The Muhammadiyah's Promotion of Moderation

Zakiyuddin Baidhawy

Abstract

This article examines the role of the Muhammadiyah as the largest civil Islam movement in Indonesia in promoting moderation in the Muslim community. This study focuses on the Muhammadiyah's efforts to establish its social ideals within the framework of civil society and the *ummah*. The findings of this study state that the social ideals of the Muhammadiyah to establish "Masyarakat Islam yang Sebenar-benarnya" (the Truly Islamic Society [MIYS]) have been implemented by playing its role in three domains. First, in the political domain the movement has utilized the public sphere and public opinion to democratize the state through collective deliberation and checks and balances on the state and public institutions, enforcing moderation and civility in diversity, and influencing the direction of state policy. Second, in the economic domain, the Muhammadiyah has attempted to build self-reliance, justice, and economic welfare through the development of religious-social philanthropy; to represent itself as the articulator and advocator of the interests of the marginalized people; and to build a healthy business for the social welfare. Third, in the cultural domain, it portrays itself as an intellectual and moral strength to enlighten the nation's reason and conscience, to build consensus with the pillars of the state, as well as to enforce contestation and alternatives to the state.

Keywords: *Civil Society; Muhammadiyah; Moderation; Public sphere; Deliberation*

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Introduction

The discourse about the development of civil society both in the western and Islamic worlds, along with its relationship to the concept of *ummah* (community), continues to gain attention. Generally, advocates of democracy have seen civil society as a necessary and sufficient condition for democracy to grow and develop. Civil society in the West is located outside the country, whereas in the Islamic discourse it is closely related to *ummah*. Most Muslims also see Islam as including both *dīn wa dawlah*, which today has come to mean an "Islamic state." Others understand *ummah* as "Islamic society."

One of its interpreters and advocates is the Muhammadiyah. This movement, which is inspired by the Qur'an and Sunnah, has launched major social ideals under the banner of "the Truly Islamic Society" (Masyarakat Islam yang Sebenar-benarnya; hereinafter MIYS). This noble ideal illustrates this socio-religious-based civil society's desire to realize the *ummah*'s ideals in the life of the nation-state.

This background encourages the author to present an elaborate explanation of the relationship among civil society, the *ummah*, and MIYS. The goals of this paper are to (1) discuss the development of the contemporary civil society discourse, (2) elaborate upon the discourse on the *ummah* and outline MIYS' social ideals, (3) locate the point of tangency among these three concepts in order to redefine and develop a *tajdīd* (renewal) movement and promote *al-amr bi al-ma'rūf wa al-nahy 'an al-munkar* (ordering the good and forbidding the evil) that the Muhammadiyah can carry out during its second century of existence, and (4) elaborate on its role in three above-mentioned domains of civil society.

The Contemporary Civil Society Discourse

The civil society discourse can be traced back to the era of Aristotle (d. 322 BCE), who perceived it as political community.[1] This concept was incrementally developed by Thomas Hobbes (d. 1679; political society),[2] John Locke (d. 1704; state of nature and contract),[3] Adam Ferguson (d. 1816) and Adam Smith (d. 1790; economic society),[4] Georg Hegel (d. 1831; bourgeouis society),[5] Alexis de Tocqueville (d. 1859; public sphere; space for free and voluntary association),[6] Jean Cohen (b. 1946) and Andrew Arato (b. 1944; public sphere – social interaction between economy and state),[7] and Antonio Gramsci (d. 1937; anti-political society).[8]

The ever-increasing engagement of non-government actors calls for more attention to be paid to civil society. The emergence of religious and ethnic

movements, along with NGOs and other social movements, are expressive forms of a new civil society. The idea of civil society itself has undergone a significant change during the past two decades and continues to spread in politics, economics, culture, and other fields. In this perspective, the uprising of civil society discloses not only the continuity of a modernity-based political paradigm, but also refers to something completely current.

Contemporary theorists have enriched our understanding of civil society with new ideas designed to adapt the new paradigm now known as the post-colonial paradigm. The other two new approaches are neoliberalism and cosmopolitanism.[9] First, the post-colonial perspective offers a cultural version of civil society. Post-colonial theorists perceive that the West's philosophical tradition has certain limits. Outside the West, civil society is never identified through the perspective of a private interest space and individual freedom based on voluntary and autonomous associations. Only a handful of large cities can be identified as providing space for civil society as prescribed by and understood in the West. A liberal country in this context is generally an exporter of colonialism, for the West is usually reluctant to open itself up to any forms of civil society outside its own tradition. This reality underlies current assumptions on the importance of formulating non-western ideas of civil society.

According to this approach, which begins with Gramsci's idea on culture's role in constructing identity and consensus, civil society is regarded as a counter-hegemonic idea. The main idea here is the existence of communal groups and traditional organizations based upon religious, ethnic, and kinship affiliations that can serve as alternatives for the public sphere. Tolerance is needed to maintain such a public sphere. For instance, most Islamists view the Ottoman *millet* system as one of the best examples of this model. In addition, tolerance can be realized in the public sphere through the efforts of public intellectuals, who are relevant not only as guardians against abuses of power but also as standing in the forefront to offer tolerant interpretations of religion, culture, and morality.

Second, the neoliberal perspective, which tends to look at the American system as the model, emphasizes the role of non-profit organizations as the third sector in terms of providing social services and controlling abuses of power. The main idea here is to regard the emergence of strong non-profit sectors as a way to create a comparative advantage for other sectors, including the market and the state. On the one hand, this perspective minimizes the state's role for the benefit of market efficiency. This emphasizes the idea of Tocqueville, who connects the association sector and a strong voluntary sector with the effort to run a contemporary state democratically.

The third sector is a social reference system that is strongly related to the various economic and political dynamics. Also closely related to this sector is the idea that social capital can be developed through networks, social norms, and beliefs that facilitate coordination and motivate the common welfare. Thus social capital, the economic output of this particular sector, also enables the emergence of the social trust that becomes a fundamental resource of a liberal democracy.[10] This social capital strongly influences the quality of public life and the performance of all social institutions. Moreover, it is an important entity in terms of improving market efficiency by reducing the transaction costs related to formal association mechanisms.

Third, European theorists have proposed a cosmopolitan perspective that combines political philosophy and international relations theories. This recent idea of civil society has emerged in relation to the political sphere. When the nation-state can no longer impose its authority on its people, new civil society movements and organizations present themselves as bridges between individuals and the state. In the case of Europe and Latin America, theorists perceived civil society as an entity that takes part as a "society of role" against different enemies, namely, totalitarianism in Europe and dictatorship in Latin America.[11] Their strategy is based on new values, non-violent struggle, and the protection of human rights.

This perspective suggests that civil society implies pluralism, mutual trust, solidarity, and cooperation and also provides a framework for an individual struggle against the state. Civil society contains a normative signification as the project to be realized on a global scale. *Global civil society* is a normative category perceived as being able to provide the agency needed to support the democratization of institutions at the global level. This term relates to the effort of civilizing or democratizing globalization via processes that allow groups, movements, and individuals to demand the global rule of law, global justice, and global empowerment. Within this framework, civil society presents resources for global justice from the bottom up.

The Concept of *Ummah*

To understand civil society from the Islamic perspective, we can start by elaborating the concept of *ummah*. In the Qur'an, this term is derived from *amm* (to intend), which is commonly used in the context of a person meaning or intending to follow a leader or a religion. It is also used to define the will to "occupy" one's place or generation, as well as to denote a variety of birds.

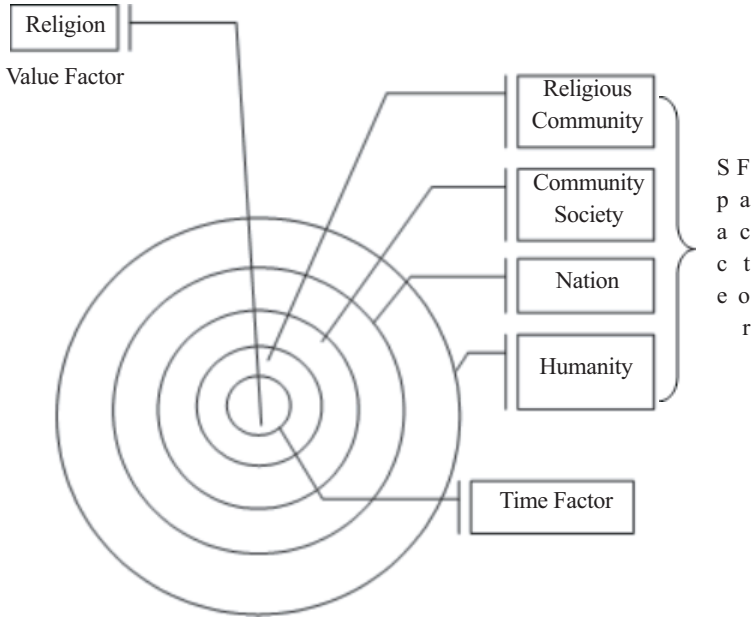
The third one means religion, as in "Nay! They say: 'We found our fathers following a certain way and religion, and we guide ourselves by their footsteps'" and similarly, "We sent not a warner before you (O Muhammad) to any town (people) but the luxurious ones among them said: 'We found our fathers following a certain way and religion, and we will indeed follow their footsteps'" (Q. 43:22-23). The fourth one specified a period of time in history, as in "And if We delay the torment for them till a determined term, they are sure to say, 'What keeps it back?' Verily, on the day it reaches them, nothing will turn it away from them, and they will be surrounded by that at which they used to mock!" (Q. 11:8).

The sixth one means the humanity as a whole or human unity, as in "Humanity was one community" (Q. 2:213) and "Were it not that all humanity would have become of one community, We would have provided for those who disbelieve in the Most Beneficent silver roofs for their houses, and elevators (and stairways, etc. of silver) whereby they ascend" (Q. 43:33). The seventh one indicates a religious community, which combines the first (state and community) and third (religion) meanings. It is specifically reflected when the Qur'an addresses Muslims, as in: "Thus We have made you, a *wasaṭ* (just) (and the best) nation, that you be witnesses over humanity and the Messenger be a witness over you. And We made the *qiblah* which you used to face only to test those who followed the Messenger from those who would turn on their heels (i.e., disobey him)" (Q. 2:143) and "You [Muslims] are the best of peoples ever raised up for humanity" (Q. 3:110).

These six Qur'anic meanings provide the framework for understanding this term's true meaning (see figure 1). The three relevant ideas here are (1) the value factor, the root/foundation of the *ummah*'s establishment, referring to its root *amm*. When defined as religion (regardless of the religion), it implies a certain purpose or attachment toward certain value-laden beliefs; (2) *ummah* underlines the importance of the *time factor*, namely, a certain time span in the course of history that is used to establish the particular community; and (3) *ummah* includes the *space factor*'s scope and its graduation in the process of achievement, starting with the smallest level of religious group, progressing to the community/society and then the state, and finally to global humanity.

The aforementioned discussion enriches our horizon on the existing concept of *ummah*, which is explained in the following terms. In Islamic history, the first application of this concept can be seen in the Madinah Charter, the world's first written constitution.[12] Although it knows no territorial boundaries and is often referred to the one *ummah*, in the few past decades we have wit-

Figure 1: The Multilayers of the *Ummah*



nessed several interpretations among Orientalists and Muslim scholars as to its precise meaning.[13]

The *fuqahā'* and ulama also commonly use this term, despite the ongoing debate over its exact meaning, to refer to the Muslim community. Hence the *ummah* is a religious community of individuals who believe in God's oneness, Muhammad's prophethood, and seek to fulfill the obligations mandated by the Shari'ah.[14] However, it is important to note that the Qur'an also uses this word to refer to people of faith, non-Muslims, and Muhammad's followers in Makkah. Therefore, one cannot regard it as a post-*hijrah* concept. Some people think that *ummah* was initially a territorial concept that eventually turned into a more universal one. The Qur'an's Makkan verses use it to refer to a religious community (Q. 23:52; 16:92), which means that this concept emerged in Makkah and developed further in Madinah.

This word also implies unity, integration, and solidarity based not only on an ideological stance, but also on an external organizational perspective. Nazeer Kakakhel elaborates on it in terms of unity and integration, as was the case in Makkah. According to him, *ummah* comprises categories of spiritual-economic-political integration.[15] The idea of *ummah* as spiritual integration was first proposed by Syed Amir Ali in *The Spirit of Islam* (1891).

Since the beginning of the seventh century, Makkah has represented a multidimensional process of disintegration. Islam, which came with the doctrine of God's oneness and Muhammad's prophethood, serves as the medium for this type of spiritual integration. Hence, the true meaning of Muslim unity is ideological because it transgresses race, skin color, clan, language, and so on. It is a humanity united by faith and morality, a humanity that has its life organized and integrated into one inseparable unit by the Qur'an. As no one carries the burden of Original Sin, all are born sinless. However, if they fail to follow God's teachings, they will be thrown into the lowest place possible.

The Qur'anic arguments concerning the Day of Judgment, reward for good deeds and punishment for bad deeds, and paying attention to God's mightiness and unlimited power played a positive and important role in uniting the Makkan Muslims. In this respect, the *ummah* comprised those united by Islam regardless of their social status, for those who embraced Islam had to abandon all tribal affiliations.

Second is economic integration. Before Islam, Makkah was seeing the emergence of mercantilist aristocracy that dominated the means of production in the form of capital and land. The Makkan verses and relevant hadiths indicate that the rich were exploiting the poor and that the wealthy and well-respected families were enjoying a high social status. These verses clearly forbid cheating in weights and measures, for economic exploitation is one of the causes of social disintegration – a state in which the rich use their wealth and power to further increase both. Hence, Islam proposed the payment of zakat and voluntary charitable donations to eliminate this economic exploitation. As a mode of wealth redistribution, charity played an important role in integrating Makkah's *ummah*. Islam also prohibits monopoly, manipulation, and interest (*ribā*). At the same time, the Qur'an encourages alms, charity, and financial endowments (*waqf*) to ensure the redistribution of the rich people's surplus wealth. Today, this practice is known as social security, which strengthens the economic integration between rich and poor Muslims.

Third is social integration. The Qur'an explains the importance of building humanity based on morality, justice, and honesty. When Muhammad started spreading the message of Islam, people from all classes came to listen. After this, he immediately tried to strengthen his followers' unity through Islam's teachings and institutionalized unity to ensure social justice, because all Muslims are equal before God regardless of their social status. In addition, the Qur'an also forbids slavery and implements several measures to free them, primarily through zakat. Muhammad proclaimed:

> Your slaves are your brothers and sisters. Allah places them under your supervision. Hence, of you have to provide for them, the same food that you eat, the same clothes that you wear, and assign them work according to their capacity. If the work load has exceeded their capacity, you must help them.[16]

Fourth is political integration. It is generally believed that this type of integration occurred in Madinah. However, if we look carefully, *ummah* in this context refers to the cohesion between fellow Muslims. While it is true that Muhammad had no political authority in Makkah, at least in the modern definition of that term, those who acknowledged him as God's Messenger would naturally respect him and follow his lead. Their moral obedience also implied political obedience, as both are inseparable given the logical fact that the *ummah* requires a political basis. The core of tribalism in the structure of political Islam is kinship. However, Muslims only acknowledge social cohesion based on Islam, God's oneness, and Muhammad as His Messenger. As all Muslims came from different tribes and clans, uniting on behalf of Islam meant that they had to shift their loyalty from tribal ideas to those of Islam.

Hence, it can be concluded that the first *ummah* appeared in pagan Makkah, differed from the Makkans' tradition, and was inspired by Islamic moral principles. Given that this concept defines the Muslim community, in this context it is considered a non-complex united entity.

The second theory, which considers *ummah* to be a complex entity, was proposed by W. Montgomery Watt (d. 2006)[17] and other scholars on the grounds that the complex *ummah* became a single *ummah* only after the Jews were expelled from Madinah. Watt, who bases this assertion on his reading of the Madinah Charter, explains clearly that *ummah* initially referred to a certain territorial boundary but was incrementally replaced by the concept of universality, which transformed the Arab *ummah* into a global *ummah* by establishing a state inhabited by both Arabs and non-Arabs.[18] One of the most important issues that has to be taken into consideration here is Watt's statement that the Muslim community emerged in Makkah but believed in integration with the Jewish community under the principle of a territorial boundary. Clearly, he forgot that Muhammad had started a revolution through the Madinah Charter, and thus his theoretical assumption of a territorial and complex *ummah* was mistaken.

Both theories mentioned above are usually referred to as the inclusive theory (i.e., a complex *ummah* formed of several communities that join it through a social contract) and the exclusive theory (i.e., a united *ummah* with single-identity members).[19] As the Syrian-born intellectual Basam Tibi (b. 1944)[20]

demonstrated, *ummah* connotes both of these theories based on the dynamics of Muslim responses toward the political situation. Following the Ottoman Empire's collapse during the early twentieth century, the Islamic world witnessed the resurrection of *al-ummah al-Islāmīyah* as well as the emergence of *al-ummah al-'arabīyah*, a secular *ummah* that includes Arab Muslims and Christians. At the end of the 1970s Islam revived *al-ummah al-Islāmīyah*, which gradually became the main signifier of the Islamic movement's response to the failure of nation-state as well as a sign of internal crisis within the Muslim community. According to Tibi, the 1970s saw the shift from the myth of the Arab nation to the myth of Islamic universalism as a counter-ideology to that of the nation-state. The failure to understand the true meaning of the nation-state's structure and social change inspire the revivalists to place Islam and the nation-state in conflict with each other.

In conclusion, the various theories of *ummah* mentioned above explain the variation of thoughts and views among Muslim and western scholars. Nevertheless, both sides agree that this concept plays an important role in shaping the social and political life of modern Islam. These idealizations of *ummah*, both at the social and political levels, are partly determined by religious interpretations and mostly external point of view.

MIYS: Between Civil Society and *Ummah*

With regards to the two concepts of civil society and *ummah* and their practices throughout history, discussing the Muhammadiyah's social ideals in terms of MIYS[21] is very relevant to understanding how this movement is trying to realize civil society and *ummah* in the nation-state context. This discussion becomes even more relevant if we connect it to the reform agenda in Indonesia, which has not yet discovered its proper shape.

Several issues need to be scrutinized here, one of which is whether civil society itself is a value-laden or a value-free concept. Some scholars perceive it, due to their western sociological and cultural basis, as incompatible with the Islamic worldview. Others defend the idea of an *Islamic* civil society,[22] and the rest view it as a neutral ideology.

If the social ideal needed to realize MIYS[23] is no more than a translation of the Islamic vision of *khayr ummah*, which the Muhammadiyah once asserted as the perfect society (*masyarakat utama*), then this vision reflects and is attached to Islamic values. The term *value attachment* was coined many years ago by Kuntowijoyo (d. 2005), who proposed the Ilmu Sosial Profetik (Islamic Social Science [ISP]) in an effort to create a scientific framework for

Islam. He stated that *khayr ummah* can be achieved by objectifying Islamic values via liberation, humanization, and transcendence.[24] This argument also makes it very clear that the word *ummah* itself implies the intention to hold on to religion (read: certain values) strongly.

The second problem is the conflict between the social and political domains. The Muhammadiyah is a socio-religious organization and therefore represents civil Islam. Established in 1912 when Indonesia was still a non-state entity, it has never stopped growing and has consistently refused to insert the concept of *ummah* into any political struggle that seeks to establish an Islamic state. In fact, it made a conscious choice to work in the social domain and cooperate with the colonial government by using more moderate methods (*wasaṭīyah*). Ever since Indonesia's declaration of independence, this organization has remained faithful to its socio-religious orientation by maintaining its relationship with the state based on its commitment to become a critical partner. This stance was once interpreted as "keeping its distance from all political parties." Now, under Din Syamsuddin's leadership, this tagline has turned into "staying close to all political parties." It is, therefore, a historical fact that the Muhammadiyah has never inserted its MIYS vision into the political arena in an attempt to build an "Islamic state." In other words, it regards *ummah* more as an "Islamic community."

The Muhammadiyah is regarded as a non-profit religious-cultural organization. Hence, in the post-colonial perspective it can be considered a civil society function itself as regards being an alternative to the public sphere, which, in this case, means tolerance. Based on this particular perspective, tolerance can be realized in the public sphere through voices and movements initiated by public intellectuals, who are entrusted with both preventing abuses of power and offering certain more moderate and tolerant religious interpretations.

M. Amien Rais (b. 1944) and A. Syafii Maarif (b. 1935), just a few of the country's public intellectuals, actively speak out against corrupt government. The former actually led the people to topple Soeharto's thirty-one-year reign (1967-98) of corruption, and the latter has consistently stood up for the values of pluralism, humanity, and nationalism that are, in fact, opposed by some its members. With their own styles and thoughts, both of them offer religious, cultural, and moral interpretation. Rais has written his thoughts on *tauhid sosial* (*social tawḥīd*) as an extension of *al-mā'ūn theology*, which emphasizes high politics and moral politics.[25] In the meantime *Buya* Syafii, with his expertise in history, has been working to safeguard the Muslims' struggle in order to prevent them from leaving the Republic of Indonesia. Through his religious interpretation of "Islam, humanity, and Indonesianness," he clearly

refuses the idea and political endeavors to establish an Islamic state or even to return to the Jakarta Charter.[26] Both intellectuals continue to promote the importance of upholding morality in the life of the nation-state.

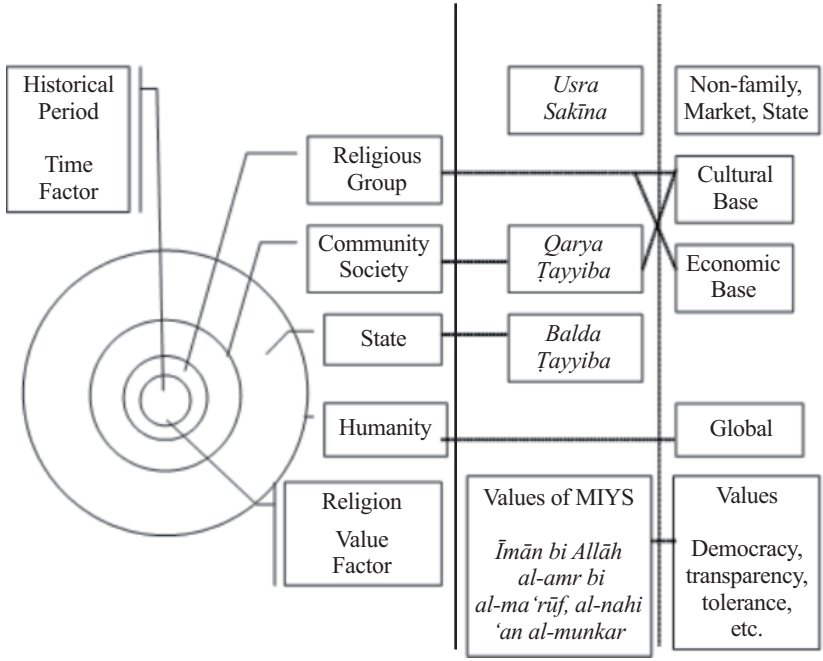
In the perspective of civil society, this movement is neither a political community nor an economic community (market); rather, it is a part of as well as an actor in civil Islam. Hence, MIYS has two dimensions: one of *process* and one of *purpose*. Given that its ideal vision is a *non-achievable goal*, it keeps inspiring hope and spiritual strength. Given that it is also a process that lies in time and space, it can be interpreted in the spatial/locus framework, starting from the level of *usra sakīna* (a happy and prosperous family) and moving up to *qarya ṭayyiba* (a prosperous village-community) and then *balda ṭayyiba* (a prosperous society-state).

Here we can see this vision's uniqueness when compared with that of civil society. If civil society is defined as a space outside of the family, state, and market, then the MIYS framework touches the private sphere, which explains why the Muhammadiyah promotes *usra sakīna* concepts and programs. Objectives such as *usra sakīna*, *qarya ṭayyiba*, and *balda ṭayyiba* should also be achieved over a certain period of time/tempus. This time-space framework makes MIYS a process that can be evaluated even if it cannot be measured quantitatively.

As a part of civil society, the Muhammadiyah can play its role in the sphere of social interaction located between politics and economy. In fact, it is already present there in the form of a non-profit organization as well as a social movement that works on the levels of family, community, and society/state. Although the movement works in between politics and economy, this does not mean that it, as an organization, is identical with all of life outside the state administration and economic processes in the narrow meaning. According to this definition, political organizations, political parties, Parliament, and organizations that produce and distribute goods (e.g., corporations and other forms of partnerships) are not a part of MIYS.

But in reality the Muhammadiyah, in its role as an actor pursing MIYS, still plays a political and economic role. Its role in this regard is not directly connected to control in terms of political and economic authority; rather, it appears to be one that has enough power to influence the nation's economy and politics through democratic association and deliberation in the cultural public sphere. It is important to consider the Muhammadiyah as part of the larger social fabric, for in one way or another it contributes to the political, economic, as well as cultural spheres. Figure 2 below illustrates how, in the MIYS conception, this movement intersects with the concepts of civil society and *ummah*.

Figure 2: Intersection between *Ummah*, MIYS, and Civil Society



Political Role

The Muhammadiyah is neither a political party nor an organization. However, as a civil society movement it did play a public role during the reform period (1998-2014). This discussion will analyze two issues: its role in enforcing political reform during the regime transition and its public role following the fall of the New Order.

Immediately after President Soeharto's 1998 fall, the Muhammadiyah assumed a significant role in the transition. Its engagement with the reform's dynamics had begun with the 1993 Tanwir Assembly in Surabaya, at which Rais' raising of the very sensitive issue of national succession had triggered tension between the movement and the government. Soeharto, who reacted fiercely, tried to prevent him from being elected the movement's chief executive during its 1995 general assembly in Aceh. This effort failed, and the government had to accept his election for the period 1995-2000. This followed two earlier failures: Jakarta's inability to prevent Megawati's 1993 election as the PDI's (Indonesian Democratic Party) leader in Surabaya and Abdurrahman Wahid's

1994 election as the NU's leader. Rais paid for Soeharto's anger by losing his position at ICMI (the Association of Muslim Intellectuals in Indonesia).

Following the 1997 economic crisis, Rais became even more determined to expose the New Order's corrupt practices via KKN (collusion, corruption, and nepotism). Soeharto's power declined along with the economic downturn. Together with other leaders namely, Megawati, Abdurrahman Wahid, and Sri Sultan Hemengkubuwono X, Rais came to be regarded as a leader of the reform movement. These four leaders gained legitimation from the people to speak out in the name of morality. Rais was perceived as the most successful reformist, because he was the first one who blatantly publicized the issue of national succession and eventually forced Soeharto to step down.[27]

During the crisis, Wahid suffered a stroke, Megawati withdrew from public engagement, and Sri Sultan Hemengkubuwono X focused on his local leadership as the king of Kraton Yogyakarta. Thus Rais became the reform movement's sole leader. As Hefner stated, from 1997 until Soeharto fell on May 21, 1998, the world regarded Rais as the true national leader. Hefner mentioned further that not only was Rais the Muhammadiyah's leader, but he also initiated the Majelis Amanat Rakyat (MARA, Council for People's Mandate), which functioned as a watchdog vis-à-vis the cabinet. MARA was also the seed of the Partai Amanat Nasional (PAN, National Mandate Party).[28]

The New Order period bequeathed a legacy of corrupt governance to the new government. While this corruption has still not been eradicated, transparency is indeed increasing. However, it has not yet been followed by accountability of the new government in restoring the public sector and eradicating corruption. This failure to eradicate corruption has encouraged civil institutions and the general public, including the Muhammadiyah, to become involved in enforcing clean government. The Muhammadiyah and the NU, which work together, signed the "National Anti-Corruption Movement" declaration on October 15, 2003. Through this movement, the Muhammadiyah is working to increase its members' anti-corruption spirit and awareness by publishing "anti-corruption *fiqh*."[29]

Outside of the organization, the Muhammadiyah continues to increase its civil participation by keeping track of the corrupt behavior of public officials. It organizes training and capacity-building classes in various regions for activists, students, and the general public so they can learn how to advocate for pro-poor budgets at the local level and watch out for corruption in local government. The Muhammadiyah also initiated the Local Parliament Caucus of Anti-Corruption and provided training in budgeting and strategy planning to increase public participation in overseeing the implementation

and efficiency of the local budget. Internally, it applied the principle of good governance to the management systems of its schools, hospitals and other institutions based on the principles of accountability, transparency, integrity, participation, and justice.

Reform in Indonesia is still very young. Hence, it requires the participation of all civil agents to ensure the ongoing blooming of socio-political democratization in this current state of openness and freedom, which has never existed before. Ever since the beginning of the reform, political parties have been growing significantly. Most of the Muhammadiyah's members participated in this democratic euphoria by establishing the Partai Amanat Nasional (National Mandate Party); others chose to remain on non-partisan and build alliances with other organizations to establish the Jaringan Pendidikan Pemilih untuk Rakyat (JPPR, Network of Voters Education for the People).

The JPPR was very much needed at that time to ensure that the process and procedure of the central election could be conducted in a "*langsung*, *umum*, *bebas*, *rahasia*, *jujur dan adil*" (direct, public, free, undisclosed, honest, and fair) manner. Elections during the New Order period had been dominated by *lip service* democracy, which sought to maintain the status quo through highly organized intimidation, manipulation, and pressure campaigns.[30] The engagement of social and religious organizations, including the Muhammadiyah, in the JPPR proved very effective in ensuring the validity of and legitimating the 1999 and 2004 elections. In fact, the JPPR was the largest voters' education institution during these two elections.[31]

The above discussion shows that the Muhammadiyah, as an Islamic civil organization, can be actively involved in a non-partisan political struggle. This movement embodies the attempt to utilize the public sphere. In line with al-Farabi's idea, it helps public opinion pressure the ruling regime. The public sphere is a space for deliberation, a space that this organization utilizes to discuss matters of public interest (*maṣlaḥah ʿāmmah*) related to nation-state as well as how to achieve the public good (*maṣlaḥah*).

In line with Gramsci's idea, the Muhammadiyah has relatively succeeded in democratizing and *moderating* the nation in order to uphold pluralism and respect multiculturalism. Moreover, it has done this while maintaining civility in the process of living together as a nation (read: politics as an art to organize public life). From the post-colonial point of view, the movement's engagement in the public sphere through its political role seeks to enforce the rule of law in managing public life. Hence, it can be concluded that the Muhammadiyah has played an important role in the area of political engagement, mainly in

terms of contributing to the organized collective deliberation by maintaining the formation of public opinion as an important instrument to control, check, and limit public institutions and also to indirectly influence state policy.

Economic Role

The Muhammadiyah is neither a state (political community) nor a market (economic community). However, as explained in the previous section, given its civil Islam nature, the movement can perform some roles in the political sphere. But does it also play a role in the economy? In the neoliberal perspective, this socio-religious organization provides social services and political activities, thereby strengthening the community's participation and the people's authority. In several respects, it also represents the third sector by working to build the people's sovereignty, uphold justice, and promote economic welfare. In the economic sphere, the Muhammadiyah realizes its capacity by actively addressing economic issues through its economic mission.

The movement has been economically independent since its establishment in the early twentieth century, thanks to its members' voluntary contributions, mainly in the form of membership fees and the charitable businesses that it owns (e.g., schools and hospitals). In the early days, these people were merchants who donated their zakat, *infāq*, *ṣadaqah*, *waqf*, and other charitable grants to develop the organization. Merchants from Kotagede, Pekalongan, Solo, and other trading cities became the main resources in growing the organization, as mentioned by Nakamura.[32] Their economic activities ran simultaneously with their religious activities, for they were inspired by the spirit of earning God's mercy for their financial contributions.

During the last five decades, the organization has been experiencing a convergence between *social entrepreneurship* and *corporate culture*. The former emphasizes innovation in bringing about social change,[33] whereas the latter leans toward enabling the organization's culture to improve its productivity in order to gain the community's trust and, ultimately, earn more profit or income to reinvest in the community in order to finance their ongoing social activities.[34]

This charitable business model, which was chosen to maintain the organization's economic independence (*self-help*, *self-financing*), has expanded from health institutions to economic institutions. A 2010 survey reported that the Muhammadiyah now boasts 284 health institutions: 71 hospitals, 49 maternity hospitals, 117 Mother and Children clinics, and 47 other clinics. In addition, it has organized 565 economic institutions: 6 micro-credit banks, 256

bayt al-tamwīl, and 303 cooperatives. These charitable business institutions are developing their organizational culture and professionalism on the one hand, and working under and following the principles set forth by the movement's Council of Health and Council of Economy on the other. They are the results of their members' initiatives and seek to produce income, accumulate capital for the institution, develop businesses, and provide wages for its employees. At the same time, the income also represents a significant source of contributions to the organization's activities and other charitable works.

In addition, the Muhammadiyah is dynamically involved in various activities related to enforcing social justice specifically for the poor (e.g., the *ḍu'afā'* and the *mustaḍ'afīn*). The income and profit earned by its health and economic institutions are channeled toward subsidies for non-profit charitable institutions, among them orphanages, homes for the elderly, orphanages, life insurance, and other charitable activities.

To realize these roles, the movement initiates religious philanthropical institutions to collect and manage the zakat, *infāq*, *ṣadaqah*, *waqf*, and *hibah*, and their use in a transparent and accountable manner for both short-term and long-term programs. In addition, it actively advocates for and articulates the interests of the poor and the marginalized, those who have become the victims of impoverishment and structural oppression. All of this is based on the spirit of the *al-mā'ūn theology* introduced by founding father K. H. Ahmad Dahlan. Last but not least, the Muhammadiyah also participates in building sustainable charitable business institutions and prevents them from being run solely for profit (*al-takāthur*).

Cultural Role

The Muhammadiyah is active in the cultural domain, where it fulfills its civil society function in the intellectual and morality sphere by strengthening ideology in order to build consensus and contestation. Some of its goals here are to (1) provide moral and intellectual enlightenment (*tanwīr al-'uqūl wa al-qulūb*) for the community and the nation, both of which are experiencing a spiritual crisis; (2) build consensus, which means to construct an understanding with and to support the state pillars; and (3) create contestation in the form of resistance and providing alternatives for the state.

The movement's implementation of these roles can be seen through the work and engagement of its public intellectuals, among them M. Amien Rais and Ahmad Syafii Maarif, both of whom have been very persistent in shaping public opinion and openly criticizing the corrupt state. Rais succeeded in lead-

ing Indonesia toward its peaceful transition after the fall of the corrupt New Order's thirty-one-year reign (1967-98) under Soeharto. Maarif has been working tirelessly to uphold values of pluralism, regardless of opposition from both inside and outside the organization.

With their own expertise, both offer religious, cultural, and moral interpretations. In the midst of the stagnation in national leadership at the end of the twentieth century, Rais tried to inject *social tawḥīd* into the context of political struggle.[35] At that time, this idea achieved a significant momentum in the practical struggle against the corrupt New Order regime. Using the movement's support, Rais challenged Soeharto by raising the issue of succession at the Tanwir Assembly in Surabaya as early as 1993.

His identification of this particular crisis came simultaneously with a multi-dimensional crisis sparked by a failing economy and a moral defect that was, in Maarif's view, *hampir sempurna* (almost absolute). White-collar crime (viz., corruption and collusion) was blatant, as was nepotism. This reality accounted for the strong interest in who would succeed Soeharto. Rais defined the doctrine of *social tawḥīd* in "Purification Chapter II,"[36] which interprets the Islamic doctrine of heresy, innovation, and superstition (*takhayyul*, *bid'a*, *khurafa*) into corruption, collusion, and nepotism (KKN). He mentioned that glorification of the individual, in this case Soeharto, was nothing more than superstition and heresy, and that KKN was a form of *bid'a* that opposed clean government and good governance based upon submission to the law, accountability, democratization, and human rights. At this point, Rais brought the idea of moral politics to the table in order to prevent the organization from being carried away during the coming chaotic power struggle.

Meanwhile Maarif, a trained historian, has been consistent in his effort to safeguard the *ummah*'s struggle so that its members would not step out of the framework of Republic of Indonesia. In his *tafsīr* (interpretation) *Islam, Keindonesiaan, dan Kemanusiaan* (*Islam, Indonesianness, and Humanity*),[37] he explicitly rejects the idea and any political effort to establish an Islamic state or even to revive the seven words (with the obligation to uphold Islam for its followers) in the Jakarta Charter. Hence, he and other intra- and extra-Parliament entities rejected the proposal made by the Partai Bulan Bintang (PBB, Star Crescent Party) and PPP (United Development Party) to revive those words. In addition, he refused to even mention the Shari'ah in the constitution.[38]

Maarif believes that Islamic politics is "salt politics" (i.e., Islamic values flavor the nation's socio-political life) instead of "lipstick politics" (i.e., leaning toward a formal Islamic state). Thus, in his opinion Islam does not oppose

democracy but rather supports and embodies it through the principle of *shūrā*. Islam also supports democracy because it is regarded as the best political system ever devised and it allows Muslim to fight for their rights and realize their vision within the nation-state framework.[39]

Maarif has consistently voiced the importance of upholding morality in governing the nation. According to him, the post-reform era is losing leaders that the people can look up to because contemporary leaders tend to be more pragmatic instead of trying to lead by example. Moreover, most post-New Order politicians have lost their sense of vision and sensitivity.[40]

Institutionally, the Muhammadiyah offers a breakthrough in answering and facing the challenge of pluralism. In 2000, the Council of Development of Islamic Thought (Majelis Tarjih) published *Tafsir Tematik al-Qur'an tentang Hubungan Sosial Antarumat Beragama* (*Thematic Interpretation of the Qur'an on Social Relation of Inter-Religious Community*).[41] Regardless of some of the criticisms made by a handful of its members, the book remains an important reference in terms of opening the minds of the movement's members and the public as a whole to pluralism, interfaith dialogue, peaceful coexistence, interfaith marriage, and apostasy. It explicitly mentions that social and religious pluralism are inevitable. Given this reality, Islam should develop a multicultural stand and be prepared to co-exist with those belonging to different religions, ethnicities, and cultures.

To support the growth of the idea of pluralism, the movement introduced *dakwah kultural* (*cultural da'wah*) at its 2002 meeting in Bali; this idea was accepted unanimously during the 2005 General Assembly in Malang. *Cultural da'wah* means calling upon global Islam to create welfare for all of humanity, regardless of differences in religion, race, tribe, ethnicity, language, and gender. It also means to disseminate *Islām raḥmah li al-'ālamīn* (Islam is a mercy to all the worlds) through a wise and prudent approach and method based on humanity's intellectual and psychological capacity and development. In other words, its members expect Islam to be able to engage with those particularities related to time and space. Locality becomes the modality to spread Islam in the Indonesian Archipelago and everywhere else on the planet.[42]

Under Din Syamsuddin's leadership, the Muhammadiyah has demonstrated its commitment to peace building both at the national and the international level. Working through the Center for Dialogue and Cooperation among Civilizations (CDCC), Syamsuddin initiates and plays a role in the regional and global peace process. He also serves as the chief executive of the Committee on Religion and Peace (IComRP) and is involved with the Asian Con-

ference on Religion and Peace (ACRP) as well as the World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP).

Institutionally, the Muhammadiyah is working for peace between Muslim separatist groups in Thailand and the Philippines. In Thailand, it provides scholarships for students from Patani (southern Thailand) to study at Muhammadiyah universities. To settle the conflict between Mindanao's Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and Manila, it was officially invited to join the International Contact Group (ICG) together with the Asia Foundation Philippines, the Henry Dunant Center (Geneva), and Reconciliation Resource (London), aside from the representation of the United Kingdom, Turkey, Japan, and Saudi Arabia. The movement is also conducting a *scoping mission* in Mindanao for the period of 2012-22.

Taking into consideration the above discussion, one can confidently say that the Muhammadiyah has been and will continue to play its role as the agent of *tajdīd* (reform) in the field of thought, movements, and transcendence (*īmān bi Allāh*) that will overcome the bottleneck of morality and meet the challenges of moral corruption, the absence of role models, hedonism, and materialism that have been poisoning the nation. When public institutions, the state, and their leader are already on the right track, the movement can play the role of stabilizer (*al-amr bi al-ma'rūf*) and partner with others to maintain their consistent progress. Finally, when public institutions, the state, and their leaders fail, it will serve once again as an agent of transformation (*al-nahy 'an al-munkar*) that will openly (*'alāniyah*) or secretly (*sirr*) oppose the failing regime or provide alternative solutions for it.

Conclusion

The above discussion described the intersection among civil society, the *ummah*, and MIYS (the Truly Islamic Society), as well as how the Muhammadiyah has been fulfilling its role of within the three conceptual frameworks (i.e., political, economic, and cultural) and its praxis. The analysis is expected to help redefine the configuration of MIYS so that it will be compatible with and adopted on the local and national level by taking into account patterns and tendencies that will allow it to grow at the global level. At this point, perhaps the movement should start thinking about playing a larger role in addressing global issues. If it decides to do so, it would become a cosmopolitan civil movement and organization entrusted with the mission of realizing "Global MIYS." Finally, by taking into account its past struggles, the Muhammadiyah should move forward and redefine itself in order to achieve a better future.

Endnotes

1. Aristotle perceived a human being as *zoon politicoon* (political animal) and *polis* as the profound arrangement by which humanity's natural purposes can be realized. In this context the idea of *politicon koinonema* is close to the idea of *societas civilis*, for both ideas represent a will to build a society organized by law as a space in which the public interest exists. In such a society, freedom can only be realized in the public sphere. In other words, the *polis* (city-state) is a space in which the priority of public interest intertwines with the idea of civilization so that the community is determined by its political organization. For more on this, consult Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: The Chicago University Press, 1958).
2. Political society is defined as a society that agrees to submit and thus be subordinated by an authoritarian king. Thomas Hobbes challenges the idea of a rights-based community established on the contract that allows individuals to live under cooptation, poverty, and violence. According to him, any community that submits to living in a civil society has to conform to the release of their individual freedom, regardless of the fact that individual freedom is a birthright of every human being. See Thomas Hobbes, *The Leviathan* (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin Books, 1968).
3. Locke introduced *state of nature and contract*: First, human beings at beginning are organized in pre-political community where appreciation on other people compensates personal freedom and interest. This situation is often accused as the cause of the birth of economic advancement and the growth of private ownership. Second, community is perceived as exists before the existence of government established based on the initial contract. Only after the enactment of initial contract does the community committed agreement to build government based on the relation between fiduciary and community. Read John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, ed. P. Laslett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).
4. Ferguson and Smith coined the term economic society to emphasize the autonomy of economic space as private domain; civil society is a natural organization born from division of labor. See Adam Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, ed. Fania Oz-Salzberger (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1995); Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976).
5. Hegel understood it as *bourgeois society*, an organization established to provide space for certain interests. It is a bridge between the family and the state. Civil society is a dialectic momentum, and thus gives birth to universal principles in ethical jurisdiction and presents ideas for the state itself.
6. Civil society is neither the state nor the market; rather, it portrays political and economic aspects, for the reality of the public sphere that is not politically organized, but a space for free and voluntary association. See Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (New York: Saunders & Otley, 1838).

7. According to Cohen and Arato, civil society is an interactive space between the economy and the state. The public sphere is where citizens can discuss common issues and concerns as well as learn about relevant facts, events, and interests from the perspective of others. This public sphere produces public opinion on values, norms, laws, and policies. Public opinion facilitates debates in public institutions. For further discussion, see Jean Cohen and Andrew Arato, *Civil Society and Political Theory* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994).
8. Gramsci (1971) stated that civil society is an anti-political society (socio-cultural interaction; intertwined between the state and a structural class-based economy). As a tool for consensus, it is a moral and cultural reality that provides a foundation for the existing order. It functions as stabilizing agency when it works in harmony with the political structure. As a tool for contestation, it has its autonomy and priority over the state; it becomes the agent of transformation when it is in conflict with power. Read Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, ed. and trans. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1971).
9. See S. Nawaf, "Civil Society in the Arab World: The Historical and Political Dimension," *Occasional Paper* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2002); D. Lewis, "Civil Society in Non-Western Contexts: Reflections on the 'Usefulness of a Concept,'" *LSE Working Papers* 13 (2001); A. B. Sajoo, ed., *Civil Society in the Muslim World: Contemporary Perspectives* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002).
10. See Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000), 163-85.
11. See further Samuel Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991); M. Kaldor, "The Idea of Global Civil Society," *International Affairs* 79, 3 (2003): 583-93.
12. See in Muhammad Hamidullah, First Written Constitution of the World (Lahore: SH. Muhammad Ashraf Publisher, 1968).
13. Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Medina* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), 24.
14. Al-Baghdadi, *Al-Farq bayn al-Firaq* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Halabi, 1948), 141-42.
15. Muhammad Nazeer Kakakhel, "The Rise of Muslim *Umma* at Makkah and Its Integration," *The Dialogue* (1983), 10-19.
16. Al-Bukhari, *Al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaḥīḥ* (Karachi: n.p., 1961), 1:346.
17. See Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*.
18. Kakakhel, "The Rise of Muslim Umma," 20.
19. Muhamad Ali, "The Concept of *Umma* and the Reality of Nation-State: A Western and Muslim Discourse," *Kultur* 2, no. 1 (2002): 38.
20. Basam Tibi, *Arab Nationalism: Between Islam and the Nation-State* (New York: Macmillan, 1997), 1-26.
21. The Muhammadiyah's social ideals to establish "Masyarakat Islam Yang Sebenar-benarnya" (the Truly Islamic Society [MIYS]) was launched at a national congress in 1946, and the formula is valid until 1985. In 1985 at its national con-

gress in Solo, the movement revised its formula to be "the Perfect Society (*masyarakat utama*), just and prosperous, blessed by Allah." It returned to the former formula in 2000. See Sudibyo Markus et.al., *Masyarakat Islam Yang Sebenar-benarnya: Sumbangan Pemikiran* (Jakarta: Civil Islamic Institute, 2009), 25-26.

22. Nadri Abyaneh in S. Larijani. "Religion and the Civil Society," in *The Realisation of the Civil Society in the Islamic Revolution of Iran: An Anthology* (Tehran: The Organisation for the Cultural Documents of the Islamic Revolution, 1997).
23. The Qur'an does not mention the term that refers directly to *Masyarakat Islam Yang Sebenar-benarnya*. The term *khayr umma* is close to al-Farabi's proposed *al-madīnah al-fāḍilah* (the perfect state). The Qur'an also mentions *ummah wasaṭ* (moderate *ummah*), a middle society located between the two extremes, which means the chosen and just society. These two terms imply that the Qur'an itself only states that the highest target of attainment for the *ummah* is to become the best *ummah*, not the only true *ummah*.
24. See Kuntowijoyo, *Paradigma Islam* (Bandung: Mizan, 1991).
25. M. Amien Rais, *Tauhid Sosial: Formula Menggempur Kesenjangan* (Bandung: Mizan, 1998).
26. See A. Syafii Maarif, *Islam dan Masalah Kenegaraan: Studi tentang Percaturan dalam Konstituante* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1985).
27. David Bourchier, "Habibie's Interregnum: Reformasi, Elections, Regionalism, and the Struggle for Power," in *Indonesia in Transition: Social Aspect of Reformasi and Crisis*, ed. Chris Manning and Peter van Diermen (Singapore: ISEAS, 2000), 124.
28. Robert F. Hefner, *Civil Islam: Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 200; see also Edward Aspinall, *Opposing Soeharto: Compromise, Resistance, and Regime Change in Indonesia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), 233.
29. See Majelis Tarjih dan Tajdid Pimpinan Pusat Muhammadiyah, *Fikih Anti-Korupsi: Perspektif Ulama Muhammadiyah* (Jakarta: Majelis Tarjih dan Tajdid Pimpinan Pusat Muhammadiyah, 2000).
30. Syamsuddin Haris, "General Election under the New Order," in *Elections in Indonesia: The New Order and Beyond*, ed. Hans Antlov and Sven Cederrroth (London and New York: Routledge Curzon, 2004), 18-37.
31. In 1999, JPPR trained and fielded 117,000 voter-education volunteers and distributed more than 23 million pieces of voter-education materials (e.g., leaflets, brochures, and posters). In 2004, it distributed 140,000 volunteers for voter education and election monitoring in 350 cities. See Pramono U. Thantowi, "Peran Muhammadiyah di Ruang Publik dalam Lintasan Sejarah" in *Menuju Peradaban Utama: Membedah Peran Muhammadiyah di Ruang Publik*, ed. Piet Khaidir H. (Jakarta: Civil Islamic Institute and al-Wasat Publishing House, 2011), 202.

32. See Mitsuo Nakamura, *The Crescent Arises over the Banyan Tree: A Study of the Muhammadiyah Movement in a Central Javanese Town c. 1910-2010* (Singapore: ISEAS, 2012).
33. *Social entrepreneurship*, according to J. Gregory Dees, enables individuals to produce social values in order to create and maintain social values and serve as the agent of change in social sectors; strive to obtain new opportunities to carry out that mission; commit to innovation and adaption as well as to learn to act openly without being limited by available resources; and enhance accountability to their constituents who served and to achieve the highest results. See Paul C. Light, *The Search for Social Entrepreneurship* (Washington, DC: The Brooking Institution, 2008), 8.
34. See Jacalyn Sherriton and James L. Stern, *Corporate Culture: Removing the Hidden Barriers to Team Success* (New York: Amacom, 1996).
35. See further M. Amien Rais, *Tauhid Sosial: Formula Menggempur Kesenjangan* (Bandung: Mizan, 1998). Rais' conception of *tauhid sosial*, in the author's opinion, shows a Faruqian mode of thought, for his interpretation is in line with the ideas of Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, as expressed in his *Al-Tawhid: Its Implication for Thought and Life* (Herndon, VA: IIIT, 1992).
36. Chapter 1, "Purification," interprets the Islamic doctrines of heresy, innovation, and superstition (*takhayyul*, *bid'a*, *khurafa*) in the context of the fundamental faith (`aqi>dah) and rituals.
37. See A. Syafii Maarif, *Islam dalam Bingkai Keindonesiaan dan Kemanusiaan: Sebuah Refleksi Sejarah* (Bandung: Mizan dan Maarif Institute for Culture and Humanity, 2009), chap. 2, 147-49.
38. Nadirsyah Hosen, "Religion and the Indonesian Constitution: A Recent Debate," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 36, no. 3 (2005): 200.
39. Maarif, *Islam dalam Bingkai Keindonesiaan*, 149.
40. Ibid., 41.
41. Majelis Tarjih dan Pengembangan Pemikiran Islam Pimpinan Pusat Muhammadiyah, *Tafsir Tematik al-Qur'an tentang Hubungan Sosial Antarumat Beragama* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Suara Muhammadiyah, 2000).
42. See Pimpinan Pusat Muhammadiyah, *Dakwah Kultural Muhammadiyah* (Yogyakarta: Suara Muhammadiyah, 2004).