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From Political Parties to Cultural Organizations: Indonesian Islamic Movements during the New Order

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Abstract

The development of political Islam in Indonesia has been characterized by severe tension between Muslim intellectuals and 'secular' intellectuals. Since Indonesian independence to the Old Order, Muslim intellectuals focused on struggling the political Islam by establishing political parties and proposing Islam as the state foundation. This article aims to describe political Islam in the Indonesian New Order. This article uses historical approach and qualitative methods. In fact, the New Order regime had a negative view of political Islam. This view follows from its policy which prohibited Islamic parties. The New Order emphasized national stability, as well as economic development, as its main policies. The economic development under the New Order regime led to a new crop of Muslim intellectuals. This new generation of Muslim intellectuals was different from the older generation. They preferred strengthening their role in non-political organizations to playing a role in political parties.

Keywords: Muslim intellectuals, Indonesia, cultural Islam, political Islam

Introduction

The development of political Islam in Indonesia has been characterized by severe tension between Muslim intellectuals and 'secular' intellectuals. This can be seen throughout history, since the early days of Indonesian independence. Soekarno and Hatta proclaimed Indonesia's independence on 17 August 1945, shortly after the surrender of the Japanese to the Allies. Indonesian leaders then prepared to write the state constitution and found the state. In discussing the foundation of the state, there was a heated debate between these two camps. Muslim intellectuals, such as Kiyai Wahid Hasyim and H. Agus Salim, in the early, proposed that Islam become the foundation of the state. 'Secular' intellectuals such as Soekarno and Hatta, rejected this proposal. Soekarno and Hatta rejected Islamic state because it was not suitable with Indonesian context. Indonesia has a plural society including religion. The inclusion of Islam to be Indonesian's state foundation could threat the NKRI (Indonesian Republic United State) because other religions might not agree with it.[1] However, both groups finally agreed to accept the Pancasila as the state foundation, not Islam.[2]

The above statement indicates that Pancasila has been accepted as Indonesian state ideology by Muslim intellectuals. This acceptance is succesful agreement and compromise among Indonesian founding fathers. Furthermore, in 1955, Islamic parties, such as NU and Masyumi, competed in the general election, but neither of them gained a majority of seats. PNI (*Partai Nasionalis Indonesia* or Indonesian Nationalist Party), the nationalist party, won 22.3% of the votes. Masyumi took 20.9 % of the votes and NU received 18.4%. PKI (*Partai Komunis Indonesia* or Indonesian Communist Party), the communist party, gained 16.4%.[3]

The above description indicates that the relation between Islam and state in Indonesia has been negoitated and compromised. This article aims to describe how political Islam is negoitated and compromised in Indonesian new order. This article uses historical approach and qualitative methods. Historical approach is useful to explain and analyze the past events. Because this article deals with political phenomena during the New Order, data are collected from relevant books, articles and newspapers. Books, articles and newspapers describing political Islam during the Soeharto's authority are selected and analyzed qualitatively based on Bayat's concept about Islam and democracy in a Muslim society Bayat explains that Muslims play a significant role in supporting or opposing

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[1] Imam Amrus Zailani (2012), "Tarik Ulur Islam dan Dasar Negara," *Al-Daulah: Jurnal Hukum dan Perundangan Islam*, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 1-12.

[2] Abdul Aziz Thaba (1996), *Islam dan Negara dalam Politik Orde Baru*, Bandung: Mizan, pp. 153-158.

[3] Pramono U. Thantowi (2005), *Kebangkitan Politik Kaum Santri*: *Islam dan Demokratisasi di Indonesia 1990-2000*, Jakarta: PSAP, p. 44.

democracy, not Islam. This is because Islamic values such as political Islam needs interpretations from Muslims to be practiced. Unsurprisingly, in this world, political Islam is plural in terms of its practices. Indonesia and Pakistan, for instance have different practice of political Islam seen from their political system implemented in these countries.[4] This article then argues that the political Islam has always been negoitated because Muslims have agency to define it based on their cultural and educational backgrounds. The trajectory of political Islam then depends on Muslims who have an authority to interpret and implement political Islam. During the New Order, political Islam in Indonesia was not monolithic. This means that political Islam was responded differently by Muslims intellectuals. Some Muslim intellectuals in Indonesia regarded that political Islam was not related to the establishment of Islamic state in Indonesia. They shifted their orientation focusing on social and cultural Islam, not establishing Islamic parties or Islamic state. This strategy was previously implemented to adapt with the state's political policy. However, in further development, many Muslim intellectuals in Indonesia have chosen this strategy to develop Muslim communities and support democracy in Indonesia .

The New Hope for the New Regime

After the fall of Soekarno's regime in 1966, the Indonesian people were ruled by a different regime, namely the New Order. At the beginning of the era, Indonesian Muslims had great expectations for the future of Indonesian politics.[5] One of these expectations was that the new regime would accommodate political Islam. Unsurprisngly, after the establishment of the new administration, some Muslim intellectuals tried to to establish a new Islamic party. They came frommodernist Muslim circles such as Muljadi Djojomartono, Lukman Harun, and Mochammad Natsir. Initially, Muljadi and Harun tried to revive the PII (*Partai Islam Indonesia* or Indonesian Islamic Party), established in 1938. However, Natsir, one of the ex-Masyumi leaders, succeeded in persuading them to support the idea of the Masyumi's rehabilitation, instead of reviving the PII.[6]

The former Masyumi's leaders and the party's supporters were very optimistic what they intended would be supported by the New Order government. Their great enthusiasm, however, was dampened when ABRI (the Indonesian military army) declared on 21 December 1966 that Masyumi, like the PKI (*Partai Komunis Indonesia* or Indonesian Communist Party), had deviated from the Pancasila and the 1945 constitution. Therefore, in line with ABRI's statement, Soeharto issued a decree on 6 January 1967, stating that he did not accept the idea of rehabilitating the Masyumi.[7]

It can be assumed that the New Order government's rejection of the rehabilitation of the Masyumi party was based on the fact that several Masyumi leaders had been involved in the PRRI rebellion of 1958. Also, in the view of the New Order government, this rehabilitation would lead to a new political threat. As a result, former Masyumi leaders and members felt deeply frustated by this strict government policy. Another one of Soeharto's policies considered to be in opposition to Muslim aspirations, was his policy proposing Pancasila to be the sole basis for political parties and mass organizations. Some Muslim scholars, such as Abdul Qadir Jaelani, refused to accept this decision. As a result, he was sent to prison. This kind of decision forced the Muslim community to accept this policy. Gradually, the Muslim community accepted Pancasila as the sole basis for political parties and mass organizations. It seemed that the government was satisfied with this acceptance.[8]

Accomodating Islam, Not Political Islam

Therefore, the government tended to accommodate Islam in some of its policies. However, according to Atho Mudzhar, this accomodation had only to do with cultural Islam and remained suspicious of political Islam.[9] The establishment of the MUI (*Majlis Ulama Indonesia* or Indonesian Council of

[4] Asef Bayat (2011), *Pos-Islamisme,* Yogyakarta: LKiS, p.8.
[5] It is because under Soekarno's regime, Muslims were dissappointed with Soekarno's policy. Under this regime, the communist party was legalized, among other parties. The dissapointment of Muslim community became acute to Soekarno when he did not ban the communist party in Indonesia after *Gerakan Tiga Puluh September 1965* known as *Gestapu* (September's rebellion in 1965) carried out by the *Partai Komunis Indonesia,* or Indonesian Communist Party.
[6] M. Sirajuddin Syamsuddin (1991), "Religion and Politics in Islam: The Case of Muhammadiyah in Indonesia's New Order," PhD Dissertation, University of California, p. 46.
[7] S.U. Bajasut (1972), *Alam Pikiran dan Jejak Perjuangan Prawoto Mangksasmito,* Surabaya: Documentica, pp. 214-216.
[8] Faisal Ismail (2001), *Islam and Pancasila: Indonesian Politics 1945-1995,* Jakarta: Departemen Agama, p. 131.
[9] Atho Mudzhar (1990), "Fatwa's of the Council of Indonesian Ulama: A study of Legal Thought in Indonesia 1975-1988," PhD Dissertation, University of California, p. 53.

Ulama) in 1975, for instance, was considered as creating good understanding between the New Order government and Islam. This organization played an important role in bridging the gap between the Muslim community and the government. Some MUI's programmes were very advantageous to Muslim society. In 1991, for instance, the MUI and the New Order government succeeded in sending one thousand Muslim preachers to improve Islamic understandings among Muslim people in various regions in Indonesia.

According to Prof. H.M. Frederspiel, the New Order political system has five prominent characteristics. Firstly, its emphasis on state internal security and domestic peace, using a military-controlled system. Secondly, its political system which relies on the army, civil servants, and peasant groups to mobilize much of the electorate in each general election. Thirdly, its trust in technocrats in order to further the country's economic development. Fourthly, its system actively aimed at agriculture development. Fifthly, the active promotion of Pancasila (the five principles) as the sole legitimate basis for all social and political organizations in Indonesia.[10] These five characteristics were strengthened by two realities of the New Order policy. The first reality was Soeharto did not agree to any political activity outside his direct control. The second was political Islam was regarded as a potent political force.[11]

Subsequent to the rise of the New Order, the Indonesian military viewed political Islam negatively. This is not strange, since the military were of the opinion that political Islam had great potency to create instability. Because the New Order was focused on economic development, it needed national stability. Therefore, the New Order constructed a new political framework, under which four old Islamic parties (NU, Parmusi, PSII, Perti) became Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP) or the United Development Party.[12] This political party was obliged to replace Islam with Pancasila as its ideological basis. Furthermore, prior to the general election in 1987, this party also changed its symbol from the *Ka'bah*[13] to the Star.[14]

There were Muslim intellectuals who could be be divided into two main groups, with regard to their response to the New Order's policy towards political Islam. The first group was the that of scriptualistic Islam. This was represented by an organization called the DDII or *Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia* (Indonesian Council for Islamic Mission). This group felt that Islam should be practiced in all of Indonesia (*kaffah)*.[15] This meant that Islamic teaching would formally be governed by the state. Besides the DDII, there were other radical groups promoting political Islam. One of these radical groups was a religious group in the port area of Tanjung Priok. Because of its radical nature, the government attacked this group and killed some of its members.[16]

The second group responding to the New Order's policy was that of cultural Islam. This group felt that Islam could be realized in a cultural fashion. This group was against Islam being governed formally by the state. Abdurrahman Wahid was a prominent figure in this group. He said that "[...] using religious politics is a dangerous tendency. Let the government govern and let the religious groups take care of their own affairs."[17]

There was a common perception in Indonesian Muslim thought that establishing an Islamic party in Indonesia was impossible, under the New Order administration. Therefore, the latter group was regarded as a rational choice by Muslim intellectuals. They thought that Islamic parties were no longer important tools for pursuing Muslim political interest under the New Order government. Muslim political interest was related to their political aspiration to Islamize the state which finally to make Islam as the state's ideology. In fact, the New Order regarded that Pancasila was the final state's ideology. The regime was suspicious to Muslim political interest since it did want to change the Pancasila as

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[10] Howard M, Frederspiel (1998), *Indonesia in Transition: Muslim Intellectuals and National Development*, New York: Nova Science Publishers, pp. 6-7; Howard M, Frederspiel (1991), "Muslim Intellectuals and Indonesia's National Development," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 30, pp. 232-233.

[11] Adam Schwarz (1994), *A Nation in Waiting : Indonesia in the 1990s*, San Fransisco: Westview Press, p. 163.

[12] Bachtiar Effendy (2003), *Islam and the State in Indonesia*, Singapore: ISEAS, p. 49; Umaidi Riadi (1984), *Strategi PPP 1973-1982: Suatu Study Tentang Kekuatan Politik Islam Tingkat Nasional*, Jakarta: Integrita Press.

[13] *Ka'bah* is a holy shrine in Mecca towards which all Muslims in the world orient their faces during their five daily prayers. This symbol was very important in attracting Muslim to choose PPP.

[14] M Nasir Tamara (1988), "Sejarah Politik Islam Orde Baru," *Prisma*, Vol. 5, p. 49.

[15] Taufiq Nugroho (2003), *Pasang Surut Islam dan Negara Pancasila*, Yogyakarta: PADMA, pp. 64-69 .

[16] This group was informally led by Amir Biki. This group organised religious lectures critical of the New Order policies. Because of this, the military attacked this group and killed many people. This tragedy was called *Peristiwa Tanjung Priok.*

[17] Adam Schwarz (1994), *A Nation in Waiting : Indonesia in the 1990s*, San Fransisco: Westview Press, p. 162 .

Indonesian state's ideology. Most characteristic of Islamic non-political activities under the New Order government was the development of a new Islamic thought. In 1970, Nurcholish Madjid stated that "Islam, yes! Islamic parties, no!"[18] This statement encouraged Muslim people in Indonesia to strengthen and develop their social, cultural and intellectual foundation, in an effort to achieve progress for Islam. Muslims in Indonesia thus did without the Islamic party.

This new orientation was caused by two main reasons. While the first reason is sociological, the second reason is political.[19] The first reason for this phenomenon is the fact that access to modern education was easier than during the Old Order. This created the rise of new Muslim intellectuals with a background different from the older generation's. Many of the new Muslim intellectuals were more educated in various disciplines in different universities. They also studied abroad, such as at western educational institutions.

Furthermore, since the 1990s, many Muslim students from the Institute of Islamic Studies (IAIN) have been sent by the government to study at western universities, such as Leiden University in the Netherlands, and McGill University in Canada. This programme has played an important role in creating a new generation of Indonesian Muslim intellectuals, promoting cultural Islam rather than political Islam.[20]

Toward Cultural Islam

Cultural Islam is the term translated from Indonesian 'Islam Kultural'. This term refers to the non-political activities of Muslim intellectuals in Indonesia because they were restricted to be active in political Islam such as etablishing Islamic parties. While Muslim students from Islamic educational institutions have been sent to western universities, Muslim students from 'secular' educational institutions, such as the Indonesian University (UI) and the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB) have taken part in many forms of religious activity. One of these activities was religious guidance for the students at the university mosques. While in the 1950s and 1960s the universities there was only place for secular education, since the 1970s there has been a place for Muslim activities. A good example is the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB). On this campus, the Salman Mosques have been centres of activity for Muslim students under Imaduddin Abdurrahim's guidance, a key figure of the ICMI foundation .

These new Muslim intellectuals entered into various professions, such as the civil service and the sciences. This caused the uprise of the well-educated Muslim in Indonesia. They can no longer be seen as a marginal group, such as during the Dutch colonial, and the early independence, period. Therefore, the Muslim middle class has grown, due to Muslims' better education. [21]

In this sense, Dawam Rahardjo argued that there were three empirical phenomena that explain the rise of Muslim middle class in Indonesia. The first phenomenon was the growth of institutions concerned with education and thought. Two of them were the *Yayasan Waqaf Paramadina* or *Paramadina* Foundation and the *Lembaga Studi Agama dan Filsafat* (LSAF) or Institute for Religion and Philosophy Studies. The second phenomenon was the rise of the NGOs or the non-governmental organizations. The third phenomenon was the fact that the government employed many Muslim graduates as civil servants.[22]

The second reason that orientation shifted from political parties to cultural organizations is political. In this case, the new Muslim intellectual thought can be understood as negoitation and compromise to the New Order system, which was highly suspicious of political Islam.[23] Therefore, they promoted a new format of political Islam. While most of the older generation of Muslim intellectuals who identified as

[18] Nurcholish Madjid (1991), *Islam: Kemodernan dan Keindonesiaan*, Bandung: Mizan, pp. 178-253.
[19] Bachtiar Effendy (2003), *Islam and the State in Indonesia*, Singapore: Institute of Southesat Asian Studies (ISEAS), p. 152.
[20] Michael R.J Vatikiotis (1993), *Indonesian Politics Under Soeharto*, London: Routledge, p. 127.
[21] Masykuri Abdillah (1997), *Responses of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals to the Concept of Democracy (1966-1993)*, Hamburg:Austronesia, p. 255.
[22] Dawam Rahardjo (1995), *Visi dan Misi kehadiran ICMI: Sebuah Pengantar in ICMI Antara Status Quo dan Demokratisasi*, ed. Nasrullah Ali-Fauzi, Bandung: Mizan, pp. 31-32.
[23] This is because the fact that after the fall of the New Order regime many Muslim intellectuals join political party. Abdurrahman Wahid, for instance, has joined PKB (Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa or National Awakening Party). Dawam Rahardjo has become the board of PAN or Partai Amanat Nasional or National Mandate Party.

Islamic had struggled for Islamic political parties, as well as for the establishment of an Islamic state, the new generation of Muslim intellectuals did not need an Islamic party to enhance Muslim development. Rather, they participated in cultural organizations such as NU and Muhammadiyah, rather than establishing an Islamic party or joining a political party. Gus Dur, for instance, chaired the biggest Muslim organization in Indonesia, the NU. Nurcholish Madjid was also more interested in establishing education institutions, namely *Universitas Paramadina* (Paramadina University) and *Sekolah Madania* (Madania School), rather than a political party.

In addition, some prominent Indonesian Muslim intellectual figures promoted Islam, in light of modern methods of scholarship. Although they used various terms, such as Nurcholis Madjid's inclusive theology, Dawam Rahardjo's transformative theology, Amien Rais' horizon of Islam, Kuntowijoyo's Islamic paradigm, or Syafi'i Maarif's cultural Islamization, the essence of their thought was similar, that is promoting Islam as a peaceful religion which is an important element in improving the national development.[24]

However, some Muslim intellectuals felt that an organization was an important vehicle towards realizing their aim and promoting their thought. Therefore, an effort to establish an organization representing educated people was needed. In 1964, a number of Muslim intellectuals created an organization called Persami (*Persatuan Sarjana Muslim Indonesia* or the Indonesian Muslim Scholars Association). This organization was the first attempt to unite Indonesian Muslim intellectuals. H. Mohammad Subhan Z.E. (the NU General Chairman at that time) was elected as General Chairman and H. Mohammad Sanusi (a member of the Muhammadiyah's central organizing committee) was chosen as General Secretary.[25]

However, three years after its establishment**,** there was a conflict within Persami. This internal conflict was basically created by two different factions, namely the PMII, or *Persatuan Mahasiswa Islam Indonesia* (the Union of Muslim Students of Indonesia,) and the HMI, or *Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam* (Islamic University Students' Association). The PMII can be identified as an organization under the NU (Nahdlatul Ulama) while the HMI is not associated with NU or Muhammadiyah. These two organizations competed to gain ascendance in Persami.[26]

As a result, PMII members left Persami in order to establish a new organization called *Ikatan Sarjana Islam Indonesia* (ISII), or the Affiliation of Indonesian Muslim Scholars. This new organization was created during a NU conference in 1968.[27] After Subhan and PMII members left Persami, Bintoro Tjokroamidjojo became General Chairman of Persami. However, in 1974, he resigned from Persami's leadership. After 1974, Persami dissolved.[28] In fact, Persami's condition was similar to ISII's. When Subhan passed away in 1970, this organization dissolved.[29]

In 1978, Adi Sasono invited some Muslim intellectuals, including Dawam Rahardjo, Syu'bah Asa, Sugiat S, Ekky Syahruddin, Bur Rusuanto, Utomo Dananjaya, Fachry Ali, Masdar F Masudi, Muslim Abdurrahman, Mansur Fakih, Abdurrahman Wahid, and many other intellectuals to his home. In this informal meeting, they agreed to modernize Islamic thought in Indonesian society by arranging a weekly discussion, the *Majlis Reboan* (Wednesday Discussion). This weekly discussion became an important instrument in influencing the new trend of Islamic thought in Indonesia, promoting Islamic values without Islamic parties. They also strongly supported the establishment of the P3M (*Pusat Pengembangan Pesantren dan Masyarakat* or Centre of Pesantren and Society Development).[30] However, they failed in establishing a Muslim intellectuals' association.

Because of this failure, in 1984, the *Lembaga Studi Agama dan Filsafat* (Institute for philosophy and religious studies) and the *Majlis Ulama Indonesia,* or Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI), held a meeting.

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[24] M. Syafi'i Anwar (1992), "Islam Bureaucracy and Social Political Convergence in the New Order," *Mizan*, Vol. 5, No. 2, p. 63.
[25] M. Syafi'i Anwar (1995), *Pemikiran dan Aksi Islam Indonesia : Sebuah Kajian Politik tentang Cendekiawan Muslim Orde Baru*, Jakarta: Paramadina, p. 251.
[26] Zaim Uchrowi & Usman Ks (2000), *ICMI Bergerak: Lintasan 10 Tahun Ikatan Cendikiawan Muslim se-Indonesia*, Jakarta: Republika, p. 38.
[27] M, Syafi'i Anwar (1995), *Pemikiran dan Aksi Islam Indonesia*, p. 252 .
[28] *Tempo*, December, 8, 1990.
[29] M, Syafi'i Anwar (1995), *Pemikiran dan Aksi Islam Indonesia*, p.252.
[30] Soetjipto Wirosardjono (2000), "Muslim Cendikia," *Republika Online*, 30 July 2000.

This meeting was held in Jakarta from 26 to 28 December 1984. There were 31 Indonesian Muslim intellectuals attending the meeting.[31] This meeting was followed by a second meeting. The second meeting was held from 27 and 28 April 1985. Following this meeting, from 15 to 17 May 1985, there was a seminar in Yogyakarta, attended by 75 Muslim intellectuals. This seminar was followed by a gathering in Ciawi, Bogor, on 8 and 9 March in 1986. The participant of the gathering agreed to hold another meeting. Therefore, on 7 and 8 May 1986, there was another meeting in Cibogo. In the meeting, some Muslim intellectuals agreed to form a Muslim intellectuals' organization. However, they were afraid of the government's condemnation. In fact, Fuad Amsyari, one of the participants, tried to convince other participants of the importance of the association. Finally, the participants agreed to form an organization called the *Forum Komunikasi Pembangunan Indonesia* (FKPI), or Communication Forum for Indonesian Development. They also agreed to choose Ahmad Tirtosudiro as its first general chairman.

In 1989, Imaduddin Abdur Rahim and Dawam Rahardjo also proposed creating another Muslim intellectuals' association in Kaliurang, Jogjakarta. This meeting was attended by fourty Muslim intellectuals.[32] However, this meeting was disbanded by Indonesian police.[33]

The chronology above shows that Muslim intellectuals were very interested in establishing an organization to unify Indonesian Muslim intellectuals. This could not be easily realized for two reasons. The first reason lies in the diverse backgrounds of Muslim intellectuals. Because of their backgrounds were so diverse, they could not be unified easily. The second reason has to do with the state's approval. Without the state's permission, it was very difficult for Muslim intellectuals to establish an organization during the New Order. This can be seen from the process of the establishment of the ICMI (*Ikatan Cendikiawan Muslim se-Indonesia* or the Association of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals) below.

The Establishment of the ICMI and Muslim Intellectuals' Response

The idea of the establishing the ICMI was initially proposed by five students of Brawijaya University in Malang. They were Eric Salman, Ali Mundzakir, Mohammad Zaenuri, Awang Surya and Muhammad Iqbal. These students originally came from the *Rohis,* or Islamic religious activists in the campus.[34]

This idea first appeared on 8 November 1989, after Imaduddin Abdurrahim gave a speech at Brawijaya University in Malang. After the speech, there was a discussion between Imaduddin and the students. During this discussion, there was unrest among the participants, caused by an opinion that there was fragmentation among Indonesian Muslim intellectuals. Jakarta's Muslim intellectuals' group, Nurcholish Madjid, for instance, was seen to be in opposition to Imaduddin Abdurrahim's group in Bandung. Therefore, the idea arose to quell the dissension of Indonesian Muslim intellectuals, and unite. Responding this idea, Imaduddin Abdurrahim suggested Habibie as unifying figure.[35] Then some students, Erik Salman and his friends, planned organizing a symposium to be attended by Muslim intellectuals. This was proposed to the Rector and the Dean of Technic Faculty of Brawijaya University. The Rector and the Dean suggested them to write a proposal. After the proposal was approved by the Rector and the Dean, the students sent their idea to Indonesian Muslim intellectuals in Jakarta [36]

The students told the Muslim intellectuals that they felt that Muslim intellectuals needed a place to better advance national development. Some Muslim intellectuals, such as Imaduddin Abdurrahim and Dawam Rahadjo, responded positively.[37] The students also shared their idea of choosing Habibie as General Chairman of Muslim intellectuals' association.[38] A number of Muslim intellectuals suggested meeting directly with Habibie. After their meeting with these Muslim intellectuals, they went on to approach Habibie, who was Minister of Research and Technology at the time, in order to gain his

[31] M. Syafi'i Anwar (1992), "Islam, Negara, dan Formasi Sosial dalam Orde Baru: Menguak Dimensi Sosio-Historis Kelahiran dan Perkembangan ICMI," *Ulumul Qur'an*, Vol. 3, No. 3, p.5.
[32] Robert W. Hefner (2000), *Civil Islam : Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, p. 130.
[33] *Tempo*, December, 8, 1990.
[34] *Kompas*, December 5, 1990; *Pelita*, December 6, 1990.
[35] Zaim Uchrowi & Usman Ks (2000), *ICMI Bergerak*, pp. 3-4.
[36] Ibid., pp. 4-5.
[37] Erik Salman, "Gelisah Melihat Cendekiawan Muslim," *Pelita*, 4 December 1990
[38] It is still obscure whether the idea in choosing Habibie came from these students or from Imaduddin Abdur Rahim. I assume the latter.

support. The first meeting with Habibie was carried out after Jum'at prayer in his office. In this meeting,[39] The students invited Habibie to give a speech at the symposium about Muslim intellectuals' contribution in the light of the 21st century. Habibie accepted the invitation and he even invited all the symposium participants to have lunch at PT PINDAD (Indonesian Guns Company). Because Habibie was too busy to write a paper for the symposium, the committee of the symposium wanted to interview Habibie. Based on this interview, the committee would compose the paper for the symposium. The proposal to be interviewed was accepted by Habibie. The interview was done in his office. During the interview, there were three Muslim intellectuals accompanying the the symposium committee. These Muslim intellectuals were Dawam Rahardjo, Imaduddin Abdurrahim, and Syafi'i Anwar. During the interview, they proposed that Habibie become General Chairman of Muslim intellectuals' association. Although Habibie agreed to this, he wanted to consult with Soeharto about the idea, since he was serving as Soeharto's minister. Therefore, he wanted to ask permission to become the General Chairman of the association. Moreover, Habibie asked the committee to give him Muslim intellectuals' signatures as proof that he had been asked to be the General Chairman of the association.[40] Finally, the students were able to collect forty-nine signatures from Indonesian Muslim intellectuals.[41]

On 3 September 1990, the proposal and the proof were delivered to Soeharto. Because Soeharto had given his permission, Habibie then asked his assistant, Wardiman Djojonegoro, to form a committee in order to prepare the symposium. As a result, the symposium committee was enlarged by adding some of Habibie's assistants as members.[42] The committee's modification made it more solid.

The symposium committee thus succeeded in inviting President Soeharto to open the symposium and to deliver the keynote speech. Besides the President, many people attending the symposium were directly involved in government, both at the central and provincial level. There were also ministers from the ruling cabinet and an ex-minister from the previous cabinet attending the symposium. They were the State Secretary Minister, Moerdiono, SH; the Highest ABRI Commander, General Try Sutrisno; the Minister of Information Affairs, H. Harmoko; the Minister of Transportation, Ir. Anwar Anas**;** the Minister of Religious Affairs , H. Munawir Syadzili, MA; the Minister of Education and Culture, Fuad Hassan; and the former Minister of Public Welfare**,** Alamsyah Ratu Prawiranegara. This reflected the unprecedented government support for the birth of the ICMI.[43]

On the second day of the symposium, Habibie was elected unanimously by the symposium participants, at University Brawijaya Malang, to be the first General Chairman of the organization . This was hardly surprising, since the issue of Habibie becoming the General Chairman of the ICMI had emerged a few days before the symposium. After his election, Habibie also was given full authority to form the executive leadership.[44]

With this authority, other members could not interfere with the forming of the ICMI's executive leadership. Habibie thus chose the ICMI's board without the agreement of the founders. It came as no surprise that many state officials were chosen for the ICMI's board. Dawam Rahardjo, as independent Muslim intellectual, was not chosen as the executive secretary. Rather, Habibie chose Wardiman Djojonegoro, his assistant, for that position.[45] Nurcholish Madjid, a well-known Muslim Intellectual, became the vice president of the council.

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[39] I assume that in this first meeting, these students did not propose their idea about the establishment of Muslim intellectuals association since they originally aimed at the agenda of symposium.

[40] A. Makmur Makka & Dhuroruddin Mashad (1997), *ICMI: Dinamika Politik Islam di Indonesia*, Jakarta: Pustaka Cidesindo, p. 2 .

[41] These forty nine Indonesian Muslim intellectuals are: Dr. Ir. Muslimin Nasution, Dr. Saleh Syafradji, Dr. Ing. Suparno Satika, Suwarto Martosudiro, Phd, Prof. Jusuf A. Faisal, Dr. Dipo Alam, Dr. Miftah W, Dr. M. Amin Aziz, Dr. Marwah daud Ibrahim, Dr. A. Rahman Djay, Prof. A. Baiquni, Msc, Dr. Ir. Imamuddin Abdurrahim, dr. H. Sugiat Ahmad Sumadi, Dr. Untung Sukandar, Drs. A. Makmur Makka, Dr. Ir. Ichwanuddin Mawardi, Dr. Muslimin Nasution, Dr. Ir. Syafrie Mangkuprawira, Dr. Ir. Aida Vitalaya S. Hubeis, Dr. Ir. Murasa Sarkaniputra, Dr. Ir. Sri Bintang Pamungkas, Dr. Ir. Isti Rasminah Chailani Syamsidi, Dr. Ir. Zuhal, Msc, Dr. Nurcholish Madjid, Dr. H. Peunoh Daly, Prof. Dr. H.R. Daldiri, Dr. H. Saleh Al-Djufri, Dr. Umar Nimran, MA, Dr. Ir. Lukman Hakim, MS, Dr. Ir. Latief Abadi, MA, Dr. M.S. Idrus, Dr. Syekhfani, Dr. Huzaimah, Dr. Ir. Ika Rohjatun S, Dr. Muhammad Amin Suma, Dr. Aqib Suminto, Prof.Dr. Harun Nasution, Dr. Satryia Effendi M. Zein, Drs. M. Dawam Rahardjo, Dr. M. Amien Rais, Dr. Yahya Muhaimin, Dr. Ahmad W. Praktinya, Ir. Basit Wahid, Dr.Kuntowijoyo, Dr. Umar Ajenie, Dr. Bambang Setiawan, Dr. Riswandha Imawan, and Dr. Bambang Sudibyo. See *Surya*, 7 December, 1990; A. Makmur Makka & Dhurorudin Mashad (1997), *ICMI*, p. 6.

[42] Zaim Uchrowi & Usman Ks (2000), *ICMI Bergerak*, pp. 8-9.

[43] M. Syafi'i Anwar (1995), *Pemikiran dan Aksi Islam Indonesia*, p.260.

[44] "ICMI bukan Political Power," *Angkatan Bersenjata*, 8 December 1990.

[45] "Payung ICMI dengan Makna Ganda," *Editor*, 16 February 1991.

In this sense, Habibie differentiated between state-Muslim intellectuals and non-state or independent Muslim intellectuals. The former were state officials, while the latter were not affiliated with the state bureaucracy.[46]

Because they disapproved of this decision, some independent Muslim intellectuals group felt disappointed. However, Dawam Rahardjo remained a member of the ICMI's board. He became the vice president of the council. [47] In contrast, Sri Bintang Pamungkas withdrew from the ICMI directly, after he was chosen by the members of the science and technology department.[48]

Shortly after the establishment of the ICMI, there were three main responses from Indonesian intellectuals. The first was a favourable response. This response generally declared that the establishment of the ICMI illustrated an effort to integrate Muslims, and to afford them a prominent role in national development. The second was the opposite response. This response particularly declared that the ICMI was a symbol of sectarianism and co-optation of Islam by the state. The third was a neutral response. Indonesian intellectuals in this group argued that there was nothing wrong with the birth of the ICMI. However, they did not join the ICMI.[49]

Among Muslim intellectuals, Abdurrahman Wahid was one of the strongest opponents of the establishment of the ICMI. In fact, Abdurrahman Wahid was the leader of Nahdhatul Ulama organization. This is the largest Muslim traditionalists' organization in Indonesia. He refused the invitation from some Muslim intellectuals to join the ICMI. Although his name was listed as the ICMI's advisor, he said that it was illegal. He argued that this organization tended to make Islam more exclusive.[50] He even suspected that the ICMI would found an Islamic state in Indonesia.[51]

Furthermore, Abdurrahman Wahid challenged the ICMI by founding a new organization called Democratic Forum or Fordem (Forum Demokrasi) on 16 March 1991 in Cisarua, Bogor. Its members came from various backgrounds. There were Muslim intellectuals such as Abdurrahman Wahid, Djohan Effendy and Aswab Mahasin. However, Christian scholars such as YB Mangunwijaya, Frans-Magnis Suseno, Marsilam Simanjutak, Arief Budiman, Mudji Sutrisno, Aristides Katoppo, Marianne Katoppo, and Chris Siner Key Timu were also prominent figures supporting the establishment of Fordem. The members of this organization criticized the ICMI. Marsilam Simanjutak said that Habibie and other Muslim intellectuals used the ICMI as a political instrument to gain power. Furthermore, Djohan Effendy felt that the ICMI revived political Islam. He argued that, in fact, political Islam did not make a positive contribution to the Muslim community in Indonesia. On the contrary, he added, from Indonesian experience, reviving political Islam made the state discriminate the Muslim group. [52]

However, the majority of Muslim intellectuals supported the establishment of the ICMI or *Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia* (the Association of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals) in 1990, as an organization for the well-educated Muslims in Indonesia. These Muslim intellectuals came from different Muslim organizations in Indonesia, such as Nahdhatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, and even from NGOs. As Soeharto no longer regarded the Muslim group as his opponents, some Muslim scholars such as Habibie and Munawir Sadzali then felt they should participate in the regime of the New Order. They thought that this was the best opportunity to change some of the state discrimination practiced in the late 1960s to the mid-1980s. It is not surprising that the ICMI programme then tried to improve the quality of human resources in Muslim society. According to Dawam Rahardjo, one of the ICMI's missions is to enhance the quality of Indonesian human resources. He stated that the human quality can be simplified into five K or *5K*, namely *Kualitas Iman* (the quality of belief), *Kualitas Pikir* (the quality of thought), *Kualitas Kerja* (the quality of work), *Kualitas Karya* (the quality of service)

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[46] Interview with Dawam Rahardjo in *Editor*, 16 February 1991.

[47] In this case, CSIS or centre for strategic of international studies provided a useful document about this interview. In this document, there were some articles and news from 1990 to 1993 about the ICMI from Indonesian newspaper and magazines. This document has useful information about the ICMI. However, only some mass-media had critical news, two of them were Editor and Tempo magazines. It is not surprising since at that time, mass-media was strongly controlled by the state in Indonesia.

[48] A. Makmur Makka & Dhurorudin Mashad (1997), *ICMI*, p.143.

[49] Fuad Mardatillah (1997), "Intellectual Response to the Establishment of ICMI," Unpublished Master's Thesis, McGill University, pp. 71-97.

[50] Abdur Rahman Wahid (1995), "Intelektual di Tengah Eklusivisme," in *ICMI Antara Status Quo dan Demokratisasi*, ed. Nasrullah Ali-Fauzi, Bandung: Mizan, p. 71.

[51] A. Makmur Makka & Dhurorudin Mashad (1997), *ICMI*, p. 30.

[52] Herdi Sahrasad (2005), *Rezim Orde Baru & Reformasi: Islam, Kebangsaan, Ketidakadilan & Kekerasan*, Aceh: ISAC & University of Malikussaleh Press, pp. 5-6.

and *Kualitas Hidup* (the quality of life). The ICMI was directed to struggle on the cultural field, in order to achieve this mission. A further mission of the ICMI is social change and development. The ICMI also has as a mission the encouragement of participation of Muslims and the improvement of the quality of that participation. [53]

Conclusion

Political Islam during the New Order in Indonesia was characterized by negoitation and compromise. Since its rise, the New Order regime had a negative view of political Islam. This view follows from its policy which prohibited Islamic parties. The New Order emphasized national stability, as well as economic development, as its main policies. The economic development under the New Order regime led to a new crop of Muslim intellectuals. These new Muslim intellectuals were the fruit of various educational institutions, in Indonesia and abroad. This new generation of Muslim intellectuals was different from the older generation. One of this new generation of Muslim intellectuals, Nurcholish Madjid, promoted a new format of Islamic thought that emphasized cultural Islam rather than political Islam. They preferred strengthening their role in non-political organizations to playing a role in political parties. In fact, their choice to use non-political organizations can be seen as an adaptation and negoitation to the New Order policy. Some Muslim intellectuals were still highly motivated to islamize the state. Therefore, some Muslim intellectuals used the New Order's approval of the ICMI's establishment to realize their aims. The establishment of the BMI, *Bank Muamalat Indonesia* or Indonesian Islamic Bank, was one of their Islamization programmes, realized by the government.

On the other hand, Soeharto happily allowed Habibie to head the ICMI, since Soeharto knew that Habibie had great loyalty to him. Therefore, it is clear that Soeharto's support was the most significant factor in establishing the ICMI. Although the role of students from Brawijaya University was exposed in some newspapers at the time, it can be assumed that both Muslim intellectuals and the New Order government were hiding their real agenda, playing politics. In the case at hand, the New Order government wanted to get support from Muslim intellectuals in order to strengthen its authority in Muslim society.

It is not strange that many reactions were proposed by Muslim intellectuals responding the establishment of the ICMI. Among these Muslim intellectuals, was Abdur Rahman Wahid who was regarded as strongly opposed to the establishment of the ICMI, which he challenged by forming an organization called Fordem (*Forum Demokrasi* or Democratic Forum). However, the majority of Muslim intellectuals supported the existence of the ICMI. This was because the ICMI became important organization for channelling Muslim group's interests. Because political Islam was thwarted by Soeharto, it subsequently found an outlet in the ICMI, in order to do battle in Indonesian politics more easily. The ICMI also became a political vehicle for some Muslim intellectuals. By joining the ICMI, Indonesian Muslim intellectuals could participate in the political arena. Muslim intellectuals have become the political actors in the centre of power. As a result, Muslim intellectuals who joined the state interacted actively with those who did not join the regime. While Yusril Ihza Mahendra was one of these Muslim intellectuals representing the ICMI members who joined the regime, Nurcholish Madjid was one of the ICMI members representing the ICMI members who did not join state power.

Furthermore, Muslim intellectuals were not monolithic responding the state's policy toward political Islam because they come from multiple educational and political backgrounds. Some of them such as Habibie and Harmoko were identified as Soeharto's proponents. However, some others such as Amien Rais, Malik Fadjar and Nurcholish Madjid were democracy proponents. In 1998, these three Muslim intellectuals proposed Soeharto to resign. However, the above Muslim intellectuals contribute in encouraging changes in political Islam that are closer to democracy as it is today.

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[53] Dawam Rahardjo (1995), *Visi dan Misi kehadiran ICMI*, p.40.

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