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**Spiritual Discourse in New Order Indonesia**  
**Interactions between Nationalism and Spirituality**

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## Introduction

This essay is an exploration of the interplay and overlap of spirituality, politics, and the state through an examination of the shaping of spiritual expression in late New Order Indonesia. Spirituality, in its effable, social forms, constantly interacts with political power and other social structures. Although we are frequently reminded of the difficulty, and, to some degree, impossibility, of separating religion and politics, the academic desire to parse one from the other is widespread. This essay is a preliminary investigation of one particularly fertile example of the interconnection of spirituality and nationality, and how these interact with the state. I aim to view the explicit connection between spirituality, nationalism, and political power by analyzing Indonesian state discourse regarding spiritual organizations.

I argue two things: one, that the New Order attempted to contain spiritual expression and interpretation within the rubric of the first principle of the state's ideology, *Pancasila*; and two, that since the two spiritual groups examined here were invested in Indonesian nationalism, they participated to varying degrees in the government's inscription of the first principle of state ideology in their own teachings, practices, and beliefs. They also participated in state bureaucracy through other means. In other words, they did not shy away from interaction with the state, and may have in some ways welcomed it. At various periods of time in Indonesia's history, and in different ways, spiritual expression was also patriotic expression. Prior to the New Order (General Suharto's authoritarian regime that lasted from 1966 – 1998), spiritual/patriotic expression was not limited in the way that it became during the regime. Viewing late

New Order state discourse of spiritual groups shows how the regime attempted to place limitations on spiritual expression and patriotic or nationalistic expression.

*Paguyuban Ngesti Tunggal (Pangestu)* and *Sumarah*, two long-lived spiritual organizations, embedded their own visions of Indonesian nationalism in their spiritual practice and historical development. From their inception, these groups have been invested in Indonesian nationalism. By their inclusion in a government project to inventory spiritual groups, they have been shown as respectable. Respectability, however, only became necessary only with the crackdown in the 1970s on political and spiritual expression as the New Order regime tightened its control. The New Order thus both necessitated and offered spiritual and patriotic respectability to spiritual groups. This respectability came at a cost: the groups were also discursively restricted to the state's vision of nationalism within the framework of Pancasila.

The primary material for my analysis comes from the government inventory project. Coupled with historical contextualization, the inventory project provides a wealth of information about New Order attempts to control the various forms of spiritual, theological, and cosmological understandings of its citizens in order to ensure the primacy of state ideology. It should be noted that from the sources available to me, I can make claims only about the *attempts* at control as evidenced by the texts. Whether these attempts were efficacious, and in what ways is a question that I am unable to answer with the sources available to me. This point is however, an important issue for future research and raises a necessary caveat for any discussion of state control: states are rarely as effective as their policies present them. The New Order state seems to have been highly successful in imposing state ideology on the majority of Indonesians. But studies of the

attempts at imposition, such as this one, cannot address the results, and we should not confuse the two.

My main source material is a slim volume published in 1989 by the Department of Education and Culture. Covering the region of Jakarta and West Java, it records the history, beliefs, teachings, and values of five “groups for the experiential practice of belief in the One Supreme God.”<sup>1</sup> This volume is one in an inventory series published by regional Departments of Education and Culture, starting in 1980 and, quite possibly, continuing until today. The series is a way for the state to attempt to enforce a particular set of teachings and values in these groups by writing them as such; yet it is also a way in which these spiritual groups acquire a certain kind of culturally authoritative status in Indonesia even though they do not, according to the state, constitute religions.

Pangestu and Sumarah, of the many spiritual organizations in Indonesia, provide interesting case studies that complicate issues of state control and nationalism. In many ways these spiritual organizations and the state are aligned in their goals of creating a strong national culture and identity and promoting the Indonesian state. Pangestu and Sumarah are explicitly nationalistic in their outlook. In addition, the groups come from central Java (Yogyakarta and Surakarta, respectively), generally considered the cultural heartland of Indonesia, especially by the New Order government. That they are catalogued in the Jakarta and West Java inventory shows how national they are; they moved their headquarters to the nation’s capital. At the same time, the birthplace and the relation of the founders to the traditional courts of Java give concrete focus to the claim of cultural inheritance. Also, government promotion of these groups helps them gain cultural legitimacy, benefiting them by increasing their popularity. In my presentation of

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<sup>1</sup> *Kelompok penghayat kepercayaan terhadap Tuhan Yang Maha Esa* is the Indonesian phrase.

state discourse about these groups, I do not intend to efface the ways in which these spiritual groups may have been active and willing partners in the government's inscription of state ideology. However, in the end, it was the New Order bureaucracy that wrote the inventory reports and New Order discourse that held sway. Without arguing whether Pangestu and Sumarah agreed with the information in the inventory reports, I focus my analysis on the state discourse surrounding them. Examining how and in what ways the spiritual groups agreed or disagreed with government discourse about them would be an interesting topic for further research.

Throughout this paper, I use the terms spiritual groups and spiritual organizations. These are translations of the Indonesian term *kelompok kepercayaan* and refer to the two specific groups in question and the category of organizations examined by the government inventory project. There are many Indonesian terms used to describe the experiential, spiritual practice for the goal (almost always) of union between human and divine, and "*kepercayaan*" is the term favored by the government. Of the other terms (*kebatinan, kerohanian, kejiwaan*), it is the one that least approximates the experiential nature of this kind of spiritual practice, focusing as it does on believing (*percaya*). The other terms are derived from the inner aspect of spirituality – *batin*, the inner soul, *roh*, or *rohani*, spirit/spiritual, often contrasted with *jasmani*, the physical body, and *jiwa*, also meaning spirit or soul. By using *kepercayaan*, the New Order government picked a term that underplays the inner experiential nature of spiritual practice and emphasizes the intellectual aspect of belief.

This paper is organized in three broad sections. The first gives the historical context surrounding Pangestu and Sumarah. It traces relevant intellectual ideas in

currency around and preceding the time the two groups began (1930s). It also analyzes other examples of spiritual discourse in politics in the early post-independence period and other major players and events significant to understand the place of spiritual organizations, as they came to be known, in the nation. In the post-1965 period, significant events include New Order policies that increasingly restricted expression to the rhetoric of state ideology. The second section describes the inventory project and the two organizations, offering theoretical background on the ideological agenda of the New Order state and background on the two organizations. The third section provides an analysis of the discourse used by the state to enshrine state ideology, as well as other ideological agendas, within the fabric of the groups. These other agendas include nationalism, modernism, monotheism, and standardization of spiritual interpretation and national identity.

### **The Context**

This section traces broad outlines of the social and historical context in which Pangestu and Sumarah arose and provides detailed information regarding the changing interactions between the government and individual spiritual groups or leaders. Both Pangestu and Sumarah arose during the late Dutch colonial period in Java; both leaders came from court cultures of central Java; and most significantly, both groups were committed to the idea of Indonesian nationalism. Post-independence, there was no sharp dividing line between the era when spiritual groups and state government genuinely saw themselves as working for and in tandem with each other for the joint goal of promoting Indonesian national character and national integrity and the later era when the New Order

came to see spiritual groups as a threat, if not to nationalism per se, to state authority, and attempted to conflate and direct the voices of spiritual groups into a single voice singing the praises of national ideology. Yet this change did happen, and it occurred gradually between 1954 and 1971. In this section I present a historical description of the change in the position of spiritual groups in the state, without attempting to single out one particularly definitive moment or event. Instead, a variety of factors, some concurrent, some causative of others, led to the policies that started in 1954 and ultimately led to the discursive restriction of mystical groups.

The change in the position of mystical groups underlines a deeper historical change within the Indonesian state. This line, which was crossed as Suharto solidified his control over the government, reduced popular national enthusiasm to authoritarian paralysis and turned aspiration into ideology. Government control over expression occurred in many realms, not just the spiritual. Like many authoritarians, Suharto restricted the press, imprisoned political dissidents, outlawed political parties and replaced them with his organization, Golkar, and made a sham of Indonesian democracy. This was all done under the guise of security and development, with Suharto presenting himself as doing what was best for the nation.

Before the presentation of specific events that together created the changed place of spiritual groups in the New Order state, I will sketch an overview of the intellectual atmosphere and social influences current in Java at the time of and immediately preceding the revelations which led to the founding of Sumarah and Pangestu. Three intellectual ideas are essential to understanding the backgrounds of the spiritual organizations. These are: theosophy, nationalism, and modernity, especially religious

modernity. These ideas will be discussed later in the specific context of the spiritual organizations. At this point, a simple introduction will suffice.

One of the intellectual streams in currency in early 1900s Java was theosophy. The Theosophical Society started in the United States in 1875 and its core teachings sought a rapprochement between science and religion. It combined “the idea of evolution with religious concepts chiefly from Hinduism and Buddhism.” Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, of table-rapping séance fame, and Annie Besant, an Englishwoman who actively campaigned for Indian independence, were two leaders of the Society at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and into the early 1900s.<sup>2</sup> In the Dutch East Indies, a Dutch Theosophical Society was also established, and Clifford Geertz notes that it was an influence on several spiritual groups, especially *Budi Setia*, which was founded by federalist civil servants cooperating with the Dutch in 1949. This group held its meetings with the permission of and under the direction of the Dutch chief of police, who was also interested in theosophy.<sup>3</sup> Another organization, *Hardopusoro*, was founded prior to independence as a theosophical organization for natives, and the founders of Sumarah and Pangestu were both involved in Hardopusoro for a limited time. In Europe and the United States, theosophy was anti-cleric, anti-denominational, and somewhat anti-establishment. Its leaders were on the fringe of society and tended to support leftist causes such as Indian independence and women’s emancipation before they were popular among the general public. It was also imbued with modern optimism for the future and the idea that human perfection was possible in the near future. According to Bruce Campbell, Asians tended to see theosophy as a way to value their traditions, such as

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<sup>2</sup> Bruce Campbell, *Ancient Wisdom Revived A History of the Theosophical Movement*, 61.

<sup>3</sup> Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java*, 340.

Hinduism and Buddhism, in a decidedly modern way.<sup>4</sup> The modern bent in Pangestu and Sumarah, as will be evident in the discussion of the organizations below, backs up Campbell's claim, although it is not due to the influence of theosophy and Hardopusoro alone. The presences of theosophy, as well as modernism, at the turn of the century in Java were important influences on Pangestu and Sumarah.

Other intellectual influences in Javanese society when the founders of Pangestu and Sumarah were maturing were nationalism and Indonesian independence. Raden Sunarto of Pangestu and Raden Ngabehi Sukinohartono of Sumarah first experienced revelations in 1932 and 1935, respectively. Prior to their *wahyu*, in the early 1900s mass organizations promoting various kinds of nationalism, such as *Boedi Oetomo*, *Jong Java*, *Sarekat Islam*, and *Muhammadiyah*, had formed. The anti-colonial movement in the 1930s experienced a crackdown from the Dutch regime, which, starting in 1927, according to the historian Merle Ricklefs, "entered the most repressive phase of its twentieth-century history."<sup>5</sup> It would not be long until World War II broke out (1939), the Japanese invaded Indonesia (1942), the Japanese retreated as they lost the Pacific War (1945), and the Revolution began (1945-1950). The backdrop of anticipatory enthusiasm for nationalism and incipient independence which preceded the 1930s and returned with the revolutionary battles must be recognized as vital to the intellectual climate out of which Pangestu and Sumarah rose.

Modernity was essential to nationalism and independence for one reason because it shaped institutional and participatory forms for the new nation. It also influenced how Sumarah and Pangestu defined themselves. As we shall see in the discussion of the

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<sup>4</sup> Campbell, *Ancient Wisdom Revived*, 73.

<sup>5</sup> Merle Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 181.

groups, both Pangestu and Sumarah attempted to define themselves against what they considered to be outmoded forms of spiritual practice, asserting that they did not practice esoteric arts or teach superstitions. They also aligned themselves with recognized religious traditions, asserting that their teachings complemented conventional religious practice and could even be used to improve that practice. Since Pangestu and Sumarah did not go against any major world religion, they could then be considered as universal as any world religion, their practitioners as modern as any practicing Christian or Muslim. With this kind of modernity, they would be truly fitted for the new, modern, independent Republic of Indonesia. To be associated with traditional esoteric arts, on the other hand, would be to be considered behind the times, traditional and limited instead of national and expansive.

Materials on spiritual groups emphasize the ability to leave outmoded tradition behind but retain indigenous elements that benefit national Indonesia. A reminder of the danger of *klenik*<sup>6</sup> was clear in a speech Sukarno gave to mystical groups at the Congressional Body for Indonesian Beliefs (BKKI) in 1958. In this highly modern institutional form (a congress) and discursive space (a presidential speech), the spiritual leaders responded by reiterating that they absolutely did not teach *klenik*.<sup>7</sup> Within Pangestu and Sumarah materials there is a great degree of emphasis on how mystical practice helps the nation. In a small booklet entitled “Function and Meaning of Mysticism for Individuals and the Revolution” published in 1965, Sarwedi Sosrosudigdo emphasizes, again, the difference between spirituality and negative and positive esoteric arts. Spirituality should be completely sincere, and must be practiced with no selfish or

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<sup>6</sup> *Klenik* is an important Javanese concept which refers to that which is forbidden and those potent mysteries/mysterious powers that should remain secret and hidden from open view.

<sup>7</sup> Niels Mulder, *Mysticism in Java Ideology in Indonesia*, 23.

self-aggrandizing desires. This kind of sincerity is missing from “black esoteric arts (*magi hitam*), which obviously goes against spirituality, while even white esoteric arts (*magi putih*) is not the highest level of spirituality.” Sosrosudigdo also addresses several ways in his view through which mysticism actually aided the success of the revolution.<sup>8</sup>

Theosophy, nationalism, and religious modernism formed a great part of the intellectual atmosphere in which R. Sunarto and R. Ng. Kino received their divine teachings. The following section of this essay describes the founders of the two groups. Prior to that, we now turn to a discussion of national history as it pertains to the two groups. The history of government-spiritual group interactions within the scope of this essay can be divided into two eras: early independence and the Sukarno period (1945 – 1965), and the earlier New Order period (1965 - 1990). 1965 serves as a good dividing year because of the change in government wrought then and the traumatic event it indexes: the slaughter of hundreds of thousands of Indonesians accused of membership in the Indonesian Communist Party in the wake of the military coup of October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1965 through which Gen. Suharto eventually took control of the executive office and ruled as president until 1998. Years, however, do not generally function well as starting or ending points of social phenomena. The crackdown against spiritual groups that grew to full size in the Suharto era began in the Sukarno era. In the revolutionary and Sukarno period, Indonesia saw the growth of political parties and autonomous governance. Spiritual groups were involved in both. This period also saw the beginning of what would become a long crackdown on spiritual organizations and limitation of expression for spiritual groups, continuing in the New Order under Suharto. Under the New Order and

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<sup>8</sup> Sarwedi Sosrosudigdo, *Fungsi dan Arti Kebatinan untuk Pribadi dan Revolusi*, 11-12. The Indonesian reads: “*Djanganakan magi hitam, jang terang bertentangan dengan kebatinan, bahkan magi putihpun belum merupakan tingkatan kebatinan jang tertinggi.*”

Indonesia's military strongman Suharto, spiritual groups were first the objects of government surveillance, and then were instituted in the framework of the state and pinned into place under state ideology. The institutionalization of spiritual organizations is key at this time period.

In the early independence period, there were two organizations that stand out as frontrunners for the involvement of mysticism in politics. It should be noted that religious involvement in politics was more common than not, and that Islamic political parties were one of the major factions of post-independence politics, along with the Communist and the Nationalist parties. There were also Christian and Catholic political parties. Organized groups of self-proclaimed spiritual leaders as a part of party politics and national politics were not uncommon. One instance of formal spiritual involvement in politics was the BKKI and its founder, Wongsonegoro. Another element of mystical politics was in the political party Permai.

Wongsonegoro was a member of the native elite and an independence activist starting in 1918 with the organization *Jong Java*.<sup>9</sup> First known as RT. Djaksodipoero, he held positions in the Susuhunan's court in Surakarta. In the colonial period, he was a member of *Boedi Oetomo* as well as *Jong Java*. He was also a part of *Narpowandowo*, a court association for family of the Susuhunan. He eventually completed a law degree in Batavia, earning him the title Mr. Wongsonegoro, and in 1931 he was part of a secret plan in the Susuhunan to annex the Mangkunegaran court, the other royal court of Surakarta.<sup>10</sup> After independence, Wongsonegoro was involved in national politics and was a champion for the place of mysticism in the nation.

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<sup>9</sup> Maskan, *Tokoh Wongsonegoro*, 8.

<sup>10</sup> George Larson, *Prelude to Revolution*, 137, 158.

After independence was declared on August 17, 1945 by Sukarno, Wongsonegoro was appointed by the Independence Preparatory Committee to a commission charged with making the final changes in the national Constitution.<sup>11</sup> At that time he was able to tweak the wording of the constitution, so that “belief” (*kepercayaan*) was protected as well as “religion” (*agama*). For his actions in this role, Paul Stange calls Wongsonegoro the “father of political mystical movements during the fifties”<sup>12</sup> and tells an anecdote of how the wording of the Indonesian Constitution to include the phrase “religion and belief” (*agamanya dan kepercayaannya*) came about. After the meeting in which the Constitution was finalized, Pringgogido and Wongsonegoro typed up the draft. The section on religion (paragraph 29, part XI) established that the nation was based on faith in the One Supreme God, and that the nation guarantees the freedom to worship. The section reads:

1. The nation is based on faith in God (*Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa*).
2. The nation guarantees each citizen the freedom to choose his own religion and to pray according to his own religion or faith (. . . *beribadat menurut agamanya dan kepercayaannya itu*).<sup>13</sup>

In the above quotation, Paul Stange renders *kepercayaan* as faith. This may be an acceptable translation, but it is important to note that the meaning of *kepercayaan* has been specifically tied to the idea of *kelompok kepercayaan*, spiritual groups, and thus does not have the abstract sense that the English word faith does. Rather, it indicates membership: one may belong to a religious group and to a spiritual group, and thus have religion and “kepercayaan,” spiritual beliefs. Stange also translates “dan” as *or*, while in

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<sup>11</sup> George Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia*, 138.

<sup>12</sup> Paul Stange, “‘Legitimate’ Mysticism in Indonesia,” *Review of Indonesian and Malaysian Affairs*, vol. 20, no. 2 (1986), 87.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

fact it means *and*. Stange is perhaps overzealous in seeing *kepercayaan* as equal to *agama* (religion), and thus a valid replacement for it, in the Indonesian state. This has never been the case. Nor was there the understanding that religion and spiritual beliefs were mutually exclusive, necessitating the choice of one over the other.

Stange continues that Wongsonegoro

protested that the sense of the discussion had been that *kebatinan* movements were also guaranteed. Pringgodigdo appears to have felt that direct reference to *kebatinan* would have been too strong, but he agreed with Wongsonegoro's interpretation of the sense of the meeting.<sup>14</sup> They compromised with "*kepercayaan*," added it to the Constitution, and when the Constitution was approved the next day there was no time for close scrutiny by the committee. The addition of *kepercayaan* to the Constitution has cemented the legal basis for, if not the continued protection, at least the continued existence of spiritual groups.

While the importance of *kepercayaan* in the Constitution is not small, for some spiritual practitioners, it is a success that indicates a larger failure. In the 1950s, many spiritual leaders wanted spiritual groups to be considered the same as religions and thus have the same legal status. That the only recognized religions in Indonesia were foreign imports struck many as being against the spirit of national independence. Spiritual groups never received the recognition they desired, although some groups, such as *Sapta Dharma*, continued fighting for it into the 1970s.<sup>15</sup>

One of the organizations fighting for recognition as religions was the Congressional Body for Indonesian Beliefs (*Badan Kongres Kepercayaan Indonesia*, or BKKI). Wongsonegoro established the BKKI in 1955 and was its leading spokesperson.<sup>16</sup> The BKKI had a varied agenda, but it mostly attempted to ensure that

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<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 88.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 86.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 88.

*kepercayaan* would be allowed and legitimated as a valid form of worship for Indonesians. Beyond lobbying for spirituality to be given the same status as religions, which the BKKI did mostly strenuously in 1957, its 1962 seminar stressed the relationship between spiritual practice and national struggle.<sup>17</sup> Another site for spiritual activism for Wongsonegoro was the political party he established, the *Partai Indonesia Raya* (PIR), through which he attempted to bring mystical associations together.<sup>18</sup> Another organization that further entwined mysticism with national politics was the political party *Permai*.

In Clifford Geertz's *The Religion of Java*, *Permai* is defined as a political party and a mystical (*abangan*, in his terminology) sect. The doctrine of *Permai*, according to Geertz, is

a fusion between modern nationalist ideology, particularly as set forth in the *Pantjasila* . . . and such traditional Javanese religious patterns as calendrical divination, food symbolism, and methods of spiritual discipline, plus a new note of explicit moralism designed to combat Moslem moralism on the one hand and to connect up traditional peasant values such as *rukun* (cooperation . . .) with Marxist ethics on the other.<sup>19</sup>

Pancasila, in *Permai* interpretation according to Geertz, represented a mystical "micro-macrocosm correspondence theory in which the individual is seen to be but a small replica of the state, and the state but an enlarged image of the individual."<sup>20</sup> *Permai* was nationalistic in the sense that it promotes its doctrine as indigenous, a native Javanese science beneficial for the Indonesian nation. Geertz focused on the *Permai* organization in his fieldwork site in the 1950s as a way to show that "heightened political struggle naturally results in a sharpened internal conflict between various religious groups.

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 88-89.

<sup>18</sup> Mulder, 22.

<sup>19</sup> Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java*, 115.

<sup>20</sup> Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 161.

Religious positions become political ones – almost without alteration.”<sup>21</sup> While this statement certainly requires more qualification to be entirely believable, in the case of 1950s Indonesia it does remind one how close various revolutionary and early nationalist political movements and political parties were to religious positions. Whether this was due to the intrinsic closeness between religion and politics or because religions affiliation was one of the most salient marker of difference during that time period, the relationship between religion and politics is key to viewing the connection between spirituality and nationalism in Indonesia and creates difficulty in separating spirituality from politics and ideology.

The relationship between spiritual groups and the state turned somewhat unfriendly in 1954 with the establishment of the Body for the Surveillance of Society’s Spiritual Groups (*Pengawas Aliran Kepercayaan Masyarakat*, or Pakem). This organization was first under the Department of Religion, and then in 1960 was moved to the Department of Justice. Pakem attempted to control spiritual organizations because of the clear worries on the part of the government about its ability to control these groups and the potential unrest they might cause. By 1961 the fear, on the part of the Department of Religion, of “communist infiltration” in spiritual groups was high. Pakem took action, by prosecuting individuals and outlawing organizations, generally only on the suspicion of communist involvement, bodily harm or death, or anti-Islamic activities within the spiritual groups.<sup>22</sup> Pakem had methods more delicate than prosecution as well; it also “organized regular meetings of representatives of different mystical groups and

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<sup>21</sup> Geertz, *The Religion of Java*, 363.

<sup>22</sup> Mulder, 24 and 63.

kept records of meetings”<sup>23</sup> and in this sense performed surveillance rather than repression, although a distinction between the two might not always be clear. Antoon Geels reports that in 1964 Pakem registered 360 spiritual groups, but by 1971 there were only 217 groups, 177 of which were located in central Java. Pangestu, however, was apparently a safe choice in early New Order Indonesia, as it had more than 50,000 followers at the beginning of the 1970s.<sup>24</sup> The numbers reveal the efficiency of the crackdown on spiritual groups after 1965, a crackdown which started earlier but exploded in intensity after the coup.

In 1961, the debate about the status of spiritual groups vis-à-vis religions was laid to rest. In that year, a definition for religion that had been proposed by the Department of Religion in 1952 was accepted as law. This definition of religion effectively disallowed citizens from being only members of a spiritual organization and required that they confess one of the six major faith traditions allowed by the state: Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, or Confucianism. Confucianism was later dropped from this list despite the great lengths to which Confucian groups went to make Confucianism more similar to Christianity and Islam. In 1967 the Congress of Confucian Religion (Kongres Agama Kong Hu Cu) decided on texts to use as a holy book (called collectively “*Alkitab Agama Kong Hu Cu*”), created a role for a priest-like figure in worship, and added a word to their practices to approximate “amen” as Christians and Muslims use it. In late January of 1979, Presidential Instruction dictated that

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<sup>23</sup> Stange, “‘Legitimate’ Mysticism,” 82.

<sup>24</sup> Antoon Geels, *Subud and the Javanese Mystical Tradition*, 82. It is important to note that some of Pangestu’s members in particular were very close to the regime. Among them were Sudjarwo, who was a minister in Suharto’s government as well as the treasurer of *Yayasan Supersemar*. (Personal communication, Nancy Florida, 7/24/07)

Confucianism was not a religion, and they lost permission to hold their annual conference.<sup>25</sup>

Confucianism and spiritual groups share similarities in that they were both considered by the state to be insufficient on their own for religious practice, but both could be corollary to religion. In explaining the 1979 Presidential Instruction, Confucianism is defined as a “philosophy” and therefore one could be Muslim or Christian and use Confucian philosophy with no inconsistency.<sup>26</sup> Spiritual groups, however, had a more comfortable position than Confucianism. In 1973 the rules were changed by the government and “belief” (*kepercayaan*) became a legitimate choice for the religion category on one’s identity card. Ironically, Stange notes that this was never widely practiced. Paul Stange argues that by this point, most Indonesians were sufficiently intimidated by the 1965-66 violence and the general threat of state violence that they retained affiliation with one of the major religions.<sup>27</sup> This early period of the New Order shows the changed place of spiritual organizations from the revolution to the end of Sukarno’s rule and set the stage for future institutionalization and/or repression of spiritual groups in the image of state ideology in the later New Order period.

The primary way that institutionalization of spiritual groups took place was through the document *Pancasila* and indoctrination thereof that took place in the New Order. *Pancasila* is the preamble to the *Undang-Undang Dasar*, the “Basic Articles,” or Indonesian Constitution. *Pancasila* can be translated as “five principles” on which the nation of Indonesia is founded. The five principles are: Supreme monotheism, fair and

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<sup>25</sup> Leo Suryadinata, “Kong Hu Cuisme dan Agama Kong Hu Cu di Indonesia Sebuah Kajian Awal” in *Konfusianisme di Indonesia Pergulatan Mencari Jati Diri*, 196-200

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 200

<sup>27</sup> Stange, “‘Legitimate’ Mysticism in Indonesia,” 90-91.

just humanity, Indonesian nationalism, representative government, and social equality for all Indonesians.<sup>28</sup> From the New Order's point of view, Pancasila was a statement of patriotism and the source of state ideology. This was true also for Sukarno during his Old Order; however, during the New Order, only one interpretation of Pancasila was acceptable, Suharto's interpretation, whereas during the Old Order, a proliferation of independent interpretations existed. The New Order redefined Pancasila discourse in narrow, unitary terms, and attempted to impose this definition on Indonesian citizens through various methods of indoctrination. Most important for the institutionalization of spiritual groups in the framework of Pancasila is the first principle, that of Supreme monotheism, and, related to this, the naming of God as the One Supreme God. The phrase "*Tuhan Yang Maha Esa*" is taken from the first principle "*ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa*." The "One Supreme God" is used throughout the government inventory reports, forming in this way the basic foundation of government discourse about spiritual groups. The repetition of the phrase serves the attempt to situate spiritual groups as first and foremost proponents of Suharto's New Order state ideology.

Douglas Ramage notes the extreme importance that Pancasila had for the New Order. Pancasila was "used by the government as a potent means of proscribing political behavior in Indonesia" and was also "an effective means of delineating the permissible boundaries of political discourse and behavior for thirty years."<sup>29</sup> Within general, and not just spiritual New Order Pancasila discourse, by far the most important of the five principles is the first. Partly, this is due to the context in which that Pancasila ideology arose. The New Order made Communism into its permanent bogeyman, and the state

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<sup>28</sup> Kenneth R. Redden and Linda L. Schlueter, *Modern Legal Systems Cyclopeda*, 2.60.10.

<sup>29</sup> Douglas Ramage, *Politics in Indonesia Democracy, Islam and the Ideology of Tolerance*, 6.

made “godless Communists” incompatible with the principle of the Supreme Oneness of God, even though this was clearly contrary to fact; in a Muslim-majority nation with one of the largest Communist parties in the world prior to 1965, it is impossible for there not to be overlap and hence, Muslim Communists. Anti-Communism (implicit in Pancasila ideology) became a marker of true allegiance to the state through the repeated assertions of the Supreme monotheism in the language of Pancasila, always in the phrase *ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa*. These repeated assertions, and Pancasila as the primary state document, ties belief in God to belief in the state. This conflation of belief, then, prescribed religious belief (in the God fashioned by the state) and political behavior (allegiance to the New Order). In the following sections of this paper, the use of the language of Pancasila to define, direct, control, or otherwise set boundaries for spiritual groups will be discussed at length. At this point, it is important to see how the focus of the New Order on Pancasila became essential to the state’s legitimacy.

As early as 1966, after taking power, Suharto declared that the ideology of the state would be based on Pancasila alone. This was a move to discredit the various ideological statements of his predecessor, Sukarno, with whom at that point Suharto still had to battle for legitimacy.<sup>30</sup> In 1967, Suharto declared October 1<sup>st</sup> a national holiday, *Hari Kesaktian Pancasila* (Sacred Pancasila Day). The date commemorates the coup that took place in 1965 and has at least two functions, according to the historian Katharine McGregor. It was a way for the regime to present itself as the protector of Pancasila and it was a way for Suharto to overcome the shadow of Sukarno. June 1<sup>st</sup> was known as the Birthday of Pancasila (*Hari Kelahiran Pancasila*) and as Sacred Pancasila Day was promoted, the Birthday of Pancasila was downgraded (although outside of a large

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<sup>30</sup> Merle Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 292.

celebration in 1964, it never celebrated with the ritual and predictable fanfare with which Sacred Pancasila Day came to be celebrated).<sup>31</sup> If the birth of Pancasila indexed Sukarno, the defense of Pancasila would come, in New Order terms, to index Suharto.

Sacred Pancasila Day came to be a major annual event in the New Order. It was celebrated publicly, and in 1980, after the film *The Treachery of the September 30<sup>th</sup> Movement* (*Pengkhianatan Gerakan 30 September*) was made, it became required viewing for all schoolchildren on that day. This film repeated the official line about the Communist movement and the events of the 30<sup>th</sup> of September, 1965. It also graphically represented the supposed savagery of the Communists. The same story could be found represented visually and in diorama form in the Sacred Pancasila Monument Museum which was constructed around the well from which the bodies of the six generals were extracted at Lubang Buaya, Jakarta. The monument was constructed soon after the coup, and the museum built around it opened in 1973. Reasons for the museum given by Suharto, according to McGregor, were to, “increase alertness to protect Pancasila from enemies who seek to undermine or destroy the Pancasila and to instil awareness of the sacredness of the Pancasila.”<sup>32</sup> Pancasila in this way was made into the one-word answer as to why Indonesia needed the New Order. The museum and the holiday Sacred Pancasila Day show the extent to which the regime depended on Pancasila for legitimacy and thus invested heavily in imposing its own monolithic definition of Pancasila.

Throughout Suharto’s regime, Pancasila ideology became more and more rigid. In 1978 the parliament created the P4 program, an indoctrination program of Pancasila for all levels of society. While this resolution was not unanimously popular – *Nahdlatul*

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<sup>31</sup> Katharine McGregor, *History in Uniform Military Ideology and the Construction of Indonesia’s Past*, 86.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 83-84.

*Ulama* party representatives walked out of the deliberations in protest<sup>33</sup> – it has been effective. By 1985, the government had successfully required all organizations by law to be based on Pancasila as their “sole foundation” (*asas tunggal*) or banned those that refused.<sup>34</sup>

Pancasila in New Order discourse and through representations like Sacred Pancasila Day and the Sacred Pancasila Monument Museum is intertwined with the origins of the New Order – the coup of September 30<sup>th</sup>, 1965 through which Suharto rose to power. The New Order held Pancasila up as the total source of authority for the state, and through doing so, attempted to subsume other systems or beliefs underneath it, flatten existent differences, exclude dissent, and limit discourse. The inventory project is one example of this attempt.

The New Order, like most authoritarian regimes, was not open to civil participation in politics. It repressed Islamic civil participation especially forcefully until close to its end in the early 1990s. The relationship between the New Order and spiritual groups, however, was a bit more ambiguous. At the same time it outlawed political participation by spiritual groups and demanding that the groups accept state ideology, as was demanded of all civil organizations, the New Order institutionalized spiritual groups through several bureaucratic forms and in this way attempted to tie spiritual expression within these groups to positive expression of state ideology. These bureaucracies were 1) the Indonesian Congress of Beliefs, Spirituality, and Mysticism (*Badan Kongres Kepercayaan Kejiwaan Kerohanian Kebatinan Indonesia*, or BK5I), which was a temporary organization out of which the SKK grew; 2) the Secretariat for Cooperation

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<sup>33</sup> Ramage, 32.

<sup>34</sup> Robert Hefner, *Civil Islam*, 17.

between Spiritual Groups (*Sekretariat Kerjasama antar Kepercayaan*, or SKK), which was a part of the ruling party Golkar and founded in 1970; 3) the Directory for Guidance of Experiential Spirituality (*Direktorat Pembinaan Penghayat Kepercayaan*) within the Department of Education and Culture, which was established in 1979.<sup>35</sup> As previously discussed, Pakem, established in 1954, was another government body that worked to control spiritual groups. Pakem, rather than working to institutionalize a certain kind of spirituality, repressed spiritual groups deemed a danger to society and for this reason is not included in the following discussion.

Hefner describes the relationship between Suharto and mystical groups as “fickle.”<sup>36</sup> “In its first two years, the New Order banned more than one hundred left-wing mystical organizations, including those linked to the Communist Party or openly anti-Islamic in their ideology.” There were two reasons for this, one, to placate demands from the Islamic community that spiritual groups be banned, since many in the Muslim community considered these groups to be falsely guided. The second reason was that “the policy had the welcome effect of making the remaining Javanist organizations dependent on regime protection.”<sup>37</sup> This dependence continued throughout the regime’s history, only to be strengthened in 1985<sup>38</sup> with the requirement that organizations formally pledge allegiance to the Indonesian state by making Pancasila their charter, as mentioned. Without this pledge, organizations would not be able to continue their activities unhindered.

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<sup>35</sup> Stange, “‘Legitimate’ Mysticism,” 91.

<sup>36</sup> Hefner, 85.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 84.

<sup>38</sup> Ramage, 36.

Yet even after pledging allegiance in this way spiritual groups were not left alone. In 1988 Suharto stated that mysticism could not take the place of religion, and instructed spiritual groups to return to their “*agama induk*,” or mother religion.<sup>39</sup> “Some [mystical organizations] began to identify themselves as Islamic and to define their mystical practice as personal ‘belief’ within Islam, not an alternative ‘religion’.”<sup>40</sup> Further constriction of spiritual groups occurred in 1989 when the BKKI refused to accept a chairman chosen for them by the regime. Disasterously, “after 1989 they were never again allowed to hold a national congress, and their already limited influence in government circles declined precipitously.”<sup>41</sup> After repressing Islamic organizations for roughly twenty years, in the late 1980s Suharto began to cultivate a regimist kind of Islam by granting more space for Islamic groups. The Association of Indonesian Muslim Scholars (ICMI), formed in 1990, was an example of this regimist Islam.<sup>42</sup> The instruction to spiritual practitioners to return to their “mother religion” can be seen as one of Suharto’s attempts to curry favor in Islamic organizations.

Islam and spiritual organizations, as well as other elements of civil society, operated as best they could in this atmosphere of fickle authoritarianism. Niels Mulder sees the SKK and BK5I, as well as other bureaucratic structures concerned with spiritual groups, such as the Department of Education and Culture, as ways in which spiritual groups were shaped into a legitimate movement.<sup>43</sup> Unlike Mulder, who understands this as the strengthening of the position of spiritual groups in the state, I see this as the institutionalizing of various spiritual groups into one spiritual movement within the

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<sup>39</sup> Hefner, 85.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 167.

<sup>43</sup> Mulder, 26.

framework of the state. While this does allow spiritual groups a measure of respectability, ultimately it limits their freedom of expression, spiritual or otherwise. The BK5I and SKK represent the beginning of the state's absolute position of oversight over spiritual groups and the first time in which the state attempted to direct the varied voices of spiritual groups into one choir, singing only Pancasila. The following section explores government oversight represented by the inventory project on spiritual groups conducted by the Department of Education and Culture. After detailing the parameters and goals of the inventory project, I give a history of the organizations Pangestu and Sumarah and then an analysis of the government's discourse regarding these groups.

### **The Project**

The inventory project of the Department of Education and Culture was a survey of spiritual groups that, according to the title of the project, were dedicated to the deep understanding of the One Supreme God. Entitled "Study of the Glorious Values of National Spiritual Culture"<sup>44</sup> and called an "inventory" (*inventarisasi*), the project was quite extensive. From what I can gather in the collection of the University of Michigan Library, it lasted for at least two decades, from 1980 to 2000. The vast majority of the reports, representing 150 groups inventoried, come from 1990 – 2000. From 1990 to 1994, 82 groups were inventoried, and from 1995 to 2000, 68 groups were inventoried. Interestingly, even though this was quite clearly a New Order project, it did not end in 1998 with the New Order.

The inventory project is organized by province and produced in small volumes of roughly 150 pages each. One volume typically discusses five groups, although some

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<sup>44</sup> The Indonesian title is *Pengkajian Nilai-Nilai Luhur Budaya Spiritual Bangsa*.

groups have been catalogued in their own separate volumes. The research was carried out by individuals working under the auspices of regional Departments of Education and Culture. In some volumes, the researchers are listed; in others, only the main editor's name is included. The editors, whose names are listed in the appendix, appear to be mostly bureaucrats within the Department of Education or the Department of Culture and Tourism. Some are academics, such as Usman Pelly, who edited one volume on the North Sumatran group *Ugamo Malim*, and is a professor of anthropology at the University of North Sumatra. Maskan, the editor of the volume I analyze, is currently part of the office of the General Directorate General for History and Pre-History (*Sejarah dan Purbakala*) within the Department of Education.

Despite the diversity in authorship, nearly identical introduction and conclusion sections in the volumes frame the inventory in a way that diminishes a sense of individual authorship and locates the project as the product of an impersonal state. At the risk of overemphasizing the state and underemphasizing the role individuals play in the production of state power and discourse, throughout this discussion I will refer to the collective authors of the inventory project as “the state” or alternately as the “Department of Education and Culture.” For the sake of simplicity, and because of the strong statist, ideological content of these inventory reports, I will not refer to individual authors. I am aware, and would remind readers, that abstractions such as “the state” cannot act except through the people that make them up.

A statistical breakdown of the inventory project from the sources available to me is as follows. A total of 164 spiritual groups were inventoried. Most of them originate in Java; the other provinces represented are North Sumatra, Lampung, North Sulawesi, Bali,

and Nusa Tenggara Timur. In North Sumatra, a total of eight groups were studied, one in 1986/1987, five in 1990/1991 and five in 1992/1993, three of which had been previously studied. Two of the groups that were studied in 1992/1993 were studied again in 1999/2000. In Lampung, five groups were studied in 1991/1992, one of which was studied again in 1997/1998. In North Sulawesi, ten groups were studied, five in 1988/1989 and five in 1991/1992. In Nusa Tenggara Timur, four groups were studied in 1992/1993. Finally, in Bali two different groups were studied in two different years, 1997/1998 and 1999/2000. The rest of the groups are Javanese, thus only 29 of the 164 groups are non-Javanese. An inventory of one group did not include its region, and one group was listed as being from both Central Java and East Java. Excluding the un-located group, we can count 134 groups from Java. Of these 134, one group is from both Central and East Java, Jakarta and West Java has 14 groups; Yogyakarta, 34; Central Java, 40; and East Java, 45. Yogyakarta and Central Java, geographically the same region but administratively separate, have a combined total of 74, overwhelmingly more than the other regions. This is an example of cultural privileging these areas enjoyed in the nation. Many Javanese groups are titled in Javanese and some have extensive written documentation in Javanese. Non-Javanese groups as well tend to use their local language for their titles. Others, both non-Javanese and Javanese, reveal a more national identity through their names, such as “Association for Indonesian Identity” (*Perhimpunan Kepribadian Indonesia*) from Blora, Central Java, surveyed in 1998/1999. See the appendix for a full listing of spiritual groups in the inventory reports.

As briefly mentioned in the introduction, what the government reports call *kelompok penghayat kepercayaan terhadap Tuhan Yang Maha Esa*, I have termed

“spiritual groups.” The Indonesian translates completely as: groups of practitioners of the belief in the One Supreme God.” I have chosen the name “spiritual groups” because the groups have, in general, spiritual, mystical, or even religious, goal and practices. Most claim divine inspiration but do not, in the government inventory at least, declare themselves to be religions. To repeat the government’s titling of these groups I believe would be uncritical, for while the government sees them as practitioners of the belief in the One Supreme God, I believe they might be something else entirely. Without further research I cannot sustain a positive definition for what they are, but I do not want to uncritically repeat what I see as the state’s move to contain these groups within its ideological framework.

Repeating the government’s name for these groups would also be a re-inscription of state ideology. In the inventory project, this Pancasila phrase plays an important role that will be discussed in depth. The embedding of the Pancasila formulation of Supreme monotheism is one of the ways in which the state asserts its ideology as superior and also restricts the idiom of spiritual language to an idiom of the state.

Although the inventory project was extensive and long-lived, it did not catalogue every spiritual group active in Indonesia, nor was this its apparent intention. Rather, most reports give the number of known organizations in the region, and of those, the report focuses on five for discussion. The excluded organizations are not even listed by name. For example, the 1991-1992 East Java publication notes 80 organizations in East Java, of which five are studied. The 1989-1990 Jakarta and West Java publication similarly notes 30 organizations in Jakarta and five organizations in West Java; it catalogues four organizations from Jakarta and one from West Java.

The East Java publication explains why it chose those particular groups for inclusion, and this provides an important key to understand one of the state's goals for the project. The groups were chosen because they had: written teachings, an explanation of spiritual culture, a significant number of members, an accessible location, and elders who communicate well.<sup>45</sup> The criteria show that rather than an attempt to catalogue every spiritual organization and mystical teacher of Indonesia, this project legitimizes certain groups as appropriate representatives of national spiritual culture. Those that are inventoried are validated, those omitted are not. Interestingly, written texts or Scripture, among other requirements, is an element of the legal definition for a religion in the Indonesian state. As previously discussed, the state denied the status of religion to these groups in 1961. Yet in this inventory project similar standards for validity are still projected for spiritual groups. Validation and also privileging at the expense of other spiritual groups through these reports is a parallel move to the suppression practiced by Pakem. The reports in the aggregate create a composite model for spiritual organizations promoted by the government; read individually, the reports provide a template for other groups, holding up particular examples as appropriate models for spiritual expression. Organizations whose elders don't "communicate well" and don't have written teachings are excluded from the constitution of national identity and thus do not possess glorious values that make up the spiritual identity of the nation. Through inventory, the state attempted to narrowly define the field for appropriate spiritual expression and national identity.

Privileging certain groups as representatives of national identity is one goal of the inventory project. The groups are framed as representatives of national identity and are

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<sup>45</sup> Pertiwintoro, ed., *Pengkajian Nilai-nilai Luhur Budaya Spiritual Bangsa Daerah Jawa Timur* vol 1, 8.

presented as caretakers of cultural inheritance and cultivators of native science. Another goal of the inventory project is to document the expression of native science and cultural inheritance. These spiritual groups are claimed as “spiritual capital” for correct manifestation of Pancasila and the Constitution.<sup>46</sup> The idea of cultural inheritance and the indigenous is not reserved for spiritual groups. John Pemberton, in his study on the enmeshing of culture in politics during the late New Order *On the Subject of “Java”* notes that the language of “cultural inheritance” and “authenticity” are important catchphrases of Suharto’s government and make up “a rhetoric of culture” that “enframes political will, delineates horizons of power.”<sup>47</sup> An advantage of this rhetoric is that, if believed, it makes political power unquestionable. Culture, everyone agrees, is honorable and good. When “culture” becomes a guise for political control, does political control become good as well?

In the inventory project, native science and cultural inheritance are made to reveal the unshakeable centrality of Pancasila. As discussed in the previous section, the centrality of Pancasila as a symbol for the New Order should not be underestimated. The establishment of Pancasila, which symbolically refers to the state, as original source of spiritual values and determinant of cultural inheritance is at the heart of the inventory’s discourse on spiritual groups. The writing of the inventory displaces any other God that might have been present and embeds Pancasila’s One Supreme God. In this way, the New Order project to inventory spiritual groups can be seen as a containment of possible movements that might appear to be dedicated to a source other than New Order power.

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<sup>46</sup> Maskan, ed., *Pengkajian Nilai-nilai Luhur Budaya Spiritual Bangsa, Jakarta dan Jawa Barat 1989/1990*, 12.

<sup>47</sup> John Pemberton, *On the Subject of “Java,”* 9.

Documenting spiritual values was a part of New Order nation- and nationalism-building. Materials of the inventory project were intended to have an active role in society, teaching citizens to understand particular spiritual qualities as native science, wisdom that comes directly from “*bumi Nusantara*” and is rooted in the souls of Indonesians since bygone eras.<sup>48</sup> According to the project, these qualities still exist despite the many foreign influences that have left their mark on Indonesia. They are also essential for the important work of developing Indonesia into a modern nation and Indonesian into modern people. A quote reveals this goal quite clearly:

by defending and cultivating [national] cultural identity with a firm attitude, we want to reach the ideal of developing a modern society that is able to live in a modern environment, with a modern temperament and that is prepared to use modern technology, but without loss of our own national identity.<sup>49</sup>

This project thus intends to define national culture and national identity in a constructive way, in order to use this national culture to create a society that is at once modern and indigenous.

The tension between modernity and native-ness can be felt clearly here, and the documents emphasize a drive towards a modern understanding of spiritual groups and spiritual behavior. This can be seen in the descriptions of spiritual groups, which will be discussed later, but also appears in the introductory section, making clear from the beginning the importance of a modern Indonesian mindset. Cultures must change, and they must change to support development in the present era. This study presents itself as part of a process to re-understand values in such a way that they support the modern nation-state of Indonesia. It is, in fact not the process of re-understanding by the process

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<sup>48</sup> Maskan, 12.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 3. The Indonesian reads: “*dengan mempertahankan dan memupuk kepribadian budaya dengan sikap yang mantap, kita ingin mencapai cita-cita untuk membangun masyarakat moderen yang mampu hidup dalam suasana moderen, dengan watak moderen dan sanggup pula menggunakan teknologi moderen, namun tanpa kehilangan kepribadian bangsa sendiri.*”

of formation of modern Indonesian national values. “The study of noble values is hoped to become a reference for modification of each form of traditional culture that still lives in society so that it can always develop with the demands of the era.”<sup>50</sup> In order to be modern, cultures must change, yet the noble culture of Indonesia must not be lost due to foreign (and less noble, undoubtedly) influences. The tension is clear. Indonesian identity is unique (it is the most noble), yet Indonesian culture must also share similarities with other nations (it must be modern).

In a discussion of Indonesian language ideology, Webb Keane has noted a similar tension. He argues that Indonesian is understood as a central part of Indonesian “national self-creation”<sup>51</sup> and that the language “makes two claims to universality that reflect the claims of modernist nationalisms more broadly.” Indonesian should be a “medium for the projection and fostering of a persona suitable for speaking in a public and for identification with the nation.” (It should be unique enough to be identifiable as Indonesian.) “And it should take a recognizable place in the cosmopolitan plane of *other* languages understood to be modern.”<sup>52</sup> I argue that Indonesian spiritual culture, like Indonesian language, as shown in Keane’s argument, must be both uniquely identifiable as native and as modern.

The inventory project works to make certain spiritual figures into representatives of national culture and to produce and enforce ideas of nationalism and a national identity using two foundational assumptions. The first is the assumption of iterability that allows.

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 4. The Indonesian reads: “Pengkajian nilai-nilai luhur diharapkan dapat menjadi acuan untuk memodifikasi tiap bentuk kebudayaan tradisional yang masih hidup di dalam masyarakat sehingga selalu dapat berkembang sesuai dengan tuntutan jaman.”

<sup>51</sup> Webb Keane, “Public Speaking: On Indonesian as the Language of the Nation” *Public Culture* vol. 15, no. 3, (2003), 507.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 506.

an inventory. The second is the assumption of the universality of religion. The act of inventorying marks spiritual organizations as unique examples of the same phenomenon. These groups are all exemplars of monotheism, which is a major part of state ideology. The state pays lip service to uniqueness, stating that every group has its particularities, its distinctive features (*ciri khas*). Yet unlike particularity, *ciri khas* denotes iterability: a difference that becomes sameness since everything is understood to have that difference which can be termed *ciri khas*. In the inventory, the individual example is a representation of a general category. *Ciri khas* in this way allows categorization and inventorying, reducing a science, a worldview, a way of being to an assigned number: Paguyuban Ngesti Tunggal, I.079/F.3/N.1.1/1980.<sup>53</sup>

In discussing Jakarta's "Beautiful Indonesia" Miniature Theme Park, John Pemberton notes a similar construction of diversity into similarity. He sees the representation of cultures in the park as a move on the part of the state of "dedicated, unitary recuperation of difference within a representational framework of the local."<sup>54</sup> So too the project of inventorying spiritual groups is a way to recuperate difference – of cosmology, of theology, of ethics, and possibly, dangerously, of politics – into one framework. In this case, the framework is not "the local" but "*ciri khas*," which ironically leads to unity within the state.

By treating these spiritual groups as individual manifestations of a general idea, the Indonesian state is also working from a thoroughly modern view of religion as a universal, general category. Clifford Geertz, in his *The Interpretation of Cultures*, works from a framing of religion similar to that of the Indonesian state as a universal

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<sup>53</sup> Maskan, 14.

<sup>54</sup> Pemberton, 12.

phenomenon and specifies that all religions share certain characteristics, such as employing a set of symbols and establishing a certain realistic sense of order of existence.<sup>55</sup> This definition of religion has been influential in the framing of religious behavior within anthropological studies and has been extensively criticized by Talal Asad in his *Genealogies of Religion*.<sup>56</sup> Tomoko Masuzawa further provides an important analysis of the universality of religion as it has come to be understood in the present era. In her book *The Invention of World Religions* she historicizes the concept of “world religions” and the way in which religion has come to be understood as a “unique sphere of life,” in other words, a universal phenomenon to be found wherever life is.<sup>57</sup> Masuzawa and Asad help to reveal the assumptions inherent in Geertz’s definition of religion.

A detailed understanding of the assumption of religious universality is important for viewing the religious discourse of the Indonesian state. Masuzawa explains the uncritical but popular contemporary assumption that “all religions are everywhere the same in essence, divergent and particular only in their ethnic, national, or racial expression”<sup>58</sup> and discusses this assumption which is at large in Western universities. The assumption is shared by the New Order state and provided the basis for the inventory project: that there is something fundamentally similar about these groups, and they can be seen best in relief with one another, which brings out not only their fundamental sameness to one another and to the ideology of the state, but also their relative and less important peculiarities.

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<sup>55</sup> Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 90.

<sup>56</sup> Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam*.

<sup>57</sup> Ernst Troeltsch qtd. Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions*, 313. Troeltsch lived from 1865 to 1923.

<sup>58</sup> Masuzawa, 9.

Masuzawa traces the history of religious universality by examining the writings of Ernst Troeltsch, an 18<sup>th</sup> century German theologian-historian, who believed that “everywhere the basic reality of religion is the same: an underivable, purely positive, again and again experienced contact with the Deity.”<sup>59</sup> Troeltsch and the New Order state seem to have worked from shared assumptions. Through its inscription of monotheism, the New Order re-inscribed religion as the same, and the reality of the Deity as the same and singular, the Deity of the Indonesian state. While spiritual groups in Indonesia never achieved legal status as religions, they were very clearly, from the state’s point of view, dedicated to the worship of the Deity. In this way they were included in the universality of religious expression even as they were excluded from formal authoritative status as distinct religions. The similarity between Troeltsch and the intellectuals he represents and the New Order state is important to remember to avoid treating the monotheism of the Indonesian state as a species apart. Indonesia is in line with contemporary religious scholars whose ideology, as described by Masuzawa, promotes the universality and commonality of all religious expression and feelings.<sup>60</sup> The New Order is not an outlier in its views on religion, if it does take things a step farther than other governments through its policies.

The Department of Education and Culture’s inventory discursively projected control over spiritual expression, writing state ideology into various and discrete spiritual groups or religious movements. This was an attempt to make a wide array of spiritual groups and their practitioners fit into a narrow ideological field of expression. The state required that all spiritual expression or worship be dedicated to God in the state’s terms

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<sup>59</sup> Troeltsch qtd. Masuzawa, 315.

<sup>60</sup> Masuzawa, 317.

(*Tuhan Yang Maha Esa*) and thereby, the state's definition of God. Spiritual ideology is state ideology as the Department of Education and Culture restricted spiritual expression to the idiom of Pancasila. With the inventory project, the state intended to enforce a definition of national identity and national culture that is both native (distinct, autonomous) and modern (worldly, universal). It did so by using a modern understanding of religion and spiritual behavior as universal and by defining the groups as iterable examples of a general category.

## The Organizations

### *Pangestu History and Description*

The founder of Pangestu<sup>61</sup> was Raden Soenarto Mertowardojo, born in Boyolali, near Surakarta in Central Java, in 1899. The government document describes R. Soenarto as pious despite suffering a hard life. Since he was young, he trained in various ascetic practices (*tapa brata*).<sup>62</sup> Another source, Sularso Sopater's *Mengenal Ajaran-Ajaran Pangestu*, describes R. Soenarto as having a "religious disposition, nature, and attitude" from childhood.<sup>63</sup> An example of his piety was a "*pepadang*" (lighting up, enlightenment) in his heart which occurred when he was faced with marrying a woman who was chosen for him by his parents. Although he did not want to marry her, he knew, on the basis of this *pepadang*, that he must "obey the wishes of his parents."<sup>64</sup> He married Nona Soemini in 1921.

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<sup>61</sup> The acronym for Paguyuban Ngesti Tunggal, Pangestu, is a play on words. *Pangestu*, in Javanese, means blessing or prayer.

<sup>62</sup> Maskan, 14.

<sup>63</sup> Sularso Sopater, *Mengenal Ajaran-Ajaran Pangestu*, 20. The Indonesian is: "*watak, sifat, dan sikap keagamaan tertentu.*"

<sup>64</sup> Maskan, 15.

A significant step in R. Soenarto's life occurred when he realized that the various spiritual and ascetic teachings he had been learning would not lead him to the right place. Sopater's study describes how R. Soenarto decided to forget all the teachings that he had studied up until that point, "all the secret teachings (*ilmu klenik*) of various holy teachers" and to stop believing in "strange things. Only one thing he held tightly, the belief in the One Supreme God and that belief he nourished more and more."<sup>65</sup> After coming to the realization that all he needed was total belief in the One God, R. Soenarto received divine inspiration. In a state between existence and nonexistence, in "increasingly ecstatic devotion" ("*kekhusyukan yang makin meningkat*") he received a "*wahyu*"<sup>66</sup> of divine enlightenment" which was divine speech (*sabda*) in his heart (*pusat sanubari*). This occurred in 1932.<sup>67</sup>

The source of the *wahyu* was *Suksma Kawekas*, which translates rather clumsily to the Absolute (Immaterial) Spirit or the Immaterial God, through the intermediary of *Suksma Sejati*, the True (or Real) Immaterial. *Suksma Sejati* is also called a Guide and Teacher for all humanity and *Sang Guru Sejati*, the True Teacher, and exists in the holy inner core (*pusat sanubari suci*) of every person. The divine word received through enlightenment contained three messages; one, that true knowledge is the truth about the right path towards the source (*asal*) and the goal of life; two, statements about who *Suksma Sejati* and *Suksma Kawekas* are; and three, that there will be two people sent to R. Soenarto to help him. These people will write down the commands of *Suksma Sejati* as

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<sup>65</sup> Sopater, 22. The Indonesian is: "*segala ilmu klenik ajaran berbagai 'kyai guru' tersebut, dan beliau tidak mau percaya lagi akan hal-hal yang aneh. Hanya satu yang beliau pegang teguh-teguh yaitu percaya kepada Tuhan Yang Maha Esa dan kepercayaan itu beliau pupuk semakin kuat.*"

<sup>66</sup> *Wahyu* is a sign from the Heavens in the form of a star which falls on one destined for power or kingship; it is power that is visible; it is also radiant light emanating from one's person that indicates reception or possession of divine inspiration, guidance, or power. It also is divine revelation, as in the Arabo-Islamic tradition.

<sup>67</sup> Maskan, 17.

R. Soenarto receives them. The two people were Raden Tumenggung Hardjoprakosa (d. 1942) and Raden Trihardono (d. 1958). R. Soenarto did not know these two people at the time he received the divine message.

As it turned out, R. T. Hardjoprakosa and R. Trihardono visited R. Soenarto two months after he received that *wahyu*. R. Soenarto continued to receive *wahyu* for the next seven months, and R. T. Hardjoprakosa and R. Trihardono wrote them all down. These were collected into seven volumes and compiled into one book called *Sasangkan Jati* in 1954. Until 1949, the group was not structured as an organization. In that year, while R. Soenarto was teaching, Sang Guru Sejati spoke to him again and told him that the students must organize themselves into a group. Thus Paguyuban Ngesti Tunggal was formed in order to “organize those who demand lessons from Sang Guru Sejati with the main learning materials from the book *Sasangka Jati*.”<sup>68</sup>

Harun Hadiwijono provides a full description of the cosmology, theology, and genesis story of Pangestu’s beliefs. This description concurs with that of the Department of Education and Culture report and also with that of Paul Stange.<sup>69</sup> Hadiwijono notes that Pangestu’s ideas of God are outwardly Islamic and also significantly draw on Christian and Hindu traditions; for this reason he defines the organization as unparalleled syncretism. According to Pangestu, God is Absolute, but is also three parts, *Tri Purusa*, which is made up of *Suksma Kawekas*, *Suksma Sejati*, and *Roh Suci*. These are not separate but are facets of the One. This finely-tuned theological formulation is flattened

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>69</sup> Paul Stange, “‘Legitimate’ Mysticism in Indonesia,” 95-96.

in government discourse, which melds all possible names, facets, and nuances of the Divine into the “One Supreme God.”<sup>70</sup>

Hadiwijono also details the moral values and moral qualities that a person must have according to Pangestu; these in general agree with the description in the government report. Moral values are expressed as the *tri sila*, which are awareness (*eling*), belief (*pracaya*), and obedience (*mituhu*). He provides, helpfully, a rather long description of the concept *budiluhur*. In essence, it means, he concludes, to “live in accordance with attributes of the Exalted God.”<sup>71</sup>

The government publication makes no attempt at historicizing the founding story of Pangestu. This omission will be analyzed more fully in the following section, but at this point it is important to point out that the years that are mentioned in the government text mark significant time periods in Indonesian history. In 1932, when Soenarto first received the *wahyu*, Indonesian was still a Dutch colony and the independence movement was experiencing more repression than it had previously. Nationalists were increasingly frustrated with the colonial administration and the limited opportunities available to them. In 1949, when Pangestu formed into a formal organization, Indonesia had declared its independence from the Dutch but was still internally searching for political unity and territorial integrity. Also in 1949, Dutch restrictions on native organization had been lifted and were no longer a barrier to Pangestu’s formal organization. In 1954, when the teachings of *Sang Guru Sejati* were compiled into one book, Indonesia was solidifying itself as a national entity and the central government, under Sukarno, was trying to integrate all its territories and put down armed regional rebellions. Pancasila had been

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<sup>70</sup> Harun Hadiwijono, *Man in the Present Javanese Mysticism*, 196-230.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 223.

declared by Sukarno in a speech in 1945 and soon after that was taken as the national philosophy, although it was not treated as state ideology until the Suharto years.

### *Sumarah*

The founder of Sumarah, Raden Ngabehi Soekinohartono, first understood the “demand for submission” (*tuntunan Sumarah*) not much later than the reception of the first *wahyu* by R. Soenarto of Pangestu. R. Ng. Kino, a member of the Jogjakarta court, was born in 1887 and died in 1971. Both R. Soenarto and R. Ng. Kino were influenced by Hardopusoro, a late colonial era group that Paul Stange defines as a “Javanist adjunct to the [Dutch] Theosophical Society” and a “slightly modernized form for Javanist practices”<sup>72</sup>

R. Ng. Kino understood the terrible condition of being colonized and was deeply troubled when independence movement leaders were captured, killed, or imprisoned in the early 1930s. He had strong ideas about Indonesia as a future national entity, thus Indonesia as a national entity was always important for the Sumarah movement. He was very diligent in ascetic practices, and because of his diligence he was able to receive the demand for submission. R. Ng. Kino possessed “*ilmu warisan*,” inherited knowledge, which was “*ilmu kedigdayan*,” knowledge of invulnerability.<sup>73</sup> But this *ilmu*, it turned out, didn’t provide what he was looking for. This knowledge, he decides, could not bring “happiness and salvation in this life and the next” and so he started searching for something else that could.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Paul Stange, *The Sumarah Movement in Javanese Mysticism*, 70-71.

<sup>73</sup> Maskan, 22-23.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 23. The Indonesian phrase is: “*kebahagiaan dan keselamatan dunia akhirat*.”

R. Ng. Kino prayed, meditated (*tafakur*), and “ponder[ed], fe[lt], and remember[ed] signs” that he received.<sup>75</sup> Compared to R. Soenarto’s point of contact with the divine between existence and nonexistence, “pondering,” with its connotations of intellectual, brain-centered activity to understand the demands of the divine, is practically a secular way to receive divine guidance. By this kind of pondering and prayer, R. Ng. Kino became a *warana*, a screen on which true teachings from their original source can be displayed.<sup>76</sup> In this usage of *warana*, a clear distinction between human and divine is implied, and R. Ng. Kino was careful to underline the fact that he as a person was not divine in any way. The division between divine and human and the need for intellectual thought and reflection on divine commands reveal a quite modern concept of spirituality.

Submission is the name of the game in Sumarah, and it is important to note that *sumarah* in Javanese, like *islam* in Arabic, means submission. The goal of Sumarah is for humanity to have complete faith in God and to submit totally to God.<sup>77</sup> R. Ng. Kino guides followers to that state of total submission, the demand for which comes directly from the One Supreme God. Sumarah has two texts to aid practitioners, but they do not consider these texts holy.<sup>78</sup> Compared to Pangestu, the straightforward logic of Sumarah is notable.

At the risk of providing a lop-sided analysis, a brief overview of Paul Stange’s scholarship on Sumarah will be helpful to evaluate the government discourse in the inventory reports. Unfortunately, no secondary source comparable to Stange’s study

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 24. The Indonesian reads: “*merenung, merasakan dan mengenang kembali petunjuk-petunjuk.*”

<sup>76</sup> *Warana* is translated by Paul Stange in his description of Sumarah as “screen” and occasionally “vehicle.” Another definition given by Stuart Robson and Singgih Wibisono’s *Javanese English Dictionary* is intermediary or representative.

<sup>77</sup> Maskan, 24. The Indonesian reads: “*Jadi tuntunan sumarah itu diperuntukkan bagi ummat manusia, agar ummat manusia kembali ber-Iman Bulat kepada Tuhan Yang Maha Esa.*”

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 26. The texts are *Sasangeman* and *Himpunan Wewarah*.

exists for Pangestu. Stange's description paints Sumarah as an intensely national organization in that the founder's initial inspiration was wrapped up with the idea of Indonesian nationalism. The organization has, since independence, involved itself in national politics and national structures. He also shows how the organization is deeply rooted in Islamic monotheism, modernism, and religious universalism. In many ways these tendencies are in line with the state's desires revealed through its inventory of spiritual groups. However, even with the modernist and nationalist bent of Sumarah, its discourse is not the discourse of the state. Nationalism, in Sumarah's view, did not require the totalizing framework of state ideology into which the discourse of the state has placed it.

The nationalism of Sumarah is evident both prior to and since the revolution. When R. Ng. Kino first received divine inspiration in 1935, he was meditating for the goal of Indonesian independence from the Dutch. Stange describes numerous occasions in which the founding members of Sumarah meditated for Indonesian autonomy, and that they understood, before the fact, that the Japanese would come to Indonesia, eventually leave, that Indonesia would then be an independent nation, and that Sukarno would be president. In the revolutionary years, R. Ng. Kino sent a letter to Sukarno, asking him how Sumarah could help, and Sukarno instructed him to formalize the organization for full effectiveness.<sup>79</sup> Sumarah organized its youth, who were trained in the martial art *pencak-silat* as a part of their meditation practice, into troops that served in the revolution.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Paul Stange, *The Sumarah Movement in Javanese Mysticism*, 129.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 122.

After the revolution, the nationalistic emphasis of the organization continued. Stange quotes the organization's leader Surono in 1957 as saying that the "national condition depend[s] on the progress of Sumarah."<sup>81</sup> This reveals the essential role Sumarah fills in the nation, in Surono's perspective, and also the intense national concern the members of Sumarah felt, and the connection they perceived between their spiritual practice and the well-being of the nation. Stange makes this perception a clear part of his analysis. He notes that spiritual leaders have been a part of the nationalist movement as much as anyone else and goes so far as to assert that "Every phase of Sumarah development has been clearly and profoundly linked to the Indonesian national progress."<sup>82</sup> Prior to independence, Sumarah leader R. Ng. Kino was committed to the fight to end Dutch colonialism; in 1950, as Indonesian independence solidified, Sumarah became a formal organization; and from 1950 through the New Order, Sumarah has involved itself in national bureaucratic structures. While this does not, as Stange seems to claim, indicate an existential link between Indonesia and Sumarah, it does show how fully national Sumarah has been since its founding.

Bureaucratically, Sumarah itself took steps to contact the Department of Education and Culture and thereby involve themselves in national bureaucratic structures.<sup>83</sup> Later, in 1971, Sumarah joined the New Order organization for spiritual groups, SKK, and even came to dominate SKK leadership positions. When eventually a separate directorate was established for spiritual groups in the Department of Education and Culture in 1979, the organizational leader of Sumarah, Arymurthy, was made its

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 214.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 65.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 188.

director general.<sup>84</sup> This directorate, under Arymurthy, originally undertook to inventory spiritual groups, and quite likely, the 1989 document that serves as primary material for my analysis is an outgrowth of Arymurthy's initial inventory project.<sup>85</sup> This clear national involvement indicates to what degree Sumarah feels itself to be a "national" organization. Yet it does not necessitate total endorsement of state ideology and politics. Sumarah has kept itself away from specifically ideological positions, being independent of political parties.<sup>86</sup> Its "public reputation of neutrality" strengthened its legitimacy for the New Order.<sup>87</sup>

Sumarah's teachings reveal both a specific kind of monotheism which can be understood as Islamic as well as a modern understanding of religion as universal, similar to that detailed by Clifford Geertz and analyzed by Tomoko Masuzawa. Evidence for Sumarah's modernity, as cited by Stange, are R. Ng. Kino's overwhelming emphasis that Sumarah teachings come directly from *Hakiki*, not from him; and his insistence that spirits not collude with humans in the human world, but rather that each related directly to God. Stange argues that this is a break from traditional Javanese and Javanese Sufi practices and that it is essentially an Islamic modernist position.<sup>88</sup> It is also a modern view of the meaning of agency.<sup>89</sup>

Yet rather than be reducible to an essentially Islamic or essentially modernist position, Sumarah provides a unique understanding of authority that, as far as I can tell, is

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 259-260.

<sup>85</sup> Stange, "'Legitimate' Mysticism in Indonesia," 91.

<sup>86</sup> Stange, *The Sumarah Movement*, 130.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 252.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 91.

<sup>89</sup> In his article "Public Speaking: On Indonesian as the Language of the Nation," Webb Keane notes on page 519 that one central precept of modernism is that "humans can and *must* make their own destiny." When this precept is applied to spiritual practice, it follows that each human must independently and actively seek to relate to God and that no one person can ensure the salvation of another. Modernity makes humanity more than ever unique responsible for the afterlife.

neither modern nor traditional. Authority in Sumarah lies in collective group meditating that leads to consensus. The consensus is based on God's will which can only be established definitively through agreement found in group meditation.<sup>90</sup> Another break from Islam is that the *Sesanggeman*, the written teachings from R. Ng. Kino, stress that there is only one Truth underlying all religions. While many modern Muslims may personally feel this is so, it is not an Islamic position per se, which would require belief in the perfection of Islam over all other faiths and Muhammad as the last of the prophets.

With the modern universalist idea of one underlying religious truth, one of Sumarah's goals is unity among faiths.<sup>91</sup> This universalist idea of religion is shared by Sumarah and the Indonesian government in the inventory project. The commitment to that one Truth (for Sumarah, through *Hakiki*), and "growing sensitivity to the international climate and pressure to present the nation in secular and modern terms" inspired modern and national structures for Sumarah as an organization.<sup>92</sup>

A final way in which Sumarah exhibits its modernity (and, possibly, its acquiescence to repressive New Order politics) is the firm distinction drawn between political power and spiritual consciousness. This distinction is necessary to be a "publicly legitimate organization" as well as to be a modern spiritual organization.<sup>93</sup> Although the history of Sumarah reveals an essential congruence between realms which are now divided as spiritual and material – meditating, for example, and military action during the revolution – during the New Order the division between power and spirituality

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<sup>90</sup> Stange, *The Sumarah Movement*, 186.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 258.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 309.

was made unequivocal. The distinction between spiritual and material is thoroughly modern as well as it is politically safe.

The foregoing discussion of Sumarah emphasizes that nationalism and modernism have been braided into Sumarah as an organization and as a worldview. This description runs the risk of painting Sumarah as devoted not only to Indonesian nationalism but also to Suharto's New Order. However, important distinctions between the discourses of the state and of Sumarah reveal that this is not so. Sumarah discourse, as represented by Paul Stange in his study, illustrates that Sumarah did not conceive of itself in the way that the state did, and shows that New Order discourse, try as it might, was not omnipotent. The discursive difference Sumarah presents is a way in which Sumarah presents a challenge, if passive, to state ideology.

This challenge comes in the concept of the Divine. In Stange's description, R. Ng. Kino's revelations came from *Hakiki*. Stange defines it as the "term of reference for the principle of direct guidance from God."<sup>94</sup> While *Hakiki* is used most consistently, the term *Hak*<sup>95</sup> is also used referring to the same thing. In Stange's description, it is unclear if *Hakiki*, which can be translated as Reality, is a term for God or for a sort of angel or intermediary, the *Guru Sejati* (True Teacher) that the government texts mention. The lack of clarity is telling. Sumarah, it seems, does not use the God -> heavenly messenger (angel) -> earthly messenger (prophet) format to which the Semitic religions have accustomed us. Instead, *Hakiki* refers to an ineffable source that nevertheless gives guidance if humans meditate long enough to unite with it. *Hakiki* is the source of true wisdom that R. Ng. Kino accessed through his union with it. While it might be parallel to

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 85.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 86.

the idea of God, it is not personalized like the idea of God (“the Father” or “the Judge”) rather it is abstracted, more similar to “Truth” or “Reality.” This is significant because the source of guidance, for Sumarah, is *not* the “One Supreme God,” and thus Sumarah teachings do not focus on or lead to the One Supreme God as they are made to do through the discourse of the inventory project. Nor does the place of *Hakiki* in Sumarah discourse emphasize the a priori importance of monotheism to spiritual life.

Harun Hadiwijono, writing on Sumarah in his *Man in the Present Javanese Mysticism*, defines Sumarah’s idea of God in the same terms as state discourse, but then describes *Hakiki* as “an unexpected explosion of sound, such as a short-circuit” through which one receives the word of God.<sup>96</sup> However, in Hadiwijono’s analysis of Sumarah teachings, the concept of the Divine appears to be closer to the state’s ideal of the One Supreme God than to Stange’s description.

*Hakiki*, and *Hak*, of course, are not words without antecedents. *Hak* (from the Arabic *haq*, truth) is one of the names for God in Islamic discourse. *Hak* and *Hakiki* therefore carry very strong resonances of Islamic monotheism, or *tauhid*, and while these words distance Sumarah from the state’s principle of monotheism, they do bring it close to an Islamic-leaning discursive world. In my reading of the government documents, I concur with Stange that God does not have a very central place in Sumarah cosmology. The nine realms<sup>97</sup> that R. Ng. Kino is led through reveal a cosmology in which there is a

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<sup>96</sup> Harun Hadiwijono, *Man in the Present Javanese Mysticism*, 159.

<sup>97</sup> Maskan, 26. These realms are: the realm of temptation (*alam sasar atau goda*); the plant realms (*alam tumbuh-tumbuhan*); animal realm (*alam kehewanan*); realm of conscious humanity (*alam sadar manusia* or *alam jasmani-rohani*); realm of souls carrying the body (*alam rohani mengemban jasmani* or *mati ing urip*); realm of souls conscious of eternal life (*alam rohani dalam sadar hidup kekal* or *urip ing urip*); realm of souls obeying authority (*alam rohani patuh dalam purbawisesa* or *manut ing urip*); realm of souls leading to holy work (*alam rohani mengantar tugas suci atau makarnya* or *jumeneng ing urip*); and finally, realm of souls in the shelter of The One Life (*alam rohani dalam makna atau naungan Hidup Yang Esa* or

greater discursive emphasis on the internal level of a person, on the soul and what level of the world the soul exists, and a diminished discursive importance of an external, Absolute God. *Khak* (Truth, God) is no more emphasized than *urip* (life, the divine life within). The cosmology is focused on living and embodying a particular kind of God-consciousness within the individual. While this may be conventional for Javanese mysticism and Sufi discourse, it does not allow the Indonesian state to fit Sumarah very easily into its framework of the external One Supreme God. This cosmology may also contravene the description of R. Ng. Kino as a modernist Muslim, but retain resonances with mystical Javanese and some Sufi movements.

Another discursive difference between Sumarah and the state's presentation of Sumarah is the idea of *wahyu*. *Wahyu*, common in Javanese history and mystical thought, has varied meanings. As stated previously, it can mean kingship or great power indicated by a falling light from the Heavens, or divine revelation (as in the Arabic *wahy*, revelation) or guidance, or the radiant light that emanates from a person on whom *wahyu* has fallen. In the case of these spiritual groups, *wahyu* is used to mean divine revelation. A comparison between R. Ng. Kino's *wahyu* as described by Stange and in the government documents reveals important differences in perception of human agency vis-à-vis the Absolute. The government report presents the impetus to organize into a formal organization in 1949 as *wahyu* in the form of an explicit command to R. Ng. Kino, as in, God said: organize! And it happened. In Stange's portrayal, the achievement of formal organization took time and the involvement of many people, and only came about after much collective meditation on the correct way to proceed. The state portrays *wahyu* as

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*Khak ing urip*). The nine realms, or *martabat sangga* in other Javanese Islamic (*suluk*) literature, have a long history in mystical Islam, beginning in the 12<sup>th</sup> century with Ibn Al 'Arabi.

revelation of direct commands from God, while Stange describes that the *wahyu* R. Ng. Kino received required human effort to interpret through meditation to find the correct course of action. The “*Wahyu Iman Suci*” of R. Ng. Kino was experienced not as a command, but as awareness of responsibility and at the same time, the power and authority to bear that responsibility.<sup>98</sup> This *wahyu* places power in the person of R. Ng. Kino. The state’s interpretation of *wahyu* focuses power solely within the One Supreme God and dis-empowers human actors.

The conceptual differences between the state’s description and Paul Stange’s description of Sumarah demonstrate that Sumarah, as fully intertwined as it is with the establishment of Indonesian nationality, is not an uncritical participant in New Order ideology. Nationalism, in Sumarah’s case, cannot be conflated with full acceptance of New Order indoctrination or state ideology.

### **The Discourse**

This section provides an analysis of the 1989/1990 Department of Education and Culture inventory report for the areas of Jakarta and West Java. The state has at least five goals in writing state ideology into descriptions of the beliefs and teachings of spiritual organizations. These goals are: 1) to facilitate modern monotheism in Indonesia as a whole and in Indonesians as individuals; 2) to standardize understandings of religion and spirituality; 3) to make spiritual/cultural behavior support the state; 4) to standardize national culture; and 5) to show the Indonesian state as eternal, and therefore, permanent in its present (1989) form. These goals will be discussed individually below.

#### *Modern monotheism*

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<sup>98</sup> Stange, 172-173.

Reading between the lines, the description of the way R. Soenarto received his *wahyu* makes him seem like a Sufi. He focused all his energies into concentration on the One Supreme God (perfect *tauhid*, realization of the Oneness of God) which brought him into an altered state (*antara jaga dan tiada*, between awareness and nothingness<sup>99</sup>) and into contact with the divine. The term *tauhid* is never used, but R. Soenarto is described as intending to forget everything else he had learned and focus completely on his belief in God. In doing so, he is totally engrossed in prayer and humbly devoted to God. In this kind of devotion, which brings his first divine inspiration, he is performing intense Islamic monotheism.

This monotheistic religious behavior is coupled with R. Soenarto's intention to forget the many strange things he learned, which are defined as *klenik*. *Klenik* once meant secret, or something to be kept a secret, but by the time of the New Order, it had come to have derogatory overtones, denoting dangerous superstitious or magical practices. The aversion to *klenik* portrays it as something at best impotent and at worst fatally wrong. This portrayal echoes other debates in Java regarding modernist and traditionalist Islam. Pangestu, then, is situated on the modernist side of the debate and uses a modernist idiom to express spiritual devotion.

The anti-*klenik* stance of R. Soenarto and the dysfunction of R. Ng. Kino's "*ilmu kadigdayan*" show a turn away from previous kinds of Javanese spiritual practices and a turn toward a modern kind of monotheistic spiritual understanding, although the idea of monotheism is much more emphasized in Sumarah than it is in Pangestu. Instead of inherited Javanese *ilmu*, R. Ng. Kino learns that only through total submission to the one God will Indonesia get out of the clutches of the Dutch. The idea of *tauhid* can be felt

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<sup>99</sup> Maskan, 17.

here as well. Monotheism, arguably the most important principle of Islam, is also essential to Sumarah. Instead of mysticism, the description of Sumarah reads like bare-bones Islamic universalism. As an intermediary or *warana*, R. Ng. Kino is distinctly human; he helps people submit to God, and he has no special power besides knowledge, which he reached, not through an altered state like R. Soenarto, but through reflection, pondering, and prayer.

In bringing attention to the modernist and Islamic resonances of R. Soenarto's and R. Ng. Kino's devotion, I intend to point out how the statist discourse of the "One Supreme God" can also be an Islamic discourse of *tauhid*. It is Islamic in a modernist sense (there is no use for *klenik*, all one needs is faith in the one God) and it is also sufist (approaching union with God in a state between existence and nonexistence and receiving *wahyu* through contact with God) yet also becomes, explicitly, Pancasilaist. The state's Pancasilaist discourse trumps the other two through its use of the formula the "One Supreme God" and by doing so subsumes the modernist and sufist understandings within it.

Another aspect of modernism, which might even be considered linguistic secularization of spiritual behavior, is that Pangestu members refer to their meetings as "going to school" (*masuk gedung sekolah*) because they attend to learn "knowledge of the soul" (*ilmu jiwa*) and "faith" (*keimanan*).<sup>100</sup> Schools are a government institution *par excellence*, closely connected with the development of the nation thus modern in that sense. The idea that spiritual organizations exist in order to learn or that instruction is needed to learn a general sort of faith is a modern idea of spiritual behavior. Faith has become generalized and needs no specific object. The emphasis is on *having faith*, not

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 21.

on having faith *in God*. To call one's spiritual practice "going to school" explicitly locates it within the secular realm and only works in a world in which faith and spirituality have been separated from religion proper. In these ways, Pangestu is modern and monotheistic, state-oriented and Islamic-oriented.

In a later section of the government document, the teachings of all the spiritual groups are summarized and generalized into three categories. By the very nature of categorizing in this way, the scope of possible expression of these organizations is limited. The three kinds of teachings available to the spiritual organizations are: 1) belief in God the Creator and in the need for humanity to be close to God; 2) ways to get close to God, belief in the eternal human soul, and unity with God; 3) the obligation to do good deeds in the world and to perform one's social obligations.<sup>101</sup> The teachings clearly emphasize the importance of monotheism and can be considered modern in that they are divorced from the specifics of a particular religious tradition in order to support a universal idea of religion and spirituality. However, there is a potentially radical aspect to this that should not go overlooked. In respect to the second teaching, it appears as if the Indonesian state has allowed the possibility of the Sufi idea of radical union between humanity and God as a part of national spiritual culture. This is extremely significant to remember when comparing Indonesia to other Islamic-majority countries. There is a tendency in academia to oppose modernist Islam to Sufi Islam, and this modern state understanding of Islam with Sufistic elements of union between human and God rejects that opposition.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 39-40.

<sup>102</sup> This also brings up questions of the place of Sufism in Islam and the relation of Sufism to the state. Could Sufism at the time of the New Order be said to be marginalized if it had a place in New Order state ideology? Is the state's action of writing Sufism into state ideology a form of co-optation? If so, does this

### *Standardization of religious and spiritual understanding*

Implicit in the inventory is an understanding of religion as a universal category, with one and the same God for all worshippers. This was touched upon briefly in the previous section and discussion of *ciri khas*, which showed that the government, by performing this inventory, has defined all of these varied organizations as individual representations of a general category. Although the spiritual groups inventoried are not legally considered religions, they support the identification of religion as a universal category in that they promote non-denominational practices through which to reach the universal (singular) God. Through this project, both the government and often the groups themselves are participating in the making religion into a universal phenomenon.

From the perspective of a religious practitioner, this means that all religions and spiritual groups are equal among themselves if not equal across categories. Religions are equally valuable because they all teach the same truth, being, as they are, mundane manifestations of a single Divinity. Spiritual groups are equal because they all teach various ways to reach the same end, worship of the single Divinity. Pangestu represents this universalist idea of religion and spirituality, understanding itself to be a particular expression of the truth that all religions teach. This is empowering because it logically, if not socially, gives Pangestu teachings the same weight in Indonesian society as Islamic teachings; the *Sabda* that was received by R. Soenarto can be considered as valuable as the Qur'an transmitted by the Prophet Muhammad. Yet at the same time it is perniciously limiting. With this understanding, Pangestu will never be able to promote a cosmological or theological understanding that is explicitly unique and possibly contrary

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mean that Sufism in contemporary Indonesia provides support for, rather than protest against, the state? Unfortunately it is outside of the scope of this paper to address these questions.

to modern monotheism. With the conflation of nation, the New Order, and monotheism in Pancasila ideology, it also means that Pangestu will never be able to promote an understanding that contravenes the Indonesian state.

Neither Pangestu nor Sumarah consider themselves to be a religion, nor do they consider differences in religion to be significant.

The differences of faith, according to Pangestu, are overshadowed by one objective similarity [to other religions], which is the existence of the basis of the Supreme monotheism as incorporated in the first basic principle of the Indonesian Republic.<sup>103</sup>

This quote provides a strong example of how Pangestu and the Indonesian government are together enacting a universalization of religion under the auspices of the Republic of Indonesia. According to this statement, all spiritual orientations, including Pangestu, have the same organizing principle, or “objective,” which is also the same as Indonesian state ideology. The promotion of religion and spirituality as universal phenomena further brings individual spiritual organizations into the binds of state ideology.

Sumarah also focuses on monotheism rather than doctrinal particularity. Their teachings focus on the *practice* of submission to God with scant explanation of what God is. The divine message that led to the creation of Sumarah as an organization was simply to return humanity to its perfect, complete faith in the One Supreme God. “The demand of Sumarah is understood as forming spiritual guidance based on the proof-witness-truth in performing worship of submission to the One Supreme God”<sup>104</sup> Sumarah further does not use symbols or have a holy text, nor recognize one particular leader. It turns its attention to the perfect practice of faith and leaves the question of faith *in what* for others

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<sup>103</sup> Maskan, 21-22. The Indonesian reads: “*Namun perbedaan keimanan ini, menurut Pangestu, dinaungi oleh satu persamaan obyektif, ialah adanya asas Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa sebagaimana tercantum dalam sila pertama dasar negara Republik Indonesia.*”

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 25. The Indonesian reads: “*Tuntunan Sumarah dihayati berupa bimbingan kerokhaniaan berazas pada bukti-saksi-nyata dalam menjalankan ibadah sujud sumarah kepada Tuhan Yang Maha Esa.*”

to answer, either as a way to exit the field of religious competition or to encompass all competition within it. State ideology, of course, through New Order Pancasila discourse, has jumped in to answer that question: faith in the One Supreme God, faith in Pancasila, faith in the Republic of Indonesia. Sumarah, of course, does not worship the state. Unfortunately, it is quite convenient for the state that Sumarah's discourse does focus so explicitly on submission to God, and that the state and God are linked so tightly through New Order Pancasilaist language. The state is thus able to present Sumarah as aligned perfectly with its own ideology.

#### *State-supporting religious/cultural behavior*

In the previous section on monotheism, we saw that statist resonance trumped both Islamic and Javanese resonances in Pangestu materials while at the same time maintaining echoes of those meanings. In this section I will examine how state discourse replaces, effaces, or subsumes other kinds of discourse. This is effectively accomplished through translation.

At the time of his *wahyu*, R. Soenarto understood that *Suksma Sejati* was transmitting a message to him that originated from *Suksma Kawekas*. In the inventory, *Suksma Kawekas* is first explained as "God of all the realms" (*Tuhan seru sekalian alam*) and *Suksma Sejati* is the "messenger of the Eternal God" (*Utusan Tuhan yang abadi*).<sup>105</sup> This naming of the divine is immediately followed by a translation into the framework of the state: "From the above statements we know that Pangestu is a spiritual organization solely based on the *Supreme Oneness of God* (emphasis added). . ."<sup>106</sup> The teachings of

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 19. The Indonesian reads: "Dari pernyataan-pernyataan tersebut di atas dapat kita ketahui pula bahwa Pangestu merupakan organisasi yang bersifat kejiwaan semata-mata berdasarkan Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa . . ."

*Sang Guru Sejati*, another name for *Suksma Sejati*, become the concept of the Supreme Oneness of God, importing statist ideology into Pangestu teachings. This is repeated through the statement of the goals of Pangestu, which were settled after they became a formal organization. One major goal is to help its members “return to oneness with the One Supreme God” through the teachings of *Sang Guru Sejati*.<sup>107</sup> *Suksma Kawekas* has been effaced, and the essential figure is God as discursively figured by the Indonesian state. The only place to which the teachings of *Guru Sejati* lead is *Tuhan Yang Maha Esa*, the One Supreme God of the Indonesian state.

This goal is supported by a guide of ten individual items, called the *dasasila*, (creating an echo of *pancasila*). The first item on this list is to worship the One Supreme God; second is to worship the Messenger of God. After these predictable tenets, the third principle is to be faithful to the head of the state and the nation’s laws; the fourth is to worship the homeland. Only after the homeland should one worship one’s parents, older siblings, teachers, and other living creatures.<sup>108</sup> The *dasasila* were written as guiding principles after Pangestu formed into an organization in 1949. Nationalist discourse, at least in this *dasasila* if not all the teachings of Pangestu, runs strong and in this way, nationalism is worked into spiritual practice.

For the inventory’s Sumarah, *Tuhan Yang Maha Esa* has been present since the beginning. When Indonesia was still a Dutch colony, R. Ng. Kino prayed to the One Supreme God for Indonesian independence. The anachronism of this discourse (“*Tuhan Yang Maha Esa*” did not discursively exist until the writing of Pancasila) will be discussed later. At this point it is important to note that as written in government

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 20. The Indonesian reads: “*kembali bertunggal dengan Tuhan Yang Maha Esa.*”

<sup>108</sup> Ibid. Principles five through ten are as follows: worship one’s parents; worship one’s older siblings; worship one’s teacher; worship teachings of virtue; love all fellow humans; respect all religions.

discourse, Sumarah was always dedicated to the submission to the One Supreme God as figured in state ideology. It is the One Supreme God that replies yes, Indonesia will be free. R. Ng. Kino also hears that he must help people to have total perfect faith in the One Supreme God, and in this way it is as if R. Ng. Kino's task is to promote the ideology of the state *and* perfect faith in that ideology. In just one paragraph, the statist phrase "*Tuhan Yang Maha Esa*" is repeated six times. For example: ". . . belief in the One Supreme God is not pure and not perpetuated; an unholy and fractured relationship. People don't submit completely, don't worship and give up everything completely to the One Supreme God."<sup>109</sup> In a later section in the report describing Sumarah's teachings, the definition of God (in this case, expressed with the Javanese word *Pangeran*, meaning Lord and God) is explained more fully. In that section, "*Pangeran*" becomes "*Tuhan Yang Maha Esa*" every time a Sumarah sentence is translated from Javanese to Indonesian. Being translated into Indonesian, apparently, means being translated into state discourse.<sup>110</sup>

Outside of the description of any particular organization, the government report provides its own explanation of the nature of God. In this explanation, a series for names for God in Javanese and in Indonesian are mentioned, with no particular context and no explanation of where these names come from. This quote provides an example:

A religious living culture has been known by the Indonesian people for a long time, which means that the practice of social life is always based on belief and faith in *Dhat Kang Murba Ing Dumadi* (Jv., The Essence that Rules Creation), which is the Omnipotent God, God the Creator of the Universe with all of its contents including humanity. Even though actually humanity is not able to see the form of God or *Gusti Kang Murbo Kawasa Jagad* (Jv. The Lord that Rules the World),

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 23. The Indonesian reads: ". . . *kepercayaan terhadap Tuhan yang Maha Esa tidak murni dan tidak lestari, suatu hubungan yang kurang suci dan terputus-putus. Manusia tidak bersedia sepenuhnya, tidak menyembah dan menyerah sepenuhnya kepada Tuhan Yang Maha Esa.*"

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 73-74.

every person is able to believe in the attributes of God the Most Perfect and Omnipotent over everything in the world.<sup>111</sup>

Directly following this discussion and summarizing it, the phrase “the One Supreme God” takes over as marker for God and none of the other names are used. The following paragraph begins: “Realizing that humanity is a creation of the One Supreme God, humanity always wants to be close to God . . .”<sup>112</sup> *Tuhan Yang Maha Esa* serves as a sign for all of those other names of God, effacing again their individual and specific meanings.

Incorporating Pangestu and Sumarah completely into the state’s ideological framework is in part accomplished by pervasive repetition of set phrases such as “the One Supreme God” to the exclusion of other possible discursive constructions. Translating unique names for God (if not unique Gods) into the same phrase, while not necessarily pervasive and repetitive, functions in the same way, which is to exclude or efface other discursive constructions of God and institute one kind of spiritual/cultural model for behavior. This is clearly the intent of the text. To what degree the text can be considered successful depends on its reception by a national audience; analysis of what kind of reception this inventory project has had through the years is regrettably beyond the scope of this essay. These modernizing, standardizing, and inventorying actions of the New Order must also be considered with other elements of the regime’s dynamics; specifically, the various mystical teachers and shamans (*dhukun*) with whom Suharto

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid., 36. The Indonesian reads: “*Budaya hidup yang religius memang sudah dikenal oleh bangsa Indonesia sejak dahulu, yang artinya bahwa penghayat hidup masyarakat selalu didasarkan pada keyakinan dan kepercayaan pada Dhat Kang Murba Ing Dumadi, ialah Tuhan Yang Maha Kuasa, Tuhan Pencipta Alam Semesta dengan segala isinya termasuk manusia. Walaupun pada hakekatnya manusia tidak sanggup melihat wujud Tuhan atau wujud Gusti Kang Murbo Kawasa Jagad, namun setiap orang sanggup meyakini akan sifat Tuhan Yang Maha Sampurna dan Kuasa atas segala-gala di dunia ini.*”

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., 37. The Indonesian reads: “*Menyadari bahwa manusia adalah ciptaan Tuhan Yang Maha Esa, manusia selalu ingin dekat dengan Tuhan . . .*”

surrounded himself. The New Order was by no means a monolithic or completely modern regime.

### *Standardization of national culture*

After the description of the spiritual groups, the inventory report discusses the teachings of the groups. These teachings are under the heading “Sublime Values of National Spiritual Culture” (*Nilai-Nilai Luhur Budaya Spiritual Bangsa*) and are divided into three subgroups: teachings that contain elements of belief in the One Supreme God; teachings that express the requirement to remember and worship (*berbakti kepada*) the One Supreme God; and teachings that demand humanity to behave honorably within society. This discursive framework places all of the groups, despite any possible differences, into one form – all groups have the same type of teachings and teach the same thing. Further, the first two items that must be taught by these groups require the organizing principle of belief in the state’s version of God. That is, one item that must be taught by these groups is state ideology. Because the state ideology is enacted through this “spiritual cultural” format, it standardizes national culture by setting the definitions of what those cultural values are and the boundaries of how they can be interpreted.

As an introduction to the discussion of individual spiritual groups, the document sets out a brief theology. Humans know they are created by God and thus they miss God and look forward to return after death. Humans know they can return to God only by being good in life. Being good means creating benefit for everyone, not just oneself. One has to control his/her good and bad desires, senses, and will. Humanity thanks God for revealing the right way, through religion *or* organizations for the belief in the One

Supreme God.<sup>113</sup> This is the theology of the state, and thus these are the values of the Indonesian people. They must be inherent, then, in the teachings of these spiritual cultural organizations.

In particular, there are two qualities taught by all the organizations: *becik sejatining becik* (good that is truly good) and *berbudi bawaleksana* (following through on one's words). *Becik sejatining becik* is explained as being good not only for oneself but for others as well, and *berbudi bawaleksana* is the quality of fulfilling one's promises and putting words into actions. These two teachings will increase the awareness of Indonesians in a "Pancasila-based national life."<sup>114</sup>

Important to note is the Javanese ethical formulations and Javanese language used to express the high values of the Indonesian nation. This is especially significant because the inventory locale is West Java, where the local language would be Sundanese, not Javanese. Pangestu and Sumarah started in Central Java but became national, with their centers in Jakarta, which is a national city more than it is a Sundanese city, and are thus included in the West Java and Jakarta area inventory. The Javanese terms show that while particularities in the interpellation of God are effaced, certain Javanese ethical mores are preserved and enforced as national culture. Select Javanese terms support the presentation of these spiritual groups as containing and maintaining the seeds of pure native science and lofty cultural values and are a way to delineate national culture, drawing lines between what is and is not included. The terms maintained carry heavy cultural weight.

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<sup>113</sup> Ibid., 37.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 38.

Terms of spiritual enlightenment are maintained in Javanese. R. Soenarto received *pepadang*, R. Ng. Kino is a *warana*. Other terms are those that dictate behavior in society. One of the first lessons R. Soenarto learns is that he must *mituhu* or obey his parents. This is an obvious example of a moral lesson the state would like to impress upon its citizens. Other terms that enforce moral lessons are conventional Javanese ethics such as: acceptance (*rela, narima*), honesty (*temen*), patience (*sabar*), and the elusive yet ever present honorable quality, *budi luhur*. Other ethical ideas are expressed in Indonesia, such as: dedication, dedicated service (*pengabdian*), and self-control (*pengendalian diri*).<sup>115</sup>

A third set of terms refer particularly to acts or ways of worship. No matter the type or target, worship is generally defined as “*berbakti kepada Tuhan Yang Maha Esa.*” *Berbakti* is Indonesian, and in some contexts it means to be loyal, to serve devotedly, and in others it means to worship. This double meaning works well for the conflation of state and spirituality: in a word, one can be loyal to the state and worship God. It does not necessarily follow that being loyal to the state and worshipping God are the same action, but possible slippage between the two is created. Other terms in Javanese used for worship are: remember, be aware (*eling*), believe (*pracaya, piyandel*), obey (*mituhu*), and pay homage (*manembah*).<sup>116</sup>

#### *The Indonesian state as eternal: Ahistoricism and Anachronism*

The Department of Education and Culture report records significant years for all of the spiritual organizations catalogued, but never puts those years into their historical context. This kind of ahistoricism allows a picture of the Indonesian state in its

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<sup>115</sup> Ibid., 58-61 and 88.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., 44.

contemporary form to be projected as eternal and timeless; as if it always existed and always will, changelessly. As we have seen previously, the discourse is also anachronistic.

Years are mentioned in background story of Pangestu (1932 first *wahyu* received, 1949 formally established as an organization, 1954 written works collected in one volume) but no mention of the historical context was made, even though R. Soenarto and Pangestu moved through extremely significant historical times, from the end of colonialism through Japanese occupation to independence and Guided Democracy. This is also true of the portrayal of Sumarah, which has a similar timeline to Pangestu. Though there is mention of Dutch colonialism during R. Ng. Kino's youth, the story skips, it seems, from Dutch presence to the timeless present of New Order Indonesia. It is as if historical events happened somewhere else. The government document presents Pangestu and Sumarah as not affected by history; this makes Indonesia appear and timeless.

The anachronism of state discourse allows state ideology also to appear timeless. In the discussion of Sumarah, perfect faith is defined as faith in the One Supreme God. There is no alternative construction for the interpellation of God yet at the time of Sumarah's founding, this phrase was not in currency and there was no Pancasila. R. Ng. Kino even prays to the "One Supreme God" so that Indonesia will be free from the Dutch.<sup>117</sup> Likewise for Pangestu, Sang Guru Sejati spoke to Soenarto in 1932; Pancasila and Indonesian independence were not declared until 1945, and the formulation of Pancasila that included the phrase "*Tuhan Yang Maha Esa*" came about at that same time. Besides emphasizing state ideology, this anachronistically writes state ideology

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid., 23.

into the past where it (historically) didn't exist. By removing history, and time, from the picture, the New Order conception of "Indonesia" becomes the only option ever possible.

Pemberton, in his analysis of culture in Java, notes the ahistoric tendency of the New Order. He argues that ahistoricism in the promotion of traditional culture is a way to circumvent the ugly history of the origins of the New Order. "What appears to remain is a purely *tradisional* culture free of political and historical implications, a culture dedicated to, as if by nature, its own celebration."<sup>118</sup> Similarly, marking history and politics out of the founding stories of the spiritual organizations, and the more than seventy years of history since the first *wahyu* received, is also a circumvention of the past, in such a way that anything that does not fit into the frame of "pure native science" is effaced.

If the inventory study included a historical contextualization of these spiritual groups, it would reveal examples of foreign influence such as the Dutch Theosophical movement and political ideas of nationalism promoted at the time of independence. Allowing these influences to be shown would reveal that the founders of the spiritual organization lived in an international world. As much as they may have meditated on mountaintops, they apparently drew from all resources available to them, from Javanese mystical science to Western theories of national self-definition. Part of what makes these organizations so interesting is their interpretation and combination of the various sciences and influences to which they were exposed. The ahistoricism of the New Order inventory flattens these influences, thereby reducing the scope of the spiritual organizations and limiting the discursive space available to them. Limitation of these

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<sup>118</sup> Pemberton, 15.

groups' discursive spaces is, of course, dependent on the inventory project's actual efficacy in national and spiritual life. One hopes its efficacy fell short of its mark.

## **Conclusion**

The foregoing discussion reveals five distinct areas in which the state has discursively attempted to regulate spiritual behavior. Through a discourse of modern monotheism, state ideology is shown to contain or subsume Islamic religious registers. The standardization and universality of religion allows Pangestu and Sumarah to promote spirituality and faith without a specific ideological register that would claim them as unique unto themselves, unquantifiable, and incomparable with others. On the contrary, they are represented as individual examples of a general idea, part of the universal phenomena of religion and spirituality. Translation of spiritual ideas, names for God, and ideas of worship into the state's idiom is an imposition of spiritual forms that support the state, and indeed, can do little but support the state. Further discussion of moral and ethical behavior provides a standardization of national culture, which allows the state to clearly delineate Indonesian spiritual identity, marking what belongs and effacing what does not. Finally, a portrayal of the Indonesian state as eternal is attained through a lack of attention to historical context and persistent anachrony, which inserts state ideology prior to the existence of an independent Indonesia. All of these moves are ways in which the state attempts to dominate discursive realms and impose its control over the intimate relation between human and divine. The end goal of the state is the enforcement of New Order Pancasila ideology as unequivocal.

With statist consolidation in Soeharto's years came ideological nationalist indoctrination and the institutionalization of religion in the government bureaucracy. The push toward monotheistic, universal "world" religions was perhaps a modernizing move supported by Soeharto's development plans for the nation. In this way, the New Order was responding to an ideological doctrine of modernity which influenced New Order Pancasila ideology. The program of national indoctrination of the ideology of Soeharto's Pancasila state moved spirituality and nationalism closer than they ever were before, and correspondingly restricted the breadth of meaning that both ideas could support.

Through its examination of New Order discourse on spiritual groups and national ideology, this essay has attempted to address a particular example of the interaction between spirituality and politics. I have shown not only that spirituality and politics do interact, but that they do so extensively, and in ways that are mutually influential. Sumarah and Pangestu are spiritual groups that saw themselves, at the time of their founding, as explicitly nationalist and as contributing to the formation and definition of the nation. In a later period, the groups continued to participate in bureaucratic structures, and the New Order explicitly strove to direct spiritual expression and belief into New Order-supporting forms. Spirituality and politics, rather than distinct areas of life, are modes of expression that overlap, interact with, translate, and at times, repeat one another.

## Appendix

List of spiritual groups inventoried

Pengkajian Nilai-Nilai Luhur Budaya Spiritual Bangsa

Hasil Penelitian Organisasi Kepercayaan Terhadap Tuhan Yang Maha Esa.

1980-2000

Published by the Department of Education and Culture, Jakarta, Indonesia.

Note: Location names in bold font indicate that the volume includes multiple groups.

Otherwise, the volume includes only one group.

#	Year	Name	Location	Editor
1	1980	Rila	<b>Surakarta</b>	
2		Paguyuban Ngesti Tunggal		
3		Sumarah		
4	1982	Kawruh Rasa Sejati	Purbalingga, Jawa Tengah	
5	1983-84	Aku Sejatimu	(No location)	
6	1986-87	Ugamo Malim	Sumatera Utara	Usman Pelly
7	1988-98	Organisasi Ramai	<b>Sulawesi Utara</b>	Eko Rochanto
8		Tonaas Walian		
9		Pa Empungan Waya Si Opo Empung		
10		Rumarages		
11		Si Paempungan		
(2)	1989-90	Paguyuban Ngesti Tunggal	<b>Jakarta/ Jawa Barat</b>	Maskan
(3)		Paguyuban Sumarah		
12		Paguyuban Penghayat Kapribaden		
13		Aliran Kebatinan Perjalanan		
14		Organisasi Kejiwaan Ibu Pertiwi		
15	1990-91	Sukoreno	<b>Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta (DIY)</b>	Kasiyo
16		Sumarah Purbo		
17		Ngestiroso		
18		DAS		
19		Budi Rahayu		
20	1990-91	Angesti Sampurnaning Kautaman	<b>DIY</b>	Soedjatmiko
21		Hangudi Bawanatata Lahir Bathin		
22		Paguyuban Madri Santosaning Budi		
23		Persatuan Warga Sapta Darma		
24		Anggayuh Panglereming Napsu		
25	1990-91	Paguyuban Ulah Rasa Batin	<b>Jawa Tengah</b>	Maskan
26		Paguyuban Kawruh Kasuksman Panunggalan		
27		Paguyuban Noormanto		
28		Badan Keluarga Kebatinan		
29		Paguyuban Kawruh Kodrating Pangeran		
30	1990-91	Habonaron Do Bona	<b>Sumatera Utara</b>	Soeradi, Maskan
31		PAMBI/PABBI		
32		Pemena		
33		Purwo Madio Wasono		
34		Galih Puji Rahayu		
35	1991-92	Paguyuban Urip Sejati	<b>Jawa Timur</b>	Pertiwintoro

36		Kepercayaan "Sapta Darma" Indonesia		
37		Paguyuban Ngelmu Sangkan Paraning Dumadi Sanggar Kencana		
38		Paham Jiwa Diri Pribadi		
(1)		Badan Penghayat Kepercayaan Terhadap Tuhan Yang Maha Esa "Rila"		
39	1991-92	Keakraban Kekadangan Ngestu Tunggal	<b>Jawa Timur</b>	Kasiyo
40		Kawruh Guru Sejati Kawedar		
41		Memayu Hayuning Bawono		
42		Penembah Jati		
43		Kawruh Sangkan Paran Kasampurnan		
44	1991-92	Yayasan Sosrokartono	<b>DIY</b>	Maskan
45		Paguyuban Sangkara Muda		
46		Paguyuban Jati Luhur		
47		Paguyuban Manunggaling Kawula Gusti		
48		Organisasi Imbal Wacono		
(44)	1991-92	Yayasan Sosrokartono	<b>DIY</b>	Eko Rochanto
49		Paguyuban Mardi Santosaning Budi		
(46)		Paguyuban Jati Luhur		
(24)		Anggayuh Panglereming Nafsu		
(48)		Imbal Wacono		
50	1991-92	Bumi Hantoro	<b>Lampung</b>	Ratnawati
51		Dharma Murti		
52		Ilmu Goib Kodrat Alam		
53		Paguyuban Pendidikan Ilmu Kerohanian		
54		Purwo Deksino		
55	1991-92	Adat Musi	<b>Sulawesi Utara</b>	Suradi Hp
56		Masade		
57		Empung Lokon Esa		
58		Kalkikan		
59		Sanga Lalan Rondor		
60	1992-93	Lera Wulan Tana Ekan	<b>Nusa Tenggara Timur</b>	Istiasih
61		Marapu		
62		Uis Neno		
63		Jingitiu		
(6)	1992-93	Ugamo Malim	<b>Sumatera Utara</b>	Suradi HP
64		Pijer Podi		
65		Perpulangan Rumah Sipitu Ruang		
(33)		Purwa Madio Wasono		
(34)		Galih Puji Rahayu		
66	1992-93	Bimo Suci	<b>DIY</b>	Suradi Hp
67		Manunggaling Kawula Gusti		
68		Hangudi Lakuning Urip		
69		Persatuan Eklasing Budi Murko		
70		Hak Sejati		
71	1992-93	Paguyuban Kebatinan Imu Hak Tri Sabdo Tunggal Indonesia	<b>Jakarta</b>	Sri Hartini
72		Pancaroba		
73		Persatuan Warga Theosofi Indonesia		
74		Kawruh Guru Sejati		
75	1993-94	Pakarti	<b>Jawa Tengah</b>	Sri Hartini
76				

77		Kepribadian		
78		Swatmoyo		
79		Waspada		
80		Paguyuban Ngesti Jati		
(69)	1993-94	Persatuan Eklasing Budi Murko	<b>DIY</b>	Pertiwintoro
81		Paguyuban Kebatinan Traju Mas		
82		Yayasan PEKKRI Bondhan Kejawan		
(69)		Paguyuban Hak Sejati		
(65)		Paguyuban Bima Suci		
(67)		Paguyuban Hangudi Lakuning Urip		
(20)	1993-94	Angesti Sampurnaning Kautaman	<b>DIY</b>	Suradi Hp
83		Minggu Kliwon		
84		Kasampurnan Jati		
(82)		PEKKRI – Bondan Kejawan		
85		Lepasing Budi-Luhuring Budi		
86	1993-94	Paguyuban Ngesti Budi Sejati	<b>Jawa Timur</b>	Gendro Nurhadi
87		Paguyuban Penghayat Kasampurnan		
88		Paguyuban Pamungkas Jati Titi Jaya Sampurna		
89		Paguyuban Kepribadian Indonesia		
90		Paguyuban Gunung Jati		
91		Paguyuban Kawruh Kasampurnan		
		Kasunyatan Pusoko Budi Utomo		
92	1994-95	Marsudi Kaluhuraning Budi (Mekar Budi)	<b>Jakarta</b>	Istiasih
93		Perhimpunan Perikemanusiaan		
94		Paguyuban Ki Ageng Selo		
95		Buko Saliro Pribadi (BUSADI)		
96		Kebatinan Satuan Rakyat Indonesia		
97		Gayuh Urip Utami (GAUTAMI)		
98	1995-96	Kejiwaan	<b>Jawa Tengah</b>	Pertiwintoro
99		Esa Tunggal Sejati (Satu Jati)		
100		Manengku Husada Rasa Sejati		
101		Badan Kebatinan Indonesia		
102		Pangudi Rahayunung Budhi (Prabu)		
103	1995-96	Kekadangan Wringin Seta	<b>Jawa Tengah</b>	Gendro Nurhadi
104		Wiratama Wedyananta Karya (Wiweka)		
105		Paguyuban Ulah Raos Mulatsarira		
		Hangesti Tunggal		
106		Paguyuban Pancasila		
		Handayaningratan		
107		Paguyuban Kajaten		
108		Kekadangan Kayuwanan (Kekayun)		
109	1995-96	Paguyuban Kaweruh Kebatinan Jawa Lugu	<b>Jawa Timur</b>	Istiasih
110		Sujud Nembah Bakti		
111		Jawa Domas		
112		Himpunan Murid dan Wakil Murid		
		Ilmu Sejati R. Prawiro Soedarso		
113		Paguyuban Ngelmu Kasampurnan		
114		Paguyuban Ngelmu Sangkan Paraning Dumadi "Sri Jayabaya"		
(91)		Kawruh Kasunyatan Kasampurnan	<b>Jawa Timur</b>	Kasiyo, SH

115		Pusoko Budi Utomo		
116		Pirukunan Purwa Ayu Mardi Utama		
117		Aliran Kebatinan Tak Bernama		
118		Kawruh Sedulur Sejati		
118		Perguruan Ilmu Jiwa		
119	1995-96	Trisoka	<b>DIY</b>	Ratnawati
120		Kebatinan Donojati		
121		Kawruh Budi Hardo Pusoro		
(85)		Lepasing Budi Luhuring Budi		
(83)		Minggu Kliwon		
(84)		Kasampurnan Jati		
122	1996-97	Kawruh Jendro Hayuningrat	<b>Jawa Timur</b>	Pertiwintoro
		Rahyuning Kautaman		
123		Tri Murti Naluri Majapahit		
124		Paguyuban Aliran Seni dan Kepercayaan		
125		Kaweruh Kasampurnan Sangkan Paran Budhi Luhur		
126		Purwane Dumadi Kautaman Kasampurnan		
127		Paguyuban Tuntunan Ilmu Kebatinan "Sapta Sila"		
(5)	1996-97	Aku Sejatimu	Jawa Timur	Gendro Nurhadi
128	1996-97	Hidup Betul	Yogyakarta	Gendro Nurhadi
129	1996-97	Kaweruh Jowo Dipo	Jawa Tengah Jawa Timur	Gendro Nurhadi
130	1996-97	Kepribadian Sabdo Tunggal	Kediri, Jawa Timur	Gendro Nurhadi
131	1996-97	Paguyuban Among Raga Panggugah Sukma	Blitar, Jawa Timur	Gendro Nurhadi
132	1996-97	Paguyuban Jaya Sempurno	(no location)	Gendro Nurhadi
133	1996-97	Paguyuban Ketuhanan Kasampurnan	Tuban, Jawa Timur	Gendro Nurhadi
134	1996-97	Paguyuban Pancasila Handayaningratan	Jawa Tengah	Gendro Nurhadi
135	1996-97	Pangudi Rahayuning Bawana	Semarang, Jawa Tengah	Gendro Nurhadi
136	1996-97	Sumarah Purbo	Yogyakarta	Gendro Nurhadi
137	1996-97	Seserepan Kepribadian Intisari 45	Yogyakarta	Gendro Nurhadi
138	1996-97	Pirukunan Kawula Manembah Gusti	Surakarta	Gendro Nurhadi
139	1997-98	Paguyuban Hamesu Budi Lukitaning Janma	<b>Jawa Timur</b>	Gendro Nurhadi
140		Organisasi Kasampurnan Ketuhanan Awal dan Akhir		
141		Paguyuban Kawruh Batin Kasunyatan Simbol 101		
142		Organisasi Kebatinan 09 Pambuko Jiwo		
143		Organisasi Perguruan Ilmu Sejati		
144	1997-98	Paguyuban Kawruh Bathin Kasunyatan Simbol 101	Blitar, Jawa Timur	Gendro Nurhadi
(54)	1997-98	Purwo Dekseno	Lampung Tengah	Gendro Nurhadi
145	1997-98	Darma Murti	Tabanan, Bali	Gendro Nurhadi

146	1997-98	Sukmo Sejati	Cilacap, Jawa Barat	Gendro Nurhadi
147	1997-98	Paguyuban Budi Sejati	Lamongan, Jawa Timur	Gendro Nurhadi
(108)	1997-98	Kekayun	Blora, Jawa Tengah	Gendro Nurhadi
148	1997-98	Tri Jaya	Tegal, Jawa Tengah	Gendro Nurhadi
149	1997-98	Kawruh Kasunyatan Kasampurnan Jati	Jawa Timur	Gendro Nurhadi
150	1997-98	Ngudi Utomo	Yogyakarta	Gendro Nurhadi
(91)	1997-98	Kawruh Kasampurnan Kasunyatan Pusoko Budi Utomo	Kediri, Jawa Timur	Gendro Nurhadi
151	1997-98	Pendidikan Kerohanian Luhur	Yogyakarta	Gendro Nurhadi
152	1997-98	Paguyuban Medal Urip	Brebes, Jawa Tengah	Gendro Nurhadi
153	1998-99	Perhimpunan Kepribadian Indonesia	Blora, Jawa Tengah	Istiasih
154	1998-99	Paguyuban Pakarti	Madiun, Jawa Timur	Istiasih
(111)	1998-99	Jawa Domas	Kediri, Jawa Timur	Istiasih
(142)	1998-99	Kebatinan 09 Pambuko Jiwo	Blitar, Jawa Timur	Istiasih
155	1998-99	Kawruh Urip Sejati	Blora, Jawa Tengah	Istiasih
(66)	1998-99	Kasunyatan Bimo Suci	Yogyakarta	Istiasih
156	1999-00	Kawruh Batin Tulis Tanpa Papan Kasunyatan	Surakarta, Jawa Tengah	Istiasih
(64)	1999-00	Perpulangan Pijer Podi	Sumatera Utara	Istiasih
(83)	1999-00	Minggu Kliwon	Yogyakarta	Istiasih
157	1999-00	Sastra Cetha	Surakarta, Jawa Tengah	Istiasih
(127)	1999-00	Sapta Sila	Madiun, Jawa Timur	Istiasih
158	1999-00	Paguyuban Ngesti Roso	Yogyakarta	Istiasih
159	1999-00	Paguyuban Kawruh Kodrating Pangeran	Jawa Tengah	Istiasih
160	1999-00	Kekeluargaan	Bali	Istiasih
(68)	1999-00	Hangudi Lakuning Urip	Yogyakarta	Istiasih
(34)	1999-00	Galih Puji Rahayu	Sumatera Utara	Istiasih
161	2000	Panembah Jati	Bojonegoro, Jawa Timur	Istiasih
162	2000	Perguruan Tenaga Dalam Bambu Kuning	Surakarta, Jawa Tengah	Istiasih
163	2000	Paguyuban Noormanto	Malang, Jawa Timur	Istiasih
164	2000	Angesthi Sampurnaning Kautaman	Purworejo, Jawa Tengah	Istiasih

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