

Towards Islamic Anthropology in an Indonesian Context: A Perennialist Epistemological Perspective*

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Abstract

This study outlines a new proposal on the creation of Islamic Anthropology on the basis of 'perennialist epistemology', to use Aslan's term (2005:55). A previous proposal of this kind had been put forward by Akbar S. Ahmed in his *Toward Islamic Anthropology: Definition, Dogma and Directions* (1986). While Ahmed's proposed Islamic Anthropology aims at assessing and arguing with Western anthropologists over their misconceptions about Islamic societies they observe, then preparing and replying to their study in a scholarly manner by 'creating their own alternative scholarship' (1986:55), this author's recommended Islamic Anthropology aims at finding *philosophia perennis* or *sophia perennis* or *religio perennis* or 'essential commonality' (Beinorius 2005:237) or 'transcendent unity' (Aymard & Laude 2004:38) between Islamic, other religious and ethnic cultural manifestations, or rather, in Indonesian context, between Islamic, other religious and *adat* cultural manifestations. The building of Islamic Anthropology of perennialist bend in Indonesia is imperative since in the aftermath of national economic crisis and dethronement of Pres. Soeharto, Anthropology academia in Indonesia relishes the freedom of no longer having to serve the regime socio-political agenda. Post-Soeharto era of decentralization, liberalization, emancipation, and democratization provides favourable opportunity for Anthropology to set its own purely academic goals (Ramstedt 2005 :215). This new situation also enables anthropologists from diverse epistemological traditions to contribute directly to establishment of new kinds of Anthropology based on their specific epistemologies. To clarify what is meant by his perennialism-based Islamic Anthropology, the author herein elaborates the perennialist epistemology on which he bases his suggested Islamic Anthropology, explains the perennialist ontology on which the epistemology is based, delineates how to build an Islamic Anthropology based on the perennialist epistemology, and lastly exemplifies application of the perennialist method in Islamic Anthropology he proposes.

Keywords: Islamic Anthropology; Perennialism; *Philosophia Perennis*; Perennialist Epistemology, Reformation Anthropology, *Ancilla Intellectus*, Beyond-Being, Intellection, Cardiac Knowledge.

Categories of Anthropology

For the sake of typology, anthropology as a discipline in Indonesia is divided so far into 6 (six) categories: *traveler's anthropology*, *colonizer's anthropology*, *Christian anthropology*, *revolution anthropology*, *development anthropology*, and lastly, *reformation anthropology*. The first type is embryonic anthropology which started in 1290s, exemplified

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by a travelogue sketching out Sumatran people's physique, customs, and manners written by a famous Italian, Marco Polo (1254-1323). As its book title suggests, *Description of the World* or *Book of the Marvels of the World*, the book functions to leave its readers marvelous and grotesque impression of Sumatran people. The second as well as the third type of anthropology emerged hand in hand in the colonial period; the former functions as *ancilla regime* for the colonizer's sake and colonizing interests, while the latter works as *ancilla theologiae* for evangelization and conversion of local people. By way of illustration, W. Marsden's *The History of Sumatra, Containing an Account of the Government, Laws, Customs and Manners of the Native Inhabitants* (1783), Thomas Stamford Raffles's *The History of Java* (1817), and Christian Snouck Hurgronje's *De Atjehers* (1893-1894) and *Het Gayoland en zijne Bewoners* (1903) are considered to be colonizer's anthropological works, whereas N. Graafland's *De Minahasa: Haar verleden en haar tegenwoordige toestand* (1869) and James Chalmers' *Pioneering in New Guinea* (1878-1886) Christian anthropological writings.

When Indonesia became independent from Dutch colonizers in 1950s and Soekarno held the initial presidency of Indonesian republic, the emergence of a new type of anthropology, called herein *revolution anthropology*, challenged the established types. In this period, the anthropology works as the mouthpiece of Pres. Soekarno's socio-political aspirations and ideals. It is produced for propaganda purposes of his socialism and his flowery revolution rhetoric. Mahjunir's *Mengenai Pokok-Pokok Antropologi dan Kebudayaan* (1965) is a case in point. In his own words, the task of anthropology is '*... mempertcepat realisasi masyarakat sosialis Indonesia dan membangun Dunia Baru...sesuai dengan tujuan revolusi...kearah realisasi sosialisme Indonesia...*' (...to accelerate realization of socialist society of Indonesia and to establish a New World...in accord with revolution objective...towards realization of Indonesian socialism...) (Mahjunir 1965:15-21).

Around 1966, when Soeharto succeeded Soekarno in the presidency, Indonesian anthropology marked the beginning of a trend to emphasize the importance of national economic development, and the issue of national politico-economic modernization became its main focus, meaning that it became once more the *ancilla regime*. Koentjaraningrat and Sidi Gazalba are exemplary anthropologists of this cohort. Koentjaraningrat's *Kebudayaan, Mentalitet dan Pembangunan* (1974) explicates local ethnic people mentality detrimental towards the mainstream developmentalist politico-economic scheme and encourages dismissal of the mentality. Gazalba's *Antropologi Budaya Gaya Baru* (1974) remarks that the anthropology's new mission is to understand process of development dan modernization (Gazalba 1974:10).

From 1998 onwards, since a period known in Indonesian history as *the Era of Reformasi* or post-'New Order' era, a new type of anthropology have evolved, called herein *reformation anthropology*. This is the one to enjoy the freedom of no longer being *ancilla regime*; it is the freed, independent, liberated anthropology that self-governs, self-sets, and self-puts its own area of enquiry on its own footing. Anthropology has since been starting to be *ancilla intellectus*, a handmaid of understanding. Newly coming anthropologies such as *emancipatory anthropology*, *indigenous anthropology*, or *indigenized 'action anthropology'*, born to 'help emancipate hitherto repressed 'local voices'' (Ramstedt 2005:215), are a small subset of this *reformation anthropology*.

Indonesian Muslims's Contribution

Islamic anthropology, as proposed herein, may make a positive contribution to the development of the *reformation anthropology* in Indonesia. However, it is noteworthy that the kind of anthropology Indonesian Muslims should create must not follow the backward steps of their predecessors, *Christian anthropologists*, who took advantage of anthropology to their evangelical benefits. Islamic anthropology proposed herein is never to spread the Word of Allah amongst indigenous, tribal, religious people and to convert them to Islam. It is never to make apologies for correcting the Western academe's misconceptions about Islam either. Instead, it is to best understand cultural phenomena existing in Indonesian societies by Indonesian Muslim observers. It is *ancilla intellectus* to best understand cultural production of Indonesian people by Indonesian Muslim anthropologists.

The Perennialist Epistemology

A. Ontological Foundation

To understand fully the epistemology perennialists hold, it is a must to totally comprehend perennialists' ontology or metaphysics on which it is founded.

Perennialists postulate existence of one God whose two divine Qualities; the Koran calls both *al-Zhahīr* and *al-Bathīn*, or 'the Outward' and 'the Inward', 'the Revealed' and 'the Hidden'. This postulation is a very significant starting point for understanding perennialism as a whole, and particularly for comprehending perennialists's dualities of outwardness-inwardness, relativity-absoluteness, exoterism-esoterism, veil-quintessence, form-substance, immanence-transcendence, dissension-ascension, manifestation-principle, dark-light, reflection-ray, *Māyā-Ātmā*, etc., or even dichotomies of self/Self, being/Being, good/Good, nature/Nature, intellect/Intellect, heart/Heart, soul/Soul, word/Word, revelation/Revelation, intelligence/Intelligence, religion/Religion, tradition/Tradition, wisdom/Wisdom, etc., the former being lower in hierarchy of being, and therefore in hierarchy of mystery, than the latter. Accordingly, God as 'the Inward' or 'the Hidden' is higher in the hierarchy of being than God as 'the Outward' or 'the Revealed'. The more mysterious God is, the highest It is in the hierarchy. Being the highest in level of mystery, God, therefore, herein called 'the highest mystery'.

Perennialists take metaphysics of East and West for granted; they use the metaphysicians' terms, like 'Self', 'Divine Principle', 'Essence', 'Truth', 'Intellect', 'Being', 'Spirit', 'Logos', 'Universal Good', 'One', 'Beatitude', 'Intelligence', 'Reality', 'Existence', 'Void', 'Absolute', etc. All those terms are used to explain different manifestations of the highest mystery above all lowest things manifest. The highest mystery, for example, is called 'the Self' when the perennialists explain its unique identity and individuality above other lower manifest individuals and identities; It is called 'Divine Principle' or 'Truth' when they explain its truth above other lower manifest truths; It is called 'Intellect' when they explain its knowledge, intellectual, and comprehending ability above other lower outward knowledges, intellectual abilities, and comprehensions; It is called 'God' when they explain its rulership and controlling of the universe above other lower manifest rulers and controllers; It is called 'Absolute' when they explain its independency on anything else lower than and more manifest than It, its perfectness, its greatest mystery, its inwardness, its completeness, its purity, and its freedom from all limitations.

The highest mystery has three levels of mysteriousness in descending order: 'Absolute' (also called 'Pure Absolute'), 'Being', and 'Divine Spirit' (Schuon 2002:95). 'Absolute' is the highest level of mysteriousness of the highest mystery. It is what Indian metaphysics call *Ātmā*; the Neoplatonist Iamblichus calls 'Beyond-Being'; Ibn Arabi calls *Ahadīyah* ('Unity') or *al-Ilāh al-Majhūl* ('Unknown God') or *al-Ghayb al-Muthlaq* ('Absolute Mystery') (Noer 2002:102). It is the highest mystery in its purest state; indescribable, unimaginable, unthinkable. Lower than it in the hierarchy of existence is 'Being'. It is 'Pure Absolute' manifested, clothed in an outward lower manifestation. This is what is called 'the Lord', 'God', or 'Ruler of Universe' in religions, who creates, reveals, and judges (Schuon 2002:95). This is what Ibn Arabi calls *al-Haqq al-makhlūq fi 'l-i'tiqād* ('God created in religious beliefs') (Noer 2002:96). Below it in the 'great chain of being' is 'Divine Spirit'. This is what Hindus call *Prajnā* (Schuon 2010:15); Muslims call *al-Rūh*; Christians call *the Logos* or *Word*; Buddhists call *Dhyāni-Buddhas* (Schuon 2009:148). It is the archetype of every Revealer and every Revelation (Schuon 2009:148).

'The Divine Spirit' has three modes of manifestations, each being a mystery in itself but descending to a lower outward manifestation. The modes are 'Universal Intellect', 'the Man-Logos' (called also 'Revelation') who reveals in a human language, and 'the Intellect' in humans (Schuon 2002:95).

Firstly, 'the Divine Spirit' manifests as 'Universal Intellect' in archangelic personifications in the macrocosm. Muslims call it *Jibrīl*; Christians call it *Logos*; Hindus call it *Buddhi*; Buddhists call it *Bodhisattva*. It is in this archangelic plane that the Koran, which is the eternal Word in God, pictured to descend from God to the seventh Heaven (Schuon 2002:233). Also, it is in this heavenly realm that Buddha's body descends from its "divine body" (*dharma-kāya*) to "heavenly body" (*sambhoga-kāya*) (Schuon 2002:233).

Secondly, 'the Divine Spirit' manifests as 'Man-Logos' in archetypes of certain humans such as "Muhammadan Light" or "Muhammadan Truth" (*Nūr Muhammadiyyah* or *Haqīqah Muhammadiyyah*), which is Muhammad in his archetypal plane (Schuon 2008:99). In Shiite Islam, it is the Twelve Imams in their *Logosic* sphere (Schuon 2008:129). It is Jesus in Christic realm, as stated in John 8:58: "Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was." (Schuon 2008:71). It is Mary and Eve in their 'Eternal Feminine' sphere (2002:36), or in their *Prajnā* form (Schuon 2010:15).

Finally, 'the Divine Spirit' manifests as 'the Intellect' within humans' soul in the microcosm (Schuon 2007:130). In religions, 'the Intellect' is manifest in religious figures such as Moses, Jesus, Muhammad, the Virgin Mary, Siddharta Gautama, Confucius, Lao Tzu, etc. In metaphysics, it is manifest in spiritual masters, like Plato, Iamblichus, Plotinus, Ramanuja, Shankara, Avicenna, Ibn Arabi, Mulla Sadra, etc. 'The Intellect' is expressed by perennialists in various phrases, showing its immanence in humans: 'the Christ of the microcosm' (Schuon 2002:2), 'the immanent Koran' or 'the immanent Prophet' (Schuon 2002:2), 'Paradise which we carry within us' (Schuon 2002:53), 'the microcosmic Throne' (Schuon 2002:56), 'the immanent absoluteness in the human relative' (Schuon 2002:252), 'the Eye of the heart' (Schuon 2006:36), 'the Self on the level of microcosm' (Schuon 2006:64), or 'human ego's immortal reality' (Schuon 2006:67), 'an eternal script in the very substance of our spirit' (Schuon 2006:119), 'the kernel of human intelligence' (Schuon 2008:52), 'a ray of the divine *Logos*' (Schuon 2008:129), 'the immanent Christ' (Schuon 2008:202), 'Christ within us' (Schuon 2008:104), 'the *Buddhi*' or 'the highest faculty of knowledge, distinct from *manas*, that is, mind or reason' (Schuon 2008:246), 'heart's vision' (Schuon 2010:35), 'the Sufi's Light' (Schuon 2010:65), or 'Pure Spirit in the deepest heart' (Schuon 2010:193). This 'Intellect' is immanent in the heart of every human.

B. Two Essential Sources

Just like other epistemologies, perennialist epistemology validates knowledge from the five senses (perceptive powers) and knowledge from brain (nervous system). What distinguishes the perennialist theory of knowledge from the rest is its validation of knowledge from heart and knowledge from religious texts (holy books), on which the following elaboration would fully focus.

As mentioned earlier, besides the five senses (perceptive powers) and brain, humans are endowed with heart, which within it there is the immanent Intellect, that is, 'Divine Spirit' manifested in human soul. Knowledge from heart—perennialists call *cardiac knowledge*—is made possible through this source of knowledge (Schuon 2002:49). To gain the cardiac knowledge, we do what is called 'metaphysical intellection'—i.e. activation, or actualization, or awakening of this immanent 'Intellect' or 'the heart's Eye' (Schuon 2006:33).

There are many ways to awaken 'the Intellect'; every religious tradition of the world teaches how to do so (Schuon 2002:184). In Islam, it is taught in Sufi *tharīqah* (learning institutions of Sufism). Besides joining *tharīqah*, one can also activate her/his 'Heart-Intellect' through meticulous scrutiny of metaphysical and spiritual texts, written by the sages and saints of a religious tradition since it is in them and by them 'the Intellect' is fully actualized and accessed (Schuon 2008:129). In ordinary humans, the uncomtemplatives, 'the Intellect' is veiled by their ego (Schuon 2002:75). It especially happens to us, humans of 'the dark age' or *the Kali Yuga* (Schuon 2006:129). To actualize and to access 'the Intellect', ordinary human ego—the ego from which all human sin comes—must be purified through spiritual trainings (Schuon 2002:211). None can attain 'the Intellect' except through the perfection of the human ego (Schuon 2005:27-28). When 'the Intellect' is actualized and activated, humans attain the metaphysical truths (Schuon 2002:117) and all spiritual knowledge (Schuon 2008:129), which herein are called *cardiac knowledge*.

For perennialists, the conscientious study of metaphysical books functions to trigger what is called 'spiritual concentration'—i.e. total comprehension of Unity of God (Schuon 2005:49), 'contemplation'—i.e. conceptual understanding, spiritual concentration, discernment between the Real and the illusory taken together (Schuon 2009:227), 'perception of unity'—i.e. perceiving the unity of the spiritual point of view of all spiritualities of the world (Schuon 2005:107), 'a true intuition of unity'—i.e. transcending the level of forms and doctrinal formulations of religions (Schuon 2009:194-195), 'metaphysical discernment'—i.e. separating between the Real (*Ātmā*) and the Illusory (*Māyā*) (Schuon 2006:119), 'contemplative concentration'—i.e. unifying the Real (*Ātmā*) and the Illusory (*Māyā*) (Schuon 2006:119), and finally, it is also a trigger for, if one might so express it respectively, 'intuition of transcendent unity of religions'—i.e. intuiting all religions are immanently diverse and transcendentally united, and 'intuition of *philosophia perennis*'—i.e. intuiting the connecting link between the different religious languages. Cardiac knowledge in principle is infallible since it is from 'the Intellect' which is in principle infallible; 'It is so through God and not through us.' (Schuon 2005:152).

Another source of knowledge, which differentiates perennialist epistemology from others, is holy books of all religions of the world. Ontologically, the sacred scriptures originate from 'the Divine Spirit' having both modes of 'Universal Intellect' and 'Revelation' (Schuon 2002:95). Being written in different letters of human languages, holy books outwardly descend from their state of being 'the Word' or '*Logos*' in archangelic plane to the one of being scriptures in human languages. Their descended status, however, never decrease their inward quality of being 'the Divine Spirit', one of the highest mystery's triune manifestations.

Being outwardly manifest as a book written in different human languages, a holy book becomes ‘a closed system and is by definition perfect in its kind’ (Schuon 2008:204) and, at the same time, it becomes divergent, diverse, and contradictory to other holy books, causing dogmatic ostracisms (Schuon 2006:129) since it is ‘formed by the social setting and circumstances’ (Schuon 2002:233-234). In the sacred texts there may be symbolical or dialectical antinomies, though not contradictions (Schuon 2002:175). To gain knowledge from a holy book one must, therefore, totally comprehend religious tradition and religious milieu where it is written, that is, the milieu where the receptacle of ‘Universal Intellect’ (in Islam, Prophet Muhammad) lives her/his religious life in a specific tradition.

For perennialists, knowledge from holy books or ‘Revelation’ is in principal necessary because of five reasons: *First*, it functions to actualize ‘the Intellect’, just like the metaphysical intellection does (Schuon 2005:153); *secondly*, it provides a path that guarantees both the perfection of metaphysical intellection and its continuity (Schuon 2006:121); *thirdly*, it gives the keys for understanding the underlying unity of different holy books (Schuon 2006:129), of which ‘the intuition of transcendent unity of religions’ is in its tireless pursuit; *fourthly*, since the sacred scriptures remain the necessary and unchanging basis, it is the source of inspiration and the criterion of all gnosis (Schuon 2006:15), and *finally*, being ‘Divine Word’, it is a way of uniting God and world, ‘So separation might return to unity’ (Schuon 2003:119).

Implications

For anthropologists, several considerable implications arise from the perennialist metaphysics and epistemology explained above:

1. On every culture they study and each society they examine, the anthropologists should find out holy books or sacred scriptures enlightening the hearts of people of the society since the books and scriptures are from ‘Divine Spirit’ descending from archangelic plane to human sphere. Then, they should study contents of the sacred books, inwardly and outwardly, literally and spiritually, including the study of their inherent symbolisms, parables, metaphors, idioms, etc. and gain in a perfect understanding of them to awaken ‘the Intellect’ within the anthropologists’ souls; and since what we are talking about is Islamic anthropology, it goes without saying that the Muslim anthropologists, during observance, must first masterfully understand the Koranic sciences (*‘Ulūmu’l-Qurān*), including metaphysical/spiritual exegesis of the Koran (*Al-Tafsīr al-Shūfī*).
2. They should discover spiritual or metaphysical texts written by the sages and the saints of the society they observe to complete their understanding of the holy books and sacred scriptures for it is only in them that ‘the Intellect’—that is Divine Spirit’ manifested within human souls—is fully actualized, realized, and fully awakened; it is only they that successfully do ‘metaphysical intellection’ in the society; and as stated earlier, Muslim anthropologists must first fully comprehend the teachings of Prophet Muhammad, his *Ahlu’l-Bayt*, the Twelve Imams, and Muslim metaphysicians before their anthropological undertakings.
3. If the anthropologists do not find any sacred scripture and any metaphysical text of the sages amidst the society due to its lack of writing tradition, they should dive deeper and discover the society’s divine revelations and intellectual revelations in the form of ontological mythology and traditional legends it hands over from generation to generation, cosmogonic/cosmological songs it sings, cosmogonic/cosmological

dances it performs, cosmogonic/cosmological motifs in clothes it wears, sacred music it plays, etc.—in short, all forms of sacred art—since all of these are also ‘Revelation’ and ‘Intellect’ expressed in other than our usual philosophical, legal, theological modes of expression. ‘Metaphysical doctrines do not of necessity find their expression only in verbal forms but can be expressed visually and ritually.’ (Oldmeadow 1991:10). Being another expression of ‘Revelation’ and ‘Intellect’, the sacred art of the society should be fully understood by the anthropologists as ‘a sacred text’ whose symbolism, parables, metaphors, idioms, etc. are in its own terms since ‘every sacred art is ... founded on a science of forms, or in other words, on the symbolism inherent in forms. It must be borne in mind that a sacred symbol is not merely a conventional sign; it manifests its archetype by virtue of a certain ontological law.’ (Stoddart 2005:88).

4. The sacred scriptures, the metaphysical texts, and all manifestations of sacred art that the anthropologists scrutinize should lead them and guide them to fruitfully execute ‘spiritual concentration’, ‘contemplation’, ‘perception of unity’, ‘a true intuition of unity’, ‘metaphysical discernment’, ‘contemplative concentration’, ‘intuition of transcendent unity of religions’ and ‘intuition of *philosophia perennis*’, as instructed by perennialist teachings.
5. Only after carrying out all activities and practices mentioned in points 1-4 above may the anthropologists work on a ‘thick description’, trying to fully describe all cultural and civilizational manifestations of the society they observe since ‘it is the spiritual, not the temporal, which culturally, socially and politically is the criterion of all other values.’ (Schuon 2002:36).
6. Until the anthropologists masterfully understand ‘Revelation’ and ‘Intellection’ within many a society they observe, they may proceed to intuit metaphysically ‘the transcendent unity’ of all the societies’ cultural manifestations.

Examples

The following are some examples of how the perennialist metaphysical principles and epistemological foundation as well as methodology they both imply are applied in Islamic anthropology proposed herein.

1. Mythology

Myths have been an object of anthropological study in Indonesia, and have triggered debates on its validity when used to reconstruct the past history. To illustrate, C.H.M. Palm in his *Sejarah Antropologi Budaya* (1980) criticized ‘the Leiden School’—i.e. a school of structuralist anthropology developed in Leiden University by J.P.B. de Josselin de Jong, among others—for their emphasis on myths in their anthropological studies of Indonesia. He stated that mythology was not real and not historical reality. Hence, to construct the hypothetical past of Indonesian society’s history on the basis of mythology must be avoided by anthropologists (1980:93-94). Also, he deemed their dichotomy of sacred-profane as ambiguous since in reality sacred phenomenon and profane one could not be easily identified, and what was thought as sacred phenomenon soon became profane (1980:94). To his criticism, we can reply that what De Josselin de Jong and his fellows in Leiden had done so far is true; mythology can be a signpost to

better understanding of Indonesian social structure (de Jong 1977:24). However, de Jong's following of Durkheimian notion—which posits local histories and legends, myths, religious treatises and handbooks of magic and divination, and legal codes do shine a light in the observed society's socio-political structure—is something to lament over. Right here, Perennialist Islamic Anthropology can make a significant contribution; the perennialist notion, that mythology and local legends embody the society's divine revelations and intellectual revelations expressed in visual and ritual expression other than our usual philosophical, legal, theological modes of expression, puts both mythology and legends in their truest place: a spiritual ladder with which 'God becomes Man so that Man becomes God'. Classification systems discovered by de Jong amongst Indonesian societies they observe are not only from their mythologies—this is what de Jong contends to do and he does not do any much further to realize their mythologies represent not only the social structures but also revelation and intellection—but also that the mythologies come from 'Divine Spirit' as 'Revelation' and 'Intellection' for the societies. 'Like the Revelation... the Myth, the penultimate truth, of which all experience is the temporal reflection. The mythical narrative is of timeless and placeless validity, true nowever and everywhere.' (Coomaraswamy 2004:267).

2. Primordial Tradition

Jakob Sumardjo, in his two books respectively, *Arkeologi Budaya Indonesia* (2002) and *Mencari Sukma Indonesia* (2003), postulates differences in Indonesian societies's traditions exist due to their different 'life ecology'; 'people of farming field', 'people of sea' and 'people of forest' have different traditions because of their different ways of survival and of food consumption in different area they live (Sumardjo 2003:52). To this postulation, we reply that it sounds like a renewed version of Karl Marx's concept of *suprastructure-infrastructure*, that creation of tradition is determined by economic development. Here again, Perennialist Islamic Anthropology can make a significant contribution; it can lead any anthropologists like Sumardjo to the true nature of tradition. Ali Lakhani beautifully defines 'tradition': "'Tradition", in the special way that the term is used by "Traditionalists", refers to a particular worldview: a way of seeing the world that differs from the ordinary perception. We ordinarily see the world as composed of mind and matter: of physical objects located in time and space, which we interpret with our minds and our senses (of which our technological instruments are but extensions). By contrast, Traditionalists speak of a way of seeing the world in which mind and matter exist as part of a continuum of reality that involves a deeper dimension: a transcendent spiritual dimension of which the worlds of mind and matter are merely projection—like waves upon the surface of an ocean. The worldview of Tradition is of this deep ocean, of a Presence in which we all participate: of a Reality in which we live and move and have our being—or we can think of it as a Sacred Web, as it were, through which each strand of life is intimately connected to every other.' (Lakhani 2010:3).

3. Juxtaposition of *Adat* Religions with Other Religions

The famous work of JWM. Bakker (*aka.* Rachmat Subagja) in anthropology of religion is *Agama Asli Indonesia* (1981), in which he discovers and traces some religious movements originating from Indonesia, and elaborates their distinctive religious teachings. In spite of striking originality, the book is full of his evaluations and criticisms based on his Christian prejudice and partiality. He has too low an opinion of other religions than his, asserting that, in his own words, ‘...agama-agama lain tidak berhasil mencapainya [*hubungan aktif dan otentik dengan Tuhan*], sekalipun mereka merentangkan tangannya ke surga...’ (...other religions do not succeed in establishing [*an active and authentic connection with God*], although they stretch their hands towards Heaven...) since non-Christian religions are only ‘*seeds of Revelation*’, or just ‘*preparatory means for Glad Tidings*’, which its perfectness can be completed by Christianity only (Bakker 1981:44-45). By the same token, Badruddin H. Subky wrote *Bid’ah Bid’ah di Indonesia* (1993). Subky wrote that teachings of other religions than Islam had penetrated so deep into religious structure of the ‘pure’ Islam for a very long time in Indonesia that they dirtied it from within with a lot of ‘impurities’ (*bid’ah-bid’ah*) (Subky 1993:60-90). To purify Islam by throwing those impurities away, therefore, is a must if a Muslim wants to practice Islamic teachings in Indonesia ‘purely’. However, Subky took Edward Burnett Tylor’s evolutionist naming of primitive religions ‘*animism*’ (Tylor 1903:425-426) for granted (just like other Islamic fanatics and other ignoramuses do due to their ignorance or illiteracy of the Tylor’s original books), and named all Indonesian pre-Islamic religions *animisms* without first being critical of whether or not this naming when applied to the pre-Islamic religions in Indonesia being appropriate, which absolutely denigrates truth of their teachings. Here again, Perennialist Islamic Anthropology can make a significant contribution; it can lead other Bakkers and Subkys to be critical of animism—believed by Tylor as the first kind of religion humans have, known through intuition of their dreaming experiences in the first stage of humans’ religious evolution and so it has a lower evolutionary sophistication and consequently a lower truth (Tylor 1903:440)—, and makes them believe that pre-Islamic religions spreading all over Indonesia prior to the coming of Islam are also ‘*Revelation*’ descending from ‘*Absolute*’ whose truth and validity is never less than Islam or any other Semitic religions. If pre-Islamic religions that Subky accused herein are Hindu religion, Buddhism, and native ethnic people’s religions (*Adat*), he must verily not know all religions mentioned are divine revelations and intellectual revelations—primordial traditions whose validity are infallible since they are from ‘*Absolute*’ and ‘...there has never been a time without God, nor a place into which He has failed to descent. His eternal power and Godhead have always been manifest in the things that are made, and the particular traditions are so many palimpsests of a script written into the substance of creation itself. It is not surprising, therefore, that we should find signs of tradition wherever and whenever we look.’ (Cutsinger 1994:300).

4. Re-sacralization of Culture

The most significant contribution of Perennialist Islamic Anthropology proposed herein is in deconstruction, and at the same time reconstruction, of meaning of the word '*budi*', as perennialists had done before with the words '*tradition*', '*revelation*', '*wisdom*', and '*intellect*' in English language. The word *budi* is an important root word for Indonesians to create derivatives like the words '*budiman*', '*budi pekerti*', '*budi bahasa*', '*budi daya*', '*budaya*', '*kebudayaan*', '*budayawan*', '*berbudaya*', etc. As one can easily predict, the root word *budi* in our official language is taken etymologically from the Indian word '*buddhi*' or '*Buddha*', which means 'Intellect' or 'The Enlightened Intellect' respectively. We Indonesians are proud of our linguistic heritage which is mostly inherited from the spiritually rich countries like India, Persia, Arabia, and China. We accept spiritual words like '*upacara*', '*acara*', '*moksa*', '*tapa*', '*pahala*', '*naraka*', '*siksa*', '*dosa*', '*sengsara*', '*sorga*', '*darma*', '*agama*', '*bakti*', '*akal*', '*kalbu*', '*sanubari*', '*nurani*', etc. for use in our daily life, of course in Indonesian spelling. This, however, had changed since our post-independent nationalists turned sacred meanings of those words into profane meanings. So, nowadays, we understand '*upacara*' as a nationalist event, '*acara*' as event in general, '*sengsara*' (Sanskrit, *samsara*) as misery or suffering in its general sense. The most horrible is the change of meaning of the word *budi*, change of which brings about complete desacralization of our culture and civilization. Our modernist linguists now construe *budi* and *akal* as 'reason', 'logical reasoning', 'thinking', 'reasoning power', 'common sense', or even 'cunning' (TBI 2008:9&80), while our anthropologists use derivatives of *budi* (that is, *kebudayaan*, *budaya*, and *budi daya*) to translate English word '*culture*'; they construe *kebudayaan* as power of or result of or creation by human thought, human reasoning, human thinking utilized to change and fight against Mother Nature and all the naturals that hinder human development (Koentjaraningrat 1995:19; Partokusumo 1992:210; Alisjahbana 1988:721-722; Soekmono 1981:9). This humanist anthropological construction is, in fact, the root of our cultural evil. 'In reality modern civilization gives in order to take: it gives the world but takes away God; and it is this that compromises even its gift of the world.' (Schuon 2006:11). To date, everyone in Indonesia, consequently, understands and construes the English *culture* as *kebudayaan*, *Cultural Studies* as *Kajian Kebudayaan*, *Cultural Anthropology* as *Antropologi Budaya*, *cultural thinker* as *budayawan*—all of which obliterates all traces of the metaphysical *budi* and *kalbu* and *akal* understood by our metaphysicians like Ki Ageng Selo (circa 15th century AD), Hamzah Al-Fansuri (d. 1527), Abd al-Rauf Al-Sinkili (1615-1693), Muhammad Yusuf Al-Maqassari (1627-1699), Syekh H. Jalaluddin (1882-1976), etc. However, the worst case is, with the use of this humanist construction, comes another humanist notion held by our cultural thinkers like Sutan Takdir Alisjahbana, Soedjatmoko, Dick Hartoko, Umar Kayam, etc. that *kebudayaan* as *culture* can be manipulated to serve profane socio-political ideals. At the peak of their humanist reasoning, finally, they translate and construe *Humanities* as *Ilmu-Ilmu Budaya*, emphasizing their human-centric understanding of cultural reality. With the coming of Perennialist Islamic Anthropology, hopefully, our understanding of *budaya* and *kebudayaan* and *akal* can be re-sacralized; it assigns once more, as it were, supernatural or Godhead-centric meanings to *budi*, *kebudayaan*, *budaya*, *akal*, and *kalbu*. Schuon reminds: 'A civilization is

integral and healthy to the extent it is founded on the ‘invisible’ or ‘underlying’ religion, the *religio perennis*, that is, to the extent its expressions or forms are transparent to the NonFormal and tend toward the Origin, thus conveying the recollection of a lost Paradise, but also—and with all the more reason—the presentiment of a timeless Beatitude. For the Origin is at once within us and before us: time is but a spiral movement around a motionless Center.’ (Schuon 2006:126).

Wa’l-Lāhu a’lam.

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