ASHABIYAH THEORY OF IBN KHALDUN: AN ALTERNATIVE PERSPECTIVE FOR STUDYING THE INDONESIAN MUSLIM SOCIETY

UI Ardaninggar Luhtitianti

Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga, Yogyakarta

Acmad Zainal Arifin

Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga, Yogyakarta

Kata Kunci:
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Abstrak

Ibnu Khaldun, mulai populer dikenal sebagai ilmuwan Muslim sejak Barat menemukan karyanya, Muqaddimah. Melalui karya inilah, ia menjadi satu-satunya ilmuwan Muslim yang metode dan basis pengetahuannya diterima oleh Barat. Ibn Khaldun mulai populer dengan beberapa sebutan, seperti Sosiolog, Ekonom, hingga penemu ilmu pengetahuan sosial. Namun demikian, upaya untuk menjadikan perspektif Ibn Khaldun sebagai alat analisis dalam disiplin ilmu sosiologi masih sangat minim. Di Indonesia sendiri, kajian-kajian dalam disiplin sosiologi agama pun masih banyak mengacu pada nama-nama besar Sosiolog yang teorinya lahir dari konteks sosio-historis Barat. Padahal, Ibn Khaldun melalui teori Al-Umran dan Ashabiyah telah menawarkan konsep besar tentang peradaban, budaya, dan ikatan komunal yang dihasilkan melalui penelitian dengan fokus obyek masyarakat muslim. Melalui penelusuran dan analisis pustaka, hasil studi menunjukkan bahwa teori Ashabiyah dapat digunakan sebagai perspektif alternatif dalam kajian sosiologi agama, terutama untuk menganalisis fenomena sosial keagamaan masyarakat Muslim di Indonesia yang multikultur. Dengan alasan, bahwa kesamaan konteks sosio-historis obyek analisis sangat penting dalam menentukan sebuah perspektif yang akan digunakan. Meski bukan berarti, bahwa perspektif dengan konteks berbeda harus ditinggalkan. Sebaliknya, perspektif tersebut justru dapat digunakan sebagai pelengkap, dalam kerangka untuk memperkaya khasanah ilmiah dalam kajian Sosiologi Islam.

Abstract

Keywords:
Ibn Khaldun,
Ashabiyah,
Sociology of
Religion,
Socio-
historical
context

Ibn Khaldun was popularly known as a Muslim intellectual since the West discovered his work, Muqaddimah. Through this work, he became the only Muslim scientist whose methods and knowledge basis were accepted by the West. Ibn Khaldun became popular with several names, such as Sociologist, Economist, and the founder of social science. However, only few attempts use Ibn Khaldun's perspective as an analytical tool in the discipline of sociology. In Indonesia, the study of the sociology of religion often refers to the big names of sociologists born from the West socio-historical context. Ibn Khladun theory of Al-Umran and Ashabiyah has offered a big concept about civilization, culture, and communal ties that are generated through his research on Muslim society as its focused object. This results of this study reveal that the Ashabiyah theory can be used as an alternative perspective in the study of the sociology of religion, especially to analyze the socio-religious phenomena of the multicultural Muslim society in Indonesia. With the reason that the similarity of the socio-historical context of the object of analysis is very important in determining a perspective to be used. Although, it does not mean that perspectives with different contexts should be abandoned. On the contrary, those perspectives can be used as a complementary perspective, to enrich the scientific treasure in the Sociology of Islam.

Introduction

Sociology of religion is a discipline that studies religious phenomena by applying certain perspectives in sociological studies,[1] and utilizing these perspectives to simultaneously resolve and provide solutions to various religious problems that arise in society.[2] In general, to analyze religious phenomena, academicians cannot avoid general theories in sociological studies, as has been conducted by sociologists such as August Comte, Emile Durkheim, Max Weber, Peter L. Berger, Karl Marx, Foucault, Nietzche, and others.

Lester R. Kurtz states that efforts to obtain truth in the context of religious research cannot be separated from the bias of the researcher, the socio-historical context, and the political position of the researcher.[3] Especially for the context of religious studies, the researcher's experience

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[1] Roberto Cipriani, *Sociology of Religion: An Historical Introduction* (New Brunswick (U.S.A) and London (U.K): Transaction Publishers, 2015), 1.

[2] Hendropuspito, *Sosiologi Agama* (Jakarta: Kanisius, 1983), 7.

[3] Lester R Kurtz, *Gods in the Global Village The World's Religions in Sociological Perspective*(United Kingdom: Sage Publication Ltd, 2016), xi-xii.

of religious life also determines the way he views the phenomenon under study. For that reason, the effort to achieve objectivity by "suppressing" bias must be taken by the researcher.

James V. Spickard, through his life experiences and research, shows that religious aspects of religion are strongly influenced by religious institutions and religious leaders. Most sociologists call this the 'default view' of all religious phenomena.[4] The term which of course cannot be fully applied to all cases of religious behavior and religious phenomena with different situations and historical backgrounds. Therefore, various perspectives are needed that are in accordance with the social context of the study.

Syed Farid Alatas views that although it is not directly related to religious issues, the *Eurocentrism* factor has made most sociologists pay less attention to theories that develop outside the Western context.[5] This can be seen from the existence of the Sociology curriculum in higher education, which generally has not considered other sociologists apart from figures who have become mainstream so far.[6] To study a religious phenomenon, serious efforts are needed to find the right perspective and following the socio-historical context of the observed society. The aim is to see an object of study from a different perspective from a theoretical building that has the same historical context. This does not mean that a researcher ignores the perspective that has been commonly used, but makes the existing perspective a complement to the alternative perspective that the researcher believes is more appropriate and in accordance with the context.

In the study of the sociology of religion, Ibn Khaldun's sociological perspective can be a choice in addressing religious issues that arise in

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[4] James V. Spickard, *Alternative Sociology of Religion Through Non-Western Eyes* (New York University Press, 2017), 56.

[5] Syed Farid Alatas, *Applying Ibn Khaldun; The Recovery of a Lost Tradition in Sociology* (London and New York: Routledge Taylor and Francise Group, 2014), 10.

[6] Syed Farid Alatas & Vineeta Sinha, *Sociological Theory Beyond the Canon* (United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmilan, 2017), 3.

Muslim societies. Ibn Khaldun, made a major contribution to the development of historical disciplines and social sciences, through the empirical methodology. His observations on Muslim communities in Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, and Andalusia have given birth to the theory of "Civilization Cycles" and "Ashabiyah". Although the socio-historical context of the theory is North Africa, the object of observation towards Muslim society is the uniqueness of the theory. Some scholars who are concerned about studying Ibn Khaldun state that the theory of "Cycle of Civilization" and "Ashabiyah" is universal.[7] Because Ibn Khaldun does not only talk about civilization in general but analyzes the social system of society as a whole.

However, according to Syed Farid Alatas, efforts to make Ibn Khaldun's theory a tool of social analysis in the academic tradition are still little,[8] including in the context of Indonesia. Indeed, not a few previous studies have discussed *Ashabiyyah*, but efforts to apply it to a practical-empirical level are still very limited. In several works by Kayapinar,[9] Ardic[10], Halim et.al.,[11] for example, the focus of the study is still restricted to the *Ashabiyah* concept. The same thing happened in Indonesia, as can be seen from several studies conducted by Ilham, Kamarudin,[12] and Fajar.[13] So, studies on the application of Ibn Khaldun's theory to the religious phenomenon of the Muslim community in Indonesia are still inadequate.

Here is the urgency of this study. Apart from describing *Ashabiyah's*

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[7] James V. Spickard, *Alternative Sociology of Religion Through Non-Western Eyes, 150*.

[8] Syed Farid Alatas, *Applying Ibn Khaldun; The Recovery of a Lost Tradition in Sociology, 9-11*.

[9] M. Akif Kayapinar, "Ibn Khaldun's Concept of Assabiyya: An Alternative Tool for Understanding Long-Term Politics," *Asian Journal of Social Science* 36, no. 3 (2008): 375–407.

[10] Nurullah Ardiç, "Genealogy or Asabiyya? Ibn Khaldun between Arab Nationalism and the Ottoman Caliphate," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 71, no. 2 (2012): 315–324.

[11] Asyiqin Abdul Halim et al., "Ibn Khaldun's Theory of 'Asabiyyah and Its Application in Modern Muslim Society," *Middle East Journal of Scientific Research* 11, no. 9 (2012): 1232–1237.

[12] Kamaruddin, "Pemikiran Politik Ibnu Khaldun fan Pembentukan Teori Sosiologi Politik," *Jurnal Ilmu Agama UIN Raden Fatah* 16, no. 2 (2015): 66–80.

[13] Abbas Sofwan Matlail Fajar, "Perspektif Ibnu Khaldun tentang Perubahan Sosial," *SALAM: Jurnal Sosial dan Budaya Syar-i* 6, no. 1 (2019): 1–12.

theory, the author also tries to apply it to analyze religious phenomena in Indonesia. This is because the *Ashabiyah* theory is recognized as having the same relevance as Durkheim's solidarity theory. On this basis, the researcher tries to apply this theory as a tool of sociological analysis. Referring to Spickard's opinion, theory determination based on the same religious culture will undoubtedly produce more relevant conclusions. Using the *Ashabiyah* theory to see religious phenomena in Indonesia, it is hoped that it can get a different perspective from the Western perspective in understanding the Indonesian Muslim community.

This study is based on the literature study of the Sociology of Religion and Sociology of Ibn Khaldun. The writer considers the use of *Ashabiyah* theory as the best choice to represent almost the same religious culture, i.e the Muslim community. The *Ashabiyah* theory is seen as an essential factor in the interaction process of various groups that have existed within Islam throughout history. Before discussing the *Ashabiyah* theory, the author begins with an explanation of the scholars' criticisms of Western views of religious phenomena in different socio-historical contexts. After that, the authors describe how the *Ashabiyah* theory works, explaining religious problems in Indonesia.

A Critical View of Western Sociology

The critique of Western sociology in this study is confined to the views of Farid Alatas and James Spickard. These two sociologists have discussed a lot about the development of sociology in non-western societies. In general, Alatas and Spickard's views focus on the socio-historical context of the emergence of Western sociological theory. Where, in history, the discipline of Sociology emerged, it is known that Classical Sociology theory was influenced by several factors, including the industrial revolution in France, the enlightenment in Europe, the social change in the style of feudal society to capitalist, and the emergence of democratization in Europe.

Alatas' opinion is based on the reality of the curriculum of Sociological studies at various non-European universities. According to him, in the learning process of Classical Sociology theory, sociologists such as Durkheim, Marx, and Weber became the main subjects of study. These three names always appear in sociological studies, presenting various social, political, and economic events in Europe. When discussing conflict theory, for example, the context of the industrial revolution in France will emerge as the context for the birth of Karl Marx's theory. The industrial revolution is certainly a necessity to explain Marx's theoretical frame when discussing the concept of alienation and the social structure of European society, to explain the categories of social strata of society; capitalist and bourgeoisie.[14] Marx's theory has become a reference in many universities outside Europe, including being an analytical tool in seeing social phenomena outside Europe, especially in some countries that were once European colonies.[15] As a result, certain societal categorizations also refer to Western categorizations. As if there is an opinion that Europe is trying to see and apply the socio-historical context of its country universally. Still, the social context of the society in Europe is very different from that in Asia.

Therefore, according to Alatas, the Eurocentrism perspective must be taken carefully. That is by applying several non-Western social theories as alternatives and accompanied by consideration of the importance of representation and the appropriateness of the context of the study. Ibn Khaldun's theory is supposed to be an alternative choice for viewing and analyzing social phenomena, because it is believed to have a scientific philosophical foundation, such as rationalism and empiricism.[16] Two methods, which many social scientists claim to be the most significant discoveries of the scientific method of the early Enlightenment, are the

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[14] Levine Rhonda, *Social Class and Stratification: Classic Statement and Theoritical Debates*, ed. Levine Rhonda, Secod. (United States of America: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 2006), 3.

[15] Syed Farid Alatas & Vineeta Sinha, *Sociological Theory Beyond the Canon, 2*.

[16] Syed Farid Alatas, *Applying Ibn Khaldun; The Recovery of a Lost Tradition in Sociology, 20.*

views of August Comte and Immanuel Kant, the founders of sociology, rationalism, and empiricism.[17] Meanwhile, Spickard, a sociologist who also has strong empirical arguments states that his religious experiences and some of his research on religion and spirituality in parishes and church followers has encouraged him to switch to using other theories such as Ibn Khaldun in viewing and analyzing religious phenomena.

As a lecturer in the discipline of the Sociology of Religion, Spickard believes that there have been many American Sociology textbooks, which consider that Sociology theory can help people understand everyday social life. Also, many textbooks place socio-cultural aspects as a social system of society, such as religion. But in the case of religion, only about 3-4 percent are discussed. The discussion of religion is more associated with the issue of belief and is strengthened by several surveys on the religiosity of American society. In fact, in certain parts of the book, there is a discussion about secularization as a process of decreasing religiosity caused by the development of several secular institutions that have similar functions to the Church, such as social services and counseling. As found in the study of Weber, Marx, and Durkheim in the book of Classical Sociology, which places religion as part of a social organization, or Finke and Stark who discuss the religious behavior of Church members in America.[18]

In addition to notes on textbooks, Spickard also saw many other aspects that are often ignored by the experts of Sociology of Religion related to religious aspects.[19] There is a general understanding that beliefs, rituals, supernatural forces, and spirituality are known as elements in defining religion. In fact, from the results of his study on religious behavior and the church as an organization, it is often viewed as the 'default view' of a religious community. So that to analyze socio-religious phenomena in

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[17] F. Budi Hardiman, *Filsafat Modern; dari Machiavelli dampai Nietzsche* (Jakarta: PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2004), 165.

[18] James V. Spickard, *Alternative Sociology of Religion Through Non-Western Eyes, 40.*

[19] James V. Spickard, *Alternative Sociology of Religion Through Non-Western Eyes*, 43.

society, an alternative theoretical perspective is needed, one of which is Ibn Khaldun's approach. Ibn Khaldun's theory is considered more appropriate to be applied to a more plural society, especially in the context of Muslim society.[20]

The Socio-historical Context of Ibn Khaldun's Theory

Ibn Khaldun, as told in the book of *Muqaddimah*, was born from a family who still has lineage to the Quraish tribe, a tribe that has genetic and political power in Arabia. His ancestors were influential figures in Granada and contributed to the various wars that took place there. His father is an administrative official in Tunisia while his grandmother was the Tunisian Minister of Finance. His family background provided sufficient political experience for Ibn Khaldun.

Ibn Khaldun has obtained a sound education at a young age. For 15 years, he spent his time memorizing the Qur'an, studying tajwid, qira'ah, Arabic language and literature, logic, mathematics, jurisprudence, and so on. Since the age of 17, he has been actively involved in various intellectual movements in Tunisia. This education and intellectual environment, except helping to shape Ibn Khaldun's personality with a scientific mindset, also developed his intellectual relationships.

When Tunisia was hit by the *tha'un* plague, almost all of Ibn Khaldun's family died. He and several of his surviving family decided to move to Morocco. During that journey of migration, he met nomadic communities with all their characteristics, such as robbing and killing. Since then, he formulated the characteristics of the *Badawah* people.

Arriving in Tunisia, Ibn Khaldun was actively involved in various political activities, starting from his position as Royal secretary, Judge, and advisor to the king. His expertise and intelligence during his career in politics gave him a lot of experience, ranging from being accused of being a rebellion designer, being imprisoned, and being the target of jealousy from people around the king. This experience caused him to move from

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[20] James V. Spickard, *Alternative Sociology of Religion Through Non-Western Eyes*, 157.

one dynasty to another, from Morocco to Spain and Egypt. Until finally, he decided to be active as a teacher, and by Sultan Barquq, he was later appointed as Professor of Jurisprudence at the Egyptian Zahiriyah College. He spent the rest of his life as a teacher and a judge until he died in Egypt.

On this basis, Ibn Khaldun's scope of knowledge became very broad, starting from social, politics, to economics. These three aspects are integrated by Ibn Khaldun as a unit of analysis tool, especially in seeing the role of religion in the interaction process in a social system. It is surely cannot be separated from the social setting which is the focus of his study that is the majority Muslim community.

Ibn Khaldun lived during the late Abbasid dynasty, which was filled with various social conflicts especially, in an area far from the center of power, Iraq. Not a few of these conflicts emerged as a form of rebellion and attempt for expansion. Meanwhile, the North African region, which is geographically far from the center of the Islamic empire, has made slow scientific development.[21] Regions such as Morocco and Tunisia were still struggling with the study of the Quran and Hadith normatively (indoctrination and memorization-based learning).[22] Amid this situation, Ibn Khaldun, armed with his knowledge, became one of the North African historians who critically commented on the stagnation of science, especially in the field of history.[23] Ibn Khaldun used the method of *Mantiq* (logic)[24] a method that takes abstraction from various categorizations of observed phenomena, to produce universal conclusions.[25]

Although this method is not new, its application to social and

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[21] Hafidz Hasyim, *Watak Peradaban dalam Epistemologi Ibnu Khaldun* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2012).

[22] Hafidz Hasyim, *Watak Peradaban dalam Epistemologi Ibnu Khaldun.*

[23] Akbar Ahmed, "Ibn Khaldun ' s Understanding of Civilizations and the Dilemmas of Islam and the West Today," *Middle East Journal* 56, no. 1 (2002): 20–45.

[24] Syed Farid Alatas, *Applying Ibn Khaldun; The Recovery of a Lost Tradition in Sociology*, 26.

[25] Mahmoud Dhaouadi, "The Forgotten Concept of Human Nature in Khaldunian Studies," *Asian Journal of Social Science* 36, no. 3 (2008): 571–589.

historical issues is original.[26] The historical context underlying this thought is an important part of Ibn Khaldun's study of the Sociology of Religion.[27] It starts from the attempt to describe religion which refers to the object being observed, as well as the forms of interaction and relations that occur in historical settings which are also indirectly influenced by the socio-political context in which the researcher lives.

The study of religion can be very different from one place to another, from one thinker to another. Meanwhile, in the study of the Sociology of Religion, what is often used or appears is the context of Western society, which of course has different characteristics from the society in the Southeast Asian region. Not only because of the tradition and context of Christianity but more because of the behavior of society and the social setting which of course affect the way an individual or a group of people practices religion. However, it does not mean that existing theories are useless or should be replaced, rather more precise analysis tools are needed. Or it is necessary to have a combination of old theory with alternative theory (new) in order to produce new conclusions on particular religious phenomena. Here is the urgency of considering the use of Ibn Khaldun's theory of *Ashabiyah*. A theory that was born from a pluralistic society, not only from the religious side but also politically.

Ashabiyah Theory

This theory has been widely discussed by researchers. But none of them was able to conclude with certainty, about the meaning of the *Ashabiyah* theory. Franz Rosenthal, as the translator of the *Muqoddimah* book into English, chose not to translate the word *Ashabiyah*, because it might change its meaning.[28]

From the literature search results related to the *Ashabiyah* concept, the author found several categories of understanding. In a social context,

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[26] Syed Farid Alatas, *Applying Ibn Khaldun; The Recovery of a Lost Tradition in Sociology, 65.*
[27] James V. Spickard, *Alternative Sociology of Religion Through Non-Western Eyes, 56.*
[28] Asyiqin Abdul Halim et al., "Ibn Khaldun's Theory of 'Asabiyyah and Its Application in Modern Muslim Society", 1233-1234

Ashabiyah is often interpreted as group feeling; social solidarity, and social cohesion.[29] In a religious context, Ernest Geller defined *Ashabiyah* as a *martial spirit*, and by H. Shirvani it was called *communal spirit*. In a political context, Hourani defines it as *corporate spirit*, Erwin Rosenthal means *striking power*, and Von Kremer calls it *nationalitatsidee*.[30]

Every writer who discusses *Ashabiyah*, usually rebuilds the meaning according to its definition. As stated by Rosenthal, that Ibn Khaldun used different terms to interpret *Ashabiyah*, and placed them in all aspects he studied, both in social, political, and economic contexts.[31] Ibn Khaldun himself only gave the source and function of the *Ashabiyah* in the *Muqoddimah* book, without specifically mentioning its specific meaning. Therefore, in order to understand the meaning of *Ashabiyah*, it is necessary to understand the context in which this term is used. Ibn Khaldun did use this term in various social systems, but this term was first used when referring to a group of *Badawi* people.[32] After that, this term was used to refer to religious organizations, only then to the *Hadlarah* people.

In general, Ibn Khaldun divides society into two categories; they are *Badawah* and *Hadlarah*. *Badawah* refers to a nomadic community group; his life is nomadic and often in desert or inland areas. *Hadlarah* refers to a group of people who are settled, usually characterized by the city as their residence. This group has easy and fast access to economic resources. On the other hand, *Badawi*, due to the geographical conditions they were living need extra energy to gain access to economic resources.[33]

Although *Badawah* was forged with physical conditions, it was described by Ibn Khaldun as a group that, when looking for necessities of

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[29] Kayapinar, "Ibn Khaldun's Concept of Assabiyya: An Alternative Tool for Understanding Long-Term Politics."

[30] Syed Farid Alatas, "Ibn Khaldun and Contemporary Sociology," *International Sociology* 21, no. 6 (2006): 782–795.

[31] Senol Korkut, "Ibn Khaldun's Critique of the Theory of ' Al-Siyâsah Al-Madaniyyah,'" *Asian Journal of Social Science* 36, no. 3 (2008): 547–570.

[32] Syed Farid Alatas, *Applying Ibn Khaldun; The Recovery of a Lost Tradition in Sociology, 69-70.*

[33] Ibn Khaldun, *Muqoddimah Ibn Khaldun* (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 2008), 71-73.

life, were able to work well together. So that they have the power of *Ashabiyah*, which they use not only to make a living (economy), but also in religious life. Their leaders have a big role as the main source in finding and interpreting the values of life coming from religion. It can be seen that the *Badawah* tribe leader has three (3) functions; as a political leader, administrator of economic affairs, as well as a religious leader.

While the Hadlarah people, because they occupy an area that has easy access to economic resources, their form of cooperation is not as strong as in the *Badawah* community. The *Hadlarah* people are described as having a variety of professions, living in luxury, and dependent on state law, so that their *Ashabiyah* is not as strong as the *Badawah* community.[34] As a result, the *Hadlarah* community often became the target of attacks from the Badawah community, so they were easily conquered. The leader of the *Hadlarah* community group is also described as having many weaknesses, like preoccupied with political conflicts and living in luxury. So that his *Ashabiyah* ties decreased, and his leadership abilities weakened. When leadership capabilities are weakened, the community (state) will be in a difficult economic position as a result of wasteful budgeting, and the impact on the weakening of the military condition, and the potential for destruction of the country.[35]

The description of the *Badawah* and *Hadlarah* people above can be a clue that leads to several meanings of *Ashabiyah*. When referring to its function in the *Badawah* community, *Ashabiyah* means a feeling of solidarity among community members which is obtained from the knowledge that they have the same needs and interests. When referring to the character of the Hadlarah people, the strength of this sense of solidarity will fade along with weakening social, economic, and leadership risks. In the *Muqoddimah* book, the word *Ashabiyah* is not only placed in the context of the *Badawah* and *Hadlarah* communities but also in the context of socio-religious

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[34] Ibn Khaldun, *Muqoddimah Ibn Khaldun,* 71-73.
[35] Ahmed Adam Okene, "Ibn Khaldun , Cyclical Theory and the Rise and Fall of Sokoto Caliphate , Nigeria West Africa," no. 100 (2011): 80–91.

organizations. Ibn Khaldun started with an empirical example of history in the past, concerning certain religious groups. He uses basic premises that invite readers to discuss these premises to a conclusion that leads to *Ashabiyah.*

Ibn Khaldun gave an example of the rebellion in Thahir, Baghdad, Iraq during the reign of Caliph Al-Makmun Al-Hudaibi. The rebellion aimed at overthrowing the power of Al-Makmun resulted in social chaos and crime in many areas, which led to the emergence of a sporadic movement fighting on behalf of the *amar makruf nahi munkar* group. The group was led by a religious leader, Khalid Al-Durbus. It made various efforts to dispel and combat those who commit social disorder. This movement initially gained public sympathy, but then created new social problems in Thahir. Finally, when the rebellion movement was defeated by Ibrahim Al-Mahdi, the Khalid Al-Durbus group's movement was also defeated. His group was dispersed and many of his followers fled.[36]

From this, Ibn Khaldun drew some basic premises; that the sporadic movement will not last long even if it emphasizes religion. Ibn Khaldun compared what was made by the Prophet Muhammad when he first spread Islam, building the solidarity of the Quraish tribe, then developing it to other tribes. War was never the Prophet's first choice but the last choice of self-defense.

The two historical-empirical examples above, according to Ibn Khaldun, should not be ignored. He took the essence of both cases, in which *Ashabiyah* played an important role, as the pivot of the socio-religious movement. The rebellion in Thahir showed how sporadic movements were creating new chaos and could easily be defeated. Whereas in the movement for the spread of Islam, the Prophet's message in building the strength of the *Ashabiyah* with other tribes gathered in one force (Islam) has resulted in a strong civilization.[37] So, it can be concluded about the functions and sources of *Ashabiyah* if it is used for religious

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[36] Ibn Khaldun, *Muqoddimah Ibn Khaldun,* 71-73, 194-196.
[37] Ibn Khaldun, *Muqoddimah Ibn Khaldun,* 194.

movements. First, *Ashabiyah* became a great force capable of becoming ammunition against other groups. Secondly, *Ashabiyah* comes from religious ties that manifest into a type of religious leadership, in which people depend on their socio-religious life to their leaders.

According to Syed Farid Alatas, the Ashabiyah element refers to three (3) things, i.e (1) kinship ties;(2) a socially cohesive religion such as Islam that provided a shared idiom legitimizing the chieftains aspirations for Mulk; and (3) the strength of the chieftain through trade, booty, pillage, and conquest. [38] The important point is the second as it fits the context of this study. Social cohesion, according to Alatas, can come from religion, by which a leader gets legitimacy for his sovereignty and power within a group. The rest, material ownership ties related to Ashabiyah can originate from the same economic interests.

Application of *Ashabiyah* Theory in Indonesia

Various works related to the application of Ibn Khaldun's *Ashabiyah* theory are not new. But for the Indonesian context, only a few attempts were made by academicians to apply this theory to contemporary cases. Ibn Khaldun's studies in Indonesia, apart from being more related to the exploration of thought, are also because his name is less popular if compared to Western thinkers. However, Ibn Khaldun's *Ashabiyah* theory is very likely to be applied as an analytical tool for religious phenomena in contemporary Indonesia. Given that the object of Ibn Khaldun is Muslims who "depend" on their religious life on religious leaders.

Spickard states that the theory can be applied in even the most multicultural societies. The typical Indonesian society, despite not exactly the same, has common characteristics with Ibn Khaldun's theory about Badawi and Hadlarah. Sociologically, it becomes more or less rural and urban communities. The type of society that exists in almost all countries. If it is concluded, then Ibn Khaldun's categorization of the types of society

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[38] Syed Farid Alatas, *Applying Ibn Khaldun; The Recovery of a Lost Tradition in Sociology,* 45.

is universal. Where, the Badawi people are described as having primordial and strong *Ashabiyah* ties, while the Hadlarah is the opposite.

Rural inhabitants in Indonesia are almost as typical as those described by Ibn Khaldun. In Durkheim's terminology, this kind of relationship is called Gemeinschaft and the type of religiousness of the community depends on the local religious leader[39] or Kyai (honorific title for Muslim clergy)[40] for people in Java. Their role is very big in mobilizing society, even in non-religious activities. They more respect toward religious leaders than government figures such as the head of the RT (neighborhood unit), the head of the RW (community unit), and so on.

While people in urban and sub-urban areas, their characteristics are almost the same as those described by Ibn Khaldun that tends to be preoccupied with economic activity. Job differentiation is getting higher, causing its social strata in it. The continuous production process makes the life rhythm of the people tend to be individualistic and pragmatic-economic. People with above-average income tend to have an excessive lifestyle and emphasize their social identity. Most of the people with low income will follow the pattern and lifestyle of the middle-class group. Meanwhile, the others are in the structural poverty cycle.

In the context of religious life, the reality of urban communities is much more complex than in rural areas. People in urban areas, who tend to be more rational, are far from religious teachings.[41] Especially, those who are in the upper-middle class. Their modern lifestyle and mindset tend to perceive religion as something supernatural and non-empirical, which is difficult to believe as something that must be adhered to.[42] Their life, as

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[39] Achmad Zainal Arifin, "Defending Traditions, Countering Intolerant Ideologies Re-Energizing: The Role of Modin in Modern Java," *Al-Jami'ah* 55, no. 2 (2017): 265–292.

[40] Nur Kafid, "From Personal to Social Transformation: A Phenomenological Study on the Life of 'Kyai Kampung,'" *Komunitas: International Journal of Indonesian Society and Culture* 6, no. 3 (2014): 336–344.

[41] Wasisto Raharjo Jati, "Islam Populer sebagai Pencarian Identitas Muslim Kelas Menengah Indonesia," *Teosofi: Jurnal Tasawuf dan Pemikiran Islam* 5, no. 1 (2015): 139.

[42] Wasisto Raharjo Jati, "Sufisme Urban: Konstruksi Keimanan Baru Kelas Menengah Muslim," *Jurnal Kajian & Pengembangan Manajemen Dakwah* 05, no. 02 (2015): 175–199.

described by Ibn Khaldun, depends more on how the State regulates it through laws and institutionalized social norms.[43]

From the socio-economic aspect, the production sector tends to be monopolized by a group of middle classes with strong capital. Such a group by Ibn Khaldun is called the entrepreneur, in which the relationship that is built between them is more pragmatic-economic. The rulers used them to strengthen their power, while the businessmen used their relations with the rulers for economic interests. The relationship between these two groups often results in legal products that tend to benefit entrepreneurs.

The fundamental difference between the two types of community groups mentioned above, in the context of *Ashabiyah*, is in the issue of accessibility. The difficulty of economic access in the life of rural communities and their simple mindset influenced the strength of *Ashabiyah*. While, it is easy for people in urban areas, especially the upper-middle class to get a source of livelihood, which makes them independent of each other.

The religious phenomenon that has emerged in urban areas in Indonesia in the last decade seens to be more pragmatic-economic relations, which are socially independent of each other, have weak *Ashabiyah*, and show a stronger religious trend.[44] The results of Jati's study,[45] for example, which highlighted the religious behavior of the middle-class before and after the Soeharto era, showed a link between religious conditions and the interests of economic mobility. Where, during the Soeharto era, Muslim middle groups united themselves into ICMI (Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals Association) and HMPI (Indonesian Muslim Entrepreneurs Association). Political pressure on Muslims at that time has become an important factor in social, political, intellectual and

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[43] Ibn Khaldun, *Muqoddimah Ibn Khaldun, 204-206*.

[44] Ui Ardaninggar Luhtitianti, "Rona Religius Masyarakat Muslim Perkotaan: Menuju Inklusivisme dalam Sikap Keagamaan," in *Bunga Rampai Sosiologi Perkotaan*, ed. Achmad Zainal Arifin (Laboratorium Sosiologi UIN Sunan Kalijaga, 2019), 89–113.

[45] Wasisto Raharjo Jati, "Radicalism in the Perspective of Islamic-Populism: Trajectory of Political Islam in Indonesia," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 07, no. 02 (2013): 268–287.

economic mobility. As Ibn Khaldun stated, people can have strong communal solidarity when faced with economic needs and political interests.

On the other hand, there are factors of religious ties that can create the unity of Muslims in urban areas. Urban communities that are identical with luxurious lifestyles, in some others is also found strong group ties based on 'religion'.[46] . They are a group that is looking for meaning caused by alienation process that occurs in urban areas, as a result of the domination of the production process.[47] This group, when "touched" with religious ties, can become organized groups. As happened in the case of the 212 action, to which many analysts refer to as a wave of Islamic populism in Indonesia, was caused by the strengthening of religious sentiment and expression.[48]

Some of the examples above, provide a clear picture of how *Ashabiyah* has become a driving force for community group behavior, both from religious ties and economic interests. Religion, from the point of view of the *Ashabiyah* theory, can be a unifying factor for different social groups.[49] The leader, on the one hand, can have an important role, but on the other hand might lead to religious sentiment which results in the emergence of social conflict. The religious manner should be able to unite various groups, as happened in the Arab region, where various ethnic groups and clan differences can be merged into one in Islam.[50]

To create healthy social relations, according to Ibn Khaldun, every socio-religious group must have high *Ashabiyah*, and develop these feelings across sectors with Islamic forces, not ideology.[51] But in reality, which

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[46] Wasisto Raharjo Jati, "Cyberspace, Internet, dan Ruang Publik Baru: Aktivisme Online Politik Kelas Menengah Indonesia," *Jurnal Pemikiran Sosiologi* 3, no. 1 (2016): 25.

[47] Ui Ardaninggar Luhtitianti, "Rona Religius Masyarakat Muslim Perkotaan: Menuju Inklusivisme dalam Sikap Keagamaan."

[48] Marcus Mietzner and Burhanuddin Muhtadi, "Explaining the 2016 Islamist Mobilisation in Indonesia: Religious Intolerance, Militant Groups and the Politics of Accommodation," *Asian Studies Review* 42, no. 3 (2018): 479–497.

[49] James V. Spickard, *Alternative Sociology of Religion Through Non-Western Eyes, 162*.

[50] James V. Spickard, *Alternative Sociology of Religion Through Non-Western Eyes,*163.

[51] James V. Spickard, *Alternative Sociology of Religion Through Non-Western Eyes,* 161.

often occurs in the phenomenon of intra-Islamic religious conflict in Indonesia, *Ashabiyah* which comes from economic and political interests is much stronger. Thus, religious leaders play an important role in the process of creating healthier social relationships.

Conclusion

Ibn Khaldun is recognized by the West as a social scientist from the East (Islam). Yet, few academicians in Indonesia put his theory into the discourse of social science studies. In fact, Ibn Khaldun's grand theory about *Ashabiyah* can be used as an alternative approach in the study of the Sociology of Religion. This theory was born from observation and analysis of various religious phenomena at that time. *Ashabiyah* as the center of various Ibn Khaldun's theories, including the Civilization Cycle theory, has been considered as a theory that is similar to Durkheim's theory of social solidarity. According to the author, this *Ashabiyah* concept does not only apply to the context of social relations, such as the work of Durkheim and other functional theorists. *Ashabiyah* with religion as the most universal bond has exceeded social relations. It can "move" into the essence of various political and economic relationships. Therefore, empirical research activities are supposed to not only make *Ashabiyah* an explanatory factor but also as applied science to provide solutions to various religious problems in society.

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