

NURCHOLISH MADJID ON INDONESIAN ISLAMIC EDUCATION: A HERMENEUTICAL STUDY

Lis Safitri

Jenderal Soedirman University, Purwokerto, Indonesia

*e-mail: lis.safitri@unsoed.ac.id

Fadlil Munawwar Manshur

Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

e-mail: fadlil@ugm.ac.id

Husni Thoyyar

Islamic Institute of Darussalam, Ciamis, Indonesia

e-mail: husni.thoyyar@gmail.com

Abstract

Indonesian Muslims need a well-established Islamic education that can accommodate diversity as the characteristic of Indonesia. Nurcholish Madjid (1939-2005), a neo-Modernist, has an inclusive and philosophical Islamic thought that can be used as the philosophical paradigm of Indonesian Islamic education. This study intends to interpret the thinking of Nurcholish Madjid related to Islamic education using Hans Georg Gadamer's hermeneutic model. This study shows that knowledge is a manifestation of 'aql, one of human potential as khal fah. Cak Nur's objective of Islamic education is divided into four categories that led to the awareness of human existence as God's servant and khal fah. The model of Cak Nur's education is humanistic education which focuses on moral education. The multicultural education of Cak Nur, which comes from the generic meaning of Islam, is tolerance education to the diversity of religions, religious understanding, and the acceptance of local wisdom. Cak Nur's educational thinking is not a practical theory, but a philosophical foundation that is easily accepted by people with the epistemology of burhani thought.

Keywords: *Neo-modernism; Inclusive Education; Humanistic Education; Gadamer; Indonesian Islamic Education*

Abstrak

Muslim Indonesia membutuhkan tatanan pendidikan Islam yang mampu mengakomodasi multikulturalisme Indonesia. Nurcholish Madjid (1939-2005), dikenal sebagai seorang neo-Modernist, merupakan seorang pemikir Islam yang inklusif. Pemikirannya tersebut dapat dijadikan landasan filosofis pendidikan Islam di Indonesia. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menginterpretasikan pemikiran Nurcholish Madjid berkaitan dengan pendidikan Islam dengan metode hermeneutika Hans George Gadamer. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pengetahuan merupakan manifestasi 'aql, yang merupakan salah satu potensi manusia sebagai khal fah. Tujuan pendidikan Islam menurut Cak Nur dapat dibagi menjadi empat kategori yang bertujuan akhir pada kesadaran manusia sebagai hamba dan khal fah. Model pendidikan Islam dalam pemikiran Cak Nur merupakan pendidikan humanistik yang fokus pada pendidikan akhlak. Pendidikan multikultural, yang

* Corresponding author, email: lis.safitri@unsoed.ac.id

NURCHOLISH MADJID ON INDONESIAN ISLAMIC EDUCATION: A HERMENEUTICAL STUDY

merujuk pada makna generik islam, dapat dipahami sebagai pendidikan yang toleran terhadap perbedaan agama, pemahaman keagamaan, dan penerimaan terhadap kekayaan budaya lokal. Pemikiran pendidikan Islam menurut Cak Nur berupa landasan filosofis, bukan merupakan teori praktis, yang akan mudah dipahami oleh masyarakat dengan epistemologi pemikiran burhani.

Kata kunci: *Neo-modernism; Inclusive Education; Humanistic Education; Gadamer; Indonesian Islamic Education*

مستخلص

يحتاج المسلمون الإندونيسيون إلى تعليم إسلامي راسخ يمكنه استيعاب التنوع باعتباره سمة من سمات إندونيسيا. نورخالص مجيد (١٩٣٩ - ٢٠٠٥ م) ، من الحداثيين الجدد ، لديه فكر إسلامي شامل وفلسفي يمكن استخدامه كنموذج فلسفي للتعليم الإسلامي الإندونيسي. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تفسير تفكير خالص مجيد فيما يتعلق بالتربية الإسلامية باستخدام نموذج هانز-غيورغ غادامر التأويلي. تظهر هذه الدراسة أن المعرفة هي مظهر من مظاهر العقل ، أحد إمكانات الإنسان مثل الخليفة. ينقسم هدف نورخالص مجيد من التربية الإسلامية إلى أربع فئات أدت إلى إدراك الوجود الإنساني كعبد وخليفة. نموذج تعليم نورخالص مجيد هو التعليم الإنساني الذي يركز على التربية الأخلاقية. إن التعليم متعدد الثقافات لنورخالص مجيد ، والذي يأتي من المعنى العام للإسلام ، هو تعليم التسامح لتنوع الأديان ، والتفاهم الديني ، وقبول الحكمة المحلية. إن التفكير التربوي لنورخالص مجيد ليس نظرية عملية ، ولكنه أساس فلسفي يمكن قبوله بسهولة من قبل الأشخاص الذين لديهم نظرية المعرفة لفكر البرهاني.

الكلمات الرئيسية: الحداثة الجديدة؛ التعليم الشامل؛ التربية الإنسانية؛ التربية الإسلامية الإندونيسية

A. INTRODUCTION

In 1970, there was a movement of Indonesian Islamic thought that offered Islam more substantively and put forward a more culturally Islamic model. Barton called it a neo-Modernism movement.¹ This movement has several characteristics. *First*, they tried to build a more modern Islam without leaving Islamic intellectual heritage. *Second*, they used a more modern methodology of understanding the Quran and Hadis, i.e. by historical and sociological methods with a contextual approach. *Third*, they disseminated the ideas and thoughts by first doing self-criticism then shock therapy against the rigidity of dogma.²

¹Greg Barton, "Indonesia's Nurcholish Madjid and Abdurrahman Wahid as Intellectual 'Ulama': The Meeting of Islamic Traditionalism and Modernism in neo-Modernist Thought," *Studia Islamika* 4, no. 1 (1997).

²Ismail, "Gerakan Neo-Modernisme dan Pembaruan Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia," in *Arah Baru Studi Islam di Indonesia: Teori dan Metodologi*, ed. Toto Suharto and Nor Huda (Yogyakarta: Ar-Ruzz Media, 2008), 317-318.

Nurcholish Madjid or Cak Nur (1939-2005) is an Indonesian Islamic thinker with a very broad scope of thought, covering various aspects. Because of his work in Indonesian Islam, Ali mentions him as the teacher of the nation.³ Although some of his thoughts turn into controversy,⁴ generally his thought tends to be accepted by many Indonesian Muslims, including the *pesantren* (the traditional Islamic boarding school), because it is rooted in Islamic classical book.⁵

Anwar and Saleh concluded that Cak Nur's thought is a dialectical result among Islam, modernity, and Indonesian-ness.⁶ Continuing the gait of Hamka (1908-1981) and Harun Nasution (1919-1998), he came up with the ideas to improve the position of Muslims in the context of Indonesian culture. Hefner even argued that he has succeeded in formulating "cultural Islam" namely Islam which has a major role in the life of the nation as a source of ethical values and guidelines of cultural development.⁷

Islam as part of Indonesia could not be separated from the influence and local values of the Indonesian nation itself. As mentioned by Ma'arif, Islam is a universal religion in the essence of the doctrine and mission of humanity. However, the social practice of Islam in the cultural format could not be free from local, national, and global influences.⁸ Indonesian Islam is an Islam that is confronted with the characteristics of Indonesia which have a multi-ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and religious country, or Indonesia as an archipelago, flanked by two continents and two oceans, once colonized by Europeans (Portuguese, British, and Dutch), then last by Japan or a country whose social life is very communal, paternalistic, with

³Fachry Ali, "Nurcholish Madjid sebagai 'Guru Bangsa'," in *Tharikat Nurcholishy: Jejak Pemikiran dari Pembaharu sampai Guru Bangsa*, ed. Jalaluddin Rakhmat (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2001).

⁴One of the controversial Cak Nur's thinking is the idea of secularization. Cak Nur explained it as desacralization, devaluation, or demythologization of all things contrary to *taw d*. In other words, placing the sacral and profane according to the portion of each. Cak Nur admitted that the choice of the word "secularization" is an "accident" that made it criticized by many people. He preferred to use another word if possible. Nurcholish Madjid, *Islam, Kemodernan, dan Keindonesiaan* (Bandung: Mizan, 2013), 268-278. See: Mun'im Sirry, "Secularization in the Mind of Muslim Reformist: A Case Study of Nurcholish Madjid and Fouad Zakaria," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 1, no. 2 (2007).

⁵Barton, Airlangga Pribadi and Yudhi R. Haryono, Goenawan Mohamad, Komaruddin Hidayat, Munawir Sjadzali, and Azyumardi Azra believed that the background of the study is very decisive for one's thinking in the context of liberal thinking in Indonesia. Barton argued that liberal thinking in Indonesia is rooted in the synthesis of classical Islamic scholars and modern Western education. Neo-Modernism is a combination of classical Islam, which will be gained from *pesantren*, and modern Islam that will be grasped from the west. Akh. Muzakki, "Is Education Determinant? The Formation of Liberal and Anti-liberal Islamic Legal Thinking in Indonesia," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 1, no. 2 (2007), 286.

⁶Muhammad Salik, "Menggagas Pesantren Masa Depan: Kritik Cak Nur atas Pola Pendidikan Tradisional," *El-Qudwah* 10 (2013), 6.

⁷Fauzan Saleh, "Pendidikan dan Upaya Membangun 'Tradisi Besar': Perkembangan Islam Kultural di Indonesia," in *Religious Harmony: Problems, Practice, and Education* ed. Alef Theria Wasim et.al. (Yogyakarta: Oasis Publisher, 2005), 60-68.

⁸Ahmad Syafi'i Ma'arif, *Islam dalam Bingkai Keindonesiaan: Sebuah Refleksi Sejarah* (Bandung: Mizan, 2015), 19.

NURCHOLISH MADJID ON INDONESIAN ISLAMIC EDUCATION: A HERMENEUTICAL STUDY

solidarity. Of these things, Hamka Haq chose plurality and nationality as the predicate of Indonesian-ness.

Cak Nur is not an education expert, but his thought is closely related to various aspects of life including education. The focus of the study problems are how is Nurcholish Madjid thinking about Indonesian Islamic education and what is the contribution of Nurcholish Madjid's educational thinking in the educational context today. This study used Hans Georg-Gadamer's hermeneutic interpretation method, which consists of four theories, namely the theory of consciousness of historical influences, pre-comprehension, horizon assimilation, and application.⁹

B. DISCUSSION

1. Nurcholish Madjid: Academic Journey and His Position in the Map of Islamic Thought

The journey of the academic life of Nurcholish Madjid (17 March 1939-29 August 2005) in this research is presented thematically according to the needs of interpretation analysis according to Gadamer's hermeneutics model. *The first* is the socio-cultural factors. Cak Nur was born in Barends among well-educated families, both in formal and non-formal education. His Father, Abdul Madjid, is a student of Kiai Hasyim Asy'ari (the founder of Nahdlatul Ulama) at Pesantren Tebuireng, Jombang. Barends is a multicultural district in Jombang. Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Hindus, and Confucians got equal rights and lived in harmony. This plural culture has educated Cak Nur to always be ready to face and appreciate all the differences, and to see it as a blessing. Cak Nur's family life in *Surabaya* culture was more egalitarian than *Mataraman*, a more feudal culture.

The second is the intellectual factor. Cak Nur's thinking was affected by Pondok Modern Gontor, a modern Islamic boarding school that was considered unusual at the time for requiring his students to learn English other than Arabic and to teach non-sectarian jurisprudence books such as *Bidayat al-Mujtahid* works of Ibn Rusyd. According to Hidayat and Barton, when in IAIN Jakarta Cak Nur studied Islam analytically, philosophically, and inclusively. Having studied and stood for HAMKA, during life in the Al-Azhar mosque, have increased Cak Nur's inclusivistic thinking and following HAMKA's thinking on Sufism.¹⁰ While worked at LIPI, his interest in social science has further nurtured along with his

⁹Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Kebenaran dan Metode: Pengantar Filsafat Hermeneutika* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2004), 321-333.

¹⁰Komaruddin Hidayat, "Kata Pengantar," in *Islam Agam Peradaban: Membangun Makna dan Relevansi Doktrin Islam dalam Sejarah* ed. Nurcholish Madjid (Jakarta: Dian Rakyat dan Paramadina, 2008), xii-xiii.

interaction with Harsja W. Bachtiar and Taufik Abdullah.¹¹ Muhammad Asad who has written *The Message of the Qur`an* and Abdullah Yusuf Ali who has written *The Holy Qur`an: Text, Translation, and Commentary*, also influenced the thoughts of Cak Nur, especially related to the interpretation and the translation of the Quran.

Studying in Chicago, Cak Nur was mentored by Leonard Binder, a political scientist, but later was under the guidance of Fazlur Rahman as he moved to the Department of Languages and Near Eastern Civilizations with a dissertation entitled “Ibn Taymiya on Kalam and Falsafah: A Problem of Reason and Revelation in Islam”. Along with his interaction with Rahman, Cak Nur was often regarded as the successor of Rahman in Indonesia. However, Munawwar-Rachman explained that their academic interaction did not make Cak Nur “the second Rahman”. Rahman did not influence Cak Nur significantly, except for the methods of Quranic interpretation.¹² Munawwar-Rachman argued that Cak Nur's thinking is closer to Ibn Taymiyya's thinking than Fazlur Rahman.¹³

In the realm of mind mapping, Greg Barton placed Cak Nur into neo-Modernism, which combines the methods of traditionalism and modernism.¹⁴ The modernist shows the rigid movement of thought, while the traditionalists are more flexible, past-oriented, and difficult to accept modernization.¹⁵ Neo-Modernist tried to take the abandoned problems by the Modernists, simultaneously adopted their rational way of the view. They did *ijtihad* (independent reasoning), unlike Modernism, by remaining the tradition that had been built in Islamic civilization.¹⁶

¹¹Ahmad Gaus, *Api Islam Nurcholish Madjid: Jalan Hidup Seorang Visioner* (Jakarta: Kompas, 2010), 137.

¹²Fazlur Rahman initiated the theory of double movements as a method to understand the Quran. The first movement began from the present to the past when the Quran has been revealed. The second movement began from the past time to the present. Fazlur Rahman, *Islam and Modernity: Transforming of an Intellectual Tradition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982).

¹³Budhy Munawwar-Rachman, *Ensiklopedi Nurcholish Madjid: Pemikiran Islam di Kanvas Pemikiran 1*, digital ed. (Jakarta: Democracy Project, 2011), xxx.

¹⁴Barton, “Indonesia's Nurcholish Madjid.”

¹⁵Jamal D. Rahman, “Pembaruan dalam Islam: Sebuah Rekonstruksi” in *Tharikat Nurcholishy, Jejak Pemikiran dari Pembaharu sampai Guru Bangsa*, ed. Sukandi (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2001), 346.

¹⁶In addressing the reforms, Indonesian Muslims are divided into three groups: Modernist, Reformist, and neo-Modernist. Modernism emerges in response to pan-Islamism, syncretism, and heterodoxy. The Reformist emerged in response to the ideology of the state. This movement strives to make Islam the basis of the state and the unity of Muslims through the spirit of *ukhuwwah isl miyyah*. Neo-Modernism came to respond the modernization, with the agenda for conceptualizing and actualizing faith in contexts relevant to the spirit of modernity, integrating people through Islamic spirit and religious inclusivism, and eliminating cultural barriers. The implications of the rise of Modernism are internal segmentation and religious exclusivism, while the implications of neo-Modernism are religious elitism. Jamal D. Rahman, “Pembaruan dalam Islam: Sebuah Rekonstruksi”, 335-351.

NURCHOLISH MADJID ON INDONESIAN ISLAMIC EDUCATION: A HERMENEUTICAL STUDY

Ali-Fauzi examined Cak Nur as both a neo-Modernist and a neo-Traditionalist because he kept the traditional values while executed modernization.¹⁷ His opinion is in line with Azra's, but it was related to the development of his intellectual. In the beginning, Cak Nur's thought has been focused on modernization to make people aware of it. After discussing secularization and liberalization, his intellectual direction moved to the classical Islamic way of thought on the post-Modern milieu. Thus, Cak Nur moved from neo-Modernism to neo-Traditionalist.¹⁸

2. The Absences in Islamic Education: from Arabization to the Philosophical Foundation

Islamic education contains a very broad definition, ranging from education in the Islamic view to education carried out and developed by Muslims. However, talking about the theory of Islamic education means interpretation or extracting of Islamic tenets that require interpretation methods of the Quran and Hadis. Islamic teachings, especially the Quran, are unlimited-interpretable. Verses can be explained in many ways based on the capacity of interpreters. The stronger the interpretation method and *weltanschauung* owned by an interpreter, the more effective the interpretation will be.

Islamic education theory today was limited to the Arabization of educational terms and match up it using the Quran and Hadis. The legitimation merely defends the current educational theory of the Qur'an and the Hadis without giving a concrete understanding of its philosophical meaning. Besides that, Islamic education is only colored by debates about which terms are most suitable to use among *ta'lim*, *ta'dib*, and *tarbiyyah*. The theory of Islamic education is unsystematic and dependent on the theory of conventional education in practices. The theory of Islamic education must be formulated by experts who master, at least, the theory of conventional education and the interpretation methods of the Quran and Hadis.

Together with the purpose of human creation, most of the education experts argued to create the perfect being (*ins n k mil*) as the main objective of Islamic education.¹⁹ However,

¹⁷The traditional value is the spirit of Islam in the Classical period, while the modernization is the progress of the times characterized by technicalization. The thought of Madjid is inseparable from his interactions with the works of Ibn Taimiyah (d.1328) and Fazlur Rahman (d. 1988) during his doctoral study in Chicago.

¹⁸Ann Kull, *Piety and Politics: Nurcholish and His Interpretation of Islam in Modern Indonesia* (Lund: Department of History and Antropology of Religion, 2005), 219-221.

¹⁹Aly and Suparta orientated Islamic education to the goals of the nation's life: piety being, piety family, and peity society. Langgulong limited the objective of education to accommodate spiritual, psychological, and social function of religion. Tafsir and Ramayulis argued that the purpose of education is to create a perfect being (*ins n k mil*); Hery Noer Aly and Munzier Suparta, *Watak Pendidikan Islam* (Jakarta: Friska Agung Insani, 2003), 111-113; Hasan Langgulong, *Beberapa Pemikiran tentang Pendidikan Islam* (Bandung: al-Ma'arif, 1980); Ahmad Tafsir. *Filsafat Pendidikan Islami* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2012); Ramayulis, *Ilmu Pendidikan Islam* (Jakarta: Kalam Mulia, 2008).

they make up their discussion to the mention human duties as God's servant ('*abd*) and God's vice-gerent (*khalifah*), but remain unsolved question why the human was assigned as God's servant and God's vice-gerent and how to practice it in daily life with a truly philosophical and applied explanation, not just showing a related Quranic verse.

Indonesia is a plural country in many aspects, includes Islamic understanding which established various models of Islamic education institutions.²⁰ Since the last decade, more conservative Islamic thinking has grown in Indonesia. This affects the teaching model and understanding of Islamic tenets in Islamic education in Indonesia, either in *pesantren*, *madrasah*, *Sekolah Islam*, or public schools in response to the diversity in Indonesia. Following the research report of Convey Indonesia and PPIM UIN Jakarta, recently intolerance attitudes and opinions among teachers and students (especially) in public school have increased rapidly.²¹ Thus, Indonesia needs a multicultural model of Islamic education that is tolerant to the diversity of Islamic understanding, religious differences, cultural differences and can adopt Indonesian local wisdom. This inclusive education thinking must be explored by Indonesian thinkers who, besides understanding Islamic tenets, also understand the Islamic conditions in Indonesia.

3. *The Position of Knowledge in Islam*

Cak Nur's thought about Islamic education is based on—especially—his interpretation of the cosmic drama among God, Angels, and *dam* in *surah al-Baqarah/2: 30-38* about the principal understanding of human identity as *khalifah*.²² By those verses, God gave rightful supremacy on earth to the human beings to uphold God's law and to guide the creatures to their purpose of creation. This appointment is a tribute to human being as well as to examine human dignity (*al-Furqan/25: 20*).

Started by examined those verses, Cak Nur discussed the dignity of knowledge. The basic evidence of the honor of knowledge has occurred since the appointment of *dam* as the

²⁰Lis Safitri, "Perkembangan Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia dan Australia," in *Islam Kontemporer di Indonesia dan Australia*, ed. Jamhari Makruf et.al. (Jakarta: Australia Global Alumni and PPIM UIN Jakarta, 2017), 394-407.

²¹PPIM UIN Jakarta, Convey Institut, and UNDP Indonesia, "Sikap dan Perilaku Keberagamaan Guru dan Dosen Pendidikan Agama Islam" *Convey Report* 1, no. 8 (2018), <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hC8FSCBTbUby1tompdHPe1SvBuRzmewa/view> retrieved at August 4, 2018. Maarif Insitut, PPIM UIN Jakarta, and UNDP Indonesia, "OSIS Mendayung di antara Dua Karang: Kebijakan Sekolah, Radikalisme dan Inklusivisme Kebangsaan" *Convey Report* 1, no. 4 (2018), https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PRw-aFGFBI7gMDFy_QjmpaOo9cxarmO-/view retrieved at August 4, 2018.

²²Nurcholish Madjid, *Pintu-pintu Menuju Tuhan* (Jakarta: Dian Rakyat dan Paramadina, 1994), 183-184; Nurcholish Madjid, *Islam, Kemodernan, dan Keindonesiaan* (Bandung: Mizan, 1987), 326; Nurcholish Madjid, *Islam Agama Peradaban: Membangun Makna dan Relevansi Doktrin Islam dalam Sejarah* (Jakarta: Paramadina dan Dian Rakyat, 2008), 153-157.

NURCHOLISH MADJID ON INDONESIAN ISLAMIC EDUCATION: A HERMENEUTICAL STUDY

khal fah (vice-gerent of God). Allah commands angels and demons to prostrate to *dam* because of his knowledge. The glory of *dam* lied not only because of his knowledge *an sich* but also on ability to recognize the surrounding environment.²³ The deep contemplation of the phenomena in the world will result in knowledge. The parameter of achievement, as well as the asset, of human duty as *khal fah* is not only measured by human's ability to understand the environment and God's ways (*Sunnah All h*) but also, human ability in basing his/her deeds on the knowledge and the scientific discoveries.²⁴

Basically, Cak Nur argued that knowledge is neutral. It is value-free, both from goodness or evil value.²⁵ However, agree with the interpretation of Yusuf Ali on the story of *dam* and his wife who ate *al-khuld*, Cak Nur mentioned that human beings are equipped with "emotions" that can lead them to happiness as well as to disgust. The relationship between knowledge and emotion is a mutually influential circular relationship. The knowledge would be good or bad depending on the emotions of human beings. Either the tendency of emotions can only be controlled or at least colored by knowledge. Both knowledge and emotion are the assets of man as the vicegerent of God.²⁶

Another human beings' potential is *fi rah* (natural disposition), the Divine nature that is manifested in them. Being influenced by emotions, knowledge has to be subjugated under the natural disposition of human beings for grasping the truth and goodness. If it was not directed by the good emotion and *fi rah*, knowledge would provide bad feedback for the human being.²⁷

Cak Nur associated knowledge as a *shar 'ah* or a path that will lead the human being to the ultimate goal of life, namely the recognition and the conviction of God. Every human being has a different experience in God's consciousness. A *s f* could not share his Divinity experience with others. However, those who have great knowledge (*ahl al-'ilm*) could share the way of Divine consciousness by knowledge to others.²⁸

4. The Objective of Islamic Education

²³Madjid, *Islam Agama Peradaban*, 153; Madjid, *Islam, Kemodernan, dan Keindonesiaan*, 331.

²⁴Madjid, *Islam Agama Peradaban*, 153.

²⁵Madjid, *Islam, Kemodernan, dan Keindonesiaan*, 323.

²⁶Madjid, *Islam Agama Peradaban*, 152-153.

²⁷Madjid, *Islam, Kemodernan, dan Keindonesiaan*, 326.

²⁸Madjid, 327.

The objective of Islamic education according to Cak Nur can be analyzed through Ramayulis' theory, which consists of the highest objective, the general objective, the specific objective, and the temporary objective. *First*, the highest objective of Islamic education is the innermost purpose of the creation of a human being, a servant ('*abd*) and the vice-gerent of God (*khalifah*). The human being as servants (al-Dh riy t/51: 56) should worship God and surrender to Him. As *khalifah*, the human being is tasked to "substituted" God's work to uphold the law on earth, guarding it against destruction, prospering the creation, and guiding creatures to their purpose of creation. In this case, the understanding of the innermost human identity should be the main objective of education, since both of them are the main orientations for all human deeds.²⁹

Second, the general objective of education is to develop the human potentials to achieve the highest objective of education. To carry out their duties, human beings are given some potentials, i.e. rationality that has been manifested in knowledge, emotion, or desire to choose what to do, and *fi rah* (natural disposition) to grasp the truth and goodness. The general objective of Islamic education is to evolve all of the human's potentials.

Third, the specific objective of education is the real action to achieve the highest objective of Islamic education, i.e. worshiping. The quality of worship can be indicated by the quality of *taqw* and *im n* that are manifested in '*amal s li }*. *Im n* is not only related to the vertical relationship to God, but also a horizontal relationship to human beings. Faith is not only a belief in human heart, but also realized in their deeds and morals. Following Muhammad Asad, Cak Nur defined *taqw* as the awareness of Divinity (God Consciousness). The word is in line with the meaning of *rabb niyyah* or *ribbiyyah* (the spirit of divinity) that in al-Quran implied the prophetic and revelation goals (Al 'Imr n/3: 79-146). Cak Nur equalized *taqw* with *i s n* described in a Hadis as *an ta'budall h ka anaka yar hu, fa in lam takun tar hu fa innahu yar ka* (worship just as you as saw Him if you are not able to, then feel as if He saw you).³⁰

Fourth, the temporary objective of education according to Cak Nur has been written in a paper, which was presented in a seminar held by the Ministry of Religious Affairs at Institut Pertanian Bogor, on 12 May 1998.³¹ Cak Nur distinguished between the educational objectives in public schools and Islamic schools. In public schools, religious instruction is

²⁹Madjid, *Pintu-pintu Menuju Tuhan*, 183-184; Madjid, *Islam, Kemodernan, dan Keindonesiaan*, 326; Madjid, *Islam Agama Peradaban*, 153-157. Lis Safitri and Fadlil Munawwar Mansur, "Tujuan Pendidikan Islam dalam Pandangan Nurcholish Madjid," *Tsamrah al-Fikri* 10, no. 1 (2016), 1-8.

³⁰H.R. A mad bin anbal, *Musnad A mad bin anbal*, no. 8752 in CD ROM Jaw mi' al-Kalim.

³¹Nurcholis Madjid, "Masalah Pendidikan Agama di Perguruan Tinggi Umum," in *Dinamika Pemikiran Islam di Perguruan Tinggi* ed. Fuaduddin and Cik Hasan Bisri (Jakarta: Logos Wacana Ilmu, 1999).

NURCHOLISH MADJID ON INDONESIAN ISLAMIC EDUCATION: A HERMENEUTICAL STUDY

intended to meet students' need for a comprehensive understanding of Islam. Islamic education aims to give morals and ethics teaching practically in their secular life, not to produce Islamic law. While Islamic education in Islamic school is conducted to produce an expert of Islam. The students of *pesantren* and *madrasah* should teach the comparison of *madhhab*, to make the students not only able to produce a comprehensive Islamic law, but also tolerance to the difference of religious understanding.

5. *Humanistic Education*

Cak Nur's idea of education is humanistic education, which places students as the center of learning. The main objective of humanistic education is to help students to recognize their potential as human beings and develop all of the potentials of God's servant and God's vice-gerent. Education must lead students to the expected desire, and place motivation and learning experience as the important things in the learning process.³²

Cak Nur believes that the main duty of human being is to know and to believe in God manifested in worshipping. Based on the meaning of the sentence of *shah dah* which contains the meaning of negation and affirmation, the human being has to believe that only Allah is the one and the only who is entitled to be worshiped. Before believing in the Oneness of Allah, he/she must empty his/her heart, expression, and deeds from dependence on other than Allah. The *ribbiyyah* is manifested in every behavior and worship devoted as the submission to God. Self-cleansing from *shirk* is the first step to realize the position of the human being as God's servants.³³

Another duty of the human being is the vice-gerent of God (*khal fah*). Based on al-Baqarah/2: 30, human beings—represented by *dam*—from the inception were prepared as the vice-gerent of God. Everything that was occurred in *dam*'s and his wife's life is part of God's scenario for the realization of human potential as a *khal fah*. The expulsion and the fall of *dam* and his wife was not a curse. On the contrary, it precisely denoted man's rightful supremacy on earth as a vicegerent of God to proceed God's creation in the world in the name of God.

Human beings are appointed as those who inherit the earth because of their potentials. God does not designate angels because they have only one side of creation. Angels are not

³²John D. McNeil, *Contemporary Curriculum: in Thought and Action* (USA: John Wiley & Sons, 2006), 60-62.

³³Q.S. al-Dh riy t (51): 56; Madjid, *Islam, Kemodernan, dan Keindonesiaan*, 269-270.

equipped with emotions that enable them to choose what to do. God does not designate animals as His vice-gerent because they have no perfect mind.³⁴

Both of these human duties have an inseparable relationship. Cak Nur described it as the movement in prayer. When starting prayers, human beings must be disciplined in doing the rule of praying. They don't allow to eat, talk, and do things that can corrupt the prayer. At the end of the prayer, there is a movement to look right and left while saying *sal m*. This shows the importance of horizontal relations with humans. Worship is not only performed by formal prayers (*alah*, fasting, etc), but is performed by caring and spreading the love for other people, nature, and other creatures.³⁵

6. *Multicultural Education*

The idea of Cak Nur about multiculturalism is not merely recognition of diversity but also performing positive behavior against differences. Through this idea, people would be able to distinguish between religious substance and religious patterns. Religion must be separated from religious interpretations. Religion is transcendental and untouched by anyone, while the religious pattern is a human response or interpretation of the transcendental religious teachings. There is no absolute truth resulted from the interpretation.

This understanding is suitable to be used as a paradigm of thinking in understanding the diversity of Islamic understanding. Islam is transcendent, while the *madhhab* of Islamic jurisprudence, *'aq dah*, and Islamic thought are interpretations. The absence of absolute truth in interpretation requires human beings to avoid truth claims to their respective interpretations and appreciate those differences as positive diversity.

Cak Nur expected an inter-religious dialogue, as has been exemplified by Muslims in Spain in the 15th century where the religious communities sat together to discuss a problem from various religious views. They upheld the principle of equality and eliminated superiority.³⁶ This idea could be categorized as education beyond the wall in the term Christian, namely, education carried out between religious communities together studying universal values of religion to find peace, justice, and harmony, while in Nuryatno's term it is called inclusive education.³⁷

³⁴Madjid, 153-154.

³⁵Madjid, *Islam Agama Peradaban*, 65.

³⁶Nurcholish Madjid, "Islamic Root of Modern Pluralism: Indonesian Experiences," *Studia Islamika* 1, no. 1 (1994): 76.

³⁷M. Agus Nuryatno, "Religious Education and the Challenge of Pluralism in Indonesia," *Media Pendidikan* 18, no. 1 (2013): 411-430.

NURCHOLISH MADJID ON INDONESIAN ISLAMIC EDUCATION: A HERMENEUTICAL STUDY

Interfaith education according to Cak Nur is only a discourse without any details of practical explanation. However, it can serve as the basis for interfaith education that is not only in the form of cross-religious studies or talking about the religion's commonalities, but also seeking the universal value of religions to achieve peace, justice, and harmony.

Cak Nur offers a tolerant education model that is friendly to the Indonesian local cultures and the differences in religious understanding. This attitude is rooted in Cak Nur's thinking on the meaning of *isl m*, as the submission and self-surrender to the doctrine of God. Cak Nur mentioned that Islamic teachings require an attitude of tolerance and appreciation, especially to the Abrahamic religions. This is not only mentioned by many verses of the Quran but also exemplified by the Prophet and preserved in the Medina Charter. Islamic education has to be able to accommodate Indonesian local wisdom. The existence of *pesantren* until nowadays showed that the Indonesian people can carry out the education that accommodates the local wisdom.

7. Cak Nur's Critics against Pesantren

Cak Nur argued that *pesantren* not only implemented Islamic value, but also the value of Indonesia-ness. As an indigenous Indonesian Islamic educational institution, *pesantren* has various advantages and disadvantages. *Pesantren* has a boarding system that is suitable for moral education, a trademark of Indonesian education today. However, Cak Nur gave criticisms of *pesantren*.

The first is the aspect of the method and the content of learning. Learning material in *pesantren* frequently is not oriented to the pivotal needs of understanding Islam. Many *pesantren* concern on *na w* and *arf*, whereas the study of *fiqh*, *aq 'id*, and *ta awwuf* are the main pillars of Islam which represent the domains of *m n*, *isl m*, and *i s n*. The depth of the material teaching was limited to the formal aspect, didn't touch on the basic aspects of Islamic teachings or "the spirit" of religiosity. *Pesantren* also taught a little skill of analysis, whereas there are many religious materials taught by *pesantren* which are characterized by rationalism, such as *u l fiqh* and *man iq*. A strong memorization method made students habit of debating more on the re-disclosure of the learned materials, not sharpen analysis skills.

The second is inadequate infrastructure facilities of *pesantren*. The most prominent is the availability of dorms and bathrooms that did not fit the number of students. Likewise, the aspects of architecture and layout, *pesantren* has been built gradually. The unorganized layout

and construction caused by *pesantren*'s leader have not planned its construction and layout since the beginning.

The third, *pesantren* has a strong feudal leadership style by keeping distance and keeping aloof between kyai and *santri*. This tradition is similar to hereditary nobility. This is often legitimized as the Islamic leadership style because it has been done by the *kyai* family for a long time. In fact, the leadership style conducted by Rasulullah is democratic leadership that upholds the value of egalitarianism.

Cak Nur's criticism toward *pesantren* is closely related to his background who once lived in *pesantren* both affiliated to Nahdatul Ulama and modern *pesantren*. However, Cak Nur generalized his critics to all of the kinds of *pesantren*. Cak Nur did not conduct his analysis based on the grouping of *pesantren* such as traditional *pesantren* and modern *pesantren*. Likewise, the absence of mentioning the location of *pesantren*. In the aspect of leadership, for instance, *pesantren* in Jawa Tengah are relatively more egalitarian and democratic than those in East Jawa, *pesantren* in West Jawa are more democratic and egalitarian than those in Central Jawa, this has not been compared with *pesantren* from outside of Java. However, Cak Nur's criticism toward *pesantren* is carried out with his capacity for self-criticism, one of the characteristics of neo-Modernist.³⁸

8. The Contribution of Nurcholish Madjid's Thought to the Contemporary Islamic Education

Cak Nur's thought gives some contributions to contemporary Islamic education. *First*, education according to Cak Nur is the actual practice of Islam itself that focused on moral education. Understanding the human existence and the potentials they had will result in the awareness of the objective of education. Islamic education is not only to know how to do formal worship, but the entire attitude of human beings reflected the values of Islam.

Second, the hermeneutical reading of the objectives of Islamic education in the frame of Cak Nur's thought results in a more comprehensive educational objective, especially the explanation of human duties as God's servant and God's vice-gerent. The circular relationship among *'aql, fi rah*, and emotions as God's vice-gerent potentials gives a clear interpretation of human duties (Figure 1). This interpretation is not an original thought of Cak Nur, but it was

³⁸Lis Safitri and Ahmad Yusuf Prasetiawan, "Kepemimpinan Perempuan dalam Pesantren," *Yinyang: Jurnal Studi Islam Gender dan Anak* 14, no. 1 (2019): 39-69.

NURCHOLISH MADJID ON INDONESIAN ISLAMIC EDUCATION: A HERMENEUTICAL STUDY

resulted from his understanding of the interpretation of Muhammad Asad and Abdullah Yusuf Ali.³⁹

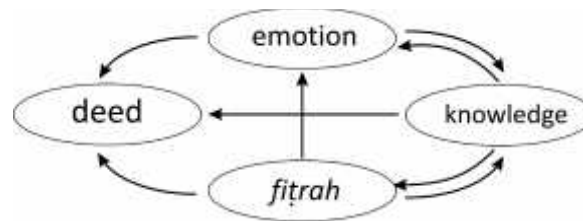


Figure 1: the circular relationship among human potentials

Third, Cak Nur's multicultural education model is well suited to the conditions of Indonesia that have cultural diversity, religion, and religious thought. Cak Nur's thinking on education is not practical but provides a fundamental and philosophical understanding of multicultural education. The tolerant teaching rooted in the explanation of the meaning of *Islam* based on its generic meaning may not be accepted by all Indonesian Muslims because of the diversity of Islamic understanding, but Cak Nur's explanation can be understood easily by Muslims with, in al-Jabiri's term, the epistemology of *burhan* thought.⁴⁰

Cak Nur criticized *pesantren* two decades ago, but it is still relevant today. Indeed, some *pesantren*, especially the modern *pesantren*, tried to fix various deficiencies in the aspects of teaching, curriculum, boarding, and management, but it has not fixed all of the conditions of *pesantren*. The improvement of the Islamic education system in Indonesia was carried out by *Sekolah Islam*, a model of Islamic schools in Indonesia that emerged in the latter half of the 90s. Cak Nur gave an extensive discussion about *pesantren*, through his book, *Bilik-bilik Pesantren*, but his criticism was not accompanied by practical solutions that were more applicable and systematized for Islamic education.

C. CONCLUSION

There was no established theory of Islamic education offered by Cak Nur, because he was not an education expert. As a multiculturalist-pluralist Cak Nur proposed a tolerant model of education, either to the diversity of religious understanding or Indonesian culture. Education is Islam itself, but needs a philosophical interpretation to spell it out. The hermeneutical reading of Cak Nur's ideas contributes to the philosophical paradigm,

³⁹Lis Safitri, Muhamad Nuskhi, Krismiwati Muatip, Hermin Purwaningsih, and Lucie Setiana, "The Relationship between Human Being and Animal: The Study of the Concepts of Khalifah and the Animals in the Quran," *Animal Production* 20, no. 3 (2019): 211-215.

⁴⁰Abid al-Jabiri, *Formasi Nalar Arab* (Yogyakarta: IRCiSoD, 2014).

especially in the objectives of Islamic education and multicultural education. This study is a conceptual explanation of Cak Nur's idea in Islamic education, while the practical explanation and its application require further research.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ali, Fachry. "Nurcholish Madjid sebagai 'Guru Bangsa'." In *Tharikat Nurcholishy: Jejak Pemikiran dari Pembaharu sampai Guru Bangsa*, edited by Jalaluddin Rakhmat. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2001.
- al-J bir , Abid. *Formasi Nalar Arab*. Yogyakarta: IRCiSoD, 2014.
- Aly, Hery Noer and Munzier Suparta. *Watak Pendidikan Islam*. Jakarta: Friska Agung Insani, 2003.
- Barton, Greg. "Indonesia's Nurcholish Madjid and Abdurrahman Wahid as Intellectual 'Ulama': The Meeting of Islamic Traditionalism and Modernism in neo-Modernist Thought." *Studia Islamika* 4, no. 1 (1997).
- Gadamer, Hans-Georg. *Kebenaran dan Metode: Pengantar Filsafat Hermeneutika*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2004.
- Gaus, Ahmad. *Api Islam Nurcholish Madjid: Jalan Hidup Seorang Visioner*. Jakarta: Kompas, 2010.
- Hidayat, Komaruddin. "Kata Pengantar." In *Islam Agama Peradaban: Membangun Makna dan Relevansi Doktrin Islam dalam Sejarah* edited by Nurcholish Madjid. Jakarta: Dian Rakyat dan Paramadina, 2008.
- Ismail. "Gerakan Neo-Modernisme dan Pembaruan Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia." In *Arah Baru Studi Islam di Indonesia: Teori dan Metodologi*, edited by Toto Suharto and Nor Huda. Yogyakarta: Ar-Ruzz Media, 2008.
- Kull, Ann. *Piety and Politics: Nurcholish and His Interpretation of Islam in Modern Indonesia*. Lund: Department of History and Antropology of Religion, 2005.
- Langgulong, Hasan. *Beberapa Pemikiran tentang Pendidikan Islam*. Bandung: al-Ma'arif, 1980.
- Ma'arif, Ahmad Syafi'I. *Islam dalam Bingkai Keindonesiaan: Sebuah Refleksi Sejarah*. Bandung: Mizan, 2015.
- Maarif Insitut, PPIM UIN Jakarta, and UNDP Indonesia. "OSIS Mendayung di antara Dua Karang: Kebijakan Sekolah, Radikalisme dan Inklusivisme Kebangsaan." *Convey Report* 1, no. 4 (2018). https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PRw-aFGFBI7gMDFy_QjmpaOo9cxarmO-/view (retrieved at August 4, 2018).
- Madjid, Nurcholis. "Masalah Pendidikan Agama di Perguruan Tinggi Umum." In *Dinamika Pemikiran Islam di Perguruan Tinggi* edited by Fuaduddin and Cik Hasan Bisri. Jakarta: Logos Wacana Ilmu, 1999.
- Madjid, Nurcholish. "Islamic Root of Modern Pluralism: Indonesian Experiences." *Studia Islamika* 1, no. 1 (1994).
- Madjid, Nurcholish. *Islam Agama Peradaban: Membangun Makna dan Relevansi Doktrin Islam dalam Sejarah*. Jakarta: Paramadina dan Dian Rakyat, 2008.
- Madjid, Nurcholish. *Islam, Kemandirian, dan Keindonesiaan*. Bandung: Mizan, 2013.
- Madjid, Nurcholish. *Islam, Kemandirian, dan Keindonesiaan*. Bandung: Mizan, 1987.
- Madjid, Nurcholish. *Pintu-pintu Menuju Tuhan*. Jakarta: Dian Rakyat dan Paramadina, 1994.
- McNeil, John D. *Contemporary Curriculum: in Thought and Action*. USA: John Wiley & Sons, 2006.
- Munawwar-Rachman, Budhy. *Ensiklopedi Nurcholish Madjid: Pemikiran Islam di Kanvas Pemikiran 1*, digital ed. Jakarta: Democracy Project, 2011.

**NURCHOLISH MADJID ON INDONESIAN ISLAMIC EDUCATION:
A HERMENEUTICAL STUDY**

- Muzakki, Akh. "Is Education Determinant? The Formation of Liberal and Anti-liberal Islamic Legal Thinking in Indonesia." *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 1, no. 2 (2007).
- Nuryatno, M. Agus. "Religious Education and the Challenge of Pluralism in Indonesia." *Media Pendidikan* 18, no. 1 (2013).
- PPIM UIN Jakarta, Convey Institut, and UNDP Indonesia. "Sikap dan Perilaku Keberagamaan Guru dan Dosen Pendidikan Agama Islam." *Convey Report* 1, no. 8 (2018).
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hC8FSCBTbUby1tompdHPe1SvBuRzmewa/view>
(retrieved at August 4, 2018).
- Rahman, Fazlur. *Islam and Modernity: Transforming of an Intellectual Tradition*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982.
- Rahman, Jamal D. "Pembaruan dalam Islam: Sebuah Rekonstruksi." In *Tharikat Nurcholishy, Jejak Pemikiran dari Pembaharu sampai Guru Bangsa* edited by Sukandi. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2001.
- Ramayulis. *Ilmu Pendidikan Islam*. Jakarta: Kalam Mulia, 2008.
- Safitri, Lis and Ahmad Yusuf Prasetiawan. "Kepemimpinan Perempuan dalam Pesantren." *Yinyang: Jurnal Studi Islam Gender dan Anak* 14, no. 1 (2019).
- Safitri, Lis and Fadlil Munawwar Manshur. "Tujuan Pendidikan Islam dalam Pandangan Nurcholish Madjid." *Tsamrah al-Fikri* 10, no. 1 (2016).
- Safitri, Lis Muhamad Nuskhi, Krismiwati Muatip, Hermin Purwaningsih, and Lucie Setiana. "The Relationship between Human Being and Animal: The Study of the Concepts of Khalifah and the Animals in the Quran." *Animal Production* 20, no. 3 (2019).
- Safitri, Lis. "Perkembangan Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia dan Australia." In *Islam Kontemporer di Indonesia dan Australia* edited by Jamhari Makruf et.al. Jakarta: Australia Global Alumni and PPIM UIN Jakarta, 2017.
- Saleh, Fauzan. "Pendidikan dan Upaya Membangun 'Tradisi Besar': Perkembangan Islam Kultural di Indonesia." In *Religious Harmony: Problems, Practice, and Education* edited by Alef Theria Wasim et.al. Yogyakarta: Oasis Publisher, 2005.
- Salik, Muhammad. "Menggagas Pesantren Masa Depan: Kritik Cak Nur atas Pola Pendidikan Tradisional." *El-Qudwah* 10, (2013).
- Sirry, Mun'im. "Secularization in the Mind of Muslim Reformist: A Case Study of Nurcholish Madjid and Fouad Zakaria." *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 1, no. 2 (2007).
- Tafsir, Ahmad. *Filsafat Pendidikan Islami*. Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2012.