

The Concept of Seven Dignities Strengthens Cirebon Cultures

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The concept of Seven Dignities strengthens Cirebon cultures in West Java, particularly the quality enhancement of human in Cirebon as the culture bearers.

“The concept of seven dignities in the context of Cirebon can be the fundamental element to strengthen the Cirebon cultures, particularly the bearer and subject of the cultures which is Cirebon people,” said the lecturer at Bunga Bangsa Islamic Institute Cirebon, Iffan Ahmad Gufron, S.Fil.I., M.Phil. during an open examination for his doctoral programme at Faculty of Philosophy UGM on Wednesday (8/11).

In the occasion, Iffan defended his dissertation entitled *The Meaning of Seven Dignities in the Perspective of Wujudiyah Ibnu ‘Arabi Perspective: Its Influence for Strengthening Cirebon Cultures* with Prof. Drs. M. Mukhtasar Syamsuddin, M.Hum., Ph.D. as his promotor and Dr. Arqom Kuswanjono as the co-promotor.

Iffan said the meaning of seven dignities in Cirebon cultures becomes the cosmological foundation which is believed by the people of Cirebon, mainly related to the concept of Nature and Human

Creation. Based on the perspective of wujudiyah Ibnu 'Arabi, the seven dignities is the development and reinterpretation of the concept of God's *tajalli* (appearance) which consists of three dignity (stages), which is *ahadiyah* dignity, *wahidiyah* dignity, and *tajalli syuhudi* dignity.

Then, the concept is divided into seven dignities which is *ahadiyah* (unity) dignity, *wahdah* dignity, *wahidiyah* (Oneness) dignity, *alam arwah* (spirit world) dignity, *alam mitsal* (between physical and spiritual world) dignity, *alam ajsam* (world of matter) dignity, and *insan kamil* (perfect human) dignity.

"The concept of seven dignities becomes a reference in realizing the perfect human being (*insan kamil*) and it is shown in the birth and ruwatan ceremony to keep ourselves away from misfortunes, the symbols of Cirebon cultures, as well as Tarekat Syattariyah in the palace and Islamic boarding school," said Iffan.

All of the symbols of the cultures, traditional dance, and traditions in Cirebon, according to Iffan, are related to the conception of nature and human. The conception is mainly regarding the *taraqqi* process or the process to become a perfect human being.

Iffan said the seven dignities concept becomes the social symbol which is shown in the daily life of the community where it has a significant role in the meaning of cultures related to the philosophy of Cirebon people. Therefore, the existing cultures have to be maintained and conserved to strengthen the Cirebon cultures.

"Those cultures have to be maintained and conserved in order to realize the perfect human beings in Cirebon," he added.

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