

RESEARCH ARTICLE



INTERMEDIATE ASSIMILATION IN THE ARAB DISTRICT IN SURABAYA CITY

Anis Masluchah¹

Abstract

This study was carried out at moslem people in kelurahan Ampel of Surabaya. Data were collected through observation and interviews as well as from documentary sources. The two religious groups concerned show striking differences as regards their ritual status and life style. Interaction between the groups in the fields of economic, social, and religious activities is characterized by elements of both conflict and cooperation.

In the field of religious activities, conflicts occur between members of more conservative and more radical/returnist groups, while cooperation among members of each group is harmonious. The factors which influence the patterns of social integration comprise needs and expectations of the groups concerned such as economic welfare, security, religion, social, and economic status, between the groups. From the findings of this study it can be concluded that in order to achieve an integration between the groups concerned, considerable efforts on both sides are still necessary.

1 | PRELIMINARY

1.1 | Background

Studying society as an integrated social system means recognizing that society is not just an irregular set of people. Society has certain behavioral relationship patterns between its members during a long period of interaction. These patterns of behavior usually go down in generations and have often been altered in accordance with the social organization or structure seen in their social institutions (Koentjaraningrat, 1977 p.13).

Besides that, in a society a series of ideal cultural patterns has been developed and those patterns tend to be strengthened by the existence of cultural restrictions. These ideal cultural patterns contain things that are recognized by most people as obligations that must be carried out under certain conditions. According to T.O Ihromi (1984: 27) ideal cultural patterns are often called the norm. However, not all

people will act according to these standards, but the ideal patterns are behavior patterns that are followed by the community and therefore describe the community.

Because of differences in people's lives with ideal patterns and behavior patterns in each society, the process of developing harmonious relations between ethnic groups and cultures that often develop unity is a major problem in certain countries. Where the atmosphere of calm, tranquility and security is influenced by the absence of cooperation between ethnic groups, religions, groups because of the differences, even according to Koentjaraningrat (1985: 376) cultural differences between ethnic groups and hostility based on socio-economic reasons between ethnic groups can actually lead in the direction of civil war.

When viewed from the various ethnic diversity that inhabits the Indonesian territory, the diversity of religions in Indonesia, all of which are seen in the development process, directly or indirectly requires tolerance in all sectors of people's lives for certain values

¹Widyaiswara Main Researcher The Government of Surabaya City.

Supplementary information The online version of this article (<https://doi.org/10.15520/jassh.v7i5.543>) contains supplementary material, which is available to authorized users.

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and ideas in their society (Geertz, 1981: h. V).

The structure of Indonesian society was reiterated by Hildred Geertz that Indonesia's most important characteristic lies precisely in the differences in values, views and ability of social forms to adapt. It is these factors which have given the community the greatest overall strength and resilience. If Indonesia will continue to live as an independent entity, it must create for itself a new national organization, must stand on the diversity of forms and identities of the local community ((Geertz, 1981: p. 96).

Indonesia is often said to be inhabited by a pluralistic society. Community plurality has 2 characteristics, as Furnivall's formulation of plural society, that plurality is seen from a horizontal structure, characterized by social unity based on differences in ethnicity, religion, customs, regionalism. However, based on the vertical structure which is marked by the vertical differences between the upper layer and lower layer which is quite sharp (Nasikun, 1986, p.3).

Of course the existence of a pluralistic society will not be separated from the emergence of conflict or foster potential tolerance. As David Lockwood said that the reality of every social always contains within him there are two things, namely the stratum which gives birth to conflict and order which is normative.

Conflicts arising from ethnic relations can be seen based on their historical background. While the process of developing harmonious development is often not easy, even though the problem of developing it is a major problem for heterogeneous communities wherever they are, including in the city of Surabaya.

The composition of urban population, as in Surabaya has specific characteristics Heterogeneity is shown by the consideration of occupational factors and interests. Also if it is associated with the location of the Arab village in Ampel is located on the edge of the city and its historical element as one of the centers of the spread of Islam in Java in particular or a broader scope, namely Indonesia.

Aside from the attention to the "native" ethnic groups who inhabit Indonesian territory, the study of "foreign" ethnic life in Indonesia is also not spared. One of the foreign ethnic groups that received attention was the presence of Arabs in Indonesia.

In fact, the differences between Arabs and other ethnicities in Indonesia, especially today are no longer

serious enough to be used as an excuse in sorting out national societies, even broader than that the international community has increasingly eroded the characteristics of society local people who still hold their ethnicity and regionalism.

However, one of the objectives of inter-ethnic study and its assimilation with the surrounding community, especially related to the need to get to know more about the existence of ethnicity in Indonesia. Where efforts to realize a sense of belonging (a sense of togetherness, landed water, family) in order to realize development goals is to pay attention to a variety of ethnic diversity in Indonesia without exception.

The reality of the people in Surabaya as one of the plural societies from various other ethnic groups will look even more complex. Many aspects affect the way of life of urbanites, with greater contact, such as extensive forms of communication, the conditions of migrants for example, has led to a social interpersonal interaction and conflict will be increasingly difficult to avoid.

Population composition has specific characteristics Heterogeneity is shown by racial and ethnic differences that are true. These considerations are related with factors such as work and interest, where so many people with different characteristics have been collected and forced into close physical contact. Often with very minimal communication and great indifference it can lead to sharp conflicts (Wirth, 1988: 43).

Discussing how members of the community in this Arab village interact will be interesting. We will be brought into the conversation about how they adapt to the modern urban living environment, how they maintain the characteristics of the traditions that have become part of their lives in relation to the social processes that occur. These include livelihoods, languages, settlement patterns, religions, classes in society as well as various norms that exist and apply in their society.

1.2 | Problem

Starting from the background of the problem above, the focus of the problem is mainly to discuss:

1. How is the process of assimilation between ethnic groups in the Arab township of Surabaya?

2. What is the relationship between economic, social and cultural issues in the assimilation process? Such as situations or things which can lead to tolerance or even sharpen conflict.

1.3 | Research purposes

Theoretically this research wants to gain an understanding of the diversity of human culture, in addition to an understanding of different cultural values in a society. Particularly in the context of Indonesian society's multiethnic life or as a pluralistic society, this understanding will be important in realizing community integration and eliminating ethnocentrism. So that the diversity can be seen as elements that enrich the life of the nation, especially in Arab villages in the city of Surabaya.

2 | THEORETICAL BASIS

2.1 | Assimilation Between Groups

The discussion about assimilation between groups put forward by Milton Gordon is an assimilationist relationship in the broadest sense. Among them, several assimilation types are related to each other, namely: 1) cultural assimilation or behavior related to patterns of change in cultural patterns in order to adjust to the majority group; 2) structural assimilation related to the entry of a large minority into the clicks, associations and institutions of the primary group level of the majority group; 3) assimilation of marriages (amalgamation) related to intergroup marriages on a large scale; 4) assimilation of identification related to national feelings based on the majority; 5) assimilation of attitudes that run in the absence of prejudice; 6) assimilation of behavior, which is related to the absence of discrimination; 7) civic assimilation, which is related to the absence of clashes regarding the value system and understanding of power (Tan, 1997; 34).

2.2 | Ethnic groups as cultural units

Besides that there is a discussion about culture in the study of behavior proposed by L. Dyson P (1989: 71-72) that the uniformity of behavior caused by a com-

mon cultural environment is not entirely in accordance with reality in society. As in environment A, someone who lives and comes from culture A does not always act the same as friends who live in culture A as well. This assumption is stated because there are many opinions that cultural values embraced by a society will determine how the behavior of individuals as members of the community or in other words many public opinion states that the supporters or the same culture will have the same mindset so as to produce relatively similar behavior.

Frederick Barth (1988: 35) analyzes ethnicity based on cultural contact and changes as a process due to the influence of industrial society. The important thing to note in this process is that a drastic reduction in cultural differences between ethnic groups is not related to the reduction in the relevance of the ethnic identity order or the end of the process of preserving ethnic boundaries.

2.3 | Community groups as part of culture

Keith F. Otterbein (1989: 131-140) describes community groups as part of culture, indirectly describes the integration of these cultural parts. Various elements of relationships that are marked by a link, starting from two elements of culture, three elements of culture which further leads to increasingly complex things. Obtaining confirmation or strengthening relationships between cultural elements must also consider various other variables, for example the physical environment. Because often the culture that meets does not always produce a confirmation form. So the calculation of cultural elements among them becomes important. For example there are certain groups that live in the same cultural sphere that still have differences. And this can be seen through controlled comparison.

3 | METHODOLOGY

3.1 | Basis for Philosophy and Research Approach

The research method used in this study is a qualitative method. It is hoped that this method will find hidden meanings behind objects and subjects to

be studied. This means that this research not only records things that appear explicitly, but looks at the whole phenomenon that occurs in society (Nawawi, 1994; 75).

By using this qualitative research method, it is expected that an in-depth overview and understanding of the object of study / research will be found. Basically, this qualitative research method aims to inductively obtain natural data sources that are holistic and in-depth, then in accordance with the research objectives, namely to understand the assimilation between ethnic groups in the Arab township of Surabaya, the method is considered relevant to use.

The community will be examined about the description of the conditions and social phenomena that appear in the multi-ethnic community life in the Ampel Village.

3.2 | Research Objects and Informants

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3.3 | Research Objects and Informants

In order to obtain the expected data and information, several data collection techniques were carried out. Primary data is collected through interviews or in-depth interviews and observations. To avoid the

rigidity of interviews and the superficiality of data obtained, these interviews are conducted freely and freely, which is usually referred to as unstructured interviews (Faisal: 1990: 62).

The process of data processing that has been obtained, moving between the four axis of the coil, namely moving back and forth between data acquisition, data reduction, presentation and drawing conclusions / verification, meaning that data in the form of field notes consisting of description and reflection sections are collected data, then an understanding is arranged with an understanding of the meaning called data reduction, then followed by the preparation of data presentation in the form of a systematic story, then an attempt is made to draw conclusions with its verification based on everything contained in the data reduction and data presentation.

3.4 | Data analysis technique

More in-depth analysis will be conducted after all data, both primary and secondary data have been collected. After the data is collected, the next step is to create an abstraction. In this study before an abstraction is made, transcripts of interviews with informants will be made first. The next step is to make the code that was previously categorized (Moleong, 1990: 190). Existing coding includes: 1) groups or individuals being compared, 2) various similarities or differences in opinions of group members; 3) important characteristics possessed by each category that will indicate the process of assimilation

Qualitative research requires certainty that the research is truly natural. From the analysis of the data it is associated with theoretical references that are in accordance with the problems discussed and are in accordance with developments in the field. From the analysis process, a conclusion will be made about how the process of assimilation between ethnic groups in the Arab village, Ampel Surabaya as part of a multi-ethnic society.

4 | DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH LOCATION

The location of Arab settlements which are often referred to as the “villages” of Arab Ampel in this

study is located in North Surabaya and is considered to have a certain culture of Islamic style which is manifested in various economic, political, social and cultural lives. Ampel Village is one of five villages located in Semampir District, Surabaya City. With an area of 38 hectares, the Ampel area has a boundary in the north is Ujung village, in the east is Simokerto sub-district and in the west is the Cunggu Customs sub-district. Semampir District has five villages, namely Ampel, Sidotopo, Pegirian, Wonokusumo and Ujung. The last three kelurahan are the majority inhabited by Madurese. While the Ampel village itself is divided into 17 RWs and 86 RTs and many are inhabited by ethnic Arabs, mainly in the areas of RW 1, RW 2 and RW 4. The Ampel village which is inhabited by around 6,558 families or around 21,892 inhabitants is located in a land area of three and a half to four hectares so of course this settlement can be said to be dense. The buildings coincide with each other and do not have a yard or said to the front porch of the house directly adjacent to the alley in front of him.

The Ampel Arab settlement is inhabited by various ethnic groups, namely: Arab ethnicity, part of Madura Medalungan (Javanese-Madurese cross-breed), and partly Javanese, Bugis Makassar, and Padang, besides Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Chinese peranakans.

The atmosphere of the settlement itself is something that is exclusive as a deliberate formation by the Dutch colonial as well as various other ethnic villages. Although now this exclusiveness is increasingly disappearing, especially with the mingling of Foreign Citizens in the area.

People who live in the Ampel area embraced Islam a lot. Religion has influenced various mindsets, behavior for the people in the area. Because the religion is relatively strong, they always base their norms, values, and behavior as sharia, a norm based on faith (Islamic faith).

5 | DATA FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

5.1 | Settlement as a form of Local Assimilation based on Residence

Ethnic foreign descent in Indonesia basically has a cultural pattern rooted in the country of origin and is relatively different from the cultural patterns of the indigenous population in Indonesia. Basically, each ethnic group in Ampel has a high tolerance and tries to do or do something that is not offensive to others, so that they can get along with people from various other ethnicities without differentiating or restricting relationships based on certain ethnicities, besides being able to get along with various community members in various economic groups. They will only feel offended and withdrawn when their self-esteem is lowered or when they have tried to be good but do not get the expected response.

Settlement as a form of neighborhood is indeed one of the factors that has an influence in the process of ethnic assimilation of the surrounding community. Although relatively local, the Arab settlements in Ampel were able to form a solidarity among fellow citizens in the sense of supporting the process of assimilation between ethnic groups living in the Ampel region.

Actually, if viewed from other ethnicities (non-Arabs) who live in the Arab ethnic region in Ampel, then the intimacy between ethnic and other ethnic groups that is shown and stands out is the close relationship between Arabs and Javanese. Even though the majority of the population around the Arab ethnic environment is the Madurese, many Arabs are of the opinion that they prefer to mingle with Javanese compared to Madurese. The Madurese in the Arab community in Ampel actually also have an important role for the Arabs in their daily lives as it can be seen that almost all itinerant traders (vegetable traders and daily shopping), food vendors etc. that exist around the majority Arab villages are ethnic Madurese. It turns out that the important role of the Madurese who inhabit locations around Ampel does not indicate that the Arabs prefer to associate with Madurese as well. One possibility is that the ethnic Arabs prefer to associate with Javanese compared to the Madurese, based on a relatively equal level of education, because in a relationship, of course, relatively similar insights are

needed to be able to communicate with one another. Indirectly, the development of settlements has changed its function from settlements based on ethnicity to settlements based on social classes that show a vertical direction that is based on economic and educational differences.

5.2 | The kinship aspect as a Binder of Interethnic Relations

This kinship aspect is one of the things that shows the existence of an ethnic group. This ethnic identity is a characteristic of an ethnic group that is recognized by itself and recognized by others. One aspect that shows things about kinship is the name *fam* which turned out to be very supportive in maintaining its ethnic identity.

An ethnic group will be formed if a person or group of people uses their ethnic identity to categorize themselves with others for interaction purposes. Levels to distinguish it appear in terms of physical form of clothing, language, lifestyle in general, in addition to the moral standards used in behavior.

5.3 | Educational aspects in social life

In scientifically analyzing human social and cultural phenomena and events as an ongoing and shifting process, the cultural learning process that includes internalization, socialization and enculturation cannot be separated from it. The internalization process that lasts from birth to death, instills personality and all feelings, desires, passions and emotions. This ability is strongly influenced by various kinds of stimuli that exist around nature and the socio-cultural environment. This internalization will continue to be a socialization, where individuals learn about patterns of action in interaction with all kinds of individuals around them who occupy various kinds of social roles that exist in everyday life. While the next process of socialization is enculturation, where an individual learns and adjusts his thoughts and attitudes to the customs, norm systems and regulations that live in his culture.

Interethnic life in Ampel cannot be separated in the various processes of cultural learning in social life. In this case there is an influence of the urban life environment that will always adjust to the life that

is around it. But the Ampel people still practice customs that sometimes conflict with one another, such as the behavior of relations between two sexes in which the current and influence of urban lifestyle generally shows that relationships between men and women in the environment at school, friends or neighbor is a natural thing. On the other hand, sharia or Islamic teachings which are implemented as a benchmark for measuring the behavior of the Ampel community, in fact, severely limit the behavior of relations between the two sexes. Then comes a variety of other behaviors such as dating backstreet or dating without the knowledge of parents or other relatives. Informal education in families includes teaching the relationship between children and older people and the relationship between children and peers. In the Ampel settlement which consists of several ethnic groups, education about tolerance as a member of the community is important to avoid ethnocentrism.

Formal and informal education which is intended as a support for assimilation involves the process of assimilation through educational institutions. The aspect of education as a support for assimilation is marked by the absence of restrictions because of ethnicity or ethnic groups entering educational institutions. In Ampel settlement there are 3 (three) tertiary institutions in addition to several academies established by the Arab community under the auspices of Al Khairiyah and Al Irsyad. In Al Irsyad's educational institutions namely elementary, junior and senior high schools there is still a separation between female and male students.

Basically the process of assimilation through the aspect of education is relatively very easy. Familiarity associations through schools for ethnic Arabs with non-Arab ethnicity is one of the things that supports the creation of assimilation through education.

5.4 | Inter-ethnic Arab social relations in the Ampel Region

Socially and culturally, the inhabitants of cities in Indonesia, including the city of Surabaya, develop a dual or bicultural culture, that is, one side holds traditional culture and on the other hand also practices the metropolitan culture (old society to the new

state). The binding element in Ampel, which indicates that old society is starting to move towards the new state, is that there are similarities in the relationship of blood, race, language, religion, area of origin and customs indirectly moving towards changes that are eroding the original nature.

In general, if seen as a group of people who are part of the culture, the portrayal between ethnic groups in Ampel (neighboring lives, employer-maid interactions, interactions based on housing and buying and selling interactions in the market) can be described as a unity, although there are some differences.

Basically, inter-ethnic participation is often shown in various development activities in the Ampel area, community activities such as community service, etc., and also participation in attending death events or invitations that have a public interest, which will certainly include all of its citizens. Then indirectly the community is required to get along intensively with the surrounding residents.

5.5 | Ethnic economic cooperation in Ampel

Ethnic Arabs generally control trade with certain business goods, namely merchandise related to supporting religious worship (Islam), which is very different from Chinese ethnic trade around the Ampel area.

Non-closed cooperation between ethnic groups can be seen from various types of trade that need help from other ethnicities, such as the making of kopyah that were previously dominated by ethnic Javanese.

With the rate of economic growth in the city of Surabaya, resulting in the opening of employment opportunities with consideration of education, expertise, and skills regardless of ethnic differences. In Arab villages in Ampel many of the residents started working and cooperating in work with other ethnic groups. It is known from several schools and universities in the Ampel area that was established because of inter-ethnic cooperation. However, for jobs in the field of demand administration, there tends to still be discrimination, for example from some Ampelaan Kelurahan employees there are still many who come from outside the Ampel area (who are non-PNS).

5.6 | Life patterns that arise in the process of assimilation

The process of assimilation between ethnic groups in Indonesia begins with the arrival of Arab traders to Indonesia both before or after Islam was born. Because they are traders, the cultural elements they carry are primarily physical cultural objects, ways of trading and everything related to them.

In the process of this assimilation process will cause various changes in people's life patterns. Changes in society in Ampel occur through 2 things: 1) changes from within the community itself and 2) changes that result from outside the community environment. Change caused by outside influences is a form of social symbiosis. In this case, people who are limited in ethnic relationships will drift along with the flow of changes that occur around them.

The reaction of people who are affected by foreign cultural elements can be categorized into 2 groups. The first group are those who are "old-fashioned" character, that is, do not like and quickly reject new things. This form of social consequences as a rejection or hostility is not uncommon to cause social conflict in society.

But actually there are not a few indigenous ethnic groups in Indonesia who are "progressive" meaning to like and easily accept new things with the arrival and presence of other ethnic groups. Such as the acceptance of the Madurese and Javanese ethnic groups in Ampel who paid much respect to the ethnic Arabs, especially for the descendants of Sayid who were glorified by them.

Thus the situation that occurred in the Ampel environment, on the one hand they identified themselves with the majority of the Indonesian people, on the other hand the people in the Arab village in Ampel also began to feel the development of their society in various aspects of life as Indonesian people with the skills and expertise so that the ethnic groups could play a role directly in the existing development activities without looking at ethnic differences.

As for the acceptance of cultural elements in the life of the Ampel people who are still relatively trying to maintain their original traditions, at least the inclusion of a variety of modern information and technology was interpreted as a functional consequence.

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Various unwanted effects from the inclusion of new elements will be seen during the night “chat” arena in various Ampel regional roads, such as Sasak Street for example.

The existence of a relatively new process of introducing cultural elements among the Ampel community may only benefit a few individuals, such as community members who are ready to take advantage or face the entry of new information.

5.7 | Inter-ethnic association in the life of the City community

Efforts have been made to make the assimilation process in the Arab village in Ampel successful, both those undertaken by the Ampel community itself or businesses based on development programs in Indonesia. Because ethnic stereotypes will emerge if the community is fragmented without any effort to participate through the process of assimilation, on the contrary the existence of varied ethnicities in the Ampel area is no longer a problem if the togetherness factor in people’s lives has been created.

The life of the people in Ampel, as one of the settlements in urban areas cannot be separated from the goals and expectations of the larger group. Imitation can take place in a form such as language, certain behavior, how to pay respect, fashion, and customs. This continuity process itself can be positive or negative through cooperation or opposition and competition. If judging from the life of ethnic groups in Ampel, the imitation process itself is inseparable from the orientation of the lives of young people with its existence as part of urban society in Surabaya.

The influence of urbanism as a city lifestyle is increasingly visible in the Ampel area. As a cultural unit that has finally undergone a change, ethnic life in Ampel can basically be said as a form of ethnic group that strives to maintain its ethnic traditions, in addition to the many factors that can influence its existence, in the sense of various changes arising within a cultural unit.

With cultural contacts that cause changes in ethnic life in Ampel basically aims that they can participate in the wider social system. So ethnic groups will generally choose a basic form of strategy, for example: 1) they try to join and enter, 2) they accept status as

a minority, 3) they accentuate their identity in activities that have not been touched in the community. For example through the terms of trade in Islamic religious worship equipment. With the diversity of the people in Ampel this will allow assimilation of minority groups and the majority. In this case the process of assimilation between ethnic groups in the area is increasingly dissolved in a community unity.

6 | CONCLUSION

The existence of ethnic differences in Arab villages in Ampel Surabaya, has an influence in the process of assimilation if it is associated with the process of assimilation between ethnic groups such as Javanese, Madurese, Bugis-Makassarese, Chinese, Indian, Bangladeshi and Pakistani.

Based on the same settlement pattern for the various ethnic groups that inhabit the Ampel area it is indeed one of the supporting factors in strengthening inter-ethnic relations. The existence of various ethnic groups in the Arab village of Ampel has of course experienced a long and long period of intensive mutual relations. Especially if traced based on the first history of the arrival of the Arabs and the opening of the Ampel area into a form of settlement, of course eventually led to interactions between various ethnic groups who later or previously had settled many around the Ampel location.

The attachment of an ethnic to settlements in the Ampel area can be mentioned as the attachment to locality and kinship. This attachment is generally still ongoing today despite changes. Measures of attachment to locality can be identified through: 1) the desire of some residents in Ampel not to move from Arab settlements in Ampel, 2) The intensity of relatives visiting Ampel villages for residents who live elsewhere, 3) togetherness of Ampel residents in solving problems / personal conflicts and conflicts involving the harmony of the local community with the aim of securing the Ampel region.

In everyday life, there is indeed a close relationship between ethnic groups. But for the ethnics in Ampel, it does not fully show that they have experienced assimilation in various other fields of life, such as marriage or the application of social norms in daily life. Social relations between ethnic groups,

for example, in the case of social relations are greatly influenced by the existing situation, for example, the scope of schools, jobs, and activities of the local community.

Conflicts that arise include the existence of collectivity. And this is a manifestation of differences in interests, work competition, religious understanding, prevailing norms or socio-cultural backgrounds.

On the other hand, cooperation in work, equality in religion (Islam) and a sense of kinship between ethnic groups in Ampel is a factor that encourages harmonious relations in the Ampel community, if related to the process of assimilation that occurs between ethnic groups in the Ampel area.

Religious values (Islam) and tradition are a benchmark in social life. But at this time not a few changes have occurred (generally by young people) both in terms of religious life, society as a form of habitual deviation.

The influence of the “city” culture (Surabaya) in the Arab Village in Ampel turned out to have a certain impact. On the one hand a variety of progress, development and development of the community with information and communication that is increasingly expanding towards community unity in a wider scope can be felt. As with increasing education and the level of the family’s economy, many families are considering looking for settlements and educational environments that are considered better than those in Ampel today.

The impact that is considered unfavorable to the lives of people of various other ethnicities in Ampel is the unpreparedness of the community that is still “traditional” in the face of “modern” currents. An example that can be seen is the increasingly changing attitudes and behavior in the daily lives of young people and is considered to lead to immoral actions for the Ampel

community.

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How to cite this article: A.M. INTERMEDIATE ASSIMILATION IN THE ARAB DISTRICT IN SURABAYA CITY . Journal of Advances in Social Science and Humanities. 2021;1789–1797. <https://doi.org/10.15520/jassh.v7i5.543>