

**INTERELATION OF ISLAMIC CULTURE AND TEACHINGS WITH
TRADITIONS, BEHAVIOR AND CULTURE OF JAVA TRIBAL PEOPLE
IN INDONESIA**

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ABSTRAK

Riset ini dilakukan untuk menganalisis hubungan antara Islam sebagai agama pendatang baru dengan budaya lokal yang sudah terlebih dahulu ada di Indonesia. Riset ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif etnografi karena akan meneliti tentang pelaku budaya masyarakat tertentu. Data bersumber dari data emik dan data etik. Data emik diperoleh melalui wawancara dengan tokoh masyarakat atau pelaku budaya setempat. Dan data etik adalah interpretasi peneliti dari konsep-konsep sebelumnya. Data diperoleh menggunakan metode wawancara, observasi di lapangan dan triangulasi. Data yang sudah terkumpul kemudian dianalisis dengan cara mereduksi, menyajikan dan *conclusion* atau penarikan kesimpulan menggunakan teknik analisis tema budaya. Riset ini menemukan bahwa proses interelasi Islam dan budaya Jawa melalui dua metode, yaitu metode akulturasi dan asimilasi. Sebagai hasil dari akulturasi dan asimilasi Islam dan budaya Jawa lahirlah nilai budaya Jawa Islam. Di dalam nilai budaya Jawa Islam ini terdapat pranata hidup dan kehidupan masyarakat pendukung budaya itu sendiri yang tidak menghilangkan sama sekali budaya Jawa namun tidak bertentangan dengan ajaran Islam. Diharapkan hasil riset ini dapat menjadi salah satu rujukan peneliti lain yang akan melakukan riset serupa. Dan hasil riset ini juga diharapkan akan menghilangkan singkritisasi antara Islam dengan budaya sebelumnya yang tidak sesuai dengan ajaran Islam. Dan hasil riset ini semoga dapat meminimalisir “ketegangan” antara kelompok Islam modernis dengan kelompok Islam tradisional.

Kata kunci: Interelasi, Islam, Budaya Jawa.

ABSTRACT

This research was conducted to analyze the relationship between Islam as a newcomer religion and local culture that already existed in Indonesia. This research uses an ethnographic qualitative approach because it will examine the cultural actors of a particular community. The data is sourced from emic data and ethical data. Emic data were obtained through interviews with community leaders or local cultural actors. And ethical data is the researcher's interpretation of the previous concepts. Data were obtained using interviews, field observations and

triangulation. The data that has been collected is then analyzed by reducing, presenting and conclusions using cultural theme analysis techniques. This research found that the process of interrelation between Islam and Javanese culture through two methods, namely the method of acculturation and assimilation. As a result of the acculturation and assimilation of Islam and Javanese culture, Javanese Islamic cultural values were born. In this Javanese Islamic cultural value, there are living institutions and the life of the people who support the culture itself, which does not completely eliminate Javanese culture but does not conflict with Islamic teachings. It is hoped that the results of this research can be used as a reference for other researchers who will conduct similar research. And the results of this research are also expected to eliminate the syncretization between Islam and previous cultures that are not in accordance with Islamic teachings. And the results of this research hopefully can minimize the "tension" between modernist Islamic groups and traditionalist Islamic groups.

Keywords: *Interrelation, Islam, Javanese Culture.*

PRELIMINARY

Islam is a religion brought by the last prophet Muhammad SAW. which must be conveyed to all humans in all corners of the world consisting of various beliefs, ethnicities, races, different cultures.

The scope of this paper is the relationship between Islam and Javanese Culture. Meanwhile, the problem in this paper is how is the relationship between Islam and Javanese culture?. The purpose of this study is to analyze the extent of the relationship between Islam as a newcomer religion and Javanese culture that has taken root centuries ago in Java.

As a reference, researchers have analyzed various journals and books that have been written by previous researchers that have similar research themes. Then the researchers set

three kinds of journals that were used as reference material in this study.

The first is the Curiosity journal Volume 11, number 2, December 2017 written by Limyah Al-Amri and Muhammad Haramain entitled "Acculturation of Islam in Local Culture". This journal reports on the success of Islam that came from Arabia in dialogue and acceptance in the local cultural landscape that has long been rooted in the archipelago.

The second is from IAIN Surakarta, the journal Shahih Volume 1, January-June 2016 written by Khabibi Muhammad Luthfi entitled "Islam Nusantara: Islamic Relations and Local Culture". In this journal the findings are in the concept of Islam Nusantara using eight approaches, which position Islam as influencing Indonesian culture and its success in dialogue with Indonesian culture.

The third is from the Islamic Discourse Journal Volume 1, Number 1, April 2013 written by Hamzah Junaid entitled "Critical

Study of Islamic Acculturation with Local Culture". This journal says that from the universality of Islam, it has the power to reach and explore beyond the limits of certain space and time. Islam requires an acculturative ability to the locality of the community in which it is accepted.

Of the three journals that have been analyzed by researchers, none of them explain the method of interrelation between Islam and local Javanese culture. Therefore, this study will discuss the method of interrelation, which found that, the relationship between Islam and local Javanese culture through two methods, namely by means of acculturation and assimilation.

This study uses a qualitative ethnographic approach because it will examine the cultural actors of a particular community. The data comes from books, journals about culture, emic data and ethical data. Data were obtained using observation, interview, and triangulation methods.

The observation method is carried out by observing the object to be studied, analyzing and recording the findings in the research field. The interview method was carried out by holding a question and answer session with the informant as a data source. While the triangulation method is obtained by combining the methods of observation, interviews, and documents from various existing data sources. Then the data that has been collected is analyzed by reducing, presenting and *drawing conclusions* using the cultural theme analysis technique (Jaya, 2020: 172).

DISCUSSION

Interrelation

The word interrelation has the meaning of a relationship with one another (Ministry of National Education, 2007: 438). This study will explain the relationship between Islam and Javanese culture.

Islam

Islam as a religion is believed to be single because it was born from the One and Only One. But when Islam enters into human understanding, Islam is no longer singular. (Wijaya, 2020: 19).

When Islam has reached human understanding, the teachings of Islam will certainly be influenced by the level of understanding of its adherents. If Islam has arrived in an area, it will also come into contact with the culture of the local community, including in Indonesia.

The presence of Islam in the territory of Indonesia in the past few centuries has met with local culture and traditions. In any area in Indonesia, whether in Java, Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and other islands. Islam always faces local culture and traditions that have grown and developed for a long time and have even taken root in society (Qomar, 2021: 203).

Javanese

Culture Culture in general is often interpreted simply as the result of human cultivation and intention by using symbols and artifacts. In line with this understanding, culture can cover the way of life of the whole community which includes how to behave, dress, speak the language, worship, norms of behavior and beliefs (Mas'ud, 2020: 60).

There is also a culture that defines the results of creativity, taste, intention, and human work. This meaning contains a generic meaning, namely that the results of human work can be of negative value and/or quality (Qomar, 2021: 76).

On the other hand, there are also differences between culture and culture. Culture is the power of mind in the form of creativity, intention and taste, and culture is all the results of that creativity, initiative and taste (Notowidagdo, 2002: 24).

While Java is one of several islands in Indonesia which has been inhabited by a number of residents who are one of the largest populations in Indonesia. And in general, the Javanese and their culture are those who inhabit the provinces of Central Java and East Java.

From the various understandings of culture above, the researcher can conclude that Javanese culture is the whole system, ideas, actions and results of creativity, initiative and taste of Javanese people to fulfill their life needs by way of learning, all of which are arranged in people's lives.

The Interrelation of Islam and Javanese Culture

When Islam entered the land of Java, the Javanese people already had a culture that came from animism, dynamism, Hinduism and Buddhism (A. Saepudin, (2017: 167-184).). With the entry of Islam into Java, there was an interrelation or relationship between pre-Hindu, Hindu-Buddhist, and Islamic elements.

The interrelation of Islam and Javanese culture involves several aspects of the life of the Javanese people which are part of the Javanese culture itself which, according to the researcher, includes at least seven aspects.

First, aspects of belief and ritual.

Every religion or belief certainly has a fundamental teaching aspect. In Islam these aspects are summarized in the pillars of faith, the pillars of Islam and Ikhshan. In pre-Islamic Javanese culture, Hindus believed in the existence of *Gods*, the *Rishis*, *Vedas*, *Samsara*, *Moksha* and others. In Buddhism also has a belief in the existence of four eternal truths, namely, *Dukha* (samudaya), *Samudaya* (cause of suffering), *Nirodha* (extinguishing desire), and *Marga* (path of release). While the beliefs of the ancient Javanese or pre-Hindu-Buddhist era are Animism and Dynamism.

It is the beliefs of Animism, dynamism, as well as Hindu and Buddhist beliefs that in the process of developing Islam are intolerant of beliefs in Islam. For example, in Islam, students call God *Allah*, Javanese Muslims call it *Gusti Allah*,

some call it *Gusti Kang Murbeng Dumadi* and others.

As the belief aspect above, before the arrival of Islam to Java, the Javanese already had certain ritual traditions. In the old belief these rituals took the form of offerings or some kind of sacrifice that was presented to certain supernatural powers. These rituals aim to ward off evil and hope that his life is always safe.

Then Islam flexibly gave a new color to the rituals as *kenduren* or *slametan*. In the Islamic Javanese slametan ritual or ceremony, it is filled with reading tahlil and dhikr to Allah SWT. The event is usually led by a *lebe* or *kyai*. There is usually a tumpeng banquet and when it is finished the congregation will go home with *blessings*. The word blessing comes from the Arabic *Baraka* which means blessing. So by bringing the blessing, the intention is that the host and the congregation will receive blessings from Allah SWT.

With such a core pattern, Islamic values have permeated the implementation of the slametan ceremony in various forms, including the *tingkeban ritual*, *puputan*, *circumcision*, *marriage*, *death ceremonies* and others. A similar pattern has also been extended to other rituals such as during the *boyongan ceremony*, *opening the legs*, *Suronan*, *Rajaban*, *Muludan*, *Nisfu Sya'ban*, *Ruwahan*, *Syawalan* and so on.

Second, aspect literature. In general, literary works consist of prose, poetry, rhymes and drama. Types of old Indonesian literature or poetry, namely, *mantras*, *rhymes*,

poems, *talibuns*, *gurindams*, *tersina*, and so on.

Types of literary works in the form of rhymes and poetry, in the Javanese cultural tradition are a kind of *parikan* and *wangsalan*. *Parikan* is a poem in the form of a Javanese rhyme, while *wangsalan* is similar to poetry, but *wangsalan* usually only has two lines in one stanza, while *parikan* has four lines.

The connection between Islam and Javanese literature is that the entry of Islam into Java has peaked at the same time as the development of Javanese literature, namely poetry in the form of macapat songs, so that the propagator of Islam at that time also doubled as poets who were very adept at creating macapat songs with Islamic nuances. It is through these macapat songs that the Walisongo incorporate noble moral values as the essence of Islamic teachings.

Third, the puppet aspect. The interrelation of Islam and Javanese culture in the wayang aspect is a distinctive part of the process of developing Javanese culture. The relationship between wayang and Javanese culture is like an inseparable coin.

Wayang is a symbol of Javanese philosophy. Puppet shows actually have a noble purpose, among others, namely, as a means of entertainment as well as providing guidance on the direction of human life to the right and right path according to the will of God Almighty.

The connection between Islam and wayang in Java is that before the arrival of Islam in Java, the art of Javanese wayang came from the

noble values of Javanese culture, while the source of the story came from the Mahabharata and Ramayana books and the fibers of Javanese poets. Then after Islam entered Java, Javanese cultural values met with Islamic values. As proof that in the original puppet story there were no clown figures, then through the missionaries or walisongo at that time they included clown figures, namely *Semar*, *Nala Gareng*, *Petruk*, and *Bagong*. Punakawan is the core of Islamic teachings that will be conveyed to the Javanese people.

Fourth, the architectural aspect of Java. In the history of Islamic civilization the mosque is considered the forerunner of architecture in Islam, namely with the construction of the Quba mosque by Rosululloh Saw as the first mosque.

Meanwhile, before Islam entered Java, the Javanese people had high architectural abilities. And when Islam entered Java, the existence of Javanese architecture that had been conceptualized and had a Javanese philosophy could not be denied by Islam. So when Islam entered Java, what happened was the art of Islamic architecture in the mosque combined with Javanese architectural art.

As a result of the work of art which is a combination of the two elements of culture, it is manifested in the building of mosques, tombs, palaces and urban or regional planning in this Java land.

Fifth, the political aspect in Java. In Indonesia, especially Java, at first Islam was accepted by coastal communities, but gradually Islam spread to the interior. In the long time after Islam entered the interior

of Java, the courts of the interior of Java began to excel against the sultanates on the north coast. This is evidenced by the collapse of the Demak sultanate and then moving to the Islamic Mataram sultanate with the kings Sultan Agung and Sunan Amangkurat I. This happened around the XVI to XVII centuries.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the Dutch had controlled all of Java. To smoothen its power, the Dutch appointed indigenous priyayi to draw tribute from the Javanese people, so that the people identified the indigenous priyayi with the invaders. Finally, there was resistance from the Javanese people, led by the kyai and ulama. This is one of the reasons why the influence of the kyai and ulama in Java is great.

On the other hand, in Java the king also has the highest, most authoritative and highly respected position. This happens because the Javanese think that the king is a descendant of God or the incarnation of God. This is what causes the Javanese in choosing a leader not on a rational basis but on an emotional basis. Javanese people prefer charismatic leaders over those who are good at leading. In a religious context, too, where the kyai of the pesantren have undeniable authority and charisma.

Evidence of the interrelation between Islam and Javanese culture in the political aspect in Java is the existence of symbols of the syncretization of Javanese and Islamic politics. The symbols are as in the following example. *First*, the titles of Islamic Javanese kings who use the titles *sultan*, *Kalifatullah*,

Sayyidin Panotogomo. Second, Sunan Giri, a scholar and one of the Walisongo, had been the king of Demak during the transition from the Majapahit kingdom to the Islamic kingdom of Demak. *Third,* the kings of Yogyakarta now use the title *Sri Sultan*. The word sultan comes from Arabic. *Fourth,* the central government building in the coastal and inland areas of Java consists of the royal center or the palace, mosque, market, and square located in one complex. *Fifth,* Nationally the names of state buildings are named in Javanese. Also in the palace and local government it is customary to hold ceremonies to commemorate Islamic holidays.

Sixth, aspects of Islamic education.

Pesantren is the oldest Islamic educational institution in Indonesia. Pesantren is an educational institution in the community as a gathering place for Javanese students. The history of the development of Islamic boarding schools began almost simultaneously with the entry of Islam in Java. The boarding school was developed by Walisongo around the 15th-16th century AD.

Pesantren as an Islamic educational institution in Java does not disturb local Javanese traditions so that its existence is supported by the community and many Javanese have converted to Islam through this pesantren. That way the Walisongo in their education have been able to absorb local elements of Javanese and foreign culture but are still in Islamic principles.

Seventh, the economic aspect. In Javanese society there is the term *golek pasugihan*. In *golek pasugihan*

Javanese people usually go to places that are considered sacred and useful for meditation in order to get inspiration to start a job. So in meditation the importance is not on the place, but on the original purpose or intention.

Meditation culture in Java seems to have similarities with the Sufi tradition in Islam. Meditation basically aims to get closer to God. And in the Islamic Sufi tradition, Sufism aims to unite oneself with Allah or *Wahdatul Being*.

In carrying out economic activities there is an activity called planning. In Javanese culture there is also a similar activity, namely the *slametan*. Slametan is a ceremony that is usually held at a family's house which is attended by close friends and neighbors. Slametan is usually held when starting a job or other activity aimed at safety. And in the slametan activity, it is filled with recitation of tahlil and dhikr. This is where there is an interrelation between Islam and Javanese culture in the economic aspect.

Forms of Interrelation of Islam and Javanese

Culture Javanese culture has been very well established since centuries before the arrival of Islam. Then after Islam came and developed in Java, there was an interrelation between Islam and Javanese culture. Islam, which is *monotheistic* intelligible with Javanese culture, which is *animistic, magical*, which has been established. Islam cannot suppress Javanese culture, but Islam

is able to display a harmonious relationship with Javanese culture.

From the descriptions of the discussion above, if analyzed, there are two patterns of interrelation, namely *acculturation* and *assimilation*.

First, acculturation, is a combination of two types of cultural values, both of which complement each other. There are also those who interpret acculturation, namely if the cultural elements of immigrants are finally accepted and processed into their own culture without causing the loss of their own cultural personality (Qomar, 2021: 79). Examples of this acculturation are *mutih fasting*, *patigeni*, *ngebleng*, *wayang arts*, *funeral patterns* and others.

Second, assimilation, is where the two elements of immigrant culture and local culture can be fused so that they cannot be separated. Mujamil Qomar defines assimilation, namely the culture of the immigrant and recipient groups, each changing to adapt to one another (Qomar, 2021: 80).

While examples of assimilation include the *gate*, *sekatenan*, calligraphy art, the tradition of the death slametan, marriages between the Javanese and the spreaders of Islam in Java and so on.

CONCLUSION

Islamic Interrelation and Javanese culture are equally strong and influence each other. Therefore what happened was acculturation and

cultural assimilation between Islam and local Javanese culture.

The occurrence of acculturation of Islamic culture and Javanese culture is evidenced by the existence of a mutually influencing relationship so that it is very difficult to identify which one is typical of Islam and which one is typical of Java. Javanese culture retains the heritage of Hindu-Buddhist and Animism-Dynamism, but is enriched and adapted to Islam.

Meanwhile, the assimilation of Islamic culture and Javanese culture is evidenced by the existence of a mutually integrated relationship between Islam and Javanese culture which becomes a new culture without any element of coercion. This assimilation process occurs on the basis of mutual openness, mutual tolerance and takes place slowly, very evolutionarily, lasts so long that without notice it has produced a new culture as a result of mutual agreement.

Although in this study there are still many shortcomings due to limited time, and the data sources are also the author's own literacy weaknesses, it is hoped that the results of this study can be a reference for other researchers who will conduct similar research. And the results of this study are also expected to eliminate the syncretization between Islam and previous cultures that are not in accordance with Islamic teachings.

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