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From Respected Hermits to Ordinary Citizens

The Conversion of the Baduy, Ethnicity, and Politics of Religion in Indonesia (1977 - 2019)

by Ade Jaya Suryani

1. In contrast with the general perception, the Baduy community is not in a static state, but it changes, be it in a very slow pace. Today many Baduy even have smartphones and some of them access Facebook and YouTube. (This thesis)
2. The Baduy changed their view about themselves that they are not only hermits but also citizens of Indonesia. By holding this view the Baduy have the right to demand the state to recognise and protect them. (This thesis)
3. That the Baduy must live in the *adat* land has put the Baduy in a dilemma. On the one hand, the *adat* land can no longer accommodate many of its inhabitants and on the other hand, living outside of the *adat* land will change their identity. (This thesis)
4. Through the choice to start managing the fields of non-Baduy farmers, many Baduy were practically beyond the control of their *adat* leaders and by the choice to join the resettlement programme they started to lose their Baduyness. (This thesis)
5. If the Baduy leaders do not allow the Baduy to adapt to modernity and development and if they wish to control the implementation of the *adat* very strictly at the same time, more Baduy will leave the *adat* land.
6. The concepts of *kepercayaan* (belief systems) and *agama* (religion) in Indonesian politics are vague which leads to confusion in the implementation of religious politics.
7. Conversion is about changing a religion (see Rambo 1989, 1993, and 2010). In the context of the Baduy, religion however is not the main reason for conversion. The limited access to land and the population increase are equally important reasons for religious conversion.
8. Motivated by the teaching of their religions and supported by the politics of religion, Muslims and Christians in Indonesia competed for getting more converts from the adherents of local religions.
9. The Baduy community is relatively small but politically more powerful than many other *masyarakat adat*, because they occupy a special position in the country. High ranking officials (and even the Father of Development, President Suharto), are hesitant to force the Baduy community to join the national development programme unlike other *masyarakat adat*.
10. Researching the Baduy at Leiden University was the correct choice for me. Sometimes I felt that Leiden was my home city. The fact that my social network in Leiden was not as extensive as in Indonesia reminded me that it was not.