

Political Thoughts and Socio-cultural Nationalism Ideologies of Nurcholish Madjid on Strengthening Democracy, Civil Societies and Civic Virtues in Indonesia

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Abstract

This article is about the thoughts and ideologies of Nurcholish Madjid (Cak Nur), as one of modern thinkers on Islam, democracy and nationalism in Indonesia. The paper analyzes Cak Nur's views on how to integrate the three in building a modern Indonesia which is peaceful and conducive for all religions and races. The author chose to study Nurcholish Madjid because he is considered to be one of the contemporary Islamic scholars on the Archipelago who has showed love for his religion, democracy and of course for his nation.

Keywords: politics, nationalism, nurcholish madjid, democracy, civil society and Indonesia

1. Introduction

Looking at Indonesia's politics, the existence and position of Nurcholish Madjid (a.k.a Cak Nur) is becoming of great significance. For instance, Abdurrahman Wahid (a.k.a Gus Dur) at one point noted and also predicted that at one time 'Cak Nur' could be considered as an authority of democratic Islam in the country (Darmawan, 2007, p. 137). According to Thaha (2005: 317) in his thesis submitted to Universitas Indonesia, he reveals that Madjid's political thoughts and ideologies are discussed widely by both 'professional politicians and political academics' across the country. There are 10 (ten) typologies derived from Madjid's thinking; i.e., indigenous, neo-modernist, cultural-substantive, formalistic, cultural, political morality balance, reformation or reconstruction of theology, modern thinkers, and religious democrats.

As a modern Islamic thinker, Madjid is one of the Islamic and democratic intellectuals in Indonesia. According to one of his own statements, Madjid describes himself as "*a glass-half-empty*" or at times "*a glass-half-full*". In other words, half of his thoughts contain "*neo-modernism*" and the other half contains "*neo-traditionalism*". This means Nurcholish Madjid is a neo-modernist as well as a neo-traditionalist. This has also been proved by a statement of one of Madjid's critics' who commonly categorizes him as a "neo-modernist" thinker.

To emphasize the importance and how crucial the legacy of classical Islamics is in the development of 'modern Islam', Madjid often quotes the experience of the modern Turks. He says that looking are two scenarios one of the era of the Young Turk and Kemal Ataturk who sacrificed Islamic legacies for the sake of modernity, which has resulted at times, modern Turks being categorized as "liberalists" and "westernized", with other experiences i.e. that of the Japanese, who conducted modernization since the Meiji era of reform, but these still held strongly on their traditional values. Hence, Cak Nur is of the opinion that, if the Muslims choose to advance in modernization and modernity, they need to learn from Japanese, and not the Turks. It is believed that though reformations among the Turks started earlier before the Meiji restorations in Japan, the later were more successful, since they were more organized.

In the context of Islamic traditionalism, Cak Nur highly appreciates shari'ah, especially Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) as a product of *ijtihad* which involves recontextualization from time to time. In other words, he is neither against shari'ah nor Islamic jurisprudence. However, he is conscious of the importance of recontextualizing syari'ah or jurisprudence in regard to the modern needs. One of his approaches has been the advocacy of

revisiting the methods which lead to redeveloping of shari'ah or Islamic jurisprudence, namely *usul fiqh*. On this point, Cak Nur appeals to the contemporary Muslim scholars and thinkers to revisit *usul fiqh* principles, if they are to be applied in the contemporary period.

In the development context and in regard to Indonesia and the Islamic world today, Cak Nur's thinking is relevant to Islamic Civilization. His thoughts on the integration of Islamic principles in Indonesian's modernization is of relevance moreso with challenges intensifying day by day., between Islam on one hand and Indonesia on the other, especially during this post Soeharto period. In other words, we are currently, facing the challenge to choose between Islam on one hand and modernity on the other and of course nationalism on the one hand. The integration of these three entities is not easy; not only because it requires a sound understanding of them, but because of the ever changing situation of religion, society, and politics. This is the biggest challenge faced by those who wish to continue with Cak Nur's agenda of reformation. Syu'bah Asa (2005: 101), a senior journalist of Tempo Magazine, states that it will be difficult to find another person who is proud of his religion as Nurcholish Madjid, who views Islam as civilization, compassion, and beauty that touches not only the Muslims, but also all human kind, in the spirit of pluralism as taught in the Al-Qur'an.

2. Research Method

2.1 Approach and Type of the Research

An approach is a reference, pattern, and framework that contains criteria and norms. Vernon Van Dyke, cited by Sapriya (2007: 130) stresses that: "An approach consists of criteria of selectiing—criteria employed in selecting the problems or questions to consider and in selecting the data to bring to bear, it consists of standards governing the inclusion of questions and data" (Dyke, 1965: 114). Based on that view, the researcher employs qualitative approach as a reference, pattern, and framework for this dissertation, based on the generalized empiric of social, political, and cultural realities in the field. The researcher comprehensively and comparatively describes and analyzes the social realities. The researcher also critically describes and analyzes phenomenal and historical aspects of realities to create an ideographic generalization. Bogdan and Taylor (1973), cited by Mungin (2001: 31), stated that qualitative approach in a research is a research procedure that produces descriptive data, observable utterances or writings and behaviors of the subject. In line with their opinion, Denzin and Lincoln (1994: 2), in Sapriya, stated that:

Qualitative research is multi-methods in focus, involving an interpretative, naturalistic approach to its subjects matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of them or interpret phenomena in terms of meanings brought to them. Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of variety of empirical materials—case studies, personal experience, introspective, life stories, interviews, observational, historical, interactions, and visual texts—that describe routine and problematic moments with meanings in individuals' lives".

Furthermore, John Creswell, in Sapriya (2007: 132) notes that: "*Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analysis words, report detailed views of informant and conducts the study in a natural setting.*" Meanwhile, Lincoln and Guba (1985: 98), in Sapriya (2007: 131) thinks that qualitative approach becomes the main thing in naturalistic paradigm not because this paradigm is anti-quantitative, but because the qualitative approach wants people as a research instrument. In other words, Lincoln and Guma state that ". . .*the human as an instrument is inclined towards methods that are extensions of normal human activities: looking, listening, speaking, reading and the like*".

Based on the views above, it can be concluded that a qualitative approach in a research that directly points to the setting and individuals in any given setting. The subject in qualitative research may be an organization, institution, or individuals, meaning that it is not limited to a separate variable or a hypothesis, but viewed as part of a given sample or object of study. Therefore, the subject in this research is an individual, as the main actor of the socio-cultural dynamics in Indonesia (in this case Nurcholish Madjid).

The author studies the life of Nurcholish Madjid as an Indonesian Islamic neo-modernist intellectual, looking at his interactions from the social, political, and cultural perspectives plus his relevance to Indonesia's political developments (how his views have helped to build a strong democracy, in the country's process of development and consolidating Islam). This is interpreted in line of a religious paradigm and its relations with contemporary political issues like democracy, human rights, civil society, and political ethnicity in Indonesia and the international world views.

The movements of the two national teachers (Cak Nur and Gus Dur) in their capacities and positions as citizens,

are related with their interactions and their intellectual struggles in translating, interpreting, contextualizing, and actualizing Islamic norms and teachings with the realities of modern life and the socio-cultural conditions of Indonesia. Therefore, through qualitative approach in this dissertation, the researcher will examine the movement of a figure and can comprehensively see how the figure develops his own definitions of the world with his various thoughts, works, and behaviors (Furchan & Maimun, 1998: 16). Furthermore, through qualitative approach, the researcher can find what the figure feels, thinks, and says in his interactions with his socio-political environment or community. Later this can as well as help examine certain groups or communities that might be the followers of the figure, previously unknown and unthought-of.

2.2 Research Subject

The subject of this research is the Indonesian neo-modernist Islamic intellectual figure, Nurcholish Madjid, particularly the movements and the dynamics of his intellectual life and interactions with the surrounding socio-political realities. The scope of this research, in terms of time dimension, begins from the period of 1970s (the period of beginning of New Order) until the year of Nurcholish Madjid's demise. It is particularly related with the political ideas or thoughts and civil socio-cultural movements in which he was actively involved in, plus the institutions he built.

Furthermore, this research also analyzes the effects caused by the thoughts and activities of the two citizens who became the leaders of the cultural movement and their followers in keeping and continuing the idealized thoughts of the two leading figures of Islamic thought reformation movement in Indonesia. The research will analyze the current situation in its relation with political, civil, and national life in the context of the Islamic position on politics of the country, as well as civil society's position in the development of democracy in Indonesia.

2.3 Stages of the Research

The stages in this dissertation of intellectual history research are as follows; the selection of topic, the collection of sources (*heuristic*), the verification of sources (critiques of sources' validity), the interpretation (analysis and synthesis), and the writing (historiography). The steps of the research are: 1) deciding an important problem in the field of the study; 2) choosing a figure; 3) identifying the merit, success, and virtue of the figure; 4) determining the focus of the study; 5) determining the instruments of the study; 6) conducting the study; 7) checking the validity of the data, analyzing data, and writing the results of the study; 8) drawing conclusions. To determine the validity of the findings of the field observation, the researcher will check the data using the steps from Moleong (2008: 326-335).

2.4 Data Collecting Technique

The procedure for collecting data in this research are conducted in three stages (Moleong, 1990: 10): 1) the orientation stage; 2) the exploration stage; and 3) the focus study stage. This research uses two techniques of data collection, from the three data collecting techniques known in a *life story*; i.e. the documentation review technique and the documentary technique. The documentation review technique is used to collect the works of the studied figure. The documentation review as a data collecting technique utilizes the existing documents as the sources of data (Usman and Setiadi, 1998: 73). Meanwhile, the documentary technique is defined as a way to collect data through the written legacy, particularly archives of files and including books of opinions, theories, theorems or laws, and others pertaining to the studied problem (Nawawi, 1995: 153). In this context, the researcher will be able to collect all documented data relevant with the focus of the research.

3. Literature Review

3.1 Biography of Nurcholish Madjid as Neo-Modernist Moslem Intellectual

Cak Nur comes from a family of Islamic students and modern Islamic political activist of Masyumi Party. Cak Nur was born at the time of turmoil and political struggle against colonialism in Indonesia. The struggle were the Indonesian people were aiming to realize Indonesia's independency of the Dutch and Japanese colonials. Cak Nur was born on 17 March 1939 A.D. or 26 Muharram 1358 of Hijriah (Islamic calendar) in the Mojoanyar Hamlet, Mojotengah Village, Bareng Subdistrict, Jombang Regency, East Java Province. The city of Jombang is named from an acronym of Javanese words of *ijo* (green) and *abang* (red). *Ijo* or green represents the religious groups (Islamic students' groups) while *abang* or red represents the nationalistic identity of Javanese groups. Both groups of people live harmoniously in Jombang, and the two elements of social groups are represented in the background colors of Jombang Regional Government insignia.

The village where Cak Nur was born has a special religious dynamism because the people in the village have put education, particularly Islamic education, at the primary position of the villagers' hierarchy of needs. Moreover,

Jombang, in a macro level, is a region with a potential to produce great figures (personalities) of this country. The majority of Jombang citizens have the culture of Islamic students, with the Islamic tradition of *ahlussunnah wal jama'ah* discipline and strong implementation of *Sufism path*. This automatically became an integral part of influence on Cak Nur and naturally formed the basic of his Islamic study tradition. His father was K.H. Abdul Madjid, an Islamic scholar and Islamic political figure who had close relations with one of the country's great Islamic scholars, K.H. Hasyim Asy'ari, the founder and leader of Indonesia's biggest and oldest Islamic Boarding School, the Tebuireng Jombang Islamic Boarding School.

Cak Nur obtained religious education from his family, then later had public education from a *Sekolah Rakyat* (SR; an elementary school in Indonesia) and Islamic education from *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* (Islamic elementary school) al-Wathoniyah in Mojoanyar Jombang. Cak Nur got his junior high school level of education from *Pesantren Darul 'Ulum* in Rejoso, Jombang, founded by K.H. Tamim Irsyad and K.H. Cholil. He continued his study to *Pondok Pesantren Modern Darussalam Gontor*, Ponorogo, founded by the three sons of Kyai Santoso Anom Besari; K.H. Ahmad Sahal. K.H. Zainuddin Fananie, and K.H. Imam Zarkasy, more commonly known as *Trimurti*.

After finishing his study in Gontor Islamic School, Cak Nur went to Jakarta to continue his studies and obtained a bachelor's degree in 1968 at *Institut Agama Islam Negeri* (IAIN/ National Islamic Institute) Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta—which later changed its name into *Universitas Islam Negeri* (National Islamic University) Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta in 2002. He majored in Arabic Language and Literature of the Faculty of *Adab*. To obtain the bachelor's degree, Cak Nur wrote a paper entitled: "*Al-Qur'an Arabiyyun Lughatan wa-'Alamiyyun Ma'nan* meaning Al- Quran: Arabic in Words, Universal in Meaning (Thaha, 2005: 16-74; Rachman , 2008: 3-4).

Besides focusing on Islamic study in IAIN Jakarta, during his years as a student and to a few years after, Cak Nur often went to Masjid Agung Al Azhar Jakarta to observe his Friday Prayers and to listen to the preachings delivered by Buya Hamka, a great Islamic scholar and the pioneer of modern Sufism in Indonesia. Through Hamka, Cak Nur was introduced to the ideas of Ibn Taimiyah which then later became the research subject of his doctoral dissertation at University of Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A entitled "*Ibn Taymiyya on Kalam and Falsafa: A Problem of Reason and Revelation in Islam*" (Thaha, 2005: 16-74; Rachman , 2008: 3-4).

However Cak Nur's study of Islam was not continued at any Middle East universities like Al Azhar University of Egypt, Ummul Quro' University of Arab Saudi, or other universities in the Arabic countries, Instead, he continued his study at University of Chicago, Illinois, the United States of America. In this university, Cak Nur met a Pakistani Islamic Studies professor, Fazlur Rahman. In this university, besides his Islamic philosophy and Islamic thoughts, Cak Nur was able to study politics. Hence, in his intellectual journey, Cak Nur's ideas and views were not merely concerned with religious matters *ansich*; they are also related with political matters wrapped in Islamic framework and foundations as the main perspective. Therefore, on one hand, Cak Nur developed from his initial contact and relationship with traditional Islamic culture and tradition through the Islamic Boarding Schools he attended in his childhood, and on the other hand, he also developed relationships with modern and global Islamic culture through the Islamic Boarding School Gontor, IAIN Ciputat, and the University of Illinois in Chicago. His exposure to the two big traditions created a new pattern and tradition in himself, particularly in thinking, behaving, and acting on Islam in a modern world; a pattern and tradition which causes experts like Greg Berton, An Kull, Azyumardi Azra, Fachri Ali, and Bahtiar Effendy to call him an Indonesian Moslem intellectual with neo-modernist discipline.

After obtaining his doctorate degree (PhD) and returning to Indonesia in 1985, a lot of Cak Nur's friends urged him to spread his Islamic ideas and political thoughts to Indonesian people in a wider scope. He then built the *Yayasan Wakaf Paramadina*. It's from this Cak Nur's position in various discourses, movements of Islamic thought and political transformation that made him stronger and phenomenal as seen in his thoughts that contributed greatly in Indonesia's Islamic thoughts, while attempting to realize a relevant, accommodative, and contextual Islam appropriate with the dynamic era and culture of Indonesia. In 35 years, Cak Nur was able to spread inclusive Islamic thoughts and progressive political ideas, while holding onto the perennial Islamic studies tradition—classic Islamic studies traditions—using modern social science to articulate Islam in the modern reality of Indonesia. This attracted dozens of students from leading universities in the United States of America, Europe, and Australia to write dissertations research on Cak Nur's thoughts from different perspectives.

After Soeharto fell from his 32-years regime, the New Order regime, Cak Nur participated in promoting democratization of Indonesia by, among others, becoming the Head of Voters' Enrichment Committee (KPP) for the General Election of 1999, which was the first general election in the Reformation Era. This new era to realize

democracy in Indonesia was one of the efforts by Cak Nur's and other national figures' political thoughts and civic socio-cultural movement.

However, a lot of people misunderstand his concepts, ideas, and discourses because they failed to comprehend the complexity of his multi-faceted thoughts. This resulted into some people –the elite and religious figures, deliberately misinterpreting his thoughts. They did not only misunderstand what he intended to say, they also put his thoughts out of context, and deliberately twisted and manipulate certain aspects of Cak Nur's thinking. Among the figures who criticized his ideas and thoughts are H. M. Rasyidi, Abdul Qadir Zaelani, Daud Rasyid, Hartono Ahmad Jaiz, Adian Husaini. They concluded that the ideas and thoughts put forward by Cak Nur are incorrect, loaded with liberal ideologies, and loaded with Western values in interpreting and articulating Islamic teachings in social and national life.

Cak Nur viewed Islam as a religion that is *compatible* with modernity and adaptive with the context of Indonesia. Therefore, modern Islam that Cak Nur constructs is different from the modern Islam developed by the "classic modernists" who are in awe of modernity that they are uprooted from the classic Islamic tradition (*al-turats al-Islamiyyah*). Meanwhile, in Cak Nur's opinion, it was actually the exact opposite. Cak Nur stressed the importance of classic Islamic legacy to develop a "modern Islam." This was the main character of the Islamic movement in "neo-modernism" discipline. In the latter context, Cak Nur often quoted the experience of the modern Turks, since the era of the Young Turk and Kemal Ataturk who sacrificed Islamic legacies for the sake of modernity, which they understood and actualized as "liberalization" and "westernization". Cak Nur often compared the Turks' experience with Japan, who conducted modernization since the Meiji Reformation era while still holding onto its traditional legacy. In Cak Nur's opinion, if the Moslems strive to advance in their modernization and modernity, they need to learn from the Japanese, not the Turks.

From this point of view, classifying Cak Nur as one of the "neo-modernist" thinkers has a strong foundation. However, "neo-modernism" is just one side of his whole thought. Therefore, it is a mistake to consider Cak Nur only from the "neo-modernism" side, while ignoring other aspects of his thoughts. In his analysis on Cak Nur's thoughts or in his direct interactions with Cak Nur in various occasions, particularly in *Yayasan Wakaf Paramadina*; which conducts Islamic study with a new model in which Islam is studied using social science, empirical, and historical perspectives and paradigms; Azra finds several important aspects of Cak Nur's thoughts. In line with his emphasis on Islamic tradition legacy, Cak Nur put great emphasis on the aspect of thought that Seyyed Hossein Nasr calls Islamic traditionalism. With this framework, Azra paints Cak Nur as a thinker that strongly stressed the classic Islamic tradition which is the focal point of the Islamic study tradition developing from the early age of Islam to the modern age.

In the context of this Islamic traditionalism, Cak Nur highly appreciated *syari'ah*, particularly *fiqh*, as a product of *ijtihad* that involves contextualization from time to time. Cak Nur barely ever gives sharp criticism against *syari'ah* and *fiqh*. However, he realizes the importance of contextualizing *syari'ah* and *fiqh* with the modern needs, particularly those pertaining to the issues of citizenship and relationship between Islam and national politics. The way to do this is to go back to the methodology of developing *syari'ah* or *fiqh*, the *ushul fiqh*. He highly recommended the Moslem scholars and contemporary thinkers to reread the principles of *ushul fiqh* to be implemented in the development of contemporary *fiqh* to satisfy the various demands of each time or era.

Cak Nur also displayed the same on Islamic traditionalism in his great appreciation of *tasawuf*. He was very critical on any forms of excessive *tasawuf* and *tarekat*, which belong to the category of heresy, falsehood, and superstitions. The things which were clearly far from his opinions concerning the strict values of *tauhid* (One God), as he formulated in *Nilai-Nilai Dasar Perjuangan* (The Foundation Values of Efforts) of HMI (Indonesia Students' Organization), which then became *Nilai Identitas Kader* (Cadres' Identity Values) of HMI, the biggest student organization in Indonesia. It is soon clear that he did not deny or reject *tasawuf* blindly. Unlike other modernist thinkers, and probably other "neo-modernists", who tend to reject *tasawuf* and *tarekat*, Cak Nur understands and practices *tasawuf*, both in thoughts and in daily life.

According to Azra, in the tradition of religious practices in the world of *tasawuf*, Cak Nur was never a member, let alone a *khalifah* or *mursyiddari* (leader), of particular *tarekat* (Islamic school of thoughts). However, this does not mean that he accepted *tasawuf* without *tarekat*. In this framework, Azra categorized Cak Nur as a follower of "neo-Sufism" *tasawuf*, founded by his professor, Fazlur Rahman, in Chicago University. Cak Nur's "neo-Sufism" was individual and personal, not practiced through certain *tarekat*. Based on this, one can easily understand why Cak Nur, in various occasions, showed his high appreciation on Buya Hamka's *Tasawuf Modern* (Modern *Tasawuf*) which is also a form of comprehension and implementation of *tasawuf* individually without any *tarekat*. Therefore, his implementation of *tasawuf* was also influenced by Hamka's *tasawuf*.

Based on that mind framework and attitude of Nurcholish Madjid, Azra categorized Nurcholish Madjid as “neo-traditionalist” thinker. This was reflected in fact that, as Azra mentioned about Nurcholish Madjid, when both of them spoke in a seminar, the latter responded by saying that his thoughts can be considered as “a glass-half-empty” or “a glass-half-full”; half of it can be considered to contain “neo-modernism” and the other half containing “neo-traditionalism”. With this metaphor, Cak Nur offered some kind of ‘guidance’ and direction concerning how to interpret his thoughts and practices in daily life. Therefore, he implicitly urged that his thoughts should be viewed more comprehensively and holistically.

The researcher agrees with Azra that the appreciation of Nurcholish Madjid’s revolutionary thoughts and ideas should begin with the correct understanding of the complexity of Cak Nur’s concepts, ideas, discourses, and practices. This is because without such framework, it will be hard to fairly discuss Cak Nur’s legacy of thoughts and unfinished ideas of reformation. In the context of the development and reality of Indonesia and Islamic world today, Cak Nur’s thinking is still relevant. His thoughts on the integration of Islamic-Indonesian-modernity matters get more relevant with the intensifying tug-of-war between Islam on one hand, used as the ideological and normative foundation of the nation, and the idea of pluralism and multicultural Indonesia on the other. This as the idea pushing for use of PANCASILA as the foundation of the nation in the post-Soeharto era.

The same thing also happens between Islam on one hand and modernity on the other. The integration of the three entities is not easy; not only because it requires a sound understanding of the three, but also because of the ever changing situations in aspects of religion, social, and politics. This is the challenge for those striving to continue Cak Nur’s agenda of reformation. Cak Nur died on Monday, 29 August 2005, because of liver cyrosis illness. He was buried in *Taman Makam Pahlawan Kalibata* (National Heroes Graveyard) which is a form of appreciation from the nation towards civilians for their great contribution in developing and strengthening democracy, civil society, and developing civil-citizenship values.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Main Themes of Nurcholish Madjid’s Thoughts in His Intellectual Works

Generally, the works of Cak Nur’s are papers prepared for academic discussions, dialogues, and reflections, mainly during the activities of Religion Study Group (KKA) held by the activity unit in *Yayasan Wakaf Paramadina*. Aside from those, there his works in the books his thoughts written in various columns and occasions, e.g. newspaper articles, magazine column, and transcription of preachers, dialogues, and interviews in several media platforms. The following are some of Cak Nur’s intellectual works that can be used as the materials for mapping the typology and tendency of his ideas and thoughts: 1) the book *Islam Kemodernan dan Keindonesiaan*, Bandung: Mizan, 1987; 2) the book *Islam, Doktrin dan Peradaban: Sebuah Telaah Kritis tentang Masalah Keimanan, Kemanusiaan, dan Kemoderenan*, Jakarta: Paramadina, 1992; 3) the book *Pintu-pintu Menuju Tuhan*, Jakarta: Paramadina, 1994; 4) the book *Cita-Cita Politik Islam Era Reformasi*, Jakarta: Paramadina, 1999; 5) the book *Islam Agama Peradaban: Membangun Makna dan Relevansi Doktrin Islam dalam Sejarah*, Jakarta: Paramadina, 1995; 6) the book *Tradisi Islam: Peran dan Fungsinya dalam Pembangunan di Indonesia*, Jakarta: Paramadina, 1997; 7) the book *Masyarakat Religius*, Jakarta: Paramadina, 1997; 8) the book *Perjalanan Religius Umrah & Haji*, edited by Muhammad Wahyudi Nafis (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1997); 9) the book *Dialog Keterbukaan: Artikulasi Nilai Islam dalam Wacana Sosial Politik Kontemporer*, edited by Edy A. Affendi (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1998); 10) the book *Pesan-pesan Takwa: Kumpulan Khutbah Jum’at di Paramadina*, editor: Asrori S. Karni (Jakarta: Paramadina, 2000); 11) the book *Atas Nama Pengalaman Beragama dan Berbangsa di Masa Transisi: Kumpulan Dialog Jum’at di Paramadina* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 2002); 12) the book *Puasa Titian Menuju Rayyan*, edited by Sufyanto and Luluk Rofiqoh (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2000); 13) the book *Kaki Langit Peradaban Islam*, edited by Ahmad Gaus AF (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1997); 14) the book *Khazanah Intelektual Islam*, Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1984; 15) the book *The Issue of Modernization among Muslims in Indonesia from a Participant Point of View*; 16) the book *What is Modern Indonesian Culture*; 17) the book *Islam in the Contemporary World*; 18) and the book *Islam in Indonesia : Challenges and Opportunities*.

Cak Nur’s thoughts were not limited to issues pertaining to Islam, but also covered thoughts concerning modern Indonesia. He wrote a book entitled *Indonesia Kita (2003)*, containing platform of reformation needed to repair and improve the socio-economic and political condition of Indonesia. He is also a pioneer in expressing various issues of political reformation, such as the ideas of loyal opposition, civil society, democracy, and Pancasila as the common national platform on the values of religion, pluralism, and human rights. The contribution of ideas from him were not only related with Moslems in Indonesia, but also with the whole nation. Therefore, the main

themes of his thoughts were Islam, modernity nationality, and Indonesia, under the supporting themes of reformation of thoughts, secularism, and pluralism.

Based on that, he believed in the importance of developing a *hanif* Islam, which is a tolerant, moderate, and open Islam; a universal Islam oriented on humanity and civilization. Releting this to current problems after 11 September 2011, where there are global discussions concerning the emergence of fundamentalism and radicalism of Islam, Nurcholish Madjid provides the solution of *hanif* Islam, highlighting the importance of cooperation and solidarity among religions. He believed that each religion can contribute its religious ethics on the global problems. Based on this belief, one of the most important issues Nurcholish Madjid always expressed in various occasions is pluralism, which is still a controversial issue in Indonesia today.

The various works and themes he focused upon make Cak Nur an intellectual whose expertise exceeds a professor of a particular discipline, almost like an encyclopedic intellectual. It is proven by a great work of Budhy Munawar Rahman entitled “*Ensiklopedi Nurcholish Madjid*” which consists of four volumes. The book displays the myriad and the range of knowledge of Cak Nur, particularly concerning Islam and modern world. During his life, Cak Nur’s works always become a reference for students, academics, scholars, ambassadors, and even presidents and president candidates.

4.2 Political Thoughts of Nurcholish Madjid Concerning Islam and Democratic-Nation, Islam and Indonesian-Pancasila, Islam and Human Rights, Islam and Civil Society, and Islam and Civic Virtues and Ethics

As people develop, a lot of thinkers, both Moslem and non-Moslem thinkers, entertain the thoughts concerning a good system of nation. In the context of Indonesia, the emergence of Nurcholish Madjid’s ideas is an interesting subject of study. This Moslem scholar emerged with his bright ideas concerning Islam as interpreted through the reformation of Islamic thinking movement. His thoughts concerning religious understanding in its relations with politics, social, and cultural issues, like pluralism, are often discussed. Based on this, it is not exaggerating to say that Nurcholish Madjid is inclusive, neo-modernists, moderate, and tolerant Moslem thinker. In this dissertation, Cak Nur’s thoughts on democracy, Pancasila, human rights, civil society, and political ethics will be sufficiently discussed.

According to Cak Nur, there is a relationship between religious values, i.e. fairness and openness, with democracy. In his book, *Islam Doktrin dan Peradaban*, Cak Nur states “It is clear that the principles of fairness and openness are interrelated since both of them are religiously consistent with the dimension of humanity. Now, the relationship between those values and democracy; i.e. the organization of life structures based on humanity or public wishes, will also be clear’ (Madjid, 1992: 118). To support his argument, Nurcholish Madjid described and compared faith which brings about the absoluteness of God, with tyranny, as an undemocratic system which is the opposite of faith. In this case, Nurcholish Madjid assumed that:

“If faith brought the consequence of absoluteness of God, the Only God, there is nothing more opposing in principle but making something other than God as an absolute, including other humans. Therefore, . . ., tyranny is an opposite of faith, and a faithful man will naturally assume the duty to destroy tyranny, as had been the duties of God’s prophets. Included in this tyranny is the one developed in the name of religion, as can be found in the theocratic life system practiced in Western culture (for example, the Holy Roman Empire in the Middle Age).”

Therefore, to avoid tyranny, Nurcholish Madjid says that a human being is required to solve the problems among them through discussion. Nurcholish Madjid notes:

“On the contrary, the belief in God requires all problems among humans to be solved through discussions, which is a reciprocal process among the participants with similar rights and duties. The description of society of faithful people as a society of discussion is very impressive for the first Moslems, so that there is a surah in Al Qur’an containing that description, the Syûrâ or Discussion surah.”

Based on the quotes, it is clear that religion, in this case, its beliefs, go hand in hand with democracy. According to Nurcholish Madjid, although some people view Islamic values and democratic values are contradictory, there is conformity between Islam and democracy. He bases his understanding on the values of democracy that conform to the values of Islam as stated in Al Quran surah 1: 6, “Show us the righteous path.” According to him, Islam considers human as a fundamentally positive and optimistic creature, while at the same time, human has potential limitations. Al Qur’an and Sunnah provide guidance for human in general terms. Both do not explain how to implement the guidance, particularly concerning the mechanism and structures of political life. Therefore, for detailed and practical matters, Islam provides wide space for humans to develop and utilize their reasoning and rationality through *ijtihad*.

Etymologically, *ijtihad* means earnestly utilized one's power, both physically and mentally. *Ijtihad*, according to Al-Ghazali is only used for difficult situations. Ibnu Abd Al-Syukur defined *ijtihad* as "the utilization of one's power to find a conclusion of *syara'* laws to the level of *zhanni'* so that one feels he cannot do more than that." Al-Badawi, the expert of *ushul fiqh* from the discipline of *syafiiyah* defines *ijtihad* as "the utilization of one's full power in order to define the laws of *syara'*." Zein and Zahrah defines *ijtihad* as "Optimally utilizing one's power to define the laws of *syara'* and to implement them."

The field to implement *ijtihad* is the uncertain problems (*zhanni'*) in their relations with Al-Quran and Hadits (Zein, 2003:245-250; Zahrah, 2011: 567-570). *Ijtihad* will generate various ideas and formulas needed in a life of a Moslem in terms of responding to various strategic issues in the national life, including the issues of democracy, Pancasila, human rights, and civil society. Due to the limitation of human power, *ijtihad* as an effort can be conducted individually, although ideally it should be done collectively, particularly concerning public matters, while praying to God to guide humans to "the righteous path" (Abdillah, 1999: 83).

Nurcholish Madjid also based his opinions on the practices of *al-Khulafa' al-Rasyidun*. Quoting Robert N Bellah, he stated that during the periods of al-Khulafa' al-Rasyidun leadership, Islam displayed a form of modern political life, in the sense that there was universal political participation of the people, the leadership recruitment system is based on personal talent and expertise, not based on special status obtained from kinship. This was considered as a very modern idea for that time, and the failure of which can be explained by the change into the Umayyah monarchy system. Just like egalitarian and participative society, he was also of the view that the classic Islam periods, as shown by the Prophet's leadership and the wise Caliphs (al-Khulafa' al-Rasyidun), are the embodiment of a fair, open, and democratic society, as explained in the modern concept of society and politics (Madjid, 1999, pp. 114-115).

The thoughts of Nurcholish Madjid concerning democracy are born from the fact that he supports the democratization of Indonesia. He was one of the Moslem thinkers that managed to find the conformity between the values of Islam and democracy. In his book, *Pintu-Pintu Menuju Tuhan*, he criticized the implementation of democracy in Indonesia in which people who talk loudly about democracy whose it wrongly to to trick the people and become dictators. Nurcholish Madjid states:

"After half a century of independence, talking about democracy in our country is like visiting an antique house. . . ., the antique democracy in Indonesia is not the basic ideas; it is the controversy. In the history surrounding the proclamation [of Indonesia's independence], we find that the issue of democracy had been a hot topic of debate among the founders of the Republic. We knew their slogans: "council," "representative," "people," "board," "musyawarah," etc. There are also more contemporary slogans: "delegation of authority," "rule of law," "majority rule and minority right," and many more. We knew them all. However, we cannot honestly say that we truly understand their meanings, let alone describe exactly how each of those claiming democracy behaves" (Madjid, 1995: 256).

Furthermore, he went ahead to give an example how Bung Karno, with his rhetoric ability, to defend democracy but he fell with an accusation of being a dictator because he allowed the people to make him into a holy individual (Madjid, 1995, p. 257). For Nurcholish Madjid, democracy is a political system that has to be developed. Political stability can only be achieved by the implementation of democratic authority. "The character of a stable democratic authority, is that it has a high chances to keep on being democratic and a low chances of experiencing social violence disruption, both openly and discreetly (Madjid, 1999, p. 5). The continuance of a system, order, legitimate power, and effectiveness are the signs of stabilization of democracy. He does not deny that democracy is hard enough to implement in a plural society. This is because the political consensus or social uniformity is an important factor for the stabilization of democracy. "Each form of valid and strong political structure, particularly democracy, requires shared bonds in the form of basic loyalty, a more touching commitment, a warmth in people's heart, among others, instead of merely a series of procedures" (Madjid, 1999, p. 7).

According to him, a consensus in politics does have a risk because democracy becomes unhealthy with too many consensus. Therefore, a stable democracy requires a natural balance between consensus and disparity, or even conflict. However, the conflict has to be aimed to a learning process for solving difficulty problems (Madjid, 1999: 12). In balancing the consensus and conflict, a capable leader is required, with the political will of the leader also playing a role. Leaders not only lead people but also learn from them. It might happen that a leader acts to "flatter" people. However, it should be avoided at all costs. The good will of the leader has to be realized in real action, like in formulating the action, the leader has to accommodate people's freedom of speech in a dialog to realize a shared commitment and responsibility (Madjid, 1999: 14-15).

On the case of pluralism in Indonesia, he believed that Islam can guarantee the continuation of democracy. It is inseparable from the inclusive characteristic of Islam, which requires a system that benefits all parties. In its history, Islam practiced values like the principles of religious tolerance and freedom of having religion, the principle of appreciation of other groups' cultural legacy, appreciation of personal rights, and positive attitude towards science (Madjid, 1999, pp. 54-55). According to Nurcholis Madjid, democracy allows the existence of open rules in a game of politics, which will in turn allow the political system of Indonesia to implement an open monitoring system on government actions and abuse of powers. The monitoring element is important because in the attempt to realize the constitutions, there will certainly be conflict of interests (Madjid, 1999, p. 70).

However much, democracy flourishes in the process of Indonesian's daily life, there is a gap between the Indonesian society condition and the democratic aspirations, therefore, the process of democratization should always be promoted. In that sense, a society can be called democratic if the democratic values are always developed. The values include the appreciation of human rights, the freedom of speech, the freedom of having company, and the order and fairness of law, and the fair opportunities for all (Madjid, 1999, p. 71). In his opinion, Nurcholish Madjid aimed at showing that democracy is a dynamic category. Democracy becomes identical with the process of democratization. This makes even the most democratic country become undemocratic if it stops pursuing and promoting the values of democracy. In the context of Indonesia, the achievement of a better quality of democracy can only be realized if there are attempts to make the democratic values concrete (Madjid, 1999, pp. 101-103).

Nurcholish Madjid states that democracy needs a strong opposition. As to him, democracy without strong opposition, without balance of political power, will become limp, like a car with a flat tire. He developed the idea of the importance of balance from a teaching in Islam, that God creates the earth with the concept of balance; that if God did not create balancer (equalizer) between people, the strong will destroy the weak. Hence, the implementation of this religious value in politics creates the concept of opposition—an idea that is totally not interesting for the New Order Regime. However he consistently put forward this idea. In 1992, in a seminar in Jakarta, he voiced it again. He noted that the opposition is important and that the political parties (PPP and PDIP) are the main actors. This opinion was declined by the Army Commander, Try Sutrisno, and the Domestic Minister, Rudini. This was also the same with even the leaders of PDIP and PPP, whom he calls as opposition, they also strongly declined the idea (Gaus, 1992, p. 260).

A healthy democracy, according to Nurcholish Madjid, requires *check and balance*. There has to be the power that monitors and the power that balances. He leans on the philosophical value that people cannot be correct all the time, therefore a system to remind each other of what is right and what is wrong has to be established. He further states that in a society, there should be a mechanism to change ideas, or in a more sophisticated form, “a freedom of speech, freedom of education, freedom of press, etc” (Gaus, 1992, pp. 260-261).

Nurcholish Madjid puts democracy as a principle, system, or rule of the game in politics, as well as a way of life, therefore, closely relating democracy with civil society. According to him, democracy shows one of its faces in the general election. However, it should not stop there. Democracy should “live” among the people. Such people are the ones called the civil society, which constitutes the many companies, alliances, and federations that join together to be the shield between the nation and its people (Gaus, 1992, pp. 144-145).

In reality, civil society is more than a mixture of various associations. It requires the quality of civility, without which the social environment will only consist of factions and secret societies that fight each other. Civility involves tolerance, willingness to accept various personalities, differences, and to accept that a problem might be unsolvable (Gaus, 1992, pp. 147-148). According to Nurcholish Madjid, although civil society can function as an opposition to government, the government must keep doing its function as the hand of the law, policy makers, and as the power to put society in order. This is because the civil society is not a government and cannot perform these functions (Gaus, 1992, pp. 149-150). In his concept concerning democracy as a form of principle and rule of the game, Nurcholish Madjid shows a sound opinion, where he argues that democracy as a political system relevant for Indonesia should be supported and fought for.

In his thoughts concerning democracy and civil society, he provided a perspective for realizing democracy beside the general election. In the context of Indonesia, he seemed to suggest that the nation doing its functions by fighting certain groups is a relevant thing. This is supported by reasoning that, without control from the nation, the groups in civil society will act and oppose the government as they please. This opinion is inseparable from his understanding of Islam because his premise is based in the belief that democracy is not contrary to Islamic values.

4.3 The Effect of Nurcholish Madjid's Civic Socio-Cultural Movement in Empowering Democracy, Civil Society and Civil Virtues in Indonesia

The effects created by the civic socio-cultural movement in developing and empowering democracy and civil society in Indonesia is significant and critical. It is proven by the success of civic socio-cultural movement, which together with students' movement dethroned the authoritarian regime of New Order in 1998. The existence of such socio-cultural movement, turned Indonesia from the era of democracy with authoritarian power into the era of transition democracy, to enter the era of reformation. In 1999, Indonesia entered the era of reformation, in which all elements of the nation were made free to voice their opinion and political affiliation, as shown by the formulation of so many political parties.

In the context of developing and empowering democracy and civil society, the contribution of Nurcholish Madjid's thoughts and socio-cultural movement is evident. History records show his role in the process of democratization, which resulted in the fall of New Order authoritarian regime and the coming of reformation era. He even planned to join the convention of president candidate from the Golkar party. Although he did not join the political game, the platform he developed, i.e. the ten platform of change, was used by the president candidate then, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, who was elected to be the president of Indonesia in 2004.

The concept of Civil Society of Nurcholish Madjid is in line with the concept of society that was developed by the Prophet Muhammad in Madina, as described by Mahmud Muhammad Thaha—a thinker and fighter in Sudan that died during the Numeiri regime in 1985. As civil society is a part of the ways to gain a noble life, this is also in line with what Islam teaches its followers.

According to Mahmud, there are two ways one has to go through to achieve a noble life (Thaha, 2003, p. 187). First, it can be achieved through the good or humane society (civil society), i.e. the civilized society, is one level above the cultured society; which is based on the religious morality awareness; or at least on the morality and legal awareness. Secondly, it can be achieved through scientific (academic) education which can get one to optimize his individual efforts, so that he can free his natural talent of the legacy of fear.

To realize the civil society, Ustadz Mahmud notes that it should be based on three equalizations (Thaha, 2003, pp. 187-188): first, the economic equalization (*al-musāwah al-iqtishādiyyah*), which is called socialism in modern society, in the sense that all men have a right upon the earth's product; second, the political equalization (*al-musāwah al-siyāsiyyah*), which is called democracy in modern society, in the sense that all men have rights based on their daily obligations; and the third, the social equalization (*al-musāwah al-ijtimā'iyah*), which in certain boundaries is a result of the two previous equalizations.

The clear signs of this are the eradication of classes, differences based on skin color, beliefs, ethnicity, and gender. Among the individuals there should not be any differences based on any considerations. One human being has no superiority over the others, save that based on reason and morality, striving for justice, providing good advice for citizens, both secretly (*bi-al-sirr*) and explicitly (*bi-al-'alāniyyah*), and the spirit to serve the greater good.

The social equalization aims to eradicate classes, in the sense of eliminating the gap between the elitists (*mustakbirin*) or the rich (*aghniya'*) with the proletariat (*mustadl'afin/dlu'afa'*, *fuqara' wa-al-masakin*), eradicating the differences between the cities and villages, by providing the equal opportunities to go through the process of civilization (*al-madaniyyah*) and cultural development (*al-hadlārah*), so that the marriage between individuals in the society (collectivity) becomes a common thing. These are the measurements used in determining to what extent the social equalization has been achieved (Thaha, 2003, p. 193).

Nurcholish Madjid's opinion concerning the civil society is in line with the opinion of Amien Rais that the term refers to a form of society founded by the Prophet Muhammad when he moved to Yatsrib—later which later became Madina. In Nurcholish Madjid's explanation, the word Madina was used by the Prophet as an indication that in the new place an orderly and law-abiding society will be developed and realized (Madjid, 1999, p. 72). Nurcholish Madjid and Amien Rais played an important role in empowering civil society for democracy, for instance in fighting authoritarianism of Indonesia prior to Soeharto's rule in 1966 (Azra, 2010, p. 3).

Nurcholish Madjid, besides other Indonesia's Moslem intellectuals (like Ahmad Syafii Ma'arif, Jalaluddin Rakmat, Amien Rais, M. Dawam Rahardjo, and M. Taher Azhary), seemed to accept the elements of democracy introduced by Hook, Schumpeter, Schmitter and Karl; i.e. the power of majority, the voice of people (political participation), and the free and responsible election (Abdillah, 1999, p. 92). However, a main problem emerges when comparing the Islamic democracy and Western democracy. The problem is that the will of people under the secular, liberal democracy, can be implemented fully, while in Islam democracy, the will of the people can only

be implemented as long as it does not violate the rules of the God (Abdillah, 1999, p. 92). Concerning this, Nurcholish Madjid believed that it is true that there are God's rules in Al-Qur'an and Sunnah that should be obeyed and cannot be altered by the will of the people; however, the same concept applies in Western democracy, for example in the USA. He stated that in the USA there is the Declaration of Independence which should be referred to as the highest source and foundation of law, which cannot be altered by the will of the people (Abdillah, 1999, pp. 93-94).

As stated by Masykuri Abdillah, the Moslem intellectuals in Indonesia, including Nurcholish Madjid, accepted and even supported democracy in terms of political realism that is merely in the practical sense of contemporary use. However, in the philosophical sense, they still agree that the supremacy of God's rule (*syariah*) is the basic standard, a source of highest power. Therefore, Abdurrahman Wahid's concept of democracy seems different when compared with Nurcholish Madjid's concept of democracy.

Cak Nur's style as well as model of implementation of the ideas and concepts of democracy and civil society are stricter because they are supported by Western theories and Islamic literatures. In fact, Cak Nur's works concerning democracy and civil society always contain references and footnotes. Cak Nur's model of democracy and civil society can only be understood by certain groups, particularly the upper-middle class, and academicians. Meanwhile the concept of democracy and civil society of Gus Dur's is easier to comprehend by all people.

The transformation has been supported by the huge number of young intellectuals emerging from the Islamic Boarding School environment, and manage to get opportunities to get modern education, especially from Western institutions. The concrete example is Nurcholish Madjid. Hidayat says that the emergence of three Islamic students from Jombang, i.e. Nurcholish Madjid, Abdurrahman Wahid, and Emha Ainun Najib, who have been so productive developing the discourses of Islam, politic, and culture, has brought the image of Islamic students as a power to be considered by academicians and cultural society in Indonesia (Hidayat in Suhanda, 2010, p. 4).

As stated by Abdillah (1999: 23), generally, their support for democracy is based on two reasons: first, the values of democracy are in line with the values of Islam in the social life, particularly the principle of discussion (*musyawarah*) (QS. Ali Imran [3]: 159, dan QS. [42]: 38); second, the system of democracy is the appropriate way to deliver the aspirations of Islam, because Moslems in Indonesia are the majority, this puts it in line with the concept of majority rule in democracy. Viewed from the theory of contemporary Islamic political thoughts concerning the relationship between religion (Islam) and the nation (politics), the thoughts of Nurcholish Madjid and Abdurrahman Wahid concerning democracy and civil society clearly belong to this paradigm.

As described in Chapter II, concerning the relationship between Islam and the nation or politics (*al-din wa-al-dawlah atau al-din wa-al-siyâsah*), there are three categories of relationship between religion and politics, as stated in the classification of Sjadzali and Syamsuddin: *First*, the conservative/traditionalist group who thinks that Islam is a perfect religion to manage human life, including the national life. Therefore there is no reason to separate the two. Among the figures of this group are Rasyid Ridha and Al-Maududi; *Secondly*, the modernist group, who thinks that Islam does not have a detailed system of nation. However it contains the values of ethics of national life. The prominent figure of this group is M. Husein Haikal; *Thirdly*, the secular group who thinks that Islam has nothing to do with the nation because according to this group, Muhammad never lead or built a nation. The prominent figures of this group are 'Ali 'Abd al-Raziq and Thaha Husein.

In the context of these three groups or paradigms, both of the figures (Nurcholish Madjid and Abdurrahman) can be categorized into the second group, i.e. the modernist group, who thinks that Islam does not have detailed system of a nation but contains the ethical values of national life, including democracy (the system of *syûrâ* or *musyawarah* or discussion) (Kurzman, 1998, pp. 29-36). However, for the current context, Abdillah states that the supporters of the modernist group and traditionalist group tend to be categorized as the neo-modernist or revivalist group. Revivalist group is a group of people who defends the revival of Islam in its earliest form when it led the civilization of the world. Although some thoughts of the revivalist group in Indonesia are inspired by Islamic fundamentalism, the revivalist in Indonesia still accepts Pancasila as the foundation of the country. Currently, there is no visible difference between these various thoughts, particularly among the Indonesia's Moslem intellectuals. Nobody is exclusively nationalist or modernists due to the strong interaction among the groups (Abdillah, 1999, pp. 12-13).

What Cak Nur's thought of during his life has profoundly impacted on the development of Islamic values and Indonesia as a whole. Cak Nur is not only a Moslem thinker, he is also a caring Indonesian who shows his real and practical effort in developing the civility of citizens with the civic socio-cultural movement. The effort he conducted through looking and finding the solutions for various problems of the country, including discussions

about the relationship between Islam and the nation. Therefore, the term of “National teacher” is suitable for Cak Nur. After his demise, Cak Nur left a legacy of his thoughts and good reputation.

Cak Nur can be used to provide examples of people like Aristotle or Socrates who are still remembered although they had been dead for more than 2500 years. In this context, the thoughts and the civic socio-cultural movement of Cak Nur’s will always inspire the next generations in developing Islam as a peaceful religion. The empowerment of personal quality of civility of the citizens is still a big problem for Indonesian. In many of their works, the ideas of people like Aristotle and Socrates can be said moving through time and are still relevant. Therefore, Cak Nur’s ideas might not be for today’s generation, but for the next generation. In other words, the product of their thoughts skips through many generations.

The important points of Cak Nur’s thoughts, according to Budhy Munawar-Rachman, can be viewed with in the categories proposed by Charles Kurzman, who stated that there are six most controversial issues in the Islamic world nowadays: the issues of theocracy, democracy, gender or feminism, pluralism, freedom of thought, and how to accept the ideas of advancement. Of the six issues, Cak Nur’s ideas encompass all frameworks. His ideas and movements differentiated between religious matters and national matters. Their included “*pribumisasi* (localizing),” pluralism, religious inclusiveness, substantive Islam, humanism, freedom of thoughts, and making Pancasila into a final foundation of the nation. Pancasila is a common platform for the various religions in Indonesia. All religions can share their values, which can be transcended to be accessed by anyone. In the context of Islam, he tried to use the thought of universalism of Islam as a religion, which can be made as an inspiration for any religious person in Indonesia, or even the world.

At the level of individuals, the individual’s ethics can get wider and become public ethics and political ethics, something fundamental in national life. Cak Nur does not recommend the strict doctrinal aspect in understanding Islam, particularly concerning the issue of *mu’amalah*. Here, Cak Nur and Gus Dur differentiate between the formalistic-symbolic pluralism with the substantial pluralism. Cak Nur and Gus Dur oppose the excessive symbolism in practicing religion, much as they do not negate the importance of symbols either, because without symbols, people are not able to reach the divine. However, Cak Nur is concerned about the stronger formalism of religion in national life, moreover with the emergence of religious radicalism and fundamentalism. Therefore, the Islamic understanding and practice should be realized in the form of religious behavior of *hanifi’atus samḥah*, a practice of being tolerant towards differences. The pluralism in Indonesia, as Cak Nur always states, is the *rahmatan lil ‘alamin* Islam; i.e. Islam for everyone, which opposes all forms of formalism, fundamentalism, and radicalism.

5. Conclusion

Nowadays, there are still many Moslems who want to show the monotonous face of Islamic politics to oppose other political powers, particularly Western powers who are taken as supporters of Christians and Jews. They believe that Jews and Christians will not accept the existence of Moslems as it happened in the beginning of the Islamic history and stated in Al-Qur’an (QS 2 Al-Baqarah: 120). On the contrary, Cak Nur believes that the verse is delivered in particular for the Prophet Muhammad in Madina when he faced the militant groups of Jews and Christians. The main motivation of Jews’ treachery towards the Charter of Madina was not religious; it was politically motivated; and the Prophet’s move against them was not based on the religious reasons but on the political considerations.

Cak Nur did not want to display the monotonous Islamic politics and see the Charter of Madina as a justification for the manifestation of inclusive Islamic politics, i.e. the Islamic politics that emphasizes the substantial values of universal Islam, like fairness, justice, equality, freedom, and *syura’* (democracy). He was highly critical of the formal form and political symbols of Islam which are frequently implemented to abuse the substance of Islamic values itself. He further believed that the universal values of Islam are in line with the values of human rights in the 1948 Declaration of Human Rights, so that he does not view Western countries as enemies, but as friends. However, this alone leaves the need to develop the concept of human rights from the Islamic environment to fight against the process of secularization as happens in the Western culture.

The civil sociocultural movement of Cak Nur’s describes him as a visionary, committed, and caring citizen who cares about the problems of citizenship. Hence, being visionary is taken as one the realization of Cak Nur’s real role. He Cak Nur basically put the values of Islam as *shālih li kulli zamân wa makân* (Islam that is relevant for every place and every time). What Cak Nur developed was Islam with in its universal values, in order to show that what are prominent and great in the current views, and the genius inventions of modern humanity, are not strange things in Islam. He showed that the issues related with the development of science, democracy, civil society, and other citizenship issues had well been the focus of classic Islam scholars in the middle age.

The critiques of the neo-modernist group towards the modernist group are like the critiques of the neo-revivalist group toward the old modernist group such as Muhammad Abduh, Muhammad Iqbal, et cetera. It is as if they want to say that what is good for the Western countries is Islam. In fact, that is also conducted by the neo-modernists like Fazlur Rahman, the teacher of Cak Nur, who attempts to relate all those phenomena with the Quranic foundation and strong Islamic tradition. He looked at history and reality, but he always saw that the positive reality supports the greatness of Islam; for instance, in the claim that Islam has always been respecting pluralism. The historical facts he quotes came from Western experts like Bernard Lewis, and Bertrand Russel. He also quotes Cyril Galsse who wrote *The New Encyclopedia of Islam*.

Cak Nur quotes Cyril who states that at that age (the 7th century), for the first time, a verse (Al-Qur'an) underlined the virtues of other religions, the first form of inclusivism. Cak Nur can be considered a theology, whose job was to create theological visions, but sometimes they are not historical. It means that a lot of real problems are not directly expressed. He always wanted to leave the problematic things in the past of Islam and move from a visionary al-Qur'an. According to the researcher, the system of democracy is not a final system; it always changes according to the demand of society's development. Therefore, the researcher argues that democracy cannot fully realize the goal of social welfare for all Indonesian, as stated in Pancasila, if democracy is implemented only in formalistic ways. Democracy has to be implemented, not only to satisfy its procedural dimension, but also to satisfy its substantial dimension. One of the elements of democracy, i.e. the general election, cannot create fairness and equality among the citizens of Indonesia and the realization of justice in the sense of the acts that represent balance or proportional measure.

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