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Socio-Religious Values and Participation

A Comparative Study of the Processes of Value-Change in Three Rural Javanese Hamlets and their Relationship to People's Participation in Development

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Abstract

This thesis examines the relationship between socio-religious values and participation in development in Indonesia. It comparatively analyses the processes of value change and their relation to participation in the three hamlets of Lopait, Central Java in the 1980s and early '90s.

While internal factors such as ecological settings, pattern of livelihood, socioreligious orientations and, to some extent, the historical backgrounds of the three hamlets under investigation have determined the way in which the people in each hamlet responded to both government policy on rural development and the influx of modernity; it was the external pressures of the regional and local government policy in the 1960s and '70s, which have largely shaped the processes of value change in these hamlets.

The study reveals that although in general, the New Order development policy has economically benefited the country, it failed to generate a sustainable development among the rural population. Most of the rural population in Java have benefited mainly from the infrastructural development which gave them access to urban jobs. However, the top-down policy and to some extent, the inaccurate identification of 'village' as the basic unit for implementing rural development, have impeded the poor from participating in developing their own local communities.

As far as the relationship between values and 'participation' is concerned, the findings suggest that neither the Parsonian theory of 'Socialised Actor' nor the 'Social Identity' approach are adequate explanations for the relation between socio-religious values and participation in these three hamlets. The role of the *kyai* (traditional religious teacher) and his 'religious purification' in Calombo hamlet; the resurgence of the traditional Javanese rituals in Celengan; and the coalition between the traditional local elite in Gudang and the supra-village structures, have become the major factors which influence people's participation in the development projects implemented in their respective hamlets.