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## Ahmadiyah: A History and its Religious Conflicts in Indonesia, 1925-2008

**ABSTRACT:** Ahmadiyah constitutes the modern movement in Islam, which was founded by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad at Qadian, India (recently, Pakistan) in the early of 19<sup>th</sup> century. From the earlier development, this school had been procuring the resistances from Islamic majority in India for having and developing some distorted Islamic teachings. Because the vision of the movement is based on the ideas related to the issues of “aqidah” or basic beliefs in Islam, which includes the concept of Isa al-Masih death, Prophecy, al-Mahdi, and al-Masih al-Mau’ud, so Ahmadiyah was also seen as part of the “Kalam” schools science or theology in Islam. Those ideas are what ultimately dragging this stream into the protracted conflicts that occur among Muslims. Since its presence in Indonesia in 1920s, Ahmadiyah had been confronting some various conflicts against the majority of Islamic society. The conflicts were initially limited to the theological debates. However, since the years of 2000s, the conflicts burst out into the physical actions, such as destroying the worshipper’s places and in the end turning up the victims. The conflicts involving Ahmadiyah and the Islamic mainstream continue to grow, even after the issue of SKB (Surat Keputusan Bersama or Joint Decree) of the three Ministers in Indonesia in 2008. This present research, then, is aimed at the description of the history of Ahmadiyah, including the conflict and its problem solving, which are conducted by those who quarreled, especially in West Java, Indonesia.

**KEY WORDS:** Ahmadiyah; Mirza Ghulam Ahmad; Revelation; Prophecy; Religious Conflict.

### INTRODUCTION

Islam is Allah’s religion, which is revealed onto His Messengers from generation to generation. Before the teachings of Muhammad SAW (*Salallahu Alaihi Wassalam* or Peace be Upon Him), Islam is truly local, only ruled for the certain nation, region, and period. Yet, after Muhammad’s teachings come, Islam is to be the universal religion for the whole people (Masters, Squires & Kaka, 2015).

Islamic teachings inside the *Al-Qur’an* will always be relevant with the life and the importance of human forever. Since Islam was embraced by the people from the regions of geographical differences, the universal understanding on Islam referred back to the local understanding and application (Zulkarnain, 2005 and 2015). The variety of understanding is caused by the differences in interpreting Islamic sources and, among

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others, by the differences of its locality.

According to Alwi Shihab (1998), the differences of understanding and opinion constitute the order of law which is in *Al-Qur'anic* language called as *sunnatullah* (Shihab, 1998:56). In other words, this is a natural phenomenon when people have the differences in point of view, faith, or religion. Alwi Shihab (1998)'s statement above is based on the *Al-Qur'an*, chapter *Hud*, verse 118, as follows:

And if thy Lord had willed, He verily would have made mankind one nation, yet they cease not differing (cited in Depag RI, 1989).

Therefore, during the history of Islamic development, we met various differences in theological understanding, law, or Sufism either. Such differences often reveal the exclusive groups, so that the differences can make them quarrel to each other. To maintain their own positions, they often make religion or the interpretation on religious texts as the legitimated device (cf Dahlen, 2006; and Burhanuddin, 2010).

According to Afif Muhammad (1997), the appearance of religious sects/groups is one of the factors which influence the pattern of relationships among religious people. The groups are initially intended to achieve the purpose easily; yet, when they are formed, a religion becomes institutionalized (Muhammad, 1997). The people inside the groups will have the homogeneity of vision and perception; thus, the earlier different patterns are now to be united.

The group, or the congregation, has its own logic and commonly the leaders want the member of the group to have the same vision and perception. They make standardization by making the boundary poles of hedges to be obeyed by all members (Douglas, 1996). The differences inside the border line are less tolerated, and then the doctrine arises: "They who are not like us are not proper to be with". From this actually reveals the dichotomous "we" and "they". "We" are not them, and "they" are not "us" (Connolly, 1991; and Burhanuddin, 2010).

Afif Muhammad (1997) again continues that the homogeneity of the group is sometimes reach *aqidah* and prayers; it also

reveals the structuralization by means of all the visions and actions must be placed under group's doctrine. In this side, truth is sometimes not put upon something objective; rather, it is placed under the group's interests. In effect, the religious organizations which are initially intended to be the social organization become the religious sects, which are exclusive and truly sectarian (Hall, 2005; and Mudzakkir, 2011).

The patterns of understanding and the deeds of religious teaching, which are viewed as the source of conflict, exclusivism, and sectarianism, have been developed for long time in Indonesia (Connolly, 1991; and Burhanuddin, 2010). In Islam, the tensions among the different understandings of religious teachings come often into the surface; and one of the most controversial tensions is about Ahmadiyah congregation in Indonesia (Mudzakkir, 2007; and Reid, 2013).

Ahmadiyah constitutes the modern movement in Islam, which was founded by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad at Qadian, India (recently, Pakistan) in the early of 19<sup>th</sup> century. From the earlier development, this school had been procuring the resistances from Islamic majority in India for having and developing some distorted Islamic teachings.<sup>1</sup>

In Indonesia, one of Ahmadiyah schools appears from the 1920s through one of its preachers, namely Maulana Rahmat Ali. Since then, the communities or the congregations of Ahmadiyah had been formed in some Indonesian cities, among others are in Garut and Bandung, West Java (Sofianto, 2014; and Bamualim, 2015). In 1953, this community acquired the formal admission from the government of the Republic of Indonesia as a societal organization under the title of JAI (*Jemaat Ahmadiyah Indonesia* or Ahmadiyah Congregation of Indonesia).<sup>2</sup>

According to M.A. Suryawan (2006) and M. Dawam Rahardjo (2015), from the beginning

<sup>1</sup>See, for example, an article entitled "History of Ahmadiyyat: The Revival of Islam". Available online at: <https://www.alislam.org/library/book/book-religious-knowledge/history-ahmadiyyat-revival-islam/> [accessed in Bandung, Indonesia: 5 January 2017].

<sup>2</sup>Article entitled "75 Tahun Jemaat Ahmadiyah Indonesia". Available online at: [www.alislam.org/indonesia/75th.JAI.html](http://www.alislam.org/indonesia/75th.JAI.html) [accessed in Bandung, Indonesia: 20 May 2016].

of its presence, Ahmadiyah congregations are widely known as an Islamic school which delivers the distorted teachings from the Islamic majority (Suryawan, 2006:ix; and Rahardjo, 2015). They are accused to have the new Prophet, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, himself a founder of the school. This teaching is truly contradicted with the Islamic majority for they believe that there are no other Prophets anymore after Muhammad SAW (*Salallahu Alaihi Wassalam* or Peace be Upon Him). Regarding Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, as a Prophet, is a distortion of faith which is misled (Sofianto, 2014).

Even though the reaction against Ahmadiyah is bitterly conducted at the time, the misunderstanding is not shaped into some violence, this rather more in the form of debates and discussions. For instance, in 1962, in Padang, West Sumatera, Abdullah Ahmad and Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah criticized Ahmadiyah's view that Prophet Isa AS (*Alaihi Salam* or Peace for Him) is dead and he is impossible to come again into the world. Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah wrote a special book entitled *Al-Qawl al-Shahih*, in which is discussed about the definition of Prophet, Messenger, Revelation, and Prophet Muhammad as the Last Messenger (cited in Rofiqoh, 2015).

In 1925, in Tapaktuan, Aceh, Muhammad Isa and Ahmad Syukur as the students of Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah also opposed Ahmadiyah school through some religious meetings or *pengajian-pengajian* (Rofiqoh, 2015). Meanwhile, in 1933, in Bandung, West Java, Ahmad Hassan from *Persatuan Islam* (Islamic Unity) conducted much of open debates to criticize such an Ahmadiyah school (Alam, 2005).

The different condition started to feel up by Ahmadiyah congregation since 1980s. At the time, the MUI (*Majelis Ulama Indonesia* or Indonesian Council of Ulema) issued a decree (*fatwa*) that the school of Ahmadiyah congregation of Indonesia (*Ahmadiyah Qadian*) had been being "outside of Islam, distorted, and misled" (Mudzakkir, 2011; and Rofiqoh, 2015). The acts of violence conducted by the anti-Ahmadiyah groups appeared soon after the decree, such as

occurred in Cianjur, West Java, on March 1984; in Garut, West Java, in 1988; and in Kerinci, Jambi, Sumatera, in 1989 (MUI, 2005; and Wibowo, 2006).

The decree as a result of the second MUNAS (*Musyawarah Nasional* or National Congress) of MUI in 1980 was, then, powered by the decree of National Congress of MUI in 2005. This was said in that decree that Ahmadiyah school is outside Islam, distorted, and misled; and those who follow it becomes *murtad* (out of Islam). For those who carelessly follow Ahmadiyah school must be back into the true Islam soon, which is proper with the *Al-Qur'an* and *Al-Hadith* (MUI, 2005; and Wibowo, 2006).

The government is then having the obligation to forbid the spreading of Ahmadiyah school in the whole regions of Indonesia, to congeal the organization, and to close all the place of activities, as recommended based on "An Anthology of *Fatwa* of the Indonesian Council of Ulama, Section of Faith and Religious Schools" (MUI, 2005).

Such MUI decrees above has constructed the societal opinion which considers that a fight against Ahmadiyah is an obligation and a kind of *ibadah*. In this sense, the people see that the decrees are the umbrella of legitimation upon their acts. Such an opinion has created the inconvenient situation between Ahmadiyah group and the other Muslim people. The opinion even results the occurrence of some violent acts conducted by certain Islamic groups toward Ahmadiyah (Tohayudin, 2012).

By some considerations coming from various sides, the series of occurrences which destruct the religious harmony, the tranquility, and the orderliness of societal life are in the end reacted by the government by issuing the document of three Ministries or SKB (*Surat Keputusan Bersama*) in 9 June 2008 about the Warning and the Order to the Adherent, Member, and/or the Board Member of Ahmadiyah Congregation of Indonesia or JAI (*Jemaat Ahmadiyah Indonesia*) and the Common People.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup>See, for further information, "Keputusan Bersama Menteri Agama, Jaksa Agung, dan Menteri Dalam Negeri Republik Indonesia, Nomor: 3 Tahun 2008, Nomor: Kep-033/A/JA/6/2008, Nomor: 199 Tahun 2008 tentang Peringatan

The SKB which is determined by Minister of Religious Affairs, Minister of Home State Affairs, and the Great Prosecutor, as stated in the points of consideration, is purposeful to keep and to preserve the religious tranquility and the order of life society (Rachmaningtyas, 2013). However, such an SKB results a contra version in the society in terms of the execution that Ahmadiyah might not spread its teaching. For some, that is a kind of human rights violation in having faith, yet for others, it should be like that, considering Ahmadiyah as the school which is not proper with common faith of Islamic people (Ruhana, 2009:47-63).

Based on the problem above, this present research tried to describe the principals of religious thoughts of Ahmadiyah congregation and the development of its religious conflict in Indonesia, mainly since the beginning of the school until the issue of SKB of three Ministers in 2008, and also the efforts conducted by Ahmadiyah congregation of Indonesia in searching the peaceful solution upon the conflict.

The writer sees that the study toward such a problem is useful in developing our understanding upon the true reality. As stated by Alwi Shihab (1998) that by understanding the availability of differences through inter-religious dialogs, each side could draw the new knowledge from its dialog partner; thus, it will be by itself developing both insights to search the similarities for creating a peace (Shihab, 1998:41).

Based on Alwi Shihab (1998)'s opinion above, the conceptual framework of this research is based on the conceptions of conflict theory coming from C.M. Beckman (2006). According to him, the identity of religion is one of many interesting social problems (Beckman, 2006). Religion is included into the category of collective cultural identity, which has the possibilities to give each other influences among individuals and other people as the outside world. Yet, if

such an identity is closed off toward another cultural influence, this will refer to the fanatics which arises conflicts (Andries *et al.*, 2014:117-133).

J. Galtung (1969), as cited also by Dwia A. Pulubuhu (2015), see the conflict as a situation of disagreement between the objective and the value acquired by the actor in one social system. Such a disagreement is not always causing a destructive conflict, since it could also be presented in the integrative form (Galtung, 1969; and Palubuhu, 2015). By unifying the disagreement, so the new social truth can be reached and the healthier relationship among the quarrel can be appeared.

J. Galtung (1969)'s definition on the conflict above is suitable with the peaceful conception in the perspective of conflict theory. In this sense, the peaceful phenomenon is signified as the condition of which is met up the various resistances or different interests in a new relation system. The peaceful condition is not signified as the condition of muffling, pressing, nor eliminating conflict, this rather, as a condition of synthesis, where a conflict can be better managed, and transformed into the conducive shape of human life (*cf* Galtung, 1969; and Grewal, 2003).

In relation to the problem of this research, if the each quarreled side can behave openly (inclusive) and can solve the problems of conflict by using dialogical ways, it is a possibility for us to create peace among religious people.

## METHODS

The research is exploratory, that is to understand the ways or life patterns of society naturally (Zainal, 2007). Therefore, the method used is qualitative method (Moleong, 1994; Nasution, 1996; and Satori & Komariah, 2010). In this case, the method is used in understanding religious views of Ahmadiyah and the development of that religious community in Indonesia. The researcher did not attempt to control or indicate where the important phenomenon of reality happened is. In this case, the researcher merely observed, interviewing,

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dan Perintah kepada Penganut, Anggota, dan/atau Anggota Pengurus Jemaat Ahmadiyah Indonesia (JAI) dan Warga Masyarakat". Available online at: <http://ahmadiyah.org/skb-3-menteri-tentang-ahmadiyah/> [accessed in Bandung, Indonesia: 25 March 2016].



and recording the information, then interpreting and making conclusion.

Collecting data was conducted by interview, observation and documentary study (Moleong, 1994; Nasution, 1996; Zainal, 2007; and Satori & Komariah, 2010). The interview used is purposive sampling technique with the figures that considered to represent of Ahmadiyah congregation of Indonesia, especially those whom researcher have encountered in Garut and Bandung, West Java. Observation was done by coming directly to the research sites, that is Mubarak mosque in Bandung and Ahmadiyah mosque in Sindang, Garut, as the first established mosque by this congregation since 1930s.

While observing their religious activity closely, the researcher also involved directly in congregational prayer activity among them. While documentary study was conducted by reading and understanding the writings about Ahmadiyah, including the books written by Ahmadiyah itself as well as writers other than Ahmadiyah, either in the form of book, article, scientific journal, or research reports.

Technique of collecting data used a multi-method, in order to get complementary data and reinforce each other (Zainal, 2007; and Satori & Komariah, 2010). It can strengthen the researcher's beliefs about the accuracy of data obtained. As Agus Salim (2001) said that the combination of data collection technique (multi-method) conducted by the researcher is intended to increase strength, spaciousness, and in-depth research (Salim, 2001).

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

**The History of Ahmadiyah.** The inception of Ahmadiyah, as one of Islamic movement in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, cannot be separated from concatenation of history that characterized the situation and condition of Muslims in India at the time. Since Turkey 'Ustmani was defeated from Western, until the leading domination of British over India and Egypt, the Muslims were still in stupidity, apathy, and also fatalistic. The condition of Muslims in India was getting worst, especially after the incident of Mutini rebellion in 1857, when British was to be suspicious and reactionary toward Muslims (Sofianto, 2014). Non-

cooperative attitude indicated by Muslims toward British government has made them strangers in their own country.

Besides, in the internal of Muslims themselves have often disputes that overshadowed by *khilafiyyah* problem, and also an estrangement of relationship between rational and traditional community (Yasir, 1978; and Sofianto, 2014). In that situation, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, confessed himself as the appointed *al-Mahdi* and *al-Masih* by God, and felt that he had moral responsibility for advancing Islam and its people, he did the effort by giving new interpretation toward the verses of the *Al-Qur'an* in accordance with the condition of the era, as God inspiring him (Sofianto, 2014).

As an effort to fend off the Hindu propagandist attacks and Christian missionary toward Islam, in this phase, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad began to sermon by taking renewal religious understanding in large society. In realizing his idea, he declare himself openly that he had been getting command from God to receive *bai'at* from his congregations. It aims to gather a force that can sustain his *al-Mahdi* mission and ambition to call for Islam to the entire world. According to him, maintaining and propagandizing Islam will not succeed without a strong organization (Iskandar, 2008b; and Sofianto, 2014).

After congregation of Ahmadiyah formed in 1900s, as a forum and place for struggling and developing ideas of *al-Mahdi* mission, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad began to call upon himself as "Prophet" openly, and his followers respect him as messengers of God. After that, in 1904, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad did not only call for himself as *al-Masih* which is awaited by Christians and *al-Mahdi* which is promised for Muslims, but also as *Khrisna* that is awaited by Hindu's (JAI, 1994:46-47).

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad pioneering his efforts through monthly magazine in English, such as *Review of Religious from Qadian*, as the media which is considered that a lot of Western people were interested by getting odds through various mass media (cited in Sofianto, 2014; and Bahri, 2015). The desire to spread this idea of *al-Mahdi* mission in

Europe appeared, then, he wrote on his works *Nurul Haq* that had been written 2 years after he confessed himself as *al-Masih* and *al-Mahdi*. The writing was aimed to straighten their mistaken view toward Islam. This stub then developed by his follower after he died, then in 1912, Islam Ahmadiyah was established in England; and in 1922 in West Germany afterwards (Ali, 1959:12).

After Mirza Ghulam Ahmad died in 1905, Ahmadiyah leadership, which is called *khilafah*, headed by Maulawi Nuruddin until he died in 1914 (Ali, 1959). During Ahmadiyah leadership as *Mahdi* movement, this has been acquiring the rapid progress and began to be known by Muslims largely. Yet, the seedlings of disunity among the followers at that time began to visible, that is the emergence of two contradictory viewpoints. The first viewpoint was about *khilafah* problem (substituting for leadership), while the second viewpoint was the problem about calling fellow Muslims heathen (Fathoni, 1994).

The dispute in Ahmadiyah community ensured this religious community to be separated into two groups. The first group considered conviction that whosoever did not belief onto Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, has he been hearing his name or not, is he (Mirza Ghulam Ahmad) as Muslim, or *Mujaddid*, or as *al-Masih* and *al-Mahdi* which was promised, then those people is punished to be infidel and out of Islam, except they have pledge allegiance him formally. The reason is that the people who did not belief Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as *al-Masih* and *al-Mahdi*, it means that they did not follow the *Al-Qur'an* and also did not uphold Prophetic message about his presence in the end of the period. This group then is known by *Ahmadiyah Qadiani* (Ali, 1959; Iskandar, 2008b; and Sofianto, 2014).

While the second group argued that every person who has been saying the phrase of unity, they are Muslims, even though they follow another group in Islam and also no one of them out of Islam, except if he denied apostolate of Prophet Muhammad SAW (*Salallahu Alaihi Wassalam* or Peace be Upon Him). As for the problem of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad prophecy still become the most

contested issue between both groups. This second group is known by *Ahmadiyah Lahore*, and also called as *Ahmadiyah Anjuman Isha'at Islam* (Batuah, 1985:21-22).

***The development of Ahmadiyah Qadiani in West Java, Indonesia.*** The spread of Ahmadiyah Qadiani in West Java cannot be separated from the successful story series of religious proselytizing conducted by Maulana Rahmat Ali, since 1925 until 1950s (Ali, 1959; and Bahri, 2015). Maulana Rahmat Ali was an Ahmadiyah preacher from Punjab, India. He was the first Ahmadiyah preacher who was sent to Indonesia from Qadian, India, by *Khalifah al-Masih II*, Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmood Ahmad (Iskandar, 2008a; and Bahri, 2015).

In 1931, Maulana Rahmat Ali went to Jakarta or Batavia at the time, after living in Padang, West Sumatra, for several years previously (Sofianto, 2014; and Bahri, 2015). Through individual discussions with those who wanted to know about Ahmadiyah or through an open discussion, Ahmadiyah religious proselytizing in Java land got the tremendous attention. Official debates occurred among Ahmadiyah, Islamic clerics, and Christian clerics in Jakarta, Bogor, Bandung, until Garut in West Java. With the good respond from half of society toward Ahmadiyah, in 1932, Maulana Rahmat Ali established Ahmadiyah congregation in Jakarta successfully and its branch in Bogor, West Java (Sofianto, 2014:125-128).

In 1933, there had been twice debate between Ahmadiyah and Islamic defenders represented by PERSIS (*Persatuan Islam* or Islamic Unity) organization in Bandung. Ahmadiyah displayed Islamic preachers: Maulana Rahmat Ali, Maulana Abu Bakar Ayyub H.A., and Maulana Moh Sadiq H.A. While Islamic defenders headed by A. Hassan, better known as "Hassan Bandung" (Yasir, 1978; Iskandar, 2008a; and Bahri, 2015).

Started from a correspondence, the discussion on Ahmadiyah began to break out between Ahmadiyah monthly magazine *Sinar Islam* and *Pembela Islam* magazine which was PERSIS media at the time. This arose henceforward the agreement between both groups to make a meeting which was called

at that time as *Openbare Debat Vergadering* (the Open Debate Meeting). That debate was held twice, the first held three days consecutively in 14-16 April 1933, placed in *Sociteit "Ons Genoegen" Naripanweg* building, Bandung, with visitors more or less 1,000 people. The main topic of the debate was "the Problem of Prophet Isa's Life". This debate got exceptional attention from visitors, which consisted of Ahmadiyah people and Islamic society in Bandung city (Iskandar, 2008a; Sofianto, 2014; and Sumantri, 2014).

When the debate took place, some mass media in Bandung and Jakarta were covering this rare event. The name of Ahmadiyah became more famous and this was really profitable for the preacher himself. Most of the visitors praised the toughness of Ahmadiyah in that debate, yet much of them distorted the fact as well that Ahmadiyah had been defeated by A. Hassan (Federspiel, 1996). Some Islamic clerics from Bandung, Singaparna, Tasikmalaya, Garut, Cianjur, and Sukabumi in West Java were spearheaded by Anwar Sanusi and Al-Hadad through *Al-Mukmin* newspaper to revile Ahmadiyah thoroughly. The results of that debate have been published as *Verslad Debat Resmi* book that was signed by both groups (cited in Federspiel, 1996; Iskandar, 2008a; and Sofianto, 2014).

The second debate was a continuation of the first, and attracted people's attention more or less 2,000 people in Batavia (Jakarta now), three days consecutively from 28-30 September 1933, and held in National Building Convention, precisely at Gang Kenari, Salemba, Batavia Centrum. The debate topics are about: "The Life and Death of Prophet Isa AS (*Alaihi Salam* or Peace for Him)"; "The Presence or Absence of Prophet after Prophet Muhammad SAW (*Salallahu Alaihi Wassalam* or Peace be Upon Him)"; and "The Impeachment Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Truth" (Iskandar, 2008a; and Bahri, 2015).

As cited by *Tempo* magazine in 1974, in Nanang R.I. Iskandar (2008a), the delegates which came from press at the time were *Keng Po*, *Sia Po*, *Pemandangan* (View), *Bintang Timoer* (Oriental Star), *Sikap* (Attitude), *Adil* (Justice), *Soemangat* (Spirit), *Sendjata*

*Pemoeda* (Young Arm), *Djawa Barat* (West Java), and *Tjeto Welo-welo* (Over-Acting). While the association delegates were: PERSIS (*Persatuan Islam* or Islamic Unity), *Pendidikan Islam* (Islamic Education), *Annadil Islamie* (Islamic Justice), *Persatuan Islam* of Garut, *Persatuan Islam* of Leles, *Islamiyah* (Islamic Community) of Jatinegara, *Perukunan* (Community) Kebon Sirih, *Salamatul Ihsan* (Good Peace), and *Al-Irsyad*. Consequently, there were many people at the time then in allegiance with and entering to Ahmadiyah congregation, such as R. Muhiyiddin who then became the first Chief of the Great Board of Ahmadiyah Congregation and later also Entoy Muhammad Tayyib (1900-1981) from Singaparna, West Java (Sumantri, 2014).

Entoy Muhammad Tayyib was an Islamic cleric who was given a task by Maulana Rahmat Ali, in 1934, to spread out Ahmadiyah in West Java. After doing his task successfully in Tasikmalaya, Ciamis, and its surroundings, he continued to spread out Ahmadiyah to Garut city. In this city, Entoy Muhammad Tayyib met his old friend, Udin Sayudin, both often held a gathering for talking about Islamic development in Garut. Moreover, when there was a news about church establishment concomitant to spread Christianity there (Sofianto, 2014:138).

To stem the spread of Christianity, Entoy Muhammad Tayyib proposed to hold a debate event between Christian and Islam. The debate event held in 1935, in Finkster Church at Jalan Ciledug, Garut, West Java, with the topic: "Muhammad is Not a Prophet and *Al-Qur'an* is the Imitation from Bible" (cited in Sofianto, 2014). That debate was finally won by Islam which was delegated by Maulana Rahmat Ali from Ahmadiyah and K.H. (*Kyai Haji* or Hajj Ulema) Moestafa Kamil from PSII (*Partai Serikat Islam Indonesia* or Indonesian Party of Islamic League). The Church was not satisfied, and proposed to hold a second debate (Noer, 1982; and Sofianto, 2014).

Yet because there was a problem with who will be delegated from Islam — there were some people who did not agree with Maulana Rahmat Ali, because he was considered as not coming from Islamic representation — then the second debate failed to be held. The

incident then engendered the agreement to form the Committee of Qadian Investigation consisted of Ganda Satiri, Udin Sayudin, Haji Ansur, Haji Amir, Amat, and Yahya. After the investigators reviewed Ahmadiyah carefully, finally they were no doubts anymore to enter Ahmadiyah congregation. After that time, Ahmadiyah congregation was officially established in Garut (Sofianto, 2014:140).

The spread of Ahmadiyah in Garut further enhanced by Abdul Wahid, an Ahmadiyah permanent delegate from Tapaktuan, Aceh, Sumatera, who was arrived in Garut on 22 April 1936. The first effort was to establish a mosque in Sanding, and the spreading of Ahmadiyah in Garut continues to widen. Ahmadiyah congregation consecutively established and preached to the areas around. For instance, still in 1936, the management of Ahmadiyah congregation was formed in Sukaraja; and in 1938, Ahmadiyah congregation also established in Samarang area, such as Kampung Ciparay, Kiara Payung, Cikaleng, and Ciparanje (Sofianto, 2014:140-141).

The spread of Ahmadiyah in Bandung cannot be separated with the role of Abdul Wahid, an Ahmadiyah preacher whose task was then transferred from Garut to Bandung in 1938. For an effort to spread Ahmadiyah ideology, Abdul Wahid gathered Ahmadiyah congregation in Bandung to conduct coaching activity, for example by executing *Jum'at* (Friday) prayer together in his own house, in Nyengseret, Bandung. That effort continued by establishing Ahmadiyah of Branch Bandung, after Abdul Wahid moved from Nyengseret to Jalan Pajagalan in Bandung, West Java (interview with Respondent A, 3/7/2016).

The preacher activity had been halted when Indonesia dealt with Japanese occupation (1942-1945) and when the period of Indonesian independence revolution (1945-1950). Moreover, when the incident of *Bandung Lautan Api* (Bandung a Sea of Flames) occurred in 24 March 1946, most of people in Bandung City, including Ahmadiyah congregation, fled to the areas out of Bandung, such as Majalaya, Garut, and Sumedang (Smail, 2011). After the situation was relatively safe, the refugees,

including Abdul Wahid and his followers, back to Bandung and rented a house in Gang Maksudi, Bojongloa, Bandung (interview with Respondent A, 3/7/2016).

Ahmadiyah activity then was activated again, begin with the establishment of a mosque in Gang Haji Sapari in Bandung. That mosque was established in 1948 and finished in 1950, with the funding from the ladies community in Garut and Bandung. After the situation became safer and safer, the spread of Ahmadiyah to the areas around Bandung was begun since 1960s. In 1960s, there was established an Ahmadiyah Branch of Cimahi, then also established a Branch in Rajamandala and in Majalaya in 1963, Branch of Banjaran in 1979, Branch of Soreang in 1998, and Branch of Arjasari in 1999 (Sofianto, 2014:148-149).

#### ***The Principle of Ahmadiyah Doctrine.***

Generally, the principle of Ahmadiyah doctrine involved the death of Isa AS (*Alaihi Salam* or Peace for Him), revelation, prophecy, and the caliphate (Sofianto, 2014:74-90). The beliefs about Isa AS death, as claimed by Ahmadiyah based on the revelation accepted by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, is a key to understand that ideology (Sofianto, 2014; and Uyun, 2014). The ideology about *Al-Mahdi* and *Al-Masih* appears when Mirza Ghulam Ahmad got a revelation from Allah in the end of 1890, which declared that Maryam's son, Isa, died just like the Prophets before (Sofianto, 2014).

The crucifixion understood by Ahmadiyah is the crucifixions toward Isa himself, not replaced by a Jewish as understood by Muslim generally. Prophet Isa AS did not die in the cross indeed; he got only an apparent death or fainting. After getting power to continue the traveling, Prophet Isa, his mother, and some of his students went to Syria, Pakistan, and Persia. Prophet Isa AS died naturally and buried in Mohalla Khan Yar, Srinagar, Kashmir, India (Knapp, 2008; and Sofianto, 2014).

The belief that Isa AS died is a renewal of Muslim understanding at that time, while for *Ahl al-Sunnah* (Sunni Community in Islam), the news about *Mahdi* or the descend of Isa AS is not a main principle (Hamka,



1956:194). The problem is not assertively expressed in the *Al-Qur'an*, while, after being investigated the *sanad* (genealogy) and its *matan* (content), most of *Hadiths* (words and deeds of Prophet Muhammad) that contained the problem were categorized to be unaccepted ones (Musa, 2008; and Dogan, 2012). Concerning that thing, Sir Muhammad Iqbal (1995) clarifies that the beliefs of this group about Isa AS, death is only to give a rational base as the first step toward the perfect Prophetic concept in order to achieve the purposes (Iqbal, 1995).

Concerning revelation, Ahmadiyah believes that God's revelation is always opened and never been disconnected after the messenger of God, Prophet Muhammad SAW (*Salallahu Alaihi Wassalam* or Peace be Upon Him) died. The disconnected revelation is only related to the law (*syari'at*) received by the Prophets in bearing the laws, which is contained in the holy book, such as *Al-Qur'an* (Sofianto, 2014:82); whereas, the revelation which is not related to the law will always be descended upon.

The category of revelation expressed by Ahmadiyah is based upon the understanding of the verses meaning, which mentions the word "revelation", such as the revelation to the mother of Prophet Musa (28:7), the revelation to the bee (16:68), and so on. That is not an exclusive thing, because such verses have been explained by the experts of *Al-Qur'an* related to the definition of the word "revelation" literally. Giving the meaning to the word "revelation" in such verses is suitable with the context and the object that receive them, so it can be meant of inspiration, instinct, the voice of the heart, and so on (Musa, 2008; Dogan, 2012; and interview with Respondent B, 5/7/2016).

For Ahmadiyah, the doctrine of revelation is important, because it is closely related to the Prophetic understanding that they profess. It was linked to the revelations that he received by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad from Allah. Because of the receiver of revelation is to be called a Prophet, so Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is. The difference lies upon his Prophetic classification which is commonly understood (Sofianto, 2014; and Uyun, 2014).

There are three classifications for the Prophecy of Ahmadiyya Qadian (Zulkarnain, 2015). Firstly, the *Sahib al-Sharia* Prophet or true Prophets and *Mustaqil*. This Prophecy as carried by the Prophets who bring *sharia* (laws) for the people. Secondly, the Prophet *mustaqil ghayr al-tasyri'*, that is the Prophet appointed directly by God and not the followers of earlier Prophets, but do not bring a new law, like the Prophet Harun, Daud, Sulaiman, Zakaria, Yahya, and Isa. Thirdly, the prophet *zilli ghayr al-tasyri'*. This kind of Prophecy is a gift from God as a result of the obedience to the Prophet before and also following the *sharia*. Prophet *Zilli* also called *Buruzy* Prophet (Shadow Prophet), meaning that it becomes a shadow of previous Prophets. This kind of Prophet then which is owned by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in the view of Ahmadiyah (*cf* Zulkarnain, 2005; Uyun, 2014; and interview with Respondent C, 7/7/2016).

According to M. Nurcholish Madjid (2015), a concept that the Prophet Muhammad is the seal of the Prophets and Messengers is quite central to the belief system of Islam. The implication is quite widespread and important, because some aspects of the discussion concerning the problems of *aqidah* (faith node) which its significance could not be underestimated (Madjid, 2015). However, somewhat surprisingly, there were very few interpreters of the *Al-Qur'an* that pay attention to and review on the issue when they describe the meaning of the relevant words of God. The interpreters of the *Al-Qur'an* from the modern time indeed, such as Muhammad Asad (1980), who is more aware on the important implications of the view that the Prophet Muhammad is the seal of the Prophets and Messengers (*cf* Asad, 1980; Madjid, 2015; and Ahmad & Amir, 2016).

By using the approach of *Sufism* or Islamic mysticism, Zuhairi Misrawi (2007) and Farhan Iqbal & Imtiaz Ahmed Sra (2014) view that the Ahmadiyah faith as it was closer to *Al-Thariqah al-Shufiyyah* (Misrawi, 2007; and Iqbal & Sra, 2014). In this case, the position of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was an ascetic *waliyullah* and an Islamic scholar. The difference is that if the path of *Sufism* is purely limited to the spiritual dimension,

while Ahmadiyah prefers to choose to integrate the spiritual dimension and a social dimension (*cf* Iskandar, 2008; Koleksi Pustaka Perpustakaan Arif Rahman Hakim, n.y.; and interview with Respondent D, 15/7/2016).

The combination is clearly visible on the other basic teachings, that of the Caliphate. In this context, Kunto Sofianto (2014) explained that before his death, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad wrote a book called *Al-Wasiyat* (the Will). The last message which is written in the book is believed to be the appearance of the “second *Kudrat*” for this congregation, that the Ahmadiyah will be assembled in a bonding direction of a Caliph who will continue his mission (cited in Sofianto, 2014:91).

With this *washiyat*, soon immediately after Mirza Ghulam Ahmad’s death, that was formed *Caliph al-Masih* inside Ahmadiyah sect. The name of *khilafat* is based on the pattern of Prophecy or ‘*Ala Minhaj al-Nubuwwah*, which is related to their duties, namely to continue the mission Mirza Ghulam Ahmad’s *Mahdi*-ness. The differences of Ahmadiyah *khilafat* and Muhammad *khilafat* is, there are two functions in Prophet Muhammad *khilafat*, namely the function of the spirit and the function of government, while Ahmadiyah *khilafat* just simply have religious functions to spread the propagation of Islam throughout the world (Iskandar, 2008a; Sofianto, 2014; and interview with Respondent E, 17/7/2016).

Related to this teaching, Koleksi Pustaka Perpustakaan Arif Rahman Hakim (n.y.:25-27) describes the reality seen today, which describes the implementation of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad’s *Mahdi*-ness teachings by his followers (*cf* Iskandar, 2008a; and Sofianto, 2014). There is a privilege in this community, at least when it compared the other organizations.

Firstly, Ahmadiyah community is an organization that is built on a clear vision. They believe on the caliphate as a reality to build spirituality and togetherness. Secondly, Ahmadiyah community took an important dimension in Islam, namely the vision of peace and non-violence. Their slogan is very famous, that “love for all, hatred for none” (Cheema, 1994). This attitude is very firm,

even when they are discriminated, they do not take any fight against. Thirdly, the Ahmadiyah is an independent organization, because such great network and membership is built upon its self-supporting of its followers. They have a system that has been fairly successful philanthropy, known as *candah* system. From the volunteerism and generosity of its members, they not only support the internal wheel of their congregation, but also help a number of poor countries, such as African’s (Yasir, 1978; and Cheema, 1994).

***The Conflict and its Resolution.*** Based on the data obtained through interviews and a review of news in the media, it is known that the government-initiated peace efforts by issuing the SKB (*Surat Keputusan Bersama* or Joint Decree) of the three Ministers in Indonesia do not necessarily create the conditions of peace and security as desired in terms of the development of Ahmadiyah congregation (*ibidem* with footnote 3). As reported by CRCS (Center for Religious and Crosscultural Studies), until 2011, three years after the release of the SKB, the violence is still ongoing on Ahmadiyah in its various forms. The violence that led to the fate of JAI (*Jemaat Ahmadiyah Indonesia* or Ahmadiyah Muslim Community) followers being worst, even some people have lost their lives, as if they had lost their citizenship (cited in Bagir, 2011).

Due to the errors in understanding the essence of SKB, the violence in other forms, also happened to Ahmadiyah. Such violences were in the form of discriminative local government rules. The rules impacted Ahmadiyah congregation in Bandung and Garut up to the present time, with the publication of Governor Regulation of West Java, Number 12/2011 on the Prohibition of Ahmadiyah Congregation Activities of Indonesia in West Java (Gaffar, 2013). In practice of the some regions, the adverse effects of the regulations were widespread, ranging from sealing the mosque, barriers to get marriage, ID card, up to the trouble for the pilgrimage for Ahmadiyah congregation (Mudzakkir, 2007; and Gaffar, 2013).

In facing of the prolonged multiple conflicts and discriminatory actions, the

Ahmadiyah congregation replying not with these similar violent reactions. In accordance with their slogan which is very famous, "love for all, hatred for none", they are working to resolve these problems by peaceful means. This is recognized by Ahmad Sulaeman & Ekky O. Sabandi (2011) that as the citizens whose rights are guaranteed by the Constitution, including the right of religion or belief, the government is obliged to protect and ensure the fulfilment of those rights. When there is a violation, then the Ahmadiyah is working on it through a legal settlement. This was done in an effort to collect the government's promise, not begging (Sulaeman & Sabandi, 2011).

In addition, to explain its existence, the Ahmadiyah sometimes opens a communication with the pluralist press, opens a dialogue with the anti-Ahmadiyah groups, fill the events on campuses, and hold a book exhibition either. The efforts were not intended to spread the ideology of Ahmadiyah, but to provide a very clear information about Ahmadiyah to get a clear understanding. In addition, it also made an attempt to establish communication with the network of pluralist groups interfaith which is equally cruelled (Mudzakkir, 2007; and Sulaeman & Sabandi, 2011).

In addition to performing the above efforts, the dialogue is also conducted through the writings in the media, both electronic and printed. A number of books have been published, some of them written by Ahmad Sulaeman & Ekky O. Sabandi (2011), and a number of other authors, which include references used in this study. A number of papers published Ahmadiyah mainly explain to the public about the existence and beliefs of the congregation, in addition to straighten misunderstanding parties who do not understand the existence of the congregation objectively (Sulaeman & Sabandi, 2011).

In the introduction to a book written by Munirul Islam Yusuf & Ekky O. Sabandi (2014), they cited Zuhairi Misrawi (2007), who said that the publication of the books written by Ahmadiyah members, reminded him to the tradition of scientific debate as developed in the golden age of the Islamic

past. Zuhairi Misrawi even reminded that it is the time for non-Ahmadiyah started to open up to conduct the academic studies on Ahmadiyah religious views (cf Misrawi, 2007; and Yusuf & Sabandi, 2014:xiii-xiv).

Yet, seeing the explanations of Ahmadiyah inside a number of books they published, some parties consider that Ahmadiyah is standing still upon its reticence. That is because, the writings produced by Ahmadiyah scholars refer more to the books of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's work, or the interpretation of their own, rather than to the diversity of the reference books authorized by non-Ahmadiyah scholars (Sofianto, 2014).

In the preface of the book on *Bukan Sekedar Hitam Putih* (Not Only Black White), written by M.A. Suryawan (2006), M. Dawam Rahardjo (2015) said that although already visible sparks of thought that is heterodox, but the mainstream of thought written tends to approach orthodoxy (Rahardjo, 2015). It is a dilemma faced by the Ahmadiyah movement, especially in Indonesia (Suryawan, 2006; and Rahardjo, 2015).

Therefore, Abdul Moqsiith Ghazali (2015) advised to diversify their references in the works of Ahmadiyah. This is related to the effort to reform the interpretations of Ahmadiyah, which supposedly has long stagnated. In this case, it takes a thinker-reformer in the body of the Ahmadiyah in a duty to contextualize the old views or refashion the interpretations (Ghazali, 2015).

With the efforts of such a dialogue, it is expected later to develop a mutual appreciation of the differences in the body of the people, as a necessity in a pluralist country. That is expected as well to grow among Islamic groups an inclusive attitude, an attitude that is open and to accept and learn from each other to develop themselves from their differing views.

## CONCLUSION

In general, the teachings of which are developed by Ahmadiyah are no different to that adopted by the majority of Muslims. They apply Islamic values, which is based on the Five Pillars of Islam and the Six Pillars of Faith, with more focus on the teachings of

morality. Therefore, some scholars categorize this group into *tarikat* or *sufism* in Islam. However, because the vision of the movement is based on the ideas related to the issues of *aqidah* or basic beliefs in Islam, which includes the concept of Isa *al-Masih* death, Prophecy, *al-Mahdi*, and *al-Masih al-Mau'ud*, so Ahmadiyah was also seen as part of the *Kalam* schools science or theology in Islam. In that second grouping, then, Ahmadiyah more understood or misunderstood. Those ideas are what ultimately dragging this stream into the protracted conflicts that occur among Muslims.

The issuance of SKB (*Surat Keputusan Bersama* or Joint Decree) of the three Ministers by the government is aimed for creating an atmosphere of peace and tranquility in the life of religious communities. However, because the dictums contained in the SKB, according to some, filled with shades discriminatory, plus a lot of mistakes in understanding its essence, so that after the publication of the rules, the violence also occur in the form of the discriminatory local government rules, precisely continues to be experienced Ahmadiyah up to the present time.

The peaceful face of Islam displayed by Ahmadiyah in Indonesia, even when dealing with conflicts that happened, it seems more confirmed to us, that the school is more accurately categorized as a school of *tarekat* or *sufism*. In fact, they pass through various trials as something that has been prophesied, which precisely strengthens their belief about the truth of the teachings brought by the founders.

Unfortunately, the efforts of dialogue has not yet fully reflected the synthesis. The congregation still seems to be exclusive and adhering the orthodoxy/the teachings of its founder. That attitude still leaves the gaps that could potentially be re-emerging the conflicts and violences in the future.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup>**Statement:** I, hereby, declare that this article is my original work, it is not product of plagiarism, due to all sources used and cited in the analysis are showed clearly and available in the References. This article is also not submitted, reviewed, and published yet in other scholarly journals.

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