A Framing Analysis of Negotiation of Interest in Islam via Dakwah Content Between Indonesia and Malaysia
A Case Study on Traditional Arts Performance

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ABSTRACT
Indonesia and Malaysia have similarities in many ways. For example, Melayu culture has become the dominant culture in both countries. Also, Islam has also become a way of life for the majority of both countries. This study aimed to explore the resemblance and variances practices, particularly in Jogjakarta and Kuala Lumpur, concerning traditional art performance, respectively. Kyai Kanjeng and the Jabatan Kebudayaan dan Kesenian Negeri Sembilan (JKKNNS) under the National Department of Cultures and Arts Malaysia are chosen as the representation of traditional arts performance that blend it with Dakwah values. This study found that the main altered of negotiating frames of interest in Islam within both neighboring countries are regarding the Governments. JKKNNS negotiated the frames of Islam concerning the Government’s rules, which highlighted the harmony of all ethnicities in Malaysia. Meanwhile, in Indonesia, even though Cak Nun – the leader of Kyai Kanjeng – has criticized the Indonesian people and Government, it does mean as part of his advice for a better Indonesia in the future.

Keywords: Framing Negotiating Interest, Traditional Arts of Dakwah

1. INTRODUCTION

Basically, Indonesia and Malaysia have close connections. Not only from the same geographical area in Southeast Asia but also has a historical connection of Prameswara, the prince from the Sriwijaya Kingdom located in Sumatra island, who lost civil wars against the Majapahit Kingdom from Java. He had to run away to the Malayan peninsula and later found the Malaka Sultanate around 1424[1]. For the above reasons, the similarities in traditional arts, culture, batik arts, dance, and songs between Indonesia and Malaysia are unavoidable.

In fact, the relationship between both countries, however, has been ups and downs, as stated by Mahatir Muhammad as ‘love and hate relationships’ between Indonesia and Malaysia [2]. Several conflicts had escalated the tension between two countries, such as the conflict of Ambalat island as the border area (2009), Indonesian labours in Malaysia, the accusation of Malaysia had claimed Batik and Reog as their original traditional arts, which then incited huge protests from Indonesian. Despite the ups and down interactions between both countries, the relationships between Indonesia and Malaysia is the most important for Southeast Asian regions. Lately, both countries, as the world’s largest producer of palm oils, are committed to standing against the black campaign of palm oil from the European Union [3].

One of the similarities between Indonesia and Malaysia is the Muslim majority inhabitants, with 87% and 61.3% Muslims of all populations from both countries, respectively. This fact shows that Islam plays a vital role within Indonesia and Malaysia, even though, in reality, the method is quite different. In Malaysia, Islam is the official religion for Bumiputra (the native Malay). Therefore, all Malay people are Muslims by law [4], Prime Ministry Mahatir Muhammad, in his first period of Prime Ministry, implemented pro-Islamic by combining Islamic values into Malaysian ‘national’ vision, with flexibility and pragmatically interpreting the religious doctrine into an inclusive ideological foundation for Malaysia.

PEW Research Centre (2010) reported Indonesia as the world’s largest Muslim population, with around
12.6% of the world’s Muslims are living in Indonesia [5]. This fact, however, is not in line with Malaysia that supports Islamic values to become an inclusive ideological foundation. The Indonesian government has a long history of excluding Islam from influencing the sovereignty. To start with, Sukarno, the first Indonesian President, had limited the role of Muslim leaders in the legislative body by his Decree on July 5, 1959 [6]. Sukarno started his Guided Democracy (Demokrasi Terpimpin) by initiating new parliament without any Muslim leaders that opposed him. Soeharto, the second Indonesian President with his New-Order regime, also restricted the role of Islam by fusing all Islamic parties into one party in 1973 [7]. Soeharto also forced Pancasila as the fundamental ideology of all Islamic institutions in Indonesia [8].

Connecting Islam in Indonesia and Malaysia is always interesting because it profoundly influences both cultures and societies. In fact, however, the existence of Islam and traditional arts in Indonesia and Malaysia are contradictory. In Indonesia, the wayang kulit (shadow puppets) had been benefitting as a tool for spreading Islamic values by Sunan Kalijaga, one of Wali Songo (the nine saints) in Java land around the 15th century [9]. Wali Songo were the nine saints of Islam who spread Islamic influence on Java island, of which the society of this island was great affected by mystical beliefs. The key success of approaching Javanese with Islamic values was with cultural values by teaching the close values of Islam with the existed cultural belief and blended the Islamic teaching into traditional shadow puppet and ritual traditions. This tradition still exists until now, even though the wayang kulit performance is quite rare nowadays.

On the other hand, the Malaysian traditional performing arts like Wayang Kulit, Menora, and Mak Yong were banned in Kelantan in 1991 by the ruling opposition Islamist party PAS, which accused those traditional performances of promoting animist and Hindu-Buddha beliefs that were not suitable for Islamic traditions [10].

The contrasting facts about Islam and traditional arts between Indonesia and Malaysia make this study interesting. Consequently, the study focused on exploring the resemblance and variances practices in extending Islamic teaching through dakwah, particularly in Jogjakarta and Kuala Lumpur with reference to traditional art performance, respectively. The way in which the traditional practices actually communicate Dakwah needs to be documented in a more specific rather than in general. This study also wishes to seek an understanding of how the negotiation of dakwah occurs in traditional art performance as communication agents perceived by both countries. Taking the city of Jogjakarta and Kuala Lumpur as the location of research, this study aims at looking at the cultural policy in considering the traditional art performance in communicating dakwah as religious practices in both countries.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The application of traditional arts as the media of dakwah has been discussed by several scholars from both Malaysia and Indonesia. Hazri (2015) concluded that the ‘wayang puppet’ in Malaysia as traditional arts is focused on three aspects of religious tradition, they are ritual, mythology, and symbolism that is hidden within the tradition [11] Hazri highlighted that although the existence of the Wayang Kulit was from Hindu-Buddha traditions, the presence was adapted to Islamic background: the image is reinterpreted, the legend is retold, and the setting and structure is redefinition. Therefore, Wayang Kulit has a potential role as the tools for spreading Islamic teaching through traditional arts.

Ghulam-Sarwar (2004) identified the presence of Islamic elements from the Middle and Near-east in the Indonesia and Malaysia performing arts in four approaches. The first approach is through particular performances like theatre, music, and dance. The second was through music. Lastly, the third was through the use of literary material in the dramatic repertoire of traditional theatre and through the reinterpretation of traditional literary content of especially traditional Sufi teaching [12].

According to Ghulam-Sarwar (2010), the significant elements of Islamic culture that have shaped Indonesian and Malay traditional theatre is actually based on the adaptation of borrowed genres such as taziya, as well as locally created styles of shadow play (wayang kulit) and the doll-puppet theatre (wayang golek). He also found that the use of essential themes from Islamic literature, in particular those derived from Hikayat Amir Hamza; as well as esoteric interpretations of certain episodes originally derived from pre-Islamic sources, including the Mahabharata, in terms of Sufism to make them both highly meaningful and acceptable to Muslim audiences [13].

In a study on the art of dakwah via social media, visual persuasion, and the Islamic propagation of Felix Siauw [14], it is found that his dakwah approach is entertaining yet conservative, casual but dogmatic, and personal if political. His preaching attempts to reunite these contradictions, which represents a strategy to normalise religious radicalism and to attract a broader audience. Comparatively, the practice of the ied adha tradition in both countries has made it clear for its uniqueness and causality rather than dogmatic as found by him.

A negotiation is defined as a tool for resolving conflicts, which has been found to be critical and significant in conflict resolution. It is perceived as a
process of resolving conflict, which is due to different interests or needs between individuals or groups. It occurs when the differences cannot be satisfactorily dealt with [15]. The negotiation is only possible whenever there is a need and motive to solve the differences among conflict actors [16]. An outcome refers to the ability to minimize the differences in interests or needs, which may fall into a win-win or win-lose situation. The solution is suggested to include behavioral and attitude changes and constructive or destructive outcomes [17].

The way in which this study is perceived, the approach of negotiation facilitates the understanding of needs in the art performances and interest in dakwah according to steps of defining problems, diagnosing causes, making a moral judgment, and recommending solutions for a specific object being negotiated. In terms of traditional art performance, it is crucial to find out the negotiating meaning of Islam and modernism embedded in the performance that causes the interests. Having the development of media technology and the shift of postmodernism society, the existence of traditional performance as a medium of spreading Islamic values becomes more interesting.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study is employing a mixed method approach, which refers to the interview and survey method. Since this research compares the traditional arts performance in Indonesia and Malaysia, the in-depth interview was conducted with ten informants from both countries. The subjects for this research are Kyai Kanjeng’s performance at Yogyakarta and the traditional performance held by Jabatan Hal Ehwal Agama Islam Negeri Sembilan (JAHEINS) and Jabatan Kebudayaan dan Kesenian Negeri Sembilan (JKKN), Malaysia.

Kyai Kanjeng’s performance is chosen since its leader, Emha Ainun Najib (Cak Nun), is a famous figure who has huge followers wherever this group performed. Kiai Kanjeng has routine monthly performances in Yogyakarta, Jakarta, and Jombang, the latest is the place of origin Mbah Nun, to keep in touch with his followers. Each performance is attended by hundreds of audiences that most of them have to travel out of their residence. The performance is mainly playing traditional gamelan and music instruments that accompanied the lyrics about Islamic values in the Javanese language. Cak Nun opens the performance by giving a short opening and share short lecturing about recent issues and relates it with how a good Muslim shout adjust their lives with such problems, and then followed by an interactive dialogue with audiences. It takes around 3 to 5 hours for each performance, and usually, the event is held from 8 pm to 2 am, in the early morning.

While in Malaysia, Jabatan Kebudayaan dan Kesenian Negeri Sembilan (JKKN) is chosen for this research since the traditional performance arts in Malaysia that still exist are held by this institution in Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia. JKKN was found under the 6th Prime Minister of Malaysia Najib Tun Razak, which generated One Malaysia as the Nation-building campaign [22]. One Malaysia concept is based on three values for enhancing nationality. They are the principle of acceptance, the principle of national spirit, and the principle of social justice [23]. This campaign, however, faces several challenges such as race gap among its citizen, especially in economics, and the acceptance of national ideology in Its constitution that privilege Bumiputra and Islam as the federal religion, since Malaysia consists of not only Malays (Bumiputra), but also Chinese and Indians. Therefore, JKKNNS was found under the ministry of Tourism, Arts, and Culture Malaysia to maintenance the unity of all existed races in terms of arts and cultures. The traditional arts performed in this institution are cultural dance, traditional music, theater, and others.

The survey method involves a survey with 80 respondents from both Kyai Kanjeng and JKNN’s audiences. In order to analyze the data, the Statistical Procedure for Social Science (SPSS) was used to perform the descriptive, correlation, and differences analysis to look at the presence of dakwah in the art performances as well as the factors of interest negotiated through the art performances in Indonesia and Malaysia. The findings are presented in the forms of tables and graphs for a better understanding of the data.

4. FRAMING ON NEGOTIATING ISLAMIC VALUES IN TRADITIONAL ISLAMIC VALUES

Entman (1993) defines the framing practice takes place in four elements of communication: communicator, the text, audience, and the culture. The process includes defining problems, diagnosing causes, making a moral judgement, and recommending a solution. In terms of negotiating, this study explores the stage of framing in each element and tries to determine the negotiating process in each stage for bridging the traditional art values and Islamic values.

4.1. The Communicator

Pak Kanjeng is the name of the key figure of a theatrical performance that was played by Cak Nun and his colleagues as a critique for the government for the Dam Project that coercively dislocated local residents in Kedungombo Central Jawa in the mid-1980s. The performance was finally played in 1994 at Yogyakarta after several banned and postponed by Suharto’s government [24].
The name of Pak Kanjeng, which later was adopted as Kiai Kanjeng, is the name of a community that plays traditional Javanese instruments and sings Islamic religious songs like sholawat (the praising du’a for the Prophet Muhammad), then followed by a dialogue with Can Nun, the leader. At least three routine monthly performances are held in Jakarta (named Kenduri Cinta or the feast of love), Yogyakarta (Mocopat Syaafaat), and in Jombang (Padang Bulan). Each performance was attended by hundreds of followers from all over Indonesia.

The primary communicator of Kyai Kanjeng performances is Cak Nun, the spiritual leader of this community. Kyai Kanjeng has no official leader. Cak Nun tends to support everybody to contribute actively within this community. Cak Nun himself also prefers to be called ‘cultural practitioner,’ rather than ‘ustad’ or ‘kyai’ that usually designation for religious leaders. The nickname of ‘Cak’ means brother from the East Javanese language, while ‘Nun’ is the nickname of his full name Emha Ainun Najib. It shows that Can Nun wants to be perceived as just an ordinary person that can be met in the neighbourhood. He is not part of any Muslim groups, such as Muhammadiyah and Nahdhatul Ulama, the two largest Muslim groups in Indonesia. He realized one of the main issues that challenged Indonesian Muslims’ harmony is the fanatic feeling as a member of a certain group, and tend to hesitate and judge negatively for those who are not part of their Muslim communities.

Meanwhile, the communicator in JKKNNS is the official officer responsible for the whole arts performances within this institution. This study found that their main tasks revolve on a higher level, such as managing the organizations as a whole, advisory (such as Jabatan Hal Ehwal Agama Islam Negri Sembilan, or JAHEINS), audience management, explanation, education, and preserving cultures and traditions. The officers have to make sure that JKKNNS preserves Malay’s culture and to ensure that the performance is promoting unity and accepted by all audiences from different races.

Therefore, the officers responsible for making sure that every aspect of the performance, such as clothing, song lyrics, music, dancing, and other accessories, is not conflicting with other ethnicities, that potentially raising disputing problems. JKKNNS plays as screening agents towards every performance scheduled to be held in Negeri Sembilan. JKKNNS also needs to advise JAKIM (Department of Islamic Development Malaysia) on the suitability of the program, as well as the contents.

4.2. The Messages

The form of dakwah messages embedded in the performances of Kyai Kanjeng and JKKNNS is obvious. For Kyai Kanjeng, the lyrics of the song played with traditional instruments are all about praising Allah and shalawat, including the dialogue delivered by Can Nun is all about the implementation of Islamic teaching in daily life. While the traditional arts performances in JKKNNS is solid influenced by Sumatra culture and Adat Pepatih tradition, the local tradition in Negri Sembilan. Both cultures are showing Islamic traditions not only in the accompaniment for the dance but also the costumes that covered the whole body, including hairs for women dancers as the representation of Islam.

However, the focusing messages of dakwah between both performances are quite different. Kyai Kanjeng pointed their messages by considering their audiences and composing new songs if necessary. Can Nun also named his community as ‘jamah maiyah’ which means the togetherness among all members and connectedness with Allah and His Prophet [25]. The main goal of Can Nun delivers his messages is easy to understand and positioned himself as a friend with his followers. For this reason, the setting of every Kyai Kanjeng’s performance is on the lower stage, and all performers and audiences sat on the floors during the performance. This setting aims to reduce the distance between both Kyai Kanjeng and their followers. Can Nun also initiated Piagam Maiyah that highlighted the social and cultural manners of Muslims.

On the other side, JKKNNS considers the attraction of the traditional arts performance that would invite larger spectators of the performances. The purpose of those performances is to generate income, entertainment, and tourist attractions. JKKNNS, as the government representation, should follow strict rules in delivering messages from the performance, like not violate the Government’s law, in accordance with the religion’s values and no harm for everybody.

4.3. The Audiences

The audiences of both performances are diverse. The audience of Kyai Kanjeng is coming to meet Cak Nun and learn about Islam in a more entertaining and relaxing way. The routine events (like Maiyyah Mocopat and Kenduri Cinta) usually start from 8 pm to 1 am. This 5 to 6 hours performance is attended by flocks of audiences and demonstrates the attraction of Kyai Kanjeng and Can Nun himself. The audiences of Kyai Kanjeng are not only from Javanese backgrounds but also from various religions.

While the JKKNNS’s audiences come as spectators of the performances that were not only for one performer, unlike the audience of Kyai Kanjeng that called themselves ‘Jamaah Maiyah,’ the audience of JKKNNS has no connections or clubs. They only came for watching the performance, looking for entertaining shows.
This study surveyed 84 respondents of both audiences to explore their motives in attending traditional performances. The negotiation of interest in traditional art performance, according to the audience, are shown in table 1. The interest of the audience for attending the art performance mostly because they want to study Islam in a relaxed manner, do not feel awkward about the teaching shared in both performance, and to get peace in mind. It seems that the audience interest in entertainment performance before they perceived Islamic teaching.

Table 1. Negotiation of interest in the traditional arts in Jogjakarta and Negri Sembilan according to mean scores and Standard Deviation (SD)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I attended the JKKNNS program/Kyai Kanjeng because of the interest in music.</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>1.197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I attended JKKNNS program/Kyai Kanjeng because of the interest of the artist/preacher/entertainer.</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>1.128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I attended the JKKNNS program/Kyai Kanjeng program to get peace in mind.</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>1.080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I attended the JKKNNS program/Kyai Kanjeng to get entertainment with the performance.</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>1.036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I attended the JKKNNS program/Kyai Kanjeng to get more contacts and networking.</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>1.152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I attended the JKKNNS program/Kyai Kanjeng to study Islam in a relaxed manner.</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>0.986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I feel more confident with the information presented in the JKKNNS/Kyai Kanjeng show.</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>1.254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I attended the JKKNNS program/Kyai Kanjeng because there was no fee required to listen to the show.</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>1.317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I attended the JKKNNS program/Kyai Kanjeng because the da’wah approach used them was not inclined to certain schools.</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>1.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>When I attended JKKNNS program/Kyai Kanjeng, I do not feel awkward to study the knowledge delivered by them.</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>0.924</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4. The Audiences

The empirical frames within the discourse or empirical thoughts of the social group are framing that occur in the culture. Emha Ainun Najib has solid Javanese cultural background in both Kyai Kanjeng’s songs and using the Javanese language while dialogues with his audiences on every occasion. Interestingly, even though the Javanese culture is strongly embedded in Kyai Kanjeng’s dakwah, the audience from different ethnicities and cultural backgrounds could keep pace with his conversations.

The influence of Islamic values within Jogjakarta’s culture can be tracked in ritual traditions, architect, traditional arts, including the Jogjanese life values. One example of a ritual tradition influenced by Islamic values in Jogja is the tradition of ‘Sekaten,’ the annual ritual of the Jogia Palace that commemorating the birth of Prophet Muhammad. The place of Central Mosque of Jogja’s Palace in front of the main entrance of the Palace symbolized the importance of praying five times a day for all Muslims, which is an example of an architectural landscape that has been influenced by Islamic traditions [26]. Some places in Jogja also become the center of Islamic communities like Mlangi, Wonokromo, Dongkelan, Plso Kuning, and Kauman [27]. Therefore, the existence of Kyai Kanjeng as traditional arts that embedded with Islamic values is fully supported by the Governor (as well as the official Jogja’s King) and Jogia’s citizen.

This supportive environment and culture have contributed to Kyai Kanjeng existence since its first music album released in 1995. Even though the lyrics and the content of Kyai Kanjeng concerning the miss conduct of the Indonesian government, corruption, and reminding his community and audiences of Allah, the Greatest Creator, and as a Muslim must follow His guidance.

On the other side, the culture around JKKNNS Malaysia is wholly dependent on Najib Razak, the 6th Prime Minister of Malaysia from 2009 to 2018. Under his authority, he created the concept 1Malaysia, to minimize the conflicting potential among the multiracial citizen of Malaysia. JKKNNS was initiated under Najib Razak’s premiership. Consequently, this institution bounds in firm regulation that makes it hard for diverse creativity in performing traditional arts. The negotiated dakwah values that are inserted in the art performances are limited to the rules set by the government.

Unlike Kyai Kanjeng that is more independent in delivering the critical messages to the government, JKKNNS put non-sharia compliance as the most concern rather than considering the Islamic values itself.
Therefore, regarding the function as an official government’s office, JKKNNS tends to concern more in operating and executing the performance (like event management, audience management, administration, and screening performance) rather than explain and educate the audience about Melayu culture.

5. CONCLUSION

Comparing Indonesia and Malaysia in terms of dakwah and traditional arts is always interesting. At a glance, it seems both countries have many things in common, as Muslim majorities and Melayu cultures. However, when explored further, the gap between these neighbouring countries is broader still exists in both musical and dialogues delivered in Javanese culture, even though its audiences are from diverse ethnicities and religions. Meanwhile, for JKKNS, audiences are only as spectators for the shows.

Regarding the framing negotiating interest for dakwah, the gap between JKK NS and Kyai Kanjeng is clear. JKKNNS negotiated the dakwah interest with the Government’s strict rules regarding the content and the performance itself. In contrast, Kyai Kanjeng tends to criticise Government policy when it did not support society, and it is taken as advice.

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