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Jamhari

Javanese Islam: The Flow of Creed

Abstraksi: *Artikel ini menghadirkan pembicaraan tentang perkembangan Islam di Jawa ketika berinteraksi dengan budaya lokal. Diawali dengan ilustrasi dari pengalaman pribadi penulisnya yang sejak kecil bergelut dengan berbagai ritual Islam di Jawa, artikel ini menghadirkan perdebatan panjang dan sengit yang terjadi di antara beberapa sarjana, baik sarjana Barat maupun sarjana lokal, tentang bagaimana menempatkan dan mengartikan "Islam" yang telah berkembang sedemikian rupa di Jawa.*

Pembahasan tentang Islam Jawa dimulai dari pernyataan Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, Gubernur Jenderal Inggris dalam The History of Java, *tentang Islam di Jawa. Menurut Raffles, kendati Islam pada akhir abad 19 telah menjadi mayoritas agama orang Jawa, masih banyak orang Jawa yang mempraktekkan kepercayaan di luar Islam. Pernyataan Raffles ini menarik karena mengindikasikan dua hal:* pertama, *kenyataan bahwa Islam telah dianut oleh orang Jawa, dan kedua, pernyataan bahwa praktek keagamaan Islam di Jawa telah bercampur dengan budaya lokal Jawa.*

*Pandangan Raffles ini menjadi titik awal penelitian beberapa sarjana lain. Clifford Geertz misalnya, menggambarkan Islam di Jawa sebagai "sinkretik", telah bercampur dengan budaya lokal Jawa. Jika dibandingkan dengan fenomena Islam di Timur Tengah atau di Afrika Utara, Islam di Indonesia jauh berbeda, karena menurut Geertz, Islam datang ke Jawa tidak dalam keadaan vakum budaya; Jawa telah memiliki budaya yang sangat tinggi. Oleh karena itu, Islam di Jawa tidak datang untuk menggantikebudayaan lokal dengan Islam, melainkan "Islam menyesuaikan (*appropriates*) dengan budaya lokal Jawa."*

Sebagai akibat dari kuatnya pengaruh budaya lokal di Jawa, maka perkembangan Islam di Jawa pun mengalami warna lokal yang beragam. Menurut Geertz, sesuai dengan karakteristik masyarakat di Jawa yang berstruktur —bangsawan dan priyayi— maka Islam di Jawa juga terpengaruh dengan kenyataan itu. Islam di Jawa, demikian ungkap Geertz, terejawantah dalam bentuk yang multi-voices *(banyak suara). Memakai kerangka ini, maka pandangan Geertz tentang Santri, Abangan dan Priyayi adalah pernyataan "warna warni" Islam di Jawa.*

*Sarjana berikutnya, Mark Woodward, seorang Antropolog dari Amerika, datang dengan pandangan yang berbeda dengan Geertz. Menurut Woodward, Islam yang ia amati di Jawa sangat jauh berbeda dengan apa yang digambarkan Geertz. Bertolak dari pandangan Marshal Hodgson yang mengatakan bahwa Islam di Jawa telah menguasai seluruh sendi kehidupan di Jawa, Woodward mengatakan bahwa Islam di Jawa telah menang (*has triumphed*), dan menjadi bagian yang tak terpisahkan dari masyarakat Jawa.*

Berbeda dengan Geertz, Woodward mengartikan perbedaan Islam di Jawa dengan Islam di wilayah lain —terutama Timur Tengah tempat kelahiran Islam— sebagai sebuah "sumbangan wong Jawa" bagaimana mengamalkan Islam sesuai dengan budaya lokal. Oleh karena itu, Islam di Jawa tidak seharusnya disebut sebagai sinkretik, tidak murni, tetapi justru hal itu merupakan usaha kreatif dari orang Jawa untuk memahami Islam sesuai dengan budaya setempat.

Melanjutkan tradisi akademis kedua antropolog di atas, Zamakhsyari Dhofier dan Muhaimin melihat secara detil tentang aspek Islam di Jawa. Dhofier meneliti tentang kehidupan para kyai Jawa di pesantren dalam rangka melihat bagaimana faham keagamaan tradisional dilestarikan dan dilembagakan. Dhofier mengkritik pandangan Geertz yang menurutnya sangat dipengaruhi oleh pandangan orang modernis ketika melihat Islam. Pernyataan bahwa Islam sinkretis adalah jelas bias modernis.

Muhaimin, di lain fihak, meneruskan tradisi Marshal Hodgson dan Mark Woodward. Dengan melihat Islam di Cirebon, Muhaimin memberikan data yang lebih jelas mengapa Islam telah begitu sempurna "menang" di Jawa. Dengan memakai argumentasi hubungan yang erat antara adat dan Islam dalam masyarakat Cirebon, Muhaimin mengatakan bahwa Islam diterima oleh orang Jawa karena jasa faham Islam tradisional yang lentur terhadap adopsi budaya lokal serta memahami Islam dengan faham yang sangat terbuka.

*Berikutnya, seorang antropolog Korea melanjutkan tradisi perdebatan wacana Islam di Jawa ini. Kim memilih Jogjakarta sebagai tempat penelitiannya. Berbeda dengan tesisnya Muhaimin, Kim menemukan fakta bahwa arah ke depan dari proses Islamisasi di Jawa adalah mengarah pada faham keislaman reformis yang dikembangkan gerakan Islam semacam Muhammadiyah. Kim menemukan bukti bahwa di Jogja telah terjadi perubahan besar-besaran tentang konsep "kemusliman" (*the Muslemness*), dari yang sebelumnya cukup untuk mengucap syahadat dan melakukan sunnat menjadi harus melaksanakan ritual-ritual Islam lainnya.*

Javanese Islam: The Flow of Creed

خلاصة: يعرض هذا المقال للبحث في انتشار الإسلام بجاوه وتفاعله مع الثقافات المحلية وتناول بشكل مستفيض الجدل المحتدم فيما بين الدارسين من الغرب والدارسين المحليين على السواء حول وضع الإسلام أو ما يعنيه انتشاره بهذه الصورة في جاوه وذلك مستهلا بإعطاء فكرة عن تجربة ذاتية مر بها كاتبه حيث كان ملتزما منذ صغره بإقامة العبادات الإسلامية بجاوه.

ولقد بدأت دراسة الإسلام بجاوه نتيجة شهادة أدلى بها سير توماس ستامفورد رافليس (Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles) الحاكم العام للحكومة الاستعمارية البريطانية كما وردت في *The History of Java* حيث كان يرى أنه على الرغم من أنه حتى نهاية القرن التاسع عشر الميلادي قد أصبح الإسلام دين الغالبية العظمى من سكان جاوه إلا أن كثيرا منهم مازالوا يمارسون اعتقادات غير إسلامية، وهذا الرأي مثير لأن فيه إشارتين: أولاهما أن الإسلام أصبح دين الغالبية العظمى من سكان جاوه وثانيتهما أن الممارسات الدينية الإسلامية فيها تمتزج بالثافات المحلية الجاوية.

لقد كان تصريح رافليس منطلقا أوليا للبحوث التي قام بها الدارسون، فقد عبر كليفورد جيرتز (Clifford Geertz) على سبيل المثال عن الإسلام بجاوه بأنه تلفيقي ويمتزج بالثقافات المحلية الجاوية؛ فإذا قورن بظاهرة الإسلام بالشرق الأوسط أو شمالي أفريقيا فإن الإسلام بإندونيسيا مختلف لأن مجئ الإسلام إلى جاوه كما يرى جيرتز لم يكن إلى فراغ حيث كان لجاوه ثقافتها العالية، ولذلك فالإسلام لم يأت لكي يحل محل الثقافة المحلية وإنما ليتواءم معها.

ونتيجة لقوة تأثير الثقافة المحلية بجاوه فإن انتشار الإسلام بها يصطبغ بصبغة محلية مختلفة؛ ويرى جيرتز طبقا لطبيعة المجتمع الجاوي الذي يتركب أفراده من سلالة الملوك والنبلاء فإن الإسلام بجاوه متأثر أيضا بهذا التركيب، ويمضي جيرتز قائلا إن الإسلام في

جاوه متعدد الأصوات، ومن هنا فإنه يرى أن اختلاف المسلمين بين ملتزمين ومسلمين بالاسم يعد ألوانا من الإسلام بجاوه.

وأما الدارس التالي فهو مارك وودوارد (Mark Woodward) وهو عالم في الانتروبولوجيا قادم من أمريكا ومعه رأي مختلف عن جيرتز إذ يرى أن الإسلام الذي لاحظه في جاوه مختلف تماما عما قال عنه جيرتز، فانطلاقا مما ذهب إليه مارشال هودجسن (Marshal Hodgson) من أن الإسلام بجاوه أصبح سائدا في مختلف جوانب الحياة فيها فإن وودوارد يقول إن الإسلام بجاوه أكد انتصاره وصار جزءا لا يتجزأ في المجتمع الجاوي.

وخلافا لما عليه جيرتز فإن وودوارد يفسر اختلاف الإسلام بجاوه عما في المناطق الأخرى وخاصة في الشرق الأوسط منشإ الإسلام بأنه إسهام الجاويين في كيفية تطبيق الشريعة الإسلامية طبقا للثقافة المحلية.

واستمرارا للمنهج الذي تبناه العالمان الانتروبولوجيان السابقان يقوم كل من زمخشري ظافر (Zamakhsyari Dhofier) ومهيمن (A.G. Muhaimin) بإلقاء نظرة على جوانب الإسلام بجاوه؛ فقد أجرى ظافر دراسة عن حياة شيوخ المعاهد التراثية من أجل الكشف عن العملية التي يتم بها نشر التعاليم الإسلامية على مذهب أهل السنة والجماعة وكيف انتهى ذلك إلى تكوين مؤسسات تقوم بالمحافظة على تلك التعاليم؛ ويوجه ظافر نقدا إلى جيرتز مفاده أن جيرتز كان متأثرا جدا في رأيه بالنظرة التجديدية لأن اهتمام الإسلام بجاوه بالتلفيقية إنما هو أثر الحركات التجديدية.

وأما الباحث مهيمن فيعد من ناحية أخرى استمرارا لآراء مارشال هودجسن ومارك وودوارد إذ من خلال ملاحظاته على الحياة الإسلامية بمدينة شيربون (Cirebon) يأتي بمعلومات أكثر تفصيلا تفسر لماذا أحكم الإسلام سيطرته في جاوه؛ فبالاستناد إلى العلاقة الوثيقة بين أحكام العرف والشريعة الإسلامية لدى مجتمع شيربون يؤكد مهيمن أن الجاويين يتقبلون الإسلام لما يتميز به مذهب أهل السنة والجماعة من تفتح على الثقافات المحلية فيفهمون الإسلام بشكل متفتح.

وهكذا قام عالم انتربولوجي من كوريا (Korea) وهو كيم هيونج جون (Kim Hyung-Jun) بمتابعة الجدل حول هذه القضية وهي الإسلام في جاوه، واختار مدينة يوغياكرتا (Yogyakarta) مكانا للبحث وانتهى إلى أنه خلافا لما ذهب إليه الباحث مهيمن فإنه اكتشف حقيقة هي أن انتشار الإسلام بجاوه يتجه إلى تبني مذهب الإصلاح الذي سار عليه الحركات الإسلامية من أمثال جمعية المحمدية؛ وقد وجد دليلا قاطعا يؤكد رأيه في أنه حدث تغير كبير في يوغياكرتا حيث تحول معنى إسلام المرء من مجرد نطق بالشهادتين وإقامة بعض العبادات إلى الالتزام التام بالممارسات الإسلامية الصحيحة.

When I was studying in Australia a few years ago, I encountered a surprising question from one of my Australian friends. As he knew that I came from Central Java and that I was a Muslim, he asked me, "Are you *abangan*, *santri* or *priyayi*?" Of course his question was a product of an understanding extracted from reading Geertz's (1976) book, *The Religion of Java*, which describes these three variants of *abangan*, *santri* and *priyayi*. Although deep down in my heart I was quite proud that a book on my society was widely read, I was astonished by that question. It was difficult for me to provide a simple answer, as he might hope. "I am a Javanese Muslim", I replied diplomatically.

After that meeting I reflected on my own history in order to answer which variant suited me. I was born in a small village that had changed a lot. Even I could not recognise any more the environment of my childhood. My father was a teacher who had obtained his degree from a Catholic school in Klaten, the only school available at that time, whereas my mother was a paddy trader (*tebasan*). My paternal grandfather (Mbah Parto) was a successful farmer, and my maternal grandfather (Mbah Huri) was a *modin* (religious official), thus a *priyayi*, who studied religion in a *pesantren* in Solo, though he dropped out. Mbah Parto loved and mastered *wayang* (shadow puppets). Whenever I came to him, he told me stories about the character of each figure in the *wayang*. He had some good quality *wayang* puppets that were always shown to his grandchildren with pride. He taught his grandchildren about Javanese wisdom through *wayang* characters.

On the other hand, Mbah Huri was a *priyayi* who owned a big house. Not all of his grandchildren dared to come to him, including me, not only because his house looked frightening, but also his bad temper made his grandchildren run away from him. However, whenever he met his grandchildren, he gave them money. As he was a student of a *pesantren*, he was very strong in his religious attention. "I will give you some money if you can read the Qur'an well", he said to his grandchildren in his *langgar* (small mosque), situated behind his house. As a *modin* he was invited by villagers to say prayers (*donga*) in the Islamic manner at *slametan* and other important religious ceremonies. As a gift to him, villagers donated a small portion of the *slametan* meal.

I, with other children, learned to read the Qur'an with Mbah Huri in the *langgar*. Mbah Huri taught us with harsh methods. He often punished a child who did not pay attention to his teaching. A bamboo stick was always in his hand ready to punish us. Whenever I felt too bored to study the Qur'an, I went to Mbah Parto to listen to *wayang* stories. Mbah Huri passed away when I was 10 years old, and Mbah Parto died two years later. Mbah Parto asked me to sleep with him during his last illness. I slept with him until his final day in this world.

This dual background shaped my future life in appreciating Islam and Javanese traditions. Since my father was involved in the Muhammadiyah organisation, he promoted the modernist argument about religious practices. With his friends, my father sponsored the establishment of Muhammadiyah in the village. He was involved in the development of Muhammadiyah schools in the village, as well as the establishment of mental training for the youth. I was introduced to these Muhammadiyah activities. However, my appreciation of *wayang* never ended. Whenever there was a *wayang* performance in my village or a nearby village, I asked my father to accompany me to watch the *wayang*. I usually went to the performance in the middle of the night for the *goro-goro*, the session with great clowning and humorous dialogue. This session is my favourite part of the performance. I usually watched the *wayang* alone, my father would return home immediately.

During the *slametan* to celebrate Islamic holidays, such as the celebration of the birth of Muhammad (*muludan*), the celebration of the end of the month of *Ramadhan* (*Idul Fitri*) and the celebration of the *hajj* and of sacrifice (*Idul Qurban*), Mbah Huri was invited by many people to pray at their *slametan*. Mbah Huri always asked me to accompany him. The *slametan* was usually performed in a group consisting of some families living in the same part of the village. After an address from a person who was regarded as the oldest (*dituakan*) to explain the intention of the *slametan*, Mbah Huri gave a little speech about the religious meaning of the event. Then Mbah Huri prayed *donga* in Arabic, and when finished, he asked the participants to share the meal with others. All the participants gave a little portion of the *slametan* (*berkat*) to the *modin* in token of their appreciation for the *donga*. I brought the *berkat* home.

When I graduated from my elementary school (Madrasah Ibtidaiyah), owned by Muhammadiyah, my father sent me to a *pesantren* (Islamic school) in Magelang. Although I did not want to study there because it was located in a remote area and was a poor *pesantren*, my father reminded me about my promise to my grandfather Mbah Huri about studying religion in a *pesantren*. I did not remember that I had made such a promise to Mbah Huri, but my father remembered that I made the promise when Mbah Huri was dying. I finally agreed to study at the *pesantren*, and I spent seven years there. My religious knowledge and practices were shaped by the *pesantren* traditions, which were dominated by traditional Islam and Sufism. Though my *kyai* was a member of NU (Nahdlatul Ulama), he said to his *santri* (students) that the *pesantren* was neutral, meaning that it had no religious or organisational ties with any Islamic religious organization, such as NU or Muhammadiyah. In a joking phrase, my *kyai* described his *pesantren* as "Pesantren Muhammad NU".

After spending seven years in the *pesantren*, I went to Jakarta to continue my study at the Jakarta campus of IAIN (the State Institute for Islamic Studies), which is well-known as an institute that promotes liberal thinking in Islamic studies. At that time, two lecturers, Harun Nasution and Nurcholish Madjid, were very influential figures in shaping the orientation of IAIN Jakarta. Nasution's argument for the necessity to study Islam from a broad perspective, studying Islam from many different aspects ranging from Islamic philosophy to legal aspects of Islam, was the core orientation of Islamic studies at IAIN Jakarta. Madjid, on the other hand, building his major in Islamic history and philosophy, argued that there is a serious need to study Islamic history in a critical way. He also argued that there is a need for reformation in Islamic thought (*keharusan pembaharuan pemikiran dalam Islam*).

Given that this has been my life, I do not know how to fit myself into Geertz's variants. To Muhammadiyah people, I am a traditionalist Muslim as I studied in a *pesantren*. For the traditionalists, however, I am a secularist Muslim because I studied at IAIN Jakarta. And for my friends at IAIN, I am a genuine Javanese (*wong Jawa totok*), as my Javanese thinking is apparent when I write or speak.

If Islam in Java is studied through a differentiation of its elements into variants, then it destroys the real picture of Islam in Java. The focus of my study of Islam in Java is to examine how Islam is understood, interpreted and put into practice. The pluralistic manifestation of Islam in Java suggests that there are many different interpretations defining the religiosity of a Muslim. Moreover, this pluralistic nature of Islam also provides a wide scope for Javanese to articulate their views in determining the right understanding of Islam for Javanese. Therefore, these differences in understanding are merely a sign of the different ways that people have endeavoured to implement Islam in Java.

Review of Studies on Islam in Java

Many articles, books and theses have been written on religion in Java, particularly on its existence there. Various scholars, travellers, Dutch colonial administrators and local writers have influenced the writing on Islam in Java. The study of Islam in Java is a study of what these writers have considered to be the nature of religious spirituality and people's interpretation of it. As Javanese people consider that the spiritual quality of religiosity depends heavily on personal experience, the studies of religion in Java have to deal with the interpretation of the social and religious experiences of people who practise the religion.

One of the difficulties has been the different approaches that scholars have used to study religious phenomena in Java. An early written account on the existence of Islam in Java can be found in *The History of Java* (1817) written by Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles. According to Raffles, most Javanese were still devotedly attached to their ancient institutions, though some of them believed in the existence of the supreme God and recognised Muhammad as the messenger of God and practised some basic Islamic duties. However, Raffles also recognised that Javanese people "have long ceased to respect the temples and idols of a former worship" (Raffles, 1817: 2). Though laws, usages and traditional observances were respected, their attachment to the older traditions had long declined. It seems that Raffles had a contradictory view of the influence of the old Javanese traditions. On the one hand, he said that Javanese people no longer had deep ties with their old religious beliefs. On the other

hand, he found that Javanese practices and usages that were inspired by the old religion were still practised, even though "the whole island appears to have been converted to Mahometanism ..." (Raffles, 1817: 2).

In line with Raffles, Peacock provided evidence that the old practices still dominated the religious practices of the Javanese. The general view was that the Javanese traditional view of the world was dominated by the view of "spiritual energies contained in forms and images, such as magical potent swords, sacred shrines, spirits, deities, teachers and rulers" (1978: 43). In short, Peacock argued, the religious practices in Java were characterised by syncretic magic. Unlike Raffles, however, Peacock seems to argue that the religious practices of Java were based on animistic beliefs, not Hindu-Buddhist traditions (Peacock, 1978: 40-43).

Geertz also found that the strong colour of syncretic religious practices in Java provided a clear picture of the meagre influence of Islam in Java. When Islam arrived, the animistic beliefs and Hindu-Buddhist traditions dominated the religious life of Javanese. Islam just appropriated those practices and did not create a civilisation in Java (1971: 11). Although Islam did not construct a civilisation, Islam did influence religious practices. As Ricklefs found, Islamisation in Java brought some changes in religious practices, for example, the belief that reading the Qur'an could release the spiritual power residing in the human body. However, these changes, Ricklefs argued, "would not have brought much understanding of the new faith or commitment to its formal requirements" (1979: 104). The accelerated rate of conversion in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries did not influence much of Javanese religious life due to the deep and comprehensive influence of traditional Javanese culture (Ricklefs, 1979: 126).

These accounts of the shallowness of Islamic influence and its existence in Java were caused by the use of a definition of Islam based on the Islam that is practiced in Arabian regions. Geertz (1971), for example, compared the existence of Islam in Java with Islam in Morocco, saying that Islam in Java is less dynamic and less devoted compared to Islam in Morocco where it has dominated the life of Moroccan people in religious, social and political affairs. Geertz described the situation as follows:

> Compared to North Africa, the Middle East, and even to Muslim India, whose brand of faith it perhaps most closely resembles, Indonesian Islam has been, at least until recently, remarkably malleable, tentative, syncretic, and, most significantly of all, multi-voiced. What for so many parts of the world, and certainly for Morocco, has been a powerful, if not always triumphant, force for cultural homogenization and moral consensus, for the social standardization of fundamental beliefs and values, has been for Indonesia a no less powerful one for cultural diversification, for the crystallization of sharply variant, even incompatible, notions of what the world is really like and how one ought therefore to set about living in it. In Indonesia, Islam has taken many forms, not all of them Koranic, and whatever it brought to the sprawling archipelago, it was not uniformity (Geertz, 1971: 12).

Ricklefs also argued that, "this Islam [in Java] would probably have been judged heretical by what were later regarded as the ideal standards of Islam in Arabia ..." (1979: 104). It seems that Ricklefs ignored the fact that Islam in Arabia, in its religious practices and understandings, has been influenced by local culture. Tibi (1991: 160-177) argued that the use of Islam as the basis for the Islamic Monarch in Arabia proved an accommodation between Islam and Arabic cultures. Islam was used as a legitimation for royal authority by describing the king as *khadem al-harameyn al-sharifeyn* (a servant of the holy shrines of Mecca and Medina). Since Islam as a cultural system will always change according to regional context, making Islam in Arabia an ideal standard for Islam is problematic. Hodgson (1974b: 550) proposed a study of Islamic civilisation in a locality that stems from the perspective of the Muslim tradition as a whole. In other words, any particular forms of Islam should be assessed in relation to the Muslim tradition as a whole. The Islamic value compiled in *shari'a* is not allowed to change and may likewise not accommodate to change, but the religious actions and practices derived from the interpretation of Islamic norms do not remain as constant as the *shari'a* would appear to be.

According to Hodgson (1974a), the systematic neglect of Islamic studies by Indonesianists has deep roots in what he labelled "methodical errors" in understanding Islam that has interacted dynamically with local cultures. The manifestation of what can be labelled the "little tradition" of Islam — Islamic traditions in a local context — provides a perspective for understanding the "great tradition" of Islam — Islamic tradition as a whole. Moreover, as is shown clearly in Geertz's work, the description of Islam in Java is based on the mod-

ernist point of view, which is based more on legal and formal aspects of Islam (Dhofier, 1985; Hodgson, 1974b: 551). Observed from the nature of Islam that has been embraced, especially by the Javanese *kraton*, it is clear that Islam has been adopted in its mystical form. As Soebardi suggested, a description of the influence of Islam in the *kraton* has to be viewed from the perspective of Sufism (Soebardi, 1975; Woodward, 1989: 20-22).

In addition, the problematic accounts of Indonesianists on Islam in Java stem from, among other things, their orientalist, especially British and Dutch, representations (Azra, 1992; Woodward, 1989). In Indonesia, Islam was not only misunderstood but its existence was denied.1 The syncretic character of Islam in Java and the permissive nature of the Javanese in accepting Islam were identified as self-evident of the marginal status of Islam in Java. The Javanese religion is described as a religion defined by Hinduism and/or Buddhism mixed with animism. Religious practices absorbed as laws, customs and traditions by Javanese were then regarded as the "real" Javanese religious practices. Although Javanese people had embraced Islam seriously, even Benda (1972a: 86) described them as, "... good and devout Muslims, profoundly attached to their own version of the faith" — they were thus not viewed as "true" Muslims.

Hodgson and Benda held different views regarding the existence of the old Javanese religious traditions. For Hodgson, there is no doubt that, before the coming of Islam in Java and Indonesia as a whole, the popular traditions were dominated by the Hindu/Buddhist and animistic traditions. When Islam came to Java, these traditions were provided with new meanings deriving from Islam. As Hodgson put it:

> The popular Islam of the countryside schools was partly nourished from old Malaysian cultural roots. ... Beneficently or mischievously, these filled every corner of nature and became ... the foundation for the whole structure of daily etiquette and of inter-personal relations, all with the blessing of the representatives and rites of Islam. ... Alongside these old-Malaysian elements, especially in inner Java, the richest country in the region, the aristocratic elements maintained their older Indic-derived traditions in an Islamicized form. ... This heritage also affected the Sufi *tariqa*s, at least on the aristocratic level, leaving its mark in the language and perhaps in some of the ideas of the Sufis. ... When the gentry adopted Islam, these traditions were woven into Sufism, which they

> enriched and endowed with a distinctively Javanese beauty (Hodgson, 1974b: 550-551).

However, for Benda, the spread of Islam in Java, which deeply influenced the religious life of the Javanese, proved that there was no strong evidence that Hinduism and Buddhism had comprehensively influenced the Javanese. Benda said:

> It was, indeed, Sufism, or Islamic mysticism, rather than Islamic orthodoxy, which for a long time held sway in Java and in parts of Sumatra. But it is at least equally significant that in Indonesia, Islam did not lead to the creation of a separate community and to lasting division between Hindus and Muslims, as had been the case in India. It is therefore very likely that its success in Indonesia is indicative of a rather superficial degree of Hinduization, particularly in Central Java, and that Javanese Islam in the early centuries was a wedding of Sufi and indigenous mysticism rather than of Islam and Hinduism proper (Benda, 1959: 12).

Nevertheless, Hodgson and Benda both recognised the existence of old Javanese beliefs, whether they were created by Malay, animistic, Hindu or Buddhist traditions, and acknowledged that the fact that Islam spread in Java so rapidly, and that the coming of Dutch colonialism had no major impact on the religious life of Javanese people compared to the impact of Islam, is an indication of the "triumph of Islam" in Java. Ricklefs, while negating the fundamental change in Javanese religious thought, especially in the mystical realm, acknowledged that "Islam became the religion of nearly all Javanese in the period after the fourteenth century ..." (Ricklefs, 1979: 126-127). The success of the introduction of Islam in Java was caused by the adoption of pre-existing Javanese religion into Islamic practices. "The wedding of Sufi and indigenous mysticism" was, according to Benda, the main aspect that supported the triumph of Islam (Benda, 1972b: 12).

Different perspectives of Islam has propelled the debate regarding the marginalised position of Islam in Java. Geertz and Ricklefs clearly see Islam in Java with reference to Islam in the Arabian regions where Islam was first developed. Most Indonesianists also see Islam from the perspective of the legal and formal aspects that are widely vocalised by modernist Islam. It is clear when Ricklefs argues that though there is an abundance of Islamic vocabulary in

Javanese mystical themes, the elites of the *kraton* did not observe Islamic practices such as praying in the mosque. Furthermore, some of the elites still drank alcohol, which is strongly forbidden by Islam. Ricklefs further argued:

> If one can speak of a growing sense of Javanese identity defined partly in Islamic terms in the Kartasura years before 1726, it does not follow that there was more Islamic religious influence in *kraton* circles in that period. So far as is presently known, there is no evidence to demonstrate that the court elite was diligent in its mosque attendance, enthusiastically studied the Arabic language or religious books in Arabic, maintained contacts with pious Islamic figures from the Malay or wider Islamic world, or wrote religious works themselves. One's picture of such matters of course rests upon the evidence that happens to have survived. ... Yet it seems not unreasonable to think that an increasing sense of Javanese identity, labelled Islamic by the literate elite, had not yet significantly changed the religious life of the court in a more intensely Islamic direction. ... This does not, of course, reveal what devotions may have gone on behind the *kraton*'s walls (Ricklefs, 1998: 330-331).

And Geertz described the religious situation in Java as follows:

> Though for what at first must have been an overwhelming majority of the population the Indic world view continued under a nominal conversion to Islam, it was no longer without a rival — a rival that, as both commercial life and contact with centres of the Muslim world increased, grew steadily more powerful. A new theme — the tension between the spell of the Madjapahit and the pull of the Koran — was introduced into Indonesian spiritual life, and what was to become a thoroughgoing differentiation of the country's religious tradition was begun (Geertz, 1971: 40).

On the basis of sociological categories, Geertz distinguished three variants in his *Religion of Java*, namely *abangan*, *santri* and *priyayi*. The *abangan* variant represents Javanese people who observe religious practices based on animistic traditions that are anchored in the worship of spirits, whereas the *santri* variant represents Javanese Muslims who hold traditions based on Islamic teachings. The *priyayi* variant represents those Javanese elite who love mystical themes as manifested in *wayang* performance. Geertz further argued that these three variants also represented three different social and political environments. *Abangan* consisted of farmers, *santri* represented people in the market, and *priyayi* represented people in the bureaucracy.

There is no doubt that there has been a constant interaction between Islam and the old Javanese values in shaping Islamic religious practices in Java. However, as Hefner found in Tengger, it is a difficult task to claim that the current Tengger traditions resembled their old traditions. In other words, the coming of Islam had changed the religious scene in Java.

> It is impossible to say with absolute certainty how popular religion in modern Tengger differs from its Old Javanese progenitor. The fall of Majapahit marked a turning point in Javanese civilization, and created the conditions that led eventually to the dilemma of modern Tengger. Java's Eastern Salient was Balkanized into small pockets of folk tradition, lacking the regional integration to some degree afforded by earlier Hindu-Buddhist courts. In the north coast and Central Java, Islam — albeit a local variety — became the religion of state. The Hindu-Buddhist ecclesiastical communities once dispersed throughout Java's countryside gradually disappeared. Tengger remained to provide testimony to earlier priestly ways, but isolation in an Islamizing Java made it destined to increasing doubt and problems of self-definition (Hefner, 1985: 266).

For Hodgson, biased views of Islam in Java had distorted the "real" picture of Islam in Java. He argued that the different groups of people interpreting Islam were an indication of the different perspectives by which people understand Islam. In Muslim societies as a whole, there is a perennial debate between mystical Islam, which focuses on the spiritual aspect of Islam, and formal Islam, which relies on the legal aspect of Islamic teachings. Therefore Woodward argued that, "religious discord is based not on the differential acceptance of Islam by Javanese of various social positions, but on the age-old Islamic question of how to balance the legalistic and mystical dimension of the tradition" (Woodward, 1989: 3).

The *shari'a* approach, the legalistic dimension of Islam, refers to the conceptions by which Islam provides guidance for the religious and social life of all Muslims. It focuses on prescribed Islamic teachings — *shari'a* — contained in the Qur'an and the Sunnah. This approach is concerned more with the legal aspect of Islamic teachings. *Shari'a* literally means "a path or road". In religious terms, *shari'a* is interpreted as the paths constructed according to Islamic values to direct humans to a good and righteous life. Islamic values con-

tained in the Qur'an and the Sunnah governing relations among human beings and relations between human beings and God, were interpreted and constructed into concrete directives for actions. The interpretation was carried out through analogy (*qiyas*), reasoning (*ijtihad*), and the consensus of *ulama* (*ijma*). The result of this interpretation is called *fiqh*, meaning "a personal understanding of religious values".

Tasawuf, the mystical dimension of Islam, on the other hand, is a way of understanding and practising Islam more in terms of its spiritual aspect focusing on the endeavour to obtain a direct relationship with God. Through ascetic practices, and through such actions as *dhikr* (recollection of God), fasting and continual prayers, Sufis, that is, Muslims who practice *tasawuf*, seek a more spiritual, personal experience with God. The primary goal of *tasawuf* is to create consciousness of God's existence and a dialogue between the human soul and God. The practice of *tasawuf* in particular communal ritual is called *tarekat*. Literally, *tarekat* means "a way" or "road", and in *tasawuf* terms, it is an organization of Sufis practising a set of rituals taught by a Sufi leader in order to attain a spiritual experience with God.

Both these approaches, *shari'a* and *tasawuf*, are Islamic. The *shari'a* approach places stress on the legal and prescribed teachings of Islam, whereas *tasawuf* places stress on obtaining a more spiritual experience. The process of becoming a good Muslim will always involve these approaches. In Indonesia, the modernist tends toward the *shari'a* approach, while most practitioners of Javanised Islam stress the *tasawuf* approach. Traditional Islam, as maintained in the *pesantren* tradition, attempts to blend these two approaches.

Islam in Java thus has to be viewed from the perspective of the continuous struggle between esoteric and exoteric understandings of Islam. In other words, Islam in Java has to be seen from the perspective of continuity and change. Dhofier's study of *pesantren* provided an excellent example of employing this approach. He argued that studying the tradition of *pesantren* demonstrates a real picture of *pesantren* that, in building their Islamic traditions, preserve some old traditions that do not violate the basic principles of Islam while at the same time introducing new Islamic elements (Dhofier, 1985: 176).

Islam in Java has been developed through cultural dialogue involving various traditions. The combination of the pluralistic nature of Islam, which provides scope for local cultural influences, and Javanese culture, which accommodates influences from other sources, formed a unique setting for Islam. In short, throughout the Muslim world, local forms gave way to greater uniformity under the persuasive, militant pressure of the reformists. Accommodation and reform are the two facets of Islam that helped to achieve both variety and unity over such extensive areas. Islam in Java then developed through an ongoing process of appropriating Islam in a local context. Muhaimin (1995) said that the triumph of Islam in Java is manifested in the forms of traditional Islam, while the rich dimension of Islam in Java is marked by the continuous struggle of defining a good Javanese Muslim.

Abdul Ghoffur Muhaimin wrote a doctoral thesis on the socio-religious traditions of the Javanese Muslims in Cirebon, a region on the north coast of West Java. Cirebon is an important region in relation to the development of Islam in Java and particularly West Java. The existence of an Islamic kingdom in Cirebon, established by Sunan Gunung Jati, one of many important Javanese *wali* (saint), around the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, suggests the significance of Cirebon in shaping Islam in Java. The thesis studied the relation between *adat* (customary laws) and *ibadat* - specifically, the pious acts related to the observance of Islamic duties, and more broadly signifing religious practices dedicated to the submission of Allah. Using the case of *pesantren* Buntet and its *tarekat* (Sufi orders) — Syatariyah and Tijaniyah — and the practice of Islamic tradition in the court of Cirebon, Muhaimin examined the tradition of Javanese Muslims through the perspective of traditional Islam. By examining the theological explanation of traditional Islam, Muhaimin rejected the syncretic approach in examining the relation between *adat* and *ibadat*. He argued that the syncretic schema, pioneered by Geertz, is an inadequate and simplistic approach to understanding Islam in Java (Muhaimin, 1995: 4). Sensing that there was a close relation between *adat* and *ibadat* in the tradition of Javanese Muslims in Java, Muhaimin argued that it is difficult to separate what is *adat* and what is *ibadat* (1995: 365). Therefore, the syncretic theoretical approach is not applicable when it is applied in practice.

The second important aspect of Muhaimin's thesis is the way in which traditions of Javanese Muslims in Cirebon are transmitted to maintain their presence in Javanese societies. On the basis of traditional Islam, people in Cirebon understand Islam in its broadest sense. The practice of Islam is considered as *ibadat* in its wide meaning. It seems that, stemming from the proposition of the deep influence of Islam in Javanese life as argued by Marshall Hodgson (1974 a & b) and Mark Woodward (1989), Muhaimin argued that the relationship between *adat* and *ibadat* in Cirebon provides clear evidence of the inability to separate Islam from Javanese traditions. Through his deep and comprehensive ethnographic research, Muhaimin found that when they considered an explanation of Muslim-ness, people from Cirebon argued that, "... when people finished reciting *syahadat* [testimony of faith stating that that there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is the Apostle of Allah], they automatically become [sic] Muslims ..." (1995: 42). The people of Cirebon are concerned with what people say, not with what people think in their hearts. Although it is true that the oral confession was sufficient to be acknowledged as a Muslim, one also needed to prove the confession to Islam through practice. Performing religious duties after confessing *syahadat* is an individual responsibility to God.

Muhaimin argued that the tradition of Islam in Cirebon, as practised in other Muslim societies, is the manifestation of the practice of *ibadat* consisting of practices related to *iman* (faith), *islam* (Islamic laws) and *ihsan* (deterrence). To explain the meaning of *ibadat*, Muhaimin argued, the people of Cirebon interpreted the term from two different perspectives: the specific (*khusus*) and the general (*umum*) (1995: 114-115). They articulated the meaning of *ibadat* as "to enslave oneself to God (*ngaula ning Gusti Allah*)" (1995: 115). This implies that performing *ibadat* is an affirmation of the relationship between a human (*kaula*) and God (*Gusti*). *Ibadat* also means performing the obligation of being a human servant to the Master (God). The third implication of *ibadat* is as an expression of thanks to God, who has given human life and happiness. This enunciation of the meaning of *ibadat* and its application corresponds to the ultimate principles of Islam. The first implication matches the six pillars of faith — belief in God, belief

in angels *(malaikat)*, the Prophet of God, the Holy books, life after death, God's final judgment (*qadha*), and predestination (*qadr*). The second interpretation of *ibadat* agrees with the existence of the five pillars of Islam — *shahadah*, the statement of affirmation; *shalah*, prayers five times a day; *shaum*, fasting in the month of *Ramadhan*; *zakat*, the giving of alms to the poor; and *hajj*, undertaking the pilgrimage to Mecca. The third implication of *ibadat* matches the practice of deterrence, manifest in Sufism and in the *tarekat* (Muhaimin, 1995: 116-117).

For the people of Cirebon, the differentiation of practice into *ibadat* and non-*ibadat* rests on one's "awareness which manifests itself as intention (*niyat*)" (1995: 118). In Islam, especially in the view of traditional Islam, *niyat* plays an important role. There is a prominent *hadith* stating that, "the outcomes of acts are determined by the *niyat* — intentions (of individuals)", which implies that *niyat* is a significant determinant of the value of actions. The status of an activity as *ibadat* or not, whether it relates to a prescribed ritual such as fasting or to other rituals, is determined by one's *niyat*. If one acts with the intention of *ibadat*, he/she performs *ibadat*. Therefore, it is "in the presence of intention that everything, irrespective of whether it is a worldly or afterlife activity (*bli perduli apa urusan dunya atawa urusan akherat*)" (Muhaimin, 1995: 118) is regarded as *ibadat* or not. It is clear that *ibadat* in Cirebon discourse embraces a wide spectrum of practice, not only those relating to formal prescribed rituals but also those relating to activities considered as mundane.

The immediate implication of this meaning of *ibadat* is that *adat* and *ibadat* in Cirebon life cannot be separated. For example, in celebrating *riyaya lebaran*, the end of the month of fasting, the people of Cirebon celebrate in accordance with the tradition of the Cirebon *kraton*. In the festival, many traditions such as *sungkeman* and *punjungan* are apparent. For the people of Cirebon, there is no difference between celebrating the religious event *Idul Fitri* and enjoying traditional performances such asa *wayang*. "To the people", Muhaimin argued, "these rituals are both *ibadat* and *adat* at the same time" (1995: 156). The people accept *adat* practices, so long as they do not breach the basic tenets of Islam, as *ibadat* is relevant to a *hadith* that declares, "What the faithful be-

lievers find good, is [presumably] good on the side of God" (1995: 158).

The second important aspect of Muhaimin's thesis is the way it documents how Islamic knowledge and tradition are preserved. The *pesantren* is an important institution in maintaining the Islamic tradition in Cirebon. In addition, *tarekat*, which are widely spread in Cirebon, provide another important aspect of traditional Islam in Java. The *pesantren* is a religious institution where "*syare'at* (the exoteric dimension of Islam) is transmitted" (Muhaimin, 1995: 331) through selective people to maintain Islam's authenticity. The *tarekat*, on the other hand, preserve "the esoteric dimension of Islam" (Muhaimin, 1995: 331) through their practices. Both *pesantren* and *tarekat* rely on the strict legitimation of an intellectual chain to preserve the transmission of Islamic knowledge.

Pesantren Buntet is a unique as this *pesantren* is home to two *tarekat* — Syatariyah, which came earlier, and Tijaniyah. The current *kyai* of Buntet, Kyai Abbas, holds two *ijazah* (certificate of initiation) as *mursyid* (legitimate initiator) for *tarekat* Syatariyah and Tijaniyah. According to Tijaniyah rules, one has to resign from other *tarekat* after joining the Tijaniyah *tarekat*. However, perhaps because of the Kyai Abbas's leadership capability and his intellectual capacity, he has been exempted from the rule.

Tarekat Syatariyah began in *pesantren* Buntet after the arrival of Kyai Anwaruddin Kriyani Al-Malebari (Ki Buyut Kriyan) in Buntet following his marriage to Nyai Ruhillah, the daughter of Kyai Mutta'ad, the leader of *pesantren* Buntet. Abdul Rauf Singkel brought the *tarekat* Syatariyah to Indonesia. Syeikh Abdul Muhyi, the student of Abdul Rauf Singkel, extended the spread of *tarekat* Syatariyah in West Java, especially in Cirebon. However, *tarekat* Syatariyah did not come to Buntet from these two figures, but through Kyai Asy'ary of Kaliwungu (Muhaimin, 1995: 334-335). After gaining a huge following, *tarekat* Syatariyah diminished considerably after the death of its prominent leader Kyai Mustahdi.

Tarekat Tijaniyah, on the other hand, despite its controversial acceptance by NU, gained greater support in Cirebon, especially after the latest leader, Kyai Abbas, promoted the *tarekat* throughout Java. His double *ijazah* as *murysid* for Syatariyah and Tijaniyah provided him with the privileged status of being able to organise

and centralise both *tarekat* in *pesantren* Buntet. The growing support for Tijaniyah, according to its followers, is due to its flexibility and the fact that it is "suitable for everyone, even the busy people of modern times ...". (1995: 346). Through the institution of *pesantren*, both *tarekat* have expanded to other places. The most important role of *pesantren* and *tarekat* is that they are institutions that ensure that "the maintenance of scriptural and cultural traditions continues within the Javanese Muslim society ..." (1995: 355). Unlike Woodward (1989) who maintained that the triumph of Islam in Java is because the *kraton* adopted Islam as the spiritual symbol for Javanese religiosity, Muhaimin argued that "... religious transmission has never ceased either with or without the support of the political power structure" (1995: 355).

It is clear that throughout his thesis, Muhaimin has convincingly provided arguments from fundamental Islamic sources on the deep influence of Islam in Javanese traditions, especially on the relationship between *adat* and *ibadat*. The broad meaning of *ibadat*, determined by intention, provided a basis for the acceptance of Javanese traditions that does not violate the basic tenets of Islam, primary among them *tauhid*, the concept of the oneness of Allah. Muhaimin's elucidation of the importance of intention in determining the boundary of *ibadat* and non-*ibadat* has filled the gap left by Woodward. When Woodward argued that the religious significance of a practice is examined through the way in which actors interpret it, he did not provide evidence derived from Islamic texts.

In addition, Muhaimin's finding on the complementary relationship between *adat* and *ibadat* undermines Hurgronje's (1972) conviction that there is a considerable gap between the practice of *adat* and the practice of Islamic law in Java. Muhaimin argued that the idea of separating Islam into Islamic and non-Islamic categories would only cast a shadow over the light of Islam in Java. He further argued that, looking at the success of *pesantren* and *tarekat* in spreading and preserving Islam in Java, it is in the shape of traditional Islam, institutionalised in *pesantren* and practised through *tarekat*, that Islam has triumphed in Java.

However, Muhaimin's strength is also his weakness. His rich ethnography and convincing discussion of the ideological and theo-

logical arguments of traditional Islam has provided a strong basis to sustain his conviction of the inseparable character of *adat* and *ibadat*. However, his dependence on views of traditional Islam has neglected the presence of other religious orientations such as those offered through Muhammadiyah. I believe that Muhammadiyah, though small in Cirebon, exists and has some followers there. As shown by Nakamura (1976) and later by Kim (1996), there is some evidence that modernists have also influenced religious practices. The role and contribution of modernist Islam in the success of Islam in Java is not clear from Muhaimin's thesis. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier by Zamakhsyari Dhofier (1985), *pesantren* also change and adapt to new situations and conditions. It seems that Muhaimin did not provide a picture of changes in the life of *pesantren* in the face of social changes.

Kim Hyung-Jun is a Korean student who, prior to his fieldwork, had never experienced life in a Muslim society. He knew Islam from reading books in preparation for his fieldwork in Indonesia. His naivety about Islam immediately appeared in the beginning of his thesis:

> One of the surprises that Kolojonggo (a pseudonym for the hamlet in which I did my field research) gave me came a few days after I had settled there. Walking aimlessly along a hamlet path, I found a house, or more precisely a building, that looked different from other houses in the hamlet. It was taller than the other houses and had a loud speaker on top of the roof. Getting closer, I recognised that it was a *masjid* (mosque). I could see the place for ablution, decorations taking the shape of the dome and a large hall inside the building. The reason I was surprised at the presence of a *masjid* in Kolojonggo, a scene which might not surprise anyone from Yogyakarta, was simple: I had not expected hamlets (*dusun*) in rural Yogyakarta to have their own *masjid* (Kim, 1996: 1).

This is a direct and honest remark from Kim that the knowledge obtained from reading books did not give him an adequate picture of Javanese reality.

Kim did his research in Kolojonggo, a reformist village in a Yogyakarta rural area, after two months wandering around Yogyakarta to find a village for his research. His decision was not because it was a perfect village for research on religion. He took it after realising the complexity of religious life in Yogyakarta. This religious situation gave him the impression that, "if I wanted to

though villagers considered themselves Muslim, many of them still practised gambling, which is forbidden in Islam. Despite their activities, they paid respect to the *kyai* as someone who had prayed to God for the prosperity of the village.

However, when Kim studied in the reformist village in Kolojonggo, he found that the growing Islamisation had been directed towards reformist Islam. Kim's findings challenged previous commonly held beliefs on the concept of religiosity. Muhaimin, for example, argued that people in Cirebon classified someone as Muslim if they confessed the *syahadat*. Significantly, however, villagers in Kolojonggo argued that "formal and oral confession" is not enough. Practicing prescribed Islamic norms should follow the oral confession. In the old days, according to the villagers' recollections, having been circumcised was also regarded as a sign of becoming a Muslim.

For reformists, this traditionalist concept of Muslim-ness, the confession of *syahadat*, is only the beginning. Motivated by a religious impulse to increase the quality and degree of Muslim-ness, reformist programs advocated various methods. Kim listed three important ways used by reformists in Kolojonggo to improve what they saw as the quality of Muslim-ness. First they attempted to Islamise all aspects of villagers' everyday life. Reformist activists in Kolojonggo attempted to maximise the practice of religious activities such as *pengajian* (public sermons). The *pengajian* is conducted according to age groups, by children, youths or older people. Apart from this, reformists also urged people to perform diligently the *ibadat wajib* (prescribed *ibadat*) such as praying five times a day and fasting in the month of *Ramadhan*. For reformists, the seriousness of one's observance of *ibadat wajib* signifies the quality of a person's piousness. Moreover, in their social life, they also remember to obey Islamic laws such as avoiding gambling and drinking alcohol.

Secondly, reformists also attempted to Islamise village traditions by imparting new religious meaning to older practices. For example, reformists in Kolojonggo gave new meaning, in accordance with Islamic teachings, to the food prepared for *slametan*. For example, *apem* (pancake-like cake), *kolak* (sweet soup with banana and cassava) and *ketan* (sticky rice), were imbued with Is-

lamic relevance (Kim, 1996: 170-171). *Kolak* is, it was said, taken from *Qaala* (Arabic) meaning speech, *apem* derives from *'afwum* (Arabic) meaning to ask forgiveness. In addition, in Islamising village traditions, reformists invented or created new traditions. Reformists regarded the old *slametan,* conducted only by distributing food and reciting *tahlil*, as inadequate. They proposed to improve the *slametan* at funeral ceremonies by reciting the Qur'an (1996: 177-187).

The third attempt of modernists to promote or increase the quality of piousness was by replacing the old spirits' names with Islamic names. For example, the bad spirits were then named Satan or bad *jin* (*jin jahat*), and good spirits renamed angels and good *jin* (*jin baik*) (1996: 207-220).

From his findings, Kim argued that there is a different way to articulate the quality of piousness. The previous assumption, as held by Woodward, Miyazaki and Muhaimin, that Muslim life is interpreted in a single religious discourse is not true. The reformist effort to increase the quality of religiosity, not only by the *syahadat* and circumcision, but also by activating religious practices, is a challenge to the sole claim of understanding Islam based on traditional Islam. For the reformist, the status of Islam is a designation exclusive to those who seriously and strictly practise Islamic teachings (Kim, 1996: 14).

However, Kim argued further that when reformists face groups outside Islam, they change their criteria and accept as Muslims those who only confessed *syahadat* and practised circumcision. When reformists encountered the coming of Christianity in the village of Kolojonggo, they included as Muslim those referred to as Muslim *KTP* or nominal Muslims, who acknowledged Islam but did not practise it.

Kim's strength is apparent in his ethnographically-rich account of the practise of reformism and Christianity in the village. The fact that two communities, Muslim and Christian, accepted him openly enabled him to get a deeper explanation of the discourse that underlies religious practices. His contribution to the understanding of Islam in Java is that, in addition to the similar observations of Nakamura on the ongoing process of *"santrification"* of village life in Yogyakarta, his findings provide evidence that reform-

ist ideas, which some Muslim scholars have accused of not being put into cultural practice, are well implemented by their supporters. His presentation of the fact that reformists rejected the notion of a definition of Muslim-ness based only on oral confession and circumcision, demonstrated the existence of other ways of interpreting Muslim life.

However, despite Kim's portrayal of the well-established reformist practices in Kolojonggo, he failed to detail the response of other Muslim groups to their practices. It may be that in Kolojonggo there was no strong opposition from other Muslim groups to reformist activities. However, sensing the strong challenge from the reformist group to old practices, I doubt that this was the case. Once, Mbah Gerobag, a prominent follower of Javanised Islam in Basin, where I did my fieldwork, described the activity of reformists in purifying religion as *ngarit rumput* (cutting the grass) to indicate his strong opposition to reformist practice which had gone "too far" (*kebablasen*). I believe that the accommodationist stance taken by reformists in Kolojonggo was a result of a strong push from other Muslim groups. Kim seemingly implied that the accommodationist tactics of the reformists were taken voluntarily.

My study on popular Islam centres on the Islam that is understood, interpreted and put it into practice in Basin and Jatinom villages, and includes a range of data that I hope will contribute to the study of Islam in Java. Basin village is in a way similar to Kolojonggo village, which for a few decades has gone through a process of becoming a reformist village. On the other hand, Basin used to be a village like the Kalitengah village in Muhaimin's thesis. The villagers' practices and passions about Islam were in line with traditional Islam. Their understanding of the quality of Muslim-ness was similar to they way villagers in Cirebon explained it to Muhaimin. Furthermore, there is no doubt that, although it was more prevalent in individual cases, there have been individuals trapped within two cultural domains: Javanese traditions inherited from their ancestors (*nenek moyang*), and Islamic traditions. Therefore, this thesis demonstrates the pluralistic voices of Islam that, in the process of social interaction, characterise a struggle to find the right formula for interpreting Islam. Social, economic and political aspects of Basin

village have influenced the way in which these various interpretations of Islam interact with each other. At the same time, the social, economic and political life of the village cannot be separated from its religious life.

Desa Santri and *Desa Apem*

Basin is a village consisting of four hamlets (*dukuh*): Nglarang, Basin, Kebonarum and Sambeng. Basin hamlet, the biggest of the four, is the seat of the central administration of Basin village. The village administration, government schools, Muhammadiyah schools, large mosques, and the traditional market are located in Basin hamlet. In neighbouring villages, Basin is known as a "*Desa Santri*" because its people perform Islamic duties seriously. However, the villagers deny the ascription because there is no *pesantren* in the village. Muslims in Basin define the meaning of *santri* as a person who has studied in a *pesantren*. In addition to *Desa Santri*, Basin is also well known as "*Desa Muhammadiyah*". The Muhammadiyah organization actively organises religious teaching in the village and surrounding villages. Muhammadiyah schools, ranging from kindergarten to high school, have been established in Basin hamlet, and attract many students from within Basin village as well as from neighbouring villages.

Basin people are actively involved in *dakwah* (spreading Islam). *Turba*, which literally means *Turun ke Bawah* (to go down to the villages), refers to *dakwah* activities to spread Islam to neighbouring villages. Religious teachers volunteer to teach Islam in other villages.

The population of Basin is around 4000 people, most of whom are Muslims who reside in Basin hamlet. There are about 13 *langgar* (small mosques) and two large mosques used for Friday prayer in Basin. Catholics are the second largest religious group and reside in Nglarang and Kebonarum. Before establishing a Catholic Church in a neighbouring village, Catholics performed their religious services in the home of a former *sinder* (tobacco field supervisor) in Basin hamlet. There are also a few Protestants and Buddhists in Basin. Religious harmony is well maintained in the village. There is no record at all of conflicts based on religious grounds.

In Basin hamlet, village religious organization consists of two systems: the system formerly known as *kondangan* (another name for *slametan*) and the system of *langgar* (prayer house). The former is based on a neighbourhood group residing in the same block. The group emerges when villagers perform celebrations together. In social affairs, such as helping to fix a house or road, the *kondangan* group plays a major role in organization. The system of *langgar* consists of people who recite prayers together in the *langgar*. The group is important when the people are dealing with religious affairs such as performing *tahlil* or organising religious ceremonies such as funerals and marriages. When performing *tahlil*, a member of a *langgar* will invite friends in the same *langgar* system.

In the modern administration, following the establishment of RT (neighbourhood groups) and RW (villagers' group), *kondangan* groups have been transformed into RT groups, whereas *langgar* groups still exist independently of the RT organization.

There is a huge irrigated area of fields surrounds Basin village where the people grow two rice crops a year, and once a year their land is hired by the tobacco industry for growing tobacco. Although the leasing money from tobacco is less than that from rice production, villagers are willing to lease their fields to the tobacco company as it benefits them.

In 1980 Basin was declared to be a village that had succeeded in promoting compulsory education for children under 15 years old. The existence of two elementary schools, one owned by Muhammadiyah (MIM) and the other a government school (SDN) is behind the education success of Basin. According to Muhammadiyah activists who organise *zakat* (alms collecting) from people in Basin, each year Muhammadiyah has to distribute *zakat* money outside the village. This indicates that the villagers in Basin cannot be categorised as poor.

According to elders, the village's relation to modernist Islam started during the time of Japanese occupation (1942-1945) and the period of early Indonesian Independence (1945-1955). Some Basin youths joined the *Hisbullah* (the troops of God) organised under a modernist organization. Furthermore, some youths from Basin were also involved in the rebellion of the DI TII (the abode of Islam and

the Islamic troops of Indonesia) to establish an Islamic state in Indonesia, and some of them were jailed in Surakarta for their participation.

For the last two decades, the political affairs in Basin have been dominated by the election of the village chief. Religious involvement in these elections has ensured their liveliness. The conflict has not been between Muslims and Catholics or Protestants but rather between modernist Muslims, who are associated with Muhammadiyah, and traditionalist Muslims, who look to various religious elites. This has provoked great tension. The establishment of a second mosque for Friday prayers was a result of this tension. Previously, Muslims in Basin performed Friday prayers at only one mosque located in the southern part of the village. However, the losing group in the election, with backing from a government agent, established the second mosque to demonstrate their separate existence. The first mosque followed the modernist tradition, whereas the second mosque, to differentiate itself from the first, followed traditionalist practices.

The establishment of the second mosque caused a swing in religious practice in Basin. All the practices of traditionalists in *pesantren* have been re-established. For example, the *tahlil* at the funeral *slametan*, which had been rejected by modernists, has been revived again. *Laras Madya* music, which was used to sing Javanese songs with Islamic teachings, has also been re-established. The *berjanjen* (reciting the narrative by Syaikh Barzanji describing the story of the Prophet Muhammad) is recited after a break of several decades. The revival of traditionalist practices has propelled modernists to accommodate these practices in order to maintain modernist domination in Basin.

The re-emergence of traditionalist Islam in Basin has led to a swing in religious orientation. By first accommodating traditionalist practices in modernist Islam and then swinging back again to follow traditional Islam, Javanese Muslims have attempted to find the right formula to understand and practise Islam in Javanese ways. Apart from the conflict in politics manifested in the election of the village chief, the villagers believe that the differences in religious practices are no more than an attempt to demonstrate that they are good Javanese Muslims. As Javanese Muslims, they

are bound between two historical, social and religious contexts — *tasawuf*, which tolerates accommodation of the influence of Javanese tradition on the one side, and *shari'a*, a more formal and legalistic approach of practising Islam, at the other. Their quest for the true Islam shifts back and forth between these two positions.

In addition to the religious swings in Basin, the diverse understandings of a particular Islamic tradition provide another picture of popular Islam in Java. In Jatinom, about 30 km from Basin, there is a traditional celebration, named the *Angkawiyu*, which is celebrated by many people. In the old days, Basin people walked to the *Angkawiyu*. The *Angkawiyu* was regarded as a *riyaya* (big and special day) to obtain *apem* (a pancake-like cake) that could be taken as a spiritual token for the village's prosperity. The celebration of the *Angkawiyu* is an important religious practice for people in the Klaten area in general. The *Angkawiyu* is a celebration to commemorate the life of Kyai Ageng Gribig, a *wali* credited with spreading Islam in Jatinom and its surrounding areas, by the distribution of *apem*. As *apem* is the main symbol of the *Angkawiyu*, the celebration is also called *apeman*, meaning "the obtaining of *apem*". The people in Jatinom celebrate the *Angkawiyu* by cooking *apem* as well as by giving alms to the poor. Because of this, the village has been given its nickname, "*Desa Apem*".

Angkawiyu, which is preserved by *juru kunci* (custodians of the graveyard), derives from the Arabic words "*Ya Qawiyyu*", meaning "oh the Most powerful". During the celebration these words are chanted while people compete to receive the *apem* thrown from a bamboo tower in front of the mosque. The celebration of the *Angkawiyu* is also called *saparan*, as it is conducted in the month of *Sapar*, the second month of the Islamic calendar. The people of Jatinom, at the time the celebration, open their houses to others. The main meal during the week of the *Angkawiyu* is *apem*.

The various names used to describe the *Angkawiyu* have significant implications for the way in which people celebrate and interpret the event. Some regard their coming to the *Angkawiyu* as attending a Sufi gathering by reciting the words "*Ya Qawiyyu*". For others, however, the most important part of the *Angkawiyu* is getting *apem* as a sign of blessing (*baraka*) from Kyai Ageng

Gribig. The different interpretations of the significance of the *Angkawiyu* lead to diverse practices. Those who believe that they are coming to Jatinom to attend a Sufi gathering perform their visitation in line with Sufi traditions, whereas people who believe in the spiritual significance of *apem* perform their visitation in their own ways.

Although these people perform different articulations of the *Angkawiyu*, these do not result in conflict. They celebrate the *Angkawiyu* in harmonious ways. The *Angkawiyu* is, as local people believe, a meeting place for their common belief in God. Although they differ in the way in which they approach God, ultimately they believe in the existence of God as manifested in their belief in the religiosity of Kyai Ageng Gribig. If the *Angkawiyu* is regarded as evidence of popular Islam in Java, then it is clear that its main characteristic is a pluralistic understanding of Islam. The rich cultural interaction embodied in the *Angkawiyu* demonstrates the rich and multi-faceted nature of popular Islam in Java.

Popular Islam in Central Java

It has been a basic premise of all monotheist religions, including Judaism, Christianity and Islam, that the universality of religious teachings is the ultimate divine revelation, valid for all people and for all times. As a result, there is a general tendency for followers of these monotheistic religions to practise religion in many different cultures. Orthodox Islam maintains that the *shari'a*, Islamic law defined on the basis of the Qur'an and the Sunnah (the tradition of Muhammad), is the ultimate source for Muslims all over the world. The Islamic *shari'a* has to be taken up by every Muslim to be his/her guide for life. However, in reality, Islam as a cultural system, to borrow Geertz's (1971) concept, creates different religious and social phenomena and constantly adopts different guises at the regional level.

The differentiation between formal and popular religion is a general phenomenon of perennial conflict, especially in monotheistic religions. Because the monotheistic religions have sacred books that are viewed as the ultimate revelation from God, the tendency for conflict between formal and popular religion is considerable (Vrijhof, 1979: 674). In Islam, however, the terms formal and popular are

rather problematic, as it is difficult to identify which group is the official one. This contrasts with Christianity, which historically has played a major role in determining official religion when, along with the emergence of the nation-state, the Christian Church developed increasing power and authority in religious affairs (Vrijhof, 1979). Waardenburg (1979), therefore, suggested the use of the concepts of normative Islam and popular Islam to overcome problematic identification.

Nicholson (1989) argues that in Islam there are two general platforms for understanding. The first is based on the *shari'a* interpretation as the ultimate, universal and sole guide for Muslims. The second platform is mainly occupied by Sufi Islam, which bases its teachings on the concept of *tariqa*. Literally, *tariqa* means "a way". In Sufism, *tariqa* consist of religious practices such as *dhikr* (reciting certain words from the Qur'an) and continuous fasting to achieve ultimate union with God. Sufism allows for different methods and practices to attain union with God, and this has led to the emergence of various *tariqa*. It also means that Sufism demonstrates a pluralistic understanding of Islam. Unlike the *shari'a* approach, Sufism provides an opportunity to articulate Islam in a local context, which thus represents a microcosm within the Muslim world shaped by social, historical and structural factors.

Sufi Islam, as studied by many scholars in African, Persian, Indian and Indonesian societies, represents the religious philosophy of popular religion. In Africa, scholars such as Trimingham (1971), Evans-Pritchard (1973), Eickelman (1976), Gilsenan (1973) and Gellner (1969), among others, have argued that the *tariqa*, which demonstrate various ritual practices and understandings of Islam, can be regarded as the representation of popular Islam in Africa. When looked at in its regional context, the *tariqa* have spread into many areas outside the Arab regions. These numerous variants document a fusion between Islam and non-Islamic indigenous culture. While the *shari'a* approach calls for a unified or universal Islam, Sufi traditions manifested in various *tariqa* permit pluralistic ways of approaching God.

Waardenburg, citing Ibn Taimiya, a prominent Muslim scholar in the early fourteenth century, commented that popular Islam has been developed through "borrowing from religions other than Is-

lam" (1979: 341). Ibn Taimiya argued that Islam is based on a concept of *tauhid*, which requires Muslims to strictly obey the principle of *tauhid* — testifying to the perfect oneness of God (Memon, 1976). Any ritual practices that are deviant to the concept of *tauhid* are regarded as *shirk* (polytheism or worshipping other than the one God). However, Bassam Tibi does not agree with these arguments, especially when borrowing from non-Islamic traditions was described as violating the principle of Islamic teachings (Tibi, 1991). Using Geertz's concept of Islam as a "cultural system," he claimed that Islam is a model "for and of reality". The emergence of regional Islam demonstrates the inevitable accommodation between Islam and the local context. Muhaimin in a convincing argument maintained that because of the concept of *tauhid,* the interaction of local culture in Islamic practices can be promoted. This means that, according to Muhaimin (1995), *tauhid* is the only parameter to determine the value of ritual practices. In other words, contrary to the argument of Taimiya, Muhaimin has argued that as long as activities do not violate Islamic principles, and have correct intentions, those activities, whether ritual or not, are *ibadah* (pious activities).

However, although Tibi and Muhaimin echoed the same argument in favour of local or regional Islamic practices, they had different intellectual grounding. Tibi, as can be seen from the insightful discussions in his books, exposes the inevitability of the influence of other traditions in Islam to demonstrate the ongoing process of "cultural accommodation of social change in Islam". If there were an abundance of evidence in the history of Islam that Islam had accommodated other traditions, this would mean that Islam should continue to adapt to changing social settings. For example, he advocated acceptance of the ideas of democracy and human rights as a historical necessity of Islam. The universal nature of Islam, Tibi (1991, 1998) argues, is based on the readiness of Islam to appropriate the local context.

Muhaimin, on the other hand, argues for the inseparable nature of Islam and local context from the perspective of traditionalist Islam. In Java, the accommodation of older Javanese traditions that do not contradict Islamic principles into Islamic practices encouraged the deep acceptance of Islam by the Javanese. Islam in Java is

regarded as a cultural element that is added to older Javanese traditions, without displacing them. The same argument can also be found regarding Africa, where Islam has been accepted as an integral part of Berber and Bedouin customs (Evans-Pritchard, 1973; Gellner, 1969; Trimingham, 1971). Muhaimin bases his argument on the reality that Javanese traditions have been interpreted in Islamic ways. The concept of *niyat* (intention) is a crucial point in traditionalist Islam. The quality and meaning of actions, whether religious or social, are determined by their intention. Bowen, in discussing modernist and traditionalist discourses, also found that *niyat* is a critical factor in judging religious activity. For traditionalists, *niyat* has to be declared when one performs a certain activity. This is because the *niyat* will determine the meaning and quality of the action. By relying on this concept of *niyat*, Muhaimin provides a religious argument that legitimates the acceptance of regional characteristics in Islamic activities.

The arguments of Tibi and Muhaimin first identified that the religio-political consequences of religious social interaction with various given cultures result in the multiple voices of Islam. The many variants of Islam, ranging from what may be called Indo-Islam, African Islam, Persian Islam to Javanese Islam, are reflections of how Islam has been adopted by various cultures and has been integrated into local traditions. Various forms of Islam are logical consequences of the process of cultural synthesis that occurs when Islam enters into a certain cultural setting.

There is no doubt that the tension between the sacred concept of reality and reality itself is reflected in the tension between legal and popular Islam. The former inspired the monolithic claim of Islamic universalism based on *shari'a* as the source of its legal provisions. The latter was mainly shaped in the dynamic course of Islamic history by borrowing from and accommodating various cultures in order to accommodate social change in Islam and put these changes into practice.

Defining popular Islam as "Islam as it is practised" in a certain locality, by no means separates this Islam from what is called legal Islam. A characteristic of what is widely known as popular Islam involves the practice of Sufism and of various religious practices and beliefs that have been adopted from outside Islam. However,

referring to Tibi and Muhaimin's arguments, it seems that there is no group that is not influenced by traditions outside of Islam. Take for example the modernist movement, which is considered to be the group that promotes the existence of universal Islam based on the *shari'a*. At the praxis level, as clearly seen in Java, the modernists have accommodated other cultures in promoting their ideas. For example, the use of the classical method in the modernist schooling system is taken from the Western system of schooling. Furthermore, when modernists promote Western style clothes such as ties and long trousers, traditionalists consider them to be behaving like infidels. And it seems that both modernists and traditionalists use the same reasons for rejecting each other's activities. On the one hand, modernists reject the intrusion of old Javanese cultures into Islamic practices and consider them as violating Islamic principles. On the other hand, traditionalists reject the introduction of modern styles in either education or behaviour as an infidel act. Therefore, if we define popular Islam as "borrowing other traditions", it is difficult to determine which Islamic tradition is not popular Islam.

The interrelationship between Islam and other cultures is the most interesting aspect of the process. The boundaries are not static, meaning that the processes of defining religious orientation may overlap. In this context it is worth mentioning two concepts introduced by Redfield (1956, 1968), "the Great Tradition" and "the Little Tradition". Hodgson used this distinction to examine the various manifestations of Islam in a number of societies. Because of its interaction with local cultures, the expression of Islam in a society — that is the little tradition of Islam — will differ between societies. However, since Islam has the same sacred textual sources, the Qur'an and the Sunnah, these little traditions all echo Islam in its universal form — the great tradition of Islam (Hodgson, 1974a).

In this article, popular Islam meaning Islam that is practised and interpreted in accordance with local context is considered to be "the true Islam". To reach this ultimate religious goal, one may proceed through various ways of understanding Islam. These differences may indicate the level of religious understanding one has reached. On the other hand, they may demonstrate the many ways to grasp the truth of religious understanding. The emergence of various religious orien-

tations with their different ways of understanding Islam indicates the ongoing process connecting Islam in Java with the wider context of Islam as a whole. This means that the different interpretations in Java are part of the global debate in Islam.

Islamic Religious Orientation

The deep influence of Islam in Javanese society, as Hodgson has argued, means that Islam constitutes the primary determining factor of political culture in Java. In its manifestation, however, Islam in Java is itself a historical revelation, meaning that in the course of its development Islam has taken on historically varied and culturally specific forms. To understand the presence of Islam in a certain locality, therefore, one has to consider the nature of popular Islam and the degree of importance that people attach to Islam. Islam in Java therefore has to be studied in terms of what the Javanese Muslims really do and believe about Islam.

There is no doubt that the variants *abangan*, *santri* and *priyayi* identified by Geertz some decades ago may still exist, though their significance has decreased. For example, the Javanese uses the term santri ambiguously. On the one hand, it is used to describe a pious Muslim or the status of a village as a Muslim village. Outsiders call Basin village, which is well known as a prominent centre of the Muhammadiyah organization in Klaten, "desa santri". However, on the other hand, the use of the term *santri* is restricted to people who study or have studied in a *pesantren*. Therefore, even though a Muslim knows and performs Islamic duties well, he/she would not be called *santri* if he/she had never studied at a *pesantren*.

In addition, the social base of these variants has also changed. Pranowo's research in a frontier village in Magelang found that a village that previously was dominated by members of the Communist Party, which was banned by the Indonesian government after the 1965 conflict, had changed into a *pesantren* village (Pranowo, 1991). Pranowo argued that there has been an active process of Islamisation in Javanese society. Therefore, Pranowo maintained that these three variants, or other social groupings based on religion, are not static groupings. Such religious orientations have more meaning as social identifiers than as elements of an ideological discourse or the basis of social structure.2

Kim also argues that there has been a continuous process of Islamisation of village traditions. In Yogyakarta, the place where the *kraton* still stands as a symbol of Javanese hegemony and Muhammadiyah, the biggest reformist organization in Indonesia, has its base, there have been ongoing processes of Islamisation. These processes can be seen in the way in which people attempt to Islamise their lives and their village traditions. The process of Islamisation has taken place in two ways: firstly, by increasing the number of religious activities such as religious gatherings and religious teachings; and secondly, by making links in everyday life to provide a public sphere to reflect the people's religiosity (Kim, 1996: 147). In Islamising village traditions, reformists take "an accommodational position to locate traditional practices in the context of Islam by imparting new meanings to them" (Kim, 1996: 187).

In the Klaten region, especially in Basin where Muhammadiyah dominates the religious discourse, the process that Kim refers to as the "Islamisation of everyday life and village traditions" can be explained in various ways. The reformists' rejection of customs and rituals considered "not-Islamic" was mainly based on economic principles. According to the modernist view, the rituals and customs were usually performed to the financial detriment of individuals. Preparation for a *slametan*, for example, needed a significant amount of money, especially for the poor. Because these customs and rituals were regarded as sacred activities that should be performed by all people, there were no excuses for people not to perform them. It is also true, however, that theological reasons were used in Basin to reject non-Islamic activities.

An interesting process was underway in Basin. Although modernists have succeeded in dominating the religious discourse, as manifested in the way in which religious activities are managed and explained, there is a swing back to the old practices. After the modernist religious view dominated for some decades, some people in Basin attempted to observe the older practices, previously rejected by the modernists, such as *slametan* ceremonies. The reason behind the reappearance of these old practices is a political one. Previously Muhammadiyah-inspired modernist Islam dominated the religious discourse and influenced social and political affairs. This can be seen

from the influential role of Muhammadiyah in the success of the election of village chief for some decades.

However, when conflict over the election occurred, especially among the elite, there emerged a new group that was opposed to Muhammadiyah's domination. To gain support among people who were religious in nature, this new group had to base its existence on religious factors. Because of its opposition to Muhammadiyah, this new group adopted religious practices that were different from Muhammadiyah. For example, if Muhammadiyah promoted the *pengajian* (religious teachings) in a house by reading the Qur'an and engaging in its exegesis, this new group conducted the *pengajian* in the mosque by reciting *tahlil* and long *dhikr*. In performing *slametan* for the dead, the modernists recited the Qur'an and believed that the subsequent reward (*pahala*) for it would return to the reader, whereas this new group followed traditional Islam performing *slametan* with *tahlil* and *dhikr*.

The return to the old practices was a reflection of the group's disagreement with modernist views. The cause of the swing was politically driven. Although the debate appeared on the level of religious discourse, the conflict was more apparent in the social and political arena. Because of the strong commitment to Islam, the group had to take up religious issues as their basis. Reinventing old religious practices such as *tahlil*, *slametan* and traditional songs, as in the *Laras Madya* orchestra, was a way of gaining supporters.

This was quite different to the way in which the modernists had established themselves in the village. The introduction of their activities was mainly motivated by the religious impulse to purify the religious practices of the village of non-Islamic influences. Inspired by successes in other regions, the modernist organization promoted its ideas by means of education. The strong support from the youth allowed the modernist organization to develop rapidly. Finally, strong support for the modernist view generated influence in social and political affairs.

Although the re-emergence of old practices has not gained much support, politically and religiously their existence marks a new religious landscape. Because of the lack of support from the local people, this new group invited supporters from outside villages. Through

their association with traditional Islam, these people have established their own community. This new group has had a significant impact on religious discourse in the village. The introduction of religious practices taken from traditional Islam forced the modernists to accommodate these changes. The modernists had previously strongly rejected such practices and considered them non-Islamic activities that had to be banned. However, sensing the strong support for these practices, the modernists attempted to observe the practices by giving them new religious meaning deriving from Islam. Kim aptly categorised these practices as the accommodation of the old by the imparting of a new interpretation. However, unlike Kim, I consider that the accommodation of local traditions is a result of the strong push from people who still believe in them. In describing the compromise approach in Yogyakarta, Kim seems to suggest that the appearance of this approach is a voluntary choice made by modernists, ignoring the push from people outside the modernist group.

As Harun Nasution (1974, 1985) argued, the emergence of an Islamic orientation that can be grouped in many different ways is politically driven. When the interpretation of religion is coloured by political interests, the group will strengthen. It seems that the re-emergence of the traditional Islamic orientation in Basin village has been accelerated by political motivation. Although it is true that, in terms of religion, each group has based its ideas on theological concepts in Islam, the conflict reached its peak when it was touched by political conflict. In Basin, there may have been different views of Islam, but these differences did not create serious conflict. But when one group became involved in political affairs, for example by supporting a political agenda, the difference in religious understanding accelerated into social and political conflict.

One cannot deny that religious variants can lead to social or religious conflict. Furthermore, one should not neglect the fact that people in Java understand Islam in different ways. The deep influence of Islam by no means implies uniformity of belief or practice in Java. There is no doubt that people have different interpretations of Islam and follow different religious movements. These differences, whether grouped in a dichotomy between normative

piety and mystical piety, or in the variants of *abangan*, *santri* or *priyayi*, or in terms of pious and less pious believers, demonstrate various ways of understanding Islam. It is this reality, consisting of the multiple voices and practices of Islam in Java, that defines the discourse of Islam as the dominant factor in religious discussion in Java. Moreover, it is these popular forms that assure that Islam in Java has found its home.

Social Experience and Cultural Dialogue

Evans-Pritchard posed a serious question about how an observer of religious studies should view religious phenomena. As religious activities and practices involve a believing situation, the truth of the meaning of religious phenomena cannot be understood without believing them (Evans-Pritchard, 1973). Moreover, Gilsenan (1982) argues that a religion such as Islam will result in various practices and interpretations when it is practised in a certain social and cultural environment. In order to believe, one has to at least appreciate practice.

Evans-Pritchard's question is concerned with two important factors, the first regarding the degree to which "subjectivity" of social practice is inevitable. When asked about the sacredness of a saint, or *marabout* in the African term, a follower of Sufism would answer with stories of the saint's capability in performing magical acts and his extraordinary spiritual appearance. The transmission of a saint's *baraka* (blessing) through visiting his tomb can only be explained by people who believe in it. Similarly, when people in Jatinom, Klaten were asked about their scramble (*rebutan*) for *apem* in the *Angkawiyu*, they answered from their personal experience, which may differ from others. An informant explained that:

> The struggle for *apem* is not merely getting *apem*. There is spiritual meaning behind the action. If I would like to have *apem* as such, it might be better for the organiser to give the *apem* to the people in order. However, *rebutan apem* is a spiritual action, meaning that it delivers a symbol of personal gain in a spiritual way. This means that if in the *slametan* you obtained *apem*, this indicates that you had obtained a spiritual blessing from Kyai Ageng Gribig.
>
> If we looked at the way in which the *apem* is made, it does not differ from other *apem* that you can buy in the market. The taste, the shape and the colour of *apem* in the *Angkawiyu* is the same as in the market. But how can people seriously struggle for *apem* in the *Angkawiyu*? This is because the *apem* in the *Angkawiyu* is

believed to have a spiritual blessing from the saint. When I got *apem* from the *Angkawiyu*, my heart felt satisfied. I did not eat the *apem*, but I used it for spiritual purposes as a medicine or a fertiliser for crops.

Such a spiritual explanation of the meaning of *rebutan apem* cannot be fully appreciated without personally believing it. The general implication of this point in the present work is that, as the Javanese acknowledge, religious phenomena in their generic form, are personal experiences relating to the existence of God. This raises a second and more important point. When speaking of religious experience based on personal explanation, it is important to remember that there exist diverse spheres of religious knowledge. From this perspective, the image of religion as a universal practice, which may be the view of some orthodox Muslims, is not very helpful since it risks obscuring the fact that religious experience is anything but uniform and shared.

These issues are relevant for understanding the pluralistic nature of Islam in Java. Since personal experience plays a major role in giving meaning to religious practices, the diverse understanding of Islam in Java has spread widely. Evans-Pritchard's question on the problem of believing in religion is taken in this context as a point of departure to examine the subjective interpretation of religious experience. From this perspective, Woodward's (1989: 7-8) use of the interpretations of people who practise religion is an example of using personal religious experience to explain religious phenomena. In his study on the relation between normative piety and mysticism in Java, Woodward argues that there is a strong tendency for Javanese to understand religion in a personal way. Muhaimin's analysis of the importance of the position of *niyat* (intention) in traditional Islam also emphasises personal religious experience. The difference between the religious sphere and mundane sphere is determined by the personal *niyat* of an action (Muhaimin, 1995).

Another implication of viewing religious phenomena through experience is the place of local context in the process of religious formation. Religious experience that considers the social context in religious formation is an acknowledgment that religious knowledge and practice, in any given society, assumes a direct correspondence to social structure (Eickelman, 1976; 1990). The different religious forms can be

observed in the way religion is transmitted and the way in which religious social changes occur. In Java, the transmission of knowledge is mainly by means of oral tradition, which is coloured by individual interpretation of this knowledge (Hefner, 1985). For example, the Sufi knowledge of Kyai Ageng Gribig is transmitted orally through the network of *juru kunci* (the custodians of the tomb of the Kyai Ageng Gribig). Although the *juru kunci* may receive the knowledge from the same person in the same generation, their reproduction of this knowledge differs.3

The survival of religious traditions in a society depends on the social environments where a religion exists. For example, in recent times, the use of a modernist perspective to interpret the *Angkawiyu* is due to the domination of modernist discourse in Jatinom. However, when the traditionalist orientation re-emerged, traditional Islam influenced the interpretation of the Angkawiyu in Jatinom.

Hefner and Eickelman argue that the social experience of a certain locality will influence the way in which local knowledge is understood. The interaction between local tradition and Islam, as Tibi showed, has become a prominent phenomenon in Islamic history. Since it's beginning, Islam has actively adopted other cultures that did not violate the basic principles of Islam. The emergence of what Tibi has called regional Islam — Arabic Islam, Persian Islam, African Islam and Malay Islam — has shown that Islam is inevitably influenced by social context. On the other hand, the influence of Islam in those regions demonstrates the contribution of Islam in shaping their cultural forms. This process of interaction between Islam and local cultures can be called cultural dialogue (Fischer and Abedi, 1990).

Endnotes

1. Snouck Hurgronje (1972) argued that Islam in Indonesia should not be feared since it was not as strong as the Dutch thought. This is because, firstly, unlike Catholicism which has a clerical system united under the authority of the Pope, *ulama* and *kyai* are not bound to a Caliph of Islam for example. Secondly, as there is no clerical command, Muslims in Indonesia are less fanatic. Thirdly, Hurgronje countered the myth that returned *hajj* had promoted fanatical rebellions. Finally, Islamic law was not rigidly applied in the society, as, realistically, *adat* and customary laws were still widely used. These phenomena of Islam demonstrated that the influence of Islam in the society was weak (Benda, 1972a; Suminto, 1985). Benda argued that Hurgronje's views laid the foundation of the Dutch marginalisation of Islam in Indonesia, especially in Java.
2. Pranowo maintained that the change of religiosity in that village was not caused by the conversion of people. Rather he said that the change was from "not yet a good Muslim to a good Muslim" (Pranowo, 1991).
3. In the story of the genealogy of Kyai Ageng Gribig, *juru kunci* provided many versions. A full description of this will be provided in a later chapter.

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