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The Impact of Authoritarian Leadership in *Pesantren*

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Abstrak

Pesantren memiliki ciri khas kepemimpinan otoritarianisme. Sistem kepemimpinan ini menjadi model dalam organisasi pesantren, khususnya pesantren tradisional. Kiai sebagai pemimpin memiliki peran dan pengaruh yang sangat kuat terhadap aktivitas pesantren. Sedangkan santri, sebagai kaum pelajar diharuskan memiliki format ketaatan dan kepatuhan yang tinggi kepada kiai. Doktrin yang dipahami dan dianut oleh santri di pesantren adalah *Sami'na wa ata'na* (kami mendengar dan kami mematuhi). Doktrin ini sekaligus menjadi ciri khas penanaman moral atau *Akhlâk al-karîmah* kepada para santri yang belajar di pesantren tersebut. Trikotomi muslim Jawa yang dibuat oleh Clifford Geertz (Santri, Priyayi, dan Abangan) sangat membantu tulisan ini untuk memahami hubungan kiai dan santri. Begitu pula, kajian Martin van Bruinessen tentang pesantren dan kitab kuning, cukup membentuk dalam mengidentifikasi tradisi dan sumber doktrin yang dianut oleh masyarakat pesantren. Berdasarkan kedua sumber tersebut dan beberapa sumber pendukung, tulisan ini menguatkan tesis bahwa kepemimpinan otoriter yang dijalankan di pesantren merupakan dampak dari hubungan kiai dan santri yang bersifat patron-klien. Hubungan ini sangat berguna untuk menjaga kewibawaan kiai dan menanamkan pendidikan moral yang baik kepada santri.

Kata kunci: Pesantren, Kepemimpinan, Kiai, Pendidikan.

Introduction

Pesantren or *Pondok* is not only an institution of Muslim religious education, but it is also a center of Islamic culture in Indonesia. Some oppositional groups against cultural stands of it such like modernist, reformist and fundamentalist currently ‘opposite’, and to some extent develop into rigid traditions. My writing here will focus on the leadership system of *pesantren*. It mainly talks about the existence of *Kiai* as an ultimate leader in *pesantren*. Martin has described the problem with some explanation that Muhammadiyah, the major reformist organization, for instance, now has its own *Pesantren*, where besides its usual school curriculum, classical Arabic texts are also taught.¹ *First*, in the average *Pesantren*, on the other hand, there has been a shift of emphasis within the traditional corpus of texts, apparently under the influence of modernism. *Second*, the principles of jurisprudence (*uṣūl al-fiqh*) receive much more attention than before, which is based on the *Qur’ān* and *ḥadīth* as sources of Islamic law.

There is crucial personality and charismatic role in *Pesantren*. An attitude of reverent respect for and unquestioning obedience to the *kiai* is one of the first values installed in every *Santri*. This clerical attitude is extended to earlier generations of ‘*ulamā* and, posteriori, to the authors of the texts studied. It might even seem to the outside observer that this attitude is deemed more important than the acquisition of knowledge; but to the *kiai* it is an integral part of the knowledge (*‘ilm*) to be acquired. The *kiai* rarely tries to discover whether the students actually understand the texts on any but the linguistic level; elementary texts are memorized, the more advanced ones simply read from beginning to end.² (This is important for us in understanding the classical book (*kitab kuning*) in their historical and cultural context, and in looking for their contemporary relevance). Perhaps the majority of *pesantren* now operates

¹ Martin van Bruinessen, “*Pesantren* and Kitab Kuning: Maintenance and Continuation of a Tradition of Religious Learning”, in: Wolfgang Marschall (ed.), *Texts from the Islands: Oral and Written Traditions of Indonesia and the Malay World* [Ethnological Bernica, 4], (Berne: University of Berne, 1994), 121.

² *Ibid.*, 123-124.

the *madrasa* system or conventional learning system and decides the *Kiai* as single authority.

According to Azra's view, the Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) in Java represented a distinct Islamic learning tradition in Indonesia. In our society, this is an example of the fact that the *Pesantren* used Arab-Jawi (Javanese or Malay language written in Arabic characters), and this is an important language for religious studies. *Pesantren* as religious institution and Islamic education had been designed to preserve traditional Islamic learning including the use of *kitab kuning* (literally "yellow books") produced by 'ulamâ in the past. Many of the rituals practiced in *Pesantren* were often categorized as "traditional Islam." Actually, it is not surprising that *Pesantren* were preserved by traditional Islam as now represented by Nahdlatul 'ulamâ (NU) as majority society organization.³ *Pesantren* has been united to the society and become the special institution to learn about Islamic education and doctrine. As long as some centuries turned and as the influence of modern education, and also affected the *Pesantren*, which has been changed the knowledge and given many contributions to it.

In the modern era, *pesantren* is considered as an institution, which holds consistently the classical model of education. In addition, *pesantren* is a culture legacy of our nation. One of the important educations in *pesantren* is *sufism*. This education indicates that *pesantren* is not only as a knowledge transformation but also developing a good moral (*akhlâq al-karîmah*).⁴ Then, the education of *akhlâq al-karîmah* begins from the exemplary (*uswah*) of *kiai*'s attitude. The exemplary is an effective education for *santri* in *pesantren*. The attitude of *kiai* is a concrete example which is obeyed and followed by *santri*. *Pesantren* has a special culture related to *akhlâq al-karîmah*, that is we hear and we obey (*sami'nâ wa ata'nâ*).

Understanding *pesantren* and Muslim in Java, Geertz classified three levels; *priyayi*, *abangan*, and *Santri*. In addition to this, there is also a

³ Azyumardi Azra, "The Making of Islamic Studies", in *the Jakarta Post*, accessed on January 4th, 2014.

⁴ Arif Jamhari, *Rituals of Islamic Spirituality: A Study of Majelis Dhikr Groups in East Java* (Canberra, Australia: ANU Press, 2010), 23.

horizontal traditionalist/modernist dimension within Javanese Islam. Originally a *Santri* was simply a student or follower within an Islamic school called a *Pesantren* (literally, “place of the *Santri*”) headed by a *Kiai* master. It was only later that the word *Santri* was used to describe that particular class within Javanese society that identified strongly with Islam, distinct from the more nominal Islam of the *abangan* and *priyayi*. Indeed, the word *santri* used to describe a class that is probably had a lot more to do with the influence of Geertz himself on how Javanese think about themselves. In fact, in common conversation, the word *muslimin* is different to be used *santri* Javanese in society.⁵ Nevertheless, all of them cannot be irrespective from *kiai*’s role, although *kiai* leadership was seen as authoritarian in some *Pesantren*. So that, I am interesting to write about the impact of authoritarian leadership system in *Pesantren*, which contains the history of leadership system in *Pesantren*; the existence of *kiai* as leader in *Pesantren* –cultural perspective-; the relationship between *kiai* and *Santri* –social perspective-; the influence of *kiai* leadership system in *Pesantren* –structural perspective.

The History of Leadership System in *Pesantren*

The *pesantren* is an important part of the *kiai*’s life, which expands his preaching and influence through teaching. In the system of *Pesantren*, there are several interconnected elements and structures which is implemented culturally. The first is the *kiai*,⁶ the main factor who has important role and influence to the *pesantren* system. He is the person who underpins the system. Secondly, there are the *santri*,⁷ that is the students who learn Islamic knowledge from the *kiai*. This element is also of great importance, since without the *santri* the *kiai* would be like a king without subjects. It is nonetheless common that some *kiai* have neither *santri* nor *pesantren*. The third element is the *pondok*, a dormitory system

⁵ Gary Dean, “Javanese Santri Islam”, in <http://www.okusi.net/garydean/works/-Santri.html>, accessed on March 17th, 2014.

⁶ Zamakhsari Dhofier, *Tradisi Pesantren; Studi tentang Pandangan Hidup Kiai* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1982), 55.

⁷ Ibid., 51.

provided by the *kiai* to accommodate his students.⁸ According to him, the *pesantren* comprises a complex of housing, which includes the houses of the *kiai* and his family, some *pondok*, and teaching buildings, including a mosque. Dhofier described *pesantren* as an educational institution which uses traditional system of learning. There are various techniques of teaching such like *bandongan* and *sorogan*. *Bandongan* is a kind of religious instruction conducted by either the *kiai* or his senior *santri*.

According to the history, the titles of *kiai* in Javanese language means:

1. As the honor title to the sacred things like “*Kiai Garuda Kencana*” which is used to the golden cart in Yogyakarta Royal Palace (*Keraton*).
2. As the honor title to old people.
3. The honor is given by society to a leader of religious institution or to the teacher which teaches classical books to *santri*.⁹

In Java island, there is distinguish term of *kiai*. In West Java, usually they are called by *ajengan*. But, in the Central and East Java they call *kiai*. Nonetheless, the term at this time has been used to some ‘*ulamâ*’ which influences to certain community and it is not absolute to someone leads *pesantren*. If we relate to *pesantren* tradition, the term is used to ‘*ulamâ*’ and traditional Islamic community. *Kiai* has strong position in society and big influence to the people, which often make him ‘authoritarian’.

Most of people assumed that *pesantren* and *madrasa* are similar. Both of them have training system “though ritual accuracy and rote learning may be important, understanding and scholarship are never incidental; they are the most valued goal to be attained. The practical importance of this is that the *pesantren* and *madrasa* system of the Islamic world are “not merely a place of preparation for a ritual leader”, but also a place that provides the *umma* (Muslim society) with more general leadership. Since *pesantren* develops Islamic scriptural thoughts, it should be seen as a means of production of religious scholars, who may develop Islam or withstand all outside negative effects. Despite their similarities,

⁸ Ibid., 41.

⁹ Ibid., 55-56.

there are some differences between *pesantren* system in Indonesia and *madrasa* system on the other Islamic countries, especially Iran. The *madrasa* system in Iran has really been the source of Islamic strength.¹⁰ It has become a source of authority, which competed with the authority of the royal court. The *madrasa* system in Iran could be considered a kind of legislature and judiciary. The *pesantren* system, on the other hand, does not have such strong authority and position.

Around twenty years ago, the most significant event of Islamic history in Indonesia was the end of media restriction (and self-censorship) and of the controls of political parties. *Pesantren* has been influenced by political interest and seemed in the late new order period. Debate over the role of Islam in public life is a lasting element of Indonesian civic discourse. There is widespread concern that the emerging party system may lead to the type of “political identity” that contributed to the collapse of Indonesian first experiment with parliamentary democracy in the 1950s. Many observers have noted similarities between the alignment of parties’ contestation in 1955 and 1999 elections. In both cases party affiliation tends to reflect “primordial loyalties”: class, ethnicity, and religion.¹¹

In fact, there are two communities, which separate one each other; those are between the Javanese and other ethnic groups and between orthodox (*santri*) and local (*abangan*) forms of Islam in Java. The orthodox Muslim community is rent in turn by theological disputes between modernists and traditionalists and between advocates of a secular, democratic state and those who would see Indonesia become an Islamic republic. That is only pretension some people to establish Islamic law, but it is not easy to attain it and need strong struggle.

The condition makes *pesantren* is so inclusive and closed to others community. But, in reality, *pesantren* is so open to the grassroots thought as an appropriate vehicle for such efforts. That is so clear, because of *pesantren* is placed by “proletar” clan. It was, after all, an authentic and

¹⁰ Karel A. Steenbrink, *Pesantren Madrasah Sekolah; Pendidikan Islam dalam Kurun Modern* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1996), 15-20.

¹¹ Mark R. Woodward, *Islam in Java: Normative Piety and Mysticism in the Sultanate of Yogyakarta* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1989), 29.

socially rooted institution, one of the few with access to the people for whom “development from below” was intended. Independent from but not opposed to the government, the *pesantren* appeared well placed to act as the interface between state and local communities. Clifford Geertz had, gave an attention to the role of the *kiai* as a cultural broker; in the early years of the New Order it was both the government and the first large NGOs that perceived a potential role for the *pesantren* in development activities and attempted to turn (some of) the *kiai* into agents of change. In this problem, *kiai* decided the cultural characteristic of the certain community and has mission to entire Islamic values, and many works to him which relates to religious problem.

The *pesantren* take the position to the objectives of development came from the Ministry of Religious Affairs under its first New Order minister. At the government under Sukarno, the ministry had been largely controlled by the NU and all ministers were prominent NU personalities. Mukti Ali, a reform-minded professor with a degree in comparative religion from McGill University, was the first non-NU person to lead the ministry since the early 1950s.¹² The reality refers to political problems which breaking up the monopoly of the NU over the administration of religion. Unlike most other reformist Muslims, Mukti Ali had a direct acquaintance with the *pesantren* world; he had studied in the famous *pesantren* of Tremas in Pacitan. He also had quite definite opinions as to what was valuable in the *pesantren* tradition and what had to change. One of the changes he considered most urgent concerned the curriculum, which had to be made more relevant to the modern age. Most *pesantren* had in fact gradually introduced various general subjects into the curriculum, besides the core of religious teachings to deepen Islamic doctrine.

At the seventeenth-century records of the Dutch East Indies Company speak of a “priest school” near Surabaya, which may be the earliest mention of a precursor of the later *pesantren*. At the time, the oldest *pesantren* that is still in existence. Exactly, in the village of Tegalsari near Ponorogo in East Java, was established in the late eighteenth

¹² Martin van Bruinessen, *NU; Tradisi, Relasi-relasi Kuasa, Pencarian Wacana Baru* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 1994), 25.

century. A survey of indigenous education made by the Dutch authorities in the early nineteenth-century finds hardly any institutions recognizable as *pesantren*. The process of religious basic learning took place informally in the mosque or in the private house of a man who was slightly more learned than his surroundings. Some more advanced students were sent to some school in the Ponorogo region, which may well have been the *Pesantren* of Tegalsari. Java appears not yet to be dotted with *pesantren* when this survey was made, quite unlike the situation a century later.¹³ *Pesantren* was expanding in Java quickly and had many students. Besides the influence of *‘ulamâ* preach which incessant to teach Islamic doctrine.

In Indonesia, the term *madrasah* is understood as Islamic education institution to Muslim and implemented informally outside formal education. Government-supervised *madrasah* with 30 percent religious subjects and 70 percent general subjects offer diplomas that give an opening to employment as a religious teacher as well as access to state institutes of higher religious studies (IAIN) and thereby an avenue to a modern career. Many *pesantren* have adopted the *madrasa* system and have thus to some extent become part of the national education system (although not under the Ministry of Education but that of Religious Affairs). Those *pesantren* that maintained the “traditional” curriculum and methods of teaching came to be known as “salafiyah”, which may be translated as “in the way of previous generations”. Both *salafiyah pesantren* and the *salafi* movement name themselves for *al-salaf al-ṣāliḥ*, “the pious predecessors”, but for the latter these *salaf* are the first two generations of Muslims in the time of the Prophet and for the former the great *‘ulamâ* of an idealized, much more recent past. The terms of religious belief and practice represent contrary within Indonesian Islam.¹⁴

The role of *kiai* in the society is not only giving advice to servant but also as controller the attitudes of human being. This is one of responsible form a *kiai* as leader in *pesantren* and society. In one hand,

¹³ Martin van Bruinessen, “Traditionalist” and “Islamist” *Pesantren* in Contemporary Indonesia, Paper presented at the workshop 'The Madrasa in Asia, transnational linkages and alleged or real political activities', ISIM, Leiden, 24-25 May 2004, 3.

¹⁴ Ibid., 4-5.

kiai is leader and guide of all Muslim as followers. In the other hand, leadership system of *kiai* cannot received fully because of many cases refers to *kiai* leads in *pesantren* with authoritarian. Of course, this act is not comfortable with Islamic values. The authoritarian leadership can be seen in classical (*salaf*) *pesantren*, although not all *salaf pesantren* has similar system. Besides, egalitarian system has been applied in modern (*kehalaf*) *Pesantren*, which has differences with *salaf pesantren*. So that, we cannot see the position of *kiai* at one side but need to see from another side, means objectively. Really, the position of *kiai* still as something sacred to rural society structure, perhaps different with citizen structure. Commonly, citizens assume the position of *kiai* is normal position, and there is no special position to them.

***Kiai* as Pesantren Leader**

The important contribution of *kiai* in *pesantren* may have shown little sympathy for efforts to empower oppressed groups, but that is not the entire story. *Kiai* has many characteristics who successfully combine their role of religious authorities and ritual specialists with pastoral functions of a type that previously did not exist and who deliberately act as an agents of change. Most of people call these men *kiai rakyat* who has works to teach the people and leads the community. The *kiai* usually do not belong to the great and famous '*ulamâ* families of the large *pesantren*; their influence does not spread far beyond their own districts. They are often very inventive to mobilize people and stimulate active participation in self-help programs. In the other cases, *kiai* has another title as somewhat eccentric (*nyeleneh* in Javanese) or even rebellious (*mbalelo*) with respect to the *pesantren* tradition, but it has always been the privilege of the *kiai* to deviate from social norms.¹⁵ The fact is the *kiai* is not only are teachers of Islamic scripture (sometimes we call them by *ustadz*) but officiate in the village rituals of Javanese Islam, such as the *slametan*, *selapanan*, *tahlilan*, *khaul*, and *pengajian*. Those cases perhaps we

¹⁵ Martin van Bruinessen and Farid Wajdi, "*Syū'ūn Ijtimā'yyah* and the *Kiai Rakyat*: Traditionalist Islam, Civil Society and Social Concerns", in http://www.let.uu.nl/~martin.vanbruinessen/personal/publications/Bruinessen_Wajidi_Traditionalist_Islam_and_civil_society.pdf. Accessed on April 21st, 2014.

shall find in Java society and part of the others Java Island which still do the ritual.

In the village, we are still finding the ritual *tahlil*, to pray someone passed away from their neighbors and friends. This ritual is implemented by visiting the house of the deceased in the evenings of the first seven days, and again on the fortieth day, for *tahlil*, the recitation of the formula “there is no god but God” (*lā ilāh illā Allāh*). There is usually no formal sermon, and anyone can lead the *tahlil*, but the presence of a *kiai* definitely lends splendor to the meeting and guarantees a large attendance. The same is true of other life cycle rituals, whether accompanied by a full-blown *selamatan* or not. The *selapanan*, celebrated after the thirty-fifth day in the life of a newborn child, is the first of the major public life-cycle rituals. The *haul* is the commemoration of the death of a saintly person, which often is the occasion for thousands or tens of thousands of villagers to gather, visit the grave and ask for blessings, recite prayer formulas and listen to well-known preachers. The *pengajian* or religious sermon is a major form of entertainment in Muslim villages, taking place at set intervals.¹⁶ Those rituals are social intercourse between Islamic values and Javanese values, which is influenced by ancestry culture.

Describing the cases above, Martin gave several example; a reputation as *Kiai rakyat* is *Kiai Mahfuzh Ridwan*, who leads the small *pesantren* Edi Mancoro in Gedangan near Salatiga (Central Java). He (read: *Kiai Mahfuzh*) gave statements are based on his study in the Middle East – he returned from Baghdad in 1977 – but he soon shocked his colleagues by proposing a radically different implementation of the *zakat*, the Islamic „alms tax“. In Salatiga, as in most other places in Java, he governed for people to pay their *zakat* to the *kiai*, who would then redistribute it according at their own discretion. In the other place, *Kiai Mahfuzh* proposed that the contribution of *zakat* to alleviating the plight of the poor should be made more transparent, and he established a small independent committee for collecting *zakat* and redistributing it in kind to the poor. This caused angry responses from other *kiai*, for it

¹⁶ Ibid.

constituted a departure from established practice and from the respected textbooks on Islamic obligations on at least two counts.¹⁷ The precept of *kiai* for the people is a giving spiritual advises which contain Islamic values, and more than that to do really in the society.

In Indonesia, there is some leadership system in *pesantren*, which has certain characteristic. Many of them still refer to classical leadership system that is authoritarian leadership system. That means the existence of *kiai* as leader in *pesantren* has the strong position. I will give the evidence and example which connected the problem, exactly about the leadership and leadership achievement in many *pesantren*.

Leadership Style

Leadership style is the art to use all of efforts (fund, facility, and energy) in *pesantren* to attain *pesantren* vision. The most manifestation in an art is move and instruction way of the *pesantren* subject path to do something as leader instructed to attain the *pesantren* vision. The existence of leader is not about each individual in *pesantren*, and the leader of work unit in *pesantren* structure, but about *Kiai* as the spiritual leader in *pesantren*.¹⁸ Clearly, some example, are:

a. *Pesantren* of Guluk-Guluk

This *Pesantren* is located at Madura, where *kiai* is highly regarded by the majority of society. The relationship between leader and members or *kiai* and *santri* (student), *ustadz* (teacher), functionaries as such one family. The work relationship in Guluk-guluk *Pesantren* is based on three principles; those are *ikhlas* (sincere), *berkah* (blessing), and *ibadah* (pray). The *pesantren* has the leadership characteristic paternalistic and free rein leadership (*laisser faire*), where the leader is passive as such father gave as widespread as possible opportunity to his children to develop their ability. Actually, this is authoritarian style too, because of the father decides final decision.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Mastuhu, *Dinamika Sistem Pendidikan Pesantren; Suatu Kajian tentang Unsur dan Nilai Sistem Pendidikan Pesantren* (Jakarta: INIS, 1994), 79-80.

b. *Pesantren* of Sukorejo

This *pesantren* has single authority, which is handed by KH.R. As'ad Syamsul Arifin as leader in the *pesantren*. According to the people, he has *karamah*, is mysterious power is given by God to certain or chosen people. This leadership system in *pesantren* of Sukorejo is *karismatik* (spiritual leader), and *otoriter-paternalistik* (authoritarian-paternalistic). The work classification in *pesantren* of Sukorejo is more clear and formal compared by *pesantren* of Guluk-Guluk. All of the function and functionaries is in *Kiai* As'ad control.

c. *Pesantren* of Blok Agung

This is similar leadership system with *Pesantren* of Sukorejo. *Pesantren* of Blok Agung is led by KH. Muchtar Syafaat as single leader. His leadership characteristic is charismatic, which make the others are so regard to him. He emphasizes *tasawuf* doctrine to all of elements in *pesantren*. So, special characteristic of the *pesantren* is *tasawuf* and *tarekat* doctrine, which he prohibits his student to do *puasa sunnah* (optional fast) when they were studying, it is one of example its doctrine. The mentions, leadership system of *pesantren* of Blok Agung is *paternalistik* (paternalistic), *otoriter* (authoritarian), and *laissez faire* or free.

d. *Pesantren* of Tebuireng

This *Pesantren* is one of the oldest *Pesantren* in Indonesia, which is created by KH. Hasyim Asy'ari or "*Kiai* Tebu Ireng". In the past time, the existence of *Kiai* is so exclusive and *Santri* must be not only regard to him but also obedient to all of his instructions and advises. Different with this time, the *pesantren* of Tebu Ireng is led by KH. Yoesoef Hasyim as one of *Kiai* Hasyim's generation. The existence of *kiai* is more inclusive, it means *kiai* can copulation and discuss together with *santri*. He has many experiences in military and politic aspects, which changes *kiai* leadership system commonly. His leadership style is diplomatic leadership and mixed with participative leadership. This style tries to approach its ember persuasively with bargains some ideas to the others (*a sell type leader*, but when is in pressed condition uses autocratic style).

e. *Pesantren* of Paciran

This *Pesantren* is led by KH. Abdurrachman Syamsoeri as the creator of *pesantren*. The structure of *pesantren* of Paciran refers to “keperguruan” (formal education system) characteristic, not “ke-*Pesantren-an*” (non-formal education system) characteristic. Most of the education activities are formal education as such in Muhammadiyah institution. The relationship between *kyai* and *santri* is good; it means all of *santri* need *pesantren* aid to develop their education. His leadership characteristic is combination among authoritarian, paternalistic, and bureaucratic.

f. *Pesantren* of Gontor

Most of the people call it “modern *pesantren*”, which uses organization structure “trimurti” (three leaders in *pesantren*) form. Their existence and authority are so strong inside or outside *pesantren*. The relationship among *kyai*, *ustadz*, *Santri* and the others is so good. In addition, their network is not limited by in state, but until abroad. Style leadership of this *pesantren* is combination among paternalistic, bureaucratic, and diplomatic. Then, this style seen as like religious charismatic style.¹⁹

Based on the abovementioned facts, we can conclude several points as follows:

- 1) The type of *pesantren* leadership is *religious charismatic*; hereafter we call it as charismatic, which is different from *scientific charismatic*, or *rational leadership*.
- 2) The main point, the style of *pesantren* leadership is a combination of *charismatic*, *authoritarian-paternalistic*, and *laissez-Faire*.
- 3) There is gradual difference between the style of *pesantren* leadership to the others, and arise change preference as like:
 - a) From *charismatic* style to *rational* type.
 - b) From *authoritarian-paternalistic* to *diplomatic-participative*.

¹⁹ Ibid., 80-86.

c) From *laisser-Faire* to *bureaucratic*.

In fact, the styles of *pesantren* leaderships are not refers to new change yet. Most of the styles are still use classical system, only change from *laisser-Faire* to *bureaucratic*, which refers to shifting paradigm in *pesantren* leadership system. Then, I think, it is so clear that most of the *pesantren* still implement authoritarian leadership system. But, it is not about good or bad, black or whites a system. It is only part of many characteristics implemented in *pesantren*.

Leadership Achievement

The continuity of *pesantren* leadership change, special for *pesantren* of individual ownership is *founder-son-son in law-grandchild-senior santri*. The first inheritor is son, which is senior and assumed comfortable by *kiai* and most of the people to become *kiai*, not only cause of his knowledge but also his religious experience. Then, if this condition is impossible, so the next generation is son in law as second inheritor. The third inheritor is grandchild, which is seen from genealogy of *Kiai's* family. If the condition is still not possibility to choose one of them, so the next choice is senior *santri*. Usually, *santri* more get the will to establish *pesantren* its self, and this condition make the *pesantren* will be end. In fact, the condition is not only in *pesantren* of individual ownership, but also in *pesantren* of institution ownership, for example; *pesantren* of Gontor, which has two of three the original genealogy in “trimurti” structure. Causes of the condition are; (a) the distance between the period of first generation and second generation was so near, so the influence of founder still influential to the leadership now; (b) besides, education factor also influence to the leadership change.²⁰ This is real; cause of one of them got the education level up to “Master of Art” level in abroad.

If we see the case in Jombang, where the *kiai* political influence is attributable to the general change in the socio-political situation among Jombang population. When the *kiai's* contributes in the political problems, he expressed by their support of various political

²⁰ Ibid., 88-89.

organizations and the disassociation of Islam from politics is the decisive factor which has contributed to its condition. The most charismatic *kiais* in Jombang are Kiai Hasyim Asy'ari, Kiai Wahab Chasbullah and Kiai Bisri Syansuri, which not only contributed to the unity of the *kiai* as a group but was also influential on the electoral behavior of all Muslims in Jombang.²¹ All of the people in present day Jombang rely on his own local *kiai*, and they will follow his own common sense rather than following the *kiai*. Many surveys refer to four districts of Jombang shows that no *kiai* is known well by all respondents. In addition, not all respondents could name five *kiai*. Some mentioned only four, and a few respondents only mentioned three. The survey respondents revealed only eight *kiai* who were widely known, being mentioned by more than ten respondents across at least three villages.

Seeing the existence of *kiai* in Jombang, based on the society's view; *first*, there is an exception to the general tendency that a *kiai* is especially well known to Muslim society in his own village or district. This exception is Kiai Rifai, who was the only one of the eight *kiai* well known to more respondents in other villages than in his own village. Secondly, some NU top figures were less mentioned in certain villages, and in many respects were even not mentioned at all. Kiai Sholeh is a senior *kiai* among NU *kiai* in Jombang, but he was only mentioned by one respondent. Kiai Sulthon, as the President of NU in Jombang, for example, was only mentioned by some people from three villages. Holding a formal position in NU therefore does not guarantee that a *kiai* will be known to all Muslims. The same happens in the *tarekat*. The majority of the *kiai* are only well known to Muslims in their own district. Although the lack of a very charismatic *kiai* has contributed to the decline in the *kiais* political influence on inducing Muslims' political action, the *kiai* as an institution is still generally regarded as important. Actually, the pattern of the *kiai* relationship with his society remains strong. The, the role of *kiai* to the process of modernization introduces secular values and produces anxiety in regard to Muslim religious lives. Furthermore, as Muslims still base their actions on the Qur'anic norms, and since the *kiai* is the person who best understands the Qur'an. *kiai*

²¹ Ibid., 112-114.

leadership hence continues to be expected by Indonesian Muslims.²² The existence of *kiai* in this problem, at least to aware the people in their religious live with emphasizing religious values in society plurality. Nevertheless, at this time is not little of *kiai* turn to political matters and take the position in our government, while they still consist on their intellectuality and teach to *santri* in the *pesantren*.

The Relationship Between *Kiai* and *Santri* in *Pesantren*

Pesantren has two main actors, namely *kiai* and *santri*. Both are the important subject in teaching and learning at *pesantren*.²³ Their relationship are patron-client or relationships between superiors and subordinates. The term of *kiai* is usually given to someone who has Islamic knowledge, has *pesantren* and *santri* to learn about classical books. So, *santri* is the important element in *pesantren* institution. According to *pesantren* tradition, there are two of *santri* group:

1. *Santri mukim*, is the students came from any regions and live in the *pesantren*. Some students who live in there more early (senior *santri*), usually make the certain group and have responsibilities to take care of the *pesantren*. Besides, they also have responsible to teach new *santri* or younger than them about the basic, and middle *kitab*.
2. *Santri kalong*, is the students came from around *pesantren*, but do not live in the *pesantren*. In studying, they go and back of their home, which is near from the *pesantren*. The quantity of *pesantren* can be identified by composition both of them (*santri mukim* and *santri kalong*). A big *pesantren* has more *santri mukim* than *santri kalong*. Contrary, a little *pesantren* has more *santri kalong* than *santri mukim*.²⁴

There are some reasons why *santri* choose to live in the *pesantren*, as such below:

²² Ibid., 114-115.

²³ A.G. Muhaimin, *The Islamic Traditions of Cirebon: Ibadat and Adat Among Javanese Muslims* (Canberra: ANU Press, 2006), 203.

²⁴ Zamakhsari Dhofier, *Tradisi Pesantren*, 51-52.

1. They want to learn classical books under the guidance of *Kiai*, who leads the *pesantren*.
2. They want to get live experience in the *pesantren*, not only about teaching and organization, but also about the relationship with the famous *pesantren*.
3. They will focus on their study without the others work in their home. Besides, they reject a will to go home intensively.²⁵

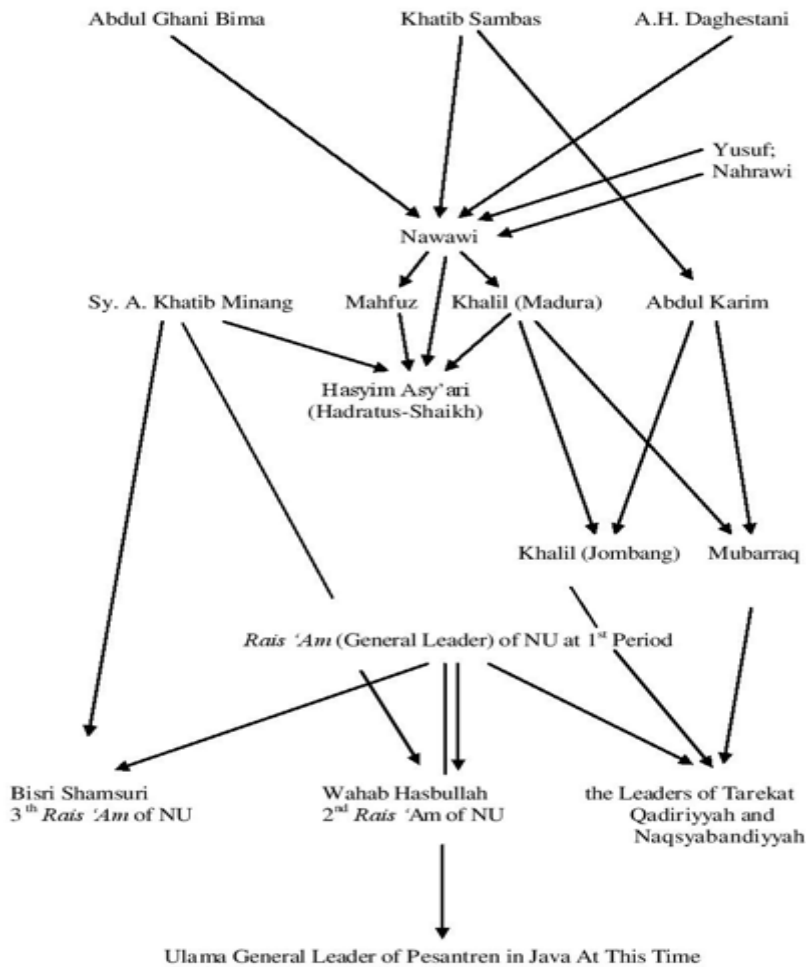
Any reasons above refer to one of characteristic of *santri* in the *pesantren*. In this problem, *santri mukim* has big opportunity to develop their Islamic knowledge and expand their knowledge to the society in their village. It is often, some of *santri* are recommended by *kiai* to teach in the certain *pesantren* as credibility form to them. As such a structural relationship, both of *kiai* and *santri* have strong emotional relationship, cause of they need each other. In our society, *santri* is positioned as henchman of *kiai* to expand Islamic doctrine and values to the people.

In *pesantren* tradition, as well as we know a *pesantren* is usually lead by a *kiai* and assisted by a number of his senior *santri* or other family members which has kinship relationship. Most of *kiai* concentrate to the *pesantren* and becoming *pesantren* as is an important part of his life. In the *pesantren* system, there are several interconnected elements. The first is the *kiai*, the main factor through whom the *pesantren* system is established. Secondly, there are the *santri* that is the students who learn Islamic knowledge from the *kiai*. The *kiai* has authority to dispose his *santri* without resistance to him. According to Dhofier, the *pesantren* usually uses a traditional system of learning. There are various techniques of teaching, but the most commonly used are *bandongan* and *sorogan*. *Bandongan* is a kind of religious instruction conducted by either the *Kiai* or his senior *santri*. It is like a lecture attended by a large number of *santri*.²⁶ *Santri* can choose both of them and many *kitab* (books) which is learned by them (*santri*). The system in this sense is just to provide the *santri* with regular daily learning, under the control of *kiai* or senior *Santrs*. Most of *kitab* is written by using Arabic language.

²⁵ Ibid., 52.

²⁶ Ibid., 50.

Picture 1
The Intellectual Genealogy of the Most Influential *Kiais* in Java³⁰



As explaining above, the *pesantren* has two learning types; those are *bandongan* and *sorogan* system to read *kitab*. The *bandongan* system differs from the *sorogan* system. If in the *bandongan*, *santri* knowledge of grammar and Arabic language is assumed, the sessions are held for those who have already attained a basic understanding of the Arabic language and the Qur'an. But *sorogan* system is provided either for beginner *santri* or those who want to have more explanation of the problems discussed

in the *kitab*. The *sorogan* session is usually attended by only two to five *santri*, and is provided by any senior *Santri* who has knowledge and ability in certain subjects. This system aims to give special training to *santri* to assist them to develop certain knowledge and skills. In Indonesia, the *pesantren* still plays its role as an education center, but it has combine with modern education.²⁷ If we see from social view, the *pesantren* has played an important role in the spread of Islam in Indonesia. The *pesantren* teach the core of Islamic belief, norms and values are transmitted and inculcated through teaching to *santri*. The *pesantren* is but one example of the traditional schools of Islam in our country.

In addition, there is another learning system in *pesantren* that is *madrasa*. It literally means school. However, the *madrasa* system in Indonesia is rather different from that in other Islamic countries, but the main concept from *pesantren* system. The student of a *madrasa* needs to pass in one grade to ascend to a higher grade in the same way as in a public school, and usually learn Islamic subjects, but the modernized *madrasa* system provides the student with a variety of material on Islam. The *pesantren* system, on the other hand, specializes in Islamic teaching and has no time limitation. However, it should also be realized that the present *madrasa* system is not designed to produce *'ulamâ*. In the *pesantren* and *madrasa* training system "though ritual accuracy and rote learning may be important, understanding and scholarship are never incidental; they are the most valued goal to be attained".²⁸ The *pesantren* has not only created village religious elites but also national political elites and articulate Muslim interests in their ideal world by the ideal concepts in Islam. The values have to do it in order to *santri* can understand and implement Islamic values in the society.

In basis of the problem above, there are some differences between the *pesantren* system in Indonesia and the *madrasa* system in other Islamic countries, especially Iran. On one hand, the *madrasa* system in Iran has really been the source of Islamic strength, which competed by the authority of the royal court. The *madrasa* system in Iran could thus be

²⁷ Ibid., 51.

²⁸ See, *Kiai and the Pesantren*: http://epress.anu.edu.au/islamic/umma/mobile_devices/bi01.html/accessed on July 21st, 2014.

considered a kind of legislature and judiciary. On the other hand, the *pesantren* system does not have such strong authority and position, which Islamic learning is developed and Islamic belief and norms are maintained. The *pesantren* is influenced by around environment of society and development of Islamic thought in Indonesia, in Iran does. Nevertheless, we should not ignore the fact that the *kiai* as individuals often have some concerns in regard to the problems of Muslim society in general; and a few of them have expressed their thoughts on Islam by writing books or papers.²⁹ According to the others argument, the *pesantren* needs to be mentioned is the practice of *tarekat* (sufi orders). This is one of sect that extents in the certain *pesantren*. The doctrine emphasizes the exercise of *bât}in*, transcendence of Islamic doctrine.

The Influence of *Kiai* Leadership

In understanding social relations between the *kiai* and his community in the society, we should know the general picture of social and interpersonal relationships among Javanese. The fact argued that Javanese society acknowledges differences between individuals in their social status and that this has become the norm that governs social relations among Javanese, regionally.³⁰ As personality form, *kiai* has rights to express his freedom or thought anywhere. Whereas, its social forms, *kiai* need to adaptation with the others people that have many identity and characteristic. Our society see social status is based on by age, wealth and occupation, so that the elder's view will take the certain position and many attentions, for example, in deciding decision that relate to social problems, elder's view will become main decision to decisive consensus than younger's view.

The condition of social status in Java is typified by the operation of such norms of differentiation. Social norms Javanese is socialized into such norms at an early age and in rural areas where most people know

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Patrick Guinness, *Harmony and Hierarchy in a Javanese Kampung* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1986); Irwan Abdullah, *Konstruksi dan Reproduksi Kebudayaan* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2007), 146-150.

and regard each other. In addition, social norms contain ethics, and humanity values, which develop in our society, become social awareness. If we give attention accurately, this culture of social difference among Javanese is perpetuated and institutionalized by the social control. In this problem, I will an example, in Javanese culture as well as we know that the behavior of *unggab-unggub* or regard the people each other as representation of social values. When we articulate it, we will find the mention is part of social ethics in Javanese social construct. This is special ethic which has regional characteristic and has certain values. Besides, there are the others regional characteristic which contain unity values.

In Javanese, *kiai* villages have big influence and receive high respect from society. *kiai*, who usually run a *pesantren*, have a more respected position as a leading figure in society. The *kiai* have therefore long been powerful elite. Two main factors have contributed to the *kiai*'s powerful position. First, the *kiai* is a knowledgeable person from whom villagers learn Islamic knowledge. In fact, his followers who are always attend his *pengajian* or lectures, and his *santri*, who stay at *pondok* around his house. Secondly, it is common for a *kiai* to come from a well-to-do family. Even though it is not rare to find a *kiai* who was a poor '*ulamâ* at the time he commenced teaching Islam, as evidenced by the small size of his first *pesantren* building. These two factors have led to the *kiai* being seen as an elite figure in a Javanese village. In addition, he strengthens his relationship with his *santri* by allowing some of them, who come from poor families, to work on his land.³¹

The pattern of relationship between the *kiai* and villagers is not based on egalitarianism, but receives of respect from the latter. This condition is conceptualized by Javanese culture, but also because he is a leader who has a wide network in Java Island. In running *pesantren*, the *kiai* will automatically get support from people from the surrounding villages. The position of the *kiai* are also involved in politics in a more general sense at a higher level, their position in the eyes of society goes

³¹ James J. Fox and Pradjarta Dirjosanjoto, "The Memories of Village Santri from Jombang in East Java", in May, R.J. and O'Mallay, William J. (ed.) *Observing Change in Asia*. (Bathurst: Crawford House Press, 1989), 45.

unchallenged. Furthermore, it is important to add that a *kiai* is often endowed with an ability which is unusual to ordinary Muslims. The extraordinary ability is commonly found in individual *kiai* even before they commence their *kiaiship*. Actually, it is often evident when they are very young and still learning Islam at certain *pesantren*, and a *kiai* candidate often has what is called *‘ilm ladunî*, that is knowledge acquired without learning. Most of the people believe in the *‘ilm ladunî* context, which may be given only for certain person who is chosen by God as an Islamic leader to lead servant or his followers in this world.

According to Bruinessen, the relationship between the *kiai* and society is similar to that between *‘ulamâ* or saints in other societies of the Islamic world in fact, Muslims share concepts and religious experiences which have created the same style of leadership in *pesantren* practically. Islam emphasizes the importance of knowledge, which should be pursued by all Muslim and the *kiai*’s respected position basically derives from the fact that in the Quran and hadith or the tradition of the Prophet, it is always stressed that seeking for knowledge is a necessary part of Muslim life.³² The possession of scientific curiosity has become part of Muslim duty, and those who succeed in obtaining such needed knowledge will be appreciated by society. *‘Ulamâ*’s perspective has given rise to the creation of a culture and as a subject to change culture which is developing in our society.

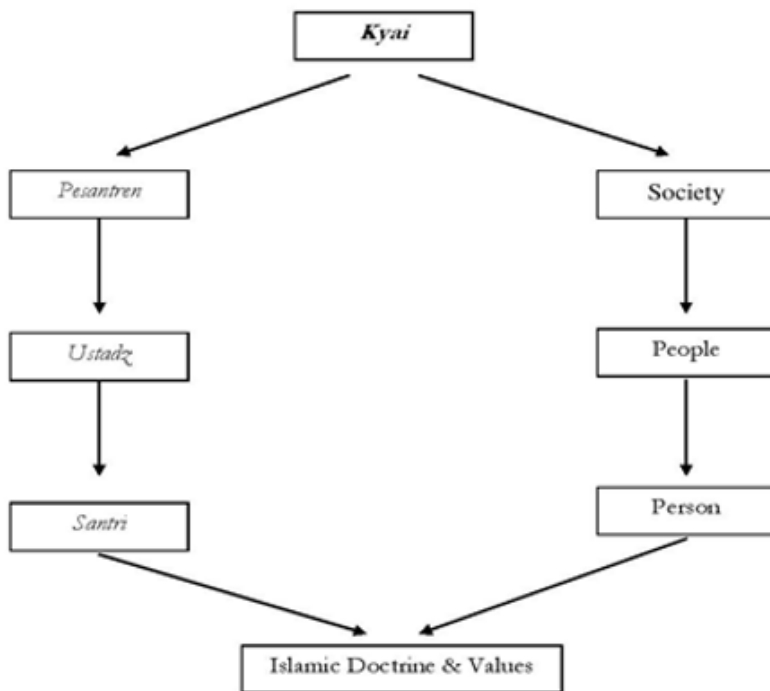
Describing the relationship between the *kiai* and his community (the *umma*), I agree with Horikoshi’s argument that both of them bound by religious emotion which makes his legitimate power more influential. *Kiai* has the charisma which surrounds the actions also imbues the relationship with emotion and has become the avenue through which people in villages solve their problems. Really, they are not just those confined to spiritual but also to wider aspects of their lives, people also endorse the *Kiai* as their leader.³³ His role reinforces his existence in *pesantren* and performing such the others role important role “...tends

³² Martin van Bruinessen, *Tarekat Naqsyabandiyah di Indonesia* (Bandung: Mizan, 1992), 246– 249.

³³ H. Horikoshi, *A Traditional Leader in a Time of Change: The Kiai and Ulama in West Java*, (Dissertation—University of Illinois, 1976), 67.

almost inevitably to lead to his being regarded not merely as a mediator of law and doctrine (of Islam), but of holy power itself'.³⁴ By his role, the *kiai* in a Javanese village has a very strong influence on society and plays a crucial role in inducing social and even political actions. But his important position and role are not confined to the village level, which can be seen through the NU, especially when it was a political organization comprising a variety of members, including intellectuals and politicians. The position of the *kiai* was evidenced by his having the highest prestige and influence compared to the professional politician in

Picture 2
The Work Pattern of *Kyai* in Pesantren and Society



³⁴ Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1960), 238.

certain times.³⁵

The interesting case in North refers to note from the *sufi* leadership as well as *'ulamâ* is the fact that the relationship between the leader and his society is cemented by close emotional ties. Gellner argued that the relationship between the *'ulamâ* and his society derives from the society's perception that the former leadership is the real leadership, and that the *'ulamâ* is the expert who can understand and explain the precepts of the Qur'an. In North Africa, the existence of *'ulamâ* who have a genealogical linkage with the Prophet Muhammad and they are given homage as leader in society to teach religious doctrine and to conduct the *umma* in virtue ways.³⁶ This is conception which encourages Muslims in Jombang to accord high respect to the *kiai* and to submit to his leadership in *pesantren* and society. The *kiai* with certain symbolic give a certain image in our society and convince to the people that he has *baraka*, which can help their life.

Discussing the existence of *'ulamâ* in Islamic countries and the *kiai* in Java receive high respect from society and occupy powerful positions. Proving the problem, in certain regions, like Madura, society's acceptance is based on genealogy, which means that a *kiai* should come from a *kiai* family and closed to the others family.³⁷ It is commonly suggested that the *kiai's* position depend on the continued recognition of society and nearness to the people. The concepts of *'ulamâship* and *kiaiship* are not merely inherited but also need to be achieved and is important to acknowledge that *'ulamâship* and the social relationship. The condition is also related to the existing situation when Islam was introduced to those regions and coming of a religion into a society not only results in changes in the belief system of that society. So that, the influence of *kiai* in *pesantren* and society has an important role to develop its institution and the social interaction in society.

³⁵ Allan A. Samson, "Conception of Politics, Power, and Ideology in Contemporary Indonesian Islam", in Karl D Jackson and Pye, Lucian (ed.) *Political Power and Communication in Indonesia*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 201.

³⁶ Ernest Gellner, *Saints of the Atlas* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969), 34.

³⁷ I. Arifin Mansurnoor, *Islam in an Indonesian World: Ulama of Madura* (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1990), 89.

Conclusion

Based on explaining above, I concluded that the important contribution of *kiai* in *pesantren* may have shown little sympathy for efforts to empower oppressed groups, but that is not the entire story. *Kiai* has many characteristics who successfully combine their role of religious authorities and ritual specialists with pastoral functions of a type that previously did not exist and who deliberately act as agents of change. Most of people call these men *kiai rakyat* who has works to teach the people and leads the community. The *kiai* usually do not belong to the great and famous *'ulamâ* families of the large *pesantren*; their influence does not spread far beyond their own districts. In the other cases, *kiai* has another title as somewhat eccentric (*nyeleneb* in Javanese) or even rebellious (*mbalelo*) with respect to the *pesantren* tradition, but it has always been the privilege of the *kiai* to deviate from social norms. The fact is the *kiai* is not only are teachers of Islamic scripture (sometimes we call them by *ustadz*) but officiate in the village rituals of Javanese Islam, such as the *slametan*, *selapangan*, *tahlilan*, *kehaul*, and *pengajian*.

Understanding the relationship between *kiai* and *santri* in the *pesantren*, we will find the fact that most *pesantren* provide housing or dormitory living at low or no cost for the students (*santri*). Actually, students attend formal school like any other students outside of *pesantren*, and in late afternoon and evening they have to attend religious ritual followed by religious studies and group studies to complete their homework. At the whole day, *santri* has many works and learn fully. In *pesantren* tradition, as well as we know a *pesantren* is usually lead by a *kiai* and assisted by a number of his senior *santri* or other family members which has kinship relationship. Most of *kiai* concentrate to the *pesantren* and becoming *pesantren* as is an important part of his life. There are two elements that have role in the *pesantren*; the first is the *kiai*, the main factor through whom the *pesantren* system is established. Secondly, there are the *santri* that is the students who learn Islamic knowledge from the *kiai*.

In addition, the influence of *kiai* in the *pesantren* and society, we should know the general picture of social and interpersonal relationships among Javanese. The fact argued that Javanese society acknowledges

differences between individuals in their social status and that this has become the norm that governs social relations among Javanese, regionally. The condition of social status in Java is typified by the operation of such norms of differentiation. Social norms Javanese is socialized into such norms at an early age and in rural areas where most people know and regard each other. In addition, social norms contain ethics, and humanity values, which develop in our society, become social awareness. If we give attention accurately, this culture of social difference among Javanese is perpetuated and institutionalized by the social control.

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