

# Chapter 3: From Bamboo *Langgar* to Brick *Masjid*: Islamic Development in Kolojonggo

Since the 1970s, studies of Islam in Indonesia have portrayed a dualistic process of Islamic development: its waning influence over political life and its waxing influence over non-political life. Passive reaction to and submissive acceptance of a series of government measures which can be interpreted as attempts to decrease the political power of Islamic groups<sup>1</sup> have been interpreted by outside observers as examples of the political retreat of Islam. On the other hand, several developments in non-political domains have shown the increasing commitment of Indonesians to Islam: participation in daily prayers, Friday prayers (*Jumatan*) and the fast in the fasting month has increased and more Indonesians have made the pilgrimage to Mecca (Johns, 1987:224); publications and public discussion about Islam have flourished (Tamara, 1986:5-8); and Islamic activities such as the public celebration of Muslim holidays, the payment of *zakat* alms and the Quranic recital have been carried out in what would have been an unthinkable fashion years earlier in rural Java (Hefner, 1987a:545-6). This state is called Islamic revivalism (Horikoshi, 1976:15), revitalisation (Hefner, 1987a:550), renaissance (Tamara, 1986), or reIslamisation (Nakamura, 1993:181).

The widening influence of Islam in non-political fields can be interpreted as an adaptive reaction to political pressure from the government (McVey, 1983:218). Facing the situation in which their political activities have been limited one by one by the government, Islamic organisations have changed their orientation from the political to the non-political domain. The emphasis put on the term *dakwah* or Islamic missionary activities by these organisations and Muslim intellectuals after the 1970s (Boland, 1982:191-193; McVey, 1983:218) reflects this shifting focus. An Islamic organisation, Muhammadiyah, in a manual, 'Outline of the struggle of Muhammadiyah' (*Khittah Perjuangan Muhammadiyah*), clarifies its orientation as follows:

Muhammadiyah will not carry out its struggle in the field of practical politics (*politik praktis*). Muhammadiyah is not and will not be a political party. Basically, Muhammadiyah will not enter political organisations.

<sup>1</sup> For a series of government policies against Islamic political groups after 1965 and the reactions by these groups, see Johns (1987:217-220), McVey (1983), Noer (1983:195-198), and Wertheim (1980). These measures included the government's monopoly of the *Haji*, the government's favourable treatment of *kepercayaan* or *kebatinan* groups, the Marriage Bill, nomination of a higher percentage of Christian ministers in the cabinet, imprisonment of Islamic leaders, and enforcement of the national ideology, *Pancasila*, as the basic ideology of all Islamic organisations.

<sup>2</sup> ... [This decision is] due to consciousness that the struggle in the field of [civil] society (*dalam bidang masyarakat*) is an extremely important and honourable work, no less important than that in the political field (Muhammadiyah, 1968:202).<sup>3</sup>

The goal of *dakwah* is thought to be attained by promoting educational activities and intensifying religious education in all levels of school, organising small groups like neighbourhood groups as units of *dakwah* (*gerakan Jamaah*), intensifying the celebration of *pengajian* (religious learning courses) in villages, training young Muslims as cadres of *dakwah*, maximising the use of film, television and radio as media of *dakwah*, and promoting social activities such as founding hospitals and orphanages (Muhammadiyah, 1978:316-332). Although Muhammadiyah is one of the two largest Islamic organisations in Indonesia, its re-orientation to non-political domains represents a new direction for the Islamic movement. Now, the primary goal of the *umat* Islam (Muslim community) is viewed not from the paradigm before 1965, that is, to establish an Islamic state, but to Islamise Indonesians, in other words, to invite non-Muslims to Islam and to guide Muslims to make their religiosity perfect (Muhammadiyah, 1967:186).

In parallel with this national development, Islamic development in Kolojonggo and in *kelurahan* Sumber also gives an impression that the revitalisation, revivalism or renaissance of Islam in non-political domains has taken place during the last three decades. Islamic leaders in Sumber felt easier describing this change in numeric terms, comparing the present with the early 1970s: the number of *masjid* has increased from 3 to 23, so that 18 hamlets out of the total 19 hamlets in Sumber have at least one *masjid* of their own; participants from all over the *kecamatan* then hardly filled half of a playing ground for the collective prayer after the fasting month (*Salat Idul Fitri*) whereas two playing grounds of the same size are now too small to accommodate participants solely from Sumber; previously the amount of *zakat* from all hamlets in Sumber reached around 100 kg. of rice, whereas now, a hamlet can collect 300-500 kg.; previously a *kelurahan* could not sacrifice a sheep for *Idul Adha* whereas now, a hamlet can sacrifice an ox; and previously almost nothing was donated by villagers for religious purposes, whereas almost two million Rupiah can now be collected on the occasion of *Salat Idul Fitri*.

<sup>2</sup> Before 1960 when the Islamic party, Masyumi, was banned, and from 1960 till 1965, Muhammadiyah did not give up its aspiration to seize power in national politics. This aspiration was based on the conviction that one of the primary goals of Muhammadiyah, namely, to promote Islamic law in Indonesia, could not be achieved without seizing political power. At that time, the political struggle was considered as one of the two ways in which activities of Muhammadiyah should be directed and was called an indirect missionary activity (Muhammadiyah, 1954:17-24).

<sup>3</sup> The decision of Muhammadiyah not to be involved in the field of practical politics has been reaffirmed in Muhammadiyah Congress (*Muktamar*) held in 1971, 1978, 1985 and 1990. For more about this, see Muhammadiyah 1971:236; 1978:328; 1985:406; 1991:19.

The figures from Kolojonggo are consistent with this pattern. A *masjid* was built in 1988, *zakat* and other alms collection have increased, an ox was sacrificed in 1994, *pengajian* is held at least once every two weeks and there has been a steady growth in the number of participants in the fast. According to the Islamic leaders in their forties or older, all of these changes would have been unimaginable in their youth.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the process of Islamic development in Kolojonggo. Among various possible ways to look at this process, the focus will be put on how the core group of Islamic activists has been crystallised, in that traditionally Kolojonggo and Sumber did not have an organised group of their own to promote religious life among Muslim villagers. This situation was different from many other Javanese villages where the religious institution of *pesantren* with its leader, a *kiyai*, has played a crucial role in determining the course of religious development.<sup>4</sup> Due to the lack of traditionally established *pesantren* and *kiyai*, Islamic development was not possible in Kolojonggo until the formation of a social force to transform individualised efforts to promote Islamic activities into collective action.

### 3.1. Development of Islam under the Dutch Colonialism

At that time [before independence], people were not so brave about reciting *sahadat*<sup>5</sup>. When they recited it, they thought they had to sacrifice something, that is, a throat of a chicken, for *sahadat* was regarded as a magical spell (*rapal*).

Why do Muslims face the west when they pray? This is because Syeh Abu Bakar lived to the west of Java and, in order to commemorate him, people started to pray facing the west.

These two quotations are from two village elders in Kolojonggo. Although short, these give us a clue to understand the situation of Islam in the colonial period. First of all, these show the degree of Islamic knowledge that was available to the villagers of that time. The recital of the *sahadat*, which is the most central doctrine of Islam and should be carried out several times a day, was equated with a spell having magical power. This equation is understandable, if seen in the context of the popular belief system of that time.<sup>6</sup> In this system, Arabic

<sup>4</sup> For more about *kiyai* and their relation to Islamic development, see Horikoshi (1976) and Mansurnoor (1990).

<sup>5</sup> *Sahadat* refers to two Arabic prayers of 'there is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is His Messenger'. The recital of these two phrases is thought to be a requirement for being a Muslim.

<sup>6</sup> In the popular belief system of the previous time, natural and human affairs were thought to be closely connected to the supernatural world in which not only Islamic supernatural beings but non-Islamic ones originating from Hindu-Buddhist and local traditions existed side by side without conflict. C. Geertz labels this as the *abangan* version of Islam characterised by syncretism. As Geertz says, in this system, Hindu goddesses rub elbows with Islamic prophets and both of these with local *dhanyang*

occupied a special position, so that the utterance of an Arabic phrase was believed to bring extraordinary power, when accompanied by other proper conditions. As the *sahadat* is in Arabic and many villagers did not know its exact position in Islam, they thought of it as a magical spell.

Misunderstanding of this sort was not only confined to the recital of the *sahadat* but was widespread in every field of Islamic teaching, so that many villagers did not have a clear concept of what is commanded, recommended or prohibited in Islam. Nor did they have any interest in knowing whether a certain concept or practice was based on Islamic teaching, especially on the Quran and Hadith. They interpreted and accepted Islamic ideas and practices as those had been passed on to them from the previous generation.

The era of ignorance (*jaman bodho*) under Dutch colonialism, as it is often designated by village elders, did not mean that no one was exposed to Islamic teachings. There was a man called *kaum* who had higher religious knowledge than ordinary villagers. The *kaum* should have been capable of reading Arabic script and memorising some Arabic prayers to guide rites of passage and a ritual called *kendhuri* (collective meal). In many cases, the *kaum* in each hamlet had a *langgar* (small prayer house) where skill in reading Arabic was taught to village children and a few religious occasions were collectively celebrated. In spite of this ability, the *kaum* was not someone who would be a cornerstone for later Islamic development. First of all, he was oriented more to and involved more in 'tradition' rather than 'Islam', both of which he supported. As a villager put it, his role was much closer to burning incense and making offerings than to sponsoring Islamic activities such as the fast, daily prayer, *Jumatan* and so on. Moreover, he could not understand Arabic nor was accustomed to the written tradition of Islam, which made it difficult for him to be severed from the way Islam had been interpreted and transmitted. Therefore, the germ which would bring later Islamic development was located in a different group of villagers, that is, the newly educated youth in the Dutch colonial period.

The late nineteenth and early twentieth century saw an increasing intervention by the Colonial government in village affairs under the Ethical Policy, which aimed to acculturate indigenous villagers to the Western mode of thought. Efforts were made to expose them to Western ideas, based on the belief that these would bring about a Netherlands Empire consisting of two geographically distant but spiritually close parts (Vredenburg, 1962:101). One of the key measures to achieve this goal was to educate village children in Western-style schools. At first, only the children of village officials were given seats in these schools, which were later extended to all children in rural areas. Although the actual beneficiaries of the widening educational opportunity were mainly the children of village

(guardian spirits) and there is little sign that any of them are surprised at the others' presence (Geertz, 1960,40). For more about this belief system, see Chapters V and VI.

officials and large landholders, due to high educational cost and parents' indifference to education, this new policy was able to produce a few villagers who received an education in Western-style schools.

Formal education was not the sole factor that created a group of youth who were sensitive to their religious duties and had a different perspective from their predecessors from which to look at Islam. The creation of this group was made possible by the foundation of an Islamic reformist organisation, Muhammadiyah, in the city of Yogyakarta and its devotion to education. Before the 1930s when there was no primary school and after the 1930s when there was no secondary school in Sumber, some village children went to the city and enrolled in a school founded by Muhammadiyah. When the encounter was made between village children and the Muhammadiyah school, their education became a basis for a different understanding of Islam from traditionally practised one.<sup>7</sup>

Muhammadiyah has been one of the most popular and influential Islamic organisations in 20th century Indonesia. Founded by Ahmad Dahlan who was an Islamic court official<sup>8</sup>, it aimed to purify faith contaminated by non-Islamic ideas and traditions, a trend of which can be labelled as reformism.<sup>9</sup> For this purpose, reformist Muslims rejected blind submission to the authority of *ulama* and *kiyai* (established scholars), and advocated a return to the Quran and Hadith and the re-establishment of human equality. They supported the concept of *ijtihad*<sup>10</sup> as a way to refute blind submission to *ulama*. To them, the gate of

<sup>7</sup> As the first Statute of Muhammadiyah put forward, one of the central activities of Muhammadiyah was education. From the outset, Muhammadiyah made every effort to build schools which adopted Western-style curriculum (Noer, 1973:307). In 1932, this organisation operated 207 Western-style schools, many of which were located in Yogyakarta and Solo (Alfian, 1989:189-190) and the number reached 466 in 1937 (ibid.:309). For the characteristics of Muhammadiyah education in the colonial period, see Nakamura (1993:84-89).

<sup>8</sup> For more about Dahlan's life history see Peacock (1978b:29-42) and Alfian (1989:144-152).

<sup>9</sup> Reformism was not an indigenous idea in Indonesia but an imported one from the Arab countries. The increasing number of Indonesian Muslims who made the pilgrimage to Mecca and their contact with the pioneer teacher of the Islamic reformism, Muhammad Abduh of Cairo, are considered as the major factors that facilitated the flow of reformist ideas into Indonesia (Peacock, 1978b:23; Noer, 1973:297; Alfian, 1989:149).

<sup>10</sup> *Ijtihad* means rational interpretation of the Quran and Hadith by individual Muslims, the concept of which is opposed to *taklid* or acceptance of the already established *fatwa* (a binding ruling in religious matters) and practices as being final and having an authoritative character (Noer, 1973:9-10). The nature of *ijtihad* that reformist Muslims supported was expressed in the efforts of Ahmad Dahlan to change the direction of prayer. Around 1896, Dahlan discovered that the *masjid* of Sultan in Yogyakarta was not facing Mecca as it was supposed to, signifying that for years Muslims had not been practising their prayers correctly. After this discovery, he took the initiative in painting slanted lines on the floor of that *masjid* in order to point out the right direction of Mecca. His behaviour enraged the other old-established religious functionaries of the Sultanate and they erased all lines. Not discouraged by this failure, Dahlan built his own *langgar* facing Mecca, which was also destroyed by other established leaders of Islam (Alfian, 1989:146-7). This story shows what was meant by *ijtihad* to the founder of Muhammadiyah, that is, to rectify Islamic teachings which had been blurred or interpreted wrongly by the established Islamic scholars and to follow the Islamic teachings as were inscribed in the Quran and Hadith. In order to carry out *ijtihad*, Muhammadiyah founded a committee called *Majelis Tarjih*. There, the committee members made an inventory of opinions concerning a certain religious issue, compared one with another and favoured the opinion which in their view conformed with the Quran

*ijtihad* was not shut once and for all, as had been considered since the second and third centuries of Islam (Gibb,1953:97), but was still open. The advocacy of *ijtihad* by the reformist Muslims prompted a transformation in the nature of religious knowledge and in the way of its reproduction. While Islamic education meant, among the circle of the *ulama* and *kiyai*, 'the teaching of fixed and memorisable statements and formulas which could be adequately learned without any process of thinking as such' (Hodgson,1974 vol.2:438)<sup>11</sup>, the reformist Muslims put priority on the understanding of the scriptures. To them, the memorisation of the scriptures was a praiseworthy and recommended work, but not a prerequisite for Muslims to make an attempt to understand the scriptures. Even those who did not know written Arabic should try to understand the scriptures translated into vernacular language. This changing focus of the reformist Muslims facilitated the shift of religious knowledge from that which is mnemonically 'possessed' to material that can be consulted in books (Eickelman,1978:511), and precipitated the change in the basis of religious leadership from a long apprenticeship under an established man of learning to a claim of a strong Islamic commitment and of a capability to interpret what Islam 'really' is (ibid.:511-12).

The presence of Muhammadiyah, apart from a few villagers who entered the primary or secondary school founded by it, started to be felt in the late 1920s when two youths from the city carried out their missionary activities in a hamlet near Kolojonggo. To attract children's attention, they brought a bike which two men could ride at one time and taught free gymnastics and other acrobatic motions. Then they asked children to attend a religious gathering to learn how to read Arabic script and to listen to Islamic stories from the Quran and Hadith. Although these activities were irregular and did not last long enough to create a group to continue their work, their visits gave the children the chance to gain contact with reformist Islam which was different from what was practised in their village. Their visits represented the first contact between Muhammadiyah and the villagers in Sumber, which has continued ever since.

In the early 1930s, a branch of Muhammadiyah (*cabang*) was founded in *kecamatan* Gamol by a small number of Islamic activists, all of whom received an education in the Muhammadiyah school. It was the first organisation of those

and Hadith (Noer,1973:98). The final decision made by the committee was called *fatwa*. One of the purposes of establishing the *Majelis Tarjih* was to prevent Muhammadiyah from making the same kind of mistake that the established scholars were thought to have made, namely, blindly rejecting existing *fatwa* for the benefit of attacking blind acceptance of them.

<sup>11</sup> In an autobiography, an Indonesian Muslim, Muhamad Radjab, remembers his experience of learning the Quran in his childhood as follows: 'When I began to study the reciting of the Quran, I did not know that the sentences had a meaning. ... I did not know that, if it were translated into one's own language, one might be able to understand what God meant in those verses. However, though I recited the Quran seven times, because it had no meaning for me, God never said anything which I was able to understand' (Cited in and translated by Soebardi,1976:46). Noer (1973:310) and Geertz (1976:178) also note the importance of memorisation rather than of understanding in traditional ways of learning Islam.

who were sympathetic to reformist Islam, combining the reformist activists scattered around each village into one place. According to a villager who belonged to the founding members, this *cabang* was the only place at that time where his ideas on Islam met with sympathy from others and he could be assured that he was not alone. In this respect, this *cabang* promoted consciousness of the sameness and the comradeship among the precursors of reformist Islam.

The first phase by which the reformist activists spread their ideas to other villagers in Sumber was characterised by peace. No confrontations or debates between reformism-oriented villagers and those supporting traditionally practised Islam took place. One of the factors which might have contributed to this peaceful introduction of reformism was the method of missionary activities (*dakwah*) employed by the reformist villagers. In dealing with various practices which were embedded in traditionally practised Islam but could not be approved of by reformism such as making offerings, worshipping other supernatural beings than Allah, negligence of ritual prayers and so on, they did not resort to force or vehemence. Instead, they retained an accommodational view that these practices would change gradually as villagers' understanding of reformist Islam deepened. According to Pak Seno who is known as the first reformist villager in Sumber, this attitude was not a compromise of reformist Islam with non-reformist Islamic practices but an actualisation of what Islam and Muhammadiyah taught. To support his argument, he quoted a passage from the Hadith saying 'those who command others to do good, do it in a gentle way', while he emphasised the most important way of conducting *dakwah* in Muhammadiyah was tolerance. Everyone is responsible for their own religious behaviour and what one can do for others is indirect guidance rather than direct actions, as he put it:

The role of religious leaders is the same as that of people selling medicine in the street or in the market. What we can do is just to give suggestions, inviting others to religious activities, so that they may receive *anugerah* (a gift from Allah). We cannot enforce anything on others, since, if a person's heart is locked by Allah, we cannot achieve anything even with forceful measures.

Another factor contributing to the peaceful introduction of reformist Islam was the absence of a local religious figure (*kiyai*) who had authoritative power to influence the way Islam was interpreted and practised. In other parts of Java where the *kiyai* had established authority, the introduction of reformist Islam had been influenced by his position to evaluate it. Given that one of the basic tenets of reformist Islam is to attack blind submission toward the established *kiyai*, however, the adoption of reformist Islam might not be done without strong resistance from the *kiyai* and subsequently from the masses under his influence. In Madura, for example, religious behaviour of reformist Muslims was considered

to be heretical from the initial stage of the introduction of reformism. This situation has persisted until recently to the extent that a local *kiyai* urged his audience not to attend the funeral of a sympathiser of reformist Islam (Jordaan, 1985:48-55).<sup>12</sup>

The accommodational attitude of reformist villagers concerning *dakwah* and the absence of an established *kiyai* in Sumber made it possible for reformist Islam to be introduced peacefully into Sumber and to co-exist side by side with traditionally practised Islam. This peaceful introduction, however, had a disadvantage for the development of reformist Islam. With the lack of open confrontations between traditionally practised Islam and reformist Islam, the chances that the distinctions between these two streams could be highlighted and the 'Islam-ness' of both could be questioned, criticised or legitimised were given only to a small group of villagers who had close personal contact with the reformist activists. To those living beyond this boundary, the distinctiveness of reformist Islam was not well understood. To most of them, Islam was still what they practised and learned from their predecessors.

### **3.2. Islamic Development after the Independence of Indonesia**

The period from 1949 when the Dutch troops retreated from Indonesia to 1965 is referred to by old villagers not as an era of ignorance (*jaman bodho*) but one of poverty (*jaman miskin*), of hunger (*jaman ngeleh*) or of communists (*jaman komunis*). As these terms imply, villagers put a negative image on it, describing it as the time of poverty, sickness, political unrest and, by some of them, coercive oppression from the communists. There are reasons that this period is not depicted as *jaman bodho*. Mass education began to be available from the mid-1950s, so that most children from Kolojonggo born in the 1940s were enrolled in the primary school for at least two or three years. The enlivened political situation also helped to make villagers more aware than before. Almost all male villagers were involved in one of three political parties extending their branches in the *kelurahan*: the communist (PKI), the nationalist or government (PNI) and the Islamic party (Masyumi). As all of these parties tried to indoctrinate their cadres, no week passed without political meetings. There, the peasants learned such borrowed terms from the West as '*kapital*', '*kontradiksi*' (contradiction), '*konfrontasi*' (confrontation), '*imperialisme*', '*manifesto*' and so on.

In the battle for increasing their followers, the Masyumi, which most reformist activists supported, was not the winner. In Kolojonggo, only a few households showed their allegiance to this party, while the rest were politically divided into

<sup>12</sup> For the doctrinal debates between reformist oriented Muslims and established *kiyai* in the late Dutch colonial period, see Federspiel (1970). For the religious debates at the local level between those who are committed to reformist Islam and those who are not, see Bowen (1993).

two, PKI and PNI sympathisers. Even the local commitment to the Masyumi was grounded less on their religious conviction that the state should be governed in accordance with Islam than on their blood relation or friendship with the Masyumi activists. A villager who had been a member of the Masyumi in the 1950s remembered his affiliation to this party as follows:

The selection of a party at that time was dependent on one's compatibility (*kecocokan*) with it. If someone felt comfortable with the members [in a certain party], ya, [the selection] was already finished, leaving registration. ... I had chances to hear what the communists were saying but I felt these did not fit exactly with me. They were clever, strong (*keras*) and talked about big topics, and all the villagers who liked to ridicule others, were arrogant and lived an extravagant life entered the PKI. ... If one of my sons-in-law had not persuaded me, I might have entered the PNI. He (my son-in-law), who was a teacher in the elementary school, was honest, worked hard, knew a lot. Moreover, I was a Muslim. Why should I, a Muslim, not enter the Islamic party? ... At that time, I sometimes went to religious sermons but, probably because my heart was not yet opened by God (*Tuhan*), I was not so diligent in carrying out religious commands. In spite of this, my neighbours always commented that my behaviour and speech were like a *santri*.<sup>13</sup> If I listen to this comment now, I may be ashamed of it. But, at that time, I felt I really was a pious Muslim in that I entered the Islamic party.

The pattern of seeking supporters by employing personal relations was also adopted by the PNI and PKI. However, the PNI and PKI were in a more advantageous position than Masyumi. The PNI drew support from the *kelurahan* officials and large landholders, who could use their dominant political and economic power to attract followers. Some of the villagers who were economically dependent on them, namely, those who sharecropped their land or worked as wage labourers for them, were incorporated in the PNI.

In the case of the PKI, the economic conditions in Kolojonggo after independence allowed its policy to be attractive to many of middle and small landholders and the landless. In the late colonial period, Kolojonggo was characterised by a rapid polarisation of villagers in terms of their land ownership. Land tax and the short cultivation period made it difficult for middle and small landholders to retain

<sup>13</sup> In Kolojonggo, the term *santri* generally retains its original meaning, namely, the students who live in the *pesantren* to learn religious teachings. In some cases, this term is used to designate a pious Muslim who follows Islamic teachings and practises ritual obligations. When used in this way, especially by those who are not involved in Islamic activities, however, the term *santri* conveys a negative meaning: those who have not practised Islamic rules or have not participated in Islamic activities but suddenly show their interest in Islam. As a result, the term *santri* is never used by religiously active villagers to designate other villagers since there is no one in Kolojonggo as well as in Sumber who has studied in a *pesantren* long enough to be called *santri*.

land, and some of them sold it to others. This situation went on to the extent that more than three-quarters of the total households in Kolojonggo consisted of landholders owning less than 0.3 hectare of *sawah* and the landless (see Chapter II and Appendix A). After independence, the heavy land tax was lifted and landholders were granted a right to use their land all year round. To hold land was no longer a burden. The benefits from these changes, however, were not distributed evenly to all villagers. Those who had sold their land in the colonial period could not enjoy the same degree of economic stability that they might have done with their original landholdings. This feeling of economic deprivation that the land sellers felt in relativistic terms changed into a real economic deterioration when the inflation rate soared and pest attacks resulted in massive crop failure from the late 1950s. Even a half hectare of *sawah*, which was enough to make one an upper-middle landholder, could not provide a stable rice supply for a family of five to six members. In these circumstances, the communists' policy to locate the uneven land distribution at the centre of their program met with enthusiastic response from small landholders and the landless. In the 1950s, the issue at stake was to equalise landholdings by way of redistributing land. When the land reform act, promulgated in 1960, made it impossible to redistribute land within the boundary of law<sup>14</sup>, the slogan of the communist activists became 'to return land to the original owner', namely to nullify all land transactions since the reorganisation in the 1920s<sup>15</sup>. As land distribution at the time of the reorganisation was remembered by some villagers, this policy of the PKI seems not to have been considered as a dream by them. Villagers' participation in collectivising agricultural work was high, a policy which was understood as the first step in preparing the process of returning land to the tillers.

The political confrontation between villagers in the Old Order Period was based largely on class relations. At one end were traditional elites consisting of large landowners who had accumulated land in the late colonial period and *kelurahan* officials who were also large landholders, while at the other end were many middle and small landowners and the landless. The presence of the Masyumi, however, added a religious element to this political confrontation. The Masyumi

<sup>14</sup> In densely populated areas such as Java, five hectares of *sawah* and six hectares of non-irrigated land (*tegal*) were fixed as the maximum holding by the land reform act of 1960 (Huizer, 1972:32-33). As there was no landholder in Sumber with more than five hectares, the ceiling of five hectares did not leave any *sawah* in Sumber to be redistributed to those who were landless or small landowners. For more about economic conditions in Kolojonggo under the Old Order, see Appendix A.

<sup>15</sup> One of the packages of the reorganisation starting in the late 1910s in Yogyakarta and Surakarta was to redistribute the land to villagers and to grant them rights to use, dispose and inherit the land. In principle, all adult male villagers who were capable of performing obligations to the village community and to the state were eligible for an equal amount of *sawah* (Suhartono, 1991:110; Takashi, 1990:20). The size of the land for redistribution varied according to the situation in each village. In the case of Kolojonggo, it was about 4000 m<sup>2</sup> of *sawah* and about 2000 m<sup>2</sup> of *pekarangan*. For more about economic conditions in Kolojonggo during the late colonial period, see Appendix A.

members criticised the PKI as the party of unbelievers and equated affiliation to the PKI with a straight path to Hell. This claim was considered as political propaganda by the PKI activists who believed that they were as religious as the Masyumi members. The difference was that they upheld not Islam but the Javanese religion (*agama Jawa*). The Javanese religion as was understood by the PKI members does not seem to have deviated much from traditionally practised Islam. However, the elements which were clearly identified with Islam such as daily prayers were consciously suppressed by the supporters of *agama Jawa*, while 'things Javanese' (*asli Jawa*) were installed as a framework to interpret what they practised and believed, irrespective of whether these actually came from Islam or not.

The politicisation of villagers and the use of religious distinctions as a way to differentiate one group from another implied that the spread of reformist Islam in the Old Order period was dependent on the local strength of the Islamic party. In a hamlet called Dawe where the Masyumi was successful in attracting a significant number of followers, the first *masjid* in Sumber could be built with uncompromising support from them. The same situation did not apply to hamlets such as Kolojonggo where the expansion of the Masyumi was sluggish. There, the spread of reformist Islam was blocked by the communist activists who equated this with the expansion of the Masyumi. Even the spread of the tenets of reformist Islam to the Masyumi followers was slow. This was because the concept of 'Muslim-ness' was defined in political terms, so that one's affiliation with the Masyumi was considered as an absolute criterion to differentiate, according to the Masyumi followers' view, Muslims from non-Muslims. In these circumstances, what mattered to define 'Muslim-ness' was one's political affiliation rather than any outward manifestation of one's religiosity such as fulfilment of religious duties, while much stronger emphasis was placed on increasing the number of the Masyumi followers rather than on spreading reformist ideas to its followers.

The interdependence of religion with politics brought a harsh blow to the Islamic activists when the Masyumi was banned in 1960 due to its alleged involvement in the unsuccessful rebellion in Sumatra. After the prohibition, the direct involvement of the Masyumi members in village politics was impeded to the extent that a *kelurahan* official and a few members of village council affiliated with the Masyumi were forced to resign. Some Masyumi members continued their socio-political activities in the branch of the reformist organisation, Muhammadiyah, but, in a hamlet like Kolojonggo where the recruitment of the Masyumi members was based largely on personal relations, the demise of the Masyumi implied the victory of *agama Jawa* over Islam. When the former Masyumi members were brave enough to practise the fast in public, not only they but their family members were mocked as '*fanatik*' (fanatic) and were intimidated by the PKI followers. This situation continued in the first half of

the 1960s, giving birth to a state in which, according to a villager who newly moved into Kolojonggo in 1964, there were only two Muslim households and several Christian households while the rest were communists in this hamlet.

When the story of an attempted coup by the PKI spread, the non-PKI activists had to escape from the village at night. When they were seized by the PKI activists, those caught, according to their reminiscences, faced being killed. They went to the city or the mountains and stayed there, waiting for a change of situation. This did not take long. Within a few days, the troops appeared and made a base on the main street to the city, signalling the moment when the PKI activists had to escape from the village. This, however, was not an easy task and most of them were caught, and a few of them were directly killed by the villagers whose family members had been killed by the communists. Those who were caught and given a chance to go to jail are said to have been fortunate.<sup>16</sup>

The 1965 affair totally changed the atmosphere of village life. Everyone was involved in the killing, at least emotionally, either as an assailant or a victim. One of the two winners of this turmoil, the Islamic group, could use this situation to promote Islam among other villagers. In Dawe, its newly built *masjid* was full of villagers who turned up to pray. It was the time when those belonging to the PKI had to show their religiosity, namely, that they were not like they had once been. Those not belonging to the PKI also had to go to the *masjid*, assuring others that they were still on the side of the winners. The same situation, however, did not occur in Kolojonggo where Muslim villagers had no place to go to show their religious devoutness and their full incorporation into the *umat* Islam. Many villagers related to the PKI just remained silent, while some of them chose Christianity as their new shelter. The lack of proper infrastructure in the form of personnel and place, therefore, let the best chance to promote Islam slip away. This was all the more true when the strained situation eased after a few years. The urgency to show one's religious identity disappeared. So did the opportunity to promote Islamic activities. The benefit that the Islamic activists obtained from this period was the removal of freedom to remain an atheist and to oppose religion. Even this benefit, however, was given and has been secured by the government which was successful in emphasising the danger of communist

<sup>16</sup> Contrary to the recollection of the former Masyumi members that the communist activists killed the Masyumi followers after the alleged coup, there seems to have been no Islamic activist who was actually killed by the communists in Kolojonggo. When I asked a few former Masyumi members to specify the name of those who were killed by the communists, they generally avoided my question. In the case of the communists who were killed after the coup, two names were commonly specified by a few villagers. In this respect, the death toll in Kolojonggo at that time seems to have been not as high as in some other parts in Java (See, Cribb, 1990). One probable answer for this seems to have been the swift action of the hamlet chief of that time who is said to have detained all the communist activists in his house as soon as the news of the failure of the coup was heard.

revival and in urging villagers to confess one of the five officially recognised religions (Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism and Buddhism).<sup>17</sup>

The momentum which enabled the construction of *masjid* in Kolojonggo and other hamlets in Sumber or, to borrow the Islamic leaders' words, a change from an acknowledgment (*mengakui*) of one's religion to its practice (*melaksanakan*), came about later under the so-called New Order Government. After the installation of this government, a group of villagers armed with higher Islamic knowledge and committed to promoting Islamic activities led the acceleration of Islamic development. The process by which this group was created was not an unitary one in Sumber. There was no religious leader or leaders who had a dominant influence over others, helping in the creation of the core group of Islamic activists. Rather, each Islamic activist had their own distinctive experience in Islamic activities as leaders. As this diversity makes it difficult to pinpoint various forces that helped the crystallisation of a group of religious leaders, my discussion will be confined to looking at a few characteristics of this group in Sumber. In doing so, one of the forces which have played a central role in giving birth to this group, namely, education, will be highlighted.

It is not easy to delineate the villagers who belong to the group of Islamic leaders in Sumber. Although every Muslim is formally or informally affiliated with Muhammadiyah whose branch is the only formal Islamic organisation in Sumber, one's involvement in the activities of Muhammadiyah or one's position in its executive board cannot be used as a criterion of Islamic leadership. Many of those who organise religious activities at the hamlet or village level are not formal members of Muhammadiyah, although they consider themselves as belonging to it. A better way to delineate the group of Islamic leaders seems to focus on the position of a *khatib* (preacher) at the *Jumatan* (Friday sermon). The *khatib* are selected by the *masjid* council (*takmir masjid*) among those who actively participate in religious activities.

<sup>17</sup> Even in 1993-94, several cases were reported in the local newspaper in which the military commandant in Yogyakarta prohibited the circulation of books, calendars and other items which were alleged to be produced by the communist remnants to propagandise communism. One of these was a tool designed to massage one's back. As this tool happened to take the form of the sickle, a symbol which had represented the PKI before 1965, the military commandant prohibited its circulation. This command, however, did not seem to be implemented well, so that I could buy one in the city after I had read this story in the newspaper. An interesting thing happened after I brought this tool into Kolojonggo. Some of the villagers were aware of the news that this tool was prohibited. Whenever I brought this tool with me, they told me it was produced by the communists, wondering how I had been able to buy one. There were also some who gave me a comment that I was brave enough to buy and to bring this tool with me in public, an action which they dared not do. This case shows how successful the Indonesian government has been in maintaining a social atmosphere by manipulating symbols. The danger of communist revival is not considered to have disappeared and the story related to the communists seems to have spread quickly. This social atmosphere has been, even if indirect, conducive to a favourable condition for the development of Islam. As the communists have been identified with the anti-religious or atheists, no villagers have opposed religion in public, although they themselves have not participated in religious activities.

Kolojonggo and five other hamlets in Sumber had twenty-four *khatib* in 1993. In many cases the *khatib* delivered their sermon once in five weeks, while some of them gave it in two or three different *masjid*. Of these twenty-four *khatib*, two were in their twenties, seven in their thirties, ten in their forties and five in their fifties. This composition shows that those who were born after independence constituted the backbone of this group. On the other hand, as a group they had more experience of schooling than other villagers. Only two of them in their fifties were primary school graduates. Even this background, however, was not ordinary, compared with other villagers belonging to their generation. At the time when they were children, a three to five year education was already enough of a qualification for someone to be an official in the *kelurahan*. Of the remaining twenty-two *khatib*, two stopped their education at middle school level, while thirteen proceeded to senior high school and seven to university. This higher educational background enabled many of them to find white collar jobs, so that nineteen worked as teachers of non-Islamic subjects, civil servants or administrators in the private sectors. The remaining one was a university student, while the other four consisted of two farmers, one labourer in the construction sector and one gardener in the high school.

All the *khatib* could read Arabic fluently, but most of them could not understand Arabic. Only three of them said to me they could understand written Arabic, although this is likely to mean that they could interpret the meaning of some Arabic passages word by word rather than that they had a full command of written Arabic. Others commented that they had not received any intensive education in written Arabic. Nineteen *khatib* started to learn to read Arabic in the hamlet *langgar*, two from their father and/or grandfather, while three of them did not learn it in childhood. Most of the *khatib* who had learned Arabic in their childhood, however, were of the opinion that these learning experiences were not enough for them to read Arabic properly and their present skill was acquired later. When they were asked to specify how they obtained their present skill in reading Arabic, their answer included *pesantren* (one *khatib*), radio programs (two *khatib*), books (four *khatib*), regular secondary or tertiary schools (thirteen *khatib*) or special secondary schools called *madrasah* where seventy percent of curriculum is devoted to religious studies (four *khatib*). In the case of the three *khatib* who were said to understand written Arabic, they acquired this skill in the *madrasah*, in an Islamic university and in the *pesantren* respectively. After having finished formal education, the *khatib* continued their religious education mainly by way of *pengajian* (religious sermon), books, newspapers and other media. Of these, the role of books and newspapers seems to be important. All the *khatib* answered they consulted books to deliver their sermon at the *Jumatan*, while a few of them made clippings of articles in newspapers which were related to Islam. The important position of written materials as a source of religious knowledge might be attributed to the fact that

no *khatib* maintained a close relation with someone whom they could consult on religious matters.

One of the interesting points in examining the personal background of the *khatib* is that only five of them received special religious education either in the *pesantren* or in the *madrasah*, while most were educated in government schools. Many of them also considered religious education in government schools under the New Order as one of the most important occasions in which they could acquire the skill to read Arabic, to learn the right way to practise Islam and to obtain Islamic knowledge. This evaluation was contrary to their appraisal of religious education under the Old Order, which was not considered to have been systematic enough to produce 'good' Muslims committed to practising Islamic teachings and to promoting Islamic activities. To understand this contrasting evaluation of religious education in the Old Order period and that in the New Order period, it is necessary to look at several educational reforms after 1965.

The New Order government seized power, suppressing the communists while being supported by Islamic groups. As a result, the demands of the Islamic groups, in particular, those which were not directly political, were readily accepted by the government. Religious education belonged to this category. In 1966, parents' right to decide whether their children would receive religious education or not was abolished and attendance at religious class became compulsory in all government schools from the primary to tertiary level (Noer, 1983:192). It was also stipulated in 1966 that religious education in elementary school started from the first grade (Noer, 1978:37). As the majority of village children dropped out before they reached the fourth grade at that time, this modification gave all village children a chance of contact with religious education. In addition to the widening opportunities to receive religious education, the method of teaching and its content also underwent changes. The curriculum for religious education was standardised and religious textbooks written in Indonesian were introduced, while new religious teachers who had received regular education to teach Islam were recruited.

Under the Old Order when no unitary curriculum and textbooks were available in government schools, religious education was largely dependent on the religious orientation of teachers. In the case of the primary school where most children from Kolojonggo and neighbouring hamlets were enrolled, religious education, according to the evaluation of some Islamic leaders, failed to emphasise one of the most important teachings that children should learn, namely, the duty to carry out the requirements of the faith. The majority of religious teachings was related to learn to memorise a few Arabic phrases and to listen to stories from the Quran and Hadith, whereas the urgency to practise regular prayers, the fast and recitation of the Quran was not repetitively taught. Lack of religious textbooks meant that the traditional way of knowing and learning Islam, namely,

by way of verbal transmission and memorisation, was maintained, and the need to understand the meaning of the scriptures and to consult them could not be properly inculcated. Without due emphasis on the importance of the scriptures, the Islamic leaders argued that religious education could not produce Muslims who were detached from traditionally practised Islam. Seen from this perspective, the significance of the introduction and popularisation of religious textbooks written in Indonesian was that this opened a new way for Islam to be learned. For the first time in the Islamic history of Sumber, Islam started to be transmitted by way of written materials. Islam was not only what one heard from others but what was written in the books.<sup>18</sup> With this shift, to learn Islam by way of materials written in Indonesian was established as a legitimate way to approach Islam and, subsequently the qualification to be a religious leader began to change. As the background of the *khatib* in Sumber shows, it is not the ability to understand Arabic nor to memorise the Quranic verses which makes them religious leaders. What they have is a commitment to reading written materials on Islam, a propensity and an ability which can be acquired through their education in government schools.<sup>19</sup>

Changes in religious education and the expansion of secondary education to villagers from the 1970s (See Chapter II) do not mean that all of those who received an extended period of religious education in the New Order period became agents to lead Islamic development. However, it is clear that religious education increased the opportunities for villagers to be exposed to regular religious teachings from their childhood on and, by shifting the way of learning Islam, facilitated the creation of a group of religious leaders. One needs not spend an extended period of time in the *pesantren* learning to memorise the scriptures or to understand Arabic in order to claim to be a religious leader and to be considered so by villagers. What is required is one's commitment to learning Islamic teachings by reading written materials in Indonesian and one's ability to interpret what Islam is, an attitude and capability which might not be very different from those required to be a 'good' student in secular education. As the number of villagers who were responsive to the plea to promote religious

<sup>18</sup> Another crucial factor which has helped to shift the basis of learning Islam is that there were no *pesantren* (religious boarding school), which supported the 'traditional' mode of transmitting Islam, in the vicinity of Sumber. As a result, the only stream of Islam which was readily available to villagers was reformist Islam represented by Muhammadiyah, which, as noted earlier, puts emphasis on the understanding rather than the memorisation of the scriptures and which supports the same mode of learning Islam as is applied in government schools.

<sup>19</sup> The influence of western education on Islamic development has been evaluated negatively by a few scholars of Indonesian Islam, as Benda puts it, 'western education was the surest means of reducing and ultimately defeating the influence of Islam' (Benda, 1972:89; see also Berg, 1932:295-298; Johns, 1978:226). Unfortunately, there has been no research which deals directly with the impact of secular mass education on Islamic development in Indonesia, except for Hefner (1987a:543-44) who suggests its positive impact on Islamic development. The assumption that western secular education reduces the influence of Islam has been recently challenged by a few scholars studying Islam outside Indonesia. For more about this, see Eickelman (1992) and Horvatich (1994).

activities and who were qualified to be religious leaders increased, they became the basis for transforming individual efforts to vitalise Islamic activities into collective ones.

### 3.3. From Bamboo *Langgar* to Brick *Masjid*

In Kolojonggo, the first visible sign of a new phase in Islamic development was the construction of a *langgar* (small prayer house) in the mid-1970s. A small bamboo *langgar* had existed in the *kaum's* house but it was destroyed at the time of his death in the early 1960s, so that no place was available for villagers to perform their collective prayers from that time on. Some went to the *langgar* or to a half-constructed *masjid* in neighbouring hamlets. After more than ten years without a prayer house, the present *kaum* initiated a plea to build a *langgar* in his own yard. A *langgar* generally is constructed and managed by an individual, but the *kaum* was not rich enough to sponsor the construction for himself. Some of his neighbours donated bamboo, brick, wood and other building materials as well as labour. As a result, this *langgar* had a more communal basis than others in other hamlets. When finished, it was a small building of around 5m x 3m, which could accommodate around 20 people at one time. However, even this small space was too big to be fully utilised. On ordinary days, it was only the *kaum's* family and a few other neighbours who came by for their daily prayers. This did not disappoint the *kaum* and others who built this *langgar* since they never expected that it would be full. The major motive for building the *langgar* was not for ordinary days but for the special month in Islam, the fasting month. During this month, religious passion among village Muslims was heightened, so that more villagers used the *langgar*.

When the first fasting month in the newly built *langgar* was celebrated, around ten households hosted religious activities by paying for the cost of food for the collective ending of the fast (*buka pasa*). The participants from these households and school children from other households made it possible for the *langgar* to be full during the *tarawih* prayer and subsequent sermon. Sometimes, the outside yard of the *langgar* had to be used for women who came to pray when the two praying lines inside were occupied by men.

The fasting month in their childhood is remembered by the youth of the present day as a time of joy rather than one of painful endurance of hunger: they went to the paddy field after the end of the *tarawih* prayer to find *belut* (a kind of eel), cooked and ate them at the spot, chatted and slept together in the *langgar* until dawn, walked around the paddy field after the morning prayer and came back home to have a sleep as satisfactorily as possible.<sup>20</sup> Their reminiscences give the impression that they used the most sacred time in Islamic calendar for

<sup>20</sup> Before 1979, schools were closed during the fasting month. This system was abolished in 1979 and the school children have around two weeks' holiday in this month.

playing rather than for praying. However, the use of the *langgar* as a gathering place and the fasting month as time for fun played an important role in the later process of Islamic development. This allowed the crystallisation of peer group solidarity among children and youth centring on the religious place.

During ordinary months, the *langgar* was used as a gathering place for some of the village children. A regular course to learn Arabic was held in the *langgar* by Pak Pomo, a high school student in the late 1970s and later a university student, and a few friends of his. He started this course in the belief that the transformation of children's religious outlook was much easier than that of adult villagers and future Islamic development would be brighter when the old generation passed away and they were replaced by the young generation armed with Islamic ideas. At first, only a few children responded to his proposal and there were even times when children did not appear at all. No compulsion was permissible to make children attend this meeting and the interest of parents in their children's religious education was low. To cope with this setback and to attract more children, Pak Pomo took two measures. On the one hand, he combined children from Kolojonggo and those from another hamlet into one group. In this way, he could assure the presence of at least a few participants, which made the continuation of this meeting possible. On the other hand, he changed the date of this meeting to Saturday night in order to induce more participation from children.<sup>21</sup>

It is not certain whether a strong peer group solidarity was formed among those who regularly participated in this religious class or whether the participation of one child in a pre-existing peer group triggered the attendance of others belonging to the same group at this meeting. Whatever the case, Pak Pomo was successful in incorporating a group of children into this meeting. In turn, their regular participation enlivened this learning course and, as these children grew older, they constituted a solid group of youth who were ready to invigorate Islamic activities.

The presence of a group of youth, however, was not the only condition to accelerate Islamic development. As these youths were not in a position to mobilise economic resources nor to influence adult villagers, their future role in the developmental process of Islam could not be realised without proper commitment from adult villagers to religious activities. The medium which attracted adult villagers' attention to religious activities was *tahlilan* among men and *pengajian* among women.

<sup>21</sup> To the Javanese in general and to the youth in particular, Saturday night is a moment when they should do some special activities. In many cases, they go outside and wander around, looking for fun. By changing the date of the learning course to Saturday night, Pak Pomo could use this tradition to attract more children. As this meeting was held alternately in two different hamlets, the children and youth from Kolojonggo visited the other hamlet once every two weeks, which gave an extraordinary mood to the participants.

*Tahlilan* is a religious meeting where participants recite the Quranic passages collectively. To many villagers, it is considered as an occasion to send Arabic prayers to their deceased ancestors. To those who have more religious knowledge, its purpose is not only to send prayers to the deceased but, more importantly, to bring oneself close to Allah by aggrandising, praising and adoring His name. This different degree of understanding, however, does not seem to bother the reformist leaders much. The more crucial point is that *tahlilan* can be used as a medium for them to mobilise villagers for religious purposes. The fact that not all of the participants can actually read or memorise Arabic prayers also does not trouble them. The mere act of listening to the recitation of an Arabic prayer is, according to the reformist leaders, enough to acquire high religious merit (*ganjaran*).

One of the reasons *tahlilan* could be a medium to mobilise adult men to religious activities with ease was its closeness to the Javanese tradition. Traditionally the funeral was followed by a ritual called *kendhuri*<sup>22</sup> and *tahlilan*, which aimed, according to village elders, to ask forgiveness of Allah for the sins committed by the deceased in this world. This, in turn, was thought to bring well-being for the living since the dead ancestors were believed to give blessings to their living children. These acts of devotion for the deceased ancestors were confined not only to the post-funeral period. The Javanese cleaned the tombs of their dead parents or other relatives, brought flowers, burned incense and made offerings in the cemetery, and, sometimes, stayed awake or slept there until dawn, waiting for the coming of blessing from the dead in the form of a dream or whisper.

According to the reformist leaders in Sumber, the traditional mode of celebrating *tahlilan* after the funeral is permissible on the condition that its aim is to ask forgiveness of Allah for the dead. However, it cannot be approved of when its aim is to ask something of the dead. Reformist Islam teaches that the relation between parents and children is severed with the death of parents, so that the dead cannot give any blessing to the living.<sup>23</sup> This clear distinction in reformist ideology is not so clear-cut in actual life: no one knows exactly what others have in mind when they pray for the deceased. This ambiguity, therefore, has been

<sup>22</sup> *Kendhuri* (*slametan*) refers to the traditional ritual, which was celebrated at each passage of life and on other specific occasions. For more about *kendhuri*, see Chapter V.

<sup>23</sup> The reformist villagers in Kolojonggo have an opinion that prayers from living children can lessen the burden of their dead parents in the *alam kuburan* or the world after death, where the dead are tortured for their earlier sins in this world. They base this idea on a passage in the Hadith saying that, after the death of people, all but three deeds are discontinued: alms given while alive (*amal jariah*), useful knowledge and a pious child (*anak shaleh*). However, they do not agree with the traditional idea that the dead ancestors can give blessings to the living children. In this respect, the relation between the living and the dead conceived by the reformist villagers is unilateral. The living children can help the dead whereas the latter cannot help the former. This idea of the reformist villagers in Kolojonggo is different from that of the Gayo reformists (modernists) who maintain that the living children cannot aid the dead parents (Bowen, 1993:268-272).

one reason why *tahlilan* was so successful in mobilising ordinary villagers and, eventually, in expanding Islamic teachings to them.

The selection of the day for *tahlilan* also indicates that a severance between the traditional concept of seeking blessing from the dead and *tahlilan* is not clearly manifested. From the outset, it was held on the night that begins the Javanese day of Friday-*Kliwon* and Tuesday-*Kliwon*<sup>24</sup>. Traditionally it was these two nights when spirits and souls of the dead were believed to hover around the village most actively, so that many villagers, who wanted to seek blessing from the dead or to increase their magical power by way of spirits, selected these two nights as the best time to visit tombs or other sacred places. This selection, therefore, smoothly changed the visiting place of villagers from tombs or other sacred places to a space where Islamic prayers could be heard. A school teacher who was one of the central figures to initiate the new *tahlilan* tradition in Sumber described the ease of inviting other villagers to *tahlilan* as follows:

When invited to learn about Islam in formal meetings, villagers were not willing to attend. There were so many excuses that they made. ... However, the situation was somewhat different in the case of *tahlilan*. I persuaded them to attend it, saying that prayer for the dead was a praise-worthy work both in Islam and in Javanese tradition, since both taught us to be faithful (*bakti*) to our dead parents. This invitation was rather readily accepted, even if they could not follow the recital of Arabic prayers.

After *tahlilan* became a regular meeting among villagers, a change was made in its mode. The reformist leaders added a section with a sermon after the recital of Arabic prayers. With this innovation, they could overcome the initial unwillingness of villagers to attend a religious meeting and their original intention to give villagers more chance to learn about Islam was implemented in the long run.

In the 1970s when the celebration of *tahlilan* was already firmly established in several hamlets in Sumber, Kolojonggo had no resources to start it by itself. The first basis for the development of the *tahlilan* celebration was imported from other hamlets when three adult villagers and some youth attended the *tahlilan* meeting held in neighbouring hamlets. As their invitation to *tahlilan* was accepted by some other villagers and they themselves were able to memorise the sequence of recitation and Arabic prayers, they began to hold their own independent *tahlilan* in the *langgar* in the early 1980s. The *kaum* became a guide to recite Arabic prayers and other attendants were asked to repeat what was recited by him. Several reformist leaders from neighbouring hamlets were invited to give the sermon after *tahlilan*.

<sup>24</sup> See Chapter VI, for more about this traditional system of calculating the day and the week.

The significance of the independent *tahlilan* in Kolojonggo lay in the fact that it was the first occasion when adult Muslim villagers gathered under the banner of Islam on a regular basis. As its purpose was religious, the participants were ready to and expected to talk about religious issues. Whereas religious topics had been discussed in a private manner by those concerned about it before the initiation of *tahlilan*, these topics started to be discussed in a public sphere after its initiation. This meant the birth of a collective power in Kolojonggo, even if in a nascent form. One of the topics discussed at that time was religious education for those who did not participate in *tahlilan* in general and for women in particular. The result of this discussion bore fruit in the form of *pengajian*<sup>25</sup> for women.

With the introduction of *pengajian* for women in the early 1980s, all Muslim villagers were given a place in religious activities. The children and youth were allocated to the Arabic learning course, the men to *tahlilan* and the women to *pengajian*. Although the number of participants at these meetings was not enough to carry out certain religious programs, they provided a place where religious problems were regularly discussed. This easy flow of thought eventually constituted the basis for the construction of a *masjid* a few years later.

Asked the reason for constructing a *masjid*, villagers gave the same answer as they used to explain the construction of a *langgar*: the fasting month. Increasing numbers of villagers who participated in religious activities naturally led to an increase of those who carried out the fast. Soon, the *langgar* became too small to accommodate this expansion and villagers had to divide the participants into two: the *langgar* for men and a private house for women. This division of place in terms of sex brought several inconveniences. As the *tarawih* prayer and sermon were offered separately in two places, they had difficulty coordinating religious activities and this eventually intensified their desire to have their own *masjid*.

On the other hand, the Islamic development in Sumber after the mid-1980s also influenced villagers in Kolojonggo: nine new *masjid* were built in three years from 1984 to 1986. This was remarkable progress, compared with the previous time when only three *masjid* were constructed over almost three decades.<sup>26</sup> This development triggered a series of discussions among the participants to *tahlilan* and *pengajian* and gave villagers an opportunity to scrutinise the process of

<sup>25</sup> *Pengajian* refers to all religious meetings whose major purpose is to learn about Islam, so that the religious course for children and the sermon after *tahlilan* are also called *pengajian*. However, when the term, *pengajian*, is used without a modifier, it generally refers to a meeting where a speaker conveys religious teachings to the participants. See Chapter IV, for more about *pengajian*.

<sup>26</sup> This remarkable increase in the 1980s was not only a distinctive feature in Sumber but was applicable to other *kelurahan* in the *kecamatan* Gamol or even to the Special Region of Yogyakarta. At the end of 1979, the *kecamatan* Gamol had 28 *masjid*, which increased to 50 in 1986 and to 73 in 1990. In the Special Region of Yogyakarta, the number of *masjid* doubled from 1779 in 1979 to 3849 in 1990 (KSY, various issues).

building a *masjid*. The report of a few villagers who closely examined this process in other hamlets brought a great hope. According to them, most of the funds to build a *masjid* were not directly mobilised from the inside but from the outside. What villagers had to provide was mainly man-power.

As the first step to build a *masjid*, an informal preparatory committee was organised in early 1987. The first work that this committee did was to search for the land where the *masjid* could be erected. Fortunately, a villager donated his land. As his house was located at the centre of the hamlet, his proposal was welcomed by the committee. However, an unexpected problem occurred. The donated land was located not far from the Protestant chapel (*kapel*), so that the *kelurahan* office recommended finding another place in order not to locate chapel and *masjid* on the same plot of land.<sup>27</sup> This did not drive the committee to despair. They started to search for another donor, who soon turned up. Although located on the western side of the hamlet, the donation was finally approved of by the committee.

The other job that this committee carried out was promoting religious activities among villagers. *Tahlilan* was regularly carried out and an irregular *pengajian* for women was changed into a regular one for a general audience. From 1987 till 1988, *pengajian* was held almost once every week. In these meetings, a donation was asked from the participants, whose number expanded rather rapidly. The records showed that the participants reached around fifty and sometimes eighty at a *pengajian* and around thirty to forty at a *tahlilan*. Although donations from villagers were mainly Rp 50 or Rp 100 coins, the regular celebration of religious meetings, increasing participation in these activities and the commitment of the increasing number of villagers to the idea of having a *masjid* made it possible for the committee to collect around half a million Rupiah within two years.

In 1988, the informal committee was changed into a formal one and the head of the *kecamatan* (*camat*) became its chief counsellor. From this time on, a massive campaign started to raise funds, the total sum of which was estimated at around three and half million Rupiah. As villagers had expected before, most funds were collected from outside Kolojonggo with the effort of the committee members to seek donors. The final moment in collecting funds was the most impressive one throughout the preparation period. Following the practice of other hamlets, the placement of the first stone for the new *masjid* was accompanied by a

<sup>27</sup> In 1969, the Indonesian government issued a regulation on the way to construct religious buildings. According to this regulation, the main body preparing a construction should submit the application to the regional government which is authorised to issue a permission. The regional government is ordered to consider the opinion of the chief official of the Department of Religion, the condition of the area where the new building will be constructed and the opinion of religious leaders in that area. In this consideration, two important factors are the closeness of the planned building with the existing ones and the composition of population in terms of religious affiliation (Proyek Perencanaan Peraturan Perundangan Keagamaan, 1980/81).

large-scale *pengajian* (*pengajian akbar*). Hundreds of people gathered, most of whom were from outside Kolojonggo. Surprisingly enough, more than a million Rupiah was collected at this *pengajian*.

In the process of building a *masjid*, a small myth was created. Around thirty men worked throughout the whole construction period. Some of them gave up their jobs as labourers to help this construction. Food for the labourers was provided by several Muslim households in turn. With this unprecedented support, it took only forty days to build the 11m x 14m building. Many villagers who participated in this construction unanimously mentioned their own surprise at such an easy and voluntary process of mobilising labour. Everyone worked hard, as if this was to build their own house. Many villagers who had not participated in Islamic activities before also came voluntarily to donate their manpower. In this respect, it was a chance for the potentiality of Muslim villagers to be publicised and the possibility of creating the *umat* Islam was felt by the participants.

### **3.4. Islamic Development after the Construction of the *Masjid***

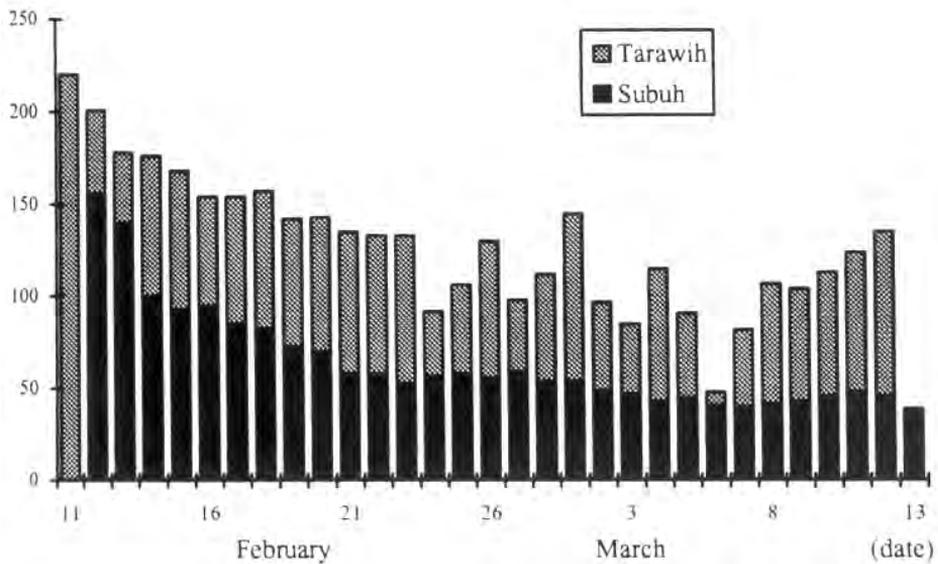
The construction of the *masjid* building was not finished in 1988, nor was it meant to be. Villagers planned to build only its main structure and other parts were designed to be completed in subsequent years. From that time on, community work was mobilised before the fasting month to make the incomplete structure of the *masjid* perfect: a toilet, a place for ablution and a brick fence were built, walls were painted, the verandah was renovated, a slate cover was made over the ablution place, a sound system was installed and so on. Even if the present appearance and facilities seem fine, the villagers have still more plans for the future. They want an electric generator to replace the well with tap water, a more spacious toilet and ablution place which men and women can use separately, a better sound system, fans and a library. Although these will be furnished some day, it is obvious that they will then make another plan to improve their *masjid*. To them, the *masjid*, although it is just a physical structure, is the symbol of their religiosity and of Islamic development in Kolojonggo. As their religiosity is viewed as something that should be ceaselessly improved, so is the *masjid*.

Compared with the rapid pace of building the *masjid*, the increase of Muslim villagers who use it has not been remarkable. On ordinary days, only a handful of villagers come for daily prayer. In 1993-94, there were around 20 villagers for *isaq* (night prayer) and around 10 for *subuh* (dawn prayer). To some villagers, this was not disappointing since even this number was a remarkable increase. Moreover, the *masjid* is not the only place where one can do his or her prayers. The house or any other place will do for this purpose. To those who regularly prayed in the *masjid*, however, this number was not satisfactory. They wished

more villagers would come to the *masjid* to make it full. Their expectation was not just a dream but based on the experience during the first phase of the fasting month when hundreds of villagers visited the *masjid*. They hoped that the same situation would continue on ordinary days.

The participation in the collective prayers during the fasting month gives a clue to understand the present religious situation in Kolojonggo. For this purpose, a graph showing the number of participants in the collective prayers during the fasting month in 1994 is presented below.<sup>28</sup> As the collective prayer starts with the *tarawih* prayer in the evening before the beginning of the fasting month and ends with the *subuh* prayer on the last day of the fast, these two days have just one collective prayer.

**Figure III-1: Number of Attendants at the Collective Prayer during the Fasting Month in 1994**



One of the notable features in Figure III-1 is the remarkable difference in the number of participants for the first and the last collective prayers. While it was around 220 for the first *tarawih* prayer, it was around 40 who attended the last *subuh* prayer. To understand what this difference signifies, the changing social atmosphere throughout the fasting month needs to be noted.

<sup>28</sup> During the *tarawih* prayer and sermon, I usually sat inside the *masjid* behind male villagers. As this made it difficult for me to count the number of female participants, many of whom sat in the *masjid* veranda, the number of female participants was calculated by a female youth, and her calculation was later combined with mine. When I could not attend the *tarawih* prayer, I asked a male youth to calculate the number of participants. As I did not attend the *subuh* prayer except for the last five days of the fasting month, the calculation was undertaken by a male youth. Numbers in Figure III-1 also include children who participated in the collective prayers.

The preparation for the fasting month started two or three months before its coming. A series of meetings were held to plan the community work, to organise a preparatory committee, to put each individual into the sub-sections of this committee, to fix the list of villagers who would supply food for the collective ending of the fast and to recruit the *khatib* who would give sermons after the *tarawih* and *subuh* prayers as well as for special *pengajian*. These meetings gave villagers who wanted to participate in the fast a chance to refresh their intention. They thought about their fast in the previous year and expected themselves to observe the coming fast better. Some of them practised the fast that they had not done in the previous year. Many public religious discourses also dealt with topics related to the fast. Due to this social atmosphere, the opening of the fasting month, beginning with the first *tarawih* prayer in the *masjid*, was enthusiastically received by villagers. Even those who had not frequently attended religious activities also visited the *masjid* for the opening of the fasting month. In this sense, the number, which reached around 220 in 1994 or around 50 percent of the total Muslims in Kolojonggo, signified the number of villagers who retained their interest in religious activities and who were responsive to the call from the Islamic activists.

As the fasting month went on, however, the first passion of villagers began to decline. Some villagers gave up their fast, the fixed list of *khatib* started to be revised due to their notice of absence, and the number of villagers who came to the *masjid* to end the fast together with others (*buka pasa*) decreased rapidly. Boredom began to replace the first strong will of villagers to complete their religious duty. As one villager put it, when one happened not to practise the fast one day, the temptation from the *satan* grew greater and greater. The fluctuating number of those who attended the *tarawih* prayer in the middle of the fasting month was a sign of this. On the 6th of March, it rained heavily and half of the villagers who had turned up the day before did not come to the *masjid*.

The number of participants in the *tarawih* prayer increased once again after the special *pengajian* was held on the 8th of March. Reanimated, villagers began to come to the *masjid* during the last phase of the fasting month. The same situation, however, was not applied to the *subuh* prayer. Compared with the *tarawih* prayer, the *subuh* prayer was said to be more difficult to carry out. First of all, it was done around 4 in the morning before the dawn. This means that one had to get up by at least 3 in the morning to have a meal (*saur*) and to take a bath for the prayer. Everyone who wanted to fast should do so, but to go to the *masjid* for prayer was, according to villagers, a totally different thing. Moreover, they had the option of performing their *subuh* prayer at home.<sup>29</sup> Due to this, many

<sup>29</sup> Islam teaches that the *tarawih* prayer can be done individually at home. However, villagers in Kolojonggo put strong emphasis on the collectivity of this prayer and many villagers considered it as a collective prayer by nature.

of those who participated in the *subuh* prayer at the beginning of the fasting month gave up going to the *masjid*. In this respect, the villagers who kept going to the *masjid* for the *subuh* prayer throughout the whole fasting month, whose number reached about 40 in 1994, represented the core group of reformist activists in Kolojonggo. Half of them were the youth while the other half consisted of old women and middle aged men.

In sum, the pattern of villagers' participation in the collective prayers is closely related to the composition of village Muslims in terms of their religious piety and of their commitment to Islam. The participation cannot be the sole criterion by which the religiosity of a certain Muslim can be judged. However, the weight that the reformist leaders and activists put on the importance of the collective prayer, their tendency to consider one's participation in these occasions as a key to evaluate religious orientation, and the positive correlation between one's participation in the collective prayers and other religious activities make it possible to use it as an indicator to understand the differentiation of religiosity among Muslim villagers.

Seen from this point of view, Muslim villagers in Kolojonggo are made up of three groups. The first is a small group of those who make every effort to harmonise their life with Islamic teachings. The youth who regularly attend the prayers in the *masjid* on ordinary days and some of the villagers who have a higher educational background and a white collar job constitute the majority of this group, to which are added a few old and middle-aged villagers who do not appear in the front line of religious activities but are active supporters. The second group consists of those who do not actively participate in religious activities but are ready to attend them on an irregular basis and are responsive to the call from the first group. Those who appeared at the first phase of the fast month but could not continue their visits to the *masjid* constitute most of this group. The third group is composed of those who do not respond to the plea from the first group nor attend any religious events even on an irregular basis. As the figures show, around half of Muslim villagers in Kolojonggo belong to this group.

Age is an important variable for understanding this grouping (see table III-1 below). As one grows older, one is more likely to belong to the third; while younger, to the first and second. Many of the youth in their late teens and twenties were generally ready to appear in the *masjid*. Even some of the youth who were notorious for their 'naughty' behaviour such as drinking and gambling, came to the meeting in the *masjid*, especially before and throughout the fasting month. The same pattern, however, did not apply to many of the adults, who felt uneasy at the idea of entering the *masjid*. As a result, they never appeared in the *masjid*, although their house was just next door to it.

**Table III.1: Participation of Male Villagers Aged over 15 in the Collective Prayers in 1994<sup>a</sup>**

Group	Year of Birth					Total
	- 1939	1940-49	1950-59	1960-69	1970-79	
A	4	5	3	6	10	28
B	3	6	12	18	15	54
C	21	11	11	15	9	67

<sup>a</sup> Comparable data on the participation of female villagers in the collective prayers were not collected.

This was because, as I sat in front of female villagers in the *masjid*, it was almost impossible for me to check who came to the *masjid* and who did not.

Source: My observation of the *tarawih* prayers throughout the fasting month and of the *subuh* prayers for the last five days of the fasting month.

Group:

A: Male villagers who participated in the *tarawih* prayer regularly (although not continuously) and attended the *subuh* prayer at least once for the last five days;

B: Male villagers who participated in the *tarawih* prayer irregularly but at least once in the fasting month and did not attend the *subuh* prayer for the last five days;

C: Male villagers who did not participate in the *tarawih* prayer and did not attend the *subuh* prayer for the last five days.

The differentiation of villagers in terms of their religious outlook and of their participation in religious activities has existed since the late colonial period when reformist Islam began to influence some villagers. With the import of this ideology, villagers were given the opportunities to come in contact with an alternative mode of Islam to *the* Islam that their ancestors had passed down to them. At least for the supporters of reformist Islam, circumcision alone, for example, could not be a sufficient qualification to make someone a Muslim, as many villagers of that time considered. The accommodational attitude of the reformist villagers concerning missionary activities and their numeric inferiority, however, did not allow their religious distinction to be understood fully by villagers who did not have many opportunities of having contact with them. Lack of religious activities and lack of a *masjid* also decreased the chances that the different modes of religious behaviour between the reformist villagers and others were manifested in public life. The situation underwent changes in the Old Order period when villagers were clearly differentiated in terms of their political affiliation either to the Islamic party or to the other parties. In spite of the formation of a clear boundary, however, the differentiation was based more on personal relations than on differences in religious outlook. Anyone who joined Masyumi was considered to be a pious Muslim, and in this process, the different religious practices and orientations between reformist-oriented Masyumi members and those who were not did not come to the fore. Even those who did not know how to pray properly could be a member of Masyumi and be equated with other reformist activists.

By contrast with the situation in the Old Order, the accelerating Islamic development in the seventies and eighties has made it possible for the religious differences among villagers to be fully manifested in daily life. With the

quantitative increase in the number of the villagers belonging to the group of Islamic activists and the expansion of religious activities, their distinctive religious behaviours and orientation are readily visible and easily contrasted with others who do not belong to this group: they appear in the *masjid* for prayer though irregularly, pay *zakat* and other alms, and attend *pengajian*, *tahlilan*, *Jumatan* and communal work to improve *masjid*.

'Islam KTP' is a common term used in the discourse of the reformist villagers to designate those who are not ready to respond to their plea to participate in Islamic activities. KTP (*Kartu Tanda Penduduk*) is an identification card of all Indonesians on which one's religious affiliation is written. Therefore, Islam KTP refers to a Muslim who belongs to the religion of Islam but does not carry out religious duties. On the other hand, the youth who are active in Islamic activities are called by others *anak masjid* or *bocah masjid(an)*(children of the *masjid*). This term originated from the fact that their everyday life is closely connected to the *masjid*. They perform *isaq* prayer together in the *masjid* and then play together in the *masjid*. No specific term has developed to designate all Muslim villagers who are active in Islamic activities, perhaps because the reformist villagers as a group do not develop the same sort of coherent relations outside the domains of religious activities. Only the youth have extended their relationship from the religious domain to non-religious domains.<sup>30</sup>

In a recent study of Islam in a Central Javanese village, Pranowo reports that religious differentiation noticed by outside observers is not what is actually perceived and used by villagers to divide themselves into different groups. This variation is viewed by villagers as a result of different emphasis on one of two possible religious trends, either the mystical and inner dimension or the outer dimension of religious life. Therefore, those who do not carry out their religious duties such as the fast or daily prayers are not considered as bad Muslims since one's inner state of religiosity, which is not visible from outside, cannot be evaluated by outward behaviour (Pranowo,1991:278-320).

The same argument does not apply to Kolojonggo. First of all, the major stream of Islam being practised in Kolojonggo and its vicinity is different from that in Pranowo's research area where Islamic development has not been initiated by reformist Islam but has been dominated by non-reformist Islam which places a heavy emphasis on the mystical dimension of religiosity. The inner aspect of religious life is not ignored by the reformist villagers in Kolojonggo but is

<sup>30</sup> In his study of reformist Islam, Irwan notes that the Muslims in a Central Javanese town categorise their community into different groups, based on their different attitude toward Islamic ideas and practices. The reformist leaders classify those who do not follow the Islamic values and customs as 'Islam KTP', while the latter call the religious leaders and the people surrounding them '*wong masjidan*' (mosque people) (Irwan,1994:89 & 97-98). Siegel also notices that the city dwellers in Surakarta, who counted themselves as Muslims for the purpose of burial at least, but in general followed syncretic Javanese religious practices, were called *Islam simpatis* (sympathetic to Islam) (Siegel,1986:60).

emphasised in a different manner. It is related to sincerity in one's religious activities: whether one's observance of religious duties is based on the sincerity of one's intention to follow Allah's command or is due to one's desire to show off. In this framework, the equation of the inner side of one's religious life with the mystical aspect is not formed, although it is not totally rejected.

The dominance of reformist ideology in the developmental process of Islam and its different interpretation concerning the inner aspect of religion make it impossible for a double standard for evaluating religious behaviours to be used in Kolojongo, at least among the reformist Muslims. Instead, whether to perform daily prayers and the fast or not is thought of as the key to evaluate one's religiosity since, if one is pious and sincere enough to follow the path to Allah, he or she can not but carry out these duties (See Chapter IV). In this respect, outer manifestation of one's religious life is considered to be the reflection of one's inner religiosity and those who do not practise daily prayers nor the fast under ordinary circumstances are not regarded as pious Muslims (*Muslim sholeh*) by the reformist villagers (See also Bowen, 1993:320).

In addition to daily prayers and the fast, the distinctive behavioural modes of the reformist villagers are also manifested in other domains of everyday life. They attend *pengajian*, *tahlilan*, *Jumatan* and other religious celebrations, donate religious alms, participate in the communal work to improve the *masjid* and do not gamble, drink alcohol, buy lottery tickets and eat dog. In this sense, villagers who are inactive in Islamic activities do not need to go to the *masjid* or *pengajian* to learn the difference between themselves and the reformist villagers, but they can do it simply by observing their neighbours. By repetitively seeing some of their neighbours' behaviour, they can perceive the differences between themselves and those who are active in Islamic activities and learn by heart who belongs to which group. As a result, when a *jagongan*<sup>31</sup> was celebrated and dozens of villagers came, those who gambled knew exactly who played for money and who did not, and took their seats besides their colleagues. Villagers could also enumerate who bought into the lottery and who did not, and who drank alcohol and who did not.

One's understanding of others' individual propensities, for example, whether one gambles or eats dog meat, has been developed from childhood. However, when more chances are given to look at this difference in terms of religion, the contrast is viewed not simply as that of individual taste or idiosyncrasy. Rather, it is interpreted and evaluated from a religious perspective both by those who try to practise Islamic teaching and those who do not. Now, one can say, 'one does this and does not do that, for one is a good Muslim'.

<sup>31</sup> *Jagongan* is a traditional gathering held in a new-born baby's house. Villagers come together and spend the night for several days after the birth of a baby.

In sum, the Islamic development after the 1970s in Kolojonggo, by providing more opportunities to look at different manifestations of religious behaviour in more diverse domains of everyday life, has accelerated the differentiation of villagers in terms of their religious outlook. This differentiation is clearly recognised by villagers and used as a framework to interpret villagers' private and social life.

### **3.5. Summary**

Islamic development in Kolojonggo has been a process in which a group of villagers who are reflective upon their religious duties and who try to practise Islam has expanded. The increasing number of villagers who have received higher education since the 1970s was one of the factors which made it possible for this group to expand at an accelerating pace. With this quantitative expansion, the rural population has started to be differentiated rapidly in terms of religious outlook. If the germ of religious differentiation existed but was not clearly expressed in daily life before this time, it is now manifested explicitly in many aspects of social life. This naturally leads to a situation in which distinctive behavioural patterns of villagers are interpreted in terms of their commitment to Islam.

The accelerating Islamic development has brought about several related changes in village life. Armed with reformist ideology, some villagers have tried to look at and reinterpret things around them with a different perspective from others. With these efforts, the practices which have been taken for granted and considered to be natural are no longer treated as they once were. Two of the issues that the reformist villagers have challenged in this process have been those of tradition and of their relations with Christians. Therefore, the focus of the following chapters will be put on how village Muslims have dealt with tradition which reformist ideology does not clearly approve of and on what their attitude has been toward Christian neighbours. Before these two topics are dealt with, the efforts of the reformist villagers to Islamise everyday life will be presented in Chapter IV in order to understand the nature of the local-level Islam practised in Kolojonggo.

**Plate 3: Improvement of the *masjid* before the coming of the fasting month in 1993.**



**Plate 4: View of the *masjid* in Kolojonggo just before the beginning of the fasting month in 1993.**

