



Kiais, Authoritarianism, and Sinful Tourism in Madura

The economy can play a role in the resurgence of tourism on Madura Island, which has been known as a hidden paradise. Madura has a great tourism potential that needs to be maximally improved in order to overcome its economic problems. However, given its socio-cultural context, Madura is not sufficiently receptive to tourism. Several factors, including the rejection of the kiais (religious leaders/teachers), have contributed to the underdevelopment of Madura's tourism industry. In Madura, a kiai serves as a religious and social figure with considerable influence in Madurese society who adhere to the philosophy of *Buppa', Babbu, Guru, Rato* ("Father-Mother, Teacher, Government"). This qualitative research found a conflict of interests between two groups: the kiais as the guardian of culture and religion and the managers as a modern progressive group. In addition, I conclude that the efforts made by the kiais as social elites in rejecting the development of tourism in Lon Malang Beach show that there is a power of authority that makes it easier for the kiais to maintain their conservative religious views and reject any upcoming changes.

Keywords: *Tourism Development; Lon Malang; Authoritarianism; and Public Relations.*

Ekonomi bisa menjadi salah satu faktor kebangkitan pariwisata di Pulau Madura yang selama ini dikenal sebagai surga tersembunyi. Madura memiliki potensi pariwisata yang besar yang perlu ditingkatkan secara maksimal untuk mengatasi masalah ekonomi di sana. Namun demikian, Madura dalam keadaan sosial budayanya tidak cukup terbuka untuk menerima pariwisata. Industri pariwisata di Madura masih terbelakang karena beberapa alasan termasuk penolakan dari kiai (tokoh agama/guru). Di Madura, kiai merupakan ikon keagamaan dan sosial yang memiliki kekuatan berpengaruh dalam masyarakat Madura karena memiliki filosofi *Buppa' Babbu, Guru, Rato*. Penelitian kualitatif ini menemukan adanya kontestasi kepentingan yang terjadi antara kedua kelompok, kiai sebagai penjaga kebudayaan dan keagamaan di sana dan pengelola sebagai kelompok progresif modern. Selain itu, penulis menemukan bahwa upaya yang dilakukan oleh kiai sebagai elit sosial dalam menolak pengembangan pariwisata Pantai Lon Malang menunjukkan adanya kekuatan otoritas yang semakin mempermudah kiai dalam mempertahankan pandangan keagamaan mereka yang cenderung konservatif dan menolak terhadap segala perubahan yang akan terjadi.

Kata kunci: *Pengembangan Pariwisata; Lon Malang; Otoritarianisme; dan Hubungan Masyarakat.*

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Introduction

Tourism development, which is frequently in conflict with local cultural values, is often considered a threat with negative consequences for the community. Moreover, *kiais*, as the foremost moral guardian, believe that tourism will erode the society's growing religious values. Nevertheless, the tourism industry in Indonesia has become a promising factor for the country's employment, income,¹ and gross domestic product, contributing 5.7% of GDP and gaining 9.7% of total employment in 2019.² However, as one of the largest contributors to regional income, tourism development is still the subject of heated debate in some regions, particularly in Madura, Indonesia.

Becoming tourism destinations in Madura, the Camplong and Lombang beaches have become a source of debate for, despite their influence on the local culture, they have not undergone a significant development since 1992. Masruroh's thesis provided an important research finding in discussing tourist destinations in Madura; she argued that the development of tourism in the area is related to several aspects, such as natural, cultural, and human resources.³ In addition, Masruroh also mentioned the existence of external roles outside the tourism managers that affect the tourism development process. In fact, the conflict of interests has slowed down the development process of tourism in Madura.

The fear that tourism development could ruin the socio-cultural condition of Madura, especially those related to religious obedience, becomes the reason for the *kiais*, as the protectors of religious dignity, a community role model,

and informal leaders, to always oppose and reject the plans of tourism development. Therefore, in this study, I would like to argue that the *kiais*, as social elites, wield a great deal of influence in society, including in terms of tourism. The novelty of this research lies in the fact that it, through in-depth analysis, looks at public relation activism related to the *kiais* and tourism development. Lon Malang beach in Bira Tengah Village of Sokobanah district, Sampang regency, is chosen as the research site because it provides an example of recent conflict on tourism development involving society, government, and *kiais* in Madura.

It is interesting to study the conflict related to Lon Malang Beach because some important and influential *kiais* opposed the tourism development there. With their power of authority, the *kiais* tried to persuade the public to reject the presence of tourism at Lon Malang Beach. For the *kiais*, the magnitude of the potential negative impact compared to the benefits provided has become the main reason for their refusal of tourism development there. In addition, I also observe that the attitude of the *kiais*, as depicted through the activism of public relations, demonstrates the presence of strong authoritarianism within the social hierarchy of society.

In this study, the author uses a qualitative descriptive approach of Denzin to see the extent to which the socio-cultural experience of the Madurese community, especially those living in Bira Tengah Village, is in reality formed and given meaning as a social construction.⁴ This is important considering that the *kiais*, as important figures of society, hold the highest religious authority and successfully influenced the local

¹ Ahmet Gürbüz, "An Assesment on the Effect of Education Level on the Job Satisfaction from the Toursim Sector Point of View," *Doğuş Üniversitesi Dergisi* 8, no. 1 (January 1, 2007): 37–40.

² Sugeng Santoso et al., "Pengembangan Desa Wisata Berkonsep Kapasitas Inovasi Daerah Di Desa Tanjungjaya, Kabupaten Pandeglang, Provinsi Banten," *Jurnal Kepariwisataaan Indonesia: Jurnal Penelitian dan Pengembangan Kepariwisataaan Indonesia* 15, no. 2 (December 6, 2021): 71–85.

³ Fitria Masruroh, "Analisis Manajemen Pengembangan Destinasi Pantai Wisata 'Lon Malang' Sampang Madura Perspektif Fenomenologi Edmund Husserl" (Tesis, Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim, 2022), 90–98, accessed October 1, 2022, <http://etheses.uin-malang.ac.id/38954/>.

⁴ Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (SAGE, 2011), 1–20.





government's agenda in tourism development. In collecting the data, I used non-participant observations and in-depth interviews with several informants as the main data as well as employing documentation techniques as secondary data. The questions posed to the informants are limited to the problems studied and do not inquire about the informants' personal lives.⁵

The collected data will be presented in a descriptive-analytical manner on certain topics. The aim is to examine the activism of the *kiais* in *Aliansi Ulama Pantura* and the manager of Lon Malang beach as a manifestation of the existence of public relations (PR). *Aliansi Ulama Pantura*, or the "Pantura Ulama Alliance", is an association of Madura's *kiais* in Pantura Regency who are responsible for producing fatwas on the prohibition of visiting Lon Malang Beach, hence using functional public relations to circulate their truth claims, they have gained public influence. This article tries to understand the significance of tourism both for religion and the religious community in Madura.

The Polemics of Tourism Development among Religious Communities

Tourism has become a human need and lifestyle; this may be the reason why Indonesian people are motivated to explore tourism potential in their local regions. The potential can be in the form of natural or artificial tourism that can provide a new identity for each region. Unfortunately, tourism development in many regions is fraught with contention, eliciting diverse analyses and viewpoints as a result of the divergent worldviews of certain groups within each region. This is understandable because the fact that developing tourism requires a long

process and emotional approach-based intensive communication with several groups in society.⁶

Tourism contributes to Indonesia's economic strength, particularly through foreign exchange earnings. In the context of Islam, tourism is allowed as long as it follows the regulations stated by The God, Allah. Hence, according to Islam, everything, including tourism, must be based on the rules contained in the Qur'an and Hadith as the main source of reference for Muslims. However, the word tourism in the two sources is not mentioned literally but through various word derivations. Among them are the Qur'anic words *saara-yasiiru*; *rihlah*; and *haajara-yuhaajiru*,⁷ which almost all have the same meaning: 'walk'; 'journey'; or 'move'. Whereas in the Hadith, there is an order to travel to the three mosques; al-Masjid al-Haram; Masjid al-Rasul; Masjid al-Aqsa, as narrated by Imam Bukhari in his book, *Jami al-Sahih*.⁸

Therefore, in Islamic view, tourism is perceived as equal as spiritual journeys. This provides Saudi Arabia, for example, with advantages as the home of Muslim holy sites such as Mecca and Medina.⁹ This is certainly different from places that do not have historical evidence of Islam but nonetheless have sacred places to visit. On the other hand, Islam also indirectly rejects all forms of tourism that are inconsistent with its Qur'anic and Hadith-based characteristic. One example is tourism that has the potential to violate Islamic ethics-morals and create space for immoral acts.

However, due to the great distance between the emergence of early Islam and the present,¹⁰ and the fact that not all areas in Islamic history have historical spiritual places, the concept of tourism in Islam has adapted to the changing times. Moreover, tourism is included in the

⁵ Keith Orlando Hilton, "Primer of Public Relations Research," *Public Relations Review* 1, no. 30 (2004): 59–64.

⁶ Abuya Busro Karim, "Pariwisata; Antara Tuntutan Industri Dan Kearifan Lokal," *Karsa: Journal of Social and Islamic Culture* (2010): 147–159.

⁷ Al-Raghib Al-Alashfihani, *Mu'jam al-Quran Li Alfaz al-Qur'an* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1989), 89–105.

⁸ Imam Bukhari, *Jami' al-Shahih* (Beirut: Dar al-Yamamah, 1987), 491.

⁹ Dallen J. Timothy and Thomas Iverson, "Tourism and Islam: Considerations of Culture and Duty," in *Tourism, Religion and Spiritual Journeys* (Routledge, 2006), 14–17.

¹⁰ Rizem Aizid, *Sejarah Peradaban Islam Terlengkap* (Diva Press, 2021), 92–95.





muamalah (one of the domains in Islamic law that regulates human relations or social relations), which continues to grow and open an opportunity to produce new concepts that are more adaptive to social change

When it comes to tourism development, a few non-Muslim majority countries have already begun to pay attention to the development of *sharia* tourism. Conceptually, tourism based on Islam or *sharia* tourism is an implementation of Islamic values in all forms of tourism sector activities. These include lodging, transportation, food and drink, the financial system, and the provision of good facilities and services in accordance with Islamic values.¹¹ It is clear that *sharia* tourism has the potential to significantly improve the economy through various related aspects. Moreover, the market-opportunity for this *sharia tourism* is globally wide-open.

The unique culture, history, and cuisine of Madura have the potential to serve as a distinct advantage, in addition to its natural beauty and uniqueness. If these potentials are managed properly through tourism development, they can attract more tourists, as a consumer market, to visit. Lon Malang beach in Bira Tengah Village, Sampang, is one of the tourist destinations that attracts significant interest for future development. The people who initiated the development of this tourism have a great expectation that this will improve local social economy by creating more job opportunities and facilitating the marketing of local products.

The expected prosperity means not only in terms of economic income, but also peaceful life, the decrease in crimes, and improvement in the education of the society. Even the manager of this tourism development tries to provide alternative employment opportunities for the people of Central Bira so that they no longer need to become migrant workers (TKI) in other

countries. However, despite the fact that this tourism development is very promising for the growth of the local community's social welfare, several social elites reject it. A group of *kiais* in the AUP present counter-arguments based on religious objectives. This refusal demonstrates the struggle for power between the *kiais* or the *kiyae*h in the structure of Madurese society and the other two main groups: the aristocrats or the *ponggabe*h and ordinary civil society or *kenek*.

The *Kiais* and Power-Relation in Madurese Society

The figure of *kiai* is a significant power and the cultural epicenter in Madurese culture. Through religion, this culture has grown and become rooted in society.¹² This culture is reflected in the philosophy of *Buppa'-Babu'* (Father-Mother), *Ghuru* (teacher/*kiai*), *Rato* (government). The honor and obedience hierarchy of Madurese society is apparent in the philosophy that, in addition to parents, people have to obey their *gurus* (teachers), in this case the *kiais*, and then *rato* or the leaders. This hierarchy provides space for the *kiais* to participate in making social policies for the community, in addition to religious matters.

This can be seen from the influence and responses given by the *kiais* as a superior intellectual group in the development of tourism in Lon Malang. The authority, which was originally owned by the *kiais* to answer religious matters, gradually began to expand its influence to respond to more complex social problems of society, such as the development of tourism in Lon Malang. Their responses are often considered conservative and exclusive of other perspectives.

¹¹ Unggul Priyadi, "Pariwisata Syariah Prospek dan Perkembangan" (January 23, 2020), accessed September 28, 2022, <http://repo.iainbatuangsangkar.ac.id/xmlui/handle/123456789/12695>.

¹² Achmad Mulyadi, "Memaknai Praktik Tradisi Ritual Masyarakat Muslim Sumenep," *Endogami: Jurnal Ilmiah Kajian Antropologi* 1, no. 2 (June 8, 2018): 124-135.





Image. 1 Dialogue and audience with the Sampang Regency Government and Kiai throughout the district to discuss the existence of Lon Malang beach tourism (Source: <https://www.koranmadura.com/2017/11/ulama-sokobanah-minta-kejumlah-destinasi-wisata-ditutup/>).

Historically, Madurese people preferred to obey their *kiais* than the government because in 18th century, when Madura was colonized by VOC, Islamization and bureaucratization were separated. The bureaucrats, who used to work together, were isolated from the Islamists.¹³ From this circumstance, people tended to be sympathetic to the Islamists along with their *kiais*, and this situations has occurred and has not changed significantly to the present days. The *kiais* continue to hold influential power in the society. For Madurese people, a *kiai* is a central role model both in religious and social aspects of life.

The *kiais* can also filter the information coming to the society, allowing them to deliver useful information while ignoring the harmful ones.¹⁴ People's educational background in *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) led by *kiais* have also had an effect on this constant influence. During the learning process in *pesantren*, the *kiais* are shaping the *santri's* (students) life attitude, including to become submissive and obedient to the *kiais* as their teachers. Eventually, this

strengthens the position of *kiais* as powerful and dominant social elites in the life of Madurese society.

In Madura, the *kiais* are the central figures and role model in the society, as people refered to them when they have questions or need opinions not only about Islamic teachings, such as *fiqh* (Islamic law), *tauhid* (theology), *akhlak* (morals), and worship, but also about their daily life problems. Therefore, there is a high level of obedience to the *kiais* as leaders.¹⁵ The *kiais* become the reference for all social problems in society. I see the power and influence of the *kiais* in society as evidence of the rise of authoritarianism in the religious domain.

The *kiais* have become mediating agents of Islamic texts, transforming the authority of Islamic texts into human authoritarianism.¹⁶ Authoritarianism is an action taken by a figure with access to the texts 'to seal or lock' the divine will, by which they present their interpretation of the texts as inevitable, final, and conclusive.¹⁷ Thus, the *kiais* serve also as also an 'extension of God's hand' with the authority to represent God's laws in the world, which is in this case the Madurese community around Lon Malang beach. Even though in Sunni religious culture, it has been emphasized that Islam does not recognize the existence of a group of people who hold God's authority like the church system.¹⁸

Bourdieu introduces the concept of capital in order to divide power relationship into four: economic, cultural, social, and symbolic capitals. He argues that symbolic capital is the noblest one as it produces symbolic power, which allows people to voluntarily submit to the domination of those who possess this capital. In this case, the domination is concealed within a lenient

¹³ Abdur Rozaki, *Menabur Karisma, Menuai Kuasa* (IRCISOD, 2021), 26.

¹⁴ Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java*, Nachdr., Anthropology/comparative religions (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1996), 227–228.

¹⁵ Ferri Wicaksono and Ferri Wicaksono, "Kepemimpinan Kontestatif Kiai (Studi Kasus: Dinamika Kuasa Kiai Dalam Perebutan Sumber Daya Di Mlangi)"

(Universitas Gadjah Mada, 2016), accessed September 29, 2022, <http://etd.repository.ugm.ac.id/penelitian/detail/102523>.

¹⁶ Khaled Abou El Fadl, *Speaking in God's Name: Islamic Law, Authority and Women*, Repr. (Oxford: Oneworld, 2010), 138–140.

¹⁷ Abou El Fadl., 293.

¹⁸ Abou El Fadl., 34.





symbolic power, so that people are unaware that they have been attracted to surrender to the dominating group. Symbolic power is related to power symbols with institutional or non-institutional social approval.¹⁹ The symbols can take the forms of bureaucratic positions, academic titles, family names, and the titles of *kiai* commonly inherited from the family. *Kiais* have been a powerful social elite that dominates and serves the “soul” of Madurese culture. They even have the power to determine public policies.

Therefore, the ideas to develop tourism in Madura were also within the intervention of *kiais* where some of them held opposing arguments to those of the Lon Malang beach managers. Hence, the existence of Lon Malang tourism destination has been one of ideological battle arenas between the *kiais* and the managers. In the other words, the contestation between economic and religious factors in planning the tourism location development has occurred. The *kiais*, with their symbolic power, tries to preserve their ideology by making claims about the truth based on the religion and cultural values of Madura. In this case, the *kiais* maintain and defend their self-claimed truth within in a strongly hierarchial society.²⁰

“You can't open it (Lon Malang Beach) at night. So, (Lon Malang Beach) at 17.00 UTC+7 must be closed. No illicit goods, such as selling drinks or wine, are allowed; male and female should not mix. If there should be a parking lot, the fee should be reasonable and not be too expensive. Prayer times should be also given attention.” Interview (October 14, 2019).

“(Pantai Lon Malang) Tidak boleh buka malam. Jadi jam 17.00 WIB harus ditutup.

Tidak boleh menjual barang-barang haram, seperti menjual minuman atau khamr. Tidak boleh campur baur laki-laki dan perempuan. Kalau memang ada parkir, tidak boleh parkirnya mahal. Yang wajar-wajaf saja. Waktunya shalat tolong diperhatikan” Wawancara (14 Oktober 2019).

The *kiais* of Madura occupy an important position in society by holding the highest authority in religious affairs. Moreover, the labeling of the *kiais* as “God's hand” rendered them an authoritarian power, providing them with space and authority to participate in the administration of the state. In this instance, the *kiais'* rejection of tourism development exemplifies their authoritarianism in exerting influence over the policies of the local government and community.

In *The Prison Notebook of Antonio Gramsci* (1971), hegemony is described as one of the power structure forms that place one side in a position of power over the other without repression processes and political or economic dominance.²¹ Gramsci's type of power relation emphasizes cultural domination through education and empowerment process without coercive confrontational processes. This means that hegemonic power relation requires elite groups with intellectual superiority to control the subordinate groups. In contrast to Gramsci, the movement of resistance inspired by the *kiais* and philosophical values held by the people of Sampang Regency in general, especially in Bira Tengah Village, showed that the pattern of power relation between the *kiais* (Islamic scholars) and the *kenek* (ordinary people) do not solely occur in the context of cultural hegemony.

Buppa'-Babu' (father-mother), *Ghuru* (teachers/*kiai*), *Rato* (government), in its

¹⁹ Karman Karman, “Bahasa & Kekuasaan: Peran Bahasa Sebagai Instrumen Simbolik Memperoleh Kekuasaan (Language & Power: The Role Of Language As A Symbolic Instrument To Power),” *Jurnal Studi Komunikasi Dan Media* 21, No. 2 (December 12, 2017): 235–246.

²⁰ Abou El Fadl, *Speaking in God's Name*, 202.

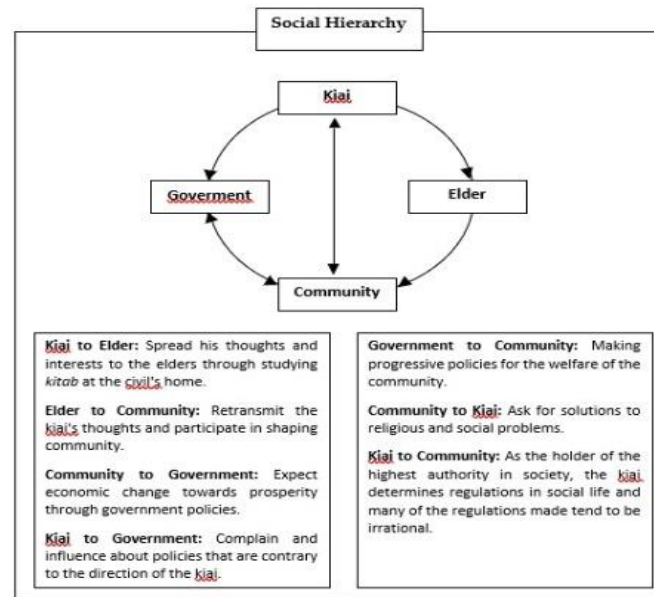
²¹ Ricca Anggraeni and Endra Wijaya, “Pengantar mengenai Hegemoni dan Hukum: Menyoal Kembali Bekerjanya Hukum di Masyarakat,” *Jurnal Magister Hukum Udayana (Udayana Master Law Journal)* 8, no. 4 (December 31, 2019): 494–511.





sequential order, means respecting father, mother, *kiai*, and then the ruler.²² This value puts the *kiais* at the top in the hierarchical structure and culture of Bira Tengah society.

destinations in Indonesia, such as Bali and Lombok. The *kiais* were afraid that the coming of tourists would break Madurese culture which



Therefore, the *kiais*, by virtue of their social power, are able to apply conservative cultural hegemony processes. Gramsci's idea that the *kiais* acted rationally due to their intellectual superiority was not found in this study. The conflict happened in Bira demonstrated that the *kiais* acted according to their emotional piety principles. This indicates that cultural hegemony or domination was not only triggered by the intellectual superiority but also charismatic values and emotional logics. As a religious figure, the *kiais* feared the decrease on the local culture if Madura was to become tourism destination, since the introduction of outside culture brought by the open access of tourism could threaten the Islamic socio-cultural order of Madura which has been maintained and preserved by the society under the guidance of *kiais*.

This anxiety was based on evidences found in other international or national tourism

was based on Islamic religion, not only because of tourists' outfits, but also because of the mingling of males and females without family relationship (*muhrim*), which could lead to immoral acts approaching adultery. Moreover, tourism location that is, according to the *kiais*, focused on entertainment could result in immoral acts, such as gambling, drinking alcohols, and could even be used by irresponsible people to distribute drugs that would destroy the morals of the people, especially the youth. The *kiais* regarded tourism as the source of conflicts and tensions within a society, triggered by different perceptions and point of views.

The *Kiais'* strong rejection on the tourism destination of Lon Malang beach was based on the belief that Madurese people were not prepared culturally, mentally, and quality of its human resources to face industrialization and modernization, which could result from the presence of tourism. Similar to the refusal to

²² Kusnadi, *Carok: Konflik Kekerasan & Harga Diri Orang Madura*, n.d.





other industrialization in Madura, the *kiais* were worried that Madurese people would obtain nothing but servitude under such industrialization. Therefore, the development of tourism industry in Madura needs to consider cultural, historical, and religious background of the society in order to create harmony within its dynamic motion. The development in Madura must treat its people as subjects, not objects.²³

Related to the understanding toward tourism, the *kiais* comprehend that tourism contributes to the needs of the human body and soul.²⁴ Tourism and entertainment are not always identical to negative and destructive things. Islamic values can also be inserted into tourism, and if the tourism location is well managed by all the parties, the *kiais'* fear of disobedience will not happen. Any countries have given examples of Muslim-friendly tourism development whose implementation referred to Al-Qur'an and Hadits as the basic law of sharia.²⁵ This should be the solution for tourism development conflicts in the context of Bira Tengah Village. The Muslim world is a potential market for the tourism industry.

Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, and China are among the countries developing a Muslim-friendly tourism industry include. Thailand has even owned a research center called The Halal Science Center at Chulalongkorn University.²⁶ In Indonesia, particularly in Madura, halal tourism has the potential to contribute to the growth of the national tourism industry.²⁷ Nevertheless, the fear from the *kiais* that tourism could disturb the society's deeply ingrained religious values has been one of the obstacles to development and this even becomes an endless polemic.

The Kiais of Madura in Public Relations: A Lesson from the Lon Malang Beach Case

The polemics between two actors, i.e. the managers and the *kiais*, each with their own truth claims, over the development of Lon Malang beach represented economic and religious contestation. The *kiais* claimed that Lon Malang beach tourism object would only be a source of immorality, with more negative than positive influences such as the potential to facilitate adultery. Moreover, *kiai* mentioned that the tourism object was promoted by using vulgar and impolite slogans, such as 'Papa Pulang Mama Basah' (Daddy home and mommy gets wet) and "69", which is a symbol of having sex. These improper slogans were removed by the *kiais* to confirm their claim.



Image. 2 The vulgar gravity in Lon Malang Beach. (Source: Personal documentation)

In addition, *kiais* affirmed their claim by meeting with the local government and giving religious speeches directly in the tourism location, as well as giving religious teaching at the houses of Bira Tengah Villagers. The meeting between the *kiais* and the community is a direct

²³ Mohammad Amir Hamzah, Iqbal Nurul Azhar, and Surokim, eds., *Madura 2020: Membumikan Madura Menuju Globalisasi*, Cetakan I. (Malang, Indonesia: Inteligencia Media, 2018), 144–165.

²⁴ Shofwan Karim, "Pembangunan Pariwisata Dalam Perspektif Islam," *Tajdid: Jurnal Ilmu Keislaman Dan Ushuluddin* 16, No. 1 (April 22, 2019): 117–126.

²⁵ Sri Maryanti et al., "Halal Tourism in West Nusa Tenggara: A Legal And Economic Perspective," *Jurnal IUS*

Kajian Hukum dan Keadilan 8, no. 3 (December 22, 2020): 472–483.

²⁶ A Muchaddam Fahham, "Tantangan Pengembangan Wisata Halal di Nusa Tenggara Barat" 8, No. 1 (2017): 65–79.

²⁷ Rose Emmaria Tarigan and Abdul Basit, "Penolakan Publik terhadap Program Wisata Halal Danau Toba," *Nyimak: Journal of Communication* 4, no. 1 (March 24, 2020): 125–134.





manifestation of the *kiai*'s figure as an important figure in public relations. Therefore, the possibility of a meeting between the *kiais* and the community can be a tool to realize social change or maintain the existing social situation.²⁸ The involvement of the empathy aspect in the *kiais*' communication with the community emotionally can be one form of the *kiai*'s work to invite in a very emotional and persuasive manner to the students or the surrounding community.

As a manifestation of the *kiais*' responsibility as guardians of the honor of Islam in Madura, persuasive dialogue and communication should be able to provide fair decisions for both parties. In reality, however, the dialogue has become a means of coercion for one side to impose its interests on the subordinate other.²⁹ So that the results of dialogue and persuasive communication, which should result in a fair decision, become an instrument of coercion.

In fact, the *kiais*, as the holders of the highest authority, issued a fatwa prohibiting his students from visiting Lon Malang beach. Then, it shows that the activities of the *kiais* are a seizure of God's will through their claims.³⁰ Because it is so hegemonic and monopolized by the *kiais*, these activities tend to promote conservative understanding and isolate themselves from the social reality of the economically powerless people. In this case, the *kiais* do not agree that changes in society also affect the legal status acquired. This is closely related to the position of the *kiais*, who has been considered a teacher in the philosophy of *Buppa'-Babu'* (father-mother), *Ghuru* (teacher/*kiai*), *Rato* (government), which has the authority to claim their truth and educate the society to keep them away from the misguided acts.

The arguments of the *kiais*' are justified by using the Qur'anic verses, especially those related to the adultery. This claim is cultural

claim based on religion and morality. On the other hand, the managers and developers of Lon Malang beach claimed that the tourism activity and development were to improve the economic well-being of Bira Tengah Villagers, the majority of whom previously worked as migrant workers (TKI) in other countries. This is progressive economic claim of truth. The managers claimed that the people of Bira Tengah Village supported them as they successfully invited the youth of *Karang Taruna* and local people as *Pokdarwis* (groups of people who are aware of the importance of tourism). Modernization, the development of information and technology, and the pattern of community education are some of the factors that encourage more people to support the managers' plans to develop Lon Malang beach..

Such factors play an important role to shift the mindset of society to become more open and rational. Even though many Madurese people choose to study in *pesantren*, they are selective in choosing *pesantren* that are modern and open to development, thereby producing young generations of *santris* (students of *pesantren*) who are open-minded and progressive. However, the *kiais* regarded people who agreed with the tourism destination in their community as those who did not understand religion, as tourism destinations would always be the source of immorality for the youth who come to visit were mostly couples with no family relationship. The use of religious texts as the basis for the *kiai*'s argument arbitrarily makes the reader's horizon merge into one with the author's horizon so that the reader claims to be the ruler of truth, nothing else. Therefore, the moral aspects of Islamic laws will be ignored, along with humanity values.³¹

In fact, youth should be responsible responsible for preserving the cultural and Islamic values. In addition, according to the *kiais*, their rejection was supported by people who

²⁸ Margalit Toledano, "Advocating for Reconciliation: Public Relations, Activism, Advocacy and Dialogue," *Public Relations Inquiry* 5, no. 3 (September 2016): 285–288.

²⁹ Ibid., 280–282.

³⁰ Abou El Fadl, *Speaking in God's Name*, 293–295.

³¹ Abou El Fadl., 67.





began to find the negative effect of tourist places in their surroundings. Some parents complained that their children no longer desired to return to *pesantrains* anymore and always went home late at night. This convinced the AUP to further refuse tourism places in order to save the next generations of Islamic cadres.

This is evident from their persistence in rejecting openly and massively the presence of tourism development, which is, on the one hand, an effort to improve the quality of the local economy and welfare. In light of this, I see that it is necessary for the development of Lon Malang tourism to keep a harmonious (dialectical) dialogue between the two parties contesting the truth claims. Thus, each party does not suppress each other with the power they have, whether it be the *kiais* through their symbolic power or the managers with progressive views, so that tourism development can improve the quality of community welfare without leaving or eroding the cultural-religious values of the community.

Conclusion

Evidently, the development of tourism in Madura cannot run smoothly because of competing interests in its management. The tourism development faces opposition from the social and religious elites of society. The manager's aim for developing tourism, which is to improve the local community's economy, is in contrast to the precautions taken by the *kiais* out of concern that the cultural religious values of the Madurese will be eroded and lost. Even the *kiais* believed that the Madurese, especially those living around Lon Malang Beach, has not been able to adapt to the changes that will result from the continued development of Lon Malang beach tourism. Thus, the development of Malang Lon Beach tourism has become an arena of contestation between competing interests. The contestation can be seen from the influential symbolic power of the *kiais* and the manager's hopes to improve the welfare of the people in the area.

In addition, the development of tourism in Madura, especially at Lon Malang Beach, cannot only be seen from the perspective of an economic development; rather, it must also be in line with the religious values championed by the *kiais* as the highest authority in the culture of the Madurese community. This is further strengthened by the public relations created through the philosophy of Buppa'-Babu' (father-mother), Ghuru (teacher/*kiai*), and Rato (government) in society. In fact, this philosophy also provides space for the *kiais* to maintain their conservative religious views on the tourism development of Lon Malang Beach, which certainly has the potential to strengthen their position as the holder of the highest authority in society to influence the tourism development.

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Author's Contributions

The aforementioned authors contributed to the production this article. Dewi Quraisyin, as the chief of authors, initiated the original draft writing, data collection, concept studying, and analyzing. Naufal Aulia Hanif contributed to the concept analyzing, chapter systemizing, topic refocusing, and research conclusion.

Ethical Considerations

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