Da`wah Politics of Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah: Coastal and Inland Islamic Society

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Abstract—Javanese coastal and inland Islam is essentially a typical Javanese Islam. It is not Islam that has Arabic traditions purified by the influence of the Wahabiyah movement, but it is also not syncretic Islam as Geertz's perspective influenced by the Islamic great traditions and small traditions. Coastal Islam is Islam that has transcended long dialogue in the span of society's history and transcended serious struggles to produce a characteristic Islam. This Islamic style is called as collaborative Islam, which is the result of joint construction between the agents and the society that produces a distinctive Islamic style, ie, Islam that is in contact with the local culture. Not solely pure Islam but also not solely Javanese. Coastal Islam is a dynamic combination that accepts and interprets Islam with local culture. Coastal Islam is often identified as more purist than inland Islam. seeing that Indonesia, especially in Java, such Islamic variants can be found as a unique da`wah reality, describing the existence of the phenomenon that Islam when in the hands of society is Islam that has experienced humanization in accordance with its ability to interpret Islam. Speaking of inland Islam, the essence is also there are variants that describe that when Islam is in the understanding of society there will also be variants according to the level of understanding of society about Islam.

Keywords—Coastal, Outback, Syncretism and Purist

I. INTRODUCTION

Islam came to Indonesia through the coastal direction and just entered the rural community. Coastal is a society that is very open, adaptive, collaborative on the carrier of Islam and not a complicated society, the coast can also be called community communities around the coast or sea and the community is more acculturative.

The arrival of traders to Java, especially in coastal communities, not just come to trade but also has a mission that is to preach. And the Islamic carriers who are on the coast are mostly from different countries, such as China, India and Arabia.

The preacher of Islam is not purist because Islam brought has changed by its carrier both in terms of culture and practice of its religion. Islam brought on coastal communities using the methods of tarikat and acculturation.

Islam comes using the adaptation process that is run on the local community, that is exchanging ideas, and there is a beautiful atmosphere. In order to maintain a place of Islamic mission adaptation and study towards the tradition is needed.

Coastal communities in the kingdom's perspective in Java include the people of sudra, while the sudra in the royal Javanese stratum in Hinduism is the lowest strata. Coastal communities are the people who are mostly in low strata that is the community of sudra so that it has difficulty when to raise the higher strata while still embracing Hindu.

When the coastal people still embrace the Hindu religion and predicate sudra that they are attracted to the religion of Islam in which there is no distinction of caste in religion, all the same and that distinguish is the level of the devotion of a believer, whether sudra or brahma are all the same.

Therefore, in that social and psychological perspective Islam is more easily accepted by coastal communities who want a change of view and a more respectable level.

Coastal communities are easy to accept and adapt to a new culture. Coastal communities open themselves, and do not easily get suspicious of missions brought by traders from guests who come from many countries.

Coastal communities are mostly more likely to follow Jam`iyyah Nahdlatul Ulama, and this cannot be separated from the influence and strength of leaders of Islamic organizations which are mostly the kyai and caregivers pesantreni hut. Coastal communities in terms of educating their children are mostly more likely to entrust education through boarding schools, and NU stands also in the middle of the coastal community.

Coastal become massive; coastal society is not only Islam but also Hinduism which is ideological. Coastal population has already practiced Islam and no longer known existence of strata.

The coastal religious base is partly NU, and Nahdlatul Ulama in the development of their organization using the method of Walisongo’s da`wah that is cultural and nguri-nguri or to Islamize the existing tradition.

While the inland community is largely a syncretic society. Religion and culture are very strong on syncretic beliefs, in contrast to coastal societies that are easy to accept and adaptive to foreigners, while the inland people are highly selective, closed, not easy to accept new ideologies and ideas,
or cannot easily accept people who have never known, and to know it takes a short time. The rural community is closer to the kingdom, and the strong Hindu religion has a higher stratum.

Unlike other religions that are difficult to accept in rural communities, Islam can enter and be easily accepted by rural communities, because the believer of his religion is considered a brahma by his kingdom and society. Brahma in Hinduism is regarded as a saint and a blessing bearer.

The Strata of Brahmin in Hinduism is high and is linked to a saint who is close to the God. The inland people are mostly ideological, rich, educated and highly placed in the kingdom.

With the assumption of brahma as the carrier of this Islamic mission, Islam can enter and accepted by rural communities. There are several ways that brought this Muslim bearer to get into the interior region, such as through marriage, cultural alignment methods but not muzzling the culture. Since Islam is accepted, this society built the means of worship such as surau, mosque, and Islamic boarding schools.

Religious base of rural people is more inclined to Muhammadiyah organization and its da'wah method is almost the same with NU, which is cultural approach, and also the use method of religious modernism which is purification. In this Muhammadiyah organization, there is a variant classified in four types, as in the theory of Mulkhan (1999).

The four types of classification in the Muhammadiyah include the more purist Islamic-Ikhlas, the Islam-Munu or the less purist oriented Muhammadiyah-NU and there is another Islam-Ahmad Dahlan who does not practice bidh'ah but lets it there, and there is Islam-Munas or Muhammadiyah-Nationalism that does not practice Islamic teachings or also called Marmud or Marhaenis-Muhammadiyah.

Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) founded by KH Hasyim Asy'ari in 1926 and Muhammadiyah was established in 1912 founded by KH. Ahmad Dahlan, both of them are alumni who have studied in Saudi Arabia, both of them also know each other. KH. Hashim Ash'ari was born in the coastal area of East Java community whereas KH. Ahmad Dahan was born in the Yogyakarta palace area which environment is very thick with its syncretism culture.

Islam brought by figures such asaulia or Wali Songo with a cultural approach which is then accepted adaptively and very openly by coastal communities, and then continued and forwarded to the hinterland. It is well received and collaborative although it must use the consensus of fusion culture between the two, because inland communities are not as easy as coastal communities.

Coastal Islam is often identified as more purist than inland Islam. Seeing in Indonesia especially in Java, such Islamic variants can be found as a unique da'wah reality. Thus, when one talks about coastal Islam there are still variants of Islam that actually describes the phenomenon that Islam when it is in the hands of society which is Islam that has experienced humanization in accordance with its ability to interpret Islam. Similarly, when talking about inland Islam, there are variants that describe when Islam is in the understanding of society there will also be variants of Islam according to the level of understanding of society about Islam.

Thus, local traditions are positioned in contrast to purification traditions seen from the perspective of the pattern of experience and the spread of religious teachings which tolerate local belief practices, while the purification tradition emphasizes the religious experience which it considers to be sourced and equal to the great Islamic tradition. It is undeniable that these differences have resulted in the question of interaction between them in the social, cultural and political framework (Sham, 2005: 9).

On the fact that the variants of Islam that makes the Indonesian Indonesia especially in Java interesting to be examined from a political perspective. Writing about Javanese Islam is emerging, especially in political, sociological and anthropological perspectives. Since Geertz (1959: 176) conducted research on The Religion of Java, the research continues, both of which agree with Geertz or who reject it. The author deliberately raised the theme of NU versus Muhammadiyah da'wah against the case study of the inland Javanese village area, and this coastal village deliberately took the starting point of Geertz Research which was caused by its interesting trichome theory about Indonesian Islam. Apart from the advantages or disadvantages of Geertz's theory, it should be underlined that Geertz's theory of Javanese Islam has been a source of inspiration for Indonesian Islamic political research.

This writing focuses on Javanese communities in coastal and inland, NU versus Muhammadiyah as subjects that have a da'wah political context in preserving culture amidst various waves of change in its own way through the process of acculturation or syncretization. Then the first question arises, why is NU acceptable to the more adaptive and open Coastal community while Muhammadiyah can also develop in rural communities whose people tend to syncretize and uphold local culture? And second, how is the strategy of Muhammadiyah's da'wah politics in the Inland and NU communities in Coastal society in the adaptive syncretic and acculturative sorting and unification?

II. THEORETICAL STUDY

Indonesia is a country with a majority of Muslims. The diversity of Islamic societies has rich features and characteristics. This religious phenomenon is a synthesis of the doctrines of normative and historical dimensions. Then, it gave birth to the understanding and meaning of different religious doctrines. The difference of contextual and historical dimensions will also give birth to the coaching of different doctrines, ultimately giving birth to different diversity behaviors (MORA, 2007). Thus, the religious face of
Indonesian society cannot be generalized as a single face. This is solely because of the different kinds of understanding, coaching and articulation.

Islamic studies of religious organizations perspective, shows the existence of various models of Islamic studies in Indonesia. The dynamics of Islamic thought and movement in Indonesia cannot be restricted within a single conceptual framework; the framework of understanding such as, traditionalism, modernism, and liberalism.

In that context, a study of Islamic studies based on local Indonesian culture, which focuses on the dialectics between the dimensions of Islamic normative on one hand and the historical dimension and local culture of Indonesian society on the other. That dialectic, in fact, has been represented by Indonesian thinkers and then institutionalized in Islamic studies at various Indonesian mass organizations. Like Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, both of which are Islamic organizations that have a unique Islamic tradition base, each different from each other.

Islamic studies based on Islamic mass organizations in Indonesia is a study of the tradition of Islamic thinking that grows and develops on Islamic organizations in Indonesia, which is represented on the typology of Islamic thought, both theological, *fiqh*, *tasawuf* and *da'wah* of each mass organizations. This is based on the assumption that the typology of Islamic thought is the result of the dialectic between the teachings of Islam and the reality of history, which then gave birth to understanding and coaching in versions of each religious organization (Nasution, 1975).

In the Javanese society, ideological flows are based on religious beliefs. *Abangan* represents the type of rural agricultural community with all the attributes of ritual beliefs and traditional interactions built on the pattern for its actions.

One of the conceptions of Geertz (1959) which advanced his view of the dynamics of the relationship between Islam and the syncretic Javanese society. The syncretic can be seen in the pattern of Javanese actions that tend not only to believe in the occult with its set of rituals, but also the view that nature is governed according to its laws with man always involved in it. Those laws are called numerology. It is through this numerology that humans engage in a series of actions that should not be against it.

Almost all the life of the Javanese is set based on the calculations that are believed to be legitimate. The happiness or disability of life in the world is determined by whether or not the guideline is done in life.

The use of Javanese numerology leads to the assumption that the Javanese are not physically and mentally embracing Islam as their religion. Here is the beginning of "infidelity" between two faiths: Islam and Javanese culture.

The many Indonesianists, Clifford Geertz is a man of tremendous contribution to the study of Indonesian society. Thanks to his research, Indonesia can be a land of great significance for sociological-anthropological and political studies for the foreseeable future. Thanks to his academic contribution, Geertz is considered by many as the opening window of Indonesian study.

Geertz is a remarkable figure who can perform conceptual modifications. Through his modification capability, Geertz found a link between the symbol system, the value system and the evaluation system. Geertz can unite the conception of the cognitivism which assume that culture is the cognitive system, the system of meaning and cultural system. In order to make the action understood by others, there must be another concept that connects between the system of meaning and value system, which is the symbol system.

The system of meaning and value cannot be understood by others, because it is very personal. For that there must be a system that can communicate the relationship of both, that is the symbol system. It is through the symbol system that hidden systems of meaning and cognitive systems can be communicated and then understood by others (kleden, 1998: ix-xxi). Geertz is a scientist who has a very varied interest in study. He did not only examine the issues of religion and society in sociological or anthropological perspectives, but also studied social history through his study of social change in two cities in Indonesia.

Through an in-depth study of Hinduism in India, which is meant to be a spectacular view of Islam in Java, known as a blend of Hindu, Islamic and local beliefs, it is not found in the Islamic religious tradition in Java. Islam is considered the most local, namely Islam in the center of the kingdom, Yogyakarta. Through the concept of axiomatic structural, then obtained the picture that Javanese Islam is Islam as well, it is just Islam in the context.

III. DISCUSSIONS

A. Understanding Traditions of Islamic Studies in Perspective of Religious Organizations

The existence of Islam in Indonesia is a field of study which is always interesting to be studied. The dynamics of thought, understanding and meaning of doctrine that influence the tradition of Islamic studies that are not monolithic. This makes every enthusiast of Islamic studies in Indonesia produces study findings that continually demand to be followed up. As an illustration, NU mass organizations are claimed to be traditional organizations both in the tradition of Islamic studies as well as their thought and movement. Their wings are stretching from the ends of the conservative to the liberal, from the end of the classic yellow book tradition to the richly Islamic Islamic studies. Even the local characteristics also very prominent in the tradition of Islamic studies that grew up in NU mass organizations. Similarly, Muhammadiyah mass organizations are claimed as a modernist organization (Zulkarnaen, 2011).
This Islamic organization is not a kind of representation of an Indonesian Muslim wing: modernist Islam. The insiders of Muhammadiyah, according to Abdul Munir Mulkhan (2000), point out four variants within the sociology of Muhammadiyah: The Puritan Muhammadiyah, the Tolerant Muhammadiyah, the Muhammadiyah NU and the Abangan Muhammadiyah. This picture identifies that the various Islamic studies in Muhammadiyah are diverse, some of which modernity is adopted from the approach and the western sciences, but there are also those who practiced traditional Islamic studies.

B. Islamic Typology of Muhammadiyah Versus Islam Nahdlatul Ulama

Islam that comes from the Qur’an and Sunnah and is believed to be a single truth, interpreted differently by adherents and constantly changing, due to differences in social life of adherents who are also constantly changing. Then, Muhammadiyah and NU was born.

The Javanese have their own religion which is a local religion that contains the belief in numerology, magical power, and ritual tradition, which is identified as abangan beliefs which concentrated in Java. On the other hand, there are also santris who have a strong belief in Islam and are divided into two: the modernists (Muhammadiyah) and the traditionalists (NU). Both have their own beliefs, rituals and traditions residing in their respective markets. Another one is the city-based priyayi and has different beliefs, rituals and traditions and they are mostly influenced by Hindu/Buddhist traditions. They are different from the two previous categories because they are wong alusan (Sham, 2005: 23).

Islam in Java flourishes through the coast and continues into the interior. Cultural contact between immigrants who frequently stopped by in coastal areas during the early days of Islam in Java led to a tug-of-war between local cultures and outside cultures that rarely resulted in the cultural dynamics of local communities. Then what happens is syncretism and/or cultural acculturation, the practice of believing in the teachings of Islam but still believing local beliefs.

Islam that comes to Java is no longer an Islamic “Arab” tradition but has received a touch of local tradition. Islam came to the archipelago based on its interpretive roots (Azra, 1994). In the field of social interaction, there has been a difference of tradition and religious understanding which resulted in the identification of local traditions that are on the coast in its religious practice of tolerance in such a way as to practices, and beliefs are more likely to be referred to as adherents of NU Jam‘iyah.

Then the purification tradition that existed in the inland society in its tradition emphasizes the religious practice which it considers must be sourced and the same as the great Islamic tradition is more likely to Muhammadiyah.

Islam in Java is not a faded Islam but a living and very important belief that provides guidance on ethics and aesthetic inspiration. Thus Muhammadiyah is a religious and social movement as well. Muhammadiyah is not as it is thought that many people are exclusive, fundamental, stiff but in fact inclusive, hospitable and populist (Nakamura, 1983).

Nahdlatul Ulama is an organization identified and assumed as an institution born and developed, which members are based in coastal and rural areas. Therefore, NU organizations are often referred to as a traditionalist organization. As a result, the pattern of religious thought is categorized as a traditionalist Islam. While Muhammadiyah, genealogy is based more on urban-based society. Even the pattern of religious thought was captured as a modernist Islamic organization (Noer 1973).

The two typologies between NU and Muhammadiyah, such as Traditional Islam aimed at the rural community represented by the NU community and the modernist Islamic group addressed to the urban community represented by the Muhammadiyah community until now still inherent and hegemonic.

The idea of re-establishing the Khittah in 1985 is an important momentum for reinterpreting the teachings of ahlusunnah wal jamaah, and re-formulating the method of thinking, both in the fiqh and social fields; and reformulate NU relations with the state. The movement succeeded in reviving the spirit of social thought and dynamics within NU.

In this method, NU used the method used by Wali Songo. Nahdlatul Ulama is committed to strengthening the cultural approach as one of the important elements of Islamic da’wah in the country. Therefore, the culture of Islam is acceptable to both the early indigenous population of Islam. Local Islamic culture is increasingly threatened by a variety of cultures and ideologies, both emerging from the west or east. As a result, the effort to introduce Islam as a religion of peace and beauty-loving is even more opaque by the cultural struggle.

NU made various efforts to acculturate the culture to remain a strong khittah organization founded by KH Hasyim Asy’ari. One of them through socialization efforts to boarding school which is a potential cadre of NU. Including providing awareness to the nahdliyyin citizens about the importance of using culture in da’wah, “NU concern to the cadre as a cultural movement and NU does not enter the political area.”

Muhammadiyah in its Cultural Da’wah used a strategy of gradual social change in accordance with empirical conditions directed to the development of Islamic life. Relying on purifying the understanding and practice of Islamic teachings by living ijtihad and tajdid, so that purification of Islamic teachings should not be rigid, and exclusive, instead become more open and have a high rationality to be accepted by all parties. By focusing on the awareness of faith through human potential, it is hoped that the ummah will accept and fulfill all Islamic teachings that are gradually in line with the social,
economic, cultural, political, and diversity of potential of each group of people.

The emergence of the concept of cultural da’wah, driven by the desire of Muhammadiyah to develop its da’wah wings that touch to all layers of Muslims with their variety of socio-cultural conditions. With the cultural dakwah, Muhammadiyah wants to understand the plurality of cultures, so that the da’wah addressed to them is done through cultural dialogue, so that it reduces the conflicts that have been considered less profitable. However, the da’wah itself adheres to the principle of purification (salafiyyah) and renewal (tajdidiyah). Thus, the cultural da’wah will actually strengthen the principles of da’wah and amar makruf nahi munkar Muhammadiyah which is based on three principles namely tabsyr, islah, and tajdid.

The principle of tabsyir is the effort of Muhammadiyah to approach and embrace every potential of the Muslims (Ummah) and non-Muslims (Umwa) to convert to Islamic in order to get Islamic guidance in wise ways and good teaching, and better discussion and debate (mujadalah).

The principle of islah is an effort to fix and improve the way of Islam that is followed by the ummah of Islam, especially the Muhammadiyah people, by refining it as directed by syar’i that derived from the Qur’an and the sunnah of the Prophet.

C. The culture and style of Islam in Javanese Society: Coastal and Inland

Geographically and culturally, Javanese society can be divided into three main divisions, namely: (a) Negarigung, (b) Mancanegari, and (c) Coastal. The culture in the Negarigung region is a culture that is sourced and rooted in the palace. They are referred to as tiyang negari (the nigari people), with their attributes of putting smoothness in both language and art, with a syncretic life. Communities in foreign regions have much in common with the culture of the country and they identify themselves as marginalized (suburban) people who have a "less subtle" culture than the tiyang negari, and in their religious life are also characterized as syncretic (Sham, 2005: 166).

Coastal and inland communities have a distinctive feature in the activities of ceremonies, the specificity is certainly guided by different cultures. Among the prominent ones in relation to Islam, there are the characteristics of coastal communities which is more adaptive to Islamic teachings than with syncretic rural communities. The adaptive culture of coastal societies can be seen in the performance of local traditions guided by Islam in its style, which takes Islamic teachings as a framework for selection of local cultures rather than taking as relevant as inland culture.

In coastal communities, Islam is used as a frame of reference for action, so that all actions are expressions of Islamic teachings that have been adapted to local culture. As for rural communities, syncretization can be seen in the life-sitting activities of which the teachings between Islam are compatible with local culture and then integrated into a syncretic cultural formulation (Tohir, 1999). The concept of abangan, santri and priyayi as clarified by Geertz (1981) and local Islamic style as conceived by Mulder (1999) are excellent examples to illustrate the syncretic nature of Islam through the process of sorting out which Islamic teachings fit the local culture and then formulated into Javanese culture inland.

Coastal Islam is often identified as more purist than inland Islam. In Indonesia especially, Javanese variants of Islam can be seen as a unique social reality. Therefore, when one talks about coastal Islam, there are still variants of Islam that actually describes the phenomenon that Islam when in the hands of society, which is Islam that has experienced humanization in accordance with its ability to interpret Islam. Similarly, when talking about inland Islam, the essence is also there are variants that describe that when Islam is in the understanding of society there will also be variants of Islam according to the level of understanding of society about Islam.

IV. CONCLUSION

The local tradition is positioned in contrast to the purification tradition seen from the perspective of the pattern of experience and the spread of religious teachings which tolerate in such a way as to local belief practices, while the purification tradition emphasizes the religious experience which it considers to be sourced and equal to the great Islamic tradition. It is undeniable that these differences have resulted in the question of interaction between them in the social, cultural and political frames.

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