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Applying Ibn Khaldun's Theory Into The Islamic Preaching's Movement in The Period of Demak Empire: Reflection for the Contemporary Muslim Society

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Abstract

*Ashabiyah and Mulk are positioned as driving forces within the broader framework of Ibn Khaldun's theory on the rise and fall of dynasties. While many studies have explored Ashabiyah and Mulk, limited efforts have been made to apply these concepts to empirical phenomena in various societies. This paper aims to bridge this gap by applying Ibn Khaldun's theory to the historical role of saints' da'wa and their alliances with rulers during the era of the Demak Empire. This research employs a qualitative approach using literature studies, with primary sources including Ibn Khaldun's **Muqaddimah** and secondary sources from related scholarly articles. The analysis reveals that Ibn Khaldun's theory effectively explains the decline of the Demak Empire, attributed to the weakening of Ashabiyah among its ruling elite. Furthermore, this study demonstrates the continued relevance of Ashabiyah and Mulk in analyzing socio-religious phenomena in both historical and contemporary Muslim societies. This research contributes to the academic discourse by offering a practical application of Ibn Khaldun's theoretical framework to historical and sociological analysis, highlighting its utility in understanding the dynamics of social cohesion and governance. It also underscores the enduring relevance of classical Islamic thought in contemporary contexts.*

Keywords: *Ashabiyah, Mulk, Ibn Khaldun, Wali, Islamic Preaching.*

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INTRODUCTION

Since Ibn Khaldun was known to Western scientists through the translation of the *Muqaddimah* written by Franz Rosenthal, much scientific research has been conducted to explore Ibn Khaldun's thoughts. The research covers various fields, including sociology (Garrison, 2012; Malešević, 2015; Hashemi, 2019; Shihade, 2020), politics (Okene, 2011; Ardiç, 2012; Halim, Mohd Nor, Ibrahim, & Hamid, 2012; Islam, 2016), and economics (Mohammad, 2010; Al-Leheabi, Mustafa Bahjat, & Ahmadi Ramchahi, 2013; Amirabedini, 2014; Ead & Eid, 2014; Mc Caffrey, 2014; Islahi, 2015). The various studies imply that:

first, even though his thoughts have stretched far back (the Middle Ages), the interest of Western and Islamic scientists towards Ibn Khaldun is still widely available in various disciplines. Second, many interests are certainly a challenge in itself not to stop at the exploration, but how the contextualization of Ibn Khaldun's thoughts in reading the problems of Islamic society deserves attention.

Many researchers from the Middle East and Africa have attempted to contextualize Ibn Khaldun's thoughts into the socio-political situation in Islamic countries (Chalk & Lesser, 2005; Ardiç, 2012; Goldsmith, 2012; McCorristo, 2013; Okene, 2011; Alatas, 2015). The majority of these researchers took empirical cases from past histories, such as the fall and rise of the Ottoman dynasty, the Sokoto Caliphate, the Arabian Kingdom, and the Safavid State. It is shows that among Eastern scientists, there was an attempt to 'pull' Ibn Khaldun's thought into the main vortex of modern social theory.

Although the interest in exploring this thought is quite considerable, quoting the writings of Syed Farid Alatas in his book *Applying Ibn Khaldun: The Recovery of a Lost Tradition in Sociology*, these efforts have not found satisfactory results, because the orientation of social science in the East still has Eurocentrism (Alatas, 2015). So it becomes a less popular effort when Ibn Khaldun's perspective is used as an analytical tool in contemporary socio- political problems. Many studies that elaborate on Ibn Khaldun's thoughts with other Enlightenment thinkers such as Machiavelli, Hobbes, John Locke, or Hegel, Emile Durkheim, Weber, and Karl Marx, should be proven that Ibn Khaldun's thoughts are comparable to those popular names.

In Indonesia, few attempts have been made to develop and contextualize Ibn Khaldun's thoughts into empirical-historical phenomena. Ibn Khaldun's research in Indonesia is still limited to the exploration of political, social, religious, and economic thoughts (Kamaruddin, 2015; Priyadi, 2017; Riyadi, 2017; Aryanti, 2018). In fact, the repertoire and phenomena of socio-political religion of Muslims in Indonesia are very dynamic. It can be seen from several studies on the empirical history of the rise and fall of political regimes in Indonesia, the history of the emergence of Islamic kingdoms in Indonesia, the role of the ulama in politics in Indonesia, and so on. Therefore, it becomes fascinating and important for us to see from a different angle or perspective, so that the

various socio-historical situations can be interpreted in a relatively broader perspective, especially through the perspective of Ashabiyah and Mulk Ibn Khaldun.

This article employs Ashabiyah and Mulk's theory into the role of religious leader in the rise of Demak Empire in Java, and analyzing several factor that contributed to the fall of the dynasty. Furthermore, the analysis's result will be contextualized in the contemporary of Indonesian Muslim society in order to make some lesson for them. This article is based on literature study, including the Muqaddimah in the Ashabiyah chapter, and is strengthened by sources of articles from other authors who specifically discuss the thoughts of Ibn Khaldun's theory and several Demak Empire's literature. The collected data are categorized and abstracted to form the arguments that will be built in this paper. After that, it will be presented in several chapter: the socio-historical context of Ibn Khaldun's thought, the explanation of Ashabiyah and Mulk, applying Ashabiyah and Mulk's theory into the rise and fall of Demak's Empire, and analysis some lesson for solve the problem of contemporary Indonesian Muslim.

DISCUSSION

1. The Socio-historical Context of Ibn Khaldun's Thought

Ibn Khaldun was born in Tunisia, and his family is a descendant of aristocrats and bureaucratic government officials. Since childhood, Ibn Khaldun has studied politics through his family role. Ibn Khaldun's career began when he moved to Maghribi after the plague attacked Tunisia. He is trusted to be the secretary of Sultan Abu Inan in Fez, Morocco (1354-1362). According to Syafii Ma'arif (1996), his political career was filled with various intrigues. He also got the position of Prime Minister when he moved to Algeria. His last political end was in Egypt.

In general, the condition of the Abbasid dynasty in Ibn Khaldun's lifetime was a transition from the peak of civilization to collapse, and the initial phase of the rise of the Fatimid Dynasty after that. This socio-political condition affected intellectual stagnation in several dynasties that were far from the center of the Abbasid government, such as in the Maghribi region and Spain (Hasyim, 2012). The Abbasid's territorial breadth factor did not

allow the center of government, especially during the time of the Caliph Al-Mutawakkil, to reach Western areas such as the Maghribi and Andalusia. So, those area always tried to break away from Abbasid rule. Moreover, the Abbasids were known to be more focused on developing Islamic science and culture than managing their expansion areas. The geographical position of the Maghreb, which is very far from Iraq (as the center of knowledge), ultimately produces a different type of knowledge. The intellectuals in this area are more focused on deepening conventional religious studies in the field of the Qur'an and Hadith, which were brought by the tabi'in and became the legacy of Khulafaur Rasyidin. It is very different from Iraq and Egypt, which had a very strong Hellenism influence (Hasyim, 2012). So it is not surprising that it became the center of civilization and science during the Abbasid Dynasty.

We can conclude that there are 2 (two) historical contexts that underlie Ibn Khaldun's thoughts. First, the political decline created conflict between dynasties, especially in the western areas of Islamic rule, which was caused by starting to reduce the legitimacy of the Abassiyah Dynasty. Second, political conflicts in parts of the West of the Abbasid rule gave rise to intellectual stagnation, thereby eliminating criticality in history and the method of narrating hadith in particular.

At the first point, we can understand that the political dynamics that occurred during his lifetime were quite influential in his thinking. It can be seen from how he describes the conditions of the dynasties in the Maghreb, Tunisia, Syria, Egypt, and Andalusia in Chapters 3, 4, and 5 of the Muqaddimah. Ibn Khaldun explains how each of these dynasties emerged, developed, and met its destruction, whose explanation later became the basis for generalizations in his thought (Bosley, 2010). In modern social research methodology, this method is commonly known as the empirical method, and also proves that in the Middle Ages before the Enlightenment in Europe appeared, Ibn Khaldun had used the principle of empiricism in building social science (Dhaouadi, 2008; Stowaser, 1984).

As for the second point, this intellectual streak generally diminished the critical capability among Islamic intellectuals at that time. It can be seen in the Introduction in the Muqoddimah where Ibn Khaldun specifically criticized several names of well-known Islamic historians, who according to him in some cases convey the irrational stories. Al

Jabiri explained that doctrinal nuances still influenced the Muslim Maghreb at that time in understanding the Qur'an and Hadith. It seems that this situation also influenced the writing of Islamic history at that time, whose method according to Ibn Khaldun adopted the hadith study method which relies heavily on track records of perawi, without trying to think and weigh the information of historical stories critically (Khaldun, 2008). As Bosley 'provoked' this with a single question, can a history filled with extraordinary stories be believed to be true (Bosley, 2010)? So that's why Ibn Khaldun argued in the Muqaddimah, that in examining the truth of a phenomenon, we must take the essence of the phenomenon. Referring to Al Mahdi, this method is known as mantiq, which is a method that can guide a person to be able to distinguish between right and wrong (Alatas, 2015).

Basically, this basic concept is not something new in science. Syed Farid Alatas said that Ibn Khaldun did not convey a new methodology in science (Alatas, 2015). However, Syed Farid Alatas emphasized that Ibn Khaldun had applied the previous philosophers' methods to historical phenomena, which could be called a novelty. This is reinforced by Hodgson's opinion that the science claimed by Ibn Khaldun is a form of empirical generalization of social change. This generalization at a later stage be based on 'higher' premises. In modern social research, this methodology is often called as an abstraction. In this context, we can conclude that Ibn Khaldun used the inductive method with the object of historical research and society in his time (Bedouin and Hadlarah).

B. Understanding Ashabiyah and Al-Mulk (Royal Authority) and Its Application in Islamic Preaching's Movement in the Period of Demak's Empire

In this chapter, first, the author will convey the nature of man and society as an introduction before entering the core of *Ashabiyah*. First, Ibn Khaldun assumes that community organization is a must (Alatas, 2015; Khaldun, 2008). Ibn Khaldun based on the philosophical statement that humans are political creatures. So that the consequence of this characteristic is requires a social organization. This community organization was later referred to by Ibn Khaldun as *al-umran*. Ibn Khaldun calls this trait as human nature from God, with which humans will use it to fulfill primary life needs, such as finding food and surviving (Khaldun, 2008).

Second, humans are influenced by the social, physical, and psychological environment (Alatas, 2015). These factors result in the development of various sciences and handicraft products, as well as differences in forms of earning a living.

Then, this difference became the basis for Ibn Khaldun to divide society into two forms, nomadic society (Bedouin) and sedentary society (city/hadlarah). Ibn Khaldun stated that this social's organization is human nature, which must be realized to fulfill God's will (Khaldun, 2008: 73). Furthermore, when the social's organization existed, Ibn Khaldun said that it would not work if no one would exercise their authority and look after them. Because, in addition to the potential for goodness in humans, humans also have a hostile character. Therefore, social's organizations need a royal authority (*Mulk*) to protect and safeguard community members from things that endanger their existence. He continued that this authority must be owned by someone who has the strongest *Ashabiyah* among its members (Khaldun 2008: 76).

1. The Ibn Khaldun's Concepts of *Ashabiyah* and *Mulk* in the Role of Religious Leader

Ashabiyah has many meanings (Luhtitianti, 2020). The author will take *Ashabiyah* terminology from the Prophet, Rosenthal, Al Mahdi, and Syed Farid Alatas. Refers to Halim (2012), the Prophet Muhammad *saw* said *Ashabiyah* is a situation when there is injustice, one human helps another. Meanwhile, Rosenthal, credited with translating *Muqaddimah* into English, defines *Ashabiyah* as "group feeling" (Y. Lacoste, 1984). Meanwhile, Mahdi concludes that *Ashabiyah* is closer to the meaning of 'solidarity' (M. Mahdi, 1957). Then, Syed Farid Alatas, the Sociologist of NUS, said that *Ashabiyah* is of the same type as the principles of social cohesion and 'group feeling' (Alatas, 2015).

In general, this *Ashabiyah* is firmly attached to the *Badawah* (nomadic's group) compared to the *Hadlarah* (sedentary's group) (Khaldun, 2008). *The first* cause is that humans in social groups need cooperation to fulfill their basic needs and survive the attacks of groups outside their ethnic groups (M. Mahdi, 1957). *The second* cause is religious ties. Members of the tribe depend heavily on their saint or shaykhs in interpreting religion as their basis for implementing good values in their community groups (Alatas, 2015). Farid Alatas explains this second cause as a result of religious propaganda in such a way that

tribal members are called to fulfill God's orders by adopting good values that exist in religion, all of which depend on the direction of the *syaiikh* and tribal leaders. Under this religious authority, members of the tribe become one unit as a social group, develop the number of followers, and eventually form a royal authority/*Mulk* (Alatas, 2015).

Concerning this religious bond, if such strong solidarity is needed to survive, the same can be true for every other human activity, such as prophecy, preaching, and building the country, as quoted from Ibn Khaldun's sentence below:

“...Because all of this (prophecy, preaching, and building the country) will not be achieved without a struggle, there is a nature of resistance. And for that struggle, *Ashabiyah* is needed ...” (Khaldun, 2008: 151).

Based on the above, Ashabiyah in Ibn Khaldun's perspective refers to the following conditions (Alatas, 2015):

- 1) Kinship ties, with this bond they will be easier to help and protect each other.
- 2) Religious ties that have high social cohesion, for example, is Islam in Arab.
- 3) Material ties, which depend on the strength of group leaders (tribal heads) in carrying out commercial economic activities.

Rosenthal added that religious ties have more power to generate Ashabiyah than kinship ties and property ownership (material ties). It is because religious ties have great strength in the group's efforts to spread religion, eliminate social jealousy among its members, and become a spiritual force that encourages members to work together to achieve the goals they expect from the group (Halim et al., 2012).

However, Ibn Khaldun emphasized that Ashabiyah would weaken when it was at the stage of a settled society. In addition to the luxury factor and kinship ties that became worthless, several political economy factors also influenced the weakening of the Ashabiyah, including the deteriorating economic sector in society due to the monopoly of entrepreneurs and rulers. This political-economic aspect ultimately influenced high taxes and military costs, in the end, Ashabiyah was weak, and the social group was threatened by other social groups that had stronger Ashabiyah.

Ibn Khaldun explained this process of domination through the relationship between the Badawah and the Hadlarah people. The Badawah are characterized as having stronger Ashabiyah, accustomed to a limited physical, the social and economic environment that requires them to be more resilient. As well as their simple life, 'clean' descendants (not mixed with other descendants), obedience to religious leaders, all of this is a great potential to be able to dominate other ethnic groups (Khaldun, 2008). It is very different from the type of Hadlarah society whose Ashabiyah are weaker. Because they are accustomed to living in luxury, their kinship ties are reduced because of the number of mixed marriages in the city, accustomed to being comfortable in getting their various needs, and do not need to think about their group because the authorities have arranged them. Thus, the people of Hadlarah can often be easily conquered by the Badawah tribe. It is implied that Ashabiyah has an important role in the strength and weakness of a social organization.

Furthermore, one of the inevitable parts of community organizations other than *Ashabiyah* is sovereignty, power, or authority, which Ibn Khaldun calls *Mulk* (sovereignty/authority). Ibn Khaldun emphasized that without sovereignty, social groups will not function properly to fulfill these natural needs.

Mulk is not always synonymous with leadership, but Ibn Khaldun mentioned it as an authority that can make other people obey the existing rules. Referring to Rosenthal's definition of Mulk, this ability is possessed by someone who has the strongest Ashabiyah feelings in the group, and with this Mulk, he uses it to organize his group members and force them to follow these rules (Alatas, 2015; Halim et al., 2012).

This Mulk will function as a "controller" (Khaldun 2008: 229). As the author has explained in the sub-chapter above, according to Ibn Khaldun, humans have a controlling character. This is a consequence of human nature to seek and cooperate in fulfilling their daily needs. In this process, each group will move its 'hand' to get the needs of other groups or other people. On the other hand, the person or group who has been harmed has become their character to try to block and defend themselves (Khaldun, 2008: 229).

The function of "controlling" is to control the aggressiveness and defensiveness of the people whom each has the desire to rule. According to Ibn Khaldun, this person must be the strongest *Ashabiyah* among the members of society and have the power to rule. Thus, according to Ibn Khaldun, Mulk's function is to gather these various *Ashabiyah* and become one community unit with the help of broader social solidarity.

Ibn Khaldun mentioned several people who can have this control (Mulk), namely community leaders (tribes) who still have blood relations (kinship), and religious leaders (saints/guardians/shaykhs) (Alatas, 2015). Ibn Khaldun did not explicitly mention that these two types were ideal conditions. However, Ibn Khaldun mentioned a significant example in the *Muqaddimah* that the Prophet Muhammad saw was an ideal type with these two conditions. Muhammad (saw) came from the descendants of the Quraish, the most powerful *Ashabiyah* tribe in Arabia, and the most respected *Bani Hashim* family in *Quraisy's* tribe.

Apart from that, Muhammad was a Prophet, a holy man who was a religious leader who became the religious reference for all tribes in Arab society. Muhammad saw proved successful in uniting all the *Ashabiyah* tribes in Arabia through his religious leadership.

The explanation above implies the argument of Ibn Khaldun that leadership is not referring to a particular tribe. His argument became debatable among many Islamic scholars from Hadist's studies that leadership requirements must come from *Quraisy's* tribe. Ibn Khaldun emphasized that religious leaders are also political leaders, as known he mentioned Muhammad saw as the ideal type of leader. The leader rises from the society which has strong *Ashabiyah* (Alatas, 2014), not from kinship ties. Therefore, he argument that *Khilafah* has ended at the end of *Khulafaur Rasyidin's* period when Muawiyah defeated Ali bin Abi Thalib. After *Khulafaur Rasyidin*, all Dynasty was built base on kinship ties, Ibn Khaldun called it as *Mulk* (royal authority) that not happened in the *Nubummah's* periode. He also wrote that Muhammad saw never nominated his successor as the leader of Muslim society after he died.

Based on his argument regarding human as a political man, Ibn Khaldun wants to show that leadership can change appropriate with the character of civilization. Ibn Khaldun wrote how Majusi built civilization even *Nubummah's* era has not come yet (Khaldun, 2008), in order to show that Prophecy and *Quraisy's* tribe are not requirements for a leadership. The

socio-historical context especially in Abbasyd era affected Ibn Khaldun's thought, especially the stagnation of Hadist studies in the text only, for him it is must to be criticize because the character of society always changing. In other hand, he also seen the reality in many dynasti leader can rises from any tribe who has strong *Ashabiyah*. It was make him to taken different argument with previous Islamic scholar. Syed Farid Alatas explained in the article "*A Khaldunian Theory of Muslim Reform*" that after *Khulafaur Rasyidin*, the expansion of territory through the control of other dynasties did not always aim to spread Islam (Alatas, 2014). However, the role of religious leaders within a tribe still plays an important role in forming a country. So, it is clear that Ibn Khaldun taken different argument with many Islamic scholar regarding to the criteria of leadership.

Eventhough, he recognized *Quraisy* as the tribe in Arab that have strongest *Ashabiyah*. The *Quraisy*'s tribe have risen many strong Islamic leader beside Muhammad *saw*, such as Abu Bakar, Umar bin Khattab and others. They had strongest *Ashabiyah* in their tribe, had more material and more religious than others. Even they came from strongest tribe (majority), but Muhammad *saw* and his adherents (*Khulafaur Rasyidin*) can unity all tribes in Arab into one nation under rules of Islam. The author argue that it is the main point which often forgotten by Muslim society today, especially in Indonesia which have many different culture and religion. Then, quoting Spickard in his book with the title "*Alternative Sociologies of Religion Throuh Non-Western Eyes*" it is implies the relevation of Ibn Khaldun's theory into the contemporary Muslim society which have multicultural religion and ethnic (Spickard, 2017).

Furthermore, the role of Ashabiyah is also essential for socio-religious movements. He took this premise from the inductive process he carried out on several historical- empirical facts of the religious reform movement, which carried out the process of tahgyir through some sporadic rebellions. Ibn Khaldun gave an example in Spain and Baghdad.

In Spain, he saw how the process of rebellion carried out by a Sufi expert and his followers called Al Murabithun did not reap optimum results, in the sense that their large number of followers was limit. They were able to get a place because of external political factors, where the time Lamtuna was busy with the Al Muwahidun movement (Khaldun, 2008).

So, according to Ibn Khaldun, when Al Muwahidun began to conquer Maghribi, Al Murabitun's weak solidarity could easily be overpowered. The leader of Al Murabitun eventually joined and became a supporter of the Al Muwahidun movement. The same thing happened in Baghdad when there was a rebellion in Thahir. This rebellion was carried out to overthrow the Caliph Al Makmun, and the social consequence was chaos in the community.

Several local religious figures whom Ibn Khaldun mentioned as Khalid ad-Durbus carried out many sporadic movements to eradicate social chaos such as robbery and other crimes in the name of this effort as a form of amar makruf nahi munkar. At first, this move got several people interested, but it did nothing but add to the chaos. In fact, when the rebellion attempt to overthrow al Makmun was successful, Ibrahim al Mahdi quickly defeated the Khalid ad-Durbus group. Some of his followers even fled. From these examples, Ibn Khaldun implies that the basic premise of his theory is religious leadership, that to carry out religious reform is by upholding social solidarity (*ashabiyyah*).

Through this *Ashabiyyah*, the *Mulk* can be enforced, which can keep proselytizing efforts away from the dangers that would quickly weaken their movement. Religious movements carried out sporadically, and without awareness to rally, the power of the *Ashabiyyah* will only pose an even greater danger to society as a whole.

The next important is that the *Ashabiyyah* does not depend on kinship. That the role of religious leaders in uniting the tribes under religious ideology is proven to encourage the formation of bigger and stronger bonds of social solidarity, such as the state, however, the failure of religious and political reform will occur when the movement is for personal interests, such as the urge to want to be a leader. Ibn Khaldun emphasized that this method will inevitably face many obstacles and usually meet failure. So as stated by Alatas, that for Ibn Khaldun, religion plays a fundamental role in consolidating all segments of society (Alatas, 2015).

2. Applying Ashabiyah and Mulk into the Empirical Role of Wali and The King of Demak Empire

In this chapter, the author does not analyse Demak's Empire in a whole, but only take several angles that related with the aim of this paper, namely the role of *Walisongo* as religious leader in Java to develop Demak as the first Islamic Kingship. Furthermore, this article is also analyse the weakness of *Ashabiyah* in Demak's Empire which reduced with several political conflict among descendants of Raden Fatah as the founder of Demak. Before he was going to Majapahit to meet with his father, namely Bhre Kertabumi, he learned Islam from Sunan Ampel in Ampelkerta (Surabaya). It is imply that Raden Fatah have connected with *ulama'* (*Walisongo*) before he develop Demak's Empire.

Before the widespread influence of Islam, the archipelago was controlled by Majapahit, which historians believe was based in Palembang. Due to Majapahit's vast territory and the many conflicts overpower, it did not allow Majapahit to monitor its distant territory, such as the land of Demak. Raden Fatah as many Javanese historian said, known as the founder of Demak's Empire. It was started when Bhre Kertabumi given one of the parts land in Java to Raden Fatah. Several analysis show that Bhre Kertabumi given the land because he worried if Raden Fatah which known as his son from his second wife, will become rival for him. On consider of Sunan Giri, Bhre Kertabumi given Demak's land to his son.

This author want to highlight this point, the existence of Sunan Giri in Majapahit, show us that before Demak's Empire has built, some clerics has carried out their role as advisor the King. It is very interesting to understand that guardian have not only the role as religious leader, but also as Ibn Khaldun's said, have a political role. In the context of Islamic preaching's movement in Java, the advise of Sunan Giri to Bhre Kertabumi became the main point as the first strategy to spread Islam outside from Majapahit.

After obtaining land in Demak as a gift from Brawijaya V, he founded a pesantren intending to spread Islam. Raden Patah and Walisongo eventually became the first founders of the Islamic Kingdom in Demak. This historical story implies that religious reform, preceded by a strong Ashabiyah spirit among the figures, still needed Mulk (sovereignty) as theorized by Ibn Khaldun. Moreover, religious alliances through religious figures and kings were a significant force in realizing greater beneficial sovereignty.

Starting from the first Islamic preaching carried out by Walisongo in Java, Raden Patah to Demak had a positive influence on Walisongo's preaching, where Raden Patah eventually became interested in Islam and studied with Sunan Ampel. This situation has become a separate force for the role of Walisongo further to expand the achievements of Islamic preaching in Java. In the end, Raden Patah and Walisongo entered into a religious alliance to establish the first Islamic Kingdom, namely Demak.

The Javanese tradition of making a community figure or leader as a respected person allowed these 9 (nine) ulama to play a role as a religious authority (*Mulk*) at that time. This is due to the strategy of the wali in preaching Islam to the Javanese people who still have animistic beliefs, they do this with a cultural approach. It is very different from what Ibn Khaldun exemplified above regarding several religious reform movements that tend to be sporadic and easily defeated, Walisongo has applying *da'wa* step by step. They were very understood about Javanese culture and its influence in the whole of Javanese behavior. As Ibn Khaldun shown in the example of Al Muwahhidun's movements, the effort to do *taghyir* (social change) or *amar makruf nahi munkar* can not be carried out with sporadic. If religious leader or Islamic organization notice it, the Islamic *da'wa* will last longer.

For example, these approaches can be seen from Sunan Kalijaga's efforts to spread Islam through cultural arts, Maulana Malik Ibrahim through an economic approach by teaching Javanese people to farm during famine. This approach is proven to be able to generate public sympathy for the *da'wa* of the guardians. Gradually, the community depended on their religious life on this *wali* figure. It is not uncommon for the Javanese to consider these saints as 'holy people' who are still sacred until now. It proves that the *wali* with their leadership charisma in society can unite Islam and Java in a harmonious relationship. This certainly implies Walisongo's awareness of the importance of building group feelings (*Ashabiyah*) among themselves and Javanese society in general, even though they continue to penetrate Islam through various means.

In other hand, Walisongo understood that Javanese peoples follows the religion of their King. It is expressed in their effort to develop Islamic Kingdom in Java with Raden Fatah. When these saints succeeded in Islamizing a small part of the people of Java, in the end, they needed *Mulk* (sovereignty) to make it easier to spread Islamic *da'wa*, to become

regulators and controllers to keep the community within the scope of Javanese Islamic *Ashabiyah*. Furthermore, the existence of *Mulk* and *Ashabiyah* during the Demak Kingdom was ultimately proven to be able to accelerate the expansion of Islamic territory.

Mulk is not only limited to leadership for political legitimacy, but as in Ibn Khaldun's theory, *Mulk* becomes a necessity to enforce rules based on religious teachings. These rules are needed as a way to bind society and establish solidarity. During the leadership of Sultan Trenggono (the third generation of the leader of the Demak Kingdom), the spread of Islam was in its glory. Several areas were successfully controlled, starting from Madiun, Blora, Surabaya, Pasuruan, Lamongan, Blitar and so on. Islam eventually became a source of values adhered to by the Javanese people who were culturally very attached to and obedient to the King, as "*sesubunan*" ("worship") for all Javanese people.

However, this *Ashabiyah* can be weakened, when certain factors trigger this weakness. Here, the author will focus more on fraternal conflicts between members of the Demak Kingdom, which, according to the author's analysis, is a sign of the weakening of the *Ashabiyah*-based kinship ties. In the context of the Demak Kingdom, after Pati Unus (the second generation of Demak Kings after Raden Patah) there was much political turmoil due to the weakening of kinship ties between members of the Demak ruling family, which ultimately weakened Demak himself. This was marked by the removal of Demak's status from the Kingdom to a duchy (*kadipaten*), which was directly subject to Pajang's rule.

Pajang, which was initially a duchy under the Demak Kingdom, succeeded in conquering Demak after several attempts to kill Aryo Penangsang, one of the descendants of the Demak's King, who wanted to seize Demak's leadership by killing Sultan Trenggono (the legitimate leader). The murder of Sultan Trenggono caused retaliation on the part of Trenggono's wife, namely Ratu Kalinyamat who then handed over to Jaka Tingkir (the sister-in-law of Ratu Kalinyamat and Sultan Trenggono) to be conducted to kill Aryo Penangsang. In the end, Jaka Tingkir with the help of several figures, was able to kill Aryo Penangsang. He did not occupy the sovereignty (*Mulk*) of Demak, but instead, he established his own sovereignty over Pajang. Pajang upright as a Kingdom, and Demak was changed its status to a duchy. Until here, the Demak Kingdom ended, no more than 4 (four generations) with the weak *Ashabiyah* factor as the cause of their fall under Pajang rule.

The history of the formation of Islamic kingdoms in Indonesia and conflict between brothers implies the basic premise of Ibn Khaldun's theory that *Mulk* is a necessity to maintain the existence of a group. There are 3 (three) functions of *Mulk* in this Demak era, namely:

- 1) Strengthen social solidarity so that the existence of Islamic *da'wa* can survive while accelerating regional expansion. It was needed in the early period of Islamic preaching (*da'wa*).
- 2) *Mulk* is used to nurture the Javanese people, regulate their needs for religion and fulfill their livelihoods.
- 3) After the Demak Kingdom was stable and the area was expanding, there was a civil conflict, here *Mulk* became the "controller" because of the human nature of always wanting to control each other.

As Ibn Khaldun's explanation, that the important thing of socio-historical phenomena is to take the essence of the event. The fall and rise of the Demak's Kingdom resulted from the weakening of the *Ashabiyah*, which was based on kinship ties. From this weakness of *Ashabiyah*, the dignity of a leader and his sovereignty in society will also weaken. However, *Mulk* is still needed as a nature of Islamic preaching to be able to maintain society, protect the existence of the Javanese Islamic kingdom from other dangerous *Ashabiyah*, and even facilitate the achievement of the spread of Islam.

C. Some Lessons to Strengthening the Contemporary Muslim Society in Indonesia

As Ibn Khaldun's statement, history can't be seen as an event only, but an essence must be drawn to be a lesson and a solution for the society afterward. According to Arnold Toynbee, it was Ibn Khaldun's main goal when he theorized about the Cycle of Civilization (The Rise and Fall of Dynasty). So that society could make preventive efforts by understanding the character of society and the social changes that occurred in it (Maarif, 1996). There are several aspects that can be taken from the analysis of the preaching of Islam in the Demak Kingdom above, which can be used as lessons as well as solutions to the problems of today's Muslim community, especially in Indonesia.

First, the Walisongo da'wa movement provides an overview of expressing religion without causing much conflict with other groups. A deep understanding of the community's character becomes the basis for efforts to change socio-religion in Java (Zuhdi, 2017). As we know, the Muslim community as the largest entity in Indonesia does not have a single face. The diversity of Islamic groups and the accompanying cultures creates a variety of religious expressions, both in preaching by each group and in the socio-religious rituals of society (Ula, 2017; Sobirin, 2018). When the Islamic da'wa movement does not well understand this, then as Ibn Khaldun said, the efforts of taghyir (social change) will quickly fail.

Second, Walisongo's efforts to enforce Mulk in Java result from deep thinking about the da'wa strategy in Javanese society. They realized that da'wa could not be done sporadically, as Ibn Khaldun also had the same argument. After taking a cultural approach, they realized that enforcing Mulk would facilitate the spread of Islamic da'wa. The Javanese people believe in *agomo ageming Ratu*, which means that the Javanese people's religion follows the religion of their King. So Demak was founded to realize these efforts, and it was proven that in the early period from Sultan Fatah to Sultan Trenggono the spread of Islam through expansion to various areas around Demak took place massively.

If contextualized with the current Muslim community, this second point is still very relevant, especially in relation to the growth of various Islamic groups that take political paths for the process of penetrating their *da'wa*. Some of these groups espoused the idea of an Islamic *Khilafah*, and some conducted *musyarokah siyasiah* with secular parties, others participated in general elections. This aspect of the need for Islamic groups to take a political path to distinguish between group political interests and Islamic missionary interests. The diversity of Islamic political groups allows for enormous contestation opportunities for leadership and economic resources. Furthermore, it will create endless political conflicts among Muslims.

Islam in Demak weakens when there is a conflict of interest between the royal descendants who are fighting for power. As Ibn Khaldun's analysis, when society is in a stage of political conflict over power, it will result in bad governance, a weak economy, and the state can no longer finance the military. And when the military is weakened, the state

will be easily controlled by other, stronger groups (Khaldun, 2008). Therefore, Ibn Khaldun emphasized how a leader should maintain *Mulk* and *Ashabiyah* with religious solution:

“In appointing a substitute, it must have endeavored that as much as possible there is pure intention. Without it, someone will experience futility in a religious organization.” (Khaldun, 2008: 262)

In addition to the prerequisites for intention, Ibn Khaldun also requires moral qualities that religious and political leaders must possess, including being polite, gentle, and generous (Khaldun, 2008). These three aspects are closely related to the economy and the stability of the morality of society. Ibn Khaldun argued that when a leader acts arbitrarily and imposes his will, the community will act defensively, and morality chaos occurs. It is one of Ibn Khaldun's theses that the decline in societal morality and the materialist lifestyle in the Hadlarah community is the cause of the weakening of the Ashabiyah ties, which if left untreated, will lead to the end of dynastic rule. In the case of Demak, the current Muslim community can reflect that the competition between Aryo Penangsang and Jaka Tingkir is a concrete form of how the power struggle resulted in the end of the Demak Kingdom.

The last point is also the writer's criticism of Ibn Khaldun's theory, Ashabiyah can indeed be a unifying factor, especially in multicultural society (Spickard, 2017). The source of the ties can be based on religion, material ownership, or kinship relations. Empirically, the history of dynastic conflicts during the Abbasid and Fatimid periods as well as in Indonesia in the Demak case, Ashabiyah proved to have a significant role in building society and ending a power. In Demak, for example, the role of religious leaders like Walisongo in enforcing Mulk through Raden Fatah, who has the strongest Ashabiyah in Java, has proven to be a means of building a strong Islamic base in Java.

Ibn Khaldun also gave an example of how the *Quraisy*, which he recognized as the strongest tribe in Arabia, were getting weaker when they were in conflict and materialism. Ibn Khaldun argues that in the end *Quraisy* was at a stage where they were too weak to master the leadership, so that in the end, the non-Arab nations were able to conquer them (Khaldun, 2008). It is the basis for Ibn Khaldun's rejection of the hadith scholars' agreement on the descendants of *Quraisy* as a condition of leadership in Islam.

However, in contemporary society today, *Ashabiyah* and *Mulk* can be two issues that lead people to the polarization of certain groups. Especially in this case, it can further confirm the existence of the majority group. As Ibn Khaldun's statement that religious and political leaders are a unity and taken from the strongest *Ashabiyah* group, indicates the contradiction of Ibn Khaldun's theory with the democratic spirit that some Muslim communities want to build, especially Indonesian Muslim. The issue of majority and minority in Indonesia has long been at the root of conflicts between religions and intra-religions. Therefore, the author argue that the interpretation of the meaning of *Ashabiyah* must be adapted to the context of the society in which we are. As the definition of *Ashabiyah* itself varies from experts, so do we interpret it, so as not to get trapped into group fanaticism, which will only further exacerbate differences.

CONCLUSION

As a Muslim theorist through his *Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldun demonstrated his genius in analyzing the processes of social change within Islamic societies. Ashabiyah and Mulk are two fundamental concepts in his framework, widely applied to analyze historical phenomena in North Africa, Spain, Arabia, and Middle Eastern countries such as Egypt. This article argues that Ashabiyah and Mulk are equally applicable to understanding the da'wah role of Walisongo and the Islamic rulers of the Demak Empire. The findings suggest that Ibn Khaldun's framework provides valuable insights into the dynamics of power and social cohesion within the historical context of Demak.

Moreover, this analysis offers a reflective tool for understanding contemporary Islamic da'wah movements in Indonesia. By utilizing Ibn Khaldun's theory, scholars can expand the scope of sociological studies from an Eastern perspective, enriching global academic discourse.

This study contributes to the academic field by illustrating the practical applicability of Ibn Khaldun's theory in analyzing the interplay between religion and governance. It establishes a methodological bridge between classical Islamic thought and modern sociological theories, highlighting its relevance in diverse contexts. However, this research is limited by its focus on literature-based analysis, lacking empirical data that

could substantiate the practical implications of Ashabiyah and Mulk to contemporary settings. Additionally, the study does not sufficiently address regional variations in the application of these concepts.

Future research should incorporate field studies and empirical approaches to investigate how Ashabiyah and Mulk operate in modern socio-political contexts, particularly within Islamic da'wah movements. Comparative studies on how Ibn Khaldun's theories can be integrated into contemporary sociological frameworks from both Eastern and Western perspectives would also be beneficial.

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