

## THE CORE ETHOS AND THE PROGRESSIVE SPIRIT OF MUHAMMADIYAH SOCIO-RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT

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### Abstract

Beyond a century, Muhammadiyah, one of the largest socio-religious movements in Indonesia, remains continuously to uphold the ideals of establishing “the truly Islamic society”. What is the Muhammadiyah spirit in facing the challenges of the times and spaces? Using library approach, this study argues that the Muhammadiyah always dedicated to and take inspiration from the three ethos of the Quran in achieving the goal of building a truly Islamic society, those are the ethos of *rahmah*, *al-Ma'un* and *al-Ashr* that founded on integrative approach between the Quranic interpretation, the sacred heart-mind and the science-technology, and the universal human experience. *Rahmah* (compassion) is a key of developing the sacred heart-mind capabilities of how to save the lives of people in the world. Muhammadiyah, which is identical with the ethos of *al-Ma'un* (social praxis), tends to throwaway religious formalities for it has been included in the social orientation to advocate *dhu'afa* and *mustadh'afin*. *Al-Ashr* ethos defines religion (*iman*) and civilization (*amal shalih*) two separated entities but in the state of collaboration. Through this way, Muhammadiyah is no longer exaggeratedly concerned with the issue of poverty and impoverishment, but also regarded to the effective systems, institutions, and leadership in building the perfect civilization.

**Keywords:** Muhammadiyah, Progressive moving Islam, *Islam Berkemajuan*, Civilized Muslim

### Introduction

Debate on the importance of Muhammadiyah to reclaim the role as reform movement similar to Puritan Protestant Model was once emerged. The proponents of this notion often compare the Calvinist Puritan with Muhammadiyah Puritan. Usually, they refer to Weber's thesis and Indonesian Weberian especially Clifford Geertz, James L. Peacock, Mitsuo Nakamura, Irwan Abdullah and the likes to support their argument.<sup>1</sup> However, Muhammadiyah ethos surpasses the discussion on the relationship between religious and economic activities, between ethos and the spirit of capitalization. The ever-changing *locus* and *tempus* encourage Muhammadiyah to adapt to the challenge and opportunity exposed to them. Muhammadiyah continue to move and thrive in the dialectics of civilization.

The theological basis of Muhammadiyah ethos can be traced from the thinking and action of K.H. Ahmad Dahlan. Among the disciples of K.H. Ahmad Dahlan, KRH Hadjid and Kyai Suja' are considered as the primary resources of the thinking of K.H. Ahmad Dahlan. The book of *Pelajaran KHA. Dahlan: 7 Falsafah Ajaran dan 17 Kelompok verse Al-Quran* (Teachings of K.H. Ahmad Dahlan: 7 Philosophy of Teaching and 17 Groups of Quranic Verses) by K.R.H. Hadjid is a compilation of information on philosophical and theological thoughts of Ahmad Dahlan.<sup>2</sup> In addition, the notes of Kyai Syuja' entitled *Islam Berkemajuan* (Progressive Islam) include the history and track record of the conduct of Kyai Dahlan on his lifetime.<sup>3</sup> There are other writings of Dahlan including *Tali Pengikat Hidup Manusia*<sup>4</sup> from Almanac of 1923, and *Peringatan bagi Sekalian Muslimin (Muhammadiyahin)* (Words for All Muslims Follower of Muhammadiyah) delivered in Islamic Congress in Cirebon in 1921. Both literatures can be

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<sup>1</sup> Clifford Geertz (1976), *The Religion of Java*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press; James L. Peacock (2017), *Purifying the Faith: The Muhammadiyah Movement in Indonesian Islam*, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press; Mitsuo Nakamura (2012), *The Crescent Arises over the Banyan Tree: A Study of the Muhammadiyah Movement in a Central Javanese Town, c.1910s-2010*, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies; Irwan Abdullah (1994), *The Muslim Businessmen of Jatinom: Religious Reform and Economic Modernization in a Central Javanese Town*, Amsterdam: Universiteit van Amsterdam.

<sup>2</sup> KRH. Hadjid (2013), *Pelajaran KHA Dahlan: 7 Falsafah dan 17 Kelompok Ayat Al-Qur'an*, Yogyakarta: MPI PPM.

<sup>3</sup> Kyai Soedja' (2009), *Islam Berkemajuan: Kisah Perjuangan KH. Ahmad Dahlan dan Muhammadiyah Masa Awal*, Jakarta: Al-Wasat.

<sup>4</sup> *Tali Pengikat Hidup Manusia* paper mentioned above is a transcript of the speech of Kyai Dahlan in Muhammadiyah Annual Congress in December 1922. The paper was later published in Abdul Munir Mulhan (1986), *Pesan-Pesan Dua Pemimpin Besar Islam Indonesia: Kyai Ahmad Dahlan dan Kyai Hasyim Asy'ari*, Yogyakarta: Penerbit Persatuan Yogyakarta. The paper was later published by the title of *The Humanity of Human Life* in Charles Kurzman (2002), *Modernist Islam 1840-1940: A Sourcebook*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 344-348.

found as annex in the book of Abdul Munir Mulkhan.<sup>5</sup> The larger idea and ethos of Kyai Dahlan movement is open-mindedness in absorbing the frontiers of civilization regardless of the nationality and religion of the bearer of the civilization.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, several social actions developed by Kyai Dahlan were inspired by the experiences of Christian Dutch, British, or Portuguese. Orphanage, Elderly Home, Home for Elderly, Hospital, Poor House<sup>7</sup> and Modern School are the result of civilization dialogue among Kyai Dahlan, Christian administrators of healthcare, social welfare, and education, and the Dutch Colonial Officials.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, this paper will explore and discuss the theological-Quranic basis that drives the ethos and spirit of *Islam Berkemajuan* in Muhammadiyah movement.

## 7 Philosophy and 17 Groups of Quranic Verses

KRH. Hadjid, the youngest disciple of K.H. Ahmad Dahlan, wrote 7 philosophy of Islamic teaching and 17 groups of Quranic verses as the primary words and teachings of the founder of Muhammadiyah for the disciples, students, and followers. The 7 philosophy and 17 groups of Quranic verses are the main reference for the followers of Muhammadiyah; many of them have succeeded in sealing the spirit of Muhammadiyah in life of our nation and society.<sup>9</sup>

The 7 philosophy referred to above are; 1) Human only live once in this world to gamble; in the afterlife whether they will earn happiness or misery; 2) Most human/people are arrogant, they make decisions individually; 3) People when they perform any work/activity, once, twice, repeatedly, will eventually create habit. Once it generates pleasure, the beloved habit will turn into culture and will be difficult to change. It is a character that most people will defend the accepted habit and culture from the point of view of religion, commitment, intention, or actions. They are even willing to fight with their life anyone trying to change it. This is because of the belief that what they uphold is right and true; 4) People needs to unite in truth. They should collectively use their mind and rationality to think about the true meaning and purpose of life in this world. Why is it important? What should people do in the world? What are we looking for? What is our goal? People should use their mind to correct their intention, commitment, and belief, purpose of life, and conduct in the search of truth. This is so because if human only live once in this world, they shall not be lost as it will earn them eternal misery.” *Or do you think that most of them hear or reason? They are not except like livestock. Rather, they are (even) more astray in (their) way” (QS. Al-Furqan: 44);* 5). Acquiring various teachings and rulings, reading several piles of books, human are now facing the challenge of maintaining their belief and integrity. They are afraid to stay true to the truth and what they belief in out of concern of losing pleasures, comforts, culture, habits, or companions of their friends. In short, these concerns lead them to fear the truth and acting right. Their life consequently is similar to the senseless and mindless, they just live their life, and they do not live in truth; 6) most leaders are not courageous enough to sacrifice their life and fortune to unite humankind in truth. On the contrary, these leaders tend to play with and exploit the weak and the fool; 7) Lessons consist of two parts; science, knowledge, or theory, and lessons on deed, action, application, implementation. All learning must be acquired incrementally, one step at a time. Similarly with lessons on deed, if one is not yet able to master one deed, there is no need to teach him new deeds.

In addition, the 17 groups of Quranic verses regarded as the primary teachings of the founder of Muhammadiyah are as follows: 1) Purify oneself, *Al-Jathiyah verse 23*; 2) Defeat one’s passion for wealth and fortune, *al-Fajr verse 17-23*; (3) One who denies the Recompense/Reward/Religion, *al-Ma’un verse 1-7*; 4) The meaning of religion, *al-Rum verse 30*; 5) Islam and socialism, *al-Tawbah verse 34-35*; 6) *Surat al-‘Ashr verse 1-3*; 7) Faith/Belief, *al-‘Ankabut verse 1-3*; 8) Good deeds, *al-Kahf verse 110* and *al-Zumar verse 2*; 9) Wa tawashaw bil haqq (learning

<sup>5</sup> Abdul Munir Mulkhan (1990), *KHA Dahlan dan Muhammadiyah*, Yogyakarta: Bumi Aksara.

<sup>6</sup> Abdul Munir Mulkhan (2010), *Kyai Ahmad Dahlan, Jejak Pembaruan Sosial dan Kemanusiaan*, Jakarta: Kompas, p. 7. “In education, the Christian established a Bible School in Central Java (1888), The school was later transferred to Jogjakarta and transformed into Seminary. Afterwards, missionary schools were established for the general public”. See Yusron Asrofie (2005), *Kyai Haji Ahmad Dahlan Pemikiran dan Kepemimpinannya*, Yogyakarta: MPKSDI PPM, p. 23.

<sup>7</sup> According to Sukriyanto AR, Muhammadiyah had two “poor house” in the past; one in Yogyakarta and one in Surabaya. This house provided life skills training for young people. Interview with Sukriyanto AR (Wednesday, May 6, 2015).

<sup>8</sup> In social welfare, Indonesian Catholics established orphanage in Semarang (1809), Jakarta (1856), and Surabaya (1862). The following year, they established one in Padang, Bogor, Magelang and Malang. The Christians also established orphanage in Tegal, Central Java (1892). In the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century, Catholic Church established several hospitals in big cities. See: M. Yusron Asrofie (1983), *Kyai Haji Ahmad Dahlan dan Kepemimpinannya*, Yogyakarta: Offset, p. 22.

<sup>9</sup> KRH Hadjid (2006), “Muqaddimah,” in Budi Setiawan and Arief Budiman (eds.), *Pelajaran KHA Dahlan: 7 Falsafah Ajaran dan 17 Kelompok Ayat Al-Qur’an*, Yogyakarta: LPI PPM, pp. 2-4.

and experiment), *Yunus* verse 108, *al-Kahf* verse 29, *Muhammad* verse 3, *al-An'am* verse 116, *al-Furqan* verse 44, *al-Anbiya'* verse 24, *Yunus* verse 32, *al-Shaff* verse 9, *al-Baqarah* verse 147, *al-Anfal* verse 8, *al-Isra'* verse 81 dan *al-Mu'minin* verse 70; 10) *Wa tawashaw bi al-shabri* (persistence to defeat yourself); 11) Jihad, *Ali 'Imran* verse 142; 12) *Wa ana minal muslimin* (I am a Muslim), *al-An'am* verse 162-163; 13) Al-Birru, *Ali 'Imran* verse 92; 14) *Surat al-Qari'ah* verse 6-11; 15) *Surat al-Shaff* verse 2-3; 16) Guard oneself, *al-Tahrim* verse 6; and finally 17) Has the time not come, *surat al-Hadid* verse 16.

The aforementioned are the 7 Philosophy and the 17 Groups of Quranic verses consistently delivered by K.H. Ahmad Dahlan to his disciples. If we look closer, there are three stages of the framework of Muhammadiyah Ethos (Kyai Dahlan) in the spirit of building civilization. As reminded by the Kyai, 'the highest knowledge' is the knowledge on unity of life. This knowledge can only be achieved through critical thinking and open-mindedness as well as rationality and consistency towards sacred heart underlying rational truth."<sup>10</sup>The message includes three ethos in achieving the "supreme civilization" namely compassion, *al-Ma'un* (critical thinking and open-mindedness), and *Al-'Ashr* (knowledge on unity of life).

The basic idea of Ahmad Dahlan lies in the "kesejajaran kebenaran" (integration-interconnection) of the interpretation of the Quran (*hadharah al-Nas*), sacred rationality and scientific discovery (*hadharah al-'ilm*), and third, the universal experience of humanity (*hadharah al-falsafah*). Studying philosophy for him is the key to develop rationality skills, in addition to learning from various experiences of different nations and religions. Through such learning, knowledge is earned, namely salvation based on compassion. Happiness is "sincerity, remembering death, and place science as key of progress and common happiness".

### **Ethos of *Rahmah* (Compassion)**

Ethos of compassion referred to the idea that truth and kindness of Islam lies in how the religion's benefit for all humankind beyond religious and nationality boundaries. The principle of compassion is the foundation of universal humanity movement and development of civilization of Muhammadiyah. The vision of liberation of Muhammadiyah at that time was challenged by the condition of the people of East Indies living in despair due to poverty, illiteracy, and disease. The document of Muhammadiyah mentioned that the ideal aspired as a result of enlightenment and empowerment is a strong, healthy, big, and progressive Islam.<sup>11</sup> Orientation of Muhammadiyah is evident in defending the poor and in empowering people through education (as part of the promotion of Islam) based on what Dr. Soetomo referred to as 'compassion' or the ethos of compassion in the words of Abdul Munir Mulkhan.<sup>12</sup> The spirit of compassion based humanity unites nations and religions under Muhammadiyah. The social development works of Muhammadiyah is based on the view that Islamic truth (*al-haqq*) and kindness (*al-khair*) Islam lies in the benefit of religion to all humanity regardless of nations and religions. "The Sacred Quran" is understood with "Sacred Mind" and "Sacred Heart" with compassion as ethos of progress, civilization and salvation of the world and humanity.<sup>13</sup>

The ethos of compassion drew interest of Javanese elite, Dr. Soetomo. He agreed to become the advisor of Muhammadiyah in the field of health. Together with a Dutch doctor, Dr. Soetomo ran Muhammadiyah hospital voluntarily (without salary).<sup>14</sup> The management of the hospital involved Dutch Christian doctors working on voluntary basis and schools are managed with modern system to improve the quality of life of the people and encourage them to contribute in modern world. Muslims began to understand the benefit of collaborating with others regardless of the religion and nation for mutual progress and welfare.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Abdul Munir Mulkhan (1990), *Warisan Intelektual K.H. Ahmad Dahlan dan Amal Muhammadiyah*, Yogyakarta: PT. Percetakan Persatuan, p. 207.

<sup>11</sup> See in Abdul Munir Mukhan (2015), *Boeah Fikiran Kijahi H.A. Dachlan*, Jakarta, Global Base Review & STIEAD Press.

<sup>12</sup> Abdul Munir Mukhan (2015), *Boeah Fikiran Kijahi H.A. Dachlan*, p. 16.

<sup>13</sup> See Praeadvies from Hoofdbestuur Perserikatan Moehammadiyah of Yogyakarta in the National Congress on "Kongres Islam Besar Cirebon dan Kesatuan Hidup Manusia", published in 1922 and 1924 in Robert W. Hefner, Sukidi Mulyadi, Abdul Munir Mulkhan (2008), *Api Pembaharuan Kyai Ahmad Dahlan*, Jakarta: Multi Pressindo, p. 107.

<sup>14</sup> Abdul Munir Mulkhan (2010), *Kyai Ahmad Dahlan: Jejak Pembaruan*, p. 2.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 216-217.

The spirit of compassion-based humanity has united people from different nations and religions.<sup>16</sup> Dr. Soetomo recalled that the ethos of compassion is a criticism towards Darwinism as paradigm of Western modern thought lying on survival of the fittest. Darwinism does not acknowledge opportunity for the weak to thrive.<sup>17</sup> As quoted from the clip of Dr. Soetomo speech in the inauguration of Muhammadiyah Hospital in Surabaya<sup>18</sup> where Dr. Soetomo worked as Medisch Adviseur H.B. of the PKO Muhammadiyah, Dr. Soetomo exclaimed in his speech “Compassion versus Darwinism”:

Furthermore, it can be considered as a challenge against Darwin’s teaching. Doesn’t the Darwin theory rest in fulfillment in life? Certainly, such theory oppresses and diminishes the weak. Because it focuses on personal gain, in order to win better place in this world. The new thinking is rooted in other principle, namely compassion. The principle of compassion, certainly, does not give a space of struggle for mere personal gain. On the other hand, it requires sacrifices for the betterment and dignity of the public. Therefore, what does compassion to parents, wife, children, and others mean? It is none other than sacrificing yourself for others’ good and happiness. Similarly, this organization acquires compassion that we will share with other people, so that through compassion and sacrifices, we can achieve a good life. Tomorrow, we will open this clinic. Anyone, European, Javanese (native), Chinese or Arab are welcomed at this clinic. Everyone will be treated for free, for as long as they are really poor.<sup>19</sup>

In order for people to achieve excellence, they have to meet the following requirements: *First*, they have to choose and make decision with compassion. Human being will not be able to achieve their ultimate dignity in the absence of compassion. In the absence of compassion, all deeds will be based on mere pleasure that leads to stagnation and devastation. *Second* is persistence and perseverance. Every goal set for the world and hereafter salvation will not be accomplished without hard work, efforts, sacrifices, thoughts and power of the mind.

Both requirements demonstrate that ethos of compassion of Kyai Dahlan surpasses the Protestant ethics and spirit of capitalism. The ethos of compassion lies in the logic and morality that encourages one to fight for nobility and excellence, instead of wasteful and deceitful materialistic-hedonistic pleasures. The ethos of Muhammadiyah movement portrays the praxis of civilization theology. The social-economic-politics-cultural relations intertwine beyond boundaries of religion, ethnicity, and nation. The Muhammadiyah movement elaborates and exploit the “ethos of compassion” as primary part of the universal mission of Islam as *rahmatan lil `alamin*. The universal humanity inductive experience of Kyai Ahmad Dahlan is the basis of almost all of his idea and ethos of the movement.

### **The al-Ma’un Ethos**

There is a memorable story on how Kyai Ahmad Dahlan taught al-Ma’un to his disciples. He taught the chapter for three months and refused to discuss the next chapter, despite of the tediousness. Tired of the monotony, one of his disciples, K.H. Syuja’ asked, “Why Kyai Dahlan refused to teach us the next chapter?” Kyai Dahlan asked him, “Do you really understand this chapter?” K.H. Syuja’ replied that he and his friends understood the meaning of the chapter and memorized it by heart. Kyai Dahlan asked another question, “Have you practice the message?” K.H. Syuja’ replied, “Don’t we recite it repeatedly in our prayers?”

Kyai Dahlan explained that the meaning of practicing al-Ma’un chapter does not stop at reciting and memorizing. The most important part is implementing al-Ma’un in real life. “Therefore,” Kyai Dahlan continued, “every person shall walk around the city to find orphans, bring them home, provide them with soap to shower, decent clothing, food and drinks, and shelter. Hence, I will conclude the lesson on the chapter, and order you to practice what I have been teaching.” This story shows how Quranic verses are supposed to be studied and implemented. We shall not move to other verse or chapter before we are able to understand and practice the message of the verse.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> See Robert W. Hefner, Sukidi Mulyadi, Abdul Munir Mulkhan (2008), *Api Pembaruan*, p. 107.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 115.

<sup>18</sup> Abdul Munir Mulkhan (2010), *Kyai Ahmad Dahlan: Jejak Pembaruan*, p. 82.

<sup>19</sup> Abdul Munir Mulkhan (2010), *Kyai Ahmad Dahlan: Jejak Pembaruan*, pp. 83–84.

<sup>20</sup> Sutrisno Kutoyo (1998), *Kyai Haji Ahmad Dahlan dan Persyarikatan Muhammadiyah*, Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, pp. 112–113.

There are five ways of Kyai Ahmad Dahlan in studying the Quran namely; understand the meaning; understand the interpretation; when encountering prohibition in the Quran reflect on whether or not, it has been deserted; when encountering order in the Quran reflect on whether or not, it has been obeyed; if the initial four ways have not been implemented, do not read other verses.<sup>21</sup> The case is similar in practicing al-Ma'un. It is difficult to discover a tafsir (interpretation) book that provides explanation on al-Ma'un as Kyai Dahlan understands it; a comprehension reflected in various social actions. The interpretation of Kyai Dahlan on al-Ma'un (The Small Kindness) underlies his actions for the poor, marginalized, and oppressed.<sup>22</sup> The ethos of al-Ma'un serves as reference for empowerment of the poor and empowerment of women in public sphere.<sup>23</sup> The al-Ma'un legend locates actual actions as authentic interpretation of the Holy Book.<sup>24</sup>

Sukidi and Robert W. Hefner wrote their thoughts in *Bentara Kompas* (March 2, April 6, and June 1, 2005) under the theme of "Islamic Protestantism and Muhammadiyah. The thought however, was argued by Munir Mulkhan. According to him, calling Muhammadiyah as Islamic reform movement similar to Protestantism is inaccurate due to several social facts demonstrating the absence of accumulation of capital practiced by the Calvinist. Muhajir Effendi called the follower of Muhammadiyah as the al-Ma'un people. The social action and cultural revolution of Ahmad Dahlan is based on his view about the natural compatibility of the interpretation of the Quran with the universal experience of humanity, and scientific discovery. According to Ahmad Dahlan, the accuracy of tafsir (Quranic interpretation) against scientific discovery is evident in numerous solutions they generate to solve universal problems of humanity. Munir Mulkhan referred to the spirit and ethic of Kyai Dahlan as humanistic pragmatism instead of Protestantism ethos.

This ethos leads to the spirit of civilization. It is evident in all actions, works, and businesses of Muhammadiyah. The establishment of Muhammadiyah Hospital (the PKU (Pusat Kesehatan Umum/Public Health Center) all across the country beginning with a clinic led by dr. Somowidagdo from Malang is one of the examples. The small clinic in Yogyakarta grew into massive health movements that serve as one of the pillars of Muhammadiyah in addition to education. The founder of this clinic was the PKO (Penolong Kesengsaraan Oemoem/Assistance for Public Misery) Board of the Muhammadiyah HB (Pimpinan Pusat/Head Quarter) under the leadership of Kyai Syuja'. This measure was a part of the PKO Board Plan formulated in 1920. Prior to the establishment of the clinic, Dr. Somowidagdo met with Kyai Dahlan to earn his blessings to establish the first health clinic of Muhammadiyah. During the inauguration of PKO Board along with Majelis Sekolahan (School/Education Board), Majelis Tabligh (Islamic Propagation Board), and Majelis Taman Pustaka (Literacy Board) in June 17, 1920, Kyai Syuja' as chairperson planned the establishment of hospital, house for the poor and orphanage as part of interpretation and practical implementation of al-Ma'un chapter.<sup>25</sup>

### ***Denier of the Recompense***

In the contemporary context, the ethos of al-Ma'un discussed above is exposed to more complex and sophisticated challenges of life. The current social-economic-political system is in the middle of fierce contestation between Libertarian and Keynesian ideology on the nature's capacity to provide resources for the people in the planet. The modern consumption exhausts natural capitals both renewable and non-renewable including fossil fuel, forest, fishery, land, water, and climate system. Such has undeniably ripped the resources, wealth, and power from the majority to the minority; creating increasing concentration on wealth and power; and encourage extravagant lifestyle among the powerful few; and at the same time create deprivation and slavery for billions of people; and accelerate destruction of natural resources that will endanger the life of billion others. If such tendency is ignored, it will dismiss humanity.

Such description is similar to, in simpler context, with the history of the revelation of al-Ma'un chapter. Similar to the Bretton Woods trio (IMF, World Bank, WTO), the pre-Islamic Mecca society, acknowledge the *jahiliyah/ignorance trio* – Abu Sufyan, Abu Jahl, and al-'Ash Ibn Walid.<sup>26</sup> They are the Scrooge of the Arab world.

<sup>21</sup> KRH. Hadjid, (2013), *Pelajaran KHA Dahlan*, p. 65.

<sup>22</sup> Abdul Munir Mulkhan (2010), *Kyai Ahmad Dahlan: Jejak Pembaruan Sosial dan Kemanusiaan*, Jakarta: Kompas, p. 6.

<sup>23</sup> Robert W Hefner, Sukidi Mulyadi, Abdul Munir Mulkhan (2008), *Api Pembaruan*, p. 110.

<sup>24</sup> M. Yusron Asroffie (1983), *Kiai Haji Ahmad Dahlan: Pemikiran dan Kepemimpinannya*, Yogyakarta: Offset, p. 71.

<sup>25</sup> Lutfi Effendi, "Tafsir Amali dan Gerakan Kesehatan" <http://suaramuhammadiyah.com/kolom/2016/04/22/tafsir-amali-dan-gerakan-kesehatan/>.

<sup>26</sup> Quraish Shihab (2002), *Tafsir al-Misbah*, Jakarta: Lentera Hati, vol. 15, p. 545.

They are greedy, hedonistic, and voyeuristic. They display wealth in front of the poor and deprived. They do not have any empathy whatsoever to people's misery. The curse as Denier of The Recompense is applied to apathetical individual, group, and system denying solidarity to the poor and marginalized. Their characteristics are blatant, they like to oppress individual, group, and community; an "orphan" state that is socially, economically, and politically helpless; they ignore poverty and impoverishment; they are the actors or supporters of impoverishment and oppression; they never side with the weak and deprived.

Comparably, Muslims performing the 5 daily prayers diligently will not earn salvation through their prayers in the hereafter, if they do not help the orphan and the poor in their lifetime. This is the "endangering" nature of prayers as a result of their ignorance towards poverty and oppression exposed to them. Religious leaders and devotees who are cursed are ones "preventing, blocking" individuals, groups and system promoting assistance and empowerment to the poor.

Therefore, struggle against corrupt and oppressive system can only appear from religious consciousness and "prayers in favor of justice" —rights to speak up and rights to life and living. Whoever struggle against corrupt regime, provide charity, and empower the capacity, power, and authority to the poor is one whose prayer salvages humanity, he/she is the martyr for the poor; he/she is ready to die defending the rights of the poor from capitalist-neoliberal criminal and their foolish followers.

### ***The spirit of Profit for Virtue***

The vision of siding with the poor and the marginalized as stated in the al-Ma'un ethos is closely linked to *al-Takathur* chapter. First, al-Ma'un chapter was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in chronological order with al-Takathur chapter. Second, substantively, there is similar message emphasizing prohibition to be ignorance, negligent, careless, and lazy, in terms of investment to and support for those in need.

Al-Takathur itself literally means "to accumulate, collect, hoard" something. The word also has several meanings including; a natural instinct of human being to accumulate wealth; legally accumulation of wealth is allowed, and therefore everyone is encouraged to do so in order to fulfill their needs and to be self-reliant; Al-Takathur as a system is a capitalization activity through certain process and procedure to ensure justice. If the third requirement, that is ensuring justice in the process of accumulation of wealth, al-Takathur drowns itself into the capitalistic regime with characteristics such as accumulation of wealth including in times of crisis and deprivation, monopoly of goods and services; calculating wealth, fortune and loss or profit from sole materialistic perspective; and believe that wealth/fortune is eternal and immortalizing which leads to negligence towards the rights of others for the share of the wealth.<sup>27</sup> Another important characteristic is that capitalism believes in "free competition" between two or more patrons through inhuman and savage ways. Al-Takathur that shall be resented and fought against is regime causing people—especially the poor and marginalized—to experience devastating misery and despair and to be further socially, economically, and politically marginalized. Such regime manifests ignorance towards misery and deprivation experienced by most people.

Therefore, in accordance to the al-Ma'un vision, the purposeful al-Takathur spirit is capitalization of wealth that sides with the poor and oppressed and is devoted to defend and empower the poor from their wealth, power, capacity/capability, and authority deprivation, instead of focusing solely on accumulation of capital. Hence, it can be concluded that the spirit of al-Takathur is accumulation of capital for the purpose of economic, social and political philanthropy. Economic philanthropy refers accumulation of capital through voluntary and required donations—*zakah*, *infaq*, *sadaqah*, and *waqf*—that is aimed to develop independence, self-sufficiency, and authority for their poor and marginalized to manage their economy and build their life skill and capacity. Social philanthropy is accumulation of capital within the framework of empowerment of the poor and marginalized against social marginalization including discrimination, stigma, and enforcement for them to involve in economic activities and social relation that is aimed to maintain gap and discrimination. Furthermore, political philanthropy means accumulation of capital with the purpose of liberating the poor and the marginalized from lack of political participation, marginalization of human rights, and marginalization of legal protection.

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<sup>27</sup> QS. Al-Humazah 104:2-3.

This is the meaning of the “spirit of profit for good”; “the spirit of al-Takathur to enforce al-Ma’un”. Such spirit is supposed to be reflected in every businesses and social services commenced and established by Muhammadiyah and other Muslim communities. It means that businesses and social services—in the field of education, health, and other public goods—are established for social goods instead of profit. These institutions need to be managed well to assure their sustainability by applying cross-subsidy in providing services. The sustainability of the institutions is also supported by philanthropic donation, and profit from the services provided. Part of the profit earned is also allocated to help the under privileged. This way, both business and social services entities survive and sustain without leaving principle of siding with, defending, and empowering the poor. In other words, the spirit of al-Takathur can only be validated if it relies on solidarity to the poor; devoting profit for good.

### **Ethos of al-‘Ashr**

The social-cultural actions committed by Kyai Dahlan certainly follow the thinking and ethos of the movement. KRH. Hadjid, the youngest disciple of Kyai Dahlan, wrote “7 Philosophy of Teaching and 17 Groups of Quranic Verses” as discussed above. According to him, Kyai Dahlan taught al-‘Ashr chapter to his disciples for more than 7 months. The al-‘Ashr chapter is also taught to the congregation of Muhammadiyah every morning at 7 a.m. and to the congregation of Aisyiyah every morning at 8 a.m. This chapter is also taught to the youth after noon prayer when they were asked to copy and recite the chapter.<sup>28</sup> According Kyai Djazuli, one of the teachers of Madrasah Mu’allimin Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta from 1926 to 1956, Kyai Dahlan taught al-‘Ashr in many places and forums, very frequently and on repeat.<sup>29</sup> Based on request from Nyai Walidah, Kyai Dahlan taught al-‘Ashr’ to female workers in Kauman. The congregation was named “al-‘Ashr Congregation”. As Kyai Dahlan preferred to teach al-‘Ashr on repeat in many of his proliferations, the people of Pekalongan referred to him as *Kyai al-‘Ashr*.<sup>30</sup>

In addition to organizing al-‘Ashr classes, Kyai Dahlan also initiated “School of al-‘Ashr Cadres” led by KRH. Hadjid. The result of teaching and inception of al-‘Ashr have embedded in the heart of the youth of Muhammadiyah, and it was reflected in how they named their football field as al-‘Ashr Field.<sup>31</sup> On a daily basis, the football field was a base for PSHW (Persatuan Sepakbola Hizbul Wathan/Hizbul Wathan Football Association) of the Muhammadiyah youth wing, for training. In 1940s, the Asri Football was developed into stadium with highly standardized facilities and audience stage. The architect of the stadium is Ir. Suratin, one of the founders and chairman of PSII (Persatuan Sepakbola Seluruh Indonesia/Indonesian Football Association).<sup>32</sup> The intention of Kyai Dahlan to repeat al-‘Ashr to his students was for them to develop discipline and to use their time wisely for good deeds.

The question is why al-‘Ashr? What is the urgency of discussing al-‘Ashr and the connection with Muhammadiyah ethos? Imam Syafi’i once explained, “If only God did not reveal any other chapter or verse of the Quran, then al-‘Ashr would have been adequate.” Al-‘Ashr chapter is condensed. It covers life and the history of human civilization. The al-‘Ashr ethos carries human to progressive and civilized life in the world and the hereafter.<sup>33</sup> Hamka in *Tafsir al-Azhar* explained that Allah mentioned the dignity of human kind relies on 4 elements namely faith, good deeds, advised each other to truth, advised each other to patience. If the four conditions are not met, our lifetime will be a great loss.<sup>34</sup> We can see how this verse encompasses civilization and the history of human kind. Similar to what is mentioned by Samuel P. Huntington that the meaning of human history is the history of civilization itself.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> KRH Hadjid (2013), *Pelajaran KHA Dahlan*, p. 80.

<sup>29</sup> Information derived from Muhammadiyah leaders of Pekajangan, Pekalongan in the 1970s. According to information from the Regional Leadership Muhammadiyah in Purworejo, KH Djazuli came from Grabag Purworejo, last lived in Sangubanyu Kutoarjo. He is the founder of the Polyclinic Muhammadiyah Grabag, among his nurses named Sarbini who later became a member of the TNI (the national army), once a Commander of the Diponegoro Division, had been Minister of Veteran RI in the New Order era. Lt. Gen. Sarbini is one of the initiators of the establishment of Sultan Agung Islamic University. His name is enshrined into the name of the Sarbini Building in Jakarta. Sukriyanto, AR., “Menangkap Pesan Surat al-‘Ashr”, p. 5.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>34</sup> Hamka, *Tafsir al-Azhar Juz 28-29-30* (1985), Jakarta: Pustaka Pajimas, p. 256.

<sup>35</sup> Samuel P. Huntington (1996), *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, New York: Simon and Schuster.

Al-‘Ashr contains key concept serving the spirit of building civilization. Words in al-‘Ashr like *amanu*, *'amilu*, and *tawashau*, in its plural show quality of life of human kind as collective (*al-mujtama'*). This means that al-‘Ashr speaks about life as collective or the *ummah*. Muhammadiyah has long been using the term *khair ummah* (the best ummah) as the basis of perfect civilization. The best ummah are those living progressive civilization that is the opposite of the word *khusr*, which means ‘loss, destruction, primitive, decadence’, and ‘regressive’. Perfect civilization (progressive) is an antithesis of the *khusr* civilization (decadence).

In order to build the history of civilization in the space and time dimension, al-‘Ashr shares four requirements. *First*, faith (*alladhina amanu*), which means the paradigm of tauhid as the core of Islamic civilization. *Second*, institutionalization of good deeds (*wa'amilu al-salihah*) as works to build civilization. *Third*, science, technology, and art (IPTEKS) as manifestation of *tawashaw bi al-haqq* (mutual advice to truth). Truth is understood in the context of relative truth to allow advancement of IPTEKS in accordance to the episteme of the era. *Fourth*, noble morality as reflected in *tawashaw bi al-shabr* (mutual advice to systematic efforts).

### **By Time (Wa al-‘Ashr)**

KRH. Hadjid, the disciple of Kyai Dahlan explained the meaning of al-‘Ashr as late afternoon or all period of time. There are other interpretations also referring al-‘Ashr as late afternoon or *ashar*. *Ashar* is a time when most people play and commit bad deeds. Therefore, God swear for the *ashar* to emphasize that this period of time is not at all low or bad. Certain period of time may be good or bad depending on how we use it. If we commit good deeds, then time will be well spent, because humankind shall have control over time instead of being occupied by it.<sup>36</sup> According to Hadjid, time is divided into *beginning* and *end*. Everything that begins will end. What we experience today is the result of our deeds in the past. Hence, law of cause and effect is applied. That is the true meaning of life, there is a beginning and there will always be an end. Thus, al-‘Ashr is the true meaning of life itself.

The ethos of al-‘Ashr makes Muhammadiyah as a visionary movement. The movement does not only concern about 10 or 20 years ahead of its establishment. Change will continue to be promoted to adapt to the change in the era. Therefore, Kyai Dahlan often warned his friends to be aware of their lifetime:

Negligence. If we continue to be negligence, we will suffer both in the world and the hereafter. Therefore, we have to always be aware and conscious. Those only looking for worldly pleasures will not succeed if they do not work hard, let alone those seeking salvation on earth and in heaven. They will surely never succeed if they fail to persist.<sup>37</sup>

Similarly, Sukriyanto AR interprets the meaning of *wa al-‘Ashr* as “by time/in the name of time progressing forward,” or “by life that is moving forward”.<sup>38</sup> Therefore, the characteristics of progressive society is visionary which means forward thinking, and forward looking beyond their era. Such culture is characterized by timeliness, committed, creative, dynamic, orderly, hardworking, and open-mindedness and collaboration between civilizations.

### **General Condition of Humanity (al-Khusr)**

“Indeed, mankind is in loss” indicates that generally, mankind will experience various problems and challenges in life (*al-khusr*). During the earliest year of Muhammadiyah, Kyai Dahlan described that in general, the heart of the Muslim community and the nation at that time was not united. According to him, there were three reasons for such separation. *First*, the hearts of the leaders were not yet united and they ignored each other. They contradicted each other due to lack of knowledge which caused closed-mindedness. As a consequence, they created destruction (*khusr*).<sup>39</sup> *Second*, leaders at that time had not shown the praxis of a movement through actions. Most of them relied on rhetoric, or even lie, and destruction (*khusr*).<sup>40</sup> *Third*, most leaders and persons in position of power were focusing on the good of their own group/communities or even their personal interest.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>36</sup> KRH. Hadjid (2005), *Pelajaran KHA Dahlan*, Malang: UMM Press, p. 81.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>38</sup> Sukriyanto, AR., interview, Wednesday, May 6, 2015.

<sup>39</sup> Abdul Munir Mulkhan (1990), *Warisan intelektual KH. Ahmad Dahlan dan Amal Muhammadiyah*, Yogyakarta: Pustaka Persatuan, pp. 123–124.

<sup>40</sup> Ahmad Dahlan (1990), “Kesatuan Hidup Manusia,” in Abdul Munir Mulkhan (ed.), *Pemikiran KH Ahmad Dahlan dan Muhammadiyah*, Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, p. 8.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*



Relying on the advice of al-Ghazali, Kyai Dahlan mentioned, “The destruction of the people is caused by the corruption of the kings (leaders) due to the damage of the ulama/religious leaders (for not giving advice).” Kyai Dahlan continued, “If leaders and ulama of a nation are good, the nature and society will be good. On the other hand, if leaders and ulama are corrupted, the nature, society and state will be destroyed”.<sup>42</sup>

As an impact of globalization, social change does not always bring positive impact. Ecological destruction, climate change, dehumanization, violence in the name of religion, ethnicity, and other issues become the challenge of the sustainability of Islamic civilization. Ulrich Beck mentioned that the challenge of today’s civilization is the emergence of risk society.<sup>43</sup> According to him, modern humanity enters a new chapter in late modernity. Awareness on risk influences process of social, political, economic, religious, and cultural interactions. If the central issue of classic modernity is on wealth and distribution of wealth, then in new modernity the central issue is risk and how to prevent, minimize, and channel risks.<sup>44</sup> The challenge is how to minimize risk of clash of civilization to prevent destruction (*khusr*).

### ***Faith as Foundation of Civilization (Alladhina Amanu)***

Faith is the foundation of civilization. According to Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, *tauhid* is the core of Islamic civilization. Tauhid is the first determining principle in culture and civilization. Tauhid gives identity connecting all elements into one integral and organic unity referred to as civilization.<sup>45</sup>

The tauhid paradigm can be found in the definition of Kyai Dahlan about religion. For Kyai Dahlan, religion is not an object that is injected to the ear. Islam is natural. It means that the teaching of Islam is compatible to the sacred nature of human being. Religion is intangible. The tangible actions are mere manifestation of the spirit of religion. Religion is actually a “spiritual tendency to achieve supreme holiness; a liberation from materialistic influence.” Religious people are those leaning towards purity of faith to God, liberated from various influences”.<sup>46</sup>

People of faith according to Kyai Dahlan—by referring to the verse “*wa shaddaqa bil husna*”—are the ones truly believe in the difference between supremacy and decadence, believe that God created and preserve the universe including him or herself as part of it. Certainly, they also believe that God will reward those who do well and torment those who do evil. This belief really engraves in their heart to the scale that it limits their will. Faith hereinafter is manifested in good deeds.<sup>47</sup>

Therefore, ‘pure tauhid’ is the first pillar of “Progressive Islam.” Purity of tauhid will impact the principle of unity. Therefore, “pure tauhid” is the first pillar of ‘Progressive Islam’. Pure tauhid will imply to the principle of unity, such as unity of creation, unity of mankind, unity of guidance, and unity of the purpose of life. Tauhid produces good deeds ethic where nobility and moral success of human kind may be seen through how they use their time and space to benefit their social environment. The implementation of tauhid is evident in development of civilization and is translated into path to enlightenment, liberation, and universalism.

### ***Institutionalization of Good Deeds (wa `Amilu al-Shalihah)***

Faith will not be complete without actions, most importantly good deeds. In the *Seventeen Groups of Verses*, KRH Hadjid explained good deeds as deeds beneficial for oneself, family, relatives, and all humankind. They are deeds distant from wrongdoings unless they are done to avoid bigger catastrophe. It includes actions like propagating Islam (*da`wah*) in the path of truth and by the means of patience.<sup>48</sup> Kyai Dahlan challenged those declaring that they fight in the path of Allah with a sentence, “Never among you shouts of your ability to defend religion at the cost of your life. You shall not offer your life to God; if He wants it, He will take it and you will die. But, are you courageous enough to offer your fortune for religion? That is what’s important today”.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>42</sup> KRH. Hadjid (2013), *Pelajaran KHA Dahlan*, p. 43.

<sup>43</sup> See Ulrich Beck (1992), *Risk Society: Toward a New Modernity*, London: Sage Publication.

<sup>44</sup> Gabe Mythen (2004), *Ulrich Beck: A Critical Introduction to the Risk Society*, London: Pluto Press.

<sup>45</sup> Isma`il Raji Al-Faruqi (1982), *Tauhid*, Bandung: Penerbit Pustaka, p. 16.

<sup>46</sup> KRH. Hadjid (2013), *Pelajaran KHA Dahlan*, p. 26.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 86.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> Junus Salam (1968), *Riwayat Hidup KHA. Dahlan. Amal dan Perjuangannya*, Jakarta: Depot Pengadjaran Muhammadiyah, p. 51.

Islam will serve as force for social transformation if its teachings are applied to overcome social problems. The social-religious movement of Muhammadiyah is an embodiment of functioning religion on the basis of common sense. Theologically, such is possible with the unity between faith and good deeds. Kyai Dahlan seemed to refer to the *Tafsir Juz Amma Chapter al-'Ashr* on *iman*/faith. In the tafsir, it is explained *yamliku iradatuhum* ('faith that control desire') which produce fundamental good deeds.<sup>50</sup> Therefore, Muhammadiyah consider good deeds not only as rituals but also works for civilization beneficial for the universe. Good deeds are not an escapist act; a ritual of alienating oneself from the humankind and various problems by indulging in rituals and spiritual *dhikr*. Good deeds are creative and solution-oriented actions which consequently require institutionalization of actions in organization instead of individual.

Good deeds are a manifestation of faith. KRH Hadjid quoted a verse of the Quran: "*lan tanalu al-birr hatta tunfiqu mimma tuhibbun*" (By no means shall ye attain righteousness unless ye give (freely) of that which ye love; and whatever ye give, of a truth Allah knoweth it well). "*Lan tanalu al-birra, wa yu'thiruna anfusihim*", to give what you love and to precede others first, defeating oneself is a perfect character (*abrar*).<sup>51</sup> This perhaps is the progressive ethos of Muhammadiyah social services.

Muhammadiyah today works in the stream of globalization as praxis instead of globalization as theory. Globalization and social change in daily practice must be responded through movements of good deeds and kindness. Muhammadiyah social businesses must also penetrate the fields of transportation, communication, economy, science, technology, culture, and others.

### ***Ethos of Inter-civilization Dialogue (Tawashaw bi al-Haqq, Tawashaw bi al-Shabr)***

The inter-civilization dialogue is the result of elaborating the tafsir of *tawashaw bi al-haqq wa tawashaw bi al-Shabr* which has transformative meaning for development of science and technology and strengthening of morality. Science, technology, and morality are primary requirements for dialogue between civilizations. In cosmopolitan era where people are global citizens, dialogue between civilizations is urgent. Certainly, in the encounter between local and global citizenship, there will be difficulty in the struggle of determining and establishing identity. There will be a dialogue between *being a true Muslim* and at the same time *being a member of global citizenship*. It requires a new overarching synthesis as spiritual anchor for those living in a new world within the stream of social and global changes.

In his monumental speech entitled "Tali Pengikat Hidup" (The Ropes of Life Guidance) Kyai Dahlan stated that verily, human beings are coming from "one flesh." He further commanded Muslims, "All leaders shall gather to advise truth regardless of nations. And never once are you giving up before finding truth. With truth we discovered, we will see that people are none other than living with one principle, single knowledge, and one action".<sup>52</sup> This message reflects the ethos of intra civilization dialogue or even universal humanity ethics (global ethics). While Hans Kung proclaimed *deklarasi etika global dan dialog antarperadaban* (declaration of global ethic and inter-civilization dialogue), Kyai Dahlan far at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century had declared *unity of human heart* and *unity of leaders to gather and build agreement*. This is the spirit of dialogue of civilization that continues to be relevant until today. Kyai Dahlan and Muhammadiyah maintain critical thinking and open-mindedness towards development of science and technology and their faith in the Quran including in interpretation of the Quran produced from sacred heart.<sup>53</sup>

The ultimate morality is an understanding of good versus bad, right versus wrong, happiness versus misery, and act based on such understanding. This state will be achieved through perfect mind, that is critical, creative, and free mind obtained from learning. The core of knowledge is the core of Islamic teaching with one principle of truth which looks at human being equally. Everyone is obliged to propagate knowledge and Islam to everyone everywhere. Everyone is a teacher and a student; learning and teaching for the betterment of humankind.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Achmadi (2010), *Merajut Pemikiran Cerdas Muhammadiyah: Perspektif Sejarah*, Yogyakarta, Suara Muhammadiyah, p. 25.

<sup>51</sup> KRH. Hadjid, (2013), *Pelajaran KHA Dahlan*, p. 163.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>53</sup> Abdul Munir Mulkhan (2000), *Menggugat Muhammadiyah*, Yogyakarta: Pajar Pustaka Baru, p. 43–44.

<sup>54</sup> Robert W. Hefner, Sukidi Mulyadi, dan Abdul Munir Mulkhan (2008), *Api Pembaruan*, p. 25.

According to KRH. Hadjid, there are seven fundamental questions to answer: 1) humankind who do not understand religion and refuse to study religion, is this right or wrong?; 2) Are religions different from one another all right? Or are they all wrong?; 3) Do you understand with religion is right and which one is wrong?; 4) Are people rejecting religion right?; 5) Are Hindu, Buddhist, Majusi, Shinto, Judaism, Christianity right? Or is the religion brought by Prophet Muhammad the only one that is right?; 6) Every follower of religion claim they are right and each religion claim that their religion is coming from God, therefore, our question is, “What are the signs/characteristics that one religion really comes from God?”; 7) Are religions outside of the right religion from God obsolete? <sup>55</sup> Despite of these fundamental questions, Muhammadiyah is neither elitist nor exclusive. The organization does not rely on fanaticism to enforce Islam. The early generation of Muhammadiyah is tolerant, creative, and inclusive without compromising the principle of enforcement of pure *tauhid*.

### **Rowing between *al-Ma'un* and *al-Ashr***

Kyai Ahmad Dahlan had taught *al-Ma'un* and *al-Ashr*; the two major ideas embedded strongly in the sub-conscious of Muhammadiyah. The two ideas underlie the vision and mission of Muhammadiyah movement until today, more than a century after. The two short chapters of the Quran inspire Kyai Dahlan in his journey of teaching the Quran. What is left now is how the two theologies are manifested through the spirit and ethos integrated with the system and movement of Muhammadiyah.

#### ***From Ethos to Spirit of Civilization***

The *al-Ma'un* and *al-Ashr* have different logic respectively. *Al-Ma'un* ethos mandates religious dimension to work simultaneously with social dimension as religious piety will mean less in the absence of social justice. Meanwhile, *al-Ashr* ethos draws the line between faith and good deeds. For *al-Ma'un*, social justice is a criterion for religious piety, while in *al-Ashr* religious dimension and social dimension are different entities—although inseparable—which has specific criteria and requirement.

Ahmad Norma Permata explained that *al-Ma'un* ethos teaches that social justice is a component and criterion of spiritual piety. In contemporary discussion, such perspective is often related to the “leftist” ideology namely structuralist view on social injustice versus equality of individual rights. In *al-Ma'un* perspective, the moral evaluation towards social injustice declared that civilization is occupied by the powerful (leaders, the rich, the intelligent, etc.). Therefore, the *al-Ma'un* morality sides with the powerless (the poor, marginalized, oppressed, and weak). The logic of *al-Ma'un* perceived rulers and rich as moral “suspect” of various suffering and hardships experienced by the weak and the oppressed. This implies institutionally to anti-establishment movements.<sup>56</sup>

*Al-Ma'un* insights encourage the establishment of institution or system of life providing chance for the weak to demand equal rights and opportunities in building life. As a consequence, space for conflicts is opened between those aiming for change and those looking to preserve establishment. The structuralist perspective is politically popular. On the one hand, *al-Ma'un* contains simple logic that all men are equal. On the other hand, social structures divide people into classes where one benefits and others suffer. In conclusion, group considered responsible to human suffering are those who are also responsible in helping the oppressed. The weak and the oppressed are usually the majority.

The structuralist logic of *al-Ma'un* implicates the strategy of building of ideal and just civilization. Similar to structuralist group in different parts of the world, the *al-Ma'un* insights are close to idealist philosophy that looks at good as something rooted in the system operating. Good system will result good life and bad system will produce bad life. The *al-Ma'un* logic always aims at formulating alternative system for Islamic civilization. The basic assumption is that social problems, injustices, and inequality are rooted in social system defying from the values of Islam. Therefore, to amend such system and overcome inequality, there is no other way but fixing or even replacing existing system.

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<sup>55</sup> KRH. Hadjid (2013), *Pelajaran KHA Dahlan*, p. 107.

<sup>56</sup> Ahmad Norma-Permata (2015), “Teologi *Al-Ashr* dan Visi Peradaban Muhammadiyah” in Azaki Khoirudin (ed.), *Teologi Al-Ashr: Etos dan Ajaran KHA Dahlan yang Terlupakan*, Yogyakarta: Suara Muhammadiyah.

Meanwhile, al-‘Ashr logic teaches that faith and good deeds—although inseparable from experience of practicing Islam—are different in the dimension and construction. This means that, effort to build one aspect will automatically assist and facilitate improvement in other dimension. However, absence or lack of one does not cancel or reduce the value of the other. Social justice contains the value and virtue of faith, but the virtue of faith can still be achieved without social justice. The al-‘Ashr logic has institutional consequences heads towards free opportunity to achieve good based on individual capacity and effort, protection and appreciation towards personal achievement and result. In this context, the al-‘Ashr logic places civilization in line with moral evaluation. Virtue may not only be seen from the perspective of passive morality but most importantly also from active morality. Glory and success are nobler than defeat and failure in the same moral position. Success is not identical with corruption, and failure is not identical with sincerity. Opposite to al-Ma’un, al-‘Ashr logic tends to look at rulers and rich as role model to follow and the weak and oppressed as warning and lessons learned to avoid.

In an effort to resolve and fix situation, the al-‘Ashr logic does not focus on system and does not encourage intervention and reconstruction of alternative systems. It, instead, focuses on reducing or even eliminating actual problems of injustices faced by the society. The al-‘Ashr logic is close to rational and empirical “liberal” tradition.<sup>57</sup> In the view of followers of this thought, system of life is a culmination of all process of action and interaction of all members of society. System of life (institution) is not a creation of certain group, but the product of will and effort of all people. A good and just system is an open system which provides opportunity for everyone to participate and contribute in life equally. Intervention and modification towards the system is not a good idea as it places one or the other as higher than the rest.

People normally perceived Muhammadiyah as adhering to leftist ideology, because Kyai Dahlan was deeply inspired by al-Ma’un Chapter. However, it is important to note that Kyai Dahlan was also heavily inspired by al-‘Ashr Chapter which institutional logic opposes one implied by al-Ma’un. It may seem strange to identify Muhammadiyah as following liberal ideology. However, if we look closer to the methodology of the movement, we can see that the movement built by Kyai Dahlan through Muhammadiyah is not directed towards building alternative system—social, politics, or economy—but is headed towards providing direct solution to overcome actual problems and injustices in the society.

Kyai Dahlan never formulates ideal system of life; does the social system need to be hierarchical or egalitarian, does the ideal political system democratic or theocratic, or does the economy should depend on state or be separated from the state. Kyai Dahlan focused more on actual and practical works for civilization in overcoming problems and injustices in society with regards to poverty, health, and education. Muhammadiyah tends to be more open to accept reality of system and works hard to overcome injustices in society. As a consequence, the formal formulation of Muhammadiyah institutional goal is rather ambiguous. It stated that the goal is noble civilization and the true Islamic society—without clear indicators and can be interpreted differently.

Which one therefore is the true ideology of Muhammadiyah, the socialist/leftist al-Ma’un or the liberal al-‘Ashr? Many are accustomed to think simplistically by perceiving that if there are two different ideas, one of them is the correct one and another is the false one. Whereas the logical possibility can also include both are correct and both are incorrect. Whether it is the al-Ma’un or al-‘Ashr theology that Muhammadiyah follow, does not depend on free will and choice, but determines by a cognitive construction as a result of institutional experiences lived by a person: if one is living in a situation that does not allow him/her to benefit from the reality, he/she will be encouraged to follow the perspective and teachings of al-Ma’un and look at social reality in structural manner which further motivates him/her to change the system. However, if the person is in a situation benefitting him/her, the person will be dispositional to follow the perspective of al-‘Ashr and focuses on overcoming actual problems in society without bothering the big picture of the existing system.

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<sup>57</sup>Although liberal and left terms are actually connotative, not descriptive but evaluative, the left term tends to be positive while the liberal term tends to be negative. The naming of liberal civilization, or perhaps even more capitalist civilization, is a term used or derived from a group that does not like the system. And its supporters prefer to use the term liberal politically or public choice methodologically. *Ibid.*

The underline is that both theologies are based on the ethos of compassion which leads to the practice of institutionalization of Muhammadiyah civilization. Muhammadiyah is not intended to lean towards one of the two theologies above. The middle way between the two is the best option. When in certain space, time and context, Muhammadiyah should lean towards al-Ma'un, it is a certainty caused by the need to adapt with changes and opportunities. Similarly, the direction towards al-'Ashr will be taken as a response towards certain dynamics.<sup>58</sup>

When the idea of "Transformative Islam" by Moeslim Abdurrahman emerges in public, with the spirit of al-Ma'un, Kuntowijoyo committed an *ijtihad* to move beyond the left (read: al-Ma'un) by offering transcendence in addition to liberation and humanization. Construction of Prophetic Social Science, still half way, are perceived as leaning towards the left due to employment of structuralist critics. However, this *ijtihad* has granted him one good deed in its own respect. Further elaboration on Prophetic Islam is important to bridge al-Ma'un and al-'Ashr. The al-Ma'un theology has produced Transformative Islam, while al-'Ashr produced *Islam Berkemajuan* (progressive Islam). They are both complementary. The humanitarian ethic of al-Ma'un should walk hand in hand with the spirit of al-'Ashr civilization to build the Muhammadiyah rhythm of *da'wah* of *amar ma'ruf nahy munkar* (promoting good, preventing evil).

## **Conclusion**

The outlook of Muhammadiyah as movement and socio-religious organization is bright in conjunction with the capacity of committing positive changes in the perspective of empowerment of the *ummah*. Muhammadiyah does not have to worry about poverty. What is required today is building effective institution with effective leadership. Theologically, it is also important for Muhammadiyah to continue reviving the ethos of al-Ma'un and the ethos of al-'Ashr for development of civilization. There is no struggle but one against our own greed. There is no need of scape goating. Borrowing the term "justice" from Amartya Sen, the ethos of al-Ma'un is aimed to build justice beginning with "resistance against reality." Theology of al-'Ashr, on the other hand, is aimed to realize justice beginning with "accepting reality." Muhammadiyah with its jargon "*Islam berkemajuan*" has the potential to serve as ideology of civilization. Not only theological-philosophy-paradigmatic term, but it also manifests in actual social-economic and social-cultural practices. Therefore, there is a need for down to earth intellectual projects to provide contribution to the existing politics, economy, social, and cultural system. Kyai Dahlan mentioned that knowledge must have practical benefit for human kind; an idea inspired by Chapter al-Ra'd: Verse 17:

"He sends down water from the clouds, then watercourses flow according to their measure, and the torrent bears along the swelling foam. And from that which they melt in the fire for the sake of making ornaments or apparatus arises a scum like it. Thus does Allah compare truth and falsehood. Then as for the scum, it passes away as a worthless thing; and as for that which does good to men, it carries in the earth. Thus does Allah set forth parables."

This verse implies the message of God that only those bringing benefit will survive. This verse provides guideline for Muhammadiyah as a movement to continue moving forward benefitting human kind and the nature.

There are four important components discover collectively in Muhammadiyah, namely: positive factors in organization (strengths), positive factors from outside of the organization (opportunities), factor of aspiration from all stakeholders within the organization (aspirations), and factor of measured result (results). These are the basic way of thinking for future change towards progressive civilization. The ethos of experience, collaboration, life-long learning, and providing benefit are the main capital for Muhammadiyah movement entering its 2<sup>nd</sup> century.

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<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

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