

THE IDEOLOGICAL SHIFT OF MUHAMMADIYAH FROM CULTURAL INTO PURITANICAL TENDENCY IN 1930s

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Abstrak

Tulisan ini ingin menunjukkan adanya pergeseran ideologi di Muhammadiyah dari tendensi kultural menuju tendensi puritan. Pada awal berdirinya, Muhammadiyah merupakan representasi Islam varian Jawa. Ia lahir di Kauman, satu tempat dalam lingkungan tembok Kesultanan Yogyakarta, oleh sejumlah abdi dalem Kraton tersebut. Ia dibangun dengan inspirasi dan kesadaran seorang Islam-Jawa tulen, Raden Ngabehi Muhamad Darwisy (KH Ahmad Dahlan).

Pada perkembangannya, terjadi satu pergeseran di organisasi yang berdiri 1912 ini, seolah-olah NU (Nahdlatul Ulama) lebih pas dipandang sebagai representasi Islam-Jawa daripada Muhammadiyah. Banyak faktor yang mempengaruhi terjadinya pergeseran ini. Diantaranya adalah masuk dan berkembangnya ideologi Wahabi, terutama setelah Mekah dan Madinah dikuasai Saud-Wahabi. Keterlibatan orang-orang dari Padang dalam Muhammadiyah juga berpengaruh dalam pembentukan sikap organisasi ini terhadap budaya lokal. Terlebih, ideologi Muhammadiyah banyak dipengaruhi oleh ulama besar dari Padang, Haji Rasul.

Selain kedua hal tersebut, faktor lain yang ikut berpengaruh dalam membentuk karakter Muhammadiyah dalam kaitannya dengan budaya adalah pembentukan Majelis Tarjih yang berorientasi syari'ah. Pendirian lembaga ini dipelopori oleh Mas Mansur, seorang ulama dari daerah pesisir, Surabaya. Karakteristik keislaman daerah pesisir pantai dikenal lebih ketat dibandingkan daerah pedalaman (hinterland) seperti Yogyakarta.

Kata kunci: Muhammadiyah, ideological shift, Majelis Tarjih, cultural tendency, puritanical tendency.

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Introduction

Muhammadiyah in its early period was well-known with its ambiguous attitude towards politics. In spite of the fact its political sentiments were as anti-Dutch as those of other nationalist movements, the Dutch Colonial Government regarded this movement as rational and safe.² In the cultural field --of Javanese culture-- the Muhammadiyah also wrestled with similar ambiguous attitude. No attempt was made to deny, since almost all of the founding fathers of this movement were *abdi dalem* of the *kraton*.³ Moreover, this movement had and intended to preserve an intimate relationship with the *kraton*.⁴ Yet, this organization proclaimed that its objective was to rationalize traditional practices and to modernize the social system.⁵ Logically, this would imply that Muhammadiyah had an agenda for reforming syncretic customs and making inroads into the feudal, aristocratic social structure which prevailed in Javanese society and which had the *kraton* squarely as its axis.

Ahmad Dahlan, the founder of this movement, provides the best portrait of the ambiguity of this movement towards Javanese culture. He remained an obedient and loyal *abdi dalem* of the *kraton* of Yogyakarta until his death. Although he was a leader of a modern organization, he continued to embody Javanese values such as showing humbleness towards and reverence for a person of higher status, particularly the *sultan*. One of Dahlan's struggles was to simplify the rich Javanese symbolism, such as a *slametan*, by introducing a less complicated form. However, his reverence for the court elite circles kept him silent about the court custom of holding *grebeg*, the big festive *slametan*. It is plausible to assume that the reason Dahlan appeared to have such an

² G.H. Bousquet, *A French View of The Netherlands Indies*, trans. by Philip E. Lilenthal, (London: Oxford University Press, 1940), p. 5.

³ Extract uit het Register der Besluiten van den Gouverneur Generaal van Nederlandsch-Indië, Buitenzorg, den 22 sten Augustus 1914, No. 81. See Alfian, *Muhammadiyah: The Political Behavior of a Muslim Modernist Organization Under Dutch Colonialism*, (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1989), p. 152.

⁴ Based on my personal interview with the prince of Yogyakarta, Gusti Joyokusumo, in Jakarta in 30 January 2003.

⁵ Mitsuo Nakamura, *The Crescent Arises over the Banyan Tree*, (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1993), pp. 47- 9

ambiguous attitude was his wish to preserve his newly born organization. Not only from the Colonial Government, he also needed a native patron to guarantee the survival of his movement. In this context, the obvious patron was the *sultan*.⁶

Another factor which caused Muhammadiyah to appear with an ambiguous attitude towards Javanese culture was the history behind its establishment. One of the main supporters of the founding of Muhammadiyah was the Boedi Oetomo.⁷ Furthermore, two of the three main groups with which this movement had to juggle in its early period were *santri-priyayi* and *non-santri priyayi*. Cogently, in line with the interests of its main supporters and its dominant members, Muhammadiyah paid serious attention to social welfare and educational activities by founding schools and clinics. The agenda for modernizing and rationalizing religious beliefs was regarded as a secondary project. In this period, Muhammadiyah was highly appreciative to Javanese surface culture. Indeed, the majority of its members were thoroughly imbued with it. Javanese-ness was one of its significant identities. There are five pieces of evidence which demonstrate Muhammadiyah's appreciation of Javanese surface culture: (1) the expression of the Javanese code of behaviour; (2) the preference of the Javanese language in its publication, daily communication, and to a certain extent in ritual; (3) the use of Javanese style of dress its formal uniform; (4) the use of Javanese names as a common name among the members; (5) the participation in Javanese cultural movements. Towards Javanese deep culture, this movement appeared to adopt an attitude like that of other modern movements, such as Boedi Oetomo, in Indonesia. It accepted some elements of Javanese deep culture and rationalized or modernized some others.⁸

These facts show us that in its earliest period, Muhammadiyah, was most probably an ideal portrait of the relationship between Islam and Java. Using the Javanese concept of *curiga manjing warangka* (a dagger fits its scabbard), it could be said that, in Muhammadiyah

⁶ Ahmad Najib Burhani, "Revealing the Neglected Missions: Some Comments on the Javanese Elements of Muhammadiyah Reformism," in *Studia Islamika*, Vol 12, Number 1, 2005, p. 101-130.

⁷ Alfian, *Muhammadiyah*, p. 158.

⁸ Ahmad Najib Burhani, "Revealing the Neglected Missions," p. 101-130.

context, Islam was regarded as the *curiga*, while the *warangka* was Javanese culture. Using the concept of *sastra gending* introduced by Sultan Agung (1603-1645), the most powerful and prominent king of the Mataram Kingdom, it could be said that Islam was the *sastra* (literature), while Javanese culture was its *gending* (melody); the former was *dhât* (content), while the latter was *sifa* (*sifat*, attribute). Thus, Muhammadiyah was a (Javanese) variant of Islam.

Following a long process of history, Javanese cultural elements in Muhammadiyah were gradually receded. The shift in the attitude of this movement, from a high appreciation to an ambiguous attitude at best with refusal and confrontation at worst, did not occur abruptly. It was a result of a long intellectual and ideological contact among the various members of Muhammadiyah and was also formed by some external influences. It would seem that the emergence, dissemination, and propagation of this newly established attitude occurred for a period of nearly seventy years or from 1927 until 1995. This paper attempts to describe some important factors that apparently had some repercussion for the changing attitude of Muhammadiyah towards Javanese identity.

The Roots of the Shifting Attitude

It was the establishment of *Majlis Tarjih* in 1927 and the Nineteenth Congress of the Muhammadiyah in Bukittinggi in 1930 that apparently mark an internal root the shift in the Muhammadiyah's make up, including the changing attitude to Javanese identity. Meanwhile the establishment of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in 1926, the victory of Wahhabism to conquer Mecca and Medina in 1924, and the rise of Indonesian nationalism marked by the Youth Pledge (*Sumpah Pemuda*) in 1928 were three external factors that indirectly motivated the changing in attitudes. In this article, I will focus more to the internal problems of Muhammadiyah than to look at these external influences.

1. The Influence of Members from Minangkabau

Muhammadiyah penetration into Minangkabau can largely be traced to the efforts of Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah alias Haji Rasul (born in Manindjau in 1879 and died in Jakarta on 2 June 1945), father of HAMKA (Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah). He, along with Haji

Abdullah Ahmad and Syeikh Djambek, were the three founding fathers of Muhammadiyah in this area. Initially, Haji Rasul introduced Muhammadiyah to Minangkabau from Java in 1925 as one of the vehicles to beat the Communists who had expelled him from Sumatera Thawalib of Padang Panjang and attacked him personally. Muhammadiyah grew rapidly throughout Minangkabau area after the suppression of the PKI (Indonesian Communist Party) as result of its unsuccessful revolt in 1926.⁹

The characteristics of Muhammadiyah in Minangkabau, politically and culturally, were strikingly different from Muhammadiyah in Java. Muhammadiyah in Minangkabau was more directly involved in politics than in Java. Alfian has brilliantly revealed these phenomena in his dissertation, *Muhammadiyah: The Political Behavior of a Muslim Modernist Organization under Dutch Colonialism*. My intention here is to show briefly the cultural and religious inclinations (and differentiations) of Muhammadiyah in Minangkabau and Java. The description of this phenomenon is intended to be one of the ways to give a clear depiction of how the shift in Muhammadiyah's attitude to Javanese culture took place.

The cultural and religious characteristics of Muhammadiyah in Minangkabau were mostly inspired and shaped by Haji Rasul as one of the founding fathers. "More than anyone else, Hadji Rasul indeed appeared to have had a strong grip on the movement, and for that matter it is not exaggerating to suggest Haji Rasul was more or less synonymous with Muhammadiyah Minangkabau" writes Alfian.¹⁰ His role in founding the movement and its dissemination in this area was unchallenged and uncontested by other Muhammadiyah members. Hence, in religious matters, Haji Rasul is a perfect portrait of Muhammadiyah Minangkabau.

Haji Rasul was well known as an unvarnished purist and revivalist 'âlim (Islamic scholar).¹¹ His religious propagation was

⁹ Alfian, *Muhammadiyah*, pp. 240-6.

¹⁰ Alfian, *Muhammadiyah*, p. 258.

¹¹ Alfian, *Muhammadiyah*, pp. 258-9. He cites from Ph. S. van Ronkel, *De Godsdienstige Verschijnselen ter Sumatra's Westkust*, (The Hague: van Hoeve, 1960), pp. 17-20 and Hamka, *Ajahku: Riwayat Hidup Dr. H. Abd. Karim Amrullah dan Perjuangan kaum Agama di Sumatra*, (Jakarta: Widjaja, 1958), p. 117.

entirely intended to revive the religious life of the Muslims in Minangkabau, bringing them back to the orthodox teachings of Islam and to purify irreligious elements from the practices of Muslim community. "His approach was harsh, unforgiving and unrelenting. His *tabligh* (religious propagation) were characterized by criticisms and attacks on all practices with which he did not agree; even minor questions were not spared" writes Deliar Noer.¹² He combated any peculiarities existing in his society which, in his opinion, could not be traced to the Qur'an and the Prophet traditions.

Haji Rasul, for example, criticized aggressively the system of inheritance which prevailed in Minangkabau which gave the right of inheritance to *kemanakan* (nephews and nieces). In his statement, "those who rule with laws which are not originated from Allah are the deviators from religion, oppressors, hypocrites."¹³ He forced Muslim women to use veil (hair cover) and prohibited them for wearing *kebaya* (fitted women's blouse). He even rejected the custom of holding a *kenduri* (public prayer and ritual meal) when his father died in 1907, while Ahmad Dahlan allowed people to hold a seven-day *tahlilan* when his father died, though it happened in the earlier time (1896).¹⁴ Consequently, his religious stance put him radically in opposition to the traditionalist '*ulamâ*, *Kaum Kolot* or *Kaum Kuno* or *Kaum Tua*, and those who are commonly called *Kaum Adat*, people who preserve local customs and traditions.¹⁵

In the Nineteenth Congress of Muhammadiyah in Bukittinggi in 1930, Haji Rasul was the person who strongly rejected and considered

¹² Deliar Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, 1900-1942*, (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 37.

¹³ Alfian, *Muhammadiyah*, p. 261. He cites from *Mailrapport 1453xx/27*: "Moehammadijah-beweging op Sumatra's Weskust", infra a report prepared by Controleur (local administrative supervisor) van Dam, dated Maninjau 14 November 1925.

¹⁴ James L. Peacock, "Dahlan and Rasul: Indonesian Muslim Reformers," in A.L. Becker and Aran A. Yengoyan (eds.), *The Imagination of Reality: Essays in Southeast Asian Coherence Systems*, (Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex Publishing Corporation, 1979), p. 259; D. Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, 1900-1942*, p. 37 note 20; H. Suja', *Muhammadiyah dan Pendorongnya*, (Yogyakarta: Pimpinan Pusat Muhammadiyah Majelis Pustaka, 1989), p. 6.

¹⁵ Alfian, *Muhammadiyah*, pp. 241, 258-9.

as *haram* (prohibited and sinful), one of the plans of the central leadership of Muhammadiyah in Yogyakarta. The central leadership had scheduled a joint session meeting between the male and female members of the organization, separated by a curtain, at which Siti Haijinhah, a leader of Aisyiah (the women's branch of the Muhammadiyah), would give a speech. The fierce debate between the members from Yogyakarta and those from Minangkabau occurred. Finally, Haji Rasul opinion was honoured and the plan was changed.¹⁶ Again, this incident gives a clear depiction of the manner of Haji Rasul.

Haji Rasul's religious stance which was more inward looking seems to have successfully influenced a number of prominent figures of the Muhammadiyah throughout the country. A.R. Sutan Mansur (the leader of the Muhammadiyah in Pekalongan at that time and the chairman of the central leadership of Muhammadiyah 1953-1959) was his son in-law, husband of his daughter, Fatimah. A.R. Sutan Mansur ever became a representative of Muhammadiyah in Aceh and Kalimantan. It was during A.R. Sutan Mansur's leadership the preamble of the Muhammadiyah's constitution (*Anggaran Dasar dan Anggaran Rumah Tangga Muhammadiyah*) and the commentary of that constitution (*Tafsir Anggaran Dasar Muhammadiyah*) were modified.¹⁷

In Surabaya, Muhammadiyah was introduced by, among some of the most important propagandists, Pakih Hasjim, an *ulama*-trader from Minangkabau and a former student of Haji Rasul. His propagation, like his teacher, was often in conflict with traditional ideas. Among the contemporaries of Pakih Hasjim, Mas Mansur (an *'alim* from Surabaya origin and the chairman of Muhammadiyah 1937-1943) found a fertile basis for Muhammadiyah in East Java.¹⁸ Hamka, a famous and prolific writer, was a son of Haji Rasul. Hamka's contribution to the formation of the Muhammadiyah's religious character is, of course, undoubted and unquestionable.

¹⁶ Alfian, *Muhammadiyah*, pp. 263-4; J.L. Peacock, "Dahlan and Rasul," p. 261.

¹⁷ Before this time, the Muhammadiyah's constitution was called *Statuten dan Qa'idah Moehammadijah*.

¹⁸ D. Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, 1900-1942*, pp. 77, 226.

The radical revivalism and puritanism of Haji Rasul clearly set him apart from Ahmad Dahlan, the founder of Muhammadiyah. Dahlan tried to interpret Islamic teachings in the modern context. Most of his activities were a materialization and contextualization of the Qur'anic verses or the Prophetic traditions. He tried to catch the meaning of the religious doctrines and to implement it in social reform. Dahlan was also famous with his tolerance, openness, and plurality.¹⁹ Haji Rasul was more concerned with religious rituals and activities of the Muslims, rather than, Howard Federspiel says, "on the accommodation of Islam with Western learning, as was the case on Java."²⁰ He took one of the two sides of Islamic modernism that was the return and revival of orthodox teachings, and abandoned the other side, that was to interpret those teachings in modern meanings. Therefore, it can be said that Haji Rasul was the real father and innovator of the puritan revivalist character of the Muhammadiyah in Minangkabau and everywhere else in Indonesia.²¹

Alfian claims that Haji Rasul was "the actual intellectual father of religious puritanism and revivalism in Minangkabau."²² More than that, the influence of his religious mindset most probably was not confined only to Minangkabau, but also throughout the Indonesian archipelago. Thus, it might also be true to claim that Haji Rasul has been the intellectual father of religious puritan-revivalism in Muhammadiyah. Many characters of Muhammadiyah nowadays model themselves on Tuanku Syech Nan Mudo (Hari Rasul's title after he had made the pilgrimage). The shift in Muhammadiyah's concern from social and educational agenda to religious behaviour was partly the result of the strong impact of Haji Rasul's religious mindset which had insinuated itself into and spreading throughout the whole body of Muhammadiyah. H.M. Federspiel states:

¹⁹ For a good discussion on those topics, see Achmad Jainuri, *The Formation of the Muhammadiyah's Ideology*, (Surabaya: IAIN Sunan Ampel Press, 1999), pp. 69-169 (particularly).

²⁰ Howard M. Federspiel, "The Muhammadiyah: A Study of an Orthodox Islamic Movement in Indonesia," in *Indonesia* 10 (October), Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1970, p. 58.

²¹ Alfian, *Muhammadiyah*, p. 260.

²² Alfian, *Muhammadiyah*, p. 260.

“... the effort to expunge bidah and churafat was given more attention, apparently because of the interest of a new leadership and the expansion of the movement onto Sumatra where Muslim modernist had already taken up the issue. Moreover, it was about this time that the real issues involving bidah, that is, change in accepted ritual, became prominent on Java.”²³

2. The Formation of Majlis Tarjih and the Sharî‘ah-Oriented Paradigm

The establishment of Majlis Tarjih (the Council of Opinions) was formally inaugurated at the Seventeenth Congress of Muhammadiyah in Yogyakarta in 1928. This Council was chaired by Kyai Haji Mas Mansur, an Islamic scholar from north Javanese coastal area, Surabaya.²⁴ The notion of founding the Council had emerged and been decided at the Sixteenth Congress of Muhammadiyah in Pekalongan in 1927. Initially, the motives behind the establishment of this Council were to deal with the disputed religious legal problems (*khilâfiyât*). The Majlis was responsible for deciding and ascertaining certain deeds of Muslims, in particular *hukm* (assessment) of the five *ahkâm* (plural of *hukm*), namely, *al-fard* (obligatory), *al-mustahab* or *al-sunna* (recommended), *al-mubâh* (permissible), *al-makrûh* (reprehensible), and *al-harâm* (prohibited). In the following progress, this Council was growing as the *fatwa* council which was responsible for issuing legal opinions. Another motive for establishing the Council was to protect the unity of the movement. It was feared that the controversies among the members would disperse the unity of the

²³ H.M. Federspiel, “The Muhammadiyah,” p. 65.

²⁴ The strong characteristic of Islam in north Javanese coastal area (*Pasisir*) was puritan. It was commonly distinguished from interior or hinterland area (*Pedalaman*) characterized by syncretistic culture. For the anthropological distinction between *Pasisir* culture and *Pedalaman* culture, see, for instance, Koentjaraningrat, *Javanese Culture*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 21-22.

organization. Hence, the organization intended to mediate in the controversies by creating this Council.²⁵

The above fear seems plausible since the movement was still in the process of making its foundations solid. Thus, any inclination that threatened to undermine the unity must be dealt with. However, the creation of the Majlis Tarjih seems to be in contradiction with the notion that there is no *madhhab* (religious legal school) in the Muhammadiyah and the Qur'an-Sunnah were the only sources for Muslims to consult.²⁶ The notion encouraged Muslims to use their reasoning in understanding and practising religion, hence the flourishing of opinions would be encouraged. However, instead of making a variety of opinion fertile, Muhammadiyah created the Majlis Tarjih as a council with the function to ascertain and endorse certain opinions. In this case, it was commonly said that Muhammadiyah based on Majlis Tarjih. In other words, Majlis Tarjih became the legal school of Muhammadiyah.

In addition, there is a shift in concern in Muhammadiyah's activities after the creation of Majlis Tarjih. Educational and social agendas were the main concern of Muhammadiyah before the creation of the Majlis Tarjih. Certainly, after the creation of the Council, Muhammadiyah was more concerned with the religious matters and the behaviour of its members.²⁷ This tendency marked a strong indication of the shift of this movement from modernization to purification. Although this organization did not totally neglected the former, it did devote a greater portion of its energy and capital to the second project. The movement was more concerned about looking inwards rather than outwards, more interested to the *'ibâdah* –in its narrow meaning— than human relationships and worldly orientation. Muhammadiyah's great concern with ritual and doctrinal behaviour was only to find an equal counterpart at the peak of the hurly-burly politics of the national struggle to independence in the 1940s.

²⁵Fathurrahman Djamil, *Metode Ijtihad Majlis Tarjih Muhammadiyah*, (Jakarta: Logos, 1995), p. 64; Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, 1900-1942*, pp. 80-1.

²⁶A. Jainuri, *The Formation of the Muhammadiyah's Ideology*, p. 91.

²⁷A. Jainuri, *The Formation of the Muhammadiyah's Ideology*, p. 102.

One of the effects of the creation of Majlis Tarjih was the appearance of some obstacles on the path to creating new ideas. Many innovations and bursts of creativity were feared to be the thin end of the wedge, tainted with *bid'ah* (innovation with no precedence in the Prophetic traditions and the Qur'an). Even though some innovations had no clear link with a sort of '*ibâdah*, the tendency to associate them with it was all too prevalent. The efforts of the council and the movement towards a new creativity or way of thinking and innovation were not to change or merely discard and remove the '*ibâdah* elements, but to destroy them totally. Campfire is a good example. This sort of activity was decided as *harâm* by the *fatwa* of Majlis Tarjih in 1932 if a certain ritual of setting a fire –as boy scouts used to hold it– was added to it. This activity was considered by the council to be a kind of *bid'ah*.²⁸

That sort of fear of making the innovative creativity seems contradictory to what Ahmad Dahlan had encouraged in the earlier stages of Muhammadiyah. He says:

People usually reject a new way that is different from what they have been following, because they believe that the new way will cause unhappiness and suffering, even though, in reality, the new matter will actually bring happiness and pleasure. This rejection will be inevitable, unless the (presenters of the new) have the common interests of people at heart and work for the universal human future.²⁹

In 1940, Soekarno criticized Muhammadiyah (and all modernist movements), saying its type of modernism seemed ambiguous. On the one hand, this movement refused to follow the established *madhahib*

²⁸ *Himpunan Putusan Madjlis Tardjih Muhammadiyah*, second edition, (Jogjakarta and Djakarta: P.P. Muhammadiyah, 1390/1971), p. 288; D. Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, 1900-1942*, p. 81 note 140. He cites from *Peringatan Congress Muhammadiyah 21* (Jogjakarta: Hoofdbestuur Muhammadiyah Hindia Timur, 1932), p. 131.

²⁹ I use two sources, both in Bahasa Indonesia and English. See Ahmad Dahlan, "The Unity of Human Life" in Charles Kurzman (ed.), *Modernist Islam, 1840-1940: A Sourcebook*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 345; Ahmad Dahlan, "Kesatuan Hidup Manusia" in Abdul Munir Mulkhan, *Pesan-pesan Dua Pemimpin Besar Islam Indonesia: Kyai Haji Ahmad Dahlan dan Kyai Haji Hasyim Asy'ari*, Yogyakarta: PT Persatuan, 1986), p. 9.

and declared its intention to refer everything directly to the Qur'an and Hadith. It encouraged and claimed the use of reason as the only vehicle to understand these two main sources of Islam. However, on the other hand, its method was textual or scriptural. Consequently, it seemed worse than the methods and the results of some of the *madhahib* intellectuals to whom traditionalists referred from their opinion. Soekarno states:

The difference between the Kaum Muda and the Kaum Tua is that the Kaum Tua accept proofs (statements) from all authorities in Islam, although not supported by the Quran and *Hadits* while the Kaum Muda are willing to admit the validity of a law only if supported by statements of the Quran and *Hadits*, and reject all opinions outside the Quran and *Hadits* even if these opinions come from an authority of Islam of whatever calibre. However, the interpretation of the Quran and *Hadits*, the method of explaining (about the contents of) the Quran and *Hadits*, is not yet one hundred per cent rationalistic, is not yet accompanied fully by reason. In other words, in accepting the statements of the Quran and *Hadits*, in interpreting the Quran and *Hadits*, the Kaum Muda do not always adjust their interpretations to (what is acceptable to) reason but still leave the door open to blind faith. If written in the Quran, if found in a *Hadits* which is *sahih* [i.e. sound], they are satisfied, although sometimes their reason does not want to accept the statement concerned ...³⁰

In line with the project of purification that was championed by the establishment of Majlis Tarjih, Muhammadiyah tended to adopt the Arab culture from the Prophet Muhammad's period as true Islamic culture. The members of this movement then tried to imitate Arab behaviour and appearance. In this context, the process of Arabization came into being, but at the cost of Javanese culture and identity which were gradually undermined. The decision of Majlis Tarjih in 1932 obliged Muslims women to wear a *kudung* (a veil for women which cover the greater part of hair), as a required daily accessory.³¹

³⁰ D. Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, 1900-1942*, p. 81. He cites from *Pandji Islam*, No. 13 (1 April 1940).

³¹ D. Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, 1900-1942*, p. 82. He cites from *Peringatan Congress Muhammadiyah 21* (Jogjakarta: Hoofdbestuur Muhammadiyah Hindia Timur, 1932), p. 131.

Furthermore, Javanese names were also gradually no longer surviving from the member of Muhammadiyah. The members of this movement were inclined to put their Javanese names in the storeroom and to give their children Arabic names. They tended to put Arabic language at a higher place than Javanese language.

There are many possibilities why Muhammadiyah after Ahmad Dahlan's decease was more inclined to ritual reform than social reform. One of those possibilities was the influence of the members from Minangkabau. Haji Rasul and his followers were mostly educated in religious school. They had limited knowledge of the modern world. Their model of fanaticism and revivalism gave a great influence to the majority of Muhammadiyah.³² This religious mindset then dominated and directed the concern of this movement. However, the process on how the members from Minangkabau conquered the intellectual domain of Muhammadiyah remains to be proven.

3. The External Factors

Prior to the Independence (1945), Indonesia was overwhelmed by the mushrooming of the emergence of various types of movements. Some of them were more politically inclined such as PNI (Indonesian Nationalist Party) of Soekarno, while the other had many other interests beside politics, such as religious, educational, or cultural interests. In the preparatory committee for independence and after the Independence -- i.e. in 1950s-- those movements were informally regrouped again. The fierce debate in the *Konstituante* (parliament) between Islamic party and its counterparts, mainly the religiously indifferent nationalist parties, was a proof of the grouping of Indonesian people.

Before Independence, particularly in the 1930s after Ahmad Dahlan's decease, Muhammadiyah grouped itself into religious party and movement. This trend then pushed it into the mould of a type of puritan movement rather than a cultural or social movement. Ahmad Dahlan not only attached himself to the Islamic movement, but also to the cultural --i.e. the Boedi Oetomo-- and political movements --i.e. the

³² Alfian, *Muhammadiyah*, p. 259; A. Jainuri, *The Formation of the Muhammadiyah's Ideology*, p. 86-87. See also H.M. Federspiel, "The Muhammadiyah," p. 58.

Sarekat Islam. The relationship between Ahmad Dahlan (and Muhammadiyah) and Boedi Oetomo was very cordial. The cooperation of these two movements was quite plainly demonstrated in many activities. Politically, after Dahlan's demise, the members of Muhammadiyah only attached themselves to the Islamic political party and did not join any other cultural movement or party.³³

In addition, Indonesian nationalism and the spread of Muhammadiyah throughout the archipelago had an impact on the cultural properties of this movement. It tended to absorb the cultural diversity of Indonesia. Javanese identity was then changed to Indonesian identity. Bahasa Indonesia was chosen as national language and commonly used as the official language of Muhammadiyah. The attitude of this movement towards culture partly followed the government taste. Under these circumstances, Muhammadiyah was being uprooted from Javanese culture and divorced from Javanese identity.

The strong puritanical tendency of Muhammadiyah in religious matters was undoubtedly influenced by the victory of Wahhabism in Arabia when they conquered Mecca in 1924, by the foundation of the traditional organization named Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in Surabaya in 1926, and Colonial policy of separating and opposing Islam from *adat*. Wahhabism was determined to purify religious practices in Arabia, especially in and around the two Holy Cities, Mecca and Medina, and wanted to eradicate various Islamic legal schools (*madhahib*) and return directly to the Qur'an and the Traditions.³⁴ The repercussions of this

³³ D. Noer depicts clearly on why some Islamic movements were often merging in one group. See D. Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, 1900-1942*, pp. 247-75.

³⁴ For the illustration of how proud some of the Muhammadiyah members to Wahhabism, see, for example, Hamka, *Moehammadiyah Melaloei Tiga Zaman*, (Soematera Barat: Markaz Idarah Moehammadiyah, 1946), p. 10 and 108. The attachment of sobriquet or cognomen "Wahabi" in Indonesia to the Muhammadiyah was regarded as honour by this movement. The welcoming yell from the native people of Borneo (Kalimantan) at the 24th Congress of the Muhammadiyah in Banjarmasin in 1932 was "Wahabi!! Wahabi!! Wahabi!!" See *Goebahan Congress Moehammadiyah ke 24 di Kalimantan (Bandjarmasin)*, prepared by Radjab Gani, (Soerabaja: M.S. Ibrohim, 1932), p. 14.

foreign movement gave Muhammadiyah external support in its efforts to purify religious beliefs and practices. The Colonial Government's policy to support and to win *adat* in Indonesia made the Muhammadiyah regard *adat* as its enemy. In this movement's view, the Government used *adat* as its vehicle to domesticate Islam. Thus, in the 22nd Congress of the Muhammadiyah in Semarang in 1933, this movement proclaimed its fight against *adat*.³⁵ Finally, the NU for its part intended to preserve the customs and traditional practices of Muslims. The members of Muhammadiyah were more inclined to absorb Wahhabism and put their party in a position opposed to the NU.³⁶

One of the slight effects of these phenomena was the members of Muhammadiyah were gradually beginning to imitate Arab behaviour and distinguish themselves from the members of the NU in some of cultural patterns. Muhammadiyah and the NU often confront each other, even those related to non-basic principles. As a result, the ideological principles of these two movements drove the two organizations farther and farther apart.

Muhammadiyah's Attitude to Javanese Culture after the 1930s

The foregoing discussion reveals some embryonic hints of the shift in the attitude of Muhammadiyah towards some elements of Javanese culture from the 1930s onward. However, this movement continued to adopt a neutral attitude towards some elements of Javanese culture. Toward *grebeg* and *wayang* (shadow puppet theatre), for example, Muhammadiyah still gives a moderate opinion until nowadays; the attitude of the movement was not especially hostile, but it did not proudly champion these cultural manifestations. In 1993, A.R. Fakhruddin, the former chairperson of Muhammadiyah, said that he did not object the *grebeg* ritual and its modern extensions such as *dangdut*

³⁵ Hamka, *Moehammadijah Melaloei Tiga Zaman*, pp. 49-52.

³⁶ Harry J. Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun: Indonesian Islam Under the Japanese Occupation 1942-1945*, (Holland: Foris Publications, 1983), p. 52; D. Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, 1900-1942*, pp. 222-40.

disco.³⁷ The practice of *sekaten* in the *grebeg Maulud* was regarded by some Muhammadiyah members, particularly those resident in Yogyakarta, as an Islamic practice. *Sekaten* was considered to derive from the word *shahadatain* (Islamic creed). Hence, there was no reason to prevent Muhammadiyah members from participating in this practice, and even delivering Islamic lectures during the *sekaten*.³⁸

As far as *wayang* was concerned, some of Muhammadiyah members would only appreciate this kind of art highly on one condition, it was a reformed *wayang*. The traditional *wayang* which was full of syncretic doctrines must substitute with Islamic doctrines for these. As a result, some *dalangs* then created a new form of *wayang* called *wayang sadat* or *wayang wali*. One of the differences between *wayang sadat* and traditional *wayang* is the logic of the *wayang* story. Demythologization and rationalization of the *wayang* stories is an essential part of *wayang sadat*. Magical power which seems irrational, for instance, is changed to worldly power. The costumes of the performers are also those of adherents of Islam. The 42nd Congress of the Muhammadiyah in Yogyakarta in 1990 put on a performance of *wayang sadat* with *dalang* Suryadi from Trucuk Klaten.³⁹ This kind of *wayang* performance was very different from the *wayang* performance in the 14th Congress of Muhammadiyah in Yogyakarta in 1925, when the Javanese shadow puppet play performed was very syncretic in content with a *dalang* from Solo, Imam Bisri.⁴⁰

³⁷ Herman Beck, "Islamic Purity at Odds with Javanese Identity: The Muhammadiyah and the Celebration of the Garebeg Maulud Ritual in Yogyakarta" in Jan Platvoet and Karel van der Toorn (eds.), *Pluralism and Identity: Studies in Ritual Behaviour*, (Leiden: Brill, 1995), p. 272.

³⁸ H. Beck, "Islamic Purity at Odds with Javanese Identity," p. 273.

³⁹ Kuntowijoyo, *Muslim Tanpa Masjid: Esai-esai Agama dan Politik dalam Bingkai Strukturalisme Transendental*, (Bandung: Mizan, 2001), pp. 213-26. See also Ki Enthus Susmono, "Membumikan Wayang pada Al-Quran," paper for *Halaqah Tarjih: Dialektika Agama dan Pluralitas Budaya Lokal* held by Pusat Studi Budaya UMS, Majelis Tarjih PP Muhammadiyah and Ford Foundation, Surakarta, 5-7 March 2002. Ki Enthus Susmono is a *dalang* from Tegal.

⁴⁰ James L. Peacock, *Purifying the Faith: The Muhammadiyah Movement in Indonesian Islam*, (Arizona: Arizona State University, 1992), p. 40.

Grebeg and *wayang* are two examples of the attitude of the Muhammadiyah to Javanese culture in 1990s. What can be inferred from those two examples, compared with this movement's attitude toward the same things before the 1930s, is a kind of shift in attitude; from a neutral attitude to a tendency towards rationalizing the Javanese arts. Internal factors in Muhammadiyah played an important role in this process, namely, the shari'ah-centred paradigm and the influence of purist-revivalist members from Padang.

The changing attitude of Muhammadiyah members towards their way of dressing, names, and language was mostly determined by one external major factor, namely, the emergence of an Indonesian national identity. Western dress and a *peci* (rimless cap, usually of black velvet), for instance, were and are still used as a symbol of nationalism.⁴¹ Thus, Muhammadiyah members, particularly from Yogyakarta and Solo, changed their formal head-gear from *blangkon* to *peci*. However, some of its members, such as General Soedirman⁴², still often used a *blangkon* as part of their formal and informal outward appearance.⁴³ Bahasa Indonesia had been adopted as the national language since the Youth Pledge (*Sumpah Pemuda*) in 1928. Since that time, most of formal meetings of the movements in Indonesia were held in Bahasa Indonesia. Muhammadiyah also participated in using this language in its publications, meetings and so forth.⁴⁴ According to

⁴¹ Soekarno, the former president of Indonesia, made a great contribution towards propagating the *peci* as a national symbol. He introduced the idea of wearing a *peci* in June 1921. See Kees van Dijk, "The Indonesian Archipelago from 1913 to 2013: Celebrations and Dress Codes Between International, Local, and Islamic Culture," in *Islam in the Era of Globalization: Muslim Attitudes towards Modernity and Identity*, ed. Johan Meuleman, (Jakarta: INIS, 2001), p. 63.

⁴² General Soedirman was the founder of Indonesian National Army. He was also the former leader of the Muhammadiyah's Boy Scouts in Banyumas. See Hamka, *Moehammadijah Melaloei Tiga Zaman*, p. 98; *Profile of Muhammadiyah: Muhammadiyah Facing the Global Era*, ed. Agus Basri et. al., (Jakarta: Bank Persyarikatan, 2003), p. 10.

⁴³ See, for example, the sculptures of him throughout Indonesia.

⁴⁴ *Tanfīdz Hoofdbestuur Moehammadijah: Boeah Congres Moehammadijah XXIII (Mengandung Poatoesan Congres Moehammadjah ke 15 Sampai ke 23)*, second edition, Djogjakarta: Hoofdcomite Congres Moehammadijah, 1938, p. 29, 34.

Hamka, Bahasa Indonesia was used as main language in Muhammadiyah congresses throughout the 1930s because this language could unite the diversity of ideas of Muhammadiyah members from various places in Indonesia.⁴⁵ In line with national development, the new generation in Indonesia then preferred to use Indonesian names or international names, like Arabic and English names.

There has been no important shift in Muhammadiyah before and after the 1930s towards Javanese deep culture. The difference between the two periods is the more beckoning appearance of Muhammadiyah. Before the 1930s, Muhammadiyah was much more concerned with education and social welfare agendas. After the 1930s, this movement paid a considerable attention to religious beliefs and practices. Hence, its attitude towards Javanese culture was clearer than in the previous periods. It was under the leadership of Mas Mansur in 1936-1942 Muhammadiyah paid full attention to the religious beliefs. Actually, Mas Mansur is from Padang. He is a *santri* from a *Pasisir* area, Surabaya, a place which has a strong puritanical characteristic of Islam. Soon after his election, Mas Mansur introduced a new program named *Langkah Muhammadiyah 1938-1940* (the Action of the Muhammadiyah 1938-1940). The most important part of this new action was to purify religious beliefs.⁴⁶ Mas Mansur himself taught and propagated his ideas on *iman* and *tawhid* in Muhammadiyah's schools. In Hadikusuma's view, Mas Mansur was the person who built the theology of Muhammadiyah.⁴⁷ He was also the person who outlined the ideology of Muhammadiyah.⁴⁸ One of the important pieces of evidence for this phenomenon was the publication of Mas Mansur's book, *Risala Tauhid dan Sjjirik*. In this book he explained how the members of Muhammadiyah should deal with some Javanese practices such as the belief in the power of *dukun* (witch, sorcerer, shaman) and the magical power of stones, trees, tomb and so forth. In this book, Mansur made

⁴⁵ Hamka, *Moehammadijah Melaloei Tiga Zaman*, p. 57.

⁴⁶ H. Djarnawi Hadikusuma, *Matahari-matahari Muhammadiyah: Dari K.H.A. Dahlan Sampai dengan K.H. Mas Mansur*, first volume, second edition, (Yogyakarta: Persatuan, 1978), pp. 43-44.

⁴⁷ H.D. Hadikusuma, *Matahari-matahari Muhammadiyah*, p. 47.

⁴⁸ Hamka, *Moehammadijah Melaloei Tiga Zaman*, p. 107.

remarks on the Indonesian daily life.⁴⁹ He states clearly in this book his condemnation to *slametan* and spirit beliefs.⁵⁰

Conclusion

In its initial stages, Muhammadiyah did not have a head-on confrontation with Javanese culture. In fact, this movement regarded some elements of Javanese-ness as an integral part of its identity. This state of affair was particularly shaken after the 1930s. Some circumstances which can be considered as the embryonic beginnings of this shifting attitude of Muhammadiyah towards Javanese culture are: (1) the participation of a significant number of Sumatran Muslims with their puritan religious beliefs, pioneered by Haji Rasul; (2) the establishment of Majlis Tarjih with its effect of forming *shari'ah*-centred paradigm in Muhammadiyah; (3) some external circumstances which also played a role in the shifting attitude of Muhammadiyah were principally the victory of Wahhabism in Arabia, Indonesian nationalism, and the foundation of Nahdlatul Ulama.

The changing orientation of the leadership of Muhammadiyah from education and social welfare activities to concentration on the reform of religious beliefs and practices was partly shaped by the influence of the Sumatran group in Muhammadiyah. This new orientation of Muhammadiyah was then articulated to some degree into a strong and concrete opposition to some elements of Javanese culture, such as the beliefs in the power of *dukun*. The formation of Majlis Tarjih meant that Muhammadiyah accorded the *shari'ah* in the highest

⁴⁹ See K.M.H. Mansoer, *Risalah Tauhid dan Sjirik*, (Surabaya: Peneleh, 1970), pp. 8-63; A. Mukti Ali, "The Muhammadiyah Movement: A Bibliographical Introduction," MA thesis at the Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, 1957, pp. 90-1.

⁵⁰ For a clear and detailed picture of Mas Mansur's expectation on the Muhammadiyah can be seen from his article "Desa Sjanggit" in *Almanak Moehammadijah ke VI*, Djokjakarta: Pengoeroes Besar Moehammadijah Bhagian Taman Postaka, Tahoen Hijrah 1348 / 1929-1930 M. / 1860 Tahoen Djawa, pp. 108-111. Some characteristics of Desa Sjanggit are: (1) People study religion seriously; (2) They have good behaviours; (3) They are diligent in observing prayers; (4) They are skilled in sports and have some gallantries; And (5) no women in this village.

position of its vision and mission. Everything had to be scrutinized from the point of view of the *shari'ah*, including art. *Wayang sadat* is one example of the intrusion of religion into the field of art. The external factors managed to prevent Muhammadiyah attaching itself primarily to Javanese culture. They directed this movement to adopt an Indonesian identity and be open to international influences.

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