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Table of Contents

Articles

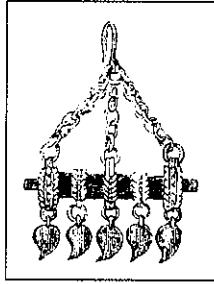
- 1 *Muhammad Adlin Sila*
The Festivity of *Maulid Nabi* in Cikoang,
South Sulawesi: Between Remembering
and Exaggerating the Spirit of the Prophet
- 57 *Suryadi*
Shaikh Daud of Sunur: Conflict between Reformists
and the Shaṭṭāriyyah Ṣūfī Order in Rantau Pariaman
in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century
- 125 *Fauzan Saleh*
The Belief in *al-Qaḍâ* and *al-Qadr*
in Indonesian Islamic Theological Discourse
- 155 *Abdul Syukur*
Bain al-Daulah wa al-Dîn:
Ma'sâh al-Jamâ'ât al-Mutaṭarrifah
fî 'Aṣr al-Ḥukm al-Jadīd (Orde Baru)
- 185 *Mubbib Abdul Wahab and Suwito*
Al-'Alâqah bain al-'Ulamâ':
Dirâsah Ta'sîliyyah li al-Thaqâfah al-Islâmiyyah
fî al-Ma'âhid al-Taqlîdiyyah fî Jâwâ

Book Review

- 207 *Oman Fathurabman*
Tradisi Intelektual Islam Melayu-Indonesia:
Adaptasi dan Pembaharuan

Document

- 223 *Fu'ad Jabali*
Bringing Good Governance
Home to Indonesia



Bringing Good Governance Home to Indonesia

Fu'ad Jabali

The Centre for the Study of Islam and Society (PPIM-CENSIS), based at The State Institute for Islamic Studies (LAIN) Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, continues to develop research programs that contribute to strengthening both the scientific tradition as well as community development in Indonesia. One of our current research programs, undertaken in collaboration with The Ford Foundation, focuses on the issue of good governance in Indonesia. Targeting the Muslim community, this project entails a combination of research, education and publications. The crux of the project ascertaining is to what extent Islam and the Muslim community in general support or reject the relative values of good governance such as democracy, transparency, participation and accountability. Techniques have been developed by the team in response to such issues and, based on these findings, curriculum and training methods will be designed in order to carry out an effective community based education programs on good governance.

Using Sherif Mardin's words, civil society does not emerge from a

vacuum. Western cultures and dreams have been significant in bringing civil society into being. However, one may ponder what happens when civil society is introduced into a non-western community. The response can range from full adaptation to total rejection of the process, the response seemingly highly dependent on the existence and/or non-existence of (1) values shared by the community that are similar to the new values, i.e. civil society, and (2) a social structure supporting these new values.

Like civil society, good governance, once it is introduced into the Muslim community, is subject to the same response. It has been stated that good governance is basically a "Western dream", but globalisation has made it impossible for the Muslim community to ignore it. This is especially so when international agencies like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, on which countries like Indonesia are economically dependent, require democracy and good governance as pre-conditions for the approval of their assistance. Since it is inevitable in the long run, perhaps a more pertinent question is whether there are existing values, as well as social structures, that are potentially supportive of good governance in Indonesia. Since the majority of Indonesians embrace Islam, what we mean by "values" is largely Islamic values.

There are certainly arguments made by Indonesian Muslims scholars to support good governance. The Qurân both instructs and encourages people to participate in the decision-making process (*wa shâwirhum fi al-amr*), to treat people equally (*musâwah*), to consult with the community (*jamâ'ah*) and to follow decisions taken by the community (*ijmâ'*). These are but some of the values which are often referred to when demonstrating the compatibility of Islam and good governance. Nurcholis Madjid, for example, uses Islamic Traditions — including the Qurân, the Prophetic Tradition (*Hadîth*) and the life of the Prophet (*al-sirah al-nabawiyah*) — to support the importance of community in state governance. 'Masyarakat madani', the term he uses when translating "civil society", is loaded with religious (or to be specific, Islamic) values and, accordingly, putting these values into practice is deemed a religious obligation. The word 'madani' is the adjectival form of the word 'madînah', which means 'city' or 'civilisation' and thus has a secular meaning. But for Nurcholis Madjid the word 'madani' is inextricable associated with Madînah, the city of the Prophet, thus 'masyarakat madani' or 'civil society' is a society that uses the community established by the Prophet in Madinah as its model. If the assumption holds true that Islam is a significant factor in shaping the thoughts and deeds of the Indonesian commu-

nity, then using religious grounds to socialize and internalise good governance in the community is one prospective strategy.

Whether Nurcholis Madjid and others who support the compatibility of Islam and good governance are right in the way they view the role of Islam particularly in the Indonesian community, is debatable. For example, Lewis (1993) and Kedourie (1994) argue that Islam is not compatible with civic culture and therefore does not constitute a good precondition for the establishment of good governance. However whatever position one takes in this debates, one cannot avoid asking many questions including those pertaining to: "What do the Indonesian Muslims actually think of values relative to good governance?" It is partly to address such questions that the national wide research mentioned above was undertaken.

The tools developed to reveal abstract values related to good governance are far from simple. A group of concepts surrounding good governance including religiosity, socio-economic status, ego-tropic and socio-tropic evaluation of social and economic conditions, psychological traits, Islamic political culture, democratic values, civic engagement, interpersonal trust, trust in public institutions, tolerance, efficacy, alienation and political engagement were transformed into simple and measurable questions. These questions, which have been developed, to mention some examples, by Wald (on religiosity), Mishler and Rose (on ego-tropic and socio-tropic factors), and Sullivan (psychological traits), were modified in accordance with the Indonesian context. A sample of 2,017 respondents were taken proportionally from 16 provinces: North Sumatra, West Sumatra, South Sumatra, Lampung, Jambi, Jakarta, Banten, West Java, Central Java, Yogyakarta, East Java, South Kalimantan, East Kalimantan, South Sulawesi and West Nusa Tenggara. Using the method of multi-stage random sampling with village or district as the primary sampling unit, these respondents, who were at least 20 years old or married at the time of the 1999 general election (thus eligible to vote), were asked directly in face to face interviews to answer about 300 questions.

Some of the major findings of this survey were published in feature articles in *Tempo* magazine, as well as in *Kompas* and the *Straits Times*. That such media organizations have shown an interest in this research is not surprising. The events of September 11 certainly have had a significant influence on the relationship between the East/Islam and the West/Christianity. Historically, the encounters between the two worlds have been dynamic. But, particularly in the post-colonial period, the relations

between the two have tended to be increasingly negative. In this respect, Huntington's thesis on the 'clash of civilizations' is strongly justified. Huntington's thesis has been criticized, but the event of September 11, or at least the way the American Government has responded to them, has countered Huntington's critics. Those behind the attacks were people with Arab names and therefore were easily associated with Islamic symbols. Usamah bin Laden and the Taliban are Muslims.

The action of the American Government against terrorism has gone well beyond the borders of Afghanistan as Al-Qaidah, Usamah bin Laden's organization, is believed to have networks in Muslim countries including Indonesia. It is true that the demonstrations against the American Government that took place soon after September 11 in Indonesia were conducted mostly by Muslim organizations such as Front Pembela Islam (FPI) and Laskar Jihad. American symbols such as McDonald's and Kentucky Fried Chicken also became the target of the demonstrations. Taking this into account, it is not unfounded to question whether Muslims also consider good governance, like McDonald's and Kentucky Fried Chicken, to be an American (Western) product that Muslims should resist. Other events that have occurred in Indonesia, such as efforts to apply Sharî'ah in some regions like Aceh, Padang, Makasar, Banten, Cianjur, and Tasik may lead one to conclude that indeed Islam (or to be precise, radical Islam) has strong support in the community, which indicates a move away from Western ideas. Accordingly, good governance has no future here.

The research reveals some seemingly contradictory realities. Take for example the following findings. The majority of respondents can be considered devout Muslims. They purport to always/often fast during Ramadhan (81%), pray five times a day (77%), and to have abandoned practices that are considered un-Islamic. They never/seldom make pilgrimages to the graves of holy persons (94%), make ritual offerings (93%), or burn incense (94%). Since the latter are practices associated with the *abangan* variant of Muslim as classified by Clifford Geertz, the disappearance of these practices indicates a weakening of *abangan* practices or a strengthening of *santri* practices. There appears to be a shift within the Muslim community from syncretic and non-practicing Islam to more orthodox and practicing Islam. In other words, Indonesian Muslims are becoming more pious. Based on these facts, one can assume that Indonesian Muslims potentially support an Islamic state. The majority of respondents (58%) agree that an Islamic government (i.e. a government based on the Qurân and the Sunnah of the Prophet and led by experts in Islam)

is best for Indonesia and that the state must oblige all Muslim men and women to follow Shari'ah law (61%). But what kind of Islamic state Indonesian Muslims want is not so easy to ascertain. It does not appear to be one that is practiced in Saudi Arabia, Pakistan or Iran. For example, while 61% of respondents agree that Shari'ah law must be applied in Indonesia, 42% do not think that stoning (the sentence for adultery as taught by the Qur'an), should be applied in Indonesia, and 55% do not think that the Quranic punishment for theft, cutting off a thief's hand, should be implemented. They also disagree that the police should monitor whether Muslims pray five times a day (80%) and that the government should arrest a Muslim who does not fast during Ramadhan (77%).

The acceptance of the Qur'an and the Sunnah as the basis for the Indonesian government on the one hand and the non-acceptance of codes and penalties of Islamic law as prescribed by the Qur'an on the other indicates that Indonesian Muslims are entering a critical period in history. They are in the process of looking for a certain form of Islamic government suitable for their cultural context. Their rejection of stoning as a legal sentence does not mean that they reject Shari'ah law, but it may mean that they want experts of Islam to come up with new interpretations of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Questioned about which should reign supreme, God's sovereignty (valued 1) or people's (valued 10), only 13% of respondents prefer the former while 17% prefer the latter. The majority of respondents (41%) ranked in the middle (valued 5-6). This means that, according to them, it is necessary to acknowledge God's sovereignty and at the same time to leave greater space for new and more contextually appropriate theological interpretations. Hence the current interpretation of the Qur'an that is embodied in the books of the available schools of Islamic thought must be revisited. But the strength of their attachment to Islam also means that putting Islam aside and introducing new ideas alien to Islam will be strongly resisted by Indonesian Muslims. Scholars such as Nurcholis Madjid have already alerted us to this. Good governance and other ideas born from a cultural milieu other than that of Islam should be introduced via the Islamic tradition if they are to be integrated into the Muslim community.

While Indonesian Muslims believe that Islamic government is best for the country, they also view democracy in the same way. They see democracy as the best system for the country (71%). Regarding the current situation in Indonesia, respondents say that democracy is neither the source of political stability (71%), nor the cause of the economic crisis (70%), nor the

cause of the difficulty that the government has in decision-making (52%). They acknowledge the inability of those who are involved in running the country to live up to democratic values. Many Indonesian Muslims distrust political parties (39%), policeman (42%), the courts (44%) and even the People Representative Body (DPR) (44%). A significant number of them believe that what is of concern to the government in Jakarta has nothing to do with the daily needs of the people (57%), that the government is controlled by a small number of people whose central concern is to protect their own interests rather than those of the people (58%), and that their promises during the general election campaign are not kept (67%).

How can Indonesian Muslims believe that both Islamic government (59%) and democratic government (71%) are simultaneously the best for them? While the 12% gap may indicate that Indonesian Muslims see democratic government as better than Islamic government, it is not unfounded to argue that they believe that democracy is basically compatible with Islam, or that Islam can become a good home for democracy. This is in direct opposition to the views of Lewis and Kedourie mentioned above.

Civic engagement is an important factor in the consolidation of democracy. According to our survey, the voluntary social activities in which the community are active are mostly religious activities (48%), followed by non-religious activities at the village/district level (17%). Some respondents viewed themselves as part of a certain religious community, especially that of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) (46%) and Muhammadiyah (11%). If democracy is believed by Indonesian Muslims to be the best system and to be compatible with Islam, then the most important agent behind the achievement of such a synthesis are probably religious organizations. Together with the tendency of Indonesian Muslims to be more pious, this is again an indication opposing the view that the role of religion will decline once modernization is introduced into a religious community.

However, there is another side to this story that may change the preceding positive conclusion regarding the relationship between Islam and the Indonesian community altogether. First, interpersonal trust among Indonesian Muslims is still low. Respondents felt that they had to be very careful with others and could not trust them easily (87%). Further, if they were not careful they believed that others would take benefits from them or exploit them (80%), and that nobody would take care of them if they do not take care of themselves (65%). Second, Indonesian Muslims are not fully tolerant. The majority of respondents (80%) profess a dislike for certain people or groups of people. They do not like communists (68%),

Jews (8%), Protestant/Catholics (4%), Laskar Jihad (2%) and the ethnic Chinese (2%). When respondents say that they do not like Communists, it means that they do not want them to be the national leader (88%), to teach at public schools (62%), or to hold public meetings in their area (68%). Also, 85% of respondents said that they did not want the Communist Party to run in the general election.

Reasons for the high level of distrust and intolerance among Indonesian Muslims may be as follows. Firstly, 'other' means people whom they do not know or who do not belong to the same group as them (a member of NU is unlikely to consider fellow members of NU as 'other', and like wise members of Muhammadiyah). It seems that voluntary participation in religious activities is only effective in developing trust and tolerance among members of that group and that they remain suspicious of people whom they do not know. Is this ideologically driven or merely a security issue? The latter reason is more likely than the former. The failure of the state to provide security and to establish the rule of law and order has not helped people build a sense of trust in the community. Since the economic crisis of 1997 in particular, crime has increased significantly and this may have increased people's suspicion of strangers. Of course one also needs to take into account the security approach of the New Order government. For over 30 years, people were constantly under scrutiny by the state, and were understandably fearful. As for the people's hatred of the Communists, one can trace this back in history. The struggle for power in the 1960s between the army and the Communist Party vis-à-vis President Soekarno reached its climax in 1965 when 7 generals were kidnapped and killed. According to the army and thus to the New Order, the Communist Party was responsible for this. Accused of trying to change the state ideology of Pancasila, the Communist Party was banned, its supporters were killed or imprisoned without trial, and henceforth communism was the number one enemy of the New Order. All Indonesian citizens were forced to denounce or deny any affiliation with Communism. Those who failed to do so could hardly get jobs, particularly in government offices and related institutions. The New Order carried out an effective media campaign against communism and the deep hatred of communism by Indonesian Muslims mirrors the success of this campaign.

The low levels of inter-personal trust and tolerance are certainly counterproductive to the establishment of democracy and good governance in Indonesia. However, it is more important to first understand clearly the roots of this sad situation and second, to find solutions for it. Like the

acceptance of democracy by Indonesian Muslims, the roots of distrust and intolerance may be religious since the activities in which Muslims participate are mostly religious activities. It is justifiable then that one looks at religion and religious institutions as the main source of these misfortunes. Of course it is not easy either to approve or to challenge this assumption, and the quantitative approach that PPIM took to examine the practices of good governance among Indonesian Muslims can answer only part of the problem. Abstract values — such as values relative to religion and good governance — are basically immeasurable. Nonetheless, the combination of both quantitative and qualitative approaches could probably reveal a better picture of reality. Thus a qualitative study is the next step that PPIM will undertake to verify and to elaborate further on the findings mentioned above. Close encounters in the manner of ethnographers will be conducted. Locations have been identified for this purpose. By the end of this year (2002), it is expected that all stages of this research will be completed and a book presenting the results of this research will be published.

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