

Foreword

This study by Hyung-Jun Kim of a village in Yogyakarta presents a remarkable case-study of the processes of reform and renewal that are occurring widely throughout Indonesia today. Rarely have these profoundly important processes been examined at the local level in such detail. As a case study, this work offers significant insights that carry well beyond a single village. Such insights provide the basis for a critical understanding of contemporary socio-religious change.

Hyung-Jun Kim's stated objective in this work is to consider how Islam is "understood, interpreted and practiced". In many villages, perhaps most villages in Java today, this is no longer a simple matter. Taken for granted practices can be questioned and abandoned, reaffirmed or reinterpreted. To a certain extent, this has become part of the quiet dynamic of daily life. In the case that Kim Hyung-Jun studies here, however, this whole process has come much more to the fore in an effort to Islamize daily life.

When as a graduate student, Hyung-Jun Kim set out to find an "ordinary Javanese village" in which to do his fieldwork, he had no idea that the village he had selected was the site of concerted efforts by a small group of committed young men to remake their village and its traditions in the light of their understanding of a reformist Islam. In his study, Hyung-Jun Kim provides an understanding of this village setting and then proceeds systematically to examine local efforts at reform and their consequences for the social life of the community.

The particular value of this work as a whole is in the way that Hyung-Jun Kim concertedly probes the way villagers now think about rituals such as the communal meal — *kendhuri* — that they share with one another to celebrate life-cycle events and the way that the reformers have endeavoured to alter accepted practices to better define these practices as Muslim. If tradition is the accumulation of practice, such simple, intimate changes at the local level eventually become of defining importance.

It is perhaps no accident that this Yogya village has, among its population, Christians, both Catholics and Protestants. Their presence in the village adds a further dimension to this study prompting among villagers a heightened sense of what it means to be Muslim or Christian. The value of this study is in the range of its considerations and the quality of its attention to the living reality of contemporary village life.

Hyung-Jun Kim is a graduate of Seoul University. He completed his BA in anthropology in 1988 and his MA in 1990. He then transferred to the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies at the Australian National University for his PhD. He did 22 months of fieldwork in Java over a period from 1992 to 1994 and submitted his doctoral dissertation in 1996. He is currently an Associate Professor in the Department of Cultural Anthropology at Kwangwon National

University in Chunchon, Korea where he has continued his research on Islam in Indonesia. Most recently, in 2003 and 2004, he carried out nine months research focusing on Muhammadiyah. Parts of his ANU PhD thesis were used in a number of published papers: parts of Chapter 2 in "Agrarian and Social Change in a Javanese Village" in the *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 32(4): 435-455. 2002; parts of Chapter 3 in "From Bamboo Langgar to Brick Masjid: Islamic Development in a Javanese Village", in Oh, M-S and Kim H-J (eds) *Religion, Ethnicity and Modernity in Southeast Asia*, 131-165. Seoul: Seoul National University Press. 1988; parts of Chapter 4 in "The Islamization of Others' Everyday Life: A Case from Yogyakarta", in *Antropologi Indonesia* 57: 61-69. 1988; parts of Chapter 7 in "Unto You Your Religion and Unto Me My Religion: Muslim-Christian Relations in a Javanese Village", in *Sojourn*, 13(1):62-85. 1988 and parts of Chapter 8 in "Changing Concept of Religious Freedom in Indonesia", in the *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 29(2): 357-373. 1988.

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