

**MOSLEM COMMUNITY IN BOROBUDUR CENTRAL JAVA  
RESPOSE OF MUHAMMADIYAH COMMUNITY TO ECONOMIC  
CHANGE FROM AGRICULTURE TO TOURISM**

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**ABSTRACT**

The study of the relation of the religious life and the economic life in Indonesia has been conduct and tended to be linear, which described how religion plays a role in arousing the spirit of capitalism and in driving the working ethics of its followers or on the contrary what is the impact of the economic development on the marginalization of the religious life, though the religion and the economics are in a reciprocal relation. It is the reason why it is necessary to study the problem of the relation of the religion and the social and economic life in transformation perspective, which is how the religious life is in a dialectic relationship with social and economic change that subsequently causes a dynamic change.

Muhammadiyah community in Borobudur at the era of agriculture considered as majority group at local level. Upon the growth of the tourism, the agriculture economics decreases significantly. The religious transformation process of Moslem community took place to respond the development of tourism and it went under the pioneering effort by young generation with broader economic knowledge resulting from their high educational background and their experience in businesses. After the bargaining process between the accommodative group and the group opposing the tourism for about 20 years, an accommodative religious transformation took place because of the development of the tourism and it gave birth to the tourism with religious nuance.

The dialectic correlation exists between the religious life and the economic growth in the tourism area, resulting in the transformation of tourism economic business with religious nuance, and at the same time creating religious activities with economic nuance, simultaneously.

**Keywords :** *Religious transformation, economy, tourism.*

## A. Introduction

The background of the study is the intense critical transformation of agriculture society in Borobudur into tourism society. The said transformation causes tremendous impact, particularly at economic and religion sectors which are interrelated. Prior to the transformation, Moslem Elite owned majority of land around Borobudur Temple area. Referring to the economic and education levels that are above the average among the local people at that time, they are considered as powerful group at local level. Upon the growth of the tourism economics, the agriculture economics decreases significantly, their social position is gradually replaced by new emerging elites representing entrepreneurs and merchants who controlled tourism economics.<sup>1</sup>

Moslem community, putting up with economic deprivation and upholding 'purification' in their religious practices, bear a dilemma between sacrificing parts of the beliefs and holding on to the belief by running the risk of their social life being left behind and their social roles being displaced. The aforesaid dilemmatic circumstance is an interesting subject to study as from this point, the process of religious life is vividly seen when the community face religious transformation and have to adapt to the changing environment. The arising question is:

“What is the pattern of religious transformation carried out by Moslem community in responding social and economic change from agriculture to tourism, thus they are able to solve the problems?”

The basis theory of the question is the fact that industrialization, including tourism, which results to essential change of social and economic life will create opposition and marginalization, not to mention rationalization and democratization to Moslem society. In addition to the opposition there will be accommodation and modification as well<sup>2</sup>. The religious life will experience transformation when the social and economic life of the people changed, because the understanding of people to their religious teachings also changed<sup>3</sup> (Esposito, 1986, p. 307).

The transformation in the study refers to the definition by Umar Kayam (1991) which suggests that 'it is a dialectical bargaining process resulting in significant change'. Religious transformation within a society covers the dialectics between composure and restiveness, between discovering and searching, between integration and disintegration, between tradition and reformation<sup>4</sup>.

## B. The Study of Islam and Economics in Indonesia

As noted before, the phenomena of the relation of religion and economics have been studied since the beginning of the development of social sciences, especially anthropology and sociology.

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Muhammad Djam'an, Leader of Moslem Movement at Borobudur and Islamic preacher, Borobudur, 17 October 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Kuntowijoyo, *Paradigma Islam Interpretasi Untuk Aksi*, (Bandung, Penerbit Mizan, 1993) p. 172.

<sup>3</sup> Esposito, Jhon L, *Masa Deoan Islam Antara Tantangan Kemajemukan dan Benturan dengan Barat*, Penerjemah: Eva Y Nukman dan Edy Wahyu SM, ( Bandung, PT. Mizan Pustaka, 2010), p 28.

<sup>4</sup> Kleden, Ignas., *Sikap Ilmiah dan Kritik Kebudayaan*. (Jakarta. LP3ES, 1987).p. 17

The study of religion and economic in Indonesia was inseparable of the work by Weber (1905) *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. The book has been the reference of all studies in Indonesia such as Geertz (1953), Castle (1982), Vredeberg (1990), Dobbin (1992), and Irwan Abdullah (1994). The work was well-known in the development of modern social sciences in addition to its controversy. Though it got many criticisms, there were many who used it as theoretical reference in their study of the relation of religion and economy.

The study of the relation of the religious life and the social and economic life in Indonesia has been conducted and tended to be linear, which described how religion played a role in arousing the spirit of capitalism and in driving the working ethics of its followers or on the contrary what was the impact of the economic development on the marginalization of the religious life, though the religion and the economics were in a reciprocal relation as Giddens said that religion is only one of the elements that influences the development of economics ethics and it is highly influenced by social, political and economical life.<sup>5</sup> It was the reason why it is necessary to study the problem of the relation of the religion and the social and economic life in transformation perspective, which was how the religious life is in a dialectic relationship with social and economic change that subsequently caused a dynamic change. Considering economics and religion as being in equal position, a more fair explanation could be made.

Islam was described by the majority of Weberian authors as patrimonial religion that did not encourage the development of a good working ethics.<sup>6</sup> Consequently, the economic life of Moslem community could not be abreast of the development of modern economics. The conclusion was criticized by other experts who considered it as too positivistic. Kuntjoro-Jakti<sup>7</sup>, for example, considered the thesis as invalid because the ability of religion to respond modern economics could not be seen from economic growth perspective only, which was quantitative as manifested in income per capita, but must be seen from the perspective of gradual transformation process. Geertz's study (1963) indicated that reformist Moslem as entrepreneurs in Mojokuto had more progressive attitude than other groups. They represented tough, thrifty and highly religious. In his book *The Padlers and Princes* that was translated by S. Pomo (1989) into *Penjaja dan Raja* Geertz saw that the successful merchants in Java were Javanese reformist Moslem (Serikat Islam) in addition to Chinese businessmen. He concluded that reformism and Puritanism were the doctrines for the Moslem merchants.<sup>8</sup> It was similar to Protestant ethics that became the spirit of West Europe capitalism as suggested by Max Weber in *The Protestant Ethics and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1937). Geertz believed that the future of Indonesian economics would be in their hands.

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<sup>5</sup> Giddens, Anthony, *Kapitalisme dan Teori Sosial Modern Suatu Analisis Karya Tulis Mark, Dhurkheim dan Max Webwr*, Penerjemah: Soeheba Kramadibrata, (Jakarta, Penerbit Universitas Indonesia (UI-Press), 2007) p. xix.

<sup>6</sup> Abdullah, Taufik, *Tesis Weber dan Islam di Indonesia*, dalam *Agama, Etos Kerja, dan Perkembangan Ekonomi*, Editor: Taufik Abdullah, ( Jakarta, LP3ES, 1982) p. 19.

<sup>7</sup> Koentjoro-Jakti, Dorodjatun, *Pengusaha Pribumi dan Proses Pertumbuhan Ekonomi di Indonesia: Tanggapan Atas Hipotesa-hipotesa Geertz* dalam Geertz ; *Penjaja dan Raja*, Penerjemah: S. Supomo, ( Jakarta, Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 1989) p. xii.

<sup>8</sup> Geertz, Clifford, *Penjaja dan Raja*, Penerjemah S. Supomo, (Jakarta, Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 1989) p. 12.

There were many other studies related to religion and economics in Indonesia other than Geertz, Irwan Abdullah and Munir Mul Khan. Some of them have been published in Indonesian such as the study by Vredeberg (1990) *Bawean and Islam*, Dobbin (1992) *Kebangkitan Islam dalam Ekonomi Petani Yang Sedang Berubah di Sumatera Tengah 1784-1847*, Leunessen (1989) *Pertanian Rakyat di Madura*, De Jonge (1989) *Perkembangan Ekonomi dan Islamisasi di Madura*, Lance Castles (1982) *Tingkah Laku Agama, Politik dan Ekonomi di Jawa: Industri Rokok Kudus*.

The paper entitled *Bawean dan Islam* by Vredeberg (1990), described that Bawean Moslem in the past century have migrated to Singapore because of economic pressure and they established Moslem exclusive community and worked in informal sectors. Their aspiration was doing hajj, a pilgrimage to Mecca. Therefore, they saved a part of their income to materialize their aspiration. The title *Haji* gave them social privilege and higher social status and then they sent money to their relatives who still lived in their villages of origin to support the economic development of the villages. Their religious spirit has motivated them to work hard and to accumulate possession.<sup>9</sup> Dobbin (1992) suggested that the increase in the income of coffee farmers in West Sumatra because of the newly open trading channel between Europe and Dutch. Furthermore, it resulted in the introduction of modern understanding of Islam that gave birth to Moslem figures such as Imam Bonjol and his follower Ahmad Chatib. At that time a religious transformation has taken place from traditional to modern Islam as a result of the introduction of modern economic system.<sup>10</sup> Subsequently, De Jonge (1989) found the relation of the economics and the Islamization in Madura, which was the phenomenon of tobacco large-scale merchants able to finance modern Islamic boarding schools that educational innovation took place in Madura. The economic power of Moslem has brought a change in the traditional educational system into modern system.<sup>11</sup> The study by De Jonge was parallel with the study by Dobbin, while Castles (1982) found that there was a weakness among the traditional Moslem students in Kudus in controlling the cigarette industry because of the domination by Chinese entrepreneurs in addition to the fact that they used traditional equipment and failed to establish modern economic organization, but only home industry scale. The case of Kudus was according to Castles the proof of the failure of Islamic reformation.<sup>12</sup>

The studies indicated that Islam in Indonesia has changed when modernization and industrialization took place. Specifically, the authors found the causal factors of the social and cultural change such as migration, access to trading and transportation, which caused the change in the diversity of Moslem society. However, other authors also saw the contrary that Islam had a symbolic power able to

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<sup>9</sup>Vredenburg, Jacob. 1990. *Bawean dan Islam*. Penerjemah : A.B. Lopian. (Jakarta.Perpustakaan Nasional. INIS, 1990).

<sup>10</sup> Dobbin, Cristine. 1992. *Kebangkitan Islam Dalam Ekonomi Petani Yang Sedang Berubah, Sumatra Tengah 1784 - 1847*. Penerjemah : Lilian D. Tedjasudana. (Jakarta. INIS, 1992).

<sup>11</sup> De Jonge, Huub ( Ed ), *Agama, Kebudayaan, dan Ekonomi Studi-studi Interdisipliner Tentang Masyarakat Madura*. (Jakarta. Rajawali Perss, 1989).

<sup>12</sup> Castles, Lance. *Tingkah Laku Agama, Politik dan Ekonomi di Jawa ; Industri Rokok Kudus*, (Jakarta, Sinar Harapan, 1982).

stimulate the working ethics of Moslem. The dualism of the results of the studies indicated that the studies of Islam and economics required a transformation perspective because positivistic and linear perspective could not find out the true fact in the thinking framework of the authors.

In order to observe how a society conducted its religious transformation in term of what were the related elements necessary to observed, Geertz offered three things: First, internal conversion or the change in religious view as a result of the belief crisis in the old doctrine and tradition of the religion coming from other culture that was felt to be the shackle of the life of the local people. Second was the contextualized interpretation of religious dogmas. Geertz himself called the interpretation the rationalization at dogma level. It was here that people understood of their religion in new perspective. Third was the establishment of structural institutions. It was the step in which religious awareness spread and the organization of religious institutions among the local people.<sup>13</sup>

The process of the change in the religious view was called by Geertz as internal conversion, even as belief crisis when the people adopted rigid and non-critical religious view that deprived them from its true spirit. It has caused them shackled by the way they embraced their religion, uprooted from their own culture and lost their social and economic development vision. It was from such internal crisis that new willingness to change to new religious view that was more contextual and able to solve actual problems.

The reinterpretation process began when new materials and information were accessible for the people through reading materials, electronic media, or religious studies. The interpretation was also made possible by the way how it was spread and crystallized in collective actions.

Religious transformation was also related to the change in values held by the people. It represented the change in the common purpose of the people that was likely to establish collective behavior over time. The collective behavior represented the one found in a group that prevailed because of the presence of the values of reference and taught to the members of the new groups.

### **C. Muhammadiyah Community in the Study of Religious Transformation**

There have been many studies of Muhammadiyah community (Peacock, 1978; Abdullah, 1994; Syamsuddin, 1991; Jainuri, 1997; Tohrari, 1993; Mulkhan, 1999), but the one that explicitly correlated religion and the working ethics was the study by Irwan Abdullah (1994) and Munir Mulkhan (1999) and Tohari (1993). Irwan used the study setting of Moslem Businessmen and the results showed that Weber thesis suggesting that the capitalism spirit of Moslem community could not grow because of its patrimonial culture, which was not relevant with the prevailing fact in Jatnom, Central Java. According to Irwan, "religion among the Moslem merchants in Jatnom plays an important role in the thinking process of the local people that led to the economic behavior and influenced them

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<sup>13</sup> See, among others, Clifford Geertz, *Kebudayaan dan Agama*, Penerjemah: F. Budi Hardiman (Yogyakarta, Penerbit Kanisius, 1995), *Penjaja dan Raja*, Penerjemah: S. Supomo (Jakarta, Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 1989), *Tafsir Kebudayaan* Penerjemah: F. Budi Hardiman, (Yogyakarta, Kanisius, 1992).

to accept the trading as a part of their life.”<sup>14</sup> Munir Mulkhan used the setting of agriculture society and the results of his study showed the contrary. According to Munir “the working ethics of Moslem members who are highly obedient and puritan among the farmers tend to be weaker than those less obedient farmers.”<sup>15</sup> The puritanism spirit of the religion was according to the study more likely to weaken the working ethics. The results varied and even were contradictive and confirmed the importance of reviewing the relation of religion (especially Islam) and the dialectic social and economic development. The Moslem community in Borobudur was changing the tradition of the local agricultural society into tourism society. It was relevant to study the social and economic transformation process into tourism society.

Theoretically, according to Pizam and Milman (1984) as cited by Pitana and Gayatri (2005) that in social and cultural context, the impact of the tourism could drive the local people to transform their norms they have long embraced. The norm transformation was for the Moslem community is a religious transformation because the norms were for them identical with their religion. So, the religious transformation of Muhammadiyah community was a bargaining process that took place in a dialogue between the religious understandings of the members of the Muhammadiyah and the social development of the people that caused a big change. The problem facing the Muhammadiyah community in the development of tourism was that their religious understanding has been standardized as their daily life norms of the local farmers and it was not easy to adapt to the rapid social and economic change of a dynamic tourism. However, the members of the Moslem community Borobudur, especially the young members, showed their ability to respond the social and economic development of the tourism that caused the religious transformation in their own environment.

In the beginning, they were constantly exposed to tourist business in their daily life in their environment and they responded more rapidly than the elites of the Muhammadiyah who served as civil servant in their daily life. If the members of the Muhammadiyah responded to the tourism by taking a part in the tourism as usually the case of the people of Borobudur, they were more likely to be accommodative without any theological burden. Meanwhile, the elites who did not directly interact with the tourism were more likely to take opposition position because of the responsibility for maintaining the morality of the people in facing the negative impact of the tourism. The study that has been conducted in 2007 of Islamic education in *SMK Moslem Borobudur* indicated that there were various views of the tourism economics among the teachers of the school. There were those with positive and accommodative view, while there were those with negative and opposing view of the tourism<sup>16</sup>. Those with positive and accommodative attitude were the teachers representing the members of Moslem, while those with negative and opposing attitude were the elites of the religious organization. So, the social and economic change caused by the tourism gave birth to the group that

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<sup>14</sup> Abdullah, Irwan, *The Muslim Businessmen of Jatinom; Religious Reform and Economic Modernization in a Central Javanese Town*, *Academisch Proefschrift*, (Universiteit Van Amsterdam, 1994) p. 197.

<sup>15</sup> Mulkhan, A Munir, *Gerakan Pemurnian Islam di Pedesaan Kasus Moslem di Kecamatan Wuluhan Jember Jawa Timur*, Disertasi, (Universitas Gajahmada, Yogyakarta, 1999), p. 268.

was accommodative and openly accepted the tourism, while the other group made the modifying step that changed the tourist businesses and adjusted them with their Islamic beliefs.

In a broader sense, the transformation stage of the agriculture community into tourist community has caused religious transformation and it could be observed in the table below.

Table I  
The Transformation of Agriculture to Tourism of Borobudur and the Response of Muhammadiyah Members

ERA ASPECT	1928-1970 AGRICULTURE	1970-1990 BEGINNING OF TOURISM	1990-2014 PRESENT TOURISM
THE GENERAL CONDITION OF BOROBUDUR SOCIAL AND ECONOMICS	Fertile agriculture land	Arid land	Tourism developed
	People lived in composure	marginalizing process	World tourist destination
	Not influenced by external culture	Moslem elites opposed tourism	Accommodating process
MUHAMMADIYAH RELIGIOUSITY	Patrimonial, religious leader	Patrimonial, religiousLeader	Rational Scholars Leder
	Religious service	Islamic Purification	Economic and Cultural Program
THE POSITION MUHAMMADIYAH COMMUNITY	Controlling economics	Economically marginalized	Economics awakening
	Close to local culture	Far from local culture	Approaching local culture
MUHAMMADIYAH BUSIENSS	Education	Education	Education
	Religious and social reformation	The study and the purification of Quran	Cultural and Economic study
THE RESPONSE OF MUHAMMADIYAH	Accommodation	Opposition	Accommodation & modification

The pattern of the religiosity of the members of Muhammadiyah changed over time with the change in the social and economic environment. It was clearly observed in table I that in the agriculture era they were accommodative to the social environment and the figures of the Moslem served as the owners of wide agriculture land that they became the patron of the remaining members of the society.

In the transition era, their attitude was more explicit to the social environment because they experienced economic pressure that caused them economic loss. It took place simultaneously in the change of the leadership of the Moslem by the *Kyai* to scholars. The reverse flow of the opposition to the tourist environment was accommodative attitude through religious transformation process that went slowly. It began with the religious transformation and continued by the contextualization of religious teachings to the establishment of economic institution of religious nuances.

The religious transformation process of Moslem community Borobudur took place to respond the development of tourism and it went under the pioneering effort by young generation with broader economic knowledge resulting from their high educational background and their experience in businesses and small industry development. There were two reformist figures in the economic activities who were Muhammad Ridwan, an entrepreneur and the successor of Moslem leader and Suryadi who was a retiree of the Education Agency of Magelang District.<sup>17</sup>

The transformation process from the agriculture to the tourist era could be observed in the table below:

**Table II**

The Religious Transformation of Muhammadiyah Community from Agriculture Era to Tourist Era

ERA	1928-1970 AGRICULTURE	1970-1990 TRANSITION	1990-2010 (PRESENT) TOURISM
DOMAIN			
RELIGIOUS VIEW	Economic activity for religious activity	Organization activity for religious interests	Religious activity with economic nuances and economic activity with religious values.
	Religion for goodness	Religion to upheld truth	Religion for prosperity on earth

<sup>16</sup> See, Radjasa, *Pendidikan Agama Islam dan Pengembangan Ekonomi Studi Kasus di SMK Moslem Borobudur*, (Badan Litbang Departemen Agama RI Balai Penelitian Pendidikan Agama dan Keagamaan., 2007).

<sup>17</sup> Obsevation, The role of Young Leader of Moslem Movement at Borobudur, 12 – 19 August 2010.



CONTEXTUALIZATION OF RELIGIOUS NORM	Religion that is acceptable for people	Religion for religion	Religion that is useful and gives working spirit
	Accommodation spirit	Opposition spirit	Modification spirit
CONSOLIDATION	Through informal gathering with charismatic leader of <i>Kyai</i>	Through formal organization with scholar and bureaucratic leader	Through productive economic effort with young entrepreneur leader

Religious transformation taking place in Muhammadiyah included the change in religious view, religious teaching contextualization and organizational consolidation and it was driven not only by the change in the environment but also the change in the educational background and the experience of the leaders. It was clearly observed that when the leader was of the educational background of Islamic boarding school with the title *Kyai*, the religious understanding was accommodative, while the leader of the formal education background became formalistic. Subsequently, when the leader was an entrepreneur, the religious understanding was more open and modification process took place in the environment and also in the religious understanding.

After the bargaining process between the accommodative group and the group opposing the tourism for about 20 years, an accommodative religious transformation took place because of the development of the tourism and it gave birth to the tourism with religious nuance. For example, Moslem tried to develop hotels with Islamic nuances, Syariah banks, and tourist property production, including tour transportation such as *Sang Surya*, the symbol of Moslem.

The religious transformation of Moslem in Borobudur at local level as described above takes place as a result of the rapid interaction with social and economic growth. They transform their religious understanding to adapt with the social and economic growth and also modify the tourism business to be in line with Islamic corridors and Moslem value. The aforesaid religious transformation shall periodically motivate the members in finding the way out from the existing economic and religious dilemma.

The important point that shall be drawn from the facts happening in Borobudur is that the religious life of a community is indeed dynamic and is in line with the development of the surrounding environment. The dynamics of the religious life occurs as the result of bargaining process between the religion and the social reality.

The dialectic correlation exists between the religious life and the economic growth in the tourism area, resulting in the transformation of tourism economic business with religious nuance, and at the same time creating religious activities with economic nuance, simultaneously.

#### D. Conclutions

First, the pattern of religious transformation which happens in this tourism era is the form of feedback of diversity in transition era which is way to legalistic, also to return to the religious return in the agriculture era. An accommodative and responsive religion towards social economic environment in the agriculture era turns back into formalistic-legalistic in the transition era, and at last it changes to an accommodative religious pattern to social economic development. The aforesaid changes not only are affected but also affects their social economic life which also experiences flux and reflux from one period to the other.

The religious transformation which happens for three generation of association proves the authenticity of theory which says that religious life, aside of being dynamic and adaptive to the environment, also dialectic to the social economic development.

Second, that process of religious transformation runs complicatedly due to unavoidable value impact, particularly when religion is understood in formalistic way and tourism shows its excess of negativity. The said value impact causes dilemma which can only be solved by transforming religious life to be in line with the development, not to mention economic efforts with religious value also need to be formed. The economic and religious dilemma which causes polarization between opposition organization elite and accommodative lower class society to tourism, can be reunited by the young generation and upcoming cadre. They can bridge both interest with various activity which draw together religious and economic interest.

That matters bring an understanding that religious organization which is unable to adapt with social and economic changes will eventually be left by the members. This understanding, is unrelated with the change of basic teaching of religion, but to the meaning and execution of the teaching which has to be dynamic. One of the solvencies when religious organization faces a dilematic change is by going through transformation path, which is to follow the change by still upholding to the basic teaching of the religion.

Third, with the ability to go through transformative path as previously described, the prospect of Moslem in Borobudur will be better. However, it still depends on the action of the leader of association, whether they will involve themselves in the tourism activities. With the education institution as the main asset and the support from religious elite which gets more open and the way of thinking of the young generation which becomes more democratic and accommodative, Moslem can improve religious and education tourism.

The three conclusions draw up an understanding that theoretically, religious community which can survive from the threat of social and economic changes is that who can perform self-transformation by giving new meaning of their norms to open the obsolete meaning. Therefore, this transformation change religious understanding to be more open, as well as making economic efforts with religious spirit.

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