

The Encounter of Islam and Javanese in *Sultan Ngarum*, a 19th Century Manuscript

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Abstract Tradition in Java has come and influenced by various traditions which come outside Java. Manuscript is one product of culture which records the whole element exist in the society at that era. *Sultan Ngarum* manuscript is a manuscript which comes from Indramayu, a region which is part of the West Java. The manuscript records the encounter of Javanese and Islamic tradition reflected in the characters, character symbolization, and dialogue. The encounter of the two tradition results in hybridity shown in the name of the character and terms related to tradition. Moreover, in the story, the relation between Javanese and Islam was portrayed harmony although at the first attendance, Islam has not yet considered as part of Java. Through analysis of the symbols found in the text, it is shown that the religion has brought a good change for Javanese through the medium of knowledge as a way to protect oneself from inner and physical evil. The object of this research is manuscript. The content of the manuscript will be analyzed with thematic study through the element of the text such as narration, expression and dialogue. Then the symbols found in the findings will be analyzed using representation theory.

Keywords: *Islam, Java, text, tradition*

1. Introduction

The first encounter of Javanese and Islam recorded in the history was indicated to be started in the 14th century. The Islamic content in Javanese manuscript was first promoted by Ratu Pakubuwana and later was promoted by Sultan Agung[5]. While in 19th Century, one manuscript which records the encounter of Javanese and Islam was *Sultan Ngarum* manuscript. A manuscript originated from Indramayu, a region in West Java.

The fourteenth century was the first time Islam enters Nusantara. The encounter of Islam and Javanese was mostly recorded in coastal literature. Some of manuscripts popular in this era were *Serat Anbiya*, *Serat Raja Pirangon* and *Serat Yusup*. While in the 15th century, in Java, two manuscripts which records the encounter of Islam and Javanese is *Sastra Gending* and *Serat Nitistruti*. In the 16th century, the record of the encounter of Islam and Javanese could be found in *Serat Menak* and *Babad Tanah Jawi*. Then, in the 17th century, the encounter of Islam and Javanese recorded in the history was recorded in *Serat Mintaraga* and *Dewa Ruci* manuscript [8]. In the 18th century, a manuscript which records the encounter of Islam and Javanese is *Serat Wedatama*. There is a transition from traditional into modern between the

18th and 19th century. The transition shown in the paper used to write the manuscript. Previously, Javanese manuscript is mostly written in daluang or European paper, but In the 19th century, the paper used to write manuscripts are more varied.

Sultan Ngarum manuscript is one manuscript produced in the 19th century written in a notebook. The manuscript shows the trace of shifting phase occurred in the 17th century. The manuscript contains Islamic tradition, one of which shown in the name of the Characters which greatly associated with Islamic names (Sultan Ngarum and Seh Subakir) while it also contains the name of character originated from Old Javanese era (Semar and Togog). This paper aims to explain the phenomenon happen when the Islamic tradition meets with Javanese tradition. The phenomenon will be analyzed through the elements of the manuscript which were characters, narration, and conversation of the characters.

2. Research Method

The object of this research is manuscript. The method used in this research consists of three steps. The first step is to transcribe the script used in the manuscript from pegon into latin. Then, the step was followed with translation from Javanese into Bahasa. The last step is to analyze the content of the manuscript using thematic analysis theory. The content of the manuscript was thoroughly examined and then the data found was classified into some sub-themes. The finding was explained in the form of narration.

3. Results And Discussion

In *Sultan Ngarum* manuscript, the story contains a myth which tells the story of early Java where there has been any people inhabit the area. The story mentioned Sultan Rum, a figure which comes from the Turkish dynasty. Sultan Rum commanded his people to inhabit in Java but unfortunately, the people sent by Sultan Rum was murdered by the supernatural creatures which has earlier inhabit the land of Java. The remaining people fled back to its kingdom and ask for help. Sultan Rum then sent his noble Sèh to go to Java and help to keep the people save from the supernatural creatures.

The story continues with the meeting between Sèh Subakir and the leader of the supernatural creatures, which were, Semar and Togog. Semar and Togog complained regarding the supernatural creatures which were actually their descendant run away from Java Island to the sea. Semar and Togog asked why Sèh Subakir planted the *tumbal* (tool for keeping the people save from the disturbance of supernatural creature) in the mountain of Tidar which has caused a great disturbance for the supernatural creature lived in Java Island. Sèh Subakir then explained that he was commanded by Sultan Rum, which received a message from God to send people to Java Island since there will be God's will happens in Java Island for approximately two thousand and one hundred years.

In the story, though Semar and Togog first discomfort about the coming of Sèh Subakir and its people, Semar and Togog received the future prophecy told by Sèh Subakir and decided to be part of it. It could be seen that in the story, Semar and Togog are no longer having any resistance toward the news brought by Sèh Subakir. Hence, the message delivered could be implemented without any trouble.

The encounter between Javanese and Islam in *Sultan Ngarum* manuscript was shown in the narration of the story. The relation between Javanese and Islam does not convey any resistance. In the text, the Javanese tradition shows acceptance toward Islamic tradition. Javanese reaction toward Islam in the story conceals the true character and nature of Javanese people. Javanese tends to accept other opinion and feeling in a polite way and barely show rejection in an open expression. Thus, the attendance of Islam as recorded in *Sultan Ngarum* manuscript was a perfect portrayal of Javanese character and values.

In this part, the way Javanese react in response with the attendance of Islam will be the main focus of the analysis. The reaction of Javanese will be explained in two aspects of the text. The first will be through the characters which symbolizes the two traditions. The second is seen through the dialogues of the characters. The second will be through the expression used by the characters. In the two textual aspects, the authority of the Javanese and Islam, the negotiation of the two traditions, and the acceptance which reflects Javanese value. Through this analysis, the position of the Javanese and Islam will be revealed as a reflection of the relation of the two traditions in the era the manuscript was created.

Javanese mystic has been highly influenced by Islam since the early time recorded in the history. In the past, Javanese used to pray and worship the Gods then when Islam came to Java, the prayer ritual turn into Allah. The shift was successfully brought by the wali which come to Nusantara at the early time when the kingdoms in Java sell goods to foreigners which come to Java Island and spread the religion of Islam to the people. Along with the religion, the existence of Javanese mystic development among its people remains slowly but in consistent way. The development of Islamic mystic cannot be separated with the growing of Islamic religion in Javanese society. Islamic religion is the pillar of mythical development in the society. Sunan Kalijaga is one figure which represents Javanese and Islam in an equivalent way [1].

Moreover, characters are the main locus in the story which tells the ideas of the writer in the text. The main argument of the writer is put together and symbolized with the characters exist in the text. *Sultan Ngarum* manuscript presents four main characters which leads the plot of the story. There are four characters in the story, two are the representation of Javanese while the other two are Islam's representation. The two sides of representation meet in the narration and shows significant clues for the ideas of the writer in writing the *Sultan Ngarum*'s story.

The first encounter between Islam and Javanese in the text is represented by the characters which portrays the old culture of Javanese namely Semar and also Togog as its accompanying partners. Semar is a character which is said to have a long age, showing Javanese culture which has been existed for thousand years before Islam first come and get its first contact with Javanese culture. In the text, Islam attendance in Java was responded by the representation of Javanese culture.

The appearance of Sultan Ngarum in the story was notable to denote since in the context of Javanese text, the use of the title "Sultan" in the manuscript shows the presence of Arabic language, Moreover, the same Arabic title also applies to the name of the character "Subakir" which was titled with "Sèh". The use of Arabic title in the text was a sign of the presence of Islamic element in the text. Thus, both the Sultan of Rum and Sèh Subakir represents the Islamic aspect in the text. Additionally, both of Sultan Rum and Sèh Subakir came from an island located far away from Java which applies the system of Sultanate. The attribute of the sultan shows that the kingdom is influenced by Islamic religion. Otherwise, the title could be King and the system applies could be in a form of Kingdom.

Moreover, the Javanese is represented in the story Semar and Togog. Semar is a character which has lived in Java for a long period of time and was said to be the ancestors of the supernatural creatures live in Java. Also, the characters also appeared in Wayang performances which are famous in Java. The character Semar represents the esoteric aspect which represents the spiritual view of Javanese [2]. Also, the trait of Semar is also become the inspiration for the Javanese as a role figure spiritually.

The appearance of characters which represents elements exist in Javanese and Islamic tradition emphasizes the meeting of the two tradition which differs in terms of language and culture. The Javanese tradition has widely spread throughout the land of Java and also in several places in Nusantara while Islam is a new religion come outside Java. The similarity between Islam and Java is the notion of worship. Both Javanese and Islamic tradition shows a tendency to worship a greater being than human. Thus, when the two traditions meet, the happening factors which cause the rendezvous is the fact of similarity which cause the tradition mingled and become an entity which combines the element of the two.

The characters in Sultan Ngarum manuscript are symbols for traditions. It has been mentioned above that Sultan Ngarum and Sèh Subakir are symbols for Islam exist both in the text and the characters.

The characters symbolize aspects in both Javanese and Islam. For example, Sultan Rum and Sèh Subakir presence is a tool to dig out the element of Islamic tradition happen in the text. Javanese tradition is represented by Semar and Togog. Also, in the text, the supporting characters represent both Islam and Javanese meeting. One important thing to note is the presence of Sultan Rum at the beginning of the text. Sultan Rum was the first character to appear in the text while Seh Subakir appears at the middle of the text. The appearance of the characters is visualized as follows:

Table 1. Visualization of the appearance of character in the storyline.

Beginning	Storyline	ending
Sultan Rum	People of Rum and supernatural creature	Sultan Rum and Patih
		Seh Subakir
		Semar and Togog
		Seh Subakir and Semar and Togog

Sèh Subakir appears in the story line after Sultan Rum as a figure The appearance of the figure supports the appearance of Sultan Rum. Hence, Sèh Subakir is actually the character which support the Rum sultanate in order to fulfill the Sultan will as commanded by Hyang Suksma.

The Rum character shows the Islam which happens to become the beginning of the story. The Sultan of Rum bears the task of the existence of inhabitants in Java as well as its civilization [10]. Moreover, the Rum portrays the attendance of Islam as a sign of the attendance of Islam in the land of Java.

Moreover, the encounter of Islam in Java Island was not in a harmonious way. The religion which supposes to bring a shed of light was fight over and almost diminishes by the Javanese represented by the supernatural creatures. Then the Sultan of Rum sent more people to Java Island along with Sèh Subakir. Sèh Subakir was a figure which has abundant knowledge, as shown by the title “Sèh” that was brought along with the name. The appearance of Sèh Subakir denoted an important time when the Islam comes with knowledge. The action of Sèh Subakir which put *tumbal* (certain tools for protecting human from supernatural creatures) was a portrayal of the Islam which protects human from disturbance from the evil temptation.

Sèh Subakir is a figure represents the inner side of Javanese. The inner side is where the goodness resides while the supernatural creatures represent the evil aspects which exist in

every human being. Sèh Subakir plants the *tumbal* in the mountain symbolize the knowledge that is planted in human mind. Knowledge is the source of good values inside human mental aspect. The Sultan of Rum in respect with the Javanese was a symbol of the beginning of an occurrence. It could be seen from the perspective of Islamic religion that a will that cause the occurrence in Java is started from a representative of God in the earth. The occurrence is only the result of the action of God's representative on earth.

Semar and Togog represent Javanese. Semar is one figure in Wayang performance which usually presents the good servant figure which helps the main leading characters. Semar, in Javanese history was a figure which was actually represents the

The expression used in *Sultan Ngarum* portrays the position of the traditions represented by the two characters of the Story. Both the Semar and Togog and Sèh Subakir describe the characters.

The hybridity of the two tradition is a symbol of the need to re-evaluate the definition of Javanese Islam and Javanese religion since in the found aspect in *Sultan Ngarum* manuscript shows a perfect combination between Javanese values and Islam which could be used as a sample of how the rendezvous between Javanese and Islam become a stepping stone for the appearance of new cultural values exist in the Javanese people and was recorded in *Sultan Ngarum* manuscript.

As mentioned in the manuscript, when Sultan Ngarum received a message from Hyang Sukma, Sultan Rum told his advisor to implement the will of God delivered.

“Jêng Sultan Ngêrum winarni. Angsal parning Hyang Sukma. Dhêdhawuh kinèn ngisèni jalma maring pulo Jawi (p.6).”

In the manuscript, one of the terms used is Hyang Sukma, and the Sultan Ngarum was actually put an attribution of Javanese in the event of receiving the message from God. As seen from the table below, the combination of Javanese tradition and Islam found in the manuscript

Table 2. Table of words derived from Arabic

No.	Arabic words	Page, line
1.	<i>Mukmin</i>	2,8
2.	<i>Waliyullah</i>	4, 5-6
3.	<i>Kiyamat</i>	4,7; 5,5
2	<i>Gaib</i>	5,4
3	<i>Jin</i>	6,3; 16,12; 29, 6
4	<i>Islam</i>	12,1-2
5	<i>Nur</i>	17,6
6	<i>Alam</i>	43,3

Table 2. Table of Javanese terms in Islamic context

No.	Arabic words	Page, line
1.	<i>Hyang Sukma</i>	6,8
2.	<i>Hyang Widi</i>	4, 5-6

The notion of hybridity is an issue important to develop further as a comparison factor when it comes to the mix of tradition. The similar mixing of tradition also occurs in Ghana, Ivory Coast, when the pagan community adapts Islamic tradition into local. Ceremonies and rituals from Islamic tradition is fused with the local tradition [11]. The similar fusion occurs in Javanese people ritual in Suriname which presents both Islam and local [12]. Javanese people

in Suriname, also combined animism and Similarly, in the text, the hybridity appears in the figures and their attribution. The figure and the attributes put in the figure were in a total contradiction. The hybridity is a sign of the existence of two different patterns which conceals the truth in a typical way. The hybridity is the main leading aspect in the development of culture. Moreover, the notion of hybridity in *Sultan Ngarum* manuscript could be a portrayal of the recreation of a totally different created tradition seen from the both sides [13].

4. Conclusion

The appearance of Islamic tradition in Javanese manuscript has long happened and recorded in the history. *Sultan Ngarum* manuscript is one of manuscript which also records the appearance of the mentioned traditions in a similar platform. It turns out that the encounter between the two traditions has brought interesting results in terms of the way Islam positioned itself along with Javanese and the way Javanese respond toward the appearance of Islamic tradition. The encounter was an important mile stone which could be used to signify the importance of Islam in the context of existing Javanese tradition. In the history, it is known that Islam has left its trace in various Javanese cultural products and manuscript is one of the door which could be used to unveil the existing Islamic tradition blend along with Javanese. Therefore, the study of the encounter of Islam and Javanese tradition in the manuscript should be more pay attention on in order to widen the experience of the two tradition encounter in the context of manuscript The rich experience of learning the issue of how tradition react and response to one another is a portrayal of current era where traditions are easily meet and react to one another. Thus, it is important to look back into the past as a way to offer solution in the present. Manuscript is one answer to current problem exist in the society. Therefore, an important attention toward manuscript should be more pay attention on.

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