

JAVANESE MYSTICISM

I have hesitated a long time before I could get myself to accept the invitation of the organisers ~~of~~ of this group to speak on this topic. I did so only after some ~~deft arm twisting~~ ²deft arm twisting and considerable sole ~~searchant~~ ²searchant.

In the first place, I am not a mystic. Secondly, I am aware of the great similarity between the culture of a people and a woman both ~~gave~~ unfold their enormous secrets only very very slowly, and only if approach ^{ed} with love.

Also, I am not an expert ^{on} Javanese culture. Although I have spent a large part of my conscious life trying to understand the culture of Java, hardly a day goes by in which something happens that forces me to try to ~~relate~~ ^{relate} it to the little I know ~~of~~ of Javanese culture.

There is an additional difficulty. The modern usage of the term ~~of~~ mysticism has blurt and distorted. A great deal of its ^{original} meaning it has now often come to mean anything that has ^{to} do

with supernaturalphenomenum, with voodoo like
magic practices, obscurantism , or a ~~xx~~ vlescle
surrender to some vague notion of ~~the~~ unity of
creation. A number of years ago, a foreign writer ~~xx~~
who is also a friend of mine, came to Indonesia and
asked to be ^{brought} ~~brad~~ into contact with some Javanese
mystics, because he wanted to write a series of
articles. I asked him how much time he wanted to
xpend on this project,. He said two weeks. I also
asked him how important his own religion ^{was} ~~xxxx~~ to him.
He replied that he was elapse Christian. After some
reflection then I said that I could not help him.
I told him that ~~under~~ these circumstances, the only
thing that he could achieve ~~inx~~ would be to pick up \$
some source here and then about magical practices in
which Jakarta abounds and that would be almost
impossible ~~for~~ him to become involved in simple
rumored mongereng. Of course he want ahead never-
theless. And the resulting pieces confirmed my worst
fears.

At the same time, we are supposed all aware of the renewed interests in religion in the last decade or so and what want my call manifestation in the counter cultures of the West of an outbreak of must religiosity , sometimes inside, of more often outside the boundaries of organized religion and the established church. The experiment with drafts in a religions contest, the underground churches , the Jesus freks but also this renewed interests in oriental religions astrology and even in devil worship have by now become familiar manifestation. The many of these phenomena may be transitory they do reflect an insistence on the development of men's intuitive expressive and the transcendental faculties that have withered so long under the domination of rationalism, science and technology.

It appears to me that such a new interest in oriental religion, but also the puzzlement of foreigners and non-Javanese alike about coffee break stories, about gurus, sooth sayers and magical

~~xxxxxxx~~ rites as well as the impact on the decision-making process in this country, lie behind the selection of tonight's stop. Let me therefore begin with a clarification of some of the terms that they will use.

Mysticism concerns the direct relationship of man to God. All religions have a doctrinal, an institutional but also a mystical component. In all religions there have been persons whose lives have been impelled by the yearning for an understanding of the infinite, ~~there~~ desires to grasp absolute truth and to comprehend ultimate reality. Their search has been toward the perceptance of the absolute through the desolution of the difference ~~is~~ between the observing subject and the observed leading towards the mystical union with God which is an act of ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ love, an act of personal surrender as well as an act of supreme perception.

Mysticism therefore is ~~not~~^a phenomenon limited orientation to religion, it is a way to develop the

soul to the point where can meet the ~~dimine~~ dâvine
where the heart speaks to the Heart "cor ad cor
loquiture." Or as the Javanese says "^{golek}~~golek~~ geni
pepikulan warih"(to look for fire by carrying fire -
the dimine fire in one's heart).

The history of Christianity is studied with accounts
of the achievement of its great mystics, ~~and~~ be they
Catholics or Protestant . It is impossible to read the
accounts of St. Theresa, Meister Eckhart, St. John of the
Cross, Francois ~~Bernard~~ de Sale, Blake and our ~~contemporary~~
the late Thomas Merton without being deeply
affected by them. But how strikingly similar are there
descriptions of the rapture of the soul, the perception
of ~~the~~ beatific vision, or the light upon light of the
great Islamic mystics like Rumi and Al Hallaj. How
similar in character are the paradoxes, or the stammering
of all these mystics which seems to be the only way for
them to break through the capability of the minds of the
reader and to give at least a glimpse of the inevitable
experience of self validating truth that they have

experienced beyond the power of language and the reach of man's rationale categories. These accounts stand up a mankind's most noble expressions of its yearning for the divine. They also show how similar beyond the many difference that do exist among them mysticism is in all religions. One of the impressions that these great mystics of various religions are closer to each other than to many of their fellow believers.

I remember asking Thomas Murton, ^{Trapist} ~~the Trapist~~ Monk and Mystics, with whom I began friends, what he intended to do on his trip to Asia that turned out to be his last trip in which he met his death. I knew he was going to see the Dalai Lama and some Indian mystics. He was also planning to visit some monks in Thailand, after which he wanted to go to Indonesia. Thomas Murton answered my question with a twinkling in his eyes: I want to bring a message of the world, unite. Mankind has nothing to do but its idle.

Religion and Magic

If at one end of the spectrum religion shades off
into mysticism ^{and} ~~xx~~ its other end religion shades off in
the magic. If the mystical union is possible only in
love towards God, requiring the desolution of the self,
magic - do it also deals with the super natural remains
concerned with man, man's knowledge and man's capacity
to manipulate the super natural . It could be seen
as an extension of the human will, even where it is
applied to help a fellow man or for the common goods.
There are magical elements in the ritual and sacraments
of all religions. The host and sacramental wine in
Catholicism, for instance, as a symbol of trans-
substantiation, a magic concept.

Magic, then, too is universal both in its low manifesta-
tions of witchcraft, spells, amulets, as well as in its
higher manifestations of the occult sciences. Europe too
has a rich history of occultism. Gurdieff, Rudolf Steiner
were quite familiar names in the period after World War I
in Europe, and of course Theosophy is still an active

creed not only in Europe, but also in Java.

Organised religion has always fought the encroachment of magic that has always threatened religious doctrine. In a way the propheted religion released man from the fears ~~wixxwxixx~~ that dominated his life, fears of demonic within himself as well as in the natural - super-natural whole in which he had to live his life. Likewise, have the guardians of the propheted religions always try to save guard the purity of religious documents against the relativising impact of mystical revelation on dogma and ritual, as well as against the pantheistic imajury that characterizes . That forum of mysticism which ^{it} pose/the ultimate identity of God and the Divine in man . It is against this background that I now would like to say a few words about mysticism in Java.

Let me first make the points that mysticism in Indonesia is not limited with Java. In fact, there are documents that be speed mystical preoccupation of great intensity, dating from the thirteenth century. Abdulrachim from Sinkal and ~~xxx~~ Al Harriry are two such mystics. If Islam was the first great religion to come to Sumatra, the situation was different in Java where Islam's influence began in the fifteenth century where it and ~~xxxx~~ encountered a Hindu-Budhistic culture which is well established religious and mystical tradition of its own. Additionally, that Islam which came to Indonesia didn't come directly from the Arab countries, but from Gujarat in India where it had been influenced very strongly by Persian sufism. This may account for the relative ease with which Islam ~~xx~~ ^{too} cold in Java but that also ~~account~~ ^{had} account for the difficulties Islam has always ~~xxx~~ in Java, when it consisted on scriptual orthodoxy. And so it is possible even to this day to discern three different streams in Javanese mysticism.

with Islamic indiss specifically Javanese elements.

Viewed in a different way one ~~might~~ could discern an indigenous popular mysticism which generally clothes itself in a Moslem guard, a more strictly Islamic stream closer to Islamic orthodoxy with ties to Islamic mysticism abroad, and thirdly an indigenous stream outside Islam, and often in a polemical relationship to Islam. It should, however, be realized that the distinction between the streams is not by any ~~means~~ being sharp. They often overlap and suffuse. And so ~~as~~ one finds in Java a proliferation of Tarekat, Islamic mystical brotherhood, a non-Islamic secret societies built around a mystic teacher, often using Islamic terminology mixed with indigenous Javanese, and now even Christian concept. Most of ~~the~~ them recognize the various stages of Islamic mysticism, The movement from Sjariat to Ma'rifat

One of the striking features that differentiate Javanese mysticism from its European, or Christian counterparts, is the closeness of the distance between mysticism and magic in Java. Two reasons may account for this difference. As I have said before, in Europe the Church has always ~~xxx~~ ^{to} guarded against the intrusion of mysticism and magic into religious dogma and the observance of the religious ritual by the population in general. It therefore interposes itself between mysticism and magic. The absence of a similar institution in the religious history of Java ~~xxxxxxx~~ there was no ~~xxxxxx~~ institution to play similar role. And Islam came too late to enforce effectively the separation between magic and mysticism. To some extent, Islam in Java especially is the scripturalist emphasis it is characteristics of more an Islamic renaissance is still engaged in the effort to glance the religion from both the magical and the mystical accretions. It is a struggle that really began right at the beginning of Islam in Java and continued to this day.

It started with the death of Syech Sitti Jenar, one of the nine walis who according to legend brought Islam to Java. He was put to death on orders of his eight fellow walis, who considered his heterodox mysticism and his lifting of the veil of secrecy from the mystical experience a danger to Islamic code. Over and over again one finds the mystical literature of Java examples of such heterodoxy with pose in the ultimate identity of divinity of man with God. Even today one ~~hears~~ reaches or hears new mystical groups whose leaders say God is I.

This points up a second figure that differentiates mysticism in Java and in Europe. In Europe mysticism ^{has} ~~is~~ always been pursued in a very structured situation, and monasteries and then only with special permission from the superior. In Java mysticism ~~became~~ was not so confined. It would not be unfair to say ~~that~~ that what we see in Java the wild proliferation of the mystical pursued. One could almost say it is the difference between a tropical jungle and a French garden.

There is a third feature that may be of interest.

Some Christian students from Jamanese mysticism have
deplored the absence of a sophisticated body of theory,
or speculative philosophy regarding the mystical pursuit.
One even says that the Javanese have brought down to their
own primitive level a great mystical tradition ^{that have} ~~xxxxxx~~ come
from abroad. It may very well be that this view will be
traced the proclivity in Western culture towards coherently
ordered thought as against the view t hat mystical knowledge
as little to do with discursive mental process, but has to
be lived truth is not a matter of knowledge but of being .
Hence,