

Maghrib Community's Qur'anic Recitation Movement: an Effort to Maintain The Tradition of Reciting The Quran Among Indonesian Muslim

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Abstract: *The crucial circumstances of Moslems toward Al-Quran and the termination of government noble program underlined this scientific paper. The underlying problems can be formulized as follow: how do we conceptualize something suitable for, and even can unite Muslim communities that are separated from each other in terms of time and place through Maghrib Reciting Quran Community Movement. This paper also discusses related strategy needed to revive and maintain this noble program again in order to maintain the tradition of reciting the Quran in Indonesian Muslim community.*

Key words: Indonesian muslim, Maghrib community, Quranic recitation tradition

Introduction

The emergence and development of Islam in Indonesia are closely related to the long history of the motherland. Before Islam was present, people have known and practiced cultural and religious system that was so complex. Various forms of cultural and religious practices have merged to form a distinctive color to this equator nation. Therefore, it is difficult and even quite impossible to remove the wealth of local culture (indigenous culture) from its roots for granted, even by the cultural system, and any strategy.¹ However, the condition of Muslims qualitative culture nowadays is very alarming. This bitter reality is perceived by predominantly Indonesian Muslim as one of the largest Muslim communities in the world. These conditions require people to pay more attention to the Al-Quran as the guidelines and instructions for their lives. The extent to which the Indonesian's awareness and understanding of the

Quran as well as the ability to practice the values contained in it that is also a benchmark of the quality of the Moslems.

Unfortunately, the reality of Indonesian Muslim community is far different from the expectation. The large number of population with great potential does not necessarily confirm the proportional quality. Those 800.000 potential mosques or *mushalla*, 496.000 *majelis taklim*, and 50.000 Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia have not been able to produce civil society that is close to the Al-Quran. Take a look at how many middle, high school, and even college students who can not memorize the holy Quran even read Al-Quran properly. The parents prefer to send their children into a coursethan an Islamic center where their children can learn how to recite Al-Quran.

A huge distance of Moslems and holy Quran confines a poor self-concept, whereas Allah says in the Quran:

كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِيَدَّبَّرُوا آيَاتِهِ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

*(This is) a Scripture that We have revealed unto thee, full of blessing, that they may ponder its revelations, and that men of understanding may reflect.*¹

Therefore, those crucial circumstances of moslem toward Al-Quran and the termination of government noble program underlined this scientific paper. The underlying problems can be formulized as follow: how do we conceptualize something suitable for, and even can unite Muslim communities that are separated from each other in terms of time and place through Maghrib community's movement of reciting the Quran. This paper also discusses related strategy needed to revive and maintain this noble program again in order to maintain the recitation of Al-Quran culture in Indonesian Muslim community.

Based on the above background, the formulations of the problem of this Quranic scientific paper are: how are the circumstances and problems of modern Indonesian Muslim community? How is the urgency of Maghrib Reciting Quran Community Movement towardnational moral development? Does modern Indonesian Muslim community require the

¹ Q.S. As-Shood: 29

holy Quran? And how to make Maghrib Reciting Quran Community Movement become Muslim culture in Indonesia?

The purpose of this scientific Quranic paper are to determine the condition and problems of modern Indonesian muslim community, to determine the urgency of Maghrib community's movement of Reciting the Quran toward national moral development, to know whether modern Indonesian muslim community requires Al- Quran, and to know how to make Maghrib community's movement of Reciting the Quran become Muslim culture in Indonesia.

The problems of modern Indonesian Muslim community

The 21st century globalization that is characterized by the advance in science and technology is growing fast. In this case, the advances in technology produce modern transportation and communication that makes people can connect more easily and quickly from one place to another. Therefore, the boundary between the regions is almost insignificant. The development of information technology makes the people can access the information more easy without any boundary that they can see, hear, and watch anything that happens in every corner of the earth. As the result, the tendency or at least the threat of moral decadence at this point becomes greater as the process of globalization is characterized by the traffic of people, products, and information which has never happened before at any level.

To face the 21st century and the globalization era, the qualified human resources are required. A qualified human as stated in the regulation No. 2 of 1989 on National Education System is a "complete Indonesian man". "The complete Indonesian man" is described as a man who is faithful and devoted to God Almighty and virtuous, has the personality and skills, physically and spiritually healthy, has steady and independent personality, and also has a sense of civic responsibility and nationality.²

Nevertheless, in its development, many challenges exist in front of us. There are at least three points that need to be noted here. Firstly, the socio-economic challenge. It signaled that the number of world's

² Undang-undang Nomor 2 tahun 1989 tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional

population now is more than 6 billion, in which about 30% of them are Muslims spreading in the southern part of the world with the characteristics of high growth, low productivity, huge natural resources but they are not productive, low welfare, and high death rate.

Secondly, the challenge of science and technology. Because the advancement of science and technology continues to evolve, the pattern of human life will be confined in a complex system of "business-science-technology". As the result, the society system becomes mechanical, shifting toward dehumanizing attitudes, materialistic orientation, and away from the long-term ideal, even the Hereafter life.

Thirdly, the ethical religious challenge. As the victim in modern materialist life, there is a shift in society will from the natural will into the rational one. In the process of this change, human emotional life is eroding, and continues to a spiritual impoverishment. In the developed countries, there is a gap between man and his God. Meanwhile, in developing countries (such as Indonesia), there is a gap between religious orientation to the worldly demands. The spiritual life becomes apparent and gray; there is no distinction in colors and lines anymore.³

As the result, the Indonesian modern Muslims society has less understanding of the essence of the teachings of Islam because the holy Quran is no longer attractive and enjoyable. Cynical attitude toward Islam appears because of the disappointment of noticing the Muslims reality that is still considered backwardness in science, economics, technology and culture. The weakening of the spirit and ideals of Muslims due to repeated failures in the political struggle that is far from the Qur`anivalues, and the loss of Islamiyah *da'wah* realization which were caused by the lack of relevance towards the demands and the developments of social reality of the Moslem nowadays.

The Urgency of Maghrib Reciting Community Movement toward the Development of National Morality

As previously known, the first Al-Quran verses that were relevated that is the first five verses of Surah Al-Alaq provide answers and

³ Muhammad Tholhah Hasan, *Prospek Islam Dalam Menghadapi Tantangan Zaman*, (Jakarta, Lantabora Press, 2003), p. 3

foundation of life that is very important for human beings. It is because Al-Alaq has described the basic orientations of human life, as well as the values of the idiological vision.

Surah Iqro or surah Al-Alaq is the first surah revealed to the Prophet *Sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam* (Honor and peace be upon him). This surah is categorized into surah *makkiyyah*. The beginning of the surah contains the command to read because by reading people know the commands and prohibitions of Allah. So, humans are not merely created in the world, but there are also certain commands and forhibitions for them. Thus, it commands the urgency of reading.

Allah said this in the Qur'an:

أَقْرَأْ بِأَسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ۝ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ۝ اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ ۝
الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ۝ عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ۝

Read in the name of your Lord who created. Created man from a clinging substance. Read, and your Lord is the most Generous. Who taught by the pen. Taught man that which he knew not (QS. Al 'Alaq: 1-5).

The above verse is a clear evidence of the urgency of reciting Quran in daily Moslem's life that can be seen from the first order that encourage mankind to read. This is a proof of the need to actualize Maghrib Reciting Community Movement. In addition, the command to read the Qur'an can also be found in this word of God:

الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَتْلُونَهُ حَقَّ تِلَاوَتِهِ أُولَٰئِكَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ ۗ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِهِ ۗ
فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ۝

Those to whom We have given the Book recite it with its true recital. They [are the ones who] believe in it. And whoever disbelieves in it - it is they who are the losers (QS. 2: 121)

Allah commands contains in the above verses provide further reinforcement that Maghrib Reciting Quran Community Movement have an influence on the moral development of the nation. In this case, there are three possible relevances of Maghrib community's movement of

Reciting the Quran in national moral development. Firstly, Islamic morality is strongly influencing the lifestyle of the people. Secondly, the Islamic and national moral is in balance so that they harmoniously blend. Lastly, the Islamic moral is less influential, so it is the combination that enhances the nation's moral. On this basis, the object of discussion here is the field of Islamic culture that participates in the national moral development. Moral is the state of mind that determines human behavior as well as attitudes deeds, and actions. In the Islam, moral aspect is known as *al-akhlaq al-karimah*, the courtesy that is a manifestation of the belief in the good and the bad, and the appropriate and the inappropriate that are illustrated by human behavior. Therefore, the point that should be considered is the importance of national moral cultivation that is impartial with Islamic moral through Maghrib community's movement of reciting the Quran.

The role of Maghrib community's movement of reciting the Quran as an effort to make people being accustomed to recite Quran is not only teaching moral activities while reciting Quran, but also as a motivator, activator, and innovator in the same time. It has a role as motivator because of the teachings of Islam contained in the Qur'an and Hadith are developed by *ijtihad* which gives a new feel for the adherents. In the teachings of Islam, there are commands or teachings that tell believers to have high moral standing with the global language, so that every Muslim strives to take the initiative to find good motives in developing the moral through Maghrib community's movement of reciting the Quran.⁴

It is also said as activator because the moral principles and ethics of Islam are dynamic. Islamic teachings are alive and support the moral of the Muslims. Dynamic also means elastic that imply that it always adjust to the changing times. When the age advances, the Islamic thoughts to the ethical and moral formation is also flourish.⁵ This is why Maghrib community's movement of reciting the Quran became one of the solutions to face the challenges of this age so that the globalization process can be filtered and neutralized from negative impacts.

Moreover, Maghrib community's movement of reciting the Quran also has a role as innovator because Islam provides an opportunity for the

⁴ M. Abdul Karim, *Op.Cit*, p. 190

⁵ *Ibid*, p. 191

believers to think ahead i.e, every time a new problem is found, it is faced with a new way of thinking. It implies that Islamic thought is open, like the call of Quran to pay attention to the signs of the skies, the Earth and between them in order to make humans come to the conclusion that the universe and everything is well ordered, following a system in which each subsystem supports each other.⁶

Modern Indonesian Muslim Community Needs al-Quran

To discuss the sub-title above, it is needed to look for the causes that lead to moral decadence due to the modern world and then propose the conception of the Quran to overcome them. The brawl occurs everywhere, drug abuse is flourishing, and the increase of free sex among the teenagers is eroding the morale of the nation. One of the causes of this problem is the inappropriate use of time. If Maghrib time is used to recite Quran followed by a discussion of religion matters, it will give positive impact toward the moral formation of future generation.

One of the facts of the moral decadence in Indonesia can be seen from the phenomenon of the increasing number of teenagers who get involved in drug which is in short called NAFZA (Narcotics Psychotropic Substances, and Other Addictive Substances) abuse. The data from the National Narcotics Agency (BNN) show that in 2012 the number of NAFZA users among adolescents reached 3.6 million people. That number increased to 3.8 million people in 2013. The moral decadence of the nation shows that our community needs a program to build qur'anicharacter.⁷

The facts above show that the morale of the nation indeed should be considered, especially Indonesia is proclaimed to get demographic bonus in 2020. Demographic bonus is a period where the dependency ratio between the population of productive age with non productive age declines and thus reaches a rate below 50. That means each of the productive populations endure few productive age populations. To get the demographic bonus, the quality of human resources must be

⁶ *Ibid*, p. 192

⁷ Factsheet, BKKBN, *Genre*, p. 1

increased to the maximum through education.⁸ Therefore, to develop the potential of young generation as demographic bonus, it is clear that we need Al-Quran to face the challenges of this age. If the conception of the Holy Quran is capable and fit thus, it is true that the modern world requires Al -Quran.

Dr. Zakiyah Derajat in his book *The Role of Religion in Mental Health* states that the cause of the confusion in modern world is the lack of the balance between the development of reasoning and feelings. Humans are lack of awareness on how the feelings influence their life. The tendency of using a logical thinking has forced the human to disregard their feeling as a result it damages their decision in determining the worldly policy.

Prof. Hamka has his own views that the confusion of the modern world is caused by the teachings of Karl Marx which focused on the struggle of human to fulfill their need for food meanwhile in Islam teaching it is not merely all about appetite need only.⁹

Prof. Dr. Abu Hanifa in his book *Pioneering Philosophy* also speaks about the confusion of the modern world. In his opinion, the cause of the chaos in modern world is humans only concern about logical thinking and materials, in which industry and trading become the center of their attention.¹⁰

On the other hand, according to holy Quran, the chaos in modern society happens because people disobey the admonition in Islam.

وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنْكًا وَنَحْشُرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ أَعْمَى

And whoever turns away from My remembrance - indeed, he will have a depressed life, and We will gather him on the Day of Resurrection blind.
(Q.S Thaha: 124)

The conception of the Al-Quran to answer the problems faced by the people could be easily found on the verses of the Quran. In Al-Quran, we can distinguish right and wrong, true and false, and the good and the bad (Q.S Al-Furqan: 1) because humans actually do not have the ability to

⁸ Factsheet, BKKBN, *Bonus Demografi*, p. 1

⁹ Hamka, *Pelajaran Agama Islam*, (Jakarta, Pembimbing Masa, 1970), p, 44

¹⁰ Abu Hanifah, *Rintisan Filsafat*, (Jakarta, Balai Pustaka, 1950), p. 50

determine which one is good and which is incorrect. With their mind, humans are only able to choose which one is good and which is bad. Therefore, Allah revealed the Quran as a guide for all mankind.

The Quran teaches mankind everything that they need in their life in order to achieve salvation and happiness in the world and the hereafter life.¹¹

وَلَقَدْ صَرَّفْنَا لِلنَّاسِ فِي هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ مِنْ كُلِّ مَثَلٍ فَأَبَى أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ إِلَّا كُفُورًا

And We have certainly diversified for the people in this Qur'an from every [kind] of example, but most of the people refused [anything] except disbelief. (QS. al-Isra: 89)

So, the author has simply pointed out from the above conception that it is very clear that the modern world need Al-Quran as an active solution. Therefore, we should perform, promote and maintain Maghrib Community's movement of reciting the Qur'an.

The Actualization of Maghrib Community's Movement of Reciting the Qur'an as Indonesian Muslim Culture

The glory of Islam that was achieved by the Prophet Muhammas together with his comrades encouraged and motivated all Muslims who looked forward the glory in the years since then. Hence, the jargon or slogan "return to the al-Quran and Sunnah" has become a rallying cry that many believed and felt in daily life, particularly in the framework of missionary endeavor and Islamic movements. However, applying the call to "return to the Al-Quran and Sunnah" in the Islamic movement is not an easy task.¹⁴

Therefore, Maghrib community's movement of reciting the Quran become one of the programs that is needed to be activated and supported due to two reasons. Firstly, Maghrib community's movement of reciting the Quran is expected to be a "counter" to the flow of information technology that almost takes controlour life, especially television, internet and etc. The word "control" means that most of our life appeared to have bonded as well as ended up with those current technologies.

¹¹ M Quraish Shihab, *Mukjizat Al-Quran*, (Bandung, Mizan, 2007), p 49

However, it does not necessarily mean that we "challenge" the modern life with technology that can not be denied. The technologies also have positive impact that provides us with knowledge and a lot of progress, but still some people are too attached with them. Indirectly, the current technology, especially television has eroded social life, education, even the value of religion.

Furthermore, the erosion of value in social life, education, and religion led to multi tremendous effects on the behavior of human life, especially the erosion of morality. Nowadays, juvenile delinquency turns to be a common occurrence: the use of narcotics, psychotropic and addictive ZAD, marital infidelity, adultery, and a number of other crimes.

The second, the fundamentally one is the people problems today is the loss of Al-Quran teachings in their life. Al-Quran is no longer use as "guidance" in life. The loss that the author means is the "silence" of life in the practice of the Quran. One of the "classic" problems that are still unfinished today is the issue of Al-Quran illiteracy. There are millions of Muslims who are illiterate in reciting Quran. That number will surely continue to grow when we question how many people are able to memorize the Quran as well as understand and practice the teachings of it. If we make a percentage of people who can memorize and practice the teaching of Quran it is precisely that the percentage will decrease even exceed double-digit or even less than that one digit.

Ironically the resonance of reciting Quran today can only be heard in a few places such as Islamic boarding schools, religious educational institutions, and in some big cities or villages that still have strong religious culture and can minimize the flow of technology.

This condition is more worrying if we live in a village. Actually, the flow of technology that goes into the village is not as large as in the city. Ironically, in the city, the flow can be neutralized by more established educational institutions such as Islamic schools and Islamic boarding school that have qualified tutors or teachers, however, in the village, the globalization enters without hindrance at all. Take a look at *Taman Pendidikan Al-Qur'an* (TPA) that can be analogized like *kerakap* growing on rocks in which the existence is not really visible. The TPA tutors also face some issues such as unsupported or unfriendly environment as well as minimal public appreciation for them. The efforts

that can be done to improve reciting Quran culture through Maghrib community's movement of reciting the Quran are as follows.

1. Involving the entire Element of community

The one who responsible to save our generations from moral decadence through Maghrib community's movement of reciting the Quran are all elements of society and certain institutions that dealt with religious issues so that this program can be accepted in society and give broad impact as it is expected. In implementing this program, there are two main issues that should be considered.

The first, this program should emphasize the cultural approach rather than the structural one. In addition, to activate the staffs of the Ministry of Religious Affairs the program should also involve the entire community located in an area. The cultural approach to encourage reciting Al-Quran is the entry point to be emphasized because the Ministry of Religious Affairs alone can not handle and achieve the target maximally if the community is not actively involved.

Take an example of the execution of *Musabaqoh Tilawatil Quran* (MTQ) program even the government program that was originally a cultural activity. MTQ (formerly called the contest) was originated from people who want to motivate society to love the Quran. Unfortunately, that program has shifted to structural movement conducted by government authorities, which turn the program into mechanistic and ceremonial program only.

Culturally, the head of the Ministry of religion in each area should embrace all elements of society, starting from community leaders, religious leaders, intellectuals, mosque youth associations, youth leaders, and of course the centers of Al-Quran teaching such as the Association of Qori-Qoriah, Quran development agencies and others organizations in each region.

An embrace is addressed to identify the perceptions and feelings of all elements of society on the importance of the Maghrib Reciting Quran Community Movement.

2. The Need of Room to Enhance Reciting Quran Competence

Furthermore, to support the implementation of Maghrib Reciting Quran Community Movement afterward, it is necessary to have more creative programs to achieve the objectives, for example it is necessary to conduct trainings for the tutors so that the quality of recitation teaching of Quran can be improved. Some others supported programs are also important in this context, such as not only use a recorded of reciting Quran to announce that the prayer time is approaching, but also asking the members of community to recite Quran alive to make them accustomed to recite Al-Quran. Likewise, the programs to read the Quran "one day one juz" or "one day one sheet" for the wider community can also actualize the Quranic culture into Indonesian Muslim community.

3. The utilization of Science and Technology to face of challenges in modern age

If the basic concepts of the Islamic world view are actualized at various levels of sophisticated society and civilization, it will produce an integrated infrastructure for the distribution of knowledge.¹⁵ In this case, the challenge of modern age can be used as an opportunity to develop competencies to empower the advancement of technology and information. The human resources that will be the educators in Maghrib Reciting Quran Community Movement must have a learner attitude. The success of an educator to take advantage of the existence of opportunities, of course, correlates to the success of the training program that has been described above. No doubt that one of the obstacles in Maghrib Reciting Quran Community Movement is the way of reciting Quran that is unattractive and boring.

As excellence human resources, one must have creative ideas in tackling these problems. One of them is the use of advanced technology such as designing technology-based learning by making teaching media by utilizing audio-visual media on the Internet. The creative innovations based on technology, of course, are very supportive in the process of teaching reciting the holy Quran.

Conclusion

From the description that has been explored in previous chapters, in general it can be concluded that the revelation of the first verses of the

Quran does not only show the coherence and integrity of the answer of major and important issues that has happened. It means that any major problems, whether it is about the ideology or civilization, that is faced by Moslems nowadays can be overcome by following the patterns and steps taken by Prophet Muhammad and friends with the principles of nuzulnya revelation of the Qur'an. In short, the conclusions of this Quranic scientific paper are:

1. To face the 21st century and the era of globalization, the qualified human resources are needed. The criteria of qualified human resources who have the personality and skills, physically and spiritually healthy, having steady and independent personality as well as the sense of responsibility in community and nationality through Maghrib community's movement of reciting the Quran in Indonesia are needed.
2. The role of Maghrib community's movement of reciting the Quran in maintaining reciting Al-Quran culture is not only limited as moral stock filler sidelines of reciting activities for students, but also as a motivator, activator, as well as innovator
3. The modern world and the people need Al-Quran as an active solution. It completes the reason of the Maghrib Reciting Quran Community Movement in Indonesia that we should maintain and grapple together
4. There are some efforts in conducting Maghrib community's movement of reciting the Quran. They are: a) the involvement of the entire community elements b) The need of room to enhance reciting quran competence and c) The utilization of science and technology in facing the challenges of this age.

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