

Abstract

This study examines the religious life of reformist Muslims in a Yogyakarta village. The foci of this discussion are on Muslim villagers' construction, with the help of the reformist paradigm, of the image of the 'good Muslim' and 'Muslim-ness', on their efforts to incorporate an (reformist) Islamic framework to question taken-for-granted practices and ideas, on the position of traditional practices and ideas and their relation to reformist Islam, and on the interplay of villagers who show a strong commitment to reformist Islam with those who do not. Another topic which is investigated in this study is the interactions between Muslim and Christian villagers and the impacts of Christian presence on the process by which Muslims define themselves, their neighbours, their religion and their religious community.

After examining the recent socio-economic developments in a Yogyakarta village in Chapter two, this study deals with the development of reformist Islam, the process whereby a group of reformist villagers has been formed and its impact on the religious life of Muslim villagers in Chapter three. The formation of this group precipitated a differentiation of Muslim villagers in terms of their religious outlook and of their participation in religious activities, and has accelerated the diversification of the meaning of 'Muslim-ness'.

Chapter four looks at the notion of 'Muslim-ness', or of 'being a Muslim' supported by the reformist villagers and the interactions between villagers who show a strong commitment to reformist Islam and those who do not. The analysis shows that the profession of faith (*sahadat*) or circumcision, which was once considered to be a sufficient condition to make someone a Muslim, is no longer regarded so by the reformist villagers. Instead, they put absolute emphasis on the fulfilment of faith, such as carrying out daily prayer and the fast, as the central part of the notion of 'Muslim-ness'. The different religious understandings and practices among Muslim villagers have not become a basis of social conflict. No villagers try to involve themselves in the religious life of others, are willing to instruct other people and to make explicit the controversial aspect of others' religious behaviour in public. These attitudes help to create a social environment where the norm of harmony is maintained.

From Chapter five to Chapter eight, the focus is placed on several changes which have taken place as Islamic development has accelerated. Chapter five examines the way traditional rituals are interpreted by Muslim villagers and the emergence of a new Islamic tradition. It shows that the process by which an Islamic tradition emerges from a syncretic background is not simply one of imposing a certain criterion on traditional practices and ending them, but of questioning their relevance, abandoning what cannot be accommodated, reinterpreting what can

be made harmonious with reformist Islam and recontextualising them in Islamic terms.

In Chapter six, traditional belief in supernatural beings, supernatural power, and related practices are examined. The reformist villagers try to challenge and reformulate the nature of supernatural beings by equating them with the Islamic concept of the malevolent *jinn* and by condemning villagers' contact with them as *syirik*, or the negation of the Oneness of Allah.

Chapters seven and eight deal with the impact of the presence of Christians on the religious life of Muslims. The study shows that their presence has prompted the formation of a clear boundary based on religious identity and of the idea of 'in-group' and 'out-group', and that the importance of religious identity has begun to extend into non-religious domains. The alleged threat of Christians have also prompted the reformist villagers to defend the *umat* Islam, and their specific mode of attacking Christianity has instated the concept of *akal* (reason) not only as a way to expose the absurdity of Christian theology but as a way to evaluate their own religious practices and ideas.