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Sultan Agung's Policy in Creating Religious Moderation in the Islamic Mataram Kingdom (1613-1645)

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Abstrak

The change of power from the Demak Bintara Kingdom to the Islamic Mataram Kingdom affected the religious pattern of the Javanese people. The Demak Sultanate was a coastal kingdom with a purer Islamic style, while Mataram was an inland kingdom with a strong local culture. As a result, in the Mataram Kingdom there were two religious sects, namely pure Islam and syncretic Islam. The emergence of this phenomenon, coupled with the interests of political power, caused prolonged internal conflicts. The purpose of this study is to understand the political policy of Sultan Agung in creating religious moderation in the Islamic Mataram kingdom in the 17th century. Therefore, this study uses a historical approach. The primary sources used are the *Babad Tanah Jawi* manuscript and various related secondary sources. Source criticism is carried out to obtain valid and authentic historical data. The next step is interpretation and analysis using the theory of cultural acculturation. This research found that the Sultan Agung's religious moderation policy was carried out by integrating Islam and local culture in the royal order. By accommodating local culture, the Islamic King of Mataram succeeded in building political legitimacy in the lives of people with different religious understandings. The Sultan Agung's policy also succeeded in uniting all the people so that Mataram succeeded in becoming the largest Islamic kingdom in the archipelago in the 17th century. Sultan Agung's religious moderation policy can inspire people around the world who face similar challenges in maintaining religious harmony.

Keywords: *Sultan Agung, policy, religious moderation, Islamic Mataram Kingdom*

Introduction

Since the era of the Majapahit Kingdom in 1293, the people of the archipelago have had various kinds of tribes, religions, beliefs, and different cultures.[1] The differences that existed in society at that time became identities and means of social integration.[2] Adherents of Hinduism as the majority of the population of the Majapahit Kingdom live side by side with other people. Each adherent of different religions and beliefs can live in harmony and respect without causing conflict let alone division.[3] The existence of tolerance between adherents of different religions and beliefs made the Majapahit Kingdom grow into a large Kingdom in the archipelago.[4] However, along with the entry and development of Islam in the archipelago, various conflicts arose caused by differences in religious views and practices.

Since the beginning of the establishment of the Islamic Kingdom of Demak at the end of the 15th century, there has been a conflict between pure or puritan Islam and syncretic Islam that still maintains cultural elements of animism, dynamism, Hinduism, and Buddhism.[5] In addition to differences in religious thought and practice, there was conflict in Javanese society because it was supported by the interests of power politics at that time.[6] Both of these factors caused a prolonged conflict that led to disintegration in the life of the Islamic community in Java. The conflict between the descendants of Raden Patah who represented pure Islam and Jaka Tingkir Putra Kebo Kenanga who was identified with syncretic Islam became the beginning of the collapse

1 Richadiana Kadarisman Kartakusuma, "Kondisi Kehidupan Keagamaan Masamajapahit Berdasarkan Sumber Tertulis Dan Data Arkeologi," *AMERTA* 26, no. 1 (2008): 32. https://ejournal.brin.go.id/amerta/article/view/3350

2 Omar Shahabudin McDoom, "Ethnic Inequality, Cultural Distance, and Social Integration: Evidence from a Native-Settler Conflict in the Philippines," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 45, no. 9 (2019): 1532–52, https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2018.1427566.

3 Syarif, "Understanding the Teaching of Religious Moderation from a Sufistic Perspective and Its Implications for Student Performance," *Journal of Social Studies Education Research* 12, no. 4 (2021): 320–43.

4 Deny Yudo Wahyudi and Agus Aris Munandar, *Majapahit: Reflection of the Religious Life (14th—15th AD)* (Atlantis Press SARL, 2023), https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-058-9_10.

5 Wawan Hernawan, Irma Riyani, and Busro Busro, "Religious Moderation in Naskah Wawacan Babad Walangsungsang: A Sundanese Religious Diversity Wisdom," *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 77, no. 4 (2021): 1–13, https://doi.org/10.4102/HTS.V77I4.6773.

6 Haedar Nashir, Mutohharun Jinan, and Bambang Setiaji, "Muhammadiyah: The Political Behavior of Modernist Muslim Elite in Indonesia," *Humanities and Social Sciences Reviews* 7, no. 4 (2019): 837–44, https://doi.org/10.18510/hssr.2019.74111.

of the Demak Kingdom.[7] Similarly, the establishment of the Kingdom of Mataram was a conflict between Harya Penangsang which was a symbol of puritan Islam, and Sutawijaya which was a symbol of syncretic Islam.[8] The occurrence of powerful political conflicts using religious symbols continued to occur until after the establishment of Mataram.[9]

Raden Sutawijaya, who had become the ruler of Mataram under the title Panembahan Senapati, faced a lack of recognition and threats from various regional rulers. Although he had secured the support of Pangeran Benawa-son of Sultan Hadiwijaya-many local leaders and coastal Islamic scholars (*ulama*) refused to submit to Mataram. Panembahan Senapati's reign was largely defined by his efforts to consolidate his position as the ruler of Mataram, achieved through both military conflict and strategic marriages. Regions that previously considered themselves superior or equal to Mataram-in terms of both religious standing and political status-posed a constant threat of rebellion. It is therefore unsurprising that several powerful regional rulers sought to establish themselves as independent entities, free from Mataram's authority. Between 1590 and 1595, various regions in Java-many of which served as strongholds for puritanical Islam, were brought under control through a series of battles; these included Jepara, Pati, Rembang, Madiun, Kediri, and Pasuruan. While these territories were eventually subdued, the process came at a significant cost to the Mataram Kingdom, depleting human and economic resources that could otherwise have been directed toward the welfare of the populace. The efforts initiated by Panembahan Senapati to bolster his legitimacy as the ruler of Mataram were continued by his successor, Panembahan Seda Krapyak. Throughout the reigns of Panembahan Senapati and Panembahan Krapyak, many regions that defied Mataram's authority were brought to heel-whether through military force or negotiation. Nevertheless, certain parts of Java, particularly in the east, continued to seek independence or even launched counter-attacks against Mataram-most notably the region of Surabaya.[10]

Following the passing of Panembahan Seda Krapyak, the leadership of Mataram passed to Raden Mas Rangsang, who subsequently took the title Sultan Agung (1613-1645). To address various conflicts stemming from

7 "Pergolakan Politik Kasultanan Demak Dan Ambisi Arya Penangsang Sebagai Sultan Demak Ke-4 Tahun 1546-1549," *Yupa: Historical Studies Journal* 3, no. 2 SE-Articles (n.d.): 69–78, https://doi.org/10.30872/yupa.v3i2.170. 72.

8 Rizal Zamzami, "Sejarah Agama Islam Di Kerajaan Mataram Pada Masa Penembahan Senapati (1584-1601)," *JUSPI (Jurnal Sejarah Peradaban Islam)* 2, no. 2 (2018): 153-165. http://dx.doi.org/10.30829/j.v2i2.1519 160.

9 Hermanu Joebagio, "Politik Islam Dalam Pusaran Sejarah Surakarta," *Millah: Journal of Religious Studies* 13, no. 1 SE-Articles (August 31, 2013): 155–78, https://doi.org/10.20885/millah.vol12.iss3.art7.

10 JH Meinsma, *Babad Tanah Jawi* ('s Gravenhage, 1941). 124-129.

religious practices and political interests, Sultan Agung encouraged his subjects to adopt a moderate approach. In essence, this meant practicing one's religion in a balanced, non-extreme manner, while also respecting the religious practices of others. Sultan Agung pursued this by implementing political policies designed to foster harmonious social relations within both society and the state. Research by Ibnu Burdah demonstrates that Sultan Agung's political vision was directed toward the unification of Java through the strengthening of a Javanese-Islamic identity, including the synthesis of Islamic values and Javanese culture as a response to the political and social fragmentation faced by Mataram.[11] Hermanu Joebagio similarly argues that Sultan Agung developed a new strategy of Islamization by making the palace a center of Islamization and placing Islam within the framework of Javanese culture.[12] Surya and Puji Discussing the geopolitics of 17th-century Java and the position of Mataram during the reign of Sultan Agung, including its relations with coastal regions and marriage alliances.[13] Riyadi and Rokamah, meanwhile, examine the political and cultural hybridization of Islam and Java in Mataram, particularly in relation to the weakening political role of the santri and the consolidation of Sultan Agung's power.[14] Although these studies demonstrate the importance of cultural integration in Sultan Agung's policies, they have not specifically examined this integration as a strategy that can be interpreted through the concept of religious moderation.

The purpose of this study is to find the political policy of Sultan Agung in creating religious moderation in the Islamic Kingdom of Mataram through the integration of Islam and local culture. How was the application of the integration of Islam and Javanese culture practiced in the Kingdom of Mataram so as to create a hormonious religious life? To answer this question, the author uses the theory of cultural acculturation, The concept was formulated systematically by Robert Redfield, Ralph Linton, and Melville J. Herskovits, who viewed acculturation as a process resulting from continuous and direct contact between groups of different cultures, in which the cultural

11 Ibnu Burdah, "The Politics of Mataram Kingdom during the Reign of Sultan Agung," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 11, no. 1 (2017): 267–306, https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2017.11.1. 267.

12 Hermanu Joebagio, "Politik Islam dalam Pusaran Sejarah Surakarta," *Millah: Journal of Religious Studies* 13, no. 1 SE-Articles (August 31, 2013): 155, https://doi.org/10.20885/millah.vol12.iss3.art7.

13 Rini Puji and Riza Surya, "The Geopolitics of Java in the 17th Century: A Case Study of Mataram Sultanate," *Paramita Historical Studies Journal* 34 (September 30, 2024): 223–30, https://doi.org/10.15294/paramita.v34i2.47748.

14 Muhammad Riyadi and Ridho Rokamah, "Islamic-Javanese Hybridization in Politic Cultural Mataram After the Weakening of the Politic Role of Santri," *Dialogia* 21 (December 24, 2023): 265–86, https://doi.org/10.21154/dialogia.v21i2.6164.

patterns of one or both groups are modified.[15] Which is the fusion of two different cultures into a unity without losing the characteristics of each culture itself.[16] Similarly, in political culture, although there are differences in cultural background, they try to become a unity because they have the same interests.[17] To achieve political goals, static differences must be directed toward unity.[18] The beginning of the development of Islam in Java centered on the north coast, namely the Demak Palace, emphasized more on the issue of tawhid and sharia. After the change of power from Demak to Mataram, there was a change in religious thought and practice from pure Islam to syncretic Islam because Mataram is an inland kingdom that is very thick with local culture.

To date, research on the role of local culture in building religious tolerance has been carried out by several experts. In his research, Pajarianto found that the cultural values of *kasiuluran, tengko situru,* and *carapasan* of the Tongkonan tribe community are very important in building moderate religious practices in South Sulawesi.[19] Religious and traditional leaders encourage the realization of religious harmony through the values of local wisdom The Tongkonan Tribe is still maintained by the community with the support of traditional and religious leaders. Sundanese local wisdom contained in the Wawacan Babad Walangsungsang Manuscript also contains teachings of religious moderation. Through the story of Prince Walangsungsang in studying with Sheikh Datuk Kahfi, much advice was taught on the importance of religious moderation based on Sundanese cultural values.[20] Unlike previous research, this study found the political policy of Sultan Agung who was the King of Islamic Mataram in Java in the 17th century, were able to create religious

15 Robert Redfield, Ralph Linton, and Melville J Herskovits, "Memorandum for the Study of Acculturation," *American Anthropologist* 38, no. 1 (October 16, 1936): 149, http://www.jstor.org/stable/662563.

16 Herwin Sutrisno et al., "Living in Harmony: Acculturation of Balinese and Dayak Ngaju Cultures in Basarang Jaya Village, Central Kalimantan," *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun* 7, no. 3 (2019): 401–12, https://doi.org/10.26811/peuradeun.v7i3.279.

17 Sutrisno et al.

18 Paddy Dolan, Stephen Vertigans, and John Connolly, "Theorising Political Legitimisation: From Stasis to Processes," *European Journal of Social Theory*, 2023, 1–19, https://doi.org/10.1177/13684310231184600.

19 Kasiuluran refers to kinship and emphasizes maintaining family relationships and harmony despite religious differences; tengko situru means togetherness and is reflected in mutual support in religious and traditional activities; while karapasan refers to persistence or a sustained effort to maintain peace and harmony by adhering to religious and customary norms. See Hadi Pajarianto, Imam Pribadi, and Puspa Sari, "Tolerance between Religions through the Role of Local Wisdom and Religious Moderation," *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 78, no. 4 (2022): 1–8, https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v78i4.7043.

20 Hernawan, Riyani, and Busro, "Religious Moderation in Naskah Wawacan Babad Walangsungsang: A Sundanese Religious Diversity Wisdom."

moderation by integrating Islam and Javanese culture. As the ruler of Mataram, he managed to build a harmonious religious life by running his government.

Method

This research is qualitative research related to past events. The research method used is the historical research method, which consists of four stages: heuristics, verification. interpretation and historiography or writing history.[21] The source of research data consists of primary sources in the form of manuscripts of *Babad Tanah Jawi*, and other old archives obtained from various museums and libraries related to the History of the Kingdom of Demak to Mataram. While secondary sources in the form of books, articles, or research results discuss related themes. After the source of information is collected, verification of information and interpretation was carried out, Source verification is conducted through external and internal criticism. External criticism examines the authenticity and origin of the sources, while internal criticism assesses the credibility and consistency of the information by comparing accounts across available sources and relevant historical studies. The verified information is then interpreted and presented in a coherent historical narrative through the historiography stage.[22]

At the interpretation stage, the excavation of meaning is obtained using the theory of cultural acculturation. Based on the analysis conducted Sultan Agung's policy as King of Islamic Mataram in the 17th century succeeded in accommodating Javanese culture in building his kingdom. Although Mataram was an Islamic kingdom, the people of Inland Java felt appreciated because their culture was still maintained. Through the integration of Islam with Javanese culture, religious moderation was created in the lives of the people of Mataram. This situation made the Islamic Mataram Kingdom grow rapidly to achieve success in the archipelago. Efforts to accommodate local culture carried out by Sultan Agung can be an example and inspire the Indonesian nation, especially leaders to build a moderate and tolerant national life of difference.

The Early Development of Islamic Kingdoms in Java

When the Majapahit Kingdom collapsed at the end of the 15th century AD, Demak grew and developed into one of the prominent duchies in Java.[23] Raden Patah succeeded in establishing the first Islamic Kingdom in Java,

21 Michael Burawoy, "Skocpol versus Trotsky," 1989, 759.

22 Kuntowijoyo, *Pengantar Ilmu Sejarah* (Bentang Pustaka, 2005). 91.

23 Kundharu Saddhono and Siti Supeni, "The Role of Dutch Colonialism in the Political Life of Mataram Dynasty: A Case Study of the Manuscript of Babad Tanah Jawi," *Asian Social Science* 10, no. 15 (2014): 7, https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v10n15p1.

namely the Kingdom of Demak.[24] The strategic location of the kingdom is the capital for the development of the Kingdom of Demak Bintara as a large and respected kingdom. As an Islamic kingdom located on the north coast of Java, Demak is very open because it often interacts with outside communities. Sea shipping lanes became a very effective means of contact with migrants, causing the people of Demak to be very familiar with outside cultures including Arab traders who were Muslims. After successfully becoming the Ruler of the Kingdom of Demak, Raden Patah was entitled Sultan Al Fattah Alamsyah Akbar. In the not-too-distant future, Sultan Patah managed to build Demak into a very influential kingdom in Asia and became a trading center along the North Coast of Java.[25]

In realizing an Islamic kingdom, Sultan Patah tried to impose Islamic law in the Demak Sultanate. With the full support of the saints, the preparation of the Book of Islamic Law, namely the Book of Jugul Muda, which is sourced from the Books of Muharrar, Taqrib, and Tuhfah. The book, which was the first codification of Islamic Law compiled in Java, became the Law of the Demak Sultanate.[26] To support the implementation of Islamic Sharia, Kitab Jugul Muda is supplemented with Kitab Salokantara which contains 1044 legal cases contained in it. Meanwhile, in the constitutional field, the preparation of judicial laws, both *siyasah* or civil and *jinayah* or criminal issues was carried out by Sunan Giri and Sunan Kudus. Sunan Ampel was assigned to draft laws related to *munakahat* or marriage issues.

In the field of Sufism, Sunan Bonang compiled *Suluk Syeh Bahri*.[27] In Suluk Bari, tasawuf syari is taught and rejects the concept of divinity conveyed by Ibn Arabi. Sunan Bonang forbade the teachings of *manunggaling kawula Gusti* because it was contrary to Islamic teachings.[28] Thus, the teachings of tasawuf syari developed rapidly in the Demak. This caused quite a lot of adherents of tasawuf filosofi which then had to be eliminated such as Syeh Siti Jenar and Sunan Panggung. The Sultanate of Demak Bintara strongly emphasized the issue of *tauhid* and *sharia*. Through his rule, Sultan Patah with the support of the saints tried to enforce *sharia* and tried to instill the basic values of Islamic teachings. This kind of da'wah strategy was maintained until the last ruler of

24 RM. Sajid Hadiwijajana Nomor 23 Babad Mentawis, "No Title" (Surakarta, n.d.).

25 Alexander Wain, "The Kubrawī and Early Javanese Islam: Re-Assessing the Significance of a 16th-Century Kubrawī Silsila in the Sejarah Banten Ranté-Ranté," *Indonesia and the Malay World* 49, no. 143 (2021): 42, https://doi.org/10.1080/13639811.2021.1875658.

26 Media Zainul Bahri, "Indonesian Theosophical Society (1900—40) and the Idea of Religious Pluralism," *Southeast Asian Studies* 6, no. 1 (2017): 139–65, https://doi.org/10.20495/seas.6.1_139.

27 1928 MS Leiden Cod. Or, "No Title," n.d.

28 Oman Fathurahman, "Sejarah Pengkafiran dan Marginalisasi Paham Keagamaan Di Melayu Dan Jawa," *Analisis: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 11, no. 2 (2011). 469-470.

Demak Sultan Trenggana.

The Beginning of the Establishment of the Kingdom of Mataram

The reign of the Demak Sultanate lasted approximately 100 years, in the mid-16th century there was a shift in power in Java. Demak Sultanate as a coastal kingdom moved to an inland kingdom, namely Pajang Sultanate.[29] Under the rule of Sultan Hadiwijaya or Jaka Tingkir, the rule of the Pajang Sultanate did not last long. The sons and direct descendants of the Sultan of Demak attempted to take power. As a result, various rebellions and disputes occurred, so the reign of Sultan Hadiwijaya was more widely used to overcome rebellions and internal royal disputes.[30] After the death of Sultan Hadiwijaya, Ki Ageng Pemanahan's son, Raden Sutawijaya, succeeded in seizing power from the Pajang Sultanate. Mataram, which was previously only a duchy, managed to increase its status to become a kingdom. This increase in status as the center of power in central Java was not followed by symbols of the previous kingdom, both in the use of the title of sultan and various traditions of the previous kingdom. Raden Sutawijaya, whose power was the same as the king, preferred to use the title Panembahan Senapati not using the title of sultan like the previous king.[31] The non-use of the title of sultan and royal symbols in Java previously showed that Panembahan Senapati felt inferior to the king, and only equal to the regional ruler.[32]

The Panembahan Senapati breed is a farmer and village leader who diligently works in his fields. Therefore, since the beginning of the establishment of the Mataram Kingdom, Panembahan Senapati always felt that he was not recognized and threatened by the regional rulers who were previously under the Kingdom of Pajang, Demak, or even Majapahit. The reign of Panembahan Senapati was mostly used to establish himself as the ruler of Mataram. In addition to peaceful avenues such as marriage and negotiations, Senapati tried to strengthen his position as the ruler of Mataram by conquering various regions that did not want to submit. Areas that previously felt superior or equal to Mataram and had the potential to carry out rebellions, tried to be conquered using military battles. Senapati's success in conquering the Pajang Sultanate was not necessarily followed by the rulers of the regions under him. In their view, Panembahan Senapati Mataram gained his position as the ruler of the kingdom by war.

So it's no surprise that there are regional leaders who feel strong and want to stand as an independent region outside of Mataram. Panembahan Senapati's efforts to win over his political opponents are often carried out with

29 Sana Pistaka Surakarta MS SP 124 Ca Babad Jaka Tingkir, "No Title," n.d.

30 Maharsi, *Upacara Grebeg* (Yogyakarta: Dinas Pariwisata Yogyakarta, 2009).

31 CF Winter, *Javaansche Zamenspraken* (Leiden, 1911).

32 Moedjanto, *Konsep Kekuasaan Jawa* (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 1987).

various tactics that are considered less chivalrous by his opponents. Even in a strategy to conquer the enemy, Panembahan Senapati sent his daughter Raden Ayu Pembayun to pretend to be submissive and ready to become the wife of Ki Ageng Mangir. Ki Ageng Mangir Wanabaya, who previously intended to fight and excel against Mataram, was eventually captured and killed in Mataram's palace.[33]

The hereditary background and actions of Panembahan Senapati further strengthened the assumption of the rulers of the Pajang region that Senapati was considered unfit to occupy the highest power in Java. Senapati was only a regional ruler and did not have the spiritual authority to preside over royal ceremonies that had been the tradition of previous Javanese kings. So it is not surprising, that the efforts made by Senapati to legitimize his power are always carried out using battle. The efforts made by Panembahan Senapati by continuing to carry out military attacks or negotiations with his enemies were followed by his successor, Panembahan Seda Krapyak. During the reign of Panembahan Senapati and Panembahan Krapyak, many areas that disobeyed the rule of Mataram were successfully subdued by the military and negotiations. Even so, there are still quite a lot of Javanese regions, especially the eastern part, who want to break away, or even turn to attack Mataram such as the Surabaya region.[34]

Sultan Agung's Religious Moderation Policy: Integration of Islam and Local Culture

Sultan Agung's religious moderation policy can be understood through his efforts to integrate Islamic values with established Javanese cultural traditions in the Kingdom of Mataram. Rather than replacing existing traditions entirely, this integration involved adapting religious values to the social, political, and cultural context of Javanese society. This policy can be examined through three aspects: the integration of Islamic values into Mataram's government and political institutions, the incorporation of Islam into Javanese cultural and religious practices, and the integration of Islamic teachings into Javanese knowledge and cultural traditions. These aspects demonstrate how the relationship between Islam and local culture contributed to the formation of Mataram's distinctive religious and cultural identity during Sultan Agung's reign.

Integration of Islamic Values into Mataram's Government and Political Institutions

After the death of Panembahan Seda Krapyak in 1613, the power of

33 Meinsma, *Babad Tanah Jawi*.

34 Meinsma.

Mataram was replaced by Raden Mas Rangsang.[35] Unlike the previous kings, Raden Mas Rangsang tried to show his power as King of Mataram with Javanese cultural symbols as used by previous kings. At first, Raden Mas Rangsang used the title Agung so that it became Panembahan Agung.[36] After successfully subduing Madura and its surroundings in 1625, Panembahan Agung changed his name to Sunan or Susuhunan, which was considered more spiritually authoritative. This title of Susuhunan follows the title of the guardians of spreading Islam in Java who indeed have a very high position spiritually in society. It is proven that the Islamic kings in Java, namely Raden Patah and Sultan Hadiwijaya received blessings and were confirmed by Sunan Giri as the leader of the saints. At the beginning of the spread of Islam in Java, saints and religious leaders had high honor and position, they also had a very wide influence and power. In addition to religious leaders, saints are rulers in their respective territories. Therefore, it is not an exaggeration, if Sunan Giri also has the title Prabu Setmaka or Sunan Bonang who has the title Prabu Anyakrakusuma. In the Babad Tanah Jawi manuscript, Sunan Giri is also told as King Pandhita.

The title of Susuhunan or Sunan did not satisfy him, Panembahan Agung wanted him as a ruler who no one equaled him. The third Islamic ruler of Mataram wanted the King of Mataram not only to be recognized as a government leader but also as a religious leader. Therefore, he changed his title to Sultan Agung after getting the title from Syarif Makah.[37] According to Sultan Agung, the Kingdom of Mataram is an Islamic kingdom that carries the mandate of Allah SWT in Java.

In the field of government, the first effort made by Sultan Agung was to create a government position structure. The king is the highest ruler of Islamic Mataram entitled Sultan who is believed to come from Mecca. The use of the title given by Syarif Makkah to Sultan Agung is very important for the Javanese Islamic community because it has a strong social effect. The influence and dignity of a ruler with the title he bears can be utilized and adapted to the political conditions of society.[38] Sultan Agung also established a penghulu institution that regulates the religious life of the people of Mataram, such as prayer, zakat, and other religious practices. To encourage efforts to practice Islamic sharia in the Kingdom of Mataram, Sultan Agung initiated the writing of the Book of Surya Alam. This book is a form of fusion of Islamic law and customs, for example in marriage and inheritance law. Sultan Agung

35 Burdah, "The Politics of Mataram Kingdom during the Reign of Sultan Agung."

36 Moedjanto, *Konsep Kekuasaan Jawa*.

37 Noor Achmad and Nanang Nurcholis, "States and Local Legal Cultures in Medieval Islam: A Comparative Study of Akbar's Mughal Rule and Sultan Agung's Mataram in 16th and 17th Century," *Al-Jami'ah* 54, no. 1 (2016): 33–57, https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2016.541.33-57.

38 Burdah, "The Politics of Mataram Kingdom during the Reign of Sultan Agung."

still maintained the civil court which was the legacy of the Hindhu kingdom.[39] But in making decisions, this trial involves the rulers who understand the teachings of Islam. The place where the pre-civil court was originally carried out in the palace was moved to the Surambi court which was located in the foyer of the mosque. Along with the development of the judiciary, the power of the ruler is getting stronger in enforcing the application of Islamic law. In addition to adjudicating cases related to Islamic law, the Surambi Court also advised the king in running his government.

Integration of Islam into Javanese Cultural and Religious Practices

The application of Islamic teachings should be adapted to the customs and culture of the Javanese people.[40] Various Javanese ceremonies, customs, traditions, and customs must be preserved without deviating from Islamic law.[41] All of that cannot be separated from the teachings of his teacher Kanjeng Sunan Kalijaga, namely *anglaras ilining banyu ngeli ananging ora keli,* meaning that in preaching Islam it is necessary to follow the culture in society but must not be swept away because it adheres to the teachings of Islam, the Qur'an and hadith. By following the culture of the community, Islam will easily integrate and be accepted by any society.[42] However, if there is a culture that is not in accordance with Islamic teachings, then the culture must be immediately filled with Islamic values. Thus there is an inculturation of Islamic values in the local culture. An example is the ceremony commemorating when the Javanese died denia with *telung dina* three-day ceremony, *pitung dina* seven days, *patang puluh dina* forty days, which is then filled with readings *tahlil* and *dzikir*.[43]

Another effort of Sultan Agung to integrate Islam with Javanese culture was to organize a *garebeg* ceremony. Before Islam came to Nusantara, the *garebeg* ceremony was a Hindu religious ritual called raja medha, namely the king's alms. The completion of offerings prepared in this ceremony are in the form of mountains consisting of various kinds of food, such as rice,

39 Aruji Sulaksono, Yasser Ahmed Adas, and Ayad Almaimani, "Islamic Influence on the Local Majapahit Hindu Dwelling of Indonesia in the 15th Century," *Architecture* 3, no. 2 (2023): 234–57.

40 Maharsi, *Upacara Grebeg*.

41 Bambang Hudayana, "Identity Shift: From Javanese Islam to Shariah-Centric Muslims in the Trah, a Kinship-Based Social Organisation," *Contemporary Islam* 16, no. 2–3 (2022): 401–26, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11562-022-00487-5.

42 Masdar Hilmy, "Towards a Religiously Hybrid Identity? The Changing Face of Javanese Islam," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 12, no. 1 (2018): 45–68, https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2018.12.1.45-68.

43 et al. KhanafiIn, Imam., "The Contribution of Ahlussunnah Waljamaah s Theology in Establishing Moderate Islam in Indonesia Research Methods," *HTS Teologiese Studies/ Theological Studies ISSN: (Online) 2072-8050, (Print) 0259-9422 Page*, 2021, 1–10.

vegetables, fruits, eggs, and other side dishes. The king himself always led the gerebeg ceremony while conveying his blessings in the form of food for his people to fight for. During the reign of Sultan Agung, every year the Islamic Mataram Kingdom held three *garebeg* ceremonies, namely *garebeg mulud*, *garebeg bada*, and *garebeg kurban*. *Garebeg mulud* is held every 12th of Rabiullawal to commemorate the birth of the Prophet Muhammad, *Garebeg* bada is held on the 1st of Shawwal to commemorate the Eid al-Fitr holiday. While the sacrificial *garebeg* is held on the 10th of Dhul-Hijjah to commemorate the Eid al-Adha holiday.[44]

The *garebeg* ceremony which was held in conjunction with the commemoration of Islamic holidays was used as a means of Islamic da'wah so the name was changed to *sekaten*.[45] The word *sekaten* comes from *shahadattain* or two shahada sentences, namely sahadat tawhid and syahadat rasul.[46] The shahada of tawhid is the testimony of Muslims that there is no God but Allah, while the sahada rasul is the testimony that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah. As a means of da'wah to spread Islam, the *sekaten* ceremony was held more festively with various renewals. In 1566 the Javanese Year Sultan Agung ordered to make *Sekaten gamelan*, namely Kyai Guntur Madu and Kyai Guntur Sari.[47] The making of gamelan by Sultan Agung is evidenced by the existence of candrasengkala memet *Rerenggan Wowohan Tinata ing Wadhah* (1566 TJ). *Candra sengkala memet* which shows the year of making the gamelan is engraved on the saron and demung rancakan. At the time of the Sekaten ceremony used to commemorate the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w., the gamelan was sounded by the niyaga Kraton for 7 days, starting from the 5th of *Rabiulawal* to the 12th of *Rabiulawal*. The garebeg ceremony also experienced a renewal in the form and amount of the king's alms. During the Hindhu period, the king's alms were rice *tumpeng* shaped like nine *gunungan* or *tumpeng sanga* equipped with various kinds of side dishes. The nine *gunungan* symbolize the 9 cardinal guardian gods in Hinduis.[48] The number of *garebeg gunungans* has also changed from 9 to 5 as a symbol of the pillars of Islam.

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44 Jajat Burhanudin, "Two Islamic Writing Traditions in Southeast Asia," *Al-Jami'ah* 60, no. 1 (2022): 1–28, https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2022.601.1-28.

45 Bahri, "Indonesian Theosophical Society (1900—40) and the Idea of Religious Pluralism."

46 Al Makin, "Unearthing Nusantara's Concept of Religious Pluralism: Harmonization and Syncretism in Hindu-Buddhist and Islamic Classical Texts," *Al-Jami'ah* 54, no. 1 (2016): 1–30, https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2016.541.1-30.

47 RM Sajid, *Sejarah Sekaten* (Solo: Reksa Pustaka Mangkunegaran, 1984).

48 Nashuddin, "Islamic Values and Sasak Local Wisdoms: The Pattern of Educational Character at Nw Selaparang Pesantren, Lombok," *Ulumuna* 24, no. 1 (2020): 155–82, https://doi.org/10.20414/ujis.v24i1.392.

Integration of Islam into Javanese Knowledge and Cultural Traditions

To integrate the teachings of Islam and Javanese culture, Sultan Agung initiated the compilation of the *Sastra Gendhing* Literary Book. *Sastra Gendhing* is a book of instructions on the relationship between Allah and humans as his creatures. Literature is a representation of the Substance of Allah (swt) which must be followed by gendhing as a manifestation of human life that is His creation. *Gendhing* must follow the instructions contained in literature because literature determines the *gendhing* of the life chanted. The realization of harmony in the gendhing of life is determined by the values contained in literature.[49] Literature is very important as a guide to maintain harmony between Allah as creator, and man and nature as creation. The harmony of relations between others, with Allah Almighty and the natural environment, became the guideline of Sultan Agung in carrying out his government in the Islamic Mataram Kingdom.[50]

To improve the status and descent of the Mataram Dynasty, Sultan Agung ordered the writing of Javanese History, namely *Babad Tanah Jawi.*[51] In the chronicle manuscript, it is told that the Mataram Dynasty is the descendant of extraordinary figures, ranging from the Prophet Adam, the gods, prophets, and pewayangan kings to the kings who ruled in Java. The efforts of the Mataram Dynasty to associate with figures in Hinduism and Islam are known as historypanengen dan pangiwa.[52] The history of panengen starts from Kanjeng Nabi Adam, Nabi Sis, Sayid Anwas, to Kanjeng Nabi Muhammad, Siti Fatimah, Sayid Husein to Syeh Wali Lanang, Kanjeng Sunan Giri, who sent down Nyi Ageng Saba, wife of Ki Ageng Pemanahan and father of Panembahan Senapati. From the history of pangiwa, the descendants of Mataram began with Prophet Adam, Prophet Sis, Hindhu Gods and Pandava figures in the Mahabharata story, followed by the story of Watu Gunung, to the Javanese Hindhu Kingdom such as Jenggala, Kediri, Kauripan, Galuh, Singasari, to Brawijaya Majapahit, Raden Bondan Kejawen, Ki Ageng Getas, Ki Ageng Enis, Ki Ageng Pemanahan who sent down Raden Sutawijaya or Panembahan Senapati. Besides *Babad Tanah Jawi* also tells the relationship of

49 Mila I. Rahmawati, Wakit A. Rais, and Prasetyo A.W. Wibowo, "Sêrat Bayanullah: A Study of Raden Panji Nataratas Thoughts on Javanese Sufism through Classical Javanese Literature," *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 78, no. 4 (2022): 1–9, https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v78i4.7239; Aldila Syarifatul Na'im, "Serat Sastra Gendhing Dalam Kajian Strukturalisme Semiotik" (Universitas Negeri Semarang, 2010).

50 Askuri and Joel Corneal Kuipers, "The Politics of Arabic Naming and Islamization in Java: Processes of Hybridization and Purification," *Al-Jami'ah* 56, no. 1 (2018): 59–94, https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2018.561.59-94.

51 Berg, "The Javanese Historiography," in *DGE Historian s of South East Asia* (London, 1963).

52 Makin, "Unearthing Nusantara's Concept of Religious Pluralism: Harmonization and Syncretism in Hindu-Buddhist and Islamic Classical Texts."

the kings of Mataram with the rulers of the supernatural realm, such as Kanjeng Ratu Kidul as the ruler of the southern sea, Ki Sapu Jagad as the ruler and guardian of the crater of Mount Merapi.

In 1555 Saka coincided with 1043 Hijri or 1633 AD, Sultan Agung combined the Saka and Hijri calendars. The calendar which later became known as the Javanese Calendar used the calculation of the Islamic month with modifications according to the Javanese tongue. For example, the month of Muharram in the Hijri year turns into the month of *Sura*, Ramadan becomes Divination or *Pasa*, Shafar becomes *Sapar*, Rajab becomes *Rejeb*, and so on. The calculation of the Javanese year does not begin with the Javanese year or the hijra year of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) but from the year used in the Saka calendar which is 1555 Saka. Thus the Javanese year does not begin with the first or first year but begins with the year 1556 of the Javanese Year. The birth of the Javanese Year was Sultan Agung's attempt to unite the Hindu power of the Majapahit Kingdom, symbolized by the Caka Year, and the Islamic Sultanate of Demak, symbolized by the Hijri Year.

Sultan Agung and the Glory of Islamic Mataram

Sultan Agung's efforts to accommodate Javanese culture in building the Islamic Mataram Kingdom received support from various circles of society. Those who still have animism, dynamism, and Hindhu beliefs feel that they have a place and are accommodated in the Kingdom of Mataram. Thus the people's support for the position of the King of Mataram became even greater.[53] This cultural accommodation helped maintain social cohesion within a kingdom whose population had diverse religious and cultural backgrounds. However, such accommodation did not necessarily eliminate all social and political tensions, particularly those arising from the expansion of royal authority and the demands imposed on local communities.

During the time of Sultan Agung, the Kingdom of Mataram managed to become the largest and most influential Islamic kingdom in the archipelago. This kingdom has a great war force both army and naval fleet. The Mataram naval force is very famous for its small boats that are very fast to protect its territory on the north coast of Java.[54] So it is not surprising that Mataram managed to control almost all of Java and Madura, as well as several regions in Sumatra, Kalimantan, and Sulawesi. In addition, the Kingdom of Mataram also had very good relations with kingdoms outside Java, especially related to their alliance or enmity with the VOC as their common enemy, such as with the Kingdom of Banjar, Makassar, and Palembang. No less important

53 Sari Bahagiarti Kusumayudha et al., *Volcanic Disaster and the Decline of Mataram Kingdom in the Central Java, Indonesia*, *Sustainable Civil Infrastructures* (Springer International Publishing, 2019), https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-02032-3_8.

54 Sri Margana et al., "Sejarah Kebudayaan Maritim Mataram, 1600-1755," 2021.

is the international relations of the Kingdom of Mataram with the Ottoman Khilafah related to the acceptance of the title of Sultan as a source of legitimacy, sending political envoys, da'wah, and so on.[55] These military and diplomatic capacities were important indicators of Mataram's political strength, although territorial expansion alone cannot be regarded as sufficient evidence of social and economic stability.

In creating social, political and economic stability, the third King of Mataram divided his territorial power into 4 parts[56] that is

1. Kuta Negara atau Siti Narawita
2. Negari Agung
3. Manca nagari
4. Pasisir

This division of territory is an effort so that Mataram's vast territory can be controlled properly.[57] At the beginning of the establishment of the capital city of Mataran was located in the former Alas Mentaok or the area of Kota Gedhe, but in 1613 Sultan Agung moved the capital of the kingdom of Mataram to the Kerta area, approximately 5 kilometers south of Kota Gedhe.[58] Kraton Kerta is *Kuta Negara* or *Siti Narawita* of the new Mataram Kingdom. Besides being used as the king's palace, this area is also used as the center of various government activities and the center of economic activities of the community. The Kuta Negara region is led by *Patih Lebet*, who is assisted by *Wedana Lebet* consisting of *Wedana Gedhong Kiwa*, *Wedana Gedhong Tengen*, *Wedana Keparak Kiwa*, and *Wedana Keparak Tengen*. While the *wedana* are assisted by *kliwon* or assistants under *wedana*), *kabayan* (assistants under *kliwon*), and 40 *jajar* orderlies (one of the names for low *priyayi* in the palace).[59]

The territory of *Negari Gung* is the area surrounding the Mataram Palace. Administratively, the Gung State area is divided into 4 regions, namely Bumi Gedhe, Siti Bumi, Siti Numbak Anyar, and Pajang.[60]

55 Burdah, "The Politics of Mataram Kingdom during the Reign of Sultan Agung."

56 Margana et al., "Sejarah Kebudayaan Maritim Mataram, 1600-1755."

57 Askuri and Kuipers, "The Politics of Arabic Naming and Islamization in Java: Processes of Hybridization and Purification."

58 Alifah, "Jejak Kraton Sultan Agung (Rekonstruksi Awal Berdasarkan Data Arkeologis Dan Historis)," *Berkala Arkeologi* 29, no. 2 SE-Articles (April 5, 2024): 73–88, https://doi.org/10.30883/jba.v29i2.380.

59 Zaid Munawar, "Organisasi Pemerintahan Kerajaan Mataram Islam Pada Masa Sultan Agung (1613-1645 M)," *FIHROS: Jurnal Sejarah Dan Budaya* 9 (August 30, 2025): 108–19, https://doi.org/10.63915/fihros.v9i02.191.

60 Herman Yoseph Murdiyastomo, "State and the Statecract of the Centrals of Government Mataram Islam Kingdom in Java," *Journal of Social Studies (JSS)* 12 (September 1, 2016): 31–42, https://doi.org/10.21831/jss.v12i2.11634. 33-34.

The *Manca Nagari* area is an area outside *Nagari Gung*. The region is divided into Manca Nagari Wetan and Manca Nagari Kulon. Manca Nagari Wetan includes Panaraga, Pacitan, Kediri, Madiun, Magetan, Jipang, Kaduwung, Jagaraga, Grobogan, Wirasaba, Blitar, Lodaya, Pace, Nganjuk, Cakuwu, Berbek, Wirasari. Manca Nagari Kulon includes Banyumas, Sumedang, Galuh and Priangan. The Coastal Area is an area located on the north coast of Java, divided into 2, namely the Wetan Coast and the Kulon coast. Wetan Coast includes Demak, Kudus, Pati, Rembang, Lasem, Tuban, Sedayu, Lamongan, Gresik, Surabaya, Pasuruan and Blambangan. While Pesisir Kulon includes Semarang, Kendal Pekalongan, Pemalang, Tegal, Brebes, Cirebon, Indramayu, and Karawang.[61] As an agrarian society, the majority of the population make a living as farmers.[62] The vast expanse of agricultural land with abundant water sources and surrounded by volcanoes makes the land very fertile and suitable for various types of plants, especially rice.[63]

At that time rice farming became the main community of the Mataram community. To support the agricultural system at that time, water channels were made and added by bringing in people on the north coast of Java. In addition to agriculture, the trade sector is the main support for the economy of the Kingdom of Mataram.[64] Through trade activities, the distribution of agricultural products can be channeled through traders who come from various regions both by land and sea. The population residing in the territory of the Kingdom of Mataram is not only Javanese but also Malay, Sundanese, Bugis, and even ethnic Chinese. They came and resided in the Mataram region for trade or other purposes.

These conditions indicate that the development of Mataram under Sultan Agung cannot be measured only by the expansion of its territory. The organization of government, the development of agriculture and trade, the presence of diverse communities, and the kingdom's military and diplomatic capacities were also important factors in maintaining the kingdom's political and social order. In this context, Sultan Agung's accommodation of Islamic values with Javanese cultural traditions contributed to creating a framework for managing religious and cultural diversity. However, this accommodation did not eliminate political resistance or the tensions associated with

61 MS 113 Pustaka Raja Purwa, Koleksi Mangkunegaran Surakarta, "No Title," n.d.

62 Wasino, Endah Sri Hartatik, and Fitri Amalia Shintasiiwi, "Wong Cilik in Javanese History and Culture, Indonesia," *Kemanusiaan* 28, no. 2 (2021): 31–51, https://doi.org/10.21315/KAJH2021.28.2.2.

63 Sugiyarto and Agustinus Supriyono, "Traditional and Feodal Agricultural Ecology: Land System in the Islamic Kingdom of Mataram," *E3S Web of Conferences* 202 (2020), https://doi.org/10.1051/e3sconf/202020207082.

64 Saddhono and Supeni, "The Role of Dutch Colonialism in the Political Life of Mataram Dynasty: A Case Study of the Manuscript of Babad Tanah Jawi."

Mataram's expansion. The experience of Sultan Agung also has relevance for contemporary discussions of religious harmony and cultural diversity. In a society characterized by religious and cultural differences, the Mataram experience demonstrates that the accommodation of local cultural traditions and religious values can become a means of building social cohesion without necessarily eliminating existing cultural identities. At the same time, Sultan Agung's experience shows that religious accommodation does not automatically eliminate social and political tensions. Therefore, its contemporary relevance lies not in directly transferring Sultan Agung's policies to the present, but in providing a historical perspective on the importance of dialogue, cultural accommodation, and respect for religious differences in managing a plural society.

Conclusion

Since the establishment of the Islamic Kingdom of Demak at the end of the 15th century, conflicts have arisen between adherents of pure Islam and Islam mixed with local culture. In addition to differences in religious understanding and practice, this prolonged conflict was caused by the political interests of the rulers at that time. The occurrence of political conflicts involving religious symbols continued until the era of the Islamic Mataram Kingdom in the 17th century. The third Islamic King of Mataram, Sultan Agung (1613-1645), tried to resolve the conflict by issuing a policy of religious moderation. The strategy implemented was to integrate Islam and local culture. This effort was realized by changing the title of king, writing *Babad Tanah Jawi, Sastra Gendhing,* holding various local ceremonies and traditions. By integrating Islam and Javanese culture, Sultan Agung succeeded in reconciling relations between adherents of various religious sects, while strengthening the consolidation of power and political legitimacy of his government. Through this policy, Sultan Agung succeeded in bringing Mataram to its peak of glory in the 17th century. The results of this study are important as an inspiration to develop the concept of religious moderation in a multi-religious and cultural society, including Indonesia. Academically, this study contributes to complementing the History of Islam in Java, that in the 17th century Sultan Agung had laid the foundation of religious moderation in leading and building the Islamic Kingdom of Mataram in Java. As an academic work in the field of Islamic History, this study is still unable to explore more primary sources to strengthen the argument and reveal more about religious and political life in Java in the 17th century. It is hoped that in the future this research can continue to reveal more about religious moderation in Mataram, for example, how do scholars struggle in the religious moderation policy of Sultan Agung.

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