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## **Ahmad Dahlan's Perspective on the Model of Modern Integration of Islamic Education**

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### **Abstract**

Ahmad Dahlan made a breakthrough in Islamic Education in the Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. He was not only educated in a traditional environment, but also influenced by the modernist movement in Egypt, especially Abduh and Rashid Ridla. This article aims to describe the approach of modern Islamic education by Ahmad Dahlan. This writing uses the socio-historical approach. The results show that Dahlan renewed Islamic Education by integrating Islamic subjects into the public school curriculum and vice versa. The project covers aspects of curriculum, methods, and institutions. Integration projects are more practical and in line with projects undertaken by Ismail Raj'i al-Faruqi, Naquib al-Attas, and Amin Abdullah. The modern Islamic education model by Ahmad Dahlan is relevant to current Islamic education.

**Keywords:** integration; model; Islamic education; modern; integration; Islamization; Ahmad Dahlan

### **Abstrak**

Ahmad Dahlan melakukan terobosan dalam Pendidikan Islam di Awal abad 20. Beliau tidak hanya dididik di lingkungan tradisional, tetapi juga dipengaruhi oleh gerakan modernis di Mesir, terutama Abduh dan Rashid Ridla. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menggambarkan pendekatan pendidikan Islam modern oleh Ahmad Dahlan. Penulisan ini menggunakan pendekatan sosial-sejarah. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa Dahlan memperbarui Pendidikan Islam dengan mengintegrasikan mata pelajaran Islam ke dalam kurikulum sekolah umum dan sebaliknya. Proyeknya mencakup aspek kurikulum, metode, dan kelembagaan. Proyek integrasi lebih bersifat praktek dan sejalan dengan proyek yang dilakukan oleh Ismail Raj'i al-Faruqi, Naquib al-Attas, dan Amin Abdullah. Model pendidikan Islam modern oleh Ahmad Dahlan relevan dengan Pendidikan Islam saat ini.

**Kata Kunci:** integrasi; modern; model pendidikan Islam, integrasi, islamisasi; Ahmad Dahlan

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## Introduction

The ideas of Ahmad Dahlan's modern thinking in the field of education can be seen from the pattern of organizing schools and colleges managed by Muhammadiyah socio-religious organizations. Muhammadiyah manages 4.623 Kindergarten Level schools, 2.604 Elementary Schools, 1.772 Junior High Schools, 1.143 High Schools, 172 Higher Education Institutions throughout Indonesia.<sup>1</sup> Muhammadiyah as a leading religious organization in education, health and social services.

Unfortunately, recognition of the role of Muhammadiyah, as a manifestation of Ahmad Dahlan's ideas, has not been accompanied by adequate studies of Ahmad Dahlan's educational thinking. His contribution to educational thought is very important. He, for example, taught the interpretation of *al-Maun* repeatedly to his students until it was applied in social work. This is an example of the influence of modernist thinkers, such as Muhammad Abduh and Rasyid Ridla, encouraging him to energize the teachings of Islam in order to be able to overcome the challenges of modernity.

Ahmad Dahlan's movement in the early of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was a breakthrough to cover the delicate problems faced by Islamic education. His movement marks a awareness among indigenous Islamic figure to awaken Islamic society through the reformation of Islamic education. His educational ideas and actions tried to recover the decline of Islamic politics and science in the growing of modern influences.<sup>2</sup>

This paper aims to describe the model of modern Islamic educational by Ahmad Dahlan and how his idea can be placed among contemporary project of reconciling islamic and secular sciences by Islamic scholaras. The writing uses socio-history approach, especially the history of education.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muhammadiyah#Universitas>. Accessed on Aug 26<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Djoko Marihandono (ed.), *K.H. Ahmad Dahlan (1868-1923)*. Jakarta: Museum Kebangkitan Nasional Dirjen Kebudayaan Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2015: 10

## Socio-Educational Background

Modernization is closely linked to industrial revolution in Western world. The simplification of modernization as westernization, however, is misleading due to complex factors contributing to the rise of modernism. Islamic world contributed to The Enlightenment in Europe by passing and enriching Greek's philosophy and sciences, which subsequently gave birth to Reformation movement. Modern consciousness is marked by individualism, progress, rationalism, and secularization, all of which are norms of Western Civilization.<sup>3</sup>

Modern influence has been responded differently by moslems' communities. Some suspect modernity as foreign elements that endanger local-islamic cultures. Some reject several aspect of modernity considered incompatible to Islamic norms. Some accept modernity but reject the materialistic and nonreligious aspect of it. The different responses can be understood since modernity came to Islamic world through invasion of European countries to Islamic World.

According to Francisco Budi Hardiman, the epistemology of modernism contains four main elements. The first element is reflective subjective, namely the recognition of rational forces in solving life problems. Second element is the ability to remove the constraints of freedom from tradition. Third, the subjective consciousness raised by the subject that time is linear, progressive and unique. Fourth element is universalism, in which modernity are normative for the whole world community. In sum, modern basic values are rationality, freedom, subjective consciousness and universalism.

Some of those values sparked tension to the values of Eastern communities with communality, harmony and belief in supranatural beings. Therefore, modernity and modernism is not responded uniformly in Islamic societies. The resistance of modernism is driven by its "too" rationalistic orientation which is considered to be less compatible to Muslims worldview at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Muslim worldview was predominantly

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<sup>3</sup>Francisco Budi Hardiman. *Melampaui Positivisme dan Modernitas: Diskursus Filosofis tentang Metode Ilmiah dan Problem Modernitas*, Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 2003: 72-73

mythical and relying on metaphysical-theological speculation with less empirical basis,<sup>4</sup> although Aristotelian logic deeply influence several Islamic sciences, such as theology, law and philosophy. The worldview played important discourse in Islamic community to reject or to adapt to modernity.

The acceptance of modernity in Islamic World, including Indonesia, required the process of reinterpretation of the established religious as well as traditional value. The process involves religious understanding to provide legitimization of adopting values that lead to social change. It would give impact to the charismatic and traditional authority that lied their authority to the tradition.<sup>5</sup> Modernism, as idea to embrace modernity, distinguished modernist Islamic movement in the identification of moden values. Modernism differs from secularism that looks down on religion and from religious revivalist who accept modern value but put aside modernity for divine mandate.<sup>6</sup>

Traditional islamic system tended suspect modernity as undermining factor for tradition. It regarded the materials of knowledge should be based on the chain of authorities from the Past. Direct reading and interpretation of Islamic sources was not considered legitimate for those who did not fullfill the criteria of *mujtahid*. Unfortunately, mujtahid has been hardly found from 14<sup>th</sup> century. In such a view, *ijtiha>d* door had been closed. Moslem communities, then, should follow the chain of authorities of classical Islamic scholars, as noted by Sayyid Uthman al-Batawi.<sup>7</sup> The idea, however, has canged recently by the reconciliation between modernity and Islamic tradition by contemporary scholars.

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<sup>4</sup>Mohammed Arkoun. *Nalar Islam dan Nalar Modern: Berbagai Tantangan dan Jalan Baru*. Translated into Indonesian by Rahayu S. Hidayat, Jakarta: INIS, 1994: 70

<sup>5</sup>Kenneth Thompson and Jeremy Thunstall, *Sociological Perspective: Selective Reading*, Middlesex: Penguin Book Ltd., 1977: 68-69

<sup>6</sup>Charles Kurzman (ed.), *Modernist Islam 1810 – 1920, A Sourcebook*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002, 4

<sup>7</sup>Sayyid Uthma>n, *al-Haqq allad{i> Yajibu Ittiba>'uh fi> al-Di>n*, Batavia: Published by Sayyid 'Utsman, No Year: 3-4

The fundamental difference between modernism and the dominant Islamic worldview at that time was reflected also in the world of education. Islamic education was based on the transmission of traditional materials through pesantren system. Islamic Education relied on traditional curricula with core subjects, such as *fiqh*, *hadi>th*, *tafsi>r*, *al-Quran*, *us}ju>l fiqh* and Arabic. Tasawuf and logic were optional. General subjects, such as natural sciences and social sciences were hardly taught in Islamic education in the nineteenth century. The materials of teaching were mostly classical texts or new text derived from those classical text. In Indonesia, as Bruinessen says<sup>8</sup>, the classical Arabic text commonly are commentary or supra-commentary to older text and some are translation of such texts in local languages. The learning process is done through reading the religious texts by a teacher, reading the text in front of a teacher, or by memorizing the poem (*naz}m*). This education was centered in a mosque or teacher's house. Traditional education uses Arabic or local languages with Arabic script, Arabic-Malay script, and or Arab-Javanese script.

In contrast, modernization gave birth to Western model of education. Western education model in the archipelago increasingly widespread due to ethical politics run by Dutch Government. Ethical politics was born from the internal criticism of the Dutch for the decline of the welfare faced by indigenous Indies society due to forced cultivation policy. Ethical political policies include irrigation, education, and emigration. Education got more attention from colonial government. In 1907, village school (*volkscholen*) was opened and held in three years using local language. Graduates may proceed to the successor school (*vervogschool*) for two years.<sup>9</sup> Colonial Government then established primary schools for the children of native civil servants. Government also established Hollandsch-Inlandsche School (HIS) in 1912; secondary school for native youth (Meer Uitgeibereid Lager Onderwijs / MULO) in 1914; and high school/ *Algemene Middlebare School*.

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<sup>8</sup>Martin van Bruinessen, *Kitab Kuning, Pesantren dan Tarekat: Tradisi-Trdisi Islam di Indonesia*, Bandung: Mizan, 1995: 141-142

<sup>9</sup>Koentjaraningrat, *Kebudayaan*, 76-77

The schools taught general sciences, such as mathematics, Dutch and other European languages, and natural sciences. The Western education model was carried out in special buildings with chalkboard, desk and chairs for students. Karel Steenbrink mentions that this Western model education differs from the aspect of method, content, and purpose with traditional Islamic education.<sup>10</sup> Western model of education were heavily aimed to fulfil the need of Government to fill beurocracy with educated civil servants and beureocratic machine. Dutch education gave birth to educated elite class who are ready to enter bureaucratic posts in government and gain high status in society. Prior to the widespread of the general educations, the positions in the government offices were filled out on the basis of the hierarchy of noble descents. After the development of general education, formal education became a condition and prerequisite for the recruitment of employees.<sup>11</sup>

In other hand, the graduates of Islamic education (pesantren) got specific post or segment. They served as teachers in madrasas, religious leaders or Islamic preachers. There was opportunity for them to serve the government as *penghulu*, who handle religious and domestic social affairs, such as marriage, neighbourhood dispute, and managing mosques. The graduates of pesantren became respected people in society because of their religious authority.

The dichotomy of education model turned into cultural and societal segregation. The graduates of Islamic education were not familiar with Western bureaucracy and culture, which brought modernization to social life. On the contrary, the graduates of Western model of education were no longer familiar to the tradition of Muslim society and tend to identify themself to ruling class. The reality directly or indirectly generates gap between Islam and modernity and leads to personality crisis experienced by Muslims who are influenced by Western culture.

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<sup>10</sup>Karel Steenbrink, *Pesantren, Madrasah, Sekolah: Pendidikan Islam dalam Kurun Modern*, Jakarta: LP3ES, 1994: 24

<sup>11</sup>Arbiyah Lubis, *Pemikiran Muhammadiyah dan Muhammad Abduh: Suatu Studi Perbandingan*, Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1993: 102-103

### **Ahmad Dahlan and Educational Reformation**

Muhammadiyah, founded by Ahmad Dahlan, is second largest Islamic Organization in Indonesia. It is sufficient to say that without Ahmad Dahlan's role, Muhammadiyah with all of its services is still existing until this time. Muhammadiyah grows bigger in the light of Ahmad Dahlan's vision on religion and social work so that the birth and the development of Muhammadiyah cannot be separated from the figure of Ahmad Dahlan. With thousands of educational institutions it is managing, Muhammadiyah has contributed for developing national education in Indonesia for almost a century. Ahmad Dahlan becomes model for Muhammadiyah's concern on educations that his vision on social reform highlights the way Muhammadiyah conducted social works. Ahmad Dahlan is portrait of religious leader who committed to do breakthrough for Islamic educations in order to match it with modernity and changing socio-educational realm.

Ahmad Dahlan is the fourth son of *ketib* (secretary) of Sultan Mosque of Yogyakarta. He live in Kauman, a social environment for devout moslems. His name was Muhammad Darwisy, and later changed to Ahmad Dahlan while performing the pilgrim. After the death of his father, Ahmad Dahlan substituted his position as *ketib* and got title Mas Haji Ahmad Dahlan. Ahmad Dahlan then was raised in religious environment in Yogyakarta.<sup>12</sup>

He studied to several noble teachers. He studied *fiqh* to Kiai Haji Muhammad Saleh, *nahw* (Arabic grammar) to Kiai Haji Muhsin and Kiai Abdul Hamid, *falak* (Islamic astronomy) to Kiai Haji Raden Dahlan -- a son of Kiai Termas -- and the science of Hadith (the methodology for studying prophet tradition) to Kiai Mahfudh and Shaykh Hayyat. He had pursued his study to Mecca under tutelage of Shafiite masters, such as Sayyid Bakri Shata, a prominent scholar. He also studied in front of Kiai Mahfudh Termas, Sayyid Bab al-Sijjil, Syaikh

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<sup>12</sup>Alfian, *Muhammadiyah: The Political Behavior of a Muslim Modernist Organization under Dutch Colonialism*, Yogyakarta: Universitas Gadjah Mada, 1989: 144-145

Ahmad Khatib al-Minkabawi, and Kiai Nawawi Banten. Those teachers were masters for prominent Indonesian students in Mecca that subsequently become outstanding ulama in Indonesia.<sup>13</sup>

Ahmad Dahlan grows in traditional academic sphere in Yogyakarta, Semarang, and Mecca. Mecca and Madinah were centers for international traditional learning that created international networks of Ulama internationally as well as a network of ulama of Nusantara from 17<sup>th</sup> Century. The networks comprises ulama from Anatolia, Andalusia, India, Iraq, Maghrib, Mecca, Egypt, Persia, Syiria, and Yemen.<sup>14</sup> The ulama network also influenced religious reform in Indonesia, like having done by al-Raniri, Abdur Rauf al-Singkili, and other ulama. Haramain was home for traditional learning of Islam until it was subdued by Wahhabis, who conquered Mecca in 1924. Wahhabi's had tried to conquere Mecca in 1804, but it was expelled by Muhammad Ali Pasha from Egypt in 1914.<sup>15</sup>

Having educated in traditional Islamic education, Dahlan was also exposed to Islamic reform movement launched by Muhammad 'Abduh and Rashid Rida. Both are Egypt reformers who have great influence Indonesian context. In some extent, Dahlan also got influence of the Islamist world of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani,<sup>16</sup>. The modernization of the Egyptian model is the middle way of two extreme attitudes toward modernism, namely Turkey and Yemen. Turkey's attitude toward modernism is to adopt and adapt completely, despite sacrificing the religious tradition.

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<sup>13</sup>Abdul Munir Mulkhan, *K.H. Ahmad Dahlan dan Muhammadiyah: dalam Perspektif Perubahan Sosial*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, Abdul Munir Mulkhan, 1990: 6-7

<sup>14</sup>Azyumardi Azra, *Jaringan Ulama Timur Tengah dan Kepulauan Nusantara Abad XVII and XVIII: Akar Pembaruan Islam Indonesia*, Bandung: Kencana Prenada Media Group, 2007: 73 and 83

<sup>15</sup>H.A.R. Gibb and J.H. Kraemer (eds.), *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Leiden: E.J. Brill and London: Luzac and C.O, 1961

<sup>16</sup>Syarifudin Jurdi et.al. (eds.), *1 Abad Muhammadiyah: Gagasan Pembaharuan Sosial Keagamaan*, Jakarta: PT Kompas Media Nusantara, 2010: xii



The reform movement of Dahlan is called *perjuangan* by Junus Anis, as quoted by Peacock. It refers to change certain forces and situation that hinder Islamic modernization such as mysticism, Hindu-Budhism, Feudalism, and Colonialism, all together were deemed to led the decline of Islam. Dahlan launched his *perjuangan* not by fierce attitued, rather by calm, systematic and less protest. Dahlan, in his opposition to Feudalims, never challenged the King of Jogjakarta, but he kept polite and humble attitude toward Jogjakarta courts. In that case, he was accepted as an official in court mosque. Dahlan also took part in an organization founded by educated traditional nobels (*priyayi*), namely Budi Utomo.<sup>17</sup> His participation and contact to Budi Utomo openen the door to his project to found Muhammadiyah and to extend his service to government schools.

In contrast, Yemen's attitude to modernism is alienating itself from Western influence. Meanwhile, the Egyptian model in addressing modernization is to take the middle ground, namely to defend religion by taking weapons from the West.<sup>18</sup> 'Abduh and Rid}a focused on Isalmic reformation in order to revitalize the Islamic society in order to generate fresh thinking. 'Abduh emphasizes the reformation on the reformation of Islamic thought while al-Afgha>ni> injected the spirit of pan-Islamism.

Egypt model of renewal seemed to be adapted as Muhammadiyah strategy. The strategy of taking the Western weapon was explicitly stressed in the 39<sup>th</sup> Congress in Padang in 1975. The Congress highlighted the Purification of Muhammadiyah's Enterprises (Amal Usaha). Although the congress explicitly confirmed Christianization as a challenge for Islamic community, the appendix of of The Congress stated that Muhammadiyah's Enterprises should refer to approaches introduced by Ahmad Dahlan. First approach is Islamic dakwah (preaching), as having been done by moslem for centuries. The

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<sup>17</sup>James L. Cook. *Purifying the Faith: The Muhammadijah Movement in Indonesian Islam*, California: The Benjamin/ Cummings Publishing Company, 1978, 34-37

<sup>18</sup>Karl Steenbrink, *Pesantren*, 209 and 238

second is using strategy employed by Christians in Europe for centuries, namely school education.<sup>19</sup>

Other factor drove Ahmad Dahlan to adopt modern educational system is his concern of the activities of Christian missionaries. By the end of 19<sup>th</sup> Century, Dutch Christian missionary groups got opportunity to enter the area of Surakarta and Jogjakarta courts from 1850. The missionary group opened education and health services that attract common people. The phenomenon show a signal of challenge to Islamic communities and of intention of Dutch Government to convert Javanese moslems. Dahlan put his concern to the situation by the fact that a large number of Javanese moslem embraced Islam nominally. He thought that although would never vanished in this World, but the dissappearance of Islam in Indonesia might happen. The project of Ahmad Dahlan, trough, to open schools and hospitals was his answer to the Christian missionary activities.<sup>20</sup>

Thus, Muhammadiyah tries to adopt school system of education that was commonly used by modern or Western education as an instrument of social change. The strategy of adaptation was done by not leaving the Islamic *dakwah* (mission), rather it was conducted synergically. To harmonize modernity and Islamic legacy, educational reformation was launched by rediscovery of religion legitimacy. The religious legitimacy was not held by searching classical literatures, rather by finding and reinterpreting Quranic verses or the Prophet's tradition. The rediscovery of the main sources was intended to breakthrough traditional Islamic education systems coined by chain of traditional authorities, along with classical literatures. The problem was that the classical system of education became too institutionalized that reformation was difficult to find justification for embracing modern values.

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<sup>19</sup>Umar Hasyim, *Muhammadiyah Jalan Lurus, dalam Tajdid, Dakwah, Kaderiasi dan Pendidikan: Kritik dan Terapinya*, Surabaya: Bina Ilmu, 1990: 294-295

<sup>20</sup>Muhammad Fuad. "Islam, Modernity and Muhammadiyah Educational Programme." *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* (5:3) 2004, 402-403 and Alwi Shihab, *Membendung Arus: Respons Gerakan Muhammadiyah terhadap Penetrasi Misi Kristen di Indonesia*, Bandung: Mizan, 1998, 114-115

The adaptation of modernity was justified through three assumptions commonly embraced by Islamic renewal thinkers. The first assumption is that Western progress occurred because of the translation of Islamic books into Western language and West civilization. The work of Ibnu Sina and Ibnu Rushd had been translated into Europe and ignited the rediscovery of Greek science by European thinkers that sparked enlightenment era. Therefore, the progress and development achieved by the West should not ignore the contribution of Islamic Civilization.

Second assumption is that modernity is embodiment of Islamic teaching. This assumption came from Muhammad 'Abduh, an Egyptian reformer who once lived in France. Abduh was impressed with the life of the European community that he saw reflecting the very values of Islam in a country with hardly any Muslims found. 'Abduh hinted that modernity developed in the West is in accordance to Islamic values so there is no reason for Muslims to exclude themselves from modernity.

The third assumption came from Arsalan that Western Civilization reached its peak and glory because they abandoned the religion (Christian), while Muslims experienced the loss due to their abandoning religion (Arslan, T.Th). Arsalan's statement was actually born out of a question raised by Shaikh Muhammad Basuni 'Imran, Imam of Sambas Kalimantan Kingdom, to Muhammad Rashid Rida. Imran questioned, through a letter, about why Islamic Civilization is declining, while Western civilization is progressing. The letter was given by Rida to Arslan who subsequently wrote the treatise.<sup>21</sup>

The three assumptions underpin Islamic modernism in Indonesia. The attitude of Islamic modernism is clearly demonstrated by Ahmad Dahlan. Dahlan basically did not formulate a systematic strategy to do educational reformation, but he directly embodied educational reformation whose spirit stems from the modernist view on the nature of modernity. Dahlan's conception should be drawn from practical reform he has

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<sup>21</sup>Amir Arsalan, *Limada Taakhkhara al-Muslimun wa Limada Taqaddama Ghairuhum*, Beirut: Manshurat Dar Maktabah al-Hayyah, No Year: 20

conducted, but from his elaborate conception. Dahlan is not a theoretician, but practitioner who emphasizes real action. It is not surprising that he was later called “a pragmatic figure”<sup>22</sup> with a "rational-functional" educational method.<sup>23</sup>

The integration of Islamic and general education system was carried out by Ahmad Dahlan through two approaches: firstly, by incorporating religious subjects into general education and secondly by incorporating general subjects into religious education. The first approach was applied by Ahmad Dahlan through two ways. The first way is to proactively offer Islamic subject to be taught in schools owned by the government. The effort was successful that he was allowed to teach religion subject in government school. Not only Dahlan, the students he mentored were also given permission to teach at the school for civil servant candidates (OSVIA) in Magelang.<sup>24</sup>

Institutionally, Muhammadiyah decided to propose to government in order to provide religious teaching in schools owned by Government in April 1929. The proposal came to reality in the era of Japanese occupation, which allowed religious subjects taught in school, despite teachers did not get any salary. It was only during the independence era that religious subjects be widely taught in public schools and the teachers rewarded with salaries. It was started when Ki Hajar Dewantara acted as person in charge of the Ministry of Teaching and Culture. The incorporation of Islamic teaching into General educational system was held by and intensively managed after the establishment of the Department of Religion on January 3, 1946.<sup>25</sup>

The second way, incorporating general subjects into Islamic education, was conducted by Ahmad Dahlan and Muhammadiyah through general private schools that taught general knowledge and religious knowledge. The schools characterized by general school, with additional religious

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<sup>22</sup>Alfian, *Muhammadiyah*, 150

<sup>23</sup>Sudarno Shobron, Syamsul Hidayat, and Mahasri Shobahiya, *Studi Kemuhammadiyah: Kajian Historis, Ideologis, dan Organisasi*, Surakarta: LPID Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, 2010: 38

<sup>24</sup>Karl Steenbrink, *Pesantren*, 54

<sup>25</sup>Ardabiyah Lubis, *Pemikiran*, 104

subjects in it. In 1923, Muhammadiyah established four primary schools and a preparatory school for teachers in Yogyakarta.<sup>26</sup>

The second approach of Ahmad Dahlan for educational integration is to include general subjects, especially mathematic and foreign language (Dutch) into religious education. The religious education is conducted using a classical system, as used in general school. The second approach was also developed by other Islamic educations, like in West Sumatra by Zainuddin Labai etc. and in Tebu Ireng East Java during Hasyim Asy'ari, under initiative of KH Moh Ilyas and KH Abdul Wahid Hasyim.

The educational vision that integrates the religious science and general science has been stated in the early Statute (Article of Association) of Muhammadiyah. Muhammadiyah Statute mentions that Muhammadiyah's aims are 1) to spread the teachings of Prophet Muhammad to the Native population in Yogyakarta, and then the Dutch East Indies and 2) to promote the religion to its members. The goals are achieved through four, two-step education-related ones, namely: 1) establishing private schools where religion and general knowledge are simultaneously taught and 2) organizing Islamic teachings at government and private schools.<sup>27</sup>

In 1913, Muhammadiyah established same schools in Karangajen, in Kotagede in 1915, and in Lempuyang in 1916. In December 1921, Muhammadiyah established Muhammadiyah's Boarding House, a school that taught religious and general sciences for five years. The school is equivalent to secondary education. In the beginning of 1922, Muhammadiyah established HIS school in Notoprajan and in 1923 al-Madrasatul Wustha led by Kiai Siradj, son of Ahmad Dahlan. Kiai Siradj taught advanced religious sciences, general sciences, and leadership.

Muhammadiyah cooperated with other organisations to fulfil the need for teachers at Muhammadiyah schools. Muhammadiyah mostly cooperated with Budi Utomo, because Ahmad Dahlan was also member of Budi Utomo. Besides,

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<sup>26</sup>Karl Steenbrink, *Pesantren*, 44-45

<sup>27</sup>Ahmad Najib Burhani, *Muhammadiyah Jawa*, Yogyakarta: Suara Muhammadiyah, 2016: 59-60

Muhammadiyah got assistance from Budi Utomo for its establishment. There is common platform between Muhammadiyah and Budi Utomo, in which both have same concern in education, health and social work.

The project of Ahmad Dahlan to integrate religious education and general education was done through curriculum, method and institutional aspects. Curriculum integration was done by incorporating religious subjects into public schools or incorporating general subjects into religious education. The integration project was very monumental in an environment where as western influence was under polemic.

The problem to understanding integration concept by Ahmad Dahlan is the lack of primary references or written material that can be attributed to him. Kurzman translated a speech delivered by Dahlan to Muhammadiyah leaders in 1923 from a book edited by Abdul Munir Mulkhan. In the speech, Ahmad Dahlan emphasize the important of al-Quran as unifying instrument to manage the life of every person and peaceful as well as happy order will might not be reached without common feelings and unified hearts. Here was the central problem because educated people failed to achieve commonality. Therefore, Ahmad Dahlan invited audience to gain truth because the truth is unified (*tauhidi*) and to have common heart in order to work for universal human future. He suggested audience to be in agreement with new way to obtain the truth<sup>28</sup> and criticized the general tendency of Muslims to have monopoly of the truth. He suggested muslims to learn from others because the fragments of the truth might be gained from them.<sup>29</sup>

Ahmad Dahlan reinforces the need for religion, a fresh religious outlook that was not dull because of persons who follow the religion. He maintained the importance of religious scholars as reference for decision in religious matters while suggested people to seek new knowledge, even from others. Finally he highlight the need for the application of knowledge

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<sup>28</sup>Charles Kurzman (ed.), *Modernist*, 244-246

<sup>29</sup>Howard Federspiel. "The Muhammadiyah: A Study of an Ortodox Islamic Movement in Indonesia" *Indonesia No. 10 (Oct. 1970)*, 105-106

because smart people understand what will lead them to happiness.

Other and main source for understanding Ahmad Dahlan's thinking is example and real practice he has done through Muhammadiyah. Ahmad Dahlan exercised integration project by combining, not unifying, religious and general subject. His main target was religious subjects given in public schools and vice versa. In that case, Ahmad Dahlan may not concern to interdisciplinarity approach yet, but he tries to provide students subjects needed for religion or for work in modern institutions.

There was no further explanation of how the paradigm aspect dealt with and how both kinds of sciences united according to Ahmad Dahlan view. The spirit of integration is manifested through the reinterpretation of religion in the light of modern sciences and development, as commonly embraced by modernists. However, the conceptualization of the unification of the curriculum is essentially still not firmly established.

It can be concluded that the education renewal by Ahmad Dahlan incorporate religious subjects into public schools and general subjects to religious schools as well as initiating educational institutions that support that projects. The project can be regarded as collaboration of knowledge rather than integration of knowledge, depending on how the integratin is defined. Such an approach seems to be more practical in the context of Islamic education in early 21<sup>st</sup> Century when the separation between Islamic education and general education was so severe. However, the collaboration can not fully overcome the scientific dichotomy since both sciences stand unrelated.

The integration project becomes main concern of contemporary Islamic thinkers. There is Ismail Raj'i al-Faruqi and Naquib al-Attas who introduce the Islamization of knowledge. In Indonesia, integration of knowledge is known as Amin Abdullah's projects.

### **Ahmad Dahlan in Contemporray Islamic Thought**

The concept of integration is now widely discussed and formulated, not only in Muhammadiyah but also in Islamic Higher Education. In the 1970s, there came up an inside Muhammadiyah in order start to formulate the role of religious

education in all educational levels. The aim was to give birth Ulama-scholars and pious intellectuals.<sup>30</sup>

The integration of knowledge and the modernization conducted by Ahmad Dahlan through Muhammadiyah root in basic religious outlook. Federspiel maps four religious outlooks that shape Muhammadiyah service. Firstly, the views of Muhammadiyah on the relationship of God, society and man because faith provide purposes for the life of Islamic society. Secondly, social organization is natural and as embodiment of God's will. Thirdly, despite the importance of society, the individual has uniqueness and importance. Fourthly, the concern of Muhammadiyah to the relationship between the past to the contemporary era.<sup>31</sup> All of the religious outlooks expresses modernist moslem frameworks with distinguished formula by Muhammadiyah and Ahmad Dahlan as its founder. The modernization introduced by Muhammadiyah is far from secularism, but express the vision of Islamic orthodoxy in facing socio-religious change. Here, religion functions as institutional means and as legitimation for social improvement as common portrait of early 20<sup>th</sup> Century national movement in Indonesia.<sup>32</sup>

The integration of education, therefore, rests on collaborating religious and general subject into curriculum applied in Muhammadiyah's schools. At Kindergarten, Elementary, and High School levels are taught subjects of morality, worship *mu'amalah*, *al-Quran-hadith*, history of Islamic culture, and on Muhammadiyah (al-Islam). Meanwhile, in Muhammadiyah universities are taught courses of Islamic Studies and on Muhammadiyah.<sup>33</sup> The collaboration approach is now applied by almost all governmental schools and private schools.

The more serious integrative attempts to reconcile general science and religious science are carried out by several figures, such as Ismail Raj'i al-Faruqi, Syed Mohammed Naquib al-

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<sup>30</sup>Umar Hasyim, *Muhammadiyah*, 296

<sup>31</sup>Howard Federspiel. "The Muhammadiyah, 59-60

<sup>32</sup>Achmad Jainuri. "The Formation of the Muhammadiyah' Ideology, 1912-1942." *Thesis of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy The Institute of Islamic Studies McGill University Montreal Canada. 1997*, 58-59

<sup>33</sup>Umar Hasyim, *Muhammadiyah*, 296



Attas, and Amin Abdullah. Al-Faruqi initiates the Islamization of knowledge to address the condition of Muslims who are left behind in the field of education.

Faruqi saw that the dominance of Western education gave impact to the stagnation of Islamic education, especially madrasah. Islamic education is lack of excellence in modern education sphere and it drives moslems scholars to depend on foreign ideas. The stagnation of Islamic education appears in the cessation of innovation and dynamism in Islamic education. The lack of excellence in Islamic education is a consequence of the general scientific development that is actively and progressively promoted and enhanced by the West. The dependence on Western ideas is influenced by the fact that Muslim scholars takes Western education as role model and they depend on the product of Western scholarly researches.

Faruqi proposes the concept of Islamization of knowledge with tauhid (union) as basic core. The unification of the sciences is also called "unity". There are three schemes of Islamization initiated by al-Faruqi. The first is the unity of knowledge, which is the unity between '*aqli*' (rational and objective science) and the science of '*naqli*' (a science based on revelation). The second is the unity of life, in which all disciplines must pay attention to natural life by eliminating the distinction between value-free and value-laden sciences. Third is the unity of history, where all sciences have to recognize the social nature of human activity and to serve the purpose of the Islamic community through history.<sup>34</sup>

The Islamization of knowledge proposed by al-Faruqi extends from the mastery of modern sciences to the dissemination of Islamized knowledges. The process comprises mastery of the heritage of Islamic science, the analysis of the heritage, the study of its relevance, the assessment of the heritage, the surveillance of the *ummah*, the surveillance of humanity, the analysis and creative synthesis, and the adjustment of disciplines within the framework of Islam.

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<sup>34</sup>Ilyas Ba-Yunus, "Al-Faruqi and Beyond: Future Directions in Islamization of Knowledge," The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences (Vol. 5 No. 119. 1988)

On the other hand, Syed Naquib Al-Attas tries to find a synthesis between the general science developed by Western civilization - which is neutral in religion and free from belief in the Supernatural Being" – and the religious knowledge, with strong root in the belief of Supernatural Being. General science that is value free, according to al-Attas, is prone to secularism. Al-Attas initiates the Islamization of science, based on ontological and epistemological reconciliation.<sup>35</sup>

Al-Attas clearly reconstruct the ontology of Islamic sciences. He formulates the ontology of Islamic sciences that include not only empirical existances, but also mental existances, sensational existances, intellectual existances as well as analogical existances. By recognizing various kinds of existances, science will not only be limited in materialistic and empirical studies. He introduces the concept of *ta'dib* as integrative concept that enable to reconcile two poles of teaching orientations: cognitive and practical ones.

*Ta'dib* requires the unity of reason, soul and authority. Al-Attas differentiates *ta'dib* from *ta'lim* and *tarbiya*. Roughly, *ta'dib*, *ta'lim* and *tarbiya* means 'to educate', but al-Attas uses the three terms with different implication. *Ta'lim* implies teaching, emphasizing cognitive and intellectual aspects of human, while *tarbiya* refer to the growth of physic and mentality. *Ta'dib* is an integration between *ta'lim* and *tarbiya* by integrating knowledge, morality and spirituality.<sup>36</sup>

Al-Attas reinforces the notion that all sciences have to guide human to believe in God (*tauhid*) and to be ready to follow shariah. The notion is elaborated into the framework of Islamic education encompassing three dimensions: human, knowledge, and university. Human dimension is aimed to give birth good human through university in order to develop society, government, and leadership in Islamic society. Knowledge dimension is the relation between religious science, which is

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<sup>35</sup>Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, *Islam and the Philosophy of Science*. Translated into Indonesian by Saiful Muzani. "Islam dan Filsafat Sains," Bandung: Penerbit Mizan Bandung 2005: 101

<sup>36</sup>Sanusi. "Al-Attas' Philosophy of Islamic Education." (Conference Proceeding of ARICIS I. 2006. (<https://jurnal.ar-raniry.ac.id/index.php/aricis/issue/view/124/showToc>): 344-346

individual obligatory, and rational or intellectual science, which is communal obligatory (*fard kifayah*). The latter should use the former's criteria.

The ideas of the Islamization of knowledge have surely influenced Islamic Religious Higher Education in Indonesia. The concept of scientific integration of knowledge becomes popular trade mark in the development of scholarship in Islamic Higher Education. The idea of integration-interconnection has been developed in Islamic State University (UIN) Yogyakarta, which is pioneered by Amin Abdullah. The epigon of such project can be found in other Islamic universities in Indonesia, such as the unity of sciences project of Islamic State University (UIN) Walisongo.

Amin Abdullah, the formulator of the integration of knowledge, states that the reason why he proposes the integration is that the development of secular sciences at the Public Higher School has been deprived of the ethical and moral roots. In contrast, the development of religious science in Islamic Colleges emphasizes the science of religion normatively. Both phenomena he views as unhealthy development that give birth to the crisis of relevance. He offers a re-approachment movement (mutual acceptance) between two camps of scholarships. He calls the reapproachment movement as a movement of unification or reintegration of scientific epistemology, which he sees as an absolute necessity of development in the third millennium.<sup>37</sup>

In general, the Islamization of science and its epigones have the same obsession, namely bridging the gap between religious sciences and general or secular sciences. The bridging effort is conducted by finding a paradigmatic synthesis to be elaborated in the practical realm. The concept of the Islamization of knowledge, initiated by al-Faruqi, has a clear vision to integrate classical Islamic sciences with general or secular sciences and to integrate the rational dimension with the revelational dimension for the sake of fulfilling the needs of the current Muslim community. In the same string, Al-Attas emphasizes an integral education

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<sup>37</sup>Amin Abdullah, *Islamic Studies di Perguruan Tinggi, Pendekatan Integratif-Interkoneksi*, Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2010: 95-97

comprising the integral part of human: mind, soul, and body. He tries to integrate sciences while keeping the distinctive characteristic of each knowledges. Hence, he emphasizes the unity in ontological and epistemological sphere.

In that discourse, Ahmad Dahlan has laid down the awareness on the openness to sciences coming from West and adopted it for sake of happiness of society. The happiness notion roots in the concept of *maslahah* in Islam. Ahmad Dahlan, however, went further by asserting that the truth is one and its fragments might be gained from others. Ahmad Dahlan is both man of idea and action so that what he does reflects what he thinks and vice versa. The understanding of his idea on Islamic education could be obtained better through Islamic education enterprises he run.

Anshoriy prefers the term of "synergy" rather than "integration" to label Ahmad Dahlan's integrational efforts.<sup>38</sup> Synergy would depict more specifically on Ahmad Dahlan's approach than integration, because the latter is closely linked to the Islamization of knowledge by al-Faruqi and al-Attas. The synergy term gives brief picture of Ahmad Dahlan model, which is the operational of religious and general science in Muhammadiyah schools as antithesis of the separation of Islamic science and general science in Dutch model of education.

However, both 'synergy' and "integration" basically refers to the same idea, both of which are open to various interpretation. The integration term is more commonly used today by modern and contemporary Islamic thinkers. The project to reconcile *turath* (legacy) of Islam and the *tajdid* (renewal) has attracted many Islamic scholar, such as Hasan Hanafi and Muhammad 'Abid al-Jabiri. Al-Jabiri uses the different term, with the same meaning as Hanafi does. Al-Jabiri chooses term *turath* and *hadatha* or *mu'ashara* (modernity) to name his integration project, which is to deal with the tension between Islamic cultural heritage and modernity. The tension is prevalent picture in Arabic world as well as in the Islamic world. The *hadatha* is

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<sup>38</sup>H.M Nasruddin Anshoriy, *Matahari Pembaharuan, Rekam Jejak KH Ahmad Dahlan*, Yogyakarta: Jogja Bangkit Publisher, 2010: 82 and 83

not negation of *turath*, because *turath* is historical force which defines the *hadatha*.<sup>39</sup>

The root of integration by Ahmad Dahlan can be traced to the Islamic reformation or modernism idea of Egyptian thinkers, especially Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Rida.<sup>40</sup> ‘Abduh is known as a modern thinker that tries to re-enter Islamic Philosophy as subject at al-Azhar University to encourage the development of rationality in Islamic education. ‘Abduh is also well-known for his view that Islam is manifested in the values of modern society, as he saw in France. ‘Abduh’s view justifies modernity as a representation Islamic teachings, whis has been forgotten for long times by Islamic communities. Modern sciences cannot relinquish their debts to Muslim scholars whose works was used to foster the enlightenment of Europe. Thus, the acceptance of general or secular sciences is based on the embodiment of Islamic values in modern civilization and the West’s owe to Islamic World.

The influence of ‘Abduh’s ideas on Ahmad Dahlan and Muhammadiyah is manifested in the *tajdid* (renewal) notion that become one of two basic visions of Muhammadiyah: purification and dynamization of Islam. Purification is a process to come closer to authentic Islam, especially in rituals (*‘ubudiyah*) and belief (*‘aqida*), while the dynamization is process to foster progress and development of Islamic society. The integration project by Ahmad Dahlan seems to be in in line with Abduh’s notion and achievement in reforming al-Azhar University. Fazlur Rahman remarks on ‘Abduh’s achievement in al-Azhar as follow: "The modernization of al-Azhar has been initiated by some scholars in the nineteenth century, mainly by Muh}ammad ‘Abduh. The effects are felt in the field of reorganization, examinational systems, and the introduction of new subjects, not the content of the core Islamic sciences, such as theology and philosophy’. Rahman remark highlight that the integration project by ‘Abduh emphasizes on introducing

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<sup>39</sup>Armando Salvataros. "The Rational Authentication of Turath in Contemporary Arab Thought: in Muhammad Jabiri and Hasan Hanafi," The Muslim World. Vol. LXXXV. No. 3-4 (July-October. 1995): 200-201

<sup>40</sup>Fazlur Rahman, *Islam*: 46

rational science in Islamic educational institution and on reorganizing organization of Islamic education.

Ahmad Dahlan's model for teaching by using the material of general knowledge for elaborating Islamic teaching. He gave example how Islamic teaching compatible to answer modern problem. His ability to speak in accepted language by Western academic circles had opened chance for him to introduce more widely Islamic teaching to general public, even theosophists among the members of Budi Utomo. In that case, Ahmad Dahlan could be accepted as teacher at *kweekschool* (king's school) in Jetis and OSVIA (school for civil servants) in Magelang.<sup>41</sup>

The integration applied by Dahlan was based on hermeneutic perspective that was usually embraced by modernists. They were interested in reinterpreting Islamic source in the light of progress or development. The reintroduction of the open gate of *ijtihad* as promulgated by the modernists was aimed to give religious legitimation to the modern or secular sciences and technology. The spirit of modernity is derived from *al-Manar*, an interpretation The Quran written by 'Abduh and Rida. In other hand, the purification stance can be traced to the thoughts of Rashid Rida, known as a figure who developed the idea of the *salafiya*, from al-Afghani. Al-Afghani's *salafiya* has three specific components: refinding pure Islam for the glory of Islam; the resistance to the domination of the West in politic, economy, and culture; and the acceptance of Western science and technology selectively.<sup>42</sup>

In short, the achievement of Ahmad Dahlan in modernist Islamic education can be seen in his reorganization of Islamic education whis is in line with the modern educational system; his incorporation of general subjects into Islamic education; the use of modern learning methods and his founding of educational institutions that provide both islamic and secular subjects. Islamic educations initiated by Ahmad Dahlan not only

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<sup>41</sup>Ahmad Najib Burhani, *Muhammadiyah*, 55

<sup>42</sup>Munawir Sjadzali, *Islam dan Tata Negara: Ajaran, Sejarah dan Pemikiran*, Jakarta: Penerbit Universitas Indonesia / UI-Press. 1993: 124-125

emphasizes on Islamic purification, but also on the spirit of progress and modernity. The separation of religious education (Islamic) and general / secular education makes Islamic World left behind the West in science and technology. The greatest task of Islamic education is to introduce general science and technology in accordance with Islamic teaching.

### **Conclusion**

The project of Ahmad Dahlan to integrate Islamic scholarship covered curriculum, learning method, and institutional aspects that infuse optimistic attitude toward progress. The acceptance of modernity does not develop into a liberalist or non-religious modernism, instead the modernism is guarded by religious purification.

Ahmad Dahlan is one of the first generation of the practitioners of knowledge integration in Islamic education. He leaves legacy of Islamic education renewal through thousands of educational institutions run by Muhammadiyah. Dahlan's contact with the Islamic reform movement and the nationalist movement (Budi Utomo) gave him a vision to accommodate the modernity as reality and challenge for Islamic educations. Education is a field that Ahmad Dahlan paid attention more as he realizes that it is the most effective way to compete against Western education introduced by colonial government.

There are two approaches used by Ahmad Dahlan to synthesize Islamic education with general or secular education: *First* approach is incorporating religious subjects into general education and *second* approach is incorporating general subjects into religious education. The first approach was done by Dahlan through proactively negotiating the government in order to allow religious (Islamic) subject to be given in public schools, such as *Kweekschool* and HIS. The second approach was conducted by incorporating general subjects, such as mathematics and foreign (Dutch) language into religious education.

Dahlan also embraced Western educational classical systems and methods to attract the interest of secular students. Classical system provides a educational environment and facilities resembling to that of general schools owned by

Government. Ahmad Dahlan used more variative method to suit to the interest of students. In sum, Ahmad Dahlan project covered curriculum, method, and institutional aspect. Ahmad Dahlan's integration is a prototype of Islamization projects, as has been done by Ismail Raj'i al-Faruqi and Naquib al-Attas, as well as the integration of knowledge put forward by Amin Abdullah. As a practitioner, Ahmad Dahlan lacks in elaboration and philosophical explanations to theoretical concepts, but he has laid down the established Islamic institution managed by Muhammadiyah that lasts till today.

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