

KAUMAN : A Moslem Neighborhood of Yogyakarta¹

Sjafri Sairin²

Visiting Yogyakarta in the 1960s, the President of a friendly country was so greatly impressed with the city that he said, "Yogyakarta is the city of yesterday, today and tomorrow". To me, what he said is not simply a courtesy since its development indicates a promising future without sacrificing its traditional traces of the past. Approaching the end of the 20th century, Yogyakarta still reflects the three dimensions. Harmoniously, people of Yogyakarta are able to mix their traditional life style with the modern one, which has already obsessed them. They do not ignore the perspectives of the future which are already present on the veranda.

As soon as we gained our independence, Yogyakarta developed into a miniature of Indonesia. Young people from all over the country came to stay as they studied at high schools and universities in Yogyakarta. Yet, the city did not seem to let its traditional landmark disappear; it keeps the spirit of the Javanese cultural center whispering. The process of cultural mixture of those of the natives and the new arrivals has stimulated the emergence of new ideas for people's betterment. They are thinkers, intellectuals, and artists whose activities have been locally, nationally and internationally acknowledged. They have their shares in contributing meaningfully to the development of the nation.

This brief paper is meant to discuss the social and economic life of a united community who lives in the *kampung* of Kauman. It is a residence which is situated in the heart of Yogyakarta toward the west of Northern *Aloan-aloon*, to be precise.³ This particular *kampung* is interesting to discuss for some reasons. First, it is the

one that none of us could separate from the history of Yogyakarta. More importantly, it is definitely a part of the sultanate bureaucratic system of the *kraton*. Beyond doubt, the *kampung* reflects, too, the dimensions of yesterday, today and tomorrow. Second, since Yogyakarta was founded, Kauman has become a Javanese community which, according to Geertz (1960), is called a *Santri* society. They profess Islam and obediently perform their religious obligations, which distinguishes themselves from the communities in the other *kampungs* in Yogyakarta. Third, the Muhammadiyah organization was founded in this *kampung* by K.H. Dahlan in 1912. It is indeed an organization which has been considered as the Islamic reformer in Indonesia. People from all over the country now accept his organization as the most influential, and so do people from the neighboring countries especially Southeast Asia. This organization has thousands of schools, hundreds of hospitals and clinics, orphanages and old folk's homes, in addition to hundreds of universities and institutions of higher education, which are available in every corner of the country.

Although the Muhammadiyah organization was born in the *kampung*, the function of *kepenguluhan*, the traditional Islamic institution of the *Kraton*, especially as part of the sultanate bureaucracy, remains as it is and does not change. Various religious traditional rituals, which basically contradict the teachings of Muhammadiyah, can get along with each other without being mutually exclusive. These are the reasons why a discussion on the life of the people in Kauman will hopefully be more interesting.

1. Presented to the International Symposium and Workshop on *Historic Cities in Islamic Societies*, April 21-23, 1996, Radisson Hotel, Yogyakarta. The Symposium is co-organized by International Research Center for Environment and Development (IRCED), Ritsumeikan University, Kyoto, Japan, International Academic Program (IAEP) Ritsumeikan University Kyoto, Japan; and Department of Architecture, Faculty of Engineering, UGM, Yogyakarta.

2. Anthropologist, Director, Center for Studies of Culture and Social Change, Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

3. Actually there are three *kampungs* in Yogyakarta that bear the name Kauman. The first one is that which is called Kauman Pakualaman, situated in the eastern part of Yogyakarta; second is Kauman Dongkelan, situated in the southern part, and the third one is the one we are now discussing in this paper.

The Establishment of Yogyakarta

The establishment of Yogyakarta cannot be separated from the internal conflicts within the court at the beginning of the 18th century. If Pakoeboewono II, the Mataram King of Kartasura, had been successful in suppressing the rebellion of Raden Mas Said, Yogyakarta would never have come into existence. Being apprehensive about and disappointed with the growth of the VOC (Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie), Dutch Trading Company of East India, Said rebelled against the king. This happened after the king asked the VOC for help to suppress the Chinese rebellion. In return for the aid and support, the king put his signature on the agreement of confirming the expansion of the VOC's political and economic power.

Unlike what he had done with the previous rebellion, the king did not ask the VOC for help to suppress the rebellion of Said. Instead, he promised a position as head of Sukawati village to anyone who could successfully extinguish the rebellion. Prince Mangkoeboemi, the brother of the king, who was seemingly interested in the promised position, took up arms against Said. Within less than three years, although Said was not arrested, Mangkoeboemi succeeded in the accomplishment of his highly important mission. But the king broke his promise. Mangkoeboemi was not appointed head of the promised area. Being unable to control his anger, Mangkoeboemi left the court without saying and eventually joined Said to fight against the king. Pakoeboewono did not seem to be able to face them alone. This was the reason why he again asked the VOC for help. Yet, the new rebellion was not easily suppressed. Moreover, the king passed away before the fighting factions got on good terms. Pakoeboewono III, who succeeded to the throne, signed an agreement to end the war in Giyanti village on February 13, 1755. Under this agreement, the kingdom of Mataram was divided into two parts. The first was Surakarta, which belonged to Pakoeboewono, and the other, which is now known as Yogyakarta, belonged to Mangkoeboewono (Soekanto:1952).

In this part of land, Mangkoeboemi established a new kingdom called *Ngayogyakarta Hadiningrat* (Ngayogyakarta the symbol of the world's beauty). He also appointed himself king and called himself *Sampeyan Dalem Hingkang Sinuhun Kangjeng Sultan Hamengkoebowono, Senopati Hing Ngalogo Sayidin Panoto Gomo Kalifatullah*. The use of such a title of nobility shows that the sultanate of Yogyakarta is undoubtedly an Islamic Kingdom. Bearing the name of *Kalifatullah*, Hamengkoebowono I had placed himself as the representative of God the Almighty on this earth as the Prophet Muhammad did when he was still alive (Selosoemardjan, 1962:17)

In addition to the *aloon-aloon*, the Sultan also built a mosque, which was situated on the West Side of it.⁴ The erection of the mosque seemed to follow the pattern of space arrangement, which had been established since the kingdom of Demak.

The Sultan started building the mosque in 1773, after he finished building the *kraton* in 1756. Then, the veranda of the mosque was added on. The mosque was called *Masjid Gedhe* or *Masjid Agung*, meaning the Grand Mosque. In the yard of the mosque a building was erected, namely *bangsal pagongan*, in which a set of gamelan instruments was placed to create orchestration accompanying traditional rituals such as Sekaten. Next to Northern and Southern gates of the mosque there were buildings called *Tepas Keprajuritan Masjid*. Another building now stands in the eastern part of the yard. In addition to accommodating religious activities of the mosque, it is also meant for social activities.

The Sultan then set up an institution called *Kapengulon* to administer the Mosque's activities. This particular institution was that of *abdi dalem pamethakan* or *abdi dalem putihan* meaning those who are in religious service at the royal court. This institution was chaired by a *pengulu*, a religious leader, appointed by the Sultan himself as a sultanate official. The *Pengulu* and his family lived in a house which was situated in an area toward the North of the Mosque called *Pengulon*. The subordinate officials such as *Ketib* and

4. To build a mosque on the West Side of Aloon-Aloon is one of the characteristics of city's space arrangement in the area of Islamic kingdom in Java, including those which were in the regencies. In addition to those of buildings for government administration, the cities were also provided with spaces for market places and settlement, which were set around the place complex. Not only that they are found in Surakarta and Yogyakarta, such phenomena are also found in many cities in Java, such as Demak, Pekalongan, Semarang, and Banten (Gufron 1996).

Modin and their families lived in area toward the West of the Mosque. This particular place later developed and became a settlement which was then called *Kauman* Yogyakarta (Darban, 1980).

Kauman : A Moslem Community

The word *Kauman* is derived from an Arabic word, *qaum*, meaning community. In the court context, this word means families of court officials, who are in charge of administering the religious activities. The settlement of the religious officials was then called *Kauman*. As a settlement of an Islamic community integrated into the traditional court system in Java, *Kauman* is found not only in Yogyakarta but also in Surakarta, Demak, Semarang, and other cities, as replicas of city's Islamic-kingdom space pattern.

The *Kauman*, which is situated toward the West of *Aloon-Aloon*, is a settlement of 192,000 square meters. Formerly, it was a land of *gaduhan*, meaning a piece of land which was granted by the Sultan to the mosque's officials, in return for their services.

The *kampung* is within easy reach. There are many streets through which you could reach it. From the North *Aloon-Aloon*, people can go in by way of the yard of the Grand Mosque, and go through the gate which is toward the West of *Aloon-Aloon*, or, through the gate which is toward the South of the Grand Mosque's yard. Toward the South and the North of the Mosque, there are two trails directing westward through which you will arrive in the heart of the *kampung*. In addition, there are some lanes that you can walk on to reach it either from K. H. Dahlan Street, which is toward the North of the *kampung* or *Kauman* Street, which is toward the South of it. There are two more lanes which you can find when you walk through Nyai Dahlan Street. These are unfortunately not known. Only those who are familiar with this place will know them. The lanes, which give access to the *kampung*, are completed with shutters, which are usually closed at night for security reasons.

The *kampung* *Kauman*, whose streets and lanes slip into the density of its inhabitants, has its own uniqueness. The

small streets and lanes that divide the *kampung* wringingly connect parts of the entire area. Generally, people's houses, which stand in a close-meshed row along the small streets and lanes. Look as if there were neither space to split one from the other nor space for yards. Yet, each house has a special space called *long-kangan*, an open space to let in fresh air and sunlight as well as to serve as a living room. Sometimes, the family puts in small plants as decorations.

The houses in the *kampung* make a special impression. They look as if they were tightly closed. Doors and windows are seldom open. If they happen to be open, the additional doors and windows will block your view of the interior.

They have practical reasons for keeping their houses closed. In addition to security reasons, they do not want the inside parts of the house to be visible to passers-by. The houses that are opposite to each other are very close. The occupants of each could easily observe the inside of the other house. According to Islam, people should protect home privacy from gossiping and slandering.

Kauman residents are actually not a reclusive community. They welcome and respect guests. More importantly, Islam teaches people to have a high regard for others. But male guests are not allowed to pay a visit to houses whose inhabitants are women.

They provide *Kauman* with small prayer houses, a kindergarten and an elementary school. The Muhammadiyah has established two school buildings for kindergarten and elementary school. In addition, they have also a special dormitory for girls in the middle of the *kampung*.

The Life of Kauman Community

The growth of population in *Kauman* has created density. When Yogyakarta was first established, there were large areas of for settlement in *Kauman*. It is assumed that the first inhabitants lived around the Grand Mosque to make it easier for them to hear the Azan (call to prayer) when the prayer times came (Artefak:6 - 7), due to the fact that they did not yet have loudspeakers.

5. It is interesting that in Padang Panjang, West Sumatra, there is also an area called *Kauman*. According to some information, the name is due to the success of *Kauman* in Padang Panjang to disseminate Muhammadiyah to all over the country. There as hear say that of course Muhammadiyah was founded in *Kauman* of Yogyakarta but later the organization was developed by those people of Padang Panjang.

The population grew very rapidly so that they made use of the empty spaces for housing. The Javanese society, who prefers the married sons and daughters to live together in the same compound with the parents (Koentjaraningrat, 1994), has made the population around dense. The marriage tradition prevailing in the community has beyond doubt supported the density. They tend to practise and keep up the tradition of marrying among themselves in Kauman (Darban, 1980). The *endogamous* form of marriage practised among Kauman people is basically meant to keep the descendants embracing the ideal Islam, in accordance with their principles. This is also true for *santri* in the *pesantren* in Java (Dhofier, 1980). The direct result of this marriage system is that there is almost no way for those who have just married to leave the *kampung*. The Javanese, who tend to follow the *verilocal* custom, seem to be similar to the Kauman people. Should they have any idea of applying *exogamy*, the brides would not hesitate to leave their parents and follow the bridegrooms who might live outside of the *kampung*. The population density would not be necessarily that high. Of course, by keeping the endogamous system, people of the entire *kampung* have become a very big family, which differs from other *kampung* in Yogyakarta. This endogamy has led the community of Kauman to deviate from the Javanese traditional custom. According to the custom for an ideal marriage the bride should be younger than the bridegroom. The Javanese cultural concept emphasizes that human age is not only measured with the real age but also with the relative age, which from the viewpoint of Javanese kinship is called *awu* (Sairin, 1992). The *awu*, genealogical level, determines the relative age of a kinship, i.e., a woman whose real age is younger than her husband is from the viewpoint of the relative age might be considered older. This can happen when the kinship relationship between both families, the status of the prospective husband is in the generation of a little brother of the father or mother of the woman. According to Javanese traditional custom, the woman should call her prospective husband "*adik*", younger brother, instead of "*mas*", elder brother. This suggests that the man is "younger" than the woman, despite his real age. In such a case, the marriage plan will be

canceled, unless they perform a special ceremony called *slametan*.

For the Kauman community, such a traditional custom does not mean anything. To them, the Islamic teaching is the primary concern. As long as the marriage plan does not contradict the teaching, there is nothing to prevent a marriage from taking place. In fact, there have been cases in which, from the relative age point of view, brides are older than bridegrooms.

When Yogyakarta was first established, the Kraton officials, who lived in Kauman, depended entirely on the *pelungguh* land granted by the Sultan. As time went by, the Sultan paid them instead. To increase their income, they had business of their own. Women produced *batiks* which were sent out to all over the country (Darban, 1980). The two-storied houses that are still in the *kampung* have indicated the success of the business in the past.

Formerly, the majority of the dwellers got religious education from their own Mushallas, which were erected in almost every corner of the *kampung*. Those who wanted to have further study, went out of the *kampung* to join some *pesantrens* in all over Java. In line with economic growth the Kauman people began to be interested in sending out their children to general educational institutions. The tendency increased rapidly when Gadjah Mada University was established in 1949. Sri Sultan Hamengkobowono, who supported the establishment of the university, lent it some parts of the *kraton* to be used for classes. This national university, which is situated near the *kampung*, attracted many Kauman people to enroll in the university. When they finished studying, they abandoned the batik business and become government officials. Those who were successful as officials began to build their own houses and left their community. Nevertheless, they still kept the kinship relationship strong. At least once a year, they paid visits to Kauman to restrengthen the family ties among them. This still happens on the Idulfitri holidays when they celebrate the spiritual victory after fasting during Ramadhan.

Kauman began to open up when young people from all over the country came to study at universities in Yogyakarta. The "migrants" needed rooms to rent and the people of Kauman

let some of them stay in their houses as lodgers. Marriage ties were no longer limited to the Kauman community but expanded to larger areas. It often happened that the "migrants" were in love with young people of Kauman and they got married. They "took away" their spouses to various places where they later worked. This decreased the growth of the population.

Despite the changes of orientation among the Kauman community, they still kept in mind the importance of standing on their own feet economically instead of becoming government officials. They had small-scale industries from which they earned their living and maintained their families.

Challenge of the Future

As Yogyakarta changes socially and culturally, Kauman does the same, too, inevitably. Implementation of the development plan by the New Order has successfully increased the people's income in Kauman. Before the monetary crisis which started in the middle of 1997, their income was on the same level as that of the rest of the citizens all over Indonesia. As income rises, demand rises, too. They started thinking of buying cars to meet the requirements of a modern life-style. The problem, however, was they could not bring the cars into the *kampung*. To solve this problem, they parked their cars along the sides of the main streets. A few years ago, they parked the cars in the yard of the Grand Mosque. The cars, of course, created inconveniences. Fortunately, they stopped doing this and they are now not allowed to do it anymore. They parked the cars along Nyai K.H. Dahlan and Kauman Streets and they made the streets narrower for public use. They also renovates their houses by changing the old architecture with the new one. The characteristics of the old houses of Kauman gradually disappeared. This suggests that new ways of preserving old architecture are needed. Some of them began to sell their houses because they needed new environments. Fortunately, the newcomers, who bought the houses, could easily adapt themselves to the specific environment of Kauman. One point that I would like to raise is that Kauman is strategically situated in the heart of business activities. As long as Kauman is still

under the *kraton* bureaucracy, there will be no problem. But if one day the status changes, there will be no protection to preserve the special characteristics that Kauman has. This has already happened to Kauman of Semarang, Central Java. It has lost its identity of being a *santri* settlement. The *Aloon-Aloon*, which was formerly one of the important characteristics of the Islamic city, has been converted magically into a business center and market place. Economic interests have apparently changed people's mind and they unconsciously neglect one of the most important part of our national heritage of historic merit. It is imperative that new steps be taken to preserve Kauman of Yogyakarta from being eventually eroded by social changes. Kauman is a landmark that should be safeguarded against possible destruction in order to ensure that it will continue to exist.

Bibliography

- Artefak No 16 August 1996, "Dialog Pemukiman Masa Islam dalam Perspektif Ilmu Arsitektur"; Yogyakarta: Department of Archaeology, Faculty of Letters, Gadjah Mada University.
- Darban, Ahmad Adaby, 1980, "Sejarah Kauman Yogyakarta Tahun 1900- 1950: Suatu Studi Perubahan Sosial", Thesis, Yogyakarta: Department of History UGM.
- Darmosoegito, 1956. *Kota Yogyakarta 200 Tahun: 7 Oktober 1756-7 Oktober 1956*. Jogjakarta: Panitia Peringatan Kota Jogjakarta 200 Tahun.
- Dhofier, Zamakhsyari, 1980, "Kinship and Marriage Among Javanese Kyai", *Indonesia*, No. 29 (April), Ithaca: Southeast Asia Program Cornell University.
- Geertz, Clifford, 1960, *The Religion of Java*, Clencoe: The Free Press.
- Gufron, 1966, "Kompleks Masjid Jami' Kauman di Beberapa Kampung Kauman di Jawa", Thesis, Yogyakarta: Department of Archaeology, Gadjah Mada University.
- Koentjaraningrat, 1994, *Kebudayaan Jawa*, Jakarta: Penerbit Balai Pustaka.
- Sairin, Sjafri, 1992, *Javanese Trah: Kinbased Social Organization*, Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press.
- Soemardjan, Selo, 1962, *Social Changes in Jogjakarta*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Soekanto, 1952, *Sekitar Jogjakarta 1775-1925*, Jakarta: Penerbit Mahabharata.