



Accompanied by Flutes and Tambourines, A
Minangkabau Gentleman Demonstrates the
Traditional Adau-Adau Dance Behind the
Mosque of Mandiangin, West Sumatra.

Photo by Claire Holt, 1938.

ADAT AND ISLAM:
AN EXAMINATION OF CONFLICT IN MINANGKABAU

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I

The Minangkabau area, which lies on the west coast of Sumatra, is one of the most Islamized regions in Indonesia. At the same time it is famous for its strong attachment to its adat (body of local customs), which, it has commonly been assumed, stands opposed to Islamic law. It is this contradiction that causes Bosquet to find the Minangkabau case "a remarkable paradox in the sociology of Islam"⁽¹⁾ and Van Ronkel to ponder how the antithesis between adat and Islam, between the local custom and the universal religion, can make a synthesis that becomes the foundation of the "Minangkabau character."⁽²⁾ I wish to consider here the extent to which the "eternal" conflict between adat and Islam exists, whether it creates a situation in which a certain reconciliation can be achieved, and how the people of the area themselves see a situation in which the apparently opposing systems are able to impose simultaneously their patterns of behavior and standards of values. The question, it seems to me, involves the whole problem of the position and function of conflict in Minangkabau society.

II

Adat is usually defined as that local custom which regulates the interaction of the members of a society, and by this definition we would expect adat in Minangkabau to be a system in opposition to the sjariah, the Islamic law. It is that, but, because the concept of adat in Minangkabau society is ambiguous, it is also more. On the one hand adat does refer to the local custom; on the other it is conceived as the whole structural system of the society, of which local custom is only a component. Adat in this second sense is supposed to form the entire value system, the basis of all ethical and legal judgment, as well as the source of social expectations. In short, it represents the ideal pattern of behavior.⁽³⁾

(1) G. H. Bousquet, Introduction à l'étude de l'Islam Indonésien, Paris, 1938, p. 241.

(2) Ph. S. van Ronkel, Rapport betreffende de Godsdienstige verschijnselen ter Sumatra's Westkust, Batavia, 1916, p. 2 (hereafter referred to as Rapport).

(3) Cf. Adat "used to denote the whole complex of custom, rules, beliefs and etiquette handed down by tradition from immemorial

As the ideal pattern of behavior in Minangkabau society, adat consists of all the elements that have been absorbed into one undifferentiated value system. Snouck Hurgronje addressed himself to a similar phenomenon in his classic book on Atjehese society when he criticized a commentator who argued that, because the Atjehese are Moslem, conflict within their society arises not from questions of ideology, but from human weaknesses.⁽⁴⁾ According to Snouck, people -- as individuals or as a community -- experience the religious and the non-religious elements of their lives as an inseparable development. Consequently, he argues that it is not sufficient to look only at the dogma -- and for that matter the ideal pattern of behavior -- but to "observe also the Muslim as the individual and as a member of a community, as a social being, and see what happens to the teaching of Islam in the practice of every day life."⁽⁵⁾ Thus Snouck stresses the cleavage between the ideal pattern of behavior and the actual practice, subtracting from the social system the non-Islamic elements -- the adat, used in its narrower sense.

In the Minangkabau context the distinction made by Snouck Hurgronje is certainly a crucial one. Not only is adat supposed to be contradictory to Islam but it is also assumed that in Minangkabau society the individual as well as the community are divided into two opposing systems of behavior. It is assumed that a person's attitude toward fellow members of the society is mostly governed by adat, while his relation to the transcendental being is determined by religion. The inability of individuals to reconcile these two opposing values may result in social fragmentation. Thus it is assumed that in Minangkabau there is a continuing struggle between the adat and the religious groups, a conflict which is called by Schrieke the "political myth"⁽⁶⁾ of Minangkabau.

times..." P. E. de Josselin de Jong, Minangkabau and Negeri Sembilan: Socio-political Structure in Indonesia, Dissertation, Leiden, 1951, p. 85.

- (4) C. Snouck Hurgronje, The Achenese (trans. by A. W. S. O'Sullivan, Leiden, 1906), Vol. I, pp. 11-14.
- (5) C. W. J. Drewes, "Snouck Hurgronje and the Study of Islam", B.K.I., CXIII, i (1951), pp. 1-15.
- (6) B. Schrieke, Indonesian Sociological Studies, Vol. I, The Hague/Bandung, 1955, p. 150. To the concept of the two conflicting groups in Minangkabau society in the later development was added a new group, that of the Western educated people. Thus it was assumed that the development of modern Minangkabau society was based on a "triangular conflict." Concerning the concept of "triangular conflict", see: H. Bowman, Enige beschouwingen over de ontwikkeling van het Indonesisch Nationalisme op Sumatra's Westkust, Batavia, 1949.

The ambiguity of the adat-concept is also reflected in the works of some Minangkabau writers who, while trying to structuralize the value system as a whole, also strive to reconcile the two components of it. They try to prove that Islam and adat as Weltanschauungen are not in conflict: Islam is complementary to adat, and the synthesis between adat and Islam -- as one of these writers puts it -- is not like the combination of "water and milk" but like "the union of water and oil in milk."⁽⁷⁾ Another writer, Nasrun, attempts to prove that in the real life of the individual and the group the theoretically possible conflict between Islam and adat does not exist. In fact, he questions the legitimacy of the problem itself. According to Nasrun, the ancient Minangkabau tradition was based on the wisdom that nature should be taken as the teacher, while in the Quran there is also a passage in which God indicates that He reveals some of His secrets through nature to those who can interpret nature properly. In short, Nasrun argues, Islam is the perfection of adat, not only in its supernatural aspect but also in the formulation of adat itself.⁽⁸⁾

This striving for reconciliation between divergent components is not a new phenomenon for Minangkabau thought. The traditional kaba -- story -- and tambo -- history or chronicle -- provide illustrations of continuing efforts to integrate and to adjust the contrasting aspects of Minangkabau social system and values. As has been suggested by Johns,⁽⁹⁾ there has been a clear tendency to embed Islamic teachings into the ideal pattern of behavior. The later versions of the traditional kaba and tambo accordingly tend to contain more specifically Islamic elements than the previous ones.

III

The ambiguity of the position of adat, and for that matter also of religion, cannot be properly understood without taking into consideration the function of conflict in the society as a whole. In Minangkabau, the concept of conflict is not only recognized but is institutionalized within the social system itself. Conflict is seen dialectically, as essential to achieving the integration of the society.

(7) Hamka, Ajahku: Riwayat Hidup Dr. H. Abd. Karim Amrullah dan Perdjjuangan Kaum Agama di Sumatera, Djakarta, 1958, pp. 23-24.

(8) M. Nasrun, Dasar Falsafah Adat Minangkabau, Djakarta, 1957, pp. 21-27.

(9) Anthony H. Johns (ed. and trans.), Rantjak Dilabueh: A Specimen of the Traditional Literature of Central Sumatra, Ithaca, 1951, Introduction.

The traditional Minangkabau social structure could be divided into two opposing systems -- the royal family system and that of the commoners. The former was patrilineal, the latter matrilineal. Both, however, were inseparable parts of the Alam Minangkabau -- the Minangkabau world. In a sense, the royalty could be considered as the representative of the male-principle and the commoners of the female principle, both principles being integrated by a "sacral marriage."⁽¹⁰⁾

Within the royal family system the concept of unavoidable conflict for the sake of integration was again manifested. Since the sixteenth century -- the earliest report concerning Minangkabau after the reign of Adityawarman in the fourteenth century -- there were three recognized reigning kings in Minangkabau. They were the King of the World (Radja Alam), the King of Adat (Radja Adat), and the King of Religion (Radja Ibadat); together they were called the Radjo Tigo Selo (Kings of the Three Seats). The last two kings were regarded as the final authorities in their respective fields. Josselin de Jong has pointed out that the King of Adat had always been the symbol of the female element and was sometimes called Tuan Gadis (the Girl Lord). The "king" could be a man or a woman, but he or she was supposed to let his or her hair grow long. The King of Religion, on the other hand, symbolized the male principle. The two kings were together called the Radjo Duo Selo (Kings of the Two Seats). The third lord, the King of the World, combined elements of both the other two.⁽¹¹⁾

Kingship never functioned as a governing institution in Minangkabau proper. In the regions of "two laras and three luhak"⁽¹²⁾ -- the kingship served as the final court of appeal

(10) Cf. Josselin de Jong's interpretation of the Sedjarah Melaju, concerning the "co-operation" between the royalty and the commoners in "The Character of the Malay Annals", in John Bastin and R. Rolvink (eds.), Malayan and Indonesian Studies, Oxford, 1964, pp. 235-241. On the "history" of the Minangkabau royal family, see: Dt. Batuah Sango, Tambo Alam Minangkabau, Pajakumbuh (n.d.); Zahara Daulay, Minangkabau -- A Preliminary Study of the Culture and People, M.A. thesis, Cornell University, 1960, pp. 41-48. One of the oldest comprehensive accounts of the tambo, which was apparently collected from several versions, is: E. Francis, "Korte beschrijving van het Nederlandsch grondgebied ter Westkust van Sumatra", T.N.I., II, i, 1839, pp. 100-111.

(11) Josselin de Jong, Minangkabau, pp. 108-109. The oldest account concerning the division of functions between the three kings is the Kaba Tjindua Mato. The latest version of the popular story was edited by A. Dt. Batuah and published in 1958 at Djakarta.

(12) Minangkabau proper refers to the "three luhak", the original homes of the Minangkabau people according to tradition. The

for the commoners and also as the only common bond of the nagari ("village republics"). It was more a sacral equilibrium power than a ruling institution, and can be regarded as representing -- to use Redfield's terms -- the Great Tradition vis-a-vis the Little Traditions of the nagari. The institution of kingship, then, can be regarded in many respects as the embodiment of opposing yet complementary systems. As a system, the kingship was in eternal conflict with the commonality, yet the kingship itself served to maintain the equilibrium of the contending "little traditions" -- the nagaris.

The nagaris in Minangkabau proper were not ruled by representatives of the king, but the rantau -- the acquired territories⁽¹³⁾ -- were under the control of the royal family. The rantau, which surrounded Minangkabau proper, were ruled by the radja, who were the king's representatives, while the nagari in the three luhak were ruled by penghulu. The sociological consequence of this situation has been that in the rantau, we can make a clear distinction between the aristocratic and non-aristocratic classes, which is not the case in Minangkabau proper. The latter area, usually called the darat, possessed a social organization based on genealogical principles, while that of the rantau was based on considerations of territory. The rantau territories were theoretically divided into several parts, belonging to individual members of the royal family and the ministers,⁽¹⁴⁾ who received from them annual revenues. Consequently the nagari in the rantau -- especially those along the coast -- could, unlike those of the darat, appeal in time of trouble to their respective royal overlords for moral and physical support.⁽¹⁵⁾

regions considered to be the original homesites are Agam, Tanah Datar and Luhak Lima Puluh Kota; see Sango, Tambo, pp. 37-40. Until today the administrative divisions of West Sumatra province follow these traditional lines.

- (13) On the areas which are regarded as the rantau, see: A. M. Dt. Maruhun Batuah and D. H. Bagindo Tanameh, Hukum Adat dan Adat Minangkabau, Djakarta (n.d.), pp. 69-93; Sango, Tambo, pp. 74-81.
- (14) Concerning the ministers see, for instance: Josselin de Jong, Minangkabau, pp. 102-106.
- (15) For instance, in 1772, when Pauh, a coastal town, was at war with Padang, which was aided by the V.O.C. -- the Dutch trading company -- the leaders of Pauh appealed to the king. The nephew of the King of Pagarrujung, Radjo Saruaso, came with his army to help Pauh. See: E. B. Kielstra, "Onze kennis van Sumatra's Westkust omstreeks de helft der achtiende eeuw", B.K.I., 36 (1887), pp. 537-538.

Despite continuing jealousies between the rantau and darat, and institutional conflict which sometimes erupted into war -- as has been clearly depicted in a famous traditional "heroic romance", Kaba Tjindua Mato (The Story of Tjindua Mato) -- each region needed the other. Not only was the darat, according to historical accounts, rich with gold⁽¹⁶⁾ and the rantau the center of trade, but, more importantly, the darat and rantau were integrated by their common attachment to an ideal pattern of behavior which provided a place for them both. It is regarded in tradition that the rantau, as the window to the outside world, functions as the religious proselytizer vis-a-vis the interior; hence it is said that agama mendaki, religion ascended, went up from the shore to the hills. The darat, as the original home of the Minangkabau, is the source of adat, and it is accordingly said that adat menurun, adat descended.

The concept of rantau, besides referring to the geographical enlargement of the Minangkabau world, means in a more general sense to be outside one's own community. Going away from one's nagari to others in the old days, for instance, was considered as going to the rantau. The custom of going to the rantau can be regarded as an institutional outlet for the frustrations of unmarried young men, who lack individual responsibility and rights in their own society. To a married man, going to the rantau means a temporary release from two families' conflicting expectations, pressed upon him as a husband and a member of the maternal family. Going to the rantau is furthermore considered as preparation for entering the realm of adulthood, and it is held to be required as the means of fulfilling one of the Nine Pillars of Law, "recognition of the greatness of the world."⁽¹⁷⁾

Books concerning Minangkabau adat usually do not fail to recognize the conflicting political systems of the two laras into which Minangkabau is divided, the Koto Piliang and Bodi Tjaniago. According to legend, they are the heirs of the two legendary adat-givers, Datuk Ketemanggungan and Datuk Perpatih nan Sebatang.⁽¹⁸⁾ The conflict between these two adat-givers, who were half-brothers, resulted in a permanent institutional conflict between their heirs, the Koto Piliang (Datuk Ketemanggungan) and the Bodi Tjaniago (Datuk Perpatih nan Sebatang). The political system of the Bodi Tjaniago is based on "egalitarian"

(16) Van Bassel's report, in Kielstra, B.K.I., 36 (1887), pp. 508-509.

(17) See: articles by Datuk Sutan Maharadja, in Adatrechtbundel, 27, 1928, pp. 209-320.

(18) On the legend, see: Sango, Tambo, pp. 21ff; I. Datuk Sanguno Diradjo, Mustika Adat Alam Minangkabau, Djakarta, 1955, pp. 69-76, also Josselin de Jong, Minangkabau, pp. 71-74.

principles in the sense that the nagari of this tradition is ruled by a group of penghulu as the representatives of their respective suku.⁽¹⁹⁾ The Koto Piliang recognizes the position of a puntjak -- a chief -- as the primus inter pares, and it is thus assumed to be more autocratic. This difference is also reflected in the criminal laws of the two laras and the arrangement of their council halls -- the balai, where the leaders hold their meetings. The recognized conflict between these two political systems, which exists not only in theory but also in the practice of institutionalized wars -- perang batu (stone war), perang bedil (rifle war), etc.⁽²⁰⁾ -- must nevertheless also end in social integration,⁽²¹⁾ for the survival of one laras can only be achieved by the existence of the other.

This interplay between conflict and integration is also reflected in the position of the individual vis-a-vis society, for a man's responsibility to his self is identical with his responsibility to his fellow members of society. The institution of marriage is a clear expression of such interplay between conflict and integration. The marriage ceremony is in fact a recognized battlefield of honor between the two families, both sides trying to enhance and to maintain their "honor" in the ceremony. It is not very unusual that as a result of the ceremonial battle the marriage itself is annulled, if one faction thinks that its kemegahan, honor, has been undermined. Marriage is an integrative institution, but it should be achieved by manifesting the latent conflict. Moreover, for a man marriage means the involvement in a new kind of conflict between the ideal husband -- "urang sumando",⁽²²⁾ observing responsibilities to his wife and

(19) Suku originally meant the Minangkabau clan. A suku can be regarded as the smallest political and religious unit.

(20) For an illustration of how the adat-war is fought, see: C. Th. Couperus, "De instellingen der Maleijers in de Padangsche Bovenlanden", T.B.G., IV (1855), pp. 21-22.

(21) The division between the two traditions is considered to be the first "eternal" principle in adat, which had been "sudah talantak ditiang pandjang, nan sudah tapaku dibandan balai" -- permanently rooted in the whole system. Quoted by Th. L. Kroesen, "Het Inlandsch bestuur ter Sumatra's Westkust", T.N.I., 1873, II, p. 86. But the two must remain together, for "Bodi Tjaniago pays our taxes, decorates our balai, and forms the foundation of our rule; it is only Bodi Tjaniago that sets up the umbrella of Koto Piliang." Again, it is said that "Datuak Katumangguangan punjo karadjoan, Datuak Parapatih punjo pajuang" (Katumangguangan is the possessor of the kingship, Parapatih is the possessor of the [royal] umbrella); quoted by Josselin de Jong, Minangkabau, p. 73.

(22) See: Johns, Rantjak Dilabuh, pp. vii-viii.

his wife's relatives -- and the ideal ninik mamak -- with duties toward his sisters, sisters' children, and maternal kinsmen (suku). The ability of a man to maintain an equilibrium between these conflicting expectations is instrumental in maintaining the stability of the marriage. This question has become one of the most sensitive in Minangkabau society; for how can a man possibly fulfill his dual marital responsibilities while he has no authority in his wife's house and is no more than a "manager" in his sisters' home?(23)

It is clear from the above discussion that in Minangkabau society institutional conflict is consciously recognized and even regarded as essential to the achievement of social integration. Within this context it can be tentatively assumed that the coming of Islam to Minangkabau did not change the nature of such conflict but rather added new aspects to it.

IV

Except for some fragmentary accounts (24) the early history of the Islamization of Minangkabau is still unrecorded. The first historically known religious center was Ulakan, a small town on the west coast, north of Padang. The first ulama of this center was Sjech Burhanuddin, who died in 1704 and who was regarded in Minangkabau tradition as the first ulama who spread the religion to the interior. There are many indications, however, that Sjech Burhanuddin was not the first ulama to introduce Islam to Minangkabau, and he himself travelled to Atjeh in order to study under the famous Sjech Abduurauf of Singkel. But he seems to have been the first important ulama to establish a religious center, which eventually became the sole authority in religious matters. The earliest branch of Burhanuddin's school was established by his pupils at Pemansiangan, Kapeh-kapeh (Padang Pandjang). In religious matters the position of the tuanku (religious teacher) of Pemansiangan (25) was second only to that of Sjech Burhanuddin, the Tuanku of Ulakan. Besides instructing the new branch of his school, the Tuanku of Ulakan was able to teach the so-called four tuanku, each of whom represented the different religious "sciences" and disciplines. These

(23) Many of the novels written by Minangkabau in the early 1920's and '30's deal with this kind of conflict.

(24) Ph. S. van Ronkel, "Een Maleisch getuigenis over den weg der Islam in Sumatra", B.K.I., 75 (1919), pp. 363-378.

(25) Tuanku is one of the highest titles of the religious teachers. The teacher who is considered to be higher than tuanku is called sjech. See: Hamka, Ajahku, p. 26 (note).

four pupils came from several parts of Minangkabau, and when they finished their studies they returned to their own regions and established new religious centers. Thus, before the death of the Tuanku of Ulakan there were already several religious centers in the interior, with Ulakan as their source of authority.⁽²⁶⁾ As the "kalifah" of the Sjatariah-tariqah, it is no wonder that after his death the grave of the Tuanku of Ulakan was made into a holy place. Until the rise of the Padri movement it was still anathema to the religious teachers in Minangkabau to question the religious authority of Ulakan. In the late 18th century Marsden noted that Minangkabau was regarded "as the supreme seat of civil and religious authorities in this part of the East..."⁽²⁷⁾ By that time there were already dissident elements in the interior resisting the religious center on the coast.⁽²⁸⁾

A common and critical problem faced by all universal religions is how to adjust the existing environment to the religious doctrine. It should be noted, however, that those who brought Islam to Minangkabau, like any other sufi-oriented "missionaries", were more concerned with the purity of an individual's heart than with the religious correctness of his actions. In this case the indifferent attitude toward the Islamic duties which Marsden noted⁽²⁹⁾ is understandable. The crucial problem at the early stage of Islamization was the re-structuralization of adat in order to "interpret the heterogenetic change ... as orthogenetic."⁽³⁰⁾

The earliest impact of Islam was accordingly reflected in the new formulation of adat as the ideal pattern of behavior, to the end that the outside elements might be thoroughly absorbed into the existing order as part of a coherent system. It is very difficult to know how this reformulation of the whole structural pattern of the society was attained. In the first place there was no recognized source of adat prior to the coming of Islam, except in the scattered information provided in the tambo and the popular sayings (pepatah adat). Secondly, the real "codification" of adat began only with the introduction of the

(26) Ph. van Ronkel, "Het Heiligdom te Oelakan", T.B.G., 56 (1914), 281ff. See also: Sjech Djilal-eddin, Verhaal van den aanvang der Padri-onlusten op Sumatra, ed. by Dr. J. J. de Hollander, Leiden, 1837, pp. 3-7.

(27) W. Marsden, History of Sumatra, London, 1783, p. 343.

(28) Sjech Djilal-eddin, Verhaal, pp. 15, 47.

(29) Marsden, History, p. 346.

(30) Gustave E. von Grunebaum, Modern Islam: The Search for Cultural Identity, New York, 1964, p. 20.

Arabic script.⁽³¹⁾ Furthermore, the logical foundation of the adat formulation was also based on the Islamic "logical law" (mantik).⁽³²⁾

The Minangkabau attitude toward adat is based on the juxtaposition of the imperative continuity of the system -- tak lakang dipaneh, tak lapuak dihudjan -- and the recognition of the importance of change -- sakali aia gadang, sakali tapian barubah ("when flood comes, the bathing place moves"). Thus it is implicit in adat that it should be always renewed and adjusted to the situation -- usang-usang dipabaru, lapuak dipakadjang -- while a permanent tension within the system itself is created by the need to reconcile the basic value with the changing situation. To handle this contradiction the system is arranged in such a way that its unavoidable reevaluation can be smoothly undertaken, adat being divided into several categories, in which the permanent and the changing elements, the general principles and the local variants, are given their proper place.

There are four classes of adat, namely the adaik nan sabana adaik (adat which is truly adat), adaik istiadaik (adat of ceremonials), adaik nan taadaik (adat which has become adat), and adaik nan diadaikkan (adat which is made adat).⁽³³⁾ This hierarchical categorization of adat is a device for overcoming the tension between what should be and what is. The adaik nan sabana adaik is considered to be eternal, since it is also identical with natural law. In the later adat codification a new dimension is added to this class of adat, that of supernatural law,⁽³⁴⁾ for although Islamic doctrine was not intended to replace local practices, it was from the outset put in the highest adat category. The Quran and Hadith and the natural laws were accordingly viewed as the eternal principles that guide human spiritual and secular activities and from which actual practices and lesser values should emanate.⁽³⁵⁾

(31) Ronkel, Rapport, p. 15.

(32) Hamka, Adat Minangkabau Menghadapi Revolusi, Djakarta, 1962, p. 27. See also the method of writing employed in Sango's Tambo.

(33) For a brief explanation of these terms, see: Johns, Introduction to the Rantjak Dilabuah.

(34) J. C. van Eerde, "De adat volgens Minangkabausche bronnen," Wet en Adat, I/II, pp. 209-220.

(35) It is interesting to note that when the Dutch government wanted to introduce Western criminal law into Minangkabau the same method was applied, including in the category of the adaik nan taadaik, which can be changed in accordance with the social and local environment. See: Ph. van

Another term applied to the traditional norms of life is the tjupak nan duo -- the two measures (tjupak is a standardized bamboo measure). The tjupak nan duo consists of the tjupak usali and the tjupak buatan, the former being the original standard, the source of all values and practices, from which the tjupak buatan derives its regulations. The tjupak usali in adat is the ideal pattern of behavior, while the tjupak buatan is the realization of the ideal in actual life, which should also be in conformity with the environment.

In view of the fact that early Islamization in Minangkabau was mostly directed toward the tariqah-practices and the reformulation of the existing order, the coming of Islam did not seriously threaten the basic foundation of Minangkabau society. Instead of cultural loss the new elements meant cultural enrichment; but, ironically, they also contributed another dimension to the ongoing internal conflict. The existing tension between continuity and change, between the "great tradition" and the local variations in adat, was compounded by the contradiction inherent in Islamic doctrine. Leaving aside the eternal dilemma in religious doctrine between the unity and separation of the natural and supernatural, Islam also had to deal with the tension between its ideal universality and a real parochialism. The Islamic standard of conduct recognizes this problem, being based on the two opposing poles of obligatory and prohibited actions -- wadji and haram -- on which reward and punishment are based. Since most human actions fall outside these two categories two more are added, those of recommended and objectionable (but not forbidden) actions -- sunat and makruh -- and a third of those which are neither bad nor good: the indifferent actions, or djain.⁽³⁶⁾ In practice as well as in theory the application of these law categories is based on the Quran and Hadith, the Prophetic tradition. In order to deal with those circumstances which cannot be found in the two highest authorities, reasoning is employed as a third important source. New circumstances, it is maintained, should be decided either by analogy (qyas) or by the consensus of the ulama.

The position of reasoning is certainly one of the most crucial problems in Islamic doctrine. How, for instance, can man's responsibility to the transcendental power -- God -- be reconciled with his duty to his community? The process of Islamization in Minangkabau began with the minimum requirement of both responsibilities. It put more stress on the recognition of the eternal values, of the Omnipotent God and His Messenger.

Ronkel, "De invoering van ons Strafwetboek ter SWK naar aanteekeningen in een Maleische handschrift", T.B.B., 46 (1914), pp. 249-255.

(36) The English translation is based on H. A. R. Gibb, Mohammedanism, London, 1953, pp. 100-101.

By avoiding the potential conflict between the self and the universe at the earliest stage of its introduction, Islam was able to restructure the social value pattern so that the Quran and Hadith were given the highest place. It is within this context that we should understand the claim by the earliest sources of Minangkabau adat that "adat is based on religion, religion is based on adat" -- adaik basandi sjarak, sjarak basandi adaik.⁽³⁷⁾ Since in this sense there is no paradox in the ideal pattern of behavior between adat and religion, there is also no difference between adaik nan sabana adaik and the teachings of the Quran and Hadith.

Like the notion of the Minangkabau World -- the Alam Minangkabau -- as the integrative concept for all opposing institutions and systems of Minangkabau society, a nagari is also held to function as a smaller universe. It can be legally called a nagari if it has a balai (council hall), musadjik (mosque), labuah (road), and tapiian tampek mandi (public bathing place). The mosque is the place to perform religious duties, and the balai is the place where secular and administrative matters are discussed. Only with the existence of these two institutions can a settlement be properly called a community, in which one's responsibility to his society and to the supernatural being can be integrated. Both duties should be performed and perfected with and within the community. As ruling institution -- the nagari-council -- the balai should classically symbolize the integration of the two components, adat prescription and religious law. The members of the balai are the urang patuik, the "exemplars", a composite elite consisting of the penghulu (or "adat-chief") and his staff, the alim ulama (the religious dignitaries), and the tjadiak pandai (the "neutral" intellectuals).⁽³⁸⁾ The tjadiak pandai, whose membership in the council is based on merit,⁽³⁹⁾ are selected by the common consent of the community and theoretically act as a "neutralizing" factor.

In a larger scope -- while the antithesis between the royalty and the commoners prevailed -- a new phenomenon emerged within Minangkabau society after the coming of Islam. The religious centers under the leadership of the tuanku began to become religious enclaves within the community. Despite continuing

(37) E. Francis, "Korte Beschrijving", pp. 113-114.

(38) A. L. van Hasselt, Volksbeschrijving van Midden Sumatra, Leiden, 1882, p. 189.

(39) Francis quotes from an old adat source to the effect that "The appointment of the 'king' and other 'chiefs' should be decided by a common agreement and the choice of the people or the 'anak buah', and that all problems should be solved according to Sjarak and Adat"; "Korte Beschrijving", p. 105.

jealousies and doctrinal conflicts between them, the mobility of the religious pupils from one madrasah (school) to another, made the small, scattered religious enclaves into a potential challenge to the royalty as the symbol of the "great tradition." These religious centers were parts of the commoners' community when viewed vis-a-vis royalty, but they were also challengers of the social structure as a whole in that, leadership of the enclaves being inherited either spiritually from teacher to pupil or genealogically from father to son, the religious communities followed a paternal line of inheritance that was unlike the commoner but like the royal family system.⁽⁴⁰⁾

The potential institutional conflict between the two claimant representatives of a "great tradition," the one based on the past and the other on the expertise of the universal religion, had little impact on the society as a whole until the end of the 18th century. The prestigious institutions never confronted each other directly. Nevertheless, the political power of the king was gradually undermined on the coast, and at the same time the religious authority of Ulakan was threatened by the rise of many religious centers in the interior. Minangkabau society at the turn of the 19th century can be described as in a period of transition, with many symptoms of social disintegration beginning to manifest themselves in the form of social demoralization and deterioration.⁽⁴¹⁾ While the traditional sacral power of the king had been greatly undermined, the religious centers were too occupied with their own contemplative practices to provide an effective substitute. This stalemate between the old and a still weak and ineffective new was abruptly ended by the Padri movement.

The Padri movement, which took shape with the coming of the famous "three hajis" from Mecca in the early 19th century, was deeply influenced by the initial success of the Wahabi movement in Arabia at that time. Like the Wahabists, the Padri also directly their attacks first of all against deterioration.⁽⁴²⁾ But if in the Middle East Wahabism with its puritanical

(40) Ronkel, "Het Heiligdom van Oelakan", T.B.G., 56 (1914), pp. 281-316.

(41) See: V. d. H., "De oorsprong van de Padri", T.N.I., 1, 1837, also: Sjech Djilal-eddin, Verhaal, passim.

(42) Schrieke, by comparing what the Wahabists did in Arabia and what was done by the Padri in Sumatra, concludes that the Padri should not be considered as Wahabists. B. Schrieke, "Bijdrage tot de bibliografie van de huidige godsdienstige beweging ter Sumatra's Westkust", T.B.G., 59, 1920, pp. 254-256. Cf. Ph. S. van Ronkel, "Inlandsche getuigenissen aangaande de Padri-oorlog", I.G., 71, 1915, p. 1259. "They were Padri, but above all Moslems of the

attitude had a "salutary and revitalizing effect",⁽⁴³⁾ in Minangkabau it became the inspiration for a dynamic force, impatient in transforming its environment, aiming at the destruction of what it considered a djahiliah -- syncretic and unenlightened -- society and at the creation of an Islamic one, by coercive measures if necessary. Consequently, this movement was, especially in its early stages, more interested than previous forms of Minangkabau Islam in eliminating the distinction between man's responsibility to God and to the society.⁽⁴⁴⁾

The success of the Padri movement is inconceivable if -- as Schrieke suggests -- it was simply a "revolution" of religious leaders who had been frustrated by living in a society which provided them no place in its social hierarchy.⁽⁴⁵⁾ The first leader of this movement in the valley of Alahan Pandjang, for instance, was one of the most powerful penghulu and a member of the ruling Radjo Ampek Selo (Kings of the Four Seats) of that region. Moreover, the protector of one of the pioneers of the movement was a penghulu.⁽⁴⁶⁾ The memoirs of a moderate Padri illustrate the way the Padri approached the entire membership of the urang patuik, which often resulted in growing numbers of new converts from that composite elite.⁽⁴⁷⁾ Not rarely the first to accept the Padri doctrine were the non-religious leaders, while on the other hand some of the most important leaders of the Padri were the old religious teachers.⁽⁴⁸⁾

Minangkabau blood." However, it should not be forgotten that up to a certain point there was a synchronization between the development in the Middle East and that of Minangkabau. For instance, in 1829 a new wave of religious reformation came to Minangkabau which claimed that Wahabism was no longer attractive in Mecca because it had become obsolete. See E. Kielstra, B.K.I., 37, pp. 368-369, also M. Radjab, Perang Padri, Djakarta, 1954, pp. 101-103. In Arabia the Wahabist power had been weakened by the 1820's.

(43) H. A. R. Gibb, The Modern Trends in Islam, Chicago, 1947, p. 27.

(44) Radjab, op. cit., pp. 3-34. Cf. Jeanne Cuisinier, "La guerre des Padri (1803-1838-1845)", Archives de sociologie des religions, IV, 7, 1959, pp. 70-88.

(45) Cf. Schrieke, T.B.G., 59, pp. 252, 260.

(46) Francis, T.N.I., I, p. 99.

(47) Sjech Djalal-eddin, Verhaal, passim.

(48) H. J. J. L. Ridder de Steurs, De vestiging en uitbreiding van Nederlanders ter Westkust van Sumatra, Amsterdam, 1849, vol. II, pp. 63-64.

The Padri revolution was preceded by a growing feeling of detachment from their existing social environment on the part of some members of the *urang patuik*. In the process of searching for a means of social renovation they found Islam the most obvious choice, due to the incessant flow of rejuvenating ideas brought by the returning haji and to the position it had already acquired in the realm of Minangkabau adat. It is ironic that the Padri, in attempting to resolve the tension between the doctrine they believed in and their environment, unintentionally created a new issue -- the social schism between the Padri and the non-Padri defenders of the old order. Progress toward a reconciliation of these forces was abruptly disturbed by the involvement of the Dutch in 1821.⁽⁴⁹⁾ The eventual rally against the Dutch in the last stages of the Padri War (1830's) temporarily overcame the schism,⁽⁵⁰⁾ only for it to reemerge under the encouragement of the domestic policy pursued by the alien regime.

The most significant impact of the Padri episode was the greater assimilation of religious doctrine within Minangkabau adat as the ideal pattern of behavior. Adat was "recodified", and the position of religion as the system of belief was strengthened. In the new codification religious doctrine became more clearly identified as the only basic standard of behavior. In daily life it was expected that adat regulations should be manifestations of religious designs: agamo mangato, adat mamakai (religion designs, adat applies). Within the new codification a sharper contradiction was made between the adat islamiah and adat djahiliah. Adat islamiah is adat which is in accordance with the religious doctrine, while adat djahiliah is adat which is contrary to religion. Adat djahiliah is defined as adat "which is forbidden in the *adaik nan sabana adaik*."⁽⁵¹⁾ This distinction is identical with the distinction between "right" and "wrong", or, in religious terms, between hak and bathil, between darl islam and darl harb.

The working harmony of adat and Islam within the social system under the new codification is symbolized in the architectural style of the mosques. In the Minangkabau interior, especially in Lima Puluh Kota, Agam, and Solok, the roofs of the mosques are divided into three stories, as the symbol of the three social groups (urang tigo djinih) according to adat, namely the penghulu, the imam-chatib (the religious dignitaries),

(49) See for instance the memoirs of Tuanku Imam Bondjol, included as an appendix in Steurs, Vestiging.

(50) C. Westenenk, "Iets over land en volk van Minangkabau," K.T.I. (1912), pp. 641-654.

(51) Ronkel, Rapport, p. 7.



Old Mosque at Lima Kaum



Traditional House of a Ruling Family with Granary
in Foreground -- the Former Residence
of the Radja of Pagarujung.

and the urang banjak (the mass). In some regions, such as Tanah Datar, the mosques are divided into four or five stories, which also reflect adat-symbols. The mosque of Lima Kaum, for instance, has five stories which symbolize the five kampung of the nagari.⁽⁵²⁾ Moreover, the mosque, especially the surau of every kampung, serves not only as the place for religious performances but is also an educational institution. The surau in many cases can also be regarded as the channel of socialization for boys, giving them a place which is not available in their mother's houses, and providing a solution to the uncertain position of the unmarried men.

The deepening absorption of Islam into the Minangkabau social fabric can be clearly seen in the mushrooming of religious schools, which in the post-Padri period were no longer isolated "enclaves" in their environment.⁽⁵³⁾ Verkerk Pistorius points out that the prestige of the religious teachers in almost every field was then far greater than that of the "native chiefs." They not only preached to the people but also aroused them from their "lethargic environment" to "strive for a high and noble life."⁽⁵⁴⁾

The position of the religious teachers as the intelligentsia was not without opposition, however. The traditional professional division of religious dignitaries into adat-religious functionaries and religious teachers had not altered; but in the new situation, under the political dominance of the alien power, their traditional "antagonism" entered a new stage.

In the middle of the 19th century a wave of religious rejuvenation resulted in an attack against the entrenched tariqah, the Islamic mystic schools. This movement directed its attack especially against the hitherto most influential tariqah-school, the Satarijah, which now "began to be regarded as an old fashioned and much corrupted form of mysticism", and the school was at last forced "to make place for the tariqahs now most popular in Mecca, such as Naqshibendite and Qadirite."⁽⁵⁵⁾

(52) (Een Maleijer in het Nederlandsch beschreven), "De masjid's en inlandsche godsdienstschoolen in de Padangsche Bovenlanden", I.G., I, 10, 1888, pp. 312-333. The writer also points out the different style of mosques in the Bodi Tjaniago and the Koto Piliang regions.

(53) A. W. P. Verkerk Pistorius, "De Priester en zijn invloed op de samenleving in de Bovenlanden", T.N.I. (1869), ii, pp. 423-452; Van Hasselt, op. cit., p. 59.

(54) Verkerk Pistorius, T.N.I. (1869), ii, p. 449.

(55) C. Snouck Hurgronje, The Achenese, vol. II, p. 8. The Satarijah was corrupted -- according to Snouck Hurgronje --

It was the more orthodox-oriented Naqshibendite (Naqshabadijah)-tariqah school that came to Minangkabau⁽⁵⁶⁾ as a further step toward the perfection of the Islamic society. In its conflict with the older tariqah school the most sensitive issues were usually those concerning the beginning and the end of the fasting month and the problem of the qiblah -- the direction faced while praying in the mosque.⁽⁵⁷⁾

By attacking the old tariqah-schools⁽⁵⁸⁾ the leaders of the Naqshabandijah also directly challenged the adat-religious functionaries, since most of them belonged to the old school and were interested in maintaining the religious status quo. Hence the traditional contradiction between the two religious functionaries, the teachers and the officials, was intensified, and in the process the new school made itself a challenger to the whole establishment as it existed under the custodianship of the members of the nagari council. In some nagari, for instance in Suliki and Pariaman, this conflict resulted in the establishment of a separate nagari-mosque. This was a question which could not be decided by the religious law but by adat regulation,⁽⁵⁹⁾ since according to adat there could be only one common mosque for a nagari.

After the subjugation of Minangkabau as the result of the Padri War, Dutch policy sought to contain the influence of the religious teachers -- and the Mecca returnees (haji) as well⁽⁶⁰⁾ -- by alienating them as far as possible from the people's daily affairs and by upholding the authority of what they considered to be the legitimate "native chiefs." The effect of this policy was not only to rigidify the traditional leadership pattern,

because its adherents in Indonesia "have been so long left to themselves ... But besides this, both Malay and Javanese have made use of the name of Satariah as a hallmark with which to authenticate various kinds of village-philosophy to a large extent of pagan origin", pp. 18-20. On Satarijah, see "Shattariya" in H. A. R. Gibb and J. H. Kramers, Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam, Leiden, 1953, pp. 533-534.

(56) Schrieke, T.B.G., 59, pp. 562-567.

(57) Schrieke, T.B.G., 59, pp. 263-265.

(58) On the numerous tariqah-schools, see: R. L. Archer, "Muhammedan Mysticism in Sumatra", J.R.A.S.M.B., XV, ii, pp. 10126; see also Ronkel, Rapport.

(59) Ph. S. van Ronkel, "De twee moskeeën en de adat", Koloniaal Tijdschrift, vi (1917), pp. 1589-1599.

(60) C. Westenek, "De Inlandsche bestuurschoofden", K.T., II, (1913), p. 833; Van Hasselt, Volksbeschrijving, pp. 60-61.

which centered around the balai, but also to create a separate group whose vested interest resided in the maintenance of the new status quo. As a sociological phenomenon this group was usually called -- with an unfortunate choice of words -- the kaum adat, the adat-group. This meant the detachment of one component from the whole context of the Minangkabau system, resulting in an imbalance of change in the society, a disequilibrium made the greater by the fact that the newly acquired status quo tended to ossify. This situation undoubtedly contributed much to the intensification of the conflict between the upholders of the status quo, the so-called custodians of adat, who had the support of the outside power, and the religious teachers who were the agents of incessant change.

Ironically, instead of enhancing the position of the representatives of adat, Dutch policy resulted in the erosion of the penghulu's traditional prestige. As elsewhere,⁽⁶¹⁾ in Minangkabau the Dutch government based its policy on the manipulation of the existing political system -- without, if possible, disrupting it -- for the benefit of its economic-oriented motives. But in Minangkabau a new problem arose, since there was no functional supra-nagari organization available for such purposes. A nagari was a community par excellence where real political and judicial powers resided.⁽⁶²⁾ A major problem for the colonial authorities was, therefore, the establishment of the required supra-nagari organization. After the failure during the Padri episode of the extension into the interior of the coastal Regency system supported by an "aristocratic" officialdom, a new system of nagari-federation was introduced. This nagari federation was headed by a "native chief" who not only acted as the representative of the European administration -- being responsible for the collection of the coffee crop and the enforcement of the government's corvée⁽⁶³⁾ -- but in reality also functioned as the highest adat authority of his region. Furthermore, at the nagari level some adjustments were made to meet the federation's needs: in effect the government invested in some "newcomers" -- since the appointment of these "native officials" depended entirely on the government's preference -- an authority and prestige much higher than that of the members of the traditional balai. In other words, the position of the penghulu and the balai as the traditional ruling group was gravely undermined. Unintentionally, a new kind of "professional" antagonism was introduced into Minangkabau society,

(61) See: B. Schrieke, "The Native Rulers", in Indonesian Sociological Studies, vol. I, The Hague, Bandung, 1955, pp. 167-201.

(62) B. J. Haga, "Influence of the Western Administration on the Native Community in the Outer Provinces", in B. Schrieke (ed.), The Effects of Western Influence on Native Civilization in the Malayan Archipelago, Batavia, 1929, p. 74.

(63) C. Westenenk, K.T., II (1913), pp. 828-830.

that of the traditional penghulu versus the government-appointed "native officials." (64)

The encroachment on the authority of the penghulu and the unprecedented and unpopular function given them as managers of the government's corvée resulted in the erosion of their prestige. This process was furthered by the growing numbers of people who claimed the title of penghulu, their multiplication being a direct response to the policy of exempting penghulu from the corvée obligation. (65) Many wealthy families installed new penghulu by paying off the adat ceremonial obligation, and this eventually resulted in excesses. The sociological consequence of this tendency was the further dispersion of deference at a time when traditional deference was already eroding.

The alienation of the religious leaders, especially the religious teachers and the haji, and the ossification of the status quo, which had been attuned to the government's rather than the people's needs, were among the most important factors creating an atmosphere of stagnation and apathy in some parts of the society. (66) It was this temporary stalemate which was at last attacked by the "adat" revivalist movement and the "religious" orthodox reformation at the beginning of the 20th century. The former movement wanted to purify Minangkabau adat as a whole from outside influence, especially that of Atjeh on the coast. The orthodox reformation movement, which was especially active in the interior, directed its attack against the whole existing order, the tariqah schools as well as the matrilineal inheritance law.

These opposing movements -- both were the staunchest of enemies (67) -- were the first expressions of social reformation by urban "intellectuals" at a time when the traditional pattern of leadership was in decline. The opportunity to capture this leadership came especially after the failure of the scattered anti-tax rebellion of 1908. (68) This syncretic and rustic response to an unprecedented situation was led by penghulu and

(64) Cf. H. W. Stap, "De Nagari Ordonantie ter Sumatra's Westkust", T.B.B., 53 (1917), pp. 699-765.

(65) Van Hasselt, Volksbeschrijving, p. 190.

(66) Cf. "Sumatra's Westkust. Een beschouwing van den tegenwoordigen toestand aldaar door een ambtenaar bij het Binnenlandsch Bestuur", I.G., ii (1886), pp. 1575-1581.

(67) See: Schrieke, T.B.G., 59, pp. 262-280.

(68) See: W. J. Kroon, "De invoering van belastingen op Sumatra's Westkust", T.B.B., li and lii (1916), pp. 342-351, 503-509; lii (1917), pp. 170-179; also: G. A. N. Scheltema de Heere, "De belasting-invoeren op Sumatra's Westkust", I.G., xlv (1923), pp. 122-156.

tariqah leaders, especially those of the Satarijah-school, and was the last battle fought for the restoration of the old order. Its failure not only resulted in the obligation of the people to pay money-taxation, but also paved the way for urban dominance. The end result was the transformation of the pattern of leadership; which now transcended the nagari boundaries. In other words, the nagari had now ceased in every sense to be an independent unit.

Another important impact of the urban phenomenon was that it tended to minimize the potential and actual conflicts between adat and Islamic inheritance law. In Minangkabau, property is divided into two categories, ancestral and self-earned. Ancestral property -- usually land, house, etc. -- may not be inherited by persons outside the maternal family. This semi-sacral property cannot be sold or pledged unless in an extreme emergency, such as marrying off an unmarried girl, paying for a funeral, redeeming debts, repairing the adat-house; and this can be done only by the consensus of all adult members of the family and by consultation with the penghulu. The position of a man regarding such property is more like that of a manager than a possessor. He has the right to use it but has no right to dispose of it or for that matter to pass it on to his own children. Exception can only be made by gift -- hibah -- for which general agreement is also required. The real problem as far as inheritance is concerned is that of self-earned property, usually called pusaka rendah. The question is whether it is necessary for a person to make the hibah in order to pass on such property to his own children. According to adat, if he does not make the hibah it is his maternal family which has the legal right to this property. But according to the sjariah, first priority should be given to one's own children, and thus hibah is unnecessary. It is haram -- strictly forbidden -- to inherit a property which is not religiously lawful.

This problem, as has been suggested earlier, has been partly solved by the individualizing tendencies created by the urban phenomenon. It is generally accepted in theory that the disposal of self-earned property depends entirely on the owner's will. It is assumed that even without a will of the deceased, the sister's children or other members of the maternal family have no right to claim the property. A problem may arise, however, if the self-earned property is itself the result of the investment of ancestral property, since such property also functions as a family-treasury. Furthermore, how should property be divided if it is accumulated in partnership with one's children and one's sister? In many cases the question of inherited property deals with these kinds of problems. The source of tension, accordingly, should not be seen as arising from the particulars of each case but as resulting from the need to formulate a general rule that can be taken as a valid inheritance law. (69)

(69) On this problem see for instance, J. Prins, "Rondom de oude strijdvraag van Minangkabau", Indonesië, vii (1953-1954),

According to Hazairin, the conflict between Islamic inheritance law and that of adat could not be solved as long as the ulama based their judgment completely on the codified fikh. The true inheritance law of Islam is based on clear bilateral principles, he claimed, the fikh being the result of an idjmak of the ulama, whose interpretations of the Quran and Hadith were certainly colored by their own social structure.⁽⁷⁰⁾ Obedience to the codified fikh was one of the characteristics of the early orthodox reformation, which tended to include all properties into one category so it should be regulated according to the fikh, which thoroughly ignored the possibility of the maternal ancestral property.⁽⁷¹⁾ In short, in Hazairin's view the issue is not the conflict between religion and adat per se but rather the inadequacy of the codified fikh in dealing with a particular local situation.

In view of taqlid -- blind obedience to whatever was written by the earlier ulamas -- it is understandable that the modernists did not attack this sensitive problem in the early stages of development. The cleavage between the modernists and the orthodox was mostly due to their attitudes toward law, the conflict between idjtihad and taqlid. The modernists were more concerned with the rediscovery of the true Islamic spirit than with law for its own sake. They opposed the other-worldly attitude of the tariqah schools as well as the taqlid of the orthodox ulama. By establishing modern schools, publishing books and magazines, and holding tabligh -- the public religious gatherings -- the modernists attempted to create a situation in which their goals could be smoothly achieved. As the representative of its "own time" the modernist movement reached its peak at the end of the second decade of the 20th century. From this time on, various other dimensions of the internal conflict would play an important role in the social development of Minangkabau.⁽⁷²⁾

pp. 320-329. For a comment by a Minangkabau leader before the Second World War, see: H. A. Salim, "Adat contra Islam", 1934, reprinted in Djedjak Langkah Hadji Agus Salim: Pilihan Karangan Utjapan dan Pendapat Beliau Dari Dulu Sampai Sekarang, Djakarta, 1954, pp. 176-189.

- (70) See: Hazairin, Pergolakan Penjesuaian Hukum Islam dengan Adat, Djakarta, 1956.
- (71) It is interesting to ask whether or not the conflict between these two laws was intensified because of the historical circumstances, such as the patronizing of the penghulu at the expense of the other members of the elite. Josselin de Jong, for instance, has argued that the Minangkabau family system originally followed a pattern of unilinear double-descent; Minangkabau, pp. 82-91.
- (72) On the modernist movement in Minangkabau see: Schrieke, T.B.G., 59, pp. 278-325; Ronkel, Rapport, p. 16ff; Hamka,

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The above discussion hopefully gives some illustrations of the multiplicity of conflicts in Minangkabau society. Some of the internal conflicts are recognized and maintained for the sake of the preservation of the whole societal system. Others are tolerated and institutionalized, while still others are minimized by channeling them into further kinds of conflict which are considered to be less divisive to the whole system. There are cases where conflict and consensus or integration follow a dialectical pattern, but there are also occasions where integration functions only to preserve the same eternal conflict.

The question of conflict in Minangkabau society is not simply one of opposing value systems, as for instance Islam vis-a-vis adat, nor is it simply the problem of central versus peripheral values, such as the whole system vis-a-vis the dissident elements. Moreover, the problem is not limited only to the most common conflict situations, such as generational and professional conflicts, because, as has been pointed out earlier in the discussion, the position of an individual depends on his involvement in a multiplicity of conflicts.

As a conclusion, it can be argued that a conceptual scheme for social analysis should not be based on the abstraction of a particular aspect of the society. It is also not recommended to apply a concept based on a "momentary snapshot" to whole historical phenomena. The concept of adat-Islam conflict as a tool for analyzing the social development of Minangkabau falls, as we have seen, into these errors.

An operational conceptual scheme should be able to do justice to all relevant phenomena and it should be applicable to historical development. Within this context the concept of adat-Islam conflict should be re-examined, and it should be seen from a different angle. The application of the formalistic approach of Snouck Hurgronje, making a clear separation between religious doctrine, which regulates man's relationship with the transcendental being, and adat, which is supposed to govern his social relationships, gives a misleading picture of Minangkabau society. This kind of conflict, as I have argued, should not be seen as the tension between two separate entities, but as one within the whole system itself. The so-called adat-Islam dilemma is only one aspect of internal conflict in the whole social pattern. The contradiction, then, should not be interpreted exclusively as the conflict between the actual and the ideal,

Ajahku, p. 76 et passim; and Deliar Noer, The Rise and Development of the Modernist Movement in Indonesia during the Dutch Colonial Period (1900-1942), unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Cornell University, 1963, pp. 47-85.

but rather as a tension within social realities striving to achieve proximity with the ideal. The concept of conflict can be very useful as an operational tool to analyze social development and the course of social change, but to limit it to a particular aspect is to do injustice to phenomena outside this narrow sphere.



Minangkabau Festive Gathering in the Traditional Council Hall, Balai Adat, at Tabek Pariangan.



Spectators Assembled Before the Balai Adat of Tabek Pariangan