

King, Identity and Islamization: Psycho-social Aspects of Religious Conversion in Southeast Asia in the 15th – 17th Centuries

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ABSTRACT: *One of the most tremendous events in the history of Southeast Asia is the massive wave of Islamization, the process that still attracts big curiosity among the historians. Islamization has radically replaced the centuries-rooted pre-Islamic belief. Based on the fact that Islamization took place in the period of lively commerce of Southeast Asia, many have said that one of the strong motivations being Muslim was economic gains. Kingdoms and courts which mainly located in coastal ports whereby Islamization vigorously took place, gained much more state wealth from the 15-17th commercial activities. This paper examines this conclusion by looking at the phenomena deeper into indigenous worldview from the psycho-social perspective. Exploring Southeast Asian religious conversion from psycho-social perspective has come to the conclusion that indigenous converters did not merely see Islam as a religion, as a set of doctrinal worship. Global community, international cooperation and massive commercial activities conducted by Muslim traders have in fact served a value that converting to Islam meant changing identity to a brighter future.*

KEY WORDS: *the massive wave of Islamization, kingdoms and courts, Southeast Asians, and psycho-social perspective.*

INTRODUCTION

Throughout recorded history, Southeast Asia has been the place where great world civilizations have been fighting for influence. History has shown us that India, China, Islam and the West have come respectively to the region in terms of political, cultural, economic, and religious expansion. In turn, *Indianization, Cinicization, Islamization and Westernization* have

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been the inextricable part of Southeast Asian history. Approaching the shift, conflict and interaction among these civilizations must have been interesting. During the early period, the expansion of Indian culture to Southeast Asia was remarkable. Almost every aspect of life of Southeast Asia had been Indianized (Hinduized) and it was deeply-rooted for centuries. Interestingly, Islam then came to the region and relatively replaced all Hinduized things. How and why had Islam been spread progressively therefore become challenging to discover.

This essay examines the Islamization process occurring after the centuries-rooted Indianization from the psychological perspective. For it is a broad theme, this essay devotes limitedly to discover the psychological aspects of Islamic conversion especially those occurred to rulers and courts in Southeast Asia.

SOUTHEAST ASIA'S ISLAMIZATION

One of the most tremendous events in the history of Southeast Asia is the massive wave of Islamization, the process that still attracts big curiosity among the historians.¹ Notwithstanding there is continuing process of compromises with pre-Islamic beliefs, no more than around three centuries Islam has “drastically” replaced the centuries-rooted Indian culture (Hinduism-Buddhism).² Since the fifteenth century when its dissemination

¹Many seem to have agreed with this conclusion. Islamization is a great success especially when viewed from geographical aspect in which the distance between Arabia, the source where Islam born and spread, and Southeast Asia, in the traditional context, was very far. There was no established Islamic organization – in modern sense – to spread Islam at that time. Moreover, Islamization is tremendous because it had successfully replaced the long-rooted and great Indian culture in which, as pointed out by G. Coedès, the expansion of Indian Culture to Southeast Asia “is one of the outstanding events in the history of the world, one which has determined the destiny of a good portion of mankind”. For the comprehensive analyses of Indianization, see G. Coedès (1975); and Neher (1981:13).

²There is a debate among scholars in terms of what was really happened in Southeast Asia. Instead of “conversion” (to Islam or Christianity), Reid argues, what had happened was “adhesion” based on the reason that what they had done was merely reciting *shahada* (confession) and they did not leave their previous animistic and shamanistic rituals. After “conversion” they were still nominal Muslims. See Anthony Reid (1993:140-143). This has been supported by Azyumardi Azra by saying that “conversion” is generally the shift, change or replacement from previous religion to scriptural one and, consequently, insists a total commitment from the adherent. In the other hand, “adhesion” is religious moving into another without leaving previous practices. See Azyumardi Azra (1992:20-23). Another scholar, Berg, gives a comment, “what really happened was that her pattern of culture gradually absorbed elements of Islam, just earlier it had absorbed elements of Hinduism and Buddhism, and was later to absorb elements of European civilization.” See C.C Berg (1955:137).

has spread out through the archipelago, Islam has emerged as the most important feature of the Southeast Asian world and plunged the former great Indian culture into the corner of history.³ Islam as Hall pointed out, “conveys of a sudden break” of Hinduism history (Hall, 1970:214). “The old Hindu-Buddhist gods was forgotten, and to be Javanese began to mean to be Moslem”, said Robert R. Jay (1963:6) when he was describing the successful early Islamization in Java. In short, the interruption of Islam and its spread, as noted by G. Coedès (1975:253), has “cut the spiritual ties” between Hinduized Southeast Asia with Brahmanic India and “sounded the death knell for Indian culture in Farther India” (Coedès, 1975:251).

Apart from being interesting, tracing the course of Islamization in Southeast Asia therefore must have been significant on the ground that, Islam, after the period of conversion or “religious revolution”, has been the key to understanding socio-political changes in Southeast Asia ever since. So far, various reasons and stressing of analyses of conversion have been studied by many scholars. Reid, for instance, constitutes seven attractions of conversion which he seemingly grasps from native’s point of view towards the new faith notably portability, association with wealth, military success, writing, memorization, healing, and a predictable moral universe.⁴ Sardesai points out sociological aspects such as fashion, the role of Syafe’i school, the ruler’s examples, marriage, trade rivalry, advent of Christianity, and Sufi missionaries as the indigenous reasons of accepting Islam (Sardesai, 1993:53-55). Coedès discerns Hinduism as a supporting factor of conversion. He argues that the aristocracy of Hinduism and it was designed only for the elite “explains the ease and speed with which the masses adopted Sanghalese Buddhism and Islam”.⁵ And, contrast to Coedès, Soebardi explains Islamic side as an important thing of crossing the boundary. He notes Islamic social concern, the easiness of both Islamic ritual and method of conversion and the spiritual equality before God as attractive call of Islam (Soebardi, 1976:40).

³It is important to separate between “the process of Indianization” and “heritage.” The former has long time come to an end by the coming of Islam. Even in recent time Indonesia, Islamization tends to keep continuing. While Islamization becomes stronger, the “abangan,” as a cultural heritage of Hinduism, tend to be more and more Islamic (*santri*) and reduced in number in the New Order period. On the other hand, as time goes by, Indianization or Hinduization, become the heritage of the past.

⁴See Anthony Reid ed. (1993:132-201). In another book, while quoting Max Weber, Anthony Reid has also seen “disruptive social order” as another attraction of conversion. See Anthony Reid (1993:152).

⁵See G. Coedès (1975:33). Interestingly, Contrast to G. Coedès’ perspective, Robert R. Jay sees another side of Hinduism. He argues that the similarity between Hindu and Islam is in fact an important reason of conversion. See Robert R. Jay (1963:7).

PSYCHO-SOCIAL PERSPECTIVE

Apart from such established accounts, this essay will examine another reason of conversion that so far does not get much attention in the analyses of Southeast Asian Islamization namely psycho-social perspective. By this approach I mean, phenomena where Southeast Asians psychologically internalized and grasped the social environment and drove them to make an important decision to convert into Islam as a new religion. In the psycho-social perspective, the history of Southeast Asia is not history of outsiders,⁶ historian construction, ruler's records or dominant perceptions but "a view from within". It is an indigenous perspective on daily social phenomena rolled by common traders. "Southeast Asian traders as historical actors", Lombard says, "is less described and less recognized" (Lombard, 2005:3 and 9). Psycho-social perspective is a national-centric approach in the Indonesian historiography that has been initiated since the 1970s.

Grounded by an international network of trading system of Southeast Asia in the thirteenth until the seventeenth centuries, economic ends were often mentioned as broadly agreed reasons and clear motivations of conversion (Neher, 1981:15). Despite this being unchallenged, however, I argue that the problem is actually not as simple as just being an economic one. More important than that, grasping the world situation and international trading network, millennial factors such as hopes, promises, and identity are significant to take into account. Therefore, I will explore psychological aspects of conversion. Instead of purely economic interests, conversion to Islam, as noted by Neher, "brought the traders into an international community of Muslims, the ummat, which became a significant aspect of economic life in Indonesia. The greater sense of community and trust among Muslim traders extended their entrepreneurial advantage" (Neher, 1981:15).

In other words, this essay will devote to examine the indigenous worldview – represented by their rulers and court – in perceiving outer-world (international dynamics) which led them to adopt Islam. The essay attempts to grasp the psycho and socio-political background of the rulers' conversion in terms of Islamization in Southeast Asia. This approach, I hope, will enrich other established perspectives, and I think it is prudent to quote Braudel

⁶Perception of these outsiders have a long period of time been the trait of Southeast Asian history in the forms of Chinese chronicles, Arabic stories or Portugese and Dutch notes. Due to these outsider's testimonies, according to Denys Lombard (2005:10), "Southeast Asia has long been viewed as a place of meeting, accommodating and colonizing; several terms like 'influence' and 'cultural impact' have its strong emphasis and importances in their historiography".

point of view when he said that all things in the past – human, event, nature, and global situation to which this essay is devoted – “have their own rhythms of life and growth, and the new history of conjuncture will be complete only when it has made up a whole orchestra of them all” (Braudel, 1972:30).

TRADE, COURT AND CONVERSION

The significant role of Southeast Asian courts and rulers in terms of religious conversion in early Islamization period was undoubtful. When exploring Islamization along the sea-route and rulers’ position before their traditional society, many historians find it hard not to mention the role of court and the ruler. Milner, for that reason, warns us to give them adequate attention.

The Southeast Asian ruler should be portrayed as (and present himself as) playing so significant role in the Islamization process, that both the innovations in and the inculcation of the religion should be attributed to him, is to be expected. The centrality of the ruler is the dominant characteristic of the Muslim South-East Asian state (Milner, 1983:31).

There are at least three reasons why the ruler and court should be paid more attention:

Firstly, there was the peculiar and strategic position of ruler before his people. Southeast Asian worldview of kingdom and their ruler was quite homogeneous. This was a meeting of the Javanese, Burmese, Thai and Khmer political traditions in one side and Indian political religious ideas in another. Reid describes that traditional belief of power at the courts of Southeast Asia was “spiritual”. The powerful ruler was “best controlled the cosmic forces, [...] not only mediated with the gods but embodied them on earth” (Reid, 1993:169).

By way of the combination between “secular commands” and “religious weapons”, Southeast Asian kings substituted earlier local chieftains. A king was not only declared “as an intermediary between man and divine beings; he claimed to be an incarnation of Bodhisatva or a Hindu deity” (William, 1976:25). In the case of Malay, Milner points out, “like his Javanese counterpart, the Malay Raja was also believed to be the owner of all the land in his territory and his subjects referred to themselves as the Raja’s slaves (*patek*)”. Yet, “Malays considered and described themselves,” says Milner, “as living not in states or under a divinely revealed law but rather under a particular Raja” (Milner, 1983:31).

The Javanese believed that “one need to spend only a few days in a royal court to be aware of the “almost idolatrous veneration” which the

rulers governed on behalf of God, they also believed the land and people were possessions of the ruler himself".⁷ Minangkabau's Raja Alam was viewed as God's emanation. Like that of Pasai subjects, Dampier pointed out, as quoted by Milner, that the Mindanaus persuaded their ruler "with the greatest respect and veneration, creeping low, and often times on their knees" (Milner, 1983). When Islam came to this structure of society with its such established traditional worldview, the ruler's and subject's position did not change and in turn facilitated an outlet for an effective process of Islamization. Once the ruler converted, he would have been easily followed by his people. The example of this form conversion was remarkable throughout Southeast Asian kingdoms.

Secondly, there was the ruler's linkage with the international trading network. The peak of Islamization in Southeast Asia took place during "the age of commerce" which Reid identifies as occurring from 1450 up to 1680. It can be said that during that time, there was relatively no kingdoms, especially those existing in city-ports, which had no business with trade. Meanwhile, the trading situation itself was reaching a peak of activity, in particular during the period of the silver boom, 1570-1630 (Reid, 1993:133). In order to keep surviving, it was seemingly impossible for Southeast Asian courts not to bind themselves with the international trading stream at that time.⁸ No kingdom and court of city-ports not to be connected with international situation.

Consequently, the relation between courts and trading activities was remarkable. It is in this sense that Hooker pointed out, "Islam was characteristically a court phenomena" (Hooker, 1983:7), in which the dominant traders like Arabs, Muslim Indians and Chinese took decisive roles. As a missionary religion, by way of trading, Islam spread through

⁷See Milner (1983). The Javanese concept of power seems to be more philosophical and somewhat complicated rather than other Southeast Asians let alone which has evolved in the West. For the Javanese, power was believed as abstract, the sources of power are heterogenous, the accumulation of power has no inherent limits, power is morally ambiguous. In the other hand, from the interrelations between contrasting premises, the coherence and consistency of that tradition derive and change. Yet, power turned out to be concret, homogeneous, the quantum of power in the universe is constant, and finally, power does not raise the question of legitimacy. See Benedict R.O'G. Anderson (1990); Donal K. Emerson (1976); Fachry Ali (1986); and G. Moedjanto (1987).

⁸McCloud constitutes that in Southeast Asian traditional state itself, one of the state functions was to manage the international trade. "The principal functions of the state were (1) control of conflicts; (2) resource management as population densities increased; (3) management of growing domestic commerce; and (4) management of international trade". See Donald McCloud (1995:89).

Southeast Asian city-ports where trading transactions between Muslim traders and local kingdoms took place. "Conversion to Islam", Jay concludes, "spread like a wave, from the west to east, through the states of archipelago [...]. Thereafter, over a span of two centuries most of the major trading centers, including the ports of north Java, came under the control of local Moslem princes" (Jay, 1963:5).

Thirdly, there was a wide impact of ruler conversion. In the pre-Islamic Southeast Asian point of view, rulers were perceived as "god-kings", "god-emanations", and "god-reincarnations" by which the subjects served with their body and soul. These perceptions continued to existing during the penetration of Islam. Hence, the conversion of Southeast Asian rulers intensively facilitated the acceleration of the massive Islamization. The *Sejarah Melayu* informed that Sultan Mohammed Syah, the Raja of Melaka, "as the first in his state to be converted, and they relate that he 'commanded' all the people of Melaka "whether of high or low degree" to become Muslim" (Milner, 1983:30).

In Buton, Halu Oleu or Timbang-timbangan, the sixth king of Buton Kingdom converted to Islam in 1538 and was inaugurated as *'ulul amri wa qa'imuddin* (the ruler and religious leader). After his conversion, the people of Buton soon followed his step accepting the new religion. After adapting Islam in 1605, Alauddin the ruler of Gowa, changed his kingdom into Islam where he put himself the first *sultan*. After announcing Islam as the new formal state religion, he ordered his people to replace their previous belief with Islam. Not only his people, Alauddin also shouted his neighbouring kingdoms out to like Bone, Soppeng and Wajo to unite themselves in Islam. This was done due to the wider expansion of the Dutch Colonial that has reached Maluku sea border (Poesponegoro & Notosusanto eds., 1993:26). Islam came into the kingdom of Banjar in Southern Kalimantan brought by Demak when Majapahit Kingdom was in the period of regression and nearly came to an end. Its famous king was Sultan Suriansyah, the first sultan who formerly known as King Daha. Suriansyah was widely recognized as an important leader in the history of Kalimantan. Thanks to his conversion, the Banjar noblemen and its people converted into Islam. The Banjar Kingdom occupied vast area like Sambas, Sukadana, Kotawaringin, Sampit, Batanglawai, Medawi, Landak, Mendawai, Pulau Laut, Kutai Pasir and Berau (Poesponegoro & Notosusanto eds., 1993:76).

It was allegedly known that Islam had been brought to the people of Makassar, as informed in the chronicle of Tallo, by Sultan Abdullah of Tallo (Milner, 1983:30), and it was then followed by the formally acceptance of Islam by the Makassarese and all Bugis states in the period 1605-1612

(Reid, 1993:93). Apart from the spread of Islam, Southeast Asian rulers also were believed to be the guardians of Islamic shari'a. Iskandar Muda (1607-1636), the Aceh ruler, "assumed responsibility for the enforcement of Islamic doctrine for his people". Meanwhile Siegel claims that "Sultan was seen as the explicit defender of the Islamic Law, and the state was justified as the necessary apparatus through which to administer it" (Siegel, 1969:39).

The result of this trend was that the Islamization process particularly in urban city-ports along the sea-route where the courts were found tended to be more effective. Melaka, apart from being "the greatest port of the region", was also "encouraging the extension of the faith throughout the coastal regions of the Malays Peninsula and eastern Sumatra. New Muslim port-states grew up along the spice route to north Java and Maluku, as well as another trading route to Brunei and Manila" (Reid ed., 1993:133).

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

It would be misleading if, in analyzing aspects of conversion, one merely emphasizes the local or regional dynamics of Southeast Asia. The international situation from the thirteenth until the seventeenth centuries in fact needs to take into account. The link between the international situation with the inter-states trading stream in the archipelago is very much an explanatory factor, but it is important to note, not in the context of economic gain but on the psychological one. There is no doubt that the greatness of the commercial empire of Melaka constituted the most important trading route in pre-colonialist time. Ricklefs describes as follows:

At Malacca, this Indonesian trading system was linked to routes reaching westward to India, Persia, Arabia, Syria, East Africa and the Mediterranean, northward to Siam, and Pegu, and eastward to China and perhaps Japan. This was the greatest trading system in the world at this time, and the two crucial exchange points were Gujerat in northwest India and Malacca (Ricklefs, 1981:19).

Thanks to the surrounding international trading along the sea route, cosmopolitan situation was strongly felt by the indigenous people. Islamic sultanates of the archipelago is then functioned as a mixing place of political activities and busy trades which formed an international culture. Lombard compares some similarities of trading culture in city-ports of Southeast Asian sultanates with those he witnessed in Italy and Vlaanderen. Sultan included his family and relatives, he asserts, involved in the trading and

owned some stocks of marine expeditions. The state, therefore, owned very much income from various trading taxes. Asian nations lively and busily visited these sea-ports and united in the trading businesses without ethnic and religious borders. Europeans also found there and took lessons from the indigenous people (Lombard, 1996:7).

By way of this trade route, the Southeast Asians did not only see the extraordinary trading activities occurring, but they also witnessed and were faced with the reality of international realm and cosmopolitanism of Muslim Arabs, Indian and Chinese traders. Tome Pires witnessed directly the cosmopolitanism of these city-ports he found. In Melaka were found foreigners coming from many countries: Gujarat, Bengali Tamil, Pegu, Siam, China, Habysi, Armenia and others. They mixed up with the traders of Melayu, Java, Bugis, Luzon and Ryukyu island. Pires listed approximately 60 ethnicities. This cosmopolitanism were also found in Cirebon, Banten, Ternate, Aceh, Makasar, Banjarmasin and Palembang (Lombard, 1996:7). In this context, psychologically, being Muslim not merely meant gaining some economic advantages but also entering the global community. In regard to this, Neher, is quoted as saying:

Conversion to Islam brought the traders into an international community of Muslims, the ummat, which became a significant aspect of economic life in Indonesia. The greater sense of community and trust among Muslim traders extended their entrepreneurial advantage (Neher, 1981:15).

As well as trade, a common set of beliefs and rituals offered by Islam also underpinned the idea of an international community, in particular pilgrimage, were Muslims went to Mecca for the hajj during that period. This Islamic tenet “serves to integrate the Southeast Asian Muslim into a global community” (Ellen, 1983:73).

For the rulers, binding with the international community, apart from giving hopes and promises, was also a strategic step in obtaining some advantages:

Firstly, the ruler would have personally been bound to the international circle of political and economical relationships. As the power of Islam was increasing both politically and economically, conversion must have been strengthened the ruler’s political position because Islamic power will more or less influence the rise and fall of kingdoms. In these sense, Jay points out, “by the later half of the fifteenth century a number of Javanese coverts had risen to positions of political leadership in the north Javanese coastal towns of Ngampel (Surabaja), Bonang, Gresik, Demak, Tuban, Djepara, and Tjirebon” (Jay, 1963:6; van Leur, 1955; and Berg, 1955:155).

Secondly, conversion must have been increased their economic trade and state wealth. For the rulers, accepting the new religion meant strengthening their economic base because they would have kept in touch with merchants of Arabs, Muslim Indians and Muslim Chinese. As mentioned above, the sultanate states of Southeast Asia, owned very much income from various trading, shares and taxes.

Thirdly, conversion meant reinforcing the state. Historical evidence tells us about the Acehese Sultanate alliance with Turkey where the Sultan asked for help to Turks against Portuguese (Reid, 1969:395-414; and Suminto, 1980:301-310). Madjapahit kingdom was believed to have been defeated by Muslim warriors of Demak in 1520, than was followed by some fifty years of Muslim Mataram hegemony in Java in the seventeenth century. This raised stronger assumption that Muslims were very strong in a military sense. Some Muslim courts had been identified to have military strength consisting of a royal guard of 3,000 troops in Pasai (about A.D. 1518), 40,000 troops in Aceh (A.D. 1620), 30,000 troops were offered in Tuban “within 24 hours”, to 100,000 troops available “within 4 leagues of Malacca, A.D. 1510 (Reid, 1980:329). For the weak courts which were often defeated in battle (Javanese, Lombok, Sumbawa, and Bugis courts), “the new religions with their popular or commercial support could be a source of strength for a challenger to the throne” (Reid, 1983:160).

It is understandable that Islamization in Southeast Asia was by and large, since the beginning, welcomed by rulers and courts because it was here that international trading took place and it was at this point the local rulers became involved with the new religion and global community (Hooker, 1983:7).

NEW IDENTITY

There is no dispute among historians that Southeast Asia has long standing been the place in which great civilizations of India, China, Islam and Europe had fought for influence. “Indianization”, “Chinesization”, “Islamization”, and European “colonialization” are the terms which have strongly determined historical direction of Southeast Asia. Since the period of Indianization onwards, other foreign influences and social changes have become characteristic of the international aspects of the region.

In the fifteenth to seventeenth century world, Denys Lombard argues that in Southeast Asia there was an emergence of a new type of society that characterized by at least two new great changes: in economy and political life. The great change in economy was rapid development of monetary economy where Southeast Asians for the first time started to create their

own monetary economy and established a currency. The development of a monetary economy must then have shaken the old social system and changed the system of dependence. "A new elite class has been formed", he says, "who were not depend on birth and land farms, but based on the wealth of movable stuffs" (Lombard, 1996:165).

In that period, apart from the restructuring of the slavery system, there was also a development of a new conception of state in which the state was no longer viewed as the interrelation between micro and macro cosmos but the human law of "social contract". The existence of the sultanate in Southeast Asia itself was an important stage of modernization of political systems (Lombard, 1996:178).

In the time where most Southeast Asians were influenced by these new social, economic and political changes, they had simultaneously been recruited into the international economic system. Because of this, the need of self-transformation into the new world with a new identity was then unavoidable. In facing the great social changes in seventeenth century Southeast Asia, the old tradition and mentality were no longer relevant. In this context, conversion to the new faith found its explanation. Apart from being inevitable, conversion also meant having a new life and obtaining a new identity. This changing identity of the indigenous people could be seen in the sixteenth century after a great deal of people "both rural and urban converted to Islam". Preceded by their rulers, they then left "former ways of life, abandoning pork, accepting Islamic modes of dress, salutation, and ritual, and identifying themselves as part of an international Islamic community" (Reid, 1993:143).⁹

In addition, another important aspect of conversion which explains that accepting Islam meant gaining new identity is, as Coedès argues, the aristocracy of Hinduism. As history proved that Southeast Asian Hinduism came from India, Indian caste system also has "sunk deep roots into all levels of Javanese society" (Jay, 1963:5) as well as in the source. Doctrinally speaking, there will forever be no chance for the lower Hinduism followers

⁹Contrast to Reid's argument that the Islamic equality principle "might have been extremely subversive" (see Reid, 1993:169; Reid ed., 1993:83-84) for the Southeast Asian traditional rulers, I argue that the term "subversive" could be applied to only kingdoms which had strong Hindu influence as it was in inland states of Java. And, conversely, it is difficult to employ to Sumatranese states for instance in which Indian influence was relatively less. As a matter of fact, the idea of equality was relatively much easier accepted by non-Java states (e.g. Pasai and Melaka) and Javanese coastal states (Gresik, Tuban, Demak, Tjirebon, and Banten) which culturally much opened for foreign influence. For that reason, conversion to Islam had been preceded long before by these states rather than Javanese inland states.

to change their status into higher level as long as they come from the lower. When Islam came with the principle of equality of all believers before God, Islamic doctrine has been the strong mainspring for proselytization. This equality doctrine along the Islamic history has been the liberating force for hierarchically oppressed society. In Southeast Asia, particularly in Java, the equality principle found its momentum. For the lower Southeast Asian Hinduists, being Muslim meant to ascent their status, dignity, human values, and new identity. Islam treats them as respectful human beings. This principle, as noted by Nieuwenhuijze, is a supporting factor of acceleration of Islamization for the urban and people of northern coastal Java who disliked Hinduist caste doctrine (van Nieuwenhuijze, 1958:36).

CONCLUSION

Southeast Asia is a complex configuration of history. A long period of islamization has shown us many faces of the importance of this religion. Historically speaking, Islam has played not only as a system of theology or a set of religious dogma, it is a powerful psychological driver of history. Exploring psycho-social aspects of Islamization inspires us that history can not be understood only by one single factor. The conversion of the indigenous rulers and courts milieu into Islam in the age of lively commerce of Southeast Asia, as believed by some historians, strongly motivated by economic advantages. Deeper analysis has shown us that psychological aspects such as global community, international cooperation, trading activities, state wealth and changing identity have been the stronger reason of conversion and their trading activities. There is always something lies behind social phenomena which is sometime unseen.

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