MUSLIM ORGANIZATIONS AT NATIONAL AND LOCAL LEVEL: THE EVIDENCE OF FRAGMENTED RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY IN BANTEN

ROHMAN

Islamic Education Lecturer at Serang Raya University (Unsera)
Serang, Banten,
rohmanana@yahoo.com

Abstrak

Makalah ini mencoba menjelaskan fragmentasi otoritas keagamaan di Indonesia, lebih khusus lagi di Provinsi Banten. Bagian pertama dalam artikel ini membahas tentang sejarah perkembangan otoritas keagamaan dan pendirian organisasi Islam tradisional dan modern di awal abad ke-20, termasuk pendirian MUI sebagai usaha pemerintah untuk mempersatukan organisasi-organisasi Islam di Indonesia. Bagian kedua membahas tentang 'ulamā' Banten, organisasi-organisasi Islam di Banten, dan pendirian MUI Banten. Dalam mengenali karakteristik otoritas agama, kita bisa menghargai bagaimana muslim Indonesia berjuang untuk menemukan sumber valid bagi otoritas keagamaan yang memikiki hak untuk berbicara tentang Islam.

Kata Kunci: otoritas keagamaan, organisasi muslim tradisionalis dan modernis, Banten, MUI

Abstract

This paper tries to describe the fragmentation of religious authority in Indonesia, more specifically in Banten province. The first part of this paper discusses the history of the religious authority development and the establishment of modernist and traditionalist Muslim organizations in the beginning of the twentieth century. It includes the foundation of MUI as an attempt of the government to unite Islamic organisations in Indonesia. The second part discusses Banten 'ulamā's, Islamic organisations in Banten, and the establishment of MUI Banten. In recognizing the nature of religious authority, we can appreciate how Indonesian Muslims have striven to find a valid source of religious authority with the right to speak for Islam.

Keywords: Religious authority, modernist and traditionalist muslim organizations, Banten, MUI

Introduction

Religious Authority: 'Ulamā' and Fatwā

The word authority in the online Cambridge English dictionary is defined as 'the moral or legal right or ability to control' and 'a group of people with official responsibility for a particular area of activity'. According to Seferta, the recognition of religious authority is one of the fundamental principles of any religion particularly when 'considering the finality of the source of that authority and its relation to the future of that religion'. In addition, Kramer argues that religious authority enables power, opportunity and the right as well as the capability to create and interpret religious texts including the manner of their interpretation. Therefore religious authority is dependent on the existence of an institution with the power and the right to both define and speak for religion. Such an institution unites its adherents in their appreciation of the holy books, prophetic traditions and religious beliefs and in this way avoids dissension and uncertainty.

Kramer's explanation supports the concept of religious authority in Muslim society particularly during the prophet Muhammad's life (d. 632). During his prophethood, Muhammad had two types of authority; political and religious. Through these he interpreted his revelations as the primary legal source of how to conduct oneself in daily life. He also determined, advised and defined appropriate patterns of behaviour for Muslims not only concerning religious practice and ritual but also in solving political problems. He became the medium through which Muslims understand God's law and regulations. His interpretations became obligatory practice for Muslims as the second source of Islamic law. After his death, religious authority in Islam was replaced by 'ulamā', religious figuress with the capacity to interpret the Qur'ān and Sunnah texts as the main sources of religious authority.

The existence of 'ulamā' is crucial because the problems faced by Muslim societies (ummah) are not only related to ritual practice s for which solutions can be found inthe Qur'ān and Sunnah texts. Islamic legal sources may not always hold the answer to more complicated problems. In such cases, the ummah, either individually or on an institutional basis, ask the 'ulamā' to give advice in solving their problems based on Islamic law. In this way the 'ulamā' develop and maintain their religious authority over the ummah by issuing their interpretations through commentaries and fatwas. The 'ulamā' use

commentaries to reinterpret Islamic texts to accommodate changing socio-political conditions in Muslim society⁵ while fatwas are used to advise the *ummah* and to respond to questions addressed to them.

According to Kaptein, an 'ulamā's pronouncement to petitioners on a specific issue is considered to be a fatwa. Mozaffari agrees, arguing that a fatwa is the response to a question concerning a particular problem of Islamic law issued by a qualified religious authority. He emphasises that a fatwa issued by a mufti or 'ulamā' has a different function from a qādhi's decision in court because a fatwa is not an order and does not have legal consequences. A qādhi's decision is binding, an obligatory decision issued by the executive authority of the court and must be implemented. The requests for religious pronouncements from the 'ulamā' have been handed down from one generation to the next because the 'ulamā' are considered to be the heirs of the prophets.

The opinion or advice issued by the 'ulamā' is interesting because it hightlights the development of religious understanding, historic circumstance, and socio-political conditions. Kaptein studies Indonesian fatwas and points out the difference between fatwas issued at the end of the nineteenth century and those issued in the twentieth in the sense that in the latter, a fatwa can be issued by a collective 'ulamā' from a Muslim organisation in Indonesia, not necessarily by an individual 'ulamā' or mufti. More recently 'ulamā' lacking religious education have also become involved in religious debate. 9

The Searching for Religious Authority: The National Context

Following the demise of Islamic sultanates in Indonesia, 'ulamā' tended to be leaders of tharīqah institutions giving advice to the ummah on ritual practice but they played another role in encouraging Muslims to fight against colonial government. The problems faced by Indonesian Muslims became more serious and complex both politically and socially. Muslims no longer dealt with ritual problems alone but also with relatively new problems. These included the compatibility of science and technology with Islam, the conflict between Islam and the West and tension between a traditionalist and modernist understanding of Islam all of which needed religious pronouncements from the 'ulamā'.

Indonesian Muslims sought religious authority in cities considered to be centres of Islam. They eventually divided into two main streams; the traditional and modern. The former tended to

maintain and preserve traditions such as the attachment to taqlid (blind imitation of the past), the abandonment of ijtihād (interpretation), paying tribute to saints and visiting their tombs. These practices were considered to be bid'ah (innovation) and were blamed for Islam remaining a backward-looking religion. According to the modernist view moreover, ijtihād helped to implement the Qur'ān and Sunnah texts as well as enabling Muslims to cope with modern life. 12

The controversy over tradition led to the establishment of modernist (kaum muda) and traditionalist (kaum tua) organisations at the beginning of the twentieth century. Muhammadiyah (Muḥammadiyyah), Al Irsyad (al Irshad) and Persis (Persatuan Islam) which represent modernist organisations, were established in 1912, 1914 and 1923 respectively. Nahdlatul Ulama (Nahdhah al-'Ulamā', hereafter NU) representing traditionalist thought, was established in 1926. 14

One of the most significant factors leading to the rise of modernist organisations in Indonesia was the influence of Rasyīd Ridha from Cairo on Indonesian Muslims. His influence was furthered by the proliferation of print media enabling the reformist's messages to reach Muslims in the archipelago. Reformist ideology and interpretation were disseminated by publishing fatwas (*ifta*) in a journal entitled *al-Manār*. Bluhm investigated the fatwas relating to questions posed by Indonesian petitioners published in *al-Manār*. He showed that correspondence between Indonesian Muslims and modernist thinkers in Cairo led to 134 requests for fatwas in *al-Manār* between 1898 and 1936. He also stated that *al-Manār* influenced two Islamic reformist magazines in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago; *al-Imām*, founded in Singapore in 1906 and *al-Munīr* founded in Padang in 1911.

Azra argues that print media are instrumental in the dissemination of modernist ideas in the Malay-Indonesian world. Burhanudin agrees, arguing that al-Manār created the environment that made it possible for Indonesian Muslims to become involved in the reformation of Islam. Another important journal that contributed to the spread of the Islamic modernist view was al-Islām, published in 1916 by Tjokroaminoto, the founder of Sarekat Islam (SI). The rise of Islamic reform in Indonesia in places considered by Indonesian Muslims to be centres of Islamic knowledge was due to the proliferation of print media which speeded up the dissemination of

modernist thought at the beginning of the twentieth century in Indonesia.

In response to the way Muslim organisations had developed to deal with religious matters, many Muslim organisations established their own institutions to issue fatwas with different ways of producing them for their followers. Muhammadiyah which uses independent rational investigation to interpret the Qur'ān and Sunnah texts to deal with modern issues rather than strictly following one of the four madhhabs (school of thought) in Aĥl as-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah, established Majlīs Tarjīh in 1927. Meanwhile, Persis emphasises the importance of the Qur'ān and Sunnah texts as sources of religious interpretation and bases most of its fatwas on Ahmad Hassan's thoughts. On the other hand, NU uses classic Syāfi'ī texts to respond to modernisation and established the Bahts al-Masā'il forum in 1926. This diverse development led to the situation whereby a fatwa issued by one religious organisation could be different from another, resulting in contradictory pronouncements on the same issue.

The Establishment of Indonesian Council of 'Ulamā' (MUI)

On 26th July 1975, MUI was established under the auspices of the New Order regime. The aim was to unite modernist and traditional Muslim organisations in Indonesia into a single state-run Institution for Indonesian Muslim society, to encourage internal consultation and give Indonesian Muslims a means of contacting the government.²⁴

In 1976, MUI published guidelines outlining its five main purposes. These are: (1) To issue fatwas and offer advice on religious and social problems to both government and Indonesian Muslims to strengthen the nation; (2) to strengthen the Islamic brotherhood and create religious harmony to bring about national unity; (3) to represent Indonesian Muslims at meetings with other religious leaders; (4) to mediate between the 'ulamā's' and 'umarā' (government) in order to establish a working relationship between government and Indonesian Muslims to aid national development and (5) to maintain neutrality by not becoming involved in politics.²⁵

The government adopted a strong authoritarian approach to speed up national development, by making MUI reflect government policy in their communications. As a result, most fatwas produced by central MUI during the New Order regime do reflect government policy rather than the interest of the *ummah*.²⁶ This is demonstrated

first, by the low number of fatwas issued in response to questions from individual Muslim petitioners and second, by the content of fatwas clearly based with government policy in mind.²⁷

Besides issuing fatwas to educate Indonesian Muslim society on religious belief, economics, politics, and social affairs, MUI also released six types of fatwa-like discourses. These are recommendations (taushiyyah), admonitions (tadzkirah), instructions or mandates (amānah), position statements (pernyataan sikap), appeals (himbauan) and intellectual positions (sumbangan pemikiran).²⁸ A true fatwa represents MUI's highest religious discourse because the procedure for issuing a true fatwa is far more stringent than it is for the six fatwa-like discourses. According to Ichwan, before issuing some fatwas, MUI consults the law commission to establish the legal position and this influences the content of the official document.²⁹

MUI's role changed after the downfall of the Suharto regime in 1998. Since then, MUI is no longer the government's mouthpiece on religious issues nor is it a supporter of government policy. MUI has become more independent and now works in the interest of Indonesian Muslims through its fatwas. However, there are at least two schools of thought about who the fatwas represent in reality since the change of position. On the one hand, some fatwas just seemed to support radical Islam in Indonesia, for example, MUI's fatwa no.7 opposing pluralism, liberalism and secularism and the Ahmadiyyah fatwa. Both fatwas seem to represent radical Islam's voice due to the fact that many groups promoting conservative Islam have become a dominant force within MUI and influence it through a strict interpretation of religious texts.³⁰ In this sense, some researchers have pointed to MUI's struggle with the fundamentalist Islam camp and have found evidence of it acting as the mouthpiece of radical Islamic groups in Indonesia.31

On the other hand, MUI has issued fatwas reflecting the ummah's general interest. For example, the fatwa confirming the prohibition of consuming food containing pork because it is considered to be harām, gained wide support. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that some of MUI's fatwas, especially those related to religious belief, have created tension in Indonesian Muslim society.

Recently, MUI established a forum called the *ljtimā' 'ulamā'* Komisi Fatwa se Indonesia (Commission for the agreement of fatwas in Indonesia) to deal with sensitive issues and problems likely to raise controversy.³³ There are three major areas discussed in this forum,

namely Masā'il Asāsiyyah Wathaniyyah (problems concerning the foundation of states), fiqhiyyah mu'āirah (problems concerning issues of the day) and masā'il qanūniyyah (laws and regulations). The MUI's fatwa commission organises a forum every three years, involving hundreds of participants from the fatwa and law commissions from branches all over Indonesia. The fatwa commission from Indonesian Muslim organisations and representatives of the syan'ah (Islamic law) faculties of universities of Islamic Studies in Indonesia all attend. MUI thus plays a crucial role in maintaining the unity of Muslim organisations in Indonesia. By discussing its fatwas based on its own methodology with every Muslim organisation in the country, MUI has endeavoured to become the foremost issuer of fatwas in Indonesia.

In 2005, MUI launched a programme known as *Tagyīr al-Munkarah* (the transformation of evils) to reduce crime in Indonesia. One objective of the programme is to consolidate MUI's fatwas on the prohibition of evil behaviour and moral turpitude including gambling, corruption, pornography, drug abuse and prostitution.³⁵

Fragmented Religious Authority at Local Context: The Banten Case

The Banten 'ulamā': Abuya, Kyai and Ustādz

The term 'ulamā's derived from the Arabic to denote men of religious learning irrespective of their level of scholarship or position.³⁶ However the term is rarely used by Bantenese Muslims who prefer to use kyai, the local term to describe someone with a certain level of religious and spiritual education and position. The Bantenese have a different term for a person holding a higher position than kyai, namely abuya. They also use ustādz for people with religious understanding, taking into account their age, spiritual experience and religious education. Therefore, it is important to examine how the Bantenese use these terms in practising their religion.

Discussion of the difference between kyai and 'ulamā' has appeared in several studies by both Indonesian and foreign researchers. According to Geertz, the use of kyai and 'ulamā' is interchangeable because both can be used to describe people with a deep knowledge of Islam.³⁷ Furthermore, Geertz identifies kyai as a kind of cultural broker who connects the external world with the peasant community in several ways. For example, they can be advisors on social and religious issues as well as teachers of Islamic law. Furthermore, although they are considered socially and economically

superior, they also claim to have magic skills for curing disease and chasing away evil spirits. These characteristics lead Javanese villagers to view them as powerful and influential sacred figures.³⁸

Meanwhile, Dhofier argues that in Java, the term kvai has three different meanings: A title to honour gods with supernatural powers; a respectful term of address for the elderly and a title for Muslim scholars in charge of pesantren (Islamic boarding schools) who teach classic Islamic texts.³⁹ He also states that the term kvai refers to 'ulamā' representing traditional Islam. 40 However, Horikoshi points out the difference between kyai and 'ulama' based on their meaning for the Sundanese in Cipari, a village in the southern part of West Java. She argues that the kyai's position is higher than the 'ulamā's in terms of their influence on society and their greater religious knowledge.⁴¹ Criticising Horikoshi's argument by stating that it is not appropriate to describe kyai and 'ulama' in West Java, Iskandar seems to support Geertz and Dhofier's opinion of kyai by arguing that it should be used to refer to Muslim scholars in pesantren with a certain number of santris and who have been on a pilgrimage, while the 'ulamā' share some characteristics and are socially influential but they are not involved with the pesantren. 42

Nevertheless, the use of kyai to denote someone in charge of a pesantren with a number of santris is no longer in common use. In Banten, many religious people with a deep knowledge of Islam and who run a pesantren are not called kyai. This could be due to several factors. They might be considered too young, they might not descend from a kyai, or they might only have a few santri studying at their pesantren. In this case they are called ustādz. Moreover, in contrast to Dhofier and Iskandar's argument, Bantenese who are not from a traditionalist background and who do not have a pesantren can also be called kyai by the Bantenese. Furthermore, the title haji (those who have performed hajj (pilgrimage) is irrelevant as a definition of kyai because many Bantenese Muslims go on pilgrimage no matter what their educational background if they can afford it.

In reference to Geertz's definition of kyai, some aspects need further examination. The first is the term 'cultural broker'. It is true that kyai can be broker or mediator in receiving Islam from the traditional centres and disseminating it to his area of influence. With their religious knowledge and experience, kyai are well-placed to meet politicians and their followers. However, the term cannot be used to refer to all kyai especially those who rigidly practise tharīqab teachings

that suggest keeping one's distance from politics. Therefore, it seems that the term when related to politics, is insufficient to describe some kyai who are against involvement in politics.

Two great kyai are well-known to the Bantenese. These are the late abuya Dimyati bin Muhammad bin Amin al-Bantani (d. 2003)⁴⁴, leader of the Cidahu pesantren and khalifah of the Shadziliyyah thariqah and the late Abuya Bustomi, leader of the Cisantri pesantren. Both pesantren are in Pandeglang district, by which they practise strict observance of shufi principles (the teaching of Islamic mysticism) and completely ignore political influence in order to preserve their independence and the atmosphere in the pesantren.

Abuya Dimyati, resisted pressure from the government and Golkar and in 1977, he was sentenced to several months in prison for his "seditious" Friday sermons. ⁴⁵ According to many Bantenese, he never accepted government support nor was he involved with any political organisations, but his influence is clear from the high number of pupils and followers he had, not just from Banten but also from other places on Java and Sumatra. Many government officials and former presidents of the Republic of Indonesia, such as Habibie and Gus Dur, have visited abuya Dimyati's pesantren to ask for blessings (barākab) and prayers.

The Bantenese called them abuya not only to distinguish them from regular kyai but also to indicate their admirable qualities, such as tawadhu' (being humble), zuhd (piety), wara' (a deep devotion to God) and their religious knowledge. The latter is greater than that of the kyai because they possessed a lot of karāmah (the magic power of Islamic saints) given by God, according to the Bantenese. 46 Living a humble lifestyle, they were independent, senior kyai who followed Islamic teachings, constantly avoiding political influence and resisting change. However, this stance meant the infrastructure of their pesantrens did not evolve. In a society familiar with the practice of magic and the occult, the two abuya were very popular and spiritually influential in Banten. Many Bantenese Muslims regularly visited their pesantrens to listen to the abuyas' sermons or to ask for religious advice (fatwa). From the description above, I infer that the definition of 'ulamā' in Banten relates to their knowledge, charisma and spiritual influence as demonstrated in the following figure:

Figure 1
Classification of Banten's 'ulamā'

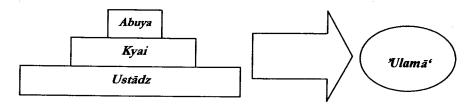


Figure 1 shows that the number of *ustādz* in Banten is higher than the number of *kyai* and there are more *kyai* than *abuya*. However, all of them are '*ulamā*'. In terms of influence on the Bantenese, the figure illustrates that an *abuya*'s influence is greater than that of a *kyai* or *ustādz*.

Second, Geertz explains that the kyai's functions are to teach Islamic law in pesantren, to act as social and religious advisor and to heal including practising magic. However, his description is no longer valid after certain historic and cultural developments. His description is probably accurate in illustrating the functions of independent kyai living in rural Banten. In this province, some kyai such as K.H. Wahab Afif, K.H. AS Hasan and K.H. Hasan Alaydrus, who are modernists, do not run pesantren, cannot cure disease and do not claim to possess magic powers.

Furthermore, Geertz's depiction of kyai is true of their socioeconomic roles in Banten. According to Hudaeri, the kyai in Banten do have roles to play in society. These are guru ngaji (Qur'ān recitation teacher), guru kitab (Arabic yellow books teacher), guru tharīqah (shūfī order teacher), guru ilmu hikmah (supernatural teacher) and muballig (sermon-giver).⁴⁷

In general, the 'ulamā' in Banten can be divided into two; formal and informal 'ulamā'. The latter consists of traditional salafi kyai that avoid government influence because most of them are against involvement in politics. Nearly all of them run pesantren in rural Banten, practise tharīqah, and become healers based on their closeness to God but they are not involved in any formal Muslim organisations. They are independent 'ulamā' in the sense that they can answer religious questions without consulting other 'ulamā' or the fatwa institution in Muslim organisations. In contrast, most formal 'ulamā' do take part in the formal religious institutions established either by the government, MUI for example, or by Bantenese 'ulamā' such as

Matla'ul Anwar, al-Khairiyah, Nahdlatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah and Persis. They are considered formal because these organisations have legal status, statutes and a membership system. One other point of note is that although Banten is renowned as one of the regions in the archipelago that adheres strongly to traditional Islam, many informal Bantenese 'ulamā' practising the same rituals as NU do not always affiliate to it.⁴⁹

Mathla'ul Anwar and Perguruan Islam al-Khairiyah's Fatwa Councils

The Bantanese formed two Muslim organisations during the first two decades of the twentieth century, namely Mathla'ul Anwar (hereafter MA) and Perguruan Islam al-Khairiyah (hereafter al-Khairiyah). The former was founded in 1916 by some kyai from Menes, a sub-district of southern Banten. This was in response to the introduction of large secular schools by the Dutch colonial government as well as to the decline of the traditional pesantrens' effectiveness in providing an attractive model of Islamic education for the young generation of Muslims in Banten. The latter was established in the same year as MA by K.H. Syam'un, who studied in Mecca between 1905 and 1910 and continued to study at al-Azhār University in Cairo from 1910 until 1915. The pesantren al-Khairiyah initially employed a traditional system but changed in 1925 to the madrasah system based on the Egyptian model that uses a number of grades of education.

There are some similarities between MA and al-Khairiyah. The first is their involvement in establishing a modern system of Islamic education i Banten. While MA concentrated on developing the education system in Pandeglang and in other regions of southern Banten, al-Khairiyah focused on Cilegon and the northern part of Banten. Both organizations have evolved into national institutions, each having a *Pengurus Besar* (National Board) and raise financial contributions from provincial branches in Indonesia to support their activities.

Both organisations have their own fatwa institutions. Al-Khairiyah established Dewan Pertimbangan dan Fatwa (Council of Consideration and Fatwa) based on the al-Khairiyah congress of 1955.⁵³ Meanwhile, MA established Majlis Fatwa wa Tablig Matla'ul Anwar (Mathla'ul Anwar's Fatwa and Proliferation Council) in 1960 based on MA's official meeting in Tangerang to solve problems

related to furu iyyah (branches of fiqh) and khilafiyyah (conflicting interpretations).⁵⁴ In 1962, Majlis Fatwa wa Tablig was divided into two councils, namely Majlis Fatwa Mathla'ul Anwar and Majlis Da'wah Mathla'ul Anwar.⁵⁵

In terms of the religious standpoint of the two organisations, MA seems to be more dynamic than al-Khairiyah in that it has at least three streams concerned with religious discourse: The traditionalist camp with the same aims as NU; the reformist camp that works towards the dissemination of Islamic purification and fundamentalist camp fighting for the implementation of Islamic teaching via an Islamic state.⁵⁶ Al-Khairiyah seems to be more fluid in the sense that although most of its leaders are graduates of Middle Eastern universities such as al-Azhar and Islamic University of Medina, they do not display a modernist perspective so there is almost no religious dispute within al-Khairiyah.⁵⁷ According to its chairman, although the ritual practice of most al-Khairiyah members resembles NU's, in reality their religious viewpoint depends upon individual preference because al-Khairiyah focuses solely on education.⁵⁸ To sum up, the two local Muslim organisations occupy an important position in Banten society because their 'ulamā' have become the backbone of MUI in some districts and municipalities.

The Coalition of Muslim Organizations in Banten under the Indonesian Council of 'Ulamā' (MUI) of Banten Province

After the establishment of Banten province in October 2000, MUI in four districts and two municipalities of Banten attended a meeting to discuss the establishment of MUI of Banten province.⁵⁹ The outcome of the meeting was a letter addressed to West Java MUI asking it to advise on and supervise the establishment of MUI in Banten province.⁶⁰ This was successful because West Java MUI approved the establishment of MUI Banten without objection.

The first provincial meeting of MUI Banten was held in March 2001 and Prof. K.H. Wahab Afif (b. 1936) was elected the first chairman for the period of 2001-2006. MUI Banten held its second provincial meeting in September 2006 to choose a new chairman and officials for MUI Banten. In this meeting, Prof. K.H. Wahab Afif was re-elected for the second period from 2006 to 2011.

There are two reasons to explain why Prof. K.H. Wahab Afif was re-elected. The first was for his organisational and political experience. K.H. Wahab Afif was one of the prominent 'ulamā' figures

in Banten who formed an alliance with Golkar. In the 1980s, he was a member of Golkar's Dewan Pimpinan Daerah (provincial board) in West Java and a member of Golkar's advisory board in Serang district.⁶² He was also a member of Satkar Ulama Dewan Pimpinan Pusat (national board), an 'ulama' organisation under Golkar's influence.63 In addition, he became chief of MUI Serang district for a while. The second reason was for his educational background and academic achievement. He received his basic education at al Khairiyah, which is influential for 'ulamā', particularly in Serang and Cilegon. After completing his basic education at the al-Khairiyah madrasah in 1956, the board sent him along with other students to study at al-Azhar University.64 He was also dean of Serang branch's syari'ah faculty at the State Institute for Islamic Studies (IAIN) and Sunan Gunung Djati (now IAIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin) between 1979 and 1985 and at the time of writing he is rector of the Institute for Islamic Studies Banten (IAIB), an independent Islamic institute that he founded. This wide experience has earned him the respect of formal 'ulamā' in Banten.

According to a report written in 2010, MUI Banten positions itself as khadīm al-ummah wa laisa khadīm al-aymah (servant of the Muslim community and not the servant of government). It does not support any political party, president, governor, bupati, or major candidate in an election. Instead, MUI adheres to the saying lā syarqiyyah wa lā garbiyyah (neither go to the east nor to the west), in other words, it is impartial. In addition, it fulfils the roles of (1) heir to the prophet; (2) mufti; (3) servant of the Muslim community; (4) upholder of good behaviour, avoiding evil and (5) agent of at-tajdīd wa al-ishlāh (reform and renewal).

MUI Banten's hierarchy is similar to the one operating in government organisations. Located in the capital city of Banten province, MUI Banten has branches in four districts and four municipalities, including 154 branches at sub-district level. MUI Banten created eleven commissions to run its programmes,: (1) The Islamic brotherhood; (2) law and fatwa; (3) communication, information and documentation; (4) foreign affairs and mass Muslim organisations; (5) inter-religious harmony, (6) research and development; (7) Da'wah (Islamic proselytising and social care); (8) educational development; (9) legal and regulation development; (10) Islamic economic development and (11) women, youth and family. In addition to these commissions, MUI Banten also incorporated two

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autonomous bodies into its organisation, namely the institute of food, nedicine and cosmetic research (LPPOM) to protect Muslims' rights concerning *halāl* food and medicine together with Basyarnas (the national *Syari'ah* arbitration board).⁷¹¹

Following its provincial meeting in 2006, MUI Banten outlined some of its programmes. The first was to continue the 2009 research on the al-Bantanī illuminated Qur'anic Mushhāf, a copy of the Qur'ān influenced by Banten's artistic design. Since 2008, a team founded by MUI Banten has been collecting illuminations considered part of the heritage of the Banten sultanates or illuminations created by Bantenese 'ulamā' from cities in Banten, Lampung and Jakarta. The illuminations discovered will be brought together and modified to adorn frames of the Qur'ān. They will then be known as the al-Bantanī illuminated Qur'anic Mushhāf.

The second programme was to organise a third training course for 'ulamā' cadres (Pendidikan Kader Ulama, or PKU). This training was initiated by central MUI in the 1990s to send young 'ulamā' from provincial branches on a training programme for a couple of months, encompassing subjects such as Islamic law and socio-political affairs under the supervision of MUI officials. After the establishment of MUI Banten in 2001, it organised the first training course for 'ulamā' in 2003. Unlike the training of 'ulamā' cadres in central MUI based on a representative system, the participants of MUI Banten's PKU were chosen by a selective system. The third programme was to organise the training of MUI Banten's auditors at the institute of food, medicine and cosmetic research (LPPOM).

Fatwa of MUI Banten Province

MUI Banten has two ways of issuing fatwas. First, it adopts fatwas released by central MUI in their entirety. This can be seen in central MUI's official book on fatwas used by MUI Banten to disseminate fatwas produced centrally to MUI Banten's branches. The second way is used when MUI Banten issues its own fatwas concerning religious beliefs considered heretical to local Muslims, for example, the fatwa on the deviance of 'Islam Sejati', a group led by Ahyari who only teach three obligatory shalāhs (only the zhuhr, Magrīb and Shubh prayers) to his followers⁷⁵ and the debus fatwa, the main concern of this thesis. Most of MUI Banten's responses to problems faced by Muslims at national and local level are written mainly in the form of pernyataan sikap (position statements).

MUI Banten's Composition

It is interesting to note that the structure of MUI at district and sub-district level in Banten still includes Muspida and Muspika as advisors to MUI which is not the case at national or provincial level. These differ in that the executive body including the president and governor is not included in the organisational structure. As far as the composition of MUI Banten is concerned, it only accommodates the formal 'ulamā' because most of them come from Muslim organisations such as Matla'ul Anwar, al Khairiyah, NU, Muhammadiyah and Persis, and from two Islamic movements categorised as radical, namely Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) and the Tarbiyah movement (PKS). Meanwhile, the Islamic Defence Front (FPI) and the Indonesian Jihadist Council (Majlis Mujahidin Indonesia) are not represented in MUI Banten. The structure of MUI Banten.

According to K.H. Fahmi, many informal 'ulamā' avoid involvement with MUI because they see it as a political instrument of the the government. His argument may be valid in that the budget to run MUI Banten comes mainly from the local government budget (APBD) which makes it difficult for MUI Banten to be independent. Meanwhile, Tihami argued that informal kyai with more spiritual and social influence in Banten do not want to be involved with MUI Banten for several reasons. For example, they think the term 'ulamā' is more prestigious than kyai and they claim the 'ulamā' involved with MUI are not pure 'ulamā' because many people involved with MUI possess neither the title kyai nor do they have a traditional pesantren background. The composition of MUI Banten is shown in the following table:

Table 1
Background of MUI Banten's officials⁸¹

Official background	Number		
Academic	30		
Serving bureaucrat	10		
Retired bureaucrat	9		
Entrepreneur	3		
Islamic movement activist	3		
(Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia)			
Kyai	30		
Serving politician (PKS and PPP)	4		

Senior high school teacher	2		
Journalist	1		
Not known	7		
Total	99		

From the table above, it is clear that MUI Banten includes people from a variety of backgrounds; academic and *kyai* are the most common (61%). Islamic movements have little influence due to the fact that only a few people from their organisations are involved with MUI Banten.

Concluding Remarks

Based on the explanation above, a number of factors have contributed to the issuing of a variety of religious answers (fatwas) to matters concerning Indonesian Muslims. These include the development of religious authority, the establishment of modernist and traditionalist Muslim organisations, MUI at central and local level and Muslim organisations at local level including the existence of informal 'ulamā'.

The establishment of fatwa councils in many Islamic organisations furthermore has led to the fragmentation of religious authority due to the proliferation of bodies issuing fatwas and the different methodologies they use. The tension between modernists and traditionalists has influenced the course of Indonesian Muslim history, also resulting in fragmented religious authority at national as well as at local level.

Endnotes:

¹ See this definition in http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/british/authority_1. Accessed on 4th May 2010

² Yusuf Seferta, "The Concept of Religious Authority According to Muhammad 'Abduh and Rasyīd Ridhā'," in *Islamic Quarterly Journal*, Vol. 30. No. 3, 1986. p. 159

³ Gudrun Kramer, Schmidtke, Sabine, Religious Authority and Religious Authorities in Muslim Societies: A Critical Overview, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2006), p.10

⁴ Muhammad Khalid Masud, et. al., "Muftis, Fatwas and Islamic Legal Interpretation," in Muhammad Khalid Masud, et. al., Islamic legal Interpretation: Muftis and their Fatwas, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), p. 5

- ⁵ Muhammmad Qasim Zaman, The 'Ulama' in Contemporary Islam: Custodian of Change, (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002), p. 38
- ⁶ N.J.G. Kaptein & Michael Laffan, "Theme Issue: Fatwas in Indonesia," in *Islamic Law and Society Journal*, Vol. 12. No. I, 2005, p. 1
- ⁷ Mehdi Mozaffari, Fatwa: Violence and Discourtesy, (Oxford: Aarhus University Press, 1998), p. 16
- ⁸ N.J.G. Kaptein, "The Voice of the 'Ulamā': Fatwas and Religious Authority in Indonesia," in Archives de Sciences Sociales des Religions, Vol. 125, 2004, p. 115-130
 - 9 N.J.G. Kaptein, "The Voice of the 'Ulama', p. 128
- ¹⁰ The thariqah movement played an important role during uprisings in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago during the 19th century. In Banten for example, Haji Abdul Karim, the leader of Qadīriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyyah tharīqah encouraged his disciples to lead the peasants in Cilegon and Serang to fight against colonial government. See, Sartono Kartodirdjo, The Peasants' Revolt of Banten in 1888, Its Conditions, Course and Sequel: A Case Study of Social Movements in Indonesia, ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966), p. 176-192
- An example of a modern invention leading to a fatwa at the turn of the twentieth century in the Dutch East Indies was the debate between Sayyid 'Utsmān and the Singaporean 'ulamā' over the phonograph, a machine invented by Thomas Edison in 1877 to record and replay sound. Sayyid 'Utsmān was against the new technology but the mufti from Singapore was more open to it, arguing that listening to a phonograph was permitted and furthermore, listening to a phonograph playing the sound of the Qur'ān would be rewarded by God. See Jan Just Witkam, The Islamic Book: from Manuscript to Modern Media, (Leiden: Leiden University Course Book, 2004), p. 45-46
 - 12 Yusuf Seferta, "The Concept of Religious Authority, p. 163
- ¹³ For more detail about Muhammadiyah, see Alfian, Muhammadiyah: The Political Behavior of a Modernist Organization under Dutch Colonialism. (Yogyakarta: UGM Press, 1989); for Persis, see Howard M. Federspiel, Persatuan Islam: Islamic Reform in Twentieth Century Indonesia, (Singapore: Equinox Publishing, 2009)
- ¹⁴ The most commonly cited study on *Nahdlatul Ulama* is by Greg Barton & Greg Fealy (eds.), *Nahdlatul Ulama: Traditional Islam and Modernity in Indonesia*, (Clayton: Monash Asia Institute), 1996
- 15 Al-Manār was a journal published in Cairo in 1898 by Rasyīd Ridhā, one of Egypt's modernist thinkers. The objectives of al-Manār were to articulate and disseminate the ideas relating to the reform of Islamand to preserve the unity of the ummah. See, Azyumardi Azra, "The Transmission of al-Manār's Reformism to the Malay-Indonesian World: The Case of al-Imām and al-Munīr," in Studia Islamika Vol. 6. No. 3, 1999, p. 77-100
- ¹⁶ Jutta E. Bluhm, "A Preliminary Statement on the Dialogue Established between the Reform Magazine al-Manār and the Malaya-Indonesian World," in *Indonesia Circle* Vol 32. No.11, 1983, p. 35
 - ¹⁷ Jutta E. Bluhm, "A Preliminary Statement...
- ¹⁸ Azyumardi Azra, "The Transmission of *al-Manār*'s, p. 77-78. See also, Jajat Burhanudin, "Aspiring for Islamic Reform: Southeast Asian Requests for Fatwas in *al Manār*," in *Islamic Law and Society*, Vol. 12. No. 1, 2005, p. 26

- ¹⁹ Jajat Burhanudin, Islamic Knowledge, Authority and Political Power: The 'Ulama' in Colonial Indonesia, (Leiden: IIAS, 2007), p. 196-199
- ²⁰ Syamsul Anwar, "Fatwa, Purification and Dynamization: A Study of Tarjih in Muhammadiyah," in *Islamic Law and Society* Vol. 12. No.1, 2005, p. 27-44
- ²¹ Howard M. Federspiel, *Persatuan Islam*, p.9. Ahmad Hassan was born in 1887 in Tamil, Singapore and became the most important religious leader in the history of *Persis* and in Indonesian modernist thought. See Akhmad Minhaji, *Ahmad Hassan and Islamic Legal Reform (1887-1958)*, (Yogyakarta: Kurnia Alam Semesta Press, 2001). In 1956, *Persis* established its fatwa institution called Majlis *'Ulamā' Persis ('Ulamā'* Council of *Persis*) to respond to Muslims' problems. In 1968, the national meeting of *Persis* changed the name to *Dewan Hisbah*. See Imron Rosyadi, "Metode Penetapan Hukum Dewan Hisbah Persis," in *Suhuf*, Vol. 19. No. 2, 2007, p.127-136
- ²² Michael Laffan, "Shura in One Indonesian Context," in Islamic Law and Society, Vol. 12. No. 1, 2005, p. 93-121
- ²³ For more detail about fatwa-issuing institutions in twentieth-century Indonesia including themethodology used, see M.B. Hooker, *Indonesian Islam: Social Change through Contemporary Fatawa*, (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003)
- ²⁴ Cees van Dijk, "Religious Authority, Politics and Fatwa," in R. Michael Feener, R. Michael & Cammack, Mark E., *Islamic Law in Contemporary Indonesia, Ideas and Institutions*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), p. 45-46
- ²⁵ MUI Secretariat, "Majlis 'Ulamā' Indonesia," (Jakarta: MUI Secretariat, 1976), p. 60
- ²⁶ For a general overview of MUI's fatwas see Muhammad Atho Mudzhar, Fatwas of the Council of 'Ulamā' Indonesia: A Study of Islamic Legal Thought in Indonesia 1975-1988, (Jakarta: INIS, 1993)
 - ²⁷ Cees van Dijk, "Religious Authority, p. 46-49
- N.J.G. Kaptein, "The Voice of the 'Ulama', p. 122; M. Nur Ichwan," 'Ulama', State and Politics: Majlis 'Ulama' Indonesia after Suharto," in Islamic Law and Society, Vol. 12. 2005, p. 51.
 - ²⁹ M. Nur Ichwan," Ulama', State and Politics, p. 52.
- 30 Piers Gillespie, "Current Issues in Indonesian Islam: Analyzing the 2005 Council of Indonesian 'ulamā's Fatwa No. 7 Opposing Pluralism, Liberalism and Secularism," in *Journal of Islamic Studies*, Vol. 18. 2007, p. 202-240. For MUI's Ahmadiyah fatwa see Leena Avonius, "The Ahmadiya and Freedom of Religion in Indonesia," in *ISIM Review*, No. 22, 2008, p. 48-49
- ³¹ M. Nur Ichwan," 'Ulama', State and Politics. See also Cees van Dijk, "Religious Authority, p. 55
- ³² MUI's fatwas on the prohibition of taking bank interest (*ribā*) and on abortion show the independent stance taken by MUI towards the government. See Muhammad Abdun Nasir and Asnawi, "The Majlis 'Ulamā' Fatwa's on Abortion in Contemporary Indonesia," in *The Muslim World*, Vol. 101, 201, p. 33-52. MUI released its first fatwa on bank interest in 2004 and it proved to be controversial among Indonesian Muslims. For a more detailed information of the fatwa see http://www.berkahmadani.co.id/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=35:fatwa-mui&catid=27:articles-syariah&Itemid=29. Accessed on 23th May 2011.
- ³³ Majelis Ulama Indonesia, *Ijma' Ulama: Keputusan Ijtima Ulama Komisi Fatwa se Indonesia III tahun 2009*, (Jakarta: Majelis Ulama Indonesia, 2009), p. iii. The book is

based on the outcome of their third meeting in Padang, West Sumatra. The first forum was organised about 2003.

34 Majelis Ulama Indonesia, Ijma' Ulama

35 See

http://www.mui.or.id/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=54:transf ormasi-kemungkaran&catid=37:press-realease&Itemid=57. Accessed on 10th May 2011.

- ³⁶ Iik Arifin Mansurnoor, *Islam in an Indonesian World: 'Ulamā' of Madura*, (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1990), p. xv
- ³⁷ See the footnote in Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java*, (New York: The Free Press Glencoe, 1960), p. 134
- ³⁸ Clifford Geertz, "The Javanese Kijaji: The Changing Role of a Cultural Broker," in Comparative Studies in Society and History, Vol. 2., 1960, p. 220-249
- ³⁹ Zamakhsyari Dhofier, Tradisi Pesantren: Studi tentang Pandangan Hidup Kyai, (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1985), p. 55
 - 40 Zamakhsyari Dhofier, Tradisi Pesantren
- ⁴¹ Hiroko Horikoshi, Traditional Leaders in a Time of Change: The Kijaji and Ulamā' in West Java, Dissertation, (University of Illionois, 1976), p. 344
- ⁴² Mohammad Iskandar, Para Pengemban Amanah: Pergulatan Pemikiran Kiai dan 'Ulama' di Jawa Barat, 1900-1950, (Yogyakarta: Mata Bangsa, 2001), p. 24-25
- 43 I interviewed ustādz Muhammad Shodiqin on 12th March 2011. He established Nurul Bantani pesantren in Serang municipality in 1996. Although he has more than three hundred santri the community in the vicinity of his pesantren do not call him kyai but ustādz. Although some modernist Muslim organisations such as the Hidayatullah, Tarbiyah movement and Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (Indonesian Jihadist Council) tend to use the term ustādz to mean the same as kyai, the Tarbiyyah movement in Banten uses the term kyai to denote senior ustādz such as K.H. Mas'a Thoyib and K.H. Syadeli Karim. This may be due to the assumption in Banten that ustādz is used to denote young Islamic teachers.
- ⁴⁴ Abuya Dimyati was born in 1925 in Pandeglang district. Involved in campaigns against colonial rule, *abuya* Dimyati furthered his desire to seek knowledge of Islam in many *pesantrens* in Java during the revolutionary era. He established Cidahu *pesantren* in 1965. I could not find out *abuya* Bustomi's date of birth but according to Mufti Ali, an academic at IAIN Serang, he passed away some years before *abuya* Dimyati. The interview with Mufti Ali took place on 15th March 2011.
- ⁴⁵ See Martin van Bruinesssen, Kitab Kuning, Pesantren dan Tarekat: Tradisi-Tradisi Islam di Indonesia, (Bandung: Mizan, 1995), p. 281. See also, Dimyati Murtadho, Manaqib Abuya Cidahu dalam Pesona Langkah di Dua Alam, (Pandeglang: NP, 2008)
- 46 Murtado Hadi, Jejak Spiritual Abuya Dimyathi al-Bantani, (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pesantren, 2009), p.8. See also, Abdul Malik, et. al., Jejak 'Ulamā' Banten: dari Shaykh Yusuf hingga Abuya Dimyati, (Serang: Setda Provinsi Banten, 2008), p. 184-189. On Abuya Dimyati's teachings, see Murtado Hadi, Tiga Guru Sufi Tanah Jawa: Wejangan-Wejangan Ruhani, (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pesantren, 2010), p. 3-85. The Bantanese believe many tales about abuya Dimyati and karāmāhs. For example, that

he visited Syaikh 'Abd al-Qadīr al-Jilānī's grave every Friday and used a gust of wind to send a spiritual message to another great kyai.

- ⁴⁷ Hudaeri, Tasbih dan Golok; Studi tentang Karisma Kyai dan Jawara di Banten (Humas Provinsi Banten, 2003). p. 80-98.
- ⁴⁸ The traditional salafi pesantren are pesantren with a traditional system of education. They provide the santri with classic Islamic texts, thariqah teachings and to a degree, training in the use of magic.
- ⁴⁹ The informal 'ulamā' in Banten practise the same rituals as NU such as performing tahlīl| tahlīlan (reciting the lā ilāha illā Allāh formula to pray for death), slametan (ritual meals), wird, reciting the dalā'il al-khairāt (a book of prayers written in the sixteenth century by 'Alī 'Abd Allāh Muhammad b. Sulaimān al-Jazūlī al-Simlālī) and talqīn (the pronouncement of prayers to the deceased during a funeral) but many of them are not necessarily NU members.
- 50 Didin Nurul Rosidin, "Authority Contested; Mathla'ul Anwar in the Last Year of the New Order," *Unpublished paper*, 2005, p.1-12. Among the founders were *kyai* Entol Muhammad Yasin, *kyai* M. Sholeh, *kyai* Mas Aburahman, *kyai* Arsyad Tegal, *kyai* Abdul Mu'thi, *kyai* Soleman Cibunglu, *kyai* Daud, *kyai* Rusydi, *kyai* Entol Darnawi, *kyai* Mustagfiri, *kyai* Saiman, *kyai* Muhammad Rais and *kyai* Entol Ismail.
- ⁵¹ There were two phases in the establishment of al-Khairiyah. The first phase was when K.H. Syam'un formed the al-Khairiyah *pesantren* between 1916 and 1923 that followed a traditional system without grades or classes. The second phase was in May 1925 when K.H. Syam'un began to implement the Egyptian *madrasah* system which does include grades in its education system. See Pengurus Besar Perguruan Islam al-Khairiyah, *Perguruan Islam al Khairiyah dari Masa ke Masa*, (Serang: PB al-Khairiyah, 1984), p. 1-4.
- ⁵² Pengurus Besar Perguruan Islam al-Khairiyah, Perguruan Islam al Khairiyah, p. 4.
- ⁵³ Pengurus Besar Perguruan Islam al-Khairiyah, Perguruan Islam al Khairiyah, p. 12-13.
- 54 Pengurus Besar Mathla'ul Anwar, Dirosah Islamiyah I: Sejarah dan Khithah Mathla'ul Anwar, (Jakarta: PB Mathla'ul Anwar, 2007), p. 29.
 - ⁵⁵ Pengurus Besar Mathla'ul Anwar, Dirosah Islamiyah I, p.32.
- The emergence of MA's pro-Islamic purification camp was initiated by Mas Abdurrahman, one of MA's founders and one of the disciples of Ahmad Khathīb al-Minangkabawī, the prominent Shāfiite school teacher in Mecca and proponent of purification in the archipelago. See Didin Nurul Rosidin, From Kampung to Kota: Mathla'ul Anwar 1916-1998, (Leiden: INIS, 2007), p.141-198.
- 57 Interview with Hikmatullah Syam'un, Chairman of Pengurus Besar al Khairiyah on 26th May 2011. Further research on al-Khairiyah is necessary due to its significance in influencing Islam in Banten through its education system.
- ⁵⁸ Interview with Hikmatullah Syam'un, Chairman of Pengurus Besar al-Khairiyah on 26th May 2011.
- ⁵⁹ A coalition of 'ulamā' Banten predated MUI Banten was established in February 1946 by kyai Achmad Chatib, resident in Banten after Japan's surrender to the Allies. This coalition was known as Majlis 'Ulamā' Banten (Banten council of 'ulamā'). See Suharto, Banten Masa Revolusi, 1945-1949: Proses Integrasi dalam Negara Republik Indonesia, Dissertation, (Jakarta: University of Indonesia, 2001), p.130.

- ⁶⁰ Interview with K.H. Aminuddin Ibrahim on 14th June 2010. He is one of the chairmen of MUI Banten and one of the initiators of the establishment of Banten province. Born in 1949, he obtained his bachelor degree from Medina and established the *pesantren* at Darul Iman in Pandeglang district in 1991. Active as the first chairman of NU in Banten province, he became one of the main protagonists during the controversy about the *debus* fatwa.
- 61 The precise date of the first provincial meeting of MUI Banten is not known. According to K.H. Aminudin Ibrahim, he received a letter appointing him as one of the chairmen of MUI Banten on 30th April 2001. This means the first provincial meeting must have been held before he received the letter. However, a report of MUI Banten's activities claims the first provincial meeting was in May 2001. See Dewan Pimpinan Daerah MUI Provinsi Banten, Laporan Kegiatan MUI Banten Periode Tahun 2010, (Serang, 2010), p.1. If the date of K.H. Aminudin Ibrahim's letter of appointment is correct, I assume the first MUI meeting was held before April 2001.
- Abdul Hamid, "Kiai in Banten: Shifting Roles in Changing Times," in Ota Atsushi *et al.*, *Islam in Contention: Rethinking Islam and State in Indonesia*, (Jakarta: The Wahid Institute, 2010), p.428.
 - 63 Abdul Hamid, "Kiai in Banten"
- ⁶⁴ Pengurus Besar Perguruan Islam al-Khairiyah, *Perguruan Islam al Khairiyah*, p.14.
 - 65 Dewan Pimpinan Daerah MUI Provinsi Banten, Laporan Kegiatan, p.4.
 - 66 Dewan Pimpinan Daerah MUI Provinsi Banten, Laporan Kegiatan, p.5.
- ⁶⁷ Dewan Pimpinan Daerah MUI Provinsi Banten, Laporan Kegiatan. The roles are consistent with central MUI's vision statement of 2000. See Ichwan, M. Nur Ichwan," Ulamā', State and Politics, p. 50.
 - 68 Dewan Pimpinan Daerah MUI Provinsi Banten, Laporan Kegiatan, p.5.
- 69 Dewan Pimpinan Daerah MUI Provinsi Banten, Laporan Kegiatan, p. 2-4. Compared with central MUI with 12 commissions, every regional MUI commission has a different number and name. This is probably based on the different needs of the individual MUI. See more about central MUI commissions in: http://www.mui.or.id/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=52&Item id=54. Accessed on 28th April 2011.
- To Dewan Pimpinan Daerah MUI Provinsi Banten, Laporan Kegiatan, p.5. Basyamas is the new name for Badan Arbitrase Mu'amalat Indonesia (BAMUI) established in 1993 as an autonomous MUI body founded to solve the ummab's problems relating to mu'amalab's (problems concerning social practice). In 2003, BAMUI became Basyamas and deals mainly with Indonesian Muslims' financial disputes. See

http://www.mui.or.id/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=57:sejara h-basyarnas&catid=41:tentang-basyarnas&Itemid=60. Accessed on 23th May 2011.

- ⁷¹ *Ibid.* p.6.
- 72 M. Nur Ichwan," 'Ulama', State and Politics, p.49.
- ⁷³ See http://www.pelita.or.id/baca.php?id=15883. Accessed on 28th April 2011.
 - ⁷⁴ Dewan Pimpinan Daerah MUI Provinsi Banten, Laporan Kegiatan, p.6.

- ⁷⁵ See http://www.antaranews.com/view/?i=11⁷9221413&c=NAS&s. Accessed on 15th May 2011. I also clarified this fatwa with K.H. Aminuddin Ibrahim. He confirmed MUI Banten released the fatwa.
- 76 MUI Banten's position statements usually involve other Islamic organisations in Banten. One example of position statement concerns Ahmadiyah. MUI Banten together with other Muslim organisations demanded that the Governor of Banten should release a decree to ban Ahmadiyah. See http://www.indopos.co.id/index.php/jakarta-raya/urban-city/6764-ahmadiyah-terlarang-di-bumi-banten.html. Accessed on 1st May 2011.
- Therview with H. Jalim Muslim, leader of the KUA (religious affairs branch at sub-district level) in Pontang and advisor to MUI Pontang sub-district, on 11th March 2011 and with kyai Fatoni, secretary of MUI Serang district on 12th March 2011. Muspida (Musyawarah Pimpinan Daerah) and Muspika (Musyawarah Pimpinan Kecamatan) are terms coined by the New Order administration to denote a regional consultative council consisting of regional leaders. Muspida at provincial level consists of governor, police and military commanders at provincial level. At district level the council consists of bupati, military and police commanders at district level. In the sub-district, Muspika consists of camat (sub-district leader), danramil (sub-district military commander) and kapolsek (police commander at sub-district level).
- 78 For more detail on Islamic movements in Indonesia see Haedar Nasir, Gerakan Islam Syariat: Reproduksi Salafryah Idiologis di Indonesia, (Jakarta: PSAP Muhammadiyah, 2007). It is interesting to note that apart from Laskar Hizbullah, a radical Muslim organisation founded in Pandeglang, inactive today since its leader K.H. Cecep Bustomi was shot by an unknown gunman, there are no radical organisations in Banten. This is in spite of Banten being one of the most turbulent areas resulting from Islamic fanaticism in the archipelago up to the beginning of the 20th century. This is due to the success of local 'ulama' in maintaining and controlling their ummah and the impact of modernisation in the region. However, the incident at Cikeusik in Pandeglang district in early 2011 where five Ahmadiyah members were killed, showed that Bantenese Muslims can act radically if they consider Islamic teaching has been humiliated.
- Thāhīr pesantren, established in 1922. He added that some informal 'ulamā' do not believe MUI Banten is independent or consistent in implementing Islamic law especially after K.H. Wahab Afif allowed Ratu Atut Chosiyah, the first female governor in Indonesia, to sit next to the imām during the 'id al-fithr prayer in 2007.
- 80 Conclusion from my interview with MA Tihami, Rector of IAIN Sultan Maulana Hasanudin Banten in June 2008.
- 81 Several people helped me to research the background of MUI officials. They are H. Jalim Muslim as one of the officials of MUI Pontang sub-district, kyai Fatoni as one of the secretaries of MUI Serang district and K.H. Aminuddin Ibrahim as one of the chairmen of MUI Banten. There are 99 people in MUI Banten but I found it difficult to trace all their backgrounds.

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- Muhammad Shodiqin on 12th March 2011.

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