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Nurcholish Madjid's Neo-Modernism in Substantive Islamic Movements in Indonesia

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Abstract:

At this time, there is a stagnation of thought among Muslims regarding whether the concept of an Islamic state is still being debated or not. Islamic socio-political movements are divided into two streams, namely Substantive Islam and Symbolic Islam. Nurcholish Madjid firmly rejects the politicization of Islam in the interests of political groups that are members of Islamic parties. With the motto: "Islam Yes, Islamic Party No!". According to Nurcholish Madjid, Islamic political power is not always related to Islamic parties. He tries to convey a more substantial view of Islam, not just symbolism. Seeing the current situation, the criticism conveyed by Nurcholish Madjid is still very relevant. This research was conducted to explore the relevance of Nurcholish Madjid's thoughts on state politics in Indonesia by considering the current situation. Based on the results of this research, it was revealed that Nurcholish Madjid chose Islam which is more substantial than just symbolism. This has its roots in the universal values of Islam, not just the symbol of the "Islamic party" itself. If we look at the current situation, the criticism raised by Nurcholish Madjid is still relevant because, at this time, the politicization of religion is generally used to attack political opponents or increase party electability. Instead of using Islam as a moral guide for politics, political elites tend to use Muslims for individual interests.

Keywords: neo-modernism, substantive Islam, cak nur, Pancasila, political Islam

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1. Introduction

The author is interested in researching the concept of neo-modernism in the substantive Islamic movement in Indonesia. The formulation of the problem raised in this study is how relevant Nurcholish Madjid's thoughts are to state politics in Indonesia. At the same time, the purpose of this research is to find out the relevance of Nurcholish Madjid's thoughts on constitutional politics in Indonesia.

Currently, Muslims are facing an impasse in thinking about the question of whether the concept of an Islamic state is still being debated or not. But actually, this problem has been solved since the 20th century when the state ideology was determined. In the Islamic socio-political movement, there is a division into two streams, namely substantive Islam and symbolic Islam. Substantive Islam refers to Islam that focuses more on action, social piety or as a liberation theology that emphasizes social goodness; as Muhammad Abdurrahman one of the Islamic thinkers once said:

"I found Islam in Paris, although there were no Muslims there, and I did not find Islam in Egypt, even though there were many Muslims here." ~ Muhammad Abdurrahman

This expression shows that substantive Islam has a more socialist orientation, as explained by Ali Ashgar Engineer in his book "Islam and Liberation Theology", that:

"No society can be called Islamic if there is still exploitation of the weak and oppressed, even though Islamic ritual practices are carried out even formalized as law." ~ Ali Ashgar Engineer

The people must be good at seeing who is among the *dhu'afa* and *mustadh'afin*, people who must be sided with by the people. The aim of taking sides is not to achieve material victory for one party but to seek justice and the common good. Muslims remain a *wasathan community*, but if there is an inevitable conflict between *mustadh'afin*. The Ummah is not a political unit that moves based on purely rational measures but moves based on awareness. It is this normative awareness, awareness of truth and justice, that has the potential to conflict with class consciousness (Amir, Shuriye, & Daoud, 2013; Kuntowijoyo, 2009).

Indonesia's state administration proceeded following the political transformation of *natural society*, leading to *civic society* progressively. The concept of theo-democracy has started to work even though it is halting, especially regarding the concept

of democracy because there are still bans, courts, telephone culture and restrictions (Arifin & Abbas, 2007). We still need to see whether historical developments towards progress are only superficial, Preamble and symbolic. What is important is that people's political participation will determine the nation's political future (Jumanda, Yufriadi, Ramadhan Fitri, & Refliandi, 2023).

Efforts are needed to ensure that political will and awareness continue to have the momentum, support and historical opportunities to develop. For this reason, the attitude that is completely in opposition to society and the attitude that is completely in power from the government needs to be abandoned. Currently, the important issue ahead is industrialization. The apathy that occurred in the past due to the political marginalization of Muslims must be replaced with a more participative attitude (Kurniawan & Afifi, 2023; Maarif et al., 2010). Muslims are no longer allowed to act passively like people who only give consent but must act as citizens who are active, critical and aware of their rights and obligations.

Indonesia is not an Islamic or secular country but a religious country, which means that the country supports and facilitates its citizens in carrying out their religious obligations. This statement is under the situation in this country, with the existence of government policies that are in line with the teachings of the Islamic religion. Through this policy, the state has assisted its citizens in fulfilling their religious obligations. In the development of this reality, in the 1980s and 1990s, there was a process of political relaxation between Islam and the state. The state is starting to show a "friendly" attitude towards Islam and is willing to develop accommodation (Maarif, 1996; Yufriadi, Ramadhan, & Afifi, 2023). In Nurcholish Madjid's view, Political Islam can be interpreted as a strong tendency towards Islam that is always associated with opposition to the government. According to him, this happened because Islam had a consistent role as a "rallying" ideology against colonialism. This role contributed to the struggle for national independence because Muslims put forward political ideas that were inconsistent and inconsistent with the practical demands of today. As a result, political prejudice emerged that linked Islamic orientation with a nationally oriented government (Madjid, 1987).

There is a political conflict between Islam and the State in Indonesia, which is mostly caused by idealism and Islamic political activism, which tends to prioritize legalistic and formalistic aspects. The idealism and activism of Muslim politicians are

characterized by a formal and legalistic approach, which results in a complex political relationship between Islam and the state in Indonesia. Just through education and intellectual transformation, the state's attitude towards political Islam can change. During the independence and post-reform era, political Islam was seen as a power competition that had the potential to disrupt the country's national foundations. This view has an impact on the state's desire to obstruct and control Islamic political movements ideologically. The antagonistic politics between Islam and the state is largely due to the idealism and activism of political Islam, which tends to be legalistic and focused on formality (Afifi & Abbas, 2023b; Effendy, 2001).

According to Nurcholish Madjid, Islam is not a theory or ideology. Furthermore, in the political context, Islam is in a position that is in line with Sharia and closer to philosophy with its characteristics and dynamics. The concept of the Islamic State is seen as a deviation from the proportional relationship between religion and the state. The state is an aspect of world life that has a rational and collective dimension, while religion is an aspect of life that has a spiritual and personal dimension (Afifi, 2022; Busyro, Ananda, & Adlan, 2019; Maarif, 2009; Shihab, 2019; Zarkasyi, 2013). This term describes a change in Islamic political ideology in Indonesia from a focus on formalism in state structures or making Islam the basis of the state towards a more substantial understanding of Islamic values in relation to the state (Afifi & Abbas, 2023a; Fitri, Afifi, & Abbas, 2022). In this context, Islam is no longer seen symbolically but is understood in the spirit of the values it promotes, such as the values of justice (*al-'adl*), equality (*al-musawah*), and deliberation (*shura*), which are then applied in the life of the state. The goal to be achieved is not the establishment of an Islamic state or the domination of Islamic ideology but a just and prosperous society. In this context, Islam is seen as being in line with the construction of the Indonesian national unitary state. There is no need for a legalistic approach between Islam and the state as long as the state operates within a framework of values that do not conflict with Islamic teachings and values ideologically or politically (Wahid, 1999; Wijoyo, 2018).

The tradition of the relationship between Islam and politics in Indonesia has a very old history. Its roots can be traced to the late 13th and early 14th centuries when Islam was first introduced and spread widely in the Indonesian archipelago. Throughout its history, Islam has interacted significantly with socio-cultural and political

realities at the local level and has been involved in the world of politics (Nasution, 1955; Nurdin & Abbas, 2012). It can be said that Islam has been an integral part of political history in Indonesia throughout its development. However, it cannot be concluded directly that Islam is a political religion.

The perception that existed at the time of independence and after the reformation considered the extension of political Islam as a competition for power that could disrupt the nation's foundations. This view has an impact on the state's desire to hinder and try to control the ideological movements of Islamic politics. The political tension between Islam and the state is mostly caused by idealism and Islamic political activism, which tends to be formalistic and legalistic in nature. The disharmony of this relationship was caused by the different views of the founders of the republic, who were mostly Muslim, regarding the direction of the Indonesian state, whether it was based on Islam or was nationalist.

Although efforts to create a harmonious and complementary relationship between Islam and the state have not been fully successful, there are important signs indicating the return of political Islam to the political life of this country. This new indication is seen in the increasingly friendly attitude of the state towards Islam, which is marked by the implementation of certain policies that are considered in line with the social, economic, cultural and political interests of Islam. Evidence of accommodation can be categorized into four different types: (1) accommodation in government structures, (2) accommodation in legislation, (3) accommodation in infrastructure, and (4) accommodation in the cultural sector.

One of the most striking forms of accommodation is the appointment of a new generation of thinkers and activists from political Islam circles into the state's executive and legislative bodies. This phenomenon has two main reasons, namely sociological reasons and political reasons. Structural accommodation develops both in terms of quantity and substance. Not only are more Muslim activists being recruited into the bureaucratic and political machine, but they are also being promoted to higher positions. More broadly, the state's cultural accommodation of Islam is not a new phenomenon. This is even an ongoing discourse, which is influenced by the process of acculturation between Islam and the peculiarities of space and time in Indonesia. The results of these cultural encounters varied widely, depending on the abilities of the groups involved in the reconciliation process. In general, these accommodations can

range from a partial (syncretic) scale to a total (pure) scale. Given that "Islam has developed very quickly and peacefully in most of the archipelago," it is no exaggeration to say that many aspects of Islamic culture have long been accommodated (Effendy, 2001).

Islam does not make a problem that the Indonesian state or government must become an Islamic state or government. For Islam, what is important is the content or essence, not the formal symbolic form. The establishment of the state is a human obligation in the context of democracy. Although Islam does not require the existence of an Islamic state, the establishment of a state can provide principles that support the realization of the desired society. This includes, first, just and democratic government (deliberation); second, the existence of dynamic government organizations; and third, sovereignty (Hosen, 2005; Madjid, 1983).

When Nurcholish Madjid explains the relationship between Islam and Pancasila ideology, he discusses in more detail the integration of Islam with Indonesia. According to him, Indonesian Muslims have accepted Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution for clear reasons (Sasmiarti & Rosman, 2018). Madjid considers that Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution have positions and functions similar to those of the earliest political documents in Islamic history, namely the Medina Charter. Muslims at that time accepted the Medina Constitution to reach a mutual agreement in forming an inclusive political society (Madjid, 1983). So from that, what is the concept of neo-modernism in substantive Islamic movements in Indonesia, especially regarding how relevant Nurcholish Madjid's thoughts are to constitutional politics, especially at this time? This paper intends to answer this problem but first describes the concept of neo-modernism, the biography of Nurcholish Madjid and then continues with the relationship between religion and the state in Indonesia.

The study of the concept of neo-modernism in the substantive Islamic movement is not among the new problems that occur in the literacy that develops in society. But, even so, there are still many issues surrounding the concept of neo-modernism in this substantive Islamic movement, thus an attraction for academics and researchers to conduct scientific studies that can enrich the horizon of thinking. First, the study of the concept of neo-modernism in the substantive Islamic movement has been researched in the form of a thesis by Muhtalim researched in 2016 by postgraduate

students of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta entitled "The Concept of Substantive Islamic State in Contemporary Indonesian Political Sociology (Study of Abdurrahman Wahid's State of Non-Violence Thought)." In this scientific work, Muhtalim examines the concept of a substantive Islamic state in an interesting debate in terms of socio-politics in Indonesia, which turns out that Gus Dur does not agree with the concept of an Islamic state if it is used as a state ideology. Second, Ahmad Amir Aziz. 1999. Islamic Neo-Modernism in Indonesia. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, Book (Aziz, 1999). In this book, the focus is on the thoughts of two figures, namely Abdurrahman Wahid and Nurcholish Madjid, the two figures develop actual themes in socio-political issues such as religious pluralism and realizing a plural society (Ali, 2011). This research is intended to find out the extent to which the relevance of Nurcholish Madjid's thought to state politics in Indonesia.

2. Method

This study employs a qualitative content analysis approach, utilising data obtained from library research. In order to apply the technique in accordance with the problem and research objectives, it is imperative to comprehend the concept of content analysis by examining its definition (Abbas, 2010; Zuchdi & Afifah, 2019). Subsequently, the findings of the analysis were presented in the format of a detailed and explanatory account. In this instance, the author employs library research, which entails visiting multiple physical libraries, including electronic libraries. In the library, the author initiates the process by categorising books and other scholarly documents, specifically numerous references that are directly associated with the issues the author addresses (Kasiram, 2008). The author engages in editing and formatting by categorising distinct references based on their subject matter. By employing this data collection technique, the author can obtain a comprehensive understanding of the issues addressed in this work and draw definitive conclusions. Throughout this research, the author consistently develops conclusions that are supported by valid and consistent evidence (Afifi, 2023; Hadi, 1998; Sugiyono, 2020). The author's concentration lies in employing the logical method to conclude by analysing the aforementioned problems. The objective of this research is to analyse and address overarching issues in order to arrive at a comprehensive and specific conclusion.

3. Nurcholish Madjid

Nurcholish Madjid was born on March 17, 1939, in Mojoanyer, Jombang, located in the province of East Java. Specifically on the 26th of Muharram in the year 1358 of the Islamic calendar. Nurcholish Madjid is generally referred to as 'Cak Nur' due to the prevalent use of the term 'Cak' in Java to respectfully address elderly individuals. The term "Cak" can be understood as a shortened form of either "Grandpa" or "Brother," indicating a familial or intimate relationship. Meanwhile, "Nur" is a component of the name Nurcholish, and its use as an additional moniker adds a sense of familiarity and closeness when referring to him. He is from an agricultural lineage. His father, KH Abdul Madjid, obtained his degree from the Tebu Ireng Islamic Boarding School in Jombang. This institution was established by Syekh Hasyim Asy'ari, the founder of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and a prominent figure in the establishment of Islamic boarding schools in East Java. Nurcholish Madjid is moreover the nephew of Hajjah Fathonah Mardiyyah, an activist associated with the Islamic Trade Union in Kediri (Nadroh, 1999).

Nurcholish Madjid received his primary and secondary education at the Mojoanggar People's School and Madrasah al-Wathaniyah in Jombang. Subsequently, Cak Nur pursued his academic endeavours at KMI Gontor Darussalam Ponorogo, located in East Java, and successfully concluded his studies in 1960. Afterwards, he proceeded to pursue his studies at IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta in 1965, specialising in Arabic Literature and Islamic Culture and completed his degree in 1968. In 1978, Nurcholish Madjid was granted permission to pursue his academic pursuits at the University of Chicago. Nurcholish Madjid died on August 29, 2005, at the age of 66. Nurcholish Madjid played a highly significant role in shaping contemporary Islamic ideology, particularly during the 1990s. He emphasised the importance of preparing Indonesian Muslims to confront the challenges of the modern-day (Nadroh, 1999).

3.1. The concept of neo-modernism

The contemporary form of modernism, sometimes known as neo-modernism, shares certain resemblances with post-modernism in this particular context. Nevertheless, the utilisation of neo-modernism is less prevalent compared to the usage of the term post-modernism, which has emerged as the prevailing term in current philosophical research. Thus, we will initially elucidate the concept of post-modernism. Post-

modernism typically encompasses two distinct connotations. Post-modernism is a historical era that follows modern times. Furthermore, post-modernism is seen as an intellectual movement that challenges and alters the preexisting developmental ideologies within the context of modern thought. Neo-modernity is a recently developed concept in Islamic thought that combines elements of traditionalism with modernism. (Barton, 1995; Rosman, 2017).

Neo-modernism was initially introduced in Pakistan by Fazlur Rahman and subsequently developed in the United States. Rahman joined the University of California in 1968 and commenced his teaching career at the University of Chicago in 1969, where he held the position of professor of Islamic thinking (Amiruddin, 2000; Aziz, 1999). The Islamic Awakening emerged as a reaction from the Islamic world to the widespread stagnation and decline experienced in several regions, particularly the archipelago. This religion, which originated from Allah's revelation to Muhammad, is perceived to encounter challenges in conforming to contemporary circumstances. This is because religion sometimes depends solely on normative texts. Furthermore, the researchers possess a limited comprehension of global issues and conflicts, resulting in their delayed ability to foresee collective challenges. Nevertheless, despite the rise of reform and renewal initiatives, there remains a widespread belief that Islam remains pertinent and is seeing ongoing expansion (Barton, 1995).

Various parties responded to this phenomenon, prompting opinions on the situation. An important worry for several Muslim intellectuals in the 20th century was how Islam could effectively navigate the contemporary world by integrating religious, cultural, political, and ethical traditions with the process of modernization and rapid societal transformation (Abbas, 1981; Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012; Al-Attas, 2011; Nasution, 1986; Sumantri, 2019). In the discourse of modern Islamic thought in Indonesia, Nurcholish Madjid is considered a central figure in the development of the reform movement known as Islamic neo-modernism. This movement was originally introduced by Fazlur Rahman when he visited Indonesia in the early 1970s.

3.2. Religion and the state according to Nurcholish Madjid

The relationship between religion and the state, especially the Islamic State of Indonesia, is not known historically. After the death of the Prophet

Muhammad, his funeral was tumultuous, and there was uncertainty over the succession because these complex legacy leadership issues are difficult to solve. Therefore, the state issue is not an obligation or an integral part of Islam. The idea of an Islamic state is more likely to be an apology or a plea for forgiveness (Aziz, 1999; Mustofa, 2010). Cak Nur seemed very impressed with the explanation that true Islam is not only related to legal aspects, government structures, or a combination of both. For him, Islam involves the essence of monotheism, namely the belief in the oneness of God. The concept of monotheism has a spiritual power that can produce good (*hanif*) character, tolerance, democratic spirit, and respect for diversity in society (Afifi & Abbas, 2023a; Hosen, 2005; Madjid, 1983).

Because of this, the concept of an Islamic state disrupts the established relationship between state and religion. For Nurcholish Madjid, the state is a rational and collective dimension of the world. At the same time, religion has a spiritual and personal dimension. Although it is difficult to separate religion and state, they must still be distinguished from inappropriate measures and manners. Cak Nur refuses to see Islam only as an ideology because that would ignore and degrade religious values and place it on the same level as other ideologies in the world (Madjid, 1984). Islam does not demand that the state or government be in the form of an Islamic government or an Islamic state (Afifi & Abbas, 2023a; Hosen, 2005). What is more important is the essence or substance of the religion, not just a symbol, to build rules and laws for society and civilization (AF et al., 2004; Arifin & Abbas, 2007). Forming a form of state is a right and obligation in the context of democracy, although Islam does not oblige the formation of an Islamic state. In general, for the establishment of a state, several principles must be realized to achieve state goals, namely: democratic fair government (involving deliberations), dynamic government, and recognition of sovereignty.

After declaring that the national ideology of Pancasila had reached perfection, Cak Nur debated again the essence of Islam as well as the ideology and spirit of the Indonesian nation. Perfection here means perfection in the context of its function as the foundation of national and state life in Indonesia. This concept is also related to the function of sentence structure and word order described in the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution. This concept is comparable to the da'wah of Islam in Indonesia. For

example, in the socio-political context of the state, we can refer to the founding of the state of Medina by the Prophet Muhammad SAW (Barton, 2003).

During the process leading to its finalization, there was intense debate and controversy among the political elite, government and society, especially regarding the first precept of Pancasila, namely "Belief in One Almighty God". Cak Nur understands the first precepts of Pancasila as a meeting point between adherents of Islam and other religions in Indonesia. Cak Nur's understanding is based on verse 64 of Surah Al-Imran in the Koran, which states

"Say: "People in the book, in which there is no dispute between us, let (hold) one sentence (rule) that we worship none but Allah, we do not associate Him with anything, and Several others. As gods other than Allah". If they turn around and leave, then say to them: "See, we are the ones who submit to (Allah)."

However, Pancasila as an ideology is flexible and not static (Madjid, 1992). There is a possibility that Pancasila could be rearranged or given a religious dimension, and this is a possible possibility. To consider this possibility support from the Islamic political elite and the enthusiasm of the Islamic Party is needed.

4. Nurcholish Madjid's Thoughts on State Politics in Indonesia

4.1. Secularization

First and foremost, it is important to acknowledge that Cak Nur holds distinct interpretations of secularisation and secularism. Secularism is an autonomous ideological framework that operates independently from religion. Secularism opposes the intrusion of religion into daily existence. From an Islamic standpoint, secularism is viewed as a contemporary interpretation that contradicts the teachings of the Koran. Additionally, it is commonly perceived as solely about worldly matters (Ahida, 2018; Madjid, 1987).

Secularism in Nurcholish Madjid's perspective is not in line with religion, especially Islam. He explicitly expressed his disinterest in utilising Islam as a means of political manipulation. He opposes the manipulation of Islam for the benefit of intellectual and political factions within Islamic parties. In the 1970s, Cak Nur and his crew actively opposed the Islamic party movement. The prevailing slogan during that period was: "Support Islam, but not the Islamic Party!" According to Cak Nur, possessing

Islamic political influence does not necessarily entail affiliation with an Islamic party, particularly in cases where the political system is afflicted by corruption, nepotism, and internal discord among party leaders. He vehemently opposed the notion of Indonesia becoming an Islamic State, as he believed that the Pancasila State adhered to the ethical tenets of Islamic politics (Gaus, 2010).

Cak Nur's concept of Islamic secularisation in the early 1970s caused astonishment among numerous political parties. Prior to the proposal of this theory, Cak Nur was recognised as a youthful Muslim scholar who had inherited the intellectual lineage of Natsir. Consequently, he was given the moniker "Young Natsir". Consequently, there is a widespread expectation that he will assume the position of a substitute and fulfil a significant function akin to that of Masyumi. Similar to Natsir's mindset, this hope is not merely a futile illusion. Cak Nur possesses a profound comprehension of both traditional Islamic intellectual thought and contemporary Western philosophy, exhibiting a wide-ranging and comprehensive thinking ability. This is feasible due to Cak Nur's proficient foreign language abilities, similar to those of Natsir. Natsir possesses fluency in English, French, Arabic, and Latin, whilst Cak Nur possesses fluency in English, French, and Persian (Suhelmi, 1999). Cak Nur contended that his proposed idea of secularisation was social in nature, rather than philosophical, contrary to the beliefs of his adversaries. Within this sociological framework, secularisation refers to a societal process that seeks to disentangle religion from worldly affairs, leaving only God with supreme sanctity. Anything that exists outside of the divine realm is transient and worldly.

4.1.1. *Pancasila as an open ideology*

The Pancasila ideology serves as the foundational principle of the state and the core national belief system. It encompasses honourable principles and the aspirations of the Indonesian people. Rooted in the nation's customs, culture, and ethical values, Pancasila is a reflection of the Indonesian way of life and heritage, making it the authentic ideology of the nation. Rather than adopting external ideologies, Pancasila's principles are elevated above foreign counterparts, representing a fusion of local values, culture, and the Indonesian worldview. This ideology mirrors the essence and distinctiveness of the nation, aiming to ensure societal concord, cohesion, and the populace's welfare. Throughout history, Pancasila arose as a response to various foreign ideologies infiltrating Indonesia, while simultaneously striving

to amalgamate pre-existing societal values into a comprehensive, all-encompassing national framework. Within its historical and cultural context, Pancasila significantly moulds the Indonesian national identity and guides political and social choices that align with the nation's esteemed principles (Herdiawanto, Wasitaatmadja, & Hamdayama, 2018).

If we see Pancasila as an open ideology, then this ideology can experience developments in modern times. Therefore, Pancasila should not be considered a formula that is fixed and eternal forever. This is because it will make Pancasila obsolete and unable to adjust to the changes that occur. By adopting a dynamic approach to Pancasila, Indonesian society seems content with the view that connects religion with the state, in which Pancasila is seen as a meeting point for all groups. This fact shows that we believe changes are happening and are recognized.

4.2. *Examples of democracy*

The discussion on dealing with the complexity of problems that are classic, fundamental, but still relevant. This complexity is considered fundamental because democracy involves the basic values of life that determine how the system of life is used, with humans as subjects and objects. As a source of legitimacy in today's modern world order, the presence of democracy is difficult to avoid. Democracy has given an important position to the people because the democratic system still adheres to the principle that the people are the holders of sovereignty (Madjid, 1995).

The root of democracy is a process that leads to improvement. A country can be called democratic if it involves developments that apply humanitarian principles and provide rights to individuals and society as a whole, regardless of race, language, religion and economy. Democracy is a human effort that aims to achieve the common good. Meanwhile, according to Nurcholish Madjid's understanding, Islam has a universal nature, defined as a mercy for all nature, which protects all forms of humans and other living things in the universe (Al-Quran, Surat Al-Anbiya/21:107).

The condition of democracy in Indonesia is still facing serious challenges both from a cultural and structural perspective. Cultural factors, for example, are reflected in the arrogant attitude of society, which tends to lead to anarchic behaviour and no respect for the law. Communities are easily provoked and often show acts of violence and threats in various forms. On the other hand,

structural factors are reflected in undemocratic government policies and statements and actions by the apparatus that ignore democratic principles. Some discriminatory policies and regulations reduce the civil liberties of society, especially vulnerable and minority groups such as gender, religion, race and belief groups (Wijayanto, 2001).

5. Conclusion

Based on the results of the research that has been explained earlier, it can be concluded that Cak Nur describes his thoughts with current reality through the expressions above, intending to offer a more substantial perspective on Islam than just symbolism. This perspective is based on universal values in Islam, not just on the symbol of the "Islamic party" or political itself. In the context of the current situation, the criticism conveyed by Cak Nur is still relevant.

According to Cak Nur, the step forward is to avoid symbolizing Islam through Islamic parties

alone, and it is ideal if Islam can show its substance as a moral guide in behaviour in the public sphere. The existence of Islamic parties is a natural thing to accommodate the aspirations of the people today. However, in the struggle for public office or government power, the prophetic mission of the party must not be neglected. The mission includes increasing the dignity of the people, realizing prosperity, encouraging harmony and tolerance in political competition, and upholding justice for all.

Currently, there is an increasing trend in the politicization of religion to attack political opponents or increase the electability of certain parties or individuals using what is known as "politik identitas". However, instead of using Islam as a moral guide in politics, political elites tend to use Muslims for personal gain. This kind of symbolization has a very dangerous potential because it can divide the Ummah into two extreme camps that are mutually hostile. This will clearly hinder the progress of Muslims in Indonesia.

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