

Saminism reinterpreted: a study of rakjat
radicalism in Java
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This paper will attempt to interpret and analyse Saminism in Javanese cultural terms as the first step to analyse the rise of rakjat radicalism in Java which formed the popular basis of early Indonesian nationalism in the 1910 s and the 1920 s.

Saminism was a teaching of esoteric knowledge which was first preached by Soerontiko Samin at the turn of the century in Blora and then spread in the mountaneous areas of middle and east Java in the 1910 s. It has been regarded as a variant of Javanese abangan tradition or as a remnant of archaic Hindu-Javanese tradition, but in terms of highly Power(kasekten)oriented Javanese cultural tradition it was in effect an effort on the side of the gogol, the upper strata of the village community, to dissociate themselves from the socio-political order dominated by the Dutch and the priajji and to prepare themselves as *kaula* of the coming *ratu kembar* (the twin just kings) to establish the realm of *tata tentrem karta rahardja* (order-tranquility-prosperity-welfare). In this perspective, the whole movement of Saminists ranging from chanting the Saminist formula to rejecting to pay taxes and perform corvee labour and using ngoko, low-Javanese, to the priajji can be interpreted as a sign of their Power(kasekten)and their denunciation of the legitimacy of the established Dutch-priajji order.