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# The Names of the Jinn Kings of Java: An Alternative Approach to Treating Demonic Possession

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A R T I C L E I N F O

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A B S T R A C T

One of the cultural traditions in the Nusantara is knowing the names of the spirit kings of Java, found in the Kidungan literature attributed to Sunan Kalijaga, though few truly understand its philosophical depth. Using a phenomenological approach, this study examines its application for spiritual disturbances, particularly in treating spirit possession where literal interpretations often dominate. The research aims to demonstrate that reciting and memorizing these names requires understanding their deeper esoteric meanings beyond mere textual recitation, while exploring its potential as a contemporary medium for da'wah. For individuals unable to recite Qur'anic healing verses, memorizing the names of local spirit kings provides an accessible alternative remedy, simultaneously preserving this traditional esoteric wisdom (ilmu hikmah) through successors who comprehend its true essence rather than merely focusing on its sacred mystique

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## INTRODUCTION

Religion is a system of beliefs, values, moral codes, and cultural practices that connects humanity with the transcendent or the divine. Every religion possesses narratives, concepts, and symbols that articulate the meaning, essence, purpose, and origin of life and the cosmos. Each tradition also maintains its own mythology to explain the existence of the universe. Furthermore, religion serves as a worldview embodying teachings on ultimate truth and human existence, providing guidance for both the physical and spiritual life of humanity in this world (Zazuli, 2000). The word "Islām" is derived from the Arabic language as a verbal noun (masdar) of the verb aslama, which signifies surrender, submission, resignation, and obedience in accepting and yielding to Allah. The term can also be traced to its root salima, meaning peace or safety, implying that an adherent of Islam (Leuba, 1921; Voll, 2003) is one who attains salvation. Islam denotes the tradition of faith based on the conviction that there is only one God, Allah, and that the Prophet Muhammad is His Messenger; its adherents are called "Muslims." The Qur'an (Yazdi, 2003) uses the term islām in conjunction with the concept of al-dīn (religion) (Nasution, 2001) eight times (Mu'in, 1984). In Surah Adh-Dhariyat, verse 56, it is stated: wa mā khalaqtu al-jinna wa al-insa illā liya'budūn ("And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me") (Qur'an Kemenag Online, 2026). In reality, however, jinn and humans often display a lack of reverence toward the God who created them, frequently violating the boundaries set by their Creator (Allah) and instead harboring greater fear toward the earthly rulers within their respective communities.

The expansion of Islam across the Nusantara is inseparable from the vital role played by the Sufis, who navigated a societal landscape deeply intertwined with mysticism and spiritualism. The scholar A.H. Johns asserts that wandering Sufis were the primary agents of Islamization in the Nusantara, traversing regions and establishing Sufi orders (tariqah) (Abdillah, 2022). Today, Indonesia stands as the largest Muslim-majority nation in the world, a legacy deeply rooted in this spiritual orientation and the Sufi missionary tradition. Among the most prominent figures was Sunan Kalijaga, whose preaching incorporated local cultural elements, rendering Islam culturally resonant and accessible to the abangan (nominal or syncretic Muslim) community (Fathoni, 2012). Through his strategic missionary approach, Sunan Kalijaga keenly understood the Javanese society of his era. Newly converted Muslims could not be expected to immediately comprehend or memorize the Qur'an; hence, his pedagogical method was gradual and relied on cultural assimilation. Throughout this missionary journey, Javanese society remained closely entangled with occult practices involving the unseen realm of the jinn, including demonic disturbances inflicted upon humans. Sunan Kalijaga is traditionally revered as a scholar endowed with the ability to preach to the jinn, granting him deep familiarity with the names of their ruling spirits. In the classical Javanese literary work Kidung Sarira Ayu, several names of these jinn kings are recorded—a text believed by many to be composed by Sunan Kalijaga as an alternative healing method for spirit-induced afflictions. It is widely held that these names were set to verse in the sinom poetic meter precisely because the lay community of that period was

not yet equipped to treat spirit afflictions using Qur'anic verses. According to Mulyadi Kartanegara, scientific inquiry within Islam has experienced profound development, encompassing theoretical sciences—such as physics, mathematics, and metaphysics—as well as practical sciences, including ethics, economics, political science, and the physical sciences (Ayatullah, 2021). It is undeniable that modern society still retains beliefs closely aligned with mysticism or metaphysics, sustained by the spiritualized history of Islam's growth in the region. Many Indonesians, particularly within Javanese culture, utilize talismanic inscriptions (rajah) or amulets (azimat) as a social necessity. They seek visible media as an instrument—referred to in Javanese as lantaran—to reinforce prayer. Rooted in enduring traditions, there is a widespread conviction that urgent personal needs are more effectively answered when accompanied by the preparation of a talisman.

Belief in rajah represents an entrenched cultural practice predating the arrival of Islam. Amulets and talismans remain deeply woven into Javanese cultural heritage; historically, introducing Islam to Java by eradicating these existing traditions would have encountered severe resistance (Zahwan, 2023). Alongside rajah, various esoteric practices (ilmu hikmah) have long been integrated into daily life for specific purposes, notably warding off or treating jinn-related afflictions. However, for modern laypeople, studying and applying these traditions is far from straightforward, remaining largely the preserve of those with specialized metaphysical training. Similarly, rural communities situated far from formal Islamic educational centers—often facing high rates of Qur'anic illiteracy—face significant obstacles when confronting spirit possession without the knowledge to treat it. One practice that remains preserved in certain circles is the recitation and memorization of the names of the jinn kings, as observed at Pondok Pesantren Kayu Sebatang, located on the border of Bandung and Sumedang Regencies. As a traditional (salaf) boarding school, Kayu Sebatang maintains the ethos of the early Islamic propagation period by integrating classical religious disciplines with esoteric wisdom (ilmu hikmah) for marginalized communities. For the students (santri) of Kayu Sebatang, esoteric knowledge and metaphysics profoundly shape their conviction regarding unseen realms beyond the human sphere, occasionally surpassing their confidence in empirical sciences. Conversely, reformist and Islamic purification groups often label the practice of memorizing jinn names for therapeutic purposes as an act of polytheism (shirk) that lacks scriptural justification, maintaining that reciting Qur'anic verses is the only permissible remedy for spirit possession. On this basis, this research investigates the topic titled "Knowing the Names of the Jinn Kings of Java as an Alternative Solution in Treating Spirit Possession," aiming to resolve the tensions existing between traditionalists and Islamic purification movements.

This study employs E.E. Evans-Pritchard’s field anthropology approach grounded in phenomenological philosophy, an essential perspective in the scholarly study of Islam. The research serves to document and preserve the intellectual heritage of Nusantara's esoteric wisdom (ilmu hikmah). To establish context and theoretical support, several relevant prior studies were examined.

Notably, Ayatullah's (2021) doctoral dissertation investigates esoteric religious traditions within the history of Islamic civilization. His study constructs the structural framework of talismanic diagrams (wafaq/wifiq) within the Islamic tradition through the three philosophical pillars of ontology, epistemology, and axiology. The strength of Ayatullah's work lies in its comprehensive philosophical analysis and meticulous explanation of wifiq, offering valuable insights for academic discourse. Utilizing qualitative methods and select classical Islamic literature, his research compiles extensive source material into a single reference volume. While prioritizing philosophical analysis, the study also traces the historical evolution of wifiq and documents communal behavior regarding its application. His findings reveal that wifiq provides psychological and spiritual benefits to adherents and functions essentially as an inscribed form of supplication to Allah. Ayatullah's inquiry closely parallels this study: beyond analyzing the philosophy and historical development of esoteric symbols, it examines the collective mindset of the community that engages with them.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Edward Evans-Pritchard maintained that one cannot comprehend the religion or cultural facets of a community without comprehensively situating the object of inquiry within the culture of the society under study. In elucidating religion, Evans-Pritchard articulated his perspective on magic and witchcraft as the conviction that certain dimensions of life can be influenced or manipulated through mystical and supernatural forces (Nasution, 2019). In Theories of Primitive Religion, he offered an objective account of diverse facets of religious life across the globe (Allen, 2005). Evans-Pritchard's methodological progression begins with investigating and analyzing empirical phenomena within a given community, followed by articulating how traditional communities vividly construct the meaning of their religious traditions. The final step involves contextualizing the perceived irrationality of their supernatural convictions within their internal logic (Tresnani, 2019).

Religion must be analyzed holistically in relation to the broader socio-cultural matrix and daily activities of communal life (Tresnani, 2019), thereby uncovering the concrete manifestations of religious symbols as they relate to the human environment, both individually and collectively (Zahwan, 2023). Pesantren function as epicenters where Sufi orders (tariqah) emerge, develop, and operate, alongside their role in transmitting classical Islamic texts and various branches of religious sciences. According to Dr. Soebardi, the traditions cultivated within the pesantren milieu represent cultural acculturation between the Javanese quest for the essence of life and wisdom, and the Islamic tradition of wandering in pursuit of sacred knowledge (talab al-'ilm) (Dhofier, 2011). Thus, beyond acting as centers of scholarship, pesantren serve as cultural hubs. Applying these scholarly insights—most notably Evans-Pritchard's theoretical framework—enables the researcher to systematically examine the religious symbols at Pondok Pesantren Kayu Sebatang regarding the practice and understanding of the names of the spirit kings of Java preserved in kidungan

literature, while interpreting the underlying purpose behind memorizing these names.

This study employs philosophical, historical, and anthropological approaches:

- Philosophical Approach: Prioritizes coherence and conceptual consistency, particularly regarding religious values. When truth value is anchored in coherence, reasoning operates within a rationalist framework. Coherence denotes theoretical congruence with foundational premises. Rationalism in this context does not merely refer to mental faculties, but aligns with philosophical rationalism as distinct from empiricism and positivism. While empiricism asserts that knowledge derives strictly from sensory experience and positivism grounds reality in material phenomena, rationalism posits that valid knowledge is generated through structured internal cognition grounded in logical reasoning (Ayatullah, 2021). This philosophical lens ensures an exhaustive, profound exploration of the esoteric practice of memorizing the jinn kings' names.
- Historical Approach: Investigates past historical dynamics to trace, reconstruct, and contextualize the developmental trajectory of the practice across time.
- Anthropological Approach: Engages in a holistic analysis of the community—particularly active practitioners—along with the diverse socio-religious interpretations that circulate regarding the tradition.

These three interrelated approaches provide a rigorous analytical framework for capturing the multidimensional perspectives surrounding the research problem

## METHODS

This study employs a qualitative method utilizing a phenomenological perspective. Qualitative research captures descriptive data in the form of spoken or written words, alongside empirical facts observed directly at the research site. It seeks to analyze social life by portraying the social world through the subjective viewpoints and interpretations of individuals (informants) within their natural settings. In other words, qualitative research aims to understand how individuals perceive, interpret, and articulate their social reality. Understanding constitutes the core essence of qualitative inquiry—a process readily stated in theory, yet demanding rigorous execution in practice (Sudaryono, 2021). This study is a descriptive field research project designed to precisely characterize specific attributes, examine the recurrence or distribution of particular phenomena, and identify relational patterns among these occurrences (Koentjaraningrat, 1997).

The textual sources comprise manuscripts, archives, books, and written records of the esoteric practice of the names of the spirit kings of Java preserved at Pondok Pesantren Kayu Sebatang, Bandung, complemented by secondary literature addressing philosophy and ilmu hikmah (esoteric wisdom). In addition, oral data were obtained directly from KH. Ma'mun, the leader (pengasuh) of Pondok Pesantren Kayu Sebatang, Bandung, who holds the

primary manuscript of these names and received formal authorization (ijazah) through an established scholarly lineage (sanad). Oral sources provide distinctive, reliable, and academically accountable insights (Darban, 1997).

Data collection relies on two primary techniques:

- Literature Review (Library Research): Serves as a method for collecting secondary data from relevant books, scholarly documents, and manuscripts to develop the conceptual framework and examine the research object. This process entails rigorous critical review and theoretical synthesis, alongside extracting empirical information and factual references.
- Documentation: Undertaken to collect primary empirical evidence at Pondok Pesantren Kayu Sebatang as verified source material. This includes recorded and transcribed interviews with KH. Ma'mun, as well as photographic and archival documentation of the Kidungan literature containing the names of the spirit kings preserved at the institution.

## RESULTS

### Definition of Jinn and Their Religious Life

From the linguistic perspective of the Qur'an, the term jinn originates from a triconsonantal root comprising jīm (ج), nūn (ن), and nūn (ن). Linguists emphasize that every word derived from this root inherently carries the connotation of concealment, hiddenness, or invisibility (Munawwir, 1997). Arabic vocabulary derived from jīm and nūn universally denotes entities or beings veiled from ordinary sensory perception (Dawud, 1995). The vast majority of Islamic scholars agree that jinn are sentient creations endowed with intellect ('aql), free will (irādah), and moral/religious accountability (taklīf), analogous to human beings (Zuchrufi, 2019). Among the numerous Qur'anic verses addressing the jinn, several explicitly demonstrate that jinn practice religion. In this regard, the world of the jinn closely mirrors the human condition: some are righteous and obedient, while others are rebellious. Allah SWT recounts the words of the jinn in Surah Al-Jinn, verse 11:

وَأَنَّا مِنَّا الصَّالِحُونَ وَمِنَّا دُونَ ذَٰلِكَ كُنَّا طَرَائِقَ قِدَدًا

"And among us are the righteous, and among us are others not so; we have followed divergent paths." (Departemen Agama RI)

This reality is further elaborated in verses 14–15:

أَمَّا الْقَاسِطُونَ فَكَانُوا وَأَنَّا مِنَّا الْمُسْلِمُونَ وَمِنَّا الْقَاسِطُونَ فَمَنْ أَسْلَمَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ تَحَرَّوْا رَشَدًا وَ لِجَهَنَّمَ حَطَبًا

"And among us are Muslims, and among us are unjust deviants. And whoever submits to Allah—those have sought out the path of rectitude. As for the deviants, they serve as fuel for Hell." (Departemen Agama RI)

In human society, individuals frequently demonstrate greater compliance toward laws governed by immediate sensory observation. A common analogy can be seen in everyday road traffic: many motorists disregard traffic laws in the

absence of law enforcement, yet instantly conform when an officer is visibly present, because the legal repercussions of any violation are felt immediately. Citizens readily submit to the state apparatus, which exercises immediate legal authority. Similarly, jinn often demonstrate greater fear toward tangible authorities within their own realm—the ruling monarchs who enforce instantaneous retribution when local decrees are violated. Consequently, they tend to evade the immediate wrath of their sovereign rulers more urgently than divine law, which they perceive merely as future promises and warnings awaiting fulfillment in the hereafter (Saepulloh, 2026).

**Names of the Spirit Kings of Java**

The names of these spirit rulers are recorded in classical kidungan literature, specifically Kidung Rumekso Ing Wengi. Folk tradition attributes this composition to Sunan Kalijaga, who is said to have transmitted it to Sheikh Tapelwaja (an Islamic scholar among the jinn), who subsequently conveyed it to Prince Natapraja, a court poet of Mataram. The knowledge was later passed to Kyai Ranggasutrasna, and ultimately transmitted to Raden Ngabehi Ranggawarsita, the celebrated royal poet (pujangga) of the Surakarta court (Kalijaga, 1975). Below are the names of the spirit kings across the land of Java preserved in the kidungan literature attributed to Sunan Kalijaga, translated from the original Kawi-Javanese manuscript:

Starting in the eastern territory: Durganeluh reigns in Maospait; Bahurekso is the sovereign of the spirits of Blambangan; various well-known entities include Sang Balabatu in Blambangan; Butalotjaja in Kediri (originally Kyai Daha, the prime minister of King Jayabaya and founding ancestor of Kediri, who, following Jayabaya's liberation through moksha, underwent moksha himself and chose an earthly, liminal spirit existence (samara bumi) to guard the realm of Kediri); and Prabu Jeksa rules over Giripura. Sidakare governs Pacitan, Si Klenthing Mungil is in Keduwang, Endrajeksa presides in Magetan, Djenggala rules Tunjungpuri, Prangmuka oversees Surabanggi, Si Aburabur presides in Panggung, Sapudjagad commands Jipang, Sang Kalasekti dwells in Madiun, and Si Korep is the spirit king in Panaraga. Singabarong rules in Djagaraga, Trenggilingwesi in Madjenang, Matjanguguh in Grobogan, Kaladjohar in Singasari, Si Barukuping in Srengat, Si Kalakathung in Blitar, Butakrodha in Rawa, Si Sekar Gambir in Kalangbret, and Tjarubawor holds dominion in Lamongan.

Gurnita resides in Puspalaja, Si Lengkur in Tilamputih, Si Lantjuk in Balora, Gambiran is watched by Sang Kaladurgi, Kedhung Gedhe is governed by Ni Jenggi, Si Klewer in Batang, Kalaprahara in Lasem, Si Dhandangmurti in Sidaju, and Widalangkah maintains residence at Tjandhi Kajanganira. Semarang is ruled by Baratkatiga, Pekalongan by Gunturgeni, Pemalang by Ki Sembungjuda, Suwarda presides over Sukawati, Nyai Ragil in Tandhes, Djajalelana in Suruh, Butatrenggiling Tanggal in Tanggal, Guntinggeni in Kendal, while Kaliwungu is commanded by Gutukapi. In Gegelang dwells Ki Somaita, Dhadungawuk in Brebes, Butasalewah in Pajang, Mandamanda in Matawis, and Palered is secured by Rajegwesi. Kuthagede is home to Nyai Panggung, Pragota presides in Kartasura, Tjirebon is governed by Setan Kober, and Djurutaman holds sway in

Tegalajang. Genawati is the phantom spirit of Waringin Putih. Si Kareteg dwells in Padjajaran, Sapuregel in Betawi, Warusuli at Waringin on Mount Agung, Kalekah traverses the open skies (ngawang-awang), Parlapa resides on Mount Merapi, and Ni Taluki guards Tunjungbang.

Setan Kowak dwells in the spring, Pamasuhan is ruled by Sapuangin, Kresnapada in Rangkudan, Pandhansari in Tarisig, and the ruler of Wanapeti is named Malangkarsa. Ki Sandhungan is stationed in Sawahan, Dudukwarih oversees the port (Palabuhan), and Butatukang occupies Pelajangan. Rara Amis resides in Tawang, Si Kalasekti on Mount Tidar, Maduretna on Mount Sindara, Djelela on Mount Sumbing, Ngurungan is governed by Sidamurti, Terepa rules Mount Merbabu, Si Bangsan dwells in Kombang, Prabu Jaka on Mount Kelir, while Prabu Dipa commands Mount Kendheng. Along the coast (Pasisir) reigns Butakala, Tjapingwarih rules in Telatjap, Kalanadhah in Banyumas, Si Renthil oversees Segaluh, Ki Wesasi guards Bandjaran, Si Korok in Lowanu, Geniara on Mount Gunungduk, Mbok Bareng at Parangtritis, and Drembamoha resides in Purbalingga. Si Kreta guards Karangbolongan, Andongsari in Kedhungwinong, Si Karungkala in Djenu, Bandjaransari in Pengging, Kyai Tjandralatu exercises authority over Pagelen, the White Monkey (Kethek Putih) watches over Mount Kendhalisada, and Butaglemboh resides in Ngajah.

Rara Dhenok is in Demak, Si Bathithit in Tubin, Djuwal Padjal in Talsanga, Tremas is guarded by Kujang, Nyai Kuring in Trenggalek, Si Kuntjung in Tjemarasewu, Kaladhadhung Bentongan in Bentongan, Si Hasmara in Tadji, and Bagus Anom governs Kudus. Manglarmunga resides in Imogiri, Ki Puspagati in Gadhing, Tjutjukdhandhang in Kartika, while the guardian spirit of Tasikwedhi along the Opak River is known as Sanggabuwana. Pak Ketjek presides over Pedjarakan, Tjintjingguling over Kalibening, and Karawelang reigns over Dhahrama. Those residing in Warulandhejan are Ki Daruna and Ni Daruni, Bagus Karang resides in Roban, Udanriris in Pasudjajan, Widanongga in Dalepih, Si Gadhung in Kedhunggarunggung, while Kabarejan is watched over by Tjitranaja. Genapura holds dominion over Madjaraga. Logendjeng resides in Djuwana, Si Badjulbali in Rembang, Si Londir in Wirasaba, Butagarigis in Madura, the ruler of Matesih is named Djaranpanolih, and Obarabir oversees Djatimalang.

Harjo Tiron dwells in Lodhaja, Sarpabongsa in Pening, Parangtandang in Kesanga, Si Ondarandir in Kuwu, the demon of Telagapasir is named Si Djalilung, Kalangadhang in Tuntang, while Bantjurikalabantjuring holds dominion at the foot of Mount Baita. Rara Dungik presides over Randhulawang, Retna Pangasih over Sendang, Butakepala over Prambanan, Mbok Sampur on Mount Wilis, Raden Gelanggangdjati atop Mount Gadjahmungkur, Si Gendruk in Talpegat, Rahaden Pandji in Ngembel, and Rahaden Kusumajuda in Pagerwadja. Si Penthul resides in Katjangan, and in Pecabakan reigns the spirit king Dodolkawit, renowned for his extraordinary powers; his mount is a white steed shielded by the parasol of Kalacakra, armored with wings of steel, enclosed by an iron shield, and bearing a whip woven from a male serpent's tail. If the whip is cracked to the east, calamity retreats to the east; cracked to the south, disaster returns southward; cracked to the west, affliction turns westward;

cracked to the north, misfortune flees northward; cracked upward, catastrophe recoils toward the heavens; and cracked downward, peril descends beneath the earth. The spirit rulers of Jepara and Pati are similarly formidable in power, commanding profound reverence among other sovereign entities: Si Kuthung in Djepara, Gambiranom in Pati, alongside Judapaksa in Delanggu, Tambaksuli in Ngrema, and Si Ketjubung presiding over Kadilangu.

Sunan Lawu Argapura dwells on Mount Lawu, Ki Malanggati in Bajat, Tjujukdhandhang in Tedja, Tjagertasik in Wedhi, Udangeni in Pringtulis, Gunturwatu in Penawangan, Si Lowar in Subang, Buratwangi in Nusabarong, and Udan Gelap commands Pesajangan. Nini Gelu is situated in Djenar, Klabangtjuring in Bandjarsari, Otarwijah in Tengger, Si Dulit in Weleri, Butagigil in Tegil, Talengkung in Watukura, Si Barangdhang in Tjomal, Si Kuru Botjor in Nggoni, and Si Barukin in Kedjajan. Ki Najadipa resides in Singgela, Gustigeni in Wiradesa, Singanada in Petanahan, Si Kuris in the Talrukmini Tree, Si Thethek in Kandangwesi, Durgabau in Djeruklegi, while the spirit pair Ki Pudjengga and Ni Pudjenggi exercise shared rule. Si Baribin dwells in Wawar; in the heights of Awuawulangit reside Raden Rara Subandijah together with Kenangsari; Ketheksekti in Moros, Kombang Ali-ali in Kombang, Ki Buntala in Bertjong, and Mahesakuda reigns across the island of Nusa Kambangan. Rara Dulek oversees Mantjingan, the Sovereign Princess (Radja Putri) governs the cave of Guwa Langse, Raden Hardja Djajengwesthi holds dominion over Parangwedang, while all southern coastal waters fall under the overarching sovereignty of Kanjeng Ratu Kidul (Kalijaga, 1975).

**The Relationship Between the Names of the Jinn Kings and the Treatment of Jinn Disturbances**

According to KH. Eko Ahmadi, head of Pondok Pesantren Tegalwangi, Cirebon, jinn cosmology dictates that a king exercises absolute authority and power over his subjects, requiring unconditional obedience; furthermore, anyone demonstrating knowledge of the sovereign's name is safeguarded from harm by the subjects under that monarch's domain (Ahmadi, 2023). This view is corroborated by KH. Ma'mun of Pondok Pesantren Kayu Sebatang, Bandung, who explains that the absolute sovereignty of the jinn king implies that an individual possessing intimate knowledge of the king's identity is treated by subordinate spirits as holding a rank comparable to the monarch himself. The researcher conducted multiple empirical trials based on this framework, committing to memory the name of the spirit king of Sunda (Padjajaran); whenever encountering individuals afflicted by demonic disturbances or spirit possession, invoking the name of their territorial ruler caused the possessing spirit to plead for mercy in sheer terror. This procedure was replicated multiple times to treat spirit possession, serving as a functional alternative healing technique. A matching account was shared by KH. Eko Ahmadi to the researcher, who noted that reciting the name of the jinn ruler governing the Cirebon region brought an instantaneous cessation to active demonic possessions.

The recitation requires no elaborate ritual; however, invoking the name must be paired with an assertive threat toward the possessing entity. This creates acute psychological intimidation, compelling the spirit to yield when confronted with the stature of its supreme monarch. The immediate consequence of invoking the ruler's name is severe duress, culminating in the spirit begging for clemency and submitting to whoever wields the monarch's authority. Among the congregation and students (santri) of Pondok Pesantren Kayu Sebatang, memorizing these names serves as an alternative protective measure, functioning alongside talismanic inscriptions (rajah), geometric diagrams (wifiq), and healing supplications. In the jinn's internal hierarchy, the king embodies law and order; violating his authority incurs immediate earthly punishment. Theological orthodoxy ('aqīdah) is preserved within this practice for two reasons: first, reciting the names involves no devotional worship ('ubūdiyyah) of the jinn kings—unlike dhikr, wherein Allah's names are remembered to attain divine reward, escape hellfire, and enter paradise; second, it entails no solicitation of occult assistance from the jinn monarch, but merely informs the trespassing spirit that the healer is cognizant of their sovereign's authority, indicating that the practitioner is no ordinary human, but one possessing direct access to their hierarchy.

Regardless of ongoing debates over the formal juridical status (halal and haram) of utilizing spirit names for healing, communities such as Pondok Pesantren Kayu Sebatang maintain an established conviction that authentic esoteric practices (ilmu hikmah) possess spiritual potency (keramat) capable of curbing demonic interference. Those relying strictly on textualism deem the practice unlawful (haram), whereas those who examine its philosophical essence adopt a more contextual stance. Here, Evans-Pritchard's anthropological lens provides critical analytical value:

- Socio-Religious Symbolism: It contextualizes specific symbols and philosophies within Islamic communities, recognizing that identical symbols often hold disparate meanings across theological orientations.
- Cultural Diversity & Conflict Resolution: It illuminates communal variation, tracks interpretive cycles surrounding these names, and helps bridge the divide between divergent Islamic factions, guiding the discourse toward mutual accommodation.
- Hermeneutic Depth: It uncovers the profound, implicit meanings embedded within indigenous religious practices, particularly the memorization of the names of the spirit kings of Java.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The tradition of memorizing the names of the spirit kings of Java represents an enduring effort to preserve an indigenous cultural legacy that faces the risk of gradual extinction amidst modernization. As institutional custodians of Nusantara's traditional heritage, pesantren play a pivotal role in this preservation, particularly in safeguarding classical manuscripts and historical literature passed down by the early propagators of Islam. Beyond its dimension as cultural preservation, this practice functions as a pragmatic alternative method

for addressing spirit-induced afflictions and demonic possession. Grounded in the internal hierarchy of the unseen realm where monarchs command absolute submission, knowledge of these sovereign entities provides psychological and spiritual leverage to subdue disruptive spirits. As reflected in the worldview of the students (santri) and congregation at Pondok Pesantren Kayu Sebatang, such esoteric knowledge (ilmu hikmah) remains socially relevant, fulfilling an ongoing communal need in traditional contexts.

**Recommendations**

- Philological and Manuscript Documentation: Academic and cultural institutions should systematically preserve, digitize, and translate classical kidungan manuscripts to protect them from physical deterioration and loss.
- Theological Dialogue and Synthesis: Academic forums should facilitate constructive dialogue between traditionalist scholars (ahli hikmah) and reformist groups to build mutual hermeneutical understanding, reducing socio-religious friction over esoteric practices.
- Anthropological Field Inquiry: Future research should broaden empirical fieldwork to examine how other traditional communities across different regions of Nusantara adapt, transmit, and contextualize indigenous esoteric practices within contemporary Islamic life..

**FURTHER STUDY**

- Philological and Textual Criticism of Kidungan Manuscripts: Future researchers can conduct comparative critical editions (tahqīq) across multiple manuscript variants of Kidung Rumekso Ing Wengi and Kidung Sarira Ayu preserved in kraton libraries (Surakarta and Yogyakarta) and regional pesantren archives to trace linguistic shifts from Old Javanese (Kawi) to Modern Javanese.
- Comparative Cross-Regional Fieldwork: Expanding fieldwork beyond West Java (Bandung and Sumedang) to Central and East Javanese pesantren and coastal fishing or agrarian communities would provide valuable comparative insights into how regional spirit pantheons vary and function socially.
- Psychological and Neurotheological Analysis: Investigating the clinical and psychological mechanisms of healing during spirit possession cases—such as the impact of authoritative vocal commands, altered states of consciousness, and cultural expectancy on conversion/dissociative disorders.
- Hermeneutical and Inter-Tradition Dialogue: An in-depth theological study comparing traditional ruqyah shar'iyyah methodologies used by Islamic reformist movements with indigenous esoteric wisdom (ilmu hikmah), mapping common ground in metaphysics and intent (niyyah) to bridge denominational friction.

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