

# IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL CONFLICT AFTER INDONESIAN INDEPENDENCE: ARTICULATION OF KIAI MUCHLAS' ROLES AND LEADERSHIP IN TEGAL

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**Abstract:** Ideological and political conflicts were prominent in Tegal's history from the early years of Indonesia Independence until the era of Guided Democracy (1959-1965). The clash between Islamism and communism often created political tension. This study intends to describe the intensity of the conflict by articulating the role and leadership of K.H. Muchlas (1886-1964), a prominent Islamic scholar in Tegal at that time. Historical methods that rely on oral history with the political sociology approach are used to analyze the themes and chronology of these various incidents, explain the root of the problems, and relate it to broader events at the national level. The study found that the intensity of ideological conflicts in Tegal is related to conflicts at the national level, but they are rooted in the community's character and the local social system.

**Keywords:** Role and leadership of ulama, Islam and Communism, conflict, post Indonesia independence.

## 1 Introduction

By the end of the 19th century, Tegal had become an advanced port city on the north coast of Central Java. Tegal's development was supported by an active port, roads, railroad lines, and the local community's economic development. Another supporting factor is that it is located at the crossroads for people, goods, and services from Cirebon to Semarang, and southern regions such as Purwokerto, Banyumas, Cilacap, Banjarnegara, Purbalingga, and Kebumen. Tegal is crossed by Jalan Raya Pos (*Groote Postweg*) or Jalan Daendels and the railroad track "*stroomtram*" from Semarang to Cirebon. Semarang Cheriboon Stroomtram Maatschappij built this road in 1886 [1]. Bandar Tegal, which had been known since the era of the Mataram Kingdom, developed into a busy export port during the golden age of the Dutch East Indies sugar industry.

Steam trains delivered sugar from the sugar factories in the south of Tegal to large ships anchored at the port [2]. Roger Knight notes that these sugar factories, equipped with sophisticated machines, have prospered the Netherlands for 50 years (1830-1880) [3]. Sugar factories in Tegal were located in the villages of Pangkah, Kemanglen, Dukuhringin, Adiwerna, Ujungrusi, Kemantran, Balapulung, and Pagongan. In 1886 there was a peak in the expansion of the sugar cane plantation industry, which was driven by the liberalization of the economy of the Dutch East Indies, after the policies that prioritized state capitalism were criticized by politicians and liberal officials in the Netherlands [4]. The expansion of the sugar industry occurred during the era Governor-General Johannes van den Bosch through the enforcement planting system (*cultuurstelsel*) with an industrial scheme supported by a state company (*staatbedrijf*). In 1830,

Bosch agreed to plant sugar canes in Central Java and East Java residencies, which changed the social and economic system of farmers, forcing many farmers to change professions by becoming sugar factory workers [5]. One of the social impacts of this system is that it fosters communism's spirit (class struggle) among sugar factory workers due to the gaps between the lifestyle of the Dutch bourgeoisie in the lodge and the poor farmers in their environment [6].

As a trading city, Tegal was often visited by foreign ships from European countries, China, Arabia, and India. The Tek Hay Kiong temple, founded in 1690, marked the formation of the Chinese community in the 17th century. The Arabs from Hadramaut also came to Tegal to trade and preached Islam. Habib Muhammad bin Thohir al-Haddad was among well-known Hadrami Muslim preachers in the coastal area of Tegal. In the countryside, a prominent Muslim preacher named Kiai Armia bin Kurdi founded *Pesantren* (Islamic Boarding School) At-Tauhidiyah in Cikura Village, Bojong Sub-district. This *Pesantren* was founded in 1880 and is the oldest *Pesantren* in Tegal. In 1859, there were 67 migrants from Hadramaut who lived in Tegal. This number increased to 204 in 1870 and 352 in 1885 [7]. Al-Hikmah Mosque in Pesengkongan, which was founded in 1821, marked the spread of Islam in Tegal from the port. In the same village, in 1830, Langgar Dhuwur (Musholla Istiqomah) was established as a place of worship for sailors from Bugis, Madura, Sumatra, and Kalimantan who docked [8]. These ethnic groups slowly settled down and lived in their respective enclaves: Kebogisan (Buginese) village, Malay (Sumatran and Kojas) village, and Paweden (Chinatown). The boundaries between these ethnic enclaves were deliberately formed by the colonial government to divide society into three groups: Europeans, Foreign Orientals, and Native Islanders. However, these ethnic groups have slowly acculturated to the local population [9].

The first figure known to have spread Islam in Tegal in the 16th century was Shaykh Abdurrahman or Sunan Geseng or Sunan Drajat, one of the Nine Saints (Walisongo) who were spiritual advisors at the Islamic Sultanate of Demak Bintoro [10]. Some also called him Sayyid Syarif Abdurrahman. He lived in Panggung, and after his death, his body was buried in the Panggung Cemetery. Hence, to the locals, he is known as Pangeran Panggung (Prince of Panggung) or Mbah Panggung [11]. According to Suputro, quoting G.W.J. Drewes, Thomas Stanford Raffles in 1815 had written about the Pangeran Panggung but referred to him with a different name.

Two cultural symbols illustrate the characteristics of Tegalnese society. First, the meaning of each Arabic or Javanese letter that forms the word *Tegal*. According to Professor Suparman Sumamiharja, the letter "T" stands for the word *tatag* or *teteg*, meaning confident and fearless. The letter "E" stands for *eling* (remember or aware), emphasizing awareness of mindfulness. The letter "G" stands for *gesit*, referring to the responsiveness and creativeness in dealing with their surrounding environment. The letter "A" stands for the word *alim*, meaning pious. The letter "L" stands for the words *lugu* or *lugas*, meaning straightforwardness and frankness. Second, the nature of the Tegalnese is depicted in the symbol of *Banteng Loreng Binoncengan* (a striped bull ridden by a child). This depiction symbolizes the nature of the Tegalnese that are brave and somewhat crude, represented by a striped bull, but can be guided by friendly people who do not have bad intentions [12]. These characteristics are slightly different from the Javanese's prevailing philosophies, for example, the attitude *narimo ing pandum*, resigning to what God has decreed [13].

With the external influences and typical characteristics of the locals, Tegal's history is often filled with examples of resistance. Suputro, the mayor of Tegal from 1948 to 1962, called Tumenggung Martoloyo as the specific embodiment of the *Banteng Loreng Binoncengan* philosophy. He emphatically rejected the intention of Adipati Anom (later Amangkurat II King of Mataram) to ask for help from Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC) to defeat Trunojoyo. Martoloyo finally left Adipati Anom. In his book *The Tegal Revolt in 1864*, Tine Ruiters noted a protest against the Enforced Planting system. Brandal Mas Cilik - referred to by Ricklefs as an Islamic mystic in Tegal who considered himself Raden Haji although he had not yet performed Hajj, attacked a sugar factory and killed Dutch officers [14]. The Three Regions Affair erupted two months after the proclamation of Indonesia Independence on August 17, 1945. At the beginning of the Reform Era, Tegal Mayor M. Zakir faced protests and was forced to

relinquish his position because he was considered authoritarian [15]. Recently, Mayor Sitha Masita Soeparno also faced protests for the same reason [16].

## 2 A Scholar of Three Eras

Kiai Muchlas is one of the children of Kiai Hasan and Maimunah. His birth name was Sarbini. This name was used again to trick the Koninklijke Nederlandsch-Indische Leger (KNIL) soldiers that were after him and his family when they fled to Kediri in 1947 [17]. Throughout his life, he had seven wives, 21 children, and a grandchild. His seven wives, who were all called "nyai," an honorific title for Muslim clerics' wives, were Muslihah, Aisyah, Salamah, Zaenah, Khodijah, Faridah, and Tursinah. Kiai Muchlas lived with his for wives at a time in accordance with the Islamic law. When one of his wives passed away or was divorced, his oldest wife will find another wife for him [18]. The polygamous household was relatively harmonious because of the kiai's charisma and the wives' willingness to support his struggle in preaching Islam.

In 1921, after completing his studies from various *Pesantrens* in Java, Kiai Muchlas established his own *Pesantren* near the tomb of Mbah Panggung. His *Pesantren* was rapidly developing, with students from Malaysia and Singapore, and he became a famous and influential cleric [19]. Also developing his *Pesantren*, preaching Islam in the area of Tegal, and being active in the struggle for Indonesian Independence, Kiai Muchlas was also involved in politics by becoming an advisor to Masyumi Tegal in the 1950s [20]. His role in Masyumi dragged him to the ideological conflict between Islam and communism. His *Pesantren* became the target of agitation and terror by the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) members. His students, even his wives, were also accused of having connections with *Darul Islam/Tentara Islam Indonesia* (DI/TII).

Kiai Muchlas lived through three eras. He was active in the struggle for Indonesia Independence, the Indonesian War of Independence, and Guided Democracy or the Old Order Era. His contribution to the struggle for Indonesian Independence was by giving moral support through his lectures and Friday sermons at Panggung Mosque and having a non-cooperative attitude towards the Dutch [21]. His resistance to the Dutch was also shown by his role in boosting the morale of Hizbullah guerrillas by blessing their rifles and spiked bamboo spears. At that time, there were two places for the blessing of Hizbullah guerrillas' weapons in Central Java: in Parakan (Temanggung) and in the Panggung (Tegal). The blessing of the spiked bamboos in Parakan was carried out by Kiai Subeki, an elderly cleric who described as having sturdy build and intact teeth despite his old age [22]. Due to his involvement in blessing the spiked bamboos used by Hizbullah troops, he had become a target of the KNIL during the First Dutch Military Aggression in 1947. He and his family fled for three years to Lirboyo, Kediri, to his brother-in-law, K.H. Mahrus Aly [23].

As one of Masyumi's advisor, Kiai Muchlas often received national Masyumi leaders such as Mohammad Natsir, Isa Anshary, Prawoto Mangkusasmito, Syafruddin Prawiranegara, Kasman Singodimejo, Burhanuddin Harahap, and Hamka. In his position, he gave directions to Masyumi politicians and members ahead of the 1955 Election. He reminded Muslims that the purpose of the election was to uphold Islamic law in Indonesia. To the community, he called for unity in making Indonesia a land that is blessed by God (*baldatun thoyyibatun wa robbun ghofur*). During open campaigns for Masyumi, he often quoted Quran Surah Yusuf (12) verse 67 in his directions to the public. Through this verse, he recommended that each party appoint leaders that can serve all. As for the general Masyumi masses, this verse was used as a source of inspiration to always be watchful and vigilant in confrontations and violent political conflicts [24].

From the 1960s toward the end of his life, Kiai Muchlas was no longer active in politics. He was more interested in preaching Islam and maintaining the unity of the Muslims. He initiated a big celebration of Prophet Muhammad's birthday every year to maintain the fraternity among Muslims (ukhuwah Islamiyah) in Tegal named the *Rolasan* Parade held on the eve of the 12<sup>th</sup> day of Rabiul Awwal. This event was known for its torch parade where participants hold torches to commemorate the Prophet's Birthday. The participants consisted of representatives of various

Islamic community organizations, Islamic educational institutions, mosque boards, and other Islamic communities. Even if he was no longer active in politics, Kiai Muchlas continued to pursue his independent principle of enjoining good and forbidding evil (*amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*). He declared that his *Pesantren* should not be used for political activities, but it is open to all groups. He had upheld this principle since he was active in Masyumi by banning activities related to political parties in the *Pesantren* premises. His stance was not without risks. One of the consequences of him forbidding political activities in the *Pesantren* was the ban of the *Rolasan* Parade by the New Order Government [25]. The ban was a form of political pressure because Kiai Muchlas did not allow Golkar to enter his *Pesantren*.

### 3 Confrontation with PKI and DI/TII

In Indonesian history, there were three milestones of the leftist political movement in Tegal, from before Indonesian Independence until its Independence. The first milestone was the PKI uprising in 1926 (November 1926 to January 1927), which was crushed by the Dutch East Indies Government, and its leaders were then exiled to Boven Digul in Papua. Harry J. Benda assesses that this uprising was related to the international communist (Comintern) policy but not related to the Cold War [26]. After the uprising, 26 Tegalnese were exiled to Boven Digul including Sakhyani [27]. Among them were also a Sarekat Islam leader H. Muklas (K.H. Moeklas), the biological father of the Indonesian communist leader M.H. Lukman. His name was similar to Kiai Muchlas. Some of these exiled leaders came from Cerih Village, Jatinegara Sub-district, Tegal Regency, where several Sarekat Islam leaders lived before 1926, including H. Muklas. According to Lucas, the communist Islamic leader was arrested and exiled to Digul because of the Karangcegak rebellion. Cerih Village was also where the Three Regions Affair first started on October 7, 1945. From this village, Kiai Muchlas's family started a difficult journey, fleeing from Tegal to Kediri. With some of the group members being young children, they were pursued by the KNIL troops behind them and had to go through mountainous roads in front of them. The second milestone was the Three Regions Affair, which occurred from October to December 1945. The third milestone was the September 30 Movement (G30S / PKI) in 1965.

Kiai Muchlas' first conflict with communism was during the Three Regions Affair, all the way to the era of Guided Democracy. The vacuum of power triggered the Three Regions Affair after the Japanese left. Kutil, alias Sakhyani, a barber from Talang, as town 6 kilometers south of the center of Tegal City, led a movement that managed to gather the youth and *lenggaong* (fighters). Their mission is to eliminate the bureaucrats that are close to the Japanese and the KNIL sympathizers and appoint the figures they chose to fill public positions in the government. The members of this movement blocked the highway in Talang that connected Tegal with Purwokerto. They detained and killed anyone that disagreed with them. The Three Regions Affair began with an incident in Cerih Village, where the Village Head Raden Mas Harjowiyono and his wife were dragged through the streets and detained in the sub-district office. The village head was accused of hoarding rice, a staple food that was scarce during the Japanese occupation. The masses demanded that the village head distribute the rice to the people. Bank Rakyat in Talang was turned into the headquarters of the Indonesian Republic's Youth Force (*Angkatan Muda Republik Indonesia/AMRI*), formed by Kutil in October 1945.

From Talang, this communism-influenced movement spread to Pemalang and Brebes. A bridge near the AMRI headquarters named *Brug Abang* (Red Bridge) was a famous place where executioners appointed by Kutil slaughtered elite bureaucrats (*pangreh praja*) who were accused of being supporters of the Japanese or agents of The Netherlands Indies Civil Administration (NICA). The people well knew this bridge of Tegal at the time. Anyone captured by the AMRI members and brought to this bridge, and their fate is certain either they were killed or detained [28].

At the culmination of the Three Regions Affair, on November 6, 1945, a messenger came to Panggung to meet Kiai Muchlas, informing him that his two caretakers of his *Pesantren*, his son-in-law Kiai Muchidin and Kiai Bisri, were arrested by Kutil in Talang and were about to be killed. Upon hearing the news from the messenger, Kiai Muchlas immediately gathered

hundreds of his students to invade Talang to force Kutil to free the two men close to him. Kiai Mukhlas' students were already gathering at Panggung Mosque, awaiting orders, when another messenger came to inform him that Kiai Bisri and Kiai Muchidin had been transferred from the prison in Talang to prison in Dukuhpringin, Slawi, along with the Commander of the XVII Regiment TKR Pekalongan Lieutenant Colonel Iskandar Idris. The three were put into a detention room with their hands and feet tied to a chair.

Initially, Iskandar Idris and the two clerics, along with Sayuti Melik, who was the envoy of the Central Java Governor Wongsonegoro, came to Talang to clear up the escalating situation. As they were approaching Talang, they were stopped by followers of Kutil. Sayuti and Iskandar were taken to Slawi. Luckily Sayuti was able to free herself, while Iskandar was not quite as fortunate. The second messenger who came to Panggung told Kiai Muchlas that Kiai Bisri and Kiai Muchidin were able to escape the death sentence and transferred to Slawi the guarantee from Kiai Misbach. Kiai Misbach, whom Lucas called a communist Islamic figure, had prevented Kutil from slaying the two clerics, saying that it would be better for Kutil to kill him rather than the two clerics because killing them would have caused a great reaction and turmoil in the society. The three of them were later released after Tegal's *Badan Keamanan Rakyat* (BKR) and *Tentara Keamanan Rakyat* (TKR) intervened.

The center of activities of the PKI youth in Tegal was in what is now Indonesian Railways Company complex, located close to the Tegal Railway Station, and in the Sentanan area. Both areas are very close to Kiai Mukhlas' *Pesantren*. The Indonesian Railways Company complex is about 200 meters east of Panggung, while Sentanan is about 500 meters west of the Pesantren. The proximity to the PKI centers led to pressure and terror experienced by the students of the cottage. PKI members often threatened to kill Kiai Muchlas and destroy his *Pesantren*. Since then, the students had taken turns guarding the *Pesantren* premises tightly, some were even ordered to guard Mbah Panggung's Tomb by hiding among gravestones [29]. In the 1950s, the Panggung Cemetery was not controlled by PKI.

The guarding of the *Pesantren* lasted for an extended period, from the eruption of the Three Regions Affair until Kiai Muchlas become ill before he died in 1964 due to the terror and intimidation that continued from time to time. One day in the early 1960s, when the students were praying at Panggung Mosque, some soldiers entered the mosque and prevented people from leaving. When the army broke into the mosque, the Panggung Cemetery, located east of the mosque, was guarded by PKI members [30]. Kiai Muchlas' student, K.H. Abu Suja'i from Pacul Village, was appointed as the regent of Tegal by Kutil on November 6, 1945. Kutil appointed him because Abu Suja'i was considered a radical Islamist and nationalist figure. In Pacul, he founded the *Partai Sarikat Islam Indonesia* (PSSI). He opposed the cheap land rent and unfair water rotation for farmers by the Pagongan sugar mill administrator. He was imprisoned by the Dutch and Japanese colonial governments.

In the perspective of communist ideology and the Comintern strategy, the appointment of a cleric as the regional head is considered unusual. Engels, in the Communist Manifesto, emphasized the proposition of the communist movement. He said human history is the history of class struggle between the ruling class and the oppressed class. Evolutionarily, the history of class struggle will not end as long as the controlled and oppressed class (proletariat) has not been able to emancipate from the ruling and exploitative class (bourgeoisie) until the society is entirely free from exploitation, oppression, difference, and class struggle [31]. Engels also distinguishes communism from socialism. According to him, socialism is a middle-class movement, while communism is the movement of the proletariat. To achieve its goals, communist leaders often use political pragmatism. PKI, under DN Aidit, deviated from the conventional Marxist-Leninist theory. According to Aidit, it is the political orientation that determines social class, not the other way around. Because of this, Aidit allowed PKI to cooperate with the bourgeois class against the feudal lords [32]. What happened during the G30S/PKI was not class conflict but the conflict within the same social class, namely the middle class [33].

Radicalization and political polarization leading to physical confrontation increased in the lead up to, during, and after the 1955 Election. There was a rivalry between the four major parties: PNI, Masyumi, NU, and PKI. Masyumi felt that its strongest ideological and electoral

rivals were PNI and PKI. Kiai Mukhlas and his students often faced terror due to this political confrontation, threatening the Kiai's safety, as narrated by one of his students:

The Kiai was about to be kidnapped once, at midnight, at 01:00 a.m. It happened in 1953 as part of the political event. It was my turn to patrol the *pesantren*. Through the kitchen, the house is entered by someone wearing a black mask that looks like a Ninja. That person was bringing a *gobang* (machete) with them. Nyai Khodijah (one of Kiai Muchlas's wives) who was going to the bathroom was shocked and screamed. The students woke up, and the person ran away. [34]

After the 1955 elections, the terror and political pressure did not stop. The impact of the Cikini incident also affected Tegal. The Cikini incident took place on November 30, 1957. President Soekarno came to the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Yayasan Perguruan Cikini (Percik), where Soekarno's children studied. In the middle of the president's welcoming party, a grenade was exploded. Nine people were killed, 100 were injured, including the president's bodyguards. Soekarno and his children survived. As a result of the incident, a grenade exploded. They were migrants from Bima, West Nusa Tenggara, who were accused of throwing the grenade, and were suspected of being terrorist agents of the DI / TII movement.

Since then, the government had imposed a curfew. The *pesantren* was closely monitored. "If there were students from Balapusuh (Balapusuh Village, Tonjong Subdistrict, Brebes), they will definitely be suspected of being members of DI," said Khulaimi, a student of Kiai Muchlas. He told me, Kiai Muchlas and himself had been summoned by the Military District Command headquarters for questioning. However, after confronting Kiai Muchlas, the interrogator said, "Kiai, had it been not for the reports, I would not have been able to meet you directly, Kiai. Now I can face you directly, Alhamdulillah." [35]. Some of the students who were active in the Indonesian Islamic Youth Movement (GPII), who often got into conflicts with members of Pemuda Rakyat (a PKI wing), were arrested. Sholehul Hadi (a son of Kiai Muchlas), Fadil, and Abu Saeri were arrested because they were sympathetic to DI / TII. Sholeh and Fadil were detained in Slawi for several months and then transferred to Nusakambangan. During his imprisonment without trial, Sholehul Hadi was often tortured until his ears became deaf. Kiai Muchlas then fought for their release by going to Jakarta to ask for help from his best friend, Kiai Muslich, an official in the Department of Religious Affairs. After this incident, Kiai Muchlas rarely talked about politics [36].

According to Sya'roni, Masyumi was often demonized and accused of being related to DI / TII. In Kesambi Village, Margasari Subdistrict, Tegal Regency, a DI / TII member, came out of the woods and entered a hamlet, wrapping his weapon in with the Masyumi flag, but was then shot by a TNI member. Shodiq Hadi Dimiyati, a member of Hizbullah and neighbor of Kiai Muchlas, said in the early 1960s, Kiai Asy'ari was PKI detained kiai Muchlas's younger brother for two days wearing DI uniform. Commander of the VII Regional Military Command (Kodam) / Diponegoro (now Kodam IV / Diponegoro) Brigadier General Sarbini threatened to destroy PKI if they did not release Kiai Asy'ari. After being threatened by Brigadier General Sarbini, PKI finally released Kiai Asy'ari. Suaib Mujahid, another student of Kiai Muchlas, was once detained and tortured at the Tegal Military District Command (Kodim) headquarters and two other fellow students, Halim and Sumar [37].

An incident has also been experienced by three wives of Kiai Muchlas (Aisyah, Khodijah, Tursinah). On their way to Salem Village, south of Bumiayu, to find funds for the development of the *Pesantren*, the three were suspected of being related to DI / TII and detained at the Bumiayu Military Command (Koramil) headquarters, Brebes Regency. The three did not carry their identity cards. To free his wives, Kiai Muchlas asked the West Tegal Koramil Commander Lieutenant Mudatsir for help. The three of them were finally picked up and escorted home by Mudatsir in a Jeep. Many did not know then that the area around Bumiayu was where Amir Fatah, the leader of DI / TII in Central Java, operated. According to Van Dijk, after separating from the Republic and proclaiming the Islamic State of Central Java at the end of April 1949 in Pengarasan Village, southwest of Bumiayu, Amir Fatah made the area around Bumiayu

his fortress, and from there, his forces attacked Republican army posts in various places, such as Margasari, Prupuk, Larangan, and Tonjong [38].

The Proclamation of the Islamic State of Central Java by Amir Fatah preceded the Indonesia Islamic State (NII), proclaimed by Sekarmadji Maridjan Kartosoewirjo on August 7, 1949. Proclamation of the NII by Kartosoewirjo was about to be prevented by Mohammad Natsir, who wrote a letter from Bandung on August 4, 1949. The letter brought by the famous Muslim figure Ustadz A. Hassan did not reach Kartosoewirjo on time because he was hard to find. The letter arrived on August 10, 1949, three days after NII was proclaimed [39]. The problem for Kiai Muchlas is that the Islamic State of Central Java was proclaimed in Pengarasan. "This village (Pengarasan) is the base of many of Kiai Mukhlis' students, for its relation with Darul Islam," said Kiai Syamsul Falah, one of the sons of K.H. Muchlas [40]. It is not surprising that Kiai Muchlas often got into trouble because some of his students were accused of supporting DI / TII, including Kiai Abu Suja'i, who was also accused of supporting DI and was removed from his position as regent of Tegal and imprisoned in Nusakambangan from 1950 to 1955.

Lev explains how ideological conflicts and political clashes have intensified since the transfer of sovereignty from the Netherlands on December 27, 1949. The beginning was in 1957. At that time, there was discontent from regions outside Java that sparked a rebellion in 1958. In contrast, the military wants to escape the control of civilian politicians. The bases of national political power were in Central and East Java, while Masyumi controlled West Java. PKI won the 1957 regional elections due to the decadence and degradation of PNI, Masyumi, and NU. PKI succeeded in winning the most significant support from the *abangan* in Central Java and East Java. PKI became more robust and more courageous in pushing Sukarno [41]. The Cikini incident made Soekarno act coercively and repressively towards his political opponents, especially Masyumi leaders who were arrested and imprisoned without trial. The Guided Democracy regime becomes authoritarian. According Mackie, the political system became more authoritarian compared to before 1959, although it was still not monolithic because dissatisfaction and criticism were not capable enough as a source of opposition to the Sukarno government [42].

#### 4 Conclusion

The ideological conflicts in Tegal from the time of the Indonesian War of Independence to the Old Order era were caused by complex factors related to the complexity of the conflicts at the national level. However, seen from the form and causes of political conflicts, there were three general trends. *First*, the conflict was expressed as an act of social revenge for the cruel treatment from Dutch and Japanese that caused long-suffering for the commoners. Threatened social identity and suffering were then resolved with resistance and rebellion against colonial rule. This motif is seen in the Three Regions Affair, which was a continuation of the 1926 communist uprising but was locally consolidated. *Second*, ideological conflicts are sharpened by political polarization that lasts continuously for quite a long time. This conflict was rooted in the sectarian identity-based politics that had existed since before Independence. The political articulation of the sectarian politics was represented by four major parties (PNI, Masyumi, NU, PKI) that struggled for influence and power in the 1955 General Election and after that. This polarization was sharpened by the radicalization that led to rebellions in various regions and armed resistance by DI / TII. *Third*, the conflicts were structural and transformative due to the problems of social, cultural, and economic inequality and injustice.

There is a political culture in the Tegalnese community that has been internalized in their collective character, forming non-actual patterns. These patterns then change into actual behaviors in responding to political system trends. It explains why people often protested against rulers in Tegal's contemporary history, as in the case of mayor M. Zakir (1989-1999) and Sitha Masita Soeparno (2014-2017).

In Tegal's past, Kiai Muchlas's role and leadership, in addition to articulating the conflict's theme and chronology, also illustrate his position in the conflicts and social change in Tegal. He used his influence and political power not by confrontation, but through an ethical and spiritual approach both in the struggle for Independence and afterward. This approach was used

to protect his *Pesantren* and his political orientation from the escalation of conflicts and the threat of the nation and society's disintegration. The political orientation adopted by Masyumi was the unity of the people and the establishment of Islamic law in a democratic Indonesian state.

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