

**AMBO MUHAMMADIYAH, MUNAK
PESANTREN:**

**The Moderate Islam Characteristics of the Coastal
Community in Kepulauan Banyak, Aceh Singkil**

Muhajir Al-Fairusy, Irwan Abdullah and Muslim Zainuddin

Jurusan Dakwah STAIN Teungku Dirundeng Meulaboh, Aceh
Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Budaya Universitas Gadjah Mada
Yogyakarta

Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Pemerintahan Islam University of Ar-
Raniry, Aceh

e-mail: muhajiralfairusy@staindirundeng.ac.id,
irwan.fib@ugm.ac.id, zainuddin@ar-raniry.ac.id

Abstract: *This research intends to investigate why the difference in Islamic interpretation did not cause religious conflict in Pulau Banyak, Aceh Singkil. This phenomenon was sharply different compared to other Aceh regions where people argue each other just because they had different interpretations (khilafiah) on Islam. In those regions, the Muslim majorities in Aceh (aswaja) use the term wahabi to distinguish minority groups and to justify their violence. Meanwhile, in Kepulauan Banyak, there are two Islamic mainstreams namely Muhammadiyah and Pesantren or tarbiyah (the traditional Islam) that are strongly rooted in the society without any clashes recorded. Hence, the question was what makes this dualism in religious interpretation live cooperatively in Kepulauan Banyak. This analytical descriptive research used qualitative methods with grounded research as its approach. Data was collected in three villages in the Kepulauan Banyak District. This research showed that coastal communities prioritize community togetherness rather than their differentiation in Islamic understanding. The collective feeling as a coastal community becomes social cohesion that obscuring religious differences.*

المخلص: هذا البحث هو محاولة للنظر بشكل أعمق في أسباب عدم تسبب الاختلافات في تنفيذ الفهم الإسلامي بالضرورة في تقسيم شعب بولاو بانياك وأتشييه سينكيل وتضاربه. هذا الشرط يختلف عن أهل أتشييه بشكل عام ، الذين غالبًا ما ينقسمون بتفسيرات مختلفة للإسلام (اقرأ: الخلافة). في الواقع ، ظهر مصطلح الوهابية مؤخرًا لتبرير الجماعات المشتبه في انحرافها ، لأنها تنفي فهم الأغلبية والثقافة المحلية. حتى الآن ، هناك تفاهان تطوراً في مجتمع العديد من الجزر ، وهما المحمدية والتعليم الإسلامي (الفهم التقليدي للإسلام). كلاهما متجذر بقوة في المجتمع المحلي دون اتصال ، والسؤال الذي يطرح نفسه لماذا يمكن أن تتعايش ثنائية الفهم الديني الإسلامي في وسط مجتمع جزر عديدة. هذا البحث وصفي تحليلي مع الأساليب النوعية وأساليب البحث القائمة على أسس. تم جمع البيانات في ثلاث قرى في منطقة كيولوان بانياك الفرعية ، بدءًا بالملاحظة والمقابلات ودراسة الأدبيات ، وأخيرًا تحليل البيانات. أظهرت النتائج أن الأهمية الثقافية للعمل الجماعي كمجتمع ساحلي جزري لها الأسبقية على الاختلافات في الفهم الإسلامي. أصبحت حالة الشعور بالجماعة كمجتمع جزري تماسكًا اجتماعيًا ، وطمس التفكك بسبب الاختلافات في الفهم الديني.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini adalah upaya untuk melihat lebih dalam mengapa perbedaan dalam menjalankan pemahaman ke-Islaman tak lantas menyebabkan masyarakat Pulau Banyak, Aceh Singkil terbelah dan berkonflik. Kondisi ini berbeda dengan masyarakat Aceh pada umumnya, yang kerap tercerai oleh perbedaan penafsiran keislaman (baca: khilafiyah). Bahkan, belakangan muncul istilah wahabi untuk menjustifikasi kelompok yang ditengarai menyimpang, karena mengingkari pemahaman mayoritas dan kebudayaan lokal. Sejauh ini, ada dua paham yang berkembang di tengah masyarakat Kepulauan Banyak, yaitu Muhammadiyah dan Pesantren (pemahaman Islam tradisional). Keduanya mengakar kuat dalam masyarakat setempat tanpa bersinggungan, muncul pertanyaan mengapa dualisme pemahaman keagamaan Islam dapat hidup berdampingan di tengah masyarakat Kepulauan Banyak. Penelitian ini bersifat deskriptif analitis dengan metode kualitatif dan pendekatan grounded research. Pengumpulan data dilakukan di tiga kampung dalam Kecamatan Kepulauan Banyak, diawali dengan observasi, wawancara, studi pustaka, dan terakhir analisis data. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan jika makna budaya kebersamaan

sebagai masyarakat pesisir kepulauan lebih diutamakan dibanding perbedaan pandangan pemahaman keislaman. Kondisi perasaan kolektivitas sebagai masyarakat kepulauan telah menjadi kohesi sosial, dan mengaburkan disintegrasi akibat perbedaan pemahaman agama.

Keywords: moderate Islam, Muhammadiyah, pesantren, Kepulauan Banyak.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia as a democratic Muslim country has been recognized by various groups, and is often referred to as “the smiling face of Islam in the world.” The face of “Indonesian Islam” and “Anatolian Islam” in Turkey are referred to by scholars as the face of a future of Islam that is friendly to diversity.¹ Nevertheless, intolerant gravel cannot be simply removed in Indonesia. Based on the reports in a policy paper issued by the Wahid Foundation in 2019, there were 78 cases of violence driven by religious politics motivated during 2014-2018, and 57% of the religious teachers have a radical understanding on religion that favor intolerance against adherents of other religions.² This condition shows that Indonesian Islam must still work towards the ideal point of tolerance in the realm of democracy.

Aceh as one of the provinces in Indonesia, and proclaimed itself as an Islamic Sharia region, did not escape the gravel of intolerance. In fact, it has not been able to cover the multicultural aspects of Acehnese society. Some violence in the name of religion still frequently occurs especially in the northernmost province of Sumatra, including friction between fellow Muslims.³ In a research report, traditionalist and modernist Islamic groups are contending in Aceh, “...in Aceh, despite the state support of Islamist institutions

¹ Muhammad Najib Azca et al., *Dua Menyemai Damai ; Peran Dan Kontribusi Muhammadiyah Dan Nahdlatul Ulama Dalam Perdamaian Dan Demokrasi* (Yogyakarta: Pusat Studi Keamanan dan Perdamaian Universitas Gadjah Mada, 2019).

² Alamsyah M Dja'far and Junaidi Simun, “Mencegah Ekstremisme Lewat RPJM,” *Kertas Kebijakan Organisasi Masyarakat Sipil, Wahid Foundation*, 2019.

³ Mumtazul Fikri, “Islam Persuasif Dan Multikulturalisme Di Aceh : Upaya Rekonstruksi Penerapan Syariat Islam Berbasis Pendidikan,” *Akademika* 20, no. 1 (2015): 27–46.

and their role in the transformation of Acehese Muslim belief and practice, broader for mist trends are often tempered with concessions to select the form of established local practice”.⁴

Amid the clashes between traditionalist and modernist Islamic groups that often occur in Aceh, tolerance between Muslim communities has actually been practiced by coastal communities in the Aceh border, Pulau Banyak. Islamic understanding of Muslim communities in Pulau Banyak is influenced by two views; Muhammadiyah and *tarbiyah* or *pesantren*. The term *tarbiyah* refers to the organization Tarbiyah Islamiyah (PERTI), a traditional Islamic organization based in Bukittinggi, West Sumatra, founded in 1930.⁵ In Aceh, PERTI was established by Sheikh Mudawali, leader of the Labuhan Haji Islamic Boarding School, after he returned from Padang, West Sumatra.⁶ The term *pesantren* or *tarbiyah* is used by local residents to describe traditional Islamic styles other than Muhammadiyah. As mentioned by Bashori, Islamic boarding schools serve as educational institutions and centers for spreading Islam, and have been developing since the beginning of the emergence of Islam in Indonesia.⁷

At the beginning of its development, these two Islamic ideas were contesting. However, until now both groups have a warm relationship. The existence of Muhammadiyah can still be found growing in several mosques affiliated with this organization, even with *pesantren* or *tarbiyah* which increasingly widen their influence to establish *pesantren* educational institutions in the archipelago in the half last decade. Moving on from the question why differences in understanding do not fade community integration in the Kepulauan Banyak, this study seeks to look deeper into the style of moderate Islam that develops in the Aceh Singkil Pulau Banyak’s communities.

⁴ R. Michael Feener, David Kloos, and Annemarie Samuels, eds., *Islam and the Limits of the State: Reconfiguring of Practice, Community and Authority in Contemporary Aceh* (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

⁵ Suhaimi, “Sejarah Perkembangan Organisasi Persatuan Tarbiyah Islamiyah (PERTI) Di Kabupaten Aceh Barat Daya Tahun 2003 - Sekarang” (Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry Darussalam Banda Aceh, 2019).

⁶ Muhibuddin Waly, *Maulana Syeikh Haji Muhammad Waly Al-Khalidy; Ulama Besar Aceh Dan Perannya Dalam Pembangunan Pendidikan*, ed. Endah Sandy and Herawati Harun (Jakarta: Intermedia, 1997).

⁷ Bashori, “Modernisasi Lembaga Pendidikan Pesantren,” *Ilmu Sosial Mamangan* 6, no. 1 (2017): 47–60, <https://doi.org/10.22202/mamangan.1313>.

On the other hand, this study tries to portray the historical conditions of the development of Islam and the social religion of the local community. This paper is expected to be able to capture the style of Islam in the coastal community which has a moderate value during inter and inter-religious conflicts that often occur in Indonesia due to differences in religious understanding.

METHODS

This research is an analytical descriptive to find a description of a situation using a grounded research approach. As written by Abdurrahman in *Religion Research; Problems and Thought*, grounded research is a qualitative approach that allows researchers without being bound or aiming to prove whether or not a theory has been put forward by experts.⁸ Qualitative methods always emphasize the perceptions and experiences of participants, and how they make sense of life. Therefore, the informant is placed as a subject (emic) who will be examined as a source of knowledge.⁹

According to Abdurrahman, in the implementation of grounded research, there is a technique known as a constant comparison, which is the effort made by researchers during the field study to develop categories and concepts based on the reality obtained as a building analysis. Therefore, this method does not use random sampling instructions that are commonly used in quantitative structural research, bearing in mind that many analytical developments will emerge in the field.¹⁰

Data collection starts from the observation involved to understand the events themselves that are the focus of research, as said by Jorgensen "... direct observation is the primary method of gathering information".¹¹ Then proceed with the interview, both without a plan (unstandardized interview) but lead (focused interview). This effort is expected to provide information on data and views on moderate religious practices that have been taking place in the Pulau Banyak's

⁸ Mulyanto Sumardi and Dkk, *Penelitian Agama : Masalah Dan Pemikiran* (Jakarta: PT. Sinar Agung Press, 1982).

⁹ John W. Creswell, *Research Design ; Pendekatan Kualitatif, Kuantitatif, Dan Mixed (Edisi Ketiga)*, Ketiga (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2010).

¹⁰ Sumardi and Dkk, *Penelitian Agama : Masalah Dan Pemikiran*.

¹¹ Danny L. Jorgensen, *Participant Observation ; A Methodology for Human Studies* (London, United Kingdom, New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 1989).

community. To ensure research consistency, the researcher stayed with the community for several months to explore the real situation. Researchers were outsiders and new people in the Pulau Banyak's community. So, the first step was to look for several key informants. Information is the main subject of knowledge sources in qualitative research. Spradley provide two considerations for the selection of key informants; local people who understand and have mature experience. Furthermore, they have to be able to provide analysis and interpretation from the perspective of folk theory (local concept).¹² In this case, key informants included to the village head, religious leaders, and community leaders at the study site.

Besides, in the data collection process, a literature study becomes an inseparable part of the research. Before conducting research and during diving into the community, the researchers continued to read, especially the culture of the area to be studied. From the literature study, the researchers can understand the local culture, the history of Muhammadiyah and Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia, as well as a picture of moderate Islam which has been the focus of work on developing the face of Islam in Indonesia.

The final stage was data analysis based on qualitative methods to answer research problems. Data analysis must be done with seriousness, foresight, and caution. In qualitative research, data collection and analysis must take place (simultaneously).¹³ Data analysis starts since the research process takes place, where the researchers must be clever, creative, and sensitive to choose and sort out which data is important or not.

THE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF ISLAM IN PULAU BANYAK

Nearly all historians agree that Islam penetrated to Indonesia in the first Hijri century (seventh or eighth century AD) directly from Arabia. The area of Indonesia that was initially converted to Islam was the Aceh region.¹⁴ This argument was further strengthened in

¹² James P Spradley, *Metode Etnografi (Terjemahan)* (Jakarta: PT. Gramedia, 1997).

¹³ Creswell, *Research Design: Pendekatan Kualitatif, Kuantitatif, Dan Mixed (Edisi Ketiga)*.

¹⁴ Azyumardi Azra, *Jaringan Ulama Timur Tengah Dan Kepulauan Nusantara Abad XVII Dan XVIII* (Bandung: Mizan, 1999); Muhajir Al Fairusy, *Singkel : Sejarah*,

the seminar on the entry of Islam into Indonesia which was held on March 17 to 20, 1963 in the city of Medan.¹⁵ Besides Aceh, there is Barus in the same area as Singkil. Both play an important role in the development of Islam in Indonesia. Both Aceh and Barus, which are adjacent to Singkil, are suspected of having an archaeological foundation as the first Islamic center to come. Barus itself is an area that has been known for a long time as an exporter of camphor (camphor) produced in Singkil. The progress of the trading port here pushed the crowds of traders from outside including the Middle East to stop by the 15th century AD.¹⁶ Also, in Singkil did several important figures in the narrative of Indonesian Islamic history lives, such as Sheikh Hamzah Fansuri and Sheikh Abdurrauf al-Singkily. Both are among the most influential intellectuals in the development of Islam in the archipelago, especially in the history and civilization of Islam in Aceh.¹⁷

As an area that once triumphed with sea ports and trade routes, Singkil inherited the story of the development of Islam centuries ago. Archaeological traces of Islamic civilization such as old gravestones can still be found in several areas, such as the Berok area which is known by the local community as the former Singkil area.¹⁸ Singkil is a multi-ethnic area and have a variety of identities that welcome the outside world for a long time. In the context of the belief system, not only Islam grows in Singkil but also other religions such as Christianity, Catholicism, and Parmalim beliefs, especially in the mainland territories. However, specifically in the coastal areas, including the Kepulauan Kepulauan, the majority of the population

Etnisitas Dan Dinamika Sosial, ed. Muhajir Al-Fairusy, I (Bali: Pustaka Larasan, 2016); Ali Hasjmy, *Sejarah Kebudayaan Islam Di Indonesia* (Jakarta: PT. Bulan Bintang, 1990).

¹⁵ Mattulada and Dkk, *Agama Dan Perubahan Sosial* (Jakarta: CV. Rajawali, 1983).

¹⁶ Muhajir Al Fairusy, “‘Menjadi Singkel Menjadi Aceh, Menjadi Aceh Menjadi Islam’ (Membaca Identitas Masyarakat Majemuk Dan Refleksi Konflik Agama Di Wilayah Perbatasan Aceh Singkel),” *Sociology USK* 9, no. 1 (2016): 17–33; Claude Guillot (Peny), *Lobu Tua : Sejarah Awal Barus* (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2014).

¹⁷ Azra, *Jaringan Ulama Timur Tengah Dan Kepulauan Nusantara Abad XVII Dan XVIII*.

¹⁸ Fairusy, “‘Menjadi Singkel Menjadi Aceh, Menjadi Aceh Menjadi Islam’ (Membaca Identitas Masyarakat Majemuk Dan Refleksi Konflik Agama Di Wilayah Perbatasan Aceh Singkel)”; Fairusy, *Singkel : Sejarah, Etnisitas Dan Dinamika Sosial*.

is Muslim. Thus, residents of the Singkil coastal region are identical with Islamic and Malay identities in the context of customs.

Islam has been spread a long time in the coastal area of Singkil. However, there is no valid data written about the beginning of the development of Islam in Many Islands. Even so, if traced from the beginning of the arrival of Nias residents who have been Muslim to the Kepulauan Banyak in the 18th century AD, it is certain that Islam came to Pulau Banyak along with the arrival of the coastal Nias community there. The inhabitants of coastal Nias have embraced Islam since the mid-17th century AD, which was brought and introduced by seafarers and migrants from Aceh from Peureumbeu, a federation of Uleebalang Kaway XVI, West Aceh. Their descendants can still be found in Nias by distancing themselves through the identity of the Marga Polem who settled in the Mudik area, Gunung Sitoli Coastal Nias.¹⁹ Moreover, many islanders having the surname Polem can still be found in that place. Polem identity cannot only be found in the island, but also in the Simeulu Islands of Aceh based on observations and interviews with local residents.

From the interviews with several residents, it is revealed that generally *nyang* (Indonesian: great-grandfather) of the community have been Muslim since the first day of coming and settling on Pulau Banyak. So, it is likely that Islam comes and grows in the island through migration and the arrival of coastal Nias residents who are already Muslim, especially those with the surname “Polem”, as told by a resident of Pulau Banyak, Darmansyah Talaumbanua (52 years), who is also a Surau priest in the Balai Island,

“... I was born in coastal’s Nias, then at 8, I was taken by my parents to move to Pulau Banyak. From birth, I was Muslim, because my grandfather was already Muslim. Coastal Nias is almost a Muslim majority, which was brought by the Acehnese and Minang people in the past, except for the inhabitants of Nias in the center who mostly practice Christianity and there may also be no religion. I had studied at Ibtidaiyah (Elementary School),

¹⁹ Muhajir Al Fairusy, “*Ama Aceh*” Di Pulau Nias : *Reproduksi Identitas Dan Adat Istiadat Keacehan Marga Polem Di Negeri Tanah Niha* (Banda Aceh: MAA Aceh, 2019); Muhajir Al Fairusy, “‘Bertahan Dengan Identitas Marga’ (Polem Dan Jejak Aceh Di Tanah Niha),” *SUWA Jurnal Sejarah & Nilai Budaya* 23, no. Nomor 2 (2018): 70–84.

a religious school in Nias, but to my disappointment, I could not continue to Tsanawiyah (junior high school), because I was rushed to Pulau Banyak, even though I am the only child in the family. So, in Nias I studied The Quran and religion. In Pulau Banyak I was also taught religion by an ustadz from Buloh Seuma, South Aceh” (Interviewed, March 14, 2020).

The same story was told by Afdhal Guci (45 years), an ustadz (priest and preacher) in Pulau Banyak. He was born and raised in Nias, precisely in Lahewa, and came to Pulau Banyak in 1999. According to him, almost all the inhabitants of coastal Nias are Muslim. This condition is different from mainland of Nias which is predominantly Christian and some still adhere to the traditional beliefs. According to Afdhal, it was the role of Aceh 26 (twenty-six) and Minang which was the most influential in the Islamization of Nias. Only then, the wave of migration of coastal residents of Nias came to Pulau Banyak.

In the oral history of the community, the development of Islam in the Pulau Banyak was further strengthened by the influence of the Pagaruyung Kingdom of Minangkabau as one of the Islamic Kingdoms in the Western Sumatra regions. As is known, Pulau Many, which used to be called Tuanku Island, was once a small kingdom that was subject to the authority of the Kingdom of Pagaruyung, and subsequently entered into the territory of Aceh Province after Indonesian independence.²⁰ The kingdom of Pagaruyung also played a strong role in “minoring” the people of Nias who lived on Pulau Banyak. Among the remnants and legacy of Minangkabau influence on Pulau Banyak, it can still be seen from the practice of customs and language that often uses Minang cultural identity attributes until now. Later, the influence of Aceh’s culture slowly began to suppress acculturation.

The role of the Minang and Aceh culture continues to this day, especially in the context of developing Islamic patterns in Pulau Banyak. From Minangkabau, several alumni of Thawalib Padang Panjang as one of the Muhammadiyah schools incessantly developed Islamic schools in Pulau Banyak after independence. As told by

²⁰ Fairusy, *Singkel: Sejarah, Etnisitas Dan Dinamika Sosial*; Muhajir Al Fairusy, “Sistem Patronase (Tauke-Palawik) Dalam Dunia Ekonomi Perikanan (Studi Hubungan Kerja Nelayan Pulau Banyak, Aceh Singkil)” (Universitas Gadjah Mada Yogyakarta, 2012).

Mustafa (70 years) the pioneer of Surau in Balai Island which was Muhammadiyah-oriented, there used to be a very rare and limited Islamic education and there were only a few Islamic teachers who wanted to establish Islamic schools, of which generally, they graduated from Tawalib, and taught by old-generations like us when I was little.

Only then, in the 1980s, Islamic teachers graduating from Islamic boarding schools from Purba Baru, Mandailing Natal, and Labuhan Haji South Aceh appeared. Their role is to color a new style of the development of Islam on Pulau Banyak. There are several names of religious teachers that are considered influential in the development of Islamic education in Pulau Banyak including Ustadz Angku, Ustadz Abu Bakar, and several other names, including later the birth of a private Diniyah (Islamic Madrasah) school which is now located next to one of the elementary school in Pulau Banyak.

In 2015, one of the influential Pesantren leaders in Singkil, Abuya Manaf, moved to establish an Islamic school (Pesantren) in Pulau Banyak namely, al-Mulazamah. He graduated from the Labuhan Haji Islamic Boarding School, in the era of Abuya Natsir Waly's leadership. From the statement of his son, Zarkasyi (32 years), he has established eighteen Pesantren throughout Singkil. Only ten are functioning normally according to him. Zarkasyi also did not understand the main motivation of his father to establish a large number of pesantren. However, from the implied message, increasing the number of pesantren is part of a strategy to counteract the influence of Christianization in Singkil. Even so, from the observations involved, the development of Pesantren in Pulau Banyak is not so massive that the number of students is very limited. The teacher council (Ustadz) is sent every month from Singkil in turns to maintain the existence of this Pesantren. According to one of the new council teachers on Pulau Banyak, Syahril (22-year-old), the main purpose of Islamic boarding schools in Pulau Banyak is to stem the potential for Christianization here. Moreover, since the existence of a new settlement called "Mata Air", it is located opposite the location of the Pesantren, only separated by small sea. The settlement is only inhabited by dozens of family heads from Nias and, is still Christian.

Attention to the development of the religion of Islam in Pulau Banyak did not only come from the increasingly thickening

traditionalist Islamic groups. Most entrepreneurs in the fishing industry (Pulau Banyak: *tauke*) are involved in maintaining the existence of Islam. Indeed, they are the main investors and providers of funds (funding) for Islamic institutions; Mosques, Islamic Boarding Schools, and Surau. In addition, the poor and orphans did not escape the attention of the *tauke*. So far, Pulau Banyak does not rely much on the government funding, especially since the rapid growing of fishing and tourism industry that guarantees incomes for people and their economic base.

Institutional development such as Mosques, Islamic Boarding Schools, and Surau was also carried out by the management of the institution. From observations in the Pulau Banyak, every day an official was sent by Islamic institution to come from door to door to collect donation. Teenagers are often seen walking around the village dressed in robes and koko, while carrying boxes of a piggy bank with contributions to the mosque, Pesantren, and orphanage. They come to every resident's house that is lined up in Pulau Banyak, knocking on doors or calling homeowners from the front yard "... *sumbangan, sumbangan, sumbangan* (donation please!)." The next homeowner fills the piggy bank, from the amount of thousands to tens of thousands of rupiah.

BETWEEN MUHAMMADIYAH AND PESANTREN IN PULAU BANYAK

Particularly in the Sumatra region, West Sumatra in the history of Islam in Indonesia nearing the transition to independence, has become the basis for the development of modern Islamic movements (Muhammadiyah) and traditionalist (PERTI), especially in the Sumatra region.²¹ Muhammadiyah was born in 1925 in West Sumatra. In fact, from Deliar Noer's notes, it is stated that Muhammadiyah

²¹ Bashori, "Modernisasi Lembaga Pendidikan Pesantren"; Alaidin Koto, *Persatuan Tarbiyah Islamiyah : Sejarah, Paham Keagamaan, Dan Pemikiran Politik 1945-1970* (Jakarta, 2012), Rajawali; Deliar Noer, *Gerakan Modern Islam Di Indonesia (1900-1942)*, IV (Jakarta: PT. Pustaka LP3ES Indonesia, 1988); Deliar Noer, *Partai Islam Di Pentas Nasional* (Jakarta: Pustaka Utama Grafiti, 1987); Fandy Aprianto Rohman and Mulyati, "Rintisan Awal Pendidikan Muhammadiyah Di Sumatra Barat Tahun 1925-1939," *Jurnal Penelitian Sejarah Dan Budaya* 5, no. 1 (n.d.): 23-41; Suhaimi, "Sejarah Perkembangan Organisasi Persatuan Tarbiyah Islamiyah (PERTI) Di Kabupaten Aceh Barat Daya Tahun 2003 - Sekarang."

has grown rapidly in Padang Panjang since 1920. Thus, PERTI as a traditionalist Islamic organization was born and began to develop in 1930.²²

Not only as of the locus of religious movements, but West Sumatra has also become the center of the cultural identity of Pulau Banyak since the 19th century AD, under the control and influence of the Kingdom of Pagaruyung. During the Dutch colonial era, the economic centers of the Tapanuli and Singkil regions were centered in Sibolga by the Dutch. As a new port, Sibolga is one of the coastal regions of Sumatra that connects West Sumatra and Singkel. Since then, human interaction along the coast has become more intense in Sibolga, creating many similarities between Pulau Banyak and Sibolga, especially in terms of language and Islamic style.²³ This historical map becomes an important signal, how Islamic understanding then develops in Pulau Banyak. Only after independence did Aceh become a new center for the identity of Pulau Banyak, as Singkil entered Aceh's administrative area.

The development of Muhammadiyah and Pesantren understanding of Pulau Banyak can be measured from the identity of the house of worship (mosque and surau). In three villages in Pulau Banyak Subdistrict, there are five Mosques, and one praying house is now being converted into a Mosque. From the observations made, three Mosques are affiliated with traditionalist Islam (pesantren), one mosque integrates Muhammadiyah and Pesantren understanding, and another is affiliated with Muhammadiyah. Meanwhile, Surau was initially affiliated with Muhammadiyah, but now it has started to be mixed with Pesantren understanding since the last half-decade.

Muhammadiyah ideology was promoted by the community as one of the old ideologies on Pulau Banyak. Although now, the existence of Muhammadiyah is no longer as conservative as it used to be. One of the villages that still maintain the presence of Muhammadiyah in a conservative manner is Teluk Nibung. As for the two more villages (Balai Island and Baguk Island), the understanding

²² Noer, *Gerakan Modern Islam Di Indonesia (1900-1942)*; Rohman and Mulyati, "Rintisan Awal Pendidikan Muhammadiyah Di Sumatra Barat Tahun 1925-1939"; Suhaimi, "Sejarah Perkembangan Organisasi Persatuan Tarbiyah Islamiyah (PERTI) Di Kabupaten Aceh Barat Daya Tahun 2003 - Sekarang."

²³ Fairusy, *Singkel : Sejarah, Etnisitas Dan Dinamika Sosial*.

of pesantren is increasingly dominating. This condition can be seen from the information distribution from the Muhammadiyah Regional Board of Aceh Province, that the management of Muhammadiyah Pulau Banyak had requested the establishment of Muhammadiyah special mosques, bearing in mind that some old mosques had mixed with traditionalist understandings. However, this request has not been responded by the Provincial Council of Aceh.

According to Hidayat (27 years) one of the students from Pulau Banyak as well as Muhammadiyah management in the Singkil branch, initially the Islamic style on Pulau Banyak was influenced by Muhammadiyah which was developed by religious teachers from Thawalib Padang Panjang. In the 1960s, there was a religious teacher who was known by his nickname as the Angku *guru* on Pulau Banyak. He was the early generation of religious teachers who graduated from Tawalib. Next, in the 1980s, a Purba Baru graduate religious teacher, Mandailing Natal, who was known as Ustadz Cebok, returned to his hometown - Baguk Island. Also, in the same year, another religious teacher named Ustadz Abubakar returned to Pulau Balai. He graduated from Labuhan Haji Islamic Boarding School, South Aceh. Both are known as the next generation of traditionalist preachers on Pulau Banyak.

The meeting of these two different notions does not necessarily make people scattered. The community places the position of a religious teacher called Ustadz from both Muhammadiyah and Pesantren in an honorable position, especially as a religious authority. Because of this, some mosques apply a double pattern, dividing functions based on two existing ideas. This condition can be seen by the implementation of the *tarawih* prayer pattern in the month of Ramadan in two rounds, one session for those who pray on eight *rakaat* (Muhammadiyah), and one session continued by those Pesantren who practices twenty *rakaat*, especially in the Jamik Mosque and Balai Mosque. The Baguk Island Mosque is consistent with its Pesantren understanding, bearing in mind that many village cadres have graduated from the Pesantren since the 1980s.

Soon after the Aceh tsunami, in 2005 in Balai Island a Muhammadiyah-affiliated mosque stood, built by Angku Mustafa (70 years) who had studied at a teacher training center in the 60s. The founder of the letter negated himself a follower of Muhammadiyah

with the phrase “ambo Muhammadiyah.” Even so, he did not restrict the worshipers and traditionalist understandings in his mosque, as a strategy to attract worshipers to pray in his mosque. Now, the priest of this Surau has since seemed more dominated by Pesantren, especially since its founder died in 2018.

The developing and well-established understanding of Pesantren in the Pulau Banyak communities in the last half of the decades can be traced from in-depth interviews with several informants. From the field study, there are several factors of understanding of Pesantren starting to take root in the Pulau Banyak community.

First, Islamic teachings on the style of Pesantren were developed directly by local residents in the 1980s, especially some religious teachers who completed boarding school education in Purba Baru-Mandailing Natal and South Aceh. This condition is understandable because Islamic religious teachers in Pulau Banyak after Indonesian independence were indeed a crisis and rare, except for a number of religious teachers graduating from Tawalib who came to Pulau Banyak in the 1960s. The next wave, in the 1980s and 1990s, was only colored by religious teachers graduating from Pesantren.

Secondly, in the 2000s, there was an increase in the arrival of religious teachers from South Aceh, mostly Pesantren graduates. They spread traditionalist-style Islamic understanding and often became some prayer-house and mosque administrators in the Naqshbandiah order ritual. As well known, South Aceh District, particularly the Labuhan Haji Islamic Boarding School, is the center for the development of a traditionalist style of Islam and post-independence Islamic congregation throughout Aceh.

Third, there was an emergence of border preachers sent by the Islamic Sharia Service to the Aceh border region since 2010, including Pulau Banyak, Aceh Singkil as a border district. All preachers sent to Pulau Banyak were Pesantren alumni, so the Islamic understanding of Pesantren remains the mission of the Ustadz work program in developing Islamic education there. For example, the addition of *wirid* upon completion of five daily prayers in congregation, adding the number of *rakaat* of *tarawih* prayers from eight to twenty, and some lecture contents which sometimes often criticize anti-traditionalist Islam.

Fourth, the establishment of pesantren educational institutions in Pulau Banyak in 2015 was founded by Abuya Manaf, an influential pesantren leader in Singkil. This condition has increasingly strengthened the Islamic influence of pesantren in Pulau Banyak. Some community traditions also shifted, from before there had never been a feast of death, now began to be forced by change. Some families who still adhere to the Muhammadiyah, sometimes reject the tradition, even if it is implemented, there is an impression of being forced due to social changes happening in the community. One of the Muhammadiyah families met, once told how they were forced to carry out a ritual of festivity that had never been before.

Although the pesantren understanding is increasingly developing, the condition of the community as far as observing research, is not too fanatical about every Islamic understanding there. This condition can be seen that there has never been a debate about differences (read; *khilafiyah*). Compare this with the socio-religious conditions in Aceh which are often divided by *khilafiyah*. Also, Muhammadiyah did not completely disappear in the midst of the pesantren religious practices in Pulau Banyak. In some Mosques, such as in Pulau Balai village, the caretaker applies a double pattern in the practice of worship. One the one side, it gives room to the Pesantren, and on the other side it maintains the existence of Muhammadiyah. This condition can be seen from the implementation of the *tarawih* prayer in the month of Ramadhan, the first wave was given to those who carried out eight *rakaat*, while the second wave was continued by those who chose twenty *rakaah*. This double pattern is very functioning in reconciling the two camps.

Indeed, the understanding between Muhammadiyah and Pesantren gave birth to community disintegration, especially in Nibung Bay as the main base of Muhammadiyah. This condition shows that religion is part of primordial ties, each trying to instill the belief “absolute truth” (absolutization) to his followers²⁴. According to Zarkasyi (32 years), his father, Buya Manaf, was sent to Teluk Nibung in the 80s to reconcile these two camps. Until now, both groups have melted. Now, there are two Mosques in Teluk Nibung, each developing a different understanding. The mosque below is identified as the pesantren mosque or some residents understand it

²⁴ Sumardi et al, *Penelitian Agama : Masalah Dan Pemikiran*.

as *tarbiyah*. The mosque above was affiliated by the community as Muhammadiyah Mosque. Among the reasons for melting according to one of the mosque's management and residents of Teluk Nibung, Bahrum Jamil Gea (57 years), the togetherness of the islanders is more important than the dispute because of differences in understanding in religion.

Religion in Indonesia has a constitutionally clear position. In the 1945 Constitution Chapter XI, Article 29 of the Constitution is formulated in two verses, if the state is based on the Supreme God, and the state guarantees the independence of each population to embrace their respective religions, and to worship according to their religion and belief.²⁵ Indirectly, the concept of religious moderation in the state live in the middle of Pulau Banyak people. Self-identity as people of the island reinforces community integration and buries group identity based on the understanding of religion that develops there.

URANG PULAU'S IDENTITY AS SOCIAL COHESION CAPITAL

The roar of a 25 GT boat fleet engine never stopped along the coastal settlement of the Kepulauan Banyak community, Aceh Singkil. The islands are inhabited mostly by the fishing communities of Nias ethnic descent, speak Malay-Minang and the majority embrace Islam. The main livelihood of the Pulo (Many) communities is the fisheries sector. Not surprisingly, the fishing industry in one of the coastal districts in Singkil Regency becomes the main producer of fish suppliers in the main Singkil region, Subulussalam to Medan-North Sumatra.²⁶

The Singkil coastal area has always been a trading center. Merchants from West Sumatra, Aceh and Nias have been involved in economic activities here for a long time along with the development of Islam in the region. Coastal language (Singkil: *baapo*) a blend of Malay and Minang languages is a market language (*lingua franca*) that is still used today. Minang itself is part of the Deutro Melayu (Young

²⁵ Sumardi et al.,

²⁶ Fairusy, "Sistem Patronase (Tauke-Palawik) Dalam Dunia Ekonomi Perikanan (Studi Hubungan Kerja Nelayan Pulau Banyak, Aceh Singkil)"; Fairusy, *Singkel : Sejarah, Etnisitas Dan Dinamika Sosial*.

Malay) community.²⁷ In fact, a Pariaman merchant, Muhammad Saleh once wrote an autobiographical note, if he ever stopped by one of the Singkil coastal ports in the early 90s, and saw first-hand the trading activities in the coastal port²⁸. Nias language users can still be found as original identity, but in a very limited relationship and can be said to be rare. As for customary practices, the influence of Minangkabau adat is very thick on the coast of Singkil, and later began to enter the influence of Aceh, this condition can be seen from ritual moments such as children who are about to be circumcised, marriage to traditional culinary types.

Singkil Pesisir's identity, actually developed through coastal culture. Singkil Regency has two community characteristics according to residential territories. On the mainland known as *kalak singkel* or *kalak upri*, those who call themselves native Singkel residents, initially settled on the banks of the river then spread to several districts in Singkel Regency. Generally, Singkil mainland residents speak in the language of the village (Singkil; *kade-kade*) resembling the Pakpak language and Alas residents in Kutacane, Southeast Aceh, geographically these three settlements are interconnected, and are connected by large rivers called Lae Alas. In the context of the understanding of Islam, the mainland population is much influenced by traditional Islamic patterns or Pesantren, because of the influence of religious teachers there, graduates of the Purba Baru pesantren and Labuhan Haji. The second character is those who settled on the coast, including the Pulau Banyak. Singkil coastal communities speak Malay-Minang (Singkil: *baapo*). Initially, in the context of understanding Islam, they were identified with Muhammadiyah. Although now, slowly the traditionalist style of pesantren has come to color the coastal communities.²⁹

Pulau Banyak as three districts have three villages, all three are side by side in an archipelago which is only 3900 Ha, Kampung Pulau Balai is adjacent to Kampung Pulau Baguk which is surrounded

²⁷ Riniwati Makmur, *Orang Padang Tionghoa ; Dimana Bumi Dipijak, Disinan Langit Dijunjuang* (Jakarta: Kompas, 2018).

²⁸ Mestika Zed, *Saudagar Pariaman Menerjang Ombak Membangun Maskapai* (Depok: LP3ES, 2017).

²⁹ Fairusy, *Singkel : Sejarah, Etnisitas Dan Dinamika Sosial*; Fairusy, “Menjadi Singkel Menjadi Aceh, Menjadi Aceh Menjadi Islam’ (Membaca Identitas Masyarakat Majemuk Dan Refleksi Konflik Agama Di Wilayah Perbatasan Aceh Singkel).”

by a 4-meter wide road from paving blocks. The village of Teluk Nibung is located opposite the tributary that must be reached using a small canoe (Pulau Banyak called robin).³⁰ Each village is led by a *geuchik* (village head) with his work tools. Even so, the three villages are under the unity of the Mukim traditional leader and in the administration of the same subdistrict-Pulau Banyak. The existence of the term Mukim in Pulau Banyak arose after the area was included in the administrative territory of Aceh Province. Not only Mukim, in the context of the regulation of fishing also applies to the term Panglima Laot, but those who play a role in controlling the fishermen according to local customary law are also like those applied in Aceh in general.³¹

As already mentioned, the Pulau Banyak community is largely a descendant of coastal Nias and has settled in the archipelago since the 18th century CE. This condition has contributed to the feeling of the same fate, as known by identity is the awareness that exists in an individual to negate his distinctive personality and distinguish it from other individuals. Identity is a set of symbols that makes an individual or group of individuals look different from other individuals or groups of individuals.³² According to Charon, humans learn their identity, who they are, through socialization. “We” identity has linked individuals with cultural groups and major cultural institutions.³³ According to Huntington “humans explain themselves through their ancestry, religion, language, history, values, habits and institutions”.³⁴ In the context of Pulau Banyak, feelings of heredity and language thicker than differences in how to understand Islam.

In addition to Nias ancestry, the residents of Pulau Banyak are also strengthened by their origins as residents of Pulau Tuangku in

³⁰ Fairusy, “Sistem Patronase (Tauke-Palawik) Dalam Dunia Ekonomi Perikanan (Studi Hubungan Kerja Nelayan Pulau Banyak, Aceh Singkil).”

³¹ Fairusy; Moehammad Hoesin, *Adat Atjeh* (Banda Aceh: Dinas Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Propinsi Daerah Istimewa Atjeh, 1970); Badruzzaman Ismail, *Nilai-Nilai Adat Aceh Sebagai Potensi Spirit Pembangunan Kesejahteraan (Refleksi Otobiografi)*, ed. Muhajir Al-Fairusy, III (Banda Aceh: MAA Aceh, 2019).

³² Heddy Shri Ahimsa-Putra, “Budaya Bangsa, Jati Diri, Dan Integrasi Nasional ; Sebuah Teori,” *Jejak Nusantara I* (2013).

³³ Larry A. Samovar, Richard E. Porter, and Edwin R. McDaniel, *Komunikasi Lintas Budaya ; Communication Between Cultures (Edisi 7)* (Jakarta Selatan: Salemba Humanika, 2010).

³⁴ Samovar, Porter, and McDaniel.

Haloban before moving to Pulau Banyak. The identity of Tuangku and Haloban Islands is the next shared identity achieved by the inhabitants of Pulau Banyak in terms of history as a small kingdom under the influence of the former Pagaruyung Kingdom, long before Indonesia gained independence and they became part of Aceh. The weaning of the population of Tuangku Island, which was previously thick with Nias identity, then became strong in Malay-Minang identity, it can be said to be like the pattern of Aceh's work in fostering Malay identity in Pulau Pinang, Malaysia.³⁵

Now, Haloban as an "old village" has become Pulau Barat District which is only inhabited by half the population of Pulau Banyak residents. There are historical and political reasons why they moved to Pulau Banyak since Indonesian independence. Haloban Island was once suspected as one of the Indonesian Communist Party partisan barns that were being banned and hunted by the government. This condition encourages population to move from Haloban, which was once known as Tuangku Island to Baguk Island and Balai Island. Haloban has its own distinctive language, which has many similarities with one of the languages on Simeulu Island, Aceh, and is still used officially in traditional, artistic, and religious ceremonies.³⁶

Awareness as *urang* island has drowned the slices of other identities that can threaten this main identity, including in the context of differences in the understanding of Islam earlier. Prioritizing identity as an island community has promoted a social cohesion as well as an adhesive from moderate Islamic behavior on Pulau Banyak, where social integration can be achieved through negotiating the common identity as the main form of identification of "us" to lessen the island rather than Muhammadiyah and Pesantren.

CONCLUSION

Moderate Islam as a middle ground in bridging differences and building a mental tolerance is part of the nation's hard work in integrating Muslim communities, especially in Indonesia. Pulau

³⁵ Kamaruzzaman Bustamam-ahmad, Ruzman bin Md Noor, and Mohd Yakub, "Kontruksi Identitas Melayu Dalam Sejarah Aceh Dan Penang," *6 Th International Conference Indonesia-Malaysia, Universitas Airlangga, Surabaya*, n.d.

³⁶ Armia, "Struktur Sintaksis Bahasa Haloban" (Universitas Sumatera Utara Medan, 2003).

Banyak, as one of the border regions of Aceh and North Sumatra, is a good example (lesson learn) on how different Muslim groups should coexist. Similar identity as the *urang* of the island unites the groups and overcome differences in understanding between the Muhammadiyah and Pesantren. Supposedly, the feeling of the same fate as Indonesians must be able to become a unifying factor that prevents disintegration due to differences in understandings within the Indonesian nation state.

Research carried out for almost a few months, in order to understand the lives of Pulau Banyak coastal communities, especially from the dimension of Islamic understanding between Muhammadiyah and Pesantren, shows that identity does not always thicken which can separate humans due to differences in religious understanding. There are other comparative identity particles, which can further serve to dilute the social life of people who live in the same area of racial and ethnic identity.

The results of this study are expected to be an important lesson, that moderate Islam can exist in society if the ego of the group is muted and the feeling of the same fate as the same identity is raised to the surface. Of course, this research can still be continued to understand more deeply the picture of the life of Pulau Banyak coastal communities in a broader scale as one of the coastal settlements in Singkil Regency, which is far from the administrative control of the central government of Aceh Province.

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