

# ISLAM IN INDONESIA :

## AN INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

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To speak about Islam in such a big population will involve a very large range of problems, from the insufficiency of the materials, to the disputes over subjects on which several researches have been done. The most important historicals are those related to its coming in this archipelago. to this day, no one can tell exactly when it came here for the first time, why it was accepted by the majority of the people, who propagated it here etc. The social scientist faces the problem that Islam is expressed here, as in any other part of Muslim world, in a vast number of variations. We can see, on the one hand ,many "Muslims" in whom Islam is only a "transparant veneer that fails to disguise the underlying substance of purely heathen character"<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, we find puritans who see Islam as a total system that has to be applied in all aspects of their life.<sup>2</sup>

Therefore we have to restrict ourselves to the most important subjects to talk about . As an introduction to the study of Islam in Indonesia, this paper will deal only with its system of beliefs and practices, its organizations, its educational institutions, its political appearances and its relations to the government. Of course, these subjects can not be dealt with sufficiently without placing them in its historical background.

### Historical Background

Leaving aside the disputes over the exact time of the coming of Islam in the Nusantara archipelago, no one disagrees that it came here slowly and peacefully. This penetrasion pasifique took a very long time . In fact, although Islam has become a semi-national identity for the majority of the population<sup>3</sup>, the process of Islamization, among non-Muslims or --especially-- among Muslims themselves<sup>4</sup>, is still going on.

1 To take C.A.O van Nieuwenhuijze's phrase in his *Aspects of Islam in Post Colonial Indonesia* (The Hague and Bandung : W. van Hoeve, 1958), p. 40.

2 See, for example, Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java* (Chicago and London : The University of Chicago Press, 1976) and Lee Khoon Choy, *Indonesia between Myth and Reality* (Singapore, Kuala Lumpur and Hong Kong : Federal Publications, 1977)

3 About this semi national identity, see Deliar Noer, *Gerakan Moderen Islam di Indonesia 1990 - 1942*, translated by him himself from his *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia 1900 - 1942* (Jakarta : LP3ES, 1980),P, 8.

4 Namely, the Islamization of their behavior. Geertz's formulation of the gradual position the doctors of Islam take in this process, i.e. "first the profession, than the Pillars, later the piety, and after that the learning and law", is exactly correct. See his



*Tasawuf* (Islamic mysticism), which is tolerant to non-Islamic practices and customs, played a very important role in the acceptance of this new religion by the population<sup>5</sup>. Up to the present time, we can see many pre-Islamic beliefs, practices and customs in the life of the average Indonesian Muslim. Take for example the belief in the existence of the spirits which can do good or harm to human beings. It is true that one can find justification for this existence in some Islamic teachings, but it is clear that many Indonesians' beliefs and attitudes toward spirits came rather from what was common here before the coming of Islam.

The relationship between a *kiai* (clergyman) and a *santri* (Muslim religious student) or an average member of the muslim community is another example. Here, too, justification can be found in many sources of Islamic teaching, to be more precise in the early practices of the Muslim community after the period of *al-khulafa' al-Rashidin*, the four first successors of Muhammad as head of the Muslim community. Nonetheless, for the Indonesians, such a form was also familiar before the coming of Islam. It is for this reason that puritan Muslims, who want to purify Islam from any non-Islamic elements, have been fighting against it.

More obvious but no less striking is the use of pre-Islamic terms and names by Muslims. *Sembahyang* (from *sembah*, to pray or to pay homage and *hyang*, god) is still used for *shalat* (Islamic prayer), although the latter is becoming more and more widespread. *Puasa* (from *upavasa*) is more common than *siyam* for Islamic fasting. We can find Muslims everywhere bearing names like Wahidin (Arabic-Islamic) Sudirohusodo (Old-Javanese), Umar Said (Arabic) Cokroaminoto (Old-Javanese) and even Gunawan Wibisono or Hadi Wijoyo (Old-Javanese)<sup>6</sup>.

There have been --and still are-- many efforts to purify Indonesian Islam from non-Islamic elements. One major effort involves the establishment of pesantrens (traditional centre for studying Islamic teachings) which teach not only *tasawuf* but also *fiqh* (the science of the sacred law of Islam), *us ul al- fiqh* (theoretical basis of fiqh), *tafsir* (the interpretation of the Koran) and *hadith* (the literary tradition of the sayings and the deeds of the prophet (Muhammad)). In Indonesia, the first wave of so-called purification came at the turn of this century as a result of direct contacts with like-minded movements from the Middle East (especially the wahhabi movement). This early movement, which often used rude and irritating language, did not go without opposition. Before it was accepted by a considerable number of Muslims, the tradisionalists formed a counter-movement. The bitter polemics between the two sides took more than two decades (from 1920s) before it abated without any reconciliation. Ac-

*Religion of Java*, p. 12.

5 A. Mukti Ali, *Alam Pikiran Islam Modern di Indonesia dan Modern Islamic Thought in Indonesia* (Yogyakarta: NIDA, 1971, p. 28

6 For more, see Ali, *Alam Pikiran Islam*, pp. 28-9



tually, there are still quarrels here and there. However, the primordial characteristics of Indonesian people, their tolerance and desire for harmony, is strong enough not to let them become an open conflict.

This desire for harmony has been useful in moderating not only polemics and quarrels which often arise between the traditionalist and modernist (or puritan) Muslims or between *abangan* (less Islamized) Muslims and *santri* (more Islamized) ones<sup>7</sup>, but also those between Muslims (especially the intellectual ones) and some Western-educated Indonesians who see Islam as a hindrance to what they see as a process of modernization. Quarrels also occur between Muslims and adherents of other religions or beliefs, such as Christianity or Kejawen (the indigenous belief of Javanese people)<sup>8</sup>. All these polemics have indeed consumed much of Indonesian Muslims, energy and time, but from that also has emerged a fresh reformulation of their beliefs and practices.

Of course the greatest polemic in Indonesia occurred between Muslims and colonialists. The coming of Western colonialism did very much harm to the process of Islamization. For example, the colonialists cut the contacts of Indonesian Muslims with their co-religionists in any other part of the world. They destroyed also Muslims' coastal trade which supported the propagation of Islam in this region. However, no one can ignore the fact that it did accelerate, in many parts of the archipelago, the acceptance of Islam by the people. Islam, for example, became a lair where people sought refuge from the bitterness they experienced under the oppressing treatments of the colonialists. As a consequence, the role of *tarekats* (Islamic mystical brotherhoods) and *pesantrens* in many revolts against the colonists was too great to be ignored<sup>9</sup>. It has often been noticed that Islamic sentiment was a fire of coals which could easily be fanned in any revolt against colonialism. Words like *allahu akbar* (Allah is the greatest), *sabilillah* (fighting in) the road of Allah,  *Jihad* (holy war) etc. were used effectively in the agitations for revolts or wars.

This fact that Islam became a focus of anti-colonialism made the majority of (especially traditional) Muslims hate, or at least look suspiciously at, the West and anything they brought to this country including modern sciences and ways of life. So, when the time came for the Indonesians to govern their own state, Muslims had to do and learn many things before being able to catch up with others who were more ready to work in a new way of life.

7 About these two variants, see Geertz, *The Religion of Java*, pp. 15 etc.

8 Ali, *Alam Pikiran Islam*, pp. 37-44

9 See Sartono Kartodirdjo, *The Peasants' Revolt of Banten in 1888* ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966), pp. 140-175.



## Islamic Tenets

The essentials of Islam can be simply formulated in the trilogy *iman-islam-ihsan*. *Iman*, covering the principles of belief, is considered the foundation of the structure of this religion, *islam* concerns the ceremonial obligations, whereas *ihsan* is the principle of conduct. This trilogy is elucidated in a tradition of the Prophet Muhammad as follows. *Iman* (formulated here in Indonesia as *Rukun Iman*, the six pillars of belief) requires believing in (1) Allah (the One Sole God), (2) His Angels, (3) His (Holy) Books, (4) His Messengers, (5) The Last Day or The day of Judgement and (6) The Divine Decree of good and bad luck for every human being. *Islam* (formulated here as *Rukun Islam*, the five pillars of Islam) is (1) reciting the creed that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is His Messenger, (2) establishing *salat*, i.e. five-time-daily prayer, (3) fasting in Ramadan, the ninth month of Islamic lunar calendar, (4) paying *zakat* (almsgiving) and (5) doing *haji*, pilgrimage to the sacred monuments of Mecca<sup>10</sup>. *Ihsan* (literally, doing good to others) is described as paying homage to Allah in such a manner that one sees Allah. If he can not do that, he must at least be sure that Allah is watching him. That means that a Muslim has to control his conduct in order that it always be in conformity with God's Rules, for God will never forget anything a man does. God will ask a man about his acts.

Do all Muslims in Indonesia hold these principles faithfully and do these obligations conscientiously? No more or less than Muslims everywhere, by the belief in the One Sole God they have to believe that there is no other thing that can do good or harm to them; only Allah Himself does. This is the principle of *tauhid* (literally proclaiming the unity of God). There are, however, many Indonesian Muslims who believe in spirits, *jimats* (amulets), weapons, sacred places etc. Which can do good or harm to them. Many thus think that they have to pay homage to them. This practice of *shirik*, associating other deities or "partners" with the worship of Allah, is found everywhere and is one of the elements of which pious Muslims aim to purify Islam<sup>11</sup>.

Nevertheless, each Muslim believes that there will be a judgement, in the hereafter, on what he has done in this worldly life. He will enter Paradise if his good deeds weigh more than his bad ones or he will be thrown into Hell if his bad ones weigh more than his good ones. A damned man will stay in Hell forever unless, after a certain time of purification -torture, actually--, God forgives him and sends him to Paradise. This judgement depends, they believe, on one's state at the last minute one lives in this worldly life. If a Muslim believes in God at this

10 For more details, see, for example, Caesar E. Farah, *Islam* (New York: Barron Educational Series, 1968), pp. 103-150.

11 See a discussion concerning the practices of *shirik* in Yogyakarta in Mark R. Woodward, *Islam in Java* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1989), pp. 216-240.



time, he will be allowed to enter Paradise although he may have committed many *dosas* (sins) before. On the other hand, if he loses this belief in his last moment, he will be thrown into Hell, no matter what he did before. No one knows when his life will end, so, everyone has to do his best not to lose his *iman* any time and furthermore has to control everything he does in order that it always be in conformity with Allah's will. This is what a Muslim hears every Friday from the pulpit of the mosque. Many Muslim, of course, think that the death will come only in old age. These people perform Islamic obligations only when they become old "enough" and they prefer to enjoy this worldly life before.

### Islamic Organizations

There is no hierarchy of authorities or any pure religious organization in Islam. There is indeed *jama'ah* (congregation) or *ummah* (*umat* in Indonesian, community) in Islam, but the membership of individuals *therein* loosely organized. They are united more by non-religious factors than by religious ones. Islam sometimes gives them a supervisory identity as Muslim, but it does not unify them as a real group. It is true that many Muslims who are worried by this absence of real unity try and try to make the *ummah* a compact group. Still, it is an inherent part of Islam that every muslim remains a loose, free member of the community. They go, for example, to the same mosque and pray together following the same *Imam* (prayer leader), but according to Islamic tradition it is not necessary that they follow the same teachings as the *Imam's*. They are free to choose the most satisfying ideas from the enormous variations of interpretations (*mazhabs*) or Islamic teachings throughout history.

This democratic tradition is so strong that it has never allowed for any religious organization which would, naturally, "bureaucratize" religious life. This results in a slightly anarchic situation. Every muslim who knows a little bit about Islamic teachings can, and often does, teach others and then becomes their leader. Who, then, will supervise and correct him when he, for example, teaches something contrary to Islamic teachings? Maybe other teacher (*kiai* or *ulama'*) will do so and in many cases any member of the Muslim community will do so<sup>12</sup>. Whether the teacher in such a case will accept and obey the correction is another thing. In many cases, he will do so if the correction comes from one having a higher religious "rank". Sometimes he stubbornly refuses and this often results in his "intelligent" --free-- followers abandoning him.

It is time, I think, to give more words to *Kiai* figure (*Buya* or *Tuan Guru* outside Java and Madura, or *Ajengan*, too, in West Java). There are variations in what a *Kiai* is. It has been said by Drewes that this title is

<sup>12</sup> This is, in my opinion, an implementation of the principle of *ijma'* (consensus) in Islamic community. Cf. H.A.R. Gibb, *Modern Trends in Islam* (New York: Octagon Books, 1978), pp. 11-5.



given by people to "an independent religious teacher not belonging to the official scribes connected with the mosques"<sup>13</sup>. There are, however, many *Kiais* who are official scribes connected with the mosques. Still, the majority of them are independent religious leaders of the community. For his followers, a *Kiai* is often a spiritual, moral and religious guide, as well as their patron protecting them from any danger<sup>14</sup>. This broad authority is, especially, common in traditional societies. Generally speaking, the more modern a society is, the greater the tendency is to regard a *Kiai* therein as only a reference for religious problems.

The title of *Kiai* is given by society and not every Muslim knowing a great deal of Islamic teachings will be accepted as *Kiai*. Moral "requirements" are, usually, the first ones even before the knowledge of Islamic teachings. However, sometimes people look rather at his *kaluwihan* (supernatural power) or *keramat* (miracles). The latter is common in the traditionalist circle. It is usual that one of a *Kiai's* sons or sons-in-law succeeds him after his death, but for choosing the real successor, there is no exact rules.

It has been said that someone achieves this title by teaching others who after a certain time gave it to him. However, sometimes religious "elites" of a society examine someone concerning his Islamic knowledge and morals, and then appoint him *Kiai*<sup>15</sup>. Thus, there are variations concerning this religious figure. His role in present day Indonesian, Islam, however, is too great to be ignored although there have been changes in society's view of him.

Most Islamic organizations take, in the present time, the form of socio-religious ones. There were formerly Islamic political parties such as Masyumi, NU, Perti etc., but there are no such organizations nowadays. This is largely a result of the government making Pancasila (The Five Principles of Indonesia) the basis of any organization in Indonesia<sup>16</sup>. It is no

13 G. W. J. Drewes' definition cited by B.J. Boland, *The Struggle of Islam in modern Indonesia* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971), p. 7. Cf G.E. von Grunebaum (ed.), *Islam : Kesatuan dalam Keragaman*, a translation of *Unity and Variety in Muslim Civilization*, (Jakarta: Yayasan Perkhidmatan, 1983), p. 354. Boland's citation is from the English version.

14 Hiroki Horikoshi, *Kiai dan Perubahan Sosial*, a translation of *A Traditional Leader in a Time of Change: The Kijaji and Ulama in West Java*, (Jakarta: P3M, 1987), 174.

15 See Muhammad Hisyam "Perubahan Aspirasi Kemasyarakatan dalam Komunitas Muslim Pedesaan (Kasus Desa Segaralangu, Cilacap)" (M.A. Thesis Universitas Indonesia, 1989), pp. 156-166.

16 In 1983, the MPR (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat, People's Congress) decided that every political party has to have only *Pancasila* as its basis (known later as *Asas Tunggal*, the Single Basis). See *Ketetapan-Ketetapan Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Republik Indonesia Tahun 1983* (Jakarta: BP7, 1983), p. 115.



need to anumerate all Islamic socioreligious organizations. It would be sufficient to mention here the two most prominent ones: the *Nahdatul Ulama* (the Awakening of the *Kiais*, more commonly known as NU) and Muhammadiyah.

NU, which was set up in 1926 as a social-religious organization, is the greatest among the traditionalists if not among all Islamic organizations in Indonesia. It consists of the traditional *Kiais* and their followers. They hold to the four medieval orthodox shools of law (*mazhabs*) and defend their authority against the reformations proposed and fought for by the modernists. NU maintains also the concessions of the *tasawuf* to some pre-Islamic beliefs and practices. Its roots are in the villages and the traditional *pesantrens*. It is because of this that, at least in a part, it can never be a centrally controlled organization.

Muhammadiyah, set up in 1912, consists of more "modern" people, for most of its members come from the urban areas. It is especially active in educational affairs and in establishing hospitals, as well as in missionary activities. In the religious sphere it strives against *taklid a* (unquestioning, passive acceptance of other's religious interpretations). Thus, as opposed to NU which follows the medieval *mazhabs*, Muhammadiyah urges the muslim to go back to the Koran and the Hadith and rewrite a strict corpus of laws appropriate to modern times. By the establishment of Majelis Tarjih (Board of *ulamas* for choosing the most possibly accepted interpretations), it is hoped that Muslims, especially Muhammadiyah's members, will not do *taklid*. It is common, ironically, that people affiliated with this organization hold strictly and blindly to the interpretations of Majelis Tarjih.

### Education

As atated before, any Muslim who has got a little bit knowledge of Islamic teachings can teach others. This is the most common way in which Islamic teachings are handed down from one to another. By this manner, many beginners, especially children, get their first, elementary lessons about Islam. For the first time they usually learn by heart several short *surats* (passages or chapters) of the Koran and prayer-texts that must be recited in the *salat*. Then they learn how to do *salat*, how to recite the Koran, how to fast, etc. They will also be taught Islamic conducts and stories of pious figures in "Islamic" history (especially of the prophets).

These elementary things are taught in mosques, *suraus* (private prayer houses, *langgar* in Java) and even in the house of the teacher. It is also common in big towns that Muslims teach their children themselves or invite a teacher to teach them (or even the adulf members of the family) at home. They pay the teacher, of course, whereas teachers who teach in mosques, *suraus* and in their houses usually do their work voluntarily or, as they say, *lillahi ta'ala* (for Allah the Highest)

There are also many *pengajians* (gatherings for studying Islamic teachings) where lectures on Islamic teachings are given. Each *pengajian*



usually has name denoting the kind of audience coming there. There are *pengajian anak-anak* for children, *pengajian remaja* for teenagers, *pengajian ibu-ibu* for women, *pengajian bapak-bapak* for men and *pengajian umum* for general audience. There are variations in who organize such *pengajians*. Individuals to private and even official organizations, political parties, government offices, the Korpri (the organization of government employees) and many others often hold such *pengajians*. No matter how very untidily organized it is, this kind of teaching plays a considerable role in the process of Islamization of Muslims behavior.

The more formal Islamic educational institutions consist of *pesantrens*, *madrasahs* (Islamic schools) and Islamic Universities. Up to now, no one has been able to tell when the *pesantren* came into being for the first time and whether it was a conversion of a similar pre-Islamic institution. There are, however, many similarities between traditional *pesantren* and *pedepokan* (pre-Islamic similar institution) For example, the teacher and the pupils live together in the same campus, there is no curriculum and that the system emphasizes practice more than theoretical knowledge.

In a *pesantren* one usually studies *kitab kuning* (yellow books), i.e. Arabic books usually printed on tinted papers giving an impression of their antiquity<sup>17</sup>. There is no uniformity in the kind of *kitab* studied in *pesantren*. "Many *Kyai* are specialized in one particular branch of learning, or even one particular text. Many *santri* for this reason move from one *pesantren* to another in order to study a certain range of texts thoroughly."<sup>18</sup>

However, *pesantren* can not avoid the influence of modern life. We can hardly find any *pesantren* today maintaining all its traditional features. In almost every *pesantren* the class-system, with tables and chairs, stands side by side with--if it does not replace-- the traditional system where students sit on the floor around a teacher<sup>19</sup>. Many *pesantren* establish general schools or *madrasahs*.

In Indonesia, religious lessons are obligatory in general government schools from kindergartens to universities. Therefore, any Muslim student will inevitably learn the teachings of Islam. In missionary schools, of course, religious lessons are taught more intensively. Beside those belong-

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17 See Martin van Bruinessen "Kitab Kuning: Books in Arabic Script used in the Pesantren Milieu" in *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* no. 146/1990, pp. 226-269

18 Ibid., p. 238.

19 There are actually two methods in this traditional system. First, *sorogan* where every student learns from the teacher one by one. Second, *Balahan* 'where the teacher translated an arabic book whereas the students, each having the same book, listen and make interlinear notes on their books.



ing to *pesantren*, these are more general schools established by Muhammadiyah. NU, too, has many general schools and so do Ahmadiyah, al-Irsyad, Persis and other Islamic organizations.

In *madrasah*, Islamic lessons constitute from about 50% to 70% of the curriculum. The government has many of MTsNS (*Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri*, State's Islamic Secondary Schools) and MANS (*Madrasah Aliyah Negeri*, state's Islamic High Schools). It accordingly standardizes the curriculum of all *madrasahs*. We can easily find, however, many *Madrasahs* that teach more religious lessons than those fixed in the government curriculum.

Such conditions can be found, too, in universities. We need, however, to give more words to Islamic Universities, especially the IAIN (*Institut Agama Islam Negeri*, State's Institute for Islamic Studies). There are now 14 IAINs in Indonesia organized by the Ministry of religious Affairs. The main aim of the establishment of IAIN is to teach Islamic teachings in a scientific method and to develop the science of Islam<sup>20</sup>. In IAINs Islamic teachings are studied in a way which is more scientific than they are in *Pesantren*. In order that the students understand Islam more comprehensively, they have to study philosophy, history, sociology and other "secular" sciences which can not be found in *Pesantren*. To some extent, therefore, its graduates have better access to modernity. However, we often find many of them master auxiliary sciences better than the Islamic ones. This especially happens when they did not have enough knowledge of Islamic teachings when they began to study in IAIN. It seems, too, that IAIN has not done enough work yet in developing Islamic sciences.

In private Islamic universities the condition is not better. As in *Madrasahs*, Islamic faculties of these universities have to use the curriculum standardized by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. So that, the quality of their graduates is about the same as, and sometimes even below, that of the IAIN's, for many reasons like the lack of facilities. Meanwhile, in their secular faculties we have not seen any effort yet to find a place for Islamic teaching in the system of each science. Thus, in this respect man can hardly find any difference between Islamic faculties and non-Islamic ones.

### Political Life

It has been stated already that since 1983 no Islamic parties exist in Indonesia any more. One can be led to say that *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan* (PPP, Union Party for Development) is the only party represents

20 *Wawasan Alma Mater IAIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta* (Yogyakarta: Panitia Penyelenggara Penataran P4 100 Jam Gaya Baru, IAIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 1991), p. 37.



Muslims' political aspiration. No one can deny, however, the fact that the majority of Indonesian Muslims did not give their votes to this party.

Since the first election (held in 1955), it was clear that Islamic parties could never succeed in gaining the votes of the majority of the people, although Muslims constitute more than 80% of the population. Muslims in Indonesia could never be unified in a political organization. There have always been many Muslims who prefer to entrust non-Islamic parties with their political aspirations. Thus, many of them voted for PNI (*Partai Nasional Indonesia*, Indonesian Nationalist Party), Partindo (*Partai Indonesia*, Indonesian Party), or even PKI (*Partai Komunis Indonesia*, Indonesian Communists Party). Hence, we can say that Islam is not a total way of life for many Indonesian Muslims or that political activities are not all things in their struggle for the Islamization of Indonesia. Many of them even think that Islam and political activity are two separate things neither of which need to be related to the other.

There have been, however, many efforts to Islamize the Indonesian state. First evidence of them was the Jakarta Charter (*Piagam Jakarta*). This charter was prepared by the Preparatory Committee for The Independence of Indonesia (*PPKI, Panitia Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia*), which was set up by Japanese military administration in 1945. The Charter was supposed to be the Preamble of the Constitution of the would be independent Indonesia. The Charter was born from long debates between the supporters of Islam as the basis of the state and the supporters of nationalism. It was signed on June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1945 by nine of the Founding Fathers of Indonesia. It was stated there that the Republic of Indonesia should be "founded on [the following principles:] the Belief in God (*ke-Tuhanan*), with the obligation for adherents of Islam to practise Islamic law, in accordance with the principle of a righteous and moral humanitarianism (*kemanusiaan*); the unity (*persatuan*) of Indonesia, and a democracy (*kerakyatan*) led by the wise policy (*hikmat kebijaksanaan*) of the mutual deliberation of a representative body (*permusyawaratan perwakilan*) and ensuring social justice (*keadilan sosial*) for the whole Indonesia people."<sup>21</sup>

However, when the time came to proclaim the independence of Indonesia, the phrase denoting the obligation of Muslims to practice Islamic law was omitted from the Preamble of the Constitution. It only mentioned "the Belief in One Sole God" (*Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa*). It is often said that the representatives of Islamic group who signed the Jakarta Charter were not involved in this omission<sup>22</sup>. The Islamic group was disappointed, of course, but they did not make any noticeable effort to protest this "un-

21 Following the translation of B.J. Boland in his *Struggle of Islam in Modern Indonesia* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971), p. 26.

22 See Endang Saefuddin Anshari, *Piagam Jakarta 22 Juni 1945* (Bandung: Pustaka-Perpustakaan Salman ITB, 1401 H./1981 M.), p. 48.



fair" omission. The primary reason for this silence was that all Indonesian people had to fight against Dutch who wanted to recolonialize their country.

After the war, the Islamic group (or Muslim Nationalist Circle, according to Anshari) tried again to make Islam the basis of Indonesian state. This happened when Indonesia held its first election for the Constituent Assembly. They had hoped that all Muslims would vote for Islamic parties. To their surprise, however, they gained only 44% of all the votes. Therefore, they could not realize their desire to make Islam the basis of the state.

Beside the constitutional efforts to make Indonesian Islamic state, there have been many Muslims, who used violence to Islamize the state. One can disagree, it is true, about the real motive of rebellions under the banner of Islam, but one cannot ignore the fact that some of them stated, formally at least, Islam as an alternative to national state of Indonesia. Kartosuwiryo, with his *Darul Islam* (House of Islam) movement, for example, proclaimed the establishment of *Negara Islam Indonesia* (Islamic state of Indonesia) in West Java in 1949. Kahar Muzakar, who rebelled in the south and the south-east part of Sulawesi, named his troops *Tentara Islam Indonesia* (Islamic Army of Indonesia). However it has been noted in the history of Indonesia that such movements always faced with oppositions of the majority of Muslims themselves. They were all destroyed by the Indonesian Army.

To revert now the constitutional efforts of Muslims in Indonesia to Islamic the state, we should mention the failure of the Constituent Assembly in deciding the basis of the state. There was no majority in this Assembly and either of the two biggest group therein (nationalist and Islamist) held fast to its opinion. Thus it was difficult for it to arrive at a final mutual decision. Because of this failure, Sukarno, the president of Indonesia, intervened and on June 5<sup>th</sup>, 1959 decreed that this Assembly was dissolved and that a return to the Constitution of 1945 had taken place. This decree marked the end of serious efforts to replace *Pancasila* as the basis of the state.

Sukarno's regime, known later as *Orde Lama* (the Old Order), was replaced by *Orde Baru* (the New Order) soon after the failure of the communist rebellion of 1965. *Orde Baru* determined to carry out the Constitution of 1945 purely and consistently. Thus the possibility of replacing *Pancasila* with any other ideology does not exist any more. The final proof of this impossibility was MPR's decision of *Asas Tunggal* in 1983.

However, this was not at all the end of Muslims' political activities in Indonesia. Since the failure of the struggle for Islamization of the state in the Constituent Assembly (1956-1959), at least, many Muslims have begun to realize that the political method is not the only way to Islamize Indonesia. Political methods, for them, will give only a formal Islam and this is not their main aim. The content of Islam is more important. Therefore, many Muslims in Indonesia do not think any longer that it is necessary to have an Islamic party that struggles formally in the name of Islam.



They prefer to Islamize the life of the society and, therefore, we can see some of them active in PPP, some in Golkar and others in PDI.

### **Relation to the Gonerment**

The last item I would like to talk about here is the relation of the Muslim Community (*Umat Islam*) in Indonesia to the government. Here, too, we face with the same difficulty as we faced before. There are so many variations in these relations that it is difficult to say if a good or bad relationship between the government and a certain group of Muslims in Indonesia represents the relationship between the government and the Muslim Community. We have just seen that while a considerable number of Indonesian Muslims voted for Islamic parties, others preferred to give their votes to nationalist or even communist parties. Relations between the Muslim community and the government vary not only from group to group but also from time to time.

In the time of colonialism Islamic sentiment was often used effectively in agitations for rebellions. In the time of independence, too, as we have just seen, many rebellions used Islam as their banner. Moreover, until this recent days, several unrests did use "Islamic" agitations. All these strained the relations of Islam to the government. In the past there was a tendency to blame Islam for such unrests or rebellions. *Umat Islam*, on the other hand, often felt itself to be cornered. As a result, either side complained about the unfairness of the other and the strained situation got worse and worse. All this happened actually, when the struggle for the Islamization of the state was still alive.

As this struggle faded, however, the tension slackened off little by little. This happened especially when either side realized that the tension arose from misunderstanding between them. The government realized eventually that the unrest caused by some Muslims did not represent the aspirations of the Muslim community and not all Muslims supported such unrests. The government felt that it was not fair then to blame Islam for the faults of some Muslims. The Muslim community realized, on the other hand, that the bitter measures taken by the government to its rioting members were only natural, for the government did take such measures to keep the order.

This easing of the strained relations between the government and the Muslim Community does not mean that the tension does not exist. It could be said that either side does not see the other as a threat to its existence, but there are still many things which can potentially raise the tension. In administering the state, for example, the government sometimes takes measures which Muslims consider as an intervention in their religion or a transgression of Islamic rules. We can take the Bill of Marriage Law (1968) as an example. Indonesian Muslims thought that there were items in this Bill which were contrary to Islamic law. Therefore, they strove inside and outside the Parliament in order that it not be passed. Many demonstrations were held everywhere to refuse it. The Parliament did indeed pass the Bill, but not without many changes.



Another interesting example is the case of SDSB ( *Sumbangan Dana Sosial Berhadiah* or Prize giving Contribution for Social Activities) organized by the government, which Indonesian Muslims regard as a national lottery no more or less. Islam condemns such a speculative practice. Many protests were addressed to the government against this anti-Islamic practice. Many demonstrations has been held and we are still waiting for the end of the story.

In fact, the relations of Muslim Community to the government of Indonesia are not always coloured by strained tension. Many times, we can see, they have worked together in a more or less good relationship. The support of NU which was then a political party and other Islamic parties to Soekarno's regime, for example, symbolized this good relationship between the government and, at least, a considerable number of Indonesian Muslims. When Indonesia was attacked by a communist rebellion in 1965, too, the Muslim Community and the government stood shoulder to shoulder to defeat this rebellion. That also happened when the newly proclaimed independent Indonesia was threatenned by the return of Dutch colonialism. We can enlarge our list of such colaborations, but it would be sufficient to say that Muslim Community can and will always work together with the government provided that there is not any thing that prevents them from doing so.

### **Conclusion**

To end these introductory remarks, I do not hesitate to say that Islam has played, is still playing and will always play a considerable role in the life of Indonesian people. Muslims' understanding of their own religion and of their position amidst the everchanging world society will always develop according to the challenges they face from day to day. Their interpretation will, in its turn, determine the kind of role they play and how they play it.

### **The last note**

The writer would like to thank all persons who have made it possible for him to write this paper, but he could not mention their names one by one. He feels obliged, however, to mention the following. Mr. Drs. Sugino, M.A. from UK Satya Wacana who gives the author the opportunity to present this paper before Australian Students of his project; Dr. Th. Sumartana and Farit Wajdi who offered author's name to Mr. Sugino; and especially the author's American friend, Clark Lombardi, who raed thouroughly this paper before the presentation and made many corrections of its English style.



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