

FROM RESISTANCE TO ACCOMMODATION: The Emergence and Controversy of Jaringan Intelektual Muda Muhammadiyah (JIMM)

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Abstract: This paper explores the emergence of the Jaringan Intelektual Muda Muhammadiyah (JIMM: Muhammadiyah Young Intellectual Network) as a response to the perceived stagnation of Islamic thought within Muhammadiyah. The discussion encompasses the historical challenges faced by Muhammadiyah, including the dominance of Western-oriented modernism, organizational routine, and resistance to change within the institution. The analysis delves into the controversies surrounding JIMM, as it faced resistance from various circles within Muhammadiyah, often labeled as “liberal” and accused of affiliating with the Liberal Islamic Network (JIL). The paper details the resistance encountered by JIMM, both institutionally and ideologically, including attempts to disband the network during the 46th Congress of Muhammadiyah in 2005. The paper also examines the shift in Muhammadiyah’s stance towards JIMM over time, from initial resistance to eventual accommodation within the organization’s structure and thought processes. The narrative concludes by highlighting Muhammadiyah’s evolving perspective on JIMM as a potential catalyst for intellectual regeneration within the Islamic organization.

Keywords: Muhammadiyah; JIMM; liberalism; accommodation.

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Introduction

In an article, Amien Rais puts his concern over the phenomenon of "the degradation of thoughts within Muhammadiyah as a movement."¹ Internal criticism of Muhammadiyah also emerged from Munir Mul Khan saying that the stagnation of Islamic thought in Muhammadiyah is a fact that could not be denied. Muhammadiyah, according to Mul Khan "began to find difficulties in fulfilling the jargon of returning to the Qur'an and Sunnah when the number young cadres who qualified as *ulama* decreases."²

Azhar and Ilyas wrote that the stagnation was caused by several things. First, the dominance of the Aristotelian and Newtonian approaches in Muhammadiyah which resulted in positivism being considered as the only method of knowledge. Second, the implication of the founding and codification of the Tarjih Assembly. In this case, Muhammadiyah places a fiqh approach in a narrow sense to solve various religious problems. Because of this, some basic disciplines of religious sciences, such as *kalam*, morals, and so on, are neglected. Third, scripturalism towards religious texts results in a normative understanding of Islam which at the same time does not pay attention to the context of religious texts. Fourth, the dichotomy of intellectuals and *ulama* in Muhammadiyah. Fifth, the development of relatively new religious discourse, such as pluralism, democracy, civil society, and others.³

According to Abdullah, Muhammadiyah is trapped in an organizational routine. Muhammadiyah suffers from obesity in term of the huge number of its administrators and business charities that

¹ M. Amien Rais, "Kata Pengantar," in Kuntowijoyo, ed., *Intelektualisme Muhammadiyah Menyongsong Era Baru*, (Bandung: Mizan, 1995), 12.

² Abdul Munir Mul Khan, *Pesan Dan Kisah Kiai Ahmad Dahlan Dalam Hikmah Muhammadiyah* (Yogyakarta: Suara Muhammadiyah, 2017), 52.

³ Muhammad Azhar and Hamim Ilyas, "Kata Pengantar," in Muhammad Azhar and Hamim Ilyas, ed., *Pengembangan Pemikiran Keagamaan Di Muhammadiyah: Antara Purifikasi Dan Dinamisasi*, (Yogyakarta: MTPPI dan LPPI, 2000), iii–vi.

are scattered everywhere.⁴ On the one hand, this huge number indicates the great existence of Muhammadiyah, on the other hand this can become a trap for Muhammadiyah so that it ignores socio-religious thinking.

Apart from the obesity of administrators and charity work, Muhammadiyah's modernism has been the target of criticism since the 41st Congress of Muhammadiyah in Surakarta 1985. Muhammadiyah's modernism suffers from fundamental weaknesses. First, Muhammadiyah's modernism is fixated on *ad hoc* matters, such as in the aspects of organizational governance and business charity.⁵ Because of this, Muhammadiyah's modernism does not develop in a broader spirit of renewal, including in Islamic thoughts.

One Muhammadiyah cadre, Tanthowi expressed his anxiety in an opinion that "the discourse of Islamic thought in Muhammadiyah seems to have stagnated, not to mention stepping back. Thus, this problem requires solution immediately. If not, Muhammadiyah, which has been considered a modernist Islamic organization, in the field of Islamic thought will have a very conservative face."⁶

Second, Muhammadiyah's modernism is too Western-oriented so that what comes from the West is taken artificially. Muhammadiyah takes aspects of Western knowledge and technology only at the level of applied science, but ignores the philosophical foundations contained therein.⁷ In fact, because it is too Western-oriented, Muhammadiyah abandons and even becomes hostile to all kinds of traditions, both Islamic scientific traditions and local culture. Third, Muhammadiyah modernism suffers from puritanism.⁸

⁴ Muhammad Amin Abdullah, *Fresh Ijtihad: Manhaj Pemikiran Keislaman Muhammadiyah di Era Disrupsi* (Yogyakarta: Suara Muhammadiyah, 2020), 42.

⁵ Haedar Nashir, *Memahami Ideologi Muhammadiyah* (Yogyakarta: Suara Muhammadiyah, 2019), 50.

⁶ Pramono U Tanthowi, "Muhammadiyah Dan Islam Liberal," *Kompas*, January 26, 2002.

⁷ Muhammad Amin Abdullah, *Dinamika Islam Kultural: Pemetaan Atas Wacana Keislaman Kontemporer* (Yogyakarta: IRCISOD, 2020), 147.

⁸ Ahmad Najib Burhani, "'Islam Murni' vs 'Islam Progresif' Di Muhammadiyah: Melihat Wajah Islam Reformis Indonesia," in Martin van Bruinessen, ed., *Conservative Turn: Islam Indonesia Dalam Ancaman Fundamentalisme*, (Bandung: Mizan, 2014), 159.

Bruinessen observes that Muhammadiyah loses its modernism characteristics and looks conservative at the same time.⁹

This situation is certainly concerning, considering that in the 1980s until the beginning of the Reformation, Islamic intellectuality in Indonesia was experiencing an upswing. In the 1980s, a Muslim middle class emerged as a result of the widespread education promoted by the New Order government. Various Islamic-based research and study clubs emerged to enliven the dynamics of Islamic intellectualism in Indonesia.¹⁰ The prominent figure of Islamic study groups in that era were the Institute for the Study of Religion and Philosophy (LSAF). LSAF is a pioneer of progressive Islam in Indonesia. This institute was founded by several muslim intellectuals in December 16, 1983, led by Rahardjo (1942-2018), an activist of of the Institute for Economic and Social Research, Education and Information (LP3ES). Rahardjo and his friends saw the tension between textualism and rationalism resulting in stagnation in Islamic thought and socio-religious conflict.¹¹ One of these efforts was realized in the form of publishing a journal of *Ulumul Qur'an: Journal of Science and Culture*, books, and conducted trainings.¹²

Apart from LSAF, several Islamic study groups later adopted the publication of books and magazines. Islamic study groups in also grew within Nahdhatul Ulama (NU) circles, whether affiliated with NU or not. Kersten views that Islamic Boarding School and Community Development Association (P3M) founded in Jakarta, May 18, 1983 as a forum for collaboration between Islamic boarding schools to develop their institutions and for social development. Its establishment cannot be separated from the intellectual network and the LP3ES program in Islamic boarding schools.¹³

⁹ Martin van Bruinessen, "Perkembangan Kontemporer Islam Indonesia Dan Conservative Turn Awal Abad Ke-21," in Martin van Bruinessen, ed., *Conservative Turn: Islam Indonesia Dalam Ancaman Fundamentalisme*, (Bandung: Mizan, 2014), 62.

¹⁰ Oki Setiana Dewi and Ahmad Khoiril Fata, "Beragam Jalan Menjadi Salih: Model Dakwah Kelas Menengah Muslim Indonesia," *Bimas Islam* 12, no. 1 (2021): 1–32.

¹¹ Budhi Munawar Rachman, *Reorientasi Pembaruan Islam: Sekularisme, Liberalisme Dan Pluralisme Paradigma Baru Islam Indonesia* (Jakarta: Yayasan Abad Demokrasi, 2010), 70.

¹² Sidney Jones, "Pengkerutan Dan Pemuaian Makna 'Umat' Dan Peran Nahdlatul Ulama," in Greg Fealy and Greg Barton, ed., *Tradisionalisme Radikal: Persinggungan Nahdlatul Ulama-Negara*, (Yogyakarta: ELKIS, 1997), 108.

¹³ Carool Kersten, *Berebut Wacana: Pergulatan Wacana Umat Islam Indonesia Era Reformasi* (Bandung: Mizan, 2018), 37.

The Islamic study group affiliated with NU is the Institute for the Study and Development of Human Resources (Lakpesdam) which was formed on April 7, 1985. Lakpesdam is an institution for the study of strategic issues and human empowerment for the fair and dignified social transformation. Apart from that, Lakpesdam is also concerned with studies related to nationalism and Islam.¹⁴ As a research institution, Lakpesdam pays attention to the development of Islamic thought. This was marked by the publication of *Tashwirul Afkar: Journal of Reflection on Religious & Cultural Thoughts*. This journal, which has been published since 1997, aims “to contribute to the development of religious and cultural thinking which is in line with the ideals of social transformation towards a democratic society within the framework of civil society.”¹⁵

Indonesian Islamic intellectualism is increasingly developing and diversifying with the emergence of the Islamic study group called “Paramadina”, founded by Nurcholish Majdid (1939-2005), a pioneer of Indonesian Islamic reform. Paramadina was indeed designed to continue the ideals of Islamic reform voiced by Madjid in the early 1970s. Paramadina focuses on Islamic thought and has a significant role in contemporary Indonesian Islamic thought.¹⁶

Islamic intellectualism in Indonesia has become more dynamic after the Reformation with the emergence of various new Islamic groups with different colors from the established mainstream groups. In this era, conservative groups that offered Islamic formalism emerged and, of course, gave birth to another group with a

¹⁴ Asep Gunawan, *Gerakan Keagamaan Dalam Penguatan Civil Society: Analisis Perbandingan Visi Dan Misi LSM Dan Ormas Berbasis Keagamaan* (Jakarta: LSAF, 1999), 103; Budhi Munawar Rachman, “Masa Depan Wajah Islam Indonesia: Kajian Atas Islam Moderat-Progresif,” *Nusantara Journal for Southeast Asian Islamic Studies* 15, no. 1 (2019): 10–28.

¹⁵ Mahrus El-Mawa, ed., *20 Tahun Perjalanan Lakpesdam Memberdayakan Warga NU* (Jakarta: Lakpesdam NU, 2005), 179; Luthfi Hadi Aminuddin, “Rekonstruksi Wacana Modernis-Tradisionalis: Kajian Atas Pemikiran Keislaman Muhammadiyah Dan Nahdlatul Ulama Pasca Reformasi,” *Kodifikasia* 12, no. 1 (2018): 93-122.

¹⁶ Carool Kersten, *Berebut Wacana: Pergulatan Wacana Umat Islam Indonesia Era Reformasi*, 36; Carool Kersten, “Cosmopolitan Muslim Intellectuals and the Mediation of Cultural Islam in Indonesia,” in *Comparative Islamic Studies* (Singapore: Equinox Publishing LTD, 2012); Faiqbal Latif, “Peran Nurcholish Madjid dalam Perkembangan Pemikiran Noe-Modernisme Islam Indonesia, 1966-2005,” *Jurnal Humanitas* 9, no. 1 (2022): 43–61; Andi Faisal Bakti, “Nurcholish Madjid and the Paramadina Foundation,” *ILAS Newsletter* 34 (2004).

contrasting discourse, namely the Liberal Islamic Network (JIL), in 2001. The Islamic discourse became more vibrant with the emergence of the Institute for the Study of Islamic Thought and Civilization (INSISTS) in 2003, that tried to counter the discourse of Islamic liberalism in Indonesia scientifically. In its development, INSISTS, which was founded by a group of Indonesian students in Malaysia, became a formidable opponent for JIL. This study group diligently held discussions and workshops, published books and the *journal of Islamia* to counter JIL's liberalism discourse.¹⁷

In the midst of this uproar of Islamic discourse, a group of young Muhammadiyah intellectuals began to be jolted, shocked, and awakened from the stagnation of thought that had engulfed Muhammadiyah. They try to stand up, to respond to the existing dynamics and to get involved in the discussion, and gathered in the Muhammadiyah Young Intellectual Network (JIMM) in 2003.¹⁸ Although considered late, the emergence of JIMM is an important point that marks the dynamics of religious thought in Muhammadiyah. At least JIMM is a sign that Muhammadiyah intellectualism is “not really stagnant” as some thinkers fear.¹⁹

¹⁷ Martin van Bruinessen, *Conservative Turn: Islam Indonesia Dalam Ancaman Fundamentalisme* (Bandung: Mizan, 2014); Ahmad Khoiril Fata and Fauzan Fauzan, “Kritik ‘INSISTS’ Terhadap Gagasan Pluralisme Agama,” *KALAM* 11, no. 1 (June 30, 2017): 31–56, accessed June 12, 2021, <http://dx.doi.org/10.24042/klm.v11i1.905>; Akhmad Rofii Damyati and Shohebul Hajad, “Virtuous Debate Against Liberalist Muslims in Indonesia Case Study of INSISTS Jakarta,” *El-Furqania* 9, no. 2 (2023): 108–124; Ahmad Khoiril Fata, “INSISTS Dan Gerakan Anti Liberalisme Islam Di Indonesia,” *Jurnal Kajian dan Pengembangan Manajemen Dakwah* 4 (2014): 65–77.

¹⁸ Nabyan Mudrik Alyaum, “JIMM: Dulu Dibenci, Kini Dicintai,” *Idtimes.Id*, last modified 2021, <https://ibtimes.id/jimm-dulu-dibenci-kini-dicintai/>; Moeslim Abdurrahman, “Tiga Pilar JIMM,” *Republika* (Jakarta, November 21, 2003); Pradana Boy, “Menyalakan Pelita Di Tengah Kutukan Kegelapan: Refleksi 17 Tahun JIMM,” *Idtimes.Id*, last modified 2021, <https://ibtimes.id/menyalakan-pelita-di-tengah-kutukan-kegelapan-refleksi-17-tahun-jimm/>; Biyanto, “Tafsir Sosial Ideologi Keagamaan Kaum Muda Muhammadiyah,” *Jurnal Salam* 12, no. 2 (2009): 31–43; Moh. Mudzakkir, “Jaringan Intelektual Muda Muhammadiyah Sebagai Arus Baru Gerakan Muhammadiyah (Studi Kasus Di Yogyakarta)” (UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 2005); Andar Nubowo, “Kebangkitan Intelektual Muda Muhammadiyah,” *Kompas* (Jakarta, November 17, 2003).

¹⁹ Mutawalli, “Pergulatan Pemikiran Melawan Arus: Penyempalan Dalam Tubuh Nahdlatul Ulama Dan Muhammadiyah,” *Ulumuna* 11, no. 2 (2007): 237–264; Aminuddin, “Rekonstruksi Wacana Modernis-Tradisionalis: Kajian Atas Pemikiran Keislaman Muhammadiyah Dan Nahdlatul Ulama Pasca Reformasi.”

However, the presence of JIMM caused controversy within the Muhammadiyah community. There were supporters and opponents of JIMM's journey. Some circles, inside and outside of Muhammadiyah, opposed its existence because they saw it as an embodiment of JIL in Muhammadiyah.²⁰ The numerous attacks on JIMM ultimately led to its short-lived existence, with it withering away before it had a chance to grow and bear fruit. Various efforts have been made to revive JIMM. However, the institution still seems to "live and die reluctantly". Nevertheless, JIMM's short existence is worthy of study, and this paper aims to explore it. This paper focuses on the emergence of JIMM and the resistance that prevented it from developing as well as its founders had hoped.

JIMM: Muhammadiyah Youth Intellectual Awakening

The idea of establishing JIMM began in Abdurrahman's small talk with several Muhammadiyah youths at the Maarif Institute office, Jakarta, in 2003. The Maarif Institute has a historical contribution to the establishment of JIMM. It is a progressive Islamic institution that focuses on the idea of reforming Islam and engaging in interfaith, intercultural and inter-civilizational dialogue. The purpose is to create civilization, peace, mutual understanding, and to construct cooperation for humanity.²¹

Even though using the name of "Maarif", The General Chairman of Muhammadiyah (2000-2005) as its brand, the Maarif Institute was in fact founded on February 28, 2003 by Jeffrie Geovanie, Suyoto and Rizal Sukma who proposed it to Syafii Maarif. The Maarif Institute was actually dedicated for Syafii Maarif's 70th birthday. Apart from them, two Islamic intellectuals were also involved in the establishment of the Maarif Institute, namely Moeslim

²⁰ Ahmad Sadzali, "Komisi Rekomendasi Minta JIMM Dibubarkan," *Hidayatullah.Com*, last modified 2005, accessed September 14, 2022, <https://hidayatullah.com/berita/nasional/2005/07/06/40875/komisi-rekomendasi-minta-jimm-dibubarkan.html>; Adian Husaini, "Muhammadiyah, Free Mason, Dan Faham Lintas Agama," in *1 Abad Muhammadiyah Istiqomah Membandung Kristenisasi & Liberalisasi*, ed. M. Amin Rais (Yogyakarta: MTDK PP Muhammadiyah, 2010); Mustafa Kamal Pasha, "Wacana Pluralisme Dan Liberalisasi Agama: Keresahan Warga Muhammadiyah," in *Pemikiran Muhammadiyah: Respons Terhadap Liberalisasi Islam*, ed. Syamsul Hidayat and Sudarno Shabran (Surakarta: Muhammadiyah University Press, 2005).

²¹ Rachman, *Reorientasi Pembaruan Islam: Sekularisme, Liberalisme Dan Pluralisme Paradigma Baru Islam Indonesia*, 147–148.

Abdurrahman and Haedar Nashir. In Sukma's view, the Maarif Institute is a cultural institution that pays attention to Islam in the public space so that Muslims can contribute to the society and not be marginalized. In its development, the Maarif Institute adheres to the basic values of egalitarianism, non-discrimination, tolerance and inclusiveness.²²

Moeslim Abdurrahman was the Executive Director of Maarif Institute in 2003. From the small talk at the Maarif Institute, the idea emerged to gather several young Muhammadiyah intellectuals who were scattered in various regions, such as Yogyakarta, Solo, Surabaya, and Malang in an issue-based or discourse-based network. Piet H. Khaidir stated that Said Ramadhan was the one who proposed "JIMM" as its name which was finally agreed upon.²³

By using the network among Muhammadiyah youth and limited publications, the first JIMM workshop was held in Cipoko, Bogor, 9-12 October 2003. Around 70 Muhammadiyah youths attended the workshop with the theme "Building Visionary, Open and Critical New Intellectuals". This workshop marked the awakening of Muhammadiyah's young intellectuals. However, this workshop also raised internal criticism of Muhammadiyah which was carried out openly. After the workshop in Bogor, JIMM formed a mailing list containing book discussions and knowledge sharing. Based on an interview with Andar Nubowo, to show its existence, JIMM activists wrote their ideas in national and local mass media, such as *Kompas daily*, *Media Indonesia*, and *Jawa Pos*.²⁴

The main goal of JIMM is to revive Muhammadiyah's intellectual tradition. Moeslim Abdurrahman imagined Muhammadiyah to be an intellectual home so that intellectual exercise could develop.²⁵ Abdurrahman stated, "JIMM is a network, not an official organization, which accommodates young people in this association to seek a new, fresher Islamic intellectual format."²⁶

Genealogically, JIMM is rooted in Muhammadiyah's intellectual tradition as practiced by Ahmad Dahlan with his spirit of socio-

²² Ahmad Syafii Maarif, *Catatan Satu Dekade Maarif Institute 2003-2013* (Jakarta: Maarif Institute for Culture and Humanity, 2013), 12-13.

²³ Piet H. Khaidir, *interview*, September 16, 2021.

²⁴ Andar Nubowo, *interview*, July 4, 2021.

²⁵ Moeslim Abdurrahman, *Islam Yang Memihak* (Yogyakarta: ELKIS, 2005), 167.

²⁶ Moeslim Abdurrahman, *Suara Tuhan, Suara Pemerdekaan* (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 2009), 153.

religious reform. The three pillars of JIMM (hermeneutics, critical social science and new social movements) conceptualized by Abdurrahman are a combination of intellectualism and activism.²⁷ JIMM marks the awakening of Muhammadiyah's young intellectuals.²⁸ Qodir identified three reasons why Muhammadiyah young people's intellectuality has risen. First, resistance to Muhammadiyah puritanism which has failed to adapt to the times. Second, the rapid development of Islamic discourse, such as discourse on gender equality, pluralism, democracy and others. Third, the meeting between Muhammadiyah generations and other generations outside Muhammadiyah.²⁹

JIMM: Resistance and Accommodation

JIMM is not an official Muhammadiyah organization, either in the form of an assembly or an autonomous organization. However, JIMM's Islamic thought received resistance from some circles in Muhammadiyah, from its establishment until the 2010s. In several areas, the existence of JIMM was rejected for being accused as illegal, heretical and damaging to Islam. Moreover, the Regional Leadership of Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta banned all JIMM activities.³⁰ Another example of the backlash against JIMM and its activists was the sacking of East Java JIMM activist Moh Shofan in 2006. Shortly after Shofan's article on the permissibility of wishing Christians a Merry Christmas was published in a newspaper, he was dismissed as a lecturer at Universitas Muhammadiyah Gresik.³¹

JIMM's Islamic thought has received resistance from some circles within Muhammadiyah through publications and seminars. The *Tabligh* magazine, which is managed by the MTDK (Majlis Tabligh dan Dakwah Khusus/Special Tabligh and Da'wah Assembly), for example, published headlines including: *Liberal Virus in Muhammadiyah*, *Liberal Islam Poisons Young People*, *Talbis Fiqih Pluralists*,

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Andar Nubowo, *interview*, July 4, 2021.

²⁹ Zuly Qodir, "Bangkitnya 'Second' Muhammadiyah," *Kompas* (Jakarta, November 23, 2003).

³⁰ Zuly Qodir, *Gerakan Sosial Islam: Manifesto Kaum Beriman* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2009), 111; Mutawalli, "Pergulatan Pemikiran Melawan Arus: Penyempalan Dalam Tubuh Nahdlatul Ulama Dan Muhammadiyah."

³¹ Moh. Shofan, "Satu Abad Muhammadiyah: 'Matinya Pembaruan' Dalam Bingkai 'Kembali Ke Al-Qur'an Dan Al-Sunnah,'" in *Satu Abad Muhammadiyah: Mengkaji Ulang Arab Pembaruan*, ed. Taufik Hidayat and Iqbal Hasanuddin (Jakarta: Paramadina - LSAF, 2010), xiii.

and *Laisa Minna (They Are Not Our Group): Traces of Liberalism*.³² Resistance towards JIMM was also carried out during live activities. The JIMM Workshop which took place in the New Year 2005 at the Yakkum Kartasura Sukoharjo Building was disbanded by Komando Kesiapsiagaan Angkatan Muda Muhammadiyah (Kokam: Muhammadiyah's Youth Preparedness Command), accusing that the Yakkum Building belonged to a non-Muslim foundation so that it was inappropriate for Muhammadiyah youths to use it.³³

The peak of resistance to JIMM took place at the 46th Congress of Muhammadiyah in Malang in 2005. Even though this congress was viewed negatively because there was a dangdut performance and the *Cucak Rowo* song, the congress which was held at the University of Muhammadiyah Malang was called a 'trial' to judge JIMM.³⁴ Before the congress took place, JIMM was nicknamed as Jaringan Iblis Muda Muhammadiyah (Young Muhammadiyah Devils Network).³⁵ The choice of the devil's diction signifies how dangerous JIMM is for Muhammadiyah. Like the devil, JIMM is seen as having scientific competence, but is disobedient to God and ignores religion.

A month before the congress was held, Muhammadiyah figure Adaby Darban (1952-2011) intensively campaigned not to elect a candidate for general chairman of Muhammadiyah who was contaminated with liberalism and secularism.³⁶ Even without mentioning names, the word "contaminated" indicated that Muhammadiyah is being infected by the virus of liberalism and secularism, especially Muhammadiyah youth. In line with Darban,

³² Ahmad Najib Burhani, "Pluralism, Liberalism and Islamism: Religious Outlook of Muhammadiyah," *Studia Islamika* 25, no. 3 (2018): 446.

³³ Anas Syahirul, "Kokam Bubarkan Workshop Jaringan Muhammadiyah," *Tempo.Co*, last modified 2005, accessed September 14, 2022, <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/54199/kokam-bubarkan-workshop-jaringan-muhammadiyah>.

³⁴ Ahmad Sadzali, "'Cucak Rowo' Ramaikan Muktamar Muhammadiyah," *Hidayatullah.Com*, last modified 2005, accessed September 12, 2022, <https://hidayatullah.com/berita/nasional/2005/07/03/40870/cucak-rowo-ramaikan-muktamar-muhammadiyah.html>; Ahmad Khoiril Fata, "Liberalisme Islam Di Indonesia: Gagasan Dan Tanggapan Tentang Pluralisme Agama" (August 15, 2006): 7.

³⁵ "Talbis Iblis Fiqih Pluralis," *Tabligh* (Jakarta, 2007).

³⁶ Ahmad Sadzali, "Adaby Darban: Calon Pimpinan Muhammadiyah Jangan Sekuler-Liberal," *Hidayatullah.Com*, last modified 2005, accessed June 22, 2023, <https://hidayatullah.com/berita/nasional/2005/05/24/40788/adaby-darban-calon-pimpinan-muhammadiyah-jangan-sekuler-liberal.html>.

Adian Husaini, who was born into a family of Muhammadiyah activists, felt concerned about Muhammadiyah because it was infected with liberalism and “became a tool for spreading ideas that were destructive to Islam.”³⁷

The “Commission D”, which is responsible for issuing statements of opinion and recommendations in the 45th Congress of Muhammadiyah in Malang, proposed that JIMM should be disbanded. This proposal was submitted with two considerations. First, JIMM suffers from theological problems. JIMM’s Islamic beliefs are not in line with Muhammadiyah. Because of that, JIMM had to leave Muhammadiyah. Second, JIMM is similar to JIL which supports liberalism and secularism. JIMM has a closer relationship between Islamic thought and JIL than Muhammadiyah.³⁸ Even though it did not become a congress decision, the proposal indicated an effort to clean Muhammadiyah from Islamic beliefs and thoughts that were contaminated with liberalism and secularism.

The failure of JIMM to win the election held by 13 Muhammadiyah central committees also indicated resistance to JIMM. Instead, new names were simply put forward. In fact, according to Burhani, almost all of them are new names. Most of them are the Taliban.³⁹ The choice of the term *Taliban* refers to the ultra-conservative Islamic faction in Afghanistan. The configuration of the vote at the Malang congress actually means the victory of the puritanists within Muhammadiyah, although there are still concerns about the remnants of liberalism and secularism.

A month after being elected as the chairman of Muhammadiyah, Din Syamsudin emphasized that secularism and liberalism are the main enemies of Islam.⁴⁰ Even though it is not right to classify him as a conservative member of Muhammadiyah,

³⁷ Adian Husaini, “Menangisi Muhammadiyah,” *Hidayatullah.Com*, last modified 2005, accessed September 12, 2022, <https://hidayatullah.com/kolom/catatan-akhirpekan/read/2005/06/24/2663/menangisi-muhammadiyah.html>.

³⁸ Sadzali, “Komisi Rekomendasi Minta JIMM Dibubarkan.”

³⁹ Ahmad Sadzali, “Kecemasan Terhadap Pimpinan Baru Muhammadiyah,” *Hidayatullah.Com*, last modified 2005, accessed September 12, 2022, <https://hidayatullah.com/berita/nasional/read/2005/07/06/40976/kecemasan-terhadap-pimpinan-baru-muhammadiyah.html>.

⁴⁰ Ahmad Sadzali, “Din Syamsuddin: Sekularisasi Dan Liberalisasi Ancaman Dakwah Islam,” *Hidayatullah.Com*, last modified 2005, accessed September 12, 2022, <https://hidayatullah.com/berita/nasional/read/2005/08/28/40978/din-syamsuddin-sekularisasi-dan-liberalisasi-ancaman-dakwah-islam.html>.

Syamsuddin did not provide explicit support for JIMM in his handover speech for the general chairmanship of Muhammadiyah 2005-2010.

The resistance of some groups of Muhammadiyah towards JIMM was due to the perception that JIMM was part of liberal Islam. Hidayat, one of those who is resistant to JIMM, wrote:

“Muhammadiyah is not in line with liberal Islam as developed by the Liberal Islam Network (JIL), and the small group of its own children calling itself the Muhammadiyah Youth Intellectual Network (JIMM) as well as other liberal Islamic elements such as those that have developed on Islamic universities. The nuances of liberalization and secularization of Islamic thought are so hegemonic that it is gave birth to what is called Islamophobia in Islamic thought.”⁴¹

Choirul Hisyam, a former activist and Chairman of Muhammadiyah Youth, made a list of thirteen Muhammadiyah intellectuals and their ideas who were exposed to the viruses of secularism and liberalism. The names of Muhammadiyah intellectuals who fall into the secular and liberal classifications are: Syafii Maarif, Dawam Rahardjo, Moeslim Abdurrahman, Amin Abdullah, Munir Mulkhan, Sukidi, Piet H Khaidir, Tarmizi Taher, Andar Nubowo, Pramono U Tanthowi, Pradana Boy, Fuad Fanani, and Zakiyuddin Baidhaway.⁴² The majority of intellectual names listed are intellectual mentors, supporters and activists of JIMM.

On behalf of their personal views, several Muhammadiyah activists have resistance to liberal Islam, including JIMM.⁴³ Before giving a response, Asjmunu Abdurrahman can understand that the idea of liberal Islam in Indonesia can't be separated from the emergence of educated Muslim youths who try to answer modern problems. However, liberal Islam made a leap of thought so that it did not merely spark resistance from *Islam Kaffab* (the perfect Islam), but even ordinary people and scholars could not accept liberal Islamic thought.

⁴¹ Syamsul Hidayat, “Respons Muhammadiyah Terhadap Liberalisme Islam,” in *Pemikiran Muhammadiyah: Respons Terhadap Liberalisasi Islam*, ed. Muhammadiyah University Press (Surakarta: Muhammadiyah University Press, 2005), xxiii.

⁴² Choirul Hisyam, “Jejak Sekuler-Liberalisme Di Tubuh Muhammadiyah,” *Hidayatullah.Com*, last modified 2005, accessed September 15, 2022, <https://www.hidayatullah.com/artikel/opini/read/2005/06/08/2901/jejak-sekuler-liberalisme-di-tubuh-muhammadiyah.html>.

⁴³ Husaini, “Muhammadiyah, Free Mason, Dan Faham Lintas Agama,” 8.

To overcome the polemic of liberal Islam, as an adviser to Muhammadiyah (2005-2010), Abdurrahman suggested to continue taking the Islamic basis of the al-Qur'an and al-Hadith by understanding the context, without having to take a fatal thought.⁴⁴

A more striking statement comes from Mustafa Kamal Pasha. According to him, liberal Islam is troubling Muhammadiyah because it is diametrically opposed to Islamic principles in Muhammadiyah. This is because liberal Islam which is rooted in Western ideas has no place in Islam.⁴⁵ For Hidayat, liberal Islam in Muhammadiyah creates problems for some members of Muhammadiyah. This is because liberal Islam uses hermeneutics and social sciences and humanities approaches and minus Islamic sciences in interpreting religious texts.⁴⁶ Noting the content of criticism, Hidayat directs it to the transformative Islamic thoughts of Moeslim Abdurrahman and JIMM which use hermeneutics and social science approaches as analytical tools.

Hidayat emphasizes that Muhammadiyah is not in line with liberal Islamic thought due to two reasons. First, liberal Islam is contaminated by Western thought and civilization which promotes secularism. Instead of reconstruction, liberal Islam actually deconstructs and destroys Islam. Second, liberal Islamic exponents do not have the scientific capacity to integrate Western thought and religion. As a result, liberal Islam is in the hegemony of Western thought.⁴⁷

The toughest resistance to JIMM came from Adian Husaini. In his view, JIMM's Islamic thought does not only touch on the issue of *furu'iyah* (sectarianism), but also on the issue of Islamic faith. JIMM seeks to change the established concept of *kaafir* (infidels) as understood by Muslims. However, the substance of infidelity lies in hostility to religion and humanity. The existence of JIMM is an infiltration in Muhammadiyah because JIMM's Islamic thought is diametrically opposed to Muhammadiyah.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Asjmun Abdurrahman, *Memahami Makna Tekstual, Kontekstual, Dan Liberal: Koreksi Pemahaman Atas Loncatan Pemikiran* (Yogyakarta: Suara Muhammadiyah, 2008), 124–126.

⁴⁵ Pasha, "Wacana Pluralisme Dan Liberalisasi Agama: Keresahan Warga Muhammadiyah," 339–340.

⁴⁶ Hidayat, "Respons Muhammadiyah Terhadap Liberalisme Islam," xx.

⁴⁷ Hidayat, "Respons Muhammadiyah Terhadap Liberalisme Islam," xxi.

⁴⁸ Husaini, "Muhammadiyah, Free Mason, Dan Faham Lintas Agama," 87–88.

Referring to Burhani's research, the views of Muhammadiyah leaders on JIMM are divided into three. First, 43% of Muhammadiyah leaders agree that JIMM deviates from Muhammadiyah and Islam. For this group, JIMM is seen as betraying Muhammadiyah. More than that, JIMM is even considered to have left Islam and pawned religion for money. Second, 50% of Muhammadiyah leaders stated that JIMM did not deviate from Islam. One of Muhammadiyah's autonomous organizations, the Muhammadiyah Youth Association (IRM, now IPM) stated that it supports JIMM's Islamic thought. JIMM's paradigm is "a scientific cultural transition for the advancement of Muhammadiyah." Third, 7% of Muhammadiyah leaders abstained as Muhammadiyah organizationally did not speak out against JIMM.⁴⁹

After the implementation of the 45th Congress of Muhammadiyah, resistance to JIMM softened. Apart from the failure to disband JIMM in Malang, several JIMM members were active in Muhammadiyah activities and intense communication has helped reducing resistance.⁵⁰ However, the most significant factor is the fact that liberal Islam associated with JIMM was no longer subject of discussion within Muhammadiyah.

Because of that, in the 46th Congress of Muhammadiyah in Yogyakarta, the polemic of JIMM did not emerge. The congress, which marks the centenary of Muhammadiyah, is "an important milestone and momentum for Muhammadiyah to realize the *da'wa* and *tajdid* movement towards the excellent civilization."⁵¹ This Congress can also be called as a cultural conference because it presents colossal cultural performances.⁵²

Implicitly, Muhammadiyah invites to focus on societal problems rather than the polemics of Islamic thought in order to "show the face of Islam that is *rahmat li al-'alamīn* and is able to become part of the solution to various problems of modern

⁴⁹ Burhani, "Pluralism, Liberalism and Islamism: Religious Outlook of Muhammadiyah," 445.

⁵⁰ Khaidir, *interview*, September 16, 2021.

⁵¹ "Muktamar Ke-46 Jadi Awal Kebangkitan Kembali Gerakan Muhammadiyah," *Hidayatullah.com*, last modified 2010, <https://www.republika.co.id/berita/111153/muktamar-ke46-jadi-awal-kebangkitan-kembali-gerakan-muhammadiyah>.

⁵² Muh Syaifullah, "Satu Abad Muhammadiyah Digelar Di Yogyakarta," *Tempo.Co*, last modified 2009, accessed September 14, 2022, <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/187065/satu-abad-muhammadiyah-digelar-di-yogyakarta>.

society".⁵³ Thus, despite being rejected, JIMM activists were not kicked out of the organization. Muhammadiyah still accommodates JIMM activists and keeps them busy in the field of social-humanitarian praxis.

In the 45th Congress of Muhammadiyah that tried to judge JIMM, Mughni, the chairman of the East Java Muhammadiyah Regional Board that time, continued to provide support for JIMM and did not agree if JIMM was dissolved or even eliminated the word "Muhammadiyah" in JIMM's name.⁵⁴ Resistance to JIMM began to wane after the 45th Congress of Muhammadiyah, although it did not completely disappear. Muhammadiyah gradually became accommodative towards JIMM activists.

The accommodation could be seen from the involvement of JIMM activists in the Muhammadiyah structure. Several JIMM activists who carried out the mandate at Muhammadiyah included Hilman Latief (General Treasurer of Muhammadiyah Central Executive, 2022-2027), and Najib Burhani (Deputy Chairman of the PP Muhammadiyah Library and Information Council, 2015-2020). In addition, one of the JIMM presidiums, Piet H. Khaidir was listed as Deputy Chair of the Muhammadiyah Research and Development Institute (2010-2015). Another JIMM Presidium, Zuly Qodir is the head of research and development for *Suara Muhammadiyah* and the Advocacy Coordinator of the Muhammadiyah Empowerment Council.

JIMM was not only accommodated structurally by Muhammadiyah, but also in the aspect of thought, of course by minimizing the controversial and liberal side of the ideas. Several JIMM activists were involved in the formulation of the concept of "Progressive Islam", one of the important decisions in the 47th Muhammadiyah Congress in Makassar. Nubowo stated that the formulation of Progressive Islam involved JIMM activists.⁵⁵ Not only accommodating JIMM, Muhammadiyah has hopes for the emergence of Islamic reform through JIMM.⁵⁶ In reflecting on the existence of JIMM for nearly two decades, Boy acknowledged that Muhammadiyah has become more accommodating to JIMM. In fact,

⁵³ Muhammadiyah, *Tanfidz Keputusan Muktamar Satu Abad Muhammadiyah (Muktamar Muhammadiyahs Ke-46)*, 31.

⁵⁴ Sadzali, "Komisi Rekomendasi Minta JIMM Dibubarkan."

⁵⁵ Nubowo, *Interviu*, July 4, 2021.

⁵⁶ Alyaum, "JIMM: Dulu Dibenci, Kini Dicintai."

Muhammadiyah became JIMM's intellectual patron so that Muhammadiyah's intellectual regeneration did not die.⁵⁷

Conclusion

The Muhammadiyah Young Intellectual Network (JIMM) emerged as an attempt to revitalize intellectualism within Muhammadiyah in response to the perceived stagnation of Islamic thought. JIMM aims to engage young Muhammadiyah intellectuals in constructive discourse, reflecting a desire to overcome the challenges faced by the organization. However, Muhammadiyah faced resistance to this intellectual awakening from various quarters, as critics perceived JIMM as embodying liberal tendencies incompatible with the organization's principles.

The resistance to JIMM manifested in debates, publications, and even attempts to disband the network during the 46th Muhammadiyah Congress. The accusations of liberalism and secularism presented significant challenges for JIMM, reflecting broader concerns within Muhammadiyah about the direction of Islamic thought and the organization's identity. Despite these obstacles, JIMM persisted for a time, organizing workshops, publishing anthologies, and actively participating in intellectual discussions.

Over time, Muhammadiyah's stance towards JIMM evolved from outright resistance to a more accommodating approach. The members of the network were assigned roles within Muhammadiyah's organizational structure and contributed to various departments and activities. However, this accommodation required a recalibration of JIMM's ideas, resulting in the minimization of controversial and liberal aspects to align more closely with Muhammadiyah's core values.

In the broader context of Indonesian Islamic intellectualism, JIMM's existence represents a dynamic response to the challenges faced by religious organizations in adapting to modernity. The controversies surrounding JIMM highlight the complexities of navigating the intersections of tradition, modernity, and diverse Islamic discourses within the Indonesian context. Muhammadiyah is

⁵⁷ Boy, "Menyalakan Pelita Di Tengah Kutukan Kegelapan: Refleksi 17 Tahun JIMM."

still grappling with these dynamics, and the experience of JIMM provides valuable insights.

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