LOCALIZING ISLAMIC ORTHODOXY IN NORTHERN COASTAL JAVA
IN THE LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURIES:
A STUDY OF PEGON ISLAMIC TEXTS

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI‘I IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN
HISTORY

AUGUST 2011

By
Saiful Umam

Dissertation Committee:
Leonard Andaya, Chairperson
Jerry Bentley
Liam Kelley
Barbara Watson Andaya
Michael Aung-Thwin
Acknowledgement

There have been many individuals and institutions that have made this dissertation possible, and I would like to thank all of them for their help and patience. My special thanks go first to my advisor, Prof. Leonard Andaya, who has tirelessly directed my study and supervised the research and writing of this dissertation. His critical questions have helped me sharpen this work. My gratitude is also due to Prof. Barbara Andaya who showed such care in guiding me through academic and non-academic difficulties throughout the course of this study. To Prof. Liam Kelley I owe my thanks for introducing me to various approaches that greatly facilitated my research and thinking about this subject. I would also like to express my gratitude to my other committee members, Prof. Jerry Bentley and Prof. Michael Aung-Thwin, who helped me position this subject within a wider context of both Southeast Asian and world history.

I am deeply grateful to all my other professors at the University of Hawaii with whom I have worked during the course of my PhD program. They are Prof. Matthew Lauzon, Prof. Vina Lanzona, and Prof. Nancy Cooper. They have provided significant assistance in widening my understanding on a variety of subjects. A Southeast Asian librarian, Rohayati Paseng, has been tremendously helpful in locating sources that proved so valuable during my course of study and especially for this dissertation. Outside the UH Manoa, I would like to thank Prof. Merle Ricklefs and Prof. Michael Laffan who have offered some stimulating suggestions and insights on this subject. Prof. Ian Proudfoot has also been very kind in clarifying the odd question on several issues that arose during the course of writing this work. For this, I am very grateful to him.
There are a number of individuals in Indonesia to whom my thanks is also due. Prof. Azyumardi Azra and Prof. Komaruddin Hidayat are among those to whom I am most indebted. As the former and current rectors of the State Islamic University (UIN) Syarif Hidayatullah, respectively, both have not only generously allowed me freedom from my duties at the UIN but have also fully supported my study. Prof. Bahtiar Effendy, Prof. Ryass Rasyid, Dr. Jamhari, Dr. Jajat Burhanuddin and Marwan Ja’far have been very helpful during the entire course of my study, and to them I would like to express my deep appreciation. To my colleagues at the Center for the Study of Islam and Society (PPIM) for their inputs, suggestion and criticism on the subject I am studying, my heartfelt thanks.

During my research, I was indebted to many. Among them are Ali Kholil (grandson of Kiyai Salih Darat), Agus Tiyanto (son-in-law of Ali Kholil), and Dr. Ghazali Munir, who assisted me in obtaining copies of some of Salih’s Pegon texts which are no longer in circulation. K.H.M.A. Sahal Mahfudh, K.H. Ma’mun and K.H. Sanusi, Prof. Abdurrahman Mas’ud, Dr. Said Aqil Siraj, Dr. Titik Pudjiastuti, and Ulil Abshar Abdalla have generously shared information about Pegon Islamic texts. Librarians of the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia and of the Faculty of Humanities the University of Indonesia (UI), especially those in the rare printed materials and the manuscript collection, have also assisted me in consulting some collections.

Financial support from several institutions was so crucial in enabling me to complete this study, and to them I express my thanks. First, the American Indonesian Exchange Foundation (Aminef) and International Institute of Education (IIE), which was the source of Fulbright Fellowship that made it possible for me to focus on coursework.
without being burdened with additional jobs. The PPIM, the UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, and the Directorate of Islamic Higher Education of the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MORA), the Republic of Indonesia, provided me partial funds for conducting research in Indonesia. Finally, the Woodrow Wilson Foundation through the Charlotte W. Newcombe Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship and The Directorate General of Higher Education, the Ministry of National Education (MONE), the Republic of Indonesia, were generous in their financial support throughout the long process of writing this dissertation.

I am very indebted to my late parents, Munawar and Saidah, for their guidance and support while they were alive. Although they were not highly educated (my mother was even illiterate), they always insisted on the importance of pursuing the highest level of education and respected honesty and hard work. It is unfortunate that they will never see this achievement, but their memories are always with me. I am also grateful to my siblings, Muzakiyah and Hasyim Asy’ari, for their support in the pursuit of my career.

Finally, I owe the greatest gratitude to my wife, Zubaidah, and my children, Virdi and Virda. They are the truly priceless wealth in my life, and I have been blessed with their unconditional support and understanding in this long journey. They always bring light to brighten my heart and their smiles and hugs have been a source of strength in facing the hardships of life. This dissertation is dedicated to them with the hope that in the future the children will benefit from this experience and will achieve their highest goals.

Having acknowledged the support from all individuals and institutions, I am the sole bearer of responsibility for any shortcoming or errors in this work.
ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the localization of Islam in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the northern coastal areas of Java, Indonesia. It focuses on a unique type of Islamic texts, *Kitab Pegon*, which are books on Islam in the Javanese language using Arabic script. Written by local *ulama* (religious scholars), Pegon books discuss various branches of Islamic knowledge. Their intended audience is commoners, and therefore they were composed in the vernacular language employing the lower stratified Javanese, *ngoko*. An assessment on this type of sources reveals that despite their adoption of local cultures and ideas, their contents conformed to Sunni orthodox teachings.

Muhammad Salih Darat (1820-1903 CE) paved the way for the popularity of Pegon Islamic texts in Java. Differentiating between the universality of Islam and locality of Arabic, Salih defended the authority of Pegon books and argued that they provided no less significant role than Arabic ones in advancing Islamic knowledge among Muslims. Based on this argument, Salih employed Javanese terms and concepts for explaining Islamic tenets in order to make them more intelligible among commoners. This practice has been followed by many Javanese ulama in the twentieth century.

The introduction of Pegon Islamic texts and their availability in great quantity due to the adoption of print technology have contributed significantly to the increasing Islamic orthodoxy among the Javanese people. Having learned to read the Qur’an at an early age, the Javanese were usually familiar with the Arabic script, which greatly facilitated their ability to read Pegon texts. The Pegon texts also proved useful for local
ulama who continue to teach Islamic knowledge to ordinary adults at prayer houses and mosques.

Contrary to the widely-held belief that Javanese Islam was syncretic and heavily influenced by pre-Islamic ideas, this dissertation argues that orthodox ideas had been present since the sixteenth century and became increasingly prominent since the nineteenth century as a result of the publication of Islamic texts in Pegon. This dissertation hopefully contributes to debates on the localization of world religions, by providing a case study in which orthodoxy was clearly maintained within a process of localization.
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A Note on Transliteration and Foreign Words

The Arabic transliteration system used in this dissertation is that of the *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* with the exception of words that are commonly used in English, such as Islam, Qur’an and ulama. The diacritical marks are omitted for these words, as well as for personal names. All personal Malay-Indonesian names derived from Arabic are used in their Arabic spelling rather than their local ones.

Foreign words are italicized when they are first used, with the English translation provided in brackets. Subsequent references are in ordinary font. No “s” is added to plural forms of Indonesian or Javanese words. Instead, the original is retained but preceded with words such as “some” or “few,” thus “some santri” and not “santris.”

Christian dating (Common Era=C.E.) is used, except when a Muslim date (Anno Hijrah=A.H.) is clearly stated.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Overview

This dissertation examines the localization of Islam in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the northern coastal areas of Java, Indonesia. It focuses on a unique type of Islamic texts, Pegon books, which were books on Islam in the Javanese language using Arabic script. Written by local 'ulamā' (religious scholars), Pegon books discussed various branches of Islamic knowledge such as fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), tawḥīd (Islamic theology), and taṣawuf (Islamic mysticism). Their intended audience was commoners, and to reach these people Pegon books were composed in the vernacular Javanese language employing the lower register of Javanese, or ngoko, spoken by the ordinary people, but using the Arabic script. While the Javanese script was well established in the elite circles, it was not known by the majority of the people. But the latter did have an acquaintance with the Arabic script because of having to learn to read the Qur’an in Arabic at an early age. The use of the Arabic script to write a form of the Javanese language that was most commonly spoken by the people enabled Muslim Javanese scholars, particularly Muhammad Salih Darat from Semarang in Central Java, to spread orthodox Islamic rituals and practices among the Javanese. Ever since the publication of Clifford Geertz’s seminal work, *The Religion of Java*, which argued that the vast majority of the Javanese people were abangan, i.e. nominal Muslims with strong adherence to indigenous beliefs, there has been a tendency to see the ordinary Javanese as

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somehow far less rigorous in the understanding and the practice of Islam. What this
dissertation argues is that there was far more comprehension and proper performance of
Islamic rituals among the common people in Java as a result of the efforts of scholars
such as Muhammad Salih Darat in teaching Islamic orthodoxy through Pegon books.

Because Islam arose among the Arabs, there has been a tendency to view Arabic
and Islam as being interchangeable. There is no denying the close relationship between
the two and the prominent position of the Arabic language in Islam. Not only is the holy
book, the Qur’an, written in Arabic, but also certain rituals, such as prayers, are done in
Arabic. The Prophet’s statements, the second source of Islamic law after the Qur’an, are
stated in Arabic, and authoritative sources on Islamic knowledge developed by Muslim
scholars through the centuries are also written in Arabic. Being a Muslim, therefore,
necessitates being able to pronounce Arabic sentences, though understanding their
meaning is not necessary.

In the expansion of Islam beyond the Arab lands, the newly-converted non-Arabs
were introduced in various degrees to the Arabic language. For the ordinary people, it is
sufficient to be able to pronounce Arabic properly when reciting the Qur’an and to
memorize some Arabic sentences necessary for ritual observance. Those who intend to
study Islam further need to master Arabic in order to read and assess authoritative Islamic
sources and, if necessary, contribute to the development of Islamic knowledge by
creating their own religious works. Ideas on Islam in non-Arab lands are facilitated
through the translation of the Arabic texts into a local language by indigenous Muslim
scholars familiar with both their own language and culture, as well as with Arabic and the
Islamic texts written in Arabic. The result has been the “localization” of Islamic ideas,
i.e. an adaptation of both the Arabic script used for the local language, as well as the way
that Islamic ideas and practices are translated for the local population.

Islam was not unique in this respect; other world religions underwent a similar
process. It was a two-way process in which the teachings of world religions were
adapted into local customs and tradition, while aspects of indigenous beliefs were
absorbed into the new religions. Of those studying this phenomenon, the anthropologists
have been particularly effective in focusing on the impact of world religions on local
societies, with a few even analyzing local texts and oral traditions in tracing
localizations. This dissertation hopes to contribute to an understanding of this process by
examining the manner in which Islam was localized in Java through the Pegon books.

Some questions that will be posed in this dissertation are what were the cultural
and intellectual factors that led to the composition of Pegon books? What are the
characteristics of Pegon books and the credentials of their authors? To what extent do
Pegon books differ from classical authoritative sources of Islam on the one hand, and

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localized-Javanese literary works on the other? How are Pegon books received by the Javanese populace and, in turn, how do the values of Pegon books contribute to the development of Muslim Javanese culture?

**Orthodoxy and Localization**

There are two crucial terms in this dissertation that need clarification: Islamic orthodoxy and localization. There is a debate among Islamic scholars whether the term orthodoxy should be applied to Islam as there is no equivalent Arabic expression. Some argue that, since there is no ecclesiastical authority within Islam, this term should not be used to discuss doctrinal differences within the religion. However, as in other religions, Islam has doctrines and practices that the majority of believers recognize as correct and proper. The terms orthodoxy and heterodoxy have thus been applied to doctrines to identify the “true” from the “false”, the “valid” from the “invalid,” without referring to the original usage of these term.

Orthodoxy, in the Encyclopedia of Religion, is defined as “correct and sound belief according to an authoritative norm,” while heterodoxy refers to “belief in a doctrine differing from the norm.” Every religion has different modes in determining what is regarded as the “authoritative norm,” and in Islam, which has no specific religious authority, the “authoritative norm” is *ijmāʿ* or the consensus among the

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community of the faithful, particularly the scholars. It is Sunni that uses the ijma‘ as the third source of Islam after the Qur’an and the Prophet’s Tradition. Sunni has the largest following in the Muslim world, and its scholars have determined what is considered to be “orthodox Islam.”

Sunni refers to the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama‘ah or “the people of the sunnah and the community,” a term used by those who are acknowledged as the followers of the sunnah or the Prophet’s Tradition and the consensus among the majority of Muslims. By this term, they distinguish themselves from other Islamic sects, whose views and practices contradict the sunnah and therefore are regarded as bida‘ (sing., bid‘ah; innovations or heresies), and who depart from the consensus of the majority of believers.

As the representation of orthodox Islam, Sunni experienced a similar pattern that may be observed in other religious traditions. One scholar describes this pattern as “beginning with faith in divine revelation, traditionalism first appears, followed by an opposing current of skeptical rationalism, with orthodoxy finally emerging as the sensible middle way between the two extremes.”

Not long after the Prophet died in 632 CE, disputes among Muslims emerged, especially in regard to the leadership of the ummah, Muslim community. The question of who was best qualified to succeed the Prophet as the leader of the ummah led to division within the early Muslim community and, in turn, the establishment of different schools of theology and jurisprudence. On the issue of

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8 Saleh, Modern Trends in Islamic Theological Discourse, 60.
leadership, there were two extreme factions: those who argued that only Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet and his descendants had authority to lead and were known as the faction of Ali, Shi’i; and those who believed that any Male Muslim had the authority to lead and were called the Khawarij (seceders). On matters of theology, the two extremes were represented by the Qadariyah, a school of thought which argues that human beings have free will, and by the Jabariyah, another school of thought which believes in predestination. On Islamic law, the extremes were the excessive rationalism of the Mu‘tazilah school of thought, and the charismatic authority of the Shi’ite imams.9

Between these extremes are the silent Muslim majority, who follow the tradition left behind by the Prophet and practiced by many of his companions and support the maintenance of the ummah. They draw their inspiration from the Prophet’s reported statement that Muslims would split into seventy-three groups, all of which would go to hell except one, which will continue to follow the tradition of the Prophet and his companions. This middle path remained in the ummah and did not question the authority of the first four caliphs (Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali) nor that of the Umayyad and Abbasid dynasties. With the passing of time and partially in response to the increase in extreme views, Muslim scholars among this middle way developed Islamic knowledge that was strongly based on the divine sources of the Qur’an and the Prophet’s tradition. By the eighth and ninth centuries, four leading scholars in Islamic law, Abu Hanifah (d. 767), Malik ibn Anas (d. 795), al-Shafi‘i (d. 820), and Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d. 855),

produced works on Islamic jurisprudence which emphasized maintenance of public order and establishment of communal consensus. These scholars were later known as the founding fathers of the four schools of thought (sing., *madhhab*; pl., *madhāhib*) of Islamic law that now bear their names. By the tenth century, Abu al-Hasan al-Ash’ari (d. 935) and Abu Mansur al-Maturidi (d. 944) developed a theological doctrine that took the middle ground between predestination and free will. Ash’ari and Maturidi were then known as the two authoritative schools of theology among Sunni Muslims. By the tenth century, therefore, Sunni became the accepted term for the ideas and practices developed by these schools of Islamic law and theology. In the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries, al-Ghazali (d. 1111) reconciled Sufism with mainstream Islamic jurisprudence, making Ghazalian Sufism part of Sunni beliefs. Sunni Islam is now practiced by about ninety percent of the entire Muslim population in the world.

Orthodox Islam today is synonymous with Sunni Islam, and it involves not simply the doctrine but also the practices of Islam. In fact, discussions on practices are more dominant than those on doctrine, so that some scholars argue it is more appropriate to

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To assess Islam from orthopraxy than orthodoxy. However, since practices within Islam have to be based on sound and authoritative doctrine, I prefer using orthodoxy than orthopraxy, as do many scholars. It is Islamic orthodoxy in this sense that I am referring to in this dissertation.

When orthodox Islam that developed in Arabia expanded beyond the Arab lands, it underwent a process of mutual exchange and adaptation of ideas. From the viewpoint of the newly-converted, this process is known as “localization.” M.C. Ricklefs describes this phenomenon in Java as the “Javanisation of Islam,” which accompanied the Islamization of the island.

Localization has been discussed by a number of scholars, the most prominent of whom was O.W. Wolters. He listed localization, along with mandala and man of prowess, as key terms in understanding the early history of Southeast Asia. He describes localization as the process by which local Southeast Asian societies throughout history have fractured and restated foreign elements, thus reconceptualizing their original import to accord with local sensibilities and create a new cultural whole. In other words, after

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16 In the context of Javanese culture, practicing *slametan*, for example, may not be orthodox practice, but if it is reformulated according to Islamic principles, it is not considered to be contrary to orthodox belief.


18 O.W. Wolters, *History, Culture, and Region in Southeast Asian Perspectives* (Ithaca: Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 1999), 55. On pages 89-91 and 176-205, Wolters shows that a number of “local literatures” found in Cambodia, Thailand, and Indonesia, that originated from Indian Hindu-
being localized, foreign elements become indigenized into a new idea and no longer foreign.

Another study on localization is McDaniel’s assessment on the transmission of religious and ethical beliefs of Theravada Buddhism in Northern Thailand and Laos. He shows how sacred texts in Pali were translated, interpreted, and localized through oral transmission by different generations of monks. Looking in detail at the *nissaya*, *vohara*, and *namasadda* texts, which he describes as “idiosyncratic lecture and sermon notes structured around the selected translation of words and phrases from individually chosen canonical and non-canonical texts,” McDaniel finds great differences in the monks’ comments and glosses from one temple to another because of the varying needs, challenges, and objectives of each local temple. It is in the commentaries and glosses expressed in the vernacular language that localization of Theravada teachings is commonly found.

Rafael’s analysis on translation and conversion of the Tagalog people may be seen as another example of localization. Although he uses the word “translation” rather than “localization”, his definition of translation could very well be one for localization: “the capacity to reshape one’s thought and actions in accordance with accepted forms.” In the early seventeenth century, the Spanish decreed that all missionary activities in the Philippines had to be conducted in a local language. Rafael argues that translation of Castilian-Spanish into Tagalog had two different functions for the Spaniards and the

Buddhism, in Vietnam from Chinese tradition, and in the Philippine from Spanish Catholicism contained adjusted meaning from their origins, so they became “something else.”

19 McDaniel, *Gathering Leaves and Lifting Words*.
20 Ibid., 122.
21 Rafael, *Contracting Colonialism*, 220.
Tagalogs. For the former it was essentially to evangelize as well as to introduce their ideas of authority into Tagalog society; whereas, for the latter, translation would prevent the local people from being overwhelmed by Spanish demands and enable them to incorporate local elements into Spanish culture. Through translation the Tagalog-speaking communities were able to insert their own cultural idioms, such as *hiya* (shame) and *utang na loob* (debt of gratitude), into the Christian message. They interpreted the Christian symbol of Christ sacrificing his life so all humankind could live as imposing an enormous obligation of *utang na loob* (lit., “debt of the heart”). If they were to reject Christianity, they would suffer unbearable *hiya* for not repaying the great debt incurred when Christ died on the cross. While the Spanish friars believed that the local people were absorbing Christian doctrinal ideas, in fact the Tagalogs were reinterpreting the Christian message in terms that made cultural sense to them. In other words, they were localizing the Christian message within a local cultural framework.

Unlike Wolters’ use of the term “localization,” I employ the concept to argue that the ulama did not intend to transform Islamic ideas so that they would fit into indigenous concepts, nor to make them different from the original ideas. Instead, my definition follows that of Pym in his analysis of moving texts in the context of cross-cultural communication. He defines “localization” as “the adaptation and translation of a text to suit a particular reception situation.”22 He argues that translation is part of localization but stresses that “localization encompasses a broader range of processes.”23 Salih Darat adapted Islamic texts previously written in Arabic to accord with the situation in Java.

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23 Ibid., 4.
among the Muslim population, but he avoided their incorporation into indigenous culture into a new cultural whole. Instead, he rigorously maintained the orthodoxy of Islamic ideas and practices while making the Islamic text comprehensible in the Javanese language. It is this idea of localization based on Pym that I apply in analyzing Pegon books in this dissertation.

Islam in Java: a Bibliographical Survey

Islam reached Java a few centuries ago and since then Java has become part of the Islamic world. Until a few decades ago, the lack of historical records on the first Islamization in Java has led to different theories regarding the time, provenance, actors, and methods of Islamization. Despite the varying views, there is no doubt that Islam had become a popular religion in Java by the sixteenth century and came to form part of the identity for most Javanese. The process of Islamization has continued to the

In attempting to understand this special character of Javanese Islam, scholars in the fields of ethnography, literary criticism, and history have been among the most active. Among those who have conducted ethnographic studies on Islam in Java, Geertz is probably the most influential. His *Religion of Java* has had a strong influence on all subsequent works on the subject. In this widely acclaimed work, Geeertz argues that Javanese society is grouped into three variants of religious beliefs: *abangan*, *santri* and *priyayi*. Abangan, according to Geertz, are those who stress on the animistic aspects of the overall Javanese syncretism and are broadly related to the peasant element; **santri** represent those who stress the Islamic aspects of the syncretism and generally relate to the trading community; and *priyayi* emphasize the Hindu aspects and are related to the bureaucratic class. These variants, in Geertz’s view, do not only represent the degree of religiosity but also social classes. More importantly, all three belong to the Javanese religious syncretism of animism, Hindu-Buddhism and Islam, and the differences among them are simply one of degree. Even the religious practices of the santri, according to Geertz, are syncretic.

Geertz, however, admits that these three terms “are not constructed” in the way the Javanese think about their society. For this reason his categorization has been criticized by scholars. While santri and abangan are used to describe the degree of their commitment in practicing the tenets of Islam, priyayi refers to a social class and should

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be properly analyzed along with the other social levels of peasants or wong cilik and artisan and traders. Geertz’s confusing of social and religious classes or between horizontal and vertical social divisions in Javanese society is one of the issues criticized by Javanese scholars such as Koentjaraningrat and Bachtiar.28 A leading scholar of Islam, Marshall Hodgson, claims that Geertz was trapped in “a major systematic error” in understanding Islam in Java because he relies heavily on the modernist conception of what practices belong to Islam and labels the rest as animist and Hindu-Buddhist. Hodgson argues that a series of Javanese practices that Geertz identifies as un-Islamic are universally found in the Islamic world and have reference to the Qur’an. Therefore, in Hodgson’s view, Geertz’s comprehensive data only “show how very little has survived from the Hindu past even in inner Java and raise the question why the triumph of Islam was so complete.”29

Confirming Hodgson’s criticism, Nakamura adds “anthropological biases” as another factor for Geertz’s inaccurate conceptualization of Javanese Islam. According to Nakamura, Geertz tends to follow conventional anthropology in which a study of ethnic group or local community is carried out in “an arbitrary isolation from the wider context.”30 For Nakamura, this is a serious disadvantage because the study of the norms, ideas, and institutions of Muslim societies should extend beyond geographical boundaries of specific ethnic groups of communities. With conventional anthropology, scholars tend

to concentrate on the study of the “Little Tradition” at the expense of the “Great Tradition.” By concentrating on the little tradition of Muslim society in Pare, East Java, Nakamura argues, Geertz ignored the great tradition of Islam. Nakamura also mentions that *slamet, iklas*, and *sabar* which, according Geertz, are significant characteristics of the abangan are derived from Arabic and are Islamic terms.\(^{31}\)

Another significant criticism of Geertz’s theories is that by Woodward, who argues that “Islam is the predominant force in the religious beliefs and rites of central Javanese, and that it shapes the characters of social interaction and daily life in all segments of Javanese society.”\(^{32}\) Woodward did an ethnographic study of Yogyakarta, the “center” of Javanese culture, and did not notice the strong influence of pre-Islamic beliefs of animism and Hindu-Buddhism on Javanese religious systems, as argued by Geertz. Instead, what was evident were the different tendencies in implementing Islam between the more *shari‘ah*-oriented (which he terms “normative piety”) and mystically-inclined practices. The former term would be the equivalent of Geertz’s santri, and the latter with Geertz’s abangan and priyayi. According to Woodward, both orientations are truly Islamic, and they differ only in ways they participate in and practice Islam. The reason that Geertz categorizes the latter as more animist or Hindu-Buddhist than Islam, according to Woodward, is because Geertz draws heavily on social actions and fails to consult Islamic literary texts and traditions which provide ample evidence on such practices. Woodward mentions that *slametan*, for example, which according to Geertz forms the most significant ritual among the abangan, is “a locally Muslim-defined rite”

\(^{31}\) Ibid.: 71-75.

within Islamic tradition, especially in Sufism. A similar ritual is practiced across the Muslim world, and if there are elements of pre-Islamic traditions they are interpreted in Islamic terms.³³ Slametan, therefore, is “Islamic, not animistic as is commonly assumed.”³⁴

Muhaimin meanwhile rejects Geertz’s notion of syncretism in Javanese Islam. In an ethnographic study in Cirebon, West Java, Muhaimin analyzed ibadat (rites) and adat (traditions) practiced by Muslim communities. There was no question that ibadat referred to Islamic practice, but even adat which includes slametan also had strong roots in Islam rather than in pre-Islamic beliefs. After examining adat practices, he concluded that “almost everything has scriptural roots or finds its justification in the basic sources of Islamic doctrine: the Qur’an, the Hadith and the work of the ulama where operational meanings of the Qur’an and the Hadith are elaborated.”³⁵ In other words, there is no strong reason to argue that this adat was a syncretic belief incorporating ideas of Islam, Hindu-Buddhism, and animism, as Geertz argues.

A number of ethnographic works on the santri community, both the traditionalist and the modernist, also criticize Geertz’s characterization of this variant of Javanese Muslims.³⁶ Works by Dhofier and Luken-Bull on the pesantren and its community in East and Central Java challenge the santri’s syncretic characteristics as defined by Geertz.

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³⁴ Ibid.: 83.
Nakamura and Kim, who both studied the Muhammadiyah and the communities belonging to this modernist organization in the Yogyakarta area, show that religious belief and practices of Muhammadiyah communities should not be categorized as syncretic.\(^{37}\)

Despite criticisms from a number of scholars, Geertz’s theories of the tripartite division of Javanese society are still influential, though in a revised form, in studying Javanese religious system. One such example is Beatty’s study of the religious beliefs and practices of villagers in Banyuwangi, the easternmost part of Java and one of the strongest remnants of Hindu-Buddhism on the island.\(^{38}\) Like Geertz, Beatty argues that there are several layers of Javanese religion, from folk belief of animism to Hindu mysticism, to orthodox Islam, all interacting and reaching accommodations with each other. Unlike Geertz, however, Beatty does not attempt to create essentialized variants of the society. Slametan, for example, is not only practiced by the abangan, but also by the santri and the priyayi. A person can present offerings to the ancestral shrines, lead a Muslim congregation, and speculate on the relation between macrocosm and microcosm according to Hindu mysticism. In other words, a person can be a santri, abangan, or priyayi at different times depending on the occasion. Religious affiliation is existential, and pragmatic reasons have drawn villagers to participate in different forms of worship. Javanese religion among these villagers, according to Beatty, is syncretism in a sense of

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“a systematic interrelation of elements from diverse traditions, an ordered response to pluralism and cultural difference” rather than “a settled outcome.”

These ethnographic studies on Javanese belief systems show various and in some cases contradictory conclusions. This is to be expected since the communities that were studied and the perceptions and interpretations of the informants and the scholars would have had an important effect on the results of the research. Slametan, which is always cited as an example by the scholars, is practiced and interpreted differently by Muslims in the localities studied in Pare, Yogyakarta, Cirebon, and Banyuwangi. From such differences, however, we can learn what religious practices they have in common and thus suggest what may be typical if not exclusive to the Muslim Javanese.

Unlike anthropological studies that have drawn differing conclusions regarding Javanese religion, scholars of Javanese literature have generally concluded that the Javanese religious system is syncretic and highly influenced by heterodox Sufism or Hindu mysticism. Zoetmulder has studied a number of Javanese religious literary works known as suluk, particularly Chentini. He shows that pantheistic and monistic ideas are dominant in Javanese religious belief, especially with regard to the concept of divine creation and the relationship between God, humans, and the world. When “the world merges with God, the world is in some way a part of His being,” and that is known as pantheism; whereas, monism is when “God merges with the world, the world is the only absolute Being which because of its absoluteness may perhaps be indicated with the

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39 Ibid., 3.
name God.” Zoetmulder argues that these Javanese ideas of pantheism and monism were adopted from the mystical thought of al-Hallaj and Ibn Arabi, as well as from the Hindu mystics Sankara and Ramanuja. The adoption of Islamic philosophical thought did not come directly but “via an Islam which had already been rather influenced by India and especially via Hindu-Javanism.”

Heterodox mysticism is less prominent in Soebardi’s discussion of the *Serat Cebolek*. The serat tells the story of a debate between Ahmad Mutamakin, a heretical mystic, and Ketib Anom, a shari’a-h-minded ulama, on the science of reality (*ilmu hakekat*) as referred to in the story of Dewa Ruci (or Bhima Suci). Ahmad Mutamakin was charged with having spread heretical mysticism and brought to the court for punishment. Pakubuwana II (r. 1726-49 CE), however, decided to pardon Mutamakin and ordered him to stop teaching such mystical heresy. Since the debate deals with Dewa Ruci, the serat tells a detailed story of Dewa Ruci’s teaching to Werkudara concerning the perfection of life, which culminated in the unity between servant and the Lord (*pamoring kawulo*-Gusti). According to Soebardi, this serat was an attempt by the writer, Yasadipura I (1729-1803 CE), to reconcile orthodox Islam and Javanese mysticism. He regarded the relationship as that between the vessel and its content, with the emphasis on the latter. The vessel is important, for without it the essence cannot be contained. But the
spiritual essence, which is the unity between servant and Lord, is much more important as this is the ultimate objective of human beings.45

Local scholars who study Javanese religious literary works have also commented on the nature of syncretism and heretical mysticism. In his analysis of Ranggawarsita’s (1802-1873 CE) Wirid Hidayat Jati, Simuh shows that Ranggawarsita’s mystical teachings are basically a blend of Hindu and Islamic heterodox mysticism.46 This is apparent in the concept of the unity of servant and God (manunggaling kawulo-Gusti), which refers to Serat Dewa Ruci and the emanation doctrine in the creation of the world taken from al-Tuhfah al-Mursalah by Muhammad ibn Fadl Allah (d. 1620 CE). The emanation doctrine, which is viewed by Sunni Islam as heretical because it counters the transcendent nature of God, was popular in Java through Malay translations by Sham al-Din al-Sumatrani (d. 1630 CE) and Abd al-Rauf al-Singkili (d. 1693 CE).47 Simuh, therefore, categorizes Ranggawarsita’s mystical teachings as mistik Islam kejawen (Javanese Islamic mysticism) and his works as part of Javanese Islamic literature in contrast to Santri Islamic literature.48

Differing slightly from Simuh’s views, Ardani, who focuses on the literary works of Mangkunegara IV (1811-1881 CE), particularly the Serat Wedhatama, argues that his mystical teachings are not contradictory to the Qur’an and the Prophet’s tradition, though they are a mixture of Islam and Javanism.49 Ardani examines Mangkunegara IV’s

47 Ibid., 289-341. See also, Zoetmulder, Pantheism and Monism, 97-114.
48 Simuh, Mistik Islam Kejawen, 2-3, 373.
49 Moh. Ardani, Al Qur’an dan Sufisme Mangkunegara IV: Studi Serat-serat Piwulang (Jakarta: Dana Bhakti Wakaf, 1995).
concept of *budiluhur* (ethics) and *sembah* (worship) at four levels: *raga* (body), *kalbu* (heart), *jiwa* (soul), and *rasa* (essence, feeling). The worship by the body consists of performing the shari’ah obligations, such as the five daily prayers, and is the lowest level. The highest aim of worship is not the unity of servant and God (*manunggaling kawula-Gusti*), but *mushahadah* (contemplation) and *ma’rifah* (gnosis). This is the reason that Ardani sees Mangkunagara IV’s mystical teachings as being within the bounds of orthodoxy.⁵₀ A direct analysis of the *Serat Wedhatama*, however, shows that there are a number of Javanisms in the author’s teachings. The text suggests that the younger generation emulate Panembahan Senopati, the founder of the Mataram kingdom, rather than the Prophet Muhammad; believe in the supernatural power of the Goddess of the Southern Ocean (*Ratu Kidul*); and be moderate in observing Islamic obligations because they are Javanese and not Arabs.⁵¹ In short, the religious ideas of Mangkunegara IV are not fully in line with orthodox principles as Ardani has argued.

Unlike the diverse views of Javanese religion by anthropologists, scholars of Javanese religious literary texts appear to agree that Javanese religious ideas can be characterized as syncretic mysticism derived from Islam, Hindu and local indigenous belief systems. Such a conclusion, however, may have resulted from the genre of literary works consulted, which were serat or suluk written by royal or court poets. These studies explicate the religious beliefs held by the courts and the Javanese nobles, but as some ethnographic studies demonstrate this type of religious ideas of the priyayi was also

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⁵₀ Ibid., 364-369.
shared by the abangan. Perhaps if literary compositions by santri had also been analyzed, the results may show that religious ideas among Javanese also incorporated more strongly Islamic elements.

There have been only a few historical studies on Javanese Islam, although there is mention of it in general studies on Indonesian Islam. Historians generally argue that mystical Islam was commonly practiced in Java before the arrival of the reformist movement that became popular in the twentieth century. One of the earliest proponents of this view was A.H. Johns, who credited the role of Sufism in the Islamization not only of Java but also of the entire archipelago. Using local chronicles as well as travelers’ accounts, Johns argues that Islam did not take root in Indonesia until the involvement of Sufis in preaching the religion. Sufi success in adapting mystical teaching to local culture contributed to the rapid conversion of the Javanese and influenced the character of Islam in the region. Nevertheless, Johns stresses that the Sufism brought to Southeast Asia did not mean that it was opposed to shari‘ah-oriented doctrine, as commonly understood. There are many instances where these two Islamic tenets are practiced together peacefully in Java. In other words, what Johns means by mystical Islam is both orthodox and heterodox Sufism.

Like Johns, Benda argues that mysticism rather than orthodoxy was the dominant form of Islam in Java and Sumatra. He attributes the rapid conversion of the Javanese to Islam in early centuries partly to the superficial degree of Hinduization in Java and partly

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to the existence of Javanese Islam, which he calls a “wedding of Sufi and indigenous mysticism rather than of Islam and Hinduism proper.”® In his view, orthodox Islam with its monotheistic creed “would very likely not have found a penetration point in the Indonesian islands, certainly not in Java.”® The Javanese religious system until the nineteenth century formed a continuity with the past with only minor external changes. Only in the twentieth century did a significant change take place as a result of the modernist movement introduced from Egypt.®

Ricklefs, one of few historians whose expertise on the history of Java is unchallenged, reaches a similar conclusion on the nature of Javanese Islam.® While he argues that after the fourteenth century Islam had formed part of the identity of nearly all Javanese, it did not fundamentally alter the pre-Islamic religious system. The Islam that developed in Java was mystical or idiosyncratic; it paid more attention to metaphysical speculation than to religious practices so that the “old culture grew and lived on in a more-or-less Islamic garb.”® Ricklefs thus concludes that the majority of Javanese at all social levels continue to remain abangan, while the santri “to some extent removed himself from his social and cultural environment.”® In his later works Ricklefs describes Javanese Islam as a “mystic synthesis,” with three characteristics: basing one’s identity

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® Harry J. Benda, *Continuity and Change in Southeast Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asian Studies, 1972), 128.
® Ricklefs, “Six Centuries of Islamization in Java,” 111.
® Ibid., 127.
on Islam, implementing the five pillars of Islam, and believing in local spiritual forces. Thus, despite their allegiance to Islam the Javanese are perceived as still venerating local deities. By the second half of the nineteenth century, the mystic synthesis became polarized into *abangan-putihan* (the red-white) duality.  

The general conclusion of historians studying the Javanese religious system is similar to that reached by scholars of Javanese literature and some of the ethnographers, i.e. that Javanese religion is syncretic with a heavy dose of mysticism. Earlier Dutch scholars such as Snouck Hurgronje and Drewes also came to that conclusion. The “mysticism” in Java was not, however, the orthodox Sufism popularized by al-Ghazali, which raises the possibility that this was a Javanese form of mysticism and hence a localization of Islamic practices. This was only one of a number of different types of localization that occurred on Java as shown by the study by Azyumardi Azra.

Azra examines the networks of Southeast Asian ulama from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, particularly the contribution of Nur al-Din al-Raniri (d. 1658 CE), Abd al-Rauf al-Sinkili (d. 1693 CE), Yusuf al-Maqassari (d. 1699 CE), Abd al-Samad al-Falimbani (d. 1789 CE), and Arshad al-Banjari (d. 1812) in introducing Islamic reformism. Their understanding of Islam, according to Azra, was different from what others have commonly called “Javanese Islam.” Although none of these five ulama was

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Javanese, all but al-Raniri were born and raised in the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago and all five wrote Islamic texts in Jawi, the Malay language written in Arabic script. Azra argues that these figures were authoritative ulama and their works were widely read by Southeast Asian Muslims. Their teachings no doubt adhered to Sunni orthodox principles and though some of them taught Sufism, it was orthodox Sufism as introduced by al-Ghazali. While translating Islamic texts from the Arabic to the vernacular is the simplest form of localization, a more complex localization process involves the interpretation of ideas in a way that is comprehensible to the intended audience.

The absence of Javanese sources comparable to the Malay texts examined by Azra makes any attempt to study the localization of Islam on Java more difficult. It should be noted, however, that two early Javanese manuscripts on Islam that were brought to Europe in the sixteenth century offer a glimpse of Javanese Islam at the time.63 They were edited and translated by Drewes64 and contain orthodox Islamic principles. Noteworthy is the fact that these manuscripts were written in Javanese using the Javanese script, and they used Javanese terms to explain certain Islamic ideas, such as Pangeran (for God), sambahyang (prayer), tapa (ascetism), swarga (heaven), and suksma (innermost soul). These are old Javanese words that have specific connotations in Javanese culture, but they were deemed the most appropriate to represent these Islamic ideas. Sambahyang, for example, is an old Javanese term to refer to the worship of any god or deity, and was used alongside the Arabic ṣalāt to mean “prayer.” Tapa, which in

64 The Admonition of She Bari was actually a rework of Het Boek van Bonang (The Book of Bonang) which was the doctor’s thesis of B.J.O. Schrieke in 1916.
Javanese refers to the practice of ascetism to strengthen one’s spiritual power, was borrowed to convey the Islamic-sanctioned practices of prayer, recitation of the Qur’an, and staying in a mosque (Ar. i’tikāf). Mystical teachings mentioned in these manuscripts are depicted as the next path of piety and not contradictory to the shari’ah. In short, these manuscripts provide evidence of Javanese Islam that is not characterized by heterodox mysticism nor syncretized with pre-Islamic belief. In examining one of these texts, Ricklefs concludes that “[t]he intellectual frame of reference of this work is thus wholly Islamic, but its linguistic and cultural context is Javanese.”

Another text edited and translated by Drewes, though the date of composition is unclear, confirms the picture of Javanese Islam as represented in previous manuscripts. It uses Javanese terms such as Pangeran, asambahyang, and tapa, and it names practices that should be followed by all Muslims, such as observing the five daily prayers, fasting during Ramadan, paying alms, going on the pilgrimage, reciting the Qur’an, and staying in a mosque. It also lists the many acts and practices that would destroy their faith and lead to kupur (unbelief), such as “worshiping idols or participating in the worship of infidels.” This manuscript advocates the adherence to orthodox Islamic principles and contains no evidence of the syncretism of Islam with pre-Islamic beliefs and practices.

Unfortunately, these were the only texts known so far that demonstrate the adaptation of Javanese culture to the principles of Islamic orthodoxy. The numerous Javanese texts later produced in the courts of Central Java represent a specific type of Javanese Islam that is syncretic and heterodox mystic. There were manuscripts of Arabic

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65 Ricklefs, Mystic Synthesis in Java, 23.
67 Ibid., 33.
texts with interlinear Javanese translation in several libraries, but they do not provide evidence of the interaction between Islamic and Javanese culture, except for a Javanese translation using the Arabic script (Pegon). Until sources are found to the contrary, Javanese Islam up to the early nineteenth century may be said to be syncretic with an emphasis on the more mystical rather than orthodox elements of Islam. By the mid nineteenth century, as Ricklefs argues, Javanese society was polarized between the abangan and putihan, representing the syncretic and orthodox tendencies, respectively. The polarization existed at the time when there began to be signs of the “intensification of religious life” as measured by the many pilgrims going on the hajj and the rapid increase in the number of Islamic religious teachers and schools (pesantren). It was in this period that Pegon Islamic texts began to be written.

Salih Darat is important in the history of the Islamization in Java in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries because his Pegon books achieved two important goals. First of all, they succeeded in using the vernacular language and local understandings in order to make Islamic ideas and practices more intelligible among the Javanese people. Secondly, they enabled the Javanese to move beyond their own parochial communities to attain greater visibility and participation in the global ummah (Muslim community).

In the nineteenth century, major advances in military technology and in economic productivity in Western countries provided the bases for an expansion of Europe throughout the world. The entire Muslim world from Africa to Southeast Asia came

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under European colonial control, and the responses to this colonization differed from one area to the next.\(^6^9\) One belief that all shared, however, was the sense that Islam had somehow failed to meet the challenge of the Christian European expansion. The feeling of failure and the need for the resurgence of the religion would have been a burning topic among many of those performing the hajj or studying Islamic sciences in Mecca and Medina.\(^7^0\) Salih Darat spent some years in these cities and, judging from his own works, he too was conscious of this atmosphere of concern about the state of Islam. When he returned home to Java, he was confronted with a situation familiar to other Muslims in other parts of the Islamic world. The local situation in Java under the Dutch, which he experienced while in Semarang, strengthened his antagonism towards the Europeans and led to his renunciation of many things coming from the West, such as clothes, culture and way of life.

The failure of Javanese people in resisting European colonialism seems to have brought about a “reorientation” of their effort.\(^7^1\) Realizing that the European power could not be defeated militarily, the Javanese turned their concern to cultural and religious issues. Many Javanese manuscripts were produced and reproduced, mostly commissioned by the Javanese royal families and the aristocracy, in the nineteenth century as a way of maintaining Javanese values, a blend of pre-Islamic, Hindu-Buddhist, and Islamic

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\(^{7^0}\) For description of Mecca in the nineteenth century, Snouck Hurgronje’s work provides the detail information. C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka in the Latter Part of the 19th Century: Daily Life, Customs and Learning, the Moslims of the East-Indian-Archipelago* (Leyden: Late E. J. Brill, 1931).

teachings. Muslims scholars, on the other hand, turned their attention toward improving religious understanding among the Javanese. Salih Darat was among the latter, who dedicated his life to teaching common people about Islam without rejecting Javanese values outright. Through Pegon Islamic texts, Salih insisted on the importance of being orthodox Muslims although they did not have to be Arabized.

This dissertation examines these Pegon Islamic texts as a way to understand the process of localization of Islam in Java. It is hoped that this study will contribute to the ongoing discussion of Javanese religious works. Previous studies have been limited to those composed in the central Javanese courts and their environs; whereas, this study focuses on religious texts produced in the northern coastal area, traditionally the home of the santri populations. It is hoped that these texts will reveal a different but complementary picture of Javanese Islam. Conclusions reached may not always accord with previous studies, but this may be partly due to the different type of sources consulted. This present study argues that mystical syncretism is not the dominant character of Javanese Islam, and it complements Ricklefs’s work on the religious polarization of Javanese society. While he regards the putihan or santri as a separate identity of Javanese Muslims that emerged from the mystic synthesis, Ricklefs does not discuss their religious characteristics in any detail. He simply lists a division of the putihan between those who are shari’ah-oriented reformers and those who are followers of reformed Sufi tarekat (Ar. tariqah). It is a division which I believe was not apparent until the establishment of the modernist Muhammadiyah organization in the twentieth

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century. By analyzing Pegon books, I hope to be able to provide information on issues left undiscussed by Ricklefs, and to demonstrate how the different characteristics of both groups of putihan became merged. This study will also examine the validity of Geertz’s proposition that the santri, despite their commitment to shari‘ah teachings, is also syncretic in essence. Finally, this study will contribute to debates on the localization of world religions, by providing a case study in which we can find orthodoxy clearly maintained within a process of localization.

For several reasons, I have focused primarily on the Pegon Islamic writings of Muhammad Salih Darat, one of the earliest Pegon writers. His works reveal his aim to conform to Islamic orthodoxy through critiquing local cultures and adapting his explanations in an appropriate Javanese cultural manner. The success of this endeavor is evident in the continuing popularity of his works, which paved the way for the acceptance of the tradition of writing Pegon Islamic texts among later twentieth-century Javanese ulama. Although Ahmad Rafi’i Kalisalak composed Pegon Islamic works before Salih, it was the latter who made the greatest impression on this tradition.

Three of Salih’s Pegon books have been studied by three different doctoral dissertations at the Islamic state universities of Jakarta and Yogyakarta. Their studies have principally shown which of Salih’s ideas conformed to and which diverged from classical Arabic texts that are viewed as authoritative by Sunni Muslims. In a doctoral
dissertation produced in the US by Basri, Salih Darat is described as one of three Javanese ulama who introduced reformist ideas to Indonesia in the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{74} While Basri categorizes Nawawi al-Bantani as a legalist and Ahmad Rifai Kalisalak as an activist, Salih Darat is viewed as a realist in introducing the reformist ideas to Javanese society. A Japanese scholar, Yumi Sugahara, has written two articles which argue that Pegon Islamic textbooks played a role in spreading Islamic values to local Javanese society.\textsuperscript{75} While these articles list titles of Pegon books by Salih Darat as well as other Javanese ulama, they do not examine in detail the content of those Pegon books.

In these studies of Pegon Islamic texts, little attention has been paid to the manner in which Salih employed his understanding of Javanese culture and knowledge of Islam in order to convey Islamic orthodox ideas to the Javanese. By carefully reading Salih’s Pegon Islamic texts, I hope to reveal the successful methods he used to “localize” Islamic orthodox teachings among the ordinary Javanese people. Through these methods, many of the Javanese from the late nineteenth century became increasingly orthodox in their Islamic faith. This dissertation, therefore, advances the thesis that the Javanese people were far more orthodox in their beliefs in Islam by the mid-twentieth century, when some of the leading scholars in anthropology and in Javanese literature depicted Javanese Islam as syncretic with a strong element of heterodox mysticism.

\textsuperscript{74} Basri Basri, "Indonesian Ulama in the Haramayn and the Transmission of Reformist Islam in Indonesia (1800-1900)" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Arkansas, 2008).
Chapter Outline

The main purpose of Pegon books was to educate the commoners about Islam, so that they would not only be able to perform rites and obligations correctly but would also understand and internalize their meaning. To understand the context of localization, Chapter 2 discusses what and how knowledge of Islam has been transmitted among Muslims in Java. The most important channel of transmission has been the traditional Islamic school known as pesantren, but it also occurs in langgar or musalla (prayer houses) and in mosques. Although the latter two institutions are less intensive in transmitting knowledge, their role has been crucial in educating adult common Javanese on Islam. It is in these institutions, not the pesantren, that Pegon books have been used as textbooks.

Chapter 3 examines the development of Pegon as a writing system and its use for writing various genres. The adoption of print as a mode of production of Pegon Islamic texts in the nineteenth century became an impetus to increasing access to Islamic scholarship. There was wide-spread use of the Pegon Islamic texts, particularly among the local kiyai in the langgar/musalla and mosques, thus making Pegon Islamic texts a crucial factor in the transmission of Islamic ideas outside the more formal Islamic educational institution of the pesantren.

Chapter 4 narrates a short biography of Salih Darat and traces his intellectual network of ulama in Java and Mecca, from whom he learned various branches of Islamic knowledge and thus received the authority to transmit it to others. This chapter also briefly discusses the content of works written in Pegon by Salih and speculates as to the reason for the popularity of some and not others.
Chapter 5 examines how Salih Darat argued that Islam was revealed not only for the Arabs but also for the world. Since there were far more non-Arab than Arab Muslims, it was necessary to translate or explain Islamic texts in local languages to improve the proper understanding of the religion. Therefore, Islamic texts in the vernacular should not be regarded as less important than those written in Arabic, as long as they maintain the orthodox principles of Islam. The chapter then assesses how Salih translated and localized some of the key concepts of Islam on tawhid, fiqh, and tasawuf while maintaining the principles of Islamic orthodoxy.

Salih Darat’s role in the establishment of Islamic orthodoxy among common Javanese Muslims is the subject of Chapter 6. This was done using three different but interrelated channels: his students, his widely-used Pegon books, and the writings of other Pegon Islamic texts by those whom he inspired.
CHAPTER 2
ISLAMIC LEARNING AND SCHOLARSHIP IN JAVA

This chapter focuses on the manner in which Islamic learning has been transmitted in Java, as a way of understanding the localization process. Without a doubt, the most important channel has been the traditional Islamic school known as pesantren, an educational complex where santri (students) and their kiyai (teachers) live and study. As will be discussed below, this institution which adopted the pre-Islamic learning tradition of Hindu-Buddhist schools has become the main guardian of Islamic orthodoxy in Java. In addition to pesantren, the transmission of Islamic knowledge has also taken place in langgar or musalla (prayer houses) and in mosques. While the pesantren has attracted attention from scholars, the role of the langgar and mosque in the transmission of Islamic knowledge is still rarely known. So far these two latter institutions, in addition to their main function as the place for communal prayer (ṣalāt al-jamā‘ah), are known only as a place for learning recitation of the Qur’an for children before they go to the pesantren for further study of Islam. In fact, langgar and mosque are also places where local ulama teach Islam to the surrounding community. It is true that, unlike the pesantren, the learning of Islam at these places is less intensive; but it is here where the Pegon books are usually taught. Although written by pesantren ulama, Pegon books are not commonly taught in the pesantren which continue to use Arabic texts. I will discuss both pesantren and langgar-mosque as centers for the study of Islam, and then turn to the Islamic scholarship taught in these institutions.
The Pesantren: an Overview

Pesantren is known as a traditional Islamic boarding school that is widely spread, not only in Java but also in other parts of Indonesia. It is regarded as an indigenous educational institution where students learn different kinds of Islamic sciences. The term “pesantren” was previously used only in Java while in other islands a similar institution was known as surau or rangkah meunasah.1 This term is now used across the nation to designate a certain type of educational institution. Other than its main function as a place for learning Islamic sciences, pesantren is also a missionary institution (da’wah), in a sense that santri do not only study Islamic knowledge but also learn how to deliver speeches to the public. This skill is necessary because after their studies in the pesantren they are expected to educate lay people about religious knowledge in public meetings. The pesantren is also a place for lifelong learning. Students who are away from their home and parents have to manage their own affairs in term of money, food, clothes, and interaction with other students. The pesantren, therefore, is not only a place to study Islamic sciences, but also a place to train and prepare students to be adult Muslims.

As an educational institution, the pesantren can be said to be similar to a secondary education. At the first stage, the younger generation usually goes to a musalla or a langgar and a mosque to learn how to recite the Qur’an, as well as to learn how to perform such religious obligations as ablution and prayer. This means that most students begin their study at the pesantren in the early teenage years, and it is very rare for pre-

1 The term of surau is found in West Sumatra, while rangkah meunasah in Aceh. See, Dawam Rahardjo, "Dunia Pesantren dalam Peta Pembaharun," in Pesantren dan Pembaharu, ed. Dawam Rahardjo (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1974), 2, and also Zamakhsyari Dhofer, The Pesantren Tradition: The Role of the Kyai in the Maintenance of Traditional Islam in Java (Tempe, Ariz.: Program for Southeast Asian Studies, Arizona State University, 1999), 1-7.
teen pupils to study at a pesantren. A pesantren can roughly be divided into two levels: basic and advanced.\(^2\) The basic pesantren is usually small and located in a village and is attended by students from the surrounding areas. In this type of pesantren, which is comparable to a secondary education, basic Arabic books are used to teach Islamic theology, jurisprudence, and grammar. The advanced pesantren is much larger and caters to hundreds of students from different areas, who live and study in a dormitory.

Advanced books in theology, jurisprudence, \textit{tafsīr} (Qur’anic exegesis), \textit{ḥadīth} (the Prophet’s tradition), \textit{tasawuf} (Islamic mysticism), and Arabic grammar and rhetoric are taught, providing an education that is the equivalent of higher education. There is no specific minimum requirement that a student should achieve to be accepted as a santri or student of a pesantren. Most students go to an advanced pesantren after they finish their study at a basic pesantren. There is also no fixed academic schedule so a santri may start at any time, although most pesantren start their activities after the long ‘Id al-Fitr (festivity after the fasting month of Ramadan) holiday. There is also no standard length of time that a student is expected to stay and study in a pesantren. This is dependent on the student’s intelligence and efforts. In addition, personal reasons, such as feeling comfortable with the teacher, friends, and neighborhood, may also influence the

\(^2\) Dhofier divides the pesantren into four levels: pengajian kitab, minor pesantren, secondary pesantren and advanced major pesantren. See, Dhofier, \textit{The Pesantren Tradition}, 5. Mahmud Junus, on the other hand, divides it into three levels: village pesantren, big pesantren, and special pesantren. See, Mahmud Junus, \textit{Sedjarah Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia} (Jakarta: Pustaka Mahmudiah, 1960), 197. These divisions, in my view, are not reliable as differences between one and the other are not clear cut and even overlap with each other. Therefore, division of pesantren into two categories, as previously identified by van den Berg, is simpler and adequate to describe the existing pesantren.
individual’s decision. Therefore, the duration of stay in a pesantren range from a few days to a few years, with some even remaining in a pesantren for more than ten years.³

The pesantren may be perceived as similar to a monastery in Buddhism or a seminary in Christianity. At closer analysis, however, it is clear that the pesantren is dissimilar in principle with these two institutions. Buddhism and Christianity educate future-monks and priests, respectively, and the students vow to be monks⁴ and priests when they join the institutions, this is not the case in the pesantren. Training to be a kiyai is not the main reason that people study at a pesantren. The majority of its graduates have no such ambitions, though almost all of the kiyai, especially until the mid-twentieth century, studied at and graduated from a pesantren.⁵ It is, therefore, inappropriate to place the pesantren on par with a monastery or a seminary.⁶

Education at the pesantren is highly depended on the kiyai who, in most cases, is also the owner of the pesantren. Before the introduction of the madrasah (which is the classical and formal school) to the pesantren in the twentieth century, Islamic knowledge taught in the pesantren was highly dependent upon the preference and the expertise of the kiyai. Certain pesantren acquired reputations for particular Islamic subjects because of the expertise of their kiyai. For example, one pesantren is called the pesantren of ḥadīth (the Prophet’s tradition) because its kiyai is an expert in that particular knowledge.

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⁴ Although in Theravada Buddhism there is a more common practice of temporary monks in contrast to Mahayana.
⁵ That some kiyai may not be educated in a pesantren is a recent phenomenon in Indonesia. The prime example is Abdullah Gymnastiar, known popularly as Aa Gym, the popular preacher from Bandung, West Java. For an account on him, see C.W. Watson, "A Popular Indonesian Preacher: The Significance of AA Gymnastiar," Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute 11, no. 4 (2005): 773-792.
Though a certain pesantren is known as the pesantren of ḥadīth, it usually also teaches other Islamic disciplines. However, for those students seeking further knowledge in tafsīr (Qur’anic exegesis) or tasawuf (Islamic mysticism), for example, they would go to other kiyai who have expertise in that knowledge. This practice is said to be one of the main reasons that the tradition of the wandering santri emerged. The santri move from one pesantren to another to study with different kiyai and improve their expertise in different branches of knowledge. Another reason for the wandering practice is to receive blessings from God through many kiyai. A knowledgeable and respected kiyai is believed to be the vessel through which the blessings from God flow to seekers of Islamic knowledge.

As an institution, the pesantren has at least five basic elements: the pondok (dormitory), mosque or musalla, teaching classical Islamic texts, santri (students), and kiyai (teacher). The pondok, which varies from one pesantren to another, is a dorm where students live together. The mosque, in addition to its function as a place of prayer, is also a place where Islamic knowledge is taught as well as a place for other related educational activities of the santri, such as mushawarah (discussion). The mosque within a pesantren is then the center of Islamic education. The classical Islamic texts are in Arabic and popularly known as kitab kuning (literally, “yellow books”). This term refers to the fact that most texts are printed on cheap yellow paper. One characteristic of the kitab kuning is that the Arabic language is not provided with vocalization nor punctuation, thus making learning difficult for Javanese students with limited knowledge of the language. The kiyai is not only a teacher but also the highest authority regarding education in the pesantren. For many pesantren, especially those with a huge number of students, a kiyai
is usually assisted by many teachers, some of whom are his relatives and others his senior students, especially in delivering education and managing the daily activities.\(^7\)

It should be noted here that, since the main task of the kiyai is to teach students Islamic knowledge by using the classical Arabic texts, there developed among pesantren a concept of legitimate authority to teach such texts. The authority rests upon the learning of the texts with teachers who are linked by sanad, an intellectual chain leading back to the original authors of the texts.\(^8\) A kiyai will not usually teach a certain text to his students if he has not learned it from a teacher. The characteristic of Arabic classical texts that come without vocalization and punctuation seems to be the reason behind the development of this concept of authority. Having studied with an authoritative teacher, one is assumed to have legitimate understanding of the text as intended by the author.

Studying at the pesantren used to be free, and kiyai received no salaries from their teaching activities. During the colonial era when poverty was ubiquitous, the pesantren was the only educational institution accessible to lay people. The santri had to rely on their own resources for their educational and personal needs while living in the pesantren. Therefore, the santri often brought raw materials, especially rice, from their homes and stored it in nearby areas surrounding their rooms. When they no longer had anything to eat, they used their spare time to work to earn money either for the kiyai, their families, or to farm and trade with members of the community. Others simply begged for charity, especially on Thursday evening.\(^9\)

\(^8\) Ibid., 57-61.
\(^9\) These characteristics of the pesantren are mentioned in L. van den Berg, "De Mohammedaansche Geestelijkheid en de Geestelijke Goederen op Java en Madoera," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, no. 27 (1882): 24-26. According to Berg, some santri used to beg food from surrounding
Only in recent times have the pesantren begun charging fees. Nevertheless, fees are still relatively low compared to modern schools, and most go toward maintenance of facilities. Kiyai are still unpaid for their teaching; and they earn a living from farming, trading, business, and donations from the rich. Teaching in the pesantren remains voluntary except when the teaching occurs in the madrasah located in the pesantren. In such cases, teachers usually receive salaries that mainly come from student fees.

**Origin and Development of the Pesantren**

It is hard to ascertain when the pesantren was first established in Java. Some scholars, such as Wahid and Brugmans, argue that it already existed in the thirteenth century. Others, such as Dhofier, believe that it was founded around the sixteenth century. It is Bruinessen’s contention, however, that pesantren did not exist until the eighteenth century, with the establishment of the Pesantren Tegalsari in 1742 as the first. Bruinessen believes that this pesantren was an established institution with hundreds of students living and studying there. There might have been pesantren on a smaller scale prior to that period. Classical Arabic books that were later popular in pesantren may have been available in Java by the sixteenth century as they were

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community on Thursdays (Kemis), and so this specific activity became known as *ngemis*. “Begging” was not looked on as repugnant if done as part of religion.


12 Martin van Bruinessen, *Kitab Kuning, Pesantren dan Tarekat: Tradisi-tradisi Islam di Indonesia* (Bandung: Mizan, 1995), 24-25. The popularity of Pesantren Tegalsari seems to be related to the role of its kiyai, Kasan Besari (Hasan Basri) who provided assistance to Paku Buwana II who fled from the kraton and sought refuge in the area of Panaraga, due to the Chinese uprising in the early 1740s. Fokkens, "De Priesterschool te Tegalsari," 318-321.
mentioned in the Admonition of Seh Bari. The fact that Amangkurat I assassinated thousands of religious figures could be seen as an indication of the existence of pesantren prior the eighteenth century since it is hard to imagine that such a number were educated privately. One may assume from this indirect evidence that pesantren were in existence in Java by at least the sixteenth century after the foundation of Demak, the first Islamic kingdom in Java.

The origin of this type of institution is also debatable. Some speculate that it is a continuation of the system of zawiyah or khanqah, which was very popular among Sufis in the Middle East. Others argue that it was adapted from pre-Islamic educational institution where Hinduism and Buddhism were taught. Some of the reasons advanced by the latter group are the non-payment of teachers; calling the students by the Sanskrit term “santri” (from sastri, meaning those studying the sacred book), and not ṭullāb; the nature of the pesantren, where students stay in dormitories and learn only religious books as in Indic educational institution rather than the Arabic madrasah, where non-religious subjects had been introduced since the eleventh century; and the tradition of receiving donations for the maintenance of pesantren and their students as in the Hindu-Buddhism tradition, although it is also common to Muslim society in the practice of waqf, ṣadaqah,

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14 This theory is proposed by Nurcholis Madjid. See Nurcholish Madjid, “Tasawuf dan Pesantren,” in *Pesantren dan Pembaharuan*, ed. Dawam Rahardjo (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1974), 104-105. Zawiyah and Khanqah are specific places used for solitude among Sufi followers. With the popularity of Sufism and, especially after the establishment of Sufi orders in the eleventh century, mystical activities were no longer accommodated in the house of their masters but in a separate and larger venue, which was called either zawijah or khanqah. Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975), 231-232.
15 There are a number of scholars who argue this. See, for example, Brugmans, *Geschiedenis van het Onderwijs in Nederlandsch-Indië*, 11; Soegarda Poerbakawatja, *Pendidikan dalam Alam Indonesia Merdeka* (Jakarta: Gunung Agung, 1970), 18-19; and Bruinessen, *Kitab Kuning, Pesantren dan Tarekat*, 23-24.
and zakāt. Similarities of the pesantren in Java with pre-Islamic educational institutions are more apparent than with the zawiyah and khanqah, the Sufi place of solitude and mystical practices. This Sufi institution is more a place for collective remembering of God (dhikr) than a place for learning religious knowledge, which is the main function of the pesantren.

The development of pesantren, especially in the early periods, is also less known as no documents are available. There is little doubt, however, that the pesantren expanded tremendously during the nineteenth century and became the pivotal institution for learning Islamic sciences. The rapid development was partly due to the increasing number of people performing the hajj with the lifting of restrictions imposed by the Dutch colonial government, the invention of steamships, and the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. The Suez Canal enabled far more ships than previously to go to the Holy Land. The earliest data on the number of pesantren in Java can be found in the 1885 government report (Kolonial Verslag). According to this report, there were 14,929 pesantren in Java and Madura with 222,623 students.¹⁶ Van den Berg, however, doubts that number. According to him, around four-fifth of them were in basic Islamic education in the villages, where students only learn to recite the Qur’an and to perform their religious obligations, especially prayers. Only about 3000 could be properly categorized as pesantren, and this number mostly included the basic pesantren where only simple

¹⁶ This number did not include Yogyakarta, and there was no reason for its exclusion. See, L. van den Berg, "Het Mohammedaansche Godsdiensstonderwijs op Java en Madoera en de Daarbij Gebruikte Arabische Boeken," Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, no. 31 (1886): 518.
Arabic books were taught. Berg believes that only about 100 pesantren taught advanced texts on Islamic knowledge.\textsuperscript{17}

The history of the pesantren shows a steady development. The introduction of modern education by the Dutch, especially following the Ethical Policy in 1901, did not halt the pesantren’s progress. In fact, the pesantren adopted a modern type of education while maintaining its traditional values. Madrasah and the later secular schools or sekolah, are found in many pesantren; and they operate side by side with the traditional education. Steenbrink’s prediction that the pesantren would come to an end following the wave of modernization of education did not materialize.\textsuperscript{18} According to the recent data issued by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Indonesia, there are now about 24,200 pesantren with more than 3.6 million students throughout Indonesia.\textsuperscript{19} Of these, Java and Madura alone accounted for some 16,700 pesantren with more than 2.6 million students.\textsuperscript{20} Although the accuracy of this data, especially regarding the number of students,\textsuperscript{21} might be questioned, what this shows is the ongoing development and progress of the pesantren.

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid.: 519. Around two decades earlier, van der Chijs mentions the number of pesantren in several districts of Java, but did not provide the total pesantren in all Java area. See, J.A van der Chijs, "Bijdragen tot de Geschiedenis van het Inlandsch Onderwijs in Nederlandsch-Indie," \textit{Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde} 14 (1864): 228-231. Dhofier who compiled the data based on the article found that the total number of pesantren was 1,853 with 16,556 students. Dhofier, \textit{The Pesantren Tradition}, 15.

\textsuperscript{18} Karel A. Steenbrink, \textit{Pesantren, Madrasah, Sekolah: Pendidikan Islam dalam Kurun Moderen} (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1974), 7.


\textsuperscript{21} The number of students of some pesantren is inaccurate. In the district of Tuban, East Java, for example, there is a pesantren with 16,000 female students. This number is very unlikely, if not impossible. The more plausible number, I think, is 1600. In Klaten, Central Java, an unpopular pesantren has more than 7 thousand students, which is also unlikely. A pesantren in Nganjuk, East Jawa, with total student of 3300, was counted twice. For the number of institution, it seems more reliable as they are provided with the
According to Dhofier, the pesantren can be divided into two major types: salafi (traditional) and khalafi (modern). By salafi he means the pesantren that “preserve the teaching of classical texts as essential education,” while khalafi refers to those that “have either introduced the teaching of secular subjects or have incorporated secular schools.”

In other words, the latter category no longer teaches classical Arabic texts. The Ministry, however, categorizes the pesantren into three different types: traditional (56%), modern (13%) and combination of both (31%).

The classical texts commonly taught in the pesantren can be grouped into at least six branches: Arabic grammar also known as instrumental sciences (‘ilm al-‘ālāt) that consists of nahw (syntax), saraf (inflection) and balāghah (rhetoric); fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) including usul al-fiqh (foundation of Islamic jurisprudence); tawhid (Islamic theology); hadith (the Prophet’s tradition); tafsir (Qur’anic exegesis); and taşawuf (Islamic mysticism). There are other branches of knowledge that are taught in a limited number of pesantren, such as falaq (astronomy), ‘arūd (prosody) and mantiq (logic). Not all pesantren teach each of these branches of knowledge but most of them teach some books on fiqh and Arabic grammar. The latter is important for reading and understanding the Arabic books used in the pesantren. Tawhīd is also another branch commonly taught in most pesantren.

addresses so, theoretically, they are traceable. However, I found in the district of Pati, Central Java, a couple of madrasah are counted as pesantren.


The fact that almost every pesantren offers the study of fiqh is a demonstration of its popularity among santri. Bruinessen even argues that fiqh is “the Islamic science par excellence” among pesantren communities. Fiqh is most useful because it prescribes proper everyday behavior for Muslims, including what course of action is recommended and which forbidden. Bruinessen also points to the fact that the first part of the fiqh concerns practices that have become the pillars of Islam. For Muslims, the pillars (arkan) of Islam consist of the acknowledgment that there is no god but Allah and Muhammad is His messenger, performing the five daily prayers, observing the fasting month, paying alms tax, and doing the hajj or pilgrimage. Except for the first, all these pillars are discussed in fiqh books. Since the main function of the pesantren is to educate and prepare students to become pious Muslims, it is very reasonable that the kiyai stress this particular branch so that the students will have sufficient knowledge to perform these pillars.

Within each branch of Islamic knowledge, there are texts that are taught differently in the pesantren according to the personal preference of the kiyai. Within a pesantren, different titles may also be studied by different groups of students. Simple books are studied by beginners while more detailed and complex books are reserved for advanced students. It is worth noting that all texts used in the pesantren are written by ulama who follow orthodox Sunni, especially Shafi’ite in fiqh, Ash’ari in theology, and Ghazali in Sufism. All texts are also written in Arabic, which confirms Dhofier’s

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25 Comprehensive lists of such texts grouped in each category with an indication of their level of usage are provided by Bruinessen. Ibid.: 240-267.
argument that one of the basic elements of traditional pesantren education is the teaching of classical Arabic texts.

Such texts are taught to students using two different methods. The first is called *bandongan* or *weton*, where a teacher reads and explains a text word by word, while the students take notes in their books. When a teacher explains the meaning of sentences, there are certain words added to them to indicate the grammatical position of different words within those sentences, such as *utawi* for *mubtada’* (subject of a nominal sentence), *iku* for *khabar* (predicate of a nominal sentence), *sopo* for *fā‘il* (subject of a verbal sentence), *ing* for *maf‘ūl* (object of a verbal sentence), and others. A teacher also pronounces the last character of each word of the Arabic sentences differently (a, i, or u) based on its grammatical position within such sentences. Therefore, when a teacher reads and explains a book, students know the grammatical position of each word, how it should be read, and its meaning. Their notebooks are then referred to as *jenggotan* (bearded) as notes are inserted between lines. The santri keep all information learned from their teachers in this way, and it is easily retrievable for review when needed. The degree of “beardedness” varies as the bandongan method is open to both elementary and advanced students. The more advanced the students the less bearded their books, as they make notes only on complex or intricate sentences that are hard for them to understand.

The second method is called *sorogan*, where an individual student reads a book in front of a kiyai or teacher, who checks on the correctness of the reading and comprehension. This is mostly applied to advanced students who are being prepared to

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read or teach the book in front of others. Depending on the need, a teacher may pick a certain part of the book to be read at one meeting or an entire book to be read at a series of meetings. If the latter, the process may last a long time since only a few pages can be read and discussed at one meeting.

A third method of learning among santri is called *mushawarah* (discussion). Unlike the previous two where students meet a teacher in the process of learning, in the mushawarah learning is between students. Questions or problems, which mostly fall within the fiqh category, are posed by either the organizer or the kiyai to students, who are expected to discuss the problem or question and seek a solution. Students refer to a number of books, and the direction of the debate may be influenced by these references. Through discussion, an agreement is reached regarding the solution to the problem. If there is no consensus, the problem is submitted to the kiyai or is left to the audience to determine which of the opinions they favor. Since this process of learning requires access to books, those participating in the discussion are mostly advanced students although the beginners are also welcomed to attend and follow the discussion. When there are various pesantren in close proximity to one another, a mushawarah may include students from these neighboring pesantren as well. In such cases, the mushawarah becomes a showcase for the intellectual prowess and hence prestige of the participating pesantren.

While the main function of a pesantren is to teach Islamic knowledge, it is also a place to train the younger generation to be devout Muslims by implementing Islamic knowledge, especially in the performance of religious rituals. It is necessary not only to learn the details of prayer, but to perform it properly. With this in mind, most pesantren draft by-laws that require santri to perform collectively (*ṣalāt al-jamāʼah*) the five
obligatory prayers; adhere to the codes of conduct between students and between students and teachers; prohibit the possession of items deemed unlawful by Islam; maintain a proper dress code, etc. These by-laws are meant to educate and train students to be practicing Muslims who are equipped with ethics acceptable to the principles of orthodox Sunni. In drafting the by-laws, Sufi ethics become the reference. It is in this context that Dhofier argues that the pesantren tradition is strongly influenced by Sufism, especially with regard to the ṭarīqah. While the term tasawuf among the pesantren community is used to indicate the intellectual aspect of Sufism, its ethical and practical aspects are referred to as tariqah or tarekat. The first is implemented in teaching Sufism texts, such as those written by Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, while the latter is represented in daily activities of kiyai and santri, such as dhikr (remembering God) after daily prayers.27

It is this Sufi-influenced tradition of the pesantren that led Abdurrahman Wahid, one of the most famous Muslim intellectuals and the fourth President of Indonesia, to argue that the pesantren is a sub-culture of the Javanese. As one who was born into a pesantren family, Wahid argues that the pesantren has three distinctive characteristics: life styles, religious values, and ethics on relation between santri and kiyai. Students in the pesantren live modestly in terms of food and accommodations. Most of them cook for themselves, and the rooms are not provided with mattresses. The clothes they wear are also far from luxurious. Religious values based on the Shari’ah supplemented with Sufi rites are stressed. They are not only satisfied with obligations set up in the books of fiqh, such as praying five times a day and fasting during the month of Ramadan, but also perform services suggested by Sufism, such as dhikr and a number of recommended

prayers and fasting. The motivation of students in learning Islamic texts is not for worldly purposes, such as getting a job or making money, but for the life hereafter. Students also obey the kiyai completely, hoping to receive *barakah* (blessing) from him. Kiyai are not only teachers and the owners of pesantren but also sources of happiness. This is a life-long relationship between the two. Once students come to study with a certain kiyai, they become his students for life. There is no “former” or “ex” teachers for students in the pesantren. All these characteristics, according to Wahid, are influences of Sufism. The pesantren are thus independent complexes which are separate from the surrounding villages and become a subculture of Javanese society.\(^{28}\)

In short, the pesantren is the leading center for studying Islam in Java. It has existed for centuries, and it continues to flourish to the present day. While its main function is to provide education for the Muslim youths on Islamic sciences, it also is a training center for performing religious rituals. In other words, the younger generation is not only exposed to religious knowledge but also prepared to be guardians of Sunni orthodox Islam. The langgar or musalla and mosque are other places for learning about Islam, but the participants are different from those in the pesantren and the method is less intensive.

**Langgar and Mosque**

Before entering a pesantren, those aged between 5 and 10 years have usually already begun learning to pray and read the Qur’an at a langgar or musalla and at a

The main function of the langgar and the mosque is to perform collective prayers. As is widely known, Islam requires its adherents to perform several obligations, one of which is to pray five times a day and once a week at the Friday congregational prayer. The daily prayers may be performed alone at any location but it is recommended that this be done together with others, which is known as ṣalāt al-jamā‘ah. The minimum number to perform a collective prayer is two, so that it may be performed at home with another member of the family. However, some go to a langgar or mosque to perform a prayer with their neighbors, which is the main function of these two buildings. Unlike a mosque which in many cases is the only one in the village, a langgar is found in most neighborhoods. Those who intend to perform collective prayers tend therefore to go to a langgar to be with people they know. It is only on Friday that all Muslims, particularly males, need to attend the mosque to perform Friday congregational prayer as this is not supposed to be carried out in a langgar.

In addition to their main function as a place for collective prayers, the langgar and the mosque are also used for other purposes, such as community meetings, celebration of

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religious holidays, *tahlilan*, and *ngaji* or *pengajian*. The last function is interesting to discuss further as it has a direct correlation with the transmission of knowledge. The root of *ngaji*, as a verb, and *pengajian*, as a noun, is *aji* which has several meanings. In Old Javanese, *aji* means holy writ, sacred texts, magically powerful formula, while in more modern Javanese, it mean value, worth, king, magic spell, as well as recitation of the Quran. The words *ngaji* and *pengajian* are now commonly used to refer to learning or studying knowledge relating to Islam. Learning how to perform prayers and to recite the Qur’an among younger pupils is commonly referred to as *ngaji*, but learning how to read books written in the Latin alphabet is not. Similarly, learning religious knowledge among santri is called *ngaji* but not learning sciences at schools. Ceramah (lectures) by a kiyai or preacher that discuss any aspects of Islam is called *pengajian* but lectures on general issues are not. As these words have been adopted into the Indonesian language, there are other grammatical forms such as *mengkaji* and *pengkajian* to indicate studies in general, while *ngaji* and *pengajian* have kept their meaning as learning Islamic-related knowledge, particularly the Qur’an. To return to the initial point of this section, the langgar or musalla and mosque are other places outside the pesantran where Islamic knowledge is transmitted to the children and the general public.

The langgar and the mosques are places that provide an early education on Islam for the young generation. They teach the Arabic script, the proper recitation of the

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30 The term *tahlilan* is from *tahlil* which is the statement that there is no god but Allah. Tahlilan, among Javanese, means reciting litanies that consist of Qur’anic verses, tahlil itself, istighfar (seeking God’s forgiveness), and salawat (praying for the Prophet).
32 *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*, 4 ed. (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2008), 604. According to this dictionary, however, the root of the words is *kaji* instead of *aji*. 

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Qur’an, and the prayers.\textsuperscript{33} Children gather at a langgar or mosque in the late afternoon, or about an hour before sunset, waiting their turn to recite the Qur’an in front of the teacher. The learning method is individual, similar to that of sorogan in the pesantren, where a person reads the Qur’an and the teacher checks the pronunciation and makes any necessary correction. When it is time for the Maghrib prayer, they pray together. After the prayer, some of them remain at langgar to continue learning the Qur’an or just to have a chat and wait for the ‘Isha prayer. Only very recently has this method of learning been modified with the introduction of Iqra’ and Qira’ati, the fast learning method of reciting the Qur’an.\textsuperscript{34} With this method, the langgar and mosques are no longer the only places for learning Qur’an recitation for younger pupils as it is now widespread in other educational institutions known as TPQ (Taman Pendidikan al-Quran, School for the Study of the Qur’an). Private teachers also provide this type of learning in their homes.

As a learning center for adult Muslims, however, the langgar and mosque are rarely discussed. Dirdjosanjoto is among the few scholars who are aware of this function. In his ethnographic assessment of the role of kiyai in facing the social and political development in the area of Tayu, Pati, Central Java, Dirdjosanjoto shows the different but complementary roles of kiyai pesantren and kiyai langgar in protecting the umat (Ar. ummah) by teaching Muslims to cope and adjust to social and political change. By kiyai pesantren, Dirdjosanjoto means the religious figures who lead the pesantren, while kiyai

\textsuperscript{33} See for example Berg, "Het Mohammedaansche Godsdienstonderwijs," 519; Dhofier, \textit{The Pesantren Tradition}, 3-4; and Steenbrink, \textit{Pesantren, Madrasah, Sekolah}, 10-12.

\textsuperscript{34} Iqra’ consists of six small booklets composed by K.H. As’ad Humam of Yogyakarta, and Qira’ati is a composition by K.H. Dahlan Salim Zarkasyi of Semarang. Iqra’ emerged first in the late 1980s and became popular throughout Indonesia, while Qira’ati began in the 1990s and is popular among members of Nahdlatul Ulama in Central and East Java. Anna Gade provides an ethnographic study of this method of learning in Makassar, South Sulawesi, and she also compares it with the more traditional method. The new method is known for its faster learning while the traditional is acknowledged for its deeper learning. See Gade, \textit{Perfection Makes Practice}, 114-163.
langgar are those respected by the community for their religious knowledge and leadership but with no pesantren. While the kiyai pesantren usually teach Islamic knowledge to their students in the pesantren, the kiyai langgar does the same for the community at a langgar or mosque. Kiyai pesantren have relatively higher social status as they might emerge as regional and even national elite, while kiyai langgar are only known locally. However, they perform complementary and mutually supportive roles.

The Kiyai langgar are always in need of support and endorsement from the kiyai pesantren, especially when they face challenges or initiate activities at the village level; whereas, the kiyai pesantren often need the kiyai langgar to communicate to the local communities any program or policy advocated by the social organization favored by the former kiyai.  

Another term which is popular and equivalent to the kiyai langgar is kiyai kampung, or the village kiyai.

There is no doubt, therefore, that, in addition to the pesantren, the langgar and mosques are places of Islamic learning for youngsters learning to recite the Qur’an and for adult Muslims learning about Islamic knowledge. Geertz indirectly confirms this function when he mentions that langgar and mosque are the terminal points of a network that spreads orthodox concepts that began in Mecca.  

Although he does not explain how it works, it must have been through learning activities known as pengajian.

Across Central Java, teaching religious knowledge to adult Muslims is conducted in mosques and less frequently in langgar, and such learning is different in certain

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36 Sanusi, an ulama who teaches Pegon books in Bareng, Kudus, identifies himself as a kiyai kampung because he has no pesantren. Personal communication, June 4, 2008. This term was recently popularized by the former President Abdurrahman Wahid as his rallying point in the general election in 2004.
respects from that at a pesantren. First, the audiences of the pengajian are mostly adults in contrast to the school-age students at pesantren. They are husbands, in some cases also wives, who have family responsibilities but seek to strengthen their knowledge of Islam in their daily lives. They are common people who might and might not have gone to pesantren when they were young. Second, while the learning at pesantren usually takes place every day, pengajian at langgar and mosques is held only once or twice a week. The day and time of the pengajian differ from one place to another, depending on the teacher and the audience. Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday seem to be favored over other days. Since many in the audience are wage-earners during the day, most pengajian are held in the late afternoon and evening. Third, while the santri in pesantren bring their books and take notes while the kiyai reads the lessons, only a few of those attending a pengajian bring books that are read by the teacher. Most of them attend the pengajian in order to listen to what the kiyai says and do not take notes. Fourth, books that are read in such pengajian are not always in Arabic as is the case in pesantren. Some kiyai use Arabic books but others use Pegon books. The latter is found, for example, in the mosques of Wedarijaksa (Pati), Bareng (Kudus), Tahunan (Jepara), and Sayung (Demak)—all in Central Java.

The selection of books to teach is the kiyai’s choice, though in some places the community may offer suggestions. Most of the books read in the pengajian are categorized as fiqh, a few are on tawhīd and Sufism, but none on Arabic grammar. The popularity of fiqh in the langgar and mosque is related to the fact that the kiyai are graduates of pesantren, which lay great emphasis on fiqh as of primary importance to
Muslims in performing the basic Islamic obligations, such as cleanliness, prayers, and fasting.\textsuperscript{38}

There are different reasons why some kiyai use Pegon books instead of Arabic. Some do not feel confident in using Arabic books as their knowledge of Arabic is limited and they do not have enough time to prepare such books by studying with more knowledgeable ulama.\textsuperscript{39} Others argue that Pegon books are easier for the participants to understand and thus enable them to internalize the information in order to improve their religious observances.\textsuperscript{40} Regardless of the reason, the audiences of Pegon books are lay people who seek greater understanding of religious knowledge to improve their performance of Islamic rituals and obligations.

The kiyai’s method in pengajian is similar to that of bandongan, which is popular in pesantren. The teacher reads the text and then provides an explanation. If the book is in Arabic, first he reads the Arabic text, provides the meaning in Javanese, then provides further details. The bandongan in pesantren is a one-way process of learning, where the kiyai reads the book and the santri take notes in their own books without interruption for questions. In the pengajian, on the other hand, the sessions are more informal and the learning is a two-way process. The participants often raise questions if they have any problem, have difficulty in understanding the kiyai’s explanations, or seek further clarification. This happens especially when the topics discussed by the kiyai relate to daily rituals and activities. When teaching in the mosque or langgar, the kiyai also often

\textsuperscript{38} Personal communication with Kiyai Sanusi, Bareng, Kudus, on June 4, 2008.
\textsuperscript{39} Comments by Kiyai Muhammad Ahmad Sahal Mahfudz, the leader of Pesantren Maslakul Huda, Pati, and the Rais Aam (supreme leader) of Nahdlatul Ulama as well as the President of Majelis Ulama Indoneisa (Chamber of Indonesian Ulama) in an interview on February 3, 2008.
\textsuperscript{40} This argument was advanced by Kiyai Sanusi, Bareng, Kudus, in the interview on June 4, 2008.
provides a broader explanation of the texts in order to make the participants understand
the topic more easily. Further explanation by the kiyai is also meant to enable the lay
people to gain a correct understanding of what they learn and then internalize it. A crucial
factor in this transmission of knowledge is the use of the vernacular, i.e. Javanese, by the
kiyai.

Although learning in a pesantren is different from that in a langgar or mosque,
they share certain features. First, the teachers of both types of Islamic learning are
regarded by their participants as having the authority to dispense Islamic knowledge.
Kiyai in the pesantren, langgar and the mosques have all studied at pesantren and have
sufficient knowledge to teach Islam. Second, what is taught is categorized as Sunni
orthodoxy, and all books studied, either in Arabic or Pegon, follow the Shafi’i school of
thought in fiqh, Ash’ariyah in theology, and Ghazali in Sufism.

Islamic Scholarship in the Pesantren

Despite the fact that the pesantren has existed in Java for several centuries, it has
rarely produced scholars who have written books. The reason seems to be that the
tradition of learning in the pesantren has so far paid more attention to knowledge
transmission than knowledge production. Discussing the scholarship in the pesantren,
therefore, rarely involves works produced by the pesantren community.

In the 1880s, van den Berg published an article detailing the Arabic books taught
in the pesantren across Java and Madura.\footnote{Berg, "Het Mohammedaansche Godsdienstonderwijs."}

About a century later, Bruinessen assessed a
similar issue, not only in the two major islands but throughout Indonesia. The interesting fact is that books that were popular in the late nineteenth century are still used a century later. Although Bruinessen notes addition of new books, especially in the field of ḥadīth and tafsīr, most books taught in the pesantren, with a few exceptions, are still the same. This means that change in the pesantren occurs very slowly, earning it the reputation of being traditional.

As already mentioned, books taught in the pesantren can be grouped into several branches of Islamic knowledge. Among those branches, three of them (fiqh, tawhīd, and tasawuf) are worth discussing as they directly influence the daily activities of Muslims. While tawhīd deals with the Islamic conception of the Supreme Being, fiqh regulates rituals dedicated to God as well as interpersonal activities. Sufism is needed to refine human behavior beyond the legal categories of fiqh. In this section, therefore, I will highlight scholarship of these three branches of knowledge popularly taught in pesantren and, sometimes, also in langgar and mosques. All of the following exposition refers to the classical Arabic texts, which will provide a measure of whether the localization introduced by Salih is still in line with the orthodoxy contained in these sources.

a. Fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence)

Fiqh, especially the Shafi‘ite, is taught in all pesantren. Technically, it can be said that there is no pesantren which does not teach any book of fiqh of all different types and levels. Fiqh discusses the legal aspects of human activities in relation to both God and

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42Bruinessen, "Kitab Kuning: Books in Arabic Script." This article seems to have been expanded to become a book in Indonesian, Bruinessen, Kitab Kuning, Pesantren dan Tarekat.
other human beings. All rituals that are mandatory for Muslims and the proper
observances of such are assessed in the fiqh. It also explains a number of recommended
rituals to improve their quality before God. In addition, it regulates the legal aspects of
interpersonal activities, especially in economy and marriage. For this reason, Bruinessen
has asserted that “works on fiqh form the real substance of pesantren education.”

Among books of fiqh that are popular in pesantren are: *Fatḥ al-Qarīb* by
Muhammad ibn Qasim al-Ghazzi (d. 1512 CE), which is the commentary of *al-Taqrīb* or
also called *Ghāyat al-Ikhtisār* by Muhammad ibn al-Husayn Abi Shuja’ al-Isfahani (d.
1042 CE), and its gloss *Ḥāshiyah Bajūri* by Ibrahim bin Muhammad al-Bajuri (d. 1860
CE); *Taḥrīr Taqrīb al-Lubāb* by Zakariya al-Ansari (d. 1520 CE) and its commentary
*Tuhfat al-Ṭullāb bi-Sharḥ Matn Taḥrīr Taqrīb al-Lubāb* by the same author himself;
*Fatḥ al-Wahhāb bi-Sharḥ Manhaj al-Ṭullāb*, another commentary of Zakariya al-Ansari
on his *Manhaj al-Ṭullāb*; and *Fatḥ al-Muʿīn* by Zayn al-Din al-Malibari (d. 1521) and its
gloss *Iʿānat al-Ṭālibīn* by Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad Shata (d.1892 CE).

In general, the contents of such books of fiqh are divided into two major parts,
namely ‘ibādāt (worship, rituals) and muʿāmalāt (human relations). The first part, the
worship, consists of several chapters beginning with *tahārah* (purification), followed by
ṣalāt (prayer), zakāt (alms tax), ṣiyām (fasting), and hajj (pilgrimage). Purification means
to clean the body from the so-called minor and major ḥadath (impurities). Before
performing rituals, especially prayers, a person must be clean or pure from the two types
of ḥadath. Water is the main means for purification. However, if one cannot find water
or, for a particular reason such as illness, cannot use it, he/she may use dust. This is

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43 Bruinessen, "Kitab Kuning: Books in Arabic Script," 244.
known as *tayammum*. Water is the first thing that is discussed in purification. Muslim scholars categorize water into three groups: pure and purifying (*muṭahhir*), pure but not purifying (*tāhir* or *musta’mal*), and dirty (*najis*). The only water valid for purifying is the first category, *muṭahhir*, which is water not mixed with anything and not having been used for purifying.\(^44\)

The next section of the chapter of *ṭahārah* is *wuḍū* (ablution). *Wuḍū* is to wash certain parts of the body as the way to purify oneself from minor ḥadath. Fiqh books usually explain how to do *wuḍū* properly and what actions are required. First is to wash one’s face while stating the *niyyah* (intention). *Niyyah* is very crucial not only in *wuḍū* but also in all rituals within Islam. Without niyyah which is proclaimed at the beginning of the rite, such a rite would be useless. After washing one’s face, the next action is to wash the arms up to the elbow, followed by rubbing part of the head. Finally, one has to wash the feet up to the ankle. These are required actions of *wuḍū*. There are also recommended actions in *wuḍū*, such as washing the palms of the hands, rinsing one’s mouth, inhaling water, rubbing one’s ears, and beginning with the right then the left.

While *wuḍū* is required before performing prayers, it is recommended before doing other things, such as sleeping, eating, bathing, even having sex. Minor ḥadath which nullifies *wuḍū* are urinating, defecating (including farting), falling asleep, being insane, touching

\(^44\) The second type is a small quantity of water that has been mixed with some clean things or has been used for purifying. If there is a lot of water, then it depends on whether or not the water changes because of the mixture. If it changes either in color, smell or taste, then it is the same. But if not, then the water is categorized as *mutahir*. The last category is water into which some filth has fallen. The principles are similar to the second category, i.e. if it is a small quantity, the water becomes *najis*. See, Muhammad ibn Qasim al-Ghazzi, *Fatḥ al-Qarib al-Muqīb fi Sharḥ Alfādh al-Taqrīb*, 3-4, Abu Yahya Zakariya al-Ansari, *Tuhfat al-Ṭullāb bi-Sharḥ Mutn Tahrīr Tanqīḥ al-Lubāb*, 3-4, and Zayn al-Din ibn Abd al-Aziz al-Malibari, *Fatḥ al-Muʿīn bi-Sharḥ Qurrat al-ʿAyn*, 5-7.
one’s own genitals with the inside of the hand, and having physical contact with another sex who has no familial relation.45

The section after wuḍū is ghusl (taking a bath). Ghusl is an act of purification mainly from major ḥadath by pouring water over the entire body with the correct intention. There should be no part of the body covered with something that impedes water from flowing onto the skin. If there is anything, such as a bandage or paint, that obstructs the water from the skin while doing ghusl and also wuḍū, the purifying act is incomplete and needs to be repeated. Ghusl is required for Muslims after sexual intercourse, masturbation, menstruation, and childbirth, known as the major ḥadath. In addition, a dead person also has to be bathed before being buried. Ghusl is recommended for other purposes, such as on Fridays, the days of Id al-Fitr and Id al-Adha, before performing prayer during lunar and solar eclipses, a new convert to Islam, entering Mecca and Medina, and starting ihram or wearing the hajj garb.46

Purification is not always done with water. For certain reasons, a Muslim may use dust for purification as a substitute for both wuḍū and ghusl; this is called tayammum. The section on tayammum explains when this is allowed, such as when there is a lack of water or because the use of water may endanger someone who is ill. If the reason for tayammum is a lack of water, it becomes automatically invalid when water is available. Unlike wuḍū, tayammum needs to be done during the time of a certain prayer and is good only for one obligatory prayer. For another prayer, another tayammum has to be done.

45 al-Ghazzi, Fatḥ al-Qariḥ, 4-6, al-Ansari, Tuḥfat al-Ṭullāb, 4-8, and al-Malibari, Fatḥ al-Muʿīn, 8-15.
despite not having experienced any ḥadath. In doing tayammum, one has to state niyyah and rub only the face and two arms up to the elbow with the dust.\(^{47}\)

In order to perform a prayer, it is not only the body that needs to be purified with wuḍū and, if necessary, ghusl, but the place for prayer and the clothes to be worn must also be free from najasāt (uncleanliness). Any fluid that comes out from the vagina or penis, except for sperm, is najis, as is anything discharged from the anus. Also najis are blood, vomit, pig, dog, and any corpse except that of fish and grasshoppers. Therefore, if the place of prayer or clothes come in contact with any of those dirty items, they need to be washed with water before they can be worn while praying. Special cases are for things licked by a pig or a dog. Those need to be washed seven times. Anything najasat is not allowed to be consumed by Muslims.\(^{48}\)

The last section of the ṭahārah deals with ḥayḍ (menstruation), nifās (post-natal bleeding), and istihādah (chronic bleeding). During the period of ḥayḍ and nifās, a woman is not allowed to pray, fast, recite and bring the Qur’an, enter the mosque, perform tawāf (circling the Ka’bah) nor have sexual intercourse. A woman does not need to make up obligatory prayers missed during ḥayḍ and nifās, but she has to make up fasting. The minimum duration of ḥayḍ is one day and night and the maximum is fifteen days, while the average is six or seven days. For nifās, the minimum period is one time during the delivery and the maximum is sixty days while the average is forty days.


woman who experiences istihādah is required to perform obligatory prayers and fasting; but she must avoid other activities prohibited during ḥayḍ and nifās. ⁴⁹

After discussing the ṭahārah, the next chapter of fiqh books is about ṣalāt. Ṣalāt is a specific prayer that consists of both physical gestures and oral statements. Four gestures within ṣalāt are standing, bowing, prostration, and sitting. The five-time daily obligatory prayers are one of the main obligations of Muslims and regarded as the most significant. ⁵⁰ Unlike other obligations that are only required if the individual is capable of performing them, ṣalāt is required for all adult Muslims whatever their condition and situation, whether they are rich or poor, healthy or sick. The only exception is for women during menstruation and post-natal bleeding. Those on a journey may shorten the four rakā’at (literally means bowing, but may be said as units) prayers into two and may perform two prayers at once. It is understandable, therefore, that the adherence to Islam is often measured by how faithfully one performs these particular obligations. To that end, the discussion of prayer is usually given in detail, from the time set for each prayer, prerequisites of prayer, basic elements, suggested actions and statements, to a detailed explanation of various types of prayer.

There are four types of prayer: individual obligatory (farḍ ʻain), communal obligatory (farḍ kifāyah), recommended (sunnah), and undesirable (makruh). The individual obligatory prayers are those performed five times a day at Zuhr (noon), ‘Aṣr (afternoon), Maghrib (sunset), ‘Isha (night), and Ṣubh (dawn). Each of Zuhr, ‘Aṣr and

⁵⁰ The Prophet Muhammad once said that salat is the pillar of the religion. Those who perform it strengthen the religion and those who leave it are destroying it.
ʻIsha has four *rakaʾat* (bowing), Maghrib has three, and Șubḥ has two, so the total number of required prayers a day is seventeen rakaʾat.

The communal obligatory prayer is fulfilled if the șalāt is performed by one person in a community. One prayer agreed upon by all ulama as the communal obligatory șalāt is the prayer for the dead. In Islam, there has to be a proper prayer for the deceased before burial can take place. If no one in the Muslim community performs the prayer, then everyone in that community is sinful. Some fiqh books explain that performing șalāt *al-jamāʿah* (collective prayer) five-times daily is regarded as a communal obligation, though majority categorize it as strongly recommended.

There are a number of recommended prayers. Among the most recommended are the two ʿĪd prayers (the ʿĪd al-Fiṭr after the end of Ramadan and the ʿĪd al-Aḍha on the tenth day of the twelfth month, Dhu al-Hijjah); prayers during the lunar and solar eclipses (*salāt al-khusūf* and *al-kusūf*, respectively); and prayer for rain (*salāt al-istiṣqā*). The other recommended prayers are those before and after the individual obligatory prayers. There are still more recommended prayers, such as /lists of morning, istikhārah (seeking proper guidance), *tarāwīḥ* (at night of Ramadan), etc.

The undesirable (*makrūh*) prayers are those performed while restraining one’s urine and the urge to defecate; while thirsty and hungry when there is available water and food; and individually while there is a congregation. There are also certain times when unconditional prayers are prohibited, such as in the period between ʿAṣr and Maghrib and from Șubḥ till sunrise.51

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Zakāt (alms tax) is an obligation for Muslims whose wealth reaches a minimum limit which is known as nişāb. Those who are liable to pay zakāt are required to set aside a small part of their wealth and distribute it to the poor and needy. The chapter on zakāt in fiqh books usually begins with different types of wealth that are subject to zakāt. They are cattle (camel, cow, and goat), gold and silver, crops, and commerce. Except for crops, the wealth has to be in the possession of the individual for a year and must never go below the nişāb for the owner to be required to pay the zakāt. For crops, zakāt has to be paid when the value reaches the nişāb after production costs are deducted. In addition, Muslims are also required to pay zakāt al-fitr which has to be paid at the end of the fasting month. This must be paid by everyone in the family, regardless of age, as long as the family has the ability to pay.

The nişāb of each of those four items varies and, since the books of fiqh are mostly written by Arab scholars, it is usually stated in Arabic measurements which are not always comprehensible to the Javanese. The nişāb for crops, for example, is five wasaq (cargo) or 1,600 Iraqi riṭl, while the nişāb for gold is twenty dinar and for silver 200 dirham. These values are not familiar to the Javanese; and therefore the kiyai usually provide the Javanese equivalences. The amount that needs to be paid for zakāt is 2.5 percent of the wealth.\(^{52}\)

The next chapter of fiqh books is siyām (fasting), which means that there should be no intake of food or drink from fajr (dawn) to sunset. The fast during the whole month of Ramadan (the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar) is an obligation for all adult

Muslims, except for women who are menstruating and during post-natal bleeding. Although they are not allowed to fast, they need to make it up later. A sick person and people on a journey are permitted not to fast during Ramadan but they also have to make up the days they miss. In addition to avoiding food and drink during the day, the person fasting is also required to avoid anything that can invalidate it, such as having sexual relations, masturbation, and inserting something to his/her anus and vagina. It is recommended that while fasting people increase their remembrance of God by reciting the Qur’an and avoiding useless actions and conversation.

While the obligatory fasting is only during the month of Ramadan, there are certain days that Muslims are recommended to fast, such as on Mondays and Thursdays, days of a full moon, the eighth and ninth days of Dhū al-Ḥijjah (the twelfth month), and the ninth and tenth days of Muḥarram (the first month). However, there are also days that Muslims are prohibited from fasting. They are the two festivities of ‘Īd al-Fitr (the first day of Shawwal, the tenth month) and ‘Īd al-Aḍḥa (the tenth day of Dhū al-Ḥijjah) and three days of after ‘Īd al-Aḍḥa, known as the days of tashrik. These five days are holidays for Muslims to mark the end of Ramadan and the hajj or pilgrimage.53

The hajj is a one-time obligation for all Muslims if they possess the resources to perform it. Details of the hajj are discussed in the last chapter of the first part of fiqh books. People are required to perform the hajj when they fulfill all of these conditions: Muslim, adult, sane, sufficient funds, available transportation, safe journey, and reaching Mecca before the session begins. If any of these conditions is absent, then one is not

required to perform the hajj. Once having completed the hajj, a Muslim is not required to do it again.

There are several activities that are basic to the proper performing of the hajj: wearing the *ihram* (specific type of dress for the hajj) at the designated places with the correct intention, *ṭawāf* (encircling the Ka’bah), staying in Arafah, walking between Safa and Marwa, throwing *jumra* (small stones in Mina) and cutting some of the hair off at the end. Some recommended activities are spending the night in Mina and Muzdalifa, shouting *talbiyah* (a statement of compliance), and circumambulating the Ka’bah upon arrival in and departure from Mecca. The hajj is performed only in the twelfth month, Dhu al-Hijjah, a few days before and after the Id al-Adha. During these days of the hajj, pilgrims are strictly prohibited from doing several things, such as having sex, covering the head for men and covering the face for women, cutting the hair, and killing an animal. If one unintentionally commits any of these prohibitions, one has to pay a fine (*fidyah*).\(^{54}\)

The second part of the fiqh contains several chapters that deal with the muʻāmalat or social life, such as *buyū‘* (trade), *farā‘iḍ* (inheritance), *nikāḥ* (marriage), *jināyāt* (criminal law), *ḥudūd* (punishment), *jihād* (holy war), etc. The chapters on *buyū‘* and *nikāḥ* will be discussed here since they receive more attention in the pesantren than the others. The *kitāb al-buyū‘* (chapter on trade) deals not only with trade but with other forms of business activities, though trade is regarded as the most important by Muslim scholars. Other forms of business activities mentioned in this chapter are *salm* (forward

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buying), *rahn* (mortgage), *sulh* (settlement), *hiwālah* (cession), *shirkah* (joint business), *‘āriyah* (borrowing), *ijārah* (rent), *hibah* (gift), etc.

Several principles of trade are discussed in fiqh. There is the requirement that both the seller and the buyer, as well as the items to be traded, be present and in the possession of the traders. A seller may sell an item not present as long as he/she can provide characteristics of the item and is able to hand it over to the buyer at the agreed time. For example, one cannot sell flying birds because they are not in the possession of the seller, nor unborn cattle or items that have not yet been produced. Another principle of trade is that the item be *ṭāhir* (clean) and is beneficial according to Islamic law. Selling pork, for example, is invalid as it is *najis* (filthy) according to Islam. Trade should only be conducted between free adults with a sane mental condition is another trade principle emphasized in fiqh. Therefore, a business transaction made by a child is not valid, nor one contracted by a mentally insane person. People categorized as *safīh* (incompetent in spending money) and *muflis* (bankrupt) are also prohibited from conducting business, thus making their transactions invalid.

What is valid in trade is a measure that is used for other business transactions. For example, whatever can be sold can also be lent or given. Conversely, whatever cannot be sold according to Islamic law cannot be exchanged in any other transaction. Those whose trade activities are regarded as invalid cannot then pursue other business ventures. These principles appear to confirm the high regard for trade among Muslim scholars compared to other commercial activities.

As different businesses have different consequences, the fiqh books highlight the significance of *‘aqd* (legal transaction) for all business activities. For example, taking
advantage of an item belonging to another person is called *ijārah* (rent), when the condition of the item does not change while being used and involves fees, and *ʻāriyah* (borrow) if there are no fees. For these two transactions, the renters or borrowers are required to return the item in the same condition as when they received it from the owner. However, if the item does not last but the borrower returns not the item itself but its full value, this is known as *qard* (debt). Borrowing money from someone, therefore, is called qarḍ, because what will be returned is the equal value not the same money borrowed. Borrowing a bicycle, on the other hand, is *ʻāriyah*. Both of these transactions do not require fees as lending money with interest is categorized as *ribā* (usury) and it is religiously unlawful. For each business transaction that is agreed upon by two parties, a specific *ʻaqd*, according to fiqh, needs to be clearly mentioned. The importance of *ʻaqd* is to protect each party from deception, in addition to making the transaction religiously lawful.\(^{55}\)

Another popular chapter in fiqh is relationships in marriage (*nikah*). Islam only regards sexual relations between men and women lawful when this occurs in marriage. Discussion on marriage receives great attention from ulama, including Javanese kiyai. A valid marriage is not only related to the issue of sexual relations but also to the future generations that are born from such a relationship. Muslims, especially ulama, do not expect that future generations are born from religiously invalid relation of men and women, so that they are very cautious in dealing with this issue. In Pegon books, this topic also receives great attention.

Fiqh books usually begin the discussion of marriage by listing the basic elements of marriage: the bride and groom, \textit{walī} (authorized agent of the bride), \textit{ʻaqd al-nikaḥ} (marriage transaction that consists of \textit{iḥāb} or the statement by the \textit{walī} and \textit{qabūl} or acceptance by the groom), \textit{mahr} (bride price), and two witnesses. The \textit{walī} is the one who has religious authority to marry the bride and groom,\textsuperscript{56} with the father as the most appropriate \textit{walī} followed by the paternal grandfather (the maternal grandfather has no authority as \textit{walī}), brother, brother’s son, then father’s brother. If a bride has none of them around, her \textit{walī} is a \textit{hakim} or representative of the government. This means that a woman may not marry herself to a man, but it has to be done by an authoritative agent with at least two witnesses. The \textit{ʻaqd al-nikaḥ} must also follow certain rules, such as using the words \textit{nikāḥ} or \textit{zawaj} and no other, to make it valid. Acceptance by the groom should also be stated directly after the \textit{walī} finishes his \textit{ʻaqd}. The dowry is part of the transaction and it is the responsibility of the groom to hand it over to the bride.

Fiqh then explains that men must not marry women who are from the same lineage (\textit{nasab}), shared the breast of the same milk mother (\textit{raḍā‘ah}), and having a marriage relationship (\textit{muṣaharah}). Those who are of the same nasab are mother, daughter, sister, father’s sister, mother’s sister, brother’s daughter, and sister’s daughter; those who are listed as raḍā‘ah are the same as those for nasab; and for muṣaharah those excluded are wife’s mother, wife’s daughter, father’s wife, and son’s wife. If for some reason a man does not know of a prohibited relationship when he marries, the marriage becomes invalid once he learns of it. Marrying a wife’s sister is not allowed except after

\textsuperscript{56} In many Javanese communities, the \textit{walī} usually entrusts the process of marriage to the ulama or pengulu and rarely carries it out himself.
the wife has died or been divorced. The rest of the chapter on nikāḥ discusses a variety of topics that relate to marriage, such as a party after marriage (walīmat al-ʻarūsh), rights and responsibilities of the husband and wife, divorce either initiated by the husband or wife, consequences of divorce in term of household expenses and custody, and a waiting period (ʻiddah) for women after being divorced.  

Despite the fact that fiqh is the most popular branch of Islamic knowledge taught in the pesantren, it does not mean that the entire content of fiqh receives equal attention from students and the kiyai. The first part dealing with rituals receives more attention as it regulates the basic practices of being Muslims, i.e. prayer, fasting, alms, and pilgrimage. As these practices are the pillars of Islam, as stated by the Prophet, it is understandable that the kiyai always place greater emphasis teaching them to students so that they understand and observe them regularly and properly at all times. The only section of the second part that receives comparable attention with the first is the section on marriage. Concerns among the kiyai that the future generation should be born from an Islamically legal and sanctioned relationship between men and women seem to be the reason for such attention to marriage.

b. **Tawhīd (Islamic Theology)**

Compared to fiqh, tawhīd (Islamic theology) is a less popular branch of knowledge, but it is taught in almost all pesantren at least in its basic forms. As already mentioned the majority of Javanese Muslims, especially pesantren communities, are

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highly influenced by Sunni thought. The tawhīd offered in pesantren follows the teachings of Ash‘ari (Abu al-Hasan al-Ash‘ari, d. 935 CE) and Maturidi (Abu Mansur Muhammad al-Maturidi, d. 934 CE). This means that the discussion on theology in the pesantren is limited to understanding God’s attributes and creations and not God’s essence. Discussion surrounding the deeper questions of theology, such as cosmology, eschatology or metaphysics, is also not found in the pesantren because the kiyai believe that discussing them could endanger the faith of the students.58

Among books on tawhīd that are widely used in the pesantren are Umm al-Barāhīn by Muhammad ibn Yusuf al-Sanusi (d. 1490 CE), Jawharat al-Tawhīd by Ibrahim al-Laqani (d. 1631 CE), and Kifāyat al-‘Awām by Muhammad al-Fadali (d. 1821 CE). These books are usually taught with their commentaries or glosses. Two glosses of Umm al-Barāhīn widely known in pesantren are Ḥāshiyah al-Dasūqi ʻalā Umm al-Barāhīn by Muhammad al-Dasuqi (d. 1815 CE) and Ḥashiyah al-Bājūri ʻalā Matn al-Sanūsiyah by Ibrahim ibn Muhammad al-Bajuri (d. 1860 CE). Ibrahim al-Bajuri also wrote commentaries on Jawharat al-Tawhīd and Kifāyat al-‘Awām, both of which are widely used in pesantren. The titles are, respectively, Tuḥfat al-Murīd ʻalā Jawharat al-Tawhīd and Taḥqīq al-Maqām ʻalā Kifāyat al-‘Awām fī ʻIlm al-Kālām. Muhammad Salih Darat also wrote a commentary in Javanese of Jawharat al-Tawhīd in Tarjamah Sabīl al-ʻAbīd, as will be discussed in chapter four.

These books begin with a statement that every Muslim is required to know the attributes of God and his messengers. For God, there are twenty sīfāt wājibāt (necessary

58 This statement refers to certain Sunni theological books, such as that found in Muhammad al-Dasuqi, Ḥāshiyah al-Dasūqi ʻalā Umm al-Barāhīn (Surabaya: Toko Kitab al-Hidayah), 70-72.
attributes) and their reversed twenty of sifāt mustaḥilāt (impossible attributes), as well as one sifat jāʾizah (possible attribute). For the messengers, there are four sifāt wājibāt, four sifāt mustaḥilāt, and one sifat jāʾizah. The total attributes for God and the prophets, therefore, is fifty and this is known as al-ʿaqāid al-khamsīn, the fifty doctrines, that all Muslim have to recognize. Muslims also need to know the dalīl ijmālī (general evidence) of each attribute to support their understanding so that they are expected to have strong īmān (faith) not easily shaken by doubt. It is not enough for Muslims, according to these books, to just memorize the attributes with taqlīd (uncritical acceptance) as this may endanger their faith.59

Before discussing the details of those attributes, the books briefly explain the terms wājib, mustaḥil, and jāʾiz that are adjectives of the attributes. Wājib is something that our rationality will think its presence necessary, while the mustaḥil is the reverse, i.e. something that our rationality will think its absence necessary. Jāʾiz is something that may and may not be present according to our rationality.60

The twenty necessary attributes of God are categorized into four groups: nafsiyah, salbiyah, maʿāni, and maʿnawiyah. Nafsiyah means, according to these books, that the attribute is the essence of existence. In other words, the attributes are not something

different from the essence. The only attribute of nafsiyah is \textit{wujūd} (omnipresence).  
\textsuperscript{61} Salbiyah is defined as negating the reverse of the attributes and there are five attributes of this category: \textit{qidam} (infinite pre-existence), \textit{baqā’} (eternal), \textit{mukhālafat lil-hawādith} (contrasting the creatures), \textit{qiyāmu bi-nafsihi} (self reliance), and \textit{wahdāniyyah} (unity).  
\textsuperscript{62} Ma’ani are attributes that exist in the essence of the being, whether they are eternal or temporary. The ma’ani attributes are \textit{qudrah} (power), \textit{irādah} (will), ‘ilmu (omniscience), ḥayāh (life), sama’ (hearing), başar (sight), and kalam (speech).  
\textsuperscript{63}  
Ma’nawiyah is the implementation of the seven ma’ani attributes, therefore the attributes are also seven: \textit{kawnuhu qādiran}, \textit{murīdan}, ‘āliman, ḥayyan, samī’an, başīran, and mutakalliman.  

Since Muslims should understand the arguments of each attribute, at least in general, some tawhīd books explain them afterwards. The argument that God exists, for example, is the existence of nature which always changes. The fact that nature changes shows that it is not eternal and it needs a creator that is God. The existence of nature, therefore, is proof that God exists. The second attribute of God, \textit{qidam}, means that God has no beginning or His existence is not preceded by non-existence. If He were preceded by non-existence, He would be ḥadīth (new). As there is no category in between qidam and ḥadīth, He would be in need of a creator because everything new is created. God, therefore, must be \textit{qidam}, as He is the sole creator.  
\textsuperscript{64} Such examples of general arguments are enough for common Muslims in order to support their faith in God.

\textsuperscript{61} al-Dasuqi, \textit{Hāshiyah al-Dasūqi}, 74-75, 93.  
\textsuperscript{62} Ibid., 75-92.  
\textsuperscript{63} Ibid., 96-117.  
The impossible attributes of God are basically the reverse of the twenty necessary attributes. They are ‘adam, ḥudūth, fanā’, mumāthalah lil-hawādith, ikhtiyāj li-ghayrih, ta’addud, ‘ajz, karāhah, jahl, mawt, šamam, ‘amā, bakam, kawnuhu ‘ājizan, kārihan, jāhilan, mayyitan, ‘aṣam, a‘mā, and abkam. In short, every attribute that is contrary to the above-mentioned of necessary ones are impossible to be attributed to God. Some books of tawḥīd, therefore, do not provide specific arguments for these impossible attributes as they are included in the necessary attributes. Some books even do not list separately those impossible attributes if they are already mentioned in the discussion of the necessary ones.

The only possible attribute of God is to do or not to do all possible things, such as to create good or bad things. The argument for this attribute is that if God is required to create or prevented from creating such things, this will lead to a situation where God is necessary or impossible in creating such things. This is, according to theologians, irrational as God has full power to create or not to create anything He wills.65

All Prophets acknowledged in Islam have four necessary attributes and four other impossible attributes and one possible one.66 The necessary attributes are being ṣidq (truthful), amānah (trustworthy), tablīgh (conveying God’s will), and faṭānah (intelligent). The opposite impossible attributes of prophets are being kidhb (deceptive), khiyānah (treasonous), kitmān (secretive), and balādah (silly). Şidq means that everything presented by all prophets are true and confirm with realities. If their statements are not true, they must be false and this will affect the laws laid down by

66 In the Umm al-Barahín, al-Sanusi mentions only three attributes that are necessary for all prophets. They are sidq, amanah, and tablīgh. Similarly, impossible attributes of the prophets are also three, which are the reverse of the necessary ones.
them. Therefore, the prophets cannot be deceptive. Amānah means that all prophets never lie nor are they committed to any action or statement that breaks the law. They had never committed unrecommended activities (*makrūhāt*) throughout their lives. All prophets also convey all instructions from God to their societies, keeping none secret for themselves. This is what it means by *tablīgh*. The last attribute, faṭānah, means that all prophets are equipped with knowledge and the ability to deal with hardships, challenges and opposition from their societies. The only one possible attribute of the prophets is to perform human acts, such as eating, drinking, and having sexual relation with their wives, that will not denigrate their position as prophet. All prophets, according to Islam, are human beings and therefore are no different from other people. They experience and feel happiness, sorrow, excitement and disappointment as other human beings.67

c. *Tasawuf* (Islamic Mysticism)

Sufism that is commonly taught in the pesantren does not discuss metaphysical speculation or speculative cosmogony. Therefore, books on *wahdat al-wujūd* (unity of existence) such as *Insān al-Kāmil* by Abd al-Karim al-Jili and *Futuḥāt al-Makkiyah* by Ibn Arabi are not studied in the pesantren. The study of Sufism in the pesantren is limited to that which upholds the principles of the Shari’ah and usually stresses perfecting Muslim behavior. It can be said that teaching Sufism in the pesantren is a continuation and a step ahead of Islamic ethics (*akhlāq*). If *akhlāq* is taught to beginners, Sufism is offered only to advanced students who have already mastered fiqh. In this scheme, there

is no worry that Sufism will lead students away from fiqh; instead, Sufism will strengthen, at least theoretically, their understanding and observance of fiqh.

Among the books of ethics used in pesantren are *Akhlāq lil-Banīn* and *Akhlāq lil-Banāt* both written by Umar ibn Ahmad Barja and *Ta’līm al-Muta’allim Ṭarīq al-Ta’llum* by Burhan al-Islam al-Zarnuji (d. 1242 CE),\(^{68}\) while those of Sufism are *Ḥikam* by Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Ata Allah (d. 1309 CE) and its commentary, *Sharḥ al-Ḥikam*, by Muhammad ibn Ibrahim ibn Abbad (d. 1390 CE), *Hidāyat al-Adhkiyā’ ilā Ṭarīq al-Awliyā’* by Zayn al-Din al-Malibary (d. 1521 CE) and its commentary, *Kifāyat al-Atqiyyā’ wa-Minhāj al-ʿAsfiya’,* by Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad Shata (d. 1892 CE) also known as Sayyid Bakri. Al-Ghazali’s works on Sufism are also popular among the pesantren. His three works that are widely read are *Bidāyat al-Hidāyah*, * Minhāj al-‘Abidīn*, and *Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn*, the last being the most popular. It is worth noting that Muhammad Salih Darat wrote commentaries on *Hidāyat al-Adhkiyā’* and *Ḥikam* and an abridgement of *Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn*.

*Akhlāq li-al-Banīn* (ethics for boys) and *Akhlāq li-al-Banāt* (ethics for girls) are usually offered to elementary students as basic knowledge on good behavior in relation to their parents and adults. *Ta’līm al-Muta’allim*, which is not only popular in Java but also in the rest of the Muslim world, is regarded as a manual for students seeking knowledge.\(^{69}\) Divided into thirteen sections, this book discusses a variety of issues relating to seeking knowledge, such as what knowledge is necessary to be studied, how to

\(^{68}\) In a couple of versions of his book, I his name listed as Burhan al-Islam al-Zarnuji, but the catalog of the US university libraries refers to him as Burhan al-Din al-Zarnuji.

find good teachers and friends, and the importance of having a good intention prior to studying. It reminds students to work hard while learning and at the same time to pray to God and seek His blessing. An important part is the insistence that they always pay high respect to knowledge and those who have and teach it. A teacher who has taught any kind of knowledge deserves to be respected, for he becomes a lifelong teacher. This is the principle upon which the tradition of the pesantren has been built. Some scholars, therefore, argue that this book has contributed significantly to the establishment of the pesantren tradition, especially in Java.

Unlike fiqh and tawhīd books that contain similar topics of discussion with more or less systematic order, books on Sufism contain a variety of content and sometimes are not systematically ordered. Ḥikam, for example, begins with indications of proper feeling among those who have committed sins and mistakes, while Hidāyat al-Adhkiyā starts with the discussion of taqwā (piety) and three inter-related concepts of sharīʿah, ṭarīqah, and ḥaqīqah. The following sections of these two books are not composed systematically and grouped into chapters, but elucidate one section after another that sometimes has no direct connection. It is only al-Ghazali’s books that are more systematized as he breaks the discussion into several chapters and provides details on topics within such chapters. In Bidāyat al-Hidāyah, for example, al-Ghazali divides the discussion into three broad issues of ṭāʿah (obedience), ijtināb al-maʿāṣi (avoiding disobedience), and ethics of human relations. In Minhāj al-ʿAbidīn, he covers seven topics that he calls ḍaqabah (steep road), i.e. ʿilm (knowledge), tawbah (repentance), ʿawāʾiq (hindrances), ʿawārid

(obstacles), bawāʻith (incentives), qawādiḥ (slanders), and al-ḥamd wa al-shukr (praise and gratitude). Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn, which many scholars categorize as Ghazali’s magnum opus, consists of four volumes with each containing ten chapters. Each volume is also named rub (quarter) and begins consecutively with Rub’ al-‘Ībādāt (acts of worship), Rub’ al-‘Adāt (norms of daily life), Rub’ al-Muhlikāt (ways to perdition), and Rub’ al-Munjiyāt (ways to salvation). Regardless of the differences among these Sufi books, they share the principle that Sufism should not conflict with Islamic jurisprudence and should stress the importance of perfecting Muslim behavior in relation to both God and human beings. They also share some topics, such as tawbah (repentance), ikhlāṣ (sincerity), tawakkul (God-reliance), shukr (gratitude), and zuhd (renunciation).

Tawbah is generally depicted as the first step in one’s journey toward approaching and staying close to God. Tawbah literally means a return, and in the Islamic context it refers to a return from what is prohibited to one that is sanctioned by the law. Al-Ghazali categorizes tawbah as a work of qalb (heart) and defines it as an act to cleanse one’s heart from sins. As people tend to make mistakes and commit sins, while obedience to God requires cleanness from any type of sins, they need to repent for such sins. This is why tawbah is placed as the first and very significant step in this spiritual journey. According to Sufis, tawbah is the key to opening the door of obedience (ṭā‘ah) and the basis of all good deeds. There are four conditions for tawbah to be effective.

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74 It is from the last volume of Ghazali’s Iḥyā’ that Salih names one of his books as Munjiyat, though it contains an abridgment of this volume and the volume 3.
75 Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad Shata, Kifāyat al-Atqiyā’ wa-Minhāj al-Asfiya’, 15.
76 al-Ghazali, Minhāj al-‘Ābidīn, 72.
77 Shata, Kifāyat al-Atqiyā’, 18-19.
First, people have to stop immediately from committing sins; second, they must regret the sins they have committed; third, they have to promise not to repeat them in the future; and fourth, they must undertake all such actions for the sake of God alone. It means that if the repentance is done because of fear of others than God, such as human beings, it is invalid.\textsuperscript{78} Since repentance is required soon after one has committed any sin, one needs to know what acts are categorized as sinful. Therefore, Ghazali stresses the importance of ‘ilm (knowledge) by which someone can recognize if a certain action is sinful. With this knowledge, people will not only be aware of sins they have committed but also be able to avoid them in the future.\textsuperscript{79}

Ikhlās is to have only God as motivation for performing any deed. Ibn Ata Allah says that activities are like living creatures and ikhlās is their soul; without ikhlās the activities have no meaning. If someone does something with the intention of becoming well-known or popular or to receive material benefits, it is like placing a seed above the ground so that it will not grow and bear fruit. Having any other motivation than God in performing good works is riyā (eye service) and should be avoided to prevent jeopardizing the rewards before God.\textsuperscript{80} Ghazali divides ikhlās into two levels. The first is called ikhlās al-‘amal (sincere acts), which seeks closeness to God, to follow His instructions, and to fulfill His promises. The second type of ikhlās, called ikhlās ṭalab al-ajr (sincerity by seeking rewards), is to seek rewards from God, meaning to enter into His paradise and be rescued from hellfire. The first type is the highest to which Muslims


\textsuperscript{79} al-Ghazali, Minhāj al-‘Abidīn, 75-78 and al-Ghazali, Ihyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn, vol. 4, 15-34. For discussion of tawbah in general, see also Schimmel, Mystical Dimensions of Islam, 109-110.

\textsuperscript{80} Muhammad ibn Ibrahim Ibn Abbad, Sharḥ al-Hikam, 2 vols. (Semarang: Karya Toha Putra), vol. 1, 11-12. See also Shata, Kifāyat al-Atqiyā’, 33-38.
should aspire, though the second is still acceptable. One thing that should be avoided by Muslims is doing good deeds in order to attain popularity, be praised by human beings, or to receive material benefits from others. For Ghazali, the absence of ikhlās is the basis of slander.81

Tawakkul is to submit and entrust everything to God and believe that it is only He who is able to create failure and success or sadness and happiness of human beings. Discussion of tawakkul usually deals with the *rizq* (means of living) where people are required to entrust their rizq to God alone. If people do not have to work for their living and this does not affect their obligations to God, then they do not need to work and can dedicate their whole lives to God. However, if they need to work for a living, they are required to do so while remembering that it is God who bestows their rizq and not their work itself.82 Ghazali divides the relation between human beings and God in tawakkul into three levels. The first is akin to when someone entrusts all his affairs to his *wakil* (trustee), whom he appoints based on his ability, eloquence, and kindness. The second level is similar to that of an infant who does not know anything except his mother. When anything happens to him, he only seeks refuge with the mother and does not trust anyone else. The third and the highest level is like a dead person who relies totally on the living. The dead cannot do anything without help of the living. The last is not easy to practice and very rarely can a person implement it. According to Ghazali, however, it is not

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impossible to achieve this if one has very strong belief in God (tawḥīd). With such total submission to God, a person has no reason at all to feel arrogant.83

Shukr is an act of gratefulness to God for what He has bestowed upon human beings. All living people must have received a lot of benefits (niʻmah) such as health, money, and, above all, belief in God. It is only God, the omnipotent and the supreme power, that is the real creator of such benefits. Therefore, human beings are instructed to thank and be grateful to Him. Referring to the Qur’an, Sufis say that there are two functions of shukr, i.e. to maintain the benefits and to increase them. Shukr is not only to thank and show gratitude to God but, more importantly, to feel happy and satisfied with all benefits and use the potential of knowledge, mouth, and body that have been granted by God to follow His instructions and avoid His prohibitions. By practicing shukr, people will always be under God’s protection.84

Zuhd, according to al-Malibary, is to cut a soul’s connection to wealth. It does not mean that to be zāhid (person practicing zuhd) a person must be poor, but that one should not be preoccupied with wealth so that it interrupts or diverts one from God.85 According to Ghazali, zuhd is to turn away intentionally from anything that is commonly desired by human beings, especially wealth, in order to concentrate on the hereafter. If one is poor, one is not called zāhid because one would be living in poverty and would not have the

choice of turning away from wealth. By practicing this attitude, a person will not be deceived by ephemeral worldly comfort but will seek eternal happiness in the hereafter.86

All these Sufi concepts are available in some Sufi textbooks and are very often communicated to students at the pesantren through study circles or in daily instruction by the kiyai. There is no doubt that these terms are familiar to the santri though they may not have studied the Sufi books. They are always reminded of the importance of these attitudes and told to practice them as much as they can. The majority of the pesantren, however, do not provide specific training in the application of such concepts. The application in real life among the students, therefore, is dependent upon their own understanding, willingness and eagerness. The only Sufi teaching that is practiced in the daily life of the pesantren is dhikr Allah (recollection of God) or simply known as dhikr.

Ghazali does not specifically mention dhikr in his books as all his ideas of praiseworthy practices lead to the closeness to and remembrance of God. Other scholars, however, mention explicitly the need to practice dhikr. Ibn Ata Allah, for example, suggests that Muslims not discontinue dhikr simply because they cannot concentrate in remembering God while practicing dhikr. They are urged to keep practicing dhikr with the hope that God will enhance their dhikr leading to the real love of God.87 Al-Malibari, on the other hand, recommends students to always practice dhikr after prayers, especially the dawn (ṣubḥ) prayer until sunrise. Dhikr, according to him, is like a light that brightens their way toward God.88 It seems that Malibari’s recommendation is being followed by the pesantren communities, for we find that dhikr is commonly practiced after daily

88 Shata, Kifāyat al-Atqiyā’, 48-51.
prayers in many pesantren. All students performing collective prayers keep sitting on the ground after they finish them, chanting certain sentences led by the imam. The sentences recited during dhikr after the prayers are usually a compilation of *istighfār* (seeking forgiveness from God), *tahlīl* (utterance of a statement that there is no God but Allah), *tasbīḥ* (praising the Lord), *taḥmīd* (thanking God), and *takbīr* (glorifying God). With this routine, students at the pesantren are trained to practice an important part of Sufism. This is why Dhofier, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, argues that the tradition of the pesantren is partly influenced by Sufi practices.⁸⁹

**Conclusion**

The transmission of Islamic knowledge in Java has been mainly channeled through the traditional Islamic educational institution known as the pesantren. Using the traditional method of teaching and learning, where students gather around the teachers to receive instructions contained in the Arabic classical texts, this institution has been responsible not only for training religious leaders but also for the growth of santri communities who uphold and practice orthodox teachings of Islam. There is no doubt that among the tripartite social division of Javanese society first advanced by Geertz, the santri is the closest to the orthodox principles of Islam.

In addition to the pesantren, Islamic knowledge has also been transmitted through prayer houses (known as *musalla* or *langgar*) and the mosques. Although knowledge transmission in these institutions is less intensive and not as rigorous as that in the pesantren, their significance rests on their ability to reach those in the periphery who have

never studied in the pesantren and thereby incorporate them into the santri community. The learning which occurs in these institutions is led by local kiyai, who possess a knowledge of Islam obtained through a pesantren education, as well as a native understanding of the Javanese language and culture. What is taught always complies with the principles of Sunni orthodox Islam, although there has been a process of localization of some Islamic teachings as a result of the use of Pegon Islamic texts.

The discussion of fiqh, tawhīd, and tasawuf is based on the classical Arabic textbooks commonly used in the pesantren and some religious circles in mosques. In the pesantren communities, the textbooks are regarded as authoritative sources and therefore will continue to be studied in the pesantren. Although fiqh, especially the first part that deals with the necessary obligations of all Muslims, is the most popular branch of Islamic knowledge taught in the pesantren, langgar, and mosques, it is the least localized. There seems to be an effort to maintain the concepts in this first part of the fiqh unchanged to distinguish these Islamic practices from the pre-Islamic ones. For this reason, such concepts are mostly stated in Arabic with a Javanese explanation. It is only in the second part of the fiqh dealing with human relations that Islamic concepts have become localized. Among the three branches, tawhīd is no doubt the one whose concepts are the most localized.

Since localization is carried out in Pegon Islamic texts, it is necessary to discuss first the history of Pegon as a writing system, its use in the writing of Islamic textbooks, and finally its role in enabling the common people to gain access to Islamic knowledge.
CHAPTER 3
PEGON BOOKS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE AMONG SANTRI

While the standard textbooks used in Islamic educational institution (pesantren) are in Arabic, there also developed Islamic texts written in the Javanese language but using the Arabic script which is known as Pegon. The use of the Arabic script for writing a non-Arabic language is also a practice in other languages, such as Malay, Persian, Urdu, and Turkish. In fact the use of the Arabic script for writing Javanese was quite late, especially when we refer to Islamic textbooks. The earliest Islamic texts written in Pegon came from the nineteenth century although as a writing system Pegon has been used for personal purposes, such as writing notes in Arabic textbooks, since the seventeenth century. Although it is hard to ascertain who initiated using the Arabic script for writing Javanese, there is little doubt that the use of Pegon was related to learning activities in the pesantren. In other words, it is the pesantren community that began using Pegon; it is also this community that has used and been most familiar with this particular writing system.

The emergence of Islamic texts in Pegon and the adoption of print as a mode of production of such texts in the nineteenth century became an impetus to increasing access to Islamic scholarship. Although it did not totally change the transmission of Islamic knowledge among Javanese, print and Pegon did contribute to the emergence of the local kiyai and the increase of understanding of Islamic teachings among common people. This chapter, therefore, will assess the development of Pegon as a writing system and the significance of the Pegon Islamic texts among Javanese Muslims beyond the pesantren.
Arabic Scripts Used for Non-Arabic Languages

There is no question that the Arabic language has a significant position in Islam. The significance of Arabic for Islam is comparable to, if not more so than, Hebrew for Judaism and Latin for Christianity. Arabic is the language of the Qur’an, the Prophet Muhammad, and most Islamic rituals. Every Muslim, therefore, needs to be able to pronounce Arabic words, at least those required for performing rituals, particularly prayer (ṣalāt). This has made Arabic the unchallenged language for Muslims. The spread of Islam beyond the Arab lands brought the Arabic language in its wake. Non-Arab peoples who had converted to Islam or were born to Muslim parents were taught to read or memorize certain Arabic sentences that are necessary for rituals. They also needed to learn Arabic, its grammar, vocabulary and rhetoric, if they intended to further study Islamic knowledge as the latter is mostly written in Arabic. There seems to be a consensus among Muslim scholars that the authoritative sources of Islamic knowledge need to be written in Arabic. Great scholars of Islam, whether they are Arabs or ‘ajam (non-Arabs), are known for their works written in Arabic.

The spread of the Arabic language beyond the Arab lands was also accompanied by the adoption of the Arabic writing system for non-Arabic languages. After embracing Islam some non-Arab peoples did not give up their local languages but, instead, used the Arabic script for writing their languages and in the process absorbed many Arabic words. According to Alan Kaye, more than ten languages are still written in the Arabic script, which makes its use in the world second only to the Roman alphabet. He also argues that
the main reason for the adoption of the Arabic script was, initially, the religious impulse.¹ According to scholars who analyze the world writing systems, there are three main reasons for a spoken language to be written in a certain script: functional, religious, and political. The adoption of Arabic scripts for some languages of Islamized lands, therefore, had apparently different motives from the use of the Cyrillic for Central Asian languages during the Soviet Union or the adoption of Roman script for Turkish after the end of the Ottoman Empire. The latter two were more politically-driven than the first.²

Among languages that use the Arabic script are the Berber languages of North Africa; the Iranian languages of Persian, Pashto, and Kurdish; the Indo-Aryan languages of Urdu, Sindhi, and Kashmiri; and the Austronesian languages of Sulu, Malagasy and Malay. Some Turkic and Caucasian languages also use the Arabic script. A number of these languages continue to be written in the Arabic script despite the introduction of the Roman script, such as Turkish and Malay. There are other languages that used to be written in the Arabic script, such as Spanish (known as aljamiado), Swahili, Kanuri, Hausa, and Fulani—the last four are in Sub-Saharan Africa.³ From the widespread use of the Arabic writing system, there is no question that the Arabic script is more prevalent than the Arabic language itself as the latter is spoken by limited Muslims among non-Arabs.⁴

⁴ Ibid., 743.
The adoption of the Arabic script for non-Arabic languages is normally accompanied by the creation of new signs as not all phonemes in other languages are represented in the Arabic script. The common examples are “g” and “c” and “p” which are not found in Arabic. The phoneme “g” is usually made of kaf with dash above it (گ) or dots below it (ڦ) while “c” is made with jim with three dots below it (ڦ). Some communities make “p” from ba with three dots below it (پ), but others make it from fa with three dots above it (ڤ). On the other hand, some Arabic letters are not used for local languages, such as َ (ض) and ِ (ط), though they are retained for loan words.\(^5\)

It is quite strange that while scholars mention Malay (Jawi) among those that adopted the Arabic script, none of them puts Javanese in the list. It might be argued that Javanese is included in Malay because most Javanese people are also Indonesian-speakers, the national language of Indonesia that evolved from Malay. However, Javanese is different from Malay and Indonesian in many ways, such as the vocabulary and the social levels found in Javanese. Javanese is not the same as Malay, and may be compared to Urdu in relation to Sindhi and Kashmiri. It seems that scholars are not aware of the fact that Javanese has also been written in the Arabic script (Pegon).\(^6\) Lack of

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\(^6\) Even Gallop, who analyzes early Malay printing materials preserved in the British Libraries, does not mention any Pegon works, although they must be among the collections as they were deposited in the Straits government in the late nineteenth century and brought to the British Museum. See, Annabel Teh Gallop, "Early Malay Printing: An Introduction to the British Library Collection," *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 63, no. 1 (1990): 85-124.
studies in Western languages about this seems to be the main reason why Javanese is not mentioned. This is different from Malay which has been studied by many scholars.

It cannot be denied that, compared to Malay, the adoption of the Arabic script for the Javanese language was quite late, at least based on the recovered manuscripts. While during the Aceh Sultanate in the seventeenth century, Nuruddin Al-Raniri and Abd al-Rauf Singkel composed books in Jawi, similar works in Pegon were not found until the nineteenth century, though the use of the script may date back earlier. The use of Arabic script for Javanese is also less popular than that for Malay. Almost all manuscripts in Malay were written in Jawi while most Javanese manuscripts were written in Javanese script and only a few of them in Pegon. The reason might be that when Islam came to the area, Java already had an Indic-derived script known as the Javanese script or the Hanacaraka alphabet. Therefore the Javanese encounter with Islam and Arabic did not alter the older writing system which had been used widely. The earliest works on Islam, presumably written by a preacher in sixteenth century Java, used the Javanese script

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instead of the Arabic one. This seems different from the case of Malay. While the earliest known Malay language text in the late seventh century used an Indic script, it was later replaced with the Arabic script. The Arabic script for Malay is thus called the Malay script by Shellabear and Lewis, in addition to Jawi. The term Jawi itself may confuse some people as it refers to Jawa (Java) but among scholars Jawi specifically refers to Malay in the Arabic script. On the contrary, the term Javanese script refers to script adopted from Indic script and is used for writing Javanese language, while the Arabic script used for writing Javanese, and also Sundanese, language is known as Pegon.

**Pegan: The Arabic Script for the Javanese Language**

The term Pegon was derived from the word pego, meaning “to speak Javanese with a regional accent.” According to Kromoprawirto, however, pego means “uncommon in pronouncing it.” It is possibly related to the pattern of Arabic script to represent Javanese words. Pigeaud, on the other hand, suggests that the term Pegon means “wryness” or “obliquity” because of the short sloping lines of Arabic writing compared to the straight parallel lines of the Javanese script. The meaning of the term

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15 Mas Kromoprawirto, "Kawruh Aksara Pegon," (Madiun, 1867), 1.
indicates that Pegon was initially regarded as strange before it became popular among Javanese Muslims. It is unknown who used the term Pegon for the first time and when it was introduced, but by the nineteenth century Pegon had a specific meaning, i.e. the Arabic script for writing the Javanese language.  

While the initial use of the term Pegon is not known, there is little doubt that the use of the Arabic script for writing Javanese had been practiced since the seventeenth century, as can be seen in the Mukhtaṣar Bāfaḍal manuscript in the British Library. Written in 1623 this manuscript contains both the original text of Arabic and the interlinear Javanese translation written with the Arabic script. Although it is the only one that has survived from this period, it confirms that Pegon has been used at least since the seventeenth century. Pegon gained wider usage in the eighteenth century judging from the manuscripts that have been preserved from that period. The National Library of Indonesia, the library of the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Indonesia, as well as libraries in Great Britain (Bodleian and India Office libraries), contain manuscripts in Pegon written in the eighteenth century. Pegon became widely used in Java in the

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17 Kromoprawiro, as mentioned in the previous note, used the term Pegon when he wrote his manuscript in 1867. Jansz who composed his dictionary in 1906 already included this word. See, Jansz, "Practisch Javaansch-Nederlandsch Woordenboek met Latijnsche Karakters," 816. 
18 This book is also known by another title, al-Muqaddimah al-Hāḍramiyyah, and was written by Abd Allah ibn Abd al-Rahman Bafadl of Hadramaut (d. 1512 CE). Together with its commentary, Minhāj al-Qawīm by Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Hajar al-Haythami (d. 1566 CE), it was one of the popular textbooks on fiqh in Java. Both were used continuously in Javanese pesantren until the twentieth century as recorded by Berg and Bruinessen. See, L. van den Berg, "Het Mohammedaansche Godsdienstonderwijs op Java en Madoera en de Daarbij Gebruikte Arabische Boeken," Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, no. 31 (1886): 519, 524, 529-530 and Martin van Bruinessen, "Kitab Kuning: Books in Arabic Script Used in the Pesantren Milieu," Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde 146, no. 2/3 (1990): 247-248. 
20 The National Library of Indonesia in Jakarta preserved a letter in Pegon from Bagus Ngarpah to the government, written in 1770. This manuscript is included in the “Koleksi-koleksi Berpeti,” 84 CS 1/13.
nineteenth century, as is evident in the fact that the majority of Pegon manuscripts preserved in libraries date from this century.\textsuperscript{21}

The use and spread of Pegon as a writing system in Java may be attributed to the pesantren people. As mentioned in chapter 2, the pesantren is an educational institution where students learn religious knowledge written mostly in the Arabic language. While students first attending a pesantren are already familiar with the Arabic script, at least through learning to recite the Qur’an in prayer houses, most of them have insufficient knowledge of the Arabic language and are unable to write the Arabic script. Among the basic knowledge they learn in the pesantren, therefore, is to write and understand Arabic. Prior to the printing era, students had to copy books before they studied them with their teachers or kiyai. The teachers read, translated, and explained the books, which were in Arabic, while students made notes on almost every single sentence. It is through this activity that Javanese students became familiar with the Arabic script and language. The notes were not only a Javanese translation of Arabic words but also showed the

\textsuperscript{21} Not all manuscripts mentioned are written solely in Pegon. Some are written as interlinear translations of the Arabic texts, especially textbooks commonly studied in pesantren, some others are mixed with the Javanese script. Most Pegon manuscripts were collected by the National Library of Indonesia with 292 entries, followed by the library of the Faculty of Humanities, the University of Indonesia, with 42. Seven libraries in Great Britain have 43 entries, while Museum Sonobudoyo Yogyakarta has 15.
grammatical position of each word within a sentence. The latter is essential to understanding Arabic sentences as well as to pronounce them correctly. Pronouncing “a” and “u” at the end of nouns may represent different position of the words and lead to a different meaning. The Javanese translations of Arabic words were also written in the Arabic script, which seems to have been the way that students in the pesantren became familiar with Pegon. The Arabic script became used for writing Javanese in the interlinear translations of textbooks.

A number of manuscripts preserved in the libraries are a mixture of original Arabic texts and interlinear translations in Pegon. This seems to be the earliest use of Pegon. The availability of this type of manuscript from the first quarter of the seventeenth century, as preserved in the British Library, does not only confirm this earliest function but also indicates the earlier establishment of the pesantren, contrary to what was argued by Bruinessen. With this manuscript, it is possible to show that the pesantren was present in Java at least a century earlier, so that Dhofier’s argument that the pesantren in Java was found by the sixteenth century seems more reasonable.

Pegon was also used for other purposes, such as personal letters and literary works. As will be detailed later, some manuscripts narrating stories popular among Javanese, whether they were adapted from Islamic or Hindu-Buddhist stories, were written in Pegon. According to Titik Pudjiastuti, a Javanese philologist from the University of Indonesia, these adapted stories were very likely produced by santri who

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22 As mentioned in chapter 2, Bruinessen argues that the pesantren in Java was not present until the eighteenth century with the establishment of Pesantren Tegalsari in Ponorogo, East Java, in 1742. Martin van Bruinessen, *Kitab Kuning, Pesantren dan Tarekat: Tradisi-tradisi Islam di Indonesia* (Bandung: Mizan, 1995), 24-25.

were exposed to the Javanese literary tradition, i.e. those with priyayi\textsuperscript{24} background and a pesantren education.\textsuperscript{25} The close connection between Pegon and santri brought scholars, including Pudjiastuti, to argue that Pegon is a mark of identity of Javanese Islam.\textsuperscript{26} While this may be so, it is also worth noting that Pegon was also used once for Bible translations. Although this was not popular and it happened only for a limited time, during the period of mass translation of the Bible into local languages in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, missionary organizations did publish a Javanese translation of the Bible in Pegon. As noted by Proudfoot, five books of the Bible (Luke, Matthew, Acts, Mark, and John) translated into Javanese and written in Pegon were published between 1893 and 1905.\textsuperscript{27}

Similar to other languages that adopted Arabic script, Pegon also adjusted several letters to represent phonemes that are not found in Arabic. There are seven phonemes that are not found in Arabic, i.e. “ca,” “pa,” “dha,” “nya,” “ga,” “tha,” and “nga.” Not all of these phonemes are specific Javanese, as we find similar ones in other languages, such ca, pa, ga, and nga which were found in Turkish and Urdu. Compared to Malay, the specific Javanese among the seven phonemes are only “dha” and “tha”. It is not surprising that the pattern of adjustment between Pegon and Jawi for those five phonemes is similar by adding diacritical dots above or below letters that have similar phonemes. We find \textit{jim} with three dots below (ג) for “ca,” \textit{fa}’ with three dots above (ן) for “pa,”

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\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{24} Priyayi were members of the Javanese administrative-aristocratic elite.
\item \textsuperscript{25} Personal communication with Dr. Titik Pudjiastuti, Jakarta, March 18, 2009.
\item \textsuperscript{27} Ian Proudfoot, \textit{Early Malay Printed Books} (Kuala Lumpur: Academy of Malay Studies and the Library University of Malaya, 1993), 159-175.
\end{itemize}
“ya” with three dots below (٥) for “nya,” kaf with three dots below (۳) for “ga,” and ‘ain with three dots above () for “nga.” For the two specific Javanese phonemes, “dha” is made of dal with three dots above or below (ڥ), while “tha” was made of ta with three dots above or below (ڦ).²⁸

All letters of the alphabet of the Arabic script, except alif, are consonants and are sounded by using shakl (vowel marks). Three shakl of fatḥah (٠), kasrah (ِ), and ḍammah (ُ) represent the sounds of “a”, “i” and “u” respectively. Since the Javanese also recognize the sound of “e”, an adaptation of shakl is made to represent such sound. The symbol is similar to (‘) and put above the letter.

Genres of Pegon

As the use of Pegon increased and became popular by the nineteenth century, it was not only for making notes in the Arabic textbooks, but also for other purposes. There are at least four genres: personal notes, literary works, primbon (compilation of mantras and invocations), and Islamic texts. Personal notes are writings made for personal purposes and were not intended for public audiences; there is little doubt that this genre is the earliest use of Pegon. Notes on the sides of Arabic books, or below the sentences, written to explain certain ideas or simply state the meaning of such sentences, are examples of this genre,²⁹ as are personal letters sent to either friends or families on any

²⁸ Some symbols are unfortunately not found in the Word program, so I cannot show them here. They are “dal” and “ta” each with three dots below.
²⁹ For a limited study on writing notes on the side of Arabic books, see Amiq, "Lektur Keagamaan dalam Pengajaran Teologi Islam di Pondo Pesantren Abad 18-20 di Indonesia," in Kearifan Lokal yang
issue of concern to the writer. Until the nineteenth century, the majority of santri were only familiar with the Arabic script because the Roman alphabet and Javanese script were not used in the pesantren. The Roman alphabet was even viewed as a representation of the infidel colonial power and therefore should be avoided. The santri used Pegon to write to their families about their activities in the pesantren or simply to ask for money.

By literary works, I mean a genre based on stories from either the Islamic or local tradition, such as Javanese Babad and Serat. Poerbatjaraka categorizes this type as pesantren literature. Most of this genre are available in manuscripts and preserved in both Indonesia and abroad. They contain various stories, mostly in rhyme and written wholly in Pegon or a combination of the Pegon and Javanese scripts. An example of works on Islamic stories is Raja Kandak, that narrates a battle between the Prophet Muhammad and his companions against the King of Kandak and his armies. The story was written entirely in Pegon and in rhyme (macapat). Another example is Serat Samud which recounts a discussion between a Jew, Samud ibnu Salam, and the Prophet

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30 Some personal letters are preserved in the National Library of Indonesia as indicated in the catalog. One of them was written by Bagus Ngarpatem in 1770, addressed to Wedana. See, Behrend, ed. *Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia*.
31 In the mid 1980s, I met some santri in Jember, East Java, who only knew how to write in the Arabic script. Communication with their friends and families by letter was always written in Pegon or Arabic. Babad and Serat are traditional Javanese chronicles composed mostly in rhyme. Babad usually tells a story of past events, while serat deals with spiritual or religious stories.
33 The title seems to be inspired by the Battle of Khandaf (ditch), when the Prophet and his companions defended the city of Medina from the aggression of Meccan infidels. It is known as such because the Prophet instructed his companions to dig a ditch on the northern part of Medina as a way to hamper movement of the enemies as well as to protect the city from their attacks. See, Montgomery Watt, "Muhammad," in *The Cambridge History of Islam*, vol. 1, ed. P.M. Holt, Ann K. S. Lambton, and Bernard Lewis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 48-49. But there is no record in Islamic history that shows that the King of Kandak waged war against the Prophet Muhammad. The manuscript is available in both the National Library of Indonesia (PNRI) and the Library of the Faculty of Humanities, University of Indonesia (FS-UI). See, Behrend, ed. *Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia*, 220 and Behrend and Pudjiastuti, eds., *Fakultas Sastra Universitas Indonesia*, 170-171.
Muhammad, which brought about Samud’s conversion to Islam. *Serat Ambiya* tells stories of the prophets in Islam, from Adam to Muhammad, and is another part of this genre that is narrated in rhyme.\(^{35}\) Among those that contained local stories are *Sri Tanjung*, about Sidapaksa and his wife, Sri Tanjung, who worked for Prabu Sulakarma in the kingdom of Sindureja.\(^{36}\) Several Babads, such as those of Cirebon, Banten, and Blambangan may also be included in this genre.\(^{37}\) Almost all of these works were written in rhyme and are preserved in libraries. This genre does not seem to be produced any longer, as I have not found it available in bookstores.

Primbon is a compilation of invocations (*do’a*) and mantra for various purposes, as well as calculations of good days for carrying out activities such as marriage, farming, erecting a house, or starting a business. Sometime it contains practical knowledge of different kinds of sickness and how to cure them. Primbon seems to be popular among Javanese, judging by the number of manuscripts found in libraries. The ones in Pegan tend to be a combination of Islamic and local knowledge, and so we may assume that the writers must have been exposed to both local and Islamic traditions. Do’a and mantra in primbon written in Pegan are part of the Islamic tradition, while the combination of days, auspicious dates, and the five day cycles (*pasaran*) are rooted in local tradition.\(^{38}\) Unlike

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\(^{35}\) These two titles are preserved at the FS-UI as well as PNRI. Behrend and Pudjiastuti, eds., *Fakultas Sastra Universitas Indonesia*, 143, 195-146, and Behrend, ed. *Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia*, 95, 220. *Serat Ambiya* is also found in British libraries. See Ricklefs and Voorhoeve, *Indonesian Manuscripts in Great Britain*, 69-70. Both of these serats seem to be ones of popular stories as there are a number of manuscripts in Javanese version preserved in both libraries. The Pegan versions are also similar to the Javanese script version, so it is assumed that the Pegon ones were copied from the Javanese version.

\(^{36}\) Behrend and Pudjiastuti, eds., *Fakultas Sastra Universitas Indonesia*, 132-133.


\(^{38}\) Manuscripts of Primbon in Pegan are preserved in the National Library of Indonesia, the library of Faculty of Humanities, the University of Indonesia, as well as libraries in the Great Britain, with the first holds the most. For the collections in the National Library, see, among others, BR 98, 191, 258, 259, and KBG 335, 338, 493, 570, 634, in Ibid., 75, 92, 95, 215, 216, 222, 231, 245. Collections in the University of
literary works that are mostly in rhyme, primbon is written in prose. In addition to manuscripts preserved in libraries, primbon in the printed form is still widely found in bookstores in Java.

The last genre of Pegon, Islamic texts, are works that deal with branches of Islamic knowledge such as theology (tawhīd), jurisprudence (fiqh), Sufism (taṣawwuf), and Qur’anic exegesis (tafsīr). From the way this genre is composed, it can be classified into three types: translation, commentary, and new composition. Most of the translation is interlinear and word by word from the Arabic originals, with some supplemented with an explanation at the bottom of the page. This is the most popular of the three types. Commentary is a tradition popular among Muslims scholars, especially in the Middle East. Scholars compose works based on books written by previous authors and provide further explanation on almost every sentence. When the commentary is made on an original writing, it is called sharah, and when further commentary is made on the sharah, it is known as hāshiyah (gloss). The Pegon tradition of commentary is comparable to sharah as it is done mostly on original writings. The literal translation of sentences is provided first, followed by an extended explanation which usually refers to other sources. The last type of this genre, which is the least popular, is an original composition. This type is composed in both rhyme and prose and mostly deal with ethics and admonitions that refer to Islamic teachings as well as local norms.

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Indonesia are, among others, PR 55, 59-63, 65, and 69 in Behrend and Pudjiastuti, eds., Fakultas Sastra Universitas Indonesia, 626, 629-933. Collections in Great Britain are Add. 12311, Or. 6622, IOL Jav. 42, 77, 80 in Ricklefs and Voorhoeve, Indonesian Manuscripts in Great Britain, 48, 54, 63, 70.

39 For an assessment of the commentary and gloss tradition, see Brinkley Morris Messick, The Calligraphic State: Textual Domination and History in a Muslim Society (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).
This last genre of Pegon is also known as Kitab Pegon or Kitab Jawan to differentiate it from other Pegon works. It is this genre of Pegon that forms the primary focus of this study. It should be kept in mind that this genre differs from the personal notations on Arabic texts, which I describe as the first genre. Although both have similarities and are used for writing Islamic knowledge, the reason for their use of Pegon differs completely. While the first genre is not meant to be read by others, the Islamic texts in Pegon are intended to be read and studied by other Muslims. Compared to other genres, including the personal notations, Kitab Pegon emerged very late. While other genres have been available from the seventeenth and eighteenth century, as has been mentioned above, Islamic texts in Pegon were not known until the nineteenth century. Based on the latest research, the earliest Muslims to compose Kitab Pegon were Ahmad Rifa’i from Kalisalak, Batang, and Muhammad Salih Darat from Semarang. They had different styles and worked on separate Islamic texts, but it is reasonable to assume that both figures were pioneers of Kitab Pegon.

**Pioneers of Kitab Pegon**

The first person known to have written Islamic texts in Pegon was Ahmad Rifai from Kalisalak, Batang, Central Java. Rifai composed such books in the mid nineteenth century with the earliest being *Sharīḥ al-Īmān* written in 1840. Since there is no evidence of any earlier Pegon text, I argue that he was a pioneer in the writing of Kitab Pegon. Although his books reveal differences from the Islamic texts commonly used in the pesantren, as will be discussed later, we cannot deny that he was the first person to utilize Pegon for this genre.
Born in 1786 in Kendal, Central Java, Rifai was the grandson of a pengulu in Kendal, R.K.H. Abu Sujak. Since his father, Muhammad Marhum, died when he was a young boy, he was raised by his brother-in-law, Kiyai Asy‘ari, who also taught him basic Islamic knowledge and Arabic. After spending several years in Mecca in the 1830s to study with some ulama, Rifai returned home and married the widow of Demang Kalisalak, Batang. This marriage seems to be one of the main reasons that Rifai settled in this remote village to teach Islam.\(^40\) In time, many came to study with him and so a pesantren was erected to accommodate incoming students. Rifai’s teachings were apparently not acceptable to the colonial government as he harshly criticized not only the Dutch but also the local apparatus and religious officers appointed by the government.\(^41\) This led him to be arrested for endangering the social order and disobeying the rule of law, and in 1859 he was exiled to Ambon where he died around 1870.\(^42\)

Rifai’s pesantren seems to be different from other pesantren at the time because he did not teach classical Arabic texts to the students. Instead, he used his own books written in Pegon and mostly in rhyme. During his lifetime, Rifai authored more than 50 titles ranging from few pages to hundreds of pages. Ten of his books are compulsory for


students wishing to learn the basic knowledge of Islam. Another different feature of his pesantren is that his followers tended to establish an exclusive group known as santri tarjumah (literally, “translation”). The term refers to the fact that they studied Islamic knowledge only from Rifai’s books which he claimed to be translations of Arabic textbooks.

Although Rifai wrote more than 50 books, some of which are still popular among his followers, these books are not read and known by the general santri community in Central Java. Some kiyai do not even recognize his name despite his fame among scholars who study the history of Muslim resistance in Java against Dutch colonialism. While this may be surprising, the reason for Rifai’s lack of exposure may be due to the striking difference of his teachings from those generally taught in the pesantren. He taught, for example, that there is only one pillar in Islam, which is shahādah, or acknowledgement that there is no god but Allah and Muhammad is His messenger, while the other four pillars are not necessary. This is unacceptable for the majority of Javanese kiyai who follow the Sunni path and accept without condition that the pillars of

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43 The exact number of Rifai’s books is in dispute. Amin lists 53 titles. Amin, Mengenal Ajaran Tarjumah, 19-21. Djamil, on the hand, says that Rifai had authored 69 titles, 62 in Pegon and 7 in Malay. Djamil, Perlawanan Kiae Desa, 33. According to Amin, the ten books that need to be studied by students are: Ḥusn al-Miṭālab (sometime stated as al-Maṭālib), Ri’ayat al-Himmah, Asna al-Miṣād, Abyān al-Ḥawā’īj (all these four books deal with three branches of knowledge: tawḥīd, fiqh, and taṣawuf), Taḥṣiniyah (deals with knowledge on reciting the Qur’an), Tabyīn al-Īṣlāḥ (on marriage), Taṣhirīḥat al-Muḥṭāj (on economic activities), Taṣkiyah (on slaughtering animals), Musliḥat (on inheritance), and Waḍīḥah (on hajji pilgrimage). See, Amin, Mengenal Ajaran Tarjumah, 61-62 and Djamil, Perlawanan Kiae Desa, 34.
44 The term santri tarjumah is not applied by outsiders but used by the followers of Rifai themselves. This is clearly indicated in the title of a book written by Amin, one of the followers and strong defender of Rifai’s teachings. The term tarjumah seems to have come from Rifai himself, for he confessed in court that his books are translations from Arabic texts. Steenbrink, Beberapa Aspek tentang Islam di Indonesia Abad ke-19, 109-113. Although Rifai claimed that his works were translations, studies show that they are truly new compositions. Djamil, Perlawanan Kiae Desa, 24-25.
45 Some kiyai I interviewed, such as Kiyai Sahal Mahfudh, the chairman of Nahdlatul Ulama, Kiyai Sanusi in Kudus, and Kiyai Ma’mun in Pati, do not know the history of Ahmad Rifai and are not aware that he had written some Pegon books.
46 Djamil, Perlawanan Kiae Desa, 52-62. See also, Amin, Mengenal Ajaran Tarjumah, 73-86.
Islam are five (pronouncing shahādah, performing five-time daily prayer, fasting, paying alms, and performing the hajj) regardless of conditions and challenges faced by Muslims. Accepting and implementing the five pillars is regarded as the very basic tenet of Islam for the majority of Muslims.

Another major difference is Rifai’s teaching that Muslims who have committed a major sin become kāfir (non-believer). While he argues that the sole pillar of Islam is the saying of the shahādah, and that neglecting other obligations, such as prayer and fasting, does not affect one’s status as a Muslim, Rifai claims that Muslims who work for the Dutch government have committed a major sin and are therefore kāfir.47 Their leadership in prayers or in social life among Muslims was thus invalid.48 This viewpoint differs from the majority of Sunni ulama who argue that once a person declares him/herself a Muslim by pronouncing the shahādah, he/she remains Muslim unless he/she rejects the principles of Islam contained in the shahādah. Committing major sins does not affect to his/her status as a Muslim.

These differences, in addition to Rifai’s insistence on building an exclusive society and assertion to students to learn only his Pegon books, seem to be the main reasons that Rifai’s teachings are not viewed as authoritative and his books not generally known among the Javanese santri. His authority is acknowledged only by those who follow his teachings and later called themselves Rifaiyah.49

47 An analysis that stresses this nature of Rifai’s books led Basri to argue that Rifai should be categorized as an activist, while Nawawi of Banten was a legalist and Salih Darat a realist. Basri Basri, "Indonesian Ulama in the Haramayn and the Transmission of Reformist Islam in Indonesia (1800-1900)" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Arkansas, 2008), 126-163.
49 This term should not be confused with the Sufi order tarekat Rifaiyah, which counted among its followers Nur al-Din al-Raniri. Azyumardi Azra, *The Origins of Islamic Reformism in Southeast Asia*: 101
Very different from Rifai’s works is Kitab Pegon written by Muhammad Salih Darat. Written in the late nineteenth century, Salih’s works were and still are acclaimed by many kiyai and santri in Java. Although they are not formally taught in the pesantren, Salih’s books are widely referred to by santri communities either for personal use or for religious circles in mosques and prayer houses. As will be discussed in depth in chapter five, the contents of his books are similar to those of classical Arabic textbooks and in accordance with principles of the Sunni school as understood by Javanese santri.

Writing in the period after Rifai, there is no indication that Salih was influenced by him. Salih’s style, for example, is totally different from that of Rifai. While Rifai used rhyme in almost all of his works, Salih’s works were in prose. Salih also adopted an intellectual tradition that developed in the Muslim world, especially in establishing an authority on the *sharḥ* (commentary) and *mukhtāṣar* (abridgment). Some of Salih’s works are commentaries, others are abridgements, and only few are original compositions. In all his works, including the original compositions, Salih does not mention any exposition that is contrary to the mainstream understanding of Sunni principles. In other words, what Salih wrote in his Pegon works is acceptable to the pesantren community and his textbooks are widely acknowledged.

Among the pesantren community, Salih is known as the first person to write Kitab Pegon. While they acknowledge that Pegon as a writing system must have been used long before Salih’s time, they argue that it is Salih who began a tradition of writing Pegon.

Islamic texts. This argument seems to be a consequence of their unfamiliarity with Rifai Kalisalak and his works, but this is also shared by the community beyond the pesantren. And when we analyze Pegon textbooks written in the twentieth century, as I do in chapter six, their form and style resemble Salih’s works more than those of Rifai. It is reasonable to argue that Salih is the real pioneer in establishing the Kitab Pegon tradition that continues to be practiced by the pesantren community, despite the fact that he was preceded by Rifai.

In addition to the substance and content of his Pegon books, the fame of Salih among the pesantren community might also have been spread by print technology that became popular in the late nineteenth century. Unlike Rifai, whose works were reproduced in manuscript form and not printed until the mid twentieth century by his followers, Salih’s works were printed since the last decades of the nineteenth century. The distribution of their books also differed. Even after being printed, Rifai’s works were distributed exclusively among the followers of his teachings, while Salih’s books were widely disseminated and became available to everyone. Print technology contributed to a significant increase in the accessibility of Islamic textbooks to the public.

Print and Vernacular Islamic texts

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50 Interview with K.H.M.A. Sahal Mahfudh, the chairman of Nahdlatul Ulama and the leader of Pesantren Maslakul Huda, Pati, on February 3, 2008, Kiyai Sanusi, Kudus, on June 4, 2008, and Dr. Ghazali Munir, Semarang, on May 6, 2008.

Both Ahmad Rifai and Salih Darat vernacularized Islamic teaching through the publication of Pegon texts. Islamic teachings were no longer offered in the “sacred” language of Arabic but in a local vernacular used in daily life. It is a practice found elsewhere, such as among Urdu- and Malay-speaking Muslims. With the availability of Islamic texts in vernacular Javanese, those who wanted to learn the basic knowledge of Islam did not have to master the intricacies of the Arabic language, with which most authoritative textbooks were written, nor to seek instructions from teachers. Vernacular Islamic texts, therefore, facilitated the learning and understanding of the basic ideas of Islam. Before the use of print, reproduction of texts took a long time because each page was copied by hand. With the adoption of print, reproduction of a huge number of texts was achieved within a short time. In his study on the impact of print to Islamic discourse in South Asia, Robinson argues that print caused “a revolution in the transmission of knowledge.”

Despite the fact that Muslims started using print quite late, in the nineteenth century, or four centuries after it was established in Christendom, print has affected the person-to-person transmission of knowledge. This was especially true when the texts were written in vernacular language. It is this, according to Robinson, that overcame the initial reluctance of Muslims in adopting print technology for fear that print would undermine their authority as the legitimate interpreters of Islam. One of the main reasons that the ulama eventually accepted the technology was their expectation that print could strengthen religious knowledge among Muslims. This was particularly important in the

absence of Muslim political authority after the imposition of British India colonial rule. Another reason was to defend the religion from the activities of Christian missionaries who had greater financial resources and printed materials. They further realized that the printing press would not undermine the traditional form of knowledge transmission but would reinforce the existing learning systems. 53 In Robinson’s words, “if Islam could no longer be supported by the swords of Muslim princes, it could now be supported by the enhanced religious understanding of Muslims themselves,”54 through printed Islamic texts.

Following the adoption of print, South Asia, as shown by Robinson, experienced a boom in printing materials. Thousands of books and newspaper were published during the nineteenth century. Most of them were written in vernacular languages of Urdu and other South Asian languages with the aim to spread as much knowledge as possible to the Muslim population.55 Islamic knowledge became accessible to those willing to read it as it was written in their local languages. South Asia, especially Bombay, was apparently the center of printing materials of not only Urdu and other South Asian languages but also those of Southeast Asian languages, particularly Malay and Javanese. As noted by Proudfoot, many of the kitabs in the Malay and Javanese languages were also printed in this city in addition to Singapore, which was the most important place for the printing industry in Southeast Asia during the nineteenth century.56

53 Robinson, Islam and Muslim History in South Asia, 68-77.
54 Ibid., 77.
55 Ibid., 75-76.
The importance of Singapore for print culture has been discussed by Roff. In his assessment of Singapore at the end of the nineteenth century, Roff argues that Singapore became one of the centers of Islamic life, not because of the existence of Islamic schools nor even religious scholars, but because of “its role as a publication and distribution centre for religious writings.” Moreover, it had a strategic location as a transit city for the Hajj to and from Mecca.57 The majority of those involved in the business of printing, according to Roff, were local born Indian Muslims, known also as Jawi Peranakan, but Proudfoot shows that their involvement was quite late and limited especially in newspapers. Earlier, Javanese descendants were the dominant actors, especially in the publication of Jawi and Pegon books. According to Proudfoot, among the top four publishers, three were Javanese. They were Haji Muhammad Said bin Haji Muhammad Arsyad of Semarang, Haji Muhammad Siraj bin Haji Muhammad Salih of Rembang, and Haji Muhammad Taib bin Haji Muhammad Zain of Pati. “Evidently book publishing was disproportionately the preserve of the Javanese community in Singapore,” says Proudfoot.58

Proudfoot identifies three different groups of people involved in publication in Singapore. They were Europeans (both the Colonial Government and Missionary organizations), Baba (local Chinese) and Muslims (Javanese and Indian descents). Unlike the other two, Muslim publishers printed works that were previously the domain of the Malay manuscript literary culture. In addition, the Muslim publishers were commercial enterprises whose survival was dependent upon their ability to sell what they published.

This commercial aspect of Muslim publishers contrasted sharply from the Europeans who relied on either the government or missionary organizations for financial support. Therefore, Muslim publishers were obliged to issue works that attracted general readers. Syair and hikayat were the financial pillars of the Muslim publishers because of their popularity. The kitabs, or books dealing with Islamic knowledge, ranging from the study and recitation of the Qur’an to Islamic theology, jurisprudence, and Sufism, were believed to be unprofitable, and some of them were printed on the basis of waqf (charitable bequest). Nevertheless, Muslim publishers kept issuing these kitabs and in the 1890s, as Proudfoot notes, kitabs accounted for 31 percent of all Muslim publications. We may assume, therefore, that publishing the kitabs was more for religious purposes than for economic profit. They were motivated to do so in order to spread and disseminate religious knowledge among Muslims in the region, although they had to compensate this with other more profitable publications.

It is interesting to note that, despite the fact that print had been present in the Dutch East Indies from the early seventeenth century, it was not until the early twentieth century that most of the Pegon books were printed in either Singapore or Bombay. According to Proudfoot, this was the result of the policy of the Dutch

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59 Syair is basically a verse on various topics, while hikayat is story, narrative, chronicle or history in prose.
60 Proudfoot, *Early Malay Printed Books*, 27-31. For a comparison of the percentage of the different works, see his endnote 185, on page 77.
62 There is a printed book issued by a Surabaya printing house in 1853 with the title *Sharaf al-Anām* (the Best of Mankind) as shown by Kaptein. N. J. G. Kaptein, "An Arab Printer in Surabaya in 1853," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 149, no. 2 (1993): 356-362. However, Kapten himself is not able to assess if this publisher produced other printed materials. It seems that this is the only printed book from this particular printer due to either to the fact that such books were “commercially unsuccessful” or “prohibited by the Dutch authorities.”
government to restrict printing activities at the same time that the British government in the Straits exercised a liberal attitude toward such publications. The Netherlands Indies government imposed large bonds on the printers as well as censorship before anything was published. Unwillingness to cooperate with the “infidel” foreigners was very likely an additional factor in having Islamic materials printed in Singapore. As de Graaf indicates, until the end of the nineteenth century printing presses in the Netherlands Indies were owned by the Europeans and mainly printed government documents, school textbooks, and missionary works, especially translations of the Bible. Javanese Muslims were understandably more comfortable working with their fellow Muslims in Singapore who ran the printing business than with the Europeans. The two regions had been closely connected with the availability of shipping services, and so distribution of printed material was unhindered. In the early twentieth century, Bombay replaced Singapore as the preferred city for printing because it produced good quality printing at a cheap price. In addition, Singapore experienced a decline in lithographic printing following the rise in popularity of typography.

Pegon and Jawi books were, until the early twentieth century, mostly printed in lithograph as the printing press or typography was not economically practical for the cursive script of Arabic. An Arabic letter, which could have up to four different types depending on its positions (i.e. at the beginning, middle, and end of a word, as well as its position independently), made typography impractical. Typography was also perceived to

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63 Proudfoot, Early Malay Printed Books, 7.
65 Graaf, Indonesia.
66 Proudfoot, Early Malay Printed Books, 7, 33, 35-36.
67 Ibid., 44-45.
be religiously tainted, as it was used for printing the Bible and its translation. Lithograph which relied on the conventional process of scribal copying was a perfect way to produce texts with the Arabic script. With such a process, kitabs with interlinear translation in either Javanese or Malay could be reproduced, and the role of the copyist remained important. Lithograph was, therefore, regarded as a continuation of the manuscript tradition; the only difference was in the faster reproduction by lithography.68

As happened elsewhere, Singapore and the surrounding area experienced a boom in publications following the introduction of print. Compared to manuscripts, the number of printed materials increased considerably. Proudfoot estimates that the number of Malay manuscripts, including those in private collections, was about 10,000. This number was reached with only ten titles that were reportedly printed by one publisher in the 1890s. There were many publishers in Singapore at the time, and more than a thousand copies could be printed from one manuscript. Moreover, not all titles were registered with the government authorities, and so the actual number of printed copies would have been even higher.69 By the end of the nineteenth century, there may have been hundreds of thousands of copies printed. In other words, the estimated number of surviving Malay manuscripts, according to Proudfoot, was equal to the “book production by Singapore printers every two weeks” during the peak of Muslim publication in the 1890s.70

The acceleration of the production of written materials had certainly contributed to the increase in literacy, though not as great as one would have expected. Compared to

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68 Ibid., 37, 45.
69 Ibid., 49-50.
70 Ibid., 50.
the manuscript era, the availability of written materials after the introduction of print increased by several hundred percent. It did not necessarily mean, however, that there was a proportionate rate of increase in literacy. One of the main reasons was the limited access to education, which determined the degree of literacy. During the colonial era, public schools were available to only certain groups of people, such as the aristocrats, the rich, and Westerners, and it was they who had access to printed materials in the Latin alphabet. The Jawi and Pegon books, on the other hand, were disseminated not through formal schools but mainly through religious gatherings in prayer houses. By learning to recite the Qur’an, Muslims learned how to read and pronounce Arabic scripts, thus giving them the ability to read Jawi or Pegon. Jawi and Pegon books would therefore have had a greater impact on literacy than books printed in the Latin alphabet. Works of syair and hikayat would have been even more effective because of their popularity as literary entertainment.

The impact of printed Pegon books on the literacy among Javanese might be less than that of Jawi for Malay-speaking people because the number of printed Pegon works was much fewer. Among hundreds of titles of the Muslim publications in Singapore, Proudfoot lists only twenty five titles in Pegon, twenty of which were Muslim publications and the other five were different books of the Bible (Luke, Matthew, Acts, Mark, and John).\(^7\) For Proudfoot, all these twenty were categorized as kitabs, though I question at least three of them.\(^2\) Since there is no indication that Pegon works were printed in other places than Singapore and Bombay by the end of the nineteenth century,}

\(^7\) Ibid., 678.
\(^2\) Ibid., 29. The three titles I doubt as kitabs were Saif Allah, Mujarrabat, and Pangelingan.
few Pegon books benefited from print culture compared to that of Jawi. Despite the fact that there were only twenty titles of Pegon kitab, the number of copies printed was an astonishing 47,000. Of this number, 38,000 consisted of the ten titles by Muhammad Salih Darat, a good indication of his importance to the Muslim community (see chapter 4).

The availability of Pegon Islamic texts in great numbers since the introduction of print in the late nineteenth century certainly affected the transmission of Islamic knowledge among Javanese Muslims. Although it did not totally alter the mode of knowledge transmission, it did provide more freedom to certain people in accessing Islamic texts which used to be exclusively in Arabic.

**Significance of Pegon books among Javanese Santri**

As discussed above, the Arabic language is not only regarded as the language of the Arab people but also the language of Islam. Most authoritative sources of Islamic knowledge are written in Arabic. Since Arabic is an intricate language, there developed a tradition among Muslims, especially Javanese santri, to obtain an *ijazah* or *sanad* (a record of intellectual chain) from one’s teacher before undertaking the teaching of a particular book. The sanad from the teacher depicts the extended chain of teachers going back to the author of the book. This tradition developed among Muslims as the oral transmission of Islamic knowledge was dominant. Prior to the emergence of print, copying manuscripts was also in need of a teacher’s rectification. By having a sanad from

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73 Again, this number is based on the registered record, as noted by Proudfoot. The real number could be much more than that because some of them were not reported to the government.
a teacher on a certain kitab, a person could have the authority to teach it to others because he was assumed to have a sufficient understanding of it. The transmission of knowledge was thus controlled to guarantee that whoever taught a book had correct understanding before teaching it to others. Authority was built upon one’s collection of sanad from teachers and not simply upon one’s ability, which was hard to measure due to the absence of examination and other methods of testing one’s mastery of a book. The more kitab one learned from teachers, the more sanad one received from them and hence more authoritative one became.

When Islamic texts are vernacularized in local languages, as for example in Pegon, the concept of authority seems to change. The ijazah from a teacher is not deemed necessary for teaching these kinds of books. Most Pegon Islamic texts are written in prose and use ngoko, the lowest of three stratified levels of Javanese language. This is different from serat or babad literary works, which were written mostly in verse by court poets and used the higher registers, kromo or kromo inggil, of the Javanese language. Among common people beyond the vicinity of the kraton (court), especially in the northern coastal areas, ngoko is more popular as the language of communication. Prose is also easier to comprehend than verse, which has to maintain a rhyme often at the expense of a more precise wording. Javanese santri who are familiar with the Arabic script and have basic knowledge of Islam, therefore, have no difficulty in reading and understanding

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74 During an interview on June 4, 2008, with Kiyai Sanusi, who always teaches one of Salih’s books in the mosque of Bareng, Kudus, he admitted that he had never studied any of Salih’s books from his teachers. Likewise, in a personal communication with Kiyai Ma’mun, who was teaching Salih’s Sabil al-Abid in Wedarijaksa, Pati, he also revealed that he had not learned it from any teacher. They were confident that they had sufficient knowledge to teach Salih’s works as a result of their study in the pesantren.

75 For the contrasting use of ngoko and kromo, see E. M. Uhlenbeck, De Tegenstelling Krama : Ngoko / Haar Positie in het Javaanse Taalsysteem (Groningen: J.B. Wolters, 1950). The use of ngoko as spoken daily is assessed in Herudjati Purwoko, Jawa Ngoko: Ekspresi Komunikasi Arus Bawah (Jakarta: Indeks, 2008).
Pegon books. There is no concern over a misreading of the texts or a misunderstanding of their meaning as it happens with Arabic texts. For this reason, Pegon books make it easier for santri to be transmitters of Islamic knowledge to their communities.

As noted by Dhofier, only a few santri who studied at the pesantren become kiyai who lead the pesantren and teach Arabic textbooks to their students.\(^6\) The majority return to their community and become lay people. However, the Islamic knowledge they acquired while in the pesantren help them to be respected in their communities as being more knowledgeable than their co-villagers. Quite often they are requested to teach Islam to the people and thus become known as *kiyai langgar* or *kiyai kampung*, a term to differentiate them from kiyai pesantren.\(^7\) They become Islamic “scholars” for those who had never studied in the pesantren. It is among this group of people that Pegon textbooks have had a significant impact.

Those who become kiyai kampung do not always have sufficient knowledge nor the courage to read and teach Arabic textbooks in their communities. Some may reason that they have not learned a book requested to be taught since they hold no sanad and therefore lack the authority to teach it. But even among those who have the sanad, classical Arabic texts are not easy to comprehend. In this situation, the Pegon books provide a breakthrough for them and have removed their reluctance to teach. Knowledge they acquired during their study at the pesantren and the Javanese language of Pegon encourage them to utilize Pegon books in teaching Islam to their communities, despite

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\(^{6}\) Dhofier, *The Pesantren Tradition*.

not having the sanad.\footnote{Interview with K.H.M.A. Sahal Mahfudh on February 3, 2008.} In fact Pegon books are not normally taught in the pesantren and consequently no sanad is needed to teach them. The availability of abundant vernacular Islamic texts as a result of print reproduction has increased access to Islamic knowledge and enabled local kiyai to teach it without having necessarily followed the traditional norms of the pesantren.

The vernacular Islamic texts and print culture, however, do not necessarily mean that such texts have now become accessible to many. Theoretically, a Javanese who is familiar with Arabic script is able to read the Pegon books not only because they are in Javanese but also because almost all Pegon textbooks contain vowel marks. In this regard they are different from the Arabic texts, known as kitab kuning (yellow books), which are mostly gundul (bald), or without vowel marks. Not all Javanese Muslims who have the ability to read Pegon books, however, will study them without some assistance. Pegon texts that contain practical instructions, such as those dealing with prayer manuals (faṣalatan) or compilation of invocation (duʿā), can be accessed directly without necessarily attending a religious circle (pengajian) led by a kiyai. This type of Pegon books may be categorized as having provided access to Islamic knowledge for anyone who can read them. However, for texts that contain deeper Islamic knowledge, especially Sufism, common Javanese Muslims still need to study with teachers. They may be able to read such texts, but understanding the content is not always easy. By attending the pengajian provided by local kiyai, they can gain a deeper understanding of Islamic ideas by discussing in detail problems or issues that arise in the course of the study.\footnote{This opinion was advanced by some participants in two religious circles in Bareng, Kudus, and Wedarijaksa, Pati, whom I met on June 7 and 8, 2008, respectively.} The
pengajian itself, in addition to its educational function, also becomes a societal forum in which friends, relatives, and colleagues interact.

It is clear, therefore, that printed vernacular Islamic texts in itself does not lead directly to greater understanding nor does it jeopardize the oral transmission of knowledge; teachers are still necessary. The general argument among scholars that print culture created a “private decoding of text” among its readers is not totally true in the case of printed Pegon books. The teachers do not totally “lose ground before the author of the texts,” as argued by Proudfoot. Practical knowledge, especially that relating to performing the daily obligations of Islam, might be learned independently through Pegon Islamic texts, but teachers are necessary for anything more complex.

Conclusion

The spread of Islam beyond the Arab lands has been accompanied not only by the introduction of the Arabic language but also by the adoption of the Arabic scripts for writing local vernacular languages. The phenomenon is true as well for Java with the introduction and widespread use of Pegon. Although it was initially used for personal purposes, Pegon became important in writing Islamic texts, following similar trends in other nations. Access to Islamic knowledge is therefore through both Arabic and local vernacular texts. While Arabic sources are commonly studied in the formal Islamic educational institutions such as the pesantren, Pegon Islamic texts are used widely in the more informal learning settings of the pengajian in the mosques and prayer houses.

80 Proudfoot, Early Malay Printed Books, 55.
81 Ibid., 56.
Arabic and Pegon texts, therefore, represent two different but complementary channels of transmission of Islamic knowledge among Javanese Muslims—the pesantren on one side and mosque and musalla on the other. The availability of Islamic texts in Pegon provides an impetus for lay Javanese people to keep learning Islam and behave as proper Muslims as directed by the texts. Pegon texts make it easier for the common people and older Javanese to study Islam. In other words, Pegon Islamic texts have expanded access to Islamic knowledge which was previously limited to educated Muslims with a strong command of the Arabic language.

Having examined the role and significance of Pegon Islamic texts, especially after the introduction of print, among Javanese Muslims, one can appreciate the contributions of the pioneer in the production of Pegon Islamic texts, Muhammad Salih Darat, whose life and works are the subjects of the next two chapters.
CHAPTER 4
SALIH DARAT AND PEGON BOOKS,

As the pioneer of Pegon Islamic texts, Salih Darat was deeply concerned with educating people so that they could acquire sufficient knowledge of Islam to perform their religious observances properly. For that purpose, Salih utilized all his potential, from teaching students in his pesantren and ordinary people in religious circles in mosques and prayer houses, to composing Pegon Islamic texts. He performed all these activities only after he was convinced that he had the authority to do so by traveling widely to study with a number of respective and authoritative scholars in various branches of Islamic knowledge. While teaching the religious sciences to students and to the community is the normal task of the ulama in Java, writing Pegon Islamic texts is only claimed by a few. This skill was the special character of Salih who was the most prominent in establishing this tradition in Java. During his life, Salih produced at least twelve printed works, ranging from prayer manuals, theology, jurisprudence, exegesis of the Qur’an, to a hagiography of the Prophet.

The main targets of Salih’s books, as he mentions in a few of his introductions, were ordinary adult Javanese Muslims with familiarity with the Arabic scripts used in all books on Islam. Salih’s concern was that, while the majority of Javanese called themselves Muslims, only a minority knew how to perform Islamic rites correctly. By creating written sources on this subject in the local language, Salih hoped to enable people to become better acquainted with the proper ways of conducting the most important Islamic rituals in the lives of the ordinary Muslim lay person.
Salih does not explain why he chose to use the Arabic, rather than the Javanese, script for these Islamic texts, but he may have been influenced by the situation at the time of his writing. As a person raised in northern coastal Java, where Islamic influence was strong, he realized that the Arabic script was more popular than the Javanese script.

While Arabic, at least in terms of reading the Qur’an, was taught free at prayer houses (muṣalla) and mosques, the Javanese script was only offered at formal schools. People in the area, therefore, were more familiar with Arabic script than the Javanese, and even Salih himself might not have been able to read and write the Javanese script. However, he would have been familiar with the use of Arabic scripts for writing non-Arabic languages, especially Javanese, as he was educated in the pesantren where writing in Pegon was widely practiced.

The reason that Salih’s works were so widely read was because he possessed the proper authority through his sanad. This chapter thus begins with a brief biographical sketch of this lineage, then proceeds to examine the works that proved most meaningful to the Javanese Muslims.

Salih Darat: a Short Biography

His full name as appears in his books is Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ ibn ‘Umar al-Samāranī,¹ but he is popularly known among Javanese as Kiyai Salih Darat.²

¹ This is a transliteration of محمد صالح بن عمر السمارني as appears in the cover of most of his books. See, for example, Muhammad Salih al-Samarani, Majmū‘at al-Sharī‘ah al-Kāfiyah lil-‘Āwam (Semarang: Toha Putra, na). Al-Samarani is an attribution to Semarang, the current capital city of Central Java.
² Kiyai is usually used to address religious teachers. See Zamakhsyari Dhofier, The Pesantren Tradition: The Role of the Kyai in the Maintenance of Traditional Islam in Java (Tempe, Ariz.: Program for Southeast Asian Studies, Arizona State University, 1999). Darat refers to a village located in the northern part of Semarang, where Salih settled and built his pesantren.
born around 1820 to a religious family in the village of Kedung Cumpleng in the district of Jepara, about 75 kilometers east of Semarang, the capital city of the province of Central Java.³ His father Umar was a local ulama as well as an activist, and he was said to have been involved with other ulama, such as Kiyai Syada’, Kiyai Darda’ and Kiyai Murtadha Semarang, in the Java War of 1825-1830.⁴ One can safely assume that Salih received an early education in Islam from his father, as this was a tradition among learned people in Java at the time. Having gained a basic knowledge of Islam, he sought to learn more and thus became an itinerant student, moving from one teacher to another to study *kitab* (books) both in Java and Mecca.

From his hometown, Salih went to Pati, Kudus, and Semarang, before leaving for Mecca. It is not known when he visited a certain pesantren and how long he stayed, or when he left Java for Mecca, because no such records are available. In one of his books, *al-Murshid al-Wajiz*, Salih only mentions several teachers in Java and Mecca, and the titles of books that he studied with various teachers. There is little doubt, however, that

³ His exact date of birth is unknown, and even the year and place of his birth are approximations made by Abdullah Salim based on his interviews with several ulama. Abdullah Salim, "Majmu'at al-Syari'at al-Kafiyyat li al-Awam Karya Syaikh Muhammad Shalih ibn Umar al-Samarani: Suatu Kajian terhadap Kitab Fiqih Berbahasa Jawa Akhir Abad 19" (Ph.D. Dissertation, IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah, 1994), 20.
⁴ It is Danuwijoto who mentions that Salih’s father was involved in the Java War. H.M Danuwijoto, "Ky. Saleh Darat Semarang: Ulama Besar dan Pujangga Islam sesudah Pakubuwono ke-IV," *Mimbar Ulama*, no. 17 (1977): 68. Peter Carey lists many religious figures who supported Dipanagara during the war. He says that there were at least 108 *Kiyai*, 31 *Hajis* (pilgrims who had performed the Hajj), 15 *Sehs* (Islamic scholars), 12 religious officials, and four religious teachers (*Kiyai guru*). Peter Carey, *Babad Dipanagara: An Account of the Outbreak of the Java War 1825-1830* (Kuala Lumpur: Council of the MBRAS, 1981), xlv. However, in the list of those religious figures that Carey provides in another book, the names of Kiyai Umar, Syada’, and Murtadha are not found. Peter Carey, *The Power of Prophecy: Prince Dipanagara and the End of an Old Order in Java 1785-1855* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2007), 786-794. This does not mean, however, that they were not part of Dipanagara’s supporters. As the war received wide support from the santri community in Java, it is very likely that these people were participants, though their names were not recorded in documents collected by Carey.
Salih was contemporaneous with Muhammad Nawawi of Banten, a well-known Javanese ulama in Mecca in the nineteenth century, because both shared several teachers. Unlike Nawawi who settled in Mecca and wrote books in Arabic, Salih returned to Java, settled in Semarang, and wrote books all in Javanese.

Salih is also reported to have stayed for a while in Singapore and interacted with Muslim societies there, though it is unclear how long he stayed and whether it was during his onward or return journey from Mecca. It was very common for Javanese pilgrims to stop for a while in Singapore during their trip to and from the Holy Land since Singapore was the main archipelago port for the pilgrimage traffic. Although he may not have lived there for long nor studied with a teacher in Singapore, his period in the city was an important stage in his life, especially when he started composing Pegon textbooks. Salih most likely befriended Muslim publishers in Singapore, many of whom came from Java and even from his home region of Semarang and Patti. He was able to call upon these friendships in later years in order to have his Pegon manuscripts published. The idea of writing Pegon books may have been sparked by his witnessing in Singapore the dynamic development of printed Islamic texts in its heyday in the late nineteenth century.

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5 Muhammad Nawawi may have been the most prolific writer among the Javanese ulama in Mecca. He wrote tens, some even say more than a hundred, books during his lifetime, all in Arabic. For discussion of this figure, see, C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka in the Latter Part of the 19th Century: Daily Life, Customs and Learning, the Moslims of the East-Indian-Archipelago* (Leyden: Late E. J. Brill, 1931), 287-292; H. Abd. Rachman, "The Pesantren Architects and Their Socio-religious Teachings" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California Los Angeles, 1997), 97-139; and Alex Soesilo Wijoyo, "Shaykh Nawawi of Banten: Texts, Authority, and the Gloss Tradition" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Columbia University, 1997).


Having studied with many Muslim scholars in Java and Mecca, Salih realized that the majority of his fellow Javanese Muslims possessed only a limited understanding of Islamic knowledge. He knew that to observe Islamic instructions properly one needs to be taught, and so he became committed to educating his people on Islamic knowledge through three channels: pesantren, religious circles, and written materials. After he returned home from Mecca, Salih built a pesantren in Darat, Semarang, possibly around 1870. This date is based on the fact that he started writing an abridgment of Ḥikam in 1289 AH (1872 CE), and it is very possible that he did that after he settled in Semarang.

After he built the pesantren, students from different parts of Central and East Java came to Darat and studied various kitab from him. It is not well known what books that he read and taught to his students, but several kitabs which were certainly read, as recorded by two of his students, were Sharḥ al-Ḥikam (Sufism), Tafsīr Jalālayn (Qur’anic exegeses), Wasīlat al-Tullāb and Sharḥ al-Mardini (astronomy), Hashiyah al-Bājūrī, Fath al-Muʿīn, Iʿāna t al-Ṭālibīn, and Mughni al-Muḥtāj (fiqh). Salih must have taught other books as he had learned a variety of books and received a number of ijazah from his teachers while an itinerant santri.

In addition to teaching the students in his pesantren, Salih was also reportedly visiting different places to teach religious knowledge to the people through what is known as pengajian (religious circle). Salih seemed to realize that not only students in the

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9 Salim, "Majmu'at al-Syari'at al-Kafiyat li al-Awam", 41-42.
10 These four kitabs were mentioned by Mahfuz Termas in his short biography. See, Muhammad Mahfuz ibn Abdullah al-Tarmasi, Mawhibah dhī al-Fadāl 'alā Sharḥ al-ʿAllāmah Ibn Ḥajar Muqaddimah Bāfadal, 4 vols. (Mīr [Egypt]: Al-Amirah al-Sharīfah, 1908), vol. 4, 735.
11 The last four books of fiqh were mentioned by Raden Muhammad Salim, penghulu of Banyuwangi and the son of Raden Hadji Muhammad Hadi, mufti of Kendal. He spent two years in Semarang in 1890s, learning such books with Salih. See, G.F Pijper, Studien over de Geschiedenis van de Islam in Indonesia 1900-1950 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1977), 92-93.
pesantren needed to be taught Islamic knowledge but also, and more importantly, those
who had no access to Islamic education. Though there are insufficient sources to
determine where he held such religious circles, one of the venues was in the residency of
Purworejo, for it was here that he met and married the regent’s daughter, Siti Aminah,
who became his third wife. The residency of Demak was another place that Salih
regularly visited, where R.A. Kartini, the famous feminist activist in the late nineteenth
and early twentieth century, mentioned having heard his lesson. Some sources even
argue that Salih’s teachings convinced her in accepting marriage for a Javanese woman.
Based on letters to her Dutch friends, by mid 1902 Kartini showed her more religious
stance, and it is probable that she attended Salih’s religious circle as she often visited
her uncle who was the Resident of Demak. While Salih may have contributed to Kartini’s

addition, these sources mention that as a gift on her marriage, Salih gave her his work of the Qur’anic exegesis, Fayḍ al-Raḥmān. Although from chronological order, it is very possible that Salih gave her the book, as it was printed in 1894, and her marriage was in November 1903, further reference to support this argument is still needed.

13 It is also argued that the title of her published collected letters, Door Duisternis tot Licht (through darkness to light), which is taken from one of her letters to Dr. Abendanon, was inspired by the Qur’anic verse 2:257. See, Efa Fillah, Kartini Menemukan Tuhan: Analisis Wacana Surat-surat R.A. Kartini Tahun 1899-1904 (Surabaya: Media Wacana Press, 2008), 27-30 and Ahmad Mansur Suryanege, Menemukan Sejarah: Wacana Pergerakan Islam di Indonesia (Bandung: Mizan, 1995), 177-183.

14 This can be seen from her letters to the Abendanon family, Mr. and Mrs. Van Kol, and Stella Zeehandelaar, especially between July 21 and October 27, 1902, where Kartini shows her reliance on God for her burdens and her realization in trust to God. In a letter to Dr. Abendanon, August 15, 1902, for example, she says “Now we have found Him for whom unconsciously our souls had yearned during the long years. We had sought so far and so long, we did not know that it was near, that it was always with us, that it was in us.” She also quotes others who reacted to her change, “It has pleased God to open your hearts at last, be thankful for that.” See, R.A. Kartini, Letters of a Javanese Princess, trans. Agnes Louise Symmers (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1976), 215. In the next letter to E.C. Abendanon, dated August 17, 1902, she says “We do not seek consolation from men—we hold fast to His hand, and then the darkness becomes light, and the storm wind a gentle breeze.” Then, she also says “Now that we have found Him, our whole lives are changed, our work seems nobler, higher.” See, Kartini, Letters of a Javanese Princess, 219-220.
view on religious matters, more evidence is necessary to support this view. Regardless of Salih’s purported influence on Kartini, he maintained close contact with his fellow Javanese working with the colonial government, despite his criticism of colonialism and the Dutch system. Unlike Rifai Kalisalak, Salih saw the need to educate his fellow Javanese on Islam as of greater importance than his dislike of the colonial authorities.

The third channel Salih used for teaching Islam was written materials. During his lifetime, Salih was the author of at least twelve books ranging from fiqh, tawḥīd, taṣāwuf and tafsīr. As mentioned previously, some were translations from Arabic, others abridged versions, and some new compositions. All were written in Pegon and meant for the common people. The language he used, therefore, was the ngoko form of Javanese, not kromo, which is commonly found in works by Javanese court poets. In the introduction of a number of his books, Salih argues that all Muslims should have sufficient knowledge of Islam when they perform religious obligations and, for that reason, he reiterates the importance of learning. Because most Javanese do not understand Arabic, which was the basis of Islamic texts, Salih was committed to making this knowledge accessible to the Javanese. His readership, therefore, was not the santri but the ordinary people with no knowledge of books on Islam written in Arabic.

In his capacity as the writer of Pegon textbooks, Salih was a special ulama in the eyes of his Javanese kiyai colleagues. While most Javanese kiyai who led the pesantren

15 Kartini does not mention who brought about her change in her religiosity, though she mentions an old woman in a letter to Dr. Abendanon. Kartini used to refuse to read or memorize the Qur’an because she did not understand its meaning and nor could her teacher. But that changed once she started studying with the old woman. See, Kartini, Letters of a Javanese Princess, 213-215. To E.C. Abendanon, she says that an old woman gave her a number of Javanese books, some of them were written in the Arabic script. “We are going to study Arabic so that we can read, and write it.” This is the only indication that Salih’s Pegon books were given to her because it is only he who at the time had composed books in Javanese written in the Arabic script. Kartini, Letters of a Javanese Princess, 216.
limited their activities to teaching students—and the few who produced written materials
did it in Arabic because standardized texts used in pesantren are in Arabic—Salih was
unique in writing Islamic textbooks in Javanese. His success in the writing of Pegon
books on Islamic subjects encouraged others to follow suit. It is thus possible to argue
that Salih was the first major pioneer in the tradition of using Pegon for the transmission
of Islamic knowledge in Java.

The contents of his Pegon books vary from simple instructions on how to perform
an obligatory ritual prayer to a more contemplative meaning of the Qur’anic verses.
There are three main concerns represented in all Salih’s books. First is his desire to
enable the Javanese to gain an understanding of the conception of God. He emphasizes
the importance of having a correct understanding of God based on Islamic teachings,
especially those of the Sunni scholars Abu al-Hasan al-Ash’ari and Abu Mansur
Muhammad al-Maturidi. Salih believed that many Javanese had a confused conception of
God that combined Islamic and pre-Islamic ideas. He stresses, therefore, the need for
Muslim Javanese to have a strong basis for their belief in God as their creator.

Second, he places great importance on the need to know what the obligations are
for all Muslims and to produce manuals for their proper performance. Toward this end he
provided not only Arabic sentences that needed to be recited during the performance of
such obligations but also their meanings in Javanese. The intention was to enable his
readers to understand and internalize the meaning of these sentences and hence the
obligations themselves. This concern seems to be motivated by his view that many
Javanese Muslims did not observe the basic obligations of Islam, and those who
performed them did not have sufficient knowledge of their significance.
Third, Salih is also concerned with improving good manners among his fellow Muslims, as can be seen in his writings on Sufism. After Muslims gain a correct understanding and conception of their God and follow God’s commands as prescribed in fiqh books, they need to perfect their lives with refined attitudes and behavior in relation to both God and other human being. In relation to God, Salih reminds the reader that ritual observance should be performed not only to discharge the obligations but also to become closer to God. All humans are God’s creatures, and the best among them are the most pious. Only God knows their piety, and so people should not feel that they are better than others. This will lead, according to Salih, to the birth of humble feelings and save people from being arrogant in front of the others. These three concerns are ubiquitous in Salih’s Pegon books and presented in simple and modest expressions that are easy to understand.

According to a booklet written by his descendant, Salih was married three times and had several children. His first wife, whose name is not known, was a girl from Mecca whom he met while studying there. From this marriage he had one son, Ibrahim.16 Salih mentioned this son in one of his books, Fayḍ al-Rahmān, where he called himself Abu Ibrahim (the father of Ibrahim) Muhammad Salih ibn Umar al-Samarani.17 This wife apparently did not live long and passed away before Salih returned to Semarang.18 Then, in Semarang, Salih married Shofiah, the daughter of Kiyai Murtadlo, a friend of Salih’s

18 Ibrahim was not brought to Semarang and he probably was raised by his grandparent. Later on, together with his half-brother, Kholil, Ibrahim provided a service in hajj pilgrimage to some Javanese. While Kholil provided services when they were still in Java, such as getting travel documents and arranging transportation to Mecca, Ibrahim escorted them after they were in Mecca. See, Dzahir, "Sejarah dan Perjugangan Kyai Sholeh," 7.
father. The second wife bore him two sons, Kholil and Yahya. It is Kholil who continued Salih’s lineage through his three sons and a daughter, while Yahya had no children. One of Kholil’s sons, Ali Kholil, is now living in the complex that used to be the pesantren of Salih in Darat, Semarang. Salih’s third wife was R.A. Siti Aminah, the daughter of Purworejo’s regent, Sayid Ali. From the last wife, Salih had a daughter, R.A. Siti Zahroh, who married Dahlan Termas, the brother of Mahfudz Termas, a well-known Javanese ulama in Mecca in the nineteenth century who also studied with Salih.

Salih passed away on 28th Ramadan 1321 AH or 18th December 1903 CE at the age of 83. He was buried in a Bergota cemetery complex in Semarang. His death is commemorated on the 10th of Shawwal, the month after Ramadan, when hundreds of Muslims gather around his tomb to pray for him and seek blessings from God. It is interesting to note that the organizers of the commemoration are not his descendants but those of his student, Kiyai Abdul Hamid, from Kendal. When this was proposed to Ali Khalil, he replied that such commemoration is part of the Javanese tradition and not sanctioned in Islam. The fact that Salih’s tomb has always been visited by Muslims not only on the commemoration day but also on other days shows that he is a respected figure and some even view him as a wali (saint). Although the last claim is debatable, there

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19 Ali Kholil was born in 1931 and he began to live there around 1950 after he studied at pesantren Pegadon and Kebon Dalem in Kendal. According to him, Salih’s students continued to lead his pesantren after Salih died, but the pesantren was completely abandoned during the Japanese occupation (1942-1945). When he started living there, the complex was already inhabited by migrants who had no relation to Salih. He was entrusted by his family to revitalize the pesantren but he was never able to do that. What he could do was to rebuild the mosque that still exists today, thanks to the support of those who greatly admired and respected Salih. Ali could not recall much about Salih as he was born decades after Salih died. His father, Kholil, passed away when he was only four years, and so he did not hear anything directly from his father about Salih. Interview with Ali Kholil on May 6, 2008.


21 Interview with Ali Khalil on May 6, 2008.

22 Interview with a visitor from Purwodadi, Irshad, who recited the Qur’an at Salih’s grave on May 5, 2008.
is no doubt that many Javanese Muslims gained their understanding of Islam from Salih since his books were in continuous use and his credentials as a teacher and ulama based on his sanad give him the authority to expound on Islamic ideas.

** Intellectual Networks  

The significance of teachers in the transmission of knowledge in Islam, especially among the santri community in Java, has been discussed by scholars.\(^\text{24}\) The authority of a kiyai rests mainly on his connection to his respected teachers. A kiyai who is considered an authority on Arabic textbooks is not only dependent on his mastery of such books, but also on his intellectual chain of teachers extending back to the authors of the books, which is known as sanad. Having learned an Arabic text from a teacher and having demonstrated one’s knowledge of it are requirements for obtaining an ijazah (certificate) from the teacher in recognition of the right to teach others. This is why the intellectual chain is so important in the pesantren.

It is fortunate that in the last part of *al-Murshid al-Wajīz* Salih lists a number of his teachers,\(^\text{25}\) which makes it possible to trace his intellectual genealogy despite the

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\(^\text{23}\) *Walī* is an abbreviated form of *wa’liy Allah*, meaning someone who is close to or intimate with God. Unlike a prophet who is appointed by God, a wali may gain his status through spiritual exercises. However, there is no fixed, standard process to attain the status of wali. Like an ulama, a wali’s status is more a matter of attribution by the community rather than imposed by an institution or self-proclaimed. Some are acknowledged as wali after they die, and others are known as wali while still living. The recognition by the community usually comes after someone has shown exemplary behavior in harmony with the Prophet’s sunnah or extraordinary religious experiences. The idea of a wali is thus socially constructed and not always agreed upon by the communities. B. Radtke, "Walī,* The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. 11, 109-112.


absence of dates regarding his actual length of study with each teacher. The first kiyai with whom Salih learned Islamic sciences was Kiyai Muhammad Shahid in the village of Kajen, Pati. With him he studied a number of fiqh books, such as *Fath al-Qarib*, *Fath al-Mu‘īn*, *Minhāj al-Qawīm*, *Sharḥ al-Khaṭīb* and *Fath al-Wahhāb*. Salih must have had sufficient knowledge of Arabic prior to learning such books because they were not elementary. It can be assumed that either he was an advanced student in Arabic grammar before studying in Kajen or he spent few years there before finally learning such books. From Kajen, Salih moved to Kudus, the neighboring district of Pati and Jepara, where he became a student of Kiyai Raden Muhammad Salih ibn Asnawi with whom he studied the *Tafsīr Jalālayn*.

From Kudus Salih moved to Semarang where he learned *nahwu* (Arabic grammar) and *ṣaraf* (morphology) as well as *Fath al-Wahhab* with Kiyai Ishaq Damaran. Still in Semarang, he learned *ilmu falak* (astronomy) with Kiyai Abdullah

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26 In the book, Salih mentions Kajen, Juwana, as the village where Kiyai Shahid lived. Ibid., 273. Juwana is actually a sub-district within the district of Pati, and Kajen itself falls within the sub-district of Tayu. However, during the colonial era, one had to go through Juwana to get to Kajen. This may have been the reason that Salih mentions Kajen, Juwana, instead of Kajen, Tayu. I learned that Kiyai Syahid actually lived in the village of Waturoyo, not Kajen. Kajen is certainly more popular than other villages surrounding it as it is the village where Kiyai Ahmad Mutamakkin, the main figure in the *Serat Cebolek*, was buried. It is not uncommon for individuals to say that they are studying in Kajen although they live in neighboring villages, such as Cebolek, Waturoyo, and Ngemplak. In Kajen itself there are now more than ten pesantren and together with pesantren in surrounding villages, more than one thousand students, male and female, live there to study religious sciences.

27 *Fath al-Qarib* is authored by Shams al-Din Muhammad ibn Qasim al-Ghazi (d. 1512/3) and it is a commentary (*sharḥ*) of *Matn al-Taqrīb* by Ahmad ibn al-Husayn ibn Ahmad al-Isfahani who is also known as Abu Shuja’ (d. 1042). *Fath al-Mu‘īn* is composed by Zayn al-Din ibn Abd al-Aziz al-Malibari. *Minhāj al-Qawīm* is written by Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Hajar al-Haytami (d. 1566). *Sharḥ al-Khaṭīb* and also called *al-Iqna*, which is another commentary of *Matn al-Taqrīb*, is a work of Muhammad bin Ahmad Shirbini (d. 1570) who is also known as Khatib al-Shirbini. *Fath al-Wahhāb* is written by Zakariya ibn Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Ansari (d.1520).

28 This kitab is co-authored by Jalal al-Din al-Mahalli (d.1459) and Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti.

29 It is not mentioned what kitab that Salih used in learning nahwu and saraf.
Muhammad al-Hadi who was a mufti of Semarang. There were two other ulama in Semarang, Shaykh Ahmad Bafaqih Ba’lawi and Shaykh Abd al-Ghani Bima, from whom Salih learned Jawharat al-Tawḥīd and Minhāj al-‘Ābidīn, and Sittīn Mas’alah, respectively. These two ulama were apparently not settled in Semarang as Salih mentioned that he studied under them “when they were in Semarang.” While it is hard to know who Shaykh Ahmad Bafaqih was, Abd al-Ghani Bima was clearly a respected figure. Snouck Hurgronje mentions that the latter was regarded by the Jawi community in Mecca as a saint, and when they mentioned his name it was prefixed with the significant word “blessed.” The period when Salih studied with these two scholars was likely after he returned from Mecca, for he mentioned this story soon after providing details about his teachers in Mecca. There is also an indication that, with these two ulama, he did not really study with them as he did with other teachers prior to leaving for Mecca or while he was in Mecca. Instead, he received barakah (blessing) from both because they were respected teachers. Salih must have had more than enough knowledge to teach such elementary books as Jawharat al-Tawḥīd and Sittīn Mas’alah after he returned from his study in Mecca. It is a common practice for those in the pesantren to study certain books with respected ulama with the intention of receiving blessings from them.

30 Salih does not mention the title of the book on astronomy that he learned in Semarang.
31 Jawharat al-Tawḥīd is a book on theology, composed by Ibrahim al-Laqani (d. 1631), while Minhāj al-‘Ābidīn is on Sufism by al-Ghazali (d. 1111). Sittīn Mas’alah or al-Masā’il al-Sittīn is a book on fiqh and written by Abu al-Abbas Ahmad al-Mishri (d. 1415).
32 al-Samarani, Al-Murshid al-Wajīz, 277.
33 Snouck Hurgronje, Mekka, 281. Laffan states that Abd al-Ghani Bima, Ahmad Khatib Sambas, and Ismail al-Minangkabawi were three leaders of the Jawi ecumene in Mecca in the 1850s. Michael Francis Laffan, Islamic Nationhood and Colonial Indonesia: The Umma Below the Winds (London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 21.
34 The sentences by Salih were “ngalap guru ingsun marang Shaykhuna al-Allamah Sayyid Shaykh ibn Ahmad Bafaqih Ba’lawi kala ana ing Semarang,” and “ngalap berkah ingsun marang Shaykh Abd al-Ghani Bima kala ana ing Semarang.”
In order to advance his knowledge and to perform the Hajj as well, Salih went to Mecca and stayed there for several years, studying with some well-known scholars. Among his teachers in Mecca was Muhammad al-Muqri’ al-Misri, with whom he studied the *Umm al-Barāhīn* and the *Hashiyah Ibrāhīm al-Bājūrī*. Then, he had Muhammad ibn Sulayman Hasab Allah as a teacher in learning the *Sharḥ al-Khaṭīb*, *Fatḥ al-Wahhāb* and *Alfiyah ibn Mālik*. Salih mentions specifically that from this teacher he received the ijazah (certificate) to teach these three books.

The next teacher Salih mentions was Muhammad ibn Zayni Dahlan, a mufti of the Safi’ite school in Mecca. With him he studied and received the ijazah for the book *Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn* by Imam al-Ghazali. Salih read the *Ḥikam* by Ahmad Ibn Ata al-Sikandari with Ahmad al-Nahrawi al-Misri, and studied the *Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn* again.

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35 Because of the lack of sources, we do not know when Salih left for Mecca and how long he stayed there.
36 I could not find any reference to this person.
37 *Umm al-Barāhīn* is a book on theology written by Muhammad ibn Yusuf al-Sanusi (d. 1490).
38 This seems to be a ḥāshiyah (gloss, supercommentary) of *Fatḥ al-Qarīb* written by Ibrahim ibn Muhammad al-Bajuri (d. 1860), and is a book on fiqh. In addition to this book, Bajuri wrote three other ḥāshiyah and each of the titles begins with Ḥāshiyah al-Bajuri.
39 Muhammad ibn Sulayman Hasab Allah lived almost a century as he was born in 1818 and died in 1917. He was known as having mastery in tafsīr, hadith, fiqh and usul al-fiqh and spent most of his time in Mecca and Medina teaching a lot of students from various countries. He authored three books, one of which was entitled *al-Riyāḍah al-Badīʻ* fi *Uṣūl al-Dīn wa-baʻḍ Furāʻ* al-Shafi’i. Of this book Muhammad Nawawi of Banten wrote a sharḥ called *al-Thimar al-Yanīʻah fī al-Riyaʻ al-Badīʻ* ah. See Umur Abd al-Jabbar, Siyar wa-Tarājim baʻd ‘Ulamā‘ inā fi al-Qarn al-Rābî‘. See also, Abd al-Razzaq ibn Hasan al-Baytar, *Ḥilyat al-Bashar fī Tārikh al-Qarn al-Thālith ‘Ashar* (Jiddah, al-Mamlakah al-Sa‘udiyyah: Tihamah, 1982), 229-232. He seems to be the same person that Snouck Hurgronje calls Hasab Allah. See, Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka*, 190-191, 282, 287, 295, 301.
40 *Alfiyah ibn Mālik* is a book on nahw (Arabic grammar) and was written by Muhammad ibn Abd Allah ibn Malik (d. 1274).
41 This seems to be Ahmad ibn Zayn Dahlan (not Muhammad as Salih states), the popular ulama who was the Shafi’ite mufti in Mecca and died in 1886. Snouck Hurgronje says that he was the rector of the Meccan university. C. Snouck Hurgronje, "Een Rector der Mekkaansche Universiteit," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 36 (1887): 344-394. In his *Mekka*, Snouck often refers to him as Ahmad Dahlan. See also, Abd al-Razzaq ibn Hasan al-Baytar, Hilyat al-Bashar fi Tārikh al-Qarn al-Thālith ‘Ashar, 3 vols. (Bayrut: Dar Sadir, 1993), 181-183.
with Muhammad Salih al-Zawawi.\textsuperscript{43} \textit{Fath al-Wahhāb} was another book Salih studied more than one time, now with two different teachers, Shaikh Zahid and Shaikh Umar al-Shami.\textsuperscript{44} His last teacher while in Mecca was Yusuf al-Sunbulawi,\textsuperscript{45} with whom he learned the \textit{Sharḥ al-Taḥrīr} by Zakariyya al-Ansari. In addition, Salih also received barakah from a Hanafite mufti in Mecca, Shaykh Jamal,\textsuperscript{46} for the Qur’anic exegesis, but he does not specifically mention the name of the book.

The list of teachers and books that Salih studied with different teachers confirms several things that are popularly followed by santri. First, it is not uncommon for someone to study the same book several times with different teachers. We note that Salih read \textit{Fath al-Wahhāb} four times with four different teachers, and \textit{Sharḥ al-Khaṭīb} and \textit{Iḥyā’ Ulūm ad-Dīn} twice. It is not because he was not satisfied with the previous teacher or that he had not mastered the book, but because he wished to receive as many barakah as possible from different teachers. To learn a certain book is not only to understand its contents but also to get blessings from God through such activities from a respected teacher. It is the teacher’s piety that is believed to be the channel through which God’s blessing is bestowed. Second, Salih indirectly says that he has the authority to teach, translate, and abridge such books because he had learned them from authoritative ulama. With this knowledge, he could also write books on the subjects studied. Authority in the eyes of Sunni followers generally and for those in the pesantren in particular is not only

\textsuperscript{43} Muhammad Salih al-Zawawi is known as a Sufi master. He and his son, Abdullah ibn Salih al-Zawawi, were both known as Sufi teachers of Tarekat Naqshbandiyah, and many Indonesians were initiated into this tarekat and received the silsilah (mystical chain) from one or the other. Ibid., 200, 223, 308.

\textsuperscript{44} I could not find any reference to these two persons. Snouck Hurgronje mentions Omar Shami once as one of the Meccan teachers who studied in Al-Azhar, Cairo, before settling in Mecca. See, Ibid., 201.

\textsuperscript{45} This seems to be what Snouck Hurgronje means when referring to Yusuf Sumbulaweni as one of three “real teachers” of Nawawi of Banten. Ibid., 287.

\textsuperscript{46} I could not find any reference for this person.
about having mastery in a certain field, which is difficult to measure. It is more about having as many respected teachers as possible and, for a certain kitab, having sanad (an intellectual chain) that links him to the author of the book through his teachers. In a certain field, such as Sufism, having a teacher is regarded as a necessary step in the process of learning. Without it, one may be deceived by satan and be led astray from the true knowledge. As will be discussed later, the books that Salih wrote, translated and abridged are those that he had studied, while the newly composed books fall within the category of fiqh—a field that he had sufficient knowledge after studying it with a number of respective ulama. Third, Salih’s story confirms the importance of fiqh as a field that is regarded as the highest priority by those in the pesantren, with the second being tasawuf. Among the fifteen books that Salih studied, eight were on fiqh and three on taṣawuf. It supports the argument of certain scholars that the pesantren are fiqh-oriented communities.

Having studied a number of classical textbooks from reputable scholars and received ijazah from them means that in the eyes of the Muslim community Salih had mastery not only in such textbooks but also the branches to which the books belong. In other words, Salih now had the authority to teach the books to others and was a reason that he built a pesantren in Semarang following his return from Mecca. Not only did Salih teach classical Arabic texts to students in his pesantren, but he also wrote translations and commentaries on certain books widely used by santri. In addition, he composed in Pegon manuals and books on basic knowledge about Islam.
### General Features of Pegon Books by Salih Darat

Salih wrote at least twelve books, though some say even more.\(^{47}\) The books can be grouped into four categories: *fiqh* (4), *taṣawuf* (3), *tafsīr* and ‘*ulūm al-Qur‘ān* (2), hagiography of the Prophet (2), and *tawhīd* (1). Those that fall within the category of *fiqh* are:

1. *Majmūʿat al-Sharīʿah al-Kāfiyyah lil-ʻAwām*
2. *Faṣalatan* \(^{48}\)
3. *Laṭā‘if al-Ţahārah wa Asrār al-Ţalāh*,\(^{49}\) and
4. *Mānāsik al-Ḥajj wa al-ʻUmrah wa ‘Adāb al-Ziyārah li-Sayyid al-Mursalīn*.\(^{50}\)

The books of *taṣawuf* are:

6. *Matn al-Ḥikam*, \(^{52}\) and
7. *Munjiyāt: Meṭik Saking Iḥyā‘ ʻUlūm al-Dīn*.\(^{53}\)

The books of *tafsīr* and *ulum al-Qur‘ān* are:

8. *Fayḍ al-Raḥmān fi Tarjamat Tafsīr Kālām Malik al-Dayyān*, and

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\(^{47}\) This number refers to the books that I managed to collect from the field. Ghazali Munir in his dissertation lists fourteen books, although he could not find the full version of the two books, *Kitāb Hadīth Mi‘rāj* and *Kitāb Manāsik Kayfīyat al-Ṣalāt al-Musafirīn*. Munir says that he only found the last five pages of the first book while none of the latter. Based on the date found in the *Hadīth Mi‘rāj* as mentioned by Munir, it seems that this book is the *Sharh Barzanji* as both were finished on the second of Rajab 1314 AH (December 7, 1896 CE). It is very unlikely that Salih finished two books on the same day. Ghazali Munir, "Pemikiran Kalam Muhammad Shaleh Darat as-Samarani 1820-1903" (Ph.D. Dissertation, UIN Sunan Kalijaga, 2007), 80-96.

\(^{48}\) Muhammad Salih al-Samarani, *Kitab Faṣalatan* (Singapore: Matba'a Haji Muhammad Amin, 1897).


Two books of hagiography of the Prophet are:

10. *Kitāb al-Maḥabbah wa al-Mawaddah fī Tarjamat Qawl al-Burdah*,\(^{54}\) and

11. *Sharḥ al-Barzanji*.\(^{55}\)

The only book about *tawḥīd* is


It should be noted here that such categories are not rigid but refer to the main theme discussed in the books, and so it might be possible to find a book which is categorized as *fiqh*, such as *Majmū‘at al-Sharī‘ah*, that also provides a brief account of *tawḥīd*.

These books can be categorized into three categories: commentary, abridgment, and new composition. All of Salih’s books on *fiqh* and *tafsīr* are new compositions, while books on the hagiography of the Prophet and theology are commentary (*sharḥ*). Two books on Sufism, *Minhāj al-Atqiyā* and *Matn al-Ḥikam*, are also commentaries, while *Munjīyāt* is an abridged version from the *Iḥyā‘ Ulūm al-Dīn* by al-Ghazali. It should also be noted here that the books I put under the category of *sharḥ* are regarded as translation (*tarjamah*) by Salih. However, judging by the contents it is clear that they are not simply translations from the Arabic but also explanations of the original texts. Therefore, the term commentary is more appropriate than translation. In one of his books, Salih acknowledged that his translation is similar to *sharḥ*, “ingsung gawe terjemaha minongko

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\(^{54}\) Muhammad Salih al-Samarani, *Kitab al-Maḥabbah wa al-Mawaddah fī Tarjamat Qawl al-Burdah* ([Singapore]: Matba‘ Haji Muhammad Amin, 1903).


sharah keduwe matan” (I do the translation like a commentary to a basic text). Salih might not use the term sharḥ because this term is widely known among the pesantren to refer to a commentary work on a certain book in Arabic. By stating that the books are tarjamah he seems to want his readers to know that his books are in Javanese. *Matn al-Hikam* is unique as it is a commentary on parts of the original texts. Salih mentions in the introduction that he took only one third of the original texts and then translated and commented on them. This can thus be regarded as a commentary of an abridged version.

In all Salih’s works on commentary, except *Sharḥ Barzanji*, he writes only the original sentences in Arabic without interlinear translation, and then explains the meaning and provides a commentary. This is a slightly different approach from Pegon works by later writers, who provide the original sentences with interlinear translations, much in the way followed by students in the pesantren.58

All of Salih’s books were initially printed in lithograph either in Singapore or Bombay, India. Six printing companies, four in Singapore and two in Bombay, printed Salih’s books in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The printers in Singapore were Haji Muhammad Siraj, Haji Muhammad Sidik, Haji Muhammad Amin, and Matba’ Idris, while the two in Bombay were Matba’ Muhammadi and Matba’ Karimi.

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57 Ibid., 3.
58 When these words are used by santri in their interlinear translation, they do not have literal meanings as initially intended. Instead they represent grammatical position within an Arabic sentence. Utawi and iku represent mubtada (subject) and khabar (predicate) respectively in a nominal sentence. A sentence of *Zaydun tilmīdhun*, for example, is translated into *Utawi Zayd iku murid* (Zayd is a student). Utawi and iku in this translation do not really have meaning but they represent different positions of words that follow the two, i.e. *Zayd* is the subject while *tilmidh* is the predicate. Sopo represent the subject of a verbal sentence. For example, *Qāma Zaydun* is translated into *Teko sopo Zayd* (Zayd came). Sopo in this sentence does not also have a specific meaning except that it shows the position of the following word, in this case *Zayd*, as the subject of the sentence. For the tradition of linear translation and the use of such words among santri, see Sidney Jones, "Arabic Instruction and Literacy in Javanese Muslim Schools," *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 42 (1983): 83-94.
(sometime it was written Matba’ah al-Karimiyah). Most of Salih’s books are mentioned in the study of early Malay printed books by Ian Proudfoot. The two missing from the list are *al-Murshid al-Wajīz*, and *Sharḥ al-Barzanji*. Proudfoot reminds the reader that his study is based mainly on the colonial government gazette. In 1886 the Straits Settlements Government promulgated the Registration of Books Ordinance which required all printers to register their publications with the Colonial Secretary’s office, and to deposit three copies of each publication. Although there was a fine of $25 for failure to register a book, Proudfoot assumes that not all printers registered their books, especially those dealing with Islamic teachings. We may assume, therefore, that Salih’s two books not listed in Proudfoot’s works were among those that were not reported to the Straits authorities.

All Salih’s books are in Pegon. Although there is no explanation why Salih used the Arabic script instead of the Javanese script, we can assume that this was motivated by his understanding of local needs as well as his concern for the proper understanding of Islam among the common people. People in the area were certainly more familiar with the Arabic than the Javanese script because Arabic, at least in term of reading the Qur’an, was taught to anybody at prayer houses (muṣalla) and mosques, while Javanese script was offered to limited people at formal schools. Salih himself might not have been literate with the Javanese script as he only studied in pesantren. In addition, he must have been familiar with the use of the Arabic script for writing non-Arabic languages because he mentions in one of his books the availability of tafsīr written in Persian and Turkish.

He must have been familiar also with Jawi books while he was living in Singapore. The idea of using the Arabic script for writing Islamic texts in the Javanese language would have been a sensible development based on the needs of the Javanese population and the precedents of other Muslim nations.

As the first one to use the Javanese language in Islamic textbooks, Salih used the type of language influenced by the pesantren tradition in translating Arabic texts. The structure does not follow fully the Javanese language as spoken by the people but instead approximates the way the santri translate Arabic texts into Javanese. The following excerpt of *Majmūʿat al-Sharīʿah* is an example of this:

> Utawi artine ngimanaken ing Allah iku arep niqadaken setuhune Allah iku sawiji kang ora ono ingkang madani ingdalem dhate lan sifate lan ora ono kang nyekutoni ingdalem kaluhurane.\(^6^1\)

The meaning of believing in Allah is to trust that Allah is the only One; none has similarities in the essence nor in the attributes and none shares His greatness.

In the pesantren, the words “utawi” and “iku” are commonly used to show the position of the words in a nominal Arabic sentence as *mubtada* (subject) and *khabar* (predicate), respectively. Although the word “iku” is also used as predicate in a nominal sentence in Javanese, the combination of “utawi” and “iku” in the structure is specifically used by the pesantren people and is not common in Javanese sentences. The fact that this sentence is not a translation of an Arabic one shows how Salih in composing it was influenced by an Arabic sentence when it was translated into Javanese by santri. As a person who had studied in many pesantren, Salih must have been familiar with this structure, and so it is natural to see him using it in his books. In the absence of any

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\(^6^1\) al-Samarani, *Majmūʿat al-Sharīʿah*, 6
precedent that uses a fully Javanese style in an Islamic textbook, Salih was free to experiment and make his books acceptable to the pesantren community by using a structure familiar to them. Both in nominal and verbal sentences Salih used an Arabic structure, as is evident in the quotation below:

Wajib ingatase wong mukallaf kabeh arep nekani sekabihane barang kang den wajibaken dening Allah Subhanahu Wata’ala saking salat lan poso lan zakat lan liya-liyane saking piro-piro fardu.62

It is an obligation upon all adult (Muslims) to observe all that is required by God, such as prayer, fasting, alms tax, and others.

This structure resembles an Arabic verbal sentence that begins with fiʼil (verb) as a predicate and is followed by a noun as fāʻil (subject). This is not a common structure of a verbal sentence in Javanese, which usually begins with a subject followed by a verb as the predicate. However, such a structure is found in all of Salih’s books, indicating that he preferred following the pesantren’s style of the Javanese language when translating Arabic texts. It is only in later Pegon books written by authors in the twentieth century that the language followed the Javanese structure.

Among twelve Pegon books by Salih, five of them are still available in some bookstores and used in many places in Central Java, such as in the districts of Pati, Kudus, Jepara, Demak, and Kendal. They are Majmūʻat al-Sharīʻah, Matn al-Ḥikam, Munjīyāt, Latāʾif al-Tahārah and Tarjamaḥ Sabīl al-ʻAbīd. The books are taught by local ulama in weekly religious circles in mosques or prayer houses and attended by mostly old people who seek knowledge to better understand Islam. These books are not taught in the pesantren but the teachers who use them are certainly graduates of the pesantren. A

62 Ibid., 18.
few of the participants of the circle may have gone to the pesantren, and many are able to read the texts by themselves, but they attend the circle for various reasons. It is through these kitab, as I argue in chapter 6, that Salih was able to assert his influence on Javanese Muslims by emphasizing the importance of observing Islamic orthodoxy.

The fact that only five titles of Salih’s books are still printed and circulated at present does not necessarily mean that they were the most popular books during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. If the number of copies is an indication of popularity, the most popular of Salih’s books was *Fasalatan*, which underwent more printing than the others, and yet it is not among the works in circulation today. It simply demonstrates that interests and demands differ from one period to the next. Regardless of the difference in popularity, all Salih’s books contributed to the dissemination of Islamic knowledge to ordinary Javanese Muslims. It is therefore useful to know something about the contents of these books.

**Summaries of Salih’s Pegon Books**

Salih Pegon books can be grouped into a number of branches within Islamic knowledge. They are fiqh, taṣawuf, tafsīr, hagiography of the prophet, and theology. As seen from the number of reprints and copies sold, the most popular books were those dealing with fiqh and taṣawuf, while books on tafsīr and hagiography of the Prophet were the least popular. A further analysis, however, shows that this is not the sole factor as some Sufi books, i.e. on taṣawuf, were not equally admired. While contents and price are two factors that affected the popularity of newly composed books, abridgements and commentaries were often dependent on the popularity of the original. As Salih’s books
were meant for ordinary people, the more advanced the contents and the more expensive the price, the less popular they were. In this chapter I will assess briefly the contents of each book and attempt to explain the popularity of certain books to the Javanese.

**Books on Fiqh: Majmūʻat al-Sharīʻah al-Kāfiyah lil-ʻAwām**

As the title suggests—it means the complete compilation of the Shari`ah for common people—this book contains basic information of religious knowledge deemed necessary for common people to understand. It is categorized as fiqh because it explicates mainly ‘ubūdiyah (worship of God) and mu‘āmalah (human relations) similar to common fiqh books. The first forty pages of the book, however, deals with the basic knowledge of being Muslims, which is commonly part of tawḥīd, such as rukun iman (basic principles of faith), rukun Islam (basic principles Islam), understanding attributes of God, attributes of prophets, names of prophets, varieties of rules, commitment to perform good and avoid bad deeds, etc. The section of u‘būdiyah starts with ṭahārah (purification), followed by ṣalāt (praying), zakāt (alm tax), fasting, and pilgrimage. The mu‘āmalah part discusses different aspects relating to business activities (buyū‘), such as the requirements of a valid sale, what is and not allowed for sale, usury, loan, borrowing, and rent. After that, the book discusses aspects relating to marriage (nikāḥ), such as the benefits of marriage, the characteristics of a good woman, the requirements of marriage, the wedding party, polygamy, ethics of the household, and divorce. It concludes with a discussion of food, sacrifice, and freeing slaves.

In the introduction to the book Salih reminds readers of the importance of seeking knowledge, especially religious knowledge. Quoting the Prophet’s hadīth, Salih says that
seeking knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim male and female. It is not valid, according to Salih, to perform any obligation without having the prerequisite knowledge. He encourages everyone to learn and seek knowledge relating to religious performances and quotes a Prophet’s hadith and a Qur’anic verse to explain that God will ease the way for people who seek religious knowledge.63

In the concluding remarks, Salih suggests that readers should continue to study the blameworthy attributes (ṣifat madhmūmah) and praiseworthy attributes (ṣifat mahmūdah) as mentioned in the Ihyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn. Since the work is in four volumes and written in Arabic, Salih says that it sufficient for the ordinary person to read the abridgement of the book in Munjiyāt, another work of Salih.64 This statement reflects two things. First, it ranks the books, with Munjiyāt regarded as higher in rank than Majmū’ since the first should be read only after having read the latter. Second, it contains information on how to proceed to read these works and can be seen as an advertisement for his work on abridgement.

At the very end of the book Salih declares that in composing this book, he consulted authoritative books used by those in the pesantren, such as Sharḥ Manhaj (i.e., Fath al-Wahhāb bi Sharḥ Manhaj al-Ţullāb by Abu Yahya Zakariyya al-Ansari), Sharḥ al-Khatīb Shirbinī (or Iqna’ fī Ḥall Alfāẓ Abī Shujāʿ by Muhammad al-Shirbini al-Khatib), Durar al-Bahiyyah by Sayyid Bakri (precisely al-Durar al-Bahiyyah fī-mā Yalzamu al-Mukallaf min al-‘Ulūm al-Shar‘iyah by Uthman ibn Muhammad Bakri), and Ihyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn by al-Ghazali. The first two books contain discussions on fiqh, while

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63 Ibid., 2-3.
64 Ibid., 276-277.
the third is on theology, and the last on the secrets (asrar) of prayer, hajj, and marriage.  

By referring to these kitab, Salih implies that his book is as authoritative as its sources, and so one should not doubt its contents.

Judging from the number of copies that have been printed, this is one of the most popular of Salih’s works. However, to say that it is the most famous, as some scholars have argued, requires further clarification. Completed on 8 Sha’ban 1309 AH (7 March 1892 CE), this book was reprinted at least four times up to the first decade of the twentieth century. Data collected by Proudfoot reveals that this book was printed twice in Singapore, by Muhammad Siraj in 1892 and Muhammad Sidik in 1894, and twice in Bombay by Matba’ Muhammadi in 1899 and Matba’ah al-Karimiyah in 1906. Muhammad Siraj printed 600, Muhammad Sidik 1000, Muhammadi 1000 and Karimiyah 2000 copies. Compared to his other works, as can be seen in table 1, this book was no doubt among the most popular. It was printed four times with a total of 4600 copies, placing it above the average among Salih’s other books and among Jawi/Pegon printed materials.

The popularity of this book seems to rest upon its contents that describe the basic knowledge necessary for Muslims to learn how to perfect their ritual observance. The price is not a factor since it is not among the cheapest nor the most expensive of his books. Sold for $0.50 (1892-1899 printed edition) and $0.29 (1906) Ringgit Singapore,

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65 Ibid., 278.
68 The average number of copies printed for the Pegon/Jawi works by indigenous presses was 946. Proudfoot, "A Formative Period in Malay Book Publishing," 109.
the price was among the average.\footnote{Based on a catalogue of a nineteenth-century Malay bookseller mentioned by Proudfoot, the average price for printed material was in the range from $0.25 to $0.75. The price of $1 and above may be categorized as expensive, while below $0.25 as the cheapest. Ian Proudfoot, “A Nineteenth-Century Malay Bookseller's Catalogue,” \textit{Kekal Abadi} 6, no. 4 (1987): 1-11.} The popularity of the subject of this book is the reason that it has been printed repeatably in Java following the establishment of printing houses in the third decade of the twentieth century. This book was reportedly printed by Al-Misriyah in Cirebon, West Java,\footnote{Salim, "Majmu'at al-Syari'at al-Kafiyat li al-Awam", 48. However, it is doubtful that Raja Murah in Pekalongan ever bought the copyright of and printed this book as suggested by Sugahara. Sugahara, "Kitab Jawa", 44 and Sugahara, "The Publication of Vernacular," 31. There is no record showing the existence of this book printed and published by Raja Murah.} and it is currently printed and distributed by Toha Putra, Semarang, and available in some bookstores in Java. Among Salih’s books printed by Toha Putra, this title is the most sold,\footnote{Personal communication from Salwa, the marketing manager of Toha Putra, Semarang, on June 29, 2009.} which suggests that it is still widely used among Javanese Muslims, either as the source for teaching by some local ulama or self learning by ordinary Javanese.

\textit{Faşalatan}

This book is a manual for prayers as it contains direct and simple guidance for common people in the proper way of saying a prayer from the beginning to the end. It provides details on Arabic words that need to be read during prayer and their meaning in Javanese. The book, in other words, does not only provide texts that Muslims need to memorize because they have to state them during the prayer, but also provides the translation in Javanese so that they understand the meaning of the Arabic texts they recite. The main intention of the book is represented in the cover with the words
“Fasalatan: Common people should understand the meaning of what they read [during prayer], [therefore] it is suggested that they learn this book.”

From the number of copies printed of this book up to the first decade of the twentieth century, this book can be said to be Salih’s most popular. It was first printed in 1897 by Muhammad Amin in Singapore, and then reprinted by al-Matba’ al-Karimi, Bombay, in 1906. A translation into Sundanese was printed in 1905 by Matba’ Idris in Singapore. While there is no record on how many imprints were made by Muhammad Amin, al-Karimi produced 10,000 copies and Idris issued another 1100. Although there were only two printings, this book had the highest number of copies among Salih’s books and was even more than the average of European-printed school books at the time. Sold for a very cheap price, $0.05 Ringgit Singapore, we may assume that this book was affordable to commoners in Java.

The book was also reprinted by two different publishers in Java in the fourth decade of the twentieth century, Salim bin Sa’ad bin Nabhan of Surabaya, East Java (1933 CE) and Matba’ah al-Misriyah of Cirebon, West Java (1935 CE). The title Fasalatan itself has inspired other authors to write similar books. There are now a number of fasalatan written by Asnawi Kudus, Ahmad Abdul Hamid Kendal, Bisri Mustafa Rembang, and Misbah Zainal Mustafa Bangilan. Using the same title, the main contents of these later fasalatan is still similar to Salih’s composition, i.e. practical

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72 The original version says “Fasalatan: wong awam supoyo pada ngěrtiho ma’nane barang kang den woco, sěyogjane kěduwe wong awam arèp ngajiho iki kitab.”
75 A contemporaneous catalogue from a Malay bookseller shows that $0.05 is the cheapest price for any book on the list. Proudfoot, "A Nineteenth-Century Malay Bookseller's Catalogue," 1-11.
manuals in performing obligatory prayers, but they add other details, such as a further explanation on performing suggested prayers, various invocations (du’ā) recited after those prayers, etc. The lay-out of these books is also slightly different as they put side by side the Arabic sentences and the Javanese translation. The availability of other fasalatan, which look more interesting and more complete than Salih’s, may be a reason that the latter is no longer printed and sold publicly.

Laṭā’if al-Ṭahārah wa Asrār al-Ṣalāh

This book is a compilation of four different and independent, though related, themes. The first, as reflected by the title, is about the secrets of ṭahārah (purification) and prayer; the second is about the secrets of Islam and Iman (faith); the third, the secrets of fasting; and the fourth, the virtues (fadīlah) of the months of Muharram, Rajab and Sha’ban (the first, seventh and eighth months of Islamic lunar calendar, respectively). In the first part, Salih reminds the readers that ablution (wuḍu) and taking a bath (ghusl) are not only to clean one’s body from impurities but also to purify one’s heart. Ṣalat is not only an exoteric activity (sharī‘ah) but also an esoteric one, which is a moment when one can ascend (mi’rāj) to witness God. Gestures within prayer can be grouped into four (standing, bowing, prostrating, and sitting) and these are in line with the four elements of soil, water, air, and fire. In the second part, Salih reminds people that every human being has ruḥ (soul) and nafsu (desire). While ruḥ always obeys God’s prescriptions, nafsu resists them and follows satanic ways. The third part summarizes a chapter in the Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn that explicates three different ranks of fasting: common, special, and very
special. The last part mentions the virtues of the three months of Muharram, Rajab, and Sha’ban.

At the end of the third part, Salih writes that he finished writing on 2 Sha’ban 1307 AH (18 April 1890 CE), but the earliest printed edition known is 1896 by Matba’ Karimi Bombay. Data collected by Proudfoot shows that the earliest edition was printed in 1906 by Matba’ Idris Singapore and Matba’ Karimi Bombay. The former issued 1000 copies in a Sundanese translation, while the latter produced 3000 copies. In 1908, Karimi reprinted 200 more copies. Seen from the number of copies and reprints, this book was on par with, though a bit less than, Majmū’at in its popularity. It was also sold much more cheaply than Majmū’at as it was thinner. Discussing esoteric sides of rituals, this book seems to be complementary to Majmū’at, which discusses more exoteric ones. As with the Majmū’at, this book is still available in some bookstores in Java and printed by Toha Putra Semarang.

**Manāsik al-Hajj wa al-ʻUmrah**

This is a manual for performing the hajj and umrah. The contents of this book, however, is similar to the chapter of Hajj of the Majmū’at, with an addition in the last section on the etiquette of visiting the Prophet’s and his companions’ graves. It is not only the topics of discussion that are identical, but the words used are also unchanged. It seems that, because of the increase of the number of people performing the hajj in the late nineteenth century, the publisher decided to print this section separately and sell it as a

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single book. To make it different from the hajj section of the Majmūʿat, Salih complemented it with the etiquette in visiting graves of the early generation of Muslims. This book begins with the explanation of the virtues of Mecca as a sacred place that is promised by God and provides multiple rewards for those who do good deeds there. The book then explains the history of the hajj among the previous prophets and what the Prophet Muhammad did with it. Afterwards, the book details the rituals of the hajj and ‘umrah, as well as the activities that should and should not be done during the hajj. It concludes with the ethics of visiting (ziyarah) the graves of the Prophet, his companions and families.

This book was published by Matbaʿ al-Karimi Bombay but, unlike Salih’s other books, there is no date showing when it was printed. According to data gathered by Proudfoot this book was printed only once by al-Karimi in 1907 with 5000 copies and sold for $0.05.78 This statement is doubtful for several reasons. First, if the date was the first printing, it happened four years after Salih died which is unlikely. Moreover, printing 5000 copies for the first edition was also too speculative and risky from a business perspective. It is very likely that this book was printed earlier and when the demand was high it was then reprinted in large quantities. If this is the case, this book would have been as popular as the Majmūʿat. Although it is no longer available, its contents is still found in the Majmūʿat.

78 Proudfoot, "Malay Books Printed in Bombay," 13. Pages 18-29 are missing in the only copy I have.
**Book on Sufism: Matn al-Ḥikam**

This book is on Sufism and a commentary on the same title written by Shaykh Ahmad ibn Ataillah al-Sikandari (d. 1309 CE). The main point of this book is to remind Muslims to rely solely on God for everything. Salih writes, “wajib ingatase wong mu’min ingkang sadiq arèp gègèyongan gandulan marang Allah Subhanahu Wata’ala beloko, těgese ojo pisan siro cècèkèlan marang liyane Allah” (It is necessary for the true believers to hang onto God only; in other words never trust any other than God). ⁷⁹

According to this book, entering paradise or condemned to hellfire in the hereafter was not due to one’s good or bad deeds but to God’s grace. However, the obligation of people is to follow God’s stipulations and avoid all His prohibitions. If someone commits a sin, he or she has to repent as soon as possible and seek God’s help to avoid it in the future; and when someone follows God’s instructions, he or she needs to pray to God to continue to do His will and increase such good deeds. The main cause of disobedience, according to this book, is forgetting God and following one’s desires. One should control one’s desires. Joining a ṭarīqah is one way to achieve the highest rank of a human being, and Salih recommends the Naqshabandiyyah, the Naqshabandiyyah-Qadiriyiah, and the Naqshabandiyyah-Khalidiyyah.

Salih does not comment on the entire original version but only a third to make it easier for common people to understand. This is why some versions of this book are entitled, *Mukhtaṣar al-Ḥikam* (an abridgment of the *Ḥikam*). While Salih claims to have commented only on a third, in fact he has covered more than half of the original version.

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This book seems to be the earliest of Salih’s works. He began composing it in 1289 AH (1872 CE) but does not mention when it was completed. According to Proudfoot, this book was printed only once in 1894 by Haji Muhammad Sidik in Singapore with 1200 copies selling for $0.50 each. While it may have had more than one printing, it was not a book in high demand. This is a puzzle since the Javanese are strongly influenced by Sufism and the original Arabic version was a popular work and taught in many pesantren. Books on Sufism are not easy to understand, and topics discussed in Sufi books require a deep and strong foundation in theology, especially with regard to the concept of the relation between God and human beings. Those who bought this book were very likely local ulama who planned to teach Sufism to others, rather than individuals who wanted to learn Sufism on their own. This may account for the low demand for this book and the small numbers printed.

This book has been printed and circulated by Toha Putra Semarang and is still available in some bookstores in Central Java. The popularity of the original version of the Hikam among the pesantren community may be the reason that a publisher continues to print this book. Other ulama after Salih, such as Misbah Zainal Mustafa of Bangilan, East Java, have also done a translation and commentary of the Hikam.

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80 Ibid.
82 Berg mentions that the Hikam was among the Sufi books that were popular in the nineteenth century. L. van den Berg, "Het Mohammedaansche Godsdienstonderwijs op Java en Madoera en de Daarbij Gebruikte Arabische Boeken," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, no. 31 (1886): 549-550.
83 This viewpoint is held by K. Sanusi of Bareng, Kudus, who teaches the Hikam to the community. He notices that people seem to lose their enthusiasm when he reads this book. Personal communication K. Sanusi on June 4, 2008.
Minhāj al-Atqiyyā’

This is a commentary of the Hidāyat al-’Adhkiyyā’ ilā Ṭarīq al-’Auliyyā’, 188 rhymes written by Zayn al-Din al-Malibari (d. 1521 CE), and it is another book of Sufism whose main mission is to lead Muslims closer to God. One of its messages is that the fear of God is the first key to approaching God and another is avoiding all prohibited activities. Muslims should maintain the balance between sharī‘ah, ṭarīqah, and haqīqah, the three aspects of Islam. They need to learn sharī‘ah first before taking ṭarīqah and they should not stop with sharī‘ah only. The three aspects are comparable to a boat, ocean, and a pearl in the deep ocean. To get a pearl, one needs to sail with a boat to an area where pearl is found, then dive into the ocean as the pearl is only found in the deep part of the ocean. In diving into the ocean, or practicing the ṭarīqah, one is required to have an authoritative teacher. Practicing Sufi by self-learning, therefore, is not recommended and even condemned. The book also reminds readers not to feel assured that, because they have already done good deeds, that they will be rewarded by God with heaven. Only with God’s permission can one enter into Heaven. However, Muslims need to always follow what God commands and avoid all that God prohibits. When they have committed sins, they need to repent as soon as possible and promise not to repeat these sins.

In Salih’s opinion, the age of forty is a significant period for Muslims to begin to follow proper behavior. He says:

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84 One should not assume, as Sugahara does, that this book is a commentary of Kifāyat al-Atqiyyā’ wa-Minhāj al-Asfiyyā’ by Abu Bakr Uthman bin Muhammad Shatta (d. 1892 CE). Sugahara, “Kitab Jawa”, 46. In the introduction, Salih clearly says that it is a commentary on the original matn, Hidāyat al-Adhkiyyā’, although in composing this book he refers also to Kifāyat al-Atqiyyā’ and Salālim al-Fudalā’ by Nawawi of Banten. These two books are commentaries of the Hidāyat al-Adhkiyyā’. See al-Samarani, Minhāj al-‘Atqiyyā’, 7.
Sopo-sopo wonge wus tuměko umure patang puluh tahun lan hale ora ngungkuli amale kěbagusane ingatase alane, moko bècik sèdiyakno wong iku maring isine neroko jahannam. Moko wajibe ingatase wong kang wus umur patang puluh kuwi arèp anduweni kělakuhan ingkang bagus lan arèp ninggal olo babar pisan kerono ora ono udhur ing atase wongkang wus umur patang puluh tahun.”

Whoever reaches forty years old and their good deeds are not more than their bad deeds should prepare themselves to be placed in hellfire. Therefore, it is necessary for those who have reached forty years to practice good behavior and completely stop all bad deeds. There is no longer an acceptable reason for those who have reached forty [to continue to do bad deeds].

Salih indirectly suggests that people begin learning this book or similar books on Sufism when they reach forty. While it is difficult to know whether his suggestion was being heeded, it is a common phenomenon in Java for people forty years and older to join the Sufi brotherhood (tarekat or ṭarīqah) and attend religious circles where Salih’s books are taught.

Similar to the Ḥikam, the original version of this kitab, Hidāyat al-Adhkiyā’, was a popular Sufi text taught in the pesantren. This seems to have been an important reason that Salih translated and commented on this text and the Ḥikam. He intended to make these books popular not only with the pesantren community who knew Arabic, but also with the ordinary Javanese people. Salih finished writing this book on 11 Dhul Qa’idah 1316 AH (23 March 1899 CE), and it was printed for the first time by Matba’ Muhammadi Bombay in 1317 AH (1899/1900 CE) and for the second time by Matba’ Karimi Bombay in 1906. Although the number of copies printed by the first publisher is not known, the second publisher printed 1500 copies and sold each for $0.29.

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86 Berg also includes this text as one of the popular Sufi books used in Javanese pesantren during the nineteenth century. Berg, "Het Mohammedaansche Godsdiestonderwijs," 551-553.
87 al-Samarani, Minhāj al-‘Atqiyā’, 3.
88 Proudfoot, Early Malay Printed Books, 347.
Although the price was cheap for a book of more than 500 pages, this work was apparently not in high demand by the Javanese public since there is no indication that it was reprinted after 1906. As with the Ḥikam, it was purchased by teachers or local ulama rather than individuals. Unlike the Ḥikam, however, this book is no longer available in the market, although the original version in Arabic is still widely taught in the pesantren. The thickness of this book might be a reason that publishers do not print it anymore.

*Munjiyāt*

The *Munjiyāt* is an abridged work of volume three and four of the *Iḥyā’ Ulūm al-Dīn* that al-Ghazali named *Rub‘ al-Muhlikāt* (ways to perdition) and *Rub‘ al-Munjiyāt* (ways to salvation), respectively. As mentioned in chapter two, the *Iḥyā’* consists of four volumes each of which Ghazali calls *al-rub‘*, which literarily means a quarter. In the tradition of classical Islamic knowledge, abridgement is not something alien. A shortened version of a book is commonly indicated by phrases beginning with the word *mukhtasar* (abridgement). Although Salih does not use that term, he says clearly on the title that this book is taken from the *Iḥyā’* “methik saking *Iḥyā’ Ulūm al-Dīn* al-Ghazali” (taken from the *Iḥyā’* ‘Ulūm al-Dīn by al-Ghazali). As an abridgement, the contents of *Munjiyāt*, therefore, is not different from the original version, but in a shorter form. It discusses ten blameworthy characteristics (*ṣifat madhmūmah* or *muhlikāt*) and ten praiseworthy characteristics (*ṣifat maḥmūdah*) that Muslims should understand and act accordingly. Salih details each of these twenty attributes and how to avoid or follow them in a way that is much simpler than in the original version of the *Iḥyā’*.
There is no question that the *Iḥyāʾ* is one of the most popular Islamic books, not only in the pesantren, but also in the Muslim world.\(^8^9\) The popularity and significance of the *Iḥyāʾ* seems to be the reason that Salih wrote an abridgement of this work in Javanese. Salih regards the principles contained in this book as necessary for Muslims to understand by stating that “utawi anapun angaweruhi sifat madhmumah lan sifat mahmudah kang bongso batin karone iku fardu ‘ain (understanding the praiseworthy and blameworthy characteristics, both of which are secrets, is an individual obligation).”\(^9^0\) To say that understanding such characteristics is an individual obligation (*farḍu ‘ain*) shows that in Salih’s view it is as important as the five daily prayers. Since the original volumes of the book were so thick and very few people could understand the Arabic, Salih was driven to summarize the essence of each characteristic with the necessary explanation to make them comprehensible to ordinary Javanese.

*Munjīyāt* emerged as a very popular book, perhaps the most popular of Salih’s works based on the number of reprints and copies. The data gathered by Proudfoot indicate that this book was printed five times until 1905. In 1893 Haji Muhammad Sidik Singapore printed it twice for a total of 1800 (600 and 1200, respectively) copies. Two years later in 1895, the same printing house issued 1000 copies with another 2400 printed in 1901. In 1906, the Matba’ al-Karimi Bombay printed 3000 copies.\(^9^1\) From this data along, more than 8000 copies of this book were printed and circulated. In addition, this book was also issued by al-Misriyyah Cirebon in the 1930s and continues to be reprinted.

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\(^{8^9}\) Berg, "Het Mohammedaansche Godsdienstonderwijs,“ 547-549.

\(^{9^0}\) al-Samarani, *Munjīyāt*, 2. A similar version of this statement is found in al-Samarani, *Majmūʿat al-Sharīʿah*, 276.

\(^{9^1}\) Proudfoot, *Early Malay Printed Books*, 357-359.
and circulated by Toha Putra Semarang. In other words, this book is still widely sold and used by Javanese Muslims.

Compared to Salih’s other books on Sufism, Munjiyāt has definitely received much more acceptance from the Javanese. Two things that might have contributed to its popularity are its practical contents and the popularity of the original Arabic version itself. Unlike Hikam and Minhaj al-Atqiya which discuss the more abstract discourse on the relation between a human and God and ways to improve religiosity to become closer to God, Munjiyāt offers more concrete knowledge on the good and bad qualities that people should be aware of. In Munjiyāt, Salih provides a concise explanation of each quality including examples that are familiar among the readers. In other words, Munjiyāt might be self-taught and practiced without a teacher. It is also composed in a more systematic way with two main chapters, each consisting of 10 clearly-marked sections. This division is not found in either the Hikam or the Minhāj al-Atqiyā.

The second factor contributing to the popularity of Munjiyāt and perhaps more important than the first, is the original work, Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn, itself. As an abridged version of the Iḥyā’, Munjiyāt maintains the popularity of Iḥyā’. In different parts of his books, Salih suggests to those who want to learn good and bad characteristics as discussed in Iḥyā’, to read his Munjiyāt. This appeared to motivate people to study the Munjiyāt for a practical reason: to understand the essence of the voluminous Arabic Iḥyā’ by means of the thin Javanese abridgement, Munjiyāt. In fact, what is explained in the Munjiyāt is a shortened version and explanation of what is discussed at length in the Iḥyā’.

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92 See, for example, al-Samarani, Majmūʻat al-Sharīʻah, 40, 59, 80, and 277.
**Book on Tafsīr: Fayḍ al-Raḥmān**

This is the only *tafsīr* (exegesis) of the Qur’an that Salih wrote. The subtitle indicates that this is a work of translation as it is written *fī Tarjamat Tafsīr Kalām Malik al-Dayyān*, but my investigation does not reveal any other book with such a title. Therefore, I categorize this book as a new composition and not a translation or commentary. The reason that he composed this *tafsīr*, as with his other books, is to enable the Javanese people to gain a better understanding of Islam, in this case the Qur’an. He says that while the main intention of the revelation of the Qur’an is to have people think about its meaning, he found that the ordinary Javanese never think about it because they do not understand the Arabic of the Qur’an.93

This book is a *tafsīr ishārī* or Sufistic interpretation of the Qur’an.94 In this *tafsīr*, Salih explains both the exoteric and esoteric meaning and interpretation of the verses. He argues that explicating the esoteric meanings of the Qur’an is allowed as long as it does not contradict the exoteric meaning and the Prophet’s tradition.95 Salih’s choice of *tafsīr* confirms his strong interest in the Sufi tradition. As mentioned, he has three works that specifically discuss Sufism, with some others that touch also on Sufi principles. The main target of his works was the mature lay Javanese, whom he believed should not only learn about Sufism but also practice it in their daily lives.

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93 al-Samarani, *Fayḍ al-Raḥmān*, vol. 1, 2.
94 Salih himself acknowledges that this *tafsīr* is *ishārī*. Ibid., vol. 1, 3. Muchoyyar assesses this *tafsīr* in his doctoral dissertation. Muchoyyar, "K.H. Muhammad Shaleh al-Samarani". There has been a number of studies on Sufi interpretation of the Qur’an, and among the latest is Kristin Zahra Sands, *Sufi Commentaries on the Qur’an in Classical Islam* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006).
95 al-Samarani, *Fayḍ al-Raḥmān*, 4-5.
Among Salih works, this book seems to be the least known among Javanese. According to Proudfoot, this book was printed once in 1894 by Haji Muhammad Amin, Singapore, with a run of 600 copies. This seems to be the first volume, which is mentioned as having 577 pages. The second volume had 705 pages and was published in 1895 by the same company, though it apparently was not registered and hence not listed by Proudfoot. It is not known how many copies of the second volume was printed. Salih finished the first volume on 7 Muharram 1311 AH (20 July 1893), while the second volume was completed on 17 Safar 1312 AH (19 August 1894). There is no indication that these two volumes were ever reprinted after their first printing in 1894 and 1895, respectively.

The scarcity of this type of tafsīr within the Islamic tradition is an indication of its unpopularity and may account for the lack of interest in this work among the Javanese. Although scholars did write Sufi tafsīr, among whom the most prominent is al-Ghazali who wrote *Mishkāt al-Anwār*, this genre never became part of the mainstream in Qur’anic exegesis. The contents of this book does not seem appropriate for uneducated people, to whom Salih directed his works, because to understand the Sufi interpretation of the Qur’an requires a basic knowledge of Qur’anic exegesis. The texts do not come with vowel marks (*shakl*), which make it difficult for common people to read. In addition, Salih’s decision to write an original composition instead of a commentary of a previous study (though he refers to works of al-Ghazali and to the *Tafsīr al-Kabīr* by al-Razi), may also contribute to the unpopularity of this work. The price may have also been

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a factor since it sold for $2.00 Ringgit Singapore for apparently just one volume, making it the most expensive of his books and beyond the reach of ordinary Javanese. The Qur’an contains 30 juz (parts) and 114 surah (chapters), and Salih’s two volumes only covered the first four chapters of the Qur’an or five parts and few more pages. This daunting task and the unpopularity of this genre, particularly to his target Javanese audience, may have been the reasons for his abandoning the project.

**Book on Tajwīd: Al-Murshid al-Wajīz fi ‘Ilm al-Qur’ān al-‘Azīz**

This book deals with knowledge in reciting the Qur’an, or commonly known as tajwīd. Salih begins by stating: “Ngaji ‘ilmu tajwid iku fardu ain (Learning the knowledge of tajwīd is an individual obligation),” and that it is imperative for people to learn to do it correctly. Since books on the subject are mostly written in Arabic, Salih’s teacher (unnamed) urged him to write it in Javanese to enable the ordinary people to read it. Before detailing the science of reciting the Qur’an, Salih commences the discussion with the beginning of the prophecy of Muhammad, the revelation of the Qur’an, its codification, and the varying styles of recitation according to the different chains of transmission (sanad). It is therefore necessary to learn from a teacher who has sanad that connect him/her to the Prophet. Salih ends his work by citing his intellectual lineage in the different branches of Islamic knowledge.

99 Sallih might not expect that the price of his Tafsīr was that expensive. As a scholar whose intention was to educate people through his written works, he would have been motivated more by producing intellectual works than the success in sale.
100 Sugahara mistakenly believed that this tafsīr covered the first and second chapters of the Qur’an. In fact, the first volume contains the first and second chapters of the Qur’an, while the second volume deals with the third and fourth chapters. She also called Ali Chalil the son of Salih Darat, but he was really his grandson. Sugahara, "Kitab Jawa", 46.
Salih needed only one and a half months to write this book. On the cover he mentions that he began writing on 15 Shawwal 1317 AH (16 February 1900 CE) and completed it on 26 Dhul al-Qa’idah 1317 AH (28 March 1900 CE). The manuscript was published by Muhammad Amin in Singapore on 20 Rabi’ al-Thani 1318 AH (17 August 1900), but may not have been registered since it does not appear in Proudfoot’s list. It is unknown, therefore, how many copies of this book were printed, and since it is no longer available it may not have been among the most popular of Salih’s works.

Learning to recite the Qur’an with a teacher in prayer houses and mosques is a common phenomenon among young Muslims. Rarely are books used in this process of learning. Pupils repeat what a teacher says while looking at the text of the Qur’an that is being recited. Once the teacher thinks that their pronunciation of a sentence within the Qur’an is correct, then they move to the next sentence. Salih’s book of tajwīd is thus used by the teachers to improve their understanding of the basic principles of tajwīd, despite Salih’s claim that it was meant for the ordinary Javanese. It is very unlikely that those with insufficient knowledge of tajwīd would have purchased this book. It is also impossible to teach oneself using this book because one needs to learn to pronounce the Qur’an with someone with authoritative knowledge of the proper Arabic pronunciation. It is more likely that this book was purchased by local ulama with limited ability in Arabic to use in teaching pupils to recite the Qur’an.

102 The advertisement of this book, however, was found in the *Lataif al-Taharah* published by Matba’ Karimi in 1906. Proudfoot, ”Malay Books Printed in Bombay,” 17.
Books on the Story of the Prophet: Kitāb al-Maḥabbah wa al-Mawaddah fi Tarjamah

Qawl al-Burdah

This book is a commentary on Qaṣīdah Burdah, popularly known as Burdah, by Muhammad ibn Sa‘id al-Busiri (d. 1296 CE). Burdah contains a poem or panegyric in honor of the Prophet Muhammad and is popular among Muslim societies because of the beauty of the verse and the appealing supernatural tale. The writer was miraculously healed by a dream in which the Prophet cast his gown, burdah, over him after he had finished the poem. Since then, this compilation originally entitled al-Kawakib al-Durriyah is known as Burdah, and stories have spread that this particular poem has supernatural powers to protect whoever reads it. This veneration of the Prophet is popular among Muslims in different lands with translations from the Arabic into Persian, Turkish, Urdu, and Malay.103 There is little doubt that during Salih’s time, this book was also popular in Java. It was recited during special occasions, such as on the first twelve days of Rabi’ al-Awwal, the month when Muhammad was born, and on Thursday evenings at prayer houses and mosques. Salih knew, however, that many of those reciting this text did not understand its meaning, and so at the request of friends whom he mentions in the introduction he wrote this commentary in Javanese. 104

This book was completed on 18 Dhul Hijjah 1320 (18 March 1903), nine months before his death, and may have been his last work. It was not very successful and had only one printing of 1200 copies by Haji Muhammad Amin in 1904.105 Despite the

103 For studies of this poem, see Muhammad Bukhari Lubis, Qasidahs in Honor of the Prophet: a Comparative Study between al-Bushiri's al-Burdah and Attar's Na't in His Illahi Namah (Bangi, Selangor: Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 1983).
104 al-Samarani, Kitab al-Maḥabbah, 2-3.
frequent recitation of the original version of the Burdah, Salih’s Javanese commentary was not in high demand. While the reason of this failure is hardly known, Javanese people might not need to understand the meaning behind the beauty of the poems they often recited as it had no direct effect on their daily religious observances. Its price of $1.00 Ringgit Singapore, which was among Salih’s most expensive works, might also be a factor.

*Sharh al-Barzanji*

Among Salih’s books, this is an ambiguous work because it is not clear whether it is a new composition or a commentary. For commentaries, Salih usually mentions the original title and writer, and begins with the original sentences first before he provides the translations and commentaries on them. This is not the case for this book. However, he also does not mention what books he refers to as he commonly does for his newly composed works. The title of this work further confuses the issue since the title, *Sharḥ Barzanji*, literally means a commentary of Barzanji. The complete title of the book as appears on the cover is *Puniko Hadith al-Ghayti lan Sharḥ Barzanji tuwin Nazhat al-Majalis ingkang sampun Kajarwaaken dening Kiyahi Muhammad Salih bin Umar ing Darat.*

106 Therefore, I assume that his is a commentary on a *Mawlid al-Nabi* by Ja’far ibn Hasan al-Barzanji (d. 1766 CE), which is popularly known in Java as Kitab Barzanji and only deals with a specific episode of the Prophet’s life known as *isrā’* and *mi’rāj*. Isrā’ is the Prophet’s travel at night from the Mosque al-Haram in Mecca to the Mosque al-Aqsa in Jerusalem, while mi’rāj is the ascension of the Prophet to heaven where he received direct instructions from God regarding daily prayers. This book describes in detail the story beginning with moments
before the Prophet’s journey and ending with the mostly incredulous responses and reactions of the Meccan people.

The *Mawlid al-Nabī* by Ja’far al-Barzanji is a popular book on the hagiography of the Prophet, and it is usually recited, along with other similar books including the *Burdah*, on Thursday nights and on the first eleven days of the month when the Prophet was born, Rabi’ al-Awal. It is during this month that the birth of the Prophet is celebrated by Muslims all over the world, with these texts playing a part in the celebrations.107 As in his other works, Salih intended to explicate in Javanese the whole story narrated in the book for the benefit of the common people. Like the *Burdah*, however, it was not popular with the Javanese. Completed on 2 Rajab 1314 AH (7 December, 1896 CE),108 this book was apparently printed once by Haji Muhammad Amin Singapore in 1315 (1897) but was not registered in the Straits Settlement and hence not listed by Proudfoot, so there is information on the number of copies printed or the price.

**Book on Tawḥīd: Tarjamah Sabīl al-ʻAbīd**

This book is a commentary on *Jawharat al-Tawḥīd* by Shaykh Ibrahim al-Laqani (d. 1631 CE), which discusses Islamic theology based on the Sunni school of thought. As mentioned in chapter 2, *Jawharat al-Tawḥīd* has been for a long time one of the popular books on tawḥīd taught in the pesantren.109 As it follows Ash’ari and Maturidi

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107 For a study of this tradition and the use of texts of the hagiography of the Prophet in the celebration, see, Marion Holmez Katz, *The Birth of the Prophet Muhammad: Devotional Piety in Sunni Islam* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007).
mainstream understanding of theology within Sunni Islam, this book mainly discusses attributes which are necessary, impossible, and possible for God and His prophets, as well as arguments to support all of them. The popularity of this book seems to be the main reason that Salih wrote this commentary in Javanese, again for the edification of the common people.\textsuperscript{110}

Salih does not only translate and provide an explanation of the original texts which are in rhyme, but he also adds several parts which are not mentioned in the original. For example, he discusses in great length the 77 branches of faith (\textit{shu`ab al-īmān}) referring to a book with that title by Ahmad ibn al-Husayn Bayhaqi (d. 1066 CE). It is interesting that, according to Salih, serving guests who come to one’s house and having affection for one’s spouse are among the branches of faith.\textsuperscript{111} In addition, Salih inserts discussion on ethics for different occasions, such as ethics in studying and interacting with others. He also describes the rights and responsibilities of students, teachers, children, parents, relatives, friends, and neighbors. For example, one needs to please one’s neighbors even if they are not Muslims. If one buys a toy for one’s child, it is also suggested that one buy another for the neighbors’ child to please the neighbors.\textsuperscript{112} By adding these extra issues, Salih regards the discussion of tawḥīd as pertinent not only to human’s conception of God and the hereafter, or the relation between humans and God, but also between human beings.

\textsuperscript{110} al-Samarani, \textit{Tarjamah Sabīl al-‘Abīd}, 2-3.
\textsuperscript{111} Ibid., 56-92.
\textsuperscript{112} Ibid., 338-361.
Although Salih does not mention when he wrote this book, Proudfoot argues that this book was first printed with 1500 copies by Matba’ Karimi Bombay in 1906, or about three years after Salih died. It is doubtful, however, that this was the first time it was published because of the length of time that elapsed between Salih’s death and the first publication. It is more reasonable to assume that another publisher before Karimi printed it during Salih’s life but did not register this book with the authorities. This book is currently still available and printed by Toha Putra Semarang.

Conclusion

All of Salih’s works reflect his great concern for the need to improve the Islamic knowledge of the Javanese people. By composing these books, Salih hoped to increase religious understanding among them so that they would become more pious Muslims. Since the majority of them did not understand Arabic, Salih decided to write for them in the Javanese language using the Arabic script, or Pegon. The most popular of his writings based on the number of copies produced during his lifetime were those dealing with practical manuals for performing religious obligations, such as Fasalatan, and the basic knowledge of Islamic teachings, such as the Majmū‘at al-Shari‘ah and Munjiyāt. This suggests that the ordinary people eagerly sought to become more orthodox and pious Muslims by learning proper thought and behavior as taught in the books on Islamic knowledge.

113 The table shows that Karimi printed Salih’s books after the latter’s death, and all titles but this and Manāsik al-Hajj were previously printed by others. Therefore, I assume that this book was also previously printed by another publisher but was not reported to the authorities. It seems that the involvement of this printing house and other Bombay publishers in Jawi and Pegon printing is related to the decline of the publication houses in Singapore in the early twentieth century. Proudfoot, Early Malay Printed Books, 43-46.
Salih was fully aware that writing Islamic texts in Pegon was something new among the Javanese and that some people might view his works as less authoritative than those written in Arabic. But he defended his decision and argued that the value of Islamic texts rested not on the language used but on the effectiveness in conveying Islamic knowledge to the intended readers. It is in this context that he freely localized various key concepts within Islamic teachings in order to help the Javanese people understand more easily the meaning of such concepts. This important process is the subject of the following chapter.
Table 1: Titles, Publishers, Years, Copies and Prices of Salih’s Pegon Books

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CHAPTER 5

DEFENDING PEGON BOOKS AND LOCALIZING ISLAMIC ORTHODOXY

As mentioned in previous chapters, one of the main reasons that Salih decided to compose Pegon texts was to improve the Javanese people’s understanding of Islamic knowledge and to teach them the proper performance of Islamic rituals. Since he was one of the pioneers to produce such works, Salih sought to defend his authority to do this. He argued that Islam was revealed not only for the Arabs but also for all people in this world. In addition, there were more non-Arabic people who had converted to Islam, and so it was necessary to translate or explain Islamic texts in local languages to improve the proper understanding of the religion. In other words, Islamic texts in the vernacular should not be regarded as less important than those written in Arabic, as long as they maintain the orthodox principles of Islam. Using these arguments Salih composed Islamic texts in Pegon, translated and localized some of the key concepts of Islam, while maintaining the principles of Islamic orthodoxy. How he did this will be discussed below.

The Obligation of Learning and Teaching Religious Sciences

Salih Darat considered it very important for Muslims to learn the religious sciences. He argued that a Muslim needs to know how to perform all of the religious obligations correctly, including the appropriate physical gestures and utterances for each ritual. In addition, he believed it necessary for Muslims to understand what was being said in such rituals so that they could internalize what they were doing. By following this prescription, they would be performing rituals that were valid according to Islamic law
(shari‘ah) and acceptable in the eyes of God. The only way to attain this goal, according to Salih, is by learning and studying the religious sciences, and he quotes the Prophet’s hadith that “seeking knowledge is an individual obligation (fardu ‘ain) for every Muslim man and woman.”\(^1\) It is to help the Javanese with this process that Salih began to write in Pegon.

For those who were already knowledgeable in the religious sciences, Salih recommends that they teach this knowledge to the surrounding communities with no concern for financial rewards. It is regarded as a communal obligation (fardu kifāyah), and so every village should have at least one person to teach the religion to others. All the residents are believed to have committed a sin if the village does not follow this prescription. The priorities should be the study of faith in God (tawḥīd) and the daily obligations, such as religious purification (tahārah) and prayer. Other forms of Islamic knowledge, such as Arabic grammar and Sufism, are not required to be taught. In the case of Sufism, it should not be taught before people have an adequate knowledge of fiqh.\(^2\)

Salih seems to realize that there was a big gap between what Muslims were supposed to do and what they actually did. Very few Muslims attended the pesantren to study Islamic knowledge, and not many educated Muslims taught ordinary people outside the pesantren. The vast majority of ordinary Javanese Muslims, therefore, were left untouched by Islamic teaching as there were no sources in their own language. Salih’s decision to compose Islamic texts in Pegon was intended to rectify the situation by giving the Javanese direct access to Islamic texts. In Matn al-Ḥikam, for example, Salih says

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\(^1\) Muhammad Salih al-Samarani, Majmū‘at al-Shari‘ah al-Kāfiyah lil-‘Awam (Semarang: Toha Putra, na), 2-3.

\(^2\) Muhammad Salih al-Samarani, Tarjamah Sabīl al-‘Abīd ‘ala Jawharat al-Tawḥīd (na: na, na), 64-65.
that “in order to make it easy for the lay people (awam) like me, I translated this book in Javanese to make the learners quickly understand [it]… and hopefully this will be beneficial for all believers.”

3 In Jawhar al-Tawhīd, he states that “I need and like to translate this book into Javanese to fulfill the hopes of some friends that this will benefit lay and unintelligent people, like me, who do not understand Arabic.”

4 On another occasion, Salih expressed his concern at the lack of Javanese versions of Islamic books, and thus writes in the Minhāj al-Atqiyyā’: “I intend to do a commentary of this book in Javanese in order to benefit the Javanese lay believers. There are a number of ulama who have done commentaries of these verses in Arabic, which many people do not understand except for the ulama. The Javanese commoners do not understand nor even hear the stories of these verses.”

5 A similar statement is made in al-Murshid al-Wajīz. Salih’s main point here is clearly to make religious sources accessible to the Javanese people to promote the learning of Islamic knowledge. By providing religious texts written in Pegon, he hoped that the Javanese would then no longer be disadvantaged by their inability to read and understand Arabic.

6 It is interesting that Salih, as the quotations show, referred to himself as a lay person. It is a sign of humility (tawāḍu’), which is a trait that is encouraged especially among Sufis. For Sufis, one should not believe oneself to be ‘alim (expert) for a person’s knowledge is inconsequential in the presence of God’s infinite knowledge. Among his students, however, Salih was certainly not an awam person due to his mastery in various

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4 Al-Samarani, Tarjamah Sabīl al-‘Abīd, 2.
5 Muhammad Salih Al-Samarani, Minhāj al-‘Atqiyyā’ fi Sharḥ Ma’rifat al-‘Adhkiyya’ ilā Ṭarīq al-‘Awliya’ (Bombay: Matba’ Muhammadiy, 1900), 3.
6 Muhammad Salih Al-Samarani, Al-Murshid al-Wajīz fi ʿIlm al-Qurān al-ʿAzīz ([Singapore]: Matba’ Haji Muhammad Amin, 1900), 3.
subjects of Islamic sciences. As mentioned, he taught his students advanced religious books written in Arabic. The fact that he also often discussed the grammar of some very intricate Arabic sentences\(^7\) demonstrates his mastery of Arabic texts and the Arabic language. Salih’s statement that he is an awam person is also intended to encourage the Javanese to study these texts in their own language by placing himself alongside the ordinary Javanese Muslim. Yet Salih realized that he would face criticism from his ulama colleagues since the Javanese pesantren in the nineteenth century used classical Arabic texts as standard materials for teaching and studying the religious sciences.\(^8\) Salih therefore found it necessary to explain and defend the validity and authority of his Javanese Islamic texts.

**Defending Non-Arabic Islamic Texts**

Salih was definitely not the first to write Islamic texts in a non-Arabic language but was one of the earliest to do it in Javanese. In defending this practice, he makes a distinction between the universality of Islam and the parochialness of the Arab. He then explains what is meant by useful knowledge (\(al-‘ilm al-nāfi’\)) and, finally, he provides examples of religious texts written in other non-Arabic languages whose authorities are widely accepted in the Islamic world.

Salih acknowledges that Arabic has a central place in Islam as the language of instruction, the Prophet’s tradition (hadīth), and more importantly, the Qur’an. There are more than five verses in the Qur’an that say explicitly that the Qur’an was revealed in

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\(^8\) As discussed by Berg, all books used in pesantren were in Arabic. L. van den Berg, "Het Mohammedaansche Godsdienstonderwijs op Java en Madoera en de Daarbij Gebruikte Arabische Boeken," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, no. 31 (1886): 518-555.
Arabic. For Salih, the Arabic language is closely related to the Prophet who was an Arab and lived within Arab society. By quoting a verse of the Qur’an that says, “We have not sent any Messenger except with the language of his people so he can make things clear to them (14:4),” Salih argues that, because Muhammad was an Arab, the Qur’an was revealed in Arabic to make it easy for Arab people to understand God’s words. For this very same reason, previous prophets wrote in the local languages. Salih reminds the reader that Islam is not only for the Arab people but for all humankind as mentioned in the Qur’an 21:107. Islam became widespread despite the fact that many did not understand Arabic. If understanding of Arabic is a precondition for being complete in Islam, then the majority would never become fully Muslim. It makes a mockery of the idea that mastery of Arabic should be a prerequisite for becoming a perfect Muslim.⁹

Salih does not mean, however, that Muslims should neglect Arabic. At the very least they need to learn how to read the Qur’an and to pronounce certain Arabic sentences properly in prayers. The five daily prayers use Arabic incantations and, according to the majority of ulama, cannot be substituted for other languages. Recitation of the Qur’an, as a religious observance, also needs to be done in Arabic. A translation is helpful to understand the meaning but should not replace the Arabic nor undermine its sacredness. Therefore, Salih argues that learning how to recite the Qur’an properly is a part of the religious obligation of every Muslim. It is also an obligation for parents to provide education for their children to be able to read the Qur’an correctly. The Arabic language is intricate, and the difference between “q” (qaf) and “k” (kaf) or between ‘ain and hamzah, for example, can lead to a separate meaning. An inappropriate pronunciation of

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the Qur’an, therefore, could endanger the mission of the Qur’an and, in turn, may invalidate the worship by changing the meaning.\(^\text{10}\) This seems to be the main reason that Salih composed the *al-Murshid al-Wajiz* which contains the *ilmu tajwīd*, or knowledge for the recitation of the Qur’an.

Salih himself uses Arabic script to write his books. This means that one needs to know the pronunciation represented by each Arabic letter. For Salih, however, this does not seem to be a big problem. He was aware that in Muslim society, especially in Java, most people from Muslim families go to Qur’anic schools at an early age to learn how to read the Qur’an. When the Javanese learn to read the Qur’an, theoretically they should then be able to read his books since most are provided with vowel marks (shakl) of “a” “i” “u” and adopt the Javanese “e”, which is not found in the original Arabic. Only a little knowledge of the Arabic script is needed for the Javanese to be able to read Pegon books. This is different from Arabic books taught in the pesantren because they are in the Arabic language and without vowel marks (*Arab gundul*). For this type of book, mastery in Arabic grammar and syntax as well as vocabulary is necessary.

Salih then elaborates the concept of useful knowledge (‘ilm al-nāfī‘). This concept is important in Islam as it is one of the three things that enable a dead person to keep receiving rewards from God. The other two are pious children who always pray for their parents, and charity which continuously benefit others.\(^\text{11}\) According to Salih, useful knowledge is determined by its contribution in improving people’s understanding of Islam. In a society where the majority do not understand Arabic, Islamic knowledge

\(^{10}\) Ibid., 3, 72-91, 152-156.
\(^{11}\) This refers to a *hadith* by the Prophet that says when a person dies all of his/her deeds are cut off except for these three.
written in the local language would be more beneficial than that in Arabic. Useful knowledge, therefore, is not limited to that written in Arabic, but is also found in any religious text written in other languages that contain knowledge that should be studied.\(^\text{12}\)

To support this argument, Salih provides empirical examples of the existence of a number of books in non-Arabic languages but widely acclaimed by Muslims scholars. He mentions three tafsīr (Qur’anic exegeses) written in Persian by Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad al-Harwi, Husayn ibn Ali al-Kashifi, and Khawajah Muhammad ibn Mahmud al-Hafizi al-Bukhari.\(^\text{13}\) Another tafsir by Abu al-Layth Nasr ibn Muhammad al-Samarqandi was written in Turkish.\(^\text{14}\) Salih also mentions the widely used fiqh books in Malay, Sabīl al-Muhtadīn, by Muhammad Arshad al-Banjari.\(^\text{15}\) Despite the fact that these Islamic texts are not in Arabic, they are, according to Salih, among the useful knowledge for their contents and widespread use among Muslims in their respected regions.

Salih, therefore, criticizes those who argue that only Arabic books deserve to be studied and regard Javanese books as not authoritative, simply because they are written in

\(^{12}\) al-Samarani, Tarjama Sabīl al-'Abīd, 2.

\(^{13}\) Ibid., 2-3. Salih unfortunately does not mention the title of these tafsir, and I have not been able to verify these figures. I could not find the tafsir in Persian by Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad al-Harwi, but I found Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad Surabadi (d. 1100)'s Tafsir-i Surabadi in Persian. I also could not locate Khawajah Muhammad ibn Mahmud al-Hafizi al-Bukhari, but there was Muhammad ibn Mahmud Naysaburi who lived in the 12th century and wrote Tafsir-i Basair-i Yamini. I am not sure if these names are identical to those that Salih cited. Husayn ibn Ali al-Kashifi seems to be the one who authored Tafsir-i Husayni. If this is so, he died in 1504.

\(^{14}\) Ibid., 3. Nasr ibn Muhammad Abu al-Layth al-Samarqandi (d. 983) actually wrote Bahr al-'Ulum known also as Tafsir al-Samarqandi in Arabic. His Turkish tafsir, Tefsiru’l Kur’an, was a translation of the Arabic version. He did not write in Turkish.

\(^{15}\) Ibid., 66. Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari (d. 1812) is a well-known ulama from South Sulawesi who, after studying in Mecca and Medina for several decades in the eighteenth century, wrote several books in Malay. In addition to Sabil al-Muhtadin on fiqh, he also composed Kanz al-Ma’rifah on Sufism. Together with other contemporary ulama, Arsyad was known for his initiative in establishing an Islamic education in South Sulawesi that received the full support from the ruler of the Banjar Sultanate, Sultan Tahmid Allah II (d. 1808). For further discussion of Arsyad of Banjar, see Azyumardi Azra, The Origins of Islamic Reformism in Southeast Asia: Networks of Malay-Indonesian and Middle Eastern 'Ulama' in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries (Crow's Nest, NSW and Honolulu: Asian Studies Association of Australia in association with Allen & Unwin and University of Hawai'i Press, 2004), 117-122.
Javanese. Salih also condemns those who refuse to teach books written in non-Arabic language because they do not want to be perceived as less educated. For Salih, these people are arrogant and do not respect the efforts of the ulama in attempting to help the common people to better understand religious knowledge by composing texts in local languages. They should know, Salih says, that such respected ulama as Ismail of Minangkabau, taught his students in Mecca by using Jawi books. This confirms his argument that the significance of a book is less dependent upon its language than its content.

For the ordinary people who know very little about Islam, the most important thing to teach is the basic knowledge of Islam, such as understanding the *uṣul al-dīn* (theology), maintaining ṭahārah, and performing prayers and other individual obligations. It is an obligation of the educated people to teach them about religious knowledge by using a language that is understandable among them. The use of the local language, according to Salih, is even necessary because the main purpose of teaching is to make people understand the matters that are taught. In a situation where the people do not have access to a teacher, the availability of books in the vernacular becomes a helpful and necessary tool. Through such books, people are able to learn by themselves, and those with even a basic knowledge of Arabic could serve as teachers.

In short, Salih argues that in order to receive God’s mercy one does not necessarily need to speak Arabic. And it is based on this argument that Salih freely expresses his teachings on the Islamic sciences in the local Javanese language. Many

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Islamic concepts of tawḥīd, fiqh, and taṣawuf are communicated to the readers through local terms and expressions, as long as their local similarities and correspondences are available and do not deviate from the original meanings. Salih thus translated and localized Islamic teachings from the original Arabic language to make Islamic knowledge accessible to the common people. But he did not neglect to criticize local practices that were contrary to the principles of Islam.

**Localizing Tawḥīd**

Salih declares in all his books that he followed the Sunni (*Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamāʿah*) path. Unlike the Shi‘i who derive religious authority from the *Ahl al-Bayt* (the Prophet’s descendants), the Sunni argue that authority descends from the Prophet and his companions. In Sunni there are several legal schools of thought (*madhhab*) and theological views. The four main legal schools widely accepted by the Sunnite are Maliki (named after Malik ibn Anas, d. 795 CE), Hanafi (after Abu Hanifah, d. 767 CE), Shafi‘i (after Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi‘i, d. 820 CE), and Hanbali (after Ahmad ibn Hanbal, d. 855 CE), while popular theological schools are Ash‘ari (after Abu al-Hasan al-Ash‘ari, d. 935 CE) and Maturidi (after Abu Mansur Muhammad al-Maturidi, d. 934 CE). Sufism is also a common practice among the majority Sunnite followers. Among the most influential Sufi in Sunni are al-Junayd (Abu al-Qasim ibn Muhammad al-Junayd, d. 910 CE) and al-Ghazali (Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazali, d. 1111 CE). Salih confirms in his writings that in fiqh he follows the Shafi‘i legal school, in theology he relies on Ash‘ari and Maturidi, and for Sufism he favors al-Ghazali. With this position, Salih
rejects the schools of Qadariyah, Jabbariyah, as well as Muʿtazilah. He even regards the last as false and infidel.

Salih, as mentioned earlier, is concerned with the study of religious knowledge because one’s worship would be worthless without proper knowledge. In his view, Muslims should study the three branches of Islamic knowledge: tawḥīd, fiqh, and taṣawuf. These three are parallel with Iman, Islam, and Ihsan, respectively. Tawḥīd (Islamic theology), which literally means the Oneness of God, is knowledge that explicates the Islamic conception of God. This is the first and basic knowledge that Muslims need to learn because to believe in the unity of God is the foundation upon which all ideas and practices in Islam are built. Fiqh or Islamic jurisprudence contains knowledge about God’s laws that regulate worship as well as personal interactions. To be a Muslim, one needs to observe religious obligations, such as praying five times a day, fasting in the month of Ramadan, paying zakat (alms), and performing the hajj. In addition, human activities need to be religiously sanctioned. All these practices are discussed in the fiqh books. Taṣawuf or Islamic mysticism, for Salih, is knowledge to cleanse one’s heart from blameworthy characteristics (ṣifāt madhmūmah) and equip it with praiseworthy characteristics (ṣifāt maḥmūdah) to attain proximity to God.

According to the Sunni doctrine, there are six aspects that one needs to believe in to be called a Muʾmin (believer). These are the arkān al-ʿIman (the basic elements of

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19 Qadariyah basically argues that human beings have free will and their activities are not predestined by God. Jabbariyah takes the opposite position. Muʿtazilah is a school that emphasizes speculative reason in Islamic theology. One of the most famous dogmas of Muʿtazilah is that the Qurʾan was created, a view totally rejected by Sunnites. To some extent, Muʿtazilah is similar to Qadariyah, especially in regard to the free will of human beings. For a short discussion of Islamic theology, see Fazlur Rahman, Islam, 2d ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 85-99.
20 al-Samarani, Tarjamah Sabīl al-ʿAbīd, 29.
21 Ibid., 25-26.
belief): Belief in one God, His angels, His holy books, His messengers, the Day of Resurrection, and divine fate and predestination (qāḍāʾ qadar). To be called a Muslim requires the observance of five practices known as ṣura ṣurah (the basic elements of Islam): The declaration of the shahādah (There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is His messenger), the five daily prayers, the paying of alms taxes, fasting in the month of Ramadan, and performing the hajj at least once for those who have the ability and resources to do so. Both Iman and Islam place the belief in and the declaration of the unity of God as the first principle. A Muslim therefore needs to understand the concept of the existence of God.

According to Salih, it is enough for the ordinary Javanese to know that God exists by understanding the general evidence. They are not required to understand the detail of the postulates of God’s existence; in fact, such study is even prohibited because it could endanger their faith. Salih provides an example of the existence of the universe by emphasizing the novelty of the changing world and how every novel thing needs a creator. The only creator is God. For Salih, conveying this information to the common people would support their conviction that God exists. However, they also need to understand the attributes (ṣifāt) that are necessary, impossible, and possible for God as well as for the Prophet. For God, there are twenty attributes that are necessary, twenty that are impossible, and one that is possible. For the Prophet, there are four necessary attributes, four impossible, and one possible. The total number of attributes is fifty, which is popularly known among Sunnites, especially in Java, as the fifty doctrines (Jv. akidah

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22 al-Samarani, Majmūʿat al-Sharīʿah, 4-8.
At this point, Salih does not differ substantially from a majority of Sunni scholars in dealing with Islamic theology.

In explicating the attributes of God, Salih always begins by translating the concepts into Javanese, although at times he retains the Arabic terms either because of lack of an equivalent in Javanese or because the Arabic original is already familiar to the Javanese people. He then provides a Javanese explanation of the concepts. In describing the meaning of the first attribute necessary for God, which is *wujūd*, omnipresence, for example, Salih keeps the Arabic *wujūd* because it had been already adopted into Javanese with the meaning of “shape, form, appearance.” Salih then explains that what is meant by this concept is “dhat ingkang městhi anane, ora kědihinan kělawan ‘adam… lan langgěng wujude (the essence that must exist, is not preceded by nonexistence… and its presence is eternal).” He thus uses local expressions in explaining this concept, although his sentence still contains some Arabic loan words, such as *dhat*, *‘adam*, and *wujūd*, which are familiar to Javanese Muslims.

The fifth attribute of God, *Qiyāmuhu bi-Nafsihi*, or self reliance, is translated as “juměněng Allah Ta’ālā kělawan dhave” (God stands with His own essence). Salih explains this concept by adding: “jumēnêng kēlawan dhave lan ora karēp marang dhat liyane kang den jumēnēngi lan ora karēp marang kange mawjudakèn” (to stand with His own essence, requires no other being to stand or create).

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23 Ibid., 9-12.
26 Ibid., 106.
previous example, Salih begins with a short translation of the concept then follows with a Javanese explanation. He repeats this style for other concepts of God’s attributes.

The ninth attribute, as another example, is ‘ilmu or omniscience, but it is not translated into Javanese because it has been adopted into the Javanese language to mean knowledge or science. As this concept in Islamic theology has a specific meaning, Salih explains that “ilmune Allah iku sifat ingkang têtěp ing dhate Allah Ta‘ālā ingkang dadi biso ngělimputi lan ngudaneni ing sěkabehane mawjud.” (Knowledge of God is an attribute that remains in God’s essence, with which He encompasses and recognizes all existences).29 Salih tries to explain the concept of ‘ilmu with the local expression in which ngelimputi (to encompass or surround) and ngudaneni (to know or recognize) become key words in explaining the meaning of ‘ilmu for God.

These examples show how Salih localizes terms and ideas relating to the concept of Oneness of God acceptable among Sunnites. The Javanese explanation given for God’s attribute of wujūd, omnipresence, is that God not only exists but nothing precedes His infinite existence. This explanation of wujūd is in sharp contrast with the local understanding of wujūd, which can be an attribute of things and even gods or deities. But the quality of God as the Beginning and Infinite is never attributed to other objects or beings. Similarly, when Salih explains the omniscience of God, he stresses that His knowledge encompasses everything everywhere in this world and even beyond this planet, including jinn, satan, and angels. Salih’s expositions on such concepts are strongly

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based on Sunni understanding but communicated in Javanese with local glosses and explanations to make them intelligible to ordinary people.

Salih follows the same method in discussing attributes of the prophets. He first translates the attributes into the Javanese equivalent whenever available but keeps the Arabic terms when they are already familiar among the Javanese. He then provides an explanation in Javanese. One of the necessary attributes of the prophets, amānah (trustworthiness), for example, is translated as kapercayan, which has several meanings in Javanese, such as “trusted, faith, belief, and confidence.” Salih then explains that what it means by this attribute is that the prophets “ora pisan-pisan ngělakoni larangane Allah kaya haram, makruh … dosa zhahir utowo batin” (never transgressed God’s prohibitions, such as committing forbidden or reprehensible [acts]… visible or invisible sins). Salih does not only translate the term with its closest Javanese equivalent but also provides an explanation which is comprehensible to the common folk. Ṣidq (truthfulness), another attribute of the prophets, is translated as běněr, which means correct, right, and true. Salih explains further that the term means, “cocok opo dawuhe karo kenyata’ane” (what [they] say fits with the realities). Another attribute of the prophets, tablīgh (conveyance) has no Javanese equivalent, and so Salih retains the Arabic but explains its meaning in Javanese. He says that tablīgh is “něka’akěn ing barang kan den perintahakěn purih něka’aken marang kaume” (conveying something that should be conveyed to the society).

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31 al-Samarani, Tarjamah Sabīl al-‘Abīd, 173.
32 Ibid.
33 Ibid., 175-176.
Pegon to translate some key concepts in Islamic theology and provide a Javanese explanation, including cultural ideas, in a way that would make these concepts comprehensible to the common people.

Another type of localization is Salih’s use of Javanese words in addressing and expressing some essential words. “Allah” as the supreme God in Islam, for example, is frequently preceded with *Gusti*, literarily “lord” or “master.” Gusti is commonly used by the Javanese to address the king or royal families.\(^{34}\) *Pĕngeran, Bĕndoro, Tuan,* and *Panjĕnĕngan* are other words that Salih often uses to replace Allah.\(^{35}\) Pĕngeran is from *Pangeran* which is a title for male nobility,\(^{36}\) but use of the form “Pĕngeran” is commonly understood by Javanese to refer to God. Bĕndoro, meaning master or mistress, is a title for a prince, princess, or the nobility.\(^{37}\) Tuan is simply a respectful title for men while panjĕnĕngan is “you” in the refined high status level of the Javanese language (*kromo inggil*).\(^{38}\) Except for Pĕngeran, which is specifically used for God, all these words are commonly used by the Javanese to address individuals of high rank. By using these various titles for God, Salih may have been seeking to make God more real, familiar and personal rather than abstract, alien and distant to the Javanese.

Salih also often places the Javanese titles *gusti* and *kanjĕng* before “Nabi,” an Arabic word for the Prophet. Like gusti, kanjĕng is also reserved for nobility.\(^{39}\) Other Javanese words Salih uses to refer to the Prophet are *wong agung* (great person), *panduko*……


\(^{37}\) Ibid., 665.

\(^{38}\) Ibid., 255.
(you or your honor) and tuan (sir). All of these forms are used by Javanese to address persons of higher rank. By using such words, Salih is not demeaning the sacredness of God or denigrating the Prophet. On the contrary, it pays homage and respect to God and the Prophet in way that the Javanese people would show respect to their kings and the royal families.

Another mode of localization employed by Salih is to use Javanese words that are not direct translations of the Arabic originals but have a similar intent in bringing about the desired result. For example, the word iman means to believe in God, as well as to be committed to what He has ordained through his messengers. It is often left in the original Arabic and is widely understood by Javanese Muslims. But at times Salih replaces it with ngestoake (to obey), which may be even closer to the manner in which Javanese would be expected to behave toward their lords. To believe in God requires obedience to His instructions. This seems to be the reason that Salih uses ngestoake instead of percoyo (believe, trust), which is closer in literal meaning to iman.

In another example, Salih uses the Javanese děměn ing Allah (to love God) for the Arabic maḥabbah Allah (to love God), as one branch of iman. He explains that the sign of a loving God is to love His messenger, and to love His messenger is to love his practices, especially those focused on the hereafter rather than on this world. Dêměn is a word usually used for affection between male and female. Adding the suffix “an”, the word becomes dêměnan, which can mean an improper relationship between a man and a woman.

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40 al-Samarani, Majmū‘at al-Shari‘ah, 2, 3, 9, 11, 13, 66; al-Samarani, Tarjamah Sabīl al-‘Abīd, 37, 182; Muhammad Salih al-Samarani, Sharḥ al-Barzanji (Singapore: Matba’ Haji Muhammad Amin, 1896), 12, 13, 15, 17, 25, 27.
41 al-Samarani, Tarjamah Sabīl al-‘Abīd, 50-51, 386-387 and al-Samarani, Majmū‘at al-Shari‘ah, 5.
42 al-Samarani, Tarjamah Sabīl al-‘Abīd, 58-59.
woman. When someone is said to děmèn another, it implies that he/she will always be in the other’s heart. This seems to be the reason that Salih uses this word, although it is not commonly used for showing one’s feelings to local gods or deities. By using děmèn Salih reminds the readers that God should be admired as one admires his/her beloved, and that one should show one’s love of God by following His commandments.

Salih’s use of the Javanese wirang (shame) to explain the Arabic al-haya’ (shyness) is another example of localization. After quoting a statement by the Prophet that “shyness is a part of iman,” Salih says that by having wirang Muslims could avoid committing any bad deeds (maʾṣiyat), either through their heads, hands, sexual organs, or feet. Salih reminds the reader that the essence of having wirang is not in relationship to other human beings but to God. As God is Omniscient, He always knows everything that people do. Therefore, if wirang is present in a Muslim’s heart, it will prevent them from carrying out actions prohibited by God. Although the Arabic word of al-haya’ has several meanings, including both shyness and shame, the concept of this word in the Prophet’s statement is similar to the emotional feeling of individuals in front of God. Therefore, shyness seems to be more appropriate than shame. Other Javanese ulama after Salih have also translated this word into isin (shyness) instead of wirang. Salih, however, prefers the Javanese interpretation of wirang, which carries the connotation that committing a sin will not only bring shame to oneself but to the family and the community. By using this culturally-loaded Javanese word, Salih was attempting to emphasize the seriousness of the effort to avoid bad deeds.

In a further explanation of iman, Salih quotes a hadīth of the Prophet who once said that “iman has seventy-seven branches. The worthiest is to state that there is no god but Allah and the least worthy is to remove harm from the street. Shyness is also a branch of iman.”46 Salih then details all seventy-seven branches in a way that is easy for the Javanese to understand. Sometimes he describes examples widely understood by Javanese to support his explanation. An example of this is when Salih discusses the number sixteen of the branches of iman, which is “nguměti kelawan agamane Islam” (miserly with his/her religion, Islam.)47 Salih does not mention the Arabic term, which is al-bukhl bi al-dīn (stingy with the religion), because it could be misunderstood by the Javanese. Instead, the example Salih chooses is of one refusing to do a religiously prohibited act even when threatened to be removed from one’s position. A Muslim should not abandon the religion for a reason not sanctioned in the sharī‘ah, which is the intent of the admonition that one should be miserly with one’s religion.

Another example is when Salih discusses the sixty-eighth branch of iman, ikrām al-ḍayūf (to honor guests). Salih translates this term with mulya’akēn dayoh (honoring guests) and explains it further with “gawe becik kēlawan dayoh kēlawan arēp nyuguh lan arēp ajer pulatan lan bagus caturane lan enggal-enggal nyuguh lamun wus hadir” (treating the guests well by serving food, a smiling face, good conversation, and speeding up the food service once the guests arrive).48 Serving food to guests entering into one’s home is a Javanese tradition and does not contravene Islamic teachings. Salih therefore combines the two traditions to show that following the Islamic prescription is maintaining

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46 al-Samarani, Tarjamah Sabīl al-ʿAbīd, 56.
47 Ibid.
48 Ibid., 87.
a Javanese practice of honoring guests. However, Salih reminds the readers not to “merdi-merdi barang kang ora ono lan arep ojo utang lan ojo tuku kelawan utang kerono arah nyuguh dayoh” (force oneself to borrow [money] or buy on credit in order to serve the guests). 49 In this way Salih encourages moderation in carrying out this tradition.

Salih also addresses Javanese practices that are contrary to Islamic principles by explaining the danger of being *kufr* (infidel). He reminds the readers to avoid twenty practices that become *wijen lan wineh* (seeds) of kufr. In this matter Salih refers to local beliefs and practices which, in his view, may lead a person into kufr. One of them is what Salih calls *mulahhidah*, which is to practice only the inner aspect of religious obligations while neglecting the external one. *Ṣalat*, which consists of a series of standing, bowing, prostration and sitting, and accompanied with certain utterances, for example, is practiced by some Javanese only as *duʿāʾ*, invocation, to their leader. *Ṣiyam*, fasting from dawn to sunset, is observed as “keeping the secrets,” 50 while the hajj is meant as visiting their leader. These practices, according to Salih, are common among those Javanese who declare themselves Muslims but they observe the “inner” religion and therefore see little need to perform the ritual obligations. In Salih’s eyes, such practices were unacceptable to Islam. 51

Another seed of kufr, Salih says, is *hululiyah*, which is a belief that God enters into individuals and becomes one with them. Among the Javanese this is known as *manunggaling kawulo gusti* (union between servant and lord, or human and god) and is very popular, although many may not really understand the concept. The union with God

49 Ibid., 88.
50 It is unclear what Salih means by “keeping the secrets” as the implementation of *siyam* among some Javanese.
51 Ibid., 97.
is known through the Hindu-Javanese tale of Bhima and his journey in search of the water of life. In this journey, Bhima had to cope with various obstacles and difficulties before arriving at his destination and unite with the god Dewa Ruci. This story is very well-known and liked by the Javanese as it is often played in the shadow puppet show (wayang kulit) and mentioned in a number of serat (Javanese religious chronicle), such as Serat Dewa Ruci, Serat Centini, and Serat Wirid Hidayat Jati. Among some Javanese, therefore, union with God becomes the greatest objective of their life. Salih states firmly that this belief or practice is incorrect and even infidel. It is in this context that Salih reminds the readers not to follow what was presumably said by Shaikh Siti Jenar that “there is no god except me.” Common people, according to Salih, are also not supposed to learn wahdat al-wujūd (Unity of Being) and ilmu al-martabah, nor should they

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54 Siti Jenar is a popular figure in the history of Islam in Java. He is believed to have lived during the Demak Sultanate and represented a Sufi who taught the public the idea of the union of God and humans (ḥulūl), which led to his being sentenced to death by the Sultan. His teaching, which resembles that of al-Hallaj (d. 922), a controversial Sufi thinker who introduced for the first time the idea of ḥulūl, brought some to argue that Siti Jenar did not really exist and was instead a symbol of the unorthodox teaching of Sufism. Regardless of whether he was a real historical figure or not, a number of books and articles have been written about him and his teaching. See, for example, Douwe Adolf Rinkes, Nine Saints of Java (Kuala Lumpur: Malaysian Sociological Research Institute, 1996), 15-48; Soebardi, The book of Cabolek, 35-36; Abdul Munir Mulkhan, Syekh Siti Jenar: Pergumulan Islam-Jawa (Yogyakarta: Yayasan Bentang Budaya, 1999); and Sudirman Tebba, Syaikh Siti Jenar: Pengaruh Tasawuf al-Hallaj di Jawa (Bandung: Pustaka Hidayah, 2003). For a short discussion of al-Hallaj, see Annemarie Schimmel, Mystical Dimensions of Islam (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975), 62-77.
55 This Sufi thought was proposed for the first time by Ibn Arabi (d. 1240 CE) and meant, in a simple way, that the real existence is only one, God. The others do no really exist. For a short discussion of Ibn Arabi, see Schimmel, Mystical Dimensions of Islam, 263-274.
56 This seems to be the Sufi thought of martabat tujuh (seven grades of being) that was popular in North Sumatra in the seventeenth century through Hamzah Fansuri and Shams al-Din-al-Sumatrani. This thought referred mainly to the Sufi teachings of Fadl Allah al-Burhanpuri (d. 1620 CE) on the theory of emanation in the creation of the world.
study the *al-Tuhfat al-Mursalah* and *al-Insān al-Kāmil*. Salih does not explicitly categorize this knowledge nor these books as invalid or not authoritative but simply says that they are meant for very specific persons (*khawāṣ*) and not for the common people, whose belief could be jeopardized.⁵⁸

Other practices that Salih considers kufr are the belief in *danyang* (deities), preparing *sēsajen* or offering to spirits in specific places to bring luck or avert danger, and performing *sēdēkah bumi*, the annual village celebration held to honor the guardian spirits of the village. Believing in deities and offering *sēsajen* are common among the Javanese, but Salih criticizes these practices as contravening Islamic principles. Another kind of action that may lead to kufr is emulating a non-believer’s behavior either in eating or dressing. Wearing Western attire, such as a suit, tie, and hat, according to Salih, is committing a great sin. Even to think that such attire is good should be avoided.⁵⁹

Seeking help from a shaman or native healer and trusting a fortune teller—a common practice among Javanese to determine auspicious days for specific activities—is also categorized as kufr. To even believe in auspicious days is sinful. This is a particularly difficult practice to eradicate because of the strong attachment to such indigenous knowledge.

The Javanese acknowledge a five day cycle consisting of *paing, pon, wage, kliwon*, and *lēgi*, known as *pasaran*, as well as the seven day cycle of Monday to Sunday. Certain combinations of day, pasaran, and year are regarded as auspicious and hence ideal for such activities as weddings, circumcisions, and beginning new businesses and

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⁵⁷ *Al-Tuhfat al-Mursalah* is authored by Fadl Allah al-Burhanpuri, while *al-Insān al-Kāmil* is written by Abd Karîm al-Jili (d. around 1408 CE).
⁵⁹ Ibid., 23-25.
farming. This practice, in Salih’s view, should be avoided as it is part of kufr. Salih sought to maintain the principles of Islamic orthodoxy, but some of his admonitions had little effect, judging by the continuing presence of the practice sēsajen, sēdēkah bumi, and the reliance of auspicious days for specific important events. This shows that Javanese population exercised agency in determining what localization to accept what not.

Salih interprets Islamic ideas and uses them to analyze some customs and practices that are popular among the Javanese but inappropriate according to Islamic principles. By using simple expressions, Salih reminds the readers to avoid such practices. Salih does not even differentiate categories of kufr, riddah, and shirk, which have different meanings and legal consequences in Islamic law, but uses them interchangeably. The reason is that Salih might not want to confuse the lay people with the complex arguments involved to explain the differences. What was of greater importance was to list the bad practices and provide useful guidance to avoid them, rather than to characterize an action falling into one of the categories of kufr, shirk, or riddah.

Although Salih’s efforts to end such Javanese practices failed among the Javanese population at large, they did decrease these practices among some, who through their Islamic practices joined the ranks of the santri. In the latter, the traditions of sesajen, sedekah bumi and pasaran are no longer followed. Salih’s local expressions for certain concepts of Islamic theology, such as for God, the Prophet, and attributes of both, are commonly used by the Javanese without debate. Although Salih was not the first to use Pegon books, he was the first to appeal to the wider Javanese community. It is thus

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60 Ibid., 29-31.
61 Kufr is basically negating the existence of God, riddah/murtad (apostasy) is to return from Islam to former religion or to deny the truth of Islam, while shirk is associating something with Allah.
possible to argue that he was a major factor in the adoption of specific Javanese terms to express Islamic concepts.

**Localizing Fiqh**

In the field of fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), especially on the part of ʿibādāt (rituals), Salih does not localize rules that govern them but simply translates them into Javanese. Certain terms are translated into Javanese while others whose similarities are not available in Javanese are kept in Arabic; and Salih provides explanation of them in the simple vernacular. However, in the second part of fiqh, known as muʿāmalah (social life), Salih uses many local expressions to explain ideas. As the first part of fiqh deals with specific rituals to God unquestioned by Islamic scholars, Salih’s aim is principally to increase the Javanese people’s understanding of such rituals and to warn them against the insertion of pre-Islamic practices.

As with books on fiqh in Arabic, as discussed in chapter two, Salih begins discussion with ṭahārah (purification), although he does not make it an independent chapter as in other fiqh texts. Instead, he includes it in the chapter on ṣalāt (prayer). For Salih, the necessity of being clean and pure is a part of the process of performing a prayer properly. Some terms relating to purification are translated into Javanese but most remain in Arabic. The terms ṭahārah, ghusl (taking bath), and maʾ (water) are translated as sesuci, adus, and banyu, respectively, while najis (filthy), wudu (ablution), tayammum (purification with dust due to lack of water), ḥadath (impurity), and hayḍ (menstruation) are kept in Arabic. Most of the Arabic words retained are those involving Islamic usage, such as wudu and tayamum, which are for specific purification procedures before
praying. A few others have gained currency because their Javanese equivalents have different connotations from the original Arabic. For example, the local word *reged* means dirty, but it does not accurately represent the idea of the Arabic *najis* in Islam.

Salih’s discussion of the purification, ṭahārah, is common to other textbooks on *fiqh*, which begins with the necessity of being cleansed from any major and minor ḥadath before performing rituals. It is then followed by a discussion of the importance of water as a medium of purification, and how to use it to purify the body and clothes from ḥadath and *najis*. In discussing water, Salih uses Javanese expressions to explain the types of water that can be used for cleaning *najis* and ṭahārah in term of wuḍū and ghusl, and how to perform purification. Seven types of water that may be used for ṭahārah are *banyu udan* (rain), *banyu bengawan* (river), *banyu sègoro* (ocean), and *banyu sumur* (well), *banyu sumbèran* (spring), *banyu èmbun* (dew), and *banyu udan woh* (melted snow). He then explains how to clean something *najis*. “Ngumbah najis iku ngilangake ʻaine najis, lan arĕp ngilangake gandane najis, lan arĕp ngilangake warnane najis” (To clean filth is to remove its essence, its odor, and its color or remains).

As for wuḍū, he says that there are six components: “niyat, masuh rah, masuh tangan karo serta sikut karo, ngusap sirah utowo rambute sirah, masuh sikil karo sertane wanglune karo, lan tertib” (to have intention, to wash the face, to wash both hands up to the elbow, to wipe the head or hair, to wash both feet up to the ankle, and to do it in this order.) While for the ghusl or adus, Salih simply says that it should begin with the intention (*niyat*) and “merataaken banyu maring sekebëhane badan” (pouring water over the whole body.) He reminds Muslims that in doing adus and wuḍū, there should not be
anything blocking or hindering water from the skin.\textsuperscript{62} Salih uses the Arabic originals that have no Javanese equivalents, such as najis, wudu, ḥadath, and niyat, but uses local terms and explanations when there are Javanese counterparts. What this indicates is that Salih was primarily concerned with effective communication, and did not favor the maintenance of the Arabic originals for its own sake.

Salih follows the same process in explicating the rest of the chapters of the first part of the fiqh, such as \textit{ṣalāt}, \textit{zakat} (alms), \textit{ṣawm} (fasting) and \textit{hajj} (pilgrimage). Salih maintains the Arabic terms that represent specific rituals and explains their detail rules and procedures in simple Javanese, with the exception of the term \textit{ṣawm} which he translates as \textit{poso}. Salih consistently uses \textit{ṣalāt} for prayer and never \textit{sembahyang}, which is commonly used by Javanese to mean \textit{ṣalāt}. The reason may be that Salih regarded \textit{ṣalāt} is a prayer religiously sanctioned by Islam and directed to Allah, while sembahyang (from \textit{SEMBAH} and \textit{HYANG})\textsuperscript{63} was a Javanese term for the worship of their deities and Hindu-Buddhist gods. For this reason Salih retained the term \textit{ṣalāt} and urged a strict adherence to its proper performance.

As in the discussion of ṭahārah, Salih explains all parts of \textit{ṣalāt}, both required and recommended, by using simple expressions. Niyat (intention), which begins and is considered an important part of all rituals, is defined as “panējane ati maring sawiji-wiji barang kang den lakoni” (the intention of the heart in doing something). The place of niyat is in the heart and requires no open declaration. \textit{Ruku}’ or bowing is one of the

\textsuperscript{62} al-Samarani, \textit{Majmū‘at al-Shari‘ah}, 41-51.

necessary physical gestures in ṣalāt and is peculiarly Islamic with no equivalent in Javanese culture. Salih explains it as “merkungkungkèn gègère sekiro-kiro ora doyong ngiwo utowo nèngèn” (to hold the back straight so it does not incline to the left or right). Muslims are reminded by Salih to perform ṣalāt with khushu’ (submissiveness) which is “antèng gahotane lan madèp atine lan ngeleng-ngeleng kaya deweke iku ngadèk ono ngèrsane Allah” (calmness, concentration, and recollection as if standing before God).64

On the section regarding the deceased, Salih prefaces the details on the obligations of the living toward the dead, such as bathing and praying for the departed, with an extended discussion on pre-Islamic Javanese practices of nyahur tanah, tèlung dina, and pitung dina. Nyahur Tanah, literally “repaying the soil,” is a ceremony held after burial to facilitate the migration of the deceased to the next world and to reaffirm the belief that one is created from and returns to the soil.65 Tèlung dina and pitung dina are ceremonies held on the third and seventh day, respectively, after death.66 All these ceremonies are parts of slametan, a ceremony that is popular among the Javanese and regarded by Geertz as “the center of the whole Javanese religious system.”67

In these ceremonies, food is provided and distributed to neighbors, relatives, and friends with the hope that the rewards from God for providing food would be transmitted to the deceased. According to Salih this practice is not sanctioned in Islam, especially if the deceased leaves orphans behind and the money used for such ceremonies is taken

64 al-Samarani, Majmū‘at al-Sharī‘ah, 56-69.
65 This tradition is also known as ngesur tanah. See Thomas Wiyasa Bratawijaya, Upacara Tradisional Masyarakat Jawa (Jakarta: Pustaka Sinar Harapan, 1988), 136. According to an early twentieth century Javanese-Dutch dictionary, these two terms have no other meaning. P. Jansz, "Practisch Javaansch-Nederlandsch Woordernboek met Latijnsche Karakters," (Semarang: G.C.T. van Dorp, 1913), 1002.
66 Bratawijaya, Upacara Tradisional Masyarakat Jawa, 134-135.
from the inheritance. Ṣadaqah (or sěděkah in Javanese) or slametan and the hope that its blessings are transferred to the deceased are acceptable, according to Salih, as long as they are not associated with certain days as, for example, the third and seventh day after death, and do not diminish the inheritance of the children of the deceased. A Muslim can perform sěděkah in a simple way, such as by reciting the Qur’an so that its blessings are transferred to the deceased parents.⁶⁸ He even says that it is part of birr al-wālidayn (filial piety) to perform sěděkah and to transmit its benefits to the deceased.⁶⁹

In these explanations, Salih does not really oppose the idea of sěděkah or slametan as long as it is not conducted on specific days connected with the death of a person. Ceremonies held on specific days after death are an important part of Javanese culture but, according to Salih, have no basis in Islam. His criticism of this specific issue, however, had little effect as many Javanese, even the santri community, continue to practice the third and seventh day after death ceremonies. The chanting in the ceremonies is Islamic, but the specific days remain unaltered. Here is an example of the strength of Javanese culture that has not been undermined by Islamic practice. It demonstrates yet again how the Javanese people exercise agency in determining what to accept and reject of outside ideas, a process that has been a characteristic of Southeast Asian societies since early times.

In the chapter on zakat (alms), another obligation of Muslims, Salih retains the Arabic terms of niṣāb (minimum amount of wealth that is subject to alms) and names of the beneficiaries of the alms, such as the faqīr (poor) and miskīn (needy), either because

⁶⁸ al-Samarani, Majmū‘at al-Sharī‘ah, 87-94.
⁶⁹ al-Samarani, Tarjamah Sabīl al-‘Abīd, 82-83.
of the lack of local words for such terms or the terms have specific meaning in Islam. But types of wealth that should be paid as alms are translated into Javanese, such as emas (gold), seloko (silver), unto (camel), kebo-sapi (bull and cow), and wedus (goat). For the detailed explanation on how to measure wealth and when to pay alms, Salih basically translates the Arabic texts. It is interesting that he mentions the wisdom behind this practice—something that is not usually mentioned in fiqh books. According to him, zakat is to train people to practice zuhud (renunciation) because people tend to accumulate wealth and spend it for their own pleasure rather than giving it to the poor and needy. Muslims are therefore obliged to spend a portion of their wealth for zakat in order to train them to become people who sèngit ing dunya (dislike wealth).  

The Javanese word poso that Salih uses for sawm (fasting) indicates that Salih does not see any significant difference between the idea of sawm in Islam and poso in the Javanese tradition. When describing this ritual, however, Salih strictly adheres to the Islamic prescription mentioned in the Arabic texts on fiqh, which is that one should refrain from drinking, eating, and doing activities that could invalidate the fasting from dawn to sunset. This rite has to be performed by all Muslims during the entire month of Ramadan. Salih reminds the readers not to be confused by the question of when Ramadan should commence. Calculating the first day of a lunar month is based on ʿilm al-falaq (astronomy), and sometimes Muslims disagree among themselves on this matter as a result of different methods of calculation. Salih says that the common people should not be concerned with this and should just start fasting after they hear the sound of the mériém (cannon) or bědug (large drum suspended at a mosque) indicating the first day of

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70 al-Samarani, Majmūʿat al-Sharīʿah, 95-99.
Ramadan. The decision to fire the cannon or strike the bědug to signal the beginning of Ramadan is made by the religious officials, pěngulu, and ulama, i.e. those with Islamic authority.

Once Ramadan begins, Muslims must observe fasting, except those who are excused because of illness, menstruation, giving birth, or on journey. Muslims who deny the necessity of performing poso during Ramadan, according to Salih, are categorized as murtad (apostasy), while those who still acknowledge the obligation of fasting but do not perform it are kurang Islame lan kurang imane (not fully Muslims and believers). Salih’s account of sawm indicates that, while he insists on the obligatory nature of observing the fasting among Muslims, he does not expect the common people to be involved in the debate over when the beginning of Ramadan is. They just need to pay attention to the indications of the beginning of Ramadan, which in some Javanese cities is identified with the sounding of the bědug or firing of a cannon. This is a local practice that is unlikely found in other Muslims worlds.

Hajj is the last pillar of Islam, and Muslims who have the ability are obligated to perform it at least once in their lifetime. Ability, istița 'ah, is a very crucial condition for performing the hajj. It can only be done in Mecca during a certain month, while many Muslims live long distances away from there. Salih uses the term kuwoso (powerful) to

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71 Ibid., 100-101.
72 The use of a bedug or a cannon to announce the beginning and end of Ramadan is mentioned by Berg. L. van den Berg, "De Mohammedaansche Geestelijkheid en de Geestelijke Goederen op Java en Madoera," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, no. 27 (1882): 7.
73 The word poso seems to be a modern Javanese word for it is not mentioned in Zoetmolder’s dictionary. Poso is regarded as ngoko and the kromo is siyam, both meaning “fasting.” Jansz, "Practisch Javaansch-Nederlandsch," 861; Horne, *Javanese-English Dictionary*, 432. There is no indication that the word poso came from pre-Islamic culture, though a similar practice might have been observed prior to Islam as in the term tapabrata (observance of asceticism or penance). Zoetmulder, *Old Javanese-English Dictionary*, vol. ii, 1945.
explain what is meant by “ability” to go on the hajj. He identifies seven conditions of 
kuwoso: availability of funds to cover expenses during the hajj as well as for the family 
remaining at home; availability of a mode of transportation to get to Mecca and back; 
safety of the route to Mecca; availability of food and fuel during the roundtrip journey; an 
accompanying male, either relative or husband, for a female pilgrim; physically healthy; 
and reaching Mecca before the session of the hajj begins. If any of these seven conditions 
is missing, Salih argues, a Muslim is not obliged to perform the hajj. Salih criticizes 
Muslims who force themselves to perform the hajj by begging or borrowing money from 
others, for this demonstrates that they do not have the “ability” to make the pilgrimage. 
But for those with the ability, he warns of the danger of delaying the hajj. If they die 
before performing the hajj, they die in fasiq, in sin. For those going on the hajj, Salih 
suggests bagusakèn niyate (creating the right intention) and maintaining ikhlās (sincerity) 
for God’s sake alone, and not for gaining material or social benefits. 74 He cites examples 
of “many lay people in performing the hajj . . . buy turbans and shoes or sandals; others 
seek higher status so that they will be respected by their fellows in various meetings.” 75 
Therefore, Salih reminds the readers to do the hajj solely for the purpose of seeking 
God’s grace. 76 

In the second part of fiqh, muʿāmalah (social life), Salih uses a lot of local 
expressions in referring to ideas discussed in general books of fiqh. Buyu ‘ (trade), for 

74 al-Samarani, Majmūʿat al-Sharīʿah, 110-122. 
75 Salih own words: “akeh-akehe wong awam olehe lungo haji arēp tuku sèrban lan tuku sèpatu utowo 
tèromptah lan sêtèṅgahe awam olehe lungo haji ngulati singgih supoyo den ajeni deneng wong akeh 
nalikane ing majlis-majlis.” Ibid., 120. 
76 For the social function of the hajj, see, J. Vredenbregt, “The Haddj: Some of Its Features and Functions 
Indonesin,” Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde 118 (1962): 138-139. See also, William R. 
Roff, “The Meccan Pilgrimage: Its Meaning for Southeast Asian Islam,” in Islam in Asia: Southeast and 
example, is expressed with *adol-tinuku*, *qard* (debt) with *utang*, *‘ariyah* (borrow) with *nyilih*, and *ijarah* (rent) with *nyewo*. Some terms without Javanese equivalents are retained in the Arabic original with Javanese explanations, such as *ribā* (usury), *ghaṣab* (usurpation), and *muzāra‘ah* (sharecropping). The greater use of Javanese terms in this section of fiqh indicates that many of these ideas were familiar to the Javanese. In any case, Salih reminds the readers to follow Islamic stipulations in doing such activities.

Among important stipulations are to state clearly the agreement (*’aqd*) between two parties and to become involved only in permitted (*ḥalāl*) things or services. The items to be exchanged should also have benefits according to Islamic law (*sharī‘ah*). If the transaction involves prohibited (*ḥarām*) things or the benefits are lacking, the transaction is, therefore, not valid. In trade, for example, Salih argues that selling a *sēmut* (ant), *kēlabang* (centipede) and *ulo* (snake) is not valid as those animals have no benefit according to *sharī‘ah*. Similarly, selling gongs, *rēbab* (a two-stringed gamelan cello), and *gambang* (xylophone-like gamelan instrument with wooden keys) is not valid because some scholars argue that playing musical instruments may lead people to forget God.

Selling tobacco to a smoker or tobacco chewer is also not allowed as smoking and chewing tobacco are prohibited. Even selling fruits is not allowed if the fruit is intended to be used for a spirit offering (*sēsajen*).77

Things that are unlawful for sale are also not to be given, rented or loaned. Salih reminds Muslims to distinguish between *nyilih* (borrow) and *utang* (debt) as they have different consequences. Items borrowed must not change so they can be returned to the lender in the condition in which they were borrowed. In the case of *utang*, however, the

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borrower is only required to return their equal values. Nyilih a bike is fine but not nyilih rice to be eaten since the borrower will not be able to return the rice unchanged. For the latter, utang is the proper usage, not nyilih. 78 *Ijārah* (rent), or *nyewo* in Javanese, according to Salih, is a transaction not only limited to things but also labor. If one asks another to repair one’s house, one is “renting” the other’s labor. As in other transactions, the benefit accruing has to conform to what is regarded as a religiously-sanctioned activity. Therefore, the work of a *lonthe* (prostitute), who rents out her body for pleasure, and a murderer, who rents out his ability to kill, is not lawful as both are prohibited by shari‘ah. The fees or wages should also be clearly stated in the transaction. It is not valid, for example, to rent a house with an added fee for repairing the house if the cost of the repairs is not yet determined. Similarly, obtaining wages in rice for harvesting rice fields is invalid because the fees are not clearly stated in the transaction. 79

All of these examples of common Javanese practices are deliberately cited by Salih to remind the people what is and is not sanctioned by Islam. Thus, Salih does not simply translate and interpret Islamic ideas and orthodoxy to the Javanese, but he also selectively focuses on practices that are deeply embedded in Javanese society that need to be corrected in accordance with proper Islamic practice.

In the chapter on what is permitted and prohibited (*kitāb al-ḥalāl wa al-ḥarām*), there is a discussion of economic transactions where Salih reminds people to avoid eating anything that is *harām*, whether in its essence or in the way it is obtained. Whatever is permitted (*ḥalāl*) is *ḥalāl*, even if it is made by non-Muslims, such as sugar, candy, and

78 Ibid., 154-155; 163-166.
79 Ibid., 171-174. Denouncing wages in rice during harvest is one of Salih’s failures in making Javanese practice accord with Islamic orthodoxy. As this is a common practice among Javanese farmers, the farmers continue to pay workers based on the amount they harvest.
bread. While it is unknown what ingredients are added in the process of producing sugar, it is ḥalāl because it is made of sugarcane, a ḥalāl object. Similarly, candy is made of sugar and bread of flour, whose plants are ḥalāl. These were important questions in Salih’s time because sugar and flour were produced and monopolized by the Dutch, and Muslims did not know what went into the process of production. It becomes ḥarām, he says, only when someone knows exactly, or the producer declares, that during the process of making a new thing, something prohibited (ḥarām) was added.80

Marriage (nikāḥ) is a topic that Salih discusses at great length because he wanted the Javanese to understand that it was everyone’s responsibility to assure the proper care of the future generations. According to Islam the meeting of sperm and ovum through sexual relations between a man and a woman should only occur between a married couple. Therefore, marriage is very important and the Prophet once said that those who reject marriage are not part of his community.

Salih begins the chapter on nikāḥ by discussing different opinions among ulama regarding the necessity of marriage. While a few regard nikāḥ as not necessary, especially for those who doubt that they have the means to provide for a family, the majority of ulama view nikāḥ as preferable to being single. Salih lists five fā’idah (plural: fawā’id) or benefits of marriage. Among them are continuing new generations, guarding against committing sins, fulfilling sexual desire, having a companion in doing housework, and combining efforts to make money and in guiding a family with patience. All these benefits need to be understood within the Islamic conception that extramarital sexual intercourse is prohibited. Because of these benefits, Islam suggests marriage for

80 Ibid., 155-160.
those coming of age. Marriage also helps those who are tempted to commit *zina* (adultery), a major sin in Islam that Muslims should avoid.\(^81\)

As in other sections, Salih uses Arabic and local expressions interchangeably in discussing marriage. For nikāḥ itself, sometime he uses *laki* or *rabi* instead of *kawin*. For present-day Javanese, laki and rabi are used most commonly for sexual intercourse, while kawin is the word for marriage.\(^82\) As Old Javanese words, laki and rabi mean “to have a husband” and “to take wife,” respectively; in addition, both also mean “sexual intercourse.”\(^83\) It is possible that in Salih’s mind the essence or the most important aspect of marriage is to have sexual relation, and so he uses laki and rabi, instead of kawin. There is no doubt that the word kawin must have been available during his time, because he uses *maskawin* to refer to *mahar* (bride price), another important aspect of a marriage contract. In Islam, the groom has to pay a brideprice as stated in the contract (*'aqd*).

Another term that Salih uses as part of the marriage process is *khiṭbah* (to view a woman for marriage).\(^84\) He uses *ningali* (to see) for this concept. Among traditional Muslims, a marriage is usually arranged by parents or older relatives. Before the man agrees to marry a woman, he is paired off with her in order to look at her. Looking at a woman by a man who is not a blood relation, and vice versa, is basically prohibited in Islam. But this is allowed for certain cases, such as for medical treatment, giving testimony, and for khiṭbah (though here it is limited to viewing only the face and hands). Salih simply says ningali which means to see or to look at something in a polite

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\(^81\) Ibid., 174-184.
\(^84\) This word is misspelled in Salih’s book as *khuṭbah*. This must be a typographical error as *khuṭbah* means sermon or public speech. See, al-Samarani, *Majmū‘at al-Sharī‘ah*, 196.
In order to help men in predicting a woman’s character, Salih discusses *ilmu firasat* (physiognomy). He does not give a reference but simply says that he is relying for his knowledge on ulama who are expert in firasat. What he explains, however, is mostly related to the sexual organ of a woman and her sexual desire. He mentions that if her mouth is wide, her vagina is wide; conversely, if her mouth is narrow, her vagina is also narrow. If her lips are thick, her genital labia are also thick. If her tongue is red, her vagina is dry. If her nose is “sharp,” she loves sex very much, and if her cheek is small, her vagina is deep. Despite Salih claims regarding the source of his understanding of firasat, there is no doubt this exposition is part of a Javanese tradition that is widely available in Javanese primbon and known as *katuranggan.* It is reasonable to assume that Salih was influenced by the Javanese tradition as such matters are never discussed in standard Arabic texts of fiqh. This is an example of the way that Salih wove local customs and beliefs into Islamic tradition, most probably to make it more acceptable to his Javanese audience.

Salih’s explicit description of the sexual organs and sexual desire of women evident in their physiognomy, is part of his emphasis that the aim of marriage is the

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85 Ibid., 196, 203.
86 Ibid., 197-199.
sexual union of man and woman to produce children. This would also explain his decision mentioned above to use the words laki and rabi, instead of kawin, for nikāḥ.

Salih, however, does not suggest a preference for a specific type of woman as a marriage partner. Quoting one of the Prophet’s traditions, Salih instead encourages a man to consider religion, instead of wealth, beauty, or rank, as the most important factor in selecting a wife. The ideal woman for Salih is one with eight features: strong religion, good character, beautiful, low bride price, from a big family, virgin, respected lineage, and not a close relative.88 Again, he puts religion as the first and the most important consideration over the others.

There are five rukun (basic elements) of a marriage: bride, bridegroom, wali (male guardian), two witnesses, and ‘aqd al-nikāḥ (marriage contract). The ‘aqd al-nikāḥ consists of ījāb (statement by the male guardian to the groom that he is marrying the bride to the groom with a certain bride price) and qabūl (statement by the groom to accept the marriage for an agreed bride price). There is a difference among ulama whether the ‘aqd al-nikāḥ needs to be stated in Arabic or not. Some argue that it has to be stated in Arabic by using words derived from nikāḥ and zawāj, as this is the tradition of the Prophet, and so it becomes invalid if it is said in any other language. Others argue that using a non-Arabic language does not invalidate the nikāḥ, as long as the words used are a translation of or comparable to the Arabic words of nikāḥ and zawāj. Salih adopts the latter viewpoint, and so he regards the contract in Javanese as religiously sanctioned and

88 al-Samarani, Majmūʻat al-Shari‘ah, 195.
valid. Salih’s position in this matter is evidence of his belief that Arabic and Islam are not identical or inseparable.

While Salih says that a marriage can be conducted on any day, he prefers Friday because it is the best day in Islam and should take place in a mosque. He also suggests that the marriage be held in one of the four special months mentioned in the Qur’an: Muḥarram (first), Rajab (seventh), Dhū al-Qa‘dah (eleventh) and Dhū al-Ḥijjah (twelfth). Salih criticizes a belief among some Javanese that certain days and months are inauspicious for marriage and that these days should be calculated based on the days in which the bride and bridegroom were born. Such practices, in Salih’s view, are not based on Islam and should no longer be practiced because they are considered to be jahiliyyah (ignorance). It seems partly due to Salih’s efforts that Rajab and Dhu al-Hijjah are now the busiest months for marriage among Javanese Muslims.

Santri communities tend to pay more attention to the first part of fiqh, ibadah, than on the second, muʿamalah. They follow much stricter rules and manuals of ibadah than of muʿamalah. The santri rarely mention the ‘aqd (transaction) when they are involved in trade, though, according to fiqh, ‘aqd is a necessary part of proper trade. Many of them do not differentiate between nyililih and utang, though both are theoretically different in fiqh. The only part of muʿamalah that receives close attention is marriage, and so the practice of marriage among Javanese Muslims follows rules and conditions contained in the books of fiqh.

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89 Ibid., 204-207.
90 Ibid., 211-212.
Localizing Taṣawuf

According to Salih, Sufism is integral to the sharīʿah, and those who perform Sufi practices must not neglect religious obligations, such as prayer and fasting. Therefore, he regards those who deny the sharīʿah because they already practice Sufism as unbelievers. Salih reminds the readers that one needs to have sufficient knowledge of the sharīʿah and observe Islamic obligations before learning and practicing mystical rituals. Salih also emphasizes the necessity of having a qualified teacher in learning and practicing Sufism. Specific rituals associated with *tarekat* (Ar. *ṭarīqah*) or Sufi orders must not be self-learned and self-practiced. If someone wants to join a Sufi order, he suggests Naqshabandiyah, or other tarekat that provide silent chanting (*dhikr khafī*).\(^9\)

It is understandable that Salih recommends the Naqshabandiyah Sufi order because one of his teachers was Salih al-Zawawi, a Sufi master of Naqshabandi in Mecca in the nineteenth century. However, there is no indication that he ever joined this tarekat because there is no mention of this, nor did he become a *murshid* (Sufi master) of this order. For Salih, having good qualities as suggested by Al-Ghazali was apparently more important than joining a tarekat. He therefore commented on two Sufi texts and wrote an abridgement of another, rather than composing manuals for a tarekat. The reason for this decision may have been based on his belief that good deeds may be practiced individually and may not necessarily need guidance of a teacher. Sufi rites, on the other hand, have to be obtained from and practiced under supervision of an authoritative teacher. Salih did

not discuss theosophy in his Pegon books aimed at the common people because theosophy is a topic usually reserved for the very highly educated.

In Munjiyāt, Salih’s most popular work, are listed ten destructive qualities (muhlikāt) that Muslims should avoid, and another ten constructive qualities (munjiyāt) that Muslims need to have. Although Salih says “qualities”, in fact what he lists is a mixture of qualities, acts, and temperaments. As mentioned, the Munjiyat is an abridgment of Al- Ghazali’s Ihyā’ ʻUlūm al-Dīn, and these destructive and constructive virtues are exactly what al-Ghazali mentions in the third and fourth volumes of his book, with slightly different terms used for several qualities. The ten negative things that Salih lists are shayṭān (satan), nafs (lust), shahwat al-baṭan wa al-fārj (eating and carnal desires), afāt al-lisān (harms of the tongue), ghaḍab wa al-huqūd wa al-hasūd (anger, hatred, and envy), al-dunya (world), al-bukhl wa hubb al-māl (stinginess and love of wealth), al-jāh wa al-riyā (rank and ostentation), takabbur wa al-’ujub, (arrogance and conceit) and ghurūr (deception). The ten positive deeds are tawbat (repentance), ṣabar and shukur (patience and thankfulness), al-khawf wa al-rajā’ (fear and hope of God), al-faqīr wa al-zuhd (poverty and abstinence), al-tawhīd wa al-tawakkal (monotheism and trust in God), maḥabbah, shawq and riḍa (love and longing for God and favoring His law), niyyat, ikhlās and ʿidq (correct intention, sincerity and truthfulness), al-muḥāṣabah wa al-murāqabah (self-examination and meditation), tafakkur (contemplation), and dhikr al-mawt (remembrance of death). Salih maintains the Arabic terms for these ideas and provides Javanese translations when available before he discusses in detail what each term means. Then, he explains ways to avoid bad deeds and how to maintain and improve the good deeds.
What Salih mentions as the first destructive deed, *shaytan*, is slightly different from that mentioned in al-Ghazali’s *Ihya* because the latter identifies it with the marvels of the heart (‘ajā‘ib al-qulūb). Ghazali explains that qalb (a singular form of qulūb) is the essence of a human being. It is with the “heart” that humans gain the ability to know God, to worship Him, and to receive knowledge from Him. The rest of the human body, such as hands, feet, eyes, and mouth, according to Ghazali, follow what qalb has instructed them to do. It is necessary to maintain a pure qalb so that it keeps instructing the rest of the body to do good deeds. The only one that can deceive the purity of the heart is Satan, hence Muslims need to know how Satan works in destroying the human’s qalb.

Salih accepts the essence of what al-Ghazali means as the first bad deed without discussing in detail, as Ghazali does, the qalb and its relation to *aql* (mind), *nafs* (desire) and different kinds of knowledge. Again, Salih may not have wanted to confuse the Javanese people with such detailed discussions, and so after repeating Ghazali’s list of good and bad deeds Salih describes eleven occasions when Satan could enter into the human heart. Among them is *ghadab* (anger) that Salih translates as *bendu lan muring-muring* (mad and anger). Anger makes one lose control over the mind, which is the moment that Satan may interfere in one’s qalb. A Muslim, therefore, should avoid anger in order to avoid satanic interference. Another way in which Satan may find entrance is through *derengki lan loba*, which is the Javanese for *al-ḥasad wa al-ḥirs* (jealousy and greed). Jealousy and greed make people deaf and blind and unable to differentiate right from wrong. *Al-bukhl wa khawf al-faqr* (stinginess and fear of poverty) Salih translates as *kumet lan wědi feqir* (miserly and afraid of being poor) is also a way for Satan to enter
the heart. These qualities prevent people from giving sedekah (charity) and zakat (alms)
to the needy and for Islamic purposes. 92

The ’afāt al-lisān (harms of the tongue) which is the number four of the ten
muhlikāt is translated by Salih as panca bayane cangkēm (the danger of the mouth). Salih
mentions that mouth is one of the most significant parts of the body that can become a
source of God’s grace but also can lead to destruction if one does not maintain it. Quoting
the Prophet’s statement, Salih says whoever shuts his mouth will be safe. Following al-
Ghazali in his Iḥyā’, Salih explains that there are twenty bad deeds that come from one’s
mouth. Among them are caturan barang kang ora manfaat (talking about something
useless), leluwihan ingdalem cecaturan (too much talking), para padu (disputes), padu
tukar (quarreling), misuh-misuh lan mada-mada ala (cursing and vilifying), nembang
(singing), ngina lan nggeguyu ing menungsa (insulting and mocking others), ngucap
kelawan goroh (lying), and ngerasani (slandering). Salih reminds his readers of the
danger of slandering as mentioned in the Qur’an that one who slanders someone else is
like eating the other’s corpse. 93 For all these terms, Salih does not include the original
Arabic words as found in the Iḥyā’, but simply states them in the local expressions that
are easily understood by the common people.

The seventh of the muhlikāt is al-bukhl wa hubb al-mal (stingy and love of
wealth). Salih expresses this term with kumēt lan démēn arto (miserly and being pleased
with money). It is interesting that, while Salih’s selection of words is mostly from more

92 Muhammad Salih al-Samarani, Munjiyāt: Meṭik Saking Ihya’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn (Bombay: Matba’ al-Karimi,
1906), 4-8. For comparison with al-Ghazali’s work, see Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazali, Ihyā’ ‘Ulūm
93 al-Samarani, Munjiyāt, 14-24. Al-Ghazali discusses in detail each of these twenty bad deeds coming from

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modern Javanese, the word *kumět* is from Old Javanese. It is unclear, however, why he uses *kumět* instead of the more contemporary words *mědit* or *nyědit*. It may be that during his time *kumět* had a specific meaning that closely approximated the Arabic *bukhl*. In this section, Salih does not go into detail about these two bad deeds except to cite both the Qur’an and the hadith as having denigrated the qualities of stinginess and love of wealth. The Qur’an says that wealth is temptation and reminds Muslims that it should not divert them from remembering God; otherwise, they will be the loser. The Prophet once said that stingy people will never enter paradise, and so Muslims should use their wealth wisely and not be stingy.94

The last bad deed is *al-ghurūr* (deception). Salih translates this word as *ketipu* (deceived), and he explains this term as “*wong kang ketipu kelawan ngelmune utowo ngibadahe utowo kelakuhane kang bagus utowo artane* (a person who is deceived by his/her own knowledge, devotion, good conduct, or wealth).” The four kinds of people that may be deceived are the *wong kang ahli ilmu* (educated person), *wong kang ahli ibadah* (devout person), *wong kang ahli taṣawuf* (Sufi or mystic), *lan wong kang ahli arto* (rich person). How can they be deceived while they are usually respected? Salih says there are many occasions that may cause these people to be deceived by their own advantages. Educated people, for example, may be deceived by their knowledge when they think that the knowledge they acquire will save them from hellfire and bring them to the respected position before God. Salih refers here to religious knowledge that needs to be practiced. Being knowledgeable only is not enough, for they have to practice what they know. “*Ora dadi manfaat ilmu tanpa amal,*” (knowledge without practice is useless),

says Salih. Even if they practice the knowledge but with the hope of attaining *kaluhuran* (rank) or *kuncara* (fame) they will also be deceived.

Salih lists ten other occasions that may lead the ulama to be deceived by their knowledge. Those who always perform rituals (*ahli 'ibadah*) are also not free from the possibility of being deceived by their actions. An example is one who prefers to perform the recommended rituals at the expense of those that are obligatory. Another example is of someone who always fasts during the day but does not keep his mouth from slandering another. One who performs the hajj several times but does not perform the five daily prayers is also among those who are deceived by their rituals.  

Muslims who follow Sufism (wong kang ahli taṣawuf) may also be deceived by their practices. Salih provides the example of some Muslims who emulate Sufis in their appearance—such as wearing worn shirts, speaking and moving slowly, and bowing their heads—but whose intention is not purely for the sake of God. Instead, their intention is to show others that they are Sufis in the hope that they would be treated with great respect. There are also those who, after practicing Sufism, think that they are close to God and no longer need to perform the rituals of *ṣalāt* and fasting. They even belittle those who still follow the sharī‘ah and see them as achieving nothing. Salih reminds readers that they should not be deceived by people who pretend to be Sufis but in fact know nothing about Sufism.

Deception for rich people (*ahli arto*) may take several forms. Salih provides the example of those who donate their wealth for building a mosque or a pesantren but then place their names on the gate of the buildings in order to show people that it was they

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95 Ibid., 51-62.
who built them. They mistakenly believe that this form of donation will be accepted and
rewarded by God. A similar self-deception among the rich is to give sadaqah (charity) to
the poor and needy with the intention of becoming known and praised for being
generous.  

In dealing with these ideas, Salih retains the Arabic expressions if they are already
familiar to the Javanese or if the Javanese translations are not commonly known. He
therefore retains the original Arabic in the words nafs (lust), shahwat (sexual desire),
riyā’ (ostentation), takabbur (arrogance) and ‘ujub (conceit). It may be assumed,
therefore, that those terms were widely known among Javanese in Salih’s time, due to
their frequent mention in the Qur’an and the Prophet tradition. He does not explain such
concepts in detail, as one would have expected if the ideas were new to the people. His
use of Javanese explanations and frequently of Javanese terms reflects a local familiarity
with Islamic concepts or of Javanese equivalents that make comprehension of Islam
easier. For nafs, for example, which has been adopted into the Javanese and become
nafsu, Salih reminds the people that “wajib siro arĕp bagusakén nafsu niro kelawan
ngaggo pĕkěrti ingkang bagus” (you have to rectify your lust with good deeds). He does
not feel the need to explain this further.

As with nafs, the Arabic terms for the ten constructive virtues (munjiyāt), such as
tawbat (repentance), ṣabr (patience), zuhd (abstinence), niyat (intention), ikhlās
(sincerity), and ṣidq (truthful) are retained because they had been adopted into Javanese,
though Salih used the Javanese rendition of the Arabic, such as tawbat or tobat, sabar

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96 Ibid., 63-65.
97 Ibid., 8.
and zuhud. Salih pays greater attention to the constructive virtues than to the destructive traits. Salih explains the individual constructive virtues but also discusses in detail the benefits of performing these good deeds and how to maintain and increase them.

Salih’s discussion of the first good deed, tawbat, is interesting to note. As a term adopted from Arabic, Salih first defines tawbat as “arep aninggal ing sekabehane dosa lan serta getun ingatase barang kang wus kelakon saking doso kang wus den lakoni lan serta neja ing dalem atine ora pisan-pisan baleni maring kelakuhan ma’siyat kang wus kelakon,” (to stop committing sins, regret all sins already committed, and promise not to repeat any such sins). Salih reminds his readers that tawbat is an obligation for Muslims based on verses in the Qur’an. Performing tawbat means returning to God after having committed a sin, which is disobeying God and following one’s lust. Tawbat, therefore, needs to be done as soon as one recognizes one’s transgression without delay to avoid undermining one’s iman (faith). Salih then explains in great detail the danger of committing sins (ma’siyat), the type of sins, their effects on one’s belief in God, and the reasons why one needs to repent as soon as possible. Repentance should be addressed directly to God without intermediaries or offerings. Except for sins associated with human interaction, such as slandering, that require forgiveness from humans, forgiveness is solely granted by God.98 This conception is entirely new and unknown in Javanese culture, and hence Salih provides a more detailed explanation for his Javanese audience.

Ṣabr (patience) is the next good attribute. This idea is familiar with the Javanese, who have adopted the Arabic term in its Javanese form sabar. This quality is often applied to human beings who are encouraged to practice sabar when faced with a disaster.

98 Ibid., 65-76.
or calamity (muṣībah). This word has been adopted into Javanese and is so popular among the Javanese that it has become a noted characteristic of Javanese people. Although they might have exercised a similar sentiment when they faced disaster before the introduction of Islam, sabar has become almost universally accepted, thus showing how the Islamic concept was greatly appreciated by the local population. In discussing this idea, Salih states that sabar is not only needed to face disaster and calamities, but also to perform ṭāʿat (obedience) and avoid maʿṣiyat (disobedience). In other words one needs patience in order to be able to perform rituals, refrain from bad habits, and accept unwanted realities.  

The next good deed is al-khawf wa al-rājāʾ that Salih translates as wedi lan ngarep-ngarep (afraid and hopeful), i.e. being afraid of God’s punishment and anger and expect His mercy and guidance. According to Salih, khawf and rājāʾ are related to something that has not happened. It is khawf if one thinks of something one dislikes, and rājāʾ if one thinks of something one likes in the future. Raja’ requires efforts, and so it is not raja’ but ghurur if one expects good things in the future without hard work. In explaining this concept, Salih uses a local metaphor about farming, which would have been familiar to the Javanese. Salih says that living in the world is like farming that one will harvest later in the day of resurrection. The heart is like the soil, to believe in God is to plant a seed, to obey God’s instructions is to plow the soil, and to avoid all prohibitions is to water the soil. One needs to do all these things if one expects to harvest in the future. If someone wants to harvest without having done these preparatory stages, one is a dreamer. Such a person is not categorized as being raja’ (expecting) but maghrur

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99 Ibid., 76-82.
(deceived) by his thinking of harvesting in the future. Even those who have put forth effort should keep praying to God so that their plants will grow and be harvested because there are cases where, despite having done all that was necessary beforehand, the plants do not grow as expected due to disease, pest, or other reasons. According to Salih, the efforts of human beings are not the sole reason for salvation in the hereafter; it is also conditional upon God’s grace and favor. Without serious efforts, however, there will be nothing that humans can harvest in the hereafter.100 Once again Salih uses examples familiar to an agrarian population in Java to expound an important idea in Islam.

In the following good deeds, Salih explains the concepts in simple Javanese. Al-faqir (poor), for example, is having no materials that are needed. One who does not have materials that are not needed is not considered to be faqir.101 Salih defines zuhud as “sēngit barang kan den déměnì nafsun lèn mādēp maring barang kang den sēngiti dèn nafsu” (to hate anything that lust loves and to like anything that lust hates). In other words, zuhud is to hate the world and to love God and the hereafter.102 Tawḥīd is described as nyuwijiake ing Allah (to acknowledge the oneness of God), and tawakkal (submission) as pasrah ing Allah (to submit one’s fate to God).103 In explaining these Islamic ideas, Salih uses simple and understandable allegories. For the three levels of tawakkal, Salih uses the following example. The lowest level is the submission of a representative, whose actions may not meet one’s approval and may even raise doubts. The second level is the submission of a baby to the mother. The baby is dependent on the mother for its needs, understands what is good and bad from the teachings of the mother,

100 Ibid., 82-93.
101 Ibid., 94.
102 Ibid., 102.
103 Ibid., 112.
and always cries for its mother when ill. The highest tawakkal is like the submission of
the dead to the living. The dead has no aspirations and is totally depended upon the
living. This last level is how a Muslim should totally submit to God, entrusting Him with
whatever happens, good or bad.104

The last good deed that Salih explains at length is *dhikr al-mawt* (remembrance of
death). Salih translates it with *eling ing pati* (to remember death). One needs to remember
death so one will not be too excited about this world and its luxuries and realize that a
lifetime in this world is short. By adopting this attitude, people are motivated to avoid
prohibited actions and perform good deeds. Death, in Islam, is a mystery of God. No one
knows when death will come. Though most people die when they are old, some die while
they are still young. For this reason Salih urges people not to think that they will live long
and thus postpone doing good deeds until they reach old age. One could be healthy in the
morning, and be dead in the afternoon. Muslims should always be ready for death
because it may come to them at any time.

The vernacular terms and explanations in Javanese that Salih uses in explaining
Sufi teachings are particularly effective in introducing these ideas to the common people
because it is written in Pegon and draws from examples that are familiar to them. While
explicating the intricacies of Sufi thought, however, Salih seeks to simplify rather than
confuse the people. Moreover, he emphasizes the inseparability of Sufism and sharī‘ah
the need to gain sufficient knowledge of sharī‘ah before attempting to understand Sufism.
He criticizes those who teach Sufism and disregard the sharī‘ah, as well as those who
teach theosophical mysticism as proposed by scholars such as al-Hallaj and Ibn Arabi.

104 Ibid., 113-114.
This standpoint confirms Salih’s inclination toward orthodox Sufism as part of the Sunni school.

**Conclusion**

Salih’s stance in differentiating between Islam and Arabic is a key to understanding his decision to write Islamic texts in Pegon and to defend the authority of texts written in non-Arabic languages, as long as these texts teach the orthodox principles of Islam. Based on these views, Salih translated into Javanese and localized Islamic teachings of theology, jurisprudence and mysticism in ways that could be easily understood by commoners. In the field of theology, Salih addresses God and the Prophet not only in Arabic but also in the Javanese titular forms of respect to deities and lords without deviating from the original meaning. Some attributes of God and the Prophet are also presented in local expressions. Iman (believing in God) and its branches are expressed in Javanese terms which were familiar to the common people.

In the field of jurisprudence (fiqh), especially in the first part, Salih keeps the Arabic terms for the obligatory rituals, but he provides local terms as well as explanations for a number of important concepts within such rituals. In the second part of fiqh, Salih employs Javanese expressions for a majority of the concepts discussed. A number of the Sufi terms related to attitudes and behaviors are also localized into Javanese. On the other hand, Salih mentions some local beliefs and traditions that do not conform to Islamic teachings, such as belief in deities and auspicious days (pasaran), providing offering to ancestors and holding a slametan for the deceased. Although he was unsuccessful in
convincing the Javanese to avoid these deeply-held traditions, he persisted in attempting to bring them closer to becoming orthodox and devout Muslims.

Many of Salih’s Javanese terms and expressions for Islamic concepts and teachings are still widely used and circulated today. Although he might not have been the original creator of these terms, his insistence on codifying and discussing them in Pegon was important in the spread and popularity of such localized terms among the Javanese. His initiative in writing Pegon Islamic texts has left an important legacy. A number of Islamic scholars followed in his footsteps and introduced even more Islamic knowledge to the wider Javanese public in Pegon through print technology. Salih’s influence was great and varied, from direct instruction to students staying in his pesantren in Semarang, to the creating of Pegon texts. It was he who was most responsible in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in achieving greater Islamic orthodoxy among the Javanese Muslims, a subject that is the focus of the next chapter.
CHAPTER 6
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ISLAMIC ORTHODOXY AMONG COMMON JAVANESE MUSLIMS

A discussion of the role and influence of Muhammad Salih Darat on the establishment of Islamic orthodoxy among common Javanese Muslims can be approached from three different but interrelated channels: his students, his widely used Pegon books, and those who followed in his footsteps by composing Pegon books. Some of Salih’s students who studied with him at his pesantren in Semarang emerged as respected kiyais who, in turn, led pesantren and taught other students. They would have transmitted Salih’s teachings as part of the Islamic practice of establishing the genealogy of one’s mentors to demonstrate legitimacy. Salih’s Pegon books are clearly a medium through which his thought and influence were and still are present in common Javanese Muslims, while those who followed in his footsteps in composing Pegon books, whether or not they had a chance to learn with Salih, provide an indication on how Salih’s influence contributed to the establishment of Islamic orthodoxy. It should be noted that such Pegon books continue to be taught by kiyai langgar and kiyai kampung in prayer houses and mosques. The number of people reached by these Pegon texts, therefore, would have been far higher than the number of copies actually sold. In this chapter I will discuss these three channels in order to understand and to measure Salih’s role in establishing Islamic orthodoxy among the Javanese.
Network and Influence of Salih Darat on Santri and Kiyai

To assess the network and influence of Salih Darat on the Javanese santri and kiyai, one should start with his students. As discussed in chapter two, the relationship between students (santri) and teachers (kiyai) in the pesantren is not only between knowledge seekers and knowledge transmitters, but also between blessing seekers and blessing sources. The bond is for life, for once a student learns from a certain kiyai, he remains in this relationship forever; there is no term for former students or teachers in the pesantren. In addition, due to the influence of ethical texts, such as Ta’līm al-Muta’allim, santri are supposed to always obey the kiyai’s instructions and pay great respect to their efforts. Students are also expected to convey what they learn in the pesantren to the wider community through various modes of transmission. It is this type of relationship that should be kept in mind when assessing Salih’s contribution to the establishment of Islamic orthodoxy among the Javanese through his students.

It is also worth mentioning that santri rarely have only one teacher. The tradition of wandering students going to a number of pesantren to study particular branches of Islamic knowledge with different teachers is a common phenomenon among santri. It is therefore almost impossible to determine the degree of influence exercised by the individual kiyai on a student, unless this is mentioned in the student’s biography. All kiyai would have had a hand in the making of a santri.

Many became Salih’s students and stayed in his pesantren in Semarang to study various kitab, but not much is known about the numbers, the length of stay, or even the books that were used because the pesantren did not keep such records and the majority of
the students left no biographical notes. What follows then is based on limited data that is available.

Among Salih’s students was Muhammad Mahfuz al-Tarmasi, known also as Kiyai Mahfuz Termas. Mahfuz who was born in 1868 in Tremas, East Java, was the eldest of six children of Kiyai Abdullah bin Abd al-Manan, the leader of Pesantren Tremas. There is no doubt that he was one of Salih’s students, for he mentions this fact in one of his kitabs, *Mawhibah dhī Faḍl ‛alā Sharḥ Muqaddimah Bāfaḍal*. He even details books that he studied with Salih, i.e. *Sharh al-Ḥikam* (Sufism), *Tafsīr Jalālayn* (Qur’anic exegesis), *Wasilat al-Ţullāb* and *Sharh al-Mardini* (astronomy).1 From the last two books, we know that in addition to his authority in fiqh, tawḥīd, and taṣawuf, Salih had expertise also in *ilm al-falak* (astronomy)—knowledge necessary to calculate the beginning of the lunar months. There is no record when exactly Mahfuz stayed in Semarang, but it seems that he studied with Salih in the late 1870s and early 1880s, before he left for Mecca and settled there.2 Mahfuz is one of the few Javanese ulama who composed books in Arabic and taught students in Mecca. Mahfuz died in 1919 and was buried in Mecca.3

Mahfuz’ brother, Ahmad Dahlan, was also a student of Salih’s and married one of Salih’s daughter, Siti Zahrah. He settled in Semarang and helped his father-in law run

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2 There is no exact date on when Mahfuz left for Mecca. But the fact that Snouck does not mention his name at all, though he was a highly respected ulama, may indicate that Mahfuz came to Mecca after Snouck left this holy city.
3 Mahfuz composed at least 20 titles, ranging from *tawḥīd, fiqh, usul al-fiqh, hadith,* and *Qur’anic recitation*. For a discussion of Mahfuz Termas, see H. Abd. Rachman, "The Pesantren Architects and Their Socio-religious Teachings" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California Los Angeles, 1997), 141-165
the pesantren. Another brother, Dimyati, also studied with Salih, but unlike his two brothers who settled outside their hometown, Dimyati returned to Tremas and continued to lead the pesantren left by his father. It was during his leadership that the Pesantren Tremas developed significantly and became one of the largest pesantrens in East Java.

Mahfuz and his brothers represent two streams of knowledge transmission that connect Salih with Javanese Muslims. Mahfuz represents knowledge transmission through writings, while his brothers are examples of verbal transmission through teaching at the pesantren. As mentioned, Mahfuz wrote a number of Arabic Islamic texts some of which have continued to be studied in the pesantren. Although he also taught students while he was living in Mecca, he would not have used the Javanese language to teach them because they did not only come from Java but also from other parts of the Muslim world. Through his books that are taught in the pesantren, Mahfuz transmitted his knowledge, some of which he received from Salih, to Javanese Muslims. In contrast, Mahfuz’s brothers pursued their career as teachers and kiyais to Javanese students.

Muhammad Hashim Asy'ari, the founding father of Nahdlatul Ulama (the largest mass-based Muslim organization in Indonesia) and Ahmad Dahlan, the founder of

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4 Abu Malikus Shalih Dzahir, "Sejarah dan Perjungangan Kyai Sholeh Darat: Penulis Awal Kitab-kitab Arab-Jawa (Pegon) di Jawa," (Semarang: Panitia pertemuan silaturahmi keluarga besar Kyai Sholeh Darat, 2000), 8. According to this booklet, Dahlan died in Mecca when he was performing the hajj. It is interesting that Dahlan also composed two Arabic manuscripts which have never been printed and so have never been mentioned by any scholar. They are Fatḥ al-Majīd fī Bayān al-Taqlīd which discusses the validity of taqlīd (blind imitation or unquestioning adoption) within Islamic theology, and Nuzhat al-Afhām fīma Ya’tarī al-Dukhān min al-Ahkām, which assesses the legal status (ḥukm) of smoking. Both manuscripts are quite short as the first consists of only 11 pages, but some pages seem missing as the last page does not indicate the end of the text. The second text is only 18 pages. The fact that his manuscripts are preserved in the King Saud University Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, indicates that he did not only perform the hajj but also stayed for some time and composed these manuscripts while living there.

5 Muhammad, Mengenal Pondok Tremas dan Perkembangannya (Tremas: Perguruan Islam Pondok Tremas, 1986), 99-101

6 This figure should not be confused with Mahfuz’s brother, whose name was also Ahmad Dahlan.
Muhammadiyah (the second largest mass Muslim organization) are also believed to be among the students of Salih. Some scholars place them in the top list of Salih’s students.  

There is no doubt that these two names are important figures in Indonesia as both are related to the two biggest Muslims organizations. The argument that these two men went to the same pesantren and had the same teacher implies that Salih had a significant influence on not only the traditional but also on modern Muslim organizations. Salih is, therefore, perceived as the meeting point of both major groups in Indonesia. While records of their educational background are meager, it is not impossible that both did study with Salih.

Hashim, who was born in 1871 in Jombang, East Java, was said to be an itinerant santri since he was fifteen years old, traveling from one pesantren to another from 1886 to 1891. He attended at least five pesantren before going to Pesantren Siwalan Panji, Sidoarjo, where he stayed for a longer time. While in this pesantren, he married Khadijah, the daughter of Kiyai Ya’qub, the director of the Pesantren Siwalan, in 1892 at the age of 21. Although Salih’s pesantren was one of five that Hashim visited, there is no explicit evidence that he attended it. What is mentioned is that he was going to Semarang. The fact that Hashim’s father, Asy’ari, came from Demak, Central Java, makes it probable

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8 Atjeh mentions that one of the pesantren was Trenggilis, but he does not mention where Trenggilis is located. See, Aboebakar Atjeh, *Sedjarah Hidup K.H.A. Wahid Hasjim dan Karungan Tersiar* (Jakarta: Panitia Buku Peringatan Alm. K.H.A.Wahid Hasjim, 1957), 65-66. It is in Mas‘shum that Trenggilis is said in Semarang. See, Saifullah Ma’shum, ed. *Karisma Ulama: Kehidupan Ringkas 26 Tokoh NU* (Bandung: Mizan, 1998), 72-73.
that the father knew Salih, as both came from neighboring districts and were of the same
generation. This connection, I argue, would have made it very likely that Hashim studied
with Salih in Darat, Semarang. If this assumption is correct, then Hashim may not have
stayed in Semarang very long before going to Mecca, where he remained for a number of
years to study with certain ulama, including Nawawi Banten, Mahfuz Termas, and
Ahmad Khatib Minangkabau. Having had sufficient knowledge to educate people in the
Islamic sciences, in 1899 he established Pesantren Tebu Ireng in Jombang, East Java,
which still exists today and became one of the respected pesantrens in Indonesia. Hashim
eventually became the great ulama in Java in the twentieth century as can be seen from
his titular name of Ḥaḍrat al-Shaykh, the great teacher. His greatness emerged mainly
from his expertise in Islamic knowledge, his serenity in teaching students who came from
different regions, and his involvement in Nahdlatul Ulama. In 1926, Hashim was the key
person in the birth and development of this organization that has colored the history of
Indonesia as a nation. Hashim became the Rais Akbar (the supreme leaders) of the
organization until his death in 1947.⁹

The history of Ahmad Dahlan’s education, like that of Hashim Asy’ari’s, is not
clear in the records. Ahmad Dahlan, known as a child by the name Muhammad Darwis,
was born in 1868 of a devout priyayi father, Abubakar, who was ketib (Ar. khatib) at the
mosque of the Yogyakarta sultanate. In all of the biographies of Ahmad Dahlan, there is
no detail about his childhood and educational history, though there is mention that

⁹ For a discussion of Nahdlatul Ulama, see Choirul Anam, Pertumbuhan dan Perkembangan Nahdlatul
Ulama (Sala: Jatayu, 1985); Andree Feillard, NU vis-a-vis Negara: Pencarian Isi, Bentuk, dan Makna
(Yogyakarta: Lembaga Kajian Islam dan Sosial, 1999); Greg Fealy and Greg Barton, eds., Nahdlatul
Ulama, Traditional Islam and Modernity in Indonesia (Clayton, Australia: Monash Asia Institute, 1996);
and Robin Bush, Nahdlatul Ulama and the Struggle for Power within Islam and Politics in Indonesia
(Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2009)
Darwis learned *ilmu falak* (astronomy) with Salih’s son-in-law, Dahlan, in Semarang.\(^{10}\) If this is correct we may assume that Darwis must have studied also with Salih while he was in Semarang, since it is very unlikely that one goes to a pesantren and learns only one subject with a junior teacher. It is unclear, however, when Darwis stayed in Semarang, whether it was before or after he went to Mecca. He was reported to have left for Mecca twice, first in 1883 when he was fifteen years old. He stayed there for five years, studying Islamic knowledge with ulama in Mecca, before returning home and changing his name from Muhammad Darwis to Ahmad Dahlan.\(^{11}\) The second time he went to Mecca was in 1902 and he stayed there for two years.\(^{12}\) It was during his second visit that Dahlan was reported to have met Rashid Rida and became impressed with his and his mentor Muhammad Abduh’s advocacy of the Islamic modernization movement. In 1912, supported by his friends and colleagues, Dahlan established a modernist Islamic organization called Muhammadiyah, whose main aims were to improve the social and

\(^{10}\) Solichin Salam, *K.H. Ahmad Dahlan: Reformer Islam Indonesia* (Jakarta: Djajamurni, 1963), 22. Darban even argues that Ahmad Dahlan shared a room with Hashim Asy’ari when both were in Semarang, studying with Salih Darat. See Ahmad Adaby Darban, *Sejarah Kauman: Menguak Identitas Kampung Muhammadiyah* (Yogyakarta: Terawang, 2000), 133.

\(^{11}\) There is no explanation why Darwis changed his name to Ahmad Dahlan. Changing one’s name during the hajj in Mecca was a common practice among Javanese, not only among people with typical Javanese names but also for those with Arabic names. This practice seems to symbolize their new personalities after completing the last pillar of Islam and not just to make their name more familiar among the Arabs, as argued by Snouck Hurgronje. C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka in the Latter Part of the 19th Century: Daily Life, Customs and Learning, the Moslims of the East-Indian-Archipelago* (Leyden: Late E. J. Brill, 1931), 252-254. According to Snouck Hurgronje, the Shafi’ite Mufti in Mecca, Ahmad Zaini Dahlan, was a very respected ulama and many Javanese came to him to seek new names. It seems likely that Darwis idealized this person and changed his name to Ahmad Dahlan. Another possibility is that he sought to emulate his teacher Ahmad Dahlan, who was Salih’s son-in-law.

\(^{12}\) Sutrisno Kutoyo, *Kiai Haji Ahmad Dahlan* (Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1985), 40-50
educational condition of Muslims in Indonesia and to eradicate Islamic syncretism that was ubiquitous in Javanese society. Dahlan became its leader until his death in 1923.\(^\text{13}\)

Hashim Asy’ari and Ahmad Dahlan represent another stream of knowledge transmission that connects Salih with the wider Muslim society, not only in Java but also in Indonesia. The religious thought of both must have influenced the organizations that were established in Surabaya and Yogyakarta, respectively, and then spread to other parts of Indonesia. The major focus of these organizations is education, perhaps a legacy of Salih, who may have been their teacher or at least would have been a major influence in their educational emphasis. Salih always insisted on the importance of seeking knowledge. Dahlan’s eagerness to reduce Islamic syncretism, which has become an important feature of Muhammadiyah, might also be traced back to Salih’s teachings, before Dahlan even met Rashid Rida.

Raden Asnawi Kudus was another student of Salih’s. Unlike the case with Hashim and Dahlan, there is direct evidence that Asnawi was Salih’s disciple. He was a strong supporter of the establishment of Nahdlatul Ulama and became an active member and respected ulama. Born in Kudus in 1864 into a santri family, Asnawi became an intense seeker of Islamic knowledge by the age of fifteen years. He was said to have studied with H. Irsyad, a penghulu in Mayong, Jepara, before going to Mecca in 1889. He returned to Mecca in 1894 and stayed there for more than 20 years. Some of his

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biographers mention that he studied with Salih in Mecca, but this is unlikely. By the
time Asnawi left for Mecca, Salih had already settled in Semarang. A more reasonable
possibility is that Asnawi studied with Salih in Semarang either before his first or second
visit to Mecca. After returning from Mecca in 1916, Asnawi became involved in several
social and educational activities, including the formation of the Madrasah Qudsiyah in
1919. In 1927 he even established his own pesantren in Bendan, Kudus, which still exists
today. He died in 1959 and was buried in Bendan, Kudus. Asnawi appears to have
followed his teacher, Salih, in writing books in Pegon. The four treatises he wrote in
Pegon are Fasalatan, Jawab Su’alipun Mu’taqad Seket, Tawḥīd Jawan, and Shi’iran
Nasihat. Unlike Salih who used ngoko in his kitabs, Asnawi wrote in kromo. In addition
to these published works, Asnawi also composed other treatises that have never been
published.

Many others of Salih’s students became kiyai of pesantren, among whom was
Amir, who married Dahlan’s widow, Siti Zahrah. Amir stayed for a time in Darat,
helping Salih to manage the pesantren before he went home to Pekalongan, where he
established his own pesantren after Salih passed away. Idris from Surakarta is another of
Salih’s students. He revived the pesantren of Jamsaren in Surakarta after it was

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15 Fasalatan contains practical guides for performing salat including the du’a. Both Jawab Su’al Mu’taqad
and Tawḥīd Jawan discuss the theology based on the Ash’ari school. The former is presented in the
question-answer format while the latter details each aspect of theology. Shi’iran Nasihat explicates ethics
and moral teachings for young generations and it is in rhyme with Javanese ngoko. All these books are still
available in some bookstores in Central Java, particularly in the vicinity of Semarang and Kudus.
16 I found two copies of manuscripts, presumably handwritten by Asnawi himself. They are Hadīth al-
Mi’rāj, which discusses the night journey of the Prophet Muhammad from the Masjid al-Haram in Mecca
to Masjid al-Aqsa in Jerusalem, and Irshād al-Ghilmān ilā Sha’b al-īmān, which describes the seventy-
seven branches of the iman (belief in God). It seems that Asnawi had not finished them when he died in
1959. There are some empty spaces between paragraphs in the earlier manuscript, and in the second he
reached fifty-five branches of the iman.
abandoned for a few decades at the end of the Java War.\textsuperscript{17} The pesantren of Jamsaren still exists today, though most of its students are now studying at formal schools instead of studying Islam traditionally in the pesantren. Another student who established a pesantren was Abdul Hamid of Kendal, whose son Ahmad Abdul Hamid composed several treaties in Pegon, such as *Aqa'id Ahl al-Sunnah, Primbon Yasin Jawa, Risalah Siyam*, and *Tuntunan Salat Jawa*.\textsuperscript{18} Kiyai Munawir, the founder of Pesantren Krapyak in Yogyakarta, which still exists today, is another of Salih’s students.\textsuperscript{19} Many others who studied with Salih became involved in managing and teaching in pesantren, such as Kiyai Sya’ban ibn Hasan Semarang, Kiyai Khalil Rembang, Kiyai Yasin Bareng, Kudus, Kiyai Dalhar Watucongol, Magelang, and Kiyai Harun Kempek, Cirebon.\textsuperscript{20}

With the exception of Asnawi, all these later kiyais represent an oral transmission of knowledge that connects Salih with Javanese Muslim societies. These kiyais are not known as having written any Islamic texts but they are highly respected figures for their role as leaders, teachers, and preachers of the pesantren. Teaching Islamic knowledge written in Arabic texts is their main task, but they also deliver sermons at religious gatherings (*pengajian*). Using the local vernacular, these kiyai transmit their Islamic knowledge.

\textsuperscript{17} Pesantren Jamsaren was first established in the mid-eighteenth century by Kiyai Jamsari from Banyumas. He was deliberately invited by the king of Surakarta to establish a pesantren where he could teach Islam to the royal families. The village in which he settled in the northwest of the palace was also named after him, Jamsaren. By the end of the Java War in 1830, the leader of this pesantren, Kiyai Jamsari II, disappeared and his body never found. Since then, the pesantren was left without a teacher. Ali Darokah, K.H., *Pondok Pesantren Jamsaren Solo dalam Historis dan Esensinya* (Solo: Ramadani, 1983), 2-3.

\textsuperscript{18} Personal communication from Salwa, the marketing manager of Toha Putra publishing company in Semarang, June 29, 2009

\textsuperscript{19} Kiyai Munawir established his pesantren in 1911 initially to teach Qur’anic recitation and memorization. Following his death in 1942, this pesantren was developed by his sons into a general pesantren while maintaining the Qur’anic specialization. Siti Ngaisah, "Pondok Pesantren al-Munawir Krapyak Yogyakarta," (Jakarta: Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan Agama, Departemen Agama RI, 1983)

\textsuperscript{20} For a list of Salih’s students, see Salim, "Majmu'at al-Syari'at al-Kafiyat li al-Awam", 44-46; Muchoyyar, "K.H. Muhammad Shaleh al-Samarani", 80-81; and Munir, "Pemikiran Kalam Muhammad Shaleh", 71-75
knowledge, some of which they received from Salih Darat, to the wider Muslim community.

Salih’s students were not only limited to those who came from pesantren families or later became kiyai of pesantren. There were also those from pangulu families who became themselves pangulu (a religious official appointed by the government). Among Salih’s students from pangulu families was Raden Sosrosapoetro alias Raden Muhammad Salim, the Adjunct-Pangulu in Banyuwangi, East Java. As a son of Raden Haji Muhammad Hadi, the Dutch-appointed Mufti in Kendal, Sosrosapoetro studied with Salih in the late 1890s before he moved to Jamsaren, Surakarta, where he studied with Salih’s student, Idris. This move seemed to have taken place after Salih died in 1903, as Idris used to stay in Semarang to help Salih teach students. Only after Salih’s death did Idris return to Surakarta and revive the Jamsaren pesantren. With Salih, Sosrosapoetro studied some books of fiqh, such as *Sharaḥ al-Bājūrī, Fatḥ al-Muʿīn, Tānāt al-Ṭālibīn,* and *Mughnī al-Muhtāj,* while with Idris he studied *Tafsīr Jalālayn,* *Alfiyah ibn Malik,* and *Minhāj al-Qawīm.*

It is worth noting that a pangulu dealing with religious (Islamic) affairs had to have at least a minimum expertise in Islamic knowledge, especially Islamic law to be appointed to this position. Since it was only pesantren that provided such training, almost

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22 For a short autobiography of Sosrosapoetro, see Pijper, *Studien over de Geschiedenis, 92-93*
all aspiring pangulu attended pesantren at a young age.\textsuperscript{23} Salih’s appeal to such students was his moderate views. Salih criticized the Dutch colonial authorities and people who imitated the Dutch way of life,\textsuperscript{24} but he maintained his relationship with local rulers by regular visits to the residencies of Demak and Purworejo, where he delivered his religious teaching. Unlike Ahmad Rifai Kalisalak, who opposed not only the Dutch government but also religious officials appointed by the government, Salih did not reject the latter group.

Many of Salih’s students emerged as respected figures and ulama. Although it is hard to measure the extent of Salih’s influence on their decision to become kiyai (they would have had other teachers in addition to Salih), there is no doubt that Salih contributed to the emergence of such figures. In the tradition of the pesantren, there is a belief that the kiyai is not only the transmitter of knowledge but also a source of blessing for his students. The success of a santri in the future, therefore, is not only determined by his mastery of Islamic knowledge but also on the barakah (blessing) of the knowledge he receives from the kiyai. In these two aspects of the pesantren, Salih made a substantial contribution.

As is implied in the profiles of his students, Salih’s fame was so widespread that students came from all parts of Java to attend his pesantren in Semarang. Although most of them came from Central Java, some came from as far east as Jombang and as far west as Cirebon. Since most of his students were later associated with Nahdlatul Ulama, some

\textsuperscript{23} Hisyam, \textit{Caught between Three Fires}, 38-46. For an autobiographical account of the pesantren education by a person with priyayi background, see Achmad Djajadiningrat, \textit{Kenang-kenangan Pangeran Achmad Djajadiningrat} (Jakarta: Balai Poetaka, 1936)

\textsuperscript{24} Muhammad Salih al-Samarani, \textit{Majmū‘at al-Sharī‘ah al-Kāfiyah lil-‘Awam} (Semarang: Toha Putra, na), 23-25, 139
were even its active supporters, Salih’s reputation was more apparent among this organization. The annual commemoration of his death on the 10th of Shawwal has always been carried out by those who identify themselves with Nahdlatul Ulama. It does not mean, however, that Salih’s network with the modernist group did not exist. Through Ahmad Dahlan, the founder of Muhammadiyah, and some of Salih’s works, especially those that contain ideas promoted by this modernist organization, Salih’s network has extended to this organization. One of Salih’s grandchildren, Ali Kholil, who now resides in Salih’s former pesantren, is even an activist of Muhammadiyah in Semarang. Ali argues that Salih’s opinion, such as prohibiting three, seven, and a hundred days of commemoration for the deceased, is in line with that of Muhammadiyah; therefore, he argues that Salih should also be regarded as a symbol of Islamic reformism. Salih’s so-called priyayi network consisted of those from this social class who studied with him. Raden Sosrosapoetro, for example, was the son of a pangulu and himself became a pangulu. In short, the evidence demonstrates that Salih had links and networks with a variety of groups from all social backgrounds.

Although we do not have a complete list of books that Salih read, we know from Mahfuz and Sosrosapoetro that he read books on fiqh, taṣawuf, tafsīr, and ilm al-falaq—all in Arabic, as was the tradition in the pesantren. We may assume, therefore, that Salih never read his own books, which were in Pegon, in front of his students in his pesantren. Salih’s method of teaching is also unknown, though we may assume that it was similar to the practice in 20th century Javanese pesantren where a teacher read the books and the students made notations in their own copies. From his Pegon books, we know that Salih had a mastery of several branches of Islamic knowledge, which he would have
transmitted to his pupils. In an indirect fashion, therefore, it is possible to suggest the influence that he would have had on his students.

There are, at least, three general features in Salih’s books that are worth examining more closely: his insistence on the orthodox teachings of Sunni Islam, his high respect for good manners, and his efforts to localize terms and adapt them to local customs. In all his books, Salih stresses the importance of performing rites and invocations that are sanctioned by orthodox Sunni, such as praying, fasting, giving alms, and performing the hajj. Muslims may not avoid such obligations except for reasons acknowledged in Islamic law. This is certainly not specific to Salih since all Sunni ulama, including kiyais of the pesantren, generally uphold this principle. One can assume, based on the fact that Salih always stressed the importance of adhering to Sunni Islam, that this attitude would have been conveyed to and continued by his students. A number of his students have become respected figures and known as ulama who always maintained orthodoxy. Since they also had pesantren and taught students, this message would have continued through the generations.

In addition to keeping orthodox teachings, Salih urged Muslims to practice good manners in relation to God and to other human beings. Muslims should not only practice the exoteric but also the esoteric side of rituals. Prayers are not only physical activities, following the rules of the Shari’ah, but they are also ways to stay close to God. Implementing what is recommended and avoiding what is prohibited by Islamic law with pure intentions to receive mercy from God, known as ikhlāṣ, is one of the praiseworthy attributes that Salih emphasized. Abstinence (zuhd) is another admirable quality that can prevent people from becoming greedy and stingy. Muslims are not supposed to work
against an individual nor seek to uncover that person’s weakness or imperfection. These are Sufi teachings proposed by many Sufi masters in order to perfect the way of life of a Muslim. They do not contravene the Shari’ah but complement it. Salih affirmed these teachings in his books and would have transmitted such understanding to his students when teaching Sufism.

As discussed in the previous chapter, Salih always uses local expressions, as far as they are available, to describe Islamic concepts that were originally written in Arabic. Salih makes a convincing argument that Islam was not intended solely for the Arabs, and so one should not think that Islam and Arabic should be inseparable. It was this line of reasoning that encouraged Salih to express Islamic ideas in Pegon and to undertake to localize some of the Arabic terms to make them more comprehensible to the Javanese. What was paramount was the spread Islamic values and teachings in a way that could be easily understood by as many people as possible. Since common people knew only Javanese and only few of them knew Arabic, there was a compelling reason for Salih to use Javanese instead of Arabic.

Salih was certainly not the first person to use the Javanese language for translating Islamic ideas from Arabic works. The ulama in the Javanese pesantren before Salih must have used the Javanese language to explain the contents of such Arabic books to students who initially knew only Javanese. Through such translations teachers could communicate successfully with their students until the latter acquired sufficient competency in Arabic. Salih continued this tradition and even strengthened the position of Javanese as the language of instruction of Islamic knowledge by composing Pegon books. He demonstrated that such vernacular translations and renditions of the Arabic
texts were as important as the originals themselves in conveying Islamic values and teachings. By using Pegon to underscore the importance of the three principles, Salih was able to establish a tradition that was continued by his students.

**Print and the Spread of Salih’s Pegon books**

During his lifetime, Salih produced at least twelve Pegon works. Thanks to print production introduced by Europeans to Muslim societies, including those in Southeast Asia, copies of his works were available in large numbers. Between 600 and 10,000 copies were printed for each title, which means that Salih’s works outnumbered any previous manuscript produced in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago.²⁵ Salih’s works mostly published in Singapore were believed to have spread widely in Java.

The publications of Salih’s work coincided with the growing significance of Singapore as a hub connecting the Malay Archipelago to the outside world. It was a major business center for the surrounding regions and a major transit point for those undertaking the hajj. Among the businesses that grew rapidly in Singapore at the end of the nineteenth and the early twentieth century was the printing industry. Singapore witnessed a revolution in book publishing, especially in the Malay language, thus contributing to the birth of Malay nationalist consciousness. Books on Islam were also printed in large numbers, helping to disseminate ideas of Islamic reform and

²⁵ Proudfoot estimates that the total Malay literary manuscript was around 10,000 including those that have been identified in various libraries in the range of 4,000-5,000. See, Ian Proudfoot, *Early Malay Printed Books* (Kuala Lumpur: Academy of Malay Studies and the Library University of Malaya, 1993), 50-51. For the number of copies of Salih’s Pegon books, see Proudfoot, *Early Malay Printed Books*, 186-187, 228, 230-231, 284, 319-320, 327-329, 347, 356-359 and Ian Proudfoot, "Malay Books Printed in Bombay: A Report on Sources for Historical Bibliography," *Kekal Abadi* 13, no. 3 (1994): 11-14
modernization. Salih who visited and stayed in Singapore for a while would have witnessed this development and been inspired to write books to be published in this cosmopolitan and vibrant city.

Salih composed his first book after he settled in Semarang and established his pesantren. Salih seemed to realize that there were more people that needed to be taught religious knowledge than students studying at the pesantren, including those in his own. There were people who, for some reason, had no chance to go to the pesantren and so had no ability to read Arabic books with which most of the classical Islamic knowledge was written. As a person concerned with the proper implementation of religious obligations, Salih was challenged to reach more people beyond the pesantren. It was his friends, according to some sources, who urged him to translate the Arabic texts to make them accessible to more people. The combination of these factors—the prospects of a printed texts, the desire to reach more Javanese, and the encouragement of his friends—provided the spark to create his Pegon books. Moreover, as Salih himself states in his books, teaching religious knowledge to others should be done for the sake of God and not for profit or other worldly reasons. In any case, as Proudfoot has shown, publication of religious books was the least profitable business in Singapore at the end of the nineteenth century. Religious publications were in many cases paid for by waqf (charitable bequest).

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Some of Salih’s works were well-received by readers, judging by the number of reprints. As the previous table shows, until the first decade of the twentieth century, *Munjiyāt*, an abridgment of al-Ghazali’s *Ihyā’ ʻUlūm al-Dīn*, was printed five times; *Majmū‘at al-Sharī‘ah* which contains basic Islamic jurisprudence printed four times, and *Fasalatan*, the manual of daily prayer, three times. Based on reprints and number of copies published, these were three of the most popular of Salih’s books, accounting for 8200, 4600, and 11,100 copies, respectively. The last figure was, in fact, from only two print editions in 1905 and 1906, as the first printing in 1897 was apparently not reported to the government and so no data is available. It should also be noted that such figures represent only those registered with the Straits Government so that the real number could have been higher.

How Salih’s books were distributed is not known, but there are indications that his works, like other printed materials, were dispersed by post, by agents of the publishers, and by returning hajj pilgrims. From a catalog issued in the late 1890s by Haji Muhammad Siraj, a publisher of Salih’s work and also a retailer in Singapore, we know that people in the Malay Archipelago ordered books directly from Singapore using such catalogs and paid for the book and shipping with a money order or cash.\(^{28}\) Reliable postage developed in the nineteenth century thus contributed to the development of the printing industry in Singapore.\(^{29}\) With this service, people who lived far away from Singapore were able to receive the books. In certain cities where the publishers had branches, books could be directly purchased. Based on the information in the catalog,

\(^{29}\) Proudfoot, "A Formative Period in Malay Book Publishing," 101
Haji Siraj had four branches in Melaka, Taiping Larut, Perak, Pulau Pinang, and Deli.  

The practice of having branches in other cities was very possibly shared by other contemporary publishers and book sellers. Returning pilgrims also played a role in the distribution of books. Since Singapore was the major transit port for Malay pilgrims, some of those returning home from Mecca bought religious books in Singapore and brought them back home as sources and references to teach Islam. It was an expectation that those pilgrims returning from the hajj would eventually share their acquired knowledge from Mecca with their compatriots in the homeland.

While it is difficult to know where Salih’s books were distributed, Java would have been the logical destination. Undoubtedly the Javanese-speaking regions of central and east Java would have been the primary market, but Salih’s works were also popular among the Sundanese of West Java. Two of Salih’s works, *Fasalatan* and *Laṭā’if al-Ṭahārah*, were translated into Sundanese. A Dutch scholar noted that some women in Sunda also used the *Majmū‘at al-Sharī‘ah*, despite the absence of a translation in Sundanese, to teach girls from the surrounding areas. The Sundanese and Javanese languages are close, and until the early decades of the twentieth century the pesantren in West Java were like those in the rest of Java in using the Javanese language for teaching and learning Arabic textbooks. For centuries Sundanese youths have attended pesantren in Central and East Java to study Islam. The Javanese language, therefore, is not alien to some Sundanese communities, and it is not surprising that Salih’s works were also read by the Sundanese.

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30 Proudfoot, "A Nineteenth-Century Malay Bookseller's Catalogue,”
32 Ibid., 19
Salih’s works, however, would not have reached many Javanese directly. As the table shows, the total copies of his ten works were 38,000. When this is compared to the total population of Java by the end of nineteenth century, which was more than twenty million, the number of people reached was rather small. Even when we add an estimate of the books and editions not reported to the Straits Government, the number of copies would still be about 40,000. The influence of Salih’s works, however, was far more extensive because of the manner in which the knowledge in these Pegon books was transmitted. The impact was primarily outside the pesantren, to those who sought to learn Islamic orthodoxy as part of their ordinary lives. By the nineteenth century the Javanese Muslims were characterized as belonging to either the abangan (the red) or the putihan (the white). The putihan, later known as the santri, was a minority and referred to those who regularly performed the basic obligations of Islam and studied in the pesantren. The abangan, on the other hand, formed the majority of the Javanese population and were characterized by rarely performing Islamic rituals, no proper knowledge of Islamic observances, and adhering to a mixture of Islamic and indigenous beliefs.

Salih decided to write in Pegon in order to reach the ordinary people beyond the pesantren and introduce greater Islamic orthodoxy to the general population. Unlike those studying in pesantren, the common people could not access the Islamic texts written

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34 M. C. Ricklefs, *Polarizing Javanese Society: Islamic and Other Visions, c. 1830-1930* (Singapore: National University of Singapore, 2007)
in Arabic and hence were hindered in obtaining knowledge about Islamic practices. Salih’s Pegon books provided a practical and simple knowledge and guideline for Islamic orthodoxy that were easy for them to understand and practice. They came to learn the basic principles of Islamic orthodoxy and how to perform the primary obligations. Much of the studying of the Pegon books occurred in pengajian (learning circles) at mosques and langgar (prayer houses) which served the local community.

As discussed in chapter two, in addition to the pesantren, the mosques and langgar are places for Islamic learning, although they are different from the pesantren in terms of the intensity of learning, the ages of the participants, and the sources used. The importance of the mosques and langgar is their capacity to reach out to busy working adults who wish to improve their knowledge of Islam. Salih’s Pegon books became popular with local teachers or kiyais, usually less knowledgeable than those of the pesantren, to teach Islamic sciences to ordinary people without pesantren experience. Written in Javanese in the Arabic script, Pegon books posed no difficulty for either the ulama or his students.

Five of the twelve Pegon books written by Salih have continued to be published and circulated to the present day, greatly increasing the numbers of people influenced by his works.36 Using Pegon Islamic texts written by Salih have become an established

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36 They are Majmū‘at al-Sharī‘ah, Matn al-Ḥikam, Munjiyat, Lata‘if al-Taharah, and Jawharat al-Tawḥīd. The first four are published by Toha Putra Semarang and there is no information of publisher for the last one. Among the first four books, the first two books, Majmū‘at al-Sharī‘ah and Matn al-Ḥikam, are the most popular in term of public demand. Toha Putra began printing these books in 1957 but has no record as how many times they have been printed. One thing for sure is that every time it goes to print, at least 3000 copies were produced. Interview with Salwa, the marketing manager of the company, in Semarang on June 9, 2009
tradition among the santri community, but his ideas were also spread through those ulama who followed in his footsteps.

Santri Scholars in Salih Darat’s Footsteps

Salih Darat, though not the first to write in Pegon, was the first to compose Islamic texts in Pegon that were acceptable to the santri community. He was preceded by Ahmad Rifai in using Pegon for composing treatises on Islamic knowledge. While Rifai’s works are not acknowledged by the santri community in general, as they contain principles which are not acceptable to Sunnites, all Salih’s works comply with Sunni teachings. As a result, Salih’s works in Pegon would have found greater favor than Rifai’s among the santri, and some who studied with Salih also followed his lead and wrote Islamic texts in Pegon.

One such student was Raden Asnawi from Kudus, who wrote a number of treatises four of which have been published. They are *Fasalatan, Jawab Su’alipun Mu’taqad Seket, Tawḥīd Jawan*, and *Shi’iran Nasihat*. *Fasalatan* contains prayer manuals consisting mainly of Arabic invocations and their Javanese translations. It is similar to Salih’s but with a more convenient layout with the Javanese translation placed beside the Arabic original. Asnawi was obviously continuing Salih’s work with additional invocations (*du’a*). *Jawab Sualipun Mu’taqad Seket* uses a question and answer format on the tawḥīd. It explains and provides arguments for the fifty attributes that are necessary, impossible, and possible for God and for the messengers as commonly discussed in the Sunni books of Islamic theology. *Tawḥīd Jawan* contains a discussion of the principles of Islamic theology and begins with the definition of the tawḥīd and a
statement that learning the tawḥīd is an individual obligation of every Muslim. It then examines the six pillars of faith (īmān) in Islam: the belief in God, angels, holy books, messenger, the day of judgment, and predestination. Shiʿīr an Nasihat are rhymes which contain admonitions to Muslims, especially to the young generation, to always seek knowledge, not to be arrogant, and to have good manners. Asnawi like Salih stressed the importance of studying religious knowledge and introducing basic theology to the common people, but their use of the Javanese language differed.

In his books, Asnawi uses more kromo (refined) style of Javanese, whereas Salih uses the lower register of ngoko. Although Asnawi uses ngoko in Shiʿīr an Nasihat, in Jawab Sualipun Muʿtaqad Seket he uses ngoko for questions and kromo for answers. As one dispensing advice to the younger generation in the former work, he situates himself above his audience and thus appropriately uses ngoko. In the latter book, the questions are asked by the teacher or an older person and answered by students or the younger generation, thus determining the level of the Javanese to be used. In Tawḥīd Jawan and for most of his other books he uses only kromo, which would have been a language befitting his aristocratic lineage traced to Kudus aristocracy through his mother, Raden Sarbinah. Asnawi was one of only a few who wrote Pegon in kromo; most Pegon books use ngoko.

Asnawi also differed from Salih in employing a more conversational style. As mentioned in chapter four, the structure of sentences in Salih’s works resembles Arabic sentences as translated into Javanese by the santri. Asnawi moves away from this style, and in the introduction to his Tawḥīd Jawan, for example, he writes: “ilmu tawḥīd inggih meniko ilmu ingkang bicara datěng têtēpipun aqaʿid (kepercayaan) mawi dalil-dalil
ingkang lěrěs lan sah” (knowledge of tawḥīd is the knowledge that discusses the necessity of aqaid [doctrine] with correct and valid arguments). Then, when he mentions the benefits of understanding tawḥīd, he says “faidahipun tiyang sinahu ilmu tawḥīd měniko supados gadahi kēmantēpan ingkang kiyat soho nyumērēpi sifat-sifatipun pěngeran lan para rusul kanthi dalil-dalil ingkang lěrěs lan sah” (the benefits for people who learn the tawḥīd are a strong belief and an understanding of the attributes of God and His messenger through correct and valid arguments).

These quoted examples by Asnawi use the style and structure of kromo but in a conversational style of everyday language. Such nominal sentences are not preceded by “utawi” to indicate the subject and followed by “iku” for the predicate, as Salih does in his Pegon books. In the other sections, the verbal sentences do not begin with verbs followed by subjects indicated by “sopo”, but begin with a subject followed by a verb. Nevertheless, the kromo that Asnawi uses is totally comprehensible and commonly known among the Javanese.

Other santri scholars in the twentieth century who wrote in Pegon are Asrari Ahmad from Wanasari, Magelang, Muslih and Masruhan from Mranggen, Masruh bin Yahya from Rembang, Ahmad Subki Masyhadi from Pekalongan, two brothers of Bisri Mustafa and Misbah Zainal Mustafa from Rembang, to name a few. As with Salih’s books, works by these scholars can be categorized as translation, commentary, or (least common) original composition. They write on almost all branches of Islamic knowledge, from tafsīr, hadīth, fiqh, to Arabic grammar. Most of them use ngoko, though a few such...
as Masruhan use kromo. Almost all works of translation and commentary have the
original Arabic texts with interlinear translation much in the style of students studying in
a pesantren. The structure of the explanation is similar to spoken language and no longer
resembles Salih’s literal Arabic translations.

These examples are evidence that, in the twentieth century, writing in Pegon had
undergone certain changes since Salih’s time. Salih never used interlinear translations in
his books, though he retained the Arabic originals before providing a translation and
commentary. Despite some differences, Salih was responsible for laying the foundations
for subsequent writings in Pegon by santri scholars. They would have been familiar with
Salih’s works and helped spread his ideas through his books that continue to be popular
among the Javanese people.

Two of these new writers in Pegon were brothers Bisri Mustafa and Misbah
Zainal Mustafa, who were born in Rembang, Central Java, as the first and third sons of
Zainal Mustafa and Chadijah. They each wrote more than fifty books and were the most
productive of those using Pegon. It is not known whether Zainal Mustafa was a kiyai, but
there is little doubt that he was a rich and pious man. He brought along his wife and his
four children to perform the hajj pilgrimage in 1923 at a time when going on the hajj was
still very hard for Javanese Muslims because of the high cost and the restrictions imposed
by the colonial government. Bisri at the time was about eight years old and his brother
Misbah 3 1/2, which means that Bisri was born around 1915 and Misbah in 1919.39

As sons of respected Muslims, both Bisri and Misbah studied at several pesantren
before going to Mecca as adults to study with religious teachers there. Upon his return,

39 Ma'shum, ed. Karisma Ulama, 320-321
Bisri eventually settled in his hometown Rembang and established the pesantren, Raudlatul Ulum, which is still in existence and is currently under his son, Mustofa Bisri. Misbah, however, settled in Bangilan, Tuban, East Java, leading the Pesantren al-Balagh which was established by his father in law, Kiyai Ridwan. Although they are brothers, they have quite distinct personalities. Bisri emerged as a multitalented person. In addition to leading the pesantren, he was an activist in Nahdlatul Ulama, a member of parliament, a renowned preacher, a skilled orator, and a poet. Bisri proved to be more popular than Misbah, and he has been the subject of a number of studies which have helped to preserve his fame among later generations. Despite their differences, they shared the same goal of educating people on Islamic knowledge either through their pesantren or their Pegon writings. Salih Darat’s legacy can thus be seen in the work and motivation of these brothers.

Bisri was a prolific writer with 54 titles, including some in Indonesian. I was able to identify only 45 of these titles, five of which are in Indonesian and the rest in Pegon. As with Salih Darat, Bisri’s works focus on different branches of knowledge (tafsir, hadith, fiqh, and tawhid), and are classified as translation, commentary, and original works. But Bisri went even further than Salih by also writing on Arabic

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40 See, Mastuki and M. Ishom El-Saha, eds., Intelektualisme Pesantren, 3 vols. (Jakarta: Diva Pustaka, 2003), vol.3, 74
41 Bisri’s books on the tafsir are al-Ibrīz (30 juz, parts, of the Qur’an), Tafsīr Surah Yāsīn (chapter 36th of the Qur’an), and al-Ikthīr which is ilmu tafsīr (science of exegeses). His books on the hadith are Sullam al-Aflāḥ which is a translation of Bulugh al-Marām composed by Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani (d. 1449 CE), al-Azwād al-Mustafāwiyah which is translation of al-Arba’īn al-Nawāwiyyah by Yahya ibn Sharaf al-Din al-Nawawi (d. 1277 CE), and Tarjamah Manzūmah al-Bayqūniyyah fī ‘Ilm Muṣṭafāl al-Ḥadīth which is translation of the same title by Taha ibn Muhammad al-Bayquni. Among his books on fiqh are Tarjamah Farā’ id al-Bahīyyah fī Qowā’id al-Fiqhīyyah, the translation of the same title by Mahmud ibn Muhammad Nasib Hamzah (d. 1887 CE), Tuntunan Salat and Tuntunan Ringkas Manasik Haji, both of which are his original works. His books on tawḥīd are Durar al-Bayān which is a translation of Shu’ab al-İmān by
grammar and logic (*manṭiq*). In addition, he authored a number of collections of Javanese poems, which are on ethics in one’s daily life. The most popular and perhaps Bisri’s magnum opus is *Al-Ibrīz li-Ma’rifat Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘Azīz*, which is an exegesis of the Qur’an. It comprised 2270 pages and was originally published in three thick volumes, though later it was converted into 30 thin volumes in accordance with the 30 parts (*juz*) of the Qur’an. Completed in January 1960, this book has been used widely in Java ever since in the elementary Islamic schools (madrasah) as well as in the pengajian classes in musalla and mosques.

In *al-Ibriz*, Bisri provides an interlinear Javanese translation of the Qur’an, in the fashion of the pesantren, and a commentary in Javanese on the side and at the bottom of the page. His commentary of the first chapter of the Qur’an, Surat al- Fātiḥah, is included below to illustrate how he uses a Javanese conversational style of writing. After explaining the meaning of the Fātiḥah, Bisri explains the meaning of verses 2-7 as follows:

Sěkabihane pengalèm bono iku namung kagungane Allah Ta’ala dewe kang mèngerani lan nguwasani alam kabe iki. Ora ono makhlùq kang anduwèni pengalèm. Gusti Allah Ta’ala iku pèrsifatan wèlas asih marang sěkabihane makhlùq, luwihi-luwihi marang menuso kang wus nyoto diparingi ni’mat wujud kanthi aqal lan angghahöta badan kang sèmpurno lan ni’mat liya-liyane maneh kang gède-gède lan kang lèmbut-lèmbut. Ugo Allah Ta’ala pèrsifatan *maliki yawm al-din*, nguwasani besuk dino qiymat. Kuasa angganjar marang wong-wong kang podo tho’at lan kuwoso nyikso marang wong-wong kang podo

Ahmad ibn al-Husayn al-Bayhaqi (d. 1066), *Rawihat al-Aqwam Aqidat al-Awam* whose original writer is unknown.

Bisri translates and comments on several books of *nahw* (syntax) such as *Ajurrūmiyah* by Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Ajurrum (d. 1323 CE), *Imrītī* by Sharaf ibn Yahya al-Imriti, and *Alfiyah ibn Mālik* by Muhammad ibn Abd Allah ibn Malik (d. 1274 CE). He also works on *ṣaraf* (inflection) with *Nazam al-Maqsud*, an anonymous author, and *balaghah* (rhetoric) with *Jawhar al-Maknūn* by Abd al-Rahman al-Akhdari (d. 1575 CE). The book on logic that Bisri translates and comments is entitled *Sullam al-Munawraq* which is also written by Abd al-Rahman al-Akhdari.

Among the collections of rhymes are *Waṣāyā al-Ābā’ li al-Abnā’, Mitero Sejati, Ngudi Susilo* and *Shi’iran Umum*.
All praise belongs to God alone, who manages and controls this universe. There is no creature that deserves praise. God is the benefactor for all creatures, especially humans who are clearly granted with grace of mind and complete bodies and organs as well as other major and minor graces. God is also maliki yawm al-din, the most authoritative power in the Day of Judgment. (He is) in full authority to grant rewards to those who obey and prosecute those who disobey God’s instructions. Because God is merciful, especially to humans, people must only pray to God for anything and always beseech God to point to the straight path that will lead to the joyful in this world and the next. (It is) the path for people who have been granted grace and not for those who have earned (God’s) anger and gone astray.

If these Javanese sentences are compared with those of the Qur’an, one realizes that this is not a literal translation but an original composition based on what is written in the Qur’an. Bisri denies having composed tafsir and acknowledges that he has simply translated the Qur’an into Javanese, as other scholars have done in many languages. However, many categorize this work as tafsir as he does not simply translate the Qur’an but also provides additional information on certain verses that, for him, require further explanation. We could call it a very simplified version of tafsir, as he does not provide explanation or interpretation on all verses as commonly found in the books of tafsir. Bisri’s main intention is to help Javanese people understand the meaning of the Qur’an,

44 Bisri Mustafa, Al-Ibrīz li-Ma’rifat Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘Azīz, 30 vols. (Kudus: Menara), vol. 1, 3
45 Literal translation of the verse 2-7 of the first chapter of the Qur’an is “All praise be to God, Lord of all the worlds, Most beneficent, ever merciful, King of the Day of Judgement. You alone we worship, and to You alone turn for help. Guide us (O Lord) to the path that is straight, the path of those You have blessed, not of those who have earned Your anger, nor those who have gone astray.” This translation is quoted from Ahmed Ali, Al-Qur’an: a Contemporary Translation (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 11
46 Mustafa, Al-Ibrīz li-Ma’rifat Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘Azīz, vol. 1, 1
and therefore he intentionally composes this work by using simple and easy (pěrsjo lan entheng) expressions. His works, like those of Salih’s, have as their target audience the common Javanese people. Both share a concern for the need to educate the common people about Islamic knowledge so that they can properly perform the rituals and uphold its values. Salih was the first to write tafsīr in Javanese in *Fayd al-Rahman*, and though he did not complete the entire thirty parts (juz) of the Qur’an, he finished five parts in the first four chapters. His initiative in composing tafsīr in Javanese might have inspired others to emulate him, as it obviously did with Bisri. Those who study these Pegon texts owe a debt to Salih, for it was he was the first to use Pegon successfully in transmitting Islamic ideas to the ordinary Javanese.

In addition to translating and commenting on Arabic books that are widely used in the pesantren, Bisri composed Javanese rhymed works (*syi’ir*) written also in Pegon. As with those written by Asnawi, Bisri’s rhymed compositions contain admonitions on ethics that are based on both Islam and local culture. In *Mítěro Sějati* (true partner), which he dedicates to the young generations, Bisri highlights the importance of observing good manners as a member of society. He begins with an introduction to remind the readers of humanitarian values. No one can live alone in this world but need to cooperate with others because people need others to fulfill their basic needs. He then mentions the necessity to respect parents, teachers, friends, as well as the government. As part of ethics in socialization, people need to become good listeners to their friends and, if they are to speak, they should do so nicely. Maintaining healthy body, eating good foods, and wearing modest clothes, as well as keeping house clean and tidy are Bisri’s next admonitions. When it comes to adulthood, people have to work to sustain their lives. As
far as it is lawful, any profession may be taken seriously, including a military officer and police. When they have money, they are urged to spend it wisely, not be too stingy nor too generous. In the last parts, Bisri suggests that the reader study the sciences seriously to catch up to the West, but at the same time not to become Westernized, especially in behavior. He says that Eastern values need to be maintained and must not be diverted no matter how inconsequential as a bug.\footnote{Bisri Mustafa, \textit{Mitero Sejati: Nerangake ing Bab Budi Pekerti} (Surabaya: Muhammad ibn Ahmad Nabhan), 2-8}

Bisri composed other verses, such as \textit{Ngudi Susilo} and \textit{Waṣāyā al-Ābā’ li al-Abnā}.\footnote{Bisri Mustafa, \textit{Ngudi Susilo} (Kudus: Menara) and Bisri Mustafa, \textit{Waṣāyā al-Ābā’ li al-Abnā} (Surabaya: Al-Ashriyah)} While the former contains admonitions for students, the latter is guidance for parents regarding their children. A common theme in Bisri’s verses is the significance of education for future generations, while retaining religious values. In the last part of \textit{Ngudi Susilo}, for example, he reminds the readers of the existence of many professions, such as minister, mufti, bupati (mayor), doctor, teachers, and others, that Muslims need to fulfill. Muslim youths, therefore, have to study hard in both religious and non-religious sciences so they can participate in managing the country through such professions. Bisri’s concern with education resembles that of Salih’s, though we see some differences. As Salih lived during colonial times, his concerns were more about religious knowledge and never mentioned the profane sciences, let alone governmental positions. Bisri, on the other hand, lived in the postcolonial period and was involved in politics. He became aware of the challenges facing Muslims in managing the independent nation of Indonesia. He therefore urged young Muslims to fill governmental positions. His concerns about conveying religious knowledge and morality are shared by many ulama, including Salih.
Another difference with Salih is Bisri’s compositions in rhyme, which demonstrate his talent as a poet but does not represent a significant shift in the Pegon tradition. Only a few Javanese ulama wrote Pegon books in rhyme, and the dominant works of Pegon are in prose. Bisri’s brother, Misbah Zainal Mustafa, wrote Pegon in prose, and Bisri himself wrote more prose than rhyme.

Compared to Bisri, Misbah is less popular among Javanese santri, though he also wrote a number of Pegon books. He is reported to have written more than a hundred books ranging from Arabic grammar, tawḥīd, fiqh, hadīth, tafsīr, to akhlāq and taṣawuf. Among his 26 works I have collected, fiqh and taṣawuf/akhlaq are the dominant works with sixteen titles, and the rest are tawḥīd, tafsīr, hadīth, rhetoric and hagiography of the Prophet. This proportion shows Misbah’s preference for fiqh and

49 It is surprising that Misbah’s biography is not found in books compiling biographies of ulama, such as Ma’shum, ed. Karisma Ulama which include a number of respected figures of Nahdlatul Ulama; Mastuki and El-Saha, eds., Intelektualisme Pesantren which traces the Nusantara ulama in its three volumes; and the latest encyclopedia ulama, H. M. Bibit Suprapto, Ensiklopedi Ulama Nusantara: Riwayat Hidup, Karya dan Sejarah Perjuangan 157 Ulama Nusantara (Jakarta: Gelegar Media Indonesia, 2009)

50 Personal communication with Islah Gusmian who is preparing Misbah’s biography on January 14, 2010.

51 Among his works of translation and commentary on fiqh are: Matn Taḥrir by Zakariya al-Ansari (d. 1520 CE); Ṭuḥfat al-Ṭullāb bi-Sharḥ Matn Taḥrīr Tanqīḥ al-Lubāb, which is the commentary on the Matn Taḥrīr, by the same author; ʿIddat al-Farīd fi ʿIlm al-Farāʾiḍ by Saʿid ibn Saʿad bin Nabhan; Minhāj al-Qawīm by Ahmad ibn Hajjar al-Haythami (d. 1566 CE), Fatḥ al-Muʿīn by Zayn al-Din al-Malibari (d. 1521 CE), and Kāshīf al-Sajā fi Sharḥ Safinat al-Najā by Nawawi Banten (d. 1898 CE). He has an original work on this category, Masāʾil al-Nisāʾ which discusses issues relating to women. The works on Taṣawuf

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tašawuf, a common phenomenon among Javanese santri who consider fiqh and Sufism as the most important to learn and practice. As with Salih Darat, he translates and comments on works that are widely used by the pesantren community, such as *al-Hikam* and *Iḥyā’ ʻUlūm al-Dīn*, two popular works of Sufism among Javanese santri which Salih abridged. Taking their content into account, Misbah shares Salih’s and Bisri’s concerns on the importance of learning and, at the same time, maintaining Islamic ethics and norms.

In the introduction to the translation of *Tanbīh al-Ghāfilīn*, Misbah reminds the readers to participate in the rapidly accelerating development of contemporary culture so that they will not be left behind. However, he also warns that such development should always be guided by faith, ethics, and good deeds. Otherwise, the religiosity of Muslims will be *sudo bobote lan soyo tipis kulite* (lighter of weight and thinner of skin). In *Izat al-Nashi‘īn*, Misbah uses a metaphor of eyes as the important tools for one’s life. He says that it is time for Muslim youths to wake up and struggle for Islam with two eyes. The one is for managing and controlling worldly issues, while the other is for taking care of matters of the afterlife, so that they will be successful here and in the hereafter. Misbah does not mean that the readers should pay attention to the physical eyes only, but his concern is on the significance of balancing worldly and religious obligations. To live happily in this world, one needs to be equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills; whereas, for the promised happiness in the hereafter, one has to understand and perform religious instructions. Such conditions will be fulfilled only through study; therefore Misbah reminds Muslims, especially the younger generation, to be serious in their study.

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Misbah writes Pegon books like his brother and other contemporary Pegon writers by making interlinear translations of the original texts and providing further explanation at the bottom of the page. The interlinear translation is similar to the tradition of santri in the pesantren while further explanation is written in Javanese ngoko resembling the spoken language. This practice shows the development from the practice that Salih initiated. It is worth quoting parts of Misbah’s explanation of the early section of Shu‘ab al-Ímān to see the structure of his Javanese sentences:

Iman kang diparingake deneng Allah marang kito ummat Islam iku anduweni pang-pangan kang akihe ono pitung puluh pitu. Wong-wong kang ahli laku utomo kang agung-agung pangkate wus podo nyampurnaake ulihe ngělakoni pitung puluh pang-pangan mahu. Songko iku, siro kabeh hai kaum Muslimin bisoho podo ningkatake imane kanti ngělakoni pang-pangan iman mahu.54

Faith that God has bestowed upon Muslims has branches that amount to seventy seven. The great and highly respected people have completed their practices of these seventy [seven] branches. Therefore, all of you as Muslims need to improve your faith by practicing these branches of faith.

In this quotation Misbah writes the Javanese sentences as they would be spoken in ordinary conversation. He no longer uses structures that are literal translations of Arabic texts, as Salih did. Like Salih, however, Misbah does not simply restate the original texts into Javanese but in many instances provides further explanation or information on certain ideas that are not mentioned in the original texts. This can be seen in his works on Matn al-Hikam and Shu‘ab al-Ímān.55 Pegon works by Misbah and other writers are not merely Javanese translations of Arabic texts but also commentaries, very much in the style of the sharh tradition in Arabic texts.

54 Misbah Zainal Mustafa, Tarjamah Nazam Shu‘ab al-Ímān (Surabaya: Al-Ihsan), 3-4
55 See, for example, Misbah Zainal Mustafa, Tarjamah Matan al-Hikam (Surabaya: Wisma Pustaka), 1-10 and Zainal Mustafa, Tarjamah Nazam Shu‘ab al-Ímān, 4-7
In addition to translations and commentaries, Misbah also composed a few original works, the most important of which is *al-Iklīl fī Ma‘āni al-Tanzīl*, a work on tafsīr. Like Bisri’s work on tafsīr, *al-Iklīl* is printed in small books based on the parts (juz) of the Qur’an, and provides an interlinear translation. But unlike Bisri, Misbah divides every page into three. On the top are the original texts of the Qur’an with interlinear translation, in the middle is a liberal translation in Javanese ngoko, and at the bottom is additional explanation of the Qur’anic sentences. For example, in the first two verses of the first chapter of the Qur’an, al-Fatihah, he writes the original sentences with an interlinear translation at the top. In the middle he begins with a short explanation of other names of this verse and follows with the translation “kēlawan bērkahe Allah kang moho wēlas asih tur langgēng wēlas asihe, aku ngaturake sēmbah puji marang Allah kang mēngerani kabei alam. Ora ono kang anduweni haq dipuji-puji kejobo Allah (With the blessing of God who is merciful and whose mercy is eternal, I submit all praise to God, the lord of all the worlds. No one deserves praise but God).”

At the bottom part of the page, he provides further explanation of the first verse, as follows:


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The statement of *Bismillah* is a statement from a slave that he praises only God. And such a slave is able to praise God because of blessings from God, the Almighty and Merciful. Without such blessings from God, he will not be able to praise God. God’s blessing means God’s gift. The meaning of *rahmān* and *rahīm* is the same as the benevolent and merciful. When saying *al-rahmān*, it means *rahmat khāṣṣah*, or specific mercy; it is mercy that motivates people to be close to and pray for God. When mercy is mentioned with *al-rahīm*, it means *rahmat ʿāmmah*, or general mercy; it is mercy that spread to all God’s creatures, whether they are humans or no, whether they are Muslims or non-believers.

This type of format, i.e. interlinear translation, liberal translation, and further explanation, applies to the rest of the verses and chapters. There is no doubt, therefore, that Misbah does not simply produce a Javanese translation of the Qur’an but also composes a tafsīr in Javanese though it may still be categorized as a simple tafsīr. Compared to *al-Ibriz* by Bisri, *al-Iklīl* is strikingly different, with the three divisions. Although this theoretically makes *al-Iklīl* more advanced than *al-Ibriz*, it does not mean that *al-Iklīl* is more popular than *al-Ibriz*. In fact, the latter is more widely used than the former. As Pegon textbooks are normally targeted at lay people or elementary students, it seems reasonable to expect that the simpler works are more popular than the advanced ones. The popularity of the authors would have also contributed to the wide distribution of their works. While Bisri was an activist in Nahdlatul Ulama, a member of parliament, a famed preacher, and a poet, in addition to being a productive writer and kiyai of a pesantren, Misbah was known only as a writer and a pesantren kiyai. Nevertheless, all Misbah’s works, including his tafsīr, are respected by the santri community and regarded as significant contributions in teaching and educating the common people about Islam.
In addition to tafsīr, Misbah also composed some original works. One of them is fiqh, which discusses issues pertaining to women, *Masā’il al-Nisā’* (women’s problems). As indicated by the title, this book deals with issues faced by women, such as menstruation (*hayd*), post-natal bleeding (*nifās*), and irregular bleeding (*istihādah*). Although in later parts, especially when discussing women’s relationships with men in a marriage, it provides an explanation that is deemed necessary for both women and men to know, it is obviously intended for women. And since Misbah used a fiqh perspective in his discussion on all issues, one would assume that he adopted a position that was part of mainstream fiqh. For example, in regards to inheritance, a woman receives only half that of a man; a woman is ineligible to lead a prayer, or become imam, when a man joins the prayer; a man is allowed to marry up to four women, but a woman is to marry only one man; and wives are required to always please their husbands because wives are the husbands’ solaces.58

Misbah, nevertheless, tries to move away a little from the traditional mainstream fiqh thinking by strengthening the position of women in relation to their husbands. In several parts, for example, he mentions that women and men have equal responsibilities in following God’s instructions. Men and women have similar rights in pursuing a job and education. “In Islam there are no rules that prohibit women from working or making money, nor rules prohibiting them from receiving any kind of education.”59 It is not only men who have the right to see their prospective wives, but women are also accorded the same privilege prior to marriage. The right to proceed or cancel a marriage is assured to

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58 Misbah Zainal Mustafa, *Masā’il al-Nisā’* (Surabaya: Sa'ad bin Nasir bin Nabhan, 1979), 58-59, 73-76, 145-147
59 Ibid., 60
both parties. The husband and the wife have to know their rights and responsibilities in order to make the marriage happy and joyful; rights and responsibilities of a wife have to be equal with those of a husband, according to standards acceptable to their surrounding community. In rearing children and guiding the family to avoid disobedience to God, both husband and wife have equal responsibilities. By reinterpreting Islamic doctrine, Misbah attempts to strengthen the position of women vis-à-vis men, thus reaffirming the traditional Javanese practice of bilateral kinship.

The main message that Misbah reiterates throughout the book is the need to balance the demands of worldly life and the obligations of the hereafter in order to achieve kebahagiaan abadi (everlasting happiness). He again uses the metaphor of two eyes as in his other books to remind Muslims of their responsibilities. One eye is focused on worldly affairs and the other on the needs of the hereafter. One needs to have knowledge to perform these functions, and thus study is imperative for all Muslims. Here we are reminded of Salih’s insistence on the importance of seeking and gaining knowledge. Study is not only demanded of students in the pesantren or schools, but of Muslims of all ages. Misbah says “kito diwajibake luru ilmu. Luru ilmu iku ora městi kudu budal mondok utowo sěkolah, nanging biso dihasilake kělawan ningali buku utowo kitab-kitab karangani wong alim kan běněr-běněr wědi Allah (We are required to seek knowledge. Seeking knowledge does not mean only going to the pesantren or schools, but may also be attained by reading books or textbooks written by knowledgeable people who fear God).”

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60 Ibid., 72-73, 89, 117-124, 142-145
61 Ibid., 53, 90
62 Ibid., 96
textbooks in Pegon, which was to enable people to continue studying even after leaving school. Misbah also suggests that the readers refer to his other books for further discussion on certain issues. Misbah’s activities are similar to those of Salih’s and may have been influenced by the latter’s success in writing Pegon books. By composing Pegon books, both intended to provide those Javanese not studying in pesantren with Islamic knowledge in a way that was accessible and comprehensible. These methods, I argue, were successful in introducing orthodox Islamic ideas and practices to many of the ordinary people in Java.

There are many other Pegon textbooks written by others that have been printed and distributed in Java. Karya Toha Putra, a publisher in Semarang, Central Java, for example, printed and distributed 161 titles from 45 writers, 136 of which are still in circulation, with print copies between 3000 to 10,000 for each title. From this one publisher alone, which began in 1957, hundreds of thousand of copies of Pegon books were brought into circulation. This number is even greater if Pegon titles are added from other established publishers, such as Menara of Kudus, Raja Murah of Pekalongan, and Sa’ad bin Nasir bin Nabhan of Surabaya.

Most of those publications are translations and commentaries of Arabic books that are widely used in the pesantren. Except for a few original compositions, such as Risālat al-Maḥūd by Masruhan Ihsan from Mranggen, such works use a similar structure, i.e. starting with original texts in Arabic, interlinear translation, followed by further

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63 See, for example pages 105, 106, 123, 133 of Ibid. where he mentions and promotes his other translations of some Arabic book such as al-Hikam, Minhaj al-Abdīdīn, Tafsīr al-Jalālayn, as well as his Fasalatan.
64 Interview with Salwa, the marketing manager of PT Karya Toha Putra, in Semarang on June 9, 2009
65 Sugahara discusses slightly on those publishers but more studies are needed to uncover their significant role in spreading Pegon books. See, Yumi Sugahara, "The Publication of Vernacular Islamic Textbooks and Islamization in Southeast Asia," The Journal of Sophia Asian Studies 27 (2009)
explanations. Despite their differences in style from Salih’s works, there is no doubt that this format is a development first begun by Salih in the late nineteenth century. His endeavor in producing Islamic textbooks in Pegon established a unique form of Islamic scholarship that has found wide success, as evident from their acceptance as authoritative sources for the study of Islam and wide distribution among santri communities to the present day. Millions of copies of Pegon books have been circulated in Java since Salih, and there is no doubt that these works have had a major impact on the Javanese understanding of Islamic orthodoxy. Salih’s pivotal role in this development is incontrovertible, a fact that is not widely known even in Indonesia.

**Conclusion**

As a kiyai who taught various branches of Islamic knowledge to students at his pesantren, Muhammad Salih Darat followed a centuries-old tradition of pesantren education in Java. Salih himself attended several pesantren and acquired a breadth of knowledge of Islam with a number of kiyai. As the author of Pegon Islamic texts, however, Salih is definitely a unique Javanese ulama. Not only did he initiate this scholarship but his works have become a foundation upon which the tradition of Pegon texts has been developed by later Javanese ulama. Thanks to the print mode of production his works were widely dispersed in large numbers throughout Java, and the popularity of his books encouraged other ulama to follow in his footsteps. Salih’s Pegon books contributed significantly to the understanding of orthodox Islamic ideas and proper performance of Islamic rituals among

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66 Toha Putra, for example, set two criteria for books to be published: following the Sunni school and in the interest of Muslim society. Interview with Salwa, the marketing manager of the company, in Semarang on June 9, 2009
lay Javanese people who had never studied in the pesantren. His and other ulama writing in Pegon encouraged many to become local kiyai and attain the religious authority appreciated by their communities. Salih, therefore, did not only participate in maintaining and strengthening Islamic orthodoxy among the santri communities through his role as teacher of his students; but even more importantly he led an effort in establishing and widening Islamic orthodoxy among Javanese people beyond the pesantren.
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This dissertation has argued that Salih Darat and the introduction of Pegon Islamic texts contributed greatly to the increasing Islamic orthodoxy of the Javanese people since the late nineteenth century. It explains that, despite the widely-held view that Javanese Islam was syncretic and mystical, Islamic orthodoxy was wide-spread in the northern coast of Java as a result of the Pegon Islamic texts and their use in langgar/musalla and mosques. The popularity and success of these Pegon books was principally due to the role of Salih Darat in “localizing” the contents, or using Javanese terms and ideas to clarify and make Islamic orthodoxy comprehensible to the vast majority of the Javanese not studying in the traditional Islamic educational institution, the pesantren.

Javanese Islam has been long represented as being heavily influenced by indigenous Javanese cultural ideas of kejawen. The majority of Javanese Muslims, it has been argued, are nominal Muslims known as abangan. Scholars generally explain this phenomenon as the result of deeply rooted pre-Islamic belief of animism and Hindu-Buddhism before the introduction of Islam. In addition, the Islam arriving in Java came through India and was mixed with Indian belief systems. The shift of political power from the northern coastal area of Demak to Mataram in the interior of central Java in the second half of the sixteenth century also contributed to the strength of syncretic Islam among the Javanese. In van Leur’s words, the local culture was deep and persistent, and outside ideas were “thin, easily flaking glaze on the massive body of indigenous
Two manuscripts from the sixteenth century, however, show that, despite the dominant syncretic mysticism of Javanese Islam at the time, there was evidence of the development of orthodoxy since the early period of Islamization. They contain Islamic teachings that are fully in accord with orthodox principles of Islam and are written in the Javanese language using the Javanese script. Although no other written sources have been uncovered since then, it is believed that orthodox teachings were being continuously taught in Java by a minority of committed Muslims. Certain incidents appear to confirm this idea of the persistent presence of pious Muslims on Java. For example, thousands of people were killed by Amangkurat I in the mid-seventeenth century, and it is believed that many were kiyai and their families. The majority of supporters of the Java War (1825-1830) were fervent Muslims, attracted to Dipanegara as a Muslim leader rather than as a Javanese prince. Some “agrarian unrests” in several areas of Java during the nineteenth century were also led by pious Muslims. Although the religious ideas and

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practices of these individuals are not known, most scholars agree that the motivations of these movements were religious.

The emergence of Pegon books in the nineteenth century, therefore, can be considered as an affirmation of persistent orthodox teachings among minority Muslims in Java. The two sixteenth century manuscripts are evidence that Islamic orthodoxy was present in Java from the beginning of the Islamization process, but it only began to make inroads in the society with the introduction of Salih Darat’s Pegon Islamic books in the late nineteenth century. The motivation for Salih Darat was the realization that the common people wanted to know how to perform Islamic religious obligations and to know the meaning of the rituals. He therefore decided to compose Islamic texts in Pegon with the main intention of educating the common people about Islam. His inspiration for the use of Pegon would have come from his awareness that similar efforts in the vernacular were being made in Malay, Persian, Turkish, and Urdu.

Salih’s Pegon Islamic texts conformed with Sunni orthodox teaching. In fiqh it is evident in his discussion of the pillars of Islam and in human relationships based on classical Arabic texts whose authoritative value was widely accepted. In theology, orthodoxy is manifest in Salih’s discussion of the middle way between free will and predestination, and in the importance of understanding God’s attributes. And in Sufism, conformity is visible in the doctrine that Sufism is inseparable from fiqh and in the emphasis on increasing personal piety rather than seeking a unity with God. All of these teachings were conveyed in Javanese using a number of local words to express Islamic ideas and also inserting certain local elements into Islamic practices. For example, the words *Gusti, Pengeran, Bendoro, Tuan,* and *Panjenengan* are used frequently for God,
while kanjeng, wong agung, and panduko are used for the Prophet. Iman (faith) is expressed with ngestoake, mahabbah (love) with demen and nikah (marriage) with laki and rabi. Distributing foods to neighbors, friends, and relatives, which is known in Java as slametan, is endorsed as long as it is not held to commemorate the dead at certain fixed days as was the Javanese practice. Interpreting a woman’s character from her physical body, known among the Javanese as katuranggan, is an example of Javanese ideas being incorporated into Islamic practice.

In order to maintain orthodox principles, however, Pegon books mention some Javanese practices which are unacceptable. Among them is the belief in deities and local spirits, and in making offerings (sesajen) at special locations to ward off ill-fortune. The Javanese scrupulously adhere to auspicious days, which are determined by a combination of the seven day week and the five day week in the Javanese cycle, known as pasaran. Specific auspicious days are recommended for conducting critical events, such as circumcision, marriage, or starting a business. This custom is rejected as having nothing to do with Islam. A Javanese mystical idea that one may unite with God, manunggaling kawulo gusti, is another Javanese concept that is spurned as being against Sunni teaching. Performing rituals such as prayer and fasting in ways that are not prescribed in fiqh is regarded as totally incorrect. All these characteristics are cited to demonstrate that localization of Islam in Pegon books avoided anything that contradicted the principles of Islamic orthodoxy.

Despite the rejection of some pre-Islamic ideas and practices, it is clear that there were certain accommodations between pre-Islamic and Islamic ideas, such as the slametan. By stating that the aim of this ritual feasting was to provide charity (sadaqah),
the pre-Islamic practice of slametan was transformed into an Islamic ritual. To commemorate the dead, a slametan is held on a precise number of days after death. Basing the day of the commemoration in this pre-Islamic formula was condemned by Salih, which led to the end of the practice. Among santri communities, practicing slametan on the seventh day after the death, for example, is not conducted on the exact seventh day, but a day earlier or later.\textsuperscript{6} For them the importance of slametan is not the particular day of the commemoration, but the collective prayer (do’a) to God for the salvation of the deceased and by the distribution of sadaqah to the people, hence bringing blessings to the deceased. Contrary to what some scholars have argued, this is not indigenous practice in an Islamic garb, but rather an Islamic practice in indigenous garb.

When Geertz argues that slametan is an indigenous practice, he is basing his statement only on abangan practice. Although he mentions the fact that santri also perform slametan, he does not explore the idea in the view of santri variant. Geertz’s argument that Javanese Islam among the abangan is centered on the slametan and is syncretic is correct. However, to equally argue that santri’s religiosity is also syncretic partly because they also conduct slametan is not totally accurate. As the Pegon books have demonstrated, the santri have retained certain pre-Islamic ideas and practices as long as do not contravene orthodox principles.

Print and the use of vernacular language were two significant factors in greatly improving the accessibility of Pegon books for the Javanese. Adopted by Southeast Asian Muslims by the nineteenth century, print proved invaluable in increasing the number of

\textsuperscript{6} This is based on my personal observation of santri practices in Pati, Central Java.
Islamic texts in circulation. As Proudfoot notes, the estimated number of extant Malay manuscripts (about 10,000) was reached through print production in only two weeks during the peak of Muslim publication in Singapore.\(^7\) The introduction of postage and better transportation facilitated the distribution of Pegon printed books to a wider readership. The combination of the greater accessibility of Pegon Islamic texts through print production and the localization of Islamic orthodox ideas in Pegon by Salih Darat and his successors enabled far greater numbers of ordinary Javanese to strengthen their knowledge of Islamic ideas and practices. Many Javanese with no Arabic could now access Islamic texts through Pegon texts, thus reducing their dependence upon teachers to explain the meaning of Arabic words. Nevertheless, there was still some need for Islamic teachers.

The growth in the number and circulation of Pegon books contributed to the emergence of local ulama (known as \textit{kiyai langgar} or \textit{kiyai kampung}). Those who graduated from the pesantren but had no lineal or intellectual authorities to lead pesantren are still respected as kiyai in their capacity as Islamic educators. Located at a mosque or musalla, the local ulama teach Islamic knowledge to common people by using the Pegon books. Through the activity known as pengajian, many came without books but listened to the exposition by the local ulama based on the Pegon texts.

The writing of Pegon books continued to develop in the twentieth century. A number of Javanese ulama have written Pegon books on more branches of Islamic knowledge. Like Salih, they were locally born, educated in the pesantren, and some also

\(^7\) Ian Proudfoot, \textit{Early Malay Printed Books} (Kuala Lumpur: Academy of Malay Studies and the Library University of Malaya, 1993), 50
studied with ulama in Mecca. Their style of writing differed from that of Salih. For example, a few use the higher Javanese register known as *kromo*, rather than the *ngoko* of everyday speech. On works of commentaries on Arabic classical texts, they provide interlinear translations, which Salih never did. Rhymed texts are produced by a few of them. Despite these differences, however, these later Pegon writers were clearly indebted to Salih. They all continue Salih’s tradition of using only Arabic classical texts that are recognized as providing authoritative teaching of Sunni orthodoxy in jurisprudence, theology, and Sufism.

Islamic texts written by Javanese ulama in the Javanese language using a familiar Arabic script were ideal for teaching Islamic orthodoxy to the general populace. Understanding local culture enabled these ulama to explain some of the Islamic concepts that would have been influenced by Arabic culture. In this regard the Pegon books can be considered to be comparable to those written in Malay (Jawi) by such Malay scholars as Abd al-Rauf al-Sinkili, Yusuf al-Maqassari, Abd al-Samad al-Falimbani, which contributed to the strong Islamic character of Malay culture. Although Pegon books never achieved the same status or influence as the Malay books in Jawi, they did have a significant influence on a large number of Javanese, particularly on the santri groups.

By means of the Pegon books, the Javanese Muslims came to understand that they were as eligible for God’s mercy as their fellow Arab Muslims. It was Salih who emphasized the universality of Islam and argued that, though the Prophet was an Arab, Islam was a revelation intended for all humankind. Being a good Muslim, therefore, was

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not dependent upon one’s knowledge of the Arabic language, but upon one’s commitment to observe religious obligations and maintain a good character. This argument was obviously well-received by Javanese Muslims, for his Pegon books have continued to be studied and frequently republished to meet the strong demand throughout Java.

It should be acknowledged that the orthodox teachings in Pegon Islamic texts did not succeed in totally eradicating pre-Islamic beliefs among the Javanese. Some Javanese cultural practices that are contrary to Islam continue to exist, especially among non-Santri communities. While the effectiveness of the Pegon texts in propagating Islamic orthodoxy is undeniable, there are still Muslim Javanese who regard the ancient beliefs as equally important and are reluctant to reject them in their daily lives. Nevertheless, some progress toward Islamic orthodoxy is clearly evident, particularly among santri communities, which continue to transform pre-Islamic ideas into acceptable orthodox ones.

In this dissertation I have tried to show that localizing Islamic ideas through Pegon texts did not deviate from orthodox Islamic teaching. On the contrary, it enabled the common people to understand more fully the teachings of Islam and learn to perform orthodox Islamic rituals in the proper manner. The belief that Javanese Islam was syncretic and heavily influenced by pre-Islamic indigenous ideas is certainly not valid for many Javanese. As a result of the publication of the Pegon books in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries dedicated to introducing greater Islamic orthodoxy to the Javanese, there would have been many exposed to these accessible books. Many Javanese were eager to become more orthodox, and these books enabled them to learn
proper orthodox practices through an intermediary, in many cases, the kiyai langgar and kiyai kampong. This study has argued that, while orthodox ideas were present in Java since the sixteenth century, they became increasingly prominent from the late nineteenth century as a result of the publications of Islamic texts in Pegon, particularly through the path-breaking localization methods employed by Salih Darat.
GLOSSARY

abangan  nominal or non-practicing Muslims; literally “the red ones”
aqad  legal transaction
aji  holy writ, sacred texts, worth
  ngaji  learning religious knowledge
  pengajian  activity of learning religious knowledge
awam  common, lay person
babad  Javanese chronicle on past stories
bandongan  learning method where a teacher reads texts and students take notes
barakah  blessing
bedug  large drum made of cattle skin
bid'ah (pl. bida‘)  innovation, heresy
bay‘ (pl. buyu‘)  trade
danyang  deity
dēmēn  love
dhikr  remembering God
du‘a/do‘a  invocation, pray
dosa  sin
fajr  dawn
falak  astronomy
farḍu  obligation
farḍu ‘ain  individual obligation
farḍu kifayah  communal obligation
fiqh  Islamic jurisprudence
ghusl  taking a bath
ḥadīth  Prophet’s tradition; also new, created
ḥadath  impurity
halāl  permitted, lawful
ḥarām  prohibited
ḥāshiyah  gloss
hayd  menstruation
hikayat  Malay chronicle
ibadat  worship
ijma‘  consensus among the community of the faithful
ilmu hakekat  science of reality
ikhlas  sincerity
iman  faith
istihāḍah  chronic bleeding
ijazah  certificate
juz  part (of the Qur’an)
kafir  unbeliever
khawf  afraid
khitbah  courtship
kiyai   Islamic scholars; teachers
kitab   religious texts; literally “book”
kitab kuning  classical Islamic texts in Arabic; lit. “yellow books”
kromo   refined style of Javanese
kuwoso   powerful
langgar   prayer house
madhhab   school of thought
manunggaling kawulo-gusti  unity between servant and the Lord
matn   basic texts
ma’ṣiyat   disobedience
mèriem   cannon
mu’amat   human relation, social life
mukhtaṣar   abridgement
musalla   prayer house
naʃfu   desire
naʃis   dirty
naḥwu   Arabic grammar
niyyah   intention
nifās   post-natal bleeding
nikah   marriage
ningali   to see
nisab   minimum amount of wealth that subject to alms
ngoko   lowest stratified style of Javanese
nyilih   to borrow
pamoring kawulo-gusti  unity between servant and the Lord
Pangeran/Pèngeran Lord
pangulu/pengulu   religious officials
pasaran  Javanese five-day cycle
pesantren  traditional Islamic boarding school
priyayi   members of Javanese aristocrats
qalb (pl. qulūb) heart
rizq   means of living
rūḥ   soul
rūkū’   bowing
rūkūn (pl. arkān)   basic element
šabr/sabar  patience
šadaqa/sedekah charity
šalāt/salat  prayer
šalāt al-jamā’ah   collective prayer
sanad   intellectual chain
santri   student of pesantren; practicing Muslims
şaraf   Arabic morphology
sedekah bumi annual village celebration to honor guardian spirits
sembahyang  prayer
serat   Javanese chronicle on religious stories
sēsajen offering (made of foods) for spirits
shahadah acknowledgment that there is no god but Allah and Muhammad is His messenger
shakl vowel mark
sharaḥ commentary
shukr gratitude
silsilah intellectual or mystical chain
sifāt wājibāt necessary attributes
sifāt mustaḥfīlāt impossible attributes
sifat jāʾizah possible attribute
ṣiyam/ṣawm fasting
sorogan learning method where a student reads texts in front of a teacher
suksma innermost soul
{suluk Javanese religious literary works
sunnah the Prophet’s tradition; recommended
sūrah chapter
syair Malay verse on various topics
swarga heaven
tafṣīr Qur’anic exegeses
ṭahārah religious purification
tapa asceticsm
ṭarīqah/tarekat sufi order
taqlid unconditional acceptance
tarjamah translation
taṣawuf Islamic mysticism
tawbah repentance
tawḥīd Islamic theology
tawakkul God-reliance
tayammum purification with dust
ṭāʿat obedience
ulama Islamic scholars
ummah Muslim community
utang debt
wali authorized agent of the bride or male guardian; saint
waqf charitable bequest
wong cilik peasants
wuḍu ablution
zakat alms tax
zuhd renunciation
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