

RELIGION-STATE RELATION WITHIN THE SURYALAYA QADIRIYAH NAQSYABANDIYAH TARIQA

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ABSTRACT

The assumption that a tariqa group opposes worldly attainment and power is incorrect; their engagement in practical politics stems from a moral duty to uphold the state's unity and integrity. This article delves into the political communication established by a Sufi figure, Abah Anom, aiming to reinforce the teachings of the tariqa and its relevance to religion and the state. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach through literature review, this research obtained data from various documents such as lecture texts, announcements, and photographs. The findings reveal two strategies employed by Abah Anom to reinforce the relations between religion and the state. First, a focus on spiritual growth, emphasizing practice and religious knowledge as guiding principles. Second, the maintenance of relations with state leaders, fostering legitimacy as responsible citizens. This study concludes that the relations between religion and the state that constitute part of the teachings of the Qodiriyah Naqsabandiyah tariqa (TQN) serve as a means to advocate and position itself within Muslim communities and government, aligning with both religion and state objectives. Furthermore, it suggests that the roles of the kyai extend beyond a broker of culture; the kyai also plays the role of a broker of politics to preserve harmony among religious groups and uphold the state's unity and integrity.

Keywords: Religion-State Relation; Suryalaya Qadiriya Naqsyabandiyah; Tariqa

INTRODUCTION

Islamic boarding schools based on the *tariqa* [a school or order of Sufism] serve not only as centers for Islamic spiritual education but also as hubs for fostering the cultural, economic, social, and political aspects of society (Rahman Nurul Amin & Panorama, 2021). These Pesantren institutions manifest as political spaces, exemplified by the dynamic relationships between ulemas [religious scholars] and the government. An example of this was witnessed at the Islamic boarding school founded by Habib Luthfi bin Yahya in Pekalongan, Central Java, during a significant event from July 27th to 29th, 2016. Here, an international ulama conference was convened. Organized by Jam'iyah Ahlith Tariqah al-Mutabarrah an-Nahdiyah in collaboration with the Indonesian Ministry of Defense, this gathering involved representatives from 37 countries and centered on the theme, "Defending the Nation: Concept and Urgency in Islam." The conference underscored the crucial role of the Tariqa ulemas in upholding the security and stability of global religious communities. This illustrates that tariqas should convey not only spiritual teachings but also political messages, positioning themselves as political entities engaging in dialogues with the government.

To date, numerous studies have explored the political movements within the tariqa, often emphasizing how *kyais* engage with the government (Abdurahman, 2019). Several studies also delve into *kyai's* resistance against colonial rule in the pursuit of independence. *Kyais*, recognized as cultural brokers, wield influence over social norms and behavior in daily life (Salahudin, 2016). Gertz (1989, 2003) categorizes Javanese society into three distinct social groups: *Abangan*, *priyayi*, and *santri*. The *santri's* identity is intricately linked to the *kyai*, who has great influence over the social order (Sairin, 2012). The significant role of the *kyai* lies in shaping national character through religious and patriotic teachings, instilling the belief that love for one's country is integral to faith (Siraj, 2016). The *kyai's* instructional methods not only emphasize spiritual devotion but also conveys a love for the homeland within their teachings (Samrudi & Abd. Hadi Faishol, 2022). Consequently, the *kyai* leadership has made significant contributions to Indonesia's mental and moral development, striving towards a fair, prosperous, and harmonious society.

The tariqa *kyai* group, contrary to being synonymous with passive escapism amid changing times (Hakim, 2021), tends to adopt an activist stance, actively engaging in social and political movements (Thohir, 2014). While the foundational purpose of tariqa institutions is to cultivate societal ethics centered around religious spirituality and esoteric power, these objectives inevitably intersect with the realm of practical politics. On the other hand,

there are also individuals within this group who opt for a more confined approach, making choices within the domain of value politics. (Mulyati & Nihayah, 2020). Sayyed Hossen Nasr (1979: 132) argues that a *Sufi is an active participant in a spiritual path and is intellectual in the real meaning in this word. Contemplation in Sufism, the highest form of activity and in fact sufis have always integrated the active and contemplative lives.* Hence, the role of Sufis is not solely confined to being agents of the spiritual path but extends to being agents of change, particularly in strengthening social and political movements within the *ummah*. (Rosi, 2020).

This article seeks to analyze the Sufistic da'wah movement embodied by KH Ahmad Shohibul Wafa Tajul Arifin, exploring how it synergizes the teachings of the Tarekat Qadiriyyah Naqsyabandiyah [hereafter referred to as the TQN] with religious and state affairs. In addition to being the spiritual teacher of the TQN Suryalaya, Abah Anom was also actively involved in practical politics, particularly in presidential elections during the New Order era (Sadono, 2021). The involvement of kyais in the tariqa, exemplified by Abah Anom, is not arbitrary; it is rooted in moral encouragement and signifies a commitment to religious principles and civic duties. The harmonious synergy of the TQN teachings with religious and state aspects reflects an earnest endeavor to uphold unity among citizens. Consequently, Abah Anom's political communication serves as a form of da'wah and political negotiation, contributing to the evolution and propagation of TQN teachings.

Until now, numerous studies have examined the engagement of tariqa *kyais* in practical politics during the era of struggle against colonialism. However, this study focuses on the nuances of political communication among tariqa *kyais* during the eras of independence and the New Order regime, specifically delving into the strategies employed by figures like Abah Anom (Ridho et al., 2021). Political communication stands as a crucial agenda for negotiating with legitimate authorities, aimed at fostering unity within the *ummah* and cultivating harmonious relationships between ulemas and the *ummah*. Moreover, it serves as a crucial element of da'wah, positioning tariqa *kyai* as allies of the government in harmonizing religious practices within both religious and state domains, rather than adopting an anti-worldly attainment stance. Consequently, the political communication developed by Abah Anom represents a means of establishing the TQN's legitimacy within Indonesia's religious and state affairs. (Rohimat, 2021).

This qualitative descriptive study aims to analyze the dynamics of Abah Anom's political relations, focusing on socio-political aspects. The research delves into Abah Anom's narrative and behavior in promoting the TQN by integrating

religious and state teachings. Data were obtained from various documents, including photographs, speech texts, lectures, and the TQN teaching guidebooks. The study used a literature-based approach, gathering documents from the Suryalaya Islamic Boarding School to explore its development during the Abah Anom era and his relations with the New Order government. The data analysis employed a critical approach, considering historical, social, and political dimensions and establishing connections between the text and the context of the period under study.

RELIGIO-SOCIAL, RELIGIO-POLITICAL

The tariqa finds itself within the pendulum of the religio-social and religio-political systems. Religio-political manifests as a form of social interaction within the political sphere of a specific society or community, characterized by a religious ideology. This interaction embodies key features: (1) integralism; (2) the presence of a religious control mechanism within the community; and (3) the influence of the main actor or *murshid* (Ajid Thohir, 2014: 85). The tariqa's movements exhibit a continual synergy, adapting to evolving social conditions. These movements are intrinsically linked to the active participation of tariqa groups in social and political transformations within society. Tariqa members consistently uphold harmony by adhering to both religious and state directives. (van Bruinessen, 1992; Zainurofieq, 2021) dari Syair Perang Menteng, menceritakan perlawanan orang Palembang terhadap pasukan Belanda yang dikirim untuk menaklukkan kota mereka pada tahun 1819. Perang ini dikenal dengan nama komandan pasukan Belanda, Muntinghe, yang dimelayukan menjadi Menteng. Sang penyair Melayu menggambarkan bagaimana kaum putihan ("haji").

In the political landscape of "Nusantara" [the Indonesian Archipelago], the oppressive rule of the Dutch East Indies posed a significant challenge for the Qadiriyyah Naqsabandiyah Tariqa across Java, including regions like Banten, Kediri, Blitar, Gedangan, and Sidoarjo. In response, the Tariqa not only closed ranks internally but also forged unity with the people to carry out *jihad fisabilillah* [fight in the path of Allah] against the invaders. This collective effort highlighted a resistance against colonialism, which is viewed as contrary to both religious and humanitarian principles. According to Clifford Geertz, the period between 1820-1880 witnessed a substantial rebellion among the *santri* in Indonesia. This rebellion encompassed several significant events; first, the Padri rebellion in Sumatra; second, the Diponegoro rebellion in Java; third, the Banten rebellion spurred by Dutch forced labor, and the rebellion in Aceh led, among others, by Teuku Umar. (Geertz, 1992: 27).

The synergy of *kyais*, with their charismatic religiosity, and the mystical-psychological inclination of the Javanese people, who held a belief in the anticipated arrival of a righteous queen, created a social momentum that played a crucial role in this conflict. Kartodirjo noted that nearly all radical movements in the interior of Java, opposing Dutch colonialism, were consistently intertwined with collective notions centered around the emergence of the fair queen, nativism (a yearning for an independent past) and millenarianism (aspiration for a liberated state without oppression). The messianic anticipation of the righteous queen found its cultural-theological orientation in the figures of the *tariqa* leaders who staunchly supported these movements. This alignment with the *tariqa*'s teachings, focused on three pillars: (1) setting an example; (2) spiritual elevation; and (3) the pursuit of ideal conditions. Benda provided further explanation.

“The rise of colonialism led to ulama and kyai assuming the roles of educators and promoters of Islam, gradually becoming pivotal figures in rural communities. This significance extended beyond mere numerical increase, impacting people both psychologically and ideologically. Particularly for farmers, weighed down by mandatory crop contributions, forced labor, and taxes, the propagation of the religion of Allah became a refuge and a source of solace, offering a means of escape from their burdens.”

TQN SURYALAYA IN THE DYNAMICS OF NATIONSHOOD

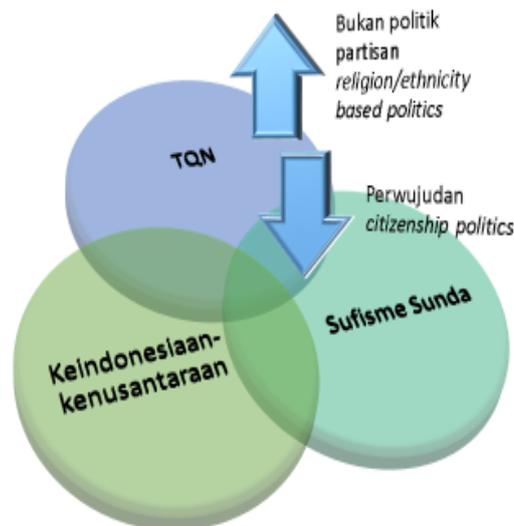
Following Indonesia's sovereignty, the Suryalaya Islamic Boarding School significantly engaged in national affairs. Previously, it influenced Wiranatakusumah V to abandon his plan of forming the Pasundan state due to his discontent with the central authorities. The school's role in preserving Indonesia's unity embodies a commitment to upholding the TQN doctrine, emphasizing adherence to religious principles and loyalty to the sovereign state.

The DI/TII ideological Islamic movement had a substantial presence across Ciamis, Tasikmalaya, and Garut. Abah Anom, along with his brothers and soldiers, formed a fortification that aimed to promote peaceful Islam. This initiative stressed the importance of aligning obedience to the state with obedience to religious principles, evident in the regular recitation of the *tariqa*'s manifesto, called *tanbih*, during religious ceremonies. There was also concerted effort to heighten political-religious awareness, particularly among individuals previously associated with the PKI's left movement. Consequently, using spiritual-based rehabilitation methods, like *inabah*, facilitated efforts to raise awareness about important issues such as NAPZA addiction within these communities. (Nurhamzah CS et al., 2021).

During the early days of the New Order, Indonesian society held a negative perception of the tariqa. The emergence of the DI/TII movement in West Java further marginalized Islamic mass organizations. Abah Anom, however, played a significant role in bridging this gap, actively engaging with the New Order government. Besides being associated with Golongan Karya, he also held a position in the MPR representing this group. Notably, the New Order era depicted the tariqa as supportive of the state, marking a shift in perception. The concepts of religion and state, under this regime, allowed greater freedom in promoting the teachings of the tariqa to broader Muslim communities. This approach fostered a more harmonious relationship between religion and the state, moving away from confrontation to collaboration. (Abbas & Danial, 2022).

SUNDANESE IDENTITY, INDONESIAN IDENTITY

Abah Anom, as a Murshid teacher, displays a genuine appreciation for the local Sundanese culture. The tariqa's teachings, while carrying a universal message, are intricately woven into the fabric of Sundanese traditions. Consequently, the tariqa bears a distinct and strong local cultural identity. Abah Anom has not only incorporated Sundanese thought as the foundation for constructing the tariqa paradigm but has also rooted his approach to Indonesian politics in Sundanese cultural awareness. This integration is evident in the "Tanbih" manifesto, which vividly captures the nuances of Sundanese life through its use of metaphors, all while underscoring its commitment to Indonesian politics.



Tritangtu:
Tarekat, Kesundaan, Keindonesiaan

The illustration above describes the profound interconnection between Sundaneseism, Islam (tariqa), and Indonesianness, portraying them as cross-cultural expressions. It embodies a dialectic of complementary thoughts, emphasizing that cultural greatness does not derive from a monolithic perspective but rather from an open, cosmopolitan, and inclusive approach. The ethos presented encourages the accommodation of all possibilities for development, fostering a spirit of receiving and giving without the need to assert recognition.

As articulated by KH Baban Ahmad Jihad, “In the past, Pangersa Abah Sepuh (K.H. Abdullah Mubarak ibn Nur Muhammad, RA) and Pangersa Abah Anom (K.H. A. Sohibul Wafa Tajul Arifin, RA) conveyed the teachings of the Qadiriyyah Naqsyabandiyah Tariqa predominantly in the Sundanese language. This is evident in various works such as the Collection of Early Morning Lectures, *Tanbih*, and ancient Sundanese poetry, for example, *Layar Putri*, *Kunosari*, *Panambih Lembur Singkur*, *Gelenyu*, *Téjamantri*, *Salaka Domas*, *Panambih Saropangan*, *Mangu-Mangu*, *Goyong*, *Panambih Sukanagara*, *Dangdanggula*, *Rumangsang Degung*, *Rakitan Degung*, *Tepiswiring*, *Bayubud*, *Budaya*, *Malihwarni*, *Kapaksi*, *Gaya*, *Mangari*, *Kentar Ajun*, *Kentar Miring*, *Pancaniti*, *Pager Ageung*, *Pagunungan*, *Kentar Cisaat*, *Pangesahan*, *Kulu-Kulu Setra*, *Adu Manis*, *Katalimbeng*, *Ditilar*, *Pangrungrum*, *Lumengis*, *Bogoh Teu Sapikir*, *Sumambat*, *Sungkawa*, *Kinanti Kaum*, *Sumolondo* and *Langendria*.” KH Baban further said that “Religion does not have to clash with culture; on the contrary, religion and culture reinforce each other. Religion becomes inseparable from its cultural roots, and culture finds its divine vision.”

Identity is shaped through interactions with ‘lian’ [the others] presenting a reformulated look that is more contextual. This process involves preserving aspects of the old culture deemed relevant, while revising or discarding elements of tradition that have become obsolete. This paradigm is the cornerstone of the development undertaken by the TQN Suryalaya.

POLITICAL COMMUNICATION OF TQN IN STATE AFFAIRS

Gabriel Almond (1960) argued that a political system invariably involves political communication conducted by formal (structural) entities as well as non-formal practitioners within society (cultural). “*All of the functions performed in the political system, political socialization and recruitment, interest articulation, interest aggregation, rule making, rule application, and rule adjudication, are performed by means of communication.*” Rusadi Kartaprawira highlights that political communication serves as a means of expressing political thoughts within both society and the government sector.

It acts as a channel, facilitating dialogue and deliberation to convey and negotiate political aspirations. Miriam Budiardjo further emphasizes that political communication is instrumental in channeling diverse opinions and community aspirations, organizing them through a combination of interest aggregation and interest articulation which are subsequently advocated as public policy objectives.

Denton and Woodward, as cited by Pawito (2009), define political communication as “public discussion regarding the allocation of public resources,” specifically pertaining to the distribution of public income, official authority, regulations, and official sanctions imposed by the state. This definition assumes an interactive relationship between the state and the people or public.

In practice, political communication channels can take various forms, including mass communication, face-to-face interactions, interpersonal exchanges, and organizational processes. The scope of political communication encompasses communicators (activists, politicians, professionals), messages, persuasion techniques, media, audiences, and the resulting consequences.

In the context of the New Order state, Abah Anom emerged as a significant figure in the political landscape. He garnered considerable support from high-ranking officials and Golkar, an affiliation he maintained since the organization’s foundation. The widespread influence of his leadership extended across various regions, including Java, Singapore, East Sumatra, West Kalimantan, and Lombok (Bruinessen, 1992).

A noteworthy political *ijtihad* (individual interpretation) consistently upheld by Abah Anom throughout his life was his strategic alignment with the New Order regime. This alignment was interpreted as an internal form of *da’wah* communication, an endeavor described by someone close to him as an attempt to transform “Golkar” into “Golkir” (*dhikr* group). The TQN Suryalaya developed a close relationship with the ruling power, specifically with the Cendana [Soeharto’s residence]. Abah Anom’s closeness to the center of political power was not driven by a pursuit of personal power; rather, it was a deliberate effort to foster a coexistence between religion and the state without mutual suspicion. One of his sons, K.H. Baban Ahmad Jihad (Rido, 2011: 16), affirmed this approach, stating:

“The closeness between the Qadiriyyah Naqsyabandiyah Suryalaya and the Cendana [Soeharto’s residence], established by Abah Anom, indeed holds remarkable significance. This connection prompted a strong desire to extend support, particularly in material assistance, to the Islamic

boarding school. However, our approach aligns closely with Abah's counsel to exercise caution and vigilance, fostering closeness without any attached expectations. He emphasized the importance of continual giving without seeking in return—a principle we have persistently upheld, even in his absence. I must address a recent policy shift regarding the madrasah that we oversee, which now receives government assistance. It is crucial for everyone to understand that this aid is rightfully allocated by the government, similar to the support provided to other educational institutions. This clarification is essential, considering past speculations and busy discussions implying a departure from the practices during Abah Anom's era. The truth is, the aid program is part of the government initiatives, and our role is to accept the program without any further involvement. Nonetheless, our commitment to Abah's principle of 'giving instead of asking' remains unwavering."

The data highlights that Abah Anom's closeness within the New Order's political sphere was not solely driven by personal aspirations or those of Suryalaya Islamic Boarding School. It was primarily about fostering a strong relationship between the ulema (religious scholars) and the *umara* (government authorities) to synergize Indonesian human development. Abah Anom's intentions went beyond seeking personal power or positions; rather, they were inclined toward balancing and fortifying religious values within the state's policy framework. Additionally, he consistently prayed for the physical and mental well-being of the country's leaders, emphasizing the importance of their health in preserving the unity and continuity of the Indonesian state.

COMMUNICATION OF VALUE POLITICS

Abah Anom's political messaging, within Liddle's framework of political thought, leans towards substantivism rather than scripturalism, exhibiting accommodative political behavior. This approach underscores the significance of Islam as a value rather than a rigid ideology, with Islamic values being presented in a manner adaptable to the New Order government (Liddle, 1997: 100-127).

Charismatic leaders often encounter a dilemma when navigating the dynamics of power. Situated as elites of the people, charismatic leaders require legitimacy from their constituents. However, as representatives of the people, they must navigate interactions with bureaucracy and government authority. Confronted by an expanding bureaucratic elite exercising control through a corporative logic, charismatic leaders face the challenge of either embracing the government's logic, risking co-optation and potential loss of

legitimacy from the people, or adopting a critical stance that entails certain political risks. Alternatively, there's the prospect of a charismatic tariqa leader successfully gaining legitimacy from the people while concurrently engaging with government corporatism. (Mahmud Sujuthi, 2011: xx).

Sociologically, Abah Anom serves as a point of reference for the ummah and the nation, with his political references grounded in morality. This implies maintaining proximity to power, such as with Golkar, while still retaining legitimacy from the people. This delicate balance was evident in various public events, such as *manakiban*, *ngaras*, *khataman* ceremonies, and *natura* parades, attended by individuals from diverse backgrounds. These gatherings provided not only moral guidance but also insights into the murshid's political vision, often articulated in the form of "edicts," especially during the later period of Abah Anom. Consequently, every activity carried a moral message embedded with positive values and local wisdom. (Rahman et al., 2022).

This political stance, particularly during the New Order era, sparked controversy among certain groups. However, for his fellows, this political choice is adhered to with unwavering fidelity, in keeping with the traditions of the tariqa. The disciples emulate the Murshid not only in matters of worship but also in all aspects of life, including his political choices. Moreover, the TQN Suryalaya firmly holds the view that the state is as crucial as religion, as evident in the *tanbih*. Obedience to the state is considered to be equal to obedience to religion, establishing a parallel position between the two.

*Jeungna sim kuring nu jadi pananyaan Thariqah Qadiriyyah Naqsabandiyah, ngahaturkeun kagegelan wasiat ka sadaya murid-murid poma sing hade-hade dina sagala laku lampah, ulah aya carekeun Agama jeung Nagara. Eta dua-duanana kawulaan sapantesna samistina, kudu kitu manusa anu tetep cicing dina kaimanan, tegesna tiasa ngawujudkeun karumasaan terhadep agama jeung nagara ta'at ka hadirat Ilahi nu ngabuktikeun parentah dina agama jeung nagara*¹

We also serve as a platform where individuals inquire about the Qadiriyyah Naqsabandiyah Tariqa, imparting a sincere advice to all students: exercise caution in all matters, refrain from actions that contradict religious or state regulations. Adhere to both appropriately, reflecting the demeanor of individuals who maintain faith. Such an attitude not only demonstrates compliance with religious and state directives but also fosters a genuine willingness to embrace the Divine Presence of God, affirming the principles

¹This text is an excerpt of the "Tanbih" which is always recited at the *manakiban* event and other Suryalaya's formal events.

upheld in both religion and the state.

Essentially, the politics of the TQN Suryalaya are predominantly oriented toward moral values and ethics. Abah Anom stands as a moral figure, serving as a role model, an exemplar, and a cultural landmark. He consistently reminds leaders of their responsibilities while emphasizing his ethical role in safeguarding the interests of the people in their daily lives.

According to Hiroko Horikoshi (1987: 78), Abah Anom's political approach resembles that of a volunteer and an agent capable of selecting and guiding cultural values to empower society. This political volunteer function extends to reinforcing vulnerable points in the local system's framework, connecting it with the broader system. Often, Abah Anom acts as a buffer or mediator between conflicting groups, maintaining the necessary driving forces of community dynamics. The kyai, leader of the ummah, wields political influence, particularly within their ummah.

MODERATELY-ACCOMMODATIVE APPROACH

In terms of relations between power and the state, the TQN Suryalaya has adopted a more accommodative and moderate stance. This choice aligns with the tariqa's principles, emphasizing ethics over ideology and presenting "religion" as a moral force. The political-religious communication fostered by the TQN Suryalaya extends not only between schools of thought but also across religions and diverse beliefs. In a scientific oration on the 105th anniversary of the Suryalaya Islamic Boarding School, one of the TQN Suryalaya fellows, Nazarudin Umar, highlighted that the tariqa's communication aims not only to build a harmonious relationship between humans and God but also fosters harmony among people regardless of differences in beliefs, tribes, and countries. Additionally, it promotes harmonious relationships between humans and nature and animals. The tariqa's teachings are so inclusive that people from various backgrounds, including officials and ordinary individuals, naturally come together.

Contrary to the notion that modernity diminishes the roles of charismatic leaders, charismatic leadership in politics is asserted to be even stronger than leadership based on procedural and rational authority (Cosser, in Gordon, 1991: 488). Recognizing the significant influence charismatic tariqa leaders wield in shaping people's behavior, it becomes apparent why traditional leaders of this nature generally appeal to both bureaucracy and politicians (Jackson, 1990: 307). Blessings represent expressions that surpass mere actions and verbal communication.

The close association with power during the New Order era was a *murshid ijthad*, aimed at bringing Islam closer to power when, in reality, power at that time was highly hegemonic, and few were interested in carrying out *da'wah* from within. Abah Anom opted to be within the vortex of power politics without getting entangled in it, as evidenced in “Ranggeuyan Mutiara” (String of Pearls) at the end of the “Tanbih.”

Ulah ngewa ka ulama sajaman
Ulah nyalahkeun kana pangajaran batur
Ulah mariksa murid batur
Ulah medal sila upama kapanah

Avoid harboring resentment towards modern scholars.
 Refrain from criticizing the teachings of others.
 Abstain from scrutinizing the students of other teachers.
 Maintain your demeanor even when faced with adversity.
 (Source: Book “Tanbih Abah Sepuh 1956”)

These words in “Ranggeuyan Mutiara” emphasize the importance of adopting a humble attitude and nurturing a hospitable character. Abah Anom promotes an Islamic message that engages in a dialogue with national politics, establishing a strong connection between religious values and everyday politics. In Abah Anom’s teachings, religion is seamlessly integrated with statehood, viewing the *tariqa* as a means to experience pluralism.

Nasaruddin Umar (2014) asserts that this inclusive attitude applies the universality and cosmopolitan aspects of Islam, making Islam a source of blessing for the entire universe. He further highlights the significance of *Suryalaya* in fostering diversity, contributing to the mitigation of social tensions and conflicts prevalent in society. The *Suryalaya Islamic Boarding School*, according to Umar, places a strong emphasis on upholding humanity, respecting all individuals irrespective of their religion, nationality, or social class.² Additionally, Abah Anom imparts values such as sincerity, humility, and the prioritization of the brotherhood of faith to his followers.

The analysis by Kompas Research and Development (October 14, 1996) underscores that Abah Anom’s political decision to support the Golkar Secretariat since its foundation in 1963 was not made without a deep understanding of the dynamics of political life. This decision, and the subsequent establishment of a personal “closeness” between Abah Anom and President Soeharto, is considered a political *ijthad*. The enduring relationship

²Delivered by Nasaruddin Umar on 5 September 2010

between Abah Anom and President Soeharto is compared to the political stance taken by KH Ahmad Siddiq, the former Rais Aam of PBNU, during the opening of the NU Congress in Krapyak Yogyakarta (1989). In that event, Siddiq firmly stated NU's acceptance of Pancasila as the principle of the nation and state, providing a thorough foundation for the decision and inspiring the development of "harmonious" relations between the government and Islam. This has contributed to a gradual reduction in suspicion towards Islam as a social group.

The political alliance between the government and religious leaders is exemplified by the amicable relationship with Islamic boarding schools (Witro, 2020) this does not make Indonesia as an Islamic country. The relationship between religion and state in Islam is fairly interpretive and it nowadays still becomes a debate. The government system applied in this country is democratic. Besides, there has to be freedom for the ulama in preaching without being limited by space and time. A number of ulama are currently being persecuted and intimidated that impacts to the lecture to be either stopped, postponed, or even canceled. At this part, the role of the umara (government). This symbolizes the strengthening of ties between the ulema and the umara. On September 5, 2004, coinciding with the 99th anniversary of the Suryalaya Islamic Boarding School, Megawati Soekarnoputri, accompanied by Golkar Party figures Akbar Tandjung, Pramono Anung, and several functionaries from the Golkar Party and PDIP, visited Abah Anom. Megawati, then serving as the president, and her entourage traveled from the Halim Perdanakusuma Air Force Base using an F-100 aircraft owned by Merpati Nusantara. Upon arrival at Husein Sastranegara Airport in Bandung, the President and her entourage proceeded to Suryalaya. In her address, Megawati mentioned her longstanding awareness of Pondok Suryalaya, stating, "There is no other purpose than to stay connected." Additionally, the President sought prayers for Abah Anom, wishing him ease in guiding the nation through the current crisis. Pramono Anung clarified, "The visit was, without a doubt, a friendly one. They prayed for each other." Megawati also expressed concern for Abah Anom regarding his efforts to address the drug issues.

In the 2009 presidential election, specifically on Friday, June 26, 2009, Jusuf Kalla visited Abah Anom. Similarly, President KH Abdurrahman Wahid also paid a visit. Even long before that, during the era of the New Order regime, Gus Dur, a known representative of civil society, made multiple visits to Abah Anom. He urged Abah Anom to mend relations with President Soeharto, recognizing that Abah Anom, as a kyai, not only held a "special route" to the palace but also commanded great respect from the then-powerful President.

According to Martin van Bruinessen (1992), Abah Anom was a kyai with a personal closeness to Suharto. Abah Anom played a role in “Islamizing” Soeharto, shifting the emphasis from what was perceived as a more dominant “Kejawen” appreciation. Suharto regularly sought Abah Anom’s advice on religious teachings and dynamics, even in the final stages of his power. Abah Anom, a spiritual teacher, was unwavering in his commitment to *ngumawula ka wayahna* (serving without limits), serving as a pillar for every complaint (*jadi gunung pananggehan*), and never ceasing to serve (*homo tuna sumujud*). He remained a reliable listener for all the problems faced by the people.

Moertono (1995) defines an ongoing tug-of-war between kyai and rulers. Despite the authorities wielding substantial, integrated, diffuse, technocratic, bureaucratic, and at times, repressive power, it cannot be overlooked that kyai have played a crucial political role from the pre-independence era to the present, navigating various dynamics.³ Endang Turmudi (2004) emphasizes a strong interdependence between the community and kyais, encompassing various aspects of life, including politics. Kyais are perceived to hold superior cultural and structural positions. Ali Maschan Moesa (1999) highlights their knowledge superiority and the precedence of actions that impel kyai to attain self-perfection and endeavor to perfect others (*al-kamâl wa al-takmîl*). Max Weber (1968) categorizes this as charismatic leadership rooted in personal authority. In this context, ulemas act as patrons to their followers (clients) in a paternalistic relationship. Berger (1991) argues that religion serves as the sacred canopy, an instrument to fortify politics in all human actions. Kyais not only serve as leaders of Islamic boarding schools but also wield power within and hold prestige in society (Geertz, 1981).

Initially rooted in cultural spheres, kyais have adapted to the fast-paced socio-political dynamics, extending their influence into politics. This transformation occurs through mutual symbiosis, where kyai receive government support. Simultaneously, the political elite gains religious moral legitimacy from kyais, a legitimacy crucial for expanding their authority.

³ Further studies on aspects of the *kyai* leadership both for himself and in the context of relations with the state can be read in Zamakshari Dofier, *Tradisi Pesantren* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1982); Clifford Geertz, “*The Javanese Kiai, The Changing Role of Cultural Broker*” in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 2; Hiroko Harikoshi, *Kiai and Social Change*, (Jakarta: P3M, 1987); Endang Turmudi, *Perselingkuhan Kiai dan Kekuasaan* (Yogyakarta: LP3ES, 2003); Bisri Effendi, *an-Nuqayyah: Corak Transformasi Sosial di Madura* (Jakarta: P3M, 1990) and Arifin Mansur Noor, *Islam in an Indonesian World: Ulama of Madura* (Yogyakarta: Gajah Mada Press, 1990)

PAPAYUNG (TENT) TARIQA

It appears that the TQN's religious and state political communication centers around efforts to make religion a *papayung* for society right from the onset of crises such as drought, chaos (*bancang pakewuh*), anxiety (*harengreng*), and full of worry (*loba karingrang kahariwang*). This religio-politics is not only involved but engages deeply with the life of society. It represents a religion that ascends to the heavens of transcendence and simultaneously delves into the roots of humanization, similar to “word of purity” (*kalimah thayyibah*), which is consistently expressed either loudly (*jahar*) or subtly (*khafi*).

This form of religious politics avoids being trapped in doctrinal fanaticism, as evidenced in the *tanbih*:

“Ari sebagai agama, saagamana-saagamana, nurutkeun surat Alkafirun ayat 6: “agama anjeun keur anjeun, agama kuring keur kuring”, surahna ulah jadi papaseaan “kudu akur jeung batur-batur tapi ulah campur baur”. Geuning dawuhan sepuh baheula “ Sina logor dina liang jarum, ulah sereg di buana”. Lamun urangna henteu kitu tangtu hanjakal diakhirna. Karana anu matak tugeunah terhadap badan urang masing-masing eta teh tapak amal perbuatanana. Dina surat Annahli ayat 112 diuynggelkeun anu kieu :”Gusti Allah geus maparing conto pirang-pirang tempat, boh kampungna atawa desana atawa nagarana, anu dina eta tempat nuju aman sentosa, gemah ripah loh jinawi, aki-kari pendudukna (nu nyicinganana) teu narima kana ni’mat ti Pangeran, maka tuluy bae dina eta tempat kalaparan, loba kasusah, loba karisi jeung sajabana, kitu teh samata-mata pagawean maranehanana”.

Regarding religious matters, it is left to each individual's belief, bearing in mind Surah Al-Kafirun verse 6: “Your religion is for you, my religion is for me.” This verse emphasizes the importance of avoiding disputes, promoting harmony and peace, and respecting each other without interference. Let us reflect on the wisdom passed down by our ancestors: “We should conduct ourselves wisely, in an orderly manner, and peacefully; failing to do so will lead to regrets—first in terms of income, then personal remorse, and ultimately, it will be futile.” The suffering one experiences is often a consequence of one's own actions. Surah An-Nahl verse 112 provides a meaningful example: “Allah has given the analogy of a town or village that was once safe, peaceful, and prosperous. Yet, its residents rejected the blessings of Allah, leading to famine, suffering, and fear due to their own attitudes and deeds.”

The inclusiveness of religion-state politics stems from an acknowledgment of the inevitability of diversity as a social reality, requiring tolerant attitudes.

Differences are not seen as sources of conflict but rather as opportunities to enhance spiritual experiences. Abah Anom's teachings emphasize this appreciation for spirituality, extending beyond the spiritual realm and manifesting in real-life situations. This philosophy is not confined to metaphysical considerations but is transformed into a political practice, embodying both "politics" and "the politically-related aspects."

CONCLUSION

The political communication of the tariqa group, exemplified by Abah Anom, goes beyond the scope of da'wah and political negotiations for the tariqa's teachings. It aims to legitimize the TQN and establish its position in state affairs. The relationship Abah Anom cultivated with state leaders reflects a collaboration between the *ulema* and the *umara*, working together to foster religious harmony and uphold the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia. This effort aligns with the tariqa's doctrine, emphasizing the importance of maintaining a balance between religious teachings and obedience to the state. Abah Anom's political communication carries implications for the government's perception of the TQN teachings, which might be seen as anti-development and anti-worldly attainment. Therefore, Abah Anom's approach serves as a form of da'wah to integrate the TQN teachings into both religious and state affairs in Indonesia.

Following Abah Anom's passing, political dynamics continued to evolve, requiring prompt, adequate, and visionary responses from the Suryalaya Islamic Boarding School and the broader TQN fellows. The teachings of Abah Anom need to be interpreted progressively and contextually to ensure the continued relevance of the TQN in an ever-changing political landscape. The political arena, characterized by power struggles and various means, stands in contrast to the world of the kyai. The crucial role played by kyais within the state requires an independent stance, ensuring that their existence contributes significantly and long-term to the nation's development and the welfare of its ummah.

This study serves as a reflective critique, challenging the perception of tariqa groups as exclusive and detached from worldly affairs, even being perceived as anti-government. It recognizes the significant transformation of the tariqa movement, acknowledging its direct involvement in practical politics. The participation of kyais and tariqa communities in political activities is not a contradiction to the teachings of the tariqa but is seen as a beneficial collaboration between kyais and the government for the country's development.

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