

Patterns of Strengthening Conservative Muslims in the Middle of Culture *Wasathiyah* Madurese Society: PAI Approach to Religious Moderation

Mufiqur Rahman,

Al-Khairat Pamekasan Islamic Institute
maufiqurrahmansurahman@gmail.com

Nasiba Mirzayeva Bakhtiyar Kizi

English teacher at Tashkent State University of Uzbekistan
nasiba.mirzaeva.98@bk.ru

Abstract

Conservatism hits all religions, including Islam. Muslim conservatives have found momentum in the last decade as identity politics divides the nation. This study aims to describe the problem of depression in Muslim analysis amid the wasathiyah culture of the Madurese people. This study uses a qualitative approach with the main data network in-depth interviews with religious leaders, activists, academics, and the government. And also direct data observations with the community with relatively long observations, researchers also use documents from several online mass media, BPS data. The data collection technique was carried out purposefully, and data analysis was carried out using Aceberg's theory and U analysis. This study found that the pattern of strengthening Muslim destruction in Pamekasan was through the praxis of religious intolerance and aggressiveness, such as burning tourist attractions and besieging the homes of state officials. The action was carried out due to low knowledge, political sociology, and the influence of Wahhabi salafi ideology. The most responsive Islamic organization is Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). Meanwhile, other mass organizations, such as Muhammadiyah, are less responsive to cases of violence of this kind.

Keywords: conservative Muslim; siege of official's house; burning of tourist attractions

Introduction

Pamekasan is one of the districts in Madura, which is known as the city of the gate of greetings (Islamic community movement).¹ The greeting gate is an icon of the city, which is geographically located at the central point of Madura Island. The society is religious, and in harmony with the cultural realities of society, there are those who live in peace and harmony.² Madurese people have an emotional closeness to the Kyai and Ulama; in other words, Madurese people obey the Kyai and Ulama.³ Even Kyai in Madura also have a dual role; apart from being spiritual educators, they are also role models in the community's political choices.⁴ This value of obedience is reflected in the Madura terms Buppa, Babbu, Guru, and Ban Rato (Father, Mother, Teacher, and Government Leader).⁵

However, in recent cases, violence after violence has occurred in this city. *The* tragedy of October 5, 2020, namely the burning of a tourist location, the mob burned down the tourist spot under the pretext of religion.⁶ Apart from several findings that explain that the masses have carried out procedures to request the closure of tourist attractions for several reasons, this burning tragedy remains a practice of violence that cannot be justified both from the perspective of religious law and the positive law that applies in Indonesia.

This kind of vigilante practice shows the seeds of religious aggressiveness, or what can be called religious conservatism. According to one Madurese community figure, social reality has a very strong influence on expressions of violence carried out in the name of religion. Aside from the violent flow of community organizations (ormas), many

¹ Ibnu Ali and Ali Tohir, "ANALISIS FUNGSIONALISME STRUKTURAL UNTUK MELIHAT OPTIMALITAS PELAKSANAAN GERBANG SALAM DI PAMEKASAN," *NUANSA: Jurnal Penelitian Ilmu Sosial Dan Keagamaan Islam* 15, no. 1 (2018): 23–52.

² Nor Hasan, "Kerukunan Intern Umat Beragama Di Kota Gerbang Salam (Melacak Peran Forum Komunikasi Ormas Islam [Fokus] Pamekasan)," *NUANSA: Jurnal Penelitian Ilmu Sosial Dan Keagamaan Islam* 12, no. 2 (2015): 415–44.

³ Hasanatul Jannah, "Pondok Pesantren Sebagai Pusat Otoritas Ulama Madura," *Jurnal Al-Hikmah* 17, no. 2 (2019): 79–94.

⁴ Merlia Indah Prastiwi, "Politisasi Pesantren Dan Pergeseran Fungsi Pesantren Di Madura," *KARSA: Jurnal Sosial Dan Budaya Keislaman* 23, no. 2 (2015): 208–20.

⁵ Nasrullah Nasrullah, "Islam Nusantara: Analisis Relasi Islam Dan Kearifan Lokal Budaya Madura," *Al-Irfan: Journal of Arabic Literature and Islamic Studies* 2, no. 2 (2019): 274–97.

⁶ Nasrullah.

of the violent perpetrators in various cases were members of large groups who were prepared to die for *habaib*.⁷

The next fact that happened in Pamekasan was the siege of a public official's house on December 1, 2020. The mob was acting in the name of the Madurese Pamekasan Muslims. ^[8] This incident adds a new record and tarnishes Pamekasan's good name as a city of Islamic students. The siege of a state official's house by a mob of *Habib* lovers was a form of protest to the government for the release of *Habib Rizik* from the law. HRS fans actually persecuted the mother of a state official who was at home at the time.

According to Marsana, conservative religious expressions with the phenomenon of violence and intolerance that occurred in Pamekasan under the pretext of protecting *Ulama'/habaib*, or in the name of religion, cannot be seen in partial terms, but must be examined from all aspects. There may be a connection between social factors, poverty and perhaps also culture, law, education and politics. ⁸ This means that violence is not always purely due to religious factors alone, but behind religion there are also many factors that provide encouragement and triggers for violence and the practice of religious extremism. However, apart from religion being a source of conflict, religion can also be a source of harmony in society.

The phenomenon of the increasing level of participation of the Pamekasan community in mass organizations such as the former FPI (Islamic Defenders Front), especially in the northern and western Pamekasan communities (*Samatan, Palenggaan, Pakong, Waru, and Tamberru Pasean* areas), which in the interim study became the base of the former FPI.

Ach Khoiri and Muhammad Nurulhuda also revealed that there are several *pesantren* in Pamekasan that have been influenced by the concept of HTI, which they believe is the beginning of conservatism in Pamekasan. The research carried out in 2019 aims to protect the *Salaf pesantren* so that their understanding is not exposed.⁹ This research provides confidence that there has been mass mobilization towards Islamic

⁷ Ali and Tohir, "Analisis Fungsionalisme Struktural Untuk Melihat Optimalitas Pelaksanaan Gerbang Salam di Pamekasan."

⁸ Fajar Khaswara and R Yuli Ahmad Hambali, "Conflict Theory According to Johan Galtung," in *Gunung Djati Conference Series*, vol. 4, 2021, 650–61.

⁹ Ach Khoiri, "Metode Pencegahan Penyebaran Paham Islam Anti-Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia Pasca Pembubaran Hizbut Indonesia Pada Pondok Pesantren Salaf di Pamekasan," *VOICE JUSTISIA: Jurnal Hukum Dan Keadilan* 3, no. 2 (2019): 1–25.

conservatism by incorporating HTI ideology through Islamic boarding schools in Pamekasan. Although there are other studies that contradict Asch's study, Khairi and Muhammad Nurulhuda regarding the existence of Islamic boarding schools that are exposed to HTI understanding is called stigmatization. However, the author doubts the stigmatization statement because it will obscure the issue.

Another finding that makes this author's research into an interesting study on Islamic studies and conservatism in Pamekasan, the most important in the findings in this research, will be providing space for discussion and exchange on the findings of Zainul Hamdi's research, which found harmony between Islamic groups in Bangkalan, namely between the FPI and NU. Hamdi claimed that there was peace in Bangkalan as a result of NU's ability to combine the FPI group's leadership, putting FPI under the control of NU figures.¹⁰ Can't NU in Pamekasan take steps to merge NU's leadership with other mass organizations that are considered conservative in Pamekasan? Is the fact of violence in the name of religion in Pamekasan a failure of NU because it was unable to carry out practical practices like what was done in Bangkalan?

The research conducted by brothers Ach Khoiri and Muhammad Nurulhuda was entitled about methods of preventing the spread of Islamic ideas anti-Unitary Republic of Indonesia after the dissolution of HTI at the Pamekasan Salaf Islamic Boarding School. This research is motivated by the existence of several Islamic boarding schools in Pamekasan which have been influenced by the HTI ideology which they believe was the beginning of the conservatism that occurred in Pamekasan. The research carried out in 2019 aims to protect Salaf Islamic boarding schools so that they are not exposed to the ex-HTI ideology.¹¹ This research provides confidence that there has been mass mobilization towards Islamic conservatism by incorporating HTI ideology through Islamic boarding schools in Pamekasan. This is different from the author's aim, which is to look for factors that strengthen conservatism in society's culture, wasatiyyah in Pamekasan, with a sociological analysis approach.

Research conducted by Ibnu Ali and Mujiburrahman in 2020 regarding the attitude of local Islamic organizations in Pamekasan towards religious radicalism. This research

¹⁰ Ahmad Zainul Hamdi, "Radicalizing Indonesian Moderate Islam from within: The NU-FPI Relationship in Bangkalan, Madura," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 7, no. 1 (2013): 71–95.

¹¹ Khoiri, "Metode Pencegahan Penyebaran Paham Islam Anti-Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia Pasca Pembubaran Hizbut Indonesia Pada Pondok Pesantren Salaf Di Pamekasan."

produces the views and perceptions of Islamic mass organizations such as NU, Muhammadiyah, SI, Persis, Hidayatullah and FPI regarding their views regarding religious radicalism. It is certain that all mass organizations in Pamekasan in this research reject religious radicalism. Although there are those who claim that religious radicalism is only limited to stigmatization.¹² This research provides an illustration of mass organizations' rejection of religious radicalism, but a small number consider this issue to be limited to stigma. The author doubts the stigmatization statement because it will obscure the issue.

Samsul Arifin's research is entitled *Youth and Fundamentalist Islam: A Study of the Role of Youth in Responding to Fundamentalist Ideology in Pamekasan District, Madura*. This research shows that public awareness of the reality of differences is relatively high. Pamekasan is mature enough to face differences in sects and even different religions. Samsul's research only focuses on youth views on the multicultural reality of Pamekasan, both ethnically and religiously. This research does not touch on people's views on current issues such as violence in the name of religion that has occurred in Pamekasan.¹³ The results of this research are in contrast to the recent case in Pamekasan, which showed the face of extreme Islam with the burning of tourist attractions and the siege of the house of the parents of one of the state officials.¹⁴

The next research was conducted by Zainal Abidin et al., entitled Terror in the Name of Jihad in the View of the Madurese Islamic Boarding School Community: A Case Study of the Mambaul Ulum Bata-bata Islamic Boarding School and the Al-Amien Prenduan Islamic Boarding School, Sumenep. Research conducted in 2018 resulted in the conclusion that the involvement of Islamic boarding school alumni in acts of terrorism made the Western world and the government suspect that Islamic boarding schools were nests of terrorists, causing Islamic boarding school education to be questioned.¹⁵

The research provides information that the two Islamic boarding schools never called for theoretical action, either in the formal education process (classes) or in the

¹² Ibnu Ali and Mujiburrahman Mujiburrahman, "Sikap Ormas-Ormas Islam Lokal Di Pamekasan Terhadap Radikalisme Agama," *KABILAH: Journal of Social Community* 5, no. 2 (2020): 1–14.

¹³ Samsul Arifin, "Pemuda Dan Islam Fundamental" (Surabaya: UIN Sunan Ampel, 2018).

¹⁴ Zainal Abidin et al., "TEROR ATAS NAMA JIHAD DALAM PANDANGAN CIVITAS PESANTREN MADURA (STUDI KASUS PESANTREN MAMBAUL ULUM BATA-BATA PAMEKASAN DAN PESANTREN AL-AMIEN PRENDUAN SUMENEP)," *Istiqro* 16, no. 01 (2018): 235–66.

¹⁵ Hamdi, "Radicalizing Indonesian Moderate Islam from within: The NU-FPI Relationship in Bangkalan, Madura."

recitation of books. In relation to this research, it shows that Islamic boarding schools in Madura, especially the two Islamic boarding schools studied, are sterile to calls for terror in the name of jihad. So the author made Pamekasan Muslims the locus of this research.

The most important thing in the findings of this research will be to provide space for discussion and exchange on the results of Zainul Hamdi's research findings, which found harmony between Islamic groups in Bangkalan, namely between FPI and NU. Hamdi claimed that there was peace in Bangkalan as a result of NU's ability to combine the FPI group's leadership, putting FPI under the control of NU figures.¹⁶

Therefore, this research will identify more deeply the patterns and factors of increasing religious conservatism in the culture of the Wasatiyyah Pamekasan people. The author wants to examine in more depth how conservative Muslims in the wasatiyyah culture of Madurese society are strengthening. How have NU and other mass organizations in Pamekasan responded to this fact? So the title of this research is Patterns of Strengthening Conservative Muslims in the Wasatiyyah Culture of Pamekasan Society.

Research Methods

This research uses a qualitative approach with a phenomenological type of study.¹⁷ To obtain deeper data from data sources in the context of the study.¹⁸ With emergent designs, this plan can develop and open according to the context.¹⁹ The subjects of this research were religious figures, relevant governments, and Kyai at Islamic boarding schools in Pamekasan district, especially in the northern part, which is an area with religious conservatism. This research was analyzed using Iceberg theory and the U process model.²⁰

Data collection strategies and techniques in this research used observation strategies, in-depth interviews, FGDs, and documentation studies. Survey data as supplemental data. Data analysis was carried out using various approaches, both

¹⁶ Ahmad Zainul Hamdi, "The Radicalization of Contemporary Educated Indonesian: A Case Study of University Students in Yogyakarta," *Kasetsart Journal of Social Sciences* 44, no. 1 (2023): 155–62.

¹⁷ John W Creswell, "Penelitian Kualitatif & Desain Riset," *Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar*, 2015, 1–634.

¹⁸ Creswell.

¹⁹ Y S Lincon and Egon G Guba, "Naturalistic Inquiry. Beverly Hills," *CA: Sage Publications. Lee, WS (2001). Parents Divorce and Their Duty to Support the Expense of Bringing up Their Child. Asian Women* 13, no. 1 (1985): 85–105.

²⁰ Wildani Hefni, "Pengaruhutamaan Moderasi Beragama Generasi Milenial Melalui Gerakan Siswa Moderat Di Kabupaten Lumajang," *Smart: Jurnal Studi Masyarakat, Religi Dan Tradisi* 8, no. 2 (2022): 163–75.

sociologically and politically.²¹ The data analysis technique for this research uses Miles and Huberman data analysis techniques, namely data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions or verification [6] more carefully. Credibility checks were carried out by data triangulation.²²

Discussion

Strengthening Conservative Muslims in Pamekasan

The tendency to strengthen conservative Muslims in Pamekasan is characterized by aggressiveness and violence in enforcing a group of Muslims in *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*. As Azra said, conservative Muslims are characterized by aggressiveness in their religion, and upholding itamar ma'ruf is not welcome, as is inviting his followers. Conservative Muslims are usually too aggressive in believing in absolute truth; therefore, followers of other religions must be "saved" and brought to the path they believe is the path to salvation.²³ Although religious conservatism, in Azra's view, also occurs in other religions,²⁴ erized by aggressiveness and violence in enforcing a group of Muslims in amar ma'ruf nahi munkar. As Azra said, conservative Muslims are characterized by aggressiveness in their religion, and upholding itamar ma'ruf is not welcome, as is inviting his followers. Conservative Muslims are usually too aggressive in believing in absolute truth; therefore, followers of other religions must be "saved" and brought to the path they believe is the path to salvation. 16 Although religious conservatism, in Azra's view, also occurs in other religions,²⁵

It was the phenomenon of a tendency to strengthen religious conservatism in Madura.²⁶ It is proven that the recent violence in Pamekasan in the name of religion occurred because of people's understanding of religion. The fact that those who commit violence in the name of religion are merely cooperating with it explains this lack of

²¹ S Start, "Introduction to Data Analysis Handbook Migrant & Seasonal Head Start Technical Assistance Center Academy for Educational Development," *Journal of Academic* 2, no. 3 (2006): 6–8.

²² Mattheu B Miles and A Michael Huberman, "Qualitative Data Analysis: A Sourcebook of New Methods," in *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Sourcebook of New Methods*, 1984, 263.

²³ Azyumardi Azra, *Pendidikan Islam: Tradisi Dan Modernisasi Di Tengah Tantangan Milenium III* (Prenada Media, 2019).

²⁴ Azyumardi Azra, "Pergolakan Politik Islam: Dari Fundamentalisme, Modernisme Hingga Post-Modernisme," (*No Title*), n.d.

²⁵ Azra, *Pendidikan Islam: Tradisi Dan Modernisasi Di Tengah Tantangan Milenium III*.

²⁶ Hefni, "Pengaruhutamaan Moderasi Beragama Generasi Milenial Melalui Gerakan Siswa Moderat Di Kabupaten Lumajang."

religious knowledge. They follow figures they think are right. Strangely, the religious figures they follow are kyai, who have influence.²⁷ So one of the conditions for being moderate, freeing yourself from extreme behavior, and taking the law into your own hands is sufficient knowledge.²⁸ So that people can take the middle path that observes *mafsadah and maslahah* as a concrete definition in behaving and taking decisions taught by religion.²⁹

Religious leaders, specifically Kyai, who have a strict and conservative fundamentalist understanding of religion that is still present in Pamekasan, order violence in the name of religion. Usually, these kyai, in the context of Sharia, are very strict and even tend to take the law into their own hands. The Kyai, who incidentally are members of a group willing to die for *habaib*, are also an active group in voicing the criminalization of *ulama*. The tendency for conservatism in religion in Pamekasan is postulated to have occurred in several cases, including the siege of state officials' houses. Burning of tourist attractions suspected of being places of immorality. A religious group that most definitely did not represent academic groups like NU and Muhammadiyah led a siege of a state official's home in Pamekasan. This group is called *Habaib Lovers*. This means that the above cases of violence occurred outside the control of the largest mass organization in Pamekasan, namely NU. In the author's view, this fact means that NU in Pamekasan must pay attention to alternative steps in fostering religious moderation in the community.³⁰ As a mass organization, we should be able to guard a more peaceful and harmonious community life. In fact, NU is also called the mass organization closest to society as the custodian of traditions.³¹

The cases of burning down tourist sites and the siege of state officials' houses in Pamekasan have the same motive, namely the tendency to take the law into their own hands in the name of religion due to a lack of trust in law enforcers. In the author's view, this tendency to distrust law enforcement or the government is an action that needs further

²⁷ Masdar Hilmy, "Kepemimpinan Modern Berbasis Karakter Pesantren," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam (Journal of Islamic Education Studies)* 7, no. 2 (2019): 89–106.

²⁸ Muh Khoiril Rifa'i, "Internalisasi Nilai-Nilai Religius Berbasis Multikultural Dalam Membentuk Insan Kamil," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 4, no. 1 (2016): 117–33.

²⁹ Abdul Mu'ti, "Akar Pluralisme Dalam Pendidikan Muhammadiyah," *Afkaruna: Indonesian Interdisciplinary Journal of Islamic Studies* 12, no. 1 (2016): 1–42.

³⁰ A Busyairi Harits, *Islam NU: Pengawal Tradisi Sunni Indonesia* (Khalista, 2010).

³¹ Ali Topan, "Toleransi Antar Umat Beragama; Studi Kasus Network Gusdurian Pamekasan Madura," *ENTITA: Jurnal Pendidikan Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial Dan Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial* 5, no. 1 (2023): 105–22.

study. Because in the Islamic concept, the government is called Umar, which must be obeyed as long as it does not conflict with religion. 'Umar or Ulil Amri In al-Ghazali's view, it must be obeyed and trusted so that in the life of the religious community, Umara places himself as the part that must be followed and obeyed after Allah and his Messenger.³² So the underlying reason for distrust in the government must be sought so that it is not biased. Religious community organizations such as NU are needed that place religion as a source of teachings that bring religion and the state together in a dialogic and mutually trusting relationship so that it becomes a capital in preaching.³³ So that any movement group in society continues to ensure that religious law and state law remain dialogical and do not conflict.

Politics and Conservatism

The strengthening of conservatism in Pamekasan is also influenced by politics, as in Azra's view, conservative Muslims in one study emerged and were born due to many factors, one of which is the factor of community tradition, which is more synonymous with Islam and Dutch propaganda with the term inferiority complex, a fear of rising resistance from Muslims.³⁴ Another factor is the political factor. Kikue Hamayotsu mentioned the term conservatism in the Indonesian context, with a conservative turn. The term put forward by Martin in 2013 was the return of Muslims to a strong understanding that religion is the basis of politics. According to Hamayotsu, all ethnic and religious conflicts in Indonesia will return to the issue of political competition.³⁵

So in the author's view, politics is the main factor in the strengthening of religious conservatism in Pamekasan. Domestic political issues that have attracted the public's attention have attracted a group of people who are not "satisfied" with politics and feel it is "unfair," making it easy for religious groups in Pamekasan society to commit violence as a form of rejection and resistance from the religious community. So what Kikue

³² Harits, *Islam NU: Pengawal Tradisi Sunni Indonesia*.

³³ Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali, "Kimiya'al-Sa'adah," *Kimia Ruhani Untuk Kebahagiaan Abadi. Terjemahan Dedi Slamet Riyadi Dan Fauzi Bahreisy. Jakarta: Penerbit Zaman, 2001.*

³⁴ "Konservatisme Agama (2) | Republika Online," accessed January 3, 2024, https://news.republika.co.id/berita/pwam8a282/konservatisme-agama-2#google_vignette.

³⁵ Irvan Tasnur and Zulkarnain Zulkarnain, "Melacak Akar Dan Perkembangan Konservatisme Islam Dalam Dinamika Perpolitikan Indonesia," *JRP (Jurnal Review Politik)* 9, no. 1 (2019): 50–71.

Hamayotsu conveyed with the term conservative turn Martin's phrase alludes to Muslims regaining a firm understanding that politics can be a vehicle for religion.³⁶

Indications of religion becoming a political pillar are central issues such as the Ahok case and other issues that occurred at the national level, which then had an impact at the regional level.³⁷ The massive trend of increasing conservative Islam in Pamekasan in the last 10 years since the explosion of the national issue, which dragged Ahok into alleged insults to the Koran, led to the 212 action, which brought in masses from all regions of Indonesia. Including from Pamekasan.

The masses defending Islam in the 212 action reached thousands with information that the masses were members of the Pamekasan Muslim movement. They rode a bus to Jakarta. 15 large buses and 15 small buses or mini buses. With the information that the largest crowd from Pamekasan Pantura was 7 large buses and 12 small buses, this means that the crowd is greater than Pamekasan Pantura.

Other information about the increase in conservative Islam in Pamekasan was also conveyed by Muhammadiyah youth activist Matnin. The Muhammadiyah activist stated that the increase in conservative Islam in Pamekasan cannot be separated from political factors.

There has been a division of the nation, at least in the practical political competition in 2014, where Prabowo's supporters were referred to by political observers as hard-line Islamists. This observer's statement can be seen in the results of the 2019 election. Bringing the truth to Madura, especially in Pamekasan, the majority of Madurese people support Prabowo. This means that Pabowo won in Madura. This means that Prabowo's masses are dominant in Madura, especially in Pamekasan. This shows that Prabowo's supporters are hard-line Muslims, as observers have alleged, and perhaps also the results of analysis by national political observers. The increase in conservative Muslims can also be caused by practical political factors, which make the Pamekasan people active in responding to the fact that many of Prabowo's supporters are from hardline Islamic circles.

This means that in this context, Pamekasan is a district that is serious about guarding this case with massive movements to raise funds and also well-prepared

³⁶ Tasnur and Zulkarnain.

³⁷ Moh Dannur et al., "Madurese Islam: Dissemination Of Multicultural Education in Islamic Religious Streams," *TADRIS: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 18, no. 2 (2023).

departures to Jakarta. The author sees this as shared momentum with good coordination. However, after this action was completed and the aim of this action was completed, this group did not immediately disband itself, but instead became a group vulnerable to violence. leads to collective violence under the pretext of religion, as mentioned by Christopher Duncan. The political activity-driven conservatism that is a common cause of violence in Indonesia. For instance, according to Mietzner & Muhtadi, populism in political contexts both locally and nationally emerged in Indonesia in 2018.³⁸

Influence of Wahhabism

Apart from political factors, there are other factors, as stated by the chairman of the Aswaja Center, explaining that religious conservatism is increasing in Pamekasan in direct proportion to transnational movements such as Wahhabism, which have entered formal educational institutions. Wahhabism in Pamekasan has now become institutionalized through formal educational institutions such as PAUD, Kindergarten, and SD, meaning that the seeds of Wahhabism have entered educational institutions from an early age. NU must anticipate this.

This view was also expressed by the chairman of Lakpesdam NU Pamekasan, who said that the spread of Wahhabism through formal education is a trend towards increasing conservative Muslims in Pamekasan. Therefore, NU, as an Islamic mass organization, is conducting a study on the origins of Wahhabism in Madura. What are the motives and agendas of this movement so that NU can anticipate it well?

The head of the activist for the study of religious moderation, NU Sumenep Higher Education Institute, said regarding the above statement about increasing religious conservatism, Damanhuri said that actually religious conservatism is in Indonesia, nationally, not only in Pamekasan and in Madura specifically. Currently, there has been a significant increase nationally. Damanhuri conveyed the results of a survey conducted by a survey institute published by the ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, which found that 82% of the Indonesian population supported the opinion that women should wear the hijab.

Nationally conservative Islam is increasing because the ISEAS survey results state that. He mentioned that 82% of people support hijab as a necessity. The ISEAS survey

³⁸ Yanwar Pribadi, "Kebangkitan Konservatisme Islam: Politik Identitas Dan Potret Demokrasi Di Indonesia.," *Studia Islamika* 28, no. 2 (2021).

results also stated that Islamic conservatism has also increased because 67% of Indonesians still think that implementing Islamic Sharia will be able to maintain the nation's morals. However, I continue to have doubts about the findings of the IDEAS survey.

The need to strengthen religious moderation education

Damanhuri said that information about increasing religious conservatism in Indonesia could also be seen in Madura, especially in Pamekasan. Many studies view that the rise of conservative Islam in Madura cannot be separated from political issues, especially the 2017–2018 DKI Regional Election and the 2019 presidential election. The religious issue built into these political issues is identity politics. It is as if Jokowi's supporters are called moderate Islam and Prabowo's supporters are called conservative Islam. In fact, the media also takes up space on this public issue. So when Prabowo lost, it was also a defeat for the conservative group. And moderation triumphs. This is the pattern that has resulted in this group's conservatism becoming increasingly crystallized and strong in Madura. Especially when Prabowo chose to become part of power. This makes this group more emotional and more proactive in government policy, even though, coincidentally, the issue of moderation has become a narrative built by the government.

In the author's view, it is very necessary to carry out a religious moderation movement where Ahmad Najib Burhani interprets moderate Islam as a mid-position between liberalism and Islamism. That is, the attitude that is in the middle between liberalism and Islamism is moderate.³⁹ Remembering that it was massive in Madura, especially in Pamekasan, and remembering that there had been violence and intolerance because of another ideology in Sampang, namely the Shia case. Strengthening conservatism will also give birth to religious intolerance, as happened in Sampang Regency with the Shiite case that occurred in 2012 where there was an attack and burning of a place of worship.⁴⁰

The survey above shows that it is haram to say that it is haram to say Merry Christmas, but 28% answered in the affirmative. This shows an intolerant attitude

³⁹ Ahmad Najib Burhani, "Pluralism, Liberalism and Islamism: Religious Outlook of the Muhammadiyah Islamic Movement in Indonesia," *Faculty of Humanities, University of Manchester*, 2007.

⁴⁰ Handrini Ardiyanti, "Konflik Sampang: Sebuah Pendekatan Sosiologi-Komunikasi," *Jurnal Politica Dinamika Masalah Politik Dalam Negeri Dan Hubungan Internasional* 3, no. 2 (2016).

between religious communities by refusing to wish them a Merry Christmas. The second statement, It is permissible to carry out violence against perpetrators of immorality, turns out to be true. 28% agree with this statement. This shows the existence of vigilantism and violence in the name of religion. Then, 4% admitted that they did not agree to accept and not interfere with other religions when carrying out worship activities. This also shows an attitude of intolerance. Then 12% of those who disagree with state law do not conflict with Islamic law. This also shows the rejection of some parts of society regarding state law. And 4% disagree with the statement that Indonesian Islam is a friendly Islam and loves culture. Shows rejection of Indonesian Islam, which is friendly and maintains traditions.⁴¹

The findings of this survey contribute to the persistence of conservative Islam, which is still characterized by intolerant attitudes among both the general public and students. From this survey, the author draws the temporary conclusion that the strengthening of conservative Muslims in Pamekasan is strong but not significant.

The strengthening of religious conservatism is also strengthening due to the growth of new organizations or alliances in Pamekasan such as the Madurese Ulama Alliance (AUMA). The Alliance has the spirit to carry out four targets in Auma's goals, first the Shia movement, second Wahhabi and third liberalism and fourth is religious blasphemy. The Ulama Alliance, which was founded on October 31 2015, was established to protect Madura, especially Pamekasan, as a gate for greetings by enforcing that Nahi munkar is more dominant than amar makruf.⁴² In the view of some people, Auma is said to be a right-leaning religious social organization that is reactionary and tends to be extreme these days.

AUMA is an organization that was born out of unproductiveness or stagnation at BASSRA (Madura Islamic Boarding School Ulama Silaturahmi Agency) to become an organization that is passionate about Islamic issues. AUMA is committed to fighting for Islamic da'wah kaffah by standing up amar ma'rūf nahy munkar and guarding Madura against all kinds of movements that disturb sharia. So the research conducted by Topan on AUMA questioned the social upheaval that occurred in Pamekasan, Madura, according

⁴¹ Survey ini dilakukan oleh Mufiqur Rahman Survey pada 21 Desember 2022

⁴² "Ulama Madura Deklarasi Anti Wahabi - SantriNews," accessed January 3, 2024, <https://santrinews.com/daerah/ulama-madura-deklarasi-anti-wahabi>.

to Topan, which was always responded to quickly by the Madurese Ulama Alliance as a movement with the aim of bringing order and regulating the symptoms that occurred among Pamekasan society, such as closing night entertainment venues and tourist attractions that are not in accordance with Islamic law and the existing culture in Madura. The movement patterns used by the Madurese Ulama Alliance (AUMA) in responding to political-religious issues use persuasive, preventive, and repressive patterns. The impact of this movement is proof that in Pamekasan, there has been minimal escalation of political-religious conflict compared to other regions.⁴³

Although there are several studies that differ from Topan, namely that they mention AUMA as an extreme and conservative Islamic organization. However, in the report, Typhoon AUMA is said to have had a good impact on government control regarding the running of government in Pamekasan Regency. Second, minimal escalation of conflict and socio-religious issues in Pamekasan, in accordance with the jargon "Great Pamekasan, and "Pamekasan Gate of Greetings."⁴⁴

Conclulation

The pattern of strengthening conservative Muslims in Pamekasan is characterized by the presence of conservative groups such as Wahhabi Salafis, the former Islamic Defenders Front, the former HTI, Hidayatullah, and al-Islah. This is based on the results of several studies, in-depth interviews, observations, documents, and focus groups that looked into the wasatiyyah culture of the Madurese community there. Meanwhile, moderate groups such as NU and Muhammadiyah also make up the majority in Pamekasan. The pattern of strengthening conservative Muslims in Pamekasan is through arson and sieges as acts of intolerance and violence in the name of religion.

⁴³ Ali Topan, "Respons Aliansi Ulama Madura (AUMA) Terhadap Dinamika Politik Keagamaan Di Pamekasan Madura," *ENTITA: Jurnal Pendidikan Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial Dan Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial* 4, no. 1 (2022): 92–106.

⁴⁴ Topan.

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