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Islamizing Java? Religion and Politics in Rural East Java

ROBERT W. HEFNER

> After 1965 Muslims have more and more realized that the Islamization of Indonesia would in fact mean the Islamization of Java, and that this was a question of now or never.
>
> Boland 1982:191

> We are so accustomed to thinking . . . only of politicians using religion for political ends, that it is extremely hard for us to understand what politics might look like if we could see it through religious eyes, or in a religious perspective, and thus imagine the possibility of religious people using politics for religious ends.
>
> Anderson 1977:22

Scholarly discussion of Javanese society has consistently linked variation in Islamic orthodoxy to differences of socioeconomic class, political behavior, and social conflict. In the most widely known sociological formula, Clifford Geertz distinguished three varieties of Javanese Islam and correlated each with a particular social class. *Abangan*, or Javanist Muslim, tradition was described as a syncretic blend of animist, Hindu-Buddhist, and Islamic elements that was predominant among the mass of rural Javanese.[1] *Santri* tradition was identified as a more orthodox variant of Islam, especially widespread among merchants and wealthier peasants. Finally, *priyayi* tradition was identified as an elite heritage strongly influenced by the Hindu-Buddhist values of earlier Javanese courts and linked to Java's traditional gentry and the administrative bureaucracy that replaced it in the modern era (Geertz 1956; Geertz 1960:5–6).

A full reassessment of Geertz's typology would merit a separate article, but several points should be noted here. First, as has been widely pointed out (Koentjaraningrat 1963; Kartodirdjo 1966:50; Ricklefs 1979; Dhofier 1978; Boland 1982:4), Geertz's

Robert W. Hefner is Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Boston University.

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[1] It is important to note that the term *abangan*, used to refer to people of Javanist-Islamic persuasion, is in many regions of Java a highly pejorative term, rarely used for self-ascription by Javanist Muslims. In light of this fact, I prefer in the present and other publications to use a term like "Javanese Islam" (*Islam Jawa*), *kejawen* (roughly, "Javanist"), or *agama Jawa* ("Javanese religion"; cf. Koentjaraningrat 1985:316), to refer to the so-called *abangan* population.

use of the term *priyayi* does not conform to Javanese usage, where the term refers to a distinction of social class (*priyayi*, or aristocrats, as opposed to *wong cilik*, or common people), not religious culture. Some *priyayi* have been devout Muslims (cf. Nakamura 1983:49). Second, and related to the first point, the distinction between Javanist and orthodox Muslims tends to cut across classes rather than neatly correlate with them. Hence there are peasants and aristocrats who are *santri*, and others who are Javanist Muslims. A close correlation of class/economic status and religious orientation is found among merchants, however, who, as throughout Indonesia (Dobbin 1980), tend to be more orthodox Muslims. The whole issue of religion and class is complicated, moreover, by regional variation. As Koentjaraningrat (1985:318) has noted, the "heartland" regions of south-central Java (including the western sections of the province of East Java) tend to be strongholds of Javanism, while Islamic orthodoxy is particularly strong in the western portions of Central Java (adjacent to Sunda), the *pasisir* north coast, and the Madurese-influenced eastern salient regions of further East Java. Scholars such as Jay (1963) and Dhofier (1978:54) have noted that regional variation in the balance of Javanism and orthodox Islam is as important as variation according to economic status. Still others (see, for example, Roff 1985:16) have recognized that Islam and Javanism have had a historically quite variable relationship. Ricklefs (1979:115) has similarly noted that the self-consciously antagonistic relation between Javanists and *santri* really dates only from the nineteenth century, when the rise of a revitalized Islam forced many Javanese to reconsider their identity as Muslims and Javanese. Clearly the relationship was experiencing new strains in the early independence period, when still-strong memories of the Madiun massacres "greatly sharpened" tensions between Javanist and orthodox Muslims in Modjokuto (Jay 1963:19).

The basic distinction between orthodox and *abangan*, or "Javanist," Muslims continues to be one of the most widely invoked categories for analyzing Javanese society, politics, and religion. The distinction, and the cleavage in Javanese society to which it refers, have been used to explain patterns of elite competition in the prewar, Japanese, and early independence periods (Benda 1983), party mobilization and voting patterns in the 1950s (Feith 1957:32–52; Mortimer 1982:60; Jay 1963:85; Lyon 1970:37), the failure of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) to build an effective class alliance of rural poor (Mortimer 1982:58; Wertheim 1969:3), and the intensity of violence that accompanied the destruction of the PKI during 1965–66 (Jay 1971; Wertheim 1969:3). Developments under the "New Order" government that took shape after 1965–66 have been explained with similar reference to this primordial socioreligious distinction. It has been suggested, for example, that most ethnic Javanese (Ricklefs 1979:123; Liddle 1978:189) and most Indonesian military leaders, many of whom are themselves Javanese (Emmerson 1978:96; Samson 1971–72:548; Sundhaussen 1978:72), are Javanist Muslims in their religious orientation. This cultural fact is cited to explain, in part, military suspicion of fundamentalist Islam, the government party's electoral success in Javanist communities (Ward 1974:172; Raillon 1985:246), and government watchfulness in the administration of the pilgrimage and religious education (Noer 1983). In short, whatever the precise nature of orthodox and Javanist Muslim tradition, it would appear, as Mackie (1982:126) has noted, that the polarization between the two groups is as much a feature of the New Order cultural landscape as it was of the Old. Surely this is the impression conveyed by most Western scholarship on Javanese society.

As Mackie has also noted, there is reason to believe that this polarization may in fact have worsened during the years of the Old Order. In 1948, the Madiun affair

pitted *abangan* communists against *santri* Muslims in a bloody massacre and countermassacre (Kahin 1952:286–303). Shortly thereafter, as national political parties extended their rivalry into the countryside, the division between orthodox and Javanist Muslims became "the principal basis of political party organization" (Liddle 1978:190). Local religious tensions were supercharged with ideological rivalry concerning "the nature of the state and . . . the way social and material resources should be distributed" (Lyon 1970:37). Religious culture was dramatically influenced by these political developments. Javanist and orthodox Muslims purged their respective ritual traditions of elements identified with the opposite side (Jay 1963:85). At the nominal fringe of the Javanist community, moreover, there were calls for an outright repudiation of Islam and a return to "indigenous" Javanese religion (Geertz 1960:112–18; Jay 1969:426). Political support for such anti-Islamic initiatives came almost exclusively from elements of the PKI and the Indonesian Nationalist Party (PNI). Muslims regarded the initiatives as proof that their political opponents were really anti-Muslim. Although not an exclusive or even a primary cause, these religious tensions contributed to the tragic bloodshed of 1965–66, when, in the aftermath of a failed left-wing coup in Jakarta, the PKI was banned and tens of thousands of its members were rounded up and executed (Mortimer 1974; Jay 1971).

These circumstances suggest that there were good historical reasons for scholars examining Javanese religion under the Old Order to construe the relationship between Javanist and orthodox Islam as strongly oppositional.[2] The extreme political factionalism of the period also suggests, however, that cultural insights concerning that relationship may have to be qualified when applied to other periods in Javanese history, at least if we are to avoid the "conflations of time and place" that, as Roff (1985:16) has noted, undermine Western social scientists' analysis of Southeast Asian Islam. In fact, historical studies of Javanese Islam reveal that the relationship between orthodox and Javanist Islam has varied greatly over time (Ricklefs 1979; Pigeaud 1967, 1:79; Roff 1985:25). From this historical perspective, then, we should not be surprised to see that the tremendous changes in political economy under the New Order may be leaving their mark on popular Javanese Islam. The New Order, for example, has greatly restricted political party activity in rural areas (King 1982:111; McVey 1982:86). Some observers have commented that this program of rural "depoliticization" may be reducing religious polarization (Mackie 1982:126). As Herbert Feith (1982:52) noted several years ago, however, Western scholars have devoted surprisingly little attention to the nature of Javanese religious culture under the New Order, despite these sweeping changes. Analyses of national politics have sometimes inadvertently reinforced this neglect. Recent setbacks for Muslim political parties are cited as evidence of the "eclipse" of political Islam and the triumph of Javanist values. Despite the importance of these national political developments, there is no analytic justification for assuming that they either reflect or determine local-level religious culture. Indeed, as I discuss below, ethnographic evidence from some areas of rural Java suggests a partial disjunction between such state-level developments and trends in rural society.

In what follows I wish to address this problem of religious change in Javanist areas of New Order rural Java. My analysis will focus first on events in two subdistricts

[2] Roff (1985:7) suggests that the force of the typology may also be due to "an extraordinary desire on the part of Western social science observers to diminish, conceptually, the place and role of the religion and culture of Islam . . . in Southeast Asian societies." In the case of Javanese culture, one should add, a significant number of native scholars have perhaps shared this desire.

(*kecamatan*) in the East Javanese regency (*kabupaten*) of Pasuruan, where I carried out ethnographic and historical research during 1978–80 and again in 1985. Under the New Order, communities in this region—formerly a bastion of Javanist Islam—have experienced new pressures for Islamic orthodoxy, with the result that large numbers of syncretic Muslims have begun to rethink their relation to Islam. Given regional variation within Java and the complexity of social forces involved in religious change, it must be stressed from the start that this highland region is not necessarily typical of all regions in rural Java. Nonetheless, events here are linked to broader changes in Javanese society, and they indicate that the New Order may very well leave a different mark on popular religious culture than that of the Old Order. In particular, in some areas of Javanist tradition, the New Order may have inaugurated—perhaps unwittingly—a new phase in the Islamization of *abangan* Java.

Mountain Pasuruan: The Sociohistorical Background

From a religious perspective, the regency of Pasuruan in the province of East Java is one of the most heterogeneous in all Java. The northern littoral in this regency (and others to the east) has long been a center of Islamic traditionalism and a stronghold of Nahdatul Ulama (NU), the organization of traditionalist Muslim teachers (Samson 1978; Hatley 1984). As in most other Madurese-dominated regencies in Java's eastern salient (the *oosthoek*), Nahdatul Ulama was the victor here in the elections of both 1955 and 1971 (Feith 1957; Hering and Willis 1973:18). As one moves south in the regency, however—that is, away from the northern littoral and up into the rugged Tengger mountains—the cultural terrain quickly changes. Although Madurese and "Madurized" Javanese predominate in the lowlands, the uplands are largely Javanese. The highest mountain terrains are home to a culturally and linguistically subvariant ethnic Javanese population known as Tengger or Tengger Javanese, renowned throughout Java for having preserved the only explicitly non-Islamic priestly tradition since the fall of Java's last major Hindu-Buddhist kingdom five centuries ago (Hefner 1983a, 1985; Jasper 1926). The middle slopes of the highlands, by contrast, are inhabited by a mixed Muslim population of Madurese and Javanese (the Javanese predominate), traditionally renowned for their attachment to Javanist spirit cults, their strong opposition to Nahdatul Ulama, and their general disregard for the strongly Islamic ways of their lowland neighbors. It is the midslope population with which I am concerned here, particularly the portion of it that includes some sixty thousand people residing in nineteen administrative villages in the mountain subdistricts of Puspo and Tutur.

In the early nineteenth century, most of this midslope territory was thinly populated. Tengger swidden farmers resided in several small communities, but most of the Hindu[3] population that had long taken refuge in this remote mountain territory was concentrated in the more fertile and inaccessible terrains higher up the mountain slope, around Mount Bromo, at the center of the Tengger highlands (Hefner 1985:24). Seventeenth-century slave raiding by Muslim kings (Rouffaer 1921:300), two centuries of warfare between the small Hindu principality of Blambangan to the

[3] Throughout Java, the term used by Javanese to refer to the religion of pre-Islamic times has historically been *Buda* (cf. Hefner 1985:39). Among the Tengger population, however, the liturgical tradition was based on an earlier form of popular Sivaite worship (Hefner 1985), with no important "Buddhist" influences. With the rediscovery of the historical roots of their tradition, most Tengger have in recent years begun to call their religion Hindu (Hefner 1985).

east and Mataram to the west (Ricklefs 1981:44; Kumar 1979), and over a hundred years of resistance to the Dutch and the Mataram court in Central Java had all taken a severe toll on population here and in other areas of the eastern salient of Java. Early in the eighteenth century, the Dutch had established a military presence in coastal Pasuruan after successfully defeating Surapati, a famous rebel who had established a semi-independent principality in Pasuruan, in alliance with Balinese and Blambangers (Kumar 1976, 1979; Ricklefs 1981:79–82). In 1743 the Dutch acquired political sovereignty over this entire eastern territory and much of Java's north coast (*pasisir*). It was not until the 1770s, however, that the last of Surapati's followers in Tengger and Blambangan were finally vanquished (Jasper 1926:11; Ricklefs 1981:96). Because the scorched-earth tactics used by the Dutch forces throughout their military campaign had decimated the Javanese population from Pasuruan to Blambangan, the Dutch immediately encouraged Madurese immigration to reintroduce a rural labor force (Kumar 1979:191). In Blambangan, moreover, the Dutch encouraged Hindu conversion to Islam, so as to distance the local population from their former allies in neighboring Hindu Bali (Kumar 1979:190; Ricklefs 1981:96). Eventually the only remaining Hindu population in all of Java would be that around Mount Bromo.

Beginning in the 1830s and continuing through most of the century, Pasuruan's northern littoral became Java's largest sugar-growing region (Elson 1978:9). Under the Dutch-imposed Cultivation System, much of the population in this lowland region was subject to severe labor demands, with the result that, during the system's first years, large numbers of ethnic Javanese fled to upland regions, where colonial labor demands were less intense. The out-migration was compensated for, however, by a significant influx of Madurese (Elson 1978:26; Alexander and Alexander 1979:29), further eroding the cultural influence of Javanese in the regency's lowlands. The Tengger highlands, however, remained predominantly Javanese, despite the Dutch introduction of the compulsory cultivation of coffee, the Cultivation System's most lucrative cash crop (Van Niel 1972:91) and the steady influx of more lowlanders. Eventually, immigration and coffee cultivation not only changed the economy of the mountain territory but also brought about the first phase of its Islamization. By the mid-nineteenth century, most of the lower-lying pockets of Hindu Tengger had been pushed further up into the highlands or assimilated into the economically dominant immigrant Muslim population (Hefner 1985:241–47).[4] The Islam professed by most of the midslope mountain population was a nominal one at best, however, blending Tengger and Javanist ritual styles. According to village elders in many communities even today, a significant minority within the midslope population continued until late in the nineteenth century to identify itself as non-Islamic, and, as in Tengger, some males still refused to practice circumcision.[5] No Islamic prayer house (*langgar*), mosque, or religious school (*pesantren*) existed in any of the mountain subdistricts until 1910, when road building into the highlands resulted in increased commercial activity and substantial immigration from the lowlands. In most communities, it was these later migrants who provided the capital and inspiration for the construction

[4] I describe the cultural fate of one such lower-lying Tengger population elsewhere (Hefner 1987).

[5] In fact, even in Tengger many males already practiced circumcision in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Lerwerden 1844; La Chapelle 1899), although the technique differed somewhat from the Islamic custom, and local people referred to the rite as a "Buda-izing" (*mbuda'en*), insisting it had nothing to do with Islam. Many elder villagers whom I interviewed in both Tengger and midslope communities insisted, however, that a significant number of people in earlier times refused to be circumcised. Many Hindus in modern Tengger today have banned circumcision (Hefner 1985:145).

of Muslim places of worship. Most of the immigrant men took local wives, however, and many eventually came to accept less orthodox religious attitudes. A common pattern was for men who had earned their wealth in trade to consolidate their claim to status in upland villages by acquiring land and doing what was incumbent on all people of wealth and status in this mountain region: sponsoring the celebration of large ritual festivals (*slametan*) dedicated to the propitiation of village ancestors, territorial guardians, and the spirits of mountain land and water (Hefner 1983b, 1985). Such celebrations included the provision of meals[6] for hundreds of guests, *tayuban* dancing, theater performances, and—before and above all else—the presentation of food offerings to village guardian spirits at the shrines of village ancestors and water spirits. Despite some differences in festival detail and broader differences in the form of religious ritual, the same ritual concerns were the focus of popular cult in Hindu Tengger (Hefner 1985). The majority of Muslims in this midslope mountain territory rejected more stringent forms of Islamic piety, which they identified with the oppressively stratified and un-Javanese culture of *ngare*, the "lowlands."

In some respects, events following Indonesian independence in 1945 weakened the already-tenuous hold of Islam on the people in this midslope territory. As in other parts of Java (Jay 1963; Geertz 1973:151), the intrusion of political party competition into rural areas exacerbated Muslim and Javanist relations, pushing some Javanist Muslims to deny that they were Muslim at all. In the regency of Pasuruan, this religious antagonism was reinforced by regional and ethnic sentiments, since the lowlands were dominated by Madurese Muslims strongly committed to Nahdatul Ulama. *Ulama* from NU at times criticized what they regarded as the heathen customs of the regency's mountain Javanese. In upland Pasuruan, by contrast, both Hindu Tengger and the midslope Muslims threw their support overwhelmingly to the PNI. The PKI also had a small following in several communities where, as elsewhere in Java (Feith 1957:15), it had succeeded in mobilizing the land poor in campaigns for land reform. In the final years of the Old Order, political tensions in the regency worsened considerably. PKI victories in the city of Surabaya and a series of ill-timed assaults on religious institutions (Walkin 1969:828) confirmed Muslim fears that the PKI was their main enemy. In 1964 and 1965, PKI "unilateral actions"—designed to force implementation of the 1960 land reform law—pushed rural tensions here and throughout Java to unprecedented levels (Lyon 1970:50; Mortimer 1974:284–328).

It was in this climate that several anti-Islamic religious movements began to take shape in the midslope mountain subdistricts. The most prominent of these was a local organization known as "Javanese Visnu-Buda Religion" (*Agama Buda Visnu Jawi*). Castigating Islam as un-Javanese, the leaders of this organization promoted a return to what they called Java's "original" religion at the time of Majapahit, the last of the great Hindu-Buddhist states. In response to Muslim claims that Visnu-Buda was not a real religion, since it lacked scripture (*kitab*) and proper forms of worship, Visnu-Buda's leaders composed books of prayers, created new forms of ritual *slametan*, designated certain villagers to act as ritual specialists, and sought permission from regency officers to perform marriage and burial in a Visnu-Buda fashion. At its peak in 1964, this organization claimed two thousand followers in five mountain

[6] Unlike the more familiar custom in areas of Central Javanese influence, ritual festivals in the Tengger highlands do not involve mere symbolic consumption of food, with leftovers wrapped up for transport and consumption at home; guests are given abundant food and are expected to eat.

communities, or about 5 percent of the subdistricts' population. There were in addition several smaller non-Islamic movements in the area.

Most villagers in the mountain subdistricts, however, adopted a more cautious stance toward Islam. They continued to call themselves Muslim but studiously avoided participating in religious activities regarded as clear indices of *santri* behavior, such as mosque attendance or payment of *zakat* alms. Mosque attendance is reported to have actually declined during the 1950s and early 1960s, dwindling down to a core of people regarded as NU "fanatics." Participation in activity at spirit shrines, meanwhile, soared, as local-level PNI leaders promoted shrine ceremonies to demonstrate their opposition to NU. Although few in number, PKI leaders in the area also sought to mobilize anti-Islamic sentiment, in some communities, for example, organizing gamelan and dance exercises at precisely the same hour as Friday mosque services.

To underscore the contrast with later New Order policies, it is important here to emphasize the pivotal role played by PNI and, to a lesser degree, PKI leadership in the regional coordination of these anti-Islamic organizations. Local-level organizers appear to have enjoyed at least the tacit support of party leaders in Pasuruan. Nationally, of course, both the PNI and PKI sought at times to present themselves as faithful defenders of Muslim interests. Indeed in some areas of Java, the PNI in particular had real success in appealing to orthodox Muslims. For example, the party's association of Islamic teachers, the *Jamiatul Muslimin*, is reported to have had a sizable following in the nearby Malang regency, where the Madurese population is smaller than along the *oosthoek*'s northern littoral. In mountain Pasuruan, however, PNI officials were linked to strongly anti-Islamic forces. These ties do not appear to have been the product of electoral strategies alone, since PNI dominance in the mountain region was assured without the adoption of a religious stance that risked further alienating Muslims in the lowlands. The motivation for the religious policy in the uplands seems instead to have been primarily influenced by the personal beliefs of a few highly placed PNI officials strongly opposed to orthodox Islam. The regency coordinator for Visnu-Buda, for example, was a well-known PNI officer in regency government who also advised Tengger Hindus, *kebatinan* mystics, and others on the margin of Pasuruan's strong Islamic community. He had begun his work long before the 1955 elections and continued it long after (right up through 1966), helping various organizations to compose, publish, and distribute doctrinal tracts and putting movement leaders in contact with national organizations similarly dedicated to the creation of a non-Islamic "Javanese" religion. He was an avid supporter of village spirit cults as well, providing them with intervillage coordination, without which, he feared, they would eventually die. Similarly, he played an important role in helping upland Tengger to forge contacts with Hindu Balinese, aiding in the Tengger rediscovery of their Hindu history (Hefner 1985:248).

In light of ethnographic reports from other areas of Java at this same time, none of this anti-Islamic activity should be regarded as really exceptional. Clifford Geertz (1960:113) and Robert Jay (1969:426) have both reported that in "Modjokuto" a significant portion of the Javanist community was also openly flirting with a repudiation of Islam, apparently again with the direct support of PNI and PKI officials. Political observers of the Old Order in general noted that throughout Java at this time the PNI and PKI competed for the so-called *abangan* vote (Feith 1957:31), while NU and Masyumi courted the *santri* electorate. Although the impact of this competition was not just political, for the purpose of comparison with the New Order, it is important to stress one startling fact: that in a country boasting the world's

largest Muslim population, two of the nation's most powerful political parties were openly supporting anti-Islamic initiatives, at least in some areas of Java.

Cultural differences between Javanist and orthodox Muslims remained even after 1965–66, but it is clear that the New Order brought tremendous institutional change to the religious scene. Most of Java's popularly based anti-Islamic movements were outlawed and their PNI and PKI leadership was neutralized, while many popularly based Muslim institutions remained intact or even grew in influence. All Indonesians were obliged to profess an officially recognized religion, and, for the first time in modern Indonesia, public expression of antireligious sentiments was outlawed (Boland 1982:149). Although much attention has been given to the fact that portions of the Javanist community sought refuge from these strictures by converting to Hinduism or Christianity (Lyon 1980; Ricklefs 1979:129; Geertz 1972), it is important to recognize that in other areas, like mountain Pasuruan, circumstances proved much more favorable to Islamic revitalization.

In the weeks following the abortive coup attempt in Jakarta, Muslim youth groups from NU strongholds in the lowlands swept through known centers of PKI activity in the highlands and either executed or obliged villagers to execute suspected PKI leaders. In the course of these sweeps, several of Visnu-Buda's leaders were seized and killed. Although the actual extent of bloodshed in the mountain subdistricts was in fact quite limited (because the PKI organization was itself small), the chaos of this period terrified many in the Javanist community. Rumors circulated that, after the liquidation of the PKI, the PNI was next. Villagers not professing either Islam or Christianity, other rumors indicated, were also liable for execution. In the first months of 1966, therefore, all but sixty of the two thousand Visnu-Buda followers heeded the "suggestion" of village leaders and reaffiliated with Islam. (The remainder still profess to be Hindus.) For reasons I discuss below, one saw in mountain Pasuruan none of the mass conversions to Hinduism or Christianity reported from areas of Central Java and Blitar (Lyon 1980). Explicitly anti-Islamic activity ceased. The last viable focus of Javanist religious activity thus lay in village spirit shrines. But even these were eventually placed in a politically awkward position, the dimensions of which are illustrated in the experience of a community I shall call Wonorejo (a pseudonym), where I carried out research in 1979 and 1985.

Assault on the Spirit Cult

Wonorejo is a community of thirty-seven hundred people in the subdistrict of Puspo, not far from the main road linking upland Tengger with lowland Pasuruan. Like most communities in this region, Wonorejo had been a PNI stronghold under the Old Order, with only 15 percent of its population voting in 1955 for NU, and another 9 percent for the PKI. Never a strong center of Visnu-Buda activity, Wonorejo's spiritual tradition had instead been organized around a well-known guardian spirit shrine located at the edge of the main hamlet, known as Nyai Po ("Grandmother Mango"), after the name of the main spirit guardian of the community. The shrine had long attracted visitors from throughout the regency. People from as far away as Pasuruan would come bearing food offerings (*sesajen*), placing them on a table adjacent to a large metal incense burner at the center of the shrine, an open-air, gardenlike space beneath a dense gathering of banyan, bamboo, and mango trees. In presenting offerings, people always faced mountainward in respectful acknowledgment of the powerful spirits thought to reside on Mount Bromo and Mount Semeru at the center

of the Tengger highlands. A similar directional orientation in the presentation of offerings is found in nearby Tengger communities (Hefner 1985:67). The Nyai Po guardian spirit was, in effect, the local Wonorejo representative of these more august guardian spirits. Although visitors provided the offerings, only the shrine caretaker (*juru kunci*) was privileged to utter the sacred formulas and burn the incense that drew the guardian spirits to the offering site. Much like a Tengger priest (Hefner 1985:189), the *juru kunci* inherited his role from his father, from whom he also learned the prayers for spirit appeal. Despite parallels of ritual practice with the Tengger priest, the *juru kunci*'s prayers contained none of the richly archaic Hindu liturgies found in Tengger prayer (Hefner 1985:163). Their appeals to the guardians of earth, sky, water, and wind directions were always prefaced by an Islamic profession of faith (spoken in Arabic). Indeed, in the eyes of most villagers, shrine activity was entirely consistent with "Javanese Islam." When questioned about the basis of their belief, villagers would respond by saying, "Nyai Po is our teacher as well as the mosque." Hence during rites of life passage (except funerals), during the monthly *barikan* rite of village blessing, and once each year for the especially elaborate *gahdeso* celebration,[7] villagers would bring offering trays (*ancak*) to the spirit shrines, invoke the presence of the guardian spirits, and share the foods blessed by spirits' presence.

The Nyai Po cult thrived in part because it enjoyed the support of Wonorejo's political elite. The family from which the shrine caretaker was always recruited was linked by marriage and descent to the village's leading political families. The annual *gahdeso* celebration was organized out of the house of the village chief and was incomplete without his participation at the shrine, where he would dance *tayuban*-style first with the shrine caretaker and then with the professional female dancers (*tledek*) hired in the lowlands for the occasion. The shrine caretaker and the village chief also received the lion's share of the shrine offerings, once the food's invisible essence (*sari*) had been consumed by the invited spirits. Finally, no person with a claim to standing in the community was free of the obligation to sponsor elaborate ritual festivals (*slametan*), always preceded by a mandatory visit to the spirit shrine. Shrine activity, in short, was integral to the very fabric of village social and religious order.

The events of 1965–66 cast a shadow on the Nyai Po cult. As the dimensions of the bloodshed became clearer and rumors spread that Nahdatul Ulama's holy war was soon to target even PNI strongholds, Wonorejo's leaders quietly suspended Nyai Po services. Attendance at Wonorejo's mosque, meanwhile, soared, going from ten or fifteen men each Friday to hundreds. By mid-1967, however, the political situation appeared to be stabilizing, and mosque attendance began to decline again. Services at the Nyai Po were revived. Shortly thereafter, an event took place that shocked the community and revealed that, whatever the apparent return to normalcy, the religious situation had changed.

In the final months of 1966, the mountain subdistricts' Forestry Bureau chief (a PNI official) had been dismissed because of alleged leftist sympathies. The dismissal was part of a larger "crystallization" campaign directed at the PNI at this time, designed to weed out left-wing elements in the party; it was especially strong in East Java (Ward 1974:142). The bureau chief was replaced by a man who happened to be a member of the powerful reform Muslim organization Muhammadiyah; here too the appointment of a reform Muslim in a Javanist Muslim region was indicative of

[7] The term *gahdeso* appears to be derived from the two words *sedekah deso*, or (loosely) village alms, and means "blessing of the village through offerings."

the close cooperation between Muslims and security forces during the first years of the New Order. On taking office, the new chief sent a directive to Wonorejo's village chief, instructing him to desist from holding rites at the Nyai Po shrine. "Wonorejo will never be modern (*maju*)," his directive admonished, "until villagers stop feeding that shrine devil." Wonorejo's chief politely ignored the request. Not long thereafter, the village chief received another letter from the Forestry officer, informing him that the Nyai Po shrine was in actuality located on Forestry lands, and its trees were soon to be cut down.

The news was greeted with disbelief and horror in the village. The chief protested to Forestry officials, pointing out that in the entire history of the village the trees at Nyai Po had never been cut. In earlier years, in fact, many Forestry officials had been avid patrons of the shrine. The new bureau chief was unmoved, however, and called on all "true Muslims" in Wonorejo to join him in a rite of exorcism at the shrine, to banish Nyai Po and her spirit family (a husband and four children) to a remote forest location. Only members of the small NU community in Wonorejo came forward to aid the effort. According to their subsequent reports, the enterprise was long and dangerous, lasting a full six days. At one point, NU informants noted, one of Nyai Po's children—a male spirit, especially reluctant to move because he is said to be a cripple—attacked the Forestry officer, who pulled his service revolver and discharged several rounds. Eventually, the spirits were beaten; they retreated to their new home far from the village. Workmen came in and cut down the shrine's trees. Latter-day defenders of the Nyai Po, however, tell a different story. The prayers used by the reformists were ineffective because they are designed to work against devils—which Nyai Po is not. She is a benevolent guardian spirit (*roh bau rekso*). Hence, even though the shrine trees may have been felled, Nyai Po herself lives on, still in residence at the old shrine. Even today she welcomes offerings from those who remember and respect the kind guardianship she has always displayed to her village.

The New Order and Islam's Advance

The Nyai Po incident provides fascinating insight into the nature of popular Javanese belief. The reformists who sought to expel Nyai Po did not question her existence, but her status, as a spirit being. In their eyes, she must be a devil, because she compelled people to pay her homage. Nyai Po's defenders, by contrast, insisted that she was not a devil at all but a guardian spirit of a kind well known in Javanese—if not orthodox Muslim—cosmology. Religious conflict here involved competing definitions of spiritual reality.

Whatever its cosmological subtleties, the Nyai Po incident is especially interesting for what it reveals about the shifting balance of power between orthodox and Javanist Muslims in this mountain region. After protesting to Forestry officers, Wonorejo's leaders took what was—given the political climate at the time—the unusually bold step of appealing to regency officials in Pasuruan. Among those to whom they took their plea were several PNI officers who, just two years earlier, had actively supported the village shrines and Visnu-Buda initiatives. According to villagers' reports, these men quietly took the delegation aside and explained that they were unable to help. It was, the officials said, a "new era." Henceforth they would play no role in the organization of Javanist religious activities.

The cutting of the trees at the Nyai Po shrine did not in fact put an end to shrine services. *Barikan* continued to be held each month despite the shrine's desecration,

although, as I note below, even this activity eventually subsided. From a broader perspective, however, the incident signaled a critical turning point in the political administration of rural religion in Pasuruan's mountain subdistricts. Official support for Javanist initiatives collapsed, and for a variety of reasons the popular appeal of orthodox Islam was progressively enhanced. Primary among the causes of the erosion of Javanism were the removal of explicitly anti-Islamic Javanist leaders and the banning of their organizations. None of the anti-Islamic Javanist organizations in this region, of which Visnu-Buda was the most prominent, survived 1965–66.[8] Despite the efforts of some leaders to rechannel their followers into Hindu organizations legally protected by the Indonesian government, most villagers nominally returned to Islam. In areas of Central Java (Lyon 1980; Ricklefs 1979:125) and southwestern East Java (Geertz 1972; Ward 1974:147), significant mass conversion to Hinduism and Christianity occurred at this time, but no such large-scale conversion occurred in Pasuruan or neighboring regencies on the northeast coast. The predominance of Islam in the area and the almost total absence of any urban-based organizational counterpart to mountain Javanist organizations left rural organizations institutionally crippled. In particular, there was in Pasuruan no counterpart to the high-status officials who, in Central Java, are reported to have provided vital organizational skills and social legitimacy for the Hindu movement (Lyon 1980:206). Unlike many areas of south-central Java, one must remember, in Pasuruan local government had been dominated by Nahdatul Ulama, not the PNI, and the "crystallization" campaign against left-wing PNI party members (Ward 1974:142) had both gutted the party and rendered it even further suspect in the eyes of Pasuruan NU officials. In these circumstances, remnant PNI leaders were understandably reluctant to launch any non- or anti-Islamic initiatives.

It is important, however, not to interpret developments in the Pasuruan region too narrowly, as if events there had no counterpart elsewhere in Java. There is considerable information to indicate that counterparts exist, although developments in each area of Java must be assessed in light of both national circumstances and an often complex configuration of local social forces. On a national level, first of all, the banning of explicitly anti-Islamic organizations like Visnu-Buda or Permai (Geertz 1960:112–18) clearly set back or destroyed the efforts of some in the Javanist community to build explicit, mass-based religious alternatives to Islam. Increased pressures for all citizens to profess a recognized national religion, the institution of mandatory religious instruction in all schools (Boland 1982:196), and the discrediting of many Javanist leaders for their association with leftist organizations also enhanced the appeal of Islam for some Javanist Muslims. In the case of religious education, for example, it appears that Islam has most benefited from the new requirements. As a number of Indonesian scholars have observed (Noer 1978:44); Dhofier 1978:49; Koentjaraningrat 1985:317), the majority of Javanists still strongly identify with Islam as an index of ethnic and national identity, and most have always been unwilling to take the radical step of repudiating Islam. In schools, therefore, children of Javanist

[8] I am excluding from this generalization Tengger Hindus, who were never Mùslim in the first place, and a small circle of *kebatinan* mystics from the organization *Pangestu* (Koentjaraningrat 1985:400), who have developed an organization in two villages just to the north of the mountain subdistricts. The mystical movement, curiously, has emerged in an area otherwise dominated by Nahdatul Ulama, apparently attracting most of its followers from the Javanese minority in these Madurese-dominated communities. Mystical organizations have attracted few followers in the mountain subdistricts themselves. The theosophical relativism and general de-emphasis of collective public rite characteristic of most *kebatinan* organizations appear to appeal very little to most practical-minded mountain Javanese.

parents are still usually identified as Muslim and thus are given instruction in Islamic belief and duty. Under the New Order, the previous parental option of allowing children to skip religious classes has been eliminated (Noer 1978:37), despite the appeals of *kebatinan* mystics (Ward 1974:43) and more secular-minded leaders who would prefer instruction in basic civics and morality. Not only has religious instruction been extended to all levels of education (including universities), but its quality has also improved as a result of growing state support for Muslim teacher training colleges and a boom in the number of such teachers (Noer 1978:35; Boland 1982:197).

In areas like mountain Pasuruan, these national developments have had a visible impact. Under the Old Order, religious education was at best perfunctory. Village leaders arranged to bar NU and orthodox school teachers from the village school system, recruiting instead teachers sympathetic to Javanist traditions. Under the New Order, by contrast, local autonomy in religious matters has been considerably reduced. Almost all instructors in the mountain subdistricts today are graduates of special teacher-training programs, and they make clear their orthodox sympathies. At the same time, regency-level support for the construction of religious schools (*madrasah*) has more than doubled their number in the mountain subdistricts in the past fifteen years, placing them even in communities like Wonorejo, where the village chief originally requested that such a religious school not be built.

The decreased autonomy of villages in the management of religious affairs has been paralleled by the growing influence of the Department of Religion in rural areas. A ministry of religion was established shortly after Indonesian independence (Boland 1982:106), but under the Old Order its effective role in Javanist communities was limited. For one thing, from 1953 to 1971, control of the ministerial post was in the hands of Nahdatul Ulama (Ward 1974:97; Emmerson 1978:88), and this political association made its local representatives the object of considerable suspicion or even scorn in PNI- and PKI-dominated communities. As one Wonorejo nationalist put it, ministry representatives were "NU spies in the nationalist countryside." Shortly after the 1971 elections, a triumphant Golkar, the ruling party, shocked the Muslim community by awarding the cabinet position for the ministry to a non-NU technocrat closely linked to Golkar (Ward 1974:97; Hering and Willis 1973:40). At the same time, the principle of "monoloyalty" (*loyalitas tunggal*)—whereby civil servants were required to sever ties with political parties and profess singular loyalty to government (Emmerson 1978:106; Ward 1974:33)—was more vigorously applied within the Department of Religion. (It had been announced before the 1971 elections but only half-heartedly applied within the religion ministry.) Both actions were widely interpreted by Western scholars as a blow to NU and, more generally, Islamic interests (Emmerson 1978:96). Whatever their implications for national political intrigues, it is not clear that either measure has decisively undermined the administration of Islam in rural Java. Again, to cite the Pasuruan example, most of the NU officials in the subdistrict Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) entered Golkar to keep their jobs. But they did not alter their basic religious convictions or, for the most part, sever personal ties with their NU comrades. Meanwhile, although party activity in the countryside was severely restricted (Jackson 1978:11), the Department of Religion's programs flourished because they were no longer tainted in PNI areas by an association with NU. Nationally the Department of Religion increased its budget and personnel in the early 1970s, becoming for a short time the largest government ministry (Emmerson 1978:95). Despite some retrenchment in recent years, religious programs have been extended in rural areas, particularly in special regions targeted

by the department as "weak zones" in special need of Islamic *dakwah* appeal (Labrousse and Soemargono 1985:222).

Muslim leaders in mountain Pasuruan are unanimous in their conviction that the New Order has not hindered the spread of Islam but enabled them to realize goals inspired by the 1955 elections, when the disappointing achievement of Muslim parties encouraged many Muslim leaders to shift their energies "from the political scene to the problem of education, religious teaching," and "the spread of Islam" (Boland 1982:108). As the bureau chief in the mountain subdistricts' Office of Religious Affairs explained to me in 1985, under the Old Order he had to content himself with collecting statistics and repairing mosques. Early in the New Order, however, he learned that—once he had left NU for Golkar—he was able to carry out programs unthinkable during the heavily politicized days of the Old Order. Village-level Muslim religious leaders (*modin*)—many of whom had at least tolerated spirit cult activity—were banned from participation in shrine activities. Educational programs for *modin* and village officials were also expanded, focusing on the importance of celebrating Islamic religious holidays, a correct understanding of the relationship between religion and *adat* custom, and the coordination of mass-based *dakwah* efforts. By 1985 most communities in the region boasted a variety of committees for activities virtually unthinkable years earlier in this region: the public celebration of Muslim holidays, public education concerning the importance of the Ramadan fast, the payment of the *zakat* alms, and the coordination of *takbiran* parades for the proclamation of God's greatness at the end of the fasting month. In the 1980s highland communities for the first time began to sponsor the *solat ied*, the special, once-a-year mass prayer service held the first morning after the end of the fast. Most villages now also boast new or refurbished mosques and prayer houses, complete with powerful loudspeakers. And everywhere throughout the upland region, evening classes for Qur'anic study (*pengajian*) are attracting large numbers of male *and* female students. (In most communities, women are also prominent at the Friday worship.) Some classes are sponsored by the Office of Religious Affairs for the mountain subdistricts, others by village Golkar, and still others by independent *ulama* often associated with NU. Activities once dismissed by most people in this region as *santri* and "for lowlanders" (*ngare*) are becoming an important part of upland religious culture.

What is one to make of Golkar involvement in the *dakwah* process? Village Golkar officials have played a significant but not singular role in a variety of these activities, including the sponsorship of *pengajian*, the organization of *zakat* collection, and the *takbiran* parades. Officials in Wonorejo told me in 1985 that they had been instructed by the regency government to enroll their spouses and children in *pengajian* classes. In a regency where the majority of people have had strong ties to the Nahdatul Ulama, it would be easy to dismiss such activity as a mere electoral stratagem designed to court Muslim voters. Evidence from other areas of Java indicates that, where Javanist and mystical religious traditions find broad appeal, Golkar representatives have shown themselves ready to support Javanism and mysticism (Hering and Willis 1973:19; Ward 1974:43). Before the 1971 elections the antipathy of some regional Golkar leaders to Islam is reported to have undermined the party's efforts to appeal to Muslim *ulama* (Ward 1974:77). Finally, it is widely reported that Javanist mysticism enjoys the support of many high-ranking military and civilian leaders (Ward 1974:123; Sundhaussen 1978:77; Emmerson 1978:96). Against this information, however, other data reveal a more complicated picture of Golkar policies. In some parts of Indonesia, particularly where local-level Muslim reformist organizations enjoy broad organizational strength, Golkar officials have worked closely with groups promoting

Islamic orthodoxy (cf. Ecklund 1979:260). Similar examples can be found in Java, such as in the East Javanese regency of Lumajang (Ward 1974:82), where Golkar and government leaders are reported to have once proposed a mandatory program of *pengajian* for the populace.

The point here is not to suggest that Golkar is pursuing a national policy of Islamization; nor is it my purpose to make any general claim about religious attitudes among the Indonesian ruling elite. This example should inspire caution, however, among observers who would generalize about governmental religious policy based on the supposed personal beliefs of a small circle of Indonesian leaders, beliefs that are still analyzed in terms of categories created a quarter century ago. In addition to the analytic inadequacy of a term like *abangan* in contemporary Java, the implementation of governmental policies anywhere is influenced by a social process more complex than any individual or group's personal beliefs. In the case of Indonesia's religious policy, it is clear that its actual implementation shows significant responsiveness to local cultural variation, in a fashion that is sometimes quite favorable to Muslim religious interests. As King (1982:110) has noted, Indonesia's government operates according to a pattern of "multiple legitimacy," forging political appeals for a diverse variety of social groupings. Government efforts to establish the Panca Sila doctrine as the sole basis of national political organizations (Tamara 1985; Waardenburg 1984:27) should not obscure the fact that, at a regional and local level, Golkar supporters display an almost dizzying cultural and ideological heterogeneity (Ward 1974:83).

Nowhere is it clearer than in Indonesia's religious policy that government policy is not mere "execution of the rule" but an ongoing, complex, negotiated process involving interaction between national policymakers, regional leaders in a variety of bureaus (not all necessarily dedicated to the same policy interests), and diverse local populations. The application of monoloyalty principles has in fact swept large numbers of orthodox Muslims into regional bureaus responsible for religious administration. This move has occurred, moreover, at a time when resources for department programs are, relative to Old Order levels, abundant and the political climate makes their popular influence all the more effective. To take the East Java example once again, a recent study of *dakwah* activities sponsored by the Department of Religion demonstrates that, especially since 1975, there has been a spectacular increase in government-sponsored *dakwah* (Labrousse and Soemargono 1985). Bureau speakers crisscross the province, presenting over five thousand sermons each year. They control regular broadcasts on radio and television and publish a steady stream of pamphlets and books. A consistent theme of their programs is the backwardness of belief in guardian spirits and *dukun* religious mediums (Labrousse and Soemargono 1985:224). The department's East Java network of teachers, scholars, and *mubaligh* preachers includes a full sixty-five thousand people, "constituting a well implanted network in rural society and thus a line of transmission as quantitatively important as that available to the Army, the Ministry of the Interior, or National Education" (Labrousse and Soemargono 1985:224). *Dakwah* representatives from the department have been especially active in certain "target" areas where, because of political or cultural history, Islam is thought to be weak, such as in areas along Java's south coast and in the Tengger mountains (Labrousse and Soemargono 1985:222). No such scale of *dakwah* activity was thinkable in the politicized climate of the Old Order.

Throughout Indonesia in recent years, observers have noted an increase in Islamic books and publications (Tamara 1985:30–40) and a growing Islamic influence in big-city *kampung* (Raillon 1985) and even Jakarta's wealthy suburbs (Tamara 1985:11).

By the mid-1980s, general political and cultural developments in Indonesia were having a visible effect on religious attitudes in mountain Pasuruan. A generation was coming of age that knew little of the Old Order's political antagonisms. In schools and village meetings, on television and radio, meanwhile, these village youths had continually heard of the central importance of religion in national modernization. Events in Wonorejo again provide a striking example of the resulting shift in local attitudes. In 1979 a new village chief was elected, replacing the elderly chief who years earlier had staunchly defended the Nyai Po. The new chief's first act was to appoint a new *modin*, choosing for the role one of the NU activists who years ago had helped the Forestry officer expel Nyai Po. The appointment was clearly intended to signal a new era. Under the chief's direction, the village council voted to require each hamlet to build a prayer house and provide regular evening *pengajian*. Two young religious teachers from lowland *pesantren* schools—*santri* in the classic meaning of the term—were invited by the village chief and *modin* to take up residence in the *modin*'s house (earning their keep as tailors) so as to give nightly Qur'anic instruction for especially serious students. In 1981 the new chief finally withdrew official village support for the monthly celebration of *barikan* at the spirit shrine. The same year, the village council decided—despite the strenuous protests of some of Wonorejo's elite families—to scale back the *gahdeso*, holding it once every three years rather than annually. (The chief confided that, when a few elders passed away, the rite would be abolished outright.) The chief also announced that he would no longer participate in spirit shrine activities during *gahdeso* and that the *tayuban* dancing integral to festivities would now occur without the consumption of alcohol and during only one night rather than three. In place of *tayuban*, the second night of the festival would now consist of Qur'anic reading contests among especially skilled young students. Javanist culture was giving way to Islam.

Events in Wonorejo are dramatic but not exceptional in the mountain subdistricts. Although sixteen communities still sponsored *gahdeso* (or similar annual rites of village blessing) in 1979, by 1985 only five or six did. *Tayuban* dancing—long a symbol of East Javanese mountain culture (Hefner 1985:118)—is everywhere in decline. In several communities, village chiefs have refused outright to appoint replacements on the death of spirit shrine caretakers. Youths in some communities direct catcalls at groups of people seen to be heading for spirit shrines, deriding them as "old-fashioned." And in several communities, NU *ulama*—like the young *santri* in Wonorejo—have been invited to take up residence in the community, sometimes at the invitation of the village chief, sometimes on the initiative of private agents in the village. The children of many "*abangan*" are becoming good Muslims.

It would be a mistake to assume that everyone in the mountain region welcomes the Islamic revitalization or that its advance is uniform in all communities. Islamic appeals seem to be achieving greatest success in less closed, commercially oriented communities, particularly those intensively involved in the new cash-crop agriculture that has swept the highlands since the late 1970s. The correlation of Islamic revitalization and agricultural commercialization raises important questions as to the role of class and economic stratification in the spread of Islamic reform. There is a clear class dimension to many of the religious developments, although it is by no means unambiguous. First of all, commercial agriculture (and with it the extension of relatively inexpensive transport to the highlands in the mid-1970s) has greatly increased villagers' interaction with lowland society. The region into which they travel—lowland Pasuruan—is of course a strong center of Islamic traditionalism. Second, commercial agriculture has created new entrepreneurial opportunities for village men. In

urban areas of East Java, indeed as in many parts of Indonesia (Dobbin 1980), Islam is an important element of the trading subculture, and in some mountain communities traders have acted as strong supporters of Islamic reform. Yet support for Islam within the rural elite is by no means uniform. As in Wonorejo, some of the most prominent families in the mountain subdistricts have strong family ties to the spirit shrines, and these older families have sometimes adamantly opposed Islamic advances. In Wonorejo several wealthy families have attempted to counter Islamic assaults on the Nyai Po by conspicuously lending their support to shrine activities. Several families have also recently sought to promote the development of a small tourist park at a nearby waterfall, long regarded by local people as the home of a powerful guardian spirit. A plan was under discussion when I left East Java in 1985 to extend a road to the waterfall site and charge tourists a small fee for entrance, as is common at many nearby tourist parks. Money received from visitors would be used to subsidize the construction of a shrine similar, it is hoped, to the famous pilgrimage center atop Mount Kawi to the west of the city of Malang.

It is unlikely, however, that the efforts of these Javanist families will succeed in reversing the general deterioration of traditional Javanist institutions in the mountain subdistricts. As I have discussed elsewhere (Hefner 1983b) with reference to Tengger mountain communities, one of the primary forces eroding popular support for traditional ritual festivities has been increasing intravillage economic differentiation and poverty. Both developments have undermined the communalistic sensibilities long integral to popular ritual tradition, which has been concerned with affirming villagers' collective descent from common ancestors and their commitment to shared social styles distinct from a lowland society regarded as oppressively stratified. Increasing contact with lowland society, exposure to national media like radio, television, and cassette music, and greater economic differentiation within rural communities have all encouraged a shift in consumption patterns away from investment in traditionally esteemed (and wealth-siphoning) ritual festivals to more privatized status goods, like radios, televisions, and motorcycles (Hefner 1983b). At the same time, the growing numbers of rural poor have found themselves unable to commit scarce resources to elaborate ritual *slametan*, the traditional vehicle for conspicuous consumption. Economic change has thus created an alliance of interest between urban-oriented Muslim reformists, many of whom come from wealthier backgrounds, and the village poor. This apparent class alliance should not be exaggerated. Many of the poor and some in the rural elite continue to support traditional ritual activity. But as the consensus on the shrine's importance has eroded, activity around it has lost its prominent role in village life and become "privatized." Meanwhile, for the first time in the history of most communities in this region, an infrastructure for Islamic orthodoxy has come into being.

The result of these national and local changes is that, for many young people in the mountain subdistricts, *adat* custom has come to be regarded as an antiquated reminder of backward village ways. One should remember that in the far eastern region of East Java, where the influence of Central Javanese court culture was historically weak, there is no court or *priyayi* heritage to give Javanist customs an elevated air or to serve as an exemplary model for rural customs. Although Javanist traditions can still claim a degree of institutional elaboration in village society, the urban culture to which rural people are increasingly exposed in this part of Java is a predominantly Islamic one. For many village youths, therefore, the transition from belief in village guardian spirits to orthodox Islam looks like an enlightened transition to modernity. At one time, under the Old Order, there were institutionalized religious alternatives

in the air, but most are now a distant memory. There are of course more Western-style cultural alternatives at least theoretically available to rural youths. But they are predicated on levels of income, education, and social mobility (with its freedom from village social pressures) unavailable to most rural people. In this context of sweeping social and cultural change—a virtual redefinition of the village as a moral community—Islam finds its compelling appeal.

Conclusion

It would be premature on the basis of the Pasuruan example to conclude that Javanist tradition is everywhere in decline under the New Order. For historical and contemporary reasons, the regency is one in which we would expect *dakwah* activities to be especially strong in the altered climate of the New Order. However, the fact that such activity has made impressive inroads, that it is supported by a vast national and provincial infrastructure (Labrousse and Soemargono 1985), that similar Islamic revitalization seems to enjoy government support in at least some other areas of Java (Ward 1974), and that Islam's appeal is given moral depth by the sweeping social changes in rural society—all these facts suggest that events in Pasuruan should not be dismissed as mere regional anomalies. The example should also inspire caution among political observers who sweepingly characterize New Order policies as anti-Islamic or conclude that recent setbacks for Muslim political parties are proof of Islam's ill health. The relations among state, society, and religious culture appear to be more complex than such characterizations would allow.

As many Islamic leaders point out, Islamic interests cannot be narrowly identified with any single party. Moreover, in a curious way—and this is an irony that may not be apparent to some Indonesian Muslim leaders—New Order restrictions on rural political activity may in fact have worked in favor of more broadly conceived Muslim interests. With the field cleared of most of the Old Order's anti-Islamic organizations and with strong government pressures for all Indonesians to profess a recognized religion, many former opponents of Islamic parties have come to view Islam in less politicized terms. Villagers in communities still traumatized by the events in 1965–66 may not be receptive to such a revisionist view. But in mountain Pasuruan, this depoliticized perception of Islam has been an important force. Many of my devout Muslim friends in Wonorejo attributed the recent upsurge in religious piety to just this point. "When people go to the mosque today," Wonorejo's *modin* explained, "they know they're not going to hear religious appeals (*dakwah*) mixed with politics. Before, they thought all they would hear were anti-PNI and anti-PKI anthems." The irony is that this depoliticized perception is very much a product of New Order politics. Whatever the logic of its genesis, its impact has been real, allowing many to rethink their relationship to Islam. As one villager explained, "Before, people avoided talking about Islam in speeches, except to criticize NU. Now you can't even go to a meeting on fertilizers without reciting prayers and hearing about the importance of religion."

To return to a question posed at the beginning, does the East Java example require us to rethink the relation of religion and politics in rural Java? It is important to remember that at different times in modern Javanese history, Islamization has been linked to very different sociopolitical forces. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it went hand in hand with the development of *pesantren*, religious schools and economic structures around which an alternative religious tradition and social

structure were slowly built (Geertz 1956:146; Geertz 1965:95). During the Old Order, Islamization was linked to the so-called *aliran* pattern of party mobilization, whereby political parties penetrated the countryside in search of votes, creating new social institutions and tensions in the process (Jay 1963; Feith 1982:47). Although this new pattern of organization allowed a more aggressive mobilization effort, it also alienated many associated with non-Muslim parties and even encouraged some Javanists to attempt to create explicit alternatives to Islam. Under the New Order, with its concept of the rural population as a "floating mass" undisturbed by the disruptive factionalism of Old Order politics (Ward 1974:189), political Islam may have receded, but Islam as a religion may not have. In at least some regions of Java, the state—or certain departments within it—is now playing a pivotal role in Islamic educational initiatives on a scale unlike anything seen in Dutch or Old Order times. The counterevidence of conversion to Hinduism and Christianity (Lyon 1980; Ricklefs 1979:124; Geertz 1972) is real enough, but shifts in the faith of 2–4 percent of Java's population may be ultimately dwarfed by the statistically less visible ground swell of Islamic revitalization. On this point, we need additional ethnographic investigation.

The Islamization process raises a broader political issue, which I can only mention here. Earlier administrations in Java—the Dutch with Snouck Hurgronje's policies (Benda 1983:21), the Japanese, and, to some degree, the Sukarno regime—all tried to control Islamic political activity while at least tolerating Islamic social and religious activities. Some observers see an analogy between Dutch and New Order policies on this point (McVey 1982:84; Ward 1974:198; Samson 1971–72:564; Bonneff 1985:57). Given the nominal support of Dutch leaders for Islamic education (Noer 1978:26) and the monumental scale of government support for Islamic education under the New Order, one can question whether the analogy is not in some important respects superficial. Nonetheless, a socially "modernized Islam may well bring an upsurge of vigour and renewal in newly-confident Muslim [political] circles anxious to press the demands of a revitalized Islamic community upon Indonesian leaders" (Ward 1974:198). From this perspective, reports of the political demise of Islam may prove premature.

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After visiting Java in 1971, Clifford Geertz reported that he was deeply impressed by the growing realization among Javanese "that the Muslim community . . . is a minority community in Java" (Geertz 1972:71). Doctrinal sniping, he noted, had diminished, and there had been an upsurge of interest in mysticism. It is not surprising that such a climate prevailed in some circles in the early years of the New Order, when memories of 1965–66 were still fresh. Geertz's analytic style in this article, one should note, is similar to that often adopted in his later works, emphasizing style, ethos, and meaning rather than the painstaking organizational analysis so brilliantly evident (and often overlooked by Geertz critics) in *The Religion of Java* (1960). For assessing the long-term growth of Islam in Java, however, the approach of the earlier work will probably prove the more telling. In his earlier work, Geertz demonstrated that the *santri* community benefited from a sophisticated national infrastructure in the fields of education, politics, and social welfare. He observed that the *abangan* community, by contrast, was primarily organized at a household and village level, lacking a larger network of national institutions. "In contemporary Modjokuto at least," Geertz (1960:128) remarked, "there is only a set of separate

households geared into one another like so many windowless monads, their harmony preordained by their common adherence to a single tradition."

Developments under the New Order appear to have only enhanced the overwhelming institutional advantage of the orthodox Muslim community. Javanist initiatives aimed at creating a mass-based and explicitly non-Islamic "Javanese" religion have all but ceased. Despite some regional successes, Hindu and Buddhist organizations still claim only a small proportion of Java's rural population. The revisionist purges of tradition that occurred under the Old Order—whereby Javanists stripped their rites of *santri* elements and orthodox Muslims repudiated Javanist customs (Jay 1963:85)—today occur again, to the overwhelming advantage of orthodox Islam. Meanwhile, the social forces undermining village traditions have grown stronger, encouraging villagers, particularly the young, to look elsewhere for more encompassing moral guides to modernity. The Pasuruan example awaits ethnographic comparison with other areas of rural Java. If similar developments are occurring in even a few other sectors of the Javanist community, the New Order may provide the setting for a profound adjustment in the balance of cultural power between Islam and Javanism. Whatever the short-term setbacks of Muslim political parties, the social forces unleashed under the New Order may contribute to the partial realization of one of the Muslim community's primary religious goals, the Islamization of Java.

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