

# Modern Dynamic Engagement Between Sufism and Reiki Meditation

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**Abstraksi:** Secara historis dan kultural, sejak akhir 1990an, teknik dan praktik Reiki dan meditasi 'modern' telah memberikan dampak tersendiri bagi rakyat Indonesia. Globalisasi standar pengobatan Reiki, diturunkan dari teknik meditasi Reiki, juga memiliki pengaruh dalam kearifan tradisi Islam. Gerakan global Reiki ini tampak sekali memanfaatkan sinkretisme sebagian Muslim Indonesia. Pada gilirannya, situasi ini menciptakan ketegangan politik antara Islam radikal-puritan melawan guru-guru Reiki Muslim. Menggunakan studi-studi komparatif, artikel ini mendasarkan diri pada fenomena kekinian tentang Islam dan Reiki, dan berusaha mengeksplorasi politik Reiki sebagai produk global, berikut responsnya dalam Muslim Indonesia, baik secara historis maupun sosiologis, dan dengannya kita dapat mengobservasi dialog dinamis antara Budha dan sufisme Islam.

**Katakunci:** Reiki, Sufisme, Pengobatan spiritual, Sinkretisme, Adopsi dan adaptasi, Muslim Indonesia

**Abstract:** Historically and culturally speaking, since the late 1990's, 'modern' Reiki and meditation techniques and practices have impacts on the Indonesian people. The globalization of Reiki on healing attunement that is generated from the Reiki's meditation technique also has its influences in Islamic traditional wisdom. This Reiki global movement has apparently invoked the traditional syncretistic style of some Indonesian Muslim. In turn, this situation creates political tension between the radical and puritan Islam vis a vis the Muslim Reiki's masters. Using comparative studies, this paper is based on the current phenomenon of Islam engaged with Reiki and attempts to explore the politics of Reiki as a global product and its relation to the responses within Indonesian Muslim, historically and sociologically, through which we can observe the dynamics dialogue in practice between Buddhism and Islamic Sufism.

**Keywords:** Reiki, Sufism, Spiritual Treatment, Sinkretisme, Adoption and adaptation, Indonesian Muslim

## Opening

Approaching to this 21<sup>st</sup> millennium, the New Age believes that this millennium is the Aquarian era, the entrance gates of spiritual era. And Reiki is believed by the Aquarians as one of the simple and effective technique to attain human spiritual development or enlightenment.<sup>1</sup> A book about Reiki in Indonesia was firstly published in 1998—written by Anand Krishna, a Sufis master and Indian descendant who lives in Jakarta—and entitled *Meditasi & Reiki: untuk manajemen stres & kesehatan rohani dan jasmani* (Meditation & Reiki: for stress management & the health of body and spiritual.)

<sup>1</sup> See Irmansyah 1998a, b, c; 1999a, b; 2000a, b, c; 200; 2003.

Reiki as a technique, in fact, could be seen as the Buddha's practices without its historic and cultural traditions, in which it excludes the rites of organized or institutional of Buddhism schools. Buddhism, in fact, in modern term of Reiki science is simply a technique or method of Buddha Gautama in experiencing and gaining a pure energy of true-blissful-divine-consciousness. This pure energy of true-blissful-divine-consciousness is known in Indonesian language simply as *Energi Ilahi* or Divine Energy. While by definition, the word *Ilahi* is actually an Islamic terminology for godhead things. Because of this mixture conceptualization of Buddhist term and Islamic term in Reiki, many of the aware-Islamist intellectuals, prominently

coming from the reformist and fundamentalist Islamic groups, accuse and even believe that Reiki is contradictory to Islam. However, many Muslim Sufism practitioners, or at least whose his/her heart is cling to Sufism, are easily attracted and inspired by the miracles of Reiki. They try to catch up their esoteric Islam with the essence of Reiki. Actually, this divine energy or *Energi Ilahi* is also known in Java, particularly in the martial art schools (*Pencak Silat*.) In the 1990's, parts of the movements of the art of inner power schools are actually cultivating techniques of Kundalini and its *chakras* in developing the inner energy in human body (Wilson, 2002.) This energy is popularly known by the practitioners with these following terms: *prana*, *tenaga dalam* or inner power, *chi*, *dhat*, *aura*, and even *qudra* in Thiffan Po Khan martial art school.

Reiki schools are part of global spiritual movements, but, in fact, they have their indirect historical record in Indonesian culture and religiosity, particularly in Java, as I will argue in this article. The spread of Reiki schools or their techniques are simple and cross religious affiliations, but the claim to be one of the ways to attain God's or Divine's consciousness seems threatening the Semitic notion of their exclusive God. The Semitic religions, particularly the fundamentalist type of Islam (and evangelist Christianity), hence have developed their own techniques of spiritual and body healing to save their lay people's or *umma's* faith from *mushrik* or deviation and wickedness deed. This (religious) politics discourse of divine energy is starting to emerge in Indonesian Muslim in late 1990's, when the healing performance of Reiki and Yoga schools and The Evangelist Healing Movements along with the popularity of alternative and natural medicines and healing services popularly emerged, which was coincidence with the time of econo-

mic and political crisis of Indonesia.<sup>2</sup> These circumstances are also signed by the luster of urban Sufism services such as Pusat Kajian Tassawuf (center of Tasauf Study) in Paramadina Foundation Jakarta lead by Jalaluddin Rakhmat and Budhy Munawar-Rachman. Paramadina Foundation has modern and moderate Islamic university, Universitas Paramadina, built by the famous Islamic scholar (the late) Nurcholish Madjid in 1986.

Howell shows us that Sufism attraction in urban elites and intellectuals was starting in the modern Muslim such as the famous '*ulamā'*: Hamka, Harun Nasution, and others in the middle of twentieth century (see Sila, 2000; Howell 1998, 2001, 2002.) But the popularity of these Sufism movements and along with the more modern of alternative healing services came into an obscure situation and accusation by the fundamentalist because of their heresy in nature and in their commodification impact. This commodification issue of those 'spiritual services' is reported in the article of *Kompas*, 1999 on "Meraup Peluang dari Kesadaran Baru" (Grabbing a [Beneficial] Chance from new Consciousnesses.)<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, all of those movements agree that their explorations and approaches to spirituality will not letting go of their firm Muslim identity.

The *perdukunan* world phenomenon or popularly called as *alternative healing services*<sup>4</sup> or traditional supernatural services in their nature actually use the same techniques

<sup>2</sup> About the turmoil of Islam politics in Indonesia in 1990's see Azyumardi Azra, *Pergolakan Politik Islam dari fundamentalisme, Modernisme, Hingga Post-modernisme* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1996.)

<sup>3</sup> See at [www.hamline.edu/apakabar/basisdata/1999/06/17/0066.html](http://www.hamline.edu/apakabar/basisdata/1999/06/17/0066.html) retrieved 12/12/06

<sup>4</sup> For *perdukunan* world see Bruinessen, "Duit, Jodoh, Dukun: Observations on Cultural Change among Poor Migrants to Bandung," *Masyarakat Indonesia* jilid XV (1988), pp. 35-65. See also Mark Woodward's recent book, *Islam, Jawa, Indonesia* (Springer, 2011) "Chapter 2: The Javanese Dukun—Healing and Moral Ambiguity."

or mix their techniques with, or at least, the methods and teachings of Sufism, Yoga, and Reiki or others supernatural techniques but indeed their commodification nuance is more vulgar rather than the elite urban spiritual services. The 'market' of the modern *perdukunan* services is surpassing from the lay people to elite social classes while the modern spiritual services is mostly from middle to high class and more educated. This condition is supported by the *perdukunan* performances in most of Indonesian television programs since late 1990's. Those television (national and regional) programs promoted alternative healing services and also how to deal with the unseen or supernatural world, especially the harmful of evil-spirit. And even how to improve one personality into a worldly and spiritually successful person by practicing their techniques or merely buy their spiritual products, such as talismans or occults stuffs. It is interesting that that phenomenon remarked the uncertainty condition of Indonesian economy and social politics.<sup>5</sup>

The political stands of Reiki as non-secular and cross-religious affiliation, just as the practitioners has believed, in fact create those varies of unintended counter-responses from the fundamentalist Muslim. Meanwhile, the local traditions of spiritual school of Javanese and some of the Sufism practitioners gained the benefits from the Reiki's techniques. The Sufism, even, developed its Islamic rationalization (syncretism act?) on the nature of the Reiki. This political discourse is what I attempt to share in this paper. It explores and depicts the idea of Muslim practitioner of Reiki and their understanding of Reiki as compatible with Islam. And it exposes the counter act of puritan Moslem to the Reiki practitioners such as *ruqyah* and other issues.

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<sup>5</sup> For this occult products one may easily finds in the ads of weekly *Posmo* tabloid, or *Liberty* Magazine, or *Mistery* Magazine, or local newspapers in *Kedaulatan Rakyat* of Yogyakarta.

### The Nature of Reiki in Sufism

According to Wijaya Kusuma (Bakri, 2006: 32-33) Reiki is a spiritual technology that has positive implication to improve human quality of life, to increase health, psychic ability, and spirituality. The Reiki energy, which is exist in the universe, is already served by Allah (Islamic term for God) and everyone may possible to access it to clean and attune his/her seven layers of human conscious-body those are the layer of physical, psychical or emotion, mental, intuition, atma, light or monade, and even spiritual (these are standard Reiki's terminology).

Bakri analogues the cleansing process of Reiki with the Sufism term of *tazkiyya al-nafs* (the purification of soul), which are, consist of *tazkiyya al-badaniyya* (cleansing of the body) and *tazkiyya al-rūhiyya* (cleansing of the spirit) in Reiki the first is constitute a healthiest body and the later is constitute the other six parts of human finest inner-self. The process of the purification in Sufism is known through, first, *takhallī* or avoiding any negative actions, that is in Reiki's terminology cleansing the self from any negative energy and then *taḥallī* or adorning the self with beautiful virtues, in Reiki it is known as purifying the self with positive energy. The very unique similarity between both of Sufism and Reiki is the existence of *no mind* attitude as the act of *tawwakul* or surrendering to God's Will. Basri states that within this perspective the needs of Reiki practices should be based on Sufism (*taṣawwuf*, *tasauf*.) Henceforth, Sufis Reiki is regarded as the way to bringing down onto earth the prophetic content of Sufism in Reiki, whilst not deviate from the Reiki standard.

The moral philosophy of Sufis Reiki in controlling lust and passionate and any negative forms is the very basic requirement for instituting healthiest body, soul, mental, and strengthening spirituality. Without these qualities mankind are not being able to experiencing the beauty of God's Majesty or

*tajjalī* (also translated as streams of light.) In Reiki this final ends of spirituality is known as state of Union or Yoga. Reiki itself is Allah's Mercy that is achieved and developed from human's spiritual journey (Bakri, 2006: 40.) As spiritual technology Reiki is not a kind of mysticism practice, for mysticism (actually, in Indonesian's notion) has a negative or pejorative meaning. Mysticism, Bakri argued, is close to the notion of secretive rites and superstitions, while spiritual technology is more make sense or rational and pure (Bakri, 2006: 47.)

Sufis Reiki, Bakri believed, is a kind of the amalgamation form of two spiritual traditions. One is non-religious affiliation, Reiki and the other is from the womb-hearth of Islam, *tasauf*. The former statement is the popular belief of Reiki practitioners though actually it was the old form of Tantra religion, particularly the Japanese and Tibetan Vajrayana Buddhism.<sup>6</sup> According to Bakri there is epistemological similarity dan distinction between Sufism and Reiki. First, in *tasauf* and Reiki there is acknowledgement of the rite of initiation known as *ijāza* (Sufism) and *attunement* (Reiki.) Both traditions allow their disciples to transmit the 'knowledge' after passed the stages of several initiations. In Sufism the initiator is known as *shaykh* or *murshid* and Master in Reiki. Epistemologically, the spiritual basic of Sufism and Reiki sciences are accomplished through transferring 'heavenly' energy by the specific capable-initiator who have already attuned with it. Second, the special similarity of Sufism and Reiki is the attitude of *no mind* or *tawakkal* as the standard manner to access Divine Energy and without using the power of the mind.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> The salafist-Wahhābī even accused and condemned the Sufism relation to Buddhism as in their book by Al-Hushain, Ahmad bin Abdul Aziz & Dr. Abdullah Mustofa Numsuk, *Kesesatan Sufi Tasawuf, Ajaran Budha!* (Jakarta: Pustaka As-Sunnah, 2004.)

<sup>7</sup> This no mind is curiously paradoxical for me since Reiki and Sufism meditation, though emphasize on no mind state, are clearly acknowledge of visualization

Only thorough this no mind states Reiki and Sufism practice can be operated. Third, the highest concept of both spiritual traditions is to achieve *rūhāniyya* or enlightened-spiritual consciousness not just physical consciousness. Both of them acknowledge patern of specific *dhikr* (incantation by remembrance of Allah) and meditation (*murāqaba*) (Bakri, 2006: 42.)

He believes that the effective combination of the traditions is really productive for the attuning processes in individual's life. In the frame of Sufis Reiki, practice of Reiki is recognized as a way to extend Allah's Mercy and Favor in any dimensions of life. Bakri insisted that that is why Reiki should be understood and internalized in frame of Islamic spirituality practice or *tasauf* (Sufism.) Meaning that the therapy of Reiki is made for as a practice of *tasauf spirituality* (Sufi Healing), for *tazkiyya al-badaniyya* (cleansing of the body) and *tazkiyya al-rūhiyya* (cleansing of the spirit) is the basic principle of *tasauf*. For the practitioner of Reiki, spiritually speaking, Sufism may improve the understanding and behaviour of the practitioner with more Sufis religiosity (Bakri, 2006: 34.) He concluded that Sufis Reiki is Reiki tradition that is filled with *tasauf*, by the result it will strengthen in accessing and distributing energy. The body and spirit transformation of the Sufis Reiki practitioner is positively beneficial for improving health, faith, and psychical ability and power (Bakri, 2006: 38, 40). The chemical reaction of both traditions will increase quality and quantity of energy (in Reiki's perspective) because of the additional *dhikr* and *sulūk* (Sufism mystical path) and improve the quality of *khushū'* (a tranquility and meditative state in surrendering before God) (Bakri, 2006:44.)

The spiritual enlightenment is only

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state such as light balls, colors, and symbols in their intention (*niyya*) during meditation, self healing, and in other purposes in accessing energy, especially in a distant healing.

achieved through spiritual evolution that is the perfection path of spirituality from level to level (or *maqām*), that is, from the physical level (*maqām al-nafs*) to a level of enjoying communication with Allah (*maqām al-wiṣāl*).<sup>8</sup> In their spiritual journey, Bakri stated that the practitioner of Sufism will be rally round in attaining state of *fanā'* if at the same time practicing Reiki. *Fanā'* is usually Sufism terminology for spiritual 'trance', but here it is used for a state of tranquil contemplation. A state when the wave of mind tuned in the condition of *theta* wave.<sup>9</sup> By practicing Reiki, the Sufis will easily enter into the wave of alpha (*khushū'*), theta (*fanā'*) and delta (*baqā'* or union-liked state) (Bakri, 2006: 45-46.)

### Reiki Symbols in Sufis Reiki

Exactly the same as in Reiki Tummo, Sufis Reiki also regarded those Reiki symbols as follows: by affirming that only Allah who has the power (*al-Qawiyy*) and brave (*al-'Azīz*).

Those symbols are not the source of any power. The source of the energy in Reiki Tummo is simply the blessing from Divine Source. Symbols are used to refer to specific types of energy.... The method is simi-

lar to referring to a specific person within a group of people. You can refer to the person by calling the person's name or by writing the name on a piece of paper and holding it up.... We use symbols.... as the main goal of Reiki TUMMO is to learn about the heart and the blessing from Divine Source, the use of symbols is temporary.... After understanding more about the blessing from Divine Source and removing more limitations, you will not be required to use symbols in channeling energy. The most important factor is how you surrender to Divine Source. It is how you open your heart to let the blessing of Divine Source work on you and through you. The truth is known only by the Inner Heart within your heart.

**Picture 1**  
Symbols



- A. Palm Master Symbol  
B. Tibetan Fire Serpent  
C. The Book of Sufi Healing page 139, by Syaikh Hakim Moinuddin

In conclusion, Bakri believed that by practicing Reiki a Muslim practitioner would affirm its energy quality and increase their spirituality faster if mixed with Sufism practice. Though he acknowledged that without *tasauf* Reiki practitioners still produce higher conditions of spiritual consciousness (Bakri, 2006: 46.) Based on this notion, it is firmly safe to state here that it is Sufis who adopts Reiki techniques or in other word, Sufism is adapting Reiki wisdom and its techniques.

### The Nature of Man in Sufis Reiki

In Islam, particularly Sufism, Man is the

<sup>8</sup> See Bakri, which is taken from Syaikh Hakim Moinuddin (1991). *The Book of Sufi Healing*, refers to the six levels of human spiritual stages:

Maqām al-Nafs or station of Ego  
Maqām al-Qalb or station of Heart  
Maqām al-Rūḥ or station of Pure Soul  
Maqām al-Sirr or station of Divine Secret  
Maqām al-Qurb or station of Closeness with Allah

Maqām al-Wiṣāl or station of Union

See also Gus Muh in his "Manajemen Jati Diri" (2005) and Syaiful M. Maghsri in his *Kecerdasan Bioenergi Jalan Spiritual Menuju Penyembuhan, Pencerahan, and Revolusi Hidup*. <http://www.bukusolusi.com/?bio=product&product=detail&tiz=1&aff=1>

<sup>9</sup> The books of Reiki refer these 4 states of brain-wave: *Beta* (14-20 MHz), *Alpha* (7-14 MHz), *Theta* (4-7 MHz) and *Delta* (0-4 MHz). Gus Muh and Syaiful also refer to this notion. See *ibid*.

image of God and destined by God as the *khalīfah fī al-ard* or the God's noble representation to govern Earth because mankind has certain 'hardware' more than other creatures. Mankind has capability and potential to make evolution physically by sciences and technology and spiritually through practicing spirituality. Their spiritual evolution will transform them to become a perfect and excellent creature or *al-insān al-kāmil*. Even, angels could not attain this level (Bakri, 2006: 39.) This kind of personality, *al-insān al-kāmil*, is able to accessing *energy Ilahi* or Divine Energy (in Bio Energy terminology it is called The Absolut Unifying Energy) and making them rise beyond angelic realm.<sup>10</sup>

It was assumed that this ability is, in a certain degree, analogue with the story of the Prophet Muḥammad while experiencing the event of *mi'rāj* (journey beyond the heavens.) Bakri affirmed that in different capacity and quality, individuals are able to make such a journey like the prophets and the saints. And through this Sufis Reiki technology, individuals have the chance to experience by themselves (Bakri, 2006: 40.) The result of the journey is profitable for individuals' benefit and other common people.

The idea of *insān al-kāmil* in Islam, seemingly, does resemble with the meaning of Buddha in Mahayanic and Theravadic perspective. That is attaining the perfect man condition, a Buddha (Cheng, 1981:57.) Buddha is alleged to have said,

I have no teacher, none is like me; in the world of men and gods none is equal. I am a saint in the world, a teacher unsurpassed in wisdom, sole supreme Enlightened One. Having attained tranquility (*sitibutha*) I am at peace (*nibutto*) in the darkened world I will beat the drum of

immortality (Mahavagga 1, 6.)

I am the first and greatest in the world. This is my last birth. (*buddha-carita, sutta-nipata IV*) (Cheng, 1981:58.)

Regardless its theological debate, this notion (underlines words), it seems to me, is parallel to story of the nature of *Nūr Muḥammad*. In fact, under the light of Mahayana Buddhism of Buddha Trikaya (Cheng, 1981: 58-59) I found that the *Nūr Muḥammad* is sound parallel. Just like Buddha, *Nūr Muḥammad* is regarded as the transcendent Dharmakaya (the body of Dharma) that is viewed from the absolute and universal point of view. It is also belived by the Sufis that all of the creation is from *Nūr Muḥammad* this is parallel to Buddha as *Sambhogakaya* who as Bodhisatvvas spread the teaching of Dharma. It is reminding us of to the biblical knowledge on "Spirit of God is moving on the water" story of creation, to teach and preach is an active action as to create. Muḥammad as historical prophet is just like Buddhist notion as *Nirmanakaya*, the historical Sakyamuni Buddha Gautama. Moreover, al-Qur'ān and other biblical texts commonly agree that it is from God's Spirit the soul of mankind is breathed (Q 38:72) and all of the spirits are from God: the light of the Ultimate Light (Q 24:35.)

A practitioner of (Sufis) Reiki, just like Buddha the Perfected One or *al-insān al-kāmil*, is believed as a person who possesses *all power, splendour, fame, wealth, knowledge, and perfection* as we may comparatively view in the 'benefits' and 'advantageous' of mastering and practicing Reiki.<sup>11</sup> Again, Cheng (1981: 60) reviewed for us that Buddha is described as possessing the four kinds of purity:

#### 1. Purity of the body (*Asraya-parisuddhi*)

<sup>10</sup> Syaiful Bakri quoted this statement from Nasaruddin Umar, "Sinergi Alam untuk Energi Manusia (Perspektif al-Qur'ān)," introduction in Sutan Remy Sjahdeini, *Hidup Sehat dengan Reiki & energi-energi Non Reiki* (Jakarta: Grasindo, 2005), p.xxiv. See also Irmansyah Effendi, *Kundalini 2* (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2003), 147.

<sup>11</sup> Could it be that apparently 'missinterpretation' use of Reiki (and Bioenergy) is perhaps making these qualities in a sense of really materialistic and 'secular' notion?

2. Purity of observation as regards objects of sense (*Alambana-parisuddhi*)
3. Purity of mind (*Chitta-parrisuddhi*)
4. Purity of knowledge (*Prajna-parisuddhi*)

He has a great compassion (*Mahakaruna*) and love to save or to release all beings from suffering and misery (in Reiki: to heal self and the world.) In Pure Land Buddhist, this loving and merciful Buddha is Amitabha (Amida), parallel to Nūr Muḥammad. Human beings cannot obtain salvation (*shafā'a* or a state of body purification to perfection and attained spiritual enlightenment) by their own effort, but achieve their goal by calling (*dhikr*) the name of Amitabha Buddha (that is no-mind and relax in attuning state with God's Divine Energy, *tawakkul*.)

#### The Nature of Reiki Energy in Sufis Reiki

Reiki energy is Intelligent-Energy, and it is only work on and for positive intentions and purposes that is why it is called in Reiki tradition: Divine Energy. It is also meant as Universal Life Force Reiki which, Bakri stated, is energy that has highest intellegentia and consciousness, which is incredibly sensitive to any stimulus and can be used simply for ethical dan religious aims and purposes (Bakri, 2006: 48.)

Reiki is the Original Source of Energy and from this Original Source of Energy Allah creates Universe with all of its contents. In Sufism it is known as Nūr Muḥammad.<sup>12</sup> It is said so because Nūr Muḥammad or Prophetic Light is Allah's will (*irāda*) to be the Crown of Universe. Allah's will is existed before the Universe is created. The Will itself is the cause of His action (*af'āl*) to create the Universe. Henceforth, Nūr Muḥammad is equal with the original source of the existence of Universe (Bakri, 2006: 48.) This Original Source of Energy as the germ and spirit of universe and holy persons is Nūr Muḥammad. This is the interpretation of

God's word in Sacred Ḥadīth (*al-ḥadīth al-qudsī*), "*Law lā Muḥammadin mā khalaqtu al-samāwāt wa al-arḍ*" (if not because of you Muḥammad, I will not create heaven and earth.) Based on this concept Sufism believed the *al-ḥaqīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* or the essence of Nūr Muḥammad (Bakri, 2006: 48.)<sup>13</sup> Reiki can be regarded as God's blessing or in Islam it is regarded as *al-barāka al-ziyāda al-khayr* (the benefits or positive impacts that is coming from Allah.) By using Reiki as spiritual technology or 'spiritual medicine,' the practitioners can be said that they are practicing of what done by the sages, prophets, saints, sufists, and even philosophers (Bakri, 2006: 51.)

Apparently, beside as simply for healing techniques and/or spiritual enlightenment, Reiki practice, actually, has just created a pluralistic view on religions and interreligious relationships. Perhaps, it is because of this Tantric wisdom as the source of original worldview of the Javanese that make Javanese is very eminent of its moderate and pluralistic attitudes in their religiosity. However, a doubt is arising whenever we criticize the very fact of its commodification attitude in Reiki. Thus, it is questioning the place of selling the Reiki spirituality and healing, in contrast to the belief that Reiki is only working for ethics and religiously positive purposes. Since one easily feels that selling spirituality 'cheaply' in Reiki is sound like really improper in spiritual path. But that is the reality of popular Reiki. Moreover, business is not so negative or even evil in Reiki spirituality, and in fact Buddhism and Islam too, is regarded business as a proper job for living, of course it should be based on trust and honest attitude or in the line of Dharma.

#### Sufis Reiki in Solving Theological Problem

Bakri stated some argument why Reiki is

<sup>12</sup> See <http://www.nurmuhammad.com/>

<sup>13</sup> See Sutan Remi Sjahdeini.

reasonable enough and not contradicted with Islam (Bakri, 2006: 71-74)<sup>14</sup>

First argument is that Reiki is technology. Reiki is just like modern technology that is never been stated in al-Quran and Hadith.

Second argument is Islam—as a blessing religion for universe (*rahma li al-‘ālamīn*)—makes humanity and nature could improve its quality: physically, psychically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually healthier than it previous state. And based on those notions, indeed, Reiki purposes are nothing different with the teaching of Islam.

Third, the channeling process of Reiki to any things and any persons, which is flowing down from God’s power through practitioners is able to operate if only the practitioners are in a state of surrender to God or *tawakkul*. No one of the Reiki practitioner is worshipping Reiki, for if it is so, the Reiki energy could not be transmitted. It is God’s will himself who control the transmission.

Fourth, as a science and knowledge, it does not matter whether Reiki is coming from Japan or Tibet. The benefits are so real and very useful particularly for mankind’s needs of health and spirituality.

Fifth, Each of Reiki practitioners always prays before, during, and after practices whether for self healing or healing others. Prayer is the heart of religion that connected man with their God. They way of Reiki is noble and religious.

Sixth, The surrendering and relaxing attitude to God’s present in Reiki practice is not using mantra or any kind of offerings. It is pure spiritual exercise to purifying the energy gates or chakra in order to access divine energy.

Seventh, Energy of Reiki is entering the body through crown chakra that has a divine nature and act as the spiritual center in human body. It is affirmed that no negative energy

could contaminated this chakra. That is why Reiki is religious and spiritually positive.

Eighth, Dhikr as the practice to gain positive energy in Islam would not be able to collaborate with Reiki energy if Reiki energy is negative.

Ninth, Reiki principles to improve positive energy are obviously supporting Islamic teachings and purposes.

Tenth, Reiki is empowering Muslim’s faith because it is the way to contact and communicate with Allah in any sessions of Reiki healing.

Eleventh, What is known as union with God or Yoga or in Sufistic term as *al-wahda al-wujūd* is affirmation with *haqq al-yaqīn* (absolutely believed) that Allah is with(-in) his servant. This is a state of *maqām al-wiṣāl* (see footnote 7.) This total affirmation is also known as *wahda al-shuhūd* or total witnessing of servant to God as stated in Q.s. Tāhā: 41 and 46, “I have chosen you for My Self, do not be afraid, I am always be with you.”

Hsueh-Li Cheng stated, “*The Buddha is said to be as soteriologist at heart and his teaching is practical in character. His main concern is the salvation of mankind from evil and suffering* (1981: 68).” And this is what Reiki practitioners are practicing.

#### *Instance of the Adoption and Adaptation Process*

What is really happening in Sufistic Reiki is the process of Sufism in adopting Reiki techniques and then adapting it as their Sufism techniques. For instance, there are five Dhikr meditations in Wijaya Kusuma Reiki,

##### 1. *Dhikr* Grounding Meditation<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> In this Grounding Meditation of Sufis Reiki the *Kechari Mudra* (placing the tongue above the soft palate and into the nasal cavity) is also known and regarded as a symbol of ‘welcoming’ and ‘leading’ a way to greet the descended Allah’s Heaven Blessing Energy in responding the Allah’s Earth Energy (visualized as green) (Bakri, 2006: 142.)

<sup>14</sup> Compare this with Q-RAK statement at <http://reikiqrak.wordpress.com/2010/01/26/the-philosophical-theological-basis-of-q-rak/>



2. *Dhikr* Kundalini Meditation
3. *Dhikr* Heart Meditation
4. *Dhikr* Light Meditation<sup>16</sup>
5. *Fī Dhikrillāh* Meditation.

There we saw that four of them are exactly the same as in Reiki Tummo course and only added with *dhikr* or Islamic ritual incantations. The pattern, actually, is the same as Reiki's had but with additional Islamic term and prayers in here and there steps of Reiki formulation. Such as in Sufis Reiki, or (Islamic) Bio Energy,<sup>17</sup> all of those meditations and other Reiki practices—such as self-healing, direct and distant attunement, drawing symbols, channeling energy to patient, and 'programming' (making all things protected by Reiki energy from all of negative energy)—are should be began with *dhikr ta'āwudh* or asking psychic protection to God by reading "*A'ūdhubillāhi min al-shayṭān al-rajīm*" (I seek protection to Allah from all of the cursed-devil's temptations) to protect oneself from negative energy. By reading this, practitioner remembers and acknowledges his weakness nature that always

<sup>16</sup>Meditation of Blue Lights is also known in Khwāja Shamsuddin Azeemi, the greatest Spirituality Master in Pakistan today and he has appeared in many TV and International Shows. In that one has to read Durood Sharif 11 times, *yā Hayy yā Qayyūm* 11 times, and then imagine that Blue rain is falling on one's head and the rays of light are absorbing in ones heart. It is a very calming meditation. After the meditation one has to make prayer to God. See "Meditation in Islam" at <http://www.sunniforum.com/forum/archive/index.php?t-14528.html> retrieved 03/02/07. The Reiki Light meditation did the same thing; the distinction is the blue aura is turn to be white because of white light ball pouring the blue aura. The meditation of colorful radiant-lights is common meditation in Tibetan, SHKM, and even in To Thi Anh Therevada Buddhism.

<sup>17</sup>I said 'Islamic Bioenergy' because actually bioenergy is in position as Reiki Tummo, in which it opens to all racial and religious background. But no doubt that his courses are intended to Muslim clients as one may read his latest books (*Menembus Dimensi Ruang dan Waktu*, 2006 and *Zimat*, 2006.) These two books and Gus Muh's books (*Hakikat Meditasi dan Reiki*, 2003 and *Hidup Menuju Allah*, 2002) are the canonized of the *fī Dhikrillāh* Meditation.

needs God's helps. And then he/she reads *Bismillāh al-Rahmān al-Rahīm* (In the Name of Allah, Most Merciful and Compassionate.) This prayer is for strengthening one-soul to do all of positive deeds. After reading those prayers, one is ready to begin his/her affirmative intention (*niyya*) to 'pull' Divine Energy and do the intended ordinary Reiki practices. During the meditation state, the Sufistic Reiki practitioners, with relax and no mind state or *tawakkul*, constantly *dhikr* to Allah, suggestion is repeating Allah names. Once the session of practice is finished we should thanks to God by affirmatively saying *taḥmīd* words: *al-ḥamdulillāh* (All praises is for Allah) and then pray for the grace of His Energy. To conclude, one thing that is likeky unique in Sufis Reiki is it has its Islamic prayers in those techniques. Here, I would not mention all of the practices of Sufis Reiki techniques in Islamicate Reiki, for it would be too much energy (and many pages) to reading all of those things. Thus, for example from the technique of 'programming,' the Sufis Reiki pattern runs as follows:

1. Intended your heart to do something, such as cleansing the room for negative energy by chanting *ta'āwudh* and *bismillāh* first, then
2. Pray to Allah
3. Affirmation, for instance, says, "clean all of negative energy, whatever forms are, from this room with *Reiki*. In the name of *Allah* and *Allah* Mercy. Be executed."
4. Turn on both of your palms chakras to the room until you feel it is enough. Commonly it needs 15-60 minutes per session. But if you sensitive enough and you feel that the energy is still flow it may to be continued.
5. During the channeling, the practitioner should be constantly in a state of relax and always asking Allah help by praying any suggestive prayers such as *al-Ikhlāṣ*, *al-Falaq* and *al-Nās* verses or others.

6. Once it is finished, close it with *tahmīd* and prayer.

In ordinary Reiki, it is simply to replace the Allah word above with the term of any God's names, and during the session the practitioner is simply totally surrender and relax to God's will but no such of formal prayers, though any prayer is not prohibited even encouraged. Nevertheless, Reiki energy as a divine energy is mentally agile. In Syaiful's<sup>18</sup> Bio energy the term Reiki is replaced by *Bioenergy*.

In fact, it is in the *fi Dhikrillāh* Meditation, Sufis rites are really empowered by Reiki energy. Bakri depicted the general technique of this meditation:

1. Intention is made for routines rites of sufiistic *dzikir*s tradition (usually after five times a day of prayers), then
2. Intended to access divine energy during the above dhikr
3. In doing the traditional dhikr one should completely realize that he/she is accessing Reiki energy

It is worth to note here that in Bio Energy the 'programming' technique (Bakri called it 'materialization') is developed creatively to make affirmative action in gaining all of secular, profane, and material things and needs such as automobile, richness, self esteem, and all of the lived-life of individual's fame and fortune. In Bio Energy and Gus Muh's<sup>19</sup> Reiki, it is 'creatively' used as a kind of traditional luxurious-occult science or *perdukunan*.

#### Healing the Spirit of the Nation? A Concluding Remark

Today, bulks of books and articles on condemning the *klenik/mistis* (or magic

and superstition) practices are easily found in any Islamic bookstalls and even in any bookseller at veranda of the mosques. Such as the 'best seller' books by Perdana Akhmad, *Membongkar Kesesatan Praktek Sihir pada Reiki, Tenaga Dalam, dan Ilmu Kesaktian* (2004) and *Membongkar Kesesatan Perilaku Syirik Masyarakat Indonesia* (2005), and *Kesaksian* (2007) published by Seri Psikoterapi Ruqyah, Quranic Media Pustaka, Yogyakarta. Many of soap opera in national televisions clearly depicted how Islamic views (especially from fundamentalist, radicalist, reformist and the contemporary *Salafist*) direct and determine individuals understanding, and therefore significantly changed the public's believe in spirituality, prominently spiritual and physical health. The result of these circumstances is pictured in following news,

Patroli News. Indosiar.com. Yogyakarta Thursday (19/01/06), the alternative healing office (of Bioenergi, author) was attacked and destroyed by 200 people with sharp-arms (later known as the *Lasykar Jihad* member—author.) Furiously they accused that the office is propagating *perdukunan* (Shamanism/black magician—author.) This is regarded as heretics' even shirk. They are throwing Molotov.

Such above criminal news is not really surprising news in Indonesia, the largest tolerance Muslim in the world. The tension between this subculture is vividly occurred occasionally. The national tragedy of the slaughtering of *Dukun Santet* (black magician) in 1997, prominently, East Java seems always occurred particularly in facing on the elite political transition, such as local and national Election. The Phenomenon of traditional and modern *dukun* as the largest agent of these *alternative* health and spirituality is always has a polar opposite with the puritan Islam (the pioneer is Muhammadiyah.) Among the reformist Muslim movements in Indonesia there are *Persis* and currently the 'Salafist ustādh' from *Lasykar Jihad*/the Jihadist Troopers, *MMI/Indonesian Council of Muja-*

<sup>18</sup> See Dr. HM Syaiful M. Maghsri DN, Med. M.Ph. and his *Bioenergy Clinic* at <http://bioenergi.co.id/home>

<sup>19</sup> See Drs. H. Muhammad Basis, MBA, M.Ri. MPP at <http://bhakti-nusantara.blogspot.com/2011/04/sekilas-tentang-gus-muhammad-basis-gmb.html>

*hidin*, FPI/ Defender of Islamic Front whom are the most radical in its rejection of spirit beliefs, *adat* rituals, and traditional Muslim practices that have no sound basis in the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth.

Meanwhile, the meaning of 'health' (and 'wealth') in Indonesian's policy is still far from the notion of better. The political, sociological, and economical crisis since the middle of 1990's and took its peak in the collapse of New Order Regime made 'health' is expensive, worse, and uncertain. Van Bruinessen's (1988) depicted how poor economic condition in the grassroots made many people chose *dukun* as their profession, even though not all of the *dukuns* possessed the real ability. Poverty made many of people turn to Dukun asking for a short cut ways to empower their health (physically and psychically) and wealth. Though health care and health policy of the Government is constitutionally planned but the implementation is very limited.

The only visible prestige of the New Order regime was health program for mother and children (*Posyandu*), but generally health is still expensive for the middle and poor people. Apparently, the policy of health is just policy, that's all and nothing more. This is proved from their very slow responded on SARS, and Bird Flu endemic and other.<sup>20</sup> At the same time health exercise is only emphasized on physical or 'outer' aspect, a sport, as the result of rationalization and modernization of health by government to prevent its militant aspect of 'Cult' (Wilson, 2002.) The modernization of all aspect also bring rationalization on, as signified with its scientification, both of local religion and local-traditional spirituality, such as *pencak silat* or martial art schools and *kebatinan* or Javanism. Whilst religion (in this case, Islam) takes its evolution with the continuously

coming of young Indonesian students from Islamic countries (Arab, Yaman, Pakistan, Egypt, and even America), the spiritual part of martial art is evolving along with its outer 'edge' form: the inner power school. It is answering the demand and definition for 'inner' health (Wilson, 2002.)

Meanwhile, neo Salafist found in its believed-foundation that Islam is the medical-answered for all of the 'sicknesses of modernity. Islam is *kāffah* or perfectly fit and right for modern life and even the future life for any one's life. And in this terminology, Islam, through the Prophet Muḥammad model, also answered the way to achieve this demands of spiritual and physical health.

Thus, the coming of Reiki is apparently becoming the string to sew the beads of local spirituality, martial art, and inner power with Islam into one single rosary. Meanwhile, at the same time, neo-Salafist is trying to sew all of existed un-uniform Islamic beads though it is still hard to be realized. Reiki, however, is success in making of many rosaries, instead of a single rosary. It makes many of Muslims attracted to practice Reiki. And for the first time, they are sitting together publicly with non-Muslim and even *kebatinan* persons from any racial and class background. A pluralistic view is really happening compare to the story of *kejawan* and other modern spiritual sects that is more secretive and exclusive. Under its modern and scientific fabric of spirituality and accessories with Islamic view of Sufism, Government does not negatively suspect Reiki unlike to what they do to *Kejawan* and *Kebatinan*. At the same time, Reiki also empowered the practitioners of *kejawan*, *kebatinan*, martial art, inner power, and Sufism schools. Perhaps, Government sees the positive offering of Reiki in serving for the benefit of people health or they simply see Reiki as kind of apolitical *perdukunan* services.

<sup>20</sup> See Eko Prasetyo, *Orang Miskin Dilarang Sakit* (Yogyakarta: Resist Book, 2000.)

### Islamist Respond to Reiki Practice

As stated above, the Indonesian crisis—that took its peak in 1998—is often condemned by most of religious regimes as the result of irreligious acts of the elite’s rulers and its peoples. They affirmed that the Indonesian people and its elites have deviated from the true way of (particularly Islamic) God. And, it is in these political circumstances Reiki spiritual healing came to grow and offered to ‘heal’ the uncertain life of Indonesian. This situation is exactly has to face with the discourse of neo salafy, in which Islam is the answered for all of modern human problems. The same notion of Reiki offers to modern people.

The problem and contestation of religion and science just like in the case of ‘Healing sects and anti-cult campaigns China’ as told by Nancy N. Chen (2003) is not happening in the case of Reiki or in previous inner power schools, including Falun Gong. This happens because from the beginning the art of inner power school had already accepted modern science and even, in a certain degree, the Islamic doctrine in their philosophy. And, probably, Government regards this new form of spirituality and other *perdukunan* realm as under category of alternative medical service that offers a holistic health.

This situation is also signed and triggered by the sporadically events of ‘ghost possession’ throughout Indonesian archipelagos. In that time, and still in the present time, Jinn or Ghost possessed many of (female) students of Indonesian, coincidently with the unrest of natural and human calamities. This brought an idea that, actually a common symptom in religious logics, these are the signs that people of Indonesia is being deviated from God, and many of them are in sinfulness. Since then on, many Islamic communities held a publicly mass recitation of the Qur’ān and congregation asking for God’s forgiveness. But the coming and popularity of Reiki and through its local derivation—

such as Bioenergy, neo Zen Reiki, Deo Reiki, Neo Sufi Reiki, Sufistic Reiki, and Reiki Kundalini—and others local Javanese spiritualities and religiosities in mass people, is inexcusable to the particularly Salafists ideology.

To answer and to respond against those of, in their point of view, un-Islamic practices, the Muslims particularly the Salafist ‘creatively’ created many of spiritual services to heal Indonesian people of health, wealth, and of course, spirituality. For instances, to answer of meditative life of Yoga or Reiki and others practices Muslim offered *ṣalāt khushū’* which is taught by Abu Sangkan as the ultimate meditation technique (Sangkan, 2005.) Others Islamic spiritual health services are ESQ of Ary Ginanjar, MQ methodes of AA Gym, and prominently *ruqyah* service. Regardless its economical motives that is occurring in this massive market, as one may easily observes from the huge business of publishing, health products, domestic stuffs (from soap to fabrics), and of course political votes,<sup>21</sup> the *Ruqyah* of Salafist was created as a discourse of anti-shirk (a kind of anti-cult but more religious in its nuance) movement to fight against those irreligious or un-Islamic practices.

The service that is call *ruqyah* prominently to counter the ‘spirit possession’ ritual in Reiki, inner power school, Javanese *ruwatan* or dukun’s Mantras. *Ruqyah* is believed to be the prophet action to heal people who are possessed by spirits by reciting certain verses of the Qur’ān to force out the evil spirit from man’s body. In fact, Reiki and others also claimed that their ability and power is purely from God. The Sufist also counteract this discourse by saying that the Salafist doctrine on *ruqyah* is not stronger enough and in

<sup>21</sup> See Budiyanto, A. “Converting Icons, How Indonesian Muslim’s are conquering the Icons.” Paper presented on ARI 4<sup>th</sup> Graduate Workshop: *Religion and Technology in Contemporary Asia* (19 – 20 January 2006), Singapore.

fact many jinns were Muslim and listening the Qur'ān without felt of burnt by any fire. "Anyway, how comes fire can burn *jinn* that is created from fire" is the argument of some other Muslim.<sup>22</sup>

For physical health, the salafist revives the *al-ṭibb al-Nabawī* of Ibn al-Qayyim (scholar from medieval era) as the complete and perfect medical aids for all of physical illness such as *bekam* or wet cupping techniques (affirmatively from Chinese), honey bees jelly, and black cumin. In which, in all of human civilization bees honey with its other products and herbs, including black cumin, or even *bekam* was known long ages before Islam, particularly in the Middle Eastern and Asian civilizations. Meanwhile, to cure mental, emotional, intellectual, job, or all of worldly problems and shortcomings, and even spiritual 'illness,' a set of certain Qur'ānic verses will able to relieve one's problems, accordingly by reciting those verses. This is exposed in the Islamic tabloid *Khalifah*, initially issued in 2001. In the meantime, the Javanese piety (or *tirakat*) is counteracted with Islamic fasting.

This manner is based on the ideology that Islam is *kāffa* or perfect, therefore any things of worldly and spiritual aspects are exist in Islam, a notion that is exactly similar in Christian's evangelism perspective.<sup>23</sup> Almost hundred of books have been published issuing the above matters to encourage society back to the way of Prophet and his *Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ* (companions) in questioning to all of our worldly and spiritual needs. It is becoming varies in its expressions and has initiated massive movement indeed. In addition, books on how to achieve material

<sup>22</sup> See the debate of the effectiveness of *ruqyah* in Muhammad Luthfi Ghozali, "*Ruqyah: dampak dan bahayanya menguak dunia jin* (Semarang: Gunung Djati, 2006.)

<sup>23</sup> The discourse of Reiki in Christianity is argued in [http://www.yabina.org/TanyaJawab/Okt\\_02.htm](http://www.yabina.org/TanyaJawab/Okt_02.htm) and [http://www.yabina.org/artikel/A15\\_01.HTM](http://www.yabina.org/artikel/A15_01.HTM) retrieved 08/01/07

wealth based on Islamic spirituality are also flourishing in recent decade; the titles are range from the Islamic elements such as prayers, *ṣalāt*, *ṣadaqah*, and others as the way to gain successful life materially. Apparently, religion and its spiritual messages in its practices, however, should be able to answer the demands of worldly life of the adherents.

While Reiki is enabling a pluralistic action, the making of spirituality as commodification is overshadowing Reiki's popular image. Looking at that, could it be Reiki bring a public enlightenment to this commercial society in the near future such as Christian Evangelism? However, it seems, at the present time, Reiki is still looks like an alter form of Qi Gong school, in which it is heavily emphasize on healing rather than a purely spiritual path.

Another issue is from many of religious persons who are yielding its negative impacts of Reiki—and other un-common formal religiosity—as the source of personals mental and physical disorder.<sup>24</sup> Though in fact, formal religiosity has the same impact too, and maybe worse, as it is proved by the recent escalation of their radicalism ideology and claim their irrational violence actions are a consequence of God's decree, in which this is really threatening others. Thus, as Indonesian's religion majority is Islam and Islam is the dominant spirituality and piety discourse, person like Gus Muh, Syaiful M. Maghsry, and others should address Islamic vocabularies as theirs, not to say only, references.

## Conclusion

As a closing remark, politically speaking, we could say that the Divine Energy or Energi Ilahi as proposed by Reiki or others is actually not neutral, since it is always regarded as an exclusive 'power' belonging to

<sup>24</sup> See "The Truth about spontaneous Chi Kung (Jinns - Demonic Possession)" at <http://www.dangerofchi.org/> retrieved 04/02/07

a specific group. Though, I myself anxiously ask whether somebody could monopolize God's Power or Energy to achieve our selfish intentions and needs. Finally, spirituality (such as Sufism, Reiki, or other traditions) and religion that generally believed theoretically by prominently religious scholars as nothing to do with 'shamanism', in its real practical sense do the shamanism like practices (such as: healing and exorcism.) Indeed,

Divine Spiritual Power—probably known as *karāma* (Islam) or *Shakti* (Hinduism) or *Siddhi* (Buddhism)—exists in all religious and spiritual traditions. Though most of them realize and emphasize that religion or spirituality is the way to God, achieving (divine) spiritual power is a 'bonus,' a witness of Divine Bliss and Compassion to the faithful.