



# Javanese Power: A Comparative Study of the Power Systems of the Majapahit and Demak Kingdoms

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## ARTICLE INFO

### Article history:

Received Jan 09, 2021

Revised Feb 22, 2021

Accepted Mar 21, 2021

### Keywords:

Java Power,  
Majapahit Kingdom,  
Kingdom Of Demak

## ABSTRACT

Majapahit and Demak were the two most influential Javanese kingdoms of their time. The two kingdoms are located in the same area, namely Java, but have many differences, including the problem of the concept of the legitimacy of power and the authority of the power possessed by the kings. As a Javanese kingdom that still holds the ancestral traditions of the two kingdoms, it is strengthened by religious teachings that are quite influential. Majapahit which adheres to Hindu-Buddhist religion and Demak adheres to Islamic teachings. The legitimacy that was later obtained by the Javanese rulers was the legitimacy of descent where the next royal ruler was the crown prince or a close relative of the kingdom, although the succession of leadership in order to gain legitimacy of power was not only obtained in a smooth way, namely there were several power struggles that ended in civil war, one example is the struggle for power for the sake of legitimacy, there was a war called Paregreg during the Majapahit era. Demak, which is different from Majapahit, still relies on genealogy as a reinforcement of the legitimacy of its power in the eyes of the people. Raden Fatah is the son of Brawijaya V, the last ruler of Majapahit. This certainly indicates that the legitimacy of descent became very dominant in the state administration of the ancient Javanese kingdoms. After a leader gains legitimacy, it will turn into a power authority that will be owned. Given the concept of centralized Majapahit power, so that the authority of power then lies in the hands of the king directly,

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Java is one of the islands in Indonesia which stretches from the western tip of Banten Province to the easternmost (East Java), is an area that has attracted the most attention of researchers, both from Indonesia and researchers from outside Indonesia. The focus of their research attention is one of the islands called Java (Java).

Geographically, the island of Java is seen as a unit. The concept of unity is reinforced by the historical process, which places the island of Java as the center of a maritime transportation traffic network since prehistoric times (Lombard, 1996) (Sunarya, n.d.).

Given the boundaries of the island of Java which stretches between west and east, north and south coasts, but in the development of the 14th century, Lombard divides the study of Java into three major socio-cultural groups: First, Tanah Pasundan, second, the real Land of Java (Central Java Province). and East Java and the Special Region of Yogyakarta) and third, Tanah Pesisir, a kind of coastal strip where Javanese or Sundanese identity tends to weaken or even disappear and be replaced by a much more cosmopolitan culture (Wijayakusuma, 2017). The Lombard division indicates that culturally there are some differences between the three the region.

Since the 5th century Java has known government. The government used is the kingdom. It is recorded that there are several kingdoms that have become rulers on Java, including: Tarumanegara, Syailendra, Hindu Mataram, Singosari, Padjadjaran, Majapahit, Demak, Pajang, Islamic Mataram, Cirebon, Banten, and other small kingdoms.

Ricklefs describes some of the general characteristics of countries that existed in Indonesia before the colonial period. These general characteristics have not changed for several centuries. In particular the soil conditions, and the climate in these areas have important impacts not only on agriculture and trade but also on the formation of the state (Ricklefs, 2005) (Damanhuri, 2010).

The geographical location of these kingdoms is generally divided into two parts, namely the interior kingdoms with an agrarian system of life, and the kingdoms that are close to the piers, with the tendency of these kingdoms to trade because they are close to ports and are commonly called the Maritime kingdom.

The two forms of kingdom as mentioned above are Majapahit as an inland Hindu kingdom whose economic focus is agriculture (cultivating), and the Moslem sultanate (kingdom) of Demak which focuses its economy on trading because it is located in the northern coastal area of Java, namely in the city of Demak.

The two kingdoms have their own uniqueness, considering the differences in the acceptance of their religion, namely Majapahit which is Hindu, Buddhism as the official state religion and Islam as the state's unofficial religion, (Halim & Jambi, 2015) and the Demak kingdom with the prototype form and the official religion of Islam. These two kingdoms were not that far apart in ruling - Demak was the kingdom that replaced Majapahit after its destruction - Java.

When traced further, the two kingdoms, namely Majapahit and Demak, are one family of Singasari descent. And the first king of Demak himself was a descendant of the last king of Majapahit, namely Kertabumi who married a princess from Champa China (Abdullah, 2020). This kinship system was one of the reasons for the collapse of the kingdoms in Java, in addition to other factors.

It is interesting to elaborate on Harry J. Benda's view on the domestication approach, Benda stated that the kingdoms on the coast (maritime) would always lose to the kingdoms in the interior (agrarian) this was based on a theory about the domestication of Islam, namely a comprehensive study of Islam on the island of Java. in the 16th-18th centuries, there was a power struggle between the rulers of the devout Islamic kingdoms in the coastal areas of Java, represented by Demak, against the notoriously syncretic Mataram kingdom in the interior. When the latter embraced Islam, he sought to suppress their rebellious coastal conquests, and in the process destroy the most dynamic sections of Islamic society on the island of Java (Faridl, 2001).

But of course this approach is not always correct, considering that there are several hypotheses which state that the kingdoms in the interior had experienced defeat, namely the Majapahit kingdom which was subdued by the Demak kingdom, this Benda approach was at least refuted by the splendor of the Demak kingdom over Majapahit when the Majapahit kingdom fell to its knees in front of the Demak army. . In this case, the defeat of Majapahit was the defeat of non-Islamic Java in the interior, as stated by Benda on the Islamic power on the coast of Java.

The struggle between the interior and the coast was described by a medicine expert from Lisbon (Portuguese), Tome Pires, in the sixteenth century who had explored the archipelago, namely Sumatra and Java. Pires stated that there were wars between the coast and inland areas, but he emphasized that these wars should not be seen as the result of irreconcilable religious and cultural conflicts. Pires added that there had been a process of cultural assimilation when Islam met the strong ancient Javanese high culture. This can be seen from the great tolerance value of

the Majapahit kingdom by allowing the two Muslim graves in Trowulan and Tralaya to be close to the capital of the Majapahit kingdom (ULUM, n.d.) (Maghfiroh, 2019).

The war mentioned above as stated by Pires was not caused by religious factors alone, but as explained by Kuntowijoyo, that the establishment of Demak as the first Muslim kingdom in Java could be seen as the victory of the merchant class and maritime kingdom over the aristocratic class and agrarian kingdom (Majapahit) (Maulana, 2015).

Both Majapahit and Demak certainly expect legitimacy for their power, but this legitimacy is not like the legitimacy in the West, where power holders are obliged to be responsible to the people, considering that the legitimacy of power is ethical and democratic.

For the Javanese kingdoms, the legitimacy used was religious legitimacy which was applied from generation to generation, where the most influential was a leader who was able to accommodate the power of the superworldly universe. A Javanese leader is always identified with mystical power as a symbol of his power.

The legitimacy of a king's power is usually determined by hereditary conditions (inheritance) both from the crown prince as the successor of the kingdom and close relatives of the kingdom who will continue the kingdom. The hereditary process is strengthened by the intensification of the king's power, namely through *tapa brata* and collecting objects that are considered to have supernatural powers so that the king's power will increase.

After obtaining the legitimacy of power in the form of hereditary (kinship) form of legitimacy of power turned into the authority of power, the authority in question is the authority of the king in carrying out his government. The policies taken by the king of Majapahit and Demak are certainly different, this can be seen from the different views on religion and the influence of these religious teachings.

In the Majapahit tradition all aspects of authority are in the hands of a king, but in the Demak kingdom there are quite central roles in determining the authority of the kingdom other than that of the sultan, this can be traced from the existence of a guardian *sanga* who is quite central in helping the expansion of the Demak kingdom.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses data collection techniques, namely through library research or library research with the main reference books: 1. Slamet Muljana. *Towards the Peak of Splendor; History of the Majapahit Kingdom*. Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 1965, and 2. Hasanu Simon. *The Mystery of Sheikh Siti Jenar; Wali Songo's role in Islamizing Java*. Jogjakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2008, and other data from books, mass media and other documents related to this problem.

The discussion that will be studied is a comparative study whose problem limitations have been determined, this study is an analysis of data and describes it using a comparative method by mapping the concepts and workings of the royal power system. The governments being compared are the Majapahit and Demak kingdoms.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Power is not a new thing in political studies, but then power cannot be translated only as "Western-oriented", considering that if we study further about power, it turns out that it is in a veiled form even though there is a concept of power that is emitted by each tradition.

Power as described by Carter is related to the ability to make other parties do something or not do something in accordance with the wishes of those who have power. What Carter sees is that power is able to make other parties do something (or not do something) on the basis of obedience that comes from within the obedient party.

In the Western tradition, power is known which is then incarnated in the legitimacy of power and authority of power, but then power is translated as a formal rule with structured laws, thus indicating the accountability of a ruler to his people. This is often called ethical or normative legitimacy, considering the rule of law and legislation is a policy framework for rulers.

In contrast to the Western tradition, in the Eastern tradition, especially in Indonesia, the legitimacy or authority that applies is religious legitimacy, where the superworldly understanding of a ruler makes the people not entitled to ask for accountability from their leaders.

Legitimacy and authority are the spirit of power, how do the Javanese actually get power and how do they maintain power?

Although there are similarities in gaining power in both the Majapahit and Demak traditions, it cannot be denied that the religiosity system is very influential in coloring the way the legitimacy and authority of a ruler work. All these discussions are mapped through a comparison scheme that includes sources and actors.

### **3.1 Legitimacy of Power**

Legitimacy is a very important word for a leader to have. Legitimacy or "declaring lawful", capable of changing from power to authority (Yogyanto, 2017). Legitimacy is the belief of community members that the authority that exists in a person, group or authority is reasonable and deserves respect (Salindri, 2019). David Easton says that legitimacy is "the conviction on the part of the member that it is right and proper for him to accept and obey the authorities and abide by the requirements of the regime" (Yogyanto, 2017).

In the western tradition, there are several stages of legitimacy, as explained by John Chrisman, that legitimacy has developed quite rapidly. At first legitimacy was placed in the "rational interest" of humans to form a state or government, in order to overcome conflicts between humans (Hobbes). Then Locke stated that the formation of political power is based on the statement of the "will" of the people to agree. The shift occurred at a time when Rousseau and Kant put the legitimacy of the state on state guarantees of "freedom" of citizens. Thus the justification of political power depends on the ability of political institutions to guarantee the freedom of citizens. Referring to Rawls's view, it can be said that the legitimacy of modern political power does not only require that authority manifests justice, but justice demands the participation of citizens in the implementation of justice itself; in other words, democracy is demanded (MADUNG, 2011).

However, the western view is slightly different from the Javanese tradition of power. In Java, especially Majapahit, power or legitimacy can be obtained by gathering through penance and sacred ceremonies. Meanwhile, Demak, with a slightly different tradition, practices a unique legitimacy procession, namely the strong religious tradition carried out by the guardians in providing legitimacy. Further discussion will be described in more detail in the following discussion.

#### **a. The legitimacy of the power of the Majapahit Kingdom**

In political life the Javanese priyayi who controlled the kingdom certainly had a pattern of life. The pattern of life used by the Javanese priyayi is as described by Koentjaraningrat and especially JWM Bakker in his book, *The Original Religion of Indonesia*, the cultural pattern used is the Hindu-Kejawen cultural pattern. The most dominant in this cultural pattern is not religious values as described by St. Alisjahbana's destiny, but orientation to the value of power or political value. For the Javanese priyayi as enforcers of the dynastic system of position, political power is the most important. While religion ranks second (Zamany, 2015).

In the legitimacy of power, religion becomes the second factor as a reinforcement of the king's power and immunity. One of the evidences of the non-dominance of religion in determining policy is reflected in the building of temples such as Borobudur temple, Prambanan temple, also through the attitude of king Erlangga to the kings of Majapahit who adhered to two religions, namely Shiva-Buddha (Syiwa-Boja). Even though in their home country these two religions are at war with each other (Mulder, 2001).

In Hindu-Kejawen culture, it is the priyayi or ksatriya groups who are superior. The clergy are under this priyayi class. This means that political power is the highest institution, while religion is only a complement (Nambo & Puluuluwa, 2005) (Wibowo, 2007).

But Lombard caught another signal from the tradition of power maintained by Majapahit, according to Lombard, in its heyday, Majapahit was marked by centralized agrarian social relations, where the king stood at the top of the pyramid. This king's power is very strong because it gets religious legitimacy from the clergy. In return, the king gave arable land that was not subject to

royal taxes. In addition, the clergy also played a role as officials of the royal administration (Rosyad, 2021).

Then, related to the religious attitude of Javanese priyayi culture, it seems that the orientation of the value of power is very strong, this can be seen in the Hindu-Buddhist mystique that they chose to carry out the position of king and the concept of Raja Bimathara or the king of Gods. The concept of God-King or the king of the gods is always highlighted in Hindu-Kejawen literature, namely literature which is the development of the Mahabharata and Ramayana books.

The concept of power is explained by Simuh with the concept of Javanese priyayi mysticism. This mysticism is not escapistic mysticism as in Sufism. Mysticism is a stepping stone to find one's identity and reach the perfection of power, which is to become sacred because it has merged with God. This discovery of identity and supernatural powers then becomes the provision for carrying out their state duties as priyayi or government officials in mamayu hayuningbawana (Rosyad, 2021).

S. De Jong mentioned that there are three concepts to describe the attitude of Javanese mystical life which is considered effective in carrying out their government duties. Namely distance, concentration, and representation. S. De Jong explained : (KATOLIK & KATOLIK, n.d.) "Humans take distance (distance) from the world, the big universe. Then there is concentration on oneself; even this is a kind of distance to the little universe (its own body). And the result of the two efforts is a representation. Released from bondage to the material world with a purified mind, one lives the rest of one's life as a messenger of God in the world...."

In Majapahit the power base was mostly in the hands of the secular, political and military bureaucracy, whereas priests from various sects were included in the royal bureaucracy (Idi, 2019). Political authority was in the hands of the king, because the king was considered the incarnation of a god. Therefore, the Majapahit kingdom can be classified as a theocratic kingdom.

#### **b. The Litigation of the Demak Kingdom's Power**

The Kingdom of Demak is one of the Islamic kingdoms in Java after the Hindu-Buddhist Majapahit. This kingdom has quite complex rules of the game considering that the founders of the Demak kingdom were scholars who spread Islam in Java. Even though Raden Fatah is still a descendant of the last king of Majapahit, namely Brawijaya V, he is an administrator of a pesantren in the Demak area after receiving the blessing of his teacher, Sunan Ampel.

The spread and even expansion of the Demak kingdom to the western region of the island of Java was carried out by members of the wali sanga, this indicates that the role of religion is very central in the Islamic tradition. One of the strengths in determining every problem the guardian is to be at the forefront of execution.

Wali sanga has a strong enough role in providing legitimacy, especially in relation to the power that will be mandated to the kings of Demak. The Guardian Council is a vehicle for providing legitimacy or punishment for problems that later develop. The guardian's trial in question is not only dealing with religious issues but also political issues. Religion and politics is a package that is being confirmed by the guardians.

However, the subsequent development of the Javanese rulers after Demak often mixed religious issues with Javanese cultural issues (syncretic). The role of religious legitimacy began to change its orientation from what had been shari'a to become syncretic ideas with tradition (culture) that had been practiced so far.

In government affairs, a Demak leader is always on par with the trustees in discussing developing problems. One of the legal products of joint legitimacy with the Wali (ulama) and Umara (king) was when Sheikh Siti Jenar's sentencing verdict was carried out during the fourth guardian's trial.<sup>15</sup>

### c. **Similarities and Differences in Legitimacy of Power of the Majapahit and Demak Kingdoms**

Before comparing the legitimacy between Majapahit and Demak, we first explore the issue of belief in the traditional beliefs of the archipelago, symbols are still attached and even many elements of original indigenous beliefs are still alive among Muslims and Christians. "Animism" is at the base of all Indonesian religious conceptions. According to this original belief, all manifestations of nature are the consequence of the work of supernatural powers, usually evil spirits who must be served with offerings and whose wrath must be avoided. The main elements of this primitive Indonesian religion are as follows: "First, the pantheistic belief that everything and all living things have a "soul", a "life energy", which is the same for all but may be stronger in one person than in another and more concentrated in certain parts of the human body than in others. The now-extinct habits of cannibalism and headhunting aim to take over the "life energy" of the slain enemy. Items of a certain shape are often considered to have extraordinary properties and are therefore especially valued.

Second, belief in the existence of a personal soul that inhabits a human for life. This soul lives on after the body dies and then remains around the place where the body once lived. The soul does not withdraw from the community of the living but continues to engage in communal life. As a result, the souls of the dead may become angry if their descendants ignore old traditions or fail to fulfill their obligations to the spirits. The veneration of ancestors has always been one of the strongest forces in the maintenance of customs and traditions.

As mentioned above, the two kingdoms that once ruled Java had a central role in the development of culture.

#### **3.2 Power Authority**

The authority of power is a form of the legitimacy of power, a ruler is authorized (has authority) after he has legitimacy for the power he has.

The form of authority is then not only translated in the Western context which indicates a rule that has been arranged in a legislation.

In the Javanese tradition the source of one's authority is not determined by law. Rules are then made by a King, because the king has been able to absorb superworldly legitimacy.

A Javanese ruler who is able to relate to the unseen world must prove himself to be selfless, virtuous, wise, generous and just. These are the prerequisites that a Javanese ruler must possess in order to exercise his authority over society.

As two kingdoms that were not far away from leading Java, Majapahit and Demak had some authority in common, namely originating from a supernatural authority, but then this authority was described differently according to the religion adopted by the two kingdoms.

#### **a. The power of the Majapahit Kingdom**

In this discussion, authority is read as religious authority. Majapahit as a very large culture in its era was unique in the authority exercised by the rulers, in this case the king.

The rise and fall of a regime in the Majapahit government did not necessarily change the pattern of people's lives, for the community, whoever the leader who protects the community has an obligation to protect and provide prosperity, even though the conflicts that occurred in the palace were very intense.

As explained above, when a succession in government occurs either normally (handover from the king to the crown prince directly) or by family war (conflict), legitimacy must be obtained by the ruler who then comes to power, because the ruler who lost in succession is considered to have faded. his power.

The new ruler then runs the wheels of government. There is a pressure point that is expected by the community, namely a leader who is able to be fair, wise, generous, and virtuous, because if these qualities are not possessed by the leader (king) then the people will assume that the king's power has decreased. And gradually it will be replaced by the next ruler, either by natural means or by means of violence.

To see an example of the legitimacy of power possessed by Majapahit, the following will be described in a leadership of Hayam Wuruk and Gajah Mada where the people support every policy issued by the two leaders of Majapahit, until the period of their leadership is called the heyday of Majapahit.

One of the programs (authorities) launched by Hayam Wuruk and Gajah Mada was the Nusantara Oath, which was a desire from Gajah Mada to unite (expand) the Majapahit colonies. The sound of the Nusantara oath is as follows: "If huwus loses to the archipelago, isun isun amukti palapa; but lost to the Desert ring, Seran ring, Tanjungpura ring, Haru ring, Pahang ring, Dampo, Bali ring, Sunda, Palembang, Tumasik samana isun amukti palapa." It means "if the archipelago has submitted, I will just rest. If the Desert (Lombok), Seran (Seram), Tanjungpura (Kalimantan), Haru (North Sumatra), Pahang (Malaya), Dampo, Bali, Sunda, Palembang, and Tumasik (Singapore) have submitted, then I will rest.

The expansion of the area is of course accompanied by strength from within, namely the welfare of the people, so that the mandate of supernatural legitimacy is still held by Hayam Wuruk.

In addition to expanding the colonies, the Majapahit Empire also had an advanced level of agriculture based on extensive irrigation and thriving international trade, creating favorable conditions for expanding territorial control, for developing a more detailed bureaucracy, and for establishing increasingly centralized political power, but without territorial fusion. With the expansion and advancement of inter-regional relations, the socio-cultural system within the political area of Majapahit was integrated into a stronger and clearer one, separated from other socio-cultural territories.

Whatever is desired by a ruler as long as it does not disturb the stability and peace of the people, then the people consider their leader still has supernatural legitimacy.

The king as the holder of the highest authority has various symbols that are magical and mystical, which embodies the quality of the equipment of power. The king held supreme control over his military and administrative power. The king's widespread dominance necessitated the decentralization of his personal power. Regional governors (adhipati) are the highest representatives of the king's power in the regions. The relationship between the king and his employees takes the form of a relationship called clientship,<sup>34</sup> this kind of relationship may also exist at the regional and local levels. This proves that during the Majapahit era there was no organized bureaucracy with clear distinctions of position subordination.

That is a picture of the authority possessed by Majapahit, but that authority disappeared when just rulers such as Gajah Mada and Hayam Wuruk died, so that the legitimacy and authority of the Majapahit rulers collapsed one after another due to succession problems and the ego of power.

#### **b. Demak Kingdom Power Authority**

It should be noted in this discussion that the source of religious legitimacy obtained by the kingdom (ruler) of Demak is different from that of Majapahit. The superworldly realm is not translated to the gods or the universe but to the religious shari'a brought by Muhammad.

The authority of the ruler of Demak was guided by the divine rule brought by Muhammad. Substantially the same thing is that both Majapahit and Demak use religious authority, namely to present something supernatural in their leadership, what makes the difference is that in the Majapahit tradition the mystical impression is very thick, while in the Demak tradition the authority of power is guided by a supernatural substance through a treatise translated by a group of guardians.

Since the leadership of Raden Fatah to Prince Trenggono is very unique, considering that almost all the leadership of the Kings of Demak did not last long, whether it was death or even a bloody succession.

The authority which is then used by the leaders of Demak is always discussed with the guardians or must be approved by the guardian sanga. The authority possessed by a sultan must

not conflict with religious teachings which in this case are held by the guardians, so that the guardian becomes an institution that contributes to providing legitimacy to the ruler.

The continuity between the sultan's authority and the will of the wali can be seen from the existence of a very slick cooperation. One example is in the issue of the expansion of Demak's power, in some cases such as expansion in West Java and Banten, the expansion was carried out by the wali sanga, this indicates that the Demak sultanate was not only ambitious in expanding its territory but the authority it later possessed translated into a spread of Islam. at a time.

Hasanu Simon divides several categories of Walisanga generation according to lineage, he said that from the first generation to the third generation most (the majority) members of the Wali Sanga are Middle Eastern people. It was only in the fourth generation that many members of the walisanga were sons of the native nobility. Simultaneously, the orientation of Islamic teachings began to change from Arab-centric to compromising Islam. At that time the body of the walisanga began to split between the futi'ah and aba'ah groups. Perhaps that's when the term walisanga began to appear. The book of Walisana by Sunan Giri II was written several years after that, about the beginning of the 16th century. The contents of the Walisana book are very different from Sunan Mbonang's books which still explain the pure teachings of Islam.

With this case, it is clear that the authority of the sultan is limited, the sultan only has the authority to carry out executions while the judge is the one who decides the punishment even though the sultan is also present at the trial, this indicates the limited authority of the sultan.

### **c. Similarities and Differences in the Authority of the Majapahit and Demak Kingdoms**

In discussing the authority of power, it must be emphasized that authority is a right, the authority possessed by the ruler in carrying out the wheels of his government. What policies and how the royal format will be implemented by the king.

After a king is legitimate or legitimacy, then the problem then is the problem of how that authority is exercised, considering that the two Javanese kingdoms namely Majapahit and Demak did not apply a normative legitimacy system based on standardized laws so that the people could at any time hold the authorities accountable when the rulers had left. from the corridors of law.

It has been explained above, that the legitimacy of both the authority used by Majapahit and Demak is religious legitimacy, this legitimacy is then understood differently considering the different cultural (religious) backgrounds. The notion of religious legitimacy which indicates the existence of a supernatural realm is interpreted differently.

Majapahit, which is Hindu-Buddhist, uses religion only as a legitimacy amplifier, in contrast to Demak, which prioritizes religious shari'a (teachings) as a guide, but the religion in question is the understanding of the wali sanga.

Equality in terms of power authority. Majapahit as a Hindu-Buddhist kingdom whose central leadership is held by a king, the authority of power that is exercised is the full authority of a king without any obstacles and obstacles from other parties, considering that Majapahit's power is concentrated only in the lap of the king.

This is different from Demak, the sultans of Demak find it difficult to exercise their authority given the central role of the wali sanga in every policy that will be taken. This can be understood for two reasons, first, the existence of the Demak sultanate was intended for the advancement of Islam. Second, many of the rulers of Demak then often asked for help from the guardians in determining the policies to be taken by the sultans, even to the issue of succession though.

### **3. CONCLUSION**

From the long discussion in the previous chapters, of course the author feels the need to draw a common thread on this problem. As two different entities, the kingdoms of Majapahit and Demak certainly have many differences, but both are located in the same area, namely Java. Java as the center of the struggle for power and power of influence is still able to store the animistic energies that are still maintained by kingdoms, both based on Hindu-Buddhist religion, Islam and even Christianity.



In this unique center of power, Java then becomes a magnet that is strong enough to attract people to study the problems (meanings) contained and taught by the lives of its people. The conclusions that can be drawn from this paper only draw two small threads from the life of Javanese society and culture which are noble and have not been widely translated.

First, the similarities and differences in the legitimacy of power. Majapahit is a great kingdom that is able to unite the archipelago and is in the cultural embrace of the Hindu-Buddhist ruling elite. And Demak as an entity and a new identity as an Islamic force that is able to survive in Islamizing Java after being in a very different tradition, namely Hindu-Buddhist.

In terms of the legitimacy of power, between Majapahit and Demak both rely on the hereditary kinship system (power). The most striking difference is in terms of obtaining the legitimacy. The ruler of Majapahit tends to bring up one character (the power is in the hands of the king). In obtaining his power, the king often carried out (gathered) power through asceticism. The king of Majapahit believed that power could be amassed. The activity received reinforcement from the Hindu-Buddhist religious tradition adopted by the rulers, the syncretic legitimacy between the values of Animism and Hinduism, but religion was only used as a complement to the legitimacy of the king.

In the Islamic Demak tradition, the legitimacy of power always uses religious instruments, in this case the wali sanga which is applied in the guardian session. The deliberation procession equates the king with the guardian but in a different work context. The guardian as the maker of sharia policy and the king as the implementer of the law. The problem then arises when the guardian is divided into two groups, namely white and aba'ah. The legitimacy of power becomes dispersed according to which group in power follows the white, and which group follows the Aba'ah. This can be seen from the destruction of the Demak sultanate which moved to Pajang and then Mataram, whose religious teachings were syncretic with local traditions.

Second, the similarities and differences in the authority of power. In the matter of authority, it is actually difficult to find a common value, even though both are theoretically in the center of religious legitimacy. Majapahit almost all the results of his authority created by a king. The king has a very central role in the Majapahit tradition, so that every policy taken by the kingdom must be issued by a king.

A striking difference will then be seen if you look at the existence of the sultan of Demak who has very limited authority, almost every policy that is produced must go through the mechanism of the guardian session, even though in these sessions the sultans are included as trial participants, secondly the sultans tend to seek advice from the guardians even even to the issue of succession, this indicates the limited authority of the power possessed by the sultan.

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