Indigenous Religion Paradigm:

Re-interpreting Religious Practices of Indigenous People[1]

Samsul MAARIF (CRCS, Universitas Gadjah Mada)

This paper proposes an indigenous religion paradigm as an alternative to world religion paradigm in examining varieties of religious practices of Indonesian indigenous peoples. Those varieties of religious practices have been dominantly described based on world religion paradigm. As a result, instead of being accounted as "religious", those practices have been labelled as "animistic", the ethnocentric theory of Tylor. Building on scholarship of indigenous religions, this paper will show that the world religion paradigm has misrepresented phenomena of indigenous religious practices, and argue that indigenous religion paradigm is more helpful and just to be employed. Indigenous religion paradigm is based on a cosmological concept that the cosmos is occuppied by different "persons" of human and non-human beings. Personhood is not identical to human beings, but perceived as extending beyond them. It is a capacity that may belong to the so-called "nature" (an essential category in a hierarchical cosmology along with "culture" and "supernatural").

This indigenous religion paradigm is used to specifically examine religious practices through which three groups of Indonesian indigenous peoples are engaged in environmental preservations and protections. The first is the Ammatoans of Sulawesi who have succeeded in preserving and protecting their customary forest from deforestation, the second is the Kendhengs of Central Java who have been resisting a national cement company for their customary mountain and karst ecosystem, and the third is the Mollos of East Nusa Tenggara, eastern part of Indonesia, who succeeded protecting their costumary land by expelling marble mining companies. For those indigenous peoples, those costumary forest, mountain and land are "persons", whom they interrelate religiously for mutual benefits. They all engage in "inter-personal" relationship with those "natural" beings.

Keyewords: indigenous religion, cosmology, inter-subjectivity, and environment.

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Introduction

In November 7th, 2017, the Constitutional Court of Indonesia approved the Judicial Review on two articles of Civic Administration Law 2006 that stated that followers of *kepercayaan*

(literally means belief, but refers to what in this paper is called indigenous religion) have to leave the colomn of religion in Family Card and ID Card blank. The Constitutional Court Decision states that *agama* (religion) and *kepercayaan* (belief) are two different categories, and both must be legally recognized by the state. The state must therefore guarantee the rights of both equally.

Until the Constitutional Court Decision, religions of indigenous people were not recognized. Followers of those religions were even forced to choose one of the six recognized religions (Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism) in order to constitute their citizenship. Otherwise, their citizenship rights were ignored. Many had to convert to one of the six before registering their marriages, entering schools, applying jobs, and so forth. They were discriminated. Following up the Decision, in June 2018 the Ministry of Home Affairs issued a Circular Letter (*Surat Edaran*) that facilitates followers of *kepercayaan* to put their *kepercayaan* in their Family and ID Cards. They, as followers of *kepercayaan,* now may legally access state's facilities. They can have their own *kepercayaan* education, alternative to religious education they had to take before the Decision.

The current development shows progressive recognition of the state toward indigenous religions. Being categorized as *kepercayaan,* differentiated from, but equalized to *agama* (religion), the discourse of indigenous religions, however, still has more challenges to face. The most challenging issue is the category *kepercayaan* as non-religious. Such a challenge is due to the way religion has been studied.

Religions of indigenous peoples have been understood in ways that they do not qualify to be religion. Due to reification of religion, what was initially called religious (*religio*) in the first century has been disqualified since the term religion was taken over by Christianity (Smith, 1964). Religion became identical to Christianity, and the initial references of *religio* (religious) were labelled as paganistic, and practitioners were labelled as pagans, infidels, heathens and so forth. Due to European encounters with the rest, the idea of religion (the singular noun) transformed to religions (the plural noun). Christianity encountered other traditions similar to it, such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and others. Those, despite of spiteful debates among intellectuals, have come to qualify as religion. Their characteristics and attributes resembled Christianity's. They all even qualify as "world religion", a concept invented in the 19th century (Masuzawa, 2005). This concept has later become dominant paradigm in the study of religion, both in academia and in the public. This paradigm of world religion characterizes what may be included and excluded in the category religion. Religions of indigenous people fall into the category that does not qualify as religion. They are labelled as "animistic", the ethnocentrically influential theory of E. B. Tylor (1871). Since the 19th century, the world religion paradigm has been dominantly used in the study of religion. It is influential, but problematic, especially in the study of indigenous religions.

This article is a critical examination of world religion paradigm, including animism, as a hegemonic paradigm in the study of indigenous religions. It argues that it needs to be revisited for a just representation. It also offers and explores indigenous religion paradigm as an

alternative to world religion paradigm in examining varieties of religious practices of Indonesian indigenous peoples. Building insights from the scholarship of indigenous religions, this article argues that indigenous religion paradigm is necessary, more helpful and just to the study of religion, especially indigenous religions. In contrast to world religion paradigm that characterizes a cosmology as essentially hierarchical (the supernatural, culture, and nautre), indigenous religion paradigm is based on the concept of inter-subjective or inter-personal cosmology. This cosmology explains that the cosmos is occuppied by different "persons" of human and non-human beings. Personhood is not identical to human beings (commonly understood in world religion paradigm), but perceived as extending beyond them. It is a capacity that may belong to beings of the so-called "nature" (irrational to world religion paradgim).

Applying indigenous religion paradigm, this article, furthermore, examines religious practices in which three indigenous peoples of Indonesia are engaged in environmental preservations. The three indigenous peoples are first the Ammatoans of Sulawesi who have succeeded in preserving and protecting their customary forest from deforestation. The Ammatoans live in Kajang, Bulukumba, South Sulawesi. They are now legally recognized as *masyarakat adat* (indigenous people). Their legal status is based on two special regulations of the local government of Bulukumba: one is for recognition as *masyarakat adat* that constitutes them to live based on their own *adat* (culture/religion) system as well as their authorities to manage their own customary forest (2015), and the other is for empowerment and development of the Ammatoan community (2018). Those regulations were the outputs of a long advocacy by stakeholders, including civil society organizations, local and national.

The second is the Kendengs of Pati, Central Java. These people are popularly known as Samin, or followers of Saminism, ancestral values that govern balanced relationship between human and environment (Rohman, 2010). They live in the North Kendeng Mountain, a karst area. These people have a long history of resisting the state. In terms of religious affairs, most of them chose not to convert to one of the state's recognized religions for principle reasons. Claiming to be religious (for the sake of accessing the state's facilities), but not really believing in it, is hypocrite. They took the risks of not accessing the state's facilities for being loyal to their ancestral values, Saminism. Recently, they attracted both national and international publics for their movement against karst mining campanies in their area. In November 2016, they longmarched in about 150 kilometers from their village to the Governor Office of Central Java, protesting governor's permit letter for mining to companies. They also came and cemented their feet in front of the Presidential Palace, insisting the president to stop the mining.

The third is the Mollos of East Nusa Tenggara, eastern part of Indonesia. These people become well known though their famous female figure, Mama Aleta Baun, who won a Glodman Environmental Prize in 2013 for her leadership in 1995-2012 organizing her people, mainly women, to fight against marble mining companies in their area. For them, human beings and environment are united in ecosystem, both are inter-dependent, and may not be destroyed. Their movement succeeded protecting their land by expelling marble mining companies from their area.

For the three indigenous peoples, those costumary forest, mountain and land are "persons", whom they interrelate religiously for mutual benefits. They all engage in "inter-personal" relationship with those "natural" beings. These indigenous perspectives are crucial in indigenous religion paradigm.

Revisiting "*Agama*".

Agama is the Indonesian word for religion. The way it was constructed is similar to the construction of religion in the West. Both were constructed and reified based on a dominant perspective: the world religion paradigm (Bell, 2006; Cotter & Robertson, 2016; Cox, 2007; Geaves, 2005; Masuzawa, 2005; Owen, 2011; Richard, 2014). If Christianity is the prototype for religion in the West, it is Islam for agama in Indonesia (Maarif 2017a). Both religion and *agama* are defined and standardized. Definitions of religion/*agama* standardize what may (and may not) be categorized as religion and *agama*. Those resembling the prototyped religion/*agama*, but not fully fulfilling the required standards are excluded, and may not enjoy the status of being recognized as religion.

Before the Indonesian independence, the word *agama* was similar to *religio* of the first century (Smith 1964). *Agama* referred to practices of Islam, Christian, Hindu, Buddhist, and indigenous traditions (*adat*). After the independence, as it is specified in the Indonesian constitution, *agama* was reified. Initially (since the post-colonial), *agama* was identical to Islam. It was only Islam that was categorized as *agama,* and then Protestantism and Catholicism. Even though Hinduism and Buddhism were the "initial owner" of *agama,* given the fact that the word was Sanskrit of India, it took them several years to adjust to the reified *agama.* They were not recognized as *agama* until in 1959. Confucianism made its way to become *agama* in 1965, but two years later was banned, and then get recognized again in 2001.

Agama was reified as a concrete noun that has specific elements: doctrine of one God, a prophet, a holy book, institution, and internationally embraced. Since 2001, there are only six that qualify as *agama:* Islam, Protenstantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. No indigenous religion is recognized. It did not take long for the post colonial state to decide that indignous religions may not be admitted as *agama*. In fact, soon after the state established the department of religion (January 1946, several months after the independence), the first state's policy was to disqualify indigenous religions: they were not religious (Maarif 2017b), and so may not be administered under the department of religion, or the citizenship rights of their followers may not be granted based on their indigenous religions.

It is worth noting that the political policy of the post colonial state perpetuated, or reaffirmed colonial policies. In the early 20th century, the Dutch colonial issued a policy separating Islam and adat. Political reasons behind the policy was to respond rebellions of militant Muslims. Based on the advise of Christian Snouck Horgronje who studied Islam in Saudi Arabia, Islam that had embedded with local adat should be distinguished and separated from adat. Islam was defined as referring to scriptures: the Qur'an and the hadith (Muhammad's words and deeds), and beyond that was adat. The imams were differentiated from adat leaders, and

they both held different authorities. Islam was viewed as religion, and adat was viewed as tradition or custom. Muslims who practiced Islam for piety were guaranteed with freedom, but those who oriented to politics were pressured. Muslim militants were the enemy of and monitored by the colonial government. Adat separated from Islam on the other hand was revitalized and modernized. The colonial government even took adat leaders as their allies.

The policy was actually not the initial historical account that separated Islam/religion from adat. In the early 19th century, the Padri War of Sumatra was between a reform Muslim group inspired by Wahhabism and the adat holders happening to be Muslim, too. The reform Muslim group upheld Islamic law against *adat* or customary law. This war signified the tension between Islam (religion) and *adat* (indigenous custom/tradition) (De Miramon, 2016; Dobbin, 2016).

In addition, Dutch scholars had intorduced animism as a concept for explaining indigenous traditions (*adat*) (Kruyt, 1906; Kruyt, 1915). *Adat* was labelled as primitive practices. It resembled religious elements, but not fully fulfilling requirements to be a religion. It was animistic, psuedo-religion. Being animistic, *adat* was not only distinguishable from Islam/ religion, it was also subject for change to be modernized. *Adat* which includes set of values and practices, law, moral, arts, and so on, as a result, may not be treated as religion. The colonial scholars' accounts were of course adopted from the European scholarship. Animism introduced in the 18th century by E. B. Tylor was influential, introduced and popularized in Indonesia. The scholarship account was used by the colonial government, as already explained.

The colonial legacy was preserved by the Indonesian state by legitimating *agama*, different from *adat. Agama* was defined and used to distinguish or divide the people, the citizens: religious and non-religious people. Religious people are whose religions qualifying the state's standards, and non-religious people are whose religions were not fulfilling the requirements. They included indigenous religions (*adat*).

The state's standards and requirements of being religious had resulted in discrimination against followers of indigenous religions throughout the history of post colonial Indonesia. Those followers were forced to convert and affiliate to one of the recognized religions. Otherwise, they would not access and enjoy their citizenship rights or any of the state's facilities. Many chose to convert, but the rest remained with their belief/religion, and so their citizenship rights to have a belief were ignored. Their marriages may not be registered, their children may not be given birth certificates, and so could not enter any schools, and no official jobs may be accessed. These were cases or problems followers of indigenous religions were experiencing during the New Order, especially during the period of 1978-1998, in which the state invented a new policy that included religion as citizen identity in ID cards, and required all citizens to choose one of the recocgized religions (Maarif, 2017b).

Since 2000, the discourse of indigenous religions changed. It became part of the discourse of human rights, the strongest concern of the people since at the start of Reformation era. Followers of indigenous religions were positioned as victims of human right violations under the name of religion. In 2006, the Civic Administration Law No. 23/2006 was issued.

The law regulates that those whose religions are not yet admitted (by the state) and indigenous religions may leave the column of religion in their ID cards blank. The law was revised in 2013, but the substance with regard to indigenous religions remained essentially the same. Leaving the column of religion blank meant that followers of indigenous religions no longer had to choose any of the recognized religions, but publically stigmatized as having no religion. Having no religion was publicly speaking equal to dehumanized atheists or communists. As a result, rather than liberating followers of indigenous religions from discrimination and pressures, the law perpetuated stigmas of being irreligious or even anti-religion, and so socially illegal citizen. As a response, followers of indigenous religions advocated by NGOs brought the law to the Supreme Court for judicial review in the end of 2016. It took for about one year, and in November 2017, the judicial review was finally approved by the Constitutional Court. The Constitutional Court fully accepted the judicial review, and stated that followers of indigenous religions have their rights to register and put their indigenous religions in the column of religion of their ID cards. The Constitutional Court's decision obligates the state to guarantee freedom and facilitate services for followers of indigenous religions.

This new development does not yet fully guarantee the recognition of indigenous religions. In public, resistance against the Constitutional Court decision is still strong. The status of indigenous religions is still mostly stigmatized as "psudo-religion". Such a stigma has been partly due to misrepresentation by academia. In academia, especially in religious studies, world religion paradigm that favors the dominant religion has been hegemonic. Indonesia is not unique on this issue. It is common in religious studies of the globe. What follows is to examine this issue: world religion paradigm vs. indigenous religion paradigm.

Investigating Two Paradigms: "World" and "Indigenous" Religion Paradigm.

Discourses of indigenous religions in Indonesia, like in other parts of the world, have been about pressures to comply with "world religions" (Smith, 1998: 269). Followers of indigenous religions had to learn how to articulate their religiosities in ways that they comply with the prototyped (world) religions (Islam in Indonesia, Christianity in the West) (Picard and Madinier 2011: 2). The notion of "world religion" has been pervasively influential both in academia and public, even to followers of indigenous religions (Picard and Madinier 2011: 2). When asked about their religions, most followers of indigenous religions for instance would reply, "just like Islam (or Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, and so forth)." They could articulate doctrines of divinity and explain elements essential in world religions. They have learnt the dominant discourse of religion/agama, the way it has been reified in academia (Smith 1964) and freezed through the politics of religion/agama (Maarif, 2017b).

During one-year fieldwork (March 2009-February 2010), I came to realize the significant difference of information I collected between my first three months and the rest. For the first three months, I received information of what I later categorize as influenced by world religion paradigm. My informants seemed to appropriate world religion paradigm to articulate their explanations. At the fourth month and on, however, my informants re-articulated their expla-

nations of what I later call "indigenous religion paradigm". Such fieldwork experinces have been re-confrimed by several encounters with followers of indigenous religions in Indonesia. I noticed those articulation of informants through the fieldwork that after they established trust, they shared their "indigenous" perspective.

Based on fieldwork experiences, I observed that asking questions about sacredness, supernatural, divine, or other elements of religion essentialized in the world religion paradigm, would lead to representing indigenous religions under the lenses of world religions. It would lead to misunderstand indigenous peoples' ways of understanding about their religious ideas and practices. This is the concern of Smith (1964) by which he insists to replace religion with commulative tradition. For that reason, I follow the suggestion of Kenneth Morrison that religiosities should be understood through the ways people under research think about their world, suitable to their worldview, an understanding of socio-cultural order that highlights ways of understanding reality (Morrison 2000: 24).

Quoted by Irving Hallowell (1960: 19), Robert Redfield explains 'wordview' as a way members of a community view the world in relation to themselves, their existences, and a way the members view themselves, their existences, in relation to all else. It is the picture of properties and characters by which members of a community base and orient their actions. Worldview is a set of ideas that explains three related ontological questions: the self, other selves and relation of the self to all others else (Redfield 1952: 30).

Who is the self? This ontological question is related to the human self: who am I, where do I come from, and how do I live in this world? **Who are the other selves?** in addition to the self, whoelse the self knows? Soon the self understands about him/herself, s/he comes to ask, know, undertand and recognize "others" exisiting in this world in addition to him/herself: others that have specific behaviours, positions and functions in relation to his/herself in this world. **How does the self relate to other selves?** the way the self comes to know other selves is through relationship. However the self relates (engages in relationship) to other selves would determine functions and positions of the self and otherselves in their relaitonship, as both living in this world. These are the basic ontological questions for a cosmology.

Those ontological questions help to investigate worldviews of peoples whose religions are studied. They also help to investigate and conceptualize paradigms applicable in examining religious phenomena. At this point, those questions even help to compare two paradigms: World religion paradigm and indigenous religion paradigm. As shall be elaborated, the world religion paradigm is characterized with "subject-object" cosmology, meanwhile the indigenous religious paradigm is characterized with "subject-subject" cosmology.

World Religion Paradigm

In world religion paradigm, the cosmological system, which is based on western monotheistic ontology, orders a hierarchical dissimilarity among categories of being: divinity, humanity and nature. The world or the cosmos is occupied by the three categories of being, or in other words, the cosmos consists of three domains: the supernatural/divinity, culture/human-

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ity and nature. The relaitonship of the three are essentially hierarchical. The supernatural/ divine is essentially more powerful than the culture/human, and the culture is essentially more powerful than the nature. This may then be characterized as "hierarchical cosmology" that, although ethnocentrically based, has been applied universally (see Morrison 2000; 25).

The supernatural is the domain of spirits or any invisible beings that are mostly glossed with the supernatural, including gods or God. These (invisible) beings are believed to be essentially more powerful than human beings who are in the domain of culture. Meanwhile, nature is always under culture. It is the domain of "natural" beings such as forest, lands, mountains, animals, and so forth that are always less powerful than human beings. The position of nature is under that of culture.

In terms of relationship, those essential positions determine kinds of relationship of the three. When human (culture) relates to God (the supernatural) who is essentially more powerful, the kind of relationship is "worship". Human beings must *worship* God for purposes of their well-beings in this world. In relation to nature, human beings need to preserve, protect or even exploit it in order to fulfill humans' interests. Natural beings may only be meaningful if they could serve humans' interests. They have no (subjective) capacity, but being exploited by human beings. They are *object* as opposed to *subject*, the capacity of human beings. The kind of relation between human and natural beings is preservation or exploitation for humans' interests.

Ontologically ordered in the highest level of the cosmos, the supernatural/divinity is not only percieved as the most powerful, but also the most essential cosmic element. In the world religion paradigm, this cosmic element is essential to religion. Something to be religious must articulate about it. It must be sophisticatedly, systematically, and rationally articulated to demonstrate its essential existence and roles. It must be unique and different from anything else: wholly different from others (Otto, 1958). It must be *sui generis,* sacred, totally different from anyhing profane (Eliade, 1968). The articulation is prescriptive and normative, doctrinal and scriptural. The more it is systematically and rationally articulated, the more it is religious. Otherwise, it is less religious, or even claimed to be irreligious. Explanations of the cosmic beings are also used to evaluate and justify a religion to be either "true" or "false" (Picard and Madinier 2011: 1).

The supernatural/divinity as the essential element of religion was appropriated by early Christian theologians. They uprooted religion from its "indigenous" perspective originating in the Roman notion of religio (Picard, 2011: 1, quoting Sachot 2007). The Christian theologians counterposed Christianity as the true religion to indigenous practices, rejected as a set of false beliefs. The distinction between true and false religions marks a shift characterized by a scriptural turn, a substitution of text for ritual, orthodoxy (allegiance to a normative doctrine) for orthopraxy (respect for ancestors) (Picard and Madinier 2011: 1, quoting Assmann 2003). The category 'religion' is loaded with Christian theology, as well as western modernity, and then universalized (Picard and Madinier 2011: 1-2; Fitzgerald 2003). The essentialization of the supernatural/divinity is the foundation of the world religion paradigm.

Furthermore, the other two categories of being, culture/humanity and nature, are seen as below of the supernatural. Human is dependent on the omni-powerful supernatural. Humans (and the nature) are to 'worship' God. Humans' relations to divinity/God are therefore characterized as "worship" relationship. Human biengs (must) worship God. God determines all fates of humans as well as all creatures created by God that include every thing glossed in the nature. The necessity to worship God is based on scripturally articulated doctrines of the supernatural/divinity, as already explained above.

If culture/humanity is cosmologically positioned below the supernatural/divinity and so less powerful than the supernatural, it is higher and more powerful than the nature in the world religion paradigm. Human beings possess capabilities of thinking and culturing, whereas the nature does not. Human being in world religion paradigm is *subject,* and the nature is seen to be *object.* The relationship of the two is therefore "subject-object" in character.

Animism: Upholding World Religion Paradigm

The subject-object relationship is argueably based on the positivistic spiritual/materialist dichotomy of 19th century respresentation, but still influential up to the present time as essentialized in the world religion paradigm. This world religion paradigm has been the dominant paradigm perpetually used to explain all kinds of religious phenomena, including the religions of indigenous peoples. Theories offered to those religions were commonly based on the assumption that primitive people belonging to those religions were at static phase of development in history. Those theories included fetishism, totemism, shamanisme, anthromorphism, animism, magic, spirit worships, and so forth. Later, those theories were all glossed under the theory of animism as popularized by E. B. Tylor. Compared with other theories, animism has been the most influential up to the present time (Smith 1998, 277).

Tylor, in his attempt to convince that Christianity of modern people originates or develops from religions of the primitive people, defined religion as a belief in spiritual beings. He claimed that animism embodies the very essence of spiritualism. Such a belief he theorized as animism was common among the primitive people, or lower races in his ethnocentric judgment. Arguing against his predecessors, Tylor theorized that animism is the origin of religion (Tylor 1871, 425). He furthermore explained that animism consists of two dogmas. The first concerns with souls of individual creatures that continue to exist after death of the body, and second concerns with spirits, including powerful deities that control the world and human's life of now and after death (Tylor 1871, 426). Such animistic doctrines result in active worships. Tylor explicated that the belief (in souls and spirits) is the theory, and worship (spirits) is practice of animism (Tylor 1871, 427). For this point, animism is similar to Chriastinity, but Tylor clarified that for moral element, it is the most vital in higher nations or for modern people, but the very less represented in animistic cultures (Tylor 1871, 427). He then stated, animism is based on theological systems devised by human reason, without revelation or supernatural aid, as it is the case of Christianity. Animism is a natural religion. He also emphasized that his research on animism through which ideas and rites/worhsips of animism and Christianity are

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shown similar is to compare between the religions of primitive and that of modern civilized nations (Tylor 1871, 427).

Tylor's animism has been the most influential theory for religions of indigenous poeple around the world. It has been used widespredly crossing the disciplines. It was effectively used both during colonial and post-colonial periods to justify projects of colonialization, developments and religionization. It was even more effectively used to justify forceful conversions to world religions (DeWeese 2010; de Montclos 2008; Aragon 2000; Keyes 1993; Kammerer 1990).

Since the publication of E. B. Tylor's book, *The Primitive Culture* (1871), indigenous religions have commonly been represented with the theory of animism and argued as remnant of modern spiritualism (Bird-David, 1999: 67-69). Followers of inidgenous religions are called animists. Tylor explained, animists, "the savage" or "the primitive" people thought about the world childishly and errounously because they understoood that a man has both body and soul or spirit. The soul is the force of life and animates the body. It continues to exist after the body died (Bird-David, 1999: 69). Animists viewed that all things, including the inanimate ones, were just like a man who had both body and soul/spirit. Behind all things such as trees, stones, mountains, rivers, and so forth are spirits that animate them. For Tylor who was influenced by evolutionism that yielded science the true knowledge, animism is a delusion, just like religion which evolved from animism (Bird-David, 1999: 69). Understanding the world as animated by spirits is wrong, according to Tylor. The non-human things do not have subjectivities. They are objects. Bird-David rightly argues that Tylor read and interpreted the indigenous peoples' views based on modernist spiritualist understanding, not based on the peoples' own perspectives (Bird-David, 1999: 69).

Tylor's account on animism, an influential theory of indigenous religions, as just described carries two underlying essentialisms. First is that indigenous religions are primitive and underdeveloped. Their existances are only remnant of survivals. Second is that animism upholds world religion paradigm.Tylor was under the influence of world religion paradigm in reading religions of indigenous people. He essentialized both the spiritual/supernatural element for religion, when arguing that spiritualism and religion are survivals of animism, and subject-object relationship for categories of beings of human and nature. Animism therefore is nothing but a representation of world religion, or to be more exact, it has been viewed under the lens of Chrisitainity, the prototype of religion in the West, and of Islam, the prototype of religion in Indonesia. So long as Tylor's animism is used, no justice for the study of indigenous religions.

The two essentialisms are the very reasons why representations of indigenous religions may not be valued with equal honor to other religions of those categorized as world religions. As already explained, it is abvious that Tylor employed world religion paradigm. In theorizing animism as the origin of religion, Tylor stated that the very basic belief of animism is the belief in spirits (spiritualism). Tylor emphasized the doctrine of the belief which is according to Smith (1964) the reification of religion, the noun, from religious, the adjective, after being

appropriated with Christianity. Spiritualism was not the fundamental element of religion until it was appropriated and even made identical to Christianity. Spritialism as an essential element of religion has become stronger and even unquestionable after the invention of world religion (Masuzawa 2005; Cox 2007). Representing religions of indigenous people with animism, grounded with world religion paradigm, is therefore nothing but representing Christianity and world religions. Indigenous religions are seen under the lens of world religions.

Among the essential characteristics of religion emphasized by world religion paradigm is that religious practices are "worshipping" practices. When a human being **relates to** non-human (always claimed to be spirits), s/he **worships** them. Worship is a key term in world religion paradigm.

For (religious) practices of a forest visit, for example, people are claimed to come to worship the spirit of the forest, in Tylor's aminism theory. It is claimed that people believe that behind the forest is the spirit whom the people visit to worship. In animism, the forest is nature, an object that may not objectively "animate". To make it rational in animism perception, the forest must be animated by a spirit(s). Since spirits occupy the domain of the supranatural, people whose domain is culture come to visit and worship (culture-supranatural relation). The forest as occupying the domain of nature is nothing but a place of the spirit. It has a significance only because the spirit is in it, or if it has something for people to exploit or for humans' interests.

The work of animism is again the work of the world religion paradigm. The three domains: the supernatural, culture and nature are viewed in subject-object hierarchical relationship. Viewed so, religious practices of indigenous peoples may not be included in the category of "world religions". Constructed in animistic perspective, religious practices of indigenous peoples confuse the hierarchical cosmology: the supernatural is united with nature; the spirit is believed to dwell in forest or in inanimated things. Religions of indigenous peoples resemble some elements of Christianity and other world religions (belief in (existence of) spirits), but do not fulfill the basic principles, or more spesifically confuse the hierarchical cosmology.

Indigenous Religion Paradigm

World religion paradigm, more specifically animism as decribed above must be revisited for their problematic representation of religious practices of indigenous peoples. It not only misleadingly distinguishes and excludes indigenous religions from world religions, but even "falsify" them as "religious". In many cases, religious practices of indigenous peoples are even designated to "cultural" in the sense of being "profane".

Despite of its cricitism, Tylor's animism, and ways it has been appropriated, has been too hegemonic to escape. Its hegemony is not only in academia, but extending to public discourse and even to state policies. It seems that animism is essentially pejorative, no matter how it is recuperated. New studies of animism have in fact revisited and recuperated Tylorian perspective and offered new understandings (Bird-David 1999; Harvey 2000; Harvey 2006; Ingold 2000; Ingold 2006 etc.). The new studies emphasize the characteristics of non-Western ways

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of knowing and being. One way of showing the characteristics is that non-Western people perceive "personhood" as not limited, but extending beyond human beings. It is different from Western and modern people who understand that personhood is identical with human beings. New animism, the new studies, is a critique of dualist ontologies that posit absolute distinctions between subject (human beings) and object (natural things). Modernist dualism uphold the essentialist binaries between mind and body, person and thing, culture and nature (Wilkinson 2016, 291), whereas the new animism is characterized with relational ontologies (Castree 2003; Whatmore 2006; Watts 2013a/b; Maarif 2014).

Distinguished from world religion paradigm, indigenous religion paradigm explains that both the self and otherselves are *subject,*at least potentially. The self recognizes other selves through relationship. Other selves include human (the dead and the living) and non-human beings (the visible and the invisible). In this paradigm, the self knows and understands about otherselves who engage their subjectivities in relationship. The engagement of otherselves in relationship is reference of the self to know otherselves, their subjectivities. Since the engagement is contextual, subjectivity is theoretically relative, and not essential. Relationship is also contextual. The self should always be aware of any kind of relationship s/he engages because it would determine the function and position of all selves engaged. The cosmos in this paradigm is occupied by different subjects engaging in intersubjective relations, and it is therefore characterized as inter-subjective cosmology: the cosmos is occupied by different subjects.

Indigenous religion paradigm is an alternative to world religion paradigm, or at least should be incorporated in examining religious practices of indigenous peoples. As already said, the paradigm characterizes religious practices of indigenous peoples as "subject-subject relations". The self (human person) perceives otherselves whom s/he relates as subject, or person using another term (Morrison 2000, Bird-David 1999). Those subjects or persons include both humans and non-human beings. The recognition of a bieng as person is through encounters and engagement in relationship, both in ritualistic and everyday experiences. Encounters may be through visions, dreams, and myths. Humans examine the encounters, observe significances, and then engage them in relationship. Those processes of encounters, examination, and observation would determine kinds of recognition about personhood/subjectivity of their interlucators: human and non-human beings, dead and living, visible and invisible, and kinds of engagement in relationship.

For example, a human person observes in her dream a being whom she later calls God. In her dream, the being is not yet recognized. From her first encounter in a dream, she observes that the being has potential significances for her well-being and then examines him/her. Based on her examination, she learns that in order to materilize the potential significances of the being, certain kinds of exercises are required. Proper behaviours are necessary. She later finds out that the being is powerful, and even omni-powerful, and then called him God. The calling of God necessitates proper behaviours that benefit both the human and God. Or, if she observes what she later calls forest, she would act to the forest accordingly in ways that benefit both herself and the forest.

If compared in world religion paradigm, cosmological domains in indigenous religion paradigm are dwelled by beings, consisting of human and non-human beings ("subject-subject"), and the kind of relationship between the self and otherselves is "inter-subjective". The three distinguished domains of world religion paradigm (the supernatural, culture, and nature) do not exist or do not work in indigenous religion paradigm. Since subject or person is not limited but extended beyond human beings, non-human beings may also do "culturing". They are potentially persons, like humans.

In terms of religiousity, "inter-subjective relationship" is the foundation. Being religious is being engaged in inter-subjective relations. As already explained, after a person recognizes the personhood of a being (human or non-human), s/he would commit to engage with the being as a person. Inter-subjective commitment carries "responsiblity, ethics and reciprocity.

Each person in intersubjective relation carries responsibilties which specify what a person should do, and that aims at guaranteing the well-being of all engaged in inter-subjective relatioship. Being responsible is required in intersubjective relation. Responsiblity implies that "what I do would affect me". If a responsibility is not carried properly, it would certainly affect the well-being of the self. Attitudes and behaviours therefore should always be adjusted to designated responsibilities that the self carries in the context of inter-subjective relationship. For this notion, spiritual view of religion is not relevant. Religious life is a matter of responsibility between human and other (subject, person) beings (Morrison 2000, 24).

In inter-subjective relationship, each person is also tied with ethics. Ethics in this context implies that "what I do would affect others". Attitudes and behaviours of the self should always be put in the relational context with other selves, and so the self would consider proper attitudes and behaviours that contribute to the well-being of other selves. The self would be coutious about her/his attitudes and behaviours that would damage the well-being of other selves, because in inter-subjective relationship the well-being of the self is determined by the well-being of other selves. If a person does good things, s/he would receive good things, too. Otherwise would work, too.

Another commitment of inter-subjective relationship is reciprocity, which implies "what I give is what I take, or what I take is what I give." The self may only obtain something if s/he offers something, and when she offers something she receives something –for good or bad, theoretically speaking–. The self may exist only through the existence of or in relationship with other selves. In inter-subjecitve relationship, the well-being of self is dependent on the well-being of other selves. The self thus must offer somethings that would contribute to the well-being other selves, because only by doing so the self would develop her/his well-being. Those three principles –responsibility, ethics, and reciprocity– of inter-subjective relationship are religious principles in indigenous religion paradgim. In otherwords, to be religious is to be responsible, ethical and reciprocal. Kinds of relationship that **ignore** those principles are irreligious. A person who is concerned with her/his own well-being only and ignores that of other selves is irrelegious. S/he is selfish and so irresponsible, unethical and irreciprocal.

Indigenous religion paradigm as just expalined is an arguably appropriate framework for

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religious practices of indigenous people in Indonesia. To conclude, the following is the elaboration of three cases of religious practices of indigenous people: the Ammatoans of Sulawesi, the Kendhengs of Central Java, and the Mollos of East Nusa Tenggara.

Environmental Preservation as Religious Practices: an Indigenous Perspective

The Ammatoans of Sulawesi divide their territory into two divisions: the inner and outer terrritory. The inner territory where their adat (customary) land lies is nothing expected but the traditional. New things are avoided in the inner territory. The state's programs like schools, clinics, electricity and so forth are welcomed, but all placed in the outer territory. Their children go to schools in the outer territory, they wear school uniform, but adjust to it. If the state school unifrom consists of white shirts and red shorts for elementary school, the Ammatoan students wear white shirts and black shorts. When they enter the inner territory, they wear the traditional -black- clothes, like everyone else. Outsiders who visit the community for whatever reasons, mostly for cultural tourism, are also required to wear black clothes when they enter in the inner territory.

Territorial division is part of their successfull strategy in preserving their adat forest. The Ammatoans divide their forest based on the territorial divisions. The forest of the inner territory is called *borong karama* (the "powerful" forest). Cutting a tree, digging the soil and hunting are not allowed in the forest (in the inner territory). The forest of the outer territory is called *borong luwara* (the forest of the outer), and divided into two. The first category may be cultivated, but in a limited amount. It requires strict conditions. If a member of the community, for example, needs trees to build a house, s/he may take them from the forest, but must have permision from the leader of the community, and, in addition to it, must replace the trees either before or after cutting them. The second is where the people cultivate the forest/land for their lifelihoods such as farming, gardening, and so forth. Of the three categories, the later belongs to individuals, and the first two are adat forest, belonging to the community.

The territorial and forest divisions are again among the Ammatoans's strategies to preserve their environment and any beings (land, forest, and so on) dwelling in it. If viewed through the paradigm of indigenous religion, the preservation strategies that include ritualistic and everday practices may be theorized as religious practices. For the Ammatoans, the divisions are based on their recognition of the territory: the land, the forest and all others in the territory. They recognize them through series of experiential examinations, and then understand those (non-human) beings' capasities and functions. Ammatoans could tell various stories as stated in their ancestors' messages (Pasang ri Kajang, the oral tradition) that demonstrate capasities and functions of those non-human beings by which human beings are (inter-)dependent. It is based on such an understanding, those beings (with their capacities and functions) constitute "subjectivity" or "personhood" for the Ammatoans. The land and the forest have demonstrated themselves to Ammatoans as persons who carry and share what human beings (the Ammatoans) need.

The Ammatoans' perception on environment is shared with the Mollos of Nusa Teng-

gara Timur (NTT) and the Kendengs of Central Java. The Mollos have become popularly well known through their female public figure, Mama Aleta Baun, who led her people movement against marmer mining companies in their area. After tens of years, Mama Aleta Baun with her people succeeded protecting their adat land from exploitation by mining companies that held legal permission from the local government. For years (1995-2012), she led peaceful movement by mobilizing her female fellows in performing traditional weaving and rituals on roads where tractors and exavators of mining companies had to use. She was threatened for assassination, had to run into forest for hiding, and was even injured. She had to go through those experiences and pay those expenses to protect her adat land. Her success was achieved when the mining companies finally decided to stop their activities in 2012.

Similar movement has been performed by the Kendengs of Central Java. Those people have also organized themselves to protect their land from a karst mining company, PT. Semen Indonesia. The issues of Kendengs have even attracted the public, both in national and international levels. Unlike the Mollos, the Kendengs have to continue their struggles because although they have won their case in the court, the cement company continues operating with the guarantee of the government.

Both Mollos and Kendengs committed to struggle to protect their lands against mining companies based on arguments that they carry responsibilities. For them, it was their turn to protect the lands due to the fact that the lands have not only protected them, but also gived them life. They both even perceived the lands as inseparable from themselves. The only way to understand themselves as human beings is by looking at themselves inseparably related to the lands. Their identity formulations include the lands.

The Mollos for example constructed their clan identities (*marga*) by referring to stones of mountains. They often declared that if those mountains are mined, the stones are destroyed, their well-beings would be destroyed, and consequently their identities -the senses of being Mollo human, would be lost. That is also the case for the Kendengs. Kendeng itself refers to the name of a mountain. They identify themselves in relation to the mountain. If the mountain is mined, their identity is destroyed. "They would lose their identity," they said (Personal interviews, August 15th, 2015).

Based on such views, they both apply the same kindship terms to those non-human persons. The lands are their *mothers who* have given them (sources of) life. A mother of Kendengs once said, "the water coming from the mountain is offered to us by the land. We drink it the way a mother brestfeeds her baby. A baby is dependent on a mother just like we, humans, are dependent on the land. We may not have life without water" (personal interview, December 12th, 2016). She illustrated how the land plays roles of a mother. The land has many things and shares them with humans. She, the mother land, takes cares of humans just like a responsible mother does to her baby, in her understanding. For her, we humans should therefore carry responsibilities in response to the mother land. If the mother land gives us water, we humans must protect the streams from which she offers water. Similar passages were shared by Mama Aleta Baun of the Mollos. She explained, "the stones are the bones and the water is the blood

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of the mother land, from which our human bodies are built up. We are born from the mother land" (personal interview, December 12th, 2016).

The way both the Mollos and the Kendengs have formulated and reproduced their identities reflects their perceptions on the existences of non-human beings. The lands and mountains are non-human *persons* with *whom* they have lived and share with in their environments. Like the Ammatoans, they both see themselves as inseparably related to and dependent on the non-human persons, categorized as "nature" in western cosmology or in the world religion paradigm. The three communities percieve all substances of human beings are shared with non-human beings. Among them even understand and explain that their mussles is the soil, their blood is the water, and breath is the air. We, the humans and land, forest, rivers, and so forth, are in unity. For them, protecting the human body is protecting their environment.

Responses of the three communities against attempts of exploiting (or destroying) lands are religious practices, according to indigenous religion paradigm. As explained in the previous section, the foundations of inter-subjective relations as the basis of religiosity in indigenous religion paradigm are responsible, ethical and reciprocal. For members of the three communities, the lands have done their parts of providing life and the well-being of humans. They, therefore, are responsible to guarantee and protect the well-being of lands from any attempts of damaging them. It is at the same time ethically imperative for them to engage in preserving and protecting lands, because otherwise lands would be destroyed. They cannot even just be silent, because their silences would negatively affect the existence of lands. As being part of inter-subjective relations, human beings, according those community members, must guarantee reciprocal exchanges, another religious principle of indigenous religion paradigm, between human and non-human beings. To receive what humans need from lands (source of life), they need to give what lands need (protection from destruction).

Such religious perceptions are the foundaitons of their arguments grounding their movement against mining companies in their respective areas. The perceptions strongly motivated them to mobilize themselves against any attempts of exploiting and destroying their adat lands. As already said, the Mollos accupied the roads with traditional weaving and rituals. Whereas the Kendengs walked by their feet in long march, around 200 kilometers from their villages to the office of Governor of Central Java as a way of demonstrating their religious principles of responsibility, ethics and reciprocity principles to protect their adat land. They came to show their protest to the governor who guarateed permission to the Indonesian Cement Company to explore the Kendeng mountain for cement production. They even came to cement their feet in front of the Presidential Palace in Jakarta for the same reason.

Conclusion

This article has shown that world religion paradigm has been dominantly used in the study of religion, and the reason why the category religion and *agama* has transformed to a strict and limited meaning. It strictly includes some, and excludes many. Even though the Indonesian state has recognized the existence and guaranteed the rights of indigenous reli-

gion followers, the dominant discourse still problematizes the status of indigenous religions as being religious. For that reason, this article insists revisiting world religion paradigm and animism that uphold world religion paradigm. It demonstrates both as ethnocentric. World religion paradigm, which is based on a dominant perspective (Christianity in the West and Islam in Indonesia), is claimed to be, applied universally, and has become hegemonic. In turn, indigenous people whose religions are studied have had to adjust and learn to articulate their religiosities, including labelling practices of forest visits, harvest rituals, and others actually religious in their perspective as cultural, customary, or traditional, and not religious.

Indignous religion paradigm as an alternative to world religion paradigm becomes specifically significant in order to account those practices as religious. In world religion paradigm, religiosity is in the relationship between human (culture) and gods/God (the supernatural). It is the worship (human to God) relationship. Relationship between human (culture) and beings of nature may also constitute religious only if it is in the context of worship relationship: human beings protect (or exploit) the nature for human interests as commended by God (the supernatural). In that context, human beings are active, they are the subject, and the nature is passive, because it is the object. Such an order of subject-object relationship is characteristically hierarchical cosmology (the supranatural, culture, and nature), emphasized in world religion paradigm. If for instance a forest visit is interpreted based on this paradigm, the interpretation would be that human beings come to the forest to worship, not the forest because it is an object, but a spirit occupying the forest. That is the interpretation of Tylorian animism, upholding world religion paradigm.

In contrast, indigenous religion paradigm characterizes the cosmos as occupied by different persons or subjects. Personhood/subjectivity is not limited, but extends beyond human beings. Learning from their experiences, human beings (indigenous people) recognize and understand that in addition to them, there are other beings (non-human such as forest, land, mountain, and so forth) who contribute to the environment they live in, including to their own life and well-being. Those contributions constitute the personhood of those other non-human beings. Human beings are even percieved to be dependent on those other beings, the way other beings are so on human beings. Human and non-human beings are inter-dependent. With such a perception, the Ammatoans, the Kendengs and the Mollos exercise and establish inter-subjective/personal relationship with the forest, the mountain, the land, the environment with religious principles of being responsible, ethical and reciprocal. Based on those religious principles, they protect and preserve those non-human beings because those non-human beings have also done the same thing to them, to their lives. If this perspective (indigenous religion paradigm) is used to interpret a forest visit, the interpretation would be that human beings come to the forest to religiously recontextualize their inter-subjective/personal relationship. They do so to renew their commitment (responsible, ethical, and reciprocal) of mutual protection and preservation. In short, environmental preservation, in indigenous religion paradigm, is a religious practice, and should be accounted so in the study of religion.

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