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6
7 **Abstract**

8 Abdurrahman Wahid, former President of Republic Indonesia, was the first president at the
9 Reformation Era which toppled down the authoritarian Soeharto regime. His success on
10 becoming president because of his idea of democracy as well as his tract records of his efforts
11 to consolidate democracy was able to convince both the secular nationalists and Islamist
12 Muslims. His thought of democracy had justification from the fiqh paradigm employed by the
13 traditionalist Muslims, mean while his efforts at consolidating democracy was not partisan,
14 involving different social political groups. He was also able to convince the supporters of
15 Soeharto as he was not reluctantly to accommodate them as long as having commitments to
16 establish democracy. It was due to his non-revolutionary approach to progress at the Soeharto
17 regime era, but his zigzag strategies often confused both his supporters and his opponents. He
18 had made a counter discourse both to Soeharto regime and the Islamist Muslims, besides his
19 commitment to develop religious organization groups to play a role of civil society.

20
21 *Index terms*— abdurrahman wahid, fiqh paradigm, democracy, counter discourse, civil society.

22 **1 Introduction**

23 emocracy was a main political issue in the 1990s when Wahid, together with other civil society elements,
24 established Forum Demokrasi (Fordem, the Democracy Forum). This was due to the banning of Monitor magazine
25 by President Suharto which was perceived by Wahid as contrary to democracy which requires the case to be tested
26 in the courts. 1 Wahid made use of Fordem to develop a counter discourse to the monolithic interpretation of
27 Pancasila by the Suharto regime. This establishment was also related to the issue of sectarianism with the
28 establishment of ICMI as well as President Suharto's accommodation and co-optation of the rising middle class
29 modernist Muslims. In this regard, Wahid also challenged the ideas of Islamisation and of democracy introduced
30 by the modernist Muslims. 2 In this regard, Wahid argued that the fall of the world ideology of communism
31 did not automatically bring about a new era of democratisation in developing countries such as Indonesia. The
32 fall of communism caused the Soeharto regime to strengthen the political system with the argument of avoiding
33 the rising demand for separatism as had happened with the breakup of the Soviet Union and later Yugoslavia.
34 In line with this, the regime argued that Indonesia should preserve the nature of Indonesian society. In this
35 regard, Suharto followed the Sukarno regime's adoption of the integralistic nature of Indonesia, firstly introduced
36 by Supomo, Democracy became a national political issue in the 1990s following the fall of the Berlin wall in
37 1989, signifying the breakdown of communism as well as the rise of liberalism which advocated capitalism in
38 the form of globalisation. In line with the issue of globalisation, Suharto introduced the era of openness which
39 would imply more political participation. In line with this Suharto's regime created a semi-formal body of the
40 National Committee of Human Rights (Komite Nasional Hak-Hak Asasi Manusia, Komnas HAM) as a response
41 to the international trend of globalisation and liberalisation for the purpose of securing the national interest. 3
42 similar to the idea of cultural relativism. 4 The nature of the Soeharto regime was a militaristic regime which
43 runs the government oligarchy with the help of bureaucrats and technocrats. In regard with bureaucracy and

1 INTRODUCTION

44 technocracy Soeharto accommodate the modernist Muslims. Suharto developed cooperation with the modernist
45 Muslims since its establishment at the end of 1960s, as he was obsessed by modernisation, besides his plan was to
46 marginalise the political role of the traditionalist Muslims. Indeed, Soeharto wanted to maintain power for himself
47 D by centralizing the power and did not tolerate a strong political party, namely Partai Persatuan Pembangunan,
48 PPP (the United Development Party, UDP) whose members came from the traditionalist Muslims.

49 The traditionalist Muslims never had a close relationship with the regime because the former was mostly
50 associated with the United Development Party, main political force after the ban of Indonesian Communist Party
51 (Partai Komunis Indonesia, PKI). The regime considered improperly that traditionalist Muslims developed an
52 Islamic ideological, aspiring to establish an Islamic state or to interpret the national ideology of Pancasila by the
53 Shari'ah. Actually, they developed fiqh paradigm which advocated the Pancasila state, but the regime did not
54 tolerated any political opposition as an instrument for developing democracy. Accordingly the regime tried to
55 intervene to political parties, namely UDP and Partai Demokrasi Indonesia, PDI (Indonesian Democracy Party,
56 IDP).

57 Wahid considered correctly that the association of the traditionalist Muslims to UDP was not conducive to
58 the development of Nahdlatul Ulama, NU (the Revival of the Clergy), a religious mass organization. It was very
59 easy for the regime to intervene the internal affairs of the UDP as a fusion of some Islamic parties of different
60 political orientations. In this regard UDP failed to formulate a coherent party platform which enabled them to do
61 checks and balances to the regime. Accordingly Wahid did not want to consolidate Indonesian democratization
62 by political party. In line with this he tried to empower NU to play a role of civil society: providing checks and
63 balances to the government. For that purposes, Wahid, the chief executive leader of NU, released its affiliation
64 to the United Development Party (PPP). At the same time, he tried to convince Suharto to adopt the idea of
65 civil society for the purpose of development of democracy in Indonesia. His efforts were relatively successful
66 to influence the regime to support the development of NU, however the regime was not concerned with the
67 development of democracy. On the contrary, Suharto tried to maintain power by means of co-optation, but it
68 was not easy for him to coopted NU in which the leadership of pesantren (traditional Islamic system of education)
69 under the clerics was not regulated hierarchal.

70 Soeharto was very successful to co-opt the modernist Muslims after his success to approach to its chief
71 leaderships. Indeed, the modernist Muslims had tendency to develop the bureaucratization of Islam as well as
72 the agenda of Islamization. In line with this, Soeharto believed that he was able to control them and accordingly
73 he gave his approval for establishing ICMI. The establishment of ICMI on 6 December 1990 was one of the more
74 successful Muslim efforts made to approach the secular Suharto regime. 5 It was concomitant with Suharto's
75 efforts to expand his political basis to balance the rising power of the military. 6 Wahid did not agree with the
76 cooperation, developed by the regime, with the modernist Muslims, which was considered as a kind of 'marriage
77 of convenience', not strong enough to resolve the ideological conflicts between the followers of secular and Islamic
78 aspirations. 7 II. Soeharto and the Modernist Muslims on the Modernization

79 The neo-modernist Muslims had employed democracy as a tool for intellectual analysis in the 1970s 8 as they
80 were educated in both religious and secular institutions so that they were proficient in both Islamic and secular
81 knowledge. In this regard, Nurcholish Madjid was a pioneer who argued 'yes for Islam and no for Islamic parties'.
82 This was as a response to Suharto's regime which was hostile towards Islam. 9 By so doing, Madjid informed
83 the regime that Islam was different from Islamic parties so that he supported the idea of a secular state which
84 differentiated the management of state and that of religion. In other words, he supported the idea of a democratic
85 state. Wahid agreed with Madjid's proposition of 'yes for Islam and no for Islamic parties', but he, actually, had
86 a slightly different understanding from Madjid on the concept of democracy. In this regard, Madjid was likely
87 to insist on promoting Islam as the dominant culture for Indonesia akin to that of Christianity for people of the
88 USA. 10 As we know, the political power of the New Order regime was run by three elite groups that are the
89 military, bureaucracy and technocracy. These three elite groups ran an oligarchic government as the dominant
90 Accordingly, he, then, joined with ICMI in order to fulfil his idea of the bureaucratization of Islamic affairs, with
91 the help of the government. political power, namely the military elites, was not able to run the government
92 without the supports of the bureaucrat and technocrat elites. It was not surprising that the new order regime
93 pursued technocratic and bureaucratic approaches. 11 Indeed, the military had great political power since the
94 establishment of the new order regime as military officers occupied the most governmental offices at various levels
95 as well as strategic positions in the fields of economy and technology. 12 For that purpose, they tried to find
96 justification from the doctrine of the dual function of the military (dwi-fungsi ABRI). 13 The modernist Muslims
97 had not had a clear worldview on the relationship between Islam and the Pancasila state because of the different
98 nature of modern nation state and Islam. They tended to make uses of modern state to implement Shari'ah
99 (Islamic Law). This tendency contravened the nature of modern state which functions to protect individual as a
100 citizenship, implying a neutral to any religious affiliations. This contradiction can be resolved only by following
101 a true concept of modern state as well as to employ Islamic cosmology, namely the fiqh paradigm, However,
102 mostly the technocrats and bureaucrats came from either the secular nationalists or the modernist Muslims. The
103 modernist Muslims were relatively successful than their counterpart of the traditionalist Muslims to fill the offices
104 of bureaucracy and of technocracy as the result of agenda of Islamic modernization. Wahid's critic to them is
105 their adoption of ideological approach of the modern civilization which made them difficult to negotiate with
106 their counterpart of the traditionalist Muslims. This ideological approach was not very detrimental in the West

107 because of its ability to develop the mechanism of checks and balances within its societal systems, including its
108 political system, as well as its tolerance to other social groups. Examples of this ideological approach were their
109 ideas of bureaucratisation of Islam, of Islamisation, of Islamic culture, and of interpreting Pancasila through
110 Shari'ah. 14 11 Kaisiepo, M. (1997). "Dari Kepolitikkan Birokratik ke Korporatisme Negara: Birokrasi dan
111 Politik di Indonesia [From a bureaucratic politics to a corporate state: bureaucracy and politics in Indonesia]."
112 Jurnal Ilmu Politik(No. 2). 12 Ibid. 13 Adam Schwarz, A. (1994). A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia in the 1990s.
113 Sydney, Westview. 14 15 By the end of the 1980s Suharto was becoming worried about this military power under
114 the leadership of General Benny Murdani, which was perceived as being out of control and, accordingly, he tried
115 to reduce the power of the military. In doing so, Suharto made use of a professional argument that it was more
116 appropriate for the the Ministry of Research and Technology, under B.J. Habbie, a modernist Muslim, to handle
117 the military industries.

118 Encompassing by the idea of bureaucratisation of Islam, Amien Rais joined with the ICMI from the beginning
119 of its establishment. 16 The modernist Muslims also noticed the rising tensions between Suharto and Murdani,
120 a Catholic, and accordingly, they tried to approach the regime with their idea of Islamisation. They tried
121 to establish a kind of institution for the purpose of strengthening their bargaining power. At the same time,
122 Suharto also had an idea of co-opting Muslims. For that purpose, President Suharto endorsed the establishment
123 of ICMI and his protégé, the Minister of Research and Technology, B.J. Habibie headed the organisation. 17 The
124 establishment of ICMI was a further development of the success of modernist Muslims who had been absorbed
125 by the regime in the bureaucracy and technocracy. This did not mean that its member just came from Islamic
126 modernist organisations, as some Muslims of the traditionalist background also joined to ICMI. 18 What I'd like
127 to emphasise is that the idea of bureaucratisation of Islam was the thought of the modernist Muslims. 19 The
128 establishment of ICMI was just possible following the acceptance of Pancasila as the only basis for a political
129 party and mass organisation in the 1980s. Indeed, Suharto tried to co-opt all Muslim groups for the purpose
130 of balancing the political influence of the military. Suharto did not see ICMI as dangerous as the latter did
131 not challenge his policies, besides his belief was in his ability to control it. Indeed, ICMI gave more power to
132 the Suharto regime with their idea of the bureaucratisation of Islam. In 1995 this was confirmed by ICMI's
133 understanding of civil society in terms of masyarakat madani (the ideal society) which would give more power
134 to the executive. In this regard, I agree with Wahid's conclusion that: I'd like to congratulate to [Emha Ainun
135 Najib] on his resignation from ICMI. In my view, that organisation is the government's sub-ordinate, although
136 I never say that. 20 The majority of ICMI members were the modernist Muslims who aspired to the agenda of
137 the Islamisation of Indonesia and pursued their goal not by political parties but by 'the cultural approach'. This
138 was due to their position of being bureaucratic and technocratic elites. It is difficult to accuse these modernist
139 Muslims of ignoring the democratic procedure as they pursued the democratic mechanism to achieve their goal,
140 especially the Islamisation of Indonesia. In this regard, they did not want to establish an Islamic state, but rather
141 to interpret Pancasila by Islamic law, 21 Nurcholish's concept of 'Islam, yes Islamic party, no,' is denigrating to
142 the Islamic way of life. You can't do anything without political power.... Throughout the New Order Muslims
143 have been in a very low position. For me, ICMI is a means to political power. but in the long run it was possible
144 to direct the creation of an Islamic state as some Islamists joined with ICMI. This political Islam was clearly
145 stated by Bintang Pamungkas as follows:

146 2 22

147 3 III. Wahid's Counter Discourse to icmi a) Wahid's Critic on 148 ICMI's Understanding of Democracy

149 Wahid did not agree with the dominant role of Islam in political life in Indonesia because this was contrary to
150 the concept of the nation state which does not differentiate amongst people based on their religious background.
151 Accordingly, Wahid refused to join with ICMI because of its use of Islam as a flag:

152 Although I do not join ICMI, I hope that ICMI would produce something precious for our country. However,
153 I have a strong conviction that I should not join with ICMI. The reason is because of its use of the Islamic flag.
154 23 Wahid did not oppose the establishment of ICMI as long as it was for the purpose of political participation
155 which would make the regime more democratic. Wahid was critical of the sectarian understanding of democracy
156 by the modernist Muslims. 24 Wahid was also concerned with the Islamists' idea of proportionate democracy,
157 that Muslims should have proportionate representatives in the governmental system such as in the parliament
158 and ministry. It was one of political issues employed by the Islamists who considered that Christians were over
159 represented in the government. In this regard, Wahid reminded the Islamists that those who worked for the
160 governmental were not priests, but scholars. It was correct that Muslims per se, not the modernist Muslims,
161 were proportionately represented in the governmental system.

162 He evaluated that they were just concerned with power and not concerned with the democracy as the common
163 interest of all Indonesians. Wahid considered correctly that the modernist Muslims' thoughts on democracy were
164 contrary to the raison d'etre of the theory of democracy which would justify the concept of the nation state.
165 In this regard, Masykuri Abdillah evaluated precisely that these modernist Muslims just adopted the practical,
166 not philosophical, concept of democracy for the purpose of a practical arrangement of public affairs, in regard to

4 B) WAHID'S CRITIC OF ICMI'S UNDERSTANDING OF CIVIL SOCIETY

167 the fact that they did not live in an Islamic state. Philosophically, they argued that the nature of democracy,
168 of negotiation, inherently meant compromising the truth so that it was contrary to Islam which, they believed,
169 had dictated to them the absolute truth. Accordingly, they persisted in the efforts of interpreting Pancasila with
170 Syari'ah by means of the mechanism of democracy, namely procedural democracy, which justified the rule of
171 majority. 25 Wahid was also concerned with the fact that these modernist Muslims of ICMI ignored the essential
172 element of democracy which respects the rights of the minority. For example, these modernist Muslims insisted
173 that different levels of governmental systems should facilitate the creation of the bureaucratisation of religious
174 affairs. 26 I do not agree with Abdillah's assessment that Wahid just followed the liberal tradition. 27 In fact,
175 Wahid developed a theology of Islamic democracy as his response to the modern concept of democracy from the
176 Islamic point of view, namely the fiqh-plus paradigm. By so doing, he related religious aspirations to nonreligious
177 aspirations such as the concept of democracy, revitalising the fiqh paradigm to suit modern development. 28
178 Mujiburrahman argues that Wahid understood the concept of democracy as a kind of implementation of Islamic
179 universal values such as mutual deliberations (al-syura), justice (al-'adal), equality (al-musawah), and freedom
180 (al-huriyah) in the modern context.

181 More accurate was Mujiburrahman's argument that Wahid was a true Islamic thinker whose thought was
182 based on the Islamic tradition rooted in the Qur'an. 29 In other words, the adaptation of Islam to the form
183 of the concept of democracy was a kind of classical phenomenon of ushul al-fiqh which tried to accommodate
184 culture (al-'adah) into the norm, namely Syari'ah. 30 In line with this, Muslims should support the Republic of
185 Indonesia which is a commitment to the idea of liberal democracy. In this regard, he only committed to Islamic
186 values, namely democracy, not the form of an Islamic state. Wahid argued that Islamic law functioned only to
187 complement the existing culture, or in other words, Islam was a part of culture, not the other way around, with
188 Islam as an alternative to 'non-Islamic culture', such as believed by the Islamists. 31 Wahid did not agree with
189 a legal-formal approach developed by Islamists who still idealised the establishment of an Islamic state or at
190 least the interpretation of the national ideology of Pancasila in the view of Islamic law (Syari'ah). Furthermore,
191 radical Islamists such as Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) and Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI) had opposed
192 the idea of democracy because they considered that it was from the Western tradition.

193 Accordingly, his thought on the theology of Islamic democracy was to resolve the conflicting ideas between
194 secular aspirations and Islamic ones. 30 Ibid. 31 He also did not agree with the secular nationalists who advocated
195 the secular paradigm which tried to differentiate the public affairs of the state and those of the culture, including
196 religion. In this regard, Wahid advocated the fiqh paradigm as a moderate form of aspiration which tried to relate
197 the secular and theocratic aspirations. The fiqh paradigm believed in the concept of mutual legitimacy between
198 Islam and the state. In this regard, in 1982 Wahid wrote an article entitled 'Jangan Paksakan Paradigma Luar
199 terhadap Agama' [Do not Apply the Foreign Paradigms to Islam], 33 as his criticism toward the Islamists who
200 made use of modern ideologies for understanding Islam. Wahid believed that theology should form the basis for
201 Muslim responses to foreign concepts. 34 33 Abdurrahman Wahid, A. (1999). Prisma Pemikiran Abdurrahman
202 Wahid [Abdurrahman Wahid's Prismatic Thoughts]. Yogyakarta, LKiS. 34 Wahid did not agree with the idea of
203 interpreting Pancasila through Syari'ah, namely the idea of Islamisation, as it was in contradiction to the slogan
204 of Indonesian society that was 'unity in diversity' (Bhineka Tunggal Ika). Accordingly, he did not want any
205 religion to dominate Indonesian political life. He did not agree with the dominant role of Islam in Indonesian
206 political life in spite of the Muslim majority. This was due to the fact that the same status of the people's
207 majority religion was also true for Hindu-Buddhism before the coming of Islam. Accordingly, the status of Islam
208 as the majority religion was not enough to justify the dominant political role for its adherents. Indeed, Wahid
209 was aware of the historical development of this country so that he was able to envisage the proper role of religion,
210 namely Islam, in socio-political life in Indonesia. He had developed an open mind in accepting the plurality of
211 the Indonesian people and he accepted the Pancasila state. In line with this, he argued that the Muslims should
212 play the role of protector of the Republic of Indonesia and religious organisations to take a role in civil society
213 which provides checks and balances to the state.

214 Wahid persuaded Muslims not follow the way of non-Muslims in their efforts of preserving their minority
215 identities. If the Muslims tried to emphasise their identities, non-Muslims would increase their minority complex.
216 By so doing, Wahid required the Muslims to develop a mature attitude of not imitating the way of non-Muslims,
217 instead, approaching them to develop cooperation for the purpose of the unity of Indonesia. In line with this
218 Wahid did not agree with ICMI's conception of masyarakat madani which clearly signified an Islamic identity
219 and argued for a dominant role of Islam. Moreover, he did not agree with ICMI's understanding of civil society
220 with masyarakat madani which would justify a strong executive institution in the hands of President Suharto.

221 4 b) Wahid's Critic of ICMI's Understanding of Civil Society

222 Wahid did not agree with the idea of bureaucratisation of Islam because he believed that Islamic practices should
223 be under the control of Islamic leaders. Moreover, Wahid tried to empower the existing Islamic organisations
224 to play the role of civil society which would create checks and balances to the state and he provided the
225 theological foundation for that purpose which enabled Muslims to develop cooperation with non-Muslims. 35 In
226 1990s Wahid's implementation of Gramsci's idea of counter hegemony instigated a discourse of civil society
227 in the national political life. This term of civil society was introduced by the young generation of NU in
228 1990s, namely the followers of Wahid, who tried to support Wahid's critical stance towards the regime. 36

229 There appeared intellectual debates about civil society amongst different socio-political forces and they proposed
230 different terminologies. 37 In this regard, ICMI, which was accommodated by the regime, tried to understand civil
231 society with *masyarakat madani* a comparable terminology explored through their understanding of the history
232 of Islam. 38 By so doing, ICMI did not want to use the notion of civil society to confront the state as they did not
233 want to confront the Suharto regime. In other words, they supported the position of the strong executive such as
234 run by Suharto. This ICMI understanding of civil society was different from the modern concept of civil society
235 which emphasised its relative independence from the state. However, as a discourse, this understanding can be
236 justified by the original term civil society which came from the Latin *civilis* society introduced by Cicero. 39 35
237 Mark Woodward, M. (2007). *Translator's Introduction. Islam, pluralism, and democracy*. Arizona, Consortium
238 for Strategic Communication, Arizona State University. 36 Thang D Nguyen and Frank Jurgen Richter, p. 76
239 37 Rahardjo, M. D. (1999). *Masyarakat Madani: Agama, Kelas Menengah dan Perubahan Sosial [Civil Society:
240 Religion, Middle Class, and Social Changes]*. Jakarta, LP3ES dan LSAF. 38 This term of *masyarakat madani*
241 was introduced by Anwar Ibrahim at the Festival Istiqlal seminar on 26 th September 1995. This terminology was
242 a translation from the Arabic word "mujtama' madani", introduced by Prof. Naquib Attas, a historian of Islamic
243 civilisation from Malaysia. The word of "madani" means civil or civilised which reflects civilisation, similar to
244 other Arabic words such as *hadlari*, *tsaqafi* and *tamaddun*. See Dr. ??9 It is likely that when a concept becomes
245 an area of contestation as a concept it is very often related to contestation of power. This concept of *masyarakat*
246 *madani* is similar to the terms of *societas civilis* (civil society) introduced by Cicero (106-1043 B.C.) whose
247 meaning reflects to the political society which has civic code as an instrument for managing societal life. The
248 members of ICMI understand *masyarakat madani* in the same way as Cicero, as Muhammad the Prophet Didin
249 Damanhuri of ICMI also admitted that this different understanding was due to both having different historical
250 backgrounds in their conceptualisation. He did not want to follow the European understanding of civil society.
251 ??0 Indeed, he, together with other members of ICMI, tended towards the bureaucratisation of Islam and he
252 advocated the Islamisation of knowledge. Ahmad Baso, the young generation of NU, criticised ICMI, especially
253 Nurcholish Madjid, who proposed *masyarakat madani* as an alternative of civil society. ??1 IV.

254 5 Wahid's Counter Discourse on Soeharto's Monolithic Inter- 255 pretation of Pancasila

256 It was possible to Islamise the modern concept of civil society, but Wahid did not want to do so because this
257 may divert the real meaning of the concept of civil society itself. Moreover, this may blurred his main concern
258 of developing democracy in Indonesia. Accordingly, he preferred to use the prevailing institutions in order to
259 eliminate the primordial social barricades amongst different social groups such as those based on religion, ethnicity,
260 race, and religious denomination. He believed that the neutral institutions, namely an open system, was more
261 conducive to the development of democracy in a plural society such as Indonesia. Indeed, Wahid wanted to play
262 the role of the teacher of the whole of Indonesia so that he emphasised his identity as an Indonesian rather than
263 as a Muslim. In this regard, he made use of Islam as the complementary factor, not a supplementary one, so that
264 he was not concerned with the issue of the Islamisation of the knowledge. This was due to being more concerned
265 with the substance of the ideas than with their terminologies. As a result, he did not want to give civil society
266 an exclusive Islamic term. This did not imply that he opposed Muslims who wanted to develop Islamic concepts
267 and institutions, as long as they did not intend to offer them as an alternative to the national state.

268 Wahid did not agree with the sectarian character of ICMI and accordingly, he, together with intellectuals and
269 activists from different religious backgrounds, established Forum Demokrasi (Fordem, the Democracy Forum) in
270 the cause of the consolidation of democracy in Indonesia. Wahid established Fordem because he did not want to
271 jeopardise Muslims' relationship with the military.

272 I would like to emphasise that Fordem was not a mass organisation or an advocacy organisation, but just a
273 forum for those concerned with the development of democracy in Indonesia.

274 The Democracy Forum is not a mass organisation, but an education group, to improve the practices of
275 democracy. This forum is also to deal with the problems of democracy for the future, for example, the
276 problems of culture and of conducive political related factors for national integration. Recently, there appear
277 some phenomena of groupings related to both regionalism and sectarianism....In the view of democracy, what is
278 required is the condition of freedom of thought and of association, besides respecting different opinions amongst
279 each other. ??2 First is to expand the participation of people's voices in order to mature the country in the
280 process of democratisation; second is to improve communication amongst the different groups of the supporters
281 of democratisation; third is to develop a link amongst the supporters of democratisation which are still dispersed
282 and small; fourth is to preserve the tradition of the democracy movements by all means, including publication.

283 It was interesting that Wahid did not make use of NU as the backbone of his political manoeuvre because he
284 did not want to put people against the regime, indeed, it was in line with his commitment to NU as a religious
285 organisation which should not deal with practical politics. Wahid realised that it was not easy for him to criticise
286 the regime without negative impact for NU so he established Fordem for that purpose. Regarding the action
287 plans of Fordem, Wahid mentioned four points: 43 Wahid made use of the Forum Democracy to publicise some
288 statements, namely a counter discourse, challenging the formal interpretation of Pancasila by a regime set on the
289 integralistic nature of Indonesian society. On the other hand, he developed a counterdiscourse which supported

5 WAHID'S COUNTER DISCOURSE ON SOEHARTO'S MONOLITHIC INTERPRETATION OF PANCASILA

290 liberal democracy as well as his interpretation of the Islamic tradition following the fiqh paradigm. Accordingly,
291 Fordem had put Wahid into a state of the highest tension with the regime. ??4 Suharto regime to be unable to
292 accuse him of being a conservative or a radical eligible for silencing by the regime.

293 Prominent in Wahid's establishment of Fordem was his understanding of Antonio Gramsci's counterdiscourse.
294 Wahid was brave enough to create a counter-hegemony to the regime because he was able to form an alliance with
295 some military officers under the leadership of General Benny Murdani, who felt disappointed with the increasing
296 role of the modernist Muslims under the leadership of B.J. Habibie. Wahid knew how to make political moves and
297 he saved his position by playing on the political balances amongst the different of the political forces. Moreover,
298 he received support from other Indonesian people beyond his traditional NU circle as well as the Muslim circle
299 generally in his efforts at consolidating democracy in Indonesia. Last but not least, Wahid obtained political
300 influence from his position as a chairman of NU as the biggest mass organisation in Indonesia.

301 The military was traumatised and worried about the modernist Muslims' idealism about an Islamic state such
302 as had manifested in the history of Indonesia. Accordingly, Wahid tried to keep the relations between the military
303 and the modernist Muslims from breaking into conflict. He was worried about the military's response to the
304 modernist Muslims whose interest was in interpreting Pancasila according to Islamic law. This was due to his
305 belief that conflict would endanger the development of democracy in Indonesia.

306 Wahid kept a close eye on the political rivalry between the military and ICMI such as manifested clearly in their
307 competition to install their people in the candidacy for the vice-president in 1992. In this regard, the military
308 presented a fait accompli to Suharto with the announcement of its faction in parliament which promoted
309 General Tri Soetrisno to become the candidate for vice-president. It was clearly aimed at blocking any chance of
310 B.J. Habibie becoming candidate for vice-president.

311 Wahid's political influence was greater than the leaders of political parties as he had real support from the
312 people. Accordingly, he was able to assume the role that normally would belong to a political party to control
313 the course of the government. ??6 The government's claim for being more knowledgeable about anything in
314 society is a common feature everywhere in our country. This kind of attitude is not conducive to improving
315 the quality of human resources and, moreover, causes the excessive Gus Dur considered that the Suharto regime
316 had ruled autocratically by assuming the role of true interpreter of the national ideology of Pancasila such as
317 we see in his statement below: bureaucratisation of the existing governmental institutions. This means that
318 legislative institutions do not function as a tool for supporting democracy in long term. ??7 Culture should not
319 be interpreted monolithically by focusing on ...anything which is considered aesthetic just for a pure aesthetical
320 goal. ...The prevailing authoritarianism is not a legacy of culture or a product of the national personality, but a
321 side effect of a system which has been working out of control for more than 20 years.

322 Wahid was also critical of the Suharto regime's policy of bureaucratisation of culture: 48 ...the conflict within
323 the national leaders of NU on the issue of SDSB is an internal NU problem which has been intervened in by
324 the government, namely the Ministers of Religious Affairs and of Home Affairs. This is a dangerous precedent,
325 namely reducing the independence of NU.

326 The character of an autocratic state manifested in all aspects of societal life and this also emerged for NU
327 in the issue of national lottery (SDSB, Sumbangan Dermawan Sosial Berhadiah, a lottery with the name of
328 Philanthropist's Social Contribution with a Prize). Wahid commented to the issue of SDSB as follows: 49 V.
329 Wahid's Non-Revolutionary Method and Zigzag Strategy Indeed, it was not an easy job to be critical of the
330 regime as he came under strong pressure from the government as well as other elements of society. At that time,
331 all political parties and mass organisations had supported Suharto for the next presidential election. He did not
332 want to support Suharto's autocratic regime and he argued that it would not be appropriate for NU to give
333 support for presidential candidacy as NU was not a political party, but a mass religious organisation.

334 To avoid the pressure from the government and the some elements of society, in 1992 Wahid carried out a mass
335 meeting (Rapat Akbar) of NU in Jakarta which confirmed NU's loyalty to the national ideology of Pancasila and
336 the Constitution rather than surrendering to Suharto's pressure to support his leadership for the next election.
337 This mass meeting was also to remind certain groups to not force decisions on the basis of group interest, such
338 as stated by Mustofa Bisri:

339 A mass meeting or rally is, indeed, to be an arena for a show of power or to challenge certain groups who
340 want to pursue their interests by ignoring the constitution and neglecting unity and integrity. 'To 47 Jawa Pos,
341 10 August 1991. ??8 break the constitution, NU would need to be defeated first' is likely what Wahid wants to
342 say. ??9 The regime was not happy with the Rapat Akbar of NU just three months away from parliamentary
343 elections and Wahid was warned by Lieutenant Colonel Prabowo Subianto, Suharto's son-in-law, that "he had
344 strayed beyond the boundaries of acceptable political conduct ...[he] was to stick with religious issues and stay out
345 of politics." As a result of Wahid's commitment to democracy, he opted to leave the Nahdlatul Ulama and headed
346 up Democracy Forum. ??1 It is likely that the establishment of the Democracy Forum is to adopt foreign ideas
347 which had been practised unsuccessfully during the old order regime. These foreign ideas belong to liberalism
348 which is not suitable to Indonesian culture.

349 In response to Wahid's manoeuvre, the government through its ministers accused him of being the follower of
350 liberalism, with Abdul Gafur, former Minister of Youth and Sport, saying that: 52 If I am pressured to choose
351 only one, I would like to be a chief of the Democracy Forum. ...There is no prohibition for me outside NU. The
352 Democracy Forum is not an illegal organisation.

353 Pressure on Wahid to decline the candidacy of the NU leadership also came from K.H. Ali Yafie', vice-Rais
354 'Am of NU, and K.H. Yusuf Hasyim, who were close with the government. The reason was Wahid's approval
355 for proposing funding to YDBKS (Yayasan Dana Bakti Kesejahteraan Sosial, Monetary Foundation for Serving
356 Social Welfare), management of the national lottery of SDSB, and his participation in Fordem. This issue of
357 funding from YDBKS caused conflict between K.H. Ali Yafie and Wahid. It was not usual that Wahid was able
358 to win support over the institution of Rais 'Am, as the ultimate body of NU. In this regard, K.H. Ali Yafie tried
359 to bring NU closer to the Suharto regime in line with other Islamic organisations, while Wahid argued for the
360 neutrality of NU toward the regime. In this regard, Wahid pulled something of a skilled political manoeuvre
361 through his relationship to Fordem.

362 Responding to the pressure, Wahid asserted, in fact, he preferred to be a leader of Fordem than a leader of
363 NU: 53 In fact he would not leave NU if there was no guarantee for the role of NU as a critical force in civil
364 society. In 1994 he postponed his intention of leaving NU and persisted in his willingness to head NU for the
365 next term as he envisaged the danger of co-optation of NU under a new executive leader:

366 I am prepared to be re-elected as the executive general leader [of NU] in the national congress, for nothing
367 other than to block politicians who want to seize the position of the elite leaders of NU. This is due to no existing
368 leadership candidates who are able to challenge these politicians. Their political moves should be blocked before
369 they are able to bring disorder and the programs of Khittah 1926 fail, which has been achieved. If they come
370 to power, Khittah 1926 will be dragged into political affiliations. ??4 The nature of push and pull between
371 political freedom on one side and political stability on the other side in the process of the development of
372 our democracy will result in the semi-authoritarian nature of the new order regime...our democracy is not a
373 complete democracy, but also not completely authoritarian. This nature of an in-between governmental system
374 has caused some supporters of the prodemocracy movement as well as government officials to worry continuously.
375 The supporters of the prodemocracy movement are worried about the narrowing individual sphere of political
376 freedom, while the government officials are worried about the possibility of an out of control situation which may
377 have a negative impact on economic development.

378 Indeed, in 1994 Wahid was very vocal about the regime, although he was aware of the possibility of the Suharto
379 regime blocking his desire to be re-elected as the general executive leader of NU. He already mentioned publicly
380 that the new order regime was a kind of semi-authoritarian regime: 55

381 The competition for the position of the general chief of the executive section of NU in Cipasung in 1994, indeed,
382 was tense. There were three competing candidates, but Fahmi Saefudin cancelled his candidacy on seeing the
383 government's intervention in internal NU affairs. At last, Wahid received more voices from the NU delegates than
384 K.H. Abu Hasan who had backing from the government. ??6 Indeed, 1994, pro-democracy supporters became
385 more frequent in expressing their political concerns than before and the Suharto regime became unable to handle
386 them so that it was beginning to pursue repressive methods such as banning some books by the Supreme Court.
387 In this regard, General Attorney Singgih S.H. accused pro-democracy 54 Jawa Pos, 24 November 1994. ??5
388 Wahid, A. (1994) ...if previously we were shaken by the forces of the left and the right extremists, the threat in
389 1994 right now is the presence of certain individuals who are seeking to spread and implement liberal democracy
390 of the Western style in Indonesia. ... The government will face threats which would be dangerous to the state.
391 ??7 Wahid's approach to the regime was confusing some pro-democracy groups. In this regards Franz Magnis
392 Suseno argued that given Wahid was not an ideologist it was easy for Wahid to comply with the Suharto regime's
393 requirement of supporting Golkar. However, Wahid did not pursue his purpose by all means, but he would not
394 be stopped by abstract principles from doing something useful. Convinced in his role as democrat, he did not
395 feel discomfort in approaching the regime if it was useful in avoiding violence.

396 Although the government accused Wahid of being the follower of liberalism, the Suharto regime was not able
397 to get rid of him as he was a leader of an Islamic organisation, namely NU, which, of course, was critical of
398 secularism. Furthermore, to such an extent Wahid was able to convince the majority of NU's followers that he
399 was implementing Islamic values such as formulated in his conception of the theology of Islamic democracy.

400 Suharto did not want to give approval to Wahid's leadership of NU. It was also easy for Suharto to refuse
401 to receive his visit together with other NU leaders as Wahid was careless, saying Suharto was stupid when he
402 had an interview with Adam Schwarz. Accordingly, some NU clerics were getting worried about this situation
403 as NU has a tradition of having a good relationship with the government. Accordingly, Wahid tried to approach
404 the Suharto regime to make sure that there was no conspiracy to overthrow him from his position of general
405 executive leader of NU. people for his political manoeuvre. Indeed, Suharto did not want any challenge to his
406 power. This was clearly manifested in his using a repressive method 60 to suppress the supporters of Megawati
407 who was persisting in being the candidate for president. In this regard, Gus Dur had suggested that Megawati
408 withdraw her presidential candidature. ??1 Responding to the regime's repression of popular dissent, especially
409 the October 1996 anti-Chinese and anti-Christian riots in East Java, the stronghold of Wahid's followers, Wahid
410 moderated his stand towards the regime because he did not want people suffering out of his political stand.
411 Accordingly, in November 1996, Wahid met with Suharto for the first time in a pesantren in Probolinggo.
412 Moreover, Wahid accompanied Suharto's eldest daughter, Tutut, campaigning for Golkar NU's pesantren, thus
413 he was disappointing his pro-democracy friends.

414 In a similar way, Amien Rais, previously associated with ICMI, also challenged the candidacy of Suharto as
415 president and argued the need for the presidential succession in Indonesia.

6 62

416 There was a tendency for Gus Dur to employ a devious communication. In the fiqh, it is called by mukhollafah
 417 (opposite understanding), not mafhum muwaffaqah (not understanding the text). For example, when Gus Dur
 418 was hand-in-hand with Tutut, it was likely that people viewed that Gus Dur supported Tutut. In fact, Gus
 419 Dur approached Tutut in order to instigate people's jealousy and accordingly, he did not need to criticise her as
 420 people already criticised her. To conclude, Gus Dur's objective was to instigate other political groups' jealousy.
 421 In this way, Tutut's burden increased with the result that her political career was effectively blocked.
 422

423 In this regard, Al-Zastrouw, once Wahid's secretary, argued: 63 The explanation for Wahid's pro-Golkar
 424 movement in 1996, at the time of high level of public criticism of the regime, still remained unclear and incomplete.
 425 In this regard, I agree with Mohamad Sobary who tried to give an explanation based on Wahid's short article
 426 which employs the idea of khariqul 'adah (nyleneh, miraculous, but in positive meaning). 64 60 It resulted in the
 427 tragedy of 27 July 1996 involving the military's endorsement to the supporters of Soerjadi to attack and occupy
 428 PDI's headquarter controlled by the supporters of Megawati. ??1 In line with this, Mohamad Sobary challenged
 429 Romo Mangun's argument that Wahid did not want to see the political breakout between the government,
 430 symbolised by Golkar, and Islam, symbolised by PPP. Sobary argued that it was difficult for PPP to manipulate
 431 Muslims' support against the government. 65 I would like also to add to Sobary's argument that Wahid's attitude
 432 can be referred to his status of being a cleric who has the task of providing religious teachings, neither opposing
 433 the government nor accumulating power for the purpose of imposing his political standpoint. 66 VI.

7 Conclusion

434 Wahid developed his thought on democracy in three phases; modernisation of pesantren, pesantren as civil society,
 435 and the establishment of Fordem. This suited his position at three periods, in which the previous stages was the
 436 foundation for sustaining the role of pesantren in the next stage, namely in the national political system with
 437 its advocacy of democracy. These stages also indicate that Wahid did not want to wage a revolution as he tried
 438 to transform his political influence from his traditional background of pesantren into nationwide support of the
 439 people for his advocacy of liberal democracy. He was conscious of not using Islam, but rather democracy, to
 440 challenge Suharto's autocratic regime, because he did not want to be accused of being a radical/militant Muslim,
 441 which would only justify the latter in repressing the former. In line with a non-revolutionary method, he did
 442 not oppose the regime frontally: at one time he approached the regime and at another time he remained at a
 443 distance from the regime. This was due to his realistic attitude to politics which forced him to pursue a means
 444 for establishing democracy tolerable to the Suharto regime. This realistic attitude was also based on his belief in
 445 the power of an idea, namely democracy, which could delegitimise authoritarian regimes. This nonrevolutionary
 446 method was consistent with Wahid's role as a cleric, but he did not make use of Islam as his counter discourse
 447 against the Suharto regime, but rather democracy. ^{1 2 3 4}

¹ Jawa Pos, 19 September 1991.21 Michael Feener, R. M.(2007). Muslim Legal Thought in Modern Indonesia. Leiden, Cambridge University Press.22 AdamSchwarz, A. (1994). A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia in the 1990s. Sydney, Westview.23 Jawa Pos, 6 December 1990.

². "Islam, Pluralism and Democracy." Consortium for Strategic Communication: 10.

³(D)

⁴Bisri, M. (1992). Gus Dur dan Rapat Akbar N.U.-nya [Gus Dur and His N.U.'s Great Gathering]. Jawa Pos. East Java, Jawa Pos.

title 'The Islamic State Does Not Exist' (Panji Masyarakat, 1 November 1982). His interview created agreement and disagreement for some weeks and one of the most important responses was the article written by Mohammad Roem, a leader of Masyumi, in February 1983. He supported Rais's statement. Rais's breakthrough has paved the way for other Muslim intellectuals and leaders to go in the same direction. Apart from this article, Syafi'i Ma'arif, his colleague in Muhammadiyah, gave an evident that in 1987 Amien Rais still believed in the unity of Islam and the state. which considers phenomena in term of secular and religious knowledge at once. Another modernist Muslim who was still confused on the Pancasila state was Amien Rais. His association with ICMI was confirming his support of bureaucratisation, a part of his disagreement with an Islamic state, at least in 1982, in his interview with the Islamic magazine, Panji Masyarakat, with the bombastic

Figure 1:

[Note: 32 Abdullah, M.(1999). Demokrasi Dipersimpangan Makna: Respon Intelektual Muslim Indonesia terhadap Konsep Demokrasi (1966-1993) [The Competing Meanings of Democracy: Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals' Response to the Democracy] Yogyakarta, Tiara Wacana.]

Figure 2:

Abdurrahman Wahid's Efforts at Consolidating Democracy in Indonesia at Soeharto Authoritarian Regime Era (1990-1998)

supporters of spreading liberal democracy by saying that:

In line with humanism, Wahid did not always oppose the Suharto regime. At certain time, he approached this Suharto regime in order to ensure the latter did not repress

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Figure 3:

Figure 4:

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