

# Somariah FITRIANI - MUHAMMADIYAH- NAHDLATUL ULAMA (NU): MONUMENTAL CULTURAL CREATIVITY HERITAGE OF THE WORLD RELIGION

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## **MUHAMMADIYAH- NAHDLATUL ULAMA (NU): MONUMENTAL CULTURAL CREATIVITY HERITAGE OF THE WORLD RELIGION**

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### **Abstract**

*Muhammadiyah and NU are two well-known socio-religious organizations in the world over the years. In spite of the fact that both organizations are characterized as religious social movement, each of them has their individual creativity, which is called al-thaqafat in their motions. This study aims to identify the organization of Muhammadiyah-NU as a religious heritage, which affects other religious organizations both in Indonesia and other countries. This research employed a qualitative approach by using historical method to obtain the actual reality. For data collection, literature reviews, documentation and interviews were also conducted to gather empiric facts. The researchers interviewed public figures of the organizations. Al-thaqafat becomes part of elements rather than cultivated culture, which is understood as habitual patterns of human creativity, including a religious organization. Both organizations are the result of an al-thaqafat religious creativity created by each founder and can be pursued into the world monumental heritage. Without denying, the existence of al-thaqafat creativity will continue to enlighten the world civilization. Therefore, Muhammadiyah and NU have been doing and keeping continuing al-thaqafat creativity enlightenment through their charitable organizations and institutions. The result is profoundly proven so that they*

*have been in an existence more than a century.*

*[Muhammadiyah dan NU adalah dua organisasi sosial keagamaan yang sudah dikenal oleh dunia selama ini. Meskipun organisasi tersebut bercirikan gerakan sosial keagamaan, namun keduanya memiliki kreativitas masing-masing yang bersifat al-thaqafat dalam gerakan yang dilakukannya. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasikan Muhammadiyah-NU sebagai warisan budaya kreativitas keagamaan monumental yang mendunia, dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dan historical studies dalam model deskriptif untuk mendapatkan realitas yang sebenarnya. Kajian pustaka, dokumentasi dan wawancara dilakukan untuk mendapatkan fakta-fakta dan data data yang empirik. Al-thaqafat menjadi elemen bagian daripada hasil budidaya yang dipahami sebagai pola kebiasaan yang menjadi kreativitas manusia, termasuk membentuk suatu organisasi keagamaan. Organisasi Muhammadiyah-NU adalah hasil dari sebuah al-thaqafat kreativitas keagamaan yang diciptakan oleh para pendirinya masing-masing yang lahir dari rahim alam Nusantara dan dapat diupayakan menjadi warisan monumental dunia. Tanpa dipungkiri hakikat keberadaan kreativitas al-thaqafat akan terus mencerahkan peradaban dunia. Oleh karena itu, Muhammadiyah-NU telah dan terus melakukan al-thaqafat kreativitas pencerahan, baik melalui institusi organisasi maupun amal usaha yang dikelolanya. Hasil dari jerih payah tersebut terbukti bahwa dua ormas ini masih bertahan hingga saat ini].*

**Keywords:** *Muhammadiyah-NU, Heritage, Religious Creativity, Al-thaqafat*

## **Introduction**

The Islamic Movement is all community activities to move together (congregation) and organized, which seeks to restore the teachings of Islam in guiding the community and make it as life guidance in all life aspects. Its congregation movement must be done continuously and become the essential essence for an Islamic movement. However, the forms of such activities, are not limited to activities such as lectures,

selling books, seminars, preaching, speaking and writing, which they are only important part of the activities of the Islamic movement itself.<sup>1</sup> One thing to remember is that its movement must be based on the essence of solidarity (*Ashabiyah*), that is to help fellow human beings each other in the genuine goodness with real action and not for the encouragement of lust alone or with certain political mission. Then, mission of genuine movement solely to race to do good deed (*berfastabiqul Khaerat*) is to be the pulse of *Ashabiyah* spirited humanity. Its spirit becomes the main motivating factor in activating the organization and its followers to move forward in order to achieve certain goals which it aspires. Etymologically *Ashabiyah* is derived from the word *ashaba* meaning binding. So the function of *ashabiyah* is the point of socio-cultural relations that can be used to assess the persistence of a social group. In addition, *ashabiyah* also can be understood by a social solidarity with a focus on awareness, integration and unity of the group<sup>2</sup> or can be interpreted as a movement. The realization of its movement is the creation of human beings as to the cultural movements in the various dimensions of his life. It is useful for the development of life and as a medium of cultural movement in the field of organization in economic, social, political, religious or social aspects, such as traces of organization Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in Indonesia.

### **Traces of Muhammadiyah and NU Creativity in thawing heart conflict**

As educated and enlightened citizens, “deviating” from the common mindset, borrow diction from Anhar Gonggong<sup>3</sup>; Muhammad Darwis, which later became known as KH. Ahmad Dahlan and KH.

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<sup>1</sup> Yusuf Al-Qardhawi, *Awlawiyat al-Harakat al-Islamiyah fi al-Marhlmah al-qadimah* (Qaherah: Maktabah Wahbah. 1991), p. 228.

<sup>2</sup> John L. Esposito, *Ensiklopedi Oxford: Dunia Islam Modern* (Bandung: Mizan, 2001), p.198.

<sup>3</sup> Anhar Gonggong, *Meluruskan Sejarah Muhammadiyah–NU; Retrospeksi Gerakan Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan* (Jakarta: Uhamka Press, 2016), p. 37.



Muhammad Hashim Ash'ari learned from some of the greatest scholars in Mecca. Both of them applied the knowledge to deal with the situation in their country of diversity in the Sultanate of Yogyakarta and East Java. When KH. Ahmad Dahlan attempted to change critical situation, he had undeniably understood the situation and its impact for himself. The situation he faced in Yogyakarta, had made him anxious, which, according to Binfas, the process of the birth of Muhammadiyah, ranging from feelings, anxiety, or inner conflict of KH. Ahmad Dahlan to the problems of Muslims in the *Kauman* society, Yogyakarta.<sup>4</sup> This was before his first pilgrimage in 1890 in Mecca. In view of KH. Ahmad Dahlan, it is where the condition of society and religious leaders of the royal who mix up the teachings of Islam with such superstitious beliefs, heresy, and superstition. According to historian-Muslim scholars, Kuntowijoyo:

Historically, Muhammadiyah is actually formed from the village culture. I used to say that the birth of Muhammadiyah is closely linked to the socio-economic and cultural community of the city, while NU is based on an agrarian-village culture. However the statement needs to be revised because in fact at the beginning of the 20th century, when Muhammadiyah was founded in Yogyakarta, the real city life was more controlled by the nobility, the Dutch community, and the Chinese community. In Yogyakarta, the city was once ruled by the cultural hegemony of the palace, the Dutch colonial political domination and economic dominance of the Chinese group. There used to be places of Chinese worship in Malioboro and Free Masonry of "Societeit" from Netherland as a place of worship, but no mosque. Meanwhile, there was only one Great Mosque in Kraton which tended to be under the supervision of cultural *Kejawen*. We observed that Islam was then a fringe

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<sup>4</sup> Maman A. Majid. Binfas, "Budaya Pengelolaan pendidikan Muhammadiyah dan NU di Indonesia. Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia," *Tesis* (Bangi Selangor Malaysia, 2015), p. 39.

phenomenon that is in the villages.<sup>5</sup>

Facing such a stitution in Yogyakarta community as depicted by Kuntowijoyo made KH. Ahmad Dahlan concerned and anxious. His anxiety grew more particularly after learning from some greatest scholars in Mecca and reading books from reformer of Islamic public figures such as Muhammad Abduh, Al Afgani, and Rasjid Ridha. His anxiety brought him to be a “deviating” leader who made him have distinguished point of view from general mindset in society. His “deviating” attitudes and perspective led him to bring a grace for the people of the nation. Without his deviating perpective, Muhammadiyah must have never been in an existence.

NU birth process is basically also due to “deviation” which is caused by a conflict between two “companions” that have “new” initiated steps for the progress of humanity, at least in East Java. They are KH. Mas Mansyur and KH. Wahab Chasbullah who are two figures in association Tashwirul-Afkar or Nahdlatul Wathan in 1916. The interesting thing to ”ponder” is the differences between the two figures, that is, for freedom of thought.<sup>6</sup> Thus Maman A. Majid Binfas in his book; *Meluruskan Sejarah Muhammadiyah-NU; Retrospeksi Gerakan Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan*” (*Straightening the History of Muhammadiyah-NU; Retrospection of Education and Culture Movement*) which is loaded with facts, stating:

Freedom of thought and speech pioneered by KH Mas Mansyur and KH.Wahab Chasbullah and colleagues to establish Tashwirul Afkar is their most important heritage to the Indonesian Muslims. They become an idol (role model) to the next generation, so that the principle of freedom of thought or perpective could be done with a strong religious nuance. The principle of freedom of thought will not lose the spirit of divine religions and Islamic levels. With its principle, Muslims can solve

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<sup>5</sup> Kuntowijoyo, *Paradigma Islam Interpretasi untuk Aksi* (Jakarta: Mizan, 1991), p. 267.

<sup>6</sup> Anhar Gonggong, *Prolog: Muhammadiyah-NU: Modernis-Tradisional Tiang Kebertahan Umat Islam Melalui Pendidikan...*, p. 37.

social problems as a firm analysis of the Islamic community.<sup>7</sup>

Traces of freedom of thought for the NU started from the institution that was being promoted jointly by KH. Mas Mansyur and KH. Wahab Chasbullah and colleagues to establish Tashwirul Afkar as described above, in fact needs to be preserved. The essence of freedom is not longer attractive, it is like “fallen before they grow” by arrogant people.<sup>8</sup> It should be maintained as an educational culture as root of the sincere initial intention in establishing Tashwirul Afkar educational institutions, which is solely to enlighten the community and nation.

### **Educating and Enlightening Culture**

Education introduced by the Dutch colonial government, which was not only entirely for the benefit of children of the colony, but also to the interests of (administration) of colonial rule, eventually had a vital impact for survival together and a new awareness for the children of the colony. After Boedi Utomo was established, Sarekat Islam was established as well in 1911, Haji Samanhudi in Solo, but later it became a developing social and political force under the leadership of Haji Oemar Said Tjokroaminoto (HOS Tjokroaminoto). Furthermore, KH. Ahmad Dahlan who got the “intakes” of new thinking from various reformers that it had met in Mecca, Egypt, encouraged him to establish strategy, systems and new powers as to create awareness for the native community in his country. To renew it, in accordance with the teachings of Islam, the necessary instrument is required.<sup>9</sup> KH. Ahmad Dahlan mentioned that since Muhammadiyah establishment in 1912, the instrument was actually a “mandatory” and must be in accordance with the Qur’an, which means;

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<sup>7</sup> Maman A. Majid Binfas, *Meluruskan Sejarah Muhammadiyah–NU; Retrospeksi Gerakan Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan* (Jakarta:Uhamka Press, 2016), p. 43.

<sup>8</sup> Maman A. Majid Binfas, *Independen; Guratan intuisi Penyair Asongan* (Jakarta, IPPSDM-WIN 1988), p. 229.

<sup>9</sup> Maman A. Majid Binfas, Mohd Syukri Yeoh Abdullah, & Ahmad Munawar, “Asal Usul Gerakan Pendidikan Muhammadiyah di Indonesia,” *Internasional Journal of the Malay Word Civilisation (IMAN)*, Vol, 2, No, 2, 2014, p. 26.



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*And let there be arising from you a nation inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and those will be successful. (QS. Ali Imran 3:104). And enter among my righteous servants (QS. Al-Fajr 29).*

It's instrument mentioned by KH. Ahmad Dahlan is the organization, and one of them is an educational institution. By having such an institution, it can develop a system of education and produce children of knowledge which does not only fill their brain with heaps of religious knowledge and modern knowledge, but also kind hearted. In short, Muhammadiyah could have enlightened educated citizens whom they would be the future leaders of the people since they are able "to go beyond themselves". Therefore, historically Muhammadiyah, Taman Siswa and other community organizations (mass organization) have been successful in educating the early generations who not only have the strength of character, but also become a formidable fighter. They even have willingness to die for his nation. In all activities also involving all aspects of life, economy, social, and politics, they are ultimately able to do social transformation as well as religious reforms at the same time, which Kuntowijoyo stated "As the rationalization of traditional society towards a modern society."<sup>10</sup>

In contrast to some Islamic education movements in Indonesia, which emerged in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Muhammadiyah is an education movement that has accommodating character. Nevertheless, in the next journey, Muhammadiyah also established schools that had similarities with Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) that were categorized as assimilative. Those education schools were as an attempt to meet the needs of society and the context of the struggle for independence, so was NU. Although essentially NU did not have many formal schools as Muhammadiyah because its presence in the world relied on more special education boarding school with *salafiyah* as its main characteristic by following old tradition. <sup>10</sup> Those Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) indeed specialized

<sup>10</sup> Kuntowijoyo, *Muslim Tanpa Masjid; Esai-Esai Agama; Budaya dan Politik dalam Bingkai Strukturalisme Transedental* (Bandung: Mizan, 2001).



in religious sciences such as reciting the Qur'an, Arabic, fiqh, and *tahlilan*, etc.<sup>11</sup> Based on these facts, the organizations of Muhammadiyah and NU have been practicing intellectual cultural creativity to enlighten mankind and its nation through educational institutions as a charitable business management. It deserves to be made as an example of role model for anyone and any organizations in the world to do creative enlightening cultural act, whether it is based on religious belief or socio-cultural and humanitarian mission without any sort of race and religion. It is also to protect a mission aiming to marginalize and oppress which is deliberately engineered as a guinea pig, such as the issue of terrorism and radicalism in aggressive creativity motion globally in harassing the religious role of enlightening the world civilization.

### **Muhammadiyah-NU as Cultural Movement of Religious Creativity**

Muhammadiyah and NU as a cultural movement of religious creativity have taken part in developing the education world, even since the 20th century to colonized country, particularly in the Indonesian archipelago. There was no denying that their presence and development can eradicate ignorance and stupidity colonized by foreign nations. Since then, a lot of other organizations developed with their own style, ideology, and purpose. In the new history we were heading and becoming one united nation, known as the period of the National Movement. Within the framework of the National Movement and the situation, the two organizations—Muhammadiyah and NU—the leaders are also leaders of the Islamic East Indies should be placed. Because both were born to provide answers to the challenges faced by the Islamic East Indies in the period 1912 and 1926, until now.

The opening of educational institutions in the Dutch East Indies which later gave birth to the children of the colony, which is

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<sup>11</sup> Maman A. Majid Binfas, Mohd Syukri Yeoh Abdullah, & Ahmad Munawar, "Tapak Perbezaan Asal Usul Gerakan Muhammadiyah dan Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) di Indonesia," *Jurnal Melayu*, Vol. 12, No. 1, 2014.

not just as children who have successfully studying in educational institutions, but more than that, they simultaneously make themselves as enlightened educated citizens. They have the intelligence of the brain-mind with knowledge, and it also has a “liquidity heart” enlightening. They have high intelligence and become kind hearted people. Thus, they have not only new awareness for their own personal but also a new awareness to do things beyond themselves.<sup>12</sup>

The movement of Muhammadiyah and NU in the context of its birth, has been embedded in the minds of its founders that the method of a matter will not be perfect without a “tool”, which then it becomes obligatory. Muhammadiyah and NU are two well-known socio-religious organizations so far. Aligned with each name, Muhammadiyah means the followers of the Prophet Muhammad, so Muhammad is the final messenger of God. KH. Ahmad Dahlan expected that with its chosen name, Muhammadiyah would be the final society or organization anyway.<sup>13</sup>

Then on November 18, 1912/8 Dhulhijjah 1330 the year of hijrah, Muhammadiyah organization was formally established. Meanwhile, NU at the beginning, established the committee on January 31, 1926/16 Rajab 1334 The year of hijrah and then turned into Jamiyyah named NO (Nahdlatul Ulama) means the resurrection of the clergy. Its Aim is to create an Islamic society on the basis of paham Aswaja, with the full sentence in the text HBNO as follows:

“Holding the relationship among scholars who have doctrine of religious sect and check previous books to teach, to know whether it was on the books of *Soennah wal Djama’ah* experts or books of *Bid’ah* expert.”<sup>14</sup>

Despite the fact that their differences and similarities in the style of creativity to manage their respective educational institutions as part of the

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<sup>12</sup> 6 hhar Gonggong, *Prolog, Muhammadiyah-NU: Modernis-Tradisional*., p. 37.

<sup>13</sup> Solichin Salam, *K.H. Ahmad Dahlan: Reformasi Islam Indonesia*, MCMLXIII (Jakarta: Djajamurni, 1963), p. 39.

<sup>14</sup> HBNO, Statuten Perkoempulan Nadlatul Ulama 1926/1344H, Surabaya: Surat Pengakuan Penyerahan Permintaan Pendirian NO pada 5 September 1929 M.

creative elements of *al-thaqafat*. Muhammadiyah and NU are characterized as a socio-religious movement, as well as manage education, ranging from primary level to higher education level. The creativity of *al-thaqafat* is defined as a part of the cultural elements, which is the result of the cultivation developed by humans into a work of art. Its cultivation can be understood as a pattern of habits that continue to be developed into human creativity. Including in terms of establishing of association, such as the organization of Muhammadiyah-NU. Muhammadiyah is the result of a cultural creativity by KH. Ahmad Dahlan. While NU organization is the result of aggressive creativity of the *Kiai* (Religious scholars) in East Java in 1926. What is meant by a creative culture of KH. Ahmad Dahlan and the founders of NU includes to be creative in making money “how to finance the organization”, through *batik* (traditional Indonesian clothes) trade to various regions or other ways.<sup>15</sup> The existence of a culture of truth and goodness is then included in the creative culture of KH. Ahmad Dahlan and the cultural study of *Al-Maun*. Muhammadiyah and *Al-Maun* have a very deep meaning and becomes the foundation and spirit of the missionary movement of Muhammadiyah to various charities in the form of social monotheism such as hospitals, orphanages, nursing homes, poor homes, educational institutions, and others. In connection with the study of *Al-Maun*, the early history of Muhammadiyah has carved a very brilliant story about the assessment of the surah Al-Maun, in understanding the meaning of the verses to their students at that time.

Apparently, one of the important similarities is about the creative culture that has been developed to build Muhammadiyah without loss of identity as Javanese people by which KH. Ahmad Dahlan did to develop “rational thought creations in religious understanding” through the recitation activity and building advanced educational institutions. Meanwhile, the scholar team among NU developed the creative culture of the local tradition. Since NU had adjusted to the conditions of the

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<sup>15</sup> Anhar Gonggong, *Prolog Muhammadiyah-NU: Modernis-Tradisional...*, p.181.



local tradition for a long time, with its aim to get easy access and then behave aggressive which is accommodative, selective, and proportional. This attitude, by KH. Hasyim Muzadi (1999) is regarded “as a cultural and moral reference for the scientific spirit among Nahdliyin community.”<sup>16</sup> As stated by Said Aqil Siroj “although NU received the “modern thing”, they still retained the principles of *Ashwaja*. It includes the principle of grave pilgrimage, *istighosah*, *haul*, birthday of the prophet, the litany (hymn of praise on the birthday of Prophet Muhammad).<sup>17</sup> In fact, some wore *sarung* (traditional cloth worn mostly when taking prayer), it is even enforced if necessary. Therefore, according to Noor Ahmad people of *Ashwaja* are dynamic, but they do not leave the old traditions, no restraints. They are free and flexible. Implementing the good old principle (*al-muhafazha ‘ala al-qadim al-Salib al akhdh wa bil al-jadid al-aslah*) is always in the hold. *Ketawadhu’an*; they are very respectful, especially with *Kiai*. However, it does not mean they could not develop this kind of respect. *Santri* (a term for students who study in Islamic boarding school) do not do *sami’na waathokna* blindly. Within certain limits, they should be developed and need space to develop themselves.”<sup>18</sup>

From above explanation, it can be said that the organization of Muhammadiyah-NU is a manifestation of *al-thaqafat* religious creativity which enlighten the mind and heart, both for their communities and mankind as a whole. Although those organizations were born from the womb of the archipelago, the highlight of pulse does have a global movement. Therefore, it is just right that *al-thaqafat* or cultural religious creativity by Muhammadiyah-NU has become essential to be a monumental heritage of the world.

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<sup>16</sup> KH. Hazim Muzadi, *Nahdlatul Ulama di Tengah Agenda persoalan Bangsa* (Jakarta: Logos Wacana Ilmu, 1999).

<sup>17</sup> Said Aqil Siroj, *Interview* (Jakarta: PBNU Building Jakarta, 2013).

<sup>18</sup> Noor Achmad, *Interview* (Jakarta: PBNU Building Jakarta, 2013).

## The Importance of Muhammadiyah-NU as World Cultural Heritage

On the basis of the General Conference of UNESCO on November 16, 1972, there are some criteria for Category of World Heritage Cultural and Natural World as follows;

- 1) Symbolizing a masterpiece of human creativity and intelligence as well as the value of having a significant effect on the culture.
- 2) Showing a priority on human values that have not changed for a period of time in terms of architecture, technology, monumental arts, city planning or landscape design.
- 3). Containing distinctiveness or evidence that there used to be the remained existence of ritual civilization in the past or those which have disappeared.
- 4). Awesome manifestation on a building, architecture or technology which have depiction of an important stage in the history of human civilization.
- 5) Awesome manifestation of residence, land, or waterways to symbolize a culture or human interaction with the environment, especially the preserved ones against changing times significantly.
- 6). closely related to an event or a particular tradition, in terms of thought, belief, artistic and literary<sup>19</sup>

When the program aims to catalogue, name, and preserve places that are considered very important in order to become a human cultural heritage as a prerequisite for World Heritage, based on the above points. The program may just be the primary basis for consideration of the Muhammadiyah-NU organization to be a World Cultural Heritage. Because *al-thaqafat* religious creativity that has been applied by the Muhammadiyah-NU during this time is enlightening the mind and heart, both for each community and mankind as a whole. It is closely related to the first point, namely "It symbolizes the masterpiece of human creativity and intelligence as well as the value of having a significant effect on the culture. While the Muhammadiyah and NU are the association, resulting from a cultural or *al-thaqafat* religious creativity by the founders that can survive monumentally to this day. Without any doubts, the essence of *al-thaqafat* creativity existence will always continue to enlighten civilization,

<sup>19</sup> Budi Hermana, Kaya Budaya Miskin Warisan Dunia, in <http://pena.gunadarma.ac.id/ka-ya-budaya-miskin-warisan-dunia/> accessed August 27, 2016.

both in archipelago and in the world globally. Then in second point; it is closely related to an event or a particular tradition, in terms of thought, belief, artistic and literature. During this time the organization of Muhammadiyah-NU has made *al-thaqafat* creativity enlightenment, to purify and accommodate the particular tradition according to each faith, thought, belief and artistic and literary as well. It is always done as part of its work program, through charitable organizations and business institutions including through educational institutions built by Muhammadiyah and NU which have reached most of the area of the Republic of Indonesia.

Educational institutions owned by Muhammadiyah have now developed from kindergarten up to tertiary education. In 2015 Muhammadiyah has 173 Colleges and universities while NU has amounted to 78 universities that affiliate with their organizations. Not to mention the educational institutions from kindergarten to high school, both general and special, such as Islamic boarding schools, there have been thousands owned by the two organizations. In addition to the charitable business, such as hospitals and orphanages, or other enlightening creative activities carried out by an autonomous organization; youth organization, there even have abroad representative branches of the organization, including Outstanding Branch Manager Muhammadiyah (PCIM) in Malaysia, Brunei, Thailand, Taiwan, Singapore, and the Philippines, the United States, Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, Turkey, and others (PP Muhammadiyah, 2016), and so most of the NU representatives are in the Middle East. Therefore, it is not surprising that the two organizations have been in an existence up to this day and have reached more than a century.

It is not unlikely right that the organizations of Muhammadiyah-NU are a gathering of human nature creativity, which have the characteristic of advanced religious social movements. On this basis, they not only could be entitled to get a World Cultural Heritage, but should also get a Nobel Prize. As the Nobel Prize is given annually to individuals and



organizations that make amazing services in the fields of chemistry, physics, literature, peace, and physiology or medicine.<sup>20</sup> Muhammadiyah-NU having work programs in each period always consistent on world peace at any time. So that the criteria on all above points containing the message of peace and the essence values of the points would be a basis for considering Muhammadiyah-NU to become part of the world-class cultural heritage. Most importantly, the award criteria mentioned above, can be a logic reference enlightening all dimensions of humanity without favoritism. Nonetheless the nature of the assessment must presumably honestly and clearly see the creativity of accomplishments by the two organizations since its establishment until today. In addition, the results of studies and research on these two organizations, both conducted by researchers locally and internationally can be as consideration to strengthen the above criteria. Some of them are; James L. Peacock (1986)<sup>21</sup>, Abdul Munir Mulkhan (1986/1990)<sup>22</sup>, Greg Fealy (2003)<sup>23</sup>, A. Mukti Ali (1975)<sup>24</sup>, Mitsuo Nakamura (1983)<sup>25</sup>, Nurcholish Madjid (2008)<sup>26</sup>, Maman Abdul Majid Binfas (2015) and others. For instance, Maman Abdul Majid Binfas in his dissertation on *Culture management of Muhammadiyah and NU Education*. The study discussed and analyzed

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<sup>20</sup> Anom, Alfred Nobel-The Man Behind the Nobel Prize, in [http://nobelprize.org/alfred\\_nobel/](http://nobelprize.org/alfred_nobel/), accessed September 13, 2016.

<sup>21</sup> James L. Peacock, *The Muhammadiyah Movement in Indonesia Islam: Gerakan Muhammadiyah Memurnikan Ajaran Islam di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Cipta Kreatif, 1986).

<sup>22</sup> Abdul Munir Mulkhan, *Pemikiran KH. Ahmad Dahlan dan Muhammadiyah; dalam Perspektif Perubahan Sosial* (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 1990).

<sup>23</sup> Greg Fealy, *Ulama and Politics in Indonesia a History of Nahdlatul Ulama 1952-1967*, trans. by Farid Wajidi, Mulni Adelina Bachtar (Yogyakarta: LKiS-The Asia Foundation, 2003).

<sup>24</sup> A. Mukti Ali, *The Muhammadiyah Movement: A Bibliographical Introduction* (Montreal: McGill University, 1975).

<sup>25</sup> Mitsuo Nakamura, *The Crescent Arises over the Banyan Tree: A Study of the Muhammadiyah Movement in a Central Javanese Town* (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1983).

<sup>26</sup> Nurcholish Madjid, *Tradisi Islam: Peran dan Fungsinya dalam Pembangunan di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Dian Rakyat & Paramadina, 2008).

the origins of the emergence of the movement, cultural management, the education system and the similarities and differences of both organizations. The researcher gives important notes about the culture of honesty within the organization of Muhammadiyah and NU, as follows;

Muhammadiyah and NU are present to break through the curtains of the apology culture that inhibits the demolition process of the history traces of honesty and tolerant to accept reality as it is. Its aim is to put the historical traces of intellectual honesty for the life of the present generation and future. We must inherit and be based on historical traces honestly as to avoid opaque and dark history in the past. The traces of Islam history are to love the truth and honesty without patching the poisonous rhetorical spice of life. Therefore, truth and honesty must be believed with sincerity, including the history of organization movement founded by the Muslims, that is Muhammadiyah and NU. So, honesty and sincerity to the history of Muhammadiyah and NU, is becoming a major commitment indeed by both organizations based on the same grass roots to escort the perfection of Islam.<sup>27</sup>

In line with the civilized world cultural heritage, Indonesia is often called *Zamrud Khatulistiwa* (the emerald equator) with the beauty and wonder of nature and range of cultural creations, whether it is done individually or as a group such as Muhammadiyah and NU. UNESCO has World Heritage Center program which document all the cultural and natural sites, or a mixture of both the form of cultural creativity so as to enactment as world heritage. Cultural and natural heritage of creativity is one of priceless and irreplaceable assets for the nation and humanity as a whole including done by Muhammadiyah-NU as a form of *al-thaqafat* to enlighten the mind and heart. Such *al-thaqafat* activities have *rahmatan lil alamien* dimension, both for each community and mankind as a whole. The essence of these two organizations is becoming one of the most valuable assets of creativity. If these assets are not enacted as a world heritage, it is a loss for all the peoples of the world. Because the forms of *al-thaqafat* religious creativity may be considered to be of high

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<sup>27</sup> Maman Abdul Majid Binfas, *Budaya Pengelolaan Pendidikan*..., p. 521.



quality and have outstanding universal value.

With the value of outstanding universalism, then presumably the object of Muhammadiyah-NU *al-thaqafat* religious creativity mentioned above, may be proposed and considered as cultural eligible assets to receive a Nobel Prize and as a world cultural heritage. The rationale is that Muhammadiyah and NU have managed charitable efforts which are for humanity; to humanize human being. Additionally, those organizations have existed more than a century. On the basis of logical, honest, and comprehensible analysis, both organizations can qualify for a Nobel prize and as a world cultural heritage that is distinctively monumental world class of cultural heritage of religious creativity.

### **Globally Monumental Cultural Heritage**

Monumental can mean the effect or impression of great occurrence/commemoration<sup>28</sup> and it has adapted the work of human beings and the natural environment or the cultural heritage. The essence of cultural heritage<sup>2</sup> can be objects or another world heritage category, namely intangible cultural heritage. According to UNESCO, the cultural heritage is not only limited to the monuments and collections of objects. It also includes traditions or living expression inherited from ancestors to descendants, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festival events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts.<sup>29</sup>

If the cultural heritage is understood as the expressions of social practices, knowledge festivals, and religious rituals as written in UNESCO criteria. It strengthens the rationale to fall into the category of world cultural heritage. In addition to the intellectual thinking in religious beliefs, the movement of *al-thaqafat* creativity is constantly developed since its establishment. The goal is to enlighten the mind and heart for human

<sup>28</sup> Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI), 2016.

<sup>29</sup> Budi Hermana, Kaya Budaya Miskin Warisan Dunia in <http://pena.gunadarma.ac.id/ka-ya-budaya-miskin-warisan-dunia/>, accessed Agustus 27, 2016.



being. Based on one of the points in UNESCO criteria containing directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or beliefs, artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance. Then, it is precisely strengthening that Muhammadiyah-NU *al-thaqafat* religious creativity is as a choice of world cultural heritage.

To a certain extent, Muhammadiyah and NU have instilled advanced enlightened creativity movement which becomes a priority. No doubt that the hue of the organization motion can continue largely depend on the intentions of its founders, including the cultural creativity influencing their nature and character. Philosophical tree for example, mango trees will bear mango and also characterizes its nature, does not differ from the characteristics and as well as the taste of mango. This may be attributed to the words of the Prophet, which means; “Every child born on *fitrah* (pure), then both his parents who make him Jewish or Christian or Zoroastrian.”<sup>30</sup>

How important is the role of parents in changing the nature of the sanctity of a child who has been entrusted by God. This is as the Muhammadiyah organization is influenced by intention and mind of its founder, namely KH. Ahmad Dahlan. The steps undertaken by KH. Ahmad Dahlan in reformation intelligently and critically will be continued by future generations. Then, it is transfixed in the hearts and minds of cadres and followers who join the Muhammadiyah, such as Bung Karno (Sukarno, Indonesia’s first president), Tan Malaka, Sudirman (the first commander of the TNI, the Indonesian National Army), Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah (HAMKA), M. Amien Rais, and others. Similarly, as a character or characteristic of NU movement founded by a team of paratroopers *Kiai* is initiated on the basis of a movement that did not feel satisfied. Due to unsatisfactory feeling, a chain of conflicts appeared and then its reaction came up by establishing the organization in 1926 in the house of KH. Wahab Chasbullah as a main pioneer. Thus,

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<sup>30</sup> HR. Al-Bukhari No. 1279 and Muslim No. 2658.

it can be said that the prolonged conflict between KH. Mas Mansyur and KH. Wahab Hasbullah has had a somewhat positive impact. Although it looks aggressive, it is creative to establish organizations and form the characteristics of the militant cadres in some NU figures like KH. M. Hashim Ash'ari, KH. Wahid Hasyim, KH. Idham Khalik, KH. Abdurahman Wahid (Gus Dur) and others.<sup>31</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Muhammadiyah and NU are organizations as a result of an *al-thaqafat* religious creativity created by the founders. Without denying the existence of *al-thaqafat* will continue to enlighten the world civilization. Muhammadiyah-NU even continue to apply *al-thaqafat* creativity enlightenment through charitable organizations and institutions of business management. No surprise that the two organizations have reached more than a century. While on the other hand, many organizations have similar characterization like an NGO engaging in social and educational aspect can not survive as Muhammadiyah-NU. In spite of the differences and similarities in the spirit of freedom of thought, both within the organization and outside the institution, it does not affect and cause conflict for their followers. The essence of the freedom principle in religious creative thinking with strong religious overtones that enlightens civilization becomes a role model to the next generation. The principle of freedom of thought and speech in the religious creativity will not lose the spirit of divine religions and Islamic levels. With the essence of those principles, it becomes its own uniqueness in religious creativity, so that Muslims can solve social problems as a strong Islamic community analysis in spreading *rahmatan lil alamien*. Thus, the *kerahmatan* description of the development of both Islamic organizations has been largely providing services in terms of creating Indonesian Muslims who “have Islamic knowledge and remain in Indonesian character.” Educational path is the

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<sup>31</sup> Maman Abdul Majid Binfas, *Budaya Pengelolaan Pendidikan...*, p. 523.

best way to realize two important things in order that the existence of Indonesia as an independent nation with its own particular characteristics in the nature of the archipelago.

Religious creativity and freedom of thought which are done by KH. Ahmad Dahlan and the NU *Kiai*, regardless of their differences or similarities, have the “significance meaning” to understand both the Islamic organizations. Both have the same aims for the interest of maintaining the form of the presence of Indonesian Muslims with their particular features that distinguish them from Muslims in other regions of the earth. Therefore, their uniqueness and presence is essential to recommend as worldwide and monumental cultural heritage of religious creativity. With such a legacy, *al-thaqafah* religious creativity will become monumental distinctive characteristics as stated by Anhar Gonggong in his prologue; “modern Muhammadiyah but without ignoring Indonesianess, and traditional NU without ignoring the progress of the world as a “mercy of Allah on the way to the archipelago of nations and become Indonesian nation.



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