The Relationship Between Islam and Adat in Indonesia: A Comparison Between Java and Minangkabau

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1. Introduction

Islam has spread throughout Indonesia since the thirteenth century, initially in Aceh and then gradually to the rest of Indonesia. When Islam first came to Indonesia it was still debatable. There are several pieces of concrete evidence. First, "three gravestones discovered in the Pase district of north Sumatra, dated in the first half of 1294, another at Gresik in east Java of 1419. It has been determined that these originated at Cambay in Gujarat" (Hooker, 1983 : 3). Another gravestone dated 1297 from Pase is not known to be of Cambay origin but constructed to derive from India. Several Gravestones from Java dated 1102 and 1399 are also known but their derivation cannot be identified. Secondly, there is evidence from early travellers accounts: "the Great Moroccan traveller, Ibn Battuta visited Pase in 1348 and describes its people as Muslim. Marco Polo was in the area in 1292 and describes Periak as Muslim but that 'Samara' remained heathen" (Hooker, 1983 : 4). Hooker still hesitates whether 'Samara' is Samudra or Pase or not, and at the moment these are consensus that 'Samara' is Samudra. The third body of evidence are the local histories which link with the introduction of Islam, Le "the Hikayat Raja-raja Pasai and Sejarah Melamu 1812" (Hooker, ibid).

However, the above evidence is still limited. It only gives names of place, the religion and dates, and the account of travellers to the region are not wholly reliable, either with respect to their geography or to information on the depth and spread of 'response to Islam' (Hooker, ibid). Nevertheless, the information of the traveller's accounts and the surviving epigraphy are intelligible, because the traveller just reported whatever they saw and heard, and the epigraphy only mentioned the most important messages.

Undoubtedly, the evidence still provides some evidence that Islam had spread at the time in the region. Consequently, it might have affected the particular cultural form in which the religion spread. From the available data, one can hypothesise the immediate origins of Islam in Indonesia. Three hypothesis have been put forward. These are, firstly, from the Arabs of Hadramaut, secondly from south India and finally from Bengal. Even though, there is no conclusion yet from the interpretation of the evidence concerning the origins, however, the second hypothesis seems to be the most acceptable because:

This hypothesis rests on the demonstration of three points. First, a significant Muslim presence in south India. This is known to have increased at the correct time. Second the existence of trading links between south India and South-East Asia. This has also been demonstrated. Third, the evidence of a prominent Muslim element in this trade, and thus a Muslim element in the South-East Asian population. (Hooker, 1983 : 5).

Other hypothesis about the early Islamization of Indonesia was advanced by A.H. Johns (Australian Philologist). There
are two Asian routes in which Islam came along and was spread by shayl missionaries. The first route was overland route by cargo through central Asia, and the second route, via the Indian Ocean.

The culture communication between the mountain heart of Islam and the Indonesian part-tour via overseas route had ... brought the idea of great mystics of Islam first to North Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula, and subsequently to Java from the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries (Keentanagastro, 1985: 47-48).

The latter hypothesis is similar to the second hypothesis of the immediate origins of Islam in Indonesia. If it is so, mystics of Islam in Indonesia might have been influenced with fakir/ dogma. It would seem that the route by which Islam was introduced into Indonesia affected its cultural form. It seems that the religion, since its inception, has never separated from Arab culture as a whole. "Islam law, the shari'a, governs man's relations with his fellow as well as his relationship with God" (Hooker, 1978: 91).

In the diffusion content, it means that local culture would face a new doctrine.

The result is a tension between local culture or, more exactly, indigenous modes of conceptualizing the world and thinking about the eternal verities, and the literary information defining the belief in God and the practice of His command. (Hooker, 1983: 3).

Consequently, the acceptance of Islamic tenets in Indonesian archipelago varies from place to place, and, in its purity religious aspect Islam demonstrated an ability to come to some accommodation with other systems of belief, especially animism in its various forms (Hooker, 1978: 91). In Java for example, there is wide variation in the acceptance of Islamic ideas, from conservative Muslim Santri at one extreme to traditional mystics and animists at the other. In Minangkabau Islam coexists with the adat and in Aceh Islam coexists with animism etc.

On the other hand, throughout Indonesia, local and past Indianized institutions still provide modes of behaviour as customs or adat. Adat is part of local culture, that can be defined as "legal systems, that is as normative systems which shape human behaviour" (Hooker, 1983: 33). And it is "no more than customary than customary practice, and may incorporate Muslim practice as much as oppose it" (Ellis, 1983: 64). In many cases both can be combined in certain institutions, in Javanese mystical syncretism for example.

Hajiberto, nominally approximately 90% of the total population of Indonesia are Muslims. Presumably, the feature of the relationship between Islam and adat in Java and west Sumatra, seems to be different. Here I shall compare the ethnic Javanese and the Minangkabau. The ethnic Javanese represent the majority population in Indonesia. Most consider themselves Muslims, but only a few conduct the Islamic shari'a. On the other hand, the Minangkabau people are considered to be Pious Muslims.

2. The Development Of Islam In Java And Minangkabau

Although there is no exact evidence yet about when Islam spread in Java, and the conversion of Javanese to Islam, at the moment we generally assume the following:

Islam came to Java from Malacca, a newly emerging state on the west coast of the Malay peninsula. When, in the course of the fourteenth century, the power of Majapahit as commercial empire declined, central of the eastern part of the trade route through the Indies and archipelago was taken over by the state. Its part was frequently visited by Muslim merchants from Cipuri, South India and Persia (Keentanagastro, 1985: 49).

In the end of the fifteenth century Islam began to spread among the Javanese merchants in Gresik, Demak and Tuban. The spread of Islam in Java be-
came gradually wider after the last Javanese Hindu-Buddhist empire was conquered by Dharmak and the latter became the first Muslim kingdom in Java.

In the Demak period, in the early sixteenth century the spread of Islam was implemented by Muslim missionaries, led by wandering religious teachers or holy saints (wali). 

In the seventeenth century and later, Islam was spread in Java by the activity of a group of nine saints (the wali santri), who had their centre at the holy mosque of Demak. They worked with the reason of no making culture shock. They adapted the Javanese scientific institutions, which was called Mandala. Then, this institution was converted into an Islamic version and called Porokok Pesantren. Presumably, the curriculum, which was taught to its disciples, were not only Islamic tenets, but also Javanese sciences (Juru Kejawen), based on the origin of Javanese knowledge and combined with Hindu-Buddhist sages. For example, the disciples were taught to read and conduct the Rukun Islam and shari'ah in their holy book. Al Qur'an and Hadith, and also the Javanese mysticism, magic etc.

During the Mataram period, the walis probably allowed the spread of Islam in the countryside and the themselves were devotees of Islam, but they refused to wear Muslim panoply. They built large mosques near their courts. However, the walis of the Javanese kingdom, such as Mataram, still grasped Hindus-Buddhist levels by conducting several rituals such as rites of passages, rites of the Javanese calendar related to the Islamic holyday etc. In conducting the rituals, they combined Hindu-Buddhist substance and Islam's incarnation, and these Royal rituals, by and large, are imitated by Javanese villages until nowadays with some modification and charges. Even though most Javanese consider themselves as Islamic, they never or rarely conduct the shari'a. This sort of belief fusion is usually called syncretism.

At the beginning of the twentieth century there was an Islam puritan movement, formed by the pious Muslim Ulama, who had just come from Mecca and the youth people. They tried to implement the Rukun Islam without being contaminated with traditional rituals. As a result, they do not implement sambang, nyekaran grave visiting ritual, and also avoid Javanese Shadow puppet performances. The most puritanical of these movements is called Muhammadiyah.

According to Geertz in his 'Religion of Java', there are three kinds of belief system related to Islam in Java i.e. Islam santri, Islam abangan and Pityayi. The structure is widely criticized by some Indonesian scholars. Consequently, Koentjaraningrat in his 'Javanese Culture' grouped the abangan and pityayi into a category called against Javan.

Meanwhile, in Minangkabau society, the development of Islam shows a different picture. Before Islam came to this region, Minangkabau society was controlled by the asat based on traditional Minangkabau culture and Hindu-Buddhist notions.

The key figure in the nagation of Minangkabau peasant was the shahman, for whom the Minangkabau term shahman generally used. ... The theoretical justification for the view of 'shahman' was peasant belief in the dualism of the soul. Each individual was thought to have a real soul and a soul-which could disappear; it was the latter, called semangat, which represented life's vital power. In this way, Shamas could be explained as the capturing of the 'semangat' by an evil spirit, and it was the role of the 'shahman' to call on his or her familiar spirits to track down the lost semangat and return to the sufferer. (Bodkin, 1983:117).

This belief belongs to animism, which might be the original Minangkabau religion.
A new religion came to Minangkabau, which was marked by the rise in Indian traders and the Hindu-Javanese court of Adityawarma. This new religion was associated with the former magalitic cult. Adityawarma used the stone pillars for his inscriptions, or carved additional markings on their surfaces, and sacred oaths such as the three stone seats near Limas Kaur were used by the King in his own court ceremonies. But he also introduced the religion of which he was devotee, a Tamist form of dynastic Budhism with Baskale elements (Dobbins, 1983: 118).

This sort of belief and cult also flourished in Majapahit, but did not survive long in Minangkabau. The survival elements of the belief was ... the concept of the divinity of the ruler, who was transformed by the miracle of his accession into a devine being and became the sustainer of the cosmic order. The ruler could never afford to neglect magical ceremonies to sustain his power and in Minangkabau this sacral character of the ruler remained very marked through the centuries (Dobbins, 1983).

Islam came to Minangkabau at the end of the sixteenth century. The preeminent factors that caused the success were that in the earliest years of Islamic development was associated with the city, "...Islam requires the city in order to realize its social and religious ideals" (Dobbins, 1983). In addition, Islam in some way, could also be adapted to the Minangkabau royal family, even though they had their own sacred cult and belief.

The development of Islam in Minangkabau was also associated with the gold trade. By the mid-seventeenth century most gold merchants had been converted to Islam, and then spread their belief to other villagers. The villagers, who had no connection trade, became devotees of Islam through two ways: "First was the affiliation the new religion was able to evolve with the family and lineage system, and the second was the relationship of Islam to the village community as a whole" (Dobbins, 1983: 120).

The Islamic revitalism rose in the early nineteenth century under the name of the Padri Movement. However during its early movement the Padri was involved in the war against the Dutch Colonial Government. So it only paid a little attention to Islamic revitalism itself.

During this period the Padri movement itself underwent earthy change. Its extreme puritans simply could not be maintained for so long. Villagers in the devastated Padri Panday Smail, for example, were observed in 1925 to be smoking with tobacco (Dobbins, 1983: 140).

The recent movement of Islam purists which rose by the midtwentieth century, is Muhammadiyah. "The promoter of Muhammadiyah in Minangkabau was Haji Rasul. He asserted that Muhammadiyah's goal was to guide its members in their relationships with the three friends i.e. God, nation and man's fellow human being" (Abdullah, 1971: 70). Muhammadiyah at its early movement reflected "both the nature of political activities among the Kaurus Musa (youth) educated group and also the operation of Dutch colonial policies" (Abdullah, 1971: 71). The spread of Muhammadiyah in Minangkabau, first was in theジャリar area rather than in the town and it was the result of its ability to influence adat authority and religious teachers as well as the trades. Thus the success of the Muhammadiyah movement was due to the controlling of the school and the adat institutions.

3. The Relationship Between Islam and Adat In Java and Minangkabau

As we have just discussed, there seems to be a symmetrical between Hindu, Buddhist, Islamic and adat element in Java and a close relationship between Islam and adat in Minangkabau. These
features can be generally classified in real everyday life and the following description tries to discuss the relationship between Islam and art in both societies.

In the Javanese tradition, every change of individual status or calendrical period is by and large, accompanied by a similar ritual. As a whole, 'simmetan' rituals symbolize a submissive representation of the man himself to unify with the God and also with the social group. The main 'simmetan' elements consist of a set of sacrificial meals, burning licence and incantation. The main role of 'simmetan' is the incantation element, which is recited when the chant reciter bless the sacrificial meal and the host turns the incense. In such simple, 'simmetan' ritual, there is a complex symbolic belief system.

And again, many of the Javanese Muslim calendrical celebrations include the 'simmetan' meals described above. They are:

1) On the tenth of the month, Suci the first month of Javanese Muslim calendar.

2) On the tenth of the third month, Mudik is the day for celebrating the birth and death of Muhammad.

3) At the time of 'Yogyakarta Kingdom, mudik is celebrated by the 'Genting Mudik' State Ceremony. During the 'Genting Mudik' in weekly the sacred 'pempeh' musical instruments are played in the palace by the palace music on the square (Koenjianisheng, 1985: 369).

This procession is always accompanied by other rituals, which are ful of religious meaning, both mystical and Islamic.

4) On the seventh of month Rejeki, to celebrate the Prophet Muhammad's ascension to heaven, the ritual is called Rejeki ordination.

5) On the fifteenth of month, Ruhun, on the first of month of Sawai celebrates the end of fasting, and on the tenth of month Rejeki, the last month of the Javanese Muslim calendar, celebrates the day of the Prophet Ibrahim's sacrifice, and the day of the hajj in Mecca. All of the Islamic holy days, by and large, are still celebrated in both the courts and villages level by presenting sacrificial meals.

In the case of marriage, in Java there are at least two parts which are influenced by Islam, i.e. in the wedding ceremony and the divorce system. In the wedding ceremony the bride's father, as her wall guardian, asks her formally whether she agrees to getting married. This ceremony must be witnessed by her family and others. The 'wali' for a Javanese bride, established according to Islamic law, is the responsibility of relatives in the patrilineal line, of which the first is her father (Koenjianisheng, 1985: 123). Furthermore, before the original Javanese core ritual in the wedding ceremony is implemented, there is an official ritual from the government representation, conducted by pengulu, a head of religious officials. This ritual is called 'talaari', an Islam version. In the mean time, if the marriage is not successful, the bride and groom do not fit to each other, they can get divorced and it must be officially determined and legitimized by 'pengulu' by failing the first 'talaari' a decision of getting divorced in accordance to Islamic law. If the 'talaari' reaches the third level, the couple cannot remarry.

Meanwhile, in Yogyakarta the role of Islam is influencing arts, shows different features to that of the Javanese, and in this society Islam has conscious influence in inheritance affairs, marriage and divorce. The acceptance of Islam in Yogyakarta society is an illustration of the absorption of new elements. It should be seen as a harmonious world containing both Islam and art. This harmony is usually characterized by the art's appo.-

(pentahet adat, that art is based on syarik, religious law), syarik is based on adat (Abdalrah, 1974: 9). It means that
the harmony of the society has to be maintained by adat, and symbolized with batel, while 'uyaran' maintains the harmony of self linked to the cosmic order, and is symbolized with mosque.

In Minangkabau society, the grouping of para' is an extended family, becomes Kampilan or clan.

The 'kampilan' themselves are individually classified in four sadis, the legendary four original clans of Minangkabau. They are called Kit, Palang, Bod, and Tanjung, and in their turn also belong together in two, both groups, Kit, Palang and Bod, Tanjung are supposed to have their own customs or adat. (De Jong, 1952: 12)

Adat was valid only as long as it was not conceived to have directly confronted religion. But the elusive nature of the religiously valid behaviour continued since it was also based on the acceptability of the dual concept of mungkin (possibility) and patut (proper) (Abdullah, 1985: 143).

As far as we know, most Muslim societies are based on the patrilineal pattern, where in such societies male holds the important roles in politics, economics, social activities as well as religious activities. On the other hand, Minangkabau society is matriarchal. It means that kinship descent and inheritance are counted through female line. It seems to be paradoxical between Islam and adat. However, Minangkabau society seems to manage to accommodate the paradoxical matters by conceptualizing the above aphorism and validating.

...the existence of two traditions of empires, namely, in the local level linked to gender-discrimination. In the first, 'massoulin' side reflects the influence of the sultans and judges that the patriarchal royal family over the entire society, while 'temine' side reflects matriarchal and local customs. The second reflects the relationship between local custom (the adat) and the stories, regarded as more 'temine' and more 'massoulin' respectively. (Ellen, 1992: 67)

By and large, the effect of Islam on adat can be seen in innumerable affairs. Harto Pusako (heirloom asset) which belongs to 'para' should be distinguished to individual property. Severely, they are called 'pusako tinggi and pusako rendah" (Abdullah, 1985: 66). 'Pusako tinggi' is administered by the head of 'para' or the property-owning unit, and kept in the room of his oldest sister. "It, or part of it, may only be sold in very serious cases, defined by customary saying: to cover the cost of... the pilgrimage to Mecca" (De Jong, 1952: 56).

The illustration shows the importance of the role of Islam in Minangkabau society related to adat.

Individual property can also be called 'harta cairan' or 'harta dapatan' or gaining asset, personally earned by the deceased, "should be transferred in accordance with the Islamic inheritance law" (Abdullah, 1985: 143). If it is presented "by a father to his children are justified by Muslim law, and may take the form of a hibah a legally recognized gift (De Jong, 1952: 57).

Furthermore, in the matter of marriage and divorce, according to Warteb, based on historical data from the end of the nineteenth century, from Kerinci West Sumatra, religious authorities play an important role, as they might have expected, since they exert decisive at the ceremonies a for a fee. There is an institution whereby a woman can be formally separated from her husband at her own bidding, and this separation is symbolized by the murr, splitting a piece of wood. A proper divorce, however, can only take place if the husband promises the nafah (the Islamic terms for divorce), and he is initially unwilling to do so. He can usually be persuaded by the wife's relatives to pronounce the nafah for an agreed sum. This is known as menyel hidah (1985: 173).

The role of Islamic law in divorce is more or less similar to that in Java.

4. Conclusion

Based on some available evidence that the immediate origin of Islam in Indonesia is assumed to come from south India, it is assumed that Islam which spread to Indonesia has been mingled with tasanwif and dogma. Even though there
is opposition to accepting Islam in each society, apparently Islam demonstrated an ability to come to some accommodation with other systems of belief, especially animism, misticism in its various forms.

Such accommodation is not only demonstrated in terms of belief, but also with adat. In some parts of Indonesia Islam shows peaceful coexistence with adat and at some institutions both can best be combined. It is intelligible if the coexistence and mingling varies from place to place. This statement is exemplified by the description of the ethnic Javanese and the Minangkabau.

Islam began to spread in Java among the merchants, at the end of the fifteenth century, and gradually became widespread after the fall of Majapahit, the Hindu-Buddhist empire. To spread the religion, the 'wall' adopted the Javanese education institution, that was converted to Islam version, in which the disciples not only taught Islamic tenets, but also ilmu Jawa. This led to syncretism as a religious feature in Java. The pre-Islamic situation in Minangkabau seems to be similar to that of Javanese society, but in the development of Islam, both societies show different features. In Minangkabau Islam can be easily integrated into adat by conceptualizing adat apostles and the devotee seems to be more intense than Javanese.

Nevertheless, in both societies, adat is not superceded by the Islam culture, but both coexist side by side. In Java some adat has been combined with Islamic tenets and incantation, and in traditional religious devotion, there are some variations in pattern of adherence. As a whole Javanese do not identify themselves as atjehiteh Islamic. And in Minangkabau some Islamic laws have been adopted for solving adat cases, and adat only appears supreme in matters of decent and inheritance. Altogether Minangkabau define themselves as Islamic.

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