

## Textual Legacies of Javanese-*Penginyongan Pesantren*: A Codicological Study of *Kitab Kuning* Manuscripts (1890s–1970s)

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### Abstract

This article examines *Kitab Kuning* manuscripts preserved in Javanese-*Penginyongan pesantren* from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century (1890s–1970s) through a codicological and philological lens. It identifies two dominant textual formations: localized adaptations of authoritative Islamic works from the wider Sunni canon, and original compositions by indigenous *ulama* crafted to address regional pedagogical needs, linguistic sensibilities, and socio-religious realities. Covering major fields of Islamic learning, such as *tafsir*, *fiqh*, *kalam*, and *tasawwuf*, the manuscript corpus demonstrates a vibrant and plural intellectual ecology within rural *pesantren* culture. Detailed codicological analysis of script styles, ink composition, paper provenance, bindings, colophons, marginalia, and Arabic-*Pegon* bilingualism reveals not only material practices of manuscript production, but also modes of transmission, annotation, and pedagogical use. These features illuminate how texts were read, taught, and recontextualized across generations of santri and teachers. The study argues that *Penginyongan pesantren* functioned as dynamic nodes of Islamic knowledge-making, actively mediating between transregional Islamic scholarship and local epistemic frameworks. In doing so, they contributed decisively to the vernacularization, continuity, and hybridity of Islamic textual traditions within the broader Nusantara scholarly network.

**Keywords:** *Pegon*, Javanese, Banyumas, Codicology, *Kitab Kuning* manuscripts, *Pesantren*

### Abstrak

Artikel ini mengkaji manuskrip *Kitab Kuning* yang dilestarikan di pesantren-pesantren Jawa-*Penginyongan* sejak akhir abad ke-19 hingga pertengahan abad ke-20 (1890-an–1970-an) melalui pendekatan kodikologi dan filologi. Penelitian ini mengidentifikasi dua formasi tekstual utama, yaitu adaptasi lokal atas karya-karya otoritatif Islam dalam tradisi keilmuan Sunni serta karya-karya original ulama pribumi yang disusun untuk menjawab kebutuhan pedagogis, sensitivitas kebahasaan, dan kondisi sosio-keagamaan setempat. Korpus manuskrip mencakup

bidang-bidang utama keilmuan Islam, seperti tafsir, fikih, kalam, dan tasawuf, yang mencerminkan ekologi intelektual yang plural dan dinamis dalam budaya pesantren pedesaan. Analisis kodikologis terhadap gaya aksara, komposisi tinta, asal-usul kertas, penjilidan, kolofon, catatan pinggir, serta praktik bilingualisme Arab-Pegon mengungkap tidak hanya kondisi material produksi manuskrip, tetapi juga pola transmisi, anotasi, dan penggunaannya dalam praktik pengajaran. Unsur-unsur material dan paratekstual tersebut memperlihatkan bagaimana teks-teks Islam dibaca, diajarkan, dan terus direkontekstualisasikan lintas generasi. Temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa pesantren Penginyongan berfungsi sebagai simpul-simpul aktif produksi pengetahuan Islam yang secara kreatif memediasi tradisi keilmuan Islam transregional dengan kerangka epistemik lokal. Dengan demikian, pesantren-pesantren tersebut berperan penting dalam proses vernakularisasi, keberlanjutan, dan pembentukan pengetahuan Islam hibrid dalam jaringan keilmuan Nusantara yang lebih luas.

**Kata Kunci:** *Pegon*, Jawa, Banyumas, Kodikologi, manuskrip Kitab Kuning, Pesantren

## INTRODUCTION

The late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century marked a foundational phase in the establishment of *Pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) within the *Penginyongan* region of Central Java, encompassing Banyumas, Banjarnegara, Tegal, and Kebumen. During this formative period, the number of *Pesantren* remained relatively limited, with notable institutions such as *Pesantren* Bogangin, *Pesantren* Leler, *Pesantren* Pliken, *Pesantren* Kasugihan, *Pesantren* Parakan Canggah, *Pesantren* Bulus, among a few others. These *pesantren*, often classified as "ancient *pesantren*," are distinguished not only by their historical depth but also by the continued use of the *Penginyongan* dialect as a primary medium of instruction.<sup>1</sup> Over time, the leadership of these *pesantren* has been transmitted across three or four successive generations since their founding figures passed away, reflecting both dynastic continuity and evolving institutional identity.<sup>2</sup>

Inevitably, generational transitions in leadership have catalyzed shifts within the intellectual and pedagogical traditions of these *pesantren*. Historically grounded in the *salaf* (traditional-classical) framework, which emphasizes mastery of classical Islamic texts (*kitab kuning* or *turāth*), some *pesantren* have maintained strict adherence to this *salaf* tradition, while others have gradually adopted

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<sup>1</sup> Fathur Rokhman, "Kode Bahasa Dalam Interaksi Sosial Santre Kajian Sosiolinguistik Di Pesantren Banyumas," *LITERA* 3, no. 1 (2015), <https://doi.org/10.21831/ltr.v3i1.6772>.

<sup>2</sup> Zamakhsyari Dhofier, *Tradisi Pesantren : Studi Tentang Pandangan Hidup Kyai* (LP3ES, 1980).

hybrid approaches integrating elements of both *salaf* and *khalaif* (modern) paradigms.<sup>3</sup> Yet, several *pesantren* remain committed to preserving a purely *salaf* orientation without significant incorporation of modern academic frameworks. This preservation is most tangibly reflected in their continued reliance on *Kitab Kuning* as the primary and authoritative corpus of Islamic knowledge across successive generations of instruction.

Preliminary field investigations have revealed significant differences between the corpus of *kitab kuning* used during the early stages of these *pesantren* and the texts currently in circulation. These differences are evidenced in the manuscripts preserved in several *pesantren*, which served as the primary instructional sources from approximately the 1890s through the 1970s. Among these are manuscripts such as *Tafsir Jalalain*, *Naskah Khutbah Jum'at*, *Fiqh Munakahat* (loose sheets), *Qulbul Qur'an*, and *Wird Ukasah* preserved at *Pondok Pesantren Al-Djazuli* in Pliken, Banyumas; *Kifayatul Atqiy'a* at *Pondok Pesantren Al-Fatah* in Parakan Canggah, Banjarnegara; as well as *Bahjat Al-Ulum* at *Pondok Pesantren Al-Istiqlomah* in Tanjungsari Petanahan, Kebumen, and *Mu'taqad* at *Pondok Pesantren Ma'hadut Tholabah Babakan Tegal*. Beyond these sites, there is growing evidence suggesting that other early *pesantren* such as *Pondok Pesantren Sumolang* (Kebumen), *Pondok Pesantren Bogangin* (Banyumas), and *Pondok Pesantren Cikura* (Tegal), also maintain collections of *kitab kuning* (yellow book) manuscripts that remain largely undocumented.

These manuscripts are not only historical artifacts but also serve as critical windows into the intellectual genealogy and epistemological orientations of early *Penginyonganpesantren*. They invite fundamental questions concerning the nature of Islamic sciences they encompass, the doctrinal content they transmit, and the pedagogical strategies they embody during a period of significant historical transition in the region. These manuscripts further reveal how local *pesantren* communities actively appropriated, adapted, and localized Islamic knowledge within distinct socio-religious contexts.

Despite their intellectual significance, scholarly engagement with *Penginyonganpesantren* manuscripts remains scarce. A systematic literature review conducted via the Mendeley database indicates that prior research primarily clusters around two focal areas: first, studies examining the

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<sup>3</sup> Mohammad Muchlis Solichin, “Pesantren Resistance to Modern Education System and Its Implication to Culture of Learning: A Study on Pondok Pesantren Al-Is’af Kalabaan, Guluk-Guluk, Sumenep, Jawa Timur,” *ADDIN* 13, no. 1 (2019): 85, <https://doi.org/10.21043/addin.v13i1.5664>.

content of *pesantren* manuscripts concerning their contemporary contextualization;<sup>4</sup> and second, historiographical, philological, codicological, and textological analyses of *pesantren* manuscripts more broadly.<sup>5</sup> While these studies have significantly advanced the field of *pesantren* manuscript studies, none have specifically addressed the *Penginyongan* region nor systematically investigated the intellectual traditions of *pesantren* in this particular geographical and historical setting.

Given the paucity of research in this area, this study seeks to fill that gap by conducting a codicological investigation of *Penginyongan pesantren* manuscripts produced and circulated between the 1890s and 1970s. Codicology provides a systematic, material-centered framework for analyzing these newly documented manuscripts, offering critical insights into their textual structures, script typologies, ink compositions, binding formats, marginal annotations, and linguistic features, such as Arabic-*Pegon* bilingualism. Such codicological analysis not only elucidates the material culture of manuscript production and circulation but also contributes to broader discourses in the sociology of Islamic knowledge and the anthropology of manuscript cultures, positioning *pesantren*

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<sup>4</sup> R. Aris Hidayat, “Kontroversi Hukum Rokok Dalam Kitab Irsyād Al-Ikhwān Karya Syekh Ihsan Muhammad Dahlān,” *International Journal Ihyā’ ‘Ulum al-Din* 17, no. 2 (2017): 189, <https://doi.org/10.21580/ihya.16.2.1652>; Angga Marzuki, “Prinsip Memilih Partai Politik: Kajian Atas Syair Nahdah Karya K.H. Ma’shum Sirodj Pesantren Gedongan, Cirebon,” *Jurnal Lekitur Keagamaan* 17, no. 2 (2020): 273–90, <https://doi.org/10.31291/jlk.v17i2.754>; Salfia Rahmawati, “Ajaran Islam Dalam Naskah-Naskah Singir Koleksi Fsui Sebagai Bentuk Persinggungan Budaya Islam-Jawa: Kajian Intertekstualitas,” *Buletin Al-Turas* 21, no. 2 (2020): 243–54, <https://doi.org/10.15408/bat.v21i2.3840>; Muhammad Asif and Nopi Nafisantunnisa, “Naskah Al-Qur’ān Al-Karīm Karya Kiai Abil Fadhal As-Senory,” *SUHUF* 14, no. 1 (2021): 27–48, <https://doi.org/10.22548/shf.v14i1.534>.

<sup>5</sup> Nasichatul Maali and Muhammad Asif, “Aspek Kodikologis Dan Filologis Manuskrip Tafsir Pondok Pesantren Bustanul Ulum Sedan Rembang,” *AL ITQAN: Jurnal Studi Al-Qur’ān* 6, no. 1 (2020): 1–24, <https://doi.org/10.47454/itqan.v6i1.58>; Adrika Fithrotul Aini, “Identifikasi Naskah Dan Klasifikasi Corrupt Manuskrip Mushaf Al-Qur’ān Koleksi Perpustakaan Pondok Pesantren Tebuireng,” *AL QUDS: Jurnal Studi Alquran Dan Hadis* 4, no. 1 (2020): 19, <https://doi.org/10.29240/alquds.v4i1.1173>; Islah Gusmian, “Manuskrip Keagamaan Di Masjid Popongan: Kajian Kodikologi Dan Pemetaan Isi,” *DINIKA: Academic Journal of Islamic Studies* 4, no. 2 (2019): 249–74, <https://doi.org/10.22515/dinika.v4i2.2059>; Asif and Nafisantunnisa, “Naskah Al-Qur’ān Al-Karīm Karya Kiai Abil Fadhal As-Senory”; Nur Ahmad, “Shedding New Lights on Javanese Mysticism: Pegon Manuscripts in the Javanese World,” *Ulumuna* 23, no. 2 (2020): 221–41, <https://doi.org/10.20414/ujis.v23i2.370>; Zakiyah Zakiyah, “Manuscripts in Sumenep Madura; the Legacy of Pesantren and Its Ulama,” *Heritage of Nusantara: International Journal of Religious Literature and Heritage* 6, no. 1 (2017): 21–42, <https://doi.org/10.31291/hn.v6i1.133>; Fatin Masyhud Bahri, “Manzhūmat Al-Maskumambānī Wa Dawruhā Fī al-Dirāsāt al-Falakiyyah Bi-Indūnīsiyā,” *JOURNAL OF INDONESIAN ISLAM* 5, no. 2 (2011): 378, <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2011.5.2.378-409>; Dawam M. Rohmatulloh, “Local Muslim Heritage: Pelestarian Warisan Budaya Pesantren Di Tegalsari Ponorogo,” *Proceedings of Annual Conference for Muslim Scholars*, 2018, 232–39, <https://proceedings.kopertais4.or.id/index.php/ancoms/article/view/125/124>.

communities as active epistemic agents engaged in the negotiation, indigenization, and transmission of hybrid Islamic intellectual legacies in the Southeast Asian context.

By foregrounding these neglected textual legacies, this study aspires to offer new empirical data and theoretical perspectives that enrich our understanding of the complex trajectories of Islamic intellectual traditions within the peripheral yet vibrant *pesantren* networks of the *Penginyongan* region.

In the context of Indonesian Islamic education, *pesantren* manuscript culture is closely bound up with the tradition of *kitab kuning*,<sup>6</sup> i.e., handwritten or early printed texts in Arabic and Arabic-Jawi/*Pegon* scripts that transmit the canon of classical Sunni scholarship in fields such as jurisprudence, theology, Qur'anic exegesis, hadith, Sufism, and Arabic linguistics. Far from being merely devotional objects, these manuscripts function as pedagogical infrastructures that structure curricula, authorize interpretive practices, and mediate the relationship between Arabic textual authorities and vernacular intellectual life in the archipelago. Understanding the material, linguistic, and paratextual features of *kitab kuning* manuscripts<sup>7</sup> is therefore essential for grasping how *pesantren* communities appropriate, reproduce, and locally reconfigure Islamic discursive traditions across time. Against this conceptual background, the scholarly examination of *pesantren* manuscripts in Indonesia has gradually expanded over the past two decades, intersecting diverse methodological approaches, ranging from philology and historiography to codicology and the sociology of Islamic knowledge.

The scholarly examination of *pesantren* manuscripts in Indonesia has gradually expanded over the past two decades, intersecting diverse methodological approaches, ranging from philology and historiography to codicology and the sociology of Islamic knowledge. While these studies have illuminated various aspects of the *pesantren* manuscript tradition, a systematic and regionally focused analysis of manuscripts originating from *Penginyongan pesantren* remains notably absent.

Existing literature on *pesantren* manuscripts can be broadly categorized into two clusters. The first cluster emphasizes the examination of doctrinal content and its contextual relevance in

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<sup>6</sup> Martin van Bruinessen, *Kitab Kuning, Pesantren, Dan Tarekat* (Gading Publishing, 2012).

<sup>7</sup> Rosidin Rosidin et al., "The Development History of the Yellow Book ( *Kitab Kuning* ) as Islamic Textbooks in Indonesia Based on the Philology Perspective;," paper presented at International Symposium on Religious Literature and Heritage (ISLAGE 2021), Malang, Indonesia, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.220206.030>.

contemporary socio-religious discourse. Hidayat, for instance, analyzes legal reasoning on smoking prohibition (*tahrīm al-tadlīr*) found in the manuscripts of Sheikh Ikhsan Muhammad Dahlan, highlighting how textual authority continues to inform present-day debates.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, Marzuki explores political party affiliation as discussed in the manuscript authored by K.H. Ma'shum Siradj of Cirebon, reflecting the negotiation of Islamic jurisprudence and political participation.<sup>9</sup> Rahmawati uncovers aspects of Islamization and theological development through her study of the FSUI manuscript collection,<sup>10</sup> while Asif & Nafisatunnisa explore the translation of the Qur'an written in *Pegon* script within the *pesantren* context by Kiai Abil Fadhal As-Senory, highlighting its function as both a tool for Arabic grammatical analysis and a vehicle for transmitting Sunni-Ash'ari theological doctrine, employing a *tarjamah tafsīriyyah* method that reflects the intricate interplay between linguistic mediation and religious ideology in traditional Islamic education.<sup>11</sup>

The second and more extensive cluster comprises historiographical, philological, codicological, and textological investigations. Rohmatulloh conducts a historical inquiry into the manuscript legacy of Kiai Ageng Muhammad Besari at Tegalsari *Pesantren* in Ponorogo,<sup>12</sup> while Bahri offers a biographical-philological study of KH Muhammad Faqih bin Abdul Jabbar of Maskumambang Gresik.<sup>13</sup> Zakiyah focuses on manuscript transmission in *pesantren* communities in Sumenep, Madura,<sup>14</sup> whereas Ahmad investigates Arabic-*Pegon* script as an alternative writing system in *pesantren* manuscripts, demonstrating localized adaptations of Arabic scripturality.<sup>15</sup> Codicological perspectives are further advanced by Fadlan, who addresses digital preservation efforts of *pesantren* manuscripts,<sup>16</sup> and Gusmian, who explores the transmission of manuscript

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<sup>8</sup> Hidayat, "Kontroversi Hukum Rokok Dalam Kitab Irsyād Al-Ikhwān Karya Syekh Ihsan Muhammad Dahlan."

<sup>9</sup> Marzuki, "Prinsip Memilih Partai Politik."

<sup>10</sup> Rahmawati, "Ajaran Islam Dalam Naskah-Naskah Singir Koleksi Fsui Sebagai Bentuk Persinggungan Budaya Islam-Jawa."

<sup>11</sup> Asif and Nafisantunnisa, "Naskah Al-Qur'an Al-Karim Karya Kiai Abil Fadhal As-Senory."

<sup>12</sup> Rohmatulloh, "Local Muslim Heritage: Pelestarian Warisan Budaya Pesantren Di Tegalsari Ponorogo."

<sup>13</sup> Bahri, "Manzhūmat Al-Maskumambānī Wa Dawruhā Fī al-Dirāsāt al-Falakiyyah Bi-Indūnīsiyā."

<sup>14</sup> Zakiyah, "Manuscripts in Sumenep Madura; the Legacy of Pesantren and Its Ulama."

<sup>15</sup> Ahmad, "Shedding New Lights on Javanese Mysticism."

<sup>16</sup> Muhammad Nida' Fadlan, "Digitalisasi dan Katalogisasi Manuskrip Nusantara: Membedah Khazanah Manuskrip Pesantren," preprint, Unpublished, 2016, <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.1.1908.3925>.

culture at Popongan *Pesantren*.<sup>17</sup> Aini examines Qur'anic manuscripts at Tebu Ireng *Pesantren*,<sup>18</sup> while Nasichatul Ma'ali and Asif analyze *tafsir* manuscripts through codicological lenses in Sedan Rembang.<sup>19</sup>

Within this second cluster, a particularly relevant contribution for the present study is the “Codicological Study of Dawuhan Islamic Manuscripts as Insights into Nusantara Religious Literature,” which investigates Islamic manuscripts preserved in Dawuhan Village, Banyumas, Central Java. This article maps thirteen manuscripts containing thirty-five texts that span Qur'anic exegesis, fiqh, theology, Sufism, ethics, and history, written in Arabic, *Pegon*, and Javanese with Arabic interlinear translation, and classifies them into several codicological formats while analyzing their material condition, script typology, and limited paratextual information such as colophons and ownership notes. By foregrounding the physical features, damage patterns, and preservation needs of these Banyumas manuscripts, the study demonstrates how codicology can uncover the intellectual and ritual functions of local Islamic texts in a micro-regional context, thereby offering an important precedent for examining Penginyongan pesantren manuscripts as a distinctive subset of Nusantara religious literature.<sup>20</sup>

Although these studies collectively represent significant contributions to the growing corpus of *pesantren* manuscript scholarship, they exhibit a common limitation: the absence of the *Penginyongan* region as a distinct intellectual and manuscript-producing landscape. Most extant research has either concentrated on *pesantren* centers in East Java (e.g., Ponorogo, Gresik, Sumenep, Tuban, and Jombang) or generalized the *pesantren* manuscript tradition without sufficient attention to micro-regional variations. This lacuna is particularly consequential given that *Penginyongan pesantren* represents a unique sociolinguistic and intellectual milieu in which the Javanese-

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<sup>17</sup> Gusmian, “Manuskrip Keagamaan Di Masjid Popongan.”

<sup>18</sup> Aini, “Identifikasi Naskah Dan Klasifikasi Corrupt Manuskrip Mushaf Al-Qur'an Koleksi Perpustakaan Pondok Pesantren Tebuireng.”

<sup>19</sup> Nasichatul Maali and Muhammad Asif, “Aspek Kodikologis Dan Filologis Manuskrip Tafsir Pondok Pesantren Bustanul Ulum Sedan Rembang.”

<sup>20</sup> Sidik Fauji et al., “Codicological Study of Dawuhan Islamic Manuscripts as Insights into Nusantara Religious Literature,” *Jurnal Lektur Keagamaan* 23, no. 1 (2025): 109–41, <https://doi.org/10.31291/jlka.v23i1.1261>.

*Penginyongan* dialect, localized pedagogical priorities, and distinctive networks of transmission have historically shaped the contours of Islamic scholarship.<sup>21</sup>

Against this backdrop, previous codicological inquiries, whether focused on major East Javanese pesantren or on localized village collections such as Dawuhan in Banyumas, have not provided a systematic, pesantren-centered analysis of Penginyongan manuscripts that integrates material features with their specific transmission networks and pedagogical functions, thereby leaving the region's epistemic agency largely unarticulated. The present study, therefore, offers a twofold contribution: first, it constitutes the earliest systematic codicological investigation of Penginyongan pesantren manuscripts from the 1890s to the 1970s, examining paper quality, binding techniques, script typologies, ink composition, marginalia, and Arabic–*Pegon* linguistic hybridity as markers of a distinct regional manuscript culture; second, it demonstrates how these material and linguistic configurations embody an autonomous local negotiation of Islamic knowledge, extending recent theorization on peripheral Muslim intellectual traditions beyond generic notions of preservation toward empirically grounded micro-regional analysis.

Moreover, recent theoretical contributions in Islamic manuscript studies underscore the importance of adopting more localized, material-centered approaches. Akhter emphasizes the importance of viewing peripheral Islamic communities not as passive recipients but as dynamic participants in the production, circulation, and adaptation of Islamic knowledge.<sup>22</sup> Similarly, Wright and Iswanto et al, challenge linear models of center-periphery relations in Islamic intellectual history, advocating for a more nuanced recognition of regional manuscript cultures and their autonomous contributions.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Rokhman, “Kode Bahasa dalam Interaksi Sosial Santri Kajian Sosiolinguistik di Pesantren Banyumas”; Dhofier, *Tradisi Pesantren : Studi Tentang Pandangan Hidup Kyai*.

<sup>22</sup> Majed Akhter, “Muslim Peripheries: A World Regional Perspective,” *Dialogues in Human Geography* 13, no. 3 (2023): 367–71, <https://doi.org/10.1177/20438206231191738>.

<sup>23</sup> Zachary V. Wright, “The Islamic Intellectual Tradition of Sudanic Africa, with Analysis of a Fifteenth-Century Timbuktu Manuscript,” in *The Palgrave Handbook of Islam in Africa*, ed. Fallou Ngom et al. (Springer International Publishing, 2020), [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-45759-4\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-45759-4_4); Agus Iswanto et al., “The Linkage of Islamic Intellectual Traditions in Bali with Malay World: Kampung Saren Jawa Manuscripts,” *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 14, no. 2 (2025): 203–29, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v14i2.203-229>.

In light of these insights, the present study seeks to advance the field by addressing the codicological dimensions of *Penginyongan pesantren* manuscripts spanning the 1890s to the 1970s. By foregrounding material aspects such as paper quality, binding techniques, script typologies, ink composition, marginalia, and linguistic hybridity (Arabic-Pegan), this research contributes not only to codicology proper but also to the broader discourse on Islamic intellectual traditions in the Indonesian landscape, where local agency, adaptation, and epistemic hybridity remain understudied yet pivotal phenomena.

## METHODS

The unit of analysis in this study consists of manuscript materials originating from four selected *pesantren* in the *Penginyongan* region of Central Java, Indonesia. These manuscripts, dating from the 1890s to the 1970s, were chosen because they represent some of the earliest and most complete surviving textual artifacts of Islamic scholarship in this relatively understudied subregion of the broader Javanese *pesantren* tradition. The selection process was purposive, prioritizing *pesantren* that not only possess historical depth, having been founded during the late 19th or early 20th century, but also maintain collections of *kitab kuning* manuscripts directly linked to their early instructional activities. The specific sites include *Pondok Pesantren* Al-Djazuli in Pliken (Banyumas), *Pondok Pesantren* Al-Fatah in Parakan Canggah (Banjarnegara), *Pondok Pesantren* Al-Istiqomah in Tanjungsari Petanahan (Kebumen), and Ma'hadut Tholabah Babakan (Tegal). These locations were identified through preliminary field surveys, existing literature, and consultations with regional scholars.

This study employs a qualitative codicological research design. Codicology, as defined by Fathurahman et al., investigates the external and material dimensions of manuscripts, including script, ink, paper, pagination, binding, and marginalia, to uncover patterns of textual transmission and manuscript production.<sup>24</sup> This design was chosen because it allows for the reconstruction of intellectual networks, pedagogical priorities, and knowledge transmission pathways that textual analysis alone may obscure. Unlike historiographical designs, which reconstruct past events through critical narrative synthesis, codicology systematically examines the material substrates that

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<sup>24</sup> Oman Fathurahman et al., *Filologi Dan Islam Indonesia* (Puslitbang Lektur Keagamaan, Badan Litbang dan Diklat, Kementerian Agama RI, 2010).

embody the intellectual life of Islamic manuscript culture.<sup>25</sup> This material-centered approach is particularly appropriate for newly documented manuscript collections whose historical contexts remain partially uncharted.

The primary data sources in this study consist of manuscripts retrieved directly from the collections of the aforementioned *pesantren*. These manuscripts include *Tafsir Jalalain*, *Naskah Khutbah Jum'at*, *Fiqh Munakahat*, *Qulubul Qur'an*, *Wird Ukasah*, *Bahjat Al-'Ulum*, *Kifayatul Atqiyah*, and *Mu'taqad*. The selection of these manuscripts was based on three criteria: (1) physical availability and preservational viability for non-invasive examination; (2) documented or orally transmitted evidence of their use as instructional texts during the early periods of the respective *pesantren*; and (3) their representativeness of different branches of Islamic knowledge such as *tafsir*, *fiqh*, *kalam*, *tasawwuf*, and sermon literature.

Data collection followed four main procedures: (1) field observation; (2) photographic documentation; (3) codicological recording; and (4) in-depth and focus group interviews. First, direct field visits were conducted to the selected *pesantren* between 2023 and 2024, during which the physical locations of the manuscript collections (private libraries, family rooms, or *pesantren* archives) were mapped and basic environmental conditions noted. Second, each manuscript was digitally photographed using high-resolution cameras under natural or low-heat artificial lighting to avoid damage; images covered covers, spines, flyleaves, representative folios, colophons, ownership notes, and damaged sections. Third, standard codicological forms were used to record data on script typology, ink colour, pagination and foliation systems, page dimensions, ruling and layout, marginal annotations, binding structures, and linguistic features such as the presence of Arabic–Persian compositions.

The interview technique was operationalized through a combination of semi-structured in-depth interviews and, where relevant, small focus group discussions. Interview partners were selected purposively as individuals who possess custodial authority and historical knowledge of the manuscript collections. They include: (1) K.H. Achmad Saifuddin Thoha and family, *Pondok*

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<sup>25</sup> John B. Friedman, "Introduction to Manuscript Studies," *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 109, no. 1 (2010): 104–8, <https://doi.org/10.5406/jenglgermphil.109.1.0104>; Judith Olszowy-Schlanger, "Codicology and Palaeography," in *Karaite Marriage Contracts from the Cairo Geniza: Legal Traditions and Community Life in Mediaeval Egypt and Palestine* (BRILL, 1997), <https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004497535>.

*Pesantren* Al-Djazuli, Pliken, Kembaran, Banyumas, with whom an in-depth interview and a focus group discussion were conducted on 9 November 2024; (2) K.H. Amin Rosyid and family, *Pondok Pesantren* Al-Isti'qomah, Petanahan, Kebumen, interviewed through an in-depth session and focus group discussion on 12 February 2024; (3) Dr. K.H. Jauhar Hatta, M.Ag., caretaker of *Pondok Pesantren* Al-Fatah, Parakancanggah, Banjarnegara, interviewed in-depth on 5 August 2023; and (4) K.H. Mohammad Syafii Baidlowi, caretaker of *Pondok Pesantren* Ma'hadut Tholabah, Babakan, Tegal, interviewed in-depth on 21 July 2023. Each interview followed a semi-structured guide covering four domains: (a) the history of the *pesantren* and its founding figures; (b) the provenance, acquisition, and circulation of manuscripts; (c) patterns of pedagogical use (subjects, levels, teaching formats, and reading traditions); and (d) preservation practices, including storage, repair, and perceived value of the manuscripts. Focus group discussions, conducted with kyais and selected family members, were used to triangulate individual narratives, clarify conflicting memories, and collectively identify key manuscripts and their past users. All interviews were audio-recorded with prior informed consent, transcribed, and linked analytically to specific manuscripts and codicological observations.

Data analysis was conducted using codicological descriptive analysis, which involves classifying and interpreting the manuscripts' material features to infer patterns of knowledge production, transmission, and adaptation within the *Penginyongan* Islamic intellectual ecosystem. The codicological data were first organized into comparative tables by *pesantren* and genre, then cross-compared intra-regionally among the selected *pesantren* to identify shared conventions and local divergences in format, script, and paratext. Subsequently, these findings were read against inter-regional comparative studies from broader Islamic manuscript traditions to detect potential lines of influence, circulation, and adaptation. This analytic framework allows for the identification of both localized innovations and trans-regional continuities that characterize *Penginyongan pesantren* manuscript culture, and it provides a replicable procedural model for future codicological and intellectual-historical investigations of other *pesantren* regions.

## RESULTS

This study presents codicological observations of Islamic manuscript collections preserved at four traditional *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) in *Penginyongan* region, Central Java, Indonesia. These findings offer valuable insight into the material characteristics, textual transmission, and historical trajectories of these handwritten Islamic texts, which continue to serve as epistemic and cultural resources within the *pesantren* tradition.

### ***Manuscript Collection at Al-Djazuli Pesantren, Pliken, Banyumas***

Five manuscripts are preserved within the *Al-Djazuli Pesantren* collection: *Tafsir Jalalain*, a handwritten Friday Sermon (*Khutbah Jum'ah*), loose-sheet notes on *Fiqh al-Munakahat*, *Qulubul Qur'an*, and *Wird Ukasah*. For ethical and custodial reasons, access to the *Qulubul Qur'an* manuscript was not granted by the owner's family, so the present study focuses on three manuscripts that could be examined in full, namely: (1) a partial copy of *Tafsir Jalalain*; (2) a single-page manuscript on *Fiqh al-Munakahat* (marriage jurisprudence); and (3) a handwritten Friday Sermon (*Khutbah Jum'ah*) manuscript, all historically linked to K.H. Hasan Djazuli (1875–1938). During fieldwork, the manuscripts were stored in a wooden cabinet in the family residence, wrapped in cloth without specialized archival protection. In an interview, K.H. Achmad Saifuddin Thoha noted, “These manuscripts have been with our family since the time of Mbah Hasan and are still kept in the same house where he used to teach,”<sup>26</sup> indicating continuous custodianship within the Djazuli lineage.

The *Tafsir Jalalain* manuscript is written on traditional Javanese deluwang paper and constitutes a partial copy covering *Surah Al-Kahf* to the end of *Juz'* 30, with the first fifteen *juz'* no longer extant. The codex is unbound, with quires held together by simple thread stitching and lacking a protective cover. Qur'anic verses are consistently inscribed in red ink, while the accompanying *tafsir* text appears in black ink. The folios show extensive termite damage along the outer margins, especially at the beginning and end of the surviving section, and several leaves exhibit edge loss affecting line completeness. Handwritten notes in smaller black script, attributed

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<sup>26</sup> K.H. Achmad Saifuddin Thoha, “In-Depth Interview and Focus Group Discussion Conducted at Pondok Pesantren Al-Djazuli, Pliken, Kembaran, Banyumas,” November 9, 2024.

by the family to K.H. Hasan Djazuli, appear intermittently in the margins and between lines. These features: ink differentiation, script size variation, folio damage, and informal annotations, are visible in the photographic documentation reproduced in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Selected Pages of the *Tafsir Jalalain* Manuscript Attributed to K.H. Hasan Djazuli, Preserved at Al-Djazuli Pesantren, Pliken, Banyumas.

The *Fiqh al-Munakahat* manuscript consists of a single, heavily deteriorated deluwang sheet. The text occupies one side of the leaf, written diagonally across the page rather than following the horizontal ruling pattern observable in *Tafsir Jalalain*. The contents comprise brief legal statements and reminders on marriage jurisprudence, though several phrases are now illegible due to insect damage. The leaf has multiple perforations, missing corners, and no binding traces, indicating that it currently circulates as an isolated folio. Marginal additions in a smaller script appear at the edges of the page, again identified by the family as the handwriting of K.H. Hasan Djazuli. Figure 2 illustrates the diagonal layout, damage pattern, and remaining readable portions of the text.



Figure 2. Single-Page Manuscript on *Fiqh al-Munakahah* Attributed to K.H. Hasan Djazuli, Preserved at Al-Djazuli Pesantren, Pliken, Banyumas.

The *Khutbah Jum'ah* manuscript consists of a single *deluwang* sheet written on both sides. The main body of the sermon is in Arabic script without diacritical marks, while Javanese *Pegon* glosses appear in the margins and occasionally between the lines. The sheet retains its full rectangular shape with only minor fraying at the edges and no major insect perforation. The ink is uniformly black, with slightly thicker strokes used for key opening formulae and sermon transitions. No formal colophon is present, but the family reports that the manuscript was authored and used by K.H. Hasan Djazuli for Friday sermons at the local mosque. The overall legibility is high, and the document is still read aloud on certain commemorative occasions, as confirmed by K.H. Achmad Saifuddin Thoha: “We sometimes recite parts of this khutbah on special Fridays to remember his legacy.”<sup>27</sup> The layout and script combination are presented in Figure 3.



Figure 3. The Friday Sermon (*Khutbah Jum'ah*) Manuscript Handwritten by K.H. Hasan Djazuli, Preserved at Al-Djazuli Pesantren, Pliken, Banyumas.

### The *Kifayatul Atqiyā*’ Manuscript at Al-Fatah Pesantren, Banjarnegara

Al-Fatah Pesantren currently preserves three manuscripts in its private collection, but only the *Kifayatul Atqiyā*’ manuscript was made accessible for this research. The manuscript is copied on *deluwang* paper and forms a complete codex with thread binding but no external cover. The text is written in black ink, with a clear distinction between a thicker, bolder script for the matan (base text) and a finer script for the sharh (commentary), arranged around or beneath it. The folios show localized termite damage, mainly at the lower outer margins, but the majority of the text remains legible. The opening folio contains an invocation and title, while the closing folio includes a brief

<sup>27</sup> K.H. Achmad Saifuddin Thoha, “In-Depth Interview and Focus Group Discussion Conducted at Pondok Pesantren Al-Djazuli, Pliken, Kembaran, Banyumas,” November 9, 2024.

note referring to the Rembang scholarly lineage. According to Dr. K.H. Jauhar Hatta, “This book has long been read here; older kiai say it came from the Rembang line, possibly from Shaykh Thoblawi or his father.”<sup>28</sup> Figure 5 documents the first and last pages, highlighting the ink differentiation, binding style, and marginal deterioration.



Figure 5. The Opening and Closing Sections of the Kifayatul Atqiya' Manuscript Preserved at Al-Fatah *Pesantren*, Banjarnegara.

### The *Mu'taqad* Manuscript at Ma'hadut Tholabah *Pesantren*, Tegal

Ma'hadut Tholabah *Pesantren* preserves a manuscript entitled *Mu'taqad*, associated with its founder, K.H. Mufti bin Salim. The copy examined in this study is a later reproduction rather than the original autograph, as indicated by the relatively recent paper and uniform ink quality. The manuscript comprises multiple folios bound with thread and protected by a simple card cover. The main text is arranged in Arabic poetic verse (*nazm*), written in bold black script, while explanatory commentary in Javanese *Pegon* is written in finer script beneath or alongside the verses. The margins show only minor signs of insect activity, and no pages are missing. The manuscript is regularly used in teaching, as K.H. Mohammad Syafii Baidlowi stated: “We still read *Mu'taqad* with students in the aqidah class, especially for the senior santri.”<sup>29</sup> Figure 6 presents representative folios, showing the verse–commentary layout, page framing lines, and overall preservation status.

<sup>28</sup> Dr. K.H. Jauhar Hatta, “In-Depth Interview Conducted at Pondok Pesantren Al-Fatah, Parakancanggah, Banjarnegara,” August 5, 2023.

<sup>29</sup> K.H. Mohammad Syafii Baidlowi, “In-Depth Interview Conducted at Pondok Pesantren Ma'hadut Tholabah, Babakan, Tegal,” July 21, 2023.

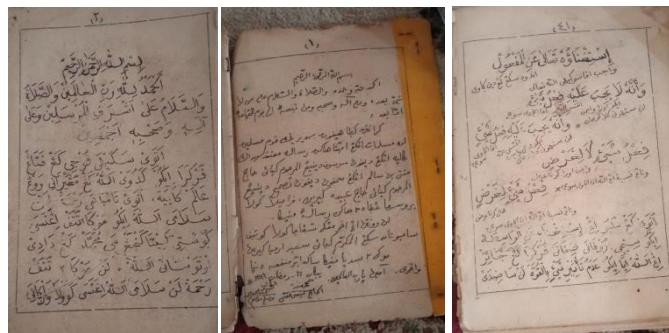


Figure 6. The Al-Mu'taqad Manuscript Preserved at Ma'hadut Tholabah *Pesantren*, Babakan, Tegal.

### The *Bahjatul Ulum* Manuscript at Al-Istiqlomah *Pesantren*, Kebumen

The *Bahjatul Ulum fi Bayani Aqidatil Ushul* manuscript is preserved in the private collection of K.H. Amin Rosyid at Al-Istiqlomah *Pesantren*. The codex is handwritten in Arabic script, with occasional *Pegon* annotations inserted between lines or at the margins. Red ink is used for chapter headings, key technical terms, and certain connective phrases, while black ink is used for the main expository text. The manuscript is bound with sturdy thread and enclosed in a relatively thick cover resembling parchment or hard paperboard. Termite damage is present at a few outer corners, but does not affect the readability of the text. No illuminations or decorative frames are found, apart from simple ruling lines around the text block. In an interview, K.H. Amin Rosyid explained, “This *Bahjatul Ulum* manuscript came from my father’s generation, and it was used in pengajian for advanced students.”<sup>30</sup> Figure 7 shows selected pages indicating the two-colour ink scheme, binding construction, and localized damage.

<sup>30</sup> K.H. Amin Rosyid, “In-Depth Interview and Focus Group Discussion Conducted at Pondok *Pesantren* Al-Istiqlomah, Petanahan, Kebumen,” February 12, 2024.



Figure 7. The Manuscript of *Bahjatul Uhum* is preserved at *Pesantren Al-Istiqomah*, Kebumen, Central Java.

## ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Codicology, as the study of manuscripts as physical objects, offers a uniquely powerful framework for examining the materiality of knowledge transmission in Islamic educational institutions. While traditional philological analysis privileges the textual content, codicology allows scholars to reconstruct the social, historical, and pedagogical contexts in which manuscripts were produced, used, and preserved.<sup>31</sup> The codicological investigation of *Penginyongan pesantren* manuscripts, building on Gallop's work on Southeast Asian manuscript cultures and Fathurahman's studies of Indonesian Islamic manuscripts, demonstrates that these texts functioned not merely as repositories of doctrinal content but as central pedagogical instruments sustaining manuscript-based Islamic intellectual traditions in rural Central Java from the late nineteenth to the late twentieth century.<sup>32</sup> The continued use of works such as *Tafsir Jalalain*, *Mu'taqad*, and *Bahjatul Uhum* as teaching resources indicates that handwritten copies remained integral to classroom practice long after printed editions were available. The reliance on hand-copied manuscripts reveals the adaptive resilience of pesantren institutions in maintaining the continuity of Islamic knowledge despite limited access to print infrastructure and commercial book markets.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Malachi Beit-Arié, "Comparative Codicology," in *The Oxford Handbook of Latin Palaeography*, by Malachi Beit-Arié, ed. Frank T. Coulson and Robert G. Babcock (Oxford University Press, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195336948.013.35>.

<sup>32</sup> Annabel Teh Gallop, "Shifting Landscapes: Remapping The Writing Traditions of Islamic Southeast Asia through Digitisation," *Jurnal Humaniora* 32, no. 2 (2020): 97, <https://doi.org/10.22146/jh.55487>; Fathurahman et al., *Filologi Dan Islam Indonesia*.

<sup>33</sup> Gallop, "Shifting Landscapes."

### ***Historical Layers: Production, Colonial Violence, and Preservation***

Historically, the corpus examined in this study falls into two broad categories: (1) transcriptions of canonical works authored by internationally recognized Muslim scholars and (2) original or semi-original compositions by local Penginyongan scholars. While the first group reproduces established texts in *fiqh*, *aqidah*, *tafsir*, and *taṣawwuf*, the second group frequently takes the form of *tashnif*, compilations, abridgements, or versifications, rather than fully independent *ta'lif* in the strict scholarly sense. This pattern suggests that Penginyongan scholars positioned themselves simultaneously as custodians and adaptors of the wider Sunni canon, reworking authoritative materials into formats suitable for their pedagogical and regional needs.<sup>34</sup>

The historical production and circulation of these manuscripts appear to have been driven by pragmatic educational considerations. Santri were often required to copy texts by hand as part of their study obligations, a practice that not only reproduced the textual corpus but also facilitated memorization and internalization of key concepts. This copying regime resonates with broader manuscript cultures across the Malay–Indonesian world, where the act of writing and rewriting religious texts carried both epistemic and devotional value.<sup>35</sup> In this context, copying becomes a form of embodied learning, strengthening the linkage between textual authority and lived religious practice, as suggested by Ricci's notion of citation and copying as sites of circulation in Muslim South and Southeast Asia.<sup>36</sup>

Codicologically, the most visible historical imprints concern material choices and patterns of damage. Older manuscripts such as *Tafsir Jalalain* and *Kifayatul Atqiyā'* are copied on *dehuwang* (Javanese bark paper), indicating reliance on local papermaking traditions, whereas later manuscripts such as *Mu'taqad* and *Bahjatul Ulum* utilise more standardized A4/A5 paper, mirroring transitions noted in other Indonesian collections from Java<sup>37</sup> and Bali.<sup>38</sup> Ink differentiation, red for

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<sup>34</sup> Nur Fauzan Ahmad and Ilham Ibnu Hakim, “Saving the Nusantara’s Ulama Scientific Treasures with Digitization,” *E3S Web of Conferences* 359 (2022): 05009, <https://doi.org/10.1051/e3sconf/202235905009>; Kamaruzzaman Bustamam-Ahmad, “The Religious Imagination in Literary Network and Muslim Contestation in Nusantara,” *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun* 7, no. 2 (2019): 217–44, <https://doi.org/10.26811/peuradeun.v7i2.344>.

<sup>35</sup> Araújo, “Preserving the Past.”

<sup>36</sup> Ricci, “Citing as a Site.”

<sup>37</sup> Bella Agustin, “Javanese Muslim Local Culture And Tradition In Islamic Perspective.”

Qur'anic verses and subheadings, black for commentary, reflects continuity with classical Islamic scribal practices, yet is here deployed in a rural pesantren context to aid oral teaching. The absence of elaborate illuminations across all six manuscripts, despite the prominence of such decorative programmes in palace and urban collections, further underlines their utilitarian pedagogical character rather than status as courtly luxury items.

The physical condition of the manuscripts in this period reveals the dual impact of environmental vulnerability and political violence.<sup>39</sup> Termite infestation, humidity-related degradation, unbound or minimally bound quires, and informal storage have produced the kinds of damage described in conservation studies of Islamic manuscripts in tropical climates. At Al-Djazuli *Pesantren*, the loss of the first 15 juz of *Tafsir Jalalain* and the disappearance of several *khutbah* manuscripts are remembered by the family as consequences of fires linked to Dutch and Japanese military incursions in the area, echoing broader accounts of colonial repression targeting *pesantren* as centres of Islamic activism. These archival gaps parallel the “changing fates” documented by Bruckmayr for Cambodian Islamic manuscripts<sup>40</sup> and underscore how political upheavals can radically reshape peripheral manuscript traditions. That any texts have survived is closely related to family-based custodianship: as K.H. Achmad Saifuddin Thoha explained in an interview, “These manuscripts have been with our family since the time of Mbah Hasan Djazuli and are still kept in the same house where he used to teach,”<sup>41</sup> highlighting the role of domestic spaces in sustaining manuscript continuity.

To synthesise these historical and material characteristics, the main codicological features of each manuscript are summarised in Table 1.

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<sup>38</sup> Iswanto et al., “The Linkage of Islamic Intellectual Traditions in Bali with Malay World.”

<sup>39</sup> M. C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia Since C. 1200*, 3rd ed (Stanford Univ. Press, 2001); Deliar Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, 1900-1942* (Oxford University Press, 1973).

<sup>40</sup> Bruckmayr, “The Changing Fates of the Cambodian Islamic Manuscript Tradition.”

<sup>41</sup> K.H. Achmad Saifuddin Thoha, “In-Depth Interview and Focus Group Discussion Conducted at Pondok Pesantren Al-Djazuli, Pliken, Kembaran, Banyumas,” November 9, 2024.

**Table 1.** Codicological Analysis of Manuscripts from *Penginyongan Pesantren*

| No | Manuscript Title & Origin   | Physical Description   | Content & Function  | Unique Features   | Condition & Damage   |
|----|---|--|---|---|--|
| 1  | <i>Tafsir Jalalain</i> – Pesantren Al-Djazuli, Pliken, Banyumas               | Handwritten on <i>deluwang</i> (Javanese paper); approx. A4 size; 8 cm thick; red ink for Qur'anic verses, black ink for tafsir; no illuminations or cover | Partial copy of <i>Tafsir Jalalain</i> (15 juz, from Surah Al-Kahfi to Juz 30); used as teaching resource | Marginal notes by K.H. Hasan Djazuli; text entirely in Arabic, no punctuation | Termite damage, especially first and last pages; first 15 juz missing; loss linked to fires and colonial destruction |
| 2  | <i>Fiqh al-Munakahat</i> (one-page fragment) – Pesantren Al-Djazuli, Banyumas | Single-page fragment on <i>deluwang</i> paper; approx. A4 size; Arabic text without diacritics; slanted text layout  | Fragmentary excerpt on Islamic marriage jurisprudence ( <i>nikah</i> ); likely copied for pedagogical use | Marginal notes by K.H. Hasan Djazuli; no illuminations                        | Significant termite damage; fragment incomplete; loss possibly linked to fires and colonial attacks                  |
| 3  | <i>Khutbah Jum'ah</i> manuscript – Pesantren Al-Djazuli, Banyumas             | Single sheet (two pages, only first page filled); <i>deluwang</i> paper; Arabic text without diacritics; <i>Pegon</i> script in Javanese                   | Original sermon manuscript handwritten by K.H. Hasan Djazuli; used for mosque sermons                     | Combination of <i>Pegon</i> and Arabic script; no illuminations               | No major physical damage; other sermon manuscripts reportedly lost to fires  |
| 4  | <i>Kifayatul Atqiyah</i> – Pesantren Al-Fatah, Parakan Canggah, Banjarnegara  | Complete manuscript bound with thread; approx. A5 size, 3–4 cm thick; black ink  | Compilation of theological ('aqidah) and jurisprudential texts attributed to Shaykh Thoblawi              | Ownership history linked to period of study in Mecca; colophon dated Monday   | Termite damage and small holes on margins; text remains legible  |

|   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|   |   | bold for <i>matan</i> , thin for <i>sharb</i> ; no illuminations  | or Shaykh Ibrahim Tuyuhan Rembang   | Pahing, 1321 H (1903 CE)  |   |
| 5 | <i>Mu'taqad</i> – Pesantren Ma'hadut Tholabah, Babakan, Tegal                                     | Bound manuscript, 24 pages; approx. A5 size, 0.5 cm thick; black ink, bold for <i>matan</i> , thin for <i>sharb</i> ; text framed with rectangular borders                    | Original theological-poetic ( <i>nazm</i> ) text authored by K.H. Mufti bin Salim, founder of the pesantren                       | Use of <i>Pegon</i> script for <i>sharb</i> ; Arabic <i>matan</i> with full diacritics                      | Minor termite damage; overall good condition; photocopied version actively used for study |
| 6 | <i>Bahjatul Ulum</i> fi <i>Bayani Aqidatil Ushul</i> – Pesantren Al-Istiqomah, Petanahan, Kebumen | Complete manuscript, approx. A4 size, 6–8 cm thick; handwritten in Arabic and <i>Pegon</i> ; red ink for subheadings, black for main text; paper and animal-parchment binding | Comprehensive work covering 'aqidah, <i>fiqh ibādah</i> , <i>fiqh mu'amalah</i> , and <i>taṣawwuf</i> ; used as teaching resource | Use of coloured ink for structural emphasis; bilingual Arabic and <i>Pegon</i> notes and <i>Pegon</i> notes | Termite damage in some sections; no colophon present                                      |

### ***Cultural Layers: Arabic–Pegon Hybridity and Pesantren Culture***

Culturally, for Riddel, Arabic–Pegon served both as a pedagogical tool for student comprehension and as a sociolinguistic marker of *pesantren* cultural identity.<sup>42</sup> In this study, the codicological data highlight the centrality of Arabic–Pegon hybridity in *Penginyongan pesantren* literacy. The widespread use of bilingual formats, especially the juxtaposition of Arabic *matan* with *Pegon* commentary, illustrates a pragmatic pedagogical strategy that enabled Javanese-speaking students with limited Arabic proficiency to access complex theological and legal discussions. Layouts in *Mu'taqad*, *Bahjatul Ulum*, and the *Khutbah Jum'ah* manuscript clearly differentiate between the core Arabic text, often in larger or bolder script, and explanatory *Pegon* prose or glosses arranged interlinearly or in

<sup>42</sup> Ǧalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Transferring a Tradition: 'Abd al-Ra'uf al-Singkili's Rendering into Malay of the Jalalayn Commentary*, with Peter G. Riddell et al. (University of California, 1990).

the margins. This layered architecture reflects classical pedagogical practices in which teachers recite the Arabic text and immediately unpack it in a vernacular language.

The deployment of *Pegon*, rather than Romanised Javanese or Indonesian, situates these manuscripts within a distinctly pesantren-based literacy tradition. As Johns<sup>43</sup> and Azra<sup>44</sup> argue, the adoption of Arabic script for Malay and Javanese facilitated a mode of Islamisation in which transregional canons were naturalised within local linguistic ecologies. The Penginyongan manuscripts concretise this argument: doctrinal propositions in *Mu'taqad* appear in Arabic *naṣr*, while explanation and elaboration are rendered in *Pegon* prose, combining mnemonic verse with vernacular exegesis. Similar bilingual strategies have been documented in Malay renderings of the *Jalalayn* commentary and other canonical texts, underscoring that *Penginyongan* participates in a wider Southeast Asian manuscript culture in which Arabic and local languages coexist on the page.

The thematic distribution of manuscripts across the four pesantren also reflects distinct institutional priorities and intellectual trajectories. Ma'hadut Tholabah Babakan Tegal and Al-Isti'qomah Petanahan Kebumen preserve manuscript corpora that lean heavily toward 'aqīdah, suggesting an explicit concern with doctrinal consolidation and the reinforcement of Sunni orthodoxy among rural Javanese Muslims navigating syncretic religious environments. By contrast, Al-Djazuli Pliken Banyumas maintains a more diverse collection encompassing *tafsīr*, *taṣawwuf*, and *fiqh*, indicating a pedagogical model in which exegetical, legal, and mystical disciplines are cultivated together; this is consistent with Bruinessen's<sup>45</sup> and Lukens-Bull's<sup>46</sup> characterisation of Javanese pesantren as sites where jurisprudential and mystical knowledge are transmitted concurrently. A comparable emphasis on *taṣawwuf* is evident in Al-Fatah Parakan Canggah Banjarnegara, historically recognised as a centre of Sufi training in the *Penginyongan* area, a pattern that resonates with Bruckmayr's and Iswanto et al.'s observations of the dominance of mystical texts in other "peripheral" Islamic manuscript traditions in Cambodia and Bali.

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<sup>43</sup> Anthony H. Johns, "Islamization in Southeast Asia," 1, preprint, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, 1993, [https://doi.org/10.20495/tak.31.1\\_43](https://doi.org/10.20495/tak.31.1_43).

<sup>44</sup> Azyumardi Azra, *Jaringan Ulama Timur Tengah dan Kepulauan Nusantara Abad XVII & XVIII: Akar Pembaruan Islam Indonesia*, Ed. rev (Kencana, 2004).

<sup>45</sup> Bruinessen, *Kitab Kuning, Pesantren, Dan Tarekat*.

<sup>46</sup> Ronald A. Lukens-Bull, "Teaching Morality: Javanese Islamic Education in a Globalizing Era," *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies* 3 (January 1970): 26–47, <https://doi.org/10.5617/jais.4554>.

Interview data further underscore the cultural embeddedness of these practices. K.H. Mohammad Syafii Baidlowi of Ma'hadut Tholabah noted, “We still read *Mu'taqad* with students in the *aqidah* class, especially for the senior santri”<sup>47</sup>, indicating that the *nazm*-*Pegon* combination remains pedagogically effective. Similarly, K.H. Amin Rosyid explained that *Baljatul Ulum* “came from my father's generation, and it was used in *pengajian* for advanced students”<sup>48</sup>, confirming that such manuscripts continue to mediate intergenerational transmission of local theological and ethical discourses. These testimonies show that the cultural significance of the manuscripts is not limited to their historical existence but persists in ongoing teaching and ritual practice.

### ***Epistemological Layers: Canon, Local Authorship, and Knowledge Hierarchies***

Epistemologically, the *Penginyongan* manuscripts reveal layered structures of authority and interpretation. The distinction between canonical transcriptions and local compositions indicates that pesantren curricula were anchored in globally recognised Sunni texts while simultaneously generating regionally specific works to address local pedagogical and doctrinal needs. Transcribed works in *tafsir* and *fiqh* embed *Penginyongan* within wider ulama networks spanning the Middle East and the Malay-Indonesian world, as mapped by Azra and others,<sup>49</sup> whereas locally authored or adapted texts such as *Mu'taqad* and parts of *Baljatul Ulum* embody forms of intellectual creativity expressed through compilation, reordering, and versification.

Codicological layering on the page materialises these epistemic hierarchies. Differences in script size, ink thickness, and spatial positioning mark the *matan* as loci of canonical authority, and the *sharb*, or *Pegon* commentary, as interpretive extensions. This is consistent with comparative codicological findings that underline how mise-en-page, margin size, ruling, and script differentiation function as a visual guide to levels of text and commentary. In *Penginyongan*, this hierarchy is further complicated by the linguistic split between Arabic and *Pegon*, so that the page simultaneously encodes chains of textual authority and processes of vernacularisation. Marginalia and occasional colophons add yet another epistemic layer: they provide information on ownership,

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<sup>47</sup> K.H. Mohammad Syafii Baidlowi, ‘In-Depth Interview Conducted at Pondok Pesantren Ma'hadut Tholabah, Babakan, Tegal,’ July 21, 2023.

<sup>48</sup> K.H. Amin Rosyid, ‘In-Depth Interview and Focus Group Discussion Conducted at Pondok Pesantren Al-Istiqomah, Petanahan, Kebumen,’ February 12, 2024.

<sup>49</sup> Azra, *Jaringan ulama*; Annabel The Gallop, ‘Indonesian Manuscripts from the Islands of Java, Madura, Bali and Lombok,’ *Islamic Studies Review* 3, no. 1 (2024): 162–66, <https://doi.org/10.56529/isr.v3i1.259>; Suyūṭī, *Transferring a Tradition*.

copying dates, and in some cases chains of transmission (*sanad*), thereby situating the manuscripts within concrete networks of teachers, students, families, and transregional study journeys to Mecca.

These findings challenge reductionist portrayals of peripheral regions such as *Penginyongan* as passive recipients of imported Islamic learning. Instead, the material and textual evidence portray Penginyongan pesantren as active sites of textual reproduction, vernacular adaptation, and curriculum formation, where canonical works were reconfigured through local genres, languages, and pedagogical practices. This profile aligns *Penginyongan* with other so-called Islamic peripheries, such as Cambodia, parts of China, and Bali, where manuscript cultures likewise served as arenas for negotiating global Islamic discourses within local sociocultural frameworks. By systematically documenting the codicological and epistemological layers of these six manuscripts, this study contributes to a growing body of scholarship that rethinks centre–periphery hierarchies in Islamic intellectual history by foregrounding the agency of regional manuscript communities and demonstrating how codicology can illuminate historical, cultural, and epistemic dynamics that might otherwise remain invisible.

## CONCLUSION

This study reveals that *Penginyongan pesantren* manuscripts serve not only as repositories but as active educational tools, using *Pegon* script, marginal annotations, and interlinear glosses to effectively transmit Arabic-Islamic knowledge to Javanese-speaking students. The manuscripts cover diverse Islamic sciences, including *tafsir*, *fiqh*, *aqidah*, and *khutbah*, and demonstrate rich intellectual traditions embedded in localized pedagogical and family custodianship systems. The research also highlights the historical vulnerability of *pesantren* manuscript culture due to colonial disruptions, positioning codicology as a lens to understand both textual heritage and socio-political transformations in Java.

This study contributes theoretically by expanding Islamic manuscript studies beyond traditional Middle Eastern archives and by offering an integrated codicological, linguistic, and sociological framework for analyzing *pesantren* manuscripts as dynamic knowledge systems. Practically, it enriches the global Islamic textual corpus by documenting previously unstudied manuscripts and supports preservation efforts. Future research should broaden fieldwork across Indonesian *pesantren*, incorporate digital humanities, and foster interdisciplinary collaborations to

further explore the intersections of manuscript culture with gender, economy, and transregional networks.

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