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From respected hermits to ordinary citizens: The conversion of the Baduy, ethnicity, and politics of religion in Indonesia (1977 - 2019)
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Christian Missionary Activities among the Baduy: Religious Violence, Politics of Religion in Indonesia, and Purchases of Land

While chapter 4 focuses on Islamic missionary activities, this chapter looks at Christian missionary activities among the Baduy. This chapter will also pay attention to the politics of religion in Indonesia which has guaranteed the adherents of the religions recognised by the state to do missionary activities among the adherents of *kepercayaan* (belief systems). The Muslim group used this politics of religion, especially on proselytization and the foundation of worship houses, to counter the development of Christianity among the Baduy community in specific and the Muslim societies in general. The contestation between the Muslims and Christians has caused religious violence mostly against the Christians. Islamic *da'wa* and Christian missionary activities then transformed into the purchases of land for the (future) converts. The reaction of all Muslims to the Christians was rooted in the worries that the Christians would overpower the Muslims. Preventing the Christians to have a church was one way to hinder the development of Christianity.

A. Christian Missionary Activities and Religious Violence in Wanasalam and Leuwidamar

What is seldom discussed in the conversion studies is the contestation among the preachers from different religions when they are doing mission in the same society. In many parts of Indonesia, contestation between Muslims and Christians happens because in doing mission they do not only try to get more converts but

also try to prevent the development of their counterparts. In Manokwari, West Papua, the Christian majority tried to prevent the foundation of Rahmatan Lil 'alamin Mosque in 2005 and 2015¹. In Jayapura, West Papua, the Christians forbid *da'wa* activities in West Papua on the whole. They also demanded that non-Christian worship places may not be higher than that of the Christian². In Leuwidamar, Banten, Muslims tried to counter the development of Christianity by hindering the foundation of churches. Johan Meuleman (2011: 239) asserts that that *da'wa* in Indonesia:

“... extended beyond religious activities proper; it involved competition for authority; it emulated Christian mission; it was marked by a complicated division of roles between state and non-governmental initiatives; and it developed within particular national and international context.... Finally, *dakwah* in Indonesia was also characterized by emulation of Christian missionary organizations and, in a number of cases, competition with Christianity.”

The emulation and competition with Christians are apparent in the *da'wa* activities among the Baduy which are marked by admiration and annoyance. The Muslim preachers admire the Christians because they believe that the Christians have much money for the missionaries and the missionary programme. This view seems to be common among Muslim preachers in Indonesia (Burhanuddin 1990, Zubir and Siandes 1997, 1999). In Leuwidamar, Lebak, the Muslims heard, for example, that the pastor Windu was paid a quite high salary by the church for his work as a pastor. As an Adventist pastor, he gets a salary and additional incomes from the church³. Because the Christians were rich, the Muslims thought, they could be generous to the Baduy. The Muslim preachers also believed that in doing the mission the Christians were cohesive⁴. Besides admiring the Christians, the Muslims also felt annoyed. They thought that the Christians had taken their right to convert the Baduy. The exasperation at the Christians increased when they heard a rumour saying that the Christians would build the biggest Indonesian church in Lebak. The Muslims tended to believe this rumour because they knew that the Christians had bought some hectares of land in Leuwidamar.

At the same time, the Muslims thought that building a dialogue with

¹ <https://tirto.id/perda-manokwari-kota-injil-demo-menolak-pembangunan-masjid-ddsl>, accessed on 13 January 2020.

² <https://khazanah.republika.co.id/berita/dunia-islam/islam-nusantara/18/03/18/p5roix396-gereja-jayapura-protas-pembangunan-masjid-dan-suara-azan>, accessed on 13 January 2020.

³ Interviews with Narja and his daughter on 20 December 2018.

⁴ Interviews with Haji Agung on 8 July 2017, Ustad Ara on 9 April and 10 May 2017, Haji Idi on 8 July 2017.

the Christians was not fruitful. Kiyai Maza in Leuwidamar said that in the meetings the Christians often stated to agree with certain clauses, but in practice, they broke them⁵. This belief was also expressed by the former leader of Muhammadiyah and the MUI, Din Syamsudin.

“... Din had held many dialogues with church leaders, but these talks were not efficient, they were without result because they had no long term effects. Christian leaders continued to steal sheep, to seek converts or what is called Kristenisasi of Indonesia. They had already put aside US\$ 100 million for the conversion of Minangkabau and this led already to 100 recent Christian converts in that strongly Muslim region. Explained that building a dialogue with the Christians is not fruitful.” (Steenbrink 2015: 361)

Because of these situations, the Muslims were worried about the development of Christianity in Leuwidamar. The Muslims could not imagine what would occur in the next ten years if Christian Baduy who lived in other cities returned to Leuwidamar, lived there, married, and had children. The number of Christians would certainly qualify the regulations on the foundation of a worship house. Some Muslim preachers claimed to have spoken about this possibility with the MUI and KUA officials of Leuwidamar, but the officials seemed not to care. Because the warning to Muslims not to sell their land to Christians was ignored and the officials did not care, a number of Muslim preachers tried to hinder the development of Christianity by using the politics of religion, especially on religious proselytization and the foundation of worship places. This effort has triggered religious violence.

1. *An Attack to Christians and a Church in Wanasalam*

In his book *Saya Dijuluki Nomensennya Baduy* Kharel Budiman Silitonga accounts his life as a missionary in Lebak⁶. In August 1978 he went to Pandeglang to study Sundanese language and Bantenese culture. During this period he stayed in his friend's house. An informant from the Persis circle, however, stated that he

⁵ Interview with Maza on 20 March 2017.

⁶ When he was young in Medan, Silitonga once became a thug. He left Medan for Jakarta after he axed the head of a security man. In the capital city, he was unable to earn money as easily as in Medan because of the competition among the thugs was much harder. In this situation, he met his friends who always advised him to live righteously. One of his friends gave him a copy of the Bible, but he tore the paper and used it as the wrap of marijuana. Afterwards, he fainted and when he was conscious he was already in jail. In it, he felt powerless. A policeman offered him a promise letter stating if Silitonga would not commit the crime again he would be freed. After signing the letter he was released. Later he followed his friends to attend church services and repented. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPdLfb7CQQA>, accessed on 9 November 2016



Photograph 5.1: Kharel Budiman Silitonga.

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPdLfb7CQqA&t=305s>, accessed on 7 April 2020.

stayed not in the house of his friend, but in that of his brother Hasahatan who was a high-rank official in the Spatial Agency (*Dinas Tata Ruang*) of Pandeglang.⁷ After mastering Sundanese he moved to Lebak to propagate Christianity to Muslims and the Baduy. He began his mission in Malingping, a sub-district in Lebak. In a market, he watched a *debus* performance where the practitioner was invulnerable to hot oil. Silitonga prayed for the failure of the performance. What occurred next, he writes, was that the hand skin of the practitioner blistered. He approached Silitonga, apologised and asked him for a cure. Silitonga utilised this moment to introduce Christianity to the spectators of the performance by playing a cassette and distributing pamphlets about Christianity (Silitonga 1998: 86-89).

⁷ Interview with Ahmad on 25 July 2017.

The market of Malingping was not the only place which Silitonga visited to introduce Christianity. He also came to the market of Bayah where he was identified by the people as a Christian missionary who pretended as a medicine seller. He escaped from the people by running into a jungle, climbed a cliff, fell from it, and fainted. After he was conscious he walked and arrived at an area where he found a stone statue and a spring. He followed the stream of the spring and arrived in an Inner Baduy village. Two Inner Baduy men stopped and interrogated him why he came into the forbidden area. He was brought to the leader of the village and warned him not to visit it again. The *puun* then let him go (Silitonga 1998: 89-92).

On 15 July 1979 Silitonga heard that there had been a man named Ali Jaya Andil in Wanasalam who believed in Jesus. Because the man was a *kiyai*, Silitonga was initially not quite sure. The *kiyai*, Silitonga claims, converted to Christianity after reading the materials that he spread in the market of Malingping. Subsequently, Silitonga stayed in the house of Ali Ara, the student of the *kiyai*. Five months later 24 Muslims converted to Christianity. Later, more and more people came to him to convert to the religion. One of them was baptised on 14 November 1982 at the GPDI (*Gereja Pantekosta di Indonesia*/ the Pentecostal Church in Indonesia) in Bogor, the church in which he later affiliated (Silitonga 1998: 94-98).

According to Hulaela⁸, Andil was a local *kiyai* where his *santri* learned martial arts. People began to dislike him when they suspected one of his *santri* of stealing something. They asked Andil to be responsible for what his *santri* did. The *kiyai* was then brought and jailed in Rangkasbitung. Because people hated him, none of them visited him in prison. During this period, the leader of the Puskesmas (*Pusat Kesehatan Masyarakat*/ Community Health Centre) who was a Christian cared for him. He often visited Andil until he was released. It seems that Andil converted to Christianity at this moment. Assisted by the leader of Puskesmas many Christian missionaries came to his village in Kubang Embe, Wanasalam. Some of them came from Bengkulu and Ciranjang (Cianjur).⁹ Among the

⁸ In 1987 the couples Himyar Abas and Hulaela came to Wanasalam as preachers. Besides, they came there to manage a *madrasah* which did not have a teacher. In the same year three Christian missionaries came there. They often gave a service every Sunday in a house in front of Himyar's house. In 1993 Himyar, according to his wife Hulaela, was hit by the villagers because he conducted an Islamic gathering. He was accused of disturbing the Christians. She also said that her husband would be killed. Feeling threatened they left the village. Another problem followed because Hulaela managed the local women's money in the social gathering programme (*arisan*). Because of it she was searched by the *desa* leader. Hulaela and Himyar asked the *camat* (the head of the sub-district) in order that they could return to their house in Kubang Embe. After 20 days leaving the village they returned to the village, managed the *madrasa*, and run the Islamic preaching (*pengajian*).

⁹ About Christianity in Ciranjang, Cianjur, read Mufti Ali, *Missionarisme di Banten* (2009).

missionaries were Ismail who also did missionary activities in the resettlement village of Gunung Tunggul. More and more people converted to Christianity. They also sent the Christian converts to school. Suarna the son of Kiyai Andil, for instance, was sent by the missionaries to study at Elo, a Christian school in West Jakarta.¹⁰

Assisted by a man of Wanasalam Silitonga began to convert the Baduy. To do so he bought salty fish and salt to be given to the people whom he would convert. He also violated the taboos intentionally by bringing an electric torch and a radio to the Baduy villages. By doing this he hoped that he would be reported to the *puun*. His plan was successful. Silitonga was brought to and interrogated by Ki Jandol, the Baduy leader of Cibeo. Silitonga admitted to Ki Jandol that he violated the taboos so that he could meet Ki Jandol. Moreover, Silitonga told Ki Jandol that he was the son of Jesus. He visited Baduy villages to “make the Baduy become the students of Jesus.” Hearing this Ki Jandol was angry. He asked Silitonga to prove that he had power. Silitonga prayed. What happened next, Silitonga writes, is that Ki Jandol fell. Blood came out from his mouth. This made the Baduy believe that he was powerful. Silitonga then invited the people to believe in Jesus but he does not explain further whether or not the people converted to Christianity (Silitonga 1998: 100-104).

After that event, Silitonga was allowed to visit Baduy villages without any restriction. He even had a close relation with Sarni the daughter of Ki Jandol. When returning from Rangkasbitung Silitonga told Sarni that he wanted to marry her. She was happy. But when Silitonga asked her father to permit them to marry, Sarni’s father Ki Jandol could not directly answer the proposal. He met other Baduy leaders to ask their advice. It was decided that Silitonga and Sarni could not marry because Silitonga was not a Baduy. At that night Sarni married Sarpan, the son of the Baduy leader of Cikertawana (Silitonga 1998:104-106). Haji Sarmedi was not sure that Sarni married the Baduy man to reject Silitonga’s proposal. In the Baduy society, Haji Sarmedi said, it takes about a year from the proposal to the marriage. Therefore, Sarni should already have had a relation with the Baduy man.¹¹ Failing to marry Sarni Silitonga returned to Wanasalam where more Muslims converted to Christianity (Silitonga 1998:105).

¹⁰ Interview with Hulaela (55) on 29 April 2017. Interview was conducted by my research assistant Rukoyah.

¹¹ Interview with Haji Sarmedi on 20 May 2017. Haji Sarmedi explained that from his previous wife Ki Jandol had a son Ayah Mursih. Ki Jandol married another woman Ambu Jala from Kaduketer. Ki Jandol and Ambu Jala married and had Sarni and Alim. Haji Sarmedi estimated that Sarni married the Cikertawana man in 1982/83 and from the marriage they had Samin. It is important to note the naming system in the Baduy society. When a Baduy man and woman marry and have children, the names of parents will disappear. They will take the name of their oldest child. For example, Ayah Mursih means the father of Mursih. Mursih is the oldest child of this Baduy man. Most people forget the real names of Baduy’s parents.

By the conversion of local Muslims to Christianity the number of Christians in Wanasalam increased. They needed a church and would build it, but Hulaela, Himyar and some other Muslims did not agree with the foundation of the church. They sought support from people to stop the foundation of the church. They also contacted a local strongman Surta. After a meeting in an evening, they destroyed the church which was just erected about two or three metres in height. The news of the incident spread beyond the village. Husen as the representative of the Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia (DDII) and Engkos Yusroni and An Aliyah¹² from Muhammadiyah came to the location to help and revert the local Muslims.¹³ After the destruction of the church, the Christian missionaries, except Katia, left the village. He remained in the village because he married a local girl and had a child.¹⁴

Silitonga accounted that he was one of the victims in the attack.¹⁵ The *desa* leader even sent him a letter asking him to leave the village, but the letter itself was drawn back. In the night of 29 November 1982 around 15 people came to his house, broke the door, and took him forcibly. They hurt his head, shoulder, arm, and stomach. They also tried to kill his wife Soey Nio Magdalena but they could not find her. On the next day, he was medicated by a doctor. Later he decided to leave for Bogor and joined the GPDI of Gunung Sindur (Silitonga 1998:106-109).

The conflict between the Muslims and Christians continued. Every week

¹² An Aliyah was born in 1963 in Tirtayasa, Serang. When she was at the 3rd grade of Elementary School (1965) his father sent her to the Islamic institution Al Khairiyah in Citangkil, Cilegon. In 1968 she continued her study to a pesantren in Kauman 32 in Yogyakarta. She was close with her teacher (*ibu nyai*), Mrs. Juned. Whenever her teacher went for an Islamic teaching, An Aliyah was invited to join. A year later she moved to another pesantren in Kauman 66, still in Yogyakarta, which was led by Zainab. At this pesantren she was educated strictly. Since she was 23 old An Aliyah has started to become a preacher, especially to teach women at the circles of Islamic teaching (*majlis taklim*). Her husband died in 2000. An Aliyah also took a Baduy girl called Bayi Nurhasanah from Pesantren Sultan Hasanuddin. After Bayi graduated from an elementary school, An Aliyah sent her and another foster son Ridwan to Pesantren As-Shidiqiyah in Jakarta Barat. Six months later, because she was ill, An Aliyah took her home, and sent her to Darul Arkom, a pesantren belonged to Muhammadiyah, in Sawangan. But then An Aliyah thought that this pesantren was problematic because it thought that its students do not need to perform the obligatory prayers. A teacher of the pesantren is also said to step on the Quran. When An Aliyah would take Bayi, she was asked to pay the tuition fees. The institution said that Bayi had not pay for four months. The money was taken by one of its teachers, Saifudin Ibrahim, who then converted to Christianity. Bayi and Ridwan were then sent to Pesantren As-Saadah in Serang, and graduated from there in 2001. Afterwards, Bayi studied at Universitas Ibnu Chaldun in Jakarta and married her friend from the same university. They had two children Ramadhon and Jasmin. They lived in Sukabumi as a teacher at a kindergarten school. They moved again to Ciganjur, Jakarta. Besides taking care of Bayi, An Aliyah also took his sister Amanah (from a different mother) who was often called Menol. Bayi and Amanah are the children of the Muslim Baduy Ki Sardaya.

¹³ Interviews with Hulaela on 29 April, Engkos Yusroni on 10 April, and An Aliyah on 2 April, 2017.

¹⁴ Interview with Hulaela on 29 April 2017.

¹⁵ After failing to marry Sarni, Silitonga married Soey Nio Magdalena. Because more people in Wanasalam converted to Christianity, they decided to live in that *desa*.

Christians from Cianjur, Rangkasbitung and Tangerang came to the village to perform religious services. They often gathered in Gopur's house. Gopur was a Muslim, converted to Christianity, reverted to Islam and converted to Christianity again. The Muslim villagers could not accept the fact that there were many Christians from other cities coming to Wanasalam. They contacted *kiyai* and Muslim figures to discuss the possibility to forbid the Christians to come to their village. They wrote a letter stating that they objected to the Christians. The letter was signed by the *kiyai* and Muslim villagers and brought to the *desa* office. Because they thought that the *desa* leader was slow in responding to their demand they came to the sub-district office.

Later the secretary of the sub-district office met Gopur and made an agreement with him stating that there would not be a Christian service at his house. Gopur and his son Cece Rohania agreed. Another Christian Asep disagreed, but he could not resist because he was afraid of being threatened by the Muslims. When the police called the disputing groups to the *desa* office, the villagers were divided. Some supported the existence of the Christians and some other rejected. Those who supported reasoned that the Christians were good at them. And those who refused the Christians argued that they were not from the village. It was decided that there would be no more religious service in the village. After this decision the family of Gopur moved to Binuangun, about ten kilometres away to the south from Wanasalam. The missionaries did not come to the village again. According to Engkos Yusroni, the Christian mission moved to the northern coastal areas of Banten such as Ujung Kulon, Wanajaya, Tunggal Jaya, and Labuan; while Ismail went to Kalimantan.¹⁶

The refusal of the Muslims towards the Christians in the village could also be seen in a letter dated 7 December 1991 sent by the *desa* leader to the pastor Suwandoko. This letter was a response to Suwandoko's letter dated 4 December 1991 that asked permission from the *desa* leader to celebrate Christmas. The *desa* leader responded that he was unable to permit the celebration of Christmas because he was under the pressure of the Muslims. In addition, on 5 December he was reminded by the head of Military Regional Command (*Koramil*) and the head of the police (*Kapolsek*) that any celebration had to get permission from the police, the government of Lebak, and other offices in the sub-district of Wanasalam. The *Koramil* and the *Kapolsek* said that the permission was needed because there would be a general election in June 1992, a reason which seems to be contrived. Because of it, the *desa* leader Ata Wijaya could not permit the Christmas celebration of the year.¹⁷

¹⁶ Interviews with Hulaela on 29 April and Engkos Yusroni on 10 April 2017.

¹⁷ I got the letter from a man of Wanasalam around 2008/9.

A document which is called “*Peristiwa 24 September [19]95 di Kubang Embe Wanasalam*” or “The Incident of 24 September [19]95 in Kubang Embe Wanasalam” which seems to be sent by Himyar Abas to the Association of Muslim Scholars (ICMI) of Jakarta accounts a conflict between the Muslims and Christians in Wanasalam. The document reports that in April 1995 there was a construction of a church in the village. The Muslims held a meeting to discuss how to stop it. They collected 231 signatures of the locals as a complaint to the *desa* leader who had permitted the construction of the church. But the *desa* leader denied having permitted the Christians to build the church. The meeting with the *desa* leader and 26 people in the *desa* office ended with an agreement that the construction would be stopped.¹⁸

Still in September 1995 the construction of the church was continued and had reached about one metre in height. Himyar and his group discussed how to stop the foundation of the church. Two youths were chosen to destroy the church. In the following morning, one of them was called by the *desa* leader. He denied what he had done. The *desa* leader showed him the permit of the foundation (*Izin Mendirikan Bangunan/IMB*) of the church. In other words, he wanted to tell him that the Christians had a permit to build the church and the Muslims may not stop it.

The foundation of the church was continued until 90 per cent. In the evenings the building was guarded. In one evening it was protected by three people: the son of Karel Kasim (Gopur’s younger brother), the son of the Christian missionary Katia and the son-in-law of Gopur, Rakim, who was a Muslim. On 24 September 1995 the Muslim locals discussed the foundation of the church again in the mosque of Uswatun Hasanah in Kubang Embe, Wanasalam. Eventually, led by Surta around 25 people attacked the church. The masterminds of the attack were Obi Dewiiryana and Sayuti. The son of Katia reported the case to the village leader Darmo. When arriving at the location they found the church was ruined and the son of Katia was hurt. He defended himself, but the attackers hit his face with wood. In the morning on the following day, 25 September 1995, policemen came to the location. On 26 September, in the afternoon, the people were gathered in the house of the *desa* leader. The *kecamatan* leader, the commander of the local military, the head of the police, the leader of the KUA, the leader of the MUI also came there and advised the people.

The Muhammadiyah preacher Engkos Yusroni who came to Wanasalam explained that until 1995 there had been 56 Muslims converting to Christianity.

¹⁸ This document mentions that the reporter’s family became the target of anger of the *desa* leader and the Christian group. It corresponds with the story told by Hulaela. In addition, in the document there is a letter sent by the *desa* leader to Himyar Abas. It seems that the document was made by Himyar Abas.

Among the converts were Andil and his family.¹⁹ Another Muhammadiyah preacher An Aliyah who came to the village later explained that the Muslims were brought by the Christians to Gereja Pasundan Rangkasbitung (the Pasundan Church of Rangkasbitung) and were baptised. After their conversion to Christianity was exposed, many Muslims, especially from Muhammadiyah, came to the village. They brought clothes, food and money. Many Muslims who converted to Christianity reverted to Islam.²⁰ In 2015 the *Badan Pusat Statistik* (BPS/ Indonesian Statistic) reported that only 10 Christians were living in Wanasalam and 3 in Kadang Pamidangan. Both are two *desa* in Wanasalam sub-district. The other 53,861 people were Muslims (Kecamatan Wanasalam Dalam Angka 2016: 68-60).

About Christianisation of the Baduy community, Silitonga encouraged churches to introduce the Baduy to Christianity. What they can do, he advises, is to meet the people in their fields. They are the best place because none will disturb the process of Christianisation. He advises the future missionaries to speak in Sundanese spoken by the Baduy and to talk with them about simple topics which the Baduy can understand. Christianisation, he suggests, can also be carried out from home to home. The missionaries can talk about Christian teachings which are similar to the practices of Sunda Wiwitan, like monogamous marriage. He encourages the future missionaries to convert children or foster children (Silitonga 1998: 111-133).

2. *Pressures on Christian Baduy Families in Cipangembar*

When the resettlement villages were opened in Gunung Tunggul (Cipangembar 1 and 2) in 1977, 80 families moved to the villages. In 1985 the regent of Lebak Oman Sachroni came to the villages to give the land certificates to the people. In his speech he said that five religions were recognised by the state and the Baduy had to choose one of them. From around 50 families who remained in the resettlement villages, 20 families chose Christianity and the rest chose Islam. Because each family consisted of around four people, the Baduy who converted to Christianity were about 80 people.²¹

The first man who introduced Christianity to the Baduy in the resettlement villages was Ismail Amaloh (d.2017), from East Timor. He was sent by “Youth with a Mission” (YWAM), a US-based interdenominational Christian missionary organisation. Founded in 1960, YWAM has “tens of thousands of staff”, including from Indonesia, and wants “youth(s) involved in missions.”²² When

¹⁹ Interview with Engkos Yusroni on 10 April 2017.

²⁰ Interview with An Aliyah on 2 April 2017.

²¹ Interviews with Sapei on 22 December and with Windu on 24 December 2018.

²² <https://www.ywam.org/about-us/>, accessed on 8 January 2020.

Ismail came to the resettlement villages of the Baduy, he was just around 20 years old. There he lived in the house of Jaro Samin for about six months.²³ In 1985 Narja a son of Jaro Samin converted to Christianity and became the first convert, and followed by Sape'i, Pulung and Sapri and their relatives (Anggraeni 2000:118). When Christianity was growing, the number of Christians was about 30 families (around 120 people).²⁴ The Al Washliyah preacher Syahroni stated that after some Baduy converted to Christianity many Christians whom he associated with the ethnics of Ambon and Manado came to Cipangembar and carried out religious services.²⁵

The conversion of the Baduy to Christianity was reported by the local Muslims to the *desa* office. The *desa* officials forwarded the report to the military office (Koramil) and police office of Leuwidamar. They reported that Ismail installed an electricity network to attract the Baduy to Christianity. He also tried to convert not only the Baduy, but also the Muslims, to the religion. Responding to this report, in the evening people came to the resettlement villages of Gunung Tunggal where Ismail and other Christians lived. On the following day three people from the *desa* office, police and military came to the house where Ismail lived. The *desa* official threatened Ismail by saying: "Where is Ismail who wants to scramble the religion (Islam)? Probably he wants to know the taste of my knife."²⁶ The *desa* leader even called the Baduy to come to the *desa* office to be interrogated. This made the Christian Baduy were afraid. Later some of them converted to Islam or reverted to Sunda Wiwitan (Anggraeni 2000: 118, 120).

In 1992 a conflict soon happened when the Muslims found a copy of the Quran on which a cross was drawn. Syahroni invited and led more than a hundred Muslims from the outside of the resettlement villages to attack the Christian Baduy. They threw stones and mud into their houses. The cars' wheels of the Christian missionaries were deflated. During the attack the Muslims took the Christians' sandals and hit some of the Christians. They also brought some Christians to the military office (*Koramil*) reporting that they had violated the regulations on religion, especially on the foundation of a worship place and proselytization. In other words, according to the Muslim group, the Christians may not use their houses as a worship place because it was not. "They did not obtain permission from the neighbours and insulted the Muslims," Syahroni said. He explained further:

²³ Some informants mentioned that Ismail lived in the resettlement village for two years.

²⁴ Interviews with Haji Sarmedi on 20 May 2017, Sapei on 22 December 2018, and with Windu on 24 November 2018.

²⁵ Interview with Syahroni on 22 July 2017.

²⁶ Interview with Eman on 4 June 2017. He stated that he witnessed the incident.

“There I saw how the Christians persuaded the Baduy with the material. They also insulted the Muslims. They wrote a cross on the Qur’an. They said that Islam was the teaching of Satan. After hearing it I became angry. When there was a service in the house of Narja, I collected about 125 people from Dukuh. We attacked them.”²⁷

The attack was then reported by the Christians Bowo, Budi, and Ismail to General Moerdani²⁸. A week later three intelligence agents came looking for him. They asked Syahroni whether he knew Syahroni. He said that Syahroni, namely himself, went to Jakarta. Then Syahroni decided to go to Jakarta to consult the leaders of Al Washliyah Harun Amin and Ridwan Ibrahim Lubis. They advised him to write a report to the government and the Depag of Lebak with the Qur’an on which a cross was written as a piece of evidence.²⁹ Afterwards, Narja as the most senior Christian Baduy was called to the military office in Leuwidamar and asked to vow that he would say the truth. A military man showed him the Qur’an and asked him about who made the cross. Narja said that he did not know because he was not the only man who lived in the house. Later it was known that the one who drew the cross was his nephew Sadam who later converted to Islam.³⁰ Narja was also called to come to the Depag office of Lebak where he met its head Isnaini. Isnaini advised Narja to learn Christianity to a *kiyai* or an *ustad*.³¹ Narja complained about the advice and told Isnaini.

“I came from a non-religion,³² so it was free for me to choose any religion. When the regent of Lebak Oman Sachroni came to the resettlement village to give the certificates of land he said that as the followers of Sunda Wiwitan we were not recognized by the *puun* because we lived outside the *adat* land. We had to choose a religion recognized by the government of Indonesia, namely

²⁷ Interview with Syahroni on 22 July 2017.

²⁸ Leonardus Benyamin Moerdani (1932–2004) was a Catholic, the Minister of Defence and Security (1988–1993), the commander of the Indonesian National Armed Forces (1983–1988), and the leader of the Operational Command for the Restoration of Security and Order (*Pangkopkamtib*) (1983–1988).

²⁹ Interviews with Syahroni on 22 July and Kasja on 24 May 2017.

³⁰ Kokom Baduy said that it was Sadam—at that time he was a junior high school student—who drew the cross on the Quran. Interview with Kokom on 20 December 2018.

³¹ *Kiyai* and *ustad* are basically the same. They are informal teachers, mostly in Java, who teach Islam. However, sociologically a *kiyai* occupies a higher level in society than an *ustad*. The first is often marked by the ownership of a pesantren. Another similar term is *ulama*, a plural form of the Arabic *‘alim* which means scholar(s). Besides becoming a general term covering the terms *kiyai* and *ustad*, an *ulama* is a leading *kiyai*. In other parts of Indonesia other terms such as Tuan Guru are used.

³² It is evident here that Narja did not name Sunda Wiwitan as a religion, but a belief; two concepts which are rooted in the politics of religion in Indonesia which differentiates religion from belief.

Islam *et cetera*. We were not asked to choose a certain religion. It was up to us to choose.”³³

Narja was also called to the KUA office of Leuwidamar. There were the head of KUA Saefuddin, the sub-district head (*camat*), the military commander of the *kecamatan*, and the head of police. They asked him not to use the houses as a worship place. Narja explained that going to the church in Rangkasbitung was far, around 32 kilometres away. The Christians most likely did not have money for the transport fees. He admitted that the Christians conducted a service every week in his house or the houses of the other Christian Baduy. The government officials argued that other people would probably know that some Baduy were Christians and the officials would not be responsible if there was another attack. The officials also required every non-Baduy Christian visiting the Baduy to report himself to the police station.³⁴ They then held a meeting in Margaluyu and concluded that the incident happened because the Christian group did not have permission from the neighbours for using their houses as a worship place, while the regulation required it.³⁵

The Christians thought that the anger of the Muslim preachers at them was related to the pilgrimage programme. The government sent the preachers (because of their successful *da'wa* activities) and the Muslim converts to Mecca for a pilgrimage, but then all of them knew that some Baduy chose Christianity. The leader of the Baduy Jaro Samin who converted to Islam was eventually pressed as well by the Muslims. Let alone those who converted to Christianity were his family members. He felt stressed and would commit suicide with a kind of rifle. A Baduy Christian explained:

“He was the *jaro* of the Baduy who was paid by the government to make a pilgrimage. Some of his children converted to Christianity. He was pressed by the government, the Depag, *ustad*, and people in general. He felt stressed. It happened in the 1990s. A local military officer shot the door of Jaro Samin’s house. There were two bullet holes. [We were said] ‘The Christian unbelievers (Indonesian: *orang kafir Kristen*) may not live here. They are the members of the PKI (the Communist Party of Indonesia)’. Mr Jarkasih’s head, a Christian Baduy, was threatened by a weapon by a local military officer.”³⁶

³³ Interview with Narja on 20 December 2018.

³⁴ Interview with Narja on 20 December 2018.

³⁵ Interviews with Syahroni on 22 July 2017 and Kasja on 24 May 2017.

³⁶ Interview with Samian on 15 December 2018.

Moreover, the Christian Baduy claimed not to be allowed to read the Bible and sing religious songs. Every two weeks they had to report themselves to the police and local military offices. Because the Christian Baduy feared the Muslim preachers, they tried not to be noticed by the preachers when they went to the church in Rumbut, Rangkasbitung. The Christians left the house around 4 a.m. They determined to meet at a certain location. To reach it they, around 20 people, took different roads.³⁷ Also when the Christian Baduy gave food to their Muslim neighbours they were often considered by the Muslims to do Christianisation.

“The relation between the Muslims and the Christians became full of suspicion and fear. A Muslim Baduy didn’t want to meet his Christian Baduy friends because he didn’t want to be gossiped by his Muslim friends. Rather than having a problem with the majority, Muslims chose to keep a distance with the (Christian) minority.³⁸”

Around 1996 a tension between local Muslims and the Christian Baduy happened again. At this time Narja invited pastor Purba to celebrate the Christmas in the resettlement villages. The *Suara Pembaharuan*³⁹ journalist Don Hasman came to cover the event. The news surprised the Muslim community.⁴⁰ The Muslims began to pressure the Christian Baduy. They were even provoked when students from Advent University brought a newspaper which reported that 200 Baduy from Kadujangkung and Karahrul had converted to Christianity.⁴¹ Moreover, in 2002 the Christian Baduy got a menace again. At that time seven strongmen came to the Christian families saying that they would convert to Christianity if the Christians could pay them for Rp10 million (€666) per month. This amount was very high. Narja told the people that no one paid the Christian Baduy. They got their livelihood from farming.⁴²

3. Striking Towards Windu Nurgojali in Gunung Tunggul

In the resettlement villages of Gunung Tunggul, Windu Nurgojali (b. 1978) was one of some Baduy children who followed formal education. He is the son of Tati and a grandchild of Jaro Samin. Windu graduated from the SD (*Sekolah*

³⁷ Interviews with Windu and Narja on 20 December 2018.

³⁸ Interview with Windu on 24 November 2018.

³⁹ This newspaper was initially named *Sinar Harapan* and changed with *Suara Pembaharuan*.

⁴⁰ Interview with Narja on 20 December 2018.

⁴¹ Interview with Ustad Kasja on 9 April 2017.

⁴² Interviews with Narja, Windu, and Tatang on 24 November 2018.



Photograph 5.2: Tatang's house in Cipangembar which was accused of being a church. Photograph was taken in 2018 by Ade Jaya Suryani.



Photograph 5.3: Tatang's house was bought by a follower Jamaah Tablig. In this village he built a *pesantren*. Photograph was taken in 2018 by Ade Jaya Suryani.

Dasar/ Elementary School) of Gunung Tunggal in 1990 and the SMP (*Sekolah Menengah Pertamal* Junior High School) of Leuwidamar in 1993. Afterwards, he followed the Adventist Christian Bambang Sigit Waluyo to Purwodadi, Central Java. In the city Windu studied at Sekolah Lanjutan Advent Purwodadi (SLAPUR/ Adventist Senior High School) and graduated from it in 1997. From Purwodadi Windu and Bambang moved to Bandung to study at Universitas Advent Indonesia (UNAI) of Bandung. Windu obtained his bachelor in 2001 and master in 2014, both from the Faculty of Philosophy, a faculty which is designed to prepare Christian missionaries. After obtaining his master from UNAI he was appointed as a missionary and gave services in churches in Jakarta. Then he was moved to Lebak where every Saturday he gives services for the Christian Baduy.⁴³

In 2011 Windu experienced violence. Windu and the Muslim locals had a different view about why it happened. According to Windu, this case was personal because the villagers Amri and Ahmad Saepuloh (b.1976) wanted to take the land that Windu bought 20 years ago from Amri's father.⁴⁴ Somehow the case expanded and involved other Muslims and the case became a religious matter. According to the Muslim locals, this case happened because Windu commented on the *'id al-fitr* celebration of the year which fell on two different days. Muhammadiyah celebrated it on 30 August, while the government and the Muslim majority on the next day.⁴⁵ The Muslims disliked Windu's comment and because of it some of them wanted to overrun Windu. The Muslim seniors forbade them to attack him. Ahmad who was Amri's father-in-law expressed that he was brave to strike Windu and he did it. Windu reported the case to the police of Leuwidamar that he was beaten by the Muslims of Cipangembar and Cihaur. The police called both parties to the police station. Many people, including the officials of the Koramil (Military Regional Command) and the MUI, came there. The mass denied having hit him.⁴⁶

The Muslims benefitted the case by pushing an agreement. There were some points in the agreement, but the most important thing is that Windu was not allowed to invite or persuade the adherents of other religions and

⁴³ Interview with Windu on 24 November 2018. See also <http://ffil.unai.edu/tentang/sambutan-dekan/>, accessed on 2 March 2018.

⁴⁴ Interview with Windu on 24 November 2018.

⁴⁵ Interview with Kasja on 24 May 2017. News on the different days of idul fitr in 2011 read, for example, <https://ramadan.tempo.co/read/502641/10-tahun-3-kali-muhammadiyah-dan-pemerintah-beda-lebaran/full&view=ok>. Accessed on 8 May 2017.

⁴⁶ The police document of Leuwidamar and interviews with Kasja on 10 May 2017 and Zainuddin Amir on 6 June 2017.

beliefs to Christianity. What is meant by religion(s) and belief(s) is of course Islam and Sunda Wiwitan. Ahmad was warned not to break the law by hitting other people. Because of his act, Ahmad was jailed for one night. If they failed to obey the agreement they both would be persecuted under the law. The agreement was signed by Ahmad, Windu and three witnesses Asrib, Ewong (Sarwan) and Tatang, on 7 September 2011.⁴⁷ A *kiyai* reminded the Christians that to build a worship place a group is required to fulfil the requirements such as to get permission from 60 neighbours proven by their identity cards.⁴⁸ Some Muslims stated that the agreement was their victory against the Christians.⁴⁹

The Muslim preachers explained that Windu was still active as a missionary. He often came to Gunungkencana and Cileles. The first is a *desa* in Lebak, about 35 kilometres away from Ciboleger to the west and the latter is a sub-district in Lebak, about 20 kilometres from Ciboleger to the northwest. In these two villages some hundred Baduy families lived. Kiyai Maza claimed to have sent a man to check whether or not Windu propagated Christianity in the villages. The man confirmed that Windu had been active there since 2016.⁵⁰

It is a common belief among the Muslims that the Christians are seeking the right moment to build a church and a clinic in Leuwidamar. For example, an *ustad* mentioned that the Christians would build a clinic in a village between Kompol and Ciboleger, but failed because there was a threat from a Muslim. He, an *ustad*, said that the Christians met the village head to ask for a permit to build the clinic. It seems that they obtained it. In the process of the building the *ustad* came to meet the contractor of the clinic and told him: "Please continue the construction if you want to be beheaded!" The *ustad* warned the contractor that if Christianisation happened, the *ustad* would search for him. He also told the contractor if the Christians had a place, it would be easy for them to do missionary activities. Because feeling threatened, the contractor did not continue the project.⁵¹

The Muslim Budi explained that many Christians were visiting the Baduy. The Christians, especially Windu, according to Budi, were interested in converting the Baduy to Christianity. He knew that Windu was known by the Baduy as a generous person. In 2016 Windu rented a house in Ciboleger

⁴⁷ Information from a police document of Leuwidamar.

⁴⁸ Interview with Kiyai Maza on 28 March 2017.

⁴⁹ Interviews with Ustad Imran on 10 April and Kiyai Maza on 28 March, 2017.

⁵⁰ Interview with Kiyai Maza on 28 March 2017.

⁵¹ Interview with Ustad Imran on 10 April 2017.

for Rp6 million (around €100) per year. The house was used as a place to sell oranges. Budi was sure that selling fruits was not Windu's real intention. Budi came to the conclusion because Windu was assisted by about five Baduy. If Windu was able to sell 10 kilograms of orange per day, he would still not be able to pay the rent and his five employees.⁵²

From my interviews with many Muslim preachers it seems that they will not let the Christians build a church in Leuwidamar. They will use any available tool especially regulations on preaching and building a worship house. The pastor Windu and other Christian Baduy are aware of what is happening. The violence they have experienced since the late 1980s taught them about their position in the Muslim majority. Many efforts have been tried to stop the development of Christianity in the villages. They know that their Muslim Baduy relatives are good at them, but they afraid of being close to them. "From the various events we are becoming surer that they try to make us uncomfortable living here," said Windu.⁵³

4. *Threats to the Christian Missionaries in Gerendeng*

A contestation and conflict between the Muslims and Christians also happened in the Baduy village of Gerendeng in 1991. In that year 39 Baduy converted to Christianity. Two Muslim preachers came to the village. They met a Baduy woman whom they asked to tell a Baduy Christian that if the Baduy in Gerendeng converted to Christianity they would burn the village. Two days later about 36 Christians searched for the preachers in Leuwidamar. At that time one of the preachers was in the mosque. The villagers who knew what was happening guarded his house. People from Rangkasbitung whom the preacher called "my troops" were on the way to his village. He said that if the Christian and Muslim groups met, there would have been bloodshed. According to him, the Christians who sought for him came from Cianjur. Moreover, in 1994 the Muslim preachers came again to Gerendeng and drove the Christian missionaries away. The Muslim preachers then built a small mosque there. Afterwards, seven Baduy of the village converted to Islam but they later moved to another village. Accordingly, there were no more Muslims in the village who could manage the mosque. Eventually, after 15 years of its existence, the mosque was dismantled.⁵⁴

⁵² Interview with Budi on 24 November 2018.

⁵³ Interview with Windu on 24 November 2018.

⁵⁴ Interview with Ustad Kusni on 10 April 2017. He stated that the first Baduy who converted to Christianity were the villagers of Gerendeng and followed by that of Gunung Tunggal. But most of informants stated that the Baduy in Gunung Tunggal had converted to Christianity since the 1980s. Missionaries who were active in Gerendeng, Gunung Tunggal and other villages, however, were the same.

5. *An accusation of Doing Christian Mission in Cihandam: Ully Sigar Rusady and a Korean Woman*

Around 1995-1997 a tension happened in Cihandam, a village close to the *adat* land, with the issue of Christianisation. The environment activist Ully Sigar Rusady (b.1952) was accused of trying to convert the Baduy through an environmental programme. The religion of Ully is not known, but her sister Paramitha Rusady is a Muslim. When the case happened people of Leuwidamar deemed Ully as a Christian. For the programme Ully bought 18-20 hectares of land and was managed by Baduy. The Minister of Environment Sarwono Kusumaatmadja was once invited to see the location. The local Muslims believed that Christians were behind this programme and had an intention to convert the Baduy to Christianity. They also believed that Ully got funding from the United States. With the funding people believed that the biggest Indonesian church would be built in Cihandam.⁵⁵

The rumour of Christianisation of the village still continues up to today. The followers of Jamaah Tabligh stated that there was a Korean Christian missionary living in Cihandam.⁵⁶ A radio journalist in Serang claimed as well that he had met the Korean and confirmed that she was a missionary.⁵⁷ Elisa (b.1950), the Christian Korean woman, objected to being called a missionary. She said that she came to and lived in Cihandam to find peace. Born in Korea, she and her family immigrated to the US in 1970. After spending 40 years in the country she retired. Afterwards, when travelling to Jakarta and Sukabumi in 2001 she heard about the Baduy, visited them in 2014, and liked the people. In the same year this Korean American citizen decided to live in Cihandam and spend the rest of her life there. Before buying the land on which she founded her house, she had tried to find land in other villages but the price was expensive. Then she purchased a half hectare of land in Cihandam which belonged to a Baduy for Rp30 million (around €2,000). In her daily life, she was assisted by some Baduy. The Baduy themselves lived in their houses, came to Elisa's house in the morning and returned in the afternoon. From the people she also learned the Indonesian language. Every three months her Korean friends who worked in Cilegon visited her. And once a year she visited the USA.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Interviews with Engkos on 10 April 2017 and Kiyai Zainuddin on 21 July 2017. The latter stated that he was there when the Minister of Environment came to Cihandam.

⁵⁶ Interview with Iton Rustandi on 24 May 2017.

⁵⁷ Personal conversation with Kosim in 2010.

⁵⁸ After a cooperation between the Indonesian company Krakatau Steel and the Korean Posco in 2011 more than 234 Koreans worked in the city. [Http://www.krakatau-posco.co.id/company/our_company](http://www.krakatau-posco.co.id/company/our_company), <https://money.kompas.com/read/2015/04/28/165000526/Geliat.Investasi.di.Ujung.Jawa>, accessed on 3 March 2019, and interview with Elisa on 21 December 2018.

Elisa knew that many local Muslims thought that she was a Christian missionary, but she rejected the accusation. “I am a Christian but I don’t want to be involved in religious matters. People in the mosque are worried that I will build a church,” she said. Muslims locals once visited her asking why she lived in the village, whether or not she would convert the Baduy to Christianity.⁵⁹

6. *Becoming the Target of Christianisation: Cikapek*

The issue of Christianisation also emerged in Cikapek. Hendra stated that Cikapek and its surroundings had become targets of Christianisation. He got the information from a man who once lived in his house. The man was from Lampung. When his parents died, he was taken care of by a Christian and made him convert to Christianity. But he reverted to Islam when he would marry a Muslim woman from Serang. Hendra was interested in him and invited him to live in his house. He stayed there for three months. The man told Hendra to be careful because, the man said, Cikapek and its surroundings had become targets of Christianisation. “I know this because I was a Christian,” he told Hendra. The man also mentioned a car and its registration number plate which was used by the missionary when he visited the areas. The man said that when his son was sick the Christian missionary met him saying that he would pay the medication of his sick son if he would return to Christianity.⁶⁰

A Christianisation effort might also have happened in a Baduy village. Christian missionaries came to the village and distributed books. When a Baduy asked about the books, the distributor said that they were copies of the Bible. If this information is true, distributing books to the Baduy as a missionary method is strange because the Baduy are generally illiterate. The Bible or whatever book would be meaningless because the Baduy would not be able to read them. The Christian missionaries, according to Andri, also distributed necklaces with a cross as their pendant.⁶¹

B. Politics of Religion in Indonesia: the Contestation between Muslims and Christians, the Exclusion of Local Religions, and Permit of the Foundation of Worship Houses

1. *Contestation between Muslims and Christians*

The contestation between Muslims and Christians like what happens in

⁵⁹ Interview with Elisa on 21 December 2018.

⁶⁰ Interview with Hendra on 8 July 2017.

⁶¹ Interview with Andri on 8 July 2017.

Leuwidamar, Lebak, has emerged since the BPUPKI (*Badan Penyelidik Usaha-Usaha Persiapan Kemerdekaan*) the Investigating Committee for Preparatory Work for Independence) formulated the foundation of the state. At that time the BPUPKI members were divided into two groups: the Muslim nationalists and the secular nationalists. The first wanted the state was based on Islam and the latter wanted a more neutral basis. The dispute between the two brought them to the acceptance of the Jakarta Charter (*Piagam Jakarta*) where Indonesia would not become an Islamic state but the Muslims were allowed to implement the *sharia* for the Muslims themselves. This charter appears as the Introduction to the Constitution.

On 17 August 1945, in the afternoon after the independence declaration, a man who claimed to be the Christian representative came to the vice-president Mohammad Hatta to convey the objection of the Christians of a phrase in the Jakarta Charter: “the belief in the One and Only God, with the obligation to abide by Islamic law for adherents of Islam”. If Hatta and friends did not remove the privilege of Muslims as it is stated in the phrase, the Christians in the eastern part of Indonesia would prefer creating a separate state. Hatta and friends then removed the seven words (in the Indonesian version) of the phrase and it became “the belief in the one and only God” (Indonesian: *Ketuhanan yang Maha Esa*). This phrase also appears as the first principle of the state’s ideology Pancasila. From this principle regulations on religion in Indonesia are derived.

To manage religious affairs in the country, the state created *Departemen Agama* (Depag/ the Department of Religious Affairs) on 3 January 1946 based on the proposal of *Badan Pekerja Komite Nasional Indonesia Pusat* (the Central Working Body of the Indonesian National Committee) and written on the decision letter No. 1/SD and signed by president Soekarno (Sismono 1991: 1-6, 16). This department was the continuation of the previous offices, namely *Het Kantoor voor Inlandsche Zaken* (the Office for Indigenous Affairs) in the Dutch period and *shūmubu* (Religious Affairs Office) in the Japanese period (Nur Ichwan: 2006) Later, based on the regulation issued by the Depag No.1/ 2010 the name *Departemen Agama* became *Kementerian Agama* (the Ministry of Religious Affairs/Mora). Article 4 of the Presidential Regulation No. 83/ 2015 about the Mora mentions, among others, that the Mora has the general directorates of the societies of Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, and Buddhism.⁶² Although Confucianism is mentioned in the law No.1/PNPS/1965 and affirmed by President Abdurrahman Wahid in 2000, this religion is not mentioned to have a directorate in the Mora. Regulation No. 83/ 2015 thus tells us the religions

⁶² The Presidential Regulation No. 83/ 2015 on the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

which are and are not recognised by the state. Local religions, like Sunda Wiwitan of the Baduy, are excluded from what the state calls ‘religion’.

Where religion is managed by a ministry, it is not surprising to find many laws, regulations, decisions, and something alike on religion. Ropi (2017) in his study on regulations on religion in Indonesia enlists around 56 laws and the like. The list will be much longer if the period and area of study are expanded, including the *sharia* by-laws (*peraturan daerah berbasis syairah*) in all regencies in Indonesia. The existence of the Mora and its offices in the lower levels has shown the importance of religion in Indonesia, especially for Muslims. At the sub-district level, it has an office called the KUA (*Kantor Urusan Agama*/the Office of Religious Affairs) which one of its duties is to record the marriages and reconciliation of Muslims.⁶³ The KUA also records the conversion of non-Muslims to Islam.⁶⁴ The extensive number of the Mora offices has made Christians suspicious of the Mora as a medium for Muslims to Islamise Indonesia (Ropi 2000, Mujiburrahman 2006).⁶⁵

2. *The Exclusion of Local Religion from the State’s Definition of Religion*

The first principle of Pancasila which reads “Belief in the one and Only God” has become a paramount foundation of religion in Indonesia. The second most important reference is Article 29 points 1 and 2 of the Constitution which declare, respectively, that: “The state is based on the belief in the one and only God” and that: “The state guarantees the freedom of every citizen to adhere to his religion and to worship according to his religion and belief.”⁶⁶ In the fourth amendment of the Constitution religion and belief are managed by Article 28E points (1) and (2). Point (1) states that: “Every person is free to choose a religion and to worship based on his religion, to choose education and teaching, to choose a work, citizenship, and to choose the place of residence in an area of the country and to leave them, and has the right to return. Point (2) states that: “Every person has the right to the freedom to believe a belief, to express his thought and attitude, based on his conscience.”

However, these legal and political foundations are not without a flaw. The words religion (*agama*) and belief (*kepercayaan*) have arisen obscurity whether

⁶³ <https://bengkulu.kemenag.go.id/artikel/8659-tugas-dan-fungsi-kantor-urusan-agama-kua>, accessed on 15 March 2018.

⁶⁴ Interview with the head of KUA Leuwidamar Abdul Muthi on 2 July 2017.

⁶⁵ Read also a paper entitled “*Masalah surat keputusan Menteri Agama R.I. no. 70 dan 77 tahun 1978*” [S.l. : s.n.], 1978. This paper is anonymous, but reflects Christian views about the regulations.

⁶⁶ Religious freedom is also guaranteed by the MPR provision number XVII /MPR/1998 on human rights. Article 13 of the provision guarantees everyone to adhere to his religion and to worship based on his religion and belief.

a belief is part of a religion or it refers to something else. The most common understanding is that the term religion refers to major religions which in the law No.1/PNPS/1965 include Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism; and the term belief refers to local religions and mystical streams. But the law No.1/PNPS/1965 is not about official religions in Indonesia, but about the Prevention of the Misuse and or Religious Blasphemy. In other words, as admitted by the former minister of Religious Affairs Lukman Hakim Saifuddin (2014-2019), Indonesia never officially recognises or does not recognise a religion.⁶⁷

In practice, however, there is something which is called religion and not-religion (belief system) and this distinction has very far consequences in the life of the followers of beliefs. First, the government made the phrase “religions adhered by most of the Indonesian population” as it appears in the law No.1/PNPS/1965. By referring to the law, the phrase was narrowed and became “religions recognised by the government”. Although this phrase appears in some regulations, in reality, there is no law or regulation which mentions which religion is recognised and which one is not. Furthermore, these phrases have excluded local religions from the state’s concept of religion. According to this concept, a region has to have God, a prophet, a sacred book, and a worship place. Second, regulations on religion assert explicitly that the state guarantees, assists, and protects the religions recognised by the state. Third, the government forbids the adherents of a religion to invite the adherents of other religions. Because local religions are not deemed by the government as religions it means that the government permits the adherents of religions to invite those of local religions. In practice, as it happened among the Baduy, this permit has pushed Muslims and Christian missionaries into conflicts.

Related to this law, attention needs to be paid to the following three issues: (1) The names of the religions recognised by the state seems to appear for the first time the law No.1/PNPS/1965. They obtain a guarantee, assistance, and protection from the state. As the implementation of this law they are managed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. (2) Although Indonesia does not have a law which recognises or does not recognise a religion, in practice religions other than the six religions are called beliefs. The former Ministry of Religious Affairs Saifuddin admits this categorisation.⁶⁸ The decision No. IV/MPR/1978 states that a belief is not a religion and the government has to prevent it from becoming

⁶⁷ See https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/berita_indonesia/2014/09/140918_agama_minoritas, accessed on 4 June 2020.

⁶⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ztieF1R5IIg&list=PLlbh--00xnUuoGU6shDW2MfGQBxdaxat&index=1>, accessed on 16 February 2019.

a religion. Different from the recognised religions, beliefs are managed by the Ministry of Education and Culture. And (3) the state tries to direct the mystical streams and local religions into what the government calls “religions adhered by most Indonesians”. Moreover, in 1966 the People’s Consultative Assembly (MPR) issued the provision No. XXVII/MPRS/1966 on Religion, Education and Culture. Here the MPR does not use the phrase “religions adhered by most Indonesians”, but “religions recognised by the government”, but still it does not mention the names of the religions.⁶⁹

After the concepts of religion and belief were defined, the government permits the adherents of the recognised religions to invite those of beliefs. This permit appears in the joint regulation between the Department of Religious Affairs and the Department of Home Affairs No.01/BER/MDN-MAG/1969 which asserts that the state guarantees religious freedom. Moreover, the government has to guide, support, and protect the efforts of religious development and the worship implementation. Article 1 states that the regent or mayor allows the religious propagation as long as (article 2) it does not make disintegration among the religious adherents; is not carried out with intimidation, inducement, and coercion; and does not break the law, security and public order. In doing so the regent or mayor is assisted by the head of the local department of religious affairs.⁷⁰

Still related to the religious outreach, the Depag issued two decisions No. 70/1978 on the guideline of the religious outreach and No.77/ 1978 on religious aid in Indonesia. These decisions were then compiled in a new joint regulation No. 1/BER/MDN-MAG/1979 on the Guideline of Religious Outreach and Foreign Aid to Religious Organisations in Indonesia. Article 1 of the joint regulation explains that the purpose of this decision is to regulate religious propagation and international aid and to make religious harmony. The same article states that the regulation is not to limit religious guidance, development, and propagation.⁷¹

Article 4, which is often deployed by a religious group to counter other groups and to convert the adherents of local religions, manages the practical issues of the religious proselytization. It states that religious proselytization may not be directed to people who already embrace a *religion* with any means of inducement,

⁶⁹ Provision No. XXVII/MPRS/1966 on Religion, Education and Culture.

⁷⁰ Joint regulation between the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Home Affairs No.01/BER/MDN-MAG/1969 on “the Implementation of the Function of Civil Servants in Guaranteeing the Order and Smoothness of the Development and Religious Worship by the Adherents”

⁷¹ Joint regulation No. 1/BER/MDN-MAG/1979 between the Ministries of Religious Affairs and of Home Affairs on the Guideline of Religious Outreach and Foreign Aid to Religious Organisations in Indonesia.

religious publications, and visits to convert the people. It is interesting to note that the word *kepercayaan* (belief) is not mentioned in this decision. As has been mentioned above, local religions are not deemed by the government as religion, but beliefs. In other words, the decision permits the adherents of the religions recognised by the government to invite the adherents of beliefs, including those of local religions, to the religions recognised by the government.

Article 6 (1) of the joint decision mentions that all efforts to obtain international aid for religious organisations have to get a recommendation from the Depag and a permit from the PKKTLN (*Panitia Koordinasi Kerjasama Teknik Luar Negeri*/ the Coordinating Committee for Foreign Technical Cooperation). Article 7 states that religious organisations have to educate and train Indonesians to replace foreign preachers and workers. Article 8 requires the governors or regents to guide and supervise foreign preachers and workers, the activities of religious organisations, the implementation of foreign aids, and the education and training of local preachers.

These regulations on religion and belief have become a legal and political basis for the Muslim and Christian preachers to target the Baduy. One of the leaders of the MUI of Banten Syibli Sarjaya, for instance, bases his argument on the regulations by stating that the government guarantees the adherents of the religions recognised by the government to proselytize their religions to those who have not had a religion (*belum punya agama*).⁷² The same argument comes from one of the leaders of the *Forum Silaturahmi Pondok Pesantren* (the Pesantren Forum) of Banten Matin Jawahir. He stated that Sunda Wiwitan of the Baduy was not a religion.⁷³ This understanding has come up from the dichotomy made by the state. Because *da'wa* for Muslims is obligatory and the government supports the recognised religions to proselytise their religions, both Sarjaya and Jawahir conclude that *da'wa* among the Baduy is necessary. Moreover, in doing *da'wa* activities the Muslims try not only to attract the Baduy to convert to Islam but also to counter Christianity. In doing so they use the regulations on the foundation of worship places.

3. Deploying Regulations on the Foundation of Worship Houses to Counter the Christians

The topic of the foundation of worship houses in Indonesian politics has emerged since at least 1960. Article 2 (4) of the MPRS provision No. II/MPRS/1960 states that the government has to “develop the foundation of worship houses and

⁷² Interview with Sibly Sarjaya on 21 March 2017.

⁷³ Interview with Kiyai Matin Jawahir on 14 March 2017.

religious institutions.”⁷⁴ A more specific legal basis of the foundation of worship houses appears in the joint regulation between the Ministries of Religious Affairs and Home Affairs No. 01/BER/MDN-MAG/1969. Article 4 of the regulation states that the foundation of a worship house has to obtain a permit from the regents or mayors. Before granting the permission they have to consult the heads of the local Depag, the Planology Department, and the local religious organisations. If a tension appears among different religious adherents because of proselytization or the foundation of a worship house, article 5 requires the regents/ mayors to make a just solution.⁷⁵

The regulation on the foundation of worship houses reappears in the joint regulation between the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Home Affairs No. 9/ 2006 and No. 8/2006.⁷⁶ This regulation requires the governors, the regents/ mayors, the heads of districts (*camat*), and the heads of villages (*lurah*) to “maintain peace and order of society including to facilitate religious harmony” in the levels of province, regency/ city, sub-district and village. Besides, this regulation also addresses the FKUB (*Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama*/ the Forum of Religious Harmony) to conduct dialogues with religious figures, to collect aspiration from religious organisations, to convey the aspiration to the government, and to socialise religious regulations to society.

More importantly, this joint regulation sets the foundation of worship houses. Article 14 mentions that the future worship house will be used by at least 90 followers proven by their identity cards. Besides, the foundation of the worship house should be supported by 60 residents where their support is legalised by the *desa* leader. The committee of the foundation of the worship house also has to obtain written recommendations from the Depag and the FKUB. Article 14 states further that if the committee of the foundation of the worship house cannot fulfil the requirements, the government is obliged to provide a worship place for the adherents of the religion.

In countering the development of Christianity in Leuwidamar Muslim preachers used these regulations on the foundation of a worship house. On the surface the relationship between the Muslims and Christians there is getting better. But the Muslim preachers are still worried that after the Christian Baduy youths finish

⁷⁴ The MPRS Provision No. II/MPRS/1960 about the Main Guideline of the National Development 1961-1969.

⁷⁵ Joint regulation between the Ministries of Religious Affairs and Home Affairs No.01/BER/MDN-MAG/1969 on the Implementation of the Duties of Governmental Officials in Guaranteeing the Order and Smoothness of the Implementation, Development and Worship of Religion by Its Adherents.

⁷⁶ Joint regulations between the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Home Affairs No. 9/ 2006 and No. 8/ 2006 on the Guideline of the Implementation of the Function of Regional Leaders (Mayors/Regents) in the Maintenance of Religious Harmony, Empowerment of the Forum of Religious Harmony, and the Foundation of Worship Houses.

their study in cities, they will return to Leuwidamar, marry, and have children. If it happens, it means the number of Christians will increase and qualify the requirement to build a worship place.⁷⁷ The Muslims believe that Windu and his Christian community are financially powerful. In the meantime, according to the Muslims, they are unable yet to materialise their dream to build a church because the followers of Christianity in Leuwidamar are administratively not enough.

A preacher claimed to have conveyed his worry about this issue to the MUI, local *kiyai*, and the *desa* office, but they did not respond to him. He exemplified a case which happened in 2010. At that time he made a photograph of a future church building in Cisimeut and sent it to the regent of Lebak, but the regent did not respond. A year later the foundation of the church would be finished soon. Around August 2011 the making of the foundation was stopped. The reason to stop the continuation of the foundation of the church was that the number of Christians who would use the church was less than is required by the regulation, namely 90 people. So far, the preacher said, the plan to build a church in Leuwidamar and its surrounding sub-districts could be prevented. But he, like some other preachers, was worried that the Baduy Christians would qualify the regulations. When it happens the Muslims will have no reason to forbid the Christians to have a church.⁷⁸

The Muslim preachers know that the Christian Baduy are concentrated in the village of Cipangembar. Even people sometimes refer to the village as the Christian village. The Muslims accused the Christian Baduy in this village of building a church in the form of a house. In 2016 some Muslims reported the so-called church to the police. Some policemen came there to check. The owner of the building Tatang refused his house to be called a church. In fact, Tatang was unable to finish the foundation of his house because the money was used to pay the tuition fee of his children. The eldest who was studying at Universitas Advent Indonesia in Bandung needed around Rp10 million per semester, while the other two children needed around Rp7 million per month. Tatang was sad with the accusation but he felt quite fortunate to have a Muslim Baduy relative Pandi who works in the police. Pandi explained to the people that Tatang's house was not a church. Because Tatang needed money, in 2018 his house was sold to the follower of Jamaah Tabligh Samain. Tatang said:

“People thought that it was a church. It was not. Indonesia is a legal state where it has a regulation which requires us to have 90 future users of the

⁷⁷ Interviews with Ustad Ara on 9 April 2017 and Haji Idi on 20 May 2017.

⁷⁸ Interviews with Ustad Ara on 9 April 2017 and Kiyai Maza on 28 March 2017.

worship house. How will we build a church when the number of Christians is not enough?⁷⁹

Because they did not have a church, to organise a service Windu and his extended Christian families gathered in their houses. But recently they built a small building which they are reluctant to call a church. This building has two rooms: a meeting room, a pantry plus a toilet. The joint regulation No. 9 and No. 8/2006 indeed excludes worship places for families from the definition of a worship house. Article 3 of the decision mentions that “a worship house is a permanent building with certain characteristics which is specifically for worship for its adherents, excluding the worship place for families.”

The pastor Windu said: “We don’t have a church because we are not allowed by the locals to have it. The majority doesn’t want it.” Windu’s elder brother Tatang believed that the reluctance of the majority to allow the foundation of a church was connected to the regulations on the foundation of a worship house. “This is because of the joint regulation between the Ministries (of Religious Affairs and Home Affairs). The government recognises five religions, but their rights, especially those of Christianity, are limited. This is strange,” said Tatang.

C. Competition for Buying Land for the (Future) Converts

Another issue in missionary activities among the Baduy is the competition between Muslims and Christians in buying land for the (future) converts. This issue is connected to the main problem of the Baduy, namely access to land. Some Muslim Baduy who live in Kompol, for example, built their houses on the land of Muhammadiyah. In Cikapek many Muslim Baduy built temporary houses in a disputed land or along the sides of the road. They live there because they do not have money to buy land or a house. Besides, it is not easy to buy land because the owners of land generally do not sell their land unless they need extra money. And when they sell their land, they sell a full block of the land, for example, one hectare. It will be extremely difficult for the majority of the Muslim Baduy to buy such a piece of land.⁸⁰

The Muslim preachers and Christian missionaries understand this problem. Therefore, one of the efforts they do when doing missionary activities among

⁷⁹ Interview with Tatang on 24 November 2018.

⁸⁰ Interviews with Kasja on 10 May 2017, Haji Adung on 8 July 2017 and 22 November 2018, Zainuddin Amir on 28 March and 6 July 2017.



Photograph 5.4: A community of Christian Baduy in Cipangembar/ Gunung Tunggul. Photograph was taken in 2018 by Ade Jaya Suryani.



Photograph 5.5: The pastor Windu Nurgojali gives a service. He is a grandchild of Jaro Samin who obtained his bachelor and master diplomas from Universitas Advent Indonesia. Photograph was taken in 2018 by Ade Jaya Suryani.

the Baduy is to provide land for the (future) converts. The Muslim preachers in Leuwidamar believed that the Christians were rich and this belief came from the information they received that the Christians could buy some hectares of land. Although the Muslims sought to counterbalance the purchase of land, they thought that the Christians were financially too powerful.⁸¹ The Muslims also realised that they actually could not forbid the Christians to buy land and to invite the Baduy to manage it. But the Christians' capability of buying land makes the Muslim worried that in the future the Christian would build a church there. What the Muslim preachers did was to remind local Muslims not to sell their land to Christians. But they also realised that this technique would not be effective. Then to counter the development of Christianity they utilised the politics of religion, especially on proselytization and the foundation of worship houses.

Many Muslim informants revealed that the Christian missionary Windu had bought land in some villages such as in Gunungkencana and Muncang where some Baduy were invited to manage it. The Muslims said that the Christians bought land, invited the Baduy to manage it, teach the Baduy agriculture, maintain their health, and offer their children formal education. In the end, the Muslims believed, the Baduy who lived in the Christian land would tend to Christianity. When a Baduy converted to Christianity, the Muslims said, they would not be surprised. Haji Alo expressed:

“When the Baduy are pressed by the *adat* leaders because they break the taboos, they will choose the Christians who have cared for them. In this situation, we will not be able to counter the Christians and their mission.”⁸²

When the Baduy managed the Christian land, the Muslims heard that most of the results of the plantation, like crops and wood, would belong to the Baduy. The Muslims understood it as part of the Christian missionary efforts as the response to the fact that the Christians could not preach as freely as the Muslims. The purchase of land was thought by the Muslims to be connected to

⁸¹ Information stating that the Christian group is financially powerful is available in many sources especially from the Muhammadiyah circle, for example Anhar Burhanuddin et al., *Lembaga Dakwah Khusus Muhammadiyah*, (Jakarta: Lembaga Dakwah Khusus Muhammadiyah, 1990); Goodwill Zubir and Sudar Siandes, *Dakwah dan Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Terasing Tanggung Jawab Siapa?*, (Jakarta: Lembaga Dakwah Khusus, 1997); Goodwill Zubir and Sudar Siandes, *Strategi Gerakan Dakwah Muhammadiyah di Pedesaan* (Banda Aceh: Lembaga Dakwah Khusus, 1999); Goodwill Zubir and Sudar Siandes, *Potret Gerakan Kristenisasi di Indonesia Versi Da'I LDK Muhammadiyah*, (Jakarta: Lembaga Dakwah Khusus, 1999?), and Karel Steenbrink, *Academic Study of Indonesian Islam a Biographical Account, 1970-2014* in *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies*, Vol. 53, no. 2 (2015), pp. 337-365.

⁸² Interview with Haji Alo 24 November 2018

the Christians' plan to build a church and or a clinic in Leuwidamar. A Muslim Baduy Ara claimed that the pastor Windu told him in 2011 that Windu wanted to build the most luxurious Asian church in Lebak. What the Muslim group was worried about was that the Christians would buy more and more land, their family members would live in a certain village and their existence would meet the regulation to build the church. Ara claimed to have investigated a rumour and obtained information about two people from Jakarta who bought two hectares of land in Leuwidamar for the foundation of a church. The land was located in the village of Lebak Gedong.⁸³

Ara explained further that the Christians had one hectare of land in Cibengkung and eleven hectares in Cisimeut. The Christians bought the land in Cibengkung for Rp300 million. In Cibengkung they would build a church behind the building of the Junior High School (SMP) 2 of Leuwidamar. The Muslims, Ara said, wanted to buy the land back for Rp400 million but they were not sure whether the Christians would want to sell it. Ara also obtained information stating that the Christians had bought three hectares of land in Leuwidamar.⁸⁴

The rumour that the Christians would build a church in Leuwidamar was also heard by Kiyai Maza. He said:

“They would build a church. But it was impossible because there were only 10 (Christian) families. They did a missionary activity by inviting the Baduy. We have converted some of the Christian Baduy to Islam. It happened in 1987-89. (Because of the plan to build the church) tension between the Christians and Muslims rose.”⁸⁵

That the Christians have bought land is also reported by the magazine Hidayatullah by referring to the information provided by the DDII preacher Nurkib Ibnu Djais.⁸⁶ Like what was said by Ara, a Jamaah Tabligh follower said

⁸³ Interview with Ara on 10 May 2017.

⁸⁴ Such a treat is actually common in Banten which is known as the land of *jawara* (local strongmen). When a man declares this statement or something alike such as '*dipaehan dia ku aing*' (I will kill you), it does not mean that he will do it. For example, the current regent of Lebak Iti Octavia Jayabaya (b.1978) came to Ciboleger and found that a public garden was destroyed by the foundation of a building. She yelled madly: '*Disapatkeun beubeung dia nu bogana di dieu. Goblog doang daria. Tolol!*' (I will cut the neck of the owner [of this building] off here. All of you are idiot. Stupid!) Watch the video on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=80iGq6As_hI, accessed on 30 August 2018.

⁸⁵ Interview with Kiyai Maza on 6 June 2017.

⁸⁶ *Hidayatullah* Issue 8, XXIV, December 2011, p.31

that the Christians had bought eleven hectares of land.⁸⁷ The Muslim Baduy who is also a preacher Sunirta even said that the Christians had bought around 30 hectares of land. Some of them are 13 hectares in Cisimeut, 3 hectares in Pasir Gelap, 3 hectares in Cikapek, 3.5 hectares in Palopat, and 1.5 hectares in another village. The fund, Sunirta said, was provided by some churches. He said:

“I have a friend who is close to Windu. He told me that he was offered by Windu to convert to Christianity. If he wanted, his son would be educated by the Christians and would obtain a scholarship. He was once wobbly. He said that the Christian fund was from the US. Sometimes it was more than needed. The Christians have a target to convert at least three Baduy to Christianity. They try to achieve the target by giving the Baduy land and agricultural tools. They also care for the Baduy’s health. The Christians themselves never spoke about their religion to the Baduy.”⁸⁸

The Muslim Baduy figure Haji Sarmedi asserted that Muslims could not blame the Baduy who converted to Christianity because, as when they converted to Islam, they did not have fields from which they could live their lives. His statement does not mean that the Baduy’s conversion either to Islam or Christianity was not sincere. But the access to land is almost always the background of every narrative of the Baduy’s conversion. When the Christians who are rich buy land, permit the Baduy to manage it, let them make use of the crops and finally become interested in Christianity, Haji Sarmedi said, it is understandable. Meanwhile the Baduy who manage Muslims’ fields have to share the crops with the owners of the fields. “So, the Baduy will follow anyone who shows the path. Conversely, we the Muslims keep silent. We don’t prepare land (for future converts). Don’t blame them when they convert to Christianity,” Haji Sarmedi emphasised.

Like the Christians, the Muslims also bought land. Muhammadiyah has four hectares of land in Ciboleger. Universitas Muhammadiyah Tangerang (UMT) donated one hectare of land to Muhammadiyah of Lebak in Wanasalam, where a conflict between the Muslims and Christians once happened there.⁸⁹ In the complex of Pesantren Sultan Hasanuddin, Muhammadiyah has around 7,000 square metres of land. The pesantren itself has 8 hectares of which 3 hectares was a donation of the Muhammadiyah preacher An Aliyah and her friends.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ Interview with Harun in Ciboleger on 24 May 2017.

⁸⁸ Interview with Sunirta on 10 May 2017.

⁸⁹ Interview with Engkos Yusroni on 10 April 2017.

⁹⁰ Interviews with Kiyai Zainuddin Amir on 2 December 2018 and with An Aliyah on 2 April 2017.

Muhammadiyah also obtained a land donation in 1994/1995 from Haji Astakari whose son studied at a *Sekolah Pendidikan Guru* (SPG, the school for the teacher training) of Muhammadiyah.⁹¹

The founder of Pesantren Sultan Hasanuddin, Kiyai Zainuddin Amir, accounted that a part of his pesantren's land was a donation from many people. The purchase of the land was connected to the issues of Islamisation and Christianisation among the Baduy. To support the *kiyai*, in 1996 An Aliyah collected money from her friends in their *majlis taklim* (religious circle). She also got money from her friend's friends and a rich family in Kuningan, Jakarta. An Aliyah told them that they should support the *da'wa* activities in the Baduy society. The money was then donated through Kiyai Zainuddin Amir for *da'wa*.⁹²

The issue of the purchase of land was also accounted by Soleh. He said that in the past there was a man who would sell his two hectares of land for Rp90 million (€6,000). At that time there was a donor who would give Rp30 million (€2,000). Because Soleh could not afford the rest, the money was given back to the donor. The land itself was then bought by a Baduy. Soleh hoped someday there would be a man who would buy land for the Muslim Baduy or the future converts. He thought it was much better if the land was close to his house so that he could manage, supervise and educate the Muslim Baduy. If the land is spacious, whenever there is a Baduy who will convert to Islam, Soleh will invite him to live there. In 2017 Soleh got a donation in the form of a square field from crowdfunding which was organised by a pesantren leader in Serang. Soleh said:

“If we have land, it will be easy when there is a Baduy who will convert. We can let them occupy the land. If we don't, where will they live unless they can buy it? We are not sure that they have money. In fact, when they will convert they have to sell their land and houses [in the *adat* land]. The prices are determined by the future buyers, not by the sellers. The converts do not have a choice. [In this situation] we are confused.”⁹³

Jamaah Tabligh is another group that has bought land for the Muslim Baduy. The businessman Ilham who had a connection with Jamaah Tabligh expressed his dream to buy land on which he could build a village for the Muslim Baduy. During my first fieldwork, Ilham and a follower of Jamaah Tabligh invited me to see the land. The size of the land is around 19 hectares which shares its border

⁹¹ Interview with Engkos Yusroni on 10 April 2017.

⁹² Interviews with An Aliyah on 2 April and with Kiyai Zainuddin on 6 June 2017.

⁹³ Interview with Soleh on 24 May 2017.

with the land of the Christians. Ilham was interested in buying the land as a counterbalance to the Christianisation of the Baduy. The price of the land was Rp1 billion and Ilham had money to buy it, but he did not have more money to run the resettlement programme of the Baduy. If he decided to buy the land, he wanted to relocate Muslim Baduy who did not have houses to that land.⁹⁴ As an initial step, Ilham bought around 5,000 square metres of land in Portal for about ten Muslim Baduy families. Jamaah Tabligh also got assistance from Iman and friends from Jakarta. They met Haji Adung during their trip to the Baduy land. After talking about the problem experienced by the Muslim Baduy, they donated 3,000 square metres of land which would be used by the Muslim Baduy.⁹⁵

Recently the Jamaah Tabligh follower Samain bought 4.5 hectares of land in Cipangembar. Previously the land belonged to Christian Baduy families. They met Samain on 21 May 2018 and asked him to buy their land, including a house of the Christian Baduy Tatang. Samain agreed even though the price was high enough. On the land Samain was building a *pesantren* to which eleven *santri* were brought from Subang and Ciputat (South Tangerang). Samain also bought a piece of land close to the mosque of Cipangembar. The mosque itself has been chosen by Jamaah Tabligh as the centre of their *da'wa* activities in Leuwidamar. Besides, in Cibengkung a follower of Jamaah Tabligh has bought land and built 15 houses for the Muslim Baduy. Twelve of the houses have been occupied.⁹⁶

The Muslims preachers believed that if they had empty land they would have been able to invite more Baduy to Islam. A Baduy in Cicakal Girang told the Muhammadiyah preacher Ahmad Hidayat that he wanted to convert to Islam, but he was still thinking where he would live after his conversion.⁹⁷ Haji Sarmedi expressed his sadness because some Baduy Muslims, including his relative, reverted to Sunda Wiwitan. They did it, according to him, because they did not have a house to live in and a field from which they could get a livelihood. Returning to the Baduy land where they still had families became a possible choice. Because the Baduy land is for the followers of Sunda Wiwitan, Baduy who want to return to the Baduy land must revert to Sunda Wiwitan. Around ten Muslim Baduy have chosen to revert to Sunda Wiwitan.⁹⁸

The preacher Ara found that some Muslims had sold their land to Christians with the reason that they needed money. He was worried when the Christians had a spacious area they would live together and their number would qualify for

⁹⁴ Interviews with Ilham and Arwan on 24 May 2017.

⁹⁵ Interview with Haji Adung on 8 July 2017.

⁹⁶ Interviews with Samain on 21 December and with Tatang on 24 December 2018.

⁹⁷ Interview with Ahmad Hidayat on 29 March 2017.

⁹⁸ Interview with Haji Sarmedi on 21 December 2018.

the regulation to build a worship place. If selling farms is urgent, the preachers hoped, the owners of fields will not sell it to Christians. Other preachers expressed the same view. Ara said:

“We are confused. Our people don’t want to know. For them, the most important thing is to sell the field at the highest price. The local *kiyai* also seem not to care about this issue. They think that celebrating the *maulud* (the birthday of the Prophet) is a *da’wa* activity. It contradicts my mind. We should have been united. When there is a field that will be sold, we contribute.”⁹⁹

In 2007 a Christian met Ara’s mother to bid a piece of her land. Ara warned his mother not to sell the land because the future buyer was a Christian. If she sold the land, Ara would ask her mother not to call him his son. In addition, close to Ara’s mother’s land there was a house which would also be bought by a Christian. Ara warned the owner of the house not to sell it to the Christian. If he did, Ara said that he would behead the owner of the house.

Muslims in Leuwidamar were worried that Christians one time would overpower the Muslims. Muslims are more numerous than the Christians but they are fragmented and feel powerless. Becoming pugnacious and utilising the politics of religion eventually became an effective way to cope with their internal problem and to counter the development of Christianity. A Muslim preacher stated:

“Doing a *da’wa* activity in the Baduy society must be brave, otherwise the Christians will enjoy the situation. They have much money. Some Christian Baduy are studying at Advent University. They will return and invite their Baduy families to Christianity.”¹⁰⁰

D. Conclusion

Like Muslims, Christians do missionary activities among the Baduy. In the 1980s the number of the Baduy who converted to Christianity probably reached more than a hundred. They converted to the religion after Christian missionaries came to the resettlement villages. The missionaries came from various cities, but the most notable were Ismail Amaloh and Kharel Budiman Silitonga. Coming

⁹⁹ Interview with Ara on 24 May 2017.

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Ustad Maftuh on 10 April 2017.

from East Timor, Ismail was sent to the resettlement villages of the Baduy by the US-based interdenominational Christian missionary organisation “Youth with a Mission” (YWAM). Coming from Medan, Silitonga could convert both Muslims and the Baduy to Christianity. In 1993 the Christian Baduy converted from Protestantism to Seventh-day Adventism by the assistance of Bambang Sigit Waluyo. Afterwards, the religious life of these Adventist Baduy is managed by the Baduy pastor Windu Nurgojali who got his bachelor and master degrees from Universitas Advent Indonesia of Bandung.

The Muslims could not accept the fact that some Baduy converted to Christianity. Here *da'wa* which initially means ‘an invitation to Muslims to become more religious’ or ‘an invitation to non-Muslims to Islam’ developed to a counter and counterbalance to Christianity. In doing so some Muslim locals and preachers pressured the Christians. To prevent them from having churches, the Muslims deployed regulations of proselytization and the foundation of worship houses. The regulations forbid people from converting other people who already embrace a religion. Before building a worship house the regulations also require the people to already have 90 future users of the worship house. The Muslims knew that the number of the Christian Baduy was less than 90, but they were still worried that sometime the number could reach the number. Efforts to counter and counterbalance Christianity and to prevent the Christians to have a church have brought the Muslims and Christians into tension, conflicts and violence. Christian and Islamic missionary activities then transformed into the purchases of land for the (future) converts. The Christian missionaries and Muslim preachers knew that the root of the Baduy’s problem was access to land.