, requests that developments and improvements have to accommodate aspirations of the Madurese in order to be constructive for the Madurese; developments and improvements have to actively involve society, particularly the *ulama*; human resources have to be organized as early as possible and must involve *pesantren* in Madura; and developments are not against Islamic values (Muthmainnah, 1998, pp. 122–125; Moesa, 1999, p. 123).

This request was taken by the government as a rejection of the bridge plan. The government responded by threatening to cancel the establishment of industrial estates in Madura and to move them to Gelangban (regencies of Gresik, Lamongan, and Tuban). Meanwhile, the regent of Lamongan, R. Mohammad Faried, was expecting that *industrialisasi* would be introduced to his regency (*Karya Darma*, 30 August 1994).

The government, via Menristek, insisted that the project to put the plans together in one policy package was not open to negotiation. The two plans would fail if the government could not obtain sufficient land for the project: 'if *industrialisasi* failed, [building] the bridge would automatically fail. We do not want to only build the bridge, then it would be used by a limited number of people for getting about, it is useless' (*Surabaya Post*, 4 September 1994).

Meanwhile, the non-Bassra *ulama* – generally those who occupied government or government-related positions – had a different opinion regarding the gigantic project. The chairman of MUI Bangkalan, *Kiai* Luthfi Madani, believed that having the bridge and the industrial estates in one package was a fair plan, because the government believed that no investor would build the bridge if they did not get a return on their investments as quickly as possible. He also stated that the realization of the bridge was the most urgent part of the plan (Muthmainnah, 1998, p. 138; *Karya Darma*, 7 September 1994). On another occasion, *Kiai* Luthfi also stated that the social function of the bridge should not be denied by those with business interests (*Karya Darma*, 22 August 1994).

In the opinion of the non-Bassra *ulama*, globalization was an unstoppable phenomenon and would, inevitably, come to Madura. As it could not be prevented, it should, instead, be anticipated. The way to do so was to educate the people morally in preparation for this globalization. *Kiai* Luthfi's opinion was also shared by *Kiai* Mahfudz Hadi, the FKP (Fraksi Karya

Pembangunan – the Golkar fraction in the DPRD II) chairman of DPRD Bangkalan (Muthmainnah, 1998, p. 139). To support the non-Bassra *ulama*, the ex-governor Soelarso stated that, in principle, the Madurese were relatively flexible. When the *ulama* acknowledged crucial points related to socio-religious issues, the people would eventually follow their leaders (*Surya*, 14 September 1994). According to *Kiai* Nuruddin, the then spokesperson and secretary of Bassra, 'the state *ulama*' (those who are regarded by the Bassra *ulama* as *ulama* who serve the government's interests) attacked Bassra for their negative attitude towards *industrialisasi* by asking: 'Is Madura going to be reforested? Do we want to be forest men?' ('*Apakah Madura mau dihutankan? Apakah kita mau menjadi orang hutan?*') (Interview with *Kiai* Nuruddin on 1 December 2009).

If we compare the two groups of *kiai*, we may assume that the Bassra *kiai* focused more on morality, while the non-Bassra *kiai* were concerned more with economic and political factors. According to Muthmainnah, a different view on the difference between the two groups is that before they voiced their concerns, the *ulama* of Bassra observed the situation and conditions in other industrial estates, such as Batam, while the non-Bassra *ulama* were fully convinced that the government would create a prosperous society by implementing *industrialisasi* (Muthmainnah, 1998, p. 140). In my opinion, however, Bassra *ulama* did not base their opinions solely on their visit to Batam. Even before the trip, they disagreed with *industrialisasi* because of the possibility of losing some of their influence. It might also be true that some *kiai* were really concerned with the people; in particular, some *kiai* were concerned that the Madurese were not ready to accept *industrialisasi* since they lacked adequate education to compete with outsiders in gaining employment in industry. On the other hand, the support of the non-Bassra *ulama* towards *industrialisasi* was not only because they believed that it would bring prosperity to the people, but also because they were convinced that they would benefit politically and economically from the project. As government agents, they also believed that they must support the government's plans.

Clearly, both Bassra and non-Bassra *ulama* were aware that various possibilities and opportunities could be used to amplify their interests. It clearly shows us that how different the two sides were, they continuously kept signifying 'Islamic' issues in the affair. The significance of 'Islam' and the prevalent use of it – intentionally or not – is actually part of a long process of embedding Islam culturally on the island. For instance, it is important to note that the opinions of Bassra actually varied over time. On one occasion they might strongly reject *industrialisasi*, while on another occasion, they might be relatively accepting of it. In one instance, they stated that they did not reject *industrialisasi*. They would accept it if it would be established gradually so that the people would be able to adjust to the change (*Merdeka*, 14 September 1994). Another time, *Kiai* Nuruddin told journalists that 'massive *industrialisasi* to turn Madura into an industrial area equipped with hotels and bars could materially improve people's well-being, but if they were morally corrupt, it

would be useless. Therefore, the industry should be integrated with moral development through a gradual process' (*Merdeka*, 14 September 1994). *Kiai* Badrus Soleh of *Pesantren* Darul Aitam, Kwanyar in Bangkalan, as well as being the fraction chairman of the PPP in the DPRD II and a member of Bassra, stressed the social function of the bridge. He said that it should be able to bridge the gap between the presently less developed Madura with the more developed Madura in the future (*Karya Darma*, 22 August 1994). *Kiai* Nuruddin feared that the Madurese would no longer be religious if industrialization became a reality. He commented that industrial estates should be compatible with Islamic values. In other words, there should be mosques in factories and that the workers should be provided with sufficient time during work to pray (Interview on 1 December 2009). *Kiai* Alawy expected *pesantren* to have a vital role in bridging the government's interests on the island and people's expectations about the future of Madura, in initiatives such as running cooperatives (*Surabaya Post*, 26 February 1994). The chairman of Bassra, *Kiai* Kholil A.G., argued that the bridge was vital as a means of transportation connecting Java and Madura (*Surya*, 25 September 1994). A similar statement was released by *Kiai* Mahfudz Siddiq, another prominent member of Bassra's board. He pointed out that the bridge would be a tool to open up Madura as well as improve the connection between Java and Madura (*Surya*, 25 September 1994). *Kiai* Nuruddin stated that the Madurese did not reject *industrialisasi*. What they actually expected was that the government should not neglect the Madurese when it developed Madura (*Memorandum*, 17 September 1997).

As has been revealed on a number of occasions, such as seminars, hearings, and interviews with newspapers, Bassra's rejection of *industrialisasi* can be classified into a number of reasons. Firstly, the plan to establish industrial estates on the island was seen to lack adequate preparation, especially considering the fact that many Madurese were not sufficiently educated. Some *kiai* were concerned with the lack of education of Madurese people and their ability to compete with outsiders in the manufacturing industry should *industrialisasi* be implemented. Secondly, there were concerns about the negative impacts of *industrialisasi*. Some *kiai* were concerned that outsiders who came to Madura would introduce 'un-Islamic' cultures. Thirdly, all the plans and ideas came directly from the central government, while neglecting opinions from the people and the Madurese religious figures. Fourthly, some *kiai* were sincerely concerned with the fate of the Madurese in the rapid *pembangunan* era. Finally, some *kiai* also feared that when the *industrialisasi* plan was realized, the *ulama* might not be able to maintain their religious authority. The reasoning behind this last point was that if the *ulama* lost their control in society, they would naturally find themselves in a difficult situation. For instance, Bassra *ulama* would no longer have large followings; consequently, the association would no longer be a major oppositional power to the government and the state-sponsored *ulama*. Moreover, the *ulama* would no longer be frequently visited since the people might become more conscious, and would no longer feel it necessary to seek guidance from the *ulama*.

The opposition of Bassra to *industrialisasi* was seen by the New Order government as a main obstacle to the integration of a regional society in the Indonesian social, political and economic system. For the *ulama*, it was seen as an attempt to reduce the socio-political influence of the religious leaders in society. Thus, the process from the first rejection to the consensus between Bassra and the central government did not follow an easy path. Eventually, however, construction of the bridge, under the new Keppres No. 79/2003 that replaced the Keppres No. 55/1990, started on 20 August 2003 and the bridge was officially opened to the public on 10 June 2009. After the project was postponed due to the financial crises, and after the new post-Suharto government introduced a more decentralized and democratic administration, the Bassra *ulama* gradually changed their attitude. The shift was caused, primarily, by the separation of the establishment of the industrial estates from the plan to build the bridge. In other words, the establishment of industrial estates was not a compulsory requirement to build the bridge. Secondly, since *industrialisasi* was not compulsory, concerns over its negative impacts gradually diminished. Thirdly, the decentralization policy of the new administration in the reformation era created a situation in which the voices of the people and *ulama* were listened to. This, in turn, created an environment in which the region was able to see the benefits of the bridge more clearly.

Industrializing Madura

In principle, according to James, the New Order administration was dependent upon the production of capital in Indonesia in order to ensure that the administration had sufficient funds for the continuation of its rule. These funds were distributed to supporters through patronage or bribery,[12] or used for the maintenance of an effective security apparatus to repress dissenters (James, 1990, p. 20). The concept of an authoritarian-bureaucratic capitalism was born in which the state figured prominently. The New Order government obviously tried to make *industrialisasi* a reality. While some officials, such as Habibie, tried to directly implement *industrialisasi* the hard way, other individuals, such as Pak Noer, tried to persuade the *ulama* and the people to accept *industrialisasi* in a more nuanced way. In a seminar held at BPD Jatim on 13 and 14 January 1992, Noer and Soelarso, in front of Rahardi Ramelan of BPPT, Muspida of East Java, and other officials, argued that *industrialisasi* should be adjusted to the readiness of the Madurese, and that the situation of *kekeluargaan* (literally kinship or familyness, here it means friendship-good relations) should be kept (*Surabaya Post*, 13 January 1992).

In order to persuade the *ulama* to accept the project, Noer regularly visited a number of *pesantren*, not only in Madura, but also in Java. In Probolinggo, for instance, in a visit that is usually called '*silaturahmi*' (good relationship/friendship), Noer visited *Kiai* Wahid Zaini of *Pesantren* Nurul Jadidi, Paiton and *Kiai* Badri Madsuqi of *Pesantren* Badridduja, Kraksaan. In the two *pesantren*, Noer asked *kiai* and the *pesantren* world in East Java to support

the bridge plan. In order to win sympathy for the cause, he promised to build workshop centres that would be used to train local people to be able to work in the new industrial areas. He also assured the public that there would be mosques and Islamic educational institutions in such areas (*Surabaya Post*, 7 February 1992).

As he did in Probolinggo, he visited a number of *ulama* in Bangkalan. He restated this pledge to resign in a visit to prominent *ulama* in Bangkalan, such as *Kiai* Abdullah Schal, *Kiai* Kholil A.G., and *Kiai* Machfud Siddiq. In the meeting, he also raised his concerns about the prices of the land in the surrounding areas of the bridge, which had been steadily rising. He believed that the asking prices of the landowners, of around Rp. 100,000 (roughly US$ 60) per square metre, were too high. He suggested that the appropriate price of the land was between Rp. 5,000 and Rp. 10,000 (roughly US$3 and US$6) per square metre (*Surabaya Post*, 20 January 1994). Noer also argued that the asking price of Rp. 25,000 per square metre by Bassra was not reasonable because the landowners only demanded Rp. 4,000 per square metre (*Memorandum*, 26 September 1994).

The government seems to have applied a 'wait and see' policy, especially when dealing with financial issues. After the financial support was thought to be adequate, Habibie stressed that the industrial estates would come in one package with the bridge (*Surya*, 8 February 1994). Bassra responded to this by calling for the development of the bridge to be prioritized, or at least for adequate and exact plans about the industrial estates to be clearly arranged before both plans were simultaneously implemented (*Surya*, 17 February 1994).

The idea of implementing industrial estates was actually rather vague, not only for the Madurese *ulama*, but also for the decision-makers. A number of attempts to introduce the concept were executed. Some initiatives came from Bassra. One of these attempts was to hold a seminar on 14 and 15 December 1993 (Muthmainnah, 1998, p. 82).

From this meeting, Bassra *ulama* issued statements that urged the government to involve them in the project. They also asked the government to take them to other industrial areas in Indonesia to conduct *studi banding* (comparative research). Habibie responded to the request by attending a national dialogue held by Bassra on 7 January 1994 in *Pesantren* Banyuanyar, Pamekasan. He expressed his perceptions of *industrialisasi*. He said that if Madura was industrialized, it would be greater in many aspects than Batam because Madura was bigger in size and population. In his speech, Habibie tried to alleviate the concerns of the *ulama* about the negative impacts of *industrialisasi*. Furthermore, he disagreed that the Madurese should be given priority in *industrialisasi* because all Indonesians had the same right and opportunity to participate in *industrialisasi*. Therefore, if the Madurese were not prepared to compete in the job market, other Indonesians would fill the positions: 'We cannot say that if we establish industrial areas in West Java, only West Javanese can work there. It is not right, nor in [*industrialisasi* in] Batam

that it is only for Riaunese, and [*industrialisasi*] in Madura it is not only for Madurese. It is not right' (*Memorandum*, 8 September 1994). It is said that a number of Bassra *ulama* were offended by these statements. According to Muthmainnah, *Kiai* Nuruddin was resentful of Habibie's words, such as 'Madura does not belong to the Madurese, but to the Indonesians' or 'I do not develop Madura, but the country'. *Kiai* Nuruddin understood it as a sign that the Madurese would be neglected in their own home island, and he was concerned that other people would exploit Madura (Muthmainnah, 1998, pp. 83–84).

As promised by Habibie, the Bassra *ulama* were taken to the industrial estates in Batam and IPTN in Bandung from 31 January to 4 February. The *ulama* asked to be taken to Aceh too, for they believed that Aceh shared similar religious sentiments to Madura. However, Habibie refused, as he believed that visiting Aceh had nothing to do with the purpose of the tour (Muthmainnah, 1998, pp. 84–85).

In September 1994, Habibie discussed the Suramadu project again with Bassra. After a fruitless meeting, he sent a letter, via *Kiai* Amin Imron, demanding that Bassra approve *industrialisasi* by signing a letter of approval. After the *ulama* discussed the letter during an internal meeting at the residence of *Kiai* Kholil A.G., they decided not to sign it, because they were waiting for the government to respond to their nine opinions first (Muthmainnah, 1998, pp. 87–88; Moesa, 1999, p. 124). In response, *Kiai* Kholil A. G. stated that Bassra could not simply be asked to approve *industrialisasi*. Moreover, he also revealed that in order to reach an agreement, all members of Bassra had to discuss the issue at length: 'The demand of Mr Habibie that Bassra has to approve the *industrialisasi* plan is unilateral. If he responds to the nine opinions, then we can talk about something else. We are still waiting for Mr. Habibie's response' (*Surabaya Post*, 27 September 1994). On another occasion, Noer voiced his opinion about the reasons behind Bassra's rejection, and stressed that only the DPRD (I and II) had the right to voice people's aspirations. Therefore, he argued that it was only the DPRD, not Bassra, who had the right to voice the people's opinions on the Suramadu project. He believed that Bassra did not represent the people (*Surabaya Post*, 9 September 1994). Moreover, in early 1995, Noer and the regent of Bangkalan had a meeting without inviting the *ulama* to discuss land acquisition. After finding out, the *ulama* held their own meeting to discuss the 'secret' meeting. The *ulama* denounced the government for not responding to their opinions and pushing ahead with land acquisition (Muthmainnah, 1998, p. 89).

The fate of the bridge was discussed again on 14 March 1995 in a meeting of several ministers. The meeting strengthened the plan to have the development of the bridge and the establishment of industrial estates in one package. After the meeting, Habibie issued a statement that there had been no disputes between the Bassra *ulama* and the government, and that both sides were concerned about the people's interests and welfare.

Conclusion

If we look at the situation at the end of the twentieth century more globally, it is not surprising to see that the rapid and sustained development in Indonesia was also found in other third world countries in Asia and Latin America. What is more interesting to note is that the efforts to create development in all these places were typically state-led or state-designed in top-down policies. In the New Order Indonesia, development was associated with rapid industrial transformation and efforts to narrow the large gap between the middle class and workers, peasants, and other city dwellers. The role of authoritarian governments, such as the New Order administration, was very important as they functioned as strong and active economic actors and consequently became vigorous in intervening in all aspects of development. In the Nipah Dam incident and the Suramadu Bridge affair, however, state intervention ignored people's rights and disregarded the *kiai*'s authority.

The landowners at the Nipah Dam site, together with a number of *kiai*, led by *Kiai* Alawy, protested against the unjust process of land acquisition and the shooting incident that took four lives. The Bassra *ulama* rejected the introduction of industrialization and the establishment of industrial estates in Madura. However, the rejections are not best identified as a refusal of *pembangunan*. Principally, while general elections were regarded as an important means to legitimate the administration politically (Antlöv, 2004, p. 114) and as a secondary source of legitimacy (King, 2003, p. 5), *pembangunan* was seen by the New Order administration as an important way to legitimate the administration economically.

The rejections were neither directed against the dam nor the bridge, which symbolized the unremitting efforts of the government to develop the country. Indeed, the *kiai* and the people realized that the dam and the bridge were essential in the process of *pembangunan* for Madurese society. Both constructions were eventually accomplished after the more decentralized and democratic government tried a few different policies. Therefore, the rejections are best described as the dissatisfaction of segments of society towards the undemocratic and authoritarian policies of *pembangunan*.

We can conclude, therefore, all rejections witnessed in the Nipah Dam incident or the Suramadu Bridge affair were not solely meant to guard Islamic principles, but perhaps also because the plans might have a direct impact on the *ulama*'s authority, not only in terms of religious authority, but also social, political, economic, and cultural authority. In order to protect themselves, they used their religious authority extensively to convey their messages; indeed, this was their main weapon and the people did not expect anything less. This is in line with two arguments highlighted in Chapter 1 that, *firstly*, the relationships between people's leaders and between them and the state in Muslim-majority-states, including Indonesia, have been more complex since their encounters with democracy. In the two cases, *kiai*'s struggle for influence was apparent, and was not only centred on opportunities for private material

benefits, but also on political competition which is loosely organized, pragmatic, and often mutually beneficial in nature. *Secondly*, the completion of the two mega projects in the post-New Order period indicates that as a new democracy in Asia, Indonesia has successfully intertwined the decentralization process with the process of democratization, and so, it means that Indonesia has arguably been successful in creating good governance in the post-New Order compared to the authoritarian style during the previous administration; in the sense of decentralization; and in the reinforcement of local identities.

Notes

1 The *industrialisasi* scheme was included in a plan to build the Suramadu Bridge that would connect the islands of Java and Madura and be the country's longest bridge. I will refer to this henceforth as the Suramadu Bridge affair.
2 Repelita was a grand design for development created by the New Order administration. In Repelita I (1969–1974), for instance, the focus lay primarily on the fulfilment of basic needs and infrastructure with the focal point on agriculture, while in Repelita V (1989–1994), the fields of transportation, communication, and education took centre stage. Moreover, the published five-year plan served as a basis for the annual national budget that was prepared jointly by the government and MPR (Soemardjan and Breazeale, 1993, p. 1).
3 It is important to note, however, that some *pembangunan* programmes, such as the construction of roads, bridges, irrigation canals, and other public works were beneficial to the village economy and could be carried out by the government itself, without any direct participation by the people (Soemardjan and Breazeale, 1993, p. 3).
4 In 2009, the average monthly rainfall was 100 mm/month, slightly higher than other sub-districts such as Torjun whose average monthly rainfall was 60 mm/month, or Omben whose average monthly rainfall was 80 mm/month, but slightly lower than Kedundung or Tambelangan whose average monthly rainfall was 110 mm/month (Kabupaten Sampang dalam Angka 2010, p. 3).
5 Many irrigation development plans throughout the world have been conventionally based on cropping pattern selection and aimed at maximizing the revenue from irrigation activities. In reality, however, several complexities make the cropping pattern selection a more complicated problem (Tsakiris and Spiliotis, 2006, p. 57).
6 In 2009 the inhabitants were 73,234 people or 8.47 per cent of the Sampang population (*Kabupaten Sampang dalam Angka 2010*, p. 55).
7 It is a common rhetoric that many village meetings during the New Order, which were actually monologist in nature, were called briefings or *instruksi* (instructions).
8 Prof. R.M. Sedyatmo was born in Karanganyar in 1909 and died in Jakarta in 1984. He was an engineer trained at Technische Hogeschool (now ITB – Bandung Technological Institute). The toll road that connects Jakarta with the Soekarno-Hatta international airport is named after the engineer (Effendi and Aksan, 2009).
9 Connecting Java and Sumatra by bridge is naturally very difficult in an island group of such volcanic activity. Krakatoa (*Krakatau* in Indonesian) lies in the Sunda Strait between Java and Sumatra. Connecting Java and Bali has not been seen as urgent since direct flights to Denpasar from major cities in Java have existed for years.
10 There have been recent discussions that the name of the bridge should be changed to the Mohammad Noer Bridge (*Tempo*, 17 April 2010; *Surabaya Post*, 19 April 2010).
11 Nationalized in 1998, in 2000 the bank was purchased by a group led by US-based Ripplewood Holdings and was renamed Shinsei Bank.

12 Contending that corruption was merely a matter of small bribes, kickbacks, gratuities, and petty theft by underpaid, low-level government employees, Suharto disregarded practices such as the millions of dollars in under-the-table payments made by companies to senior government officials to win major government contracts (King, 2000, p. 603).

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6 Electoral politics

Between alliance and competition

Introduction

Despite the successful holding of direct, indirect, local, and national elections in post-New Order Indonesia, a large number of national and local political elites nurtured under Suharto's New Order have continuously enjoyed control in the new era. This generated doubt about the development of democracy in the first years of *Reformasi*, especially in the capture of new institutions by these old elites and other predatory political forces as well as the spread of money politics, clientelism, and corruption (King, 2003; Malley, 2000; 2003). However, after a series of constitutional reform that included the direct presidential election since 2004 and the introduction of Law No. 32/2004 on Regional Government that came into effect in October 2004 that allowed the people to elect regional heads directly (elected by the people instead of by the local parliament), people and observers started to give way to rebuild their confidence in the emergence of local democracy and the whole democratization processes supported by political elites and the population which were denied during the New Order (Ramage, 2007; Sulistiyanto and Erb, 2009). The new electoral politics in Indonesia was born, and in particular it has formed a new and complex electoral democracy (Pratikno, 2009; Qodari, 2005), in which the elections have been competitive but flawed (Mietzner and Aspinall, 2010).

This chapter focuses on elections in Madura in the New Order and the Post-New Order period. Specifically, it will discuss four types of elections: *pemilu* (*pemilihan umum* – general elections), *pilkada gubernur* (*pemilihan kepala daerah gubernur* – gubernatorial elections), *pilkada bupati* (*pemilihan kepala daerah bupati* – regency head elections), and *pilkades*/*pemilihan klebun* (*pemilihan kepala desa*/*klebun* – village head elections). Among the questions posed are: what are these elections in Madura all about? How do segments of society, such as the *kiai*, the *blater*, and the people perceive these elections? How did the Suharto administration use and exert its power to win the general elections in Madura during the last three elections in the New Order administration? What roles did the *kiai* play in the 2008 East Java gubernatorial elections? How did a *kiai-blater* figure come to be victorious in the 2003 and 2008

regency head elections? How did the *blater* make use of their influence in the lowest level of elections in Madura, the village head elections, during the post-New Order era?

Elections in Madura are an arena of contests, mainly between religious and cultural powers, in which the competing parties make extensive use of Islamic and local-traditional symbols in interactions with the people. Despite the fact that this may seem a manipulative practice, the use of Islamic and local-traditional symbols is actually considered necessary by the people, as the Madurese strongly identify with Islam and at the same time also hold on to traditional values. Different segments in society responded to these elections in different ways. Local politics in Madura has long been a field in which local leaders obtain power. The ongoing process of state formation, including policies such as democratization and decentralization, has allowed for the emergence of new autonomous local leaders. In Madura, the *kiai* and the *blater* persistently strive for influence and have their own interests and their own means by which to maintain power, influence, and social status. During the Suharto administration, collaboration between the *blater* and the state apparatus appeared mainly in the socio-political realm. This minimized the political role of the *kiai*. Since the collapse of the Suharto administration, the *kiai* have been able to strengthen their visibility in the political constellation, and have come to possess important positions in various public domains. In this political sense, it is not uncommon for *kiai* and *blater* to build alliances and competitions with each other in order to strengthen their power.

General elections (*Pemilu*)

Despite its authoritarian character, the Suharto administration repeatedly attempted to demonstrate democratic principles in order to legitimate the administration nationally and internationally. During the New Order, general elections were one of the most conspicuous ways of providing a sense of legitimization for the administration (Antlöv, 2004, p. 114). Despite many misgivings, there was for President Suharto a certain inescapable logic to the idea of holding elections because since October 1965 Suharto had faced a problem of legitimacy, both his own and that of the military as a political force, which had increased rather than diminished with time (Liddle, 1973, p. 288). As Van Langenberg notes, general elections were important in legitimizing Golkar by providing it with a majority vote, which 'proved' that Golkar was supported by the people (Van Langenberg, 1990, p. 131). The recurring rhetoric that the New Order used to validate general elections was proudly expressed in a slogan *pesta demokrasi* (festivals of democracy) which celebrated general elections as people's democratic festivals. As John Pemberton suggests, the campaigns – which looked ceremonial – that preceded the elections might matter more than the results of the elections for many people (Pemberton, 1986).

The general elections in Madura are the main focus of this sub-chapter. In particular, it deals with the turmoil during the 1997 general elections in Sampang, while the general elections of 1971 are briefly sketched in order to get a picture of what happened in the first *pesta demokrasi* in Madura. Factors that influenced Golkar victories and factors that caused the PPP to lose support are also described. It seems that despite its allegedly fraudulent successes in general elections, Golkar gradually gained widespread support among the Madurese through the *pembangunan* programmes. Meanwhile, the PPP functionaries still looked to traditional and religious ways of gaining support, mostly from the *nahdliyin*. The PPP's efforts seem to have been fruitless in the last three general elections in the New Order (1987, 1992, and 1997), in which Golkar enjoyed comfortable victories.

Ten political parties participated in the 1971 general elections. Of the ten parties, eight took part in the general elections during the Guided Democracy of the Sukarno administration. Two of the parties for the 1971 election were newly established. One was Partai Muslimin Indonesia (Parmusi), founded by some members of Masyumi in 1968, and the other one was a functional group known as Golongan Karya (Golkar).[1] From the ten political parties that participated in the election, the NU enjoyed a comfortable victory in Madura. Of the total number of ballots in all municipalities in Madura, 817,561 or 66.55 per cent went to the NU party and 300,399 or 24.45 per cent to Golkar, while in East Java Province only 4,379,806 or 35.18 per cent went to the NU and 6,837,384 or 54.93 per cent to Golkar. The three other Islamic parties – PSII, Parmusi and Perti – gained insignificant votes, with only 71,752 or 5.84 per cent, 26,053 or 2.12 per cent, and 2,931 or 0.23 per cent, respectively. However, the total votes of the three Islamic parties were higher than all nationalist and Christian parties (Katholik, Parkindo, Murba, PNI, and IPKI) combined (Panitia Pemilihan Daerah Tingkat I Jawa Timur 1971, pp. 170–171).

Despite its defeat by the NU in the 1971 general elections, in all regencies in Madura and other regencies in East Java, such as the city (*kotamadya*) of Pasuruan, the regency (*kabupaten*) of Surabaya (now the regency of Gresik), and the regency of Panarukan (now the regency of Situbondo), Golkar successfully established itself as the sole winner of all the New Order general elections in the Archipelago in the subsequent general elections of 1977, 1982, 1987, 1992, and 1997. In order to strengthen Golkar and to weaken other parties, all Muslim parties were amalgamated into the PPP in 1973, and all nationalist and Christian parties were fused into the PDI (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia) by the government.[3] The biggest threats to Golkar, the Islamic parties, were not allowed to adopt an Islamic name in their new party. Instead, 'Persatuan Pembangunan' (United Development) was used as its name. The symbol of the PPP, the Kaaba (Muslim shrine in Mecca), was even replaced by a '*bintang*' (star) of the Pancasila (the state ideology) emblem after the 1977 general elections. In 1984, all political parties or socio-cultural movements were forced to accept Pancasila as their sole philosophical base. For all Muslim groups, this meant that they had to abandon or downgrade their long-preserved Islamic ideology (Suryadinata, 1989, p. 104).

Table 6.1 The results of the 1971 general elections in Madura

Regency	*Katholik*	*PSII*	*NU*	*Parmusi*	*Golkar*	*Parkindo*	*Murba*	*PNI*	*Perti*	*IPKI*	*Total in regency*
Pamekasan	187	43,033	113,210	5,169	67,027	185	108	1,202	2,333	477	232,931
Sumenep	332	9,981	283,890	16,381	119,603	278	105	1,602	186	883	433,241
Sampang	87	17,237	190,670	1,341	48,934	183	82	351	280	437	259,602[2]
Bangkalan	150	1,501	229,791	3,162	64,835	216	88	2,337	132	493	302,705
Total Madura	756	71,752	817,561	26,053	300,399	862	383	5,492	2,931	2,290	1,228,479

Source: reprocessed from Panitia Pemilihan Daerah Tingkat I Jawa Timur 1971, pp. 170–171.

The efforts to minimize the possibility of other political parties gaining victory and the efforts to create a win for Golkar were continuously applied in all regions. During the election days, incidents of cheating, poll rigging, and violations of the direct, open, free, and confidential principles of the general elections occurred in some areas (Haris, 2004, pp. 24, 27). In areas considered *lumbung suara* (regions of significant votes) for the PPP, such as Madura, the government carried out more intense efforts. Nevertheless, it would be incorrect to state that these cases of cheating and manipulation were the main reason for Golkar winning in Madura in the 1987, 1992, and 1997 general elections. Long before the election days, intimidation by Golkar functionaries and state officials occurred at village level, including pressuring and threatening people to stop them from voting for the PPP. People's aspirations were weakened by the created common view of Golkar that not voting for Golkar would constitute a betrayal of the government, of Pancasila, and of *pembangunan*. In some cases, not voting for Golkar could also be interpreted as support for communism. However, we must not underestimate the power of Golkar in Madura and the independence of voters during election days: pragmatism played an important role here. While many *kiai* demanded that the people vote for the PPP and attempted to convince them that not to vote for the party would be a betrayal of Islam, Golkar was seen by some as a key element in assuring the continuation of *pembangunan*. The people might continue in their traditional support of the NU, yet in politics they were more flexible and independent.

In Madura, the regency of Sampang was considered to hold the greatest support for the PPP. In the 1987 general elections, while the other three regencies in Madura saw the success of Golkar for the first time, Sampang was the only regency in which the PPP still maintained its victory. Many PPP functionaries blamed '*penggembosan*' (literally 'deflation') as the main reason why the PPP in Madura, except in Sampang, was defeated by Golkar. In Bangkalan, *Kiai* Mahfud Sidiq was convinced that due to the NU's decision to depart from the PPP during the Situbondo Convention in 1983, many of the PPP supporters who were also *nahdliyin* left the party and voted for Golkar (that is why it was called *penggembosan*). Meanwhile, the chairman of the PPP of Pamekasan, Ilyas Baidowi, also stressed that *penggembosan* was the main cause behind the defeat of the PPP in Pamekasan (*Jawa Pos*, 25 April 1987).

After the 1987 general elections, the PPP branch of Sampang, and the *kiai* who supported the PPP, became aware that Golkar had gained considerably more support in Sampang and in Madura in general. However, they did not want to believe that the PPP would lose in Sampang in the 1992 general elections. They suspected that the Panitia Pemilihan Daerah tingkat II (PPD II – the Regional Election Committee at the regency and municipality level) had manipulated the figures of the 1987 election results. The PPP did indeed lose in the 1992 general elections. The PPP in Sampang believed that, like the previous election results, the figures from the 1992 general election were also

Table 6.2 The results of the general elections in 1987, 1992, and 1997 in Sampang

Contestants	*1987*	*1992*	*1997*
PPP	57.02 %	38.90 %	33.37 %
Golkar	43.36 %	59.95 %	51.92 %
PDI	0.6 %	1.15 %	0.31 %
Total	100.98 %	100 %	95.60 %

Source: Kantor Sospol Pemda Tk II Sampang, cited in Widjojo and Fawzia, 1999, p. 73.

manipulated. In the 1997 general elections the PPP lost again to Golkar in all regencies with Golkar achieving 66.9 per cent of the votes, while the PPP and the PDI obtained 32.2 and 0.9 per cent, respectively (Jawa Timur dalam Angka 1997). It was during these general elections that riots took place in Sampang.

Late in the afternoon of 29 May 1997 in a number of Tempat Pemungutan Suara (TPS – polling stations), tensions between the PPP supporters and Kelompok Penyelenggara Pemungutan Suara (KPPS – general elections organizing committee for TPS) arose as a result of alleged vote fixing by the KPPS.[4] The tensions increased into the evening as thousands of angry people headed to the town centre. The police told the crowd to disperse and ordered them to go home.

Before the police could control the situation, the crowd rampaged and burned the offices of the sub-district (*kecamatan*) of Sampang, the Polsek (sub-district police headquarters) of Sampang, and that of Golkar. Two government banks (BRI and BPD), and a number of stores and houses, allegedly belonging to Chinese inhabitants, were also destroyed. Villages in a number of other sub-districts also experienced riots and clashes between local residents and members of the KPPS. In the sub-district of Kedungdung, for instance, sub-district and Polsek offices were burned down. In the sub-district of Tambelangan, the official residence of the *camat* (head of *kecamatan*) was destroyed. Meanwhile, angry crowds also gathered in the sub-district offices of Waru and Jrengik although they did not destroy these offices. In the village of Samaran, sub-district of Tambelangan, the head of the KPPS, Sukarya, was beaten (*Jawa Pos*, 30 May 1997). These riots were in fact triggered not only by the alleged cheating by KPPS members, but began with a rumour that a number of *kiai* had been arrested. This rumour spread rapidly in mosques, and *santri* and fellow Muslims were expected to come out and wage *jihad* (holy war) against the *kafir* (infidel). The devastation and burning also destroyed ballot boxes in some sub-district offices (Widjojo and Fawzia, 1999, p. 84).

On the next day, 30 May 1997, the chairman of PPP Sampang, *Kiai* Hasib Siradj; the party's secretary, Moch Hasan Asy'ari; and *Kiai* Alawy (this figure is described in Chapters 3 and 5 at length), demanded re-elections in all 1,033 TPS in Sampang. On 1 June 1997, the chairman of LPU (Lembaga Pemilihan

Umum – General Elections Institution), as well as the Minister of Home Affairs, Yogie S.M., stated that re-elections would be held in 86 TPS in Sampang. The decision was based on the fact that ballot boxes had been burned in only a few sub-district offices. Meanwhile, the PPP demanded re-elections in all TPS in Sampang due to the alleged fraud committed by KPPS members (Widjojo and Fawzia, 1999, p. 56).

Following a meeting between the boards of the DPC PPP (boards at the regency level), DPW PPP (boards at the provincial level), and DPP PPP (boards at the central level) held at *Kiai* Alawy's *Pesantren* Attaroqqi, Sampang, a number of *kiai pesantren* asked DPC PPP to reject the proposed re-elections. On 2 June 1997, DPC PPP Sampang did indeed officially reject the idea for re-elections to be held in only 86 TPS. Their demand was clear: re-elections in all TPS in Sampang or none at all. However, the regent of Sampang, Fadillah Budiono insisted that re-elections would still be carried out regardless of the absence of DPC PPP Sampang (Widjojo and Fawzia, 1999, p. 57).

On 4 June 1997, re-elections were held in only 65 TPS, instead of the 86 that had been planned, because, according to the authorities, the recapitulation papers of the election results at polling stations (CA and CA 1 forms) that were thought to have been burned had been found. The re-elections did not attract all voters, and election witnesses for the PPP and the PDI did not come to the polling stations. The potential number of voters that could vote across the 65 TPS was 32,803. Ultimately, however, only 18,808 voted (Widjojo and Fawzia, 1999, p. 57). Despite the victory for Golkar in the re-elections, the absence of potential voters was not appreciated by the government as *golput* (*golongan putih* or non-voters who have the right to vote but do not vote) are considered to be 'adversaries' of democracy.

The DPC PPP initially ignored the results of the general elections and refused to occupy their seats in the DPRD II. In the end, in a letter from the DPC No. 242/Pem/DPC/M/VI/1997 dated 26 June 1997, the PPP stated that their candidates were ready to be inaugurated as members of DPRD II (Widjojo and Fawzia, 1999, p. 57). This clearly indicates two significant things. First, the PPP was not successful in its attempts to act against the supremacy of Golkar, and was actually subordinate to the power of Golkar. Second, it seems that, like the NU, the PPP was also dominated by functionaries and *kiai* who tended to be flexible and pragmatic and willing to negotiate, and who saw that making compromises with the authorities was far more favourable than opposing them.

The Sampang riot was one event in a series of violent incidents during the election in places such as Pekalongan, Banjarmasin, Pasuruan, and Jember. According to John Sidel, the disturbances were intimately connected to the intensification of the competition between the PPP and Golkar. He argues that the election violence can be best described as religious in nature (Sidel, 2006, p. 98). He explains that this religious violence can be understood better through four further explanations. First, the riots of 1995–1997 were repetitions of similar disturbances that have occurred throughout twentieth-century

Table 6.3 The results of the re-elections in Sampang in 1997

Level of Parliament	*PPP*	*Golkar*	*PDI*
DPR RI (*pusat*)	7,392	11,132	268
DPRD I (province)	7,444	11,093	268
DPRD II (regency)	7,471	11,064	174

Source: *Harian Surya*, 5 June 1997 in Widjojo and Fawzia, 1999, p. 57.

Indonesia and which occurred only during periods of heightened ambiguity, anxiety, and anticipation with regard to the position of Islam and those forces claiming to represent it in Indonesian society. Second, seen from a geographical context, the riots in 1995–1997 occurred in provincial towns and cities where the institutions of Islamic learning, association, and political activity enjoyed a special claim within the public sphere. Third, the significant roles of institutions of Islamic worship and learning in society, and rumour escalated these disturbances. Fourth, the form and consequences of the riots reflected the context of perceived ambiguity, awkwardness, and anticipation with regard to the position of Islam in Indonesian society (Sidel, 2006, pp. 101–104). Related to the situation in Sampang, I would add another factor: the manoeuvring of *kiai* in local politics as a result of their high status in society, and the extensive use of Islamic symbols to support the *kiai*'s political movements. These aspects generated over-confidence among the people that the PPP was unbeatable. When the political party was defeated, the people simply could not believe it and subsequently pointed the finger at electoral fraud.[5] This situation is in line with an argument proposed in Chapter 1 that the religious and cultural identities of the Madurese have accumulated in powers that have presented a culturally-political challenge for the state in local politics, especially in elections and religious affairs. Moreover, it also confirms another argument that the relationships between people's leaders and the state in the Muslim world, including Madura, have been more complex since the encounters with democracy, particularly in terms of elections.

In general, the local governments of the East Java Province and the regencies of Madura recognized the power of the *kiai*, particularly when general elections were approaching. It is true that the government perceived *kiai* who did not serve as partners of the state as competitors. It is also true that the state-sponsored *kiai* would endorse Golkar's campaigns and help ensure its victory. However, when more traditional persuasion techniques, utilizing notions of order, stability, and *pembangunan*, were seen to have failed, the local governments would turn to 'alternative options' to secure Golkar's victory. It is important to note illegal 'alternative options', such as vote buying, multiple votes, misrecording of votes, or destruction of ballots, were frequently claimed but rarely proven.

It is possible that people were afraid to vote against Golkar. A former board member of DPC PPP Bangkalan told me that eleven PPP witnesses in

a TPS were threatened by a Golkar *blater* because, while he had been assigned by his patron to win the election in his village, the PPP had been victorious. The former PPP functionary asked the influential *Kiai* Abdullah Schal of *Kiai* Kholil dynasty to persuade the *blater* not to intimidate the witnesses (Interview with a former board member of DPC PPP Bangkalan on 19 November 2009).

In an apparently more neutral way, *kiai* were asked to aid the success of the general elections. However, supporting the general elections also implied supporting Golkar. A couple of months prior to the elections, *kiai* were usually invited to a '*mensukseskan pemilu*' (making the elections successful) event in which they were given financial aid to renovate their *pesantren* or other religious facilities. For instance, *kiai* in the sub-districts of Palengaan and Pakong in Pamekasan were brought together for the inauguration of the Pakong marriage hall. On this occasion, the governor of East Java granted funds for the renovation of *pesantren* in the two sub-districts, via the regent of Pamekasan, Moch Toha. In return, the *kiai* were asked to help the success of the 1982 general elections (*Jawa Pos*, 26 March 1982).

It was quite common for the PPP and the PDI functionaries or cadres to be offered tantalizing positions in Golkar or state-sponsored organizations. For instance, there was a prominent *blater* in Bangkalan in the 1970s and 1980s who used to support the PPP. In the first three general elections during the New Order, he was a functionary of the PPP and was known for his endorsement of the party. In 1987, he was promised a position as a *klebun* in his village should he became a Golkar functionary. He accepted the offer and joined Golkar and afterwards he was 'given' the *klebun* position as a result of an allegedly fraudulent election. Following the downfall of the New Order and the subsequent unpopularity of Golkar, he returned to the PPP until his death recently (Interview with a former board member of DPC PPP Bangkalan on 19 November 2009).

A more friendly approach to persuading people to vote for Golkar was through a sympathetic and appealing method that was, in fact, religious in its form. For instance, in a village in Lombok, *tahlilan* (a prayer performed on six consecutive nights to facilitate a deceased person entering paradise) became an important medium for village officials and other Golkar cadres to disseminate the message regarding the necessity of supporting the government in ensuring the continuity of *pembangunan* (development, modernity) (Cederroth, 1991, p. 286).

This also holds true for Madura. In Bangkalan, for instance, *pembangunan* became part of the government's jargon that was commonly used to signify the importance of Golkar. A former Golkar functionary in a village in Bangkalan told me that he frequently told people that *pembangunan* would continue because of Golkar, not because of the PPP or the PDI, and that *pembangunan* was well maintained due to the government, not due to *kiai*. Thus, he would conclude, it was compulsory to vote for Golkar as they would ensure the continuity of *pembangunan* (Interview with a former Golkar functionary on 21 December 2009).[6]

On the surface, Golkar might look weak if we talk about the traditional support of voters. There is evidence that electoral frauds were prevalent before, during, and after the election day. Nonetheless, as I have explained above, it would be incorrect to underestimate the people's support of Golkar. In every general election after 1971, Golkar gradually gained more support. For instance, in 1977, Golkar collected 30 per cent of all votes in Madura (De Jonge, 1989, p. 275), while in 1971 it only amassed 24.45 per cent (Panitia Pemilihan Daerah Tingkat I Jawa Timur 1971, pp. 170–171). In the 1987 general elections in Pamekasan, Golkar collected 173,204 votes, while the PPP only accumulated 140,305 votes (*Jawa Pos*, 25 April 1987). This positive trend for Golkar continued until the last general elections of the New Order, the 1997 general elections.

At the village level, support for Golkar was usually given after villagers had benefited from successfully implemented government programmes, such as paving, erection of new mosques (or renovation of old ones), and the building and renovation of schools and other public facilities. Such programmes actually attracted a few *kiai* to give their support to Golkar.

Kiai Mahfudz Hadi (d. 2011) of Bangkalan was one of the most prominent *kiai* who openly supported Golkar. During the New Order he became the leading figure of Golkar and became the chairman of the FKP (Fraksi Karya Pembangunan – the Golkar fraction) of DPRD II Bangkalan. His *Pesantren* Al Hidayah frequently received government funds. We cannot ignore the autonomous electoral behaviour of the more traditional voters who were expected to always vote for the PPP. While they might have been true supporters of the PPP, Golkar's provision of transport money, meals, T-shirts, or caps might seem to be an attractive reason to switch loyalties. On the election day in the polling booth, it was ultimately the people's right to vote as they wished. According to Antlöv, local leaders played a central role in mobilizing and making sure that people voted the way the government wanted. Yet, he emphasizes that this would only work as long as the image of the local leaders was acceptable to the people (Antlöv, 2004, p. 132).

In the Madura case, individuals such as *Kiai* Mahfudz Hadi were able to attract many followers during the general elections because he was seen not only as a religious leader who had knowledge of religious matters, but also as a generous individual.[7] Once again, pragmatism and flexibility played an important part in determining people's votes.

People's political preferences in Madura were not as simple as casual observers might note. That in the first three general elections during the New Order the PPP was able to win, while in the subsequent three general elections it had to acknowledge defeat to Golkar cannot be simply explained through electoral fraud and manipulation. The mechanisms of Golkar and the PPP in place in villages and the motivations of the people in making party affiliations should also be taken into consideration. It is also important to note the individuals behind the success of political parties participating in the general elections. Well-mannered, popular, and pious people were central factors in

becoming good spokespersons for political parties in disseminating their messages through formal or informal means. We cannot simply state that Madurese would practice whatever the *kiai* preached, especially when it came to general elections. A number of Madurese had a high degree of autonomy, particularly at polling stations where they had the right to vote for whichever party they wished. This means that if a 'perfect' Golkar functionary (in personality and religious preference) approached villagers, there was a high chance that he would be able to attract voters to Golkar. What we should also remember is that the use of Islamic notions was highly important and both Golkar and the PPP made extensive use of them for political purposes. What is worth emphasizing here, however, is that while both political parties used Islamic notions in propagating their campaigns, Golkar had a main weapon: *pembangunan*. The term *pembangunan* became the central issue in Golkar's campaigns, including in village festivities and rituals.

Despite all of this, we should also not forget that Golkar's success did benefit from the undemocratic political system of the general elections. Elections in the New Order were not seen as a medium through which the people could channel their political aspirations, but were a way of legitimizing the government. The slogan '*pesta demokrasi*' can, perhaps, be best understood by seeing *pesta* in the sense of revelry as people were allowed to have *pawai* (parades) during the campaigns,[8] received free meals, T-shirts, or caps, enjoyed musical performances, especially *dangdut* music, and took part in festivities during the election days at polling stations when hawkers and food stalls sold their products. For the New Order administration, general elections were a relatively easy way to legitimize the administration and keep it in power.

East Java gubernatorial elections (*Pilkada gubernur*)

Decentralization has transformed Indonesia's polity from a centralistic state with uniform institutions and procedures into a highly diverse cosmos of regencies/municipalities with varying political cultures. As a result, firstly, the concerns expressed by some politicians that decentralization would lead to territorial disintegration and administrative chaos have not materialized. Secondly, the quality of local government has not improved across the board either – despite this being the official rationale for decentralization (Mietzner and Aspinall, 2010, pp. 15–16). The implementation of post New Order decentralization has generated stable centre–periphery relations although long before in the Sukarno era, when the administration issued a major decentralization law in December 1956, the country saw a wave of regional rebellions (Mietzner, 2014, p. 62), and even when Suharto held almost complete authority, changes at the local level were foreseen when the administration established the Basic Law No. 5/1974 as an attempt at constitutional change to provide more responsibility at levels below the national, at the provincial, regency/municipality, sub-district, and village levels (Holzhacker, Wittek, and Woltjer, 2016, p. 5).

Decentralization is thought to have the potential to improve design of contextually appropriate projects, targeting of beneficiaries, and accountability to local residents (Dasgupta and Beard, 2007, p. 231). In general, decentralization is, from a political perspective, fundamental for it (Rasyid, 2003, p. 64). In reality, the mode of state power that was established under the New Order continues despite the demise of the regime and the institutional reforms that followed. In other words, despite the introduction of free and fair elections and the devolution of political authority, 'old elites' have maintained their strategic administrative and political positions at the national, provincial, and local levels (Robison and Hadiz, 2004, p. 29). However, it also holds true that while 'old elites' indeed remain in power, the new institutional environment has reshuffled the cards for political elites (Buehler, 2007, p. 119).

Despite its short reign (May 1998–October 1999), the B.J. Habibie presidency was marked by significantly decentralized policies that included establishing two important laws, the Law No. 22/1999 that dealt with the devolution of political authority and No. 25/1999 that set out a new system of fiscal arrangements that favoured the regions through DPR, which set in motion a process of administrative decentralization that came into effect on 1 January 2001 (Schulte Nordholt and Van Klinken, 2007, p. 12; Aspinall and Fealy, 2003, p. 3). Megawati, the successor to Habibie and Abdurrahman Wahid, passed two new fundamental laws that signified the importance of regional governments, Law No. 32/2004 on Regional Government and Law No. 33/2004 on the Fiscal Balance between the Central Government and the Regional Governments. The law on the regional government greatly enhanced the possibility of non-military *putra daerah* (literally 'sons of the region') to hold regional head positions, since the law now meant that regional heads would be elected directly by voters. The first direct election (elected by the people instead of by the local parliament) for the regional head positions passed smoothly in dozens of regencies in June 2005. People were able to select candidates they knew and trusted, rather than rely on the regional parliaments. The direct elections also completed the process of electoral liberalization begun after Suharto's fall (Schulte Nordholt and Van Klinken, 2007, pp. 14–15; Aspinall and Fealy, 2010, p. 174). What we should also not forget is that direct elections generated other consequences, especially in the nomination process. Political party cadres at the local level are generally not affluent enough to run in elections, given the high costs the more democratic political environment imposes on candidates. Consequently, many wealthy figures from outside political parties compete for the nominations prior to elections (Buehler and Tan, 2007). This indicates the absence of party discipline in Indonesia, despite attempts by central party leaders to control such centrifugal forces through the centralization of internal party decision-making structures (Buehler, 2009a).

Under the New Order, army officers not only occupied top positions in Jakarta, but also replaced civil servants in regional administrative offices. In 1985, for instance, two-thirds of all provincial governors and a half of all regency

heads in Indonesia were active or retired military officers (Crouch, 1986, p. 6; Antlöv, 1995, pp. 38–39). Like other provinces, East Java was also headed by a number of military generals during the New Order. To name a couple, Wahono and Soelarso were retired generals who became the head of the province. The last governor to originate from the military forces was Imam Utomo, who served in the position for two periods, 1998–2003 and 2003–2008. In fact, there was only one governor before 2008 who was not a military general: Mohammad Noer.

East Java held its first direct *pilkada gubernur* in 2008. During the *pilkada*, five pairs of candidates contested the positions of East Java number 1 and number 2. These candidates were **K**hofifah Ind**A**r Parawansa – Mud**JI**ono (under the acronym of Kaji Mantep (*mantap* or *mantep* means steady), but more commonly known by the acronym Kaji), who were endorsed by the PPP and a number of smaller parties who were not represented in the parliament; **S**utjipto – **R**idwan Hisyam (SR) who were supported by the PDIP; **S**oenaryo – **AL**i M**A**schan **M**oesa (Salam) who were backed by Partai Golkar; **ACH**mady – **S**uh**A**rto**N**o (Achsan) who were endorsed by the PKB; and Soe**KAR**wo – **S**yaifull**A**h Yusuf or Gus Ipul (Karsa) who were supported by Partai Demokrat, the PAN, and the PKS.

Khofifah was known, among other things, for being the State Minister for Women's Empowerment (1999–2001), a PPP functionary during the New Order, a PKB functionary in the post-Suharto period, and the general chairman of Muslimat NU, a women's organization of the NU. Mudjiono, meanwhile, was a general at the Kodam V/Brawijaya, the military area command of the Indonesian Army in the East Java Province. Sutjipto was a senior politician from the PDIP who served as a member of the DPR between 2004 and 2009. His running mate, Ridwan Hisyam, was a Golkar functionary and an entrepreneur. Soenaryo was the vice governor of East Java in the period of 2003–2008 and a Golkar functionary. His deputy governor candidate, Ali Maschan Moesa, was the chairman of the NU of East Java and a teacher at IAIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya. Achmady was the regent of Mojokerto (2000–2005 and 2005–2010) and a senior member of the regional Advisory Board in the field of religion (*syuriah*) of NU Mojokerto. Meanwhile, Suhartono was a general at Kodam V/Brawijaya. Soekarwo was the regional secretary (Sekretaris Daerah) of East Java (2003–2008) and a Golkar functionary and was also known for being an '*anak emas*' (preferred child) of Imam Utomo, the incumbent governor of East Java. His running mate, Syaifullah Yusuf was the State Minister for Development of Disadvantaged Regions (2004–2007) and the general chairman of GP Ansor, a youth organization in the NU.

The *pilkada* consisted of three rounds. The first was held on 23 July 2008, and the second was held on 4 November 2008. The third round was held on 21 January 2009 only in Bangkalan and Sampang as a result of disputes over electoral frauds in the second round. Two important phenomena emerged in these *pilkada*. The first is the involvement of several Golkar functionaries. The collapse of the Suharto administration was not accompanied by the

Table 6.4 Candidates in the 2008 East Java gubernatorial elections

Candidates	*Acronym*	*Supporting parties*	*The NU background*
Khofifah Indar Parawansa and Mudjiono	Kaji	PPP, PPNUI, PNI-Marhaen, Partai Merdeka, Partai Pelopor, PIB, PNBK, PKPI, PBR, PDS, PKPB, and Partai Patriot	Khofifah was the general chairman of Muslimat NU
Sutjipto and Ridwan Hisyam	SR	PDIP	Ridwan claimed that he came from a NU family
Soenaryo and Ali Maschan Moesa	Salam	Golkar	Ali was the non-active chairman of the NU chapter of East Java
Achmady and Suhartono	Achsan	PKB	Achmady was a *syuriah* member of the NU chapter of Mojokerto regency
Soekarwo and Syaifullah Yusuf	Karsa	PD, PAN, PKS	Gus Ipul was the general chairman of GP Ansor

downfall of Golkar. In the 1999 general elections, Golkar finished second behind the PDIP. In the 2004 general elections, Golkar even won and in the 2009 general elections, Golkar maintained its position as a party that could accumulate a huge number of votes and was runner-up to Partai Demokrat. Therefore, although the party[9] was heavily criticized by the people during the early phase of *Era Reformasi*, the party and the functionaries were able to survive and were even capable of seizing or maintaining strategic positions in the administration. Another central characteristic of the *pilkada* was the involvement of Madurese *kiai* in the processes of providing support for the candidates, especially for those NU cadres who competed under Kaji (Khofifah) and Karsa (Gus Ipul) pairs. The tensions involved in Madura, specifically in Bangkalan and Sampang, were so high that the *pilkada* had to be re-run, while in Pamekasan, a re-count had to be carried out.

There were three Golkar figures in the *pilkada*: Soekarwo, Soenaryo, and Ridwan Hisyam. However, what is important in relation to Madura is the participation of the four NU figures – Khofifah, Gus Ipul, Achmady, and Ali – who seemed to be crucial for the Madurese and who it was thought would draw many votes, principally because of the NU itself, not because of the candidates. The two biggest parties in East Java in the general elections of 1999 and 2004, the PKB and the PDIP, expected that their victories in the two general elections would be reflected in the *pilkada*. However, in Indonesia, party support is not a key factor in winning direct local elections, such as *pilkada*. The popularity and personal factors of each candidate are decisive in

his or her election triumph. At least two accounts on *pilkada* prove this proposition. Nankyung Choi's observation of the 2001 Yogyakarta municipal election demonstrates that candidates of the largest party failed to win due to internal party frictions and 'money politics' (Choi, 2004, p. 283). Meanwhile, Buehler shows us that Golkar lost 50 per cent of the elections in South Sulawesi, a region that once was the party's stronghold in Indonesia due to the unpopularity of the party's leaders who clung to their power position within the party and pressed for nomination, and subsequently led the party into defeat (Buehler, 2007, p. 138).

The decision of the PKB to put forward Achmady as the governor candidate proved to be a blunder. The decision had been made by Gus Dur who was believed by many PKB figures to be brilliant in selecting candidates for strategic positions and who had a very influential position in the PKB.[10] Achmady was only popular in Mojokerto, his hometown and he was not able to attract voters in Madura or the Tapal Kuda area due to his unpopularity among the Madurese. Sutjipto, who was supported by the PDIP, experienced a better result. Unlike Achmady – Suhartono who finished last in the *pilkada*, Sutjipto – Ridwan Hisyam finished in third position. Nevertheless, the result for both the PKB and the PDIP contenders could not ensure them a place in the second round, as Karsa and Kaji dominated the first round of votes. Meanwhile, Soekarwo and Khofifah were popular figures in East Java. Soekarwo's popularity was primarily boosted by the reputation of his running mate, Gus Ipul, as a leading NU figure, while Khofifah, had been popular in the vast network of the NU in Madura before she ran in the *pilkada*. Although the Partai Demokrat, the PAN, and the PKS that supported Karsa and the PPP and smaller parties that endorsed Kaji were not the winners of the two general elections, the fame of these candidates eventually played a decisive factor in taking them to the second round.

The direct 2008 East Java *pilkada* showed the importance of the people at the grassroots level, since it is the people who vote, not the regional parliament. Therefore, candidates approached the people, and those who demonstrated the best religious populist ideas, such as approaching *kiai* and the *pesantren* network, attending religious ceremonials, or participating in people's festivities, and combined it with good networking among local elites and local leaders, had a chance of winning the *pilkada*. An author shows that in many regency head/mayoral elections in South Sulawesi, instead of lobbying superiors and pulling strings in Jakarta, local elites are dependent on the support of ordinary people (Buehler, 2014, p. 169); a clear indication of the prevalence of populist ideas.

In a region where cultural and religious traditions frequently encounter each other and occasionally collide, as explained in the main arguments in Chapter 1, candidates were required to adjust their approaches in certain regencies. In Madura and the Tapal Kuda area, religious symbols seemed to be significant factors in determining a pair's victory, in addition to proposals that tackled development that directly involved the people. Meanwhile, in the

abangan-associated regions, such as in Blitar, Tulungagung, and Trenggalek, cultural symbols were essential factors, alongside ideas for improving people's welfare. In Madura, the three elements of *santri* culture, the *kiai*, the NU, and the *pesantren*, became crucial targets.[11]

The idea was quite simple: the candidates believed that their promises would be best delivered via the three elements. In turn, the individuals within the three elements would be offered better access to patronage resources; and actual facility improvements, such as the renovation of old *pesantren* buildings and mosques, were implemented in advance. For instance, before the first round, Khofifah reportedly donated Rp. 1 billion to the NU and a car worth Rp. 100 million to a NU-affiliated women's organization (*The Jakarta Post*, 3 September 2008).[12]

It was even more beneficial for the candidates to approach local religious leaders who had the same religious background. Four out of the five candidates (at least one of the two in each pair) had a NU background. Only Soetjipto and his running mate, Ridwan Hisyam did not have a NU genealogy. Nonetheless, on many occasions Ridwan frequently mentioned that he came from a NU family, and a *kiai* in Mojokerto even called him a NU cadre.[13] This indicates that patrimonial patterns of the New Order were still extensively used and were still thought to be useful in the post-Suharto period.

Similar to the nomination of Megawati in the presidential election of 2004, the rise of Khofifah to the governor candidacy also generated varied opinions among clerics. *Kiai* Alawy was a commanding figure in his support for Khofifah not only in his hometown, Sampang, but also in East Java in general. Kaji was legitimated by a *fatwa* from the *kiai* in 2008. The *fatwa* was issued in response to his followers and a number of *kiai* who questioned the legality of voting for a female candidate. In the *fatwa*, the *kiai* declared that a woman has the right to struggle like a man. He also denounced the view that forbids a woman to be a leader. Consequently, he appealed to the people of Sampang and Bangkalan to vote for the couple.

Karsa, meanwhile, actively visited a number of *kiai* in Madura. On 3 February 2008, the pair paid a visit to *Kiai* Abdullah Schal in his *pesantren*. The prominent *kiai* gave his approval to the candidates, 'I support Mr. Karwo because he has good programmes, and is accompanied by Ipul' (*Radar Madura*, 5 March 2008). Also important for Karsa was their visit to the graveyard of *Kiai* Kholil. A visit to the *pasarean* (burial grounds) is a symbol of approval. Whoever wishes to obtain success in elections, or other purposes, comes to the graveyard and prays. Although this may seem an unrealistic way of ensuring success, such visits were seen as a necessary step by some candidates and, more importantly, by many voters who expected their leaders to preserve the sacred values of *Kiai* Kholil and the Madurese (this is also explained in Chapter 4). The visit to the graveyard was followed by trips to several *pesantren*, such as *Pesantren* Nurul Kholil, Raudlatul Mutaalimin Al Aziziyah, and Ibnu Kholil. In an account in *Radar Madura*, Soekarwo

claimed that the rituals of *tahlilan* and *zikir* (the repetition of the names of God and of supplications taken from the *hadith* and the Quran) in the graveyard were compatible with the advice of leading East Java *kiai* who recommended that he prayed in the graveyard and visit the *kiai* of Madura (*Radar Madura*, 20 March 2008).

Kaji followed the same path as Karsa. *Kiai* Abdullah Schal, who was believed to be the most prominent *kiai* in Bangkalan at that time, was visited by Khofifah. This *kiai* openly accepted her and diplomatically stated that Khofifah is a good figure and may God give the best for the people (*Radar Madura*, 5 May 2008). Although many people know that *Kiai* Abdullah openly stated that he supported Karsa, as a prominent *kiai*, he carefully observed the situation and had to respond cautiously to political situations, such as Khofifah coming to his *pesantren* to ask for approval (*restu*).

Four years earlier, during the 2004 presidential election, a group of fifteen *kiai* known as '*Kiai Sepuh*' or *kiai* from the Langitan Axis from East Java had issued a *fatwa* against Megawati's candidacy, citing it as *haram* (illicit) in Islam for a woman to become president. They argued that women could become leaders of a country only when there were no eligible male candidates, and stated that this was possible only in an emergency situation. Among these *kiai* were *Kiai* Abdullah Faqih of *Pesantren* Langitan, Tuban; *Kiai* Chotib Umar of *Pesantren* Raudlatul Ulum, Jember; and *Kiai* Mas Subadar (*Suara Merdeka*, 21 June 2004). In 2008, *Kiai* Mas Subadar said that the *kiai* of the Langitan Axis would not issue a *fatwa* against female candidates in the upcoming gubernatorial election, but would do so during the next presidential election in 2009 (*The Jakarta Post*, 3 April 2008).

Finally, the big day for the contenders arrived. After the first election round on 23 July 2008, two pairs, Kaji and Karsa, surpassed the other three pairs. Since neither had obtained at least 30 per cent of the votes, there would be a second round to decide who would be the next governor and the deputy governor of East Java.[14] In terms of actual votes, the winner of the *pilkada* was the *golput*, as 11,153,406 voters had exercised their right not to vote (*Jawa Pos*, 2 August 2008). The *golput* phenomenon has been rampant in post-New Order elections. For example, the lower voter turnouts in the 2005 gubernatorial elections in the Riau Archipelago compared to the previous year's national general elections are not necessarily suggestive of a vibrant democracy (Choi, 2007, p. 337), while the voter turnout in South Sulawesi province was 69.8 per cent, which corresponded well with the national average voter turnout of 69 per cent (Buehler, 2007, p. 121).

The date for the second round was set: 4 November 2008. The two pairs had to rebuild their forces and attempt to rally those who had voted for the other three pairs to their cause. Kaji, for instance, was believed to have had a significant influx of SR supporters, while Karsa was thought to have been able to attract Salam's voters. Support from the PDIP came after Hasyim Muzadi persuaded Megawati to give approval to Kaji following the disappointing results for SR. Khofifah is also reported to have approached Vice President

Table 6.5 The results of the first round of the 2008 East Java gubernatorial elections

Candidates	*Votes*	*Percentage*
Kaji	4,223,089	24.82 %
SR	3,605,106	21.19 %
Salam	3,290,448	19.34 %
Achsan	1,397,291	8.21 %
Karsa	4,498,332	26.44 %
Total	17,014,266	100 %

Source: KPU Kota Mojokerto, taken from www.mojokerto.go.id, accessed on 21 December 2009 and *Jawa Pos*, 2 August 2008.

Jusuf Kalla, although the latter was believed not to have officially given support to the former. Meanwhile, the closeness of Gus Ipul and Ali (Salam) was used by the former to convince Salam's supporters to move their votes to Karsa (*The Jakarta Post*, 12 September 2008). Although the NU seems to have been divided between Kaji and Karsa, a leading figure in the organization, *Kiai* Salahuddin Wahid, believed that the majority of its members would cast their votes for Kaji (*The Jakarta Post*, 6 October 2008).

In reality, the results of the second round were extremely close with Karsa receiving 7,729,944 votes and Kaji obtaining 7,669,721 votes (50.2 per cent compared to 49.8 per cent, respectively). Kaji won in sixteen regencies and municipalities (*kotamadya*), including Trenggalek, Tulungagung, and the municipality of Malang. Meanwhile, Karsa outnumbered Kaji in 22 regencies and municipalities, such as Ponorogo, Madiun, and Bangkalan (*The Jakarta Post*, 11 November 2008).[15] The results angered Kaji. They believed that they were due to electoral fraud, and the pair filed vote-rigging allegations at the Mahkamah Konstitusi (MK – the Constitutional Court) and demanded that another election be held in Madura. This was in light of the fact that in a quick count conducted by the Lembaga Survei Indonesia (LSI – the Indonesian Survey Institute) in Pamekasan Kaji had 59.91 per cent of the votes, while Karsa had only 40.09. In the manual count carried out by the Komisi Pemilihan Umum of East Java (KPU – the Elections Commission), Karsa won with 52.64 per cent, while Kaji only collected 47.36 per cent of the votes. In Sumenep, the quick count recorded 58.19 per cent of the votes for Kaji and 41.81 per cent for Karsa. Meanwhile, the results from the KPU were very different. It was confirmed that Kaji had obtained 49.51 per cent of votes, while Karsa had collected 50.49 per cent (Rasi, Sahrasad, and Mulky, 2009, p. 43). In the second round in Bangkalan, Karsa collected 65.80 per cent or 291,781 votes, while Kaji gathered 34.20 per cent or 151,666 votes. In Sampang, Karsa accumulated 56.97 per cent or 240,552 votes, whereas Kaji amassed 43.03 per cent or 181,698 votes (*The Jakarta Post*, 21 January 2009).

A number of incidents of electoral fraud, including a lack of invitations to vote and insufficient voter cards, illegal procedures that included the use of

illegal recapitulation papers of the results and illegal voters, and the manipulation of votes in polling stations were believed to have been the causes of Kaji's defeat. According to reports in *The Jakarta Post* and *Tempo Interaktif*, a witness admitted to having taken a bribe to help Karsa win. Supriyadi, head of the Kelompok Penyelenggara Pemungutan Suara (poll committee) in Karang Gayam village, Bangkalan, testified at the MK that he was paid Rp. 300,000 by the village chief to mark more than 200 ballot papers in favour of Karsa (*The Jakarta Post*, 22 November 2008 and *Tempo Interaktif*, 3 December 2008, accessed on 27 December 2009).

The MK granted Kaji's appeal and a third round of *pilkada* was set for 21 January 2009 only in Bangkalan and Sampang, while a vote recount was scheduled in Pamekasan. The last battle began for the two pairs. Bangkalan and Sampang became crucial sites. On 11 December 2008, Kaji visited *pesantren*, fishermen, farmers, and traders in Sampang, while Karsa focused their activities on a number of *pesantren* in the neighbouring regency of Bangkalan (*The Jakarta Post*, 12 December 2008). The Bangkalan and Sampang regents and deputy regents also attended informal gatherings organized by Karsa's campaign team (*The Jakarta Post*, 13 December 2008).

As in the first and second rounds, the main targets of both pairs' campaigns were the *kiai*, the NU, and the *pesantren* networks. These elements of *santri* culture were widely believed to have generated votes for the candidates. What is important to note, the patterns used to approach *santri* elements, including attending wedding parties, *khaul*, or *tahlilan* mirrored those of the political parties during the New Order era. In return, the Islamic elements in Madura seemed to be excited to receive the honorary guests. All parties involved knew very well that each needed the other. While the competing candidates needed the Islamic elements to produce decisive votes, the latter needed the former to expand their influence. The Islamic elements were somewhat accustomed to this tradition, though in the past they had usually been less active recipients rather than the demanding actors in the post-Suharto period, in which political agreements were usually proposed first by the Islamic elements.

Prior to the last round, the two rival pairs claimed that they were supported by certain *kiai*. Sudiyatmiko, head of Khofifah's *tim sukses* (campaign team) revealed that three influential Madurese *kiai, Kiai* Alawy, *Kiai* Imam Buchori Kholil, and *Kiai* Ali Badri Zaini would accompany Kaji on the campaign trail. In the meantime, Mustofa, Soekarwo's campaign team coordinator in Bangkalan, stated that his candidate was backed by the regent of Bangkalan, Fuad Amin Imron. Moreover, Mohammad Husni, another of Soekarwo's campaign coordinators, said that Gus Ipul would be campaigning with influential *kiai*, including *Kiai* Cholil, *Kiai* Idris Marzuki, *Kiai* Subadar, and *Kiai* Nawawi in Sampang, as well as host a gathering in a *pesantren* in the same regency (*The Jakarta Post*, 15 January 2009).

After a peaceful third round in Bangkalan and Sampang and a re-count in Pamekasan, the results provided Karsa with victory by a very slim margin. Of

the total votes, Karsa collected 7,660,861 votes or 50.11 per cent. Meanwhile, Kaji gathered 7,626,757 votes or 49.89 per cent (Rasi, Sahrasad, and Mulky, 2009, p. 23).

It seems quite clear that the two most serious candidates of the 2008 *pilkada*, Karsa and Kaji, used a mix of populist ideas represented in cultural and religious symbols and wide-ranging networks among local elites and local leaders to ensure victory. In Madura specifically, they conveyed their messages via three elements of the *santri* culture, the *kiai*, the NU, and the *pesantren*. In return, the individuals of the three elements benefited from implementations of projects and donations in the early stages of the campaigns and those who supported the winning pairs assumed political and economic advantages in the later period. By applying these strategies, the winning pair, Soekarwo and Syafullah Yusuf, demonstrated that in Madura, Islamic symbols significantly ensured victory in direct elections (*pemilihan langsung*). Although they could not secure a victory, Khofifah and Mudjiono were considered successful in rallying support in Madura since a number of *kiai* had endorsed the pair. Allegedly, it was only electoral fraud that had prevented them from securing a victory.

In this *pilkada* we have observed the success of candidates who optimized the supremacy of their positions as deep-rooted popular elites in the bureaucracy and the mass organizations, such as the NU. What is also important to observe is the alleged electoral fraud that involved a large amount of money[16] and patronage. While electoral fraud may seem more reminiscent of the New Order era, similar conditions seem to be present in the post-Suharto period. This is because there has been no dominant force, such as Golkar in the New Order that has been able to manipulate the election process without being confronted by other political parties.

What we have seen from this section is that one of the most visible features in the long process of the *pilkada* was the involvement of top NU figures. Their support was a significant contribution to candidates such as Khofifah, Ali, Gus Ipul, and Achmadi. However, such support led to dissension among NU followers. The fact that the NU was the largest Islamic organization in Indonesia, especially in East Java, was taken into consideration by political parties. Madura became an important arena for the actors involved in the 2008 *pilkada*, such as in the electoral fraud that occurred on the island and the involvement of a number of *kiai* or *klebun* in helping certain candidates win. The vote manipulations as well as other fraud indicate that the three-round *pilkada* in Madura were not carefully watched and that the electoral committees at lower levels could be influenced by ambitious contenders. The involvement of *kiai* shows that they remained influential political actors, as in the New Order. The involvement of the regent of Bangkalan in giving support to Karsa signifies the regent's objective to be a close ally of Karsa, who were thought to provide the regent with many advantages, compared to the more difficult to approach Kaji (in this case Khofifah). The involvement of *klebun* in Bangkalan under Soekarwo and Fuad Amin Imron in influencing the

results of the *pilkada* indicates the importance of officials at the village level.[17] Despite the heated circumstances during the *pilkada*, there was no political violence as a result of the alliances and competitions in the elections. It shows that Islam in Madura, as explained in Chapter 1, remains the driving force that has preserved Islam in Indonesia as a more peaceful religion, such as in the political world, unparalleled with its counterpart in many seethed Middle Eastern, African, and South Asian parts, and has contributed to the transformation of Indonesia's polities from centralized authoritarian control to the decentralized democracies. In addition, Madura is one of the areas in Indonesia that has successfully intertwined decentralization process with the process of democratization, despite the abundance of strong evidence that decentralization is not always synonymous with the process of democratization. Madura has been successful in the sense of electoral politics when there is a strong public support in elections, and in the reinforcement of local identities.

Regency head elections (*Pilkada bupati*) in Bangkalan

In post-Suharto Bangkalan, one powerful figure has been able to deal with the wobbly political configurations in the post-New Order regency: R.K.H. Fuad Amin Imron, well-known as the great grandson of the legendary *Kiai* Kholil. In this section, two *bupati* elections in 2003 and 2008, which brought Fuad to the top position in the regency, are sketched. This influential figure proved capable of using his status as a political party functionary, business individual, religious leader, and cultural figure to encompass a large domain of influence. Even though emerging regional heads and business individuals are susceptible to becoming targets of political coalitions in local parliaments (as in the case of Fuad on a number of occasions prior to and during his early reign), Fuad was able to maintain his power through collaborating with members of parliament, dominated by the PKB and the NU individuals; by exploiting the *kiai*, the NU, and the *pesantren* networks – or the *santri* culture; and by utilizing his multifaceted status in society.

Regency heads during the New Order were formally elected by the regency parliaments, while the decision was in reality made ('*direstui*' in common Indonesian rhetoric) by the central government. It was not uncommon for the regent to have a military background, or be a Dandim (military commander at the regency level), and not be a *putra daerah*. When the Suharto administration collapsed and as ideas about decentralization emerged as a result of discontent about centralization policies, the Law No. 22/1999 and No. 25/1999 on decentralization and on regional autonomy authorize local parliaments to elect regional heads (*kepala daerah* at the provincial and regency/municipality level) was established. This new law provided local assemblies with significant power to control the elections of the regent through a quite complex process. According to Nankyung Choi, an examination of the selection process to determine the official candidates requires understanding of the

relationship between party representatives in the local assemblies and party functionaries on the local boards of parties and also the power structure among parties within the assembly (Choi, 2004, p. 282). In general, Law No. 22/1999 granted the local assemblies full authority to elect their own heads of government, thereby giving regional communities sovereignity over their political affairs (Rasyid, 2003, p. 65).

The 2003 *pilkada bupati* in Bangkalan was supposed to have been held on 30 December 2002, but due to several technical matters, it was moved to 3 and then 4 January 2003. In the end, the date was finally set for 6 January 2003. There were two pairs competing in the first *pilkada* in Bangkalan. The first were Fuad–Muhammadong, who were supported by Fraksi Kebangkitan Bangsa (FKB – the National Awakening Fraction) and Fraksi Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan (FPDIP – the PDIP Fraction), and the second was Sulaiman–Sunarto, who were endorsed by Fraksi Persatuan Amanat Umat (the People Mandate United Fraction), a coalition of smaller political parties. The election day itself was marked by an unsurprising landslide victory for Fuad–Muhammadong with 42:3 votes.

Even though the results of the election were predictable, the processes leading up to the election day were not simple for the winning pair. It was not simple for the pair to win the elections because of the political situation prior to the election. In order to see why this affected the pair so much, I will first sketch Fuad's background to show Fuad's position in Bangkalan.

Fuad benefited from his notable ancestry. He was born in Bangkalan in 1948, the son of *Kiai* Amin Imron and Nur Hasiyah. His father was a leading PPP functionary at the national level. Like most Madurese children, he spent some time in several *pesantren*, but the renowned *Pesantren* Sidogiri in Pasuruan was his main place of study during his childhood. He was a member of IPNU (the students' organization of the NU), KAMI/KAPPI (university/high school students organizations formed in 1965), and GP Ansor. He became the chairman of the PPP chapter of Bangkalan in 1996–1998, was a Bassra member, the deputy chairman of the PKB chapter of East Java in 1998–2001, and a member of Dewan Syuro (Advisory Board in the field of religion) of the central PKB in 2002–2007 (Imron, 2003, pp. vii–viii – his own book). During the New Order, like his father, he was a central figure in the PPP. When many *kiai* and PPP functionaries turned their political aspirations to the newly established NU-associated party, the PKB, he followed. Through this party, he was elected as a central parliament member (DPR RI). In my interview with a former major figure in the PPP chapter of Bangkalan, I was told that Fuad urged all PPP functionaries in Bangkalan to join the PKB as he argued that the PKB best represented the NU's political instrument rather than the PPP (Interview with a former functionary of the PPP on 19 November 2009).

What made it problematic for Fuad to occupy the regent position was the political situation prior to the election. The former regent, H.M. Fatah wanted to extend his tenure. However, it seems to have been very unlikely for him to

have been able to continue since the parliament members were dominated by FKB members who had already proposed Fuad as the sole candidate for the regent position. Although initially Fuad seems to have almost effortlessly won support from the FKB, soon an obstacle came into his path, in the form of the *rois syuriah* (the chairman of the advisory board in the field of religion) of the NU chapter of Bangkalan: *Kiai* Abdullah Schal. The *kiai* was in favour of the old regent, although he was a close family relation of Fuad as the two figures were descendants of *Kiai* Kholil. Both figures, *Kiai* Abdullah Schal and Fuad, made use of a number of local leaders, the *kiai*, the *blater*, and the *klebun* to achieve their ambitions. Moreover, the former is said to have set up an alliance to support Fatah and denounce Fuad's credibility. The purpose was to influence the FKB members not to vote for Fuad, even though it was then clear that Fatah would not participate in the election.

Fuad was attacked with accusations that he used a fake high school diploma, while Fatah was strongly hampered by the parliament members' rejection of his accountability report (LPJ) at the end of his tenure. It is said that the FKB members of parliament rejected the LPJ under Fuad's influence. Outside the parliament building, the *kiai*, the *blater*, and the *klebun* mobilized the masses to support one or the other figure. An alliance of Fatah supporters came together to form Mabando (Masyarakat Bangkalan Anti Pembodohan – the Anti-Duping Bangkalanese), while Fuad's supporters gathered as Gerbang (Gerakan Rakyat Bangkalan – the Bangkalanese Movement) and Mabankop (Masyarakat Bangkalan Anti Korupsi – the Anti-Corruption Bangkalanese). A *blater* told me that initially he was not concerned about who would become the regent of Bangkalan, as long as the candidate, when he assumed the regent position, would help the *blater*'s business. Over time, however, the *blater* became attracted by Fuad's ancestry, and eventually aligned himself with Fuad. His connection to Fuad altered again during a period of demonstrations when he claimed that it was Fuad's vision and mission to develop Bangkalan that had led him to endorse Fuad.[18] Yet, he also admitted that economic reasons were central to his support: he claimed that he had been promised to take control of the security of a *pasarean* (burial ground) by Fuad's people because he was seen to be loyal and that sometimes Fuad's people saw him in the *Kiai* Kholil *pasarean*. He also said that as well as possessing *kiai* heredity, in the *blater* world Fuad was regarded as a true *blater* due to his daring attitude combined with his religious character. He did state that there were also *blater* who supported Fatah, but suggested that their numbers were small. Those who endorsed Fatah, he claimed, were *blater* who only cared about economic matters (Interview with MK, a *blater* on 23 April 2011).

Regarding the fake high school diploma, in a local newspaper, Fuad denied the allegation and claimed that the issue had been blown out of proportion by Fatah supporters. He said that a couple of months before the election, the Fatah faction had obtained a copy of his high school diploma and had altered and reproduced it so that it now stated that he had studied in a high school in Jakarta, and had gone to the provincial office of the Ministry of Education in

Jakarta to seek legitimization of the document. The office had declared that it was a false certificate, and this was the base of the accusations against him. Fuad showed the journalist who interviewed him the real diploma (*Radar Madura*, 11 January 2003). On the inauguration day, the Minister of Home Affairs, Hari Sabarno, via the governor of East Java, Imam Utomo, stated that Fuad's diploma from the Islamic school was valid and legal and that it could be used as the basis for the legalization of Fuad's official position (*Radar Madura*, 2 March 2003).

On the election day, after Fuad was declared the winner, he voiced his gratitude and openly acknowledged the importance of the *kiai*, public figures, and the *blater* at his house in front of thousands of supporters (*Radar Madura*, 7 January 2003). However, the false diploma issue did not disappear. Indeed, Fuad's inauguration after the victory on 6 January 2003 was postponed following the false diploma problem. In response to the postponement, Fuad rallied support from many segments in society. In a demonstration in front of the Bangkalan parliament building, hundreds of people, from a group called Keluarga Bangkalan Surabaya (the Surabaya Bangkalanese Family) called for Hari Sabarno to install Fuad and his running mate in the regency office. At the same time, in front of the governor's office in Surabaya, hundreds more people also called for the inauguration of the winning pair (http://berita.liputan6.com, 27 January 2003, accessed on 20 March 2012). These demonstrations, however, did not have an immediate effect. In order to make a stronger stand, Fuad collected around 250 *klebun*, calling themselves Aliansi Pemerintahan Desa (the Village Administration Alliance) and had them protest in front of the governor's office (http://berita.liputan6.com, 6 February 2003, accessed on 20 March 2012 and www.indosiar.com/fokus, no date, accessed on 20 March 2012). Despite the threats, this protest did not generate a sudden outcome either. Once again, Fuad felt it necessary to mobilize more people to demand the inauguration. This time, thousands of *santri* from around fifteen *pesantren* gathered at the regent's office to voice their concerns over the postponement (http://berita.liputan6.com, 18 February 2003, accessed on 20 March 2012). Finally, the governor of East Java, Imam Utomo, inaugurated the regent and vice regent of Bangkalan on 1 March 2003. For the first time in the history of Bangkalan, the regency was headed by a descendant of *Kiai* Kholil. This reinforces the position of religious leaders in Bangkalan, especially those from this legendary *kiai* family. Sets of demonstration before Fuad's inauguration indicate several things. One of them is that it shows that participation in a protest rally is for some citizens an avenue to express (dis-)agreement with government policies, while for others a demonstration is an opportunity to prove allegiance to the political leader who called for the rally (Berenschot, Schulte Nordholt, and Bakker, 2017, p. 13).

Following the instalment of Fuad, the local parliament members who were mostly FKB members, were accused by some segments of society, mostly by local NGOs, of losing their authority since the regent was also a PKB functionary. It was feared that the parliament would lose its critical capabilities

because it did not want to control the regent due to the same party affiliation. In response, the chairman of the parliament, *Kiai* Syafik Rofi'i of the FKB, stated that the critical power of the parliament would not decrease simply because the regent also came from the PKB (*Radar Madura*, 2 March 2003). Although parliament members might not have lost their critical power towards the regent, *Kiai* Syafik became very close with Fuad, and eventually became a deputy regent candidate who paired with the incumbent regent in the next 2008 *pilkada* under the name Fusya, backed by FKB members.

A year after Fuad gained his regent position, a new Decentralization Law, the Law No. 32/2004, was decreed. The most important alteration that might influence local politics under the new law was the direct election of local government heads, known as direct *pilkada* or *pilkada langsung*. The new *pilkada* meant that the regional heads at the provincial, regency, or municipal levels were to be elected directly by the people. The new *pilkada* also implied a decrease in the power of the parliament in terms of elections. As Buehler notes, proponents of the new law argued that direct elections for local government heads would minimize 'money politics' in these elections, as local assemblies would no longer be able to blackmail candidates. At the same time, they hoped that the popular mandate of local government heads would be stronger if it was granted directly by the electorate (Buehler, 2010, p. 271).

However, political parties remained central to the election process. Large political parties and smaller ones that together usually formed a coalition of political parties, searched for the right candidates at the beginning of the election. This process could also happen in the opposite direction, with potential candidates approaching political parties. If this was the case, candidates with political ambitions had to deal with election costs: candidates now had to pay campaign expenses, favours had to be allotted to power brokers, and cash for vote-buying had to come out of their own pocket. In other words, considerable power continued to be concentrated in the local parties. Consequently, 'money politics' and political corruption did not disappear; they simply shifted from the local assemblies to parties and their local branches (Mietzner, 2006; Buehler, 2010, p. 271).

Despite his nomination by the PKB, in the 2008 *pilkada*, Fuad was also approached by Golkar. As a condition, Golkar wanted to nominate their own running mate as a vice regent to accompany Fuad (*Radar Madura*, 2 October 2007). Golkar's attempts were ultimately unsuccessful, and the PKB nominated *Kiai* Syafik to run in the election with the incumbent regent. Meanwhile, the deputy regent, Muhammadong, was nominated by the PDIP and Partai Demokrat. After a successful reign with Fuad, the PDIP felt it necessary to submit their own candidate. Muhammadong was the chairman of the PDIP chapter of Bangkalan. For the *pilkada*, he was accompanied by Abdul Rozak Hadi, and together they ran under the name Maduraza. Another big political party in Bangkalan, the PPP, nominated Abdul Hamid Nawawi and Hosyan Muhammad under the simply abbreviated name H2O. In total, there were three candidate pairs for the election, as two other pairs did not pass the

verification process (*Kiai* Nuruddin Rahman–Bey Arifin and *Kiai* Imam Buchori Kholil–Saleh Farhat). The coalitions of small political parties behind the two unsuccessful pairs could not meet the minimum 15 per cent of representatives in the parliament required to nominate their candidates.

At the nomination stage of the *pilkada*, political negotiations between candidates and political parties or between candidates and their supporters were essential. Smaller political parties, such as the PAN, PNBK, PSI, and PPD established a coalition called Koalisi Bangkalan Bersatu (KBB – the United Bangkalan Coalition). Initially their support was given to *Kiai* Nuruddin–Bey Arifin. When these candidates did not pass the verification process, the coalition aligned themselves with Fusya. The declaration of the establishment of the coalition was given on 5 October 2007 (*Radar Madura*, 6 October 2007). As is often the case in politics, KBB gradually became a significant ally for Fusya. In its development, the KBB founded the Fuad Amin Center (FAC) in order to provide Fuad with significant support. Meanwhile, other smaller political parties set up a coalition called Koalisi Peduli Bangkalan (KPB – the Bangkalan Care Coalition) to support *Kiai* Imam. Political parties involved in the coalition included the PBB, PKPI, PPNUI, and PKPB.

Tensions between *Kiai* Imam's supporters and the KPUD began to emerge when it was announced that the *kiai* had not passed the verification process. Following the KPUD's decision to invalidate *Kiai* Imam–Saleh Farhat's candidacy, on 20 November 2007 hundreds of *Kiai* Imam's supporters protested the KPUD's decision to withdraw the pair from the candidacy. They demanded that the KPUD reverse the decision and stop the *pilkada*, and they demanded that the authorities prosecute the KPUD for their decision not to support *Kiai* Imam–Saleh Farhat's candidacy (*Radar Madura*, 21 November 2007). The masses gathered in several groups to support the *kiai*. Among the groups were Jaringan Pendukung Imam (Jampi – the Imam Supporter Network), Angkatan Muda Pendukung Imam (Amphibi – the Youth Force of Imam Supporter), and Komando Pengaman Imam (Kompi – the Imam Guard Command).

Wars of support and supportive gatherings also emerged prior to the election day. For instance, tens of prominent *kiai*, including *Kiai* Hannan Nawawi, *Kiai* Muhaimin Makky, *Kiai* Badrus Soleh, and *Kiai* Muksin Mukti, collectively calling themselves Ulama Sunni Bangkalan (the Bangkalanese Sunni Ulama), gathered in a meeting to show support for Fuad. They also asked the *nahdliyin* to support and vote for Fuad in the *pilkada*. Among the reasons for supporting Fuad was the idea that he was the best NU cadre, proven to have been a successful regent, and the fact that he is the great-grandson of *Kiai* Kholil (*Radar Madura*, 7 January 2008).

On 23 January 2008, more than 600,000 voters in more than 1,300 polling stations voted for their candidates in the first direct *pilkada* in Bangkalan. Although the number of *golput* was high (196,369 or almost 30 per cent of the voters), Fusya enjoyed a comfortable victory with 373,422 votes or 80.79 per cent. Maduraza trailed behind with only 71,584 votes or 15.49 per cent and

H2O had only 17,204 votes or 3.72 per cent. The result was documented in the decree/SK of KPUD Bangkalan No. 3, dated 27 January 2008.

As in the previous *pilkada*, Fuad's victory was predictable. It seems obvious that, more than anything else, Fuad's personality and family background determined his ability to attract votes. In relation with personality, Choi suggests that in the place of effectively functioning party machines, three elements of the campaigns take on additional importance; one of them is personalities, or *sosok*, rather than platforms (Choi, 2007, p. 336), while Buehler reveals that for candidates that already have firm roots in their respective areas, strong parties may act as an additional source for yielding results while weak parties do not necessarily prevent candidates from winning the elections (Buehler, 2007, pp. 136–137).

Fuad has also been able to meet the expectations of his people by responding well to communal issues and concerns. For instance, before he became regent, the *pasarean* of *Kiai* Kholil was in rather bad shape, despite attracting tens of thousands of visitors every month. After Fuad assumed the regent position, he renovated the burial ground including its mosque, and improved the main road to the graveyard as well. The Bangkalan people saw this as Fuad showing a high degree of respect for *Kiai* Kholil, who is still considered the greatest figure in the history of Islam in Madura and the ultimate symbol of Madurese religious identity. At the same time, Fuad also showed his awareness of the existence of local village leaders, such as the *klebun* and the *blater*. In religious circles, Fuad had his feet on the ground. He has used his family background extensively, and his association with the NU and the PKB has been utilized to strengthen his position not only in Bangkalan, but also in East Java. For instance, shortly after his instalment as regent for the second time, Fuad was appointed as the chairman of *dewan syuriah* of the PKB chapter of East Java. In so-called cultural circles, Fuad has amassed the influence of the *klebun* and the *blater* by fitting the image of a powerful patron and a true *blater*. Cultural events, such as the previously mentioned *kerapan sapi*, were well preserved during his tenure. A stadium in the city centre was renovated to hold *kerapan sapi* events, and traditional *rokat* festivities were held regularly.

Table 6.6 Candidates in the 2008 Bangkalan Regency head elections

Candidates	*Acronym*	*Supporting parties*	*Votes*
Abdul Hamid Nawawi & Hosyan Muhammad	H2O	PPP	17,204 votes or 3.72 %
Muhammadong & Abdul Razak Hadi	Maduraza	PDIP & Partai Demokrat	71,584 votes or 15.49 %
Fuad Amin & Syafik Rofi'i	Fusya	PKB	373,422 votes or 80.79 %

The successful story of Fuad in maintaining his office shows that even though many public officials actually have a relatively bad image and a corrupt reputation, they are capable of securing public trust. Fuad's case is not unique in Indonesia. The reasons of these regional government heads' success vary, but at least, they include: firstly, there is no better candidate in the elections, or in other words, the problematic candidate is actually the best candidate. Secondly, the capability of the *tim sukses* to create a first-class *pencitraan* (a first-rate image) to attract the mass. Thirdly, the difference of political behaviour between segments of society, and thus candidates who are capable of approaching voters personally will likely gain more support. Fourthly, the indication of 'money politics'. Lastly, the prevalence of negotiation and power sharing among the elites that enables a certain candidate to secure victory while losers will get another compensation, for instance, being given certain governmental projects.

What is important to note here is that many of *Kiai* Kholil's descendants have been able to exploit their lineage in order to benefit in the social, political, and economic sectors. The great appreciation of the Bangkalan people and the Madurese in general for the legendary *kiai* has been used by all members of the *kiai*'s bloodline. Therefore, Fuad's prominence could, in principle, be enjoyed by other descendants. For instance, since Madura is known to have been a haven for the NU and the PKB, other religious institutions, be they mass organizations or political parties, can hardly survive on the island or obtain a large following. However, the less moderate (and also more hostile against local traditions) PKS (at least compared to the PKB and the PPP) has found a way to deal with the issue through the *Kiai* Kholil family. *Kiai* Toha Kholili of *Pesantren* Al-Muntaha Al-Kholiliyah Bangkalan, a descendant of *Kiai* Kholil, was recruited as a cadre of the PKS recently. His status as a descendant of *Kiai* Kholil was utilized by the party to generate support for PKS cadres in elections. The language of the campaigns often included the use of the acronym PKS, which stands for Pilihan/Partai Keluarga Syaichona. This roughly translates as 'the choice/party of the Syaichona family' (Syaichona is an honoured title for *Kiai* Kholil). *Kiai* Toha has also frequently been called *Pewaris Dakwah Syaichona Kholil Bangkalan* or 'the inheritor of the *dakwah* of Syaichona Kholil,' in order to obtain support from the *nahdliyin*. It is obvious that the traditional religious identity of political actors in Bangkalan and their ability to use the image of a powerful patron have been central to their performance in local politics, a situation that continues until today. Once again, this is a strong indicator that Islam in Madura is culturally embedded, including in political life.[19]

Village head elections (*Pemilihan klebun*) in Bangkalan

In observing the village during the New Order, Antlöv argues that the position of the village head as a state client helped maintain the political stability and supported economic growth in Indonesia (Antlöv, 1995, p. 10). While the

village head is a client of the state, in Madura, the village head (*klebun*) is also expected to be a powerful patron of his people. Although there are differences, similar expectations are also placed on the other local leaders in Madurese society: the *kiai* and the *blater*. The main difference is that *klebun* are formal official leaders while *kiai* and *blater* are informal, unofficial leaders. The *klebun* is elected by the villagers through a direct vote, while the sub-district office gives approval and the regency office appoints him/her. However, exceptions do occur. *Kiai*, at least a *kiai kampung* (*kiai langgar*), or *blater* sometimes assume the *klebun* office. The person who exercises both positions holds a dual status in society, and the expectation for a *klebun* to become a powerful patron is thus increased if he is also a *kiai* or a *blater*.

The *klebun* election in 2009 in a village in Bangkalan is outlined in this section in order to portray local politics in Madura at the lowest level. It seems quite clear that, similar to what happens at higher levels, village politics is characterized by the extensive use of Islamic symbols and manipulative practices to make the most of villagers. Influential figures with a *kiai* or *blater* background benefit from the village circumstances and these individuals are expected to triumph in the elections and become a powerful patron for their clients, the villagers. In reality, however, many times *klebun* are not so successful in functioning as intermediaries between higher authorities and villagers.

The *pilkades* took place in a village called Sontang (a fictitious name).[20] The centre of the village is located less than three kilometres from the main road that connects Bangkalan and Sampang. Compared to many other villages in Bangkalan, Sontang is relatively more fertile. The altitude of the village is also higher, meaning that the average rainfall is higher than other areas in the typically dry and arid Madurese landscape. However, in general, the village is not particularly extraordinary compared to other villages in Bangkalan. In 2009, the village held its *klebun* election. Two candidates competed in a lively contest. Rustam was a 44-year-old *blater* whose reputation extended beyond his village, but no further than the sub-district in which he resided. He had three *taksi* (small van used as local public transport, in Java it is usually called *angkot*) and a *lapak* (stall) in the main market in Bangkalan. Mat Hosen was a 59-year-old retired civil servant whose father was a *klebun* in Sontang prior to the 2009 election. The death of his father was the reason why the election was held. During the campaign, despite the attention from the villagers towards the two participants, the village inhabitants were not overly concerned with the vision or mission of the competitors, which were along the lines of the usual state of affairs in most villages in Indonesia. The elders (*sesepuh*) of the village, meanwhile, paid close attention to the candidates' plans and, more importantly, to their background and their supra-village networks, especially with higher authorities. Although it is not the case in Sontang, the elders can be decisive factors in determining who will be elected in a *klebun* election.

Rustam became actively involved in religious events during the campaign, not only in his village but also in neighbouring villages. He knew that many

of his fellow villagers regularly attended religious congregations in a *pesantren* of a neighbouring village. By attending religious events in the *pesantren*, Rustam hoped that fellow villagers would build an image of him as a pious *blater* who had transformed from a merely community-based figure to a cultural-religious person. More importantly, by attending religious events in the *pesantren*, he hoped to be noticed by the *kiai* of the *pesantren*, as he knew that the *kiai* would give advice to his fellow villagers regarding the upcoming *klebun*.

Moreover, Rustam frequently participated in fellow villagers' religious rituals. When his neighbour wanted to enlarge the *langgar* in his house, Rustam lent a hand. Prior to the renovation, the neighbour held a *slametan* in order to ensure the smooth restoration of the *langgar*. Rustam was spotted at this event. The *slametan* was also seen by the villagers as a traditional event held by people who wished to acknowledge such occasions (for instance starting to construct a building). When another neighbour held a *slametan* as a result of his *nazar* (*nadhr* – a religious vow), Rustam provided a goat for the meal. He knew that fellow neighbours would also enjoy the feast and by letting them know that he had contributed to the gathering, he was subtly campaigning for the election. In general, Rustam was known as a generous person, and so people did not really see his acts as part of his campaign. Before his candidacy, Rustam would most likely gather with his fellow *blater* when religious occasions were held at the same time as *remo, kerapan sapi* or *sabung ayam*. The three months campaign period provided Rustam with numerous opportunities to promote a first-rate image of himself among the villagers.

Mat Hosen, on the other hand, was a far from sympathetic person, a self-righteous person who believed in having a greater virtue than most villagers. In his village, he was considered well-off. His father was the *klebun* of Sontang before his death due to old age. Mat Hosen himself was an ordinary civil servant with a limited salary, but his father managed to establish a family business that benefited from his closeness with higher authorities in the regency capital. His main business was inter-island cattle trading.[21] Following his retirement from the government position, he took over his father's business. Despite his own bureaucratic network, he still benefited from his father's long-standing business networks in operating his inter-island trading.

Mat Hosen is a *haji*. Besides his business, he is also well regarded because of his *haji* status. However, this has not led to him being identified as a pious person with religious knowledge. Unlike Rustam who went to religious events only prior to the election, Mat Hosen had almost always come to religious occasions long before the election. He sometimes even organized his fellow villagers in pilgrimages to holy sites in Java. However, his presence at religious gatherings was hardly regarded as a sign that he was a religious person. Unlike Rustam, who successfully transformed himself into a cultural-religious figure, Mat Hosen seems to have failed in building himself up as either a religious individual or a cultural figure. The image that his fellow villagers

had of him was as a representative of the government. This is somewhat surprising, since he had been retired from the government office for quite some time, and also given that his father had been considered a good leader during his tenure.

Despite their contrasting approaches, both candidates promised the villagers that they would renovate the village's ageing main mosque. Here we see the importance of religious aspects in the candidates' campaign. Mat Hosen agreed to repair the mosque if he was elected *klebun*, and told villagers that he would ask higher authorities for assistance. Rustam also assured the public that the reconstruction of the mosque would be one of the main programmes implemented at the very beginning of his *klebun* tenure. Unlike Mat Hosen, Rustam indicated that the financing of the renovation would come mainly from his own sources. This of course led to a public perception of Rustam as a generous person, although the villagers could not be sure how Rustam would get the money or whether he would be able to keep his promise. In the meantime, although his promise was more realistic, the villagers viewed Mat Hosen as tight-fisted, which contradicted the perception of an ideal, powerful patron who could lend a hand when his clients needed assistance.

The villagers' ideal picture of a *klebun* in daily relations with the villagers is that he has the ability to lead and does not keep his distance from his people. Moreover, the *klebun* should also pay attention to the conditions of the villagers' lives and makes sure his information is up-to-date. In other words, he has to *merakyat* (being populist – being close to the people). This ideal picture of a *klebun* was also held by the elders (including several *kiai kampung* (*kiai langgar*), *kiai-dukun*, and war veterans) in Sontang. Despite this fixed idea today, according to Touwen-Bouwsma, before 1745 the role of *klebun* was not clear. We only know that they collected compulsory deliveries of goods and services from the peasants for their lords, the rulers of West Madura, who probably took over village areas and subjugated the peasants living there. Only after direct rule was introduced in West Madura in 1885 did the village head become considered to be the lowest level official, and the only elected official, in the native civil service (Touwen-Bouwsma, 1987, pp. 109, 114).

It is true that in many villages where influential *kiai pesantren* or *kiai tarekat* reside, or to some extent where prominent *blater* live, the role of the *klebun* is frequently limited by the existence of the *kiai* or the *blater*. However, when there are only lower *kiai*, such as *kiai dukun* or *kiai kampung* (*kiai langgar*) operating in a village, the authority of the *klebun* is more far-reaching. In Sontang, there are no *kiai* of the higher orders, which goes some way to explain why the reign of Mat Hosen's father was relatively uninterrupted by the influence of 'traditional leaders' such as in other villages. There is also another example of how *klebun* are occasionally more powerful than religious figures. In his research in Gapurana, the Sumenep Regency, Endy Saputro depicts a contest between the *klebun* and the *kiai langgar* to illustrate the significance of traditional wedding parties that are enlivened with the *tayub* dance. While the *kiai langgar* regards the practices as incompatible with

Islamic values, the *klebun* sees them as village rituals that need to be preserved. Even though the *kiai langgar* has some followers, the majority of the villagers support the *klebun*'s viewpoint (Saputro, 2008).

Back to the election in Sontang, both Rustam and Mat Hosen benefited from the lack of influential religious or culturally community-based figures in the village. If they assumed the *klebun* position, they would most likely be able to function without serious obstacles from the few local leaders whose authority was regarded as being lower than that of the candidates. Nevertheless, this does not mean that the government could completely depend on the *klebun* to mobilize the villagers or to persuade them to participate in the government's programmes. The ability of the *klebun* to govern a village, or more essentially to win the support of the villagers, impacts the implementation of government programmes. Here we see that in several respects, the *klebun*'s leadership resembles that of the *kiai*, as it is not the contents of the instructions that matter, but the person behind the command that is more decisive. It is important to note, however, that even though the absence of religious or cultural figures in Sontang created a favourable situation for both candidates, one of the candidates, Rustam, exploited religious symbols extensively in order to win the supports of the villagers.

In general, the campaign for both parties took a lot of time, money, and energy. Both candidates mirrored the strategies and patterns of electoral campaigns at higher levels. They employed a success team. The success team of both parties organized their supporters or potential supporters on a number of occasions, ranging from casual gatherings at weekends, *pengajian, slametan*, and *dangdut* musical performances, to persuading villagers personally by visiting their homes. In the latter case it was perhaps economics that were most relevant in the discussions with villagers.

The money spent on all the activities was seen as a long-term investment, and each candidate believed that they could recoup this investment in the future should they assume the *klebun* position. Even though Rustam and Mat Hosen were affluent enough by village standards, many people told me that the candidates had to borrow money to finance their campaigns, a fact that they hesitated to reveal to me. Mat Hosen was convinced that he would be able to return the money if he occupied the *klebun* office. He had seen from his father's experience that being a *klebun* is highly regarded and a way to improve oneself economically, as well as socially, politically, and culturally. Rustam had heard the same thing from a fellow *blater* who had held a *klebun* position. They did not seem to be concerned by the low official income from the government, since they saw a lot of opportunities that might be exploited in order to generate prosperity.[22] The opportunities ranged from involvement in government development projects and welfare programmes (building or renovating village facilities), to benefits gained from certain political parties that operated in the village, to the opportunities involved in the sale of any land in the village. All of these possibilities are logical, yet potentially corrupt if exercised in illegal ways.

The candidates, however, did not seem to be concerned with the moral consequences. Therefore, it is common that village head candidates expect that the money spent and invested during the campaign will be recouped on election. However, for the losing side, as Frans Hüsken reveals, 'losing can bring a large-scale financial disaster' (Hüsken, 1994, p. 134). From cases in Central Java in which the government of the Central Java Province postponed all village head elections – more than 6,250 – in June 1998 due to the growing unease over the astonishing level of social unrest and popular violence after Suharto resigned from the presidency two weeks before, we also learn that the postponement was seen by hundred of candidates for village head (*calon kepala desa*) as a disaster because they had paid bribes to voting committee, spent money on popular gatherings, and bribed the villagers, and it meant that these considerable outlays would be forfeited (Kammen, 2003, pp. 303–304).

On election day, thousands of villagers and also spectators from outside the village converged in the village square. On the ballot papers, Rustam was symbolized by a banana, while Mat Hosen was symbolized by a durian fruit. Food stalls and a few toys and clothes stalls had been erected a couple of days earlier, while cart hawkers came early in the morning.

While elections in Indonesia are heralded as *pesta demokrasi* (festivals of democracy), *klebun* elections are festivals in the real sense. In Sontang it was an eagerly anticipated event. This was a more boisterous election than

Figure 6.1 A village head election in Bangkalan

previously held general elections or *pilkada* because this time the candidates involved were neighbours, friends, or family, and because the election would decide the new village leader, not the leader of the regency, the province or the country. Another conspicuous aspect of the election in Sontang, which is actually common in many places, was the prevalence of gambling. Gamblers bet on who would win the election. Some had additional bets, such as who would win in the first one hundred ballot papers. A few petty gamblers, usually the local villagers, bet a very limited amount of money. They did it mostly for fun and as a temporary escape from the mundaneness of everyday life. Big-time gamblers, meanwhile, were not residents of the village. They came from other villages, sub-districts, or regencies in Madura and other places in Java, mostly from the Tapal Kuda area where many Madurese reside. Some gambled for themselves, while some represented their bosses who were mostly Chinese businessmen. These gamblers are regular visitors to village head elections. They have their own networks that provide them with information on where the next elections are to be held. Some of these gamblers also gamble in *kerapan sapi* or *sabung ayam*. During the election in Sontang, the money accumulated is estimated to have been around 600–900 million rupiah (US$ 65,000–98,000). Certainly, as Douglas Kammen puts it, gambling has become prevalent and of concern to state officials in the village head elections almost anywhere in Indonesia because it may cause fraud, cheating, chaos, and others factors that may generate possible disruptive influences (Kammen, 2003, pp. 303–304).

Rustam won the election in Sontang by a slim margin. This surprised many villagers, since they had expected Rustam to triumph by a wide margin. It had been thought that the unpopularity of Mat Hosen, who was seen as an unsympathetic person, would bring Rustam a convincing victory. Rumours that spread after the election indicated that Mat Hosen had bribed certain villagers on the day before the election. These targeted villagers were known to openly support neither Rustam nor Mat Hosen. The bribes were not significant amounts, but were enough to persuade those who were undecided to opt for Mat Hosen. Nevertheless, Rustam had already won over the voters during his sympathetic campaign. In general, in the village where villagers expect to see the elected *klebun* in his office every day, and as he (the *klebun*) attends communal events and discusses public concerns on a regular basis, they would much prefer a reliable candidate. The feeling of togetherness is more important to villagers in these elections than when they vote for candidates in other polls (i.e. parliament members in general elections; president in presidential election; or the governor and the regent in *pilkada*) since they do not know the candidates personally and since the individuals in other elections will not rule their village directly. A recent study shows that in Indonesia voting can, for some villagers, simply be the expression of a political preference, but for others a vote is an important form of leverage that can be traded in exchange for access to the valuable resources of the state (Berenschot, Schulte Nordholt, and Bakker, 2017, pp. 13–14).

For the candidates in Sontang election, the extensive use of Islamic symbols was a necessary standard in the campaign as the ideal *klebun* had to fit the criteria of a pious Muslim, regardless of their actual background. The most important criterion is that the *klebun* should have a religious background. In Sontang, the absence of *kiai pesantren* and *kiai tarekat* allowed other influential figures to rise to prominence. After *kiai, blater* were also respected for their leadership. In Sontang, Rustam was well known as a generous *blater* who had transformed himself from a rather coarse figure into a sympathetic individual. His presence at religious events was seen as evidence of the transformation. People seem not to have been bothered by Rustam's past as a violent *blater* who engaged in dubious deeds, such as *remo* or gambling in *kerapan sapi*. [23] A number of villagers seemed to have objected to Mat Hosen's background and suspicions that he was a government agent, even though he had been retired for years. The Madurese have a saying to indicate that *bhuppa-bhabhu, ghuru, rato* (parents, teachers – *kiai*, formal leaders – the state) are the most respected persons in Madura. For some, Rustam was seen as a *blater* who had transformed himself into a *ghuru* (teacher or *kiai*), primarily as a result of the religious aspects of his campaign and his strong presence as a powerful patron. Meanwhile, Mat Hosen was seen by some as a symbol of the disliked *rato* (formal official leaders). While previously *rato* positions had been regarded very highly during the royal rule, before they were associated with the Dutch colonial administration, the position of *rato* deteriorated during the concomitant emergence of *kiai* (*ghuru*) as popular leaders in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Mansurnoor, 1995, p. 26).

The positions of official leaders, such as the regent or the *camat* (head of subdistrict) deteriorated during the New Order when they were perceived as representatives of un-Islamic forces. Unfortunately for Mat Hosen, he was regarded as a *rato*. In relation to the positions of official leaders, Antlöv argues that there are two bases of authority in the village: community and administrative authorities. The former is obtained from a loyal following, is confirmed by public deference, and is executed through local means. The latter is sanctioned by an official mandate, is blessed by access to state funds, and is executed through public commands and official regulations (Antlöv, 1995, p. 8). In Antlöv's argument, then, Mat Hosen can be considered as representing administrative authority, while Rustam symbolizes community-based authority. For the villagers, the community-based authority is more decisive in the running of the village administration. While the reign of Mat Hosen's father marked the success of a member of the local elite who was firmly rooted in village life over the course of the New Order (Sidel, 2004, p. 65), the post-Suharto period has become more complex for such elite to re-establish their control.

Conclusion

Four types of elections, *pemilu, pilkada gubernur, pilkada bupati*, and *pilkades/pemilihan klebun* are discussed above. These elections were held in order to

elect parliament members during the general elections in the New Order, the governor and vice governor of East Java in the 2008 *pilkada gubernur*, the regent and deputy regent of Bangkalan in the 2003 and 2008 *pilkada bupati*, and the village head in the 2009 *pilkades* of Sontang village in Bangkalan.

Different segments in society responded to these elections in different ways. During general elections in the Suharto era, the *kiai*, alongside the PPP, attempted to counter the domination of the state through its electoral machine, Golkar. In the first three elections this attempt was relatively fruitful, although these successes were fragile. In the last three elections, the PPP's expectations that their supremacy would continue was dealt a heavy blow after its loss to Golkar. Despite allegations of fraud, Golkar was able to tame the influence of the PPP through co-opting influential and eventually benign local leaders with *kiai* and *blater* backgrounds, and through its innovative *pembangunan* programmes as well as coercive approaches to particular segments in society. The *blater*, meanwhile, were much more pragmatic. In principle, they did not have a strong political orientation like the *kiai*. They would support any political party that could accommodate their interests. The people, in the meantime, became targets of influence for the two local leaders. In order to win the support of the people, Islamic symbols were extensively used and became the ultimate method for achieving political goals.

In the 2008 gubernatorial election, contests of influence between *kiai* in Madura became prevalent, and supports were channelled for their candidates in an election dominated by NU cadres. The abundance of NU cadres in the election meant that the *kiai* had to make certain manoeuvres in order to secure their interests. In the final stage of the election, Kaji and Karsa expansively approached religious leaders in order to sway votes. The *kiai* enthusiastically responded to the campaigns, albeit under the expectation that, should their candidate win, then the *kiai* would be rewarded with beneficial cooperation in the future.

In the 2003 and 2008 regency election in Bangkalan, Fuad Amin Imron, a *kiai-blater* figure was able to maximize his family background – he was part of the legendary *Kiai* Kholil clan – to win the two elections. Despite his alleged fraud, he was a shoe-in for the position, and people had high expectations of him as the ultimate successor to *Kiai* Kholil in preserving the sacred Islamic values of the Bangkalanese and the Madurese.

At the lowest level, especially in the absence of *kiai* in the village, a *blater* was able to take full advantage of the situation by defeating his sole competitor, who was seen as a representative of the government. The *blater*'s success was determined by his extensive use of Islamic symbols and by the fact that his rival was regarded as an agent of the state, despite the fact that his father had been the previous *klebun*. This association of the government was somewhat surprising, since the rival had been retired for years from his official government position.

In observing elections in Madura, we may conclude that, alliance and competition are expressions and interactions of not only the people, but also

community leaders and local authorities with the state and with each other. The alliance and competition in electoral politics can be seen, for instance, through responding to certain powers by establishing multifaceted relations with them, from distancing themselves from the certain powers to forming mutually beneficial relations with them when the power of the opponents is too strong to compete, or when making an alliance with them is seen as a useful choice.

Notes

1 The establishment of Sekber Golkar (the Joint Secretariat of Functional Groups) in October 1964 signalled the growing influence of the Army. During the Sukarno presidency, the phenomenon can be traced back to 1957, when Sukarno attacked the political party system in 1956–1957 to question the role of political parties (Reeve, 1990, pp. 163–164).
2 The original figure is incorrect. I have reprocessed it.
3 The four Islamic parties – the NU (Nahdlatul Ulama), Parmusi (Partai Muslimin Indonesia), Perti (Pergerakan Tarbiyah Islamiyah), and PSII (Partai Sarikat Islam Indonesia) – founded the PPP, while the other five parties – the PNI (Partai Nasional Indonesia), IPKI (Ikatan Pendukung Kemerdekaan Indonesia), Murba, Partai Katolik, and Parkindo (Partai Kristen Indonesia) – formed the PDI.
4 Lembaga Pemilihan Umum (LPU – General Elections Institution) and other general elections institutions below LPU were headed by government officials. At every level of the election organizing committees, government elements were dominant, while the PPP and the PDI were represented by only a few committee members. At the lowest levels, Pantarlih (Panitia Pendaftaran Pemilih – the Regional Registration Committee) and KPPS, neither the PPP nor the PDI were represented (Haris, 2004, p. 26).
5 We have to remember, however, that the strong identification of Madurese people with the PPP during the New Order was a clear sign of how the party could associate itself with the populace. As William Liddle and Saiful Mujani argue, strong political parties are crucial to democratic health. They represent individual and civil society interests to government and shape those interests in fundamental ways. Strong parties in turn require effective organization and many voters who identify with them (Liddle and Mujani, 2007, p. 833).
6 This situation reminds us of what happened in Malaysia with UMNO. There politicians have repeatedly reminded villagers during election campaigns and community gatherings of the benefits of UMNO has provided, and they have often encouraged village leaders to apply for further assistance (Rogers, 1993, p. 131).
7 On the day of his funeral, 6 June 2011, thousands of people accompanied the coffin as it was taken to the prestigious graveyard of Pasarean *Kiai* Kholil where the *kiai* was buried alongside other religious elites from Bangkalan. Besides being a member of the Golkar elite in Bangkalan, he held several important positions, such as the chairman of Ikatan Persaudaraan Haji Indonesia (the Indonesian Hajj Brotherhood Union) of Bangkalan, the chairman of MUI Bangkalan, and the chairman of Yayasan Takmir Masjid Agung Bangkalan.
8 For instance, crowds of around 6,000 to 7,000 people enlivened Golkar's campaign in the village of Bulu Agung, Klampis, Bangkalan on 25 May 1992, with Nani Soedarsono, the Minister of Social Affairs in the Kabinet Pembangunan IV (1983–1988) as the main campaigner. It is said to have been the largest of all general elections campaigns in Madura in the 1992 general elections (*Jawa Pos*, 26 May 1992).

9 In the post-Suharto period, Golkar officially became a political party under the official name Partai Golkar.

10 It is interesting to note that Gus Dur's involvement in selecting the governor candidate of the East Java province for the PKB had also been seen before. In 2003, the PKB nominated Abdul Kahfi, a retired police brigadier general. Kahfi challenged the incumbent Imam Utomo (also a former Kodam V/Brawijaya commander) who was nominated by the PDI-P. Kahfi was 'recommended' by Gus Dur, ignoring the preference of many NU top figures who wanted to form a coalition with the PDI-P (Honna, 2010, p. 143).

11 In another area, Maluku, during the 2008 Maluku *pilkada*, the incumbent governor Karel Ralahalu and his running mate Said Assagaff, approached key *adat* (local customs) figures and local *adat* organizations in certain areas. It eventually became one of the decisive factors that brought Ralahalu to the governor seat for the second time (Tomsa, 2009, p. 240).

12 Hadiz and Robison suggest that the so-called donation should be understood in the larger theoretical framework of structural political economy: oligarchy (Hadiz and Robison, 2014, p. 37). However, not all candidates or party officials are able to finance their electoral campaigns. Most of them find it expensive to seek top posts in local government and subsequently are often unable to raise sufficient funds to pay the compensation to party organizations for a nomination and campaign support, to finance media advertisements, opinions surveys, staff, and witnesses at polling stations (Buehler, 2010, p. 274).

13 www.unisosdem.org/article_printfriendly.php?aid=10086&coid=3&caid=31, accessed on 22 March 2012.

14 Based on the Law No. 12/2008, poll authorities were required to run a second round sixty days after the first election should no one party achieve 30 per cent of the votes.

15 The results were also obtained from www.indosiar.com/fokus/karsa-ungguli-pasangan-kaji_76754.html and http://www.beritaindonesia.co.id/politik/catatan-pilkada-jatim, accessed on 23 December 2009.

16 In relation to the involvement of Islamic party candidates in the *pilkada*, it is of little surprise that many of them have been caught up in the web of vote-buying, illegal party financing, and dirty campaigns. In fact, the individualization and commercialization of Indonesian party politics in combination with the low institutionalization of the party structures has led to rampant money politics (Buehler, 2009b, p. 56).

17 Soekarwo was said to have promised village heads monthly financial aids which would be allocated from the APBD (Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Daerah – Regional Budget Revenue and Expenditure). In turn, the village heads were expected to campaign for Karsa. In order to do that, a number of Koordinator Desa (Village Coordinators), through Asosiasi Kepala Desa (AKD – the Village Head Association) were formed to help Karsa secure the *pilkada* (Rasi, Sahrasad, and Mulky, 2009, p. 44).

18 As part of his campaign, Fuad's vision and mission were based on a decentralization spirit summarized in a small book published in January 2003. The book is written under his name and titled *Kabupaten Bangkalan Membangun Diri Meningkatkan Daya Saing* (Bangkalan Regency, Developing Itself and Increasing Competitiveness).

19 The formerly unassailable Fuad was arrested in December 2014 by Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi (KPK – Corruption Eradication Commission) in charge of bribery and money laundering, and was sentenced to 13 years imprisonment. His son, Makmun Ibnu Fuad was elected the regent of Bangkalan for the period of 2013–2018.

20 The reason to hide the village's name and the actors involved in the *pilkades* is obvious and is explained in Chapter 1.

21 Cattle trading has become a profitable business in Madura. The island is a main supplier for the beef and livestock demand in Java and other provinces. According to official statistics, during the New Order, each year the number of cattle (only bulls, because the export of Madurese cows is prohibited in order to maintain the purity of the breed) shipped from Madura ranged from 50,000 to 60,000. The main ports from which the cattle were shipped were Kamal, Tanjung Bumi, and Sepulu in Bangkalan; Sapudi and Kalianget in Sumenep; and Branta in Pamekasan (*Jawa Pos*, 2 November 1984).
22 The central government frequently lamented that people did not want to become village head because there was no *tanah bengkok* (salary lands), or if there was any, the land was not fertile. Such stories came from, among others, Wonogiri, Kebumen, Kendal, Ponorogo, and Probolinggo in 1980s and 1990s (Kammen, 2003, p. 321).
23 A story about a *blater-klebun* (a *klebun* who is a *blater*) illustrates how a person who had this dual status made the headline of the local newspapers. Modus, the *klebun* of Aeng Taber village, Tanjung Bumi, Bangkalan was suspected to have killed a certain Safuri in November 1991. He became a fugitive, and the administration in his village was abandoned. The acting regent of Bangkalan ordered the *camat* of Tanjung Bumi to investigate the administration of the village (*Jawa Pos*, 7 August 1992). On 10 August 1992, Modus was arrested along with a person who was suspected to have helped him hide. He was arrested when he participated in the *remo* of a fellow *blater* in the village of Ketapang, Sampang (*Jawa Pos*, 12 August 1992).

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7 Village politics

Everyday struggle for influence

Introduction

The transformation from centralization to decentralization in the post-New Order should not be merely understood as a transition from an authoritarian rule to a democratic one. In fact, the process of decentralization can be accompanied by authoritarian rule under certain conditions (Schulte Nordholt, 2004, p. 30).[1] At the lowest level of administrative hierarchy, village politics has also experienced such a transformation. Despite the absence of national, provincial, and regency level political actors at the village level, the village has become a field of social, economic, cultural, and political interaction between prominent segments of local society that reflects the circumstances at a higher level. Everyday politics in rural Madura has mostly been manifested in an arena of alliances as well as competitions between village leaders: the *klebun*, the *kiai*, and the *blater* in everyday interactions. As is the case in other administrative hierarchies, politics has played its significant roles in the village. It is because, as Adrian Leftwich puts it, politics comprises all the activities of co-operation, negotiation, and conflict, within and between societies (Leftwich, 2004, p. 103). In general, as Syarif Hidayat has argued, in the context of decentralized Indonesia, local politics involves a great deal of bargaining and coalition-building among various actors at the local level (Hidayat, 2005, p. 56).

This chapter focuses on everyday village politics in Madura. It makes use of a case study in the village of Bayang.[2] Among the questions posed are: What are the sources of authority of influential village figures, such as the *klebun*, the *kiai*, and the *blater*, in Madurese villages? What are their leadership strategies in village politics? How do these influential figures form a relationship with each other and with the villagers? What are the characteristics of village politics in Madura? Why do these characteristics become important factors?

I would maintain that as a result of the continual reformation process in the post-Suharto period, village officials have become unable to ignore pressures and close scrutiny from different parts of society. In many places, village politics has, in fact, been marked by recurrent power struggles between village officials and influential village leaders. It is true that a village council (BPD – Badan

Permusyawaratan Desa) has been established in every village, and that this council, along with the village head and village officials (*perangkat desa*) form the village government that is provided with certain autonomy to establish and implement its own policies. Moreover, this council shows a large degree of independence and frequently forms an opposition to the village head. Nevertheless, as is the case in many rural societies, it seems quite obvious that the existence of traditional local leaders in a decentralized era cannot be ignored due to their constant influence.[3]

This chapter shows that the circumstances in the Madurese villages encourage interaction between important segments of society in which the *kiai*, the *blater*, and the *klebun* form complex relationships in the everyday struggle for influence, in which Islamic symbols and patronage play significant parts. I would also argue that despite different attitudes from the three actors, their relationship is perhaps best described as pragmatic and mutually beneficial in nature. According to Antlöv, the structure of local politics created by the New Order administration was based on intimate personal relations and on patronage (Antlöv, 2003, p. 196). In post-Suharto Madura, despite exceptions and changes, the circumstances have remained relatively similar.

Sources of authority

The village of Bayang is located along the coast of western Bangkalan. It borders on the Madura Strait in the west. Due to its location, fishermen form a large part of its population. However, the village does not have a harbour. The landscape in the inland part of the village is dominated by *tegalan* (dry or non-irrigated field). Moreover, due to its proximity to Java, a number of villagers are commuters who live off casual occupations in Surabaya and Gresik, including hawkers, street parking masters (*tukang parkir*,) *calo* (passenger recruiters for public transport), and porters. The village is headed by Rokib, a 54-year-old small to medium entrepreneur whose profession, besides his *klebun* post, is running a service station (*bengkel*) near the sub-district market and renting out a number of fishing boats. He was elected *klebun* in the village head election in early 2010.

There is a small *pesantren* with less than a hundred *santri*, led by an old-fashioned *kiai, Kiai* Shodiq who is 67 years old. Locals say that the *pesantren* used to attract a lot of *santri* in the 1960s and 1970s from neighbouring villages and sub-districts, and even from Sampang, Sumenep, Surabaya, and Gresik during the *kiai*'s father's leadership. Nowadays, only *santri* from other sub-districts in Bangkalan study in the *pesantren*, of whom very few are Bayang locals. However, these Bayang locals do not lodge (*mondok*) in the *pesantren*. They only undertake *mengaji* (learning to read Quran, sometimes with Arabic lessons) in the afternoon and evening. Some villagers point out that the *pesantren* is dying out because, unlike his father, the current *kiai* does not possess enough charisma to attract *santri* and followers. Some older villagers hold that, unlike his father, *Kiai* Shodiq does not have healing and

predicting abilities, taking away the main reason why a large number of *santri* studied in the *pesantren* during his father's *kiai*-ship. Some other villagers, however, believe that the *kiai*'s somewhat self-imposed seclusion from the vast network of *kiai* and the political world is the main reason why the *pesantren* is declining. Whatever the reasons behind the decline of the *pesantren, Kiai* Shodiq is always being compared with his father in many aspects. This signifies the importance of hereditary factors to *kiai*-ship, in which the status of a *kiai* is ultimately legitimized by such factors. On the other hand, *kiai* who do not have a well-known *kiai* lineage, do have possibilities, albeit rarely, to achieve prominence for certain reasons, including ties with important local leaders, the affiliation with the NU, the reputation of their *pesantren*, and their styles of *dakwah* (religious dissemination).

The village is also home to Khoirul, a 61-year-old businessman. He runs three grocery stores: one in the village, one in the market in the sub-district, and one near the Kamal port. He also has a scrap business in Jakarta that is managed by two of his younger brothers. Consequently, he frequently travels to the country's capital to monitor the business. He and his family are all *haji*. Despite his claim that he is retired from *blater*-ship, the villagers still consider him as a prominent *blater*. In fact, he is still recognized in the vast network of *blater* in Bangkalan, and to a large degree in Sampang and Surabaya as well. Before travelling to Mecca in 2004, he had been a leader of a *blater* group for years. Nowadays, he sometimes comes to *remo* in order to pay respect to the old brotherhood if he knows the host quite well. He claims, however, that he no longer drinks alcohol, although he admits that sometimes he still dances with the *tandhak* (dancers) and will give some money to the hosts now and then.

Based on their position and how they are regarded, each figure symbolizes distinctive sources of authority. The *klebun* represents official and formal authority, while the *kiai* reflects religious authority, and the *blater* personifies community-based authority. While the *klebun*, together with village officials and BPD constitute the village government, the *kiai, Kiai* Shodiq, and the *blater*, Khoirul, are regarded as *tokoh desa* (important figures of the village) or *tokoh masyarakat* (village notables) and are sometimes addressed as *sesepuh desa* (village elders), even though they are not very old. They are neither elected, nor appointed to this special position, but their positions are justified by the general agreement of the villagers. In principle, anybody can become an unofficial member of *tokoh desa* or *sesepuh desa* if they fulfil one or more conditions, for example by having an official position in higher government (but not in the own village), possessing certain abilities in religious domains, through wealth, or through involvement in communal issues and closeness to *warga masyarakat* (villagers). In Bayang, besides *Kiai* Shodiq and Khoirul, there are other villagers who are regarded as *tokoh desa* who have various occupations and positions, ranging from civil servants to landowners. The above three figures – *klebun, kiai*, and *blater* – are typical local leaders in Madurese villages. The official, religious, and community-based archetypes of

leadership are ideal. In reality, not all villages are marked by the presence of such leaders. Moreover, a number of leaders may have dual status (*klebun-kiai* or *klebun-blater* or rarely *kiai-blater*, such as Fuad Amin Imron – explained in Chapter 6). Nevertheless, to my knowledge, there is no such figure who is combined *klebun, kiai*, and *blater*. Therefore, categorizations of this kind are useful, yet they should never be treated as absolute.

Rokib, the *klebun*, is perceived to have extensive economic resources by village standards. Coming from a village elite family, his father owned almost all of the fishing boats in the village. His siblings are among the richest people in the village. Members of the family run a building material store, a small restaurant in Bangkalan city centre, and a grocery store in the market of Bangkalan. Their grandfather is said to be among the village pioneers who practiced inter-island trade between Madura and Borneo.[4] Rokib is a sympathizer of one political party. However, he does not really maintain a close relationship with the party. His network is limited to local functionaries in the sub-district. His association with the party started when an acquaintance asked him to get involved, not long after the 2009 general elections. He does maintain a close relationship with higher authorities and continuously strives for state-backing during his years in office. Moreover, he and some family members are *haji*. He went to Mecca in 2007 together with his wife.

The secretary of the village, Saidi, is really in charge of daily affairs within the village. Already an official in the previous *klebun*'s tenure, he is an experienced village bureaucrat who takes care of all administrative affairs. In fact, Rokib is hardly seen in his office, which generates some complaints from the villagers. Rokib is frequently spotted in his busy service station or in Surabaya where he conducts business related to his service station or his fishing boats. Another reason why he delegates most of his clerical tasks is that he simply does not have the capacity to undertake them himself. Saidi, who carries out the tasks for him is considered as a trustworthy official and subordinate. In fact, it is common in Madura for a *klebun* to be seen more frequently outside of his office than carrying out his duties.

A report from an East Java newspaper in 2010 suggests that many *klebun* wear sarong instead of their uniforms during their working hours. Moreover, the *klebun* are frequently seen in the village market instead of the village office. They often take the village stamp along with them, so that villagers with administrative business have to come to the village market or the *klebun*'s house in order to get assistance.[5] Meanwhile, although Saidi is capable of conducting secretarial tasks, which is appreciated by villagers, he remains in the shadow of Rokib in terms of popularity and, in fact, none of the villagers believe that he will one day assume the *klebun*-ship. Saidi is not a wealthy villager. He depends solely on his official position, a small field of crops, and a small number of livestock as a means of living. Unlike Rokib, he does not have a prominent ancestry to support his career and influence. Therefore, according to standard Madurese perceptions about the ideal *klebun* (as I have explained above and in the previous chapter), Saidi cannot become a powerful patron.

Kiai Shodiq comes from a *kiai* family. As I have mentioned above, he also possesses a prominent religious genealogy in the village standard. Despite his father's absence from the political world, his father's reputation extended beyond his village, not only as a preacher, but also as a healer, or a *kiai dukun* (*kiai* and healer simultaneously). He was regularly visited by people from his own village and also from other places in Madura and Java who looked for *barakah* (blessing) and *karamah* (dignity) from the *kiai*. His father wanted *Kiai* Shodiq, his only son, to follow in his footsteps as a *kiai dukun*, although he also had two daughters. When his father passed away, the young and untrained *Kiai* Shodiq had no choice but to take over the *pesantren*. Sooner or later, the *santri* started to leave his *pesantren*. Visitors no longer came to the *pesantren* for spiritual guidance or healing, although he is still visited today by people who want to ask for guidance and advice for family matters, such as marriage and divorce. He has a number of crop fields tilled by his relatives and this provides him with a source of income in addition to donations from the *santri*'s parents and those who visit him to ask for guidance and advice.

Khoirul is the wealthiest of the three most influential villagers. From the late 1970s until the end of the 1990s, Khoirul was known as a *blater* who was held in awe (*disegani*). He was frequently involved in petty crimes in Surabaya when he was in his twenties. During this period, he made friends with local gangsters who dominated the Perak port area in Surabaya. He gained prominence when he became head of security for a number of warehouses in Perak.

One of the busiest ports in Indonesia, Perak attracts many trading and storage companies, and as a negative effect of being an economic centre, Perak also attracts a lot of criminals. In the 1980s, Surabaya and East Java in general were notorious *bromocorah* (local term for criminals) dens. For instance, based on an account from a local East Java paper, the East Java police stated that there were around 25,000 *bromocorah* in East Java in 1983 (*Jawa Pos*, 23 June 1983).[6] Warehouses in Perak were seen by *bromocorah* as big targets for raids. In order to protect their businesses, entrepreneurs made extensive use of private security forces that were seen to be more reliable than the police. Madurese *blater* and other strongmen with martial arts skills, and sometimes those supposedly blessed with invulnerability and supernatural powers, were hired for these purposes. Khoirul met fellow *blater*, who also worked in security, at *remo* gatherings. Consequently, he was appointed as head of security in Perak.

Thanks to his reputation for being a reliable security guard, he was approached by the Golkar branch of Bangkalan to ensure the smoothness of Golkar's campaigns during election periods in the 1980s and 1990s. He was also asked to persuade people in his village to vote for Golkar. However, he claims that he never really influenced people's political preference because his heart was with the PPP. He asserts that making Golkar's campaigns smoother was not a big problem for him because it was his nature to tackle security

matters, but asking people to vote for Golkar was something he could not do because it was against his own political preference. In fact, his closeness with Golkar functionaries brought him to another stage in his life in the mid 1990s when he started his own business in scrap trading in Jakarta, supported by a Golkar functionary from Bangkalan, whom he had met during Golkar's campaigns and who was transferred to Jakarta. Once Khoirul had made the business a success, he entrusted it to his brothers and decided to move back to his home island where he opened grocery stores and gradually left the *blater* world, the world which he had embodied during his days as a security head in Surabaya, and which indirectly brought him wealth. Therefore, despite his activities as an entrepreneur, and his supposed retirement from the *blater* world, the villagers in Bayang and his colleagues and friends in Surabaya and Jakarta still consider him as a much feared and awed *blater*.

It was during the New Order that Khoirul came to be associated with politics. His collaboration with Golkar, which was facilitated by privileged access to funds, brought him to prominence and riches, and at the same time he built up intimate relations and patronage with Golkar functionaries. Although local notables from religious components of society in Madura remained largely outside the structure of the state, many other local notables were co-opted by the authoritarian Suharto administration into the political machinery of Golkar. In this sense, Khoirul is an obvious product of the New Order.

It is clear now that these three influential villagers possess certain authorities based on their background. While official, religious, and community-based authorities indicate the level and type of authority each figure possesses, other aspects, such as popular opinion in regard to these figures, play a significant part as well. Firstly, all figures are well-off villagers. Some *tokoh desa* are not rich, and to a large degree this undermines their participation in communal programmes or their say in communal issues. It is obvious that a hierarchy exists within the village elite. Secondly, another vital element of authority that the three figures have is the religious title attributed to them. While the principal religious authority in Bayang is in the possession of *Kiai* Shodiq, the *haji* status of Rokib and Khoirul are also very highly regarded. Therefore, the *haji* status places Rokib and Khoirul among the village's magnates. The last of the three elements is genealogy. Rokib and *Kiai* Shodiq come from respectable families settled in the village three or more generations back. Despite Khoirul's salt-of-the-earth ancestry, he is perceived as the founder of a new, influential entrepreneurial family in the village, and hence his descendants will be considered prominent in the future. This shows that the criteria for someone to be considered of prominent descent are not clear, and it is clear that the labelling is based on general agreement, not on a fixed and absolute appraisal. It is indeed the ordinary lineage of Saidi that prevents him from being regarded as a member of *tokoh desa* – despite people's appreciation of his decent occupation – because he neither comes from a prominent family, nor has he initiated a new one.

Managing reputations, network, and influence

Like many villages in Madura, Bayang is a *swasembada* (self-sufficient) village. While the level of education of all village officials in Bangkalan in recent years is relatively low (50.96 per cent are primary school (Sekolah Dasar – SD) graduates; Bangkalan dalam Angka 2007, p. 2), in Bayang, the majority of the village officials are junior high school graduates (Sekolah Menengah Pertama – SMP). All of the villagers in Bayang are Muslims. In fact, the sub-district of Langkap (pseudonym) of which Bayang is an administrative part, has no followers of any other religions besides Islam. Of the eighteen sub-districts in Bangkalan, Langkap and four other sub-districts are exclusively Muslim (*Bangkalan dalam Angka 2007*, p. 145).

Among the three influential villagers mentioned above, the *klebun* is the one who has the official task to administer the village. In a traditional and less heterogeneous society – at least when we compare it to the neighbouring Javanese – like the Madurese, in which issues spread rapidly and become communal concerns, the position of the *klebun* is of importance, for instance, for introducing and accommodating government programmes and village regulations, or hushing up false rumours over government policies,[7] and channelling people's concerns to higher authorities.

In the New Order and before, when access to information was rather limited, or somewhat filtered during the Suharto administration, the *klebun*, along with other local notables often acted as an intermediary and as a source of information. He connected the village with the outside world and interpreted messages from the government. With the introduction of modern information technology, especially television, the internet, and mobile phones, villagers are now more exposed to the outside world.

In the nineteenth and much of the twentieth century, it was not uncommon that the office of village head was handed down within a single family or cluster of families. During the first decade of the New Order, the government had to rely upon the semi-independent officials at the village level. This policy was successful in preventing them from acting against government policies, but at the same time it did not turn the village heads into competent and qualified officials who could carry out the will of the state (Hüsken, 1994, p. 123).

Under the Dutch colonial administration, and from independence until 1979, the village head was elected for life. Then the law on village government was introduced in 1979. This law brought significant changes to village administration. The LKMD (Lembaga Ketahanan Masyarakat Desa – Village Community Resilience Board) was founded and the tenure of the village head was limited to an eight-year term and to a maximum of two terms. Nevertheless, in reality the village head was frequently elected for life in spite of the application of the new law (Hüsken, 1994, p. 124; Sidel, 2004, p. 64; Soemardjan and Breazeale, 1993, p. 12). However, the 1979 law on village government was implemented only after 1988. That year and the year after witnessed a series of village elections in Java based on the law issued in 1979 (Hüsken, 1994, p. 124).

The most dramatic changes in the numbers of local government units during the New Order occurred at the village level. In 1969/70 Indonesia had around 44,500 villages. By 1983/84 this had increased to 66,000 although there was some decline after 1988/89. The creation of these new government units, especially outside Java, was sometimes controversial in that it was viewed as a deliberate attempt by the central government to impose an essentially Javanese construct on indigenous systems in other regions (Booth, 2014, p. 38), although it was also seen as a reflection of the ideology of the New Order and that the government felt the need to issue new laws because older regulations were deemed to be inadequate for the government's plan to accelerate rural development (Bebbington *et al.*, 2006, p. 1960).

Village governments tended to be less dependent than other levels of government on grants from supra-village government. Officials at higher levels of government tended to regard village people as willing to engage in local projects on a mutual self-help (*gotong royong*) basis, which in effect meant they were willing to contribute their labour without payment. Under this system, the village head was legally accountable (until 1999) to the district head instead of to the community. Eventually, job security for the village leadership depended on how well they served the interests of the district and sub-district governments (Booth, 2014, p. 39; Bebbington *et al.*, 2006, p. 1961)

The efforts of centralized New Order's authoritarian rule, which continuously attempted to implement *pembangunan* programmes, was mediated by the interests of pro-government local notables who controlled the lowest administrative hierarchy at the village level. The village head used his position as intermediary to enhance his strategy of political entrenchment and private capital accumulation (Sidel, 2004, p. 65). Such programmes were carried out with guidance by the government through the provincial administration and were called 'the people's programmes', to distinguish them from 'the government's programmes', such as the construction of roads, bridges, irrigation canals, and other public works that were beneficial to the village economy and were carried out by the government itself, without any direct participation by the people (Soemardjan and Breazeale, 1993, p. 3).[8]

In his observations on a village in West Java, Antlöv demonstrates that the success of village politics during the New Order was not primarily measured in terms of its effects, but rather in terms of whether they were implemented in a 'gentle without disturbances' manner that supposedly achieved their official targets. In other words, for the village head, appearances were more important than content, as long as his superiors were satisfied (*Asal Bapak Senang* – ABS) (Antlöv, 1994, p. 86). This indicates that the village head had to pose himself as a subordinate in order to assure his vertical network, so that government programmes in his village would continue smoothly. However, no matter how important the village head was for higher authorities, he could not get promoted to higher bureaucratic levels as he was not an official civil servant (*pegawai negeri sipil*). Therefore, it is not surprising that during his tenure, the village head would continuously attempt to secure private economic benefits for his unclear future.

Certainly, village officials have often had to comply with people's wishes and have had to be able to position themselves effectively between the state and the people. In the series of murders of *dukun santet* (black magic sorcerers) in Banyuwangi, East Java,[9] observed by Nicholas Herriman, in which the 'sorcerers' were killed and their bodies displayed in *balai desa*, the village hall was 'a site of state control, but also as a site which is ambiguous, the locus partly of state control, and partly of local control' (Herriman, 2008, p. 100).

All of the above examples clearly indicate that the level of authority of a village head or a village official is not always steady and that it is frequently challenged by villagers, especially when the village head's attitudes to government programmes are concerned or, in recent years, in the case of *peraturan desa* (village regulations). These regulations govern, amongst other things, administrative services related to marriage and divorce, arrangements of identity cards (KTP), building permits (IMB), and birth certificates (Akta Kelahiran). Villagers expect the village head and village officials to represent communal interests and to be autonomous rather than compliant to higher authorities.

In Bayang, Rokib has shown himself to be an average leader whose leadership is often questioned due to his low loyalty to the village. Rokib's preference in conducting his business and abandoning his official tasks has generated resentment. He does have a number of loyal supporters (for as long he maintains patronage with them), such as his clients in business, employees of his service station, fishermen who rent his fishing boats and their business partners and families, the *taksi* and *ojek* drivers, and his closest neighbours. Rokib is certainly a powerful patron for his clients, a condition that reflects that of the New Order. As Antlöv shows, even though a new type of village leader has been emerging since the collapse of the Suharto administration, village dynamics change over long periods of time (Antlöv, 2003, p. 206).

Among the three influential villagers, the *kiai* is the one who probably has the most followers, especially when including followers from outside the village. We should note that even a *kiai pesantren* whose *pesantren* is going largely unnoticed by local parents, remains an influential figure in surrounding villages. Indeed, many prominent *kiai pesantren* are nationally renowned, as is often the case with *kiai* who become actively involved in politics. Hence, *Kiai* Shodiq is still regarded as an influential figure among local notables of Bayang. The most prominent role of *Kiai* Shodiq is his guidance in village rituals. Almost all religious activities in Bayang are led by *Kiai* Shodiq. Even if, for instance, a famous *kiai* is imported to a *pengajian akbar* (grand *pengajian*) or to give a sermon at a wedding party, *Kiai* Shodiq is also invited to accompany the famous *kiai*. This is a special honour bestowed on *Kiai* Shodiq for his contribution in terms of giving guidance to the villagers.

To the majority of the villagers, weekly *pengajian* in *Kiai* Shodiq's *pesantren* or in the village mosque, along with *tahlilan* and *slametan* and other religious gatherings, are considered as routine occasions that are part of their ancestral heritage. If they do not observe these traditions, they believe that something

bad may happen. For some villagers, the purpose of these occasions is much broader than just tradition. They serve as media to bring themselves closer to God by praising His name. *Kiai* Shodiq does not seem to be bothered by people's different understanding of the occasions. For the *kiai*, these occasions can be used to gather villagers and mobilize them for social, political, economic, and religious purposes. It is true that not all villagers who come to these occasions can read Arabic, let alone understand the meaning of the incantation, yet the *kiai* will convince the participants by assuring them that simply listening to the recitation of Arabic verses is enough to acquire *pahala* (religious reward/merit for moral conduct).[10]

Although more and more *kiai* are becoming active in politics, *Kiai* Shodiq seems to remain apolitical. By contrast, one author argues that the majority of *kiai* in Sumenep are political. They are highly involved in political parties and local parliament, while others are playing more passive roles, for instance, only offering political advice to their *santri* and the people (Karim, 2008, p. 163). It is quite obvious, however, that the majority of *kiai* in Bangkalan are not political. It is true that in Bangkalan there were many *kiai* who became functionaries in the PPP and represented the party in the local, regional, and even national parliaments during the New Order. It is also true that in the post-Suharto period there are even more *kiai* who represent political parties – not only the PPP. However, the majority are still not associated with political parties. We should not forget that the majority of the *kiai* that the above author discusses are *kiai pesantren*. Other *kiai*, such as *kiai tarekat, kiai dukun*, and *kiai langgar* are mostly apolitical.

Kiai who play active roles in politics seem to do this for various reasons. For some, political involvement is economically beneficial. During the New Order, it was common knowledge that *kiai* expected the government's support, whether for their *pesantren* or for themselves, when they joined Golkar. By the same token, the government would send messages of good will and express its desire for a beneficial relationship and their wish for *kiai* to endorse Golkar in elections, or at least not to oppose government programmes. In Pamekasan, for instance, Amir Mahmud, the Minister of Home Affairs, visited some *kiai* in Bettet and delivered large sums of money in 1975, and General Sudomo, one of the most prominent generals of the New Order, paid homage to *Kiai* Baqir of *pesantren* Banyuanyar (Mansurnoor, 1990, pp. 376–377). Moreover, at least in Bangkalan, all *kiai* who have associated themselves with political parties seem to have benefited greatly from their political participation, something that is reflected in the fine appearance of their *pesantren*. Meanwhile, *kiai* who are more passive in politics still benefit from political parties, particularly prior to many kinds of elections when politicians pay a visit to the *kiai* for political purposes and deliver financial support to the *kiai* in exchange for political support. In contrast to Bangkalan, Pamekasan has a different example. One author reveals that it is in fact a number of *kiai langgar* who approached political candidates for a regent post during the 2008 *pilkada* (regency head election), not vice versa, in order to gain a foothold in political

configurations in Pamekasan. When their candidate acquired the regent position, the *kiai langgar* were convinced that they would also benefit, directly or indirectly, from their champion (Zamroni, 2008, p. 8).

We now return to Bayang. Despite the presence of many 'political' *pesantren* in Bangkalan, the *pesantren* in Bayang remains non-political and focuses more on educational activities. Some village cynics say that the *pesantren* is too small to be taken into account in the political world of Bangkalan. Some, as explained above, assert that *Kiai* Shodiq does not have a talent for politics. Some also mention that the *kiai*'s father instructed him not to get involved in politics. The reason is not clear. In short, like many other *kiai*, especially *kiai pesantren*, *Kiai* Shodiq certainly knows how to 'survive' in village politics, by turning himself into an indispensable man of religion, highly regarded by the villagers.

Among the three influential villagers, Khoirul is without doubt the one who has the least followers. He is neither a village official with formal authority, nor a spiritual leader who has religious authority. However, he is a charismatic man whose reputation as a respected *blater* in the past, combined with his riches, has placed him up there with the village's influential *tokoh desa*. Like the position of the *kiai*, the status of the *blater* – indeed, strongmen in general – seems to cling to a person for life, and provides him with a lasting reputation. Therefore, even though Khoirul claims that he is retired from *blater*-ship, the villagers and his fellow *blater* still regard him as one. In fact, when there is a call from a close fellow *blater* to come to a *remo* party, he is unlikely to decline the invitation. More importantly, in a situation where one's status is of importance, such as in village meetings, he will not hesitate to remind people of his *blater* status. Nonetheless, in village religious festivities, such as *pengajian akbar* or *halal bi halal* (a hallowed moment in *Idul Fitri*/Eid Al-Fitr during which Indonesian Muslims visit their elders, family, relatives, and neighbours) Khoirul will not stress his *blater*-ship and instead will proudly emphasize his *haji* status. Although this sounds very pragmatic to outsiders, villagers are never really bothered by this.

Khoirul is seen as an important figure not because of his wealth or merely because of his *blater* status. There are also a small number of petty *blater* who live in Bayang and actively participate in *remo*. However, some of these petty *blater* are seen to show off their physical power in public too much, and are criticized for drinking alcohol in public. They are not wealthy, and even though some have a permanent occupation, many depend heavily on casual jobs in the informal sector. These people are regarded by many people as *bajingan* (thugs) instead of *blater*. Here we can see that the distinction between the *blater* and the *bajingan* (as also explained in Chapter 4) is quite hazy and that is how many people see it in reality.

Khoirul has changed significantly, but the *blater* status remains attached to him. It is his closeness to state officials (*pejabat*) and state security forces (*aparat*) that makes him an important figure in the village. His past experience as part of the security force in Golkar's campaigns and his security work in Perak introduced him to the *aparat* and the *pejabat*. This closeness with the

pejabat and *aparat*, which follows the common pattern of the patron–client relationship in Indonesia, has been carefully maintained by Khoirul, so that he was able to start a new business in Jakarta. His connections allow people from his village and also from other villages to use his *jasa* (service) to deal with the *aparat* when they have a problem with the law. Here we see that he becomes a fixer, someone to solve people's problems, often by improper or unlawful means, and an intermediary.

For instance, if someone loses a motorcycle, instead of reporting it to the police, he will come to Khoirul to ask for his help to find it using his wide network within the underworld. It is less attractive to ask help from the police because they are less likely to find the motorcycle again and, even if they do, the price that the owner of the motorcycle has to pay to the police is high. Although Khoirul may also ask something in return, the cost will not be as high as that of the police. Moreover, people put more trust in Khoirul because they know him better than they know the police. This situation reminds us of Daniel S. Lev's suggestion that for the less privileged recipients of justice, money is often crucial for buying acquittal, lowering the charge, or ensuring better treatment in prison (Lev, 1999, p. 186).

His ability as a fixer differentiates Khoirul from petty *blater*, the *klebun*, and the *kiai*. By maintaining this special position, Khoirul has become a prominent figure whose influence stretches beyond the village. That does not mean, however, that Khoirul is able to mobilize villagers in the way that the *klebun* do when they call on the people to do *gotong royong* (communal aid), or like the *kiai* who can gather the people for a *pengajian* in his *pesantren* or the mosque of the village. The only environment where he has real leadership is among the *blater*, where he led *remo* gatherings during his active years. However, he is still able to mobilize people who depend on him economically, such as those who are employed in his business in Jakarta or in his grocery stores in Bangkalan. Here we see that Khoirul also acts as a protector or patron for his clients, an ideal type of *blater*.[11]

Certainly, these three influential figures in the village know how to keep on good terms with the villagers as well as mobilize them, while at the same time channelling their power and influence towards their own interests. We can see that, among other things, wealth, religiosity, ancestry, and occupation play central parts in making these figures influential in their society. What we should also not forget is charisma, a concept well-known in Indonesian society. Religious elites, underworld leaders, and members of the aristocracy were assumed to possess particular charismatic power. At the village level in Bayang, this translates well to the *kiai*, the *blater*, and the *klebun*, the three of whom are expected to possess charisma in order to be acknowledged as prominent *tokoh desa*.

Maintaining a complex relationship

During the New Order, state–society relations principally emulated centre–region (*pusat–daerah*) connections. State control was, however, not always

firm, and sometimes military authorities opted for less direct interference in civil affairs, particularly in areas strongly influenced by Islam, such as Madura, where Islamic leaders dominated local parliaments. This is in line with Van Klinken and Barker's argument that the Indonesian state is much lighter on the ground than it has often been assumed to be (Van Klinken and Barker, 2009, p. 6).

In most villages in Madura during the New Order, the main village leader was the *kiai*. Despite government's efforts to convert rural leaders into state officials, most *kiai* were not that malleable. Their position as *ummah*/*umat* leaders and their social standing would be endangered if they were seen to be too close to authorities. Most *kiai* in rural as well as urban Madura were inclined to maintain their independence because they did not want to jeopardize their religious authority in the view of the *ummah*/*umat*. However, independence here should not be understood as political non-affiliation. In fact, many *kiai* who were labelled as independent religious leaders, were actually affiliated with the PPP.

One author provides a clear illustration of how one *kiai*, who became an agent of the state during the New Order, gradually lost his religious authority. In a village on the north coast of Madura, there were two important *kiai*. One was an ally of the *klebun* and a cadre of Golkar. This circumstance compromised his religious authority and people tended not to take him seriously. The other *kiai* headed a small, though favoured, *pesantren*, for which he declined government subsidies due to his preference for being independent. The greater religious authority of the latter *kiai* was apparent on many occasions (Niehof, 1987, p. 130).

Another point that could put *kiai*'s standing among the people and other *kiai* at risk, was their support for controversial programmes, such as the Keluarga Berencana (KB – Family Planning/Birth Control) programme. Many villagers could not easily accept the programme due to their understanding that birth control was incompatible with Islamic teachings. *Kiai* were needed to convey the government's message. The question arose, which *kiai* were willing to fulfil this intermediary role? Some of them could not accept this programme at all, while some gradually changed their minds. Certainly, many *kiai* were convinced by the benefits of the programme. It often offered lucrative rewards, such as financial aids to *pesantren* and free pilgrimage to Mecca, to *kiai* who successfully promoted the programme. Events that showcased *kiai*'s support for the KB were frequently disseminated on television or in papers, and newspapers clippings were often displayed in the village hall.[12] To *kiai* who did not support the programme, those who promoted the KB were seen as *kiai plat merah*.[13] The former often persuaded the people not to obey the latter, one of the ways in which a *kiai*'s support for the KB programme might endanger his position in society.

Meanwhile, during the New Order there was another type of village leader, the *blater*. Unlike the *kiai*, *blater* tended to make alliances with the government by being Golkar propagators. If they assumed a *klebun* office, as was the

case in many villages, they would appear to be devoted to a steady relationship with superiors, such as the *camat* (head of sub-district), as opposed to communal concerns.[14] Even though they acted as patrons in their relationships with many villagers, at the same time they were clients to the patrons higher up in the hierarchy. There were, certainly, exceptions. There was a small number of *blater* who became associated with the PPP. Unlike the *kiai* who maintained their independence, these PPP *blater* did not really enjoy the privileged status given to the PPP *kiai* even though they opted for that party instead of Golkar. The main reason for this seems to be the common perception that *kiai* were the guides of the *ummah*/*umat*, and therefore they should promote and guard Islamic values by supporting the PPP. The *blater*, on the other hand, were mostly regarded as community-based figures who preserved traditional Madurese values, and at the same time were expected to sustain *kiai*'s efforts to guard Islamic principles. Therefore, if the *blater* opted for the PPP, it was seen by the people as a rather compulsory action, following in the footsteps of the *kiai*. It clearly indicates that to a certain degree, the *blater* were the *kiai*'s liegemen.

The co-optation of the *klebun* and the construction of patron–client relationships between them and the state did not always mean that they were merely puppets who could be manipulated by higher authorities. Regency and sub-district officials often tolerated self-interested political manoeuvring by *klebun*. It was true that in some villages the *klebun*'s authority was more restricted than observers might assume. For instance, the *klebun* was unable to collect the entire IPEDA (a land tax to be paid annually by landowners) because some villagers failed to pay and the *klebun* had to find ways to compensate for the shortage (Touwen-Bouwsma, 1987: 107). It is also true that there were many *klebun* who did not serve as an extension of higher authorities. It was common knowledge that as soon as the *klebun* assumed his office, many *klebun* did not serve public interests properly, and instead they abused their position for their own interests. Those who were lucky would not be confronted with people's protests or the government's fury. Those who were unlucky would become a target for removal by the government, as in a number of cases in Bangkalan. The *klebun* of Baringin village in Labang sub-district got into trouble with the law because he allowed people to gamble in the *balai desa* of his village (*Memorandum*, 14 April 1994). Moreover, the *klebun* of Morkepek village in Labang sub-district was prosecuted because of extortion. In Gili Anyar village in Kamal sub-district, the *klebun* was brought to court because he falsified information in order to obtain a school diploma that would be used as a requirement for an extension of his *klebun* post (*Memorandum*, 15 April 1994). In principle, higher authorities did not interfere with daily affairs in the village as long as government programmes and policies were implemented in ways that did not compromise higher authorities' positions, or as long as the village head was successful in ensuring the electoral success of Golkar in national elections (Kammen, 2003, p. 308).

One author highlights this condition by stressing that, despite the New Order's deeper infiltration into society and its greater domination of local society than its colonial predecessor, the regional elite showed tremendous resilience and managed to survive (Schulte Nordholt, 2003, p. 575). Therefore, these local elites (non-*ulama*) did not emerge as a significant threat to the administration due to their dependence upon the government for subsidies and other benefits and their potential vulnerability vis-à-vis the peasantry. In principle, the administration preserved its patronage with local elites to ensure the continuation of its rule at the local level. To keep the local elites dependent, funds were distributed to supporters as part of the patronage plan or as bribery. At the same time, much money was spent on security forces to repress dissidents who tried to confront the administration, specifically the poor (James, 1990, p. 20). These were the general conditions in New Order Madura.

Village officials during the New Order were appointed by the *klebun* and approved by the regency office. In the post-Suharto period, they are – with the exception of the village secretary who is appointed by the regency secretary (Sekretaris Daerah) in the name of the regent – appointed by the *klebun* and approved by the BPD. This shows the importance of the BPD's role in village politics. This situation forces village officials to really brand themselves as the voice of the people. *Klebun* are also forced to market themselves wisely in order to curb competition from the *kiai* and the *blater* since these figures often stress their natural connectedness with the people and claim that they are the people's real protectors, rather than the *klebun*. Meanwhile, village officials are not always allied with the *klebun*; they may be collaborating with *kiai* or *blater* or they may be more independent. In general, however, village officials belong to the *klebun* office, and when the BPD criticizes the performance of the village government, village officials, besides the *klebun*, usually become targets of criticism as well. Since many of the BPD members are village elites who *merakyat* (being populists – being close to the people) and are active in village communal activities, cooperation between village officials and these village elites, who are also BPD members, is crucial for the success of both government programmes and village policies. This is not to deny, however, the importance of cooperation between all village administrations with village elites who are not members of the BPD.

In Bayang, Rokib, *Kiai* Shodiq, and Khoirul are present-day *klebun*, *kiai*, and *blater*. While during the New Order Bayang was not free from the influence of Golkar and the PPP, the village has not become a battleground for ambitious local leaders who transform religious group loyalty into loyalty to political parties. While during the New Order there were hardly any local leaders and villagers who openly supported Golkar, and the majority of the population claimed to endorse the PPP, the post-Suharto period has witnessed far more diverse political aspirations channelled to various political parties. It is relatively common now to see political party flags, posters, and banners displayed in Bayang, as well as in many other villages in Indonesia. However,

this does not mean that villagers in Bayang have become significantly more conscious of supra-village political developments and, more importantly, recruitment by political parties has not increased since the level of political apathy seems to have grown. Moreover, despite the presence of some political parties through their 'representative offices',[15] many of the representatives in Bayang have limited awareness about political configurations on the national or even provincial level. They are mostly only active for one or two months prior to general elections, presidential elections, gubernatorial elections, and regency head elections. The representative offices seem to be merely symbols of the existence of certain political parties. While during the New Order strong group loyalties and a lack of tolerance towards other groups often sparked political tensions, the post-Suharto period seems to be marked by a lack of political loyalties. It is true that the PKB dominated the majority of votes in the 1999 general elections in Madura, but in the 2004 and 2009 elections, they received significantly fewer votes. Bayang has experienced a similar situation. It is still true, however, that political tension has fluctuated, heating up every now and then, and cooling down again. The level of tension is influenced by mixed political factors that largely mirror the situation on the supra-village level. This could happen because as Patrick Ziegenhain has argued, at the national level, for a new democracy such as Indonesia, the legitimacy of the legislature is dependent on whether people and their interests are adequately represented (Ziegenhain, 2009, p. 37).

Rokib seems to be the most avid politician compared to *Kiai* Shodiq and Khoirul. However, his position as *klebun* prevents him from being a political party functionary. According to Law No 22/2004, the village head is not permitted to be involved in campaigns for general elections, presidential elections, gubernatorial elections, and regency head elections, and he is not permitted to be a political party functionary (board member). It is permitted, however, to be a sympathizer of a political party. *Kiai* Shodiq, as I have explained, is not really interested in politics, while Khoirul became an integral part of Golkar's campaigns during the New Order. In the post-Suharto period, Khoirul has become less active in politics and pays more attention to his business. Supra-village politics apparently does not really attract local notables from Bayang, who appear more interested in being involved in village politics.

The most fragile relationship in Bayang is perhaps between the *kiai* who represent the *santri* culture and the *blater* who represent the *abangan*-like culture.[16] That does not mean that they are directly competing with each other over many things. Their religious orientations and practices differ to a considerable degree, but, in daily affairs, they are not so different. As Leftwich puts it, the political approach to human behaviour draws on some of the central insights of rational choice that people do seek to promote their utility, through advancing their interests, preferences, and ideas (Leftwich, 2004, p. 116). During the New Order, despite their non-involvement in the PPP, the *kiai* (mainly *Kiai* Shodiq and some *kiai langgar*) and the majority of the villagers

channelled their political aspirations through the PPP. Khoirul, along with a number of *blater* and a minority of the villagers, gave their political preference to Golkar. Political orientations polarized the village. Yet, this polarization occurred only at times of general elections, especially during campaigns. In present-day Bayang, the division of society during election periods is not as obvious as during the Suharto era. In all elections (*pemilu, pilpres*, and *pilkada*) in Bayang, political affiliations do not really matter, as the level of political apathy has increased in the post-Suharto period. Some political factions based on family organizations (clans) and informal connections, ranging from religious groupings (*kelompok pengajian*) to working associations (like fishermen's associations), have been formed. However, these factions are very informal and loose, often short-lived. One fisherman highlights this:

> *Pak kiai* (Mr *kiai*, referring to a *kiai langgar* in Bayang) in the 1990s often reminded us to not forget about our obligations as Muslims. *Salat* (five-time daily Islamic prayers), *puasa* (fasting), and *zakat* (giving alms), were the forms of worship *pak kiai* frequently reminded for us to perform, to distinguish us from non-Muslims. When general elections approached, *pak kiai* recommended us to vote for the PPP. He always maintained that it would show the difference between us and non-Muslims if we voted for the PPP. As far as I know, almost all of my friends, the fishermen, opted for the PPP, and we agreed to only vote for the PPP, to show that we were true Muslims. I remember that I was very proud wearing the PPP T-shirt and showed it to some of my neighbours who wore Golkar T-shirts. Now the situation has changed. *Pak kiai* still frequently comes to us to remind us not to forget about our religious duties. However, when the general elections times are coming, he says that the only true Islamic party to pick is the PKB. I forget since when *pak kiai* has been telling us to vote for the PKB instead of the PPP. Perhaps after *Pak* Harto (Suharto) retired [stepped down from his presidency, *sic*]. At first I was confused as to why he wanted us to shift our [political] party. However, I just followed what he said. In the last general elections (2009) I was no longer fascinated by the PKB since my standard of living (he says *penghasilan* – income, he refers to *taraf kehidupan* – standard of living) did not really improve, and so I voted for another party (he does not mention which one, however). *Pak kiai* does not know about it [that he voted for another party, instead of the PKB] and I think it is better if he does not know about it. I do not know why. I just think it is better. Actually, I do not know why I still have to vote since it does not change anything. Although I voted for the PPP, I miss the *Pak* Harto era because at that time life was easier for me.
>
> (Interview with NH, on 14 January 2011)

Nowadays, the villagers of Bayang have diverse political orientations. Although the majority of the villagers do not clearly know which party to

support in general elections or which candidates to vote for during *pilpres* and *pilkada*, as many of them have continuously shifted their political preference in the last two elections, they seem to pay more attention to which party or which candidates not to pick.

There are two overlapping categories of parties and candidates they deem unsuitable. Firstly, those who are not recommended by local notables, even though leaders at higher levels (sub-district to national levels) recommend them. This signifies the importance of local notables as people whom the villagers trust. Even though higher functionaries are more influential, they operate beyond the villagers' field of view, so their recommendations are unlikely to be followed. *Kiai langgar*, despite their inferior rank to *kiai pesantren* or *kiai tarekat* or other kinds of leaders, are, in fact, closer to the people. If *kiai langgar* maintain their *merakyat* characteristics and show commendable personalities, their political suggestions seem to be followed. This situation demonstrates the importance of charisma, which is still prevalent in the post-Suharto period. Even though various local groups at the regency and provincial levels, such as NGOs, students' associations, and workers' unions, have sometimes taken matters into their own hands when it comes to land occupations, human rights, and corruption, ordinary people in the village have rarely experienced such a post-Suharto 'euphoria' from participation, and have reaped few rewards from being given more access to local governments. Their public participation is still limited to the village level. Therefore, whoever is able to win the support of the villagers, is likely to gain the most followers.

The second category of politicians that are not likely to be popular in the village, are those who do not provide the villagers with direct benefits. As the people's political consciousness at the village level increases, by the same token higher-level politics seems to be losing ground in the people's mind. People are not really interested in candidates for official posts or political parties' programmes. If, for instance, an unfamiliar candidate for a regency parliament member campaigns their candidacy in the village's *pengajian*, what the people really expect is something tangible, not just a speech on uncertain programmes or political promises. If the politician takes action, for instance, by partially renovating a mosque, this will be much more effective. This situation obviously demonstrates the high degree of political pragmatism in the village. Leaders cannot expect the same kind of 'obedience' in supra-village politics from their followers.

Today, there is no single political party that is capable of integrating the villagers or, to be precise, the *nahdliyin*. The PPP's heyday in Madura is obviously over, at least if we look at the results of three general elections in the post-Suharto period. Although that party seems to have attempted to offer better programmes during campaign times, the exodus of many of its most influential leaders to the PKB and the PKNU and some to non-Islamic parties, has turned the PPP into an average political party. It is clear that the decline of the PPP was not caused by the inability of its functionaries to run that party, but mainly because the establishment of the PKB attracted many religious

leaders – as true leaders of the PPP – to switch their allegiance to the PKB. Here we see that, as in the New Order, many people are still attracted by the popularity of religious leaders. Therefore, for certain people who are in favour of certain *kiai* in the PKB, it is likely that they will opt for that party. Meanwhile, for others who are the followers of certain *kiai* in the PPP, it is most probable that they will maintain their support for that party. It also holds true that there is no single village notable who is capable of incorporating mass support in one single party and that relationships between village notables in supra-village politics are less prominent.

Communal concerns and village politics, however, differ significantly from supra-village politics. Village notables may form loose relationships if it is mutually beneficial to do so. A case from Pamekasan confirms this assertion. On 22 April 2011, hundreds of *blater* from Sampang were mobilized by the *klebun* and village officials of Palengaan Laok village, Pamekasan to protect the re-opening of a village polyclinic (*polindes*). The *blater* were accompanied by a number of *kiai*. Prior to the re-opening, the polyclinic had been sealed by the villagers because the midwife in charge was reallocated to another village by regency officials. The villagers were fond of the midwife and could not accept this. The re-opening was successful as the feared *blater*, the respected *kiai*, and the *klebun* who held the official authority cooperated together, while the villagers did not take any action. However, the next day the polyclinic was re-sealed by the villagers because their demand to get the midwife back was still not met.[17] This clearly indicates that village notables can, occasionally, form loose and mutually beneficial relationships, while at the same time it also shows that in the post-Suharto period the villagers have more ability and courage to protest against village officials or higher authorities if their concerns are not taken into consideration. It does not mean, however, that during the New Order villagers did not have any opportunity to voice their concerns (the Nipah Dam incident illustrated in Chapter 5 is a perfect example of how villagers protested against the government's plan). It is the more democratic socio-political circumstances in the post-New Order that have given more opportunities for villagers to do so.

A wide gap between village leaders and official bureaucrats, however, is still prevalent and it seems that this aggravates political tensions during crucial moments, for instance, during village head elections. While the New Order rural elites were privileged clients (*anak emas*) of the state during the New Order, rather than part of the purely capitalist class, whose opportunities to accumulate and rule depended on their crucial links with higher authorities (Antlöv, 1995, pp. 6–7), the decentralization era has produced mixed outcomes, for example, decentralization has not really provided village officials with ample opportunities gained from these enhanced powers. Nevertheless, another indication points out that decentralization, democratization, and the spirit of *Reformasi* in peripheral areas have enormously increased the agency of local actors. They increasingly link up with powerful political and economic 'centres' beyond Java and are frequently positioned within networks of

multiple centres, where they are much more actively engaged in a broad spectrum of relationships (Haug, Rössler and Grumblies, 2017, p. 16). Furthermore, Mietzner argues that decentralization has worked in Indonesia because both local elites and the broader citizenry support it. Obviously, local elites have enjoyed the vastly increased money flows and the expanded patronage opportunities. While many observers point to the benefits reaped by the elite as an indicator of the shortcomings of decentralization, the accommodation of local elite interests was a necessary precondition for its success (Mietzner, 2014, p. 63).

In the post-Suharto period, *anak emas* of the state no longer exist. The *klebun*, village officials, and village notables tend not to become informal underlings, but rather formal subordinates whose relationship with their superiors is no longer completely affected by the principles of *Asal Bapak Senang*. Even if *anak emas* exist, the extent to which they can secure state funds has been limited by more binding laws and regulations. Moreover, as the post-Suharto period has witnessed instability and insecurity alongside political change, the informal ties between village leaders and higher authorities have proven to be very loose and unstable, and are often hampered by political configurations at higher levels. Despite a number of exceptions, it no longer seems common in Madura for 'state-sponsored' *kiai* and *blater* to be coddled by higher authorities, as happened during the Suharto administration.

The social and political roles held by village bureaucrats in the New Order now seem to have shifted into the hands of other local notables; that is, the religious and community-based figures. Village leaders are expected to preserve the values of the village and act as brokers who bridge the gap between the population and supra-village politics. In order to do this, village leaders need to be community-oriented. They have dual commitments: as neighbours and community representatives, on the one hand, and as agents of governments and members of the village elite on the other. Consequently, as Antlöv puts it, this has posed dilemmas for village leaders who are trapped between village realities and state ideology, or between an image of the exemplary centre and the reality of administrative periphery (Antlöv, 1995, p. 9).

It is important for village leaders to be accepted in the village and to form good relations with other village leaders, and they have to present themselves as the guardians of traditions in order to achieve this. During the New Order, political events were disguised within a cultural framework of meaningful symbols (Antlöv, 1995, p. 10). Nowadays, despite some camouflaged efforts to convey their messages, it seems now that the government is more overt in translating its programmes to the people, such as Jamkesmas (public health insurance) and Raskin (*beras miskin*, literally rice for the poor: an aid programme for certain poor households to purchase rice below the market price).[18] It is true, however, that some village officials will try to benefit from uneducated villagers by mistranslating government's programmes.

Finally, in religious spheres, despite many differences between the *kiai*, on the one hand, and the *klebun* and the *blater*, on the other hand, these two

sides are not mutually exclusive. They form important segments of society who share common interests and jointly safeguard the common values of the people. In the Madurese tradition, the common values of the people are translated as Islamic and cultural values. While the *kiai* focus on common Islamic values, such as *khaul* and *tahlilan*, the *klebun* and the *blater* promote and strive to maintain festivities that are likely to be frowned upon by the *kiai*, such as *kerapan sapi* and *sabung ayam*.

Consequently, it is not uncommon that some *santri* become spectators in *kerapan sapi* or *sabung ayam*, while it is not surprising to see the *klebun* and the *blater* in *khaul* and *tahlilan* or the presence of a low-level *kiai* (*kiai langgar*) as the one who leads the ritual in the *klebun* and the *blater*'s personal religious events, such as *slametan* held to bless members of their family in rite of passage ceremonies. However, we should note that their mutual participation in seemingly opposing occasions should not be understood as signs of conversion or submission to the 'other side'.[19] Most importantly, these are the standard practices in Madura. The people are always highly aware that they have their own spiritual beliefs that may be at risk from other values, but they stand firmly in their own beliefs. This is in line with Kees van Dijk's argument that in Java, it would be a mistake to treat 'Javanese' and Islamic beliefs as complete opposites (Van Dijk, 1998, p. 229). Moreover, we should not downplay the villagers' resilience and agency. As Antlöv argues, 'villagers are not merely passive receivers of official propaganda or observers of development programmes. They are also members of a community and, in the final analysis, agents of their own lives' (Antlöv, 1995, p. 9).

Conclusion

The New Order, with its authoritarian rule hindered democratic processes at all administrative levels. Formal representatives of the state often interacted awkwardly with village populations. The village head, who was expected by the government and the people to bridge the gap between communal concerns and villagers' issues with higher authorities and to become a powerful patron for his villagers, often ended up alienating himself from the local populations. In fact, these village heads were often guilty of misappropriating public goods for private interests. Village notables, despite their non-formal leadership, were frequently able to link the local populace with supra-village politics. Whether it was the village head or the village notables who connected society with the larger world, all village leaders struggled to preserve patronage and the various forms of patron–client relationships which became so prominent during the New Order.

The village, as the lowest administrative tier in Indonesia, appears to be accepting the spirit of decentralization with less enthusiasm. Despite a number of laws and regulations that have favoured the position of the village, such as the laws and regulations that stipulate the presence of a village council and allows it to establish its own village regulations (*peraturan desa*), the

village is still considered as a peripheral area, designed to cater for the demands of urban societies. In politics, the village is regarded as a potential source of votes for political parties and political candidates for official posts rather than as a potential equal partner for development.

In Madura, village politics has been an arena of alliances as well as competition between village leaders: the *klebun* who represent formal authority, the *kiai* who embody religious authority, and the *blater* who carry community-based authority. The relationships between religious leaders, local strongmen, and village officials in the village in Madura have been complex since the colonial era. The struggle for influence within these village elites is not only centred on opportunities for private material benefits, but also on political competition which is loosely organized, pragmatic, and often mutually beneficial in nature. Their continuous presence in the post-Suharto period reflects their constant influence over society, and their presence actually fits well within ongoing state formation. Village politics in Madura is characterized by its typical rural nature. The presence of traditional local leaders is highly apparent in their struggle for influence, in connecting the local community with the outside world, and in defining the appropriate values and norms for the village residents. In the struggle for influence, Islamic symbols, wealth, and genealogy are extensively used to win the supports of the villagers, while patronage and personal relations become the prevalent pattern in relationships with the villagers.

Notes

1 Schulte Nordholt and Gerry van Klinken stress the argument in Schulte Nordholt and Van Klinken, 2007, p. 1.

2 The name of the village and the sub-district where the village is located and the names of the people are fictitious. The reason is obvious and it is explained in Chapter 1.

3 As a comparison, in Pakistan, in a state where the bureaucrats rely more on personal relationships than they do on legalistic rules, there is little hope that ordinary citizens will have faith in state structures (Lyon, 2004, p. 207).

4 In the early twentieth century, a large number of Madurese lived in the south and west of Kalimantan, especially in areas around Kotawaringin and Sambas. Some resided in coastal cities, such as Pontianak and Banjarmasin. They worked in seaports or became contract workers in clearing and managing hinterland areas (De Jonge, 1989, p. 25).

5 www.harianbhirawa.co.id/demo-section/berita-terkini/13961-kepala-desa-di-bangkalan-dilarang-pakai-sarung, accessed on 17 April 2012.

6 The activities of these criminals were countered with harsh actions by the police and military forces. Between 1982 and 1985 there was a series of mysterious killings in Indonesia known as *petrus* (*penembak*(*an*) *misterius* – the mysterious rifleman/shooting the mysterious killer/killing) whose targets were mostly *bromocorah* or *gali-gali*/*gali* (*gabungan anak-anak liar*, literally meaning gangs of wild kids) (Van der Kroef, 1985, pp. 757–758; Siegel, 1999, pp. 225–230; Schulte Nordholt, 2002, p. 48). *Bromocorah* and *gali* were recognized by their tattoos. This distinguished them from *orang biasa* (commoners) during the *petrus* time in which anyone with a tattoo was almost certainly considered *bromocorah* or *gali* and thus were marked for death.

7 For example, in Bayang in 2011, rumours spread that all villagers who were living overseas (mostly as migrant workers) or in other cities had to return home as soon as possible to arrange a new E-KTP (electronic identity card) replacing the old manual KTP. The *klebun* dismissed the rumour and stated that the E-KTP would not be introduced in the near future.

8 As a comparison, in Malaysia, there was a similar development programme called the New Economic Policy (NEP) initiated in 1971. It was developed as both a new political manifesto and a new economic policy. A variety of development programmes were designed to increase agricultural productivity without changing the class structure in the rural to raise the Ma[illegible] peasantry's standard of living, to foster support for the dominant Malay party (United Malays National Organization – UMNO), and to legitimize the [illegible]MNO-led ruling coalition (Rogers, 1993, p. 2).

9 In January 1998, Banyuwangi was the site of rumours of alleg[illegible]orcerers being murdered by unidentified black-clad assassins known as the 'ninja' (the fabled Japanese martial arts experts with supernatural powers). Th[illegible]eason behind the naming is that the perpetrators of the killings are said to have dressed in black-clad ninja fashion (Retsikas, 2006, pp. 61–62).

10 As a comparison, in observing Islamic sermons in religious congregations in Java, Ward Keeler points out that, firstly, although many people seem to take delight in stories of all sorts, there is often an absence of stories in religious instruction. Secondly, many people do not express boredom or frustration or impatience with sermons that Keeler finds stultifying (Keeler, 1998, p. 166).

11 As a comparison, in the Philippines, poor people certainly do try to attach themselves to people with greater means as one strategy for garnering more protection against adversaries and possibly improving their own claims to resources. There are two broad patterns of interaction among subordinate and superordinate people: networks that join them and antagonism between them (Kerkvliet, 1990, p. 15).

12 An illustration: a number of *kiai* in Sampang gathered in the Sampang Regency hall along with officials from BKKBN (the National Coordination and Family Planning Agency) and those from the regency office to support the KB programme in that regency. The head of the BKKBN of Sampang delivered a speech to highlight the success of the programme in Sampang (*Jawa Pos*, 1 March 1982). Whether the programme in Sampang was really successful or not, the government needed to convince the *kiai* so that they would think that their tasks were not difficult and that they soon would reap the rewards.

13 *Kiai plat merah* literally means red plate *kiai*. *Plat merah* refers to the vehicle registration plate of government vehicles (which is red in colour), meaning that the *kiai* who were backed by the government or occupied official positions were considered as part of the government.

14 After the introduction of Law No. 32/2004 on Regional Government, village actors with strong links in sub-district, regency, or even provincial levels are once again, as during the New Order, in the best position to benefit from resources (McCarthy, 2007, p. 153).

15 All buildings of representative offices of political parties in Bayang are houses of the representatives and some are small shops.

16 This distinction is explained in Chapter 2 and Chapter 4.

17 http://regional.kompas.com/read/2011/04/23/04120753/Bidan.Idaman.Dipindah.Preman.Dikerahkan, accessed on 24 August 2011.

18 In Indonesia, the spread of new social welfare schemes is not dependent on structural coalitions among labour and other social groups, though there was significant mobilization by labour unions and NGOs in favour of the passage of the national social security legislation. Instead, welfare schemes have been promoted by mainstream, elite politicians, eager to present themselves as champions of social reform for electoral gain (Aspinall, 2014, p. 133), yet, basically, the Indonesian health care

system is designed to implement the constitutional mandate to maintain and protect citizens' health status by providing accessible health care for all, for instance by recently implementing the Social Security Management Agency (BPJS), which manages health insurance for all citizens (Miharti, Holzhacker, and Wittek, 2016, p. 57).

19 As Leftwich put it: power may be used in any such context for good or for bad. It may be used with brutality and force. Equally, it may not be so obviously present where there is an identity of outlook or interest, or enough in common for negotiation to substitute for compulsion (Leftwich, 2004, p. 111).

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8 Conclusion

Twenty years of history (1990–2010) of the relationships between Islam, state, and society in Madura are examined in this book. There, local politics should be seen first and foremost as an aspect of centralization during the New Order and decentralization during the post-New Order. The transformation from one administration to another on Madura should not be understood as an automatic shift from an authoritarian rule to a democratic one. The processes have also been marked by many undemocratic changes, continuities, repetitions, and developments in Madurese society. This book has sought to contribute to our understanding of local politics in the two periods and to illustrate the continuities and changes in local political processes that include democracy, authoritarianism, centralization, decentralization, elections, Islamic affairs, and state–society interactions.

There has been a debate as to why Islamic powers have presented a challenge for secular states around the world, including Indonesia. In Indonesia, Madura has been a place where there appears very complex relationships between Islam and politics during the last years of the New Order and the first years of the post-New Order. The island has been a strong Muslim area with a history of a very strong religious as well as cultural tradition than is commonly understood and is largely ignored. Based on original research, this book has shown a complex and gripping picture of local politics in post-colonial Indonesia.

Local politics in Madura in the New Order and the post-New Order is marked by recurrent processes in which Islam and local cultural elements coexist, flourish, interlace, and strive in complex, pragmatic, and mutually beneficial relationships. All the contemporary actors of local politics in Madura – groups of local leaders – have been engaged in the formation and transformation of political culture on the island since the New Order. The actors are part of larger configurations of interdependent individuals within Madurese society and Indonesian society at large. The socio-political formations of local politics in Madura have been exercised by local leaders, who each play their part. These local leaders have employed and promoted Islamic symbols and cultural elements to reinforce their positions in society.

Having replaced the Old Order, the New Order is seen as an authoritarian era. As was the case in other places, the Suharto administration also

maintained an authoritarian style in Madura. Nevertheless, despite its authoritarian style, the government did not always have an easy time maintaining its influence in Indonesian society. However, after 1966, it seems that almost no group in Madura was immune from the influence of the New Order administration. Groups of local leaders tended to avoid direct confrontations with the local authorities; instead, many chose to be subjugated and formed patron–client relationships with regional or central authorities. The Suharto administration managed to maintain a balance between groups of local leaders on the one side, and the state on the other. Following the collapse of the Suharto administration, despite a few exceptions and changes, the circumstances have remained relatively the same. Groups of local leaders have survived the transformation processes and, in fact, they have successfully maintained their respected positions and have exercised domination over the legitimate use of religious authority for the *kiai*, physical force for the *blater*, and formal leadership for the *klebun*, within a given territory. The socio, political, economic, and cultural processes are determined by how local actors mediate and respond to formal institutional changes.

Madura has been, in terms of religion, culture, and politics, an island of piety, tradition, and violence. Islam in Madura is culturally embedded in all aspects of life. The developments of everyday relationships between Islam and politics and between state and society in Madura have been mixed: one the one hand they show largely cultural characters, while on the other hand, they also demonstrate significantly political traits. The religious and cultural identities of the Madurese have accumulated in powers that have presented a culturally-political challenge for the state in local politics, especially in elections, economic and community development, and religious affairs.

The transformations of Madura

Since independence, the Indonesian government seems, for the most part, to have neglected Madura, and so the island has become one of the disadvantaged areas in the larger Java–Madura region. Even during the *pembangunan* era of the New Order, the island, in comparison with other regions in East Java, had a weak economy. Due to infertile land, limited economic activities, and inadequate development of human resources, the local economy was too weak to absorb the abundance of labourers that resulted from high population growth during the New Order. In general, Madura scored low on the social indicators for education and employment. Moreover, in areas such as health, food and nutrition, and human settlement, Madura was also underdeveloped compared to other regencies in East Java (Rachbini, 1995).

That does not mean, however, that the government did not take any action to solve these problems. The government planned to build the Suramadu Bridge, which would connect the islands of Java and Madura. The government also asserted that the development of the bridge should go hand in hand with the establishment of industrial estates on the island, especially in

Bangkalan. Moreover, in order to solve its stagnant agriculture, that is to say, to achieve self-sufficiency in rice, the government felt that agricultural innovations, such as building the Nipah Dam for irrigation, needed to be introduced to Madura.

Such efforts to transform Madura into a better-developed region were not without problems. This book has shown the multi-faceted realities of the New Order's development programmes to 'modernize' Madura and the many reactions that arose in response to the programmes. Following the shift away from the Suharto administration to a series of more democratic ones and several policy changes, the bridge was finally inaugurated and opened for the public in 2009 after construction was re-started in 2003. However, by the end of 2010, the dam was still not functioning. At last, however, construction of the dam started in 2004 and finished in 2008 and started to be flooded in 2015, and was inaugurated on 19 March 2016.

Aspects of Islam in Madura

Nowadays, despite their rather changed perceptions of modern education, Islamic associations, and men of religion, Madurese people continue to preserve their sacred values, as the main three elements of the *santri* culture, the *pesantren*–the NU–the *kiai* networks in Madura have had a great influence over society, in both religious and worldly domains. The people share the view that Islamic law (*sharia*) is fundamental to daily life and thus must be integrated in all aspects of life. However, like Islam in other places in Indonesia, the characteristics of Islam in Madura are also emphasized primarily, but not exclusively, by aspects such as mysticism and local cultures. These traditional cultures are principally bonded by a strict obedience to *kiai*. Obviously, the *kiai* appear to have become vital figures that connect the three staples of the *santri* culture: the *pesantren*, the NU, and the *kiai* themselves.

Perhaps the oldest and most distinguishable tie, which has existed for hundreds of years, is the relation between the *pesantren* and the *kiai*. Though *kiai* are able to extend their influence beyond the *pesantren*, without a *pesantren* a Madurese *kiai* is like a captain without a ship. The second important relationship is the one between the *pesantren* and the NU. *Kiai* of the NU remain convinced that *pesantren*, even in their most modern form, are still the most appropriate place to undertake religious learning and secular education where *santri* are educated to follow the four *madhhab* and scriptural classical Islam. Establishing a *pesantren* will ensure a *kiai*'s personal reputation as a guardian of Islamic values. Last but not least, there is the tie between the NU and the *kiai*. The NU has provided the *kiai* with extensive networks to link them to the wider world. In turn, the NU enjoyed mass following when their *kiai* were able to attract villagers to vote for their party, the NU, and later on the PPP, the PKB, and the PKNU. Despite their traditional features, the *pesantren*, the NU, and the *kiai* that form the *santri* culture have never been an anti-modern force, nor have they opposed democratic principles. In fact, the three elements

have continuously identified Islam not just with personal faithfulness, but with creating social institutions that are vital to solving conflicts in Madurese society.

Political actors in an island of piety, tradition, and violence

There are two crucial actors in local politics in Madura: the *kiai* and the *blater*, both of which are presented in this book. In present day Indonesia, religious life has not been integrated into the politics of the state, and although a number of religious leaders occupy bureaucratic positions, most religious elites in Indonesia are not affiliated with the bureaucracy. However, they do continue to play important roles in Indonesia.

In Madura, *kiai* are without doubt the main actors in state–society relations. They have become cultural, economic, and political brokers. By keeping their distance from the state, the *kiai* have been successful in maintaining their positions in society. They have been aware of the possible risk of being alienated and isolated not only from their followers, but also from their horizontal networks among religious circles. More importantly, they are concerned that their high position in society may gradually fade away if they do not keep their distance from the state. For some *kiai*, utilizing their positions and personalities is a tool to gain and preserve positions and status. For others, focusing on religious matters is the decisive means by which they continuously adapt to changing situations, along with the rapidly changing administrations in Indonesia.

The *blater* have displayed various roles, from being power brokers to perpetrators of cultural violence. These strongmen should also be described as entrepreneurs of protection, individuals who offer protection to various groups, ranging from commoners to political parties. They can also be defined as local strongmen who benefit from insecurity to gain employment, gain reputation, and spread their social and political power when they become involved in politics. *Remo* is their distinctive characteristic that counteracts the elements of piety promoted by the *kiai* and *santri*. In fact, the tradition is so distinctive that it seems that no other strongmen in Java are even comparable with *blater* as far as their counteraction against *santri* cultures goes, at least when we look at the prevalence of *remo*. To be sure, Madura is not only a *santri* island.

The importance of the New Order's *pembangunan* in Madura

When it comes to the *pembangunan* programmes of the New Order, the authoritarian governments, such as the New Order administration, were very important as they vigorously intervened in all aspects of development. In New Order Indonesia, development was associated with rapid industrial transformation and efforts to narrow the large gap between the middle and working classes, the peasants, and other city dwellers. In reality, development

policies significantly benefited small components of society: bureaucrats and state-backed entrepreneurs. On the other hand, they neglected larger parts of society. Moreover, state intervention in development policies generated varied results.

In the Nipah Dam incident and the Suramadu Bridge affair, the state neglected people's rights and ignored *kiai*'s authority. The rejections of the Nipah Dam and *industrialisasi* occurred in the last years of the Suharto administration. In order to accelerate economic growth, potential development sectors needed to be maximized. Areas near Java were seen as potential regions to be industrialized, as the main part of the economic growth came from the manufacturing industry and was financed by foreign investment. This view was generated in part by the fact that some parts of Java were quite saturated with industrial estates while areas near Java were relatively 'untouched'. The *industrialisasi* policy in Madura was also derived from this point of view. Since the governments at all levels neglected certain segments of society and attempted to apply development policies in one rigid way, it seems obvious with the benefit of hindsight that the government would face rejections. The landowners at the Nipah Dam site, together with a number of *kiai*, led by *Kiai* Alawy, protested against the unjust process of land acquisition and the shooting incident that took four lives. The Bassra *ulama* rejected the introduction of industrialization and the establishment of industrial estates in Madura. However, the rejections are not best identified as resistance to *pembangunan*. The rejections are best described as the dissatisfaction of segments of society towards the undemocratic and authoritarian policies of *pembangunan*.

The rejection by certain segments of society, especially the *kiai*, maximized the use of cultural and Islamic symbols. In the Nipah Dam incident, issues such as the flooding of mosques, sacred graveyards, and inherited lands were central. Nevertheless, the inappropriate land prices were actually the decisive factors that drove the people to protest against the land acquisitions. In the Suramadu Bridge affair, issues such as demoralization and incompatibility with Islam became main arguments of Bassra *kiai* when voicing their concerns over the *industrialisasi*. One notion was the un-readiness of Madurese to accept *industrialisasi* since they lacked adequate education to fulfil positions in the manufacturing industry. Another important notion was the fear of the negative side effects of *industrialisasi,* which could bring immorality to Madura, such as the introduction of modern cultures that would destroy the local cultures, or worse, the emergence of brothels such as those in Batam.

Experiencing elections in Madura

The roles of *kiai* in elections in Madura were perhaps most visible during the New Order. At first glance, it seems that the state – through its hierarchical authority – was able to intervene at all levels of administration. In reality, large segments of society were able to form informal ties and operate within

their own hierarchies of authority. In a society in which traditions and customs are identified with Islam, the roles of religious leaders to perceive, censor, and disseminate political messages are highly evident. During the New Order, when access to information was limited, *kiai* were the central sources of information, including political affairs, for commoners. Even if access to information was not limited, the influence of *kiai* effectively determined what was appropriate and what was not. The regional governments were usually more aware than the central government in dealing with the power of religious leaders. To propagate the government's programmes through electoral campaigns, the regional government of East Java or the regency governments frequently made use of the *kiai*. Yet, using the *kiai* to promulgate the government's programmes was not unproblematic. The information they spread to the people was certainly their own version of the information, and was related to their own interests in the religious, political, and economical spheres. Such practices would be beneficial should the *kiai* support the government, but such actions could also lead to a disadvantageous situation for the government in which the interests of the *kiai* contradicted its own concerns.

Meanwhile, through elections, the post-New Order period has signified the start of *putra daerah* occupying strategic bureaucratic positions. Local elections have overwhelmingly strengthened the position of locally embedded leaders. In post-Suharto Madura, local formal leaders, such as the regents and the *klebun*, are frequently caught between the bureaucracy's extensive demands and the people's expectations. That is why local formal leaders are expected to be powerful patrons for their people so that they will be able to maintain their independence against the higher authorities' commands. In reality, they are hardly able to escape the higher authorities, not only because of the high demands of the superiors, but more importantly because they also expect something in return, for example, because they want to tackle government projects without really being monitored by the parliament or the village council.

Village politics in Madura

It has been almost two decades since Suharto's rule ended in 1998, and Indonesia has since experienced a dramatic shift in political constellations. In the time since this transfer of power, the Indonesian nation has sought to formulate and implement wide-ranging reforms that aim to democratize and improve governance systems. One way of doing so has been the decentralization of the functions of the Indonesian government. Ironically, while the reformation process is still taking place, patronage appears to have become a characteristic of the post-New Order era (Mackie, 2010, pp. 82–83). This patronage pattern is not static because it has been affected by state-building processes and, by the same token, it has influenced these processes. At some point, patronage is inherited from the New Order, while its roots can be traced back to pre-colonial

times. What we see here, then, is a 'changing continuity' that will help to explain the problems connected to decentralization and the establishment of regional autonomy (Schulte Nordholt, 2004, pp. 30–31).

In Madura, village politics has been an arena of alliances as well as competition between village leaders. Their leadership strategies in village politics are most clearly visible in their efforts to win the support from the villagers. Using his official post, a *klebun* may be able to mobilize villagers to obey village and regency regulations imposed upon the people and to mobilize the population for his own private purposes. Making use of his religious-spiritual influence, a *kiai* may be able to rally villagers in the name of God. A *kiai*'s position of authority is, in fact, firmly grounded in and associated with the village as opposed to higher tiers of society. Finally, utilizing his feared and admired standing, a *blater* may be able to direct his clients who are dependent on his influence and power. This is even true for prominent *blater*, who may have close ties to the *aparat* (state security forces) and *pejabat* (state officials).

The relationships between religious leaders, local strongmen, and village officials in the village in Madura have been complex since the colonial era. The struggle for influence within these village elites is not only centred on opportunities for private material benefits, but also on political competition which is loosely organized, pragmatic, and often mutually beneficial in nature. Their continuous presence in the post-Suharto period reflects their constant influence over society and their presence actually fits well within the ongoing state formation. The way they survive and continue to exercise their influence in society is not surprising. There are two rather different reasons for that. Firstly, it shows that they are highly capable of adjusting to the continuously changing political atmosphere of the Indonesian state. Secondly, they continue to be needed by society to safeguard and preserve its values and norms. The first reason indicates that the creation of a strong civil society is still hampered by the presence of an ineffective state system, while the second reason suggests that the religious and cultural values and norms of the Madurese are their last strongholds in coping with modernity.

Reflecting Islam and local politics in Madura

It can be concluded that Islam has firmly established its position within local politics in Madura. Islam has been used and promoted by its supporters against secular state policies. Moreover, what might have been the case in Madura, as happened quite often in other places in Indonesia during the New Order, is that the state disregarded opposition by Muslims who made use of religious symbols, at least in terms of the rejection of *industrialisasi* and the Nipah Dam incident. That is not to say that the state disregarded religious leaders and Muslims in general. At the same time, local syncretist cultures and traditions have been well preserved by their vigorous supporters. In fact, it seems that there have been no state policies that imperil these cultures and traditions. Moreover, through the co-optation of many *blater* and *klebun*

during the New Order, who became the most avid supporters of the *abangan*-like culture, the state might have indirectly stimulated local syncretist cultures and traditions. Via their determined supporters, these two cultures have continuously coexisted up to present day. Unlike contemporary Aceh or Banten, which have been perceived as regions with a very strong Islamic adherence and which seem to be increasingly *sharia* oriented, Madura tends to cling strongly to Islamic values and norms without denying the presence of local syncretist cultures, and in fact the supporters of each culture show that Islam and local traditions can live side by side.

Socio-political trajectories for other Muslim-majority states

Almost 90 per cent of Indonesians are Muslim and Islam permeates Indonesian society and its social, political, economic, and cultural intercourse. The large number of Muslims has placed the country as the world's most populous Muslim-majority country. At the same time the country has since 1999 become the world's third largest democracy. Our common understanding of how democracy can be crafted in Muslim-majority countries would prove troublesome. This book is an attempt to contribute to the debates on this contradictory postulate.

Some of the circumstances in the relationships between Islam, state, and society in local politics in Madura can be reflections of experiences that may be useful in comparing the socio-political trajectory of other Muslim countries, such as Tunisia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Senegal, and Turkey. The three features of life of the Madurese (piety, tradition, and violence); socio-political features of Indonesia in two different periods; and the engagement with democratic politics experience may become useful indicators of how the world's largest Muslim country, as well as the world's third largest democracy, deals with turbulent political configurations and has been successful in facing democratic transitions.

We also have to remember that Madura and Indonesia have numerous examples of how Islam has been able to act as a positive force, and how religious, cultural, and formal-official actors are positive forces for democracy, although we also have to note that frequently Islam and these actors have played a non-democratic role throughout history at the same time. In terms of harmony between religious communities, Indonesia and Madura can offer examples of how the state and people's leaders along with the people have attempted to manage diversity, instead of attempting to unite it. Indonesia and Madura also demonstrate that Islamic organizations and institutions, such as the NU (and its *kiai*) and the *pesantren*, have played positive roles in maintaining pro-democratic spirits that have contributed to the processes of democratization and decentralization.

Since the Iranian Revolution, the Middle East appears to have not experienced a significant extent of political reformation. In fact, the region has been highly marked by poor political governance where authoritarian regimes

continue to aggravate socio-political mobilizations in search of democracy and the rule of law (Bayat, 2010, p. 1; Mahmood, 2005, p. x). For Muslim-majority countries outside of the Middle East, Indonesia and Madura's experiences in democratization, in terms of their accomplishments and also problems, are worth greater scrutiny by scientists, activists, and policy makers who wish to investigate socio-political configurations of Muslim-majority countries, and who wish to learn how democracy is understood in the framework of the relationships between Islam, state, and society.

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Glossary

Abangan	The minority of Madurese Muslims and the proponents of a less orthodox Islam that is primarily based on local perspectives. In Java, they are usually identified as nominal Muslims.
Ahl as-Sunnah or Sunni Islam	The largest denomination of Islam.
Anak mas	Literally means favourite children, privileged clients.
Aparat	Security forces.
Bajingan or *Badjingan*	A common term for thug and a more derogatory term sometimes used for *blater*.
Barakah	Divine blessings.
Bersih desa	Javanese spirit shrine ritual.
Blater	Local strongmen in Madura.
Bromocorah	Local term for criminals in East Java.
Bupati	Regent, head of regency.
Calo tanah	Land brokers.
Camat	Head of sub-district.
Carok or *Tjarok*	Distinctive Madurese fighting using sharp weapons; it is a last resort in defending one's honour.
Dakwah	Religious dissemination.
Desa perdikan	Villages under dominion of the Javanese kingdom and later under Dutch colonial rule, which were given special status for religious functions and were exempted from tax.
Dukun	Shamans, healers, or fortune-tellers.
Fatwa	Non-binding opinions concerning Islamic law.
Guru ngaji	Teachers of Islamic knowledge and Quran recitation.
Hadith	Sayings and acts of the Prophet Muhammad as recorded and transmitted by his contemporaries.
Haji	A title addressed to a person who has completed pilgrimage to Mecca.

Industrialisasi	To introduce industrialization and to create industrial estates.
Istighosah	Communal prayer.
Jago or *Jagoan*	Local strongmen in nineteenth-century Java.
Jatah preman	Illegal rents.
Jawara	Local strongmen in Banten.
Jimat	Amulet.
Juru kunci	Custodians of graveyards.
Kantor Sosial Politik	The Social Politics Office.
Karamah	Dignity.
Kerapan Sapi	Madurese bull racing.
Kesaktian	Magical abilities.
Khaul	Annual celebrations on the death anniversaries of religious leaders.
Khittah	Fundamental guideline of, in particular, an Islamic organization.
Kiai	Religious leaders, the term is commonly used in Java and Madura.
Kitab kuning	Literally means 'yellow religious book', used to denote the yellow tinted papers of the religious books on Islamic knowledge used in *pesantren*.
Klebun	Madurese village heads.
Langgar	Small mosques; they often serve as the lowest level of religious education institutions.
Madhhab	Islamic school of law.
Madrasah	Islamic school; used to denote modern Islamic school that offers both Islamic and secular knowledge.
Muhammad-iyah	A reformist Muslim organization, established in 1912.
Muktamar	Congress.
Muslimat	Women's organization of the NU.
Nahdliyin	NU's followers.
Nazar	Nadhr, a religious vow.
Pancasila	The official five pillars philosophical foundation of the Indonesian state: belief in One God; a just and civilized humanity; the unity of Indonesia; popular rule through policies formed after representative consensus, and social justice for the whole Indonesian people.
Pasarean	Sacred burial grounds.
Pejabat	State officials.
Pembangunan	Development, modernity.
Pengajian	Religious congregations.
Perangkat desa	Village officials.
Peraturan desa	Village regulations.
Pesantren	Islamic boarding schools.
Preman	Hoodlum, the term is commonly used in Jakarta.

Priyayi	Local aristocracy in Java; the term is sometimes also used in Madura.
Reformasi	The post-Suharto period in Indonesia (1998 until now).
Remo	Feasts characteristic to the *blater* community.
Rokat Festivities	Madurese rituals to ask protection from the spirits of their ancestors, to avoid calamities as well as to get blessings.
Sabung ayam	Cock fighting.
Sandur or *Sandhor*	Madurese dancing performed in *remo*; in Java it is usually called *tayub*.
Santri	The majority of Madurese Muslims and the proponents of a more orthodox Islam that is based on the global influences of Sunni Islam. In *pesantren* tradition, *santri* are pupils of *pesantren*.
Sesepuh desa	Village elders.
Sharia	Islamic law.
Silaturahmi	Good relationship.
Slametan	Religious meal feasts.
Sunna or *Sunnah*	The practice of the Prophet; it is often equated with the *hadith*.
Syuriah or *Syura*	Religious advisory board in the field of religion. Many Islamic organizations and Islamic political parties, such as the Nahdlatul Ulama, the PPP, and the PKB have this kind of institution.
Tabligh	Islamic propagation.
Tahlilan	A prayer performed on six consecutive nights to facilitate a deceased person entering paradise.
Taksi	Local public transport in Madura; in Java it is usually called *angkot*.
Tanah bengkok	Salary land.
Tandhak	Dancers in *remo*.
Tapal Kuda	The East Java Eastern Salient.
Tarekat	Muslim mystical brotherhood.
Tayub	A traditional Central and East Java performing art that is not only a recognized form of entertainment, but also an integral part of spirit shrine ritual associated with annual *bersih desa* festivity.
Tokoh desa	Important figures of the village.
Ulama	Religious leaders or Muslim scholars of Islamic discipline; this word may be used arbitrarily to refer to *kiai*.
Umat or *ummah*	Religious Islamic community.
Ziarah	Pilgrimages to graves.

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