

# Responses of Islamic Organisations to the Enactment of Pancasila as *Asas Tunggal* for Mass Organisations in Indonesia

*Achmad Kemal Riza\**

**Abstract:** This article was about the responses of some Islamic organisations to the decision of the New Order regime to enact Pancasila as sole basis for mass organization in Indonesia back in 1985. The highlighted organizations were PPP (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan or Unitary Development Party), HMI (Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam or Muslim University Students Association), PII (Pelajar Islam Indonesia or Indonesian Muslim Students), Muhammadiyah, and NU (Nahdlatul Ulama). The article pointed out that this episode of state and Islam relationship in Indonesia showed the repressiveness of the New Order regime and the responsiveness as well as adaptability of Islam towards of political sphere in Indonesia as represented by these organizations. Such responses ranged from stiff resistance in the case PII to open-handed acceptance in PPP. The article also illustrated how internal dynamic within Islamic organizations in which Islamic values and concepts were employed to justify or to rule out the admissibility of Pancasila as their sole basis for those organizations.

**Key words:** Pancasila, Asas Tunggal Policy, Islamic organizations, The New Order regime

## A. Introduction

The enactment of Pancasila by the New Order regime as sole basis in 1985 had created resistance from Indonesian community. The religious groups, mainly Muslims, considered that the New Order regime intended to abolish Islam from Indonesia's public matter.<sup>1</sup> For the New Order regime, the intention for such idea was to secure the development process. This process sometimes hampered by

---

\*The writer is the lecturer of Syari'ah Faculty of State Institute of Islamic Studies (IAIN) Sunan Ampel Surabaya.

<sup>1</sup>Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, *Pancasila as the Sole Foundation, Indonesia*, 38, 1984. p. 80.

ideological polemics and even conflicts.<sup>2</sup> In Wahid opinion, the misunderstanding between state ideology and certain religious group was always manifested in the developing countries. Those religious groups then are considered as obstructing the development process. The Tanjung Priok incident, violent campaign of 1982 general election, bank and Borobudur bombings and other violence were indications of this obstruction. As the state ideology not yet established and alternative ideology is apparent, there will always effort from the New Order regime to secure the state ideology.<sup>3</sup> The ploy to install Pancasila as sole basis is in line with this reasoning. As there are many Islamic organisations in Indonesia, their responses to the enactment of Pancasila as sole basis is not easy and simple. As the option is not many for them, the choice is sometimes ambivalent and pragmatic. However, there are many Islamic organisations in Indonesia with different characteristics and orientation. This paper examines the responses on Pancasila as sole basis of PPP; the only party with Islamic orientation, HMI; a modern organisation for Islamic university students, PII; a modern organisation for Muslim students, NU; a traditionalist Muslims' organisation, and Muhammadiyah; an organisation of modern Muslims.

## **B. PPP**

The enactment of Pancasila as *asas tunggal* for political parties (and Golkar) did not create any tension. All of them accepted this easily and without internal debates. In the case of PPP (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan; Unity Development Party) as "the representative" of Islamic group, within which the tension would happen, the case was even smoother. In fact, as Ismail reports, PPP had already replaced its Islamic

---

<sup>2</sup>Suzaina Abdul Kadir, *Traditional Islamic Society and the State in Indonesia: the Nahdlatul Ulama, Political Accommodation and the Preservation of Autonomy* (Michigan: An Arbor, 1999), p. 198.

<sup>3</sup>Abdurrahman Wahid, *Prisma Pemikiran Gus Dur* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 1999), p. 2, 6.

basis with Pancasila in 1977 congress.<sup>4</sup> PPP preceded not only 1983 GBHN on *asas tunggal* but also P4 as well. It is important to note that PPP chairman in 1977 congress as still SH Mintaredja, a person who had more independent attitude towards the demands of the New Order regime than his successor, H.J. Naro.

However, some Muslim leaders regretted that PPP did not walk out from the parliament like what it did concerning the P-4 bill in 1978. Instead, PPP joined in the discussion session of the mass organisation bill in the parliament, the bill that created polemics within Muslims when it came into effect.<sup>5</sup> The hostility of some Muslim leaders towards PPP then worsened, as PPP did not show any hesitation his position to support the bill. Ismail argues that the attitude of some Muslim leaders to PPP was due to the position of those some leaders like A. Syafi'i Maarif and Deliar Noer as outsiders. On the other end, PPP was the object of the New Order regime's political repression and had to deal with it without losing its existence.<sup>6</sup> Consequently, the position of PPP within the given political system was relatively weak. The constant interference and internal conflicts were among that reason. Having said so, PPP actually possessed an important role as one actor in the New Order political system. The New Order regime needed PPP for its democratic legitimacy. Therefore, PPP could have done something for the group it represented, the Muslims. May be some aforementioned Muslim leaders wished PPP doing as best as it could, especially concerning the mass organisation bill.

### C. HMI and PII

The issue of *asas tunggal* Pancasila had become problem for HMI (Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam; Muslim University Students Association) since it arranged its

---

<sup>4</sup>Faisal Ismail, "Pancasila as Sole Basis", in *Studia Islamika* 3 (4). 1996, p. 25-6.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid*

Congress in May 1983. The government, through the minister of Youth, Abdul Gafur, an ex-HMI member, indicated that HMI should adopt *asas tunggal* and that the Government only allowed HMI congress if HMI would accept *asas tunggal Pancasila* in that congress.<sup>7</sup> However, the guarantee given by the central board did not come into reality as the majority of the delegates in the congress opposed the adoption of *Pancasila* as HMI sole basis. The statement delivered by Prof. Lafran Pane, the founder of HMI back in 1947, saying that the major reason behind the HMI creation was to defend Indonesia. Therefore, since *Pancasila* was the symbol of the unity of Indonesia HMI had no choice but to support it. The Islam identity of HMI, Pane stated, manifested some time later in the development of HMI.<sup>8</sup> Finally, the 1983 HMI congress decided to postpone its adoption to *Pancasila* as sole basis until the law came into effect and recommended the central board to discuss the matter.<sup>9</sup>

There were many opinions behind HMI insistence to defend Islam as its basis. Ahmad Zacky Siradj, HMI chairperson 1980-1983, argued that by implementing Islamic values HMI had already implementing *Pancasila*.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, the delegates in the 1983 congress did not feel convenience in the way the ex- HMI members, who then joined the New Order regime, in directing the course of the congress. HMI members wanted to show their independence from any external force by maintaining Islam as HMI basis.<sup>11</sup>

The HMI opposition to *asas tunggal Pancasila* eventually did not last for long. HMI did publish a book in 1984 concerning the mass organisation bill stating that *asas tunggal Pancasila* was harmful. In addition, the enactment of

---

<sup>7</sup>M. Rusli Karim, *Islam di Indonesia: Suatu Tinjauan Sosial dan Politik*, (Yogyakarta: Hanindita, 1985), p. 220.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 221.

<sup>9</sup>M. Rusli Karim, *HMI MPO Dalam Kemelut Modernisasi di Indonesia*, (Bandung: Mizan, 1997), p. 129-30.

<sup>10</sup>Faisal Ismail, *Pancasila as Sole Basis*, p. 49.

<sup>11</sup>Tempo interaktif, *Ketika Kapal HMI sampai di Pelabuhan Orde baru*, edition 29/3/1997 at <http://www.tempo.com>.

asas tunggal Pancasila for mass organisation would put the Government politically in too powerful place compared to Indonesian citizens.<sup>12</sup> Even in December 1984 the HMI chairman Harry Azhar Aziz went to NU congress in Situbondo, East Java to convince NU leaders for not accepting asas tunggal Pancasila. However, in April 1985, there was meeting of working board for HMI congress and then continued with HMI plenary session. The result of that session was for HMI to adopt Pancasila.<sup>13</sup> This decision was after NU's acceptance of asas tunggal Pancasila, but before the enactment of mass organisation law, which was in June 1985. Then, although coloured with debates and disagreement, 1986 HMI congress ratified the decision.<sup>14</sup>

The disagreement towards asas tunggal Pancasila eventually split HMI into two. Led by Eggi Sudjana, a faction not agreeing with the HMI's decision to adopt Pancasila as sole basis formed what is called HMI-MPO (MPO stands for Majelis Penyelamat Organisasi; the rescue board of HMI organisation). A faction supporting the adoption of Pancasila then called HMI DIPO (Dipo referred to Diponegoro street, a street in Jakarta where the HMI central office located). Despite the opposition to asas tunggal Pancasila, there were other reasons in Sudjana's opinion that had caused the split. He did not like the way the New Order regime interfering HMI internal matter, although it was done by ex-HMI members. In addition, Sudjana wanted to show solidarity for fellow Muslims who had died in the course of Islam in the Tanjung Priok incident, Lampung and elsewhere in Indonesia. Sudjana believed that the introduction of asas tunggal Pancasila was contradictory to the reality of pluralistic Indonesia. He argued that asas tunggal contradicted the principle of democracy.<sup>15</sup> It is clear from Sudjana's explanation that HMI-MPO has different opinion concerning the position of Islam and

---

<sup>12</sup>Faisal Ismail, *Pancasila as Sole Basis*, p. 49.

<sup>13</sup>M. Rusli Karim., *HMI MPO*, p 130-3.

<sup>14</sup>Faisal Ismail, *Pancasila as Sole Basis*, p. 50.

<sup>15</sup>M. Rusli Karim., *HMI MPO*, p. 17-9.

Muslims in Indonesia. Whereas HMI DIPO is more inclined to promote Islam in the system available, HMI-MPO tends to look for an alternative way for the system. It is HMI-MPO which still loyal to the struggle of its patron, Masjumi.

HMI-MPO's rejection of *asas tunggal* Pancasila was also due to procedural and technical way in which HMI DIPO adopting Pancasila. The first was the decision of adopting Pancasila should be based on the HMI congress as the highest place to decide essential matters. HMI DPO had broken the procedure as it had already adopted Pancasila outside the congress.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, that decision was taken before the enactment of the mass organisation law. HMI-MPO also did not agree the formula with which HMI DIPO adopted Pancasila. HMI-MPO felt that HMI DIPO had "over glorified" Pancasila and at the same time undermined the role of Islam.<sup>17</sup> The debates and disagreement surrounding *asas tunggal* Pancasila reflected the dynamics of intellectual struggle within HMI.

The *asas tunggal* issue had disclosed intellectual streams within HMI. As Sudjana argued, the issue of *asas tunggal* had clarified the tension between cultural and political Islam.<sup>18</sup> However, Karim sated that the disagreement surrounding *asas tunggal* resulted from tensions between nationalists groups and Islam group within HMI.<sup>19</sup> It could be true that the influence of ex HMI members also played a big role in the issue.

Ex HMI members had their own organisation KAHMI with which they could promote HMI goals and interests especially in politics. During the era of liberal democracy in 1950s, HMI, which also identified its close relation with Muhammadiyah and Masjumi, promoted the Islamic political goals through KAHMI. In the mid of 1960s Many HMI members also played important role in the demise of Sukarno

---

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 133.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 131.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>19</sup>M. Rusli Karim, *Dinamika*, p. 222.

as the rise of Suharto as the leader of New Order military-dominated regime. Consequently, HMI became an inseparable part of the New Order regime as well. Nonetheless, as the New Order absorbed many of KAHMI members in the New Order regime, the New Order regime used KAHMI members to influence HMI course. The *asas tunggal* issue was a good example of it. However, it is true not that KAHMI could not use the New Order regime for the HMI interests since many ex-HMI members gained positions in the structure of the New Order regime. One true point was that by accepting Pancasila HMI secured itself from possible dissolution.

There was only one Islamic organisation banned by the New Order regime because of its insistence to refuse changing its Islamic basis with Pancasila. PII (Persatuan Pelajar Islam, Islamic student association) was banned in December 1987 by the decree from the minister of internal affairs on the basis that PII did not comply with the fundamental principles of the mass organisation law.<sup>20</sup> According Mutammimul Ula, the chairperson of PII, PII rejected *asas tunggal* Pancasila from Islamic framework. Furthermore, he said that *asas tunggal* Pancasila was legally, sociologically and philosophically wrong.<sup>21</sup> In the 1984 PII national leader meeting, PII declared to refuse any law that eliminate Islam from its organisational statutes as PII believed that Islam could not be replace with Pancasila. PII also stated that adopting Pancasila as sole basis would confine the implementation of Islamic teaching.<sup>22</sup> In its 1990 congress, three years after dissolution, PII stated that Pancasila was only the philosophy of the state and not a religion. Therefore, Pancasila was subordinate to religion.<sup>23</sup> In this light, PII considered adopting *asas tunggal* Pancasila as placing Pancasila over religion. Thus, Muslims could not replace Islam with Pancasila.

---

<sup>20</sup>Faisal Ismail, *Pancasila as Sole Basis*, p. 51-2.

<sup>21</sup>Faisal Ismail, *Pancasila as Sole Basis*, p. 52.

<sup>22</sup>[www.pelajarislam.or.id/Jurnal](http://www.pelajarislam.or.id/Jurnal), visited at May 2002.

<sup>23</sup>M. Rusli Karim, *HMI MPO*, p 128.

It is interesting to note that after its dissolution, PII still managed to conduct all its programs. PII did that not in formal manner and without publication.<sup>24</sup> In addition it was obvious that the New Order regime all PII activities. This is an indication that the New Order regime did not prepare with the consequence of the mass organisation law. Another proof is that President Suharto refused to sign the PII dissolution decree.<sup>25</sup> The ambivalent attitude of the New Order regime could be described as their hesitation to accept the possible reaction from Muslims if the New Order regime played hard ball. The New Order regime possibly considered PII as small organisation that would cause any harm. The New Order regime felt that the PII dissolution as a sufficient lesson for other organisations for not doing the same and further action was unnecessary. Moreover, since the late 1980s until the early 1990s the New Order regime started to give Muslims space to express their religiosity. This could be best illustrated by the formation of ICMI in December 1990 with the blessing from the New Order regime as well as the opening of sharia-based bank in some years later. Partly because of the changing attitude of the New Order regime PII accepted Pancasila in 1995 congress. It was stated that Pancasila was no longer problem for Muslims and PII and by doing so, PII hoped that it would optimise and maximise its role for its members, especially those who were still in high school level.<sup>26</sup> It was a happy ending for PII. If PII would had accepted Pancasila at the first time PII would be happier.

#### **D. Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah**

At least four NU leaders endorsed publicly the NU acceptance of Pancasila as *asas tunggal*. They were KH. Ali Ma'shum; the Rais Am, KH Achmad Siddiq, KH As'ad Syamsul Arifin and H. Abdurrahman Wahid. KH Achmad Siddiq played the most decisive role with his middle formula

---

<sup>24</sup>[www.pelajarislam.or.id/Jurnal](http://www.pelajarislam.or.id/Jurnal), visited at May 2002.

<sup>25</sup>[www.pelajarislam.or.id/Jurnal](http://www.pelajarislam.or.id/Jurnal), visited at May 2002.

<sup>26</sup>[www.pelajarislam.or.id/Jurnal](http://www.pelajarislam.or.id/Jurnal), visited at May 2002.



to accept Pancasila. The discussion within NU on Pancasila as its sole basis began in its 1983 national conference at KH As'ad pesantren of Situbondo. Prior to that conference, KH Achmad Siddiq met president Suharto to discuss the place of Islam post *asas tunggal*. The formula agreed by President Suharto, and very likely Ulama would agree, was that Pancasila was not religion. Therefore, could replace religion or replace the position of religion<sup>27</sup> Then, after that conference, KH As'ad went to Jakarta and met President Suharto who informed him about *asas tunggal* and NU should adopt it. Again, KH As'ad was of the opinion that Pancasila did not contradict Islam and therefore NU should accept it in its commencing congress in his pesantren.<sup>28</sup>

The 1984 NU congress was not only about *asas tunggal*. The more important issue was the breakaway from PPP that would institutionally withdraw NU from practical politics. The two issues were later known as return to the *Khittah* 1926.<sup>29</sup> The both issues attracted the government support. The NU acceptance of *asas tunggal* would leave no spaces for other mass organisations to refuse and the NU withdrawal from PPP would benefit the Government party, Golkar.<sup>30</sup> Despite the New Order regime's full support, the growing conflicts between NU faction and MI faction within PPP and the emergence of NU leaders which had different view on NU's role were also believed to be the decisive elements of the transition process in the congress.

As *asas tunggal* was concerned in the congress, opinions were often contradictory to each other. Many delegates refused to accept *asas tunggal* for various reasons. The majority of them believed that Pancasila could not replace Islam as NU basis on the religious reason. They considered

---

<sup>27</sup>Martin Van Bruinessen, *Nahdlaul Ulama: Tradisi, relasi-Relasi Kuasa dan Pencarian Wacana Baru*, online edition at <http://www.kmnu.org>, visited at May 2002.

<sup>28</sup>Ali Haidar, "Al-Islam wa al-Pancasila fi Dau'i Kifah Nadlatul Ulama (NU)", in *Studia Islamika*, 1 (3) 1994. p. 103.

<sup>29</sup>M. Rusli Karim, *Dinamika*, p. 214.

<sup>30</sup>Suzaina Abdul Kadir, *Traditional Islamic Society*, p. 196-9.

accepting Pancasila as a form of infidelity. Some of them just wanted to wait until the enactment of the law of mass organisation became to reality.<sup>31</sup> It was KH Achmad Siddiq's speech that turned the situation around favoring the acceptance of Pancasila.

As H Abdurrahman Wahid had predicted, the issue of *asas tunggal* would force NU leaders to formulate for NU a synthesis that could accommodate Pancasila without losing its Islamic identity.<sup>32</sup> KH Achmad Siddiq perfectly handled that task. Arguing that accepting Pancasila as NU sole basis did not necessarily abandon Islam, the only thing to do was revising the statutes. Moreover, the NU 1926 statute did not contain any basis and therefore, the problem of basis was not an absolute matter. Furthermore, KH Achmad Siddiq argued the only and the important element of the NU statute was its Islamic character with specification of Sunnism. The place of this Islamic character was not confined in the basis only. There were still other factors posed by KH Achmad Siddiq to convince the delegates to accept Pancasila. Among them were the nature of the state of Indonesia, which reflected both in the 1945 constitution and Pancasila, and the role of NU in Indonesia since the colonial era until the development era.

In the preamble of 1945 constitution, the influence and inspiration of Islamic teachings and values were manifest. The acknowledgement that the independence was Allah's mercy and that national goals were parallel with Islamic teaching indicated that the state of Indonesia guaranteed NU and the implementation of Islamic teaching in Indonesia.<sup>33</sup> NU should support that such state as long as it did not deviate from Islamic teachings and values. The case was the same with the first article of Pancasila. KH. Achmad Siddiq even pointed out that the phrase "believe in one God" of that first article along

---

<sup>31</sup>Ali Haidar, *Al-Islam wa al-Pancasila*, p. 105.

<sup>32</sup>M. Rusli Karim, *Dinamika*, 216.

<sup>33</sup>Einar M. Sitompul, *NU dan Pancasila*, online edition at <http://www.kmnu.org>, visited at May 2002.

with chapter 29 of 1945 constitution reflected the oneness of God in Islam (*Tawhīd*).<sup>34</sup>

The latter argument by KH Achmad Siddiq was about historical role of NU in Indonesia. NU involved in every stages of Indonesia since the colonial era.<sup>35</sup> Moreover, in 1945 some NU leaders involve in the formulation of Pancasila. Therefore, NU were bounded with the current form of Indonesia. KH Achmad Siddiq concluded that Indonesia with Pancasila and 1945 constitution was the final form of state for Muslims.<sup>36</sup>

Another interesting thought of KH Achmad Siddiq concerned the relationship between NU and the Government. NU provided informal role for Muslims in Indonesia that focused on the religious matter, whereas the Government with its formal role dealt with physical and material needs of Muslims.<sup>37</sup> This synthesis is one consequence of the dialectical relationship between Islam and the state in Indonesia, and between Muslims and the New Order regime. Using the Islamic Sunnism he adhered to, especially the tendency to al-Ghazali Sufism and Shafi'i school of law, KH Achmad Siddiq came into conclusion that the position of NU was not in confrontation with regime like what NU had done during its joining with PPP. NU could have done better for its members and Indonesia if NU did not involve in politics. By using al-Ghazali reasoning on the nature of man that is potential to the righteousness, KH Achmad Siddiq argued that Indonesian Muslims could also be directed to the ideal condition Islam had demanded.<sup>38</sup>

Another opinion on Pancasila resulted from KH Achmad Siddiq thought about the relationship between Muslims and other groups in Indonesia was on the religious inclusive position of his. KH. Achmad Siddiq was of the

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup>Ali Haidar, *Al-Islam wa al-Pancasila*. P. 103

<sup>36</sup>M Syafii Anwar, *Pemikiran dan Aksi Islam Indonesia* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1995) p. 208.

<sup>37</sup>M. Rusli Karim, *Dinamika*, p. 217

<sup>38</sup>Einar M. Sitompul, *NU dan Pancasila*,

opinion that Pancasila was *kalimah al-sawa* or consensus conception reached by all religious groups to form Indonesia for them to live side by side together. Therefore, Muslims should obey the rule of Indonesian Government as Muslims had "signed the contract".<sup>39</sup> A younger figure of NU, H Abdurrahman Wahid also stated in the same line with this assertion. He believed that Pancasila was an indication of national consensus in which Muslims also participated.<sup>40</sup> For him, after acknowledging that Pancasila was compatible with Islam, there was no important thing for Muslims except the unity of Indonesia.

H. Abdurrahman Wahid not only represented an inclusive view towards other religious groups in Indonesia but he introduced many other ideas to NU members. Since the formal channel of political participation was barren with the corporatist policy of the New Order regime, H Abdurrahman Wahid believed that political struggle could be conducted outside the system. H Abdurrahman Wahid saw NU could become an influential political power without entering political system of the New Order. Here, he brought the idea to NU and wanted to construct it for his democratisation campaign.<sup>41</sup> However, as his activities varied and sometimes did not pleased his NU circle, so that some suggested that H Abdurrahman Wahid did not always represent NU.<sup>42</sup> If his role in 1984 NU congress was concerned, H Abdurrahman Wahid and KH Achmad Siddiq had employed the NU acceptance to *asas tunggal* (and its withdrawal from PPP) to initiate reconciliation with the New Order regime.

NU could easily accept *asas tunggal* Pancasila on the theological basis, but the political consideration was also apparent. It was always NU tradition to react apparently political issue with religious approach.<sup>43</sup> As H Abdurrahman

---

<sup>39</sup>M. Syafi'i Anwar, *Pemikiran dan Aksi Islam Indonesia*. p. 207

<sup>40</sup>M. Rusli Karim, *Dinamika*, p. 217

<sup>41</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup>Douglas E. Ramage, *Politics in Indonesia: Democracy, Islam and the Ideology of Tolerance* (Singapore: Routledge, 1995), p. 46

<sup>43</sup>Einar M. Sitompul, *NU dan Pancasila*.

Wahid once stated, Islam could never be separated from politics. In the case of *asas tunggal*, it was well understood by the NU leaders that there was relatively strong pressure from the New Order regime on NU to accept Pancasila as its sole basis. After reaching to the conclusion that Pancasila did not contradict Islam, the political windfall would come to NU. However, that could not be in the mind of the two architects of the NU return to *Khittah* 1926, H Abdurrahman Wahid and KH Achmad Siddiq. H Abdurrahman Wahid has democratic view before President Suharto delivered his speech on *asas tunggal* Pancasila in August 1982 and even KH Achmad Siddiq wrote the urgency for NU to be integrated fully in the state of Indonesia. It is reasonable to say that some NU leaders' new thought on NU position in the state of Indonesia was parallel with the New Order regime demand.

Relating to the easiness for NU to accept Pancasila as its sole basis, the relationship between NU members and ulama as their patron provided sufficient answer. Moreover, accepting Pancasila as its sole basis could be one key factors to restore NU's close relationship with the New Order regime. Machrus Irsyam (A Muhammadiyah figure but an expert on NU) argues that NU should be able to adapt to the situation. He asserts that as a mass organisation, NU is responsible for its members welfare and needs. Accepting Pancasila as is sole basis is one alternative for NU to act on behalf its members' welfare and goodness. Therefore, comparing NU with Muhammadiyah is not valid since, as he says, Muhammadiyah is an intellectual movement that has its own way to react to such issue.<sup>44</sup>

Having known that NU had accepted *asas tunggal* Pancasila, Muhammadiyah had no many choices but to follow NU's step. However, Muhammadiyah did not immediately change its basis. Muhammadiyah waited for the enactment of mass organisation law, which consequently postponed its

---

<sup>44</sup>Machrus Irsyam, "Aktualisasi Politik Muhammadiyah", in *Muhammadiyah dan tantangan Masa Depan: Sebuah Dialog Intelektual*, (eds.) Sujarwanto et. al. (Yogyakarta: Tiara wacana, 1990), p. 141

congress for the second time, and meanwhile tried to clarify, influence, and give contribution to the bill. The major concern of Muhammadiyah leaders was that if the future law on mass organisation would replace the role of religion and especially Islam.<sup>45</sup> There were at least three steps for Muhammadiyah to anticipate the enactment of mass organisation law. The first was to consult with other Islamic organisations like MUI and NU. The second was to influence and clarify the content of the law through consultation with the Government leaders and the legislators. The third was to consolidate internally facing the issue.<sup>46</sup>

As Muhammadiyah could not rely on NU to refuse Pancasila as sole basis, Muhammadiyah convinced MUI to resist against the New Order regime's demand. This coalition was not strong enough to stop the New Order regime's demand. This was because there were already an Islamic organisation (NU) accepting Pancasila as its sole basis. The NU decision made Muhammadiyah alone in the struggle and the New Order regime could easily use the NU precedent for other Islamic organisation to accept Pancasila as their sole basis. Therefore, what Muhammadiyah could do was to influence the content of the bill by consulting government's leaders (including President Suharto) and legislators.

In conducting its allocative politics facing the mass organisation bill, Muhammadiyah formed a committee to respond and formulate Muhammadiyah position concerning the issue. The members of the committee were H. Kusnadi, Hadikusumo, S. prodjokusumo, and Lukman Harun.<sup>47</sup> The committee did most of Muhammadiyah lobby to influence the discussion of the law. Muhammadiyah targeted its lobby to the Government and the legislators.<sup>48</sup> The first Muhammadiyah argument was that what the bill meant was

---

<sup>45</sup>M. Siradjuddin Syamsuddin, *Religion and Politics in Islam: the Case of Muhammadiyah in Indonesia's New Order* (Michigan: Ann Arbor, 1991), p. 249.

<sup>46</sup>Lukman Harun, *Muhammadiyah dan Asas Pancasila* (Jakarta: Pustaka Panjimas, 1986), p. 38-66.

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 46.

<sup>48</sup>M. Siradjuddin Syamsuddin, *Religion and Politics in Islam*, p. 237-8.

mass organisation in general. Whereas Muhammadiyah was an Islamic organisation so that Muhammadiyah did not have to change its basis. Later, Muhammadiyah argued that it agreed to insert Pancasila in its statutes but not in the basis's section. The New Order regime replied to the two Muhammadiyah's arguments that Pancasila as sole basis was a fixed price Muhammadiyah should accept. After knowing that Muhammadiyah could not escape the law, Muhammadiyah tried to make sure that Pancasila would not replace religion. As din argues, the problem of Muhammadiyah to accept Pancasila was not concerning Pancasila as the state philosophy, but the relationship between Pancasila and Islam.<sup>49</sup> Another Muhammadiyah argument was the historical fact that some Muhammadiyah leaders like Ki Bagus Hadikusumo and Kahar Muzakir participated in the formulation of Pancasila. Thus, the Muhammadiyah situation was similar to that of NU's.

The effort Muhammadiyah had done in influencing the mass organisation law had made the law reasonable acceptable for Muslims and Muhammadiyah in particular. As Lukman Harun reports, Muhammadiyah had "succeeded" in inserting the sufficient interpretation about difference between religion and Pancasila, the right to insert special character for certain mass organisations (especially religious ones).<sup>50</sup> Having succeeded in contributing the mass organisation law so that it would contradict Islamic teaching, the Muhammadiyah leaders believed that Muhammadiyah members would appreciate their effort. The Muhammadiyah congress in December 1985 could best indicate the attitude of Muhammadiyah members on *asas tunggal* Pancasila as well as their appreciation of the efforts that Muhammadiyah leaders had performed in influencing the content of the mass organisation law.

The success of Muhammadiyah leaders to somewhat influence some parts of mass organisation law, however, did

---

<sup>49</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 244-5.

<sup>50</sup>Lukman Harun, *Muhammadiyah dan Asas Pancasila*, p. 58-62.

not prevent the Muhammadiyah members to have different opinions about *asas tunggal* Pancasila. Although accepting *asas tunggal* Pancasila would not cause Muhammadiyah its Islamic identity, the majority of delegates in the congress were of the opinion that Muhammadiyah only could accept Pancasila as its sole basis because of the government's pressure.<sup>51</sup> They believed that the option of refusing *asas tunggal* Pancasila only resulted in possible dissolution. Another opinion held by Malik Ahmad, the vice chairman of Muhammadiyah was that Muhammadiyah should not accept Pancasila at all costs and he would resign from Muhammadiyah board if Muhammadiyah accept it in that congress.<sup>52</sup>

These different opinions eventually reflected the view of Muhammadiyah members after accepting Pancasila. Many believed that Muhammadiyah still maintained its Islamic character. Nonetheless, they argued that Muhammadiyah accepted Pancasila for the Government pressure.<sup>53</sup> Amien Rais also asserted that Muhammadiyah's acceptance of *asas tunggal* was perfectly measured.<sup>54</sup> What he meant was that by acknowledging that Pancasila was a mere philosophy and that religion was divine revelation. He may be also wanted to stress that Muhammadiyah only gave the part the Government wanted and no more than that. Din Syamsuddin, a young Muhammadiyah figure (with NU background) stated that by accepting Pancasila while maintaining Islam at the same time, Muhammadiyah did not fully accept *asas tunggal* Pancasila. Syamsuddin's statement should be connected to the reason of the Government to enact Pancasila as sole basis for mass organisation. Indeed, the Government did not wish to abolish Islam from Islamic organisations by forcing Pancasila. Moreover, owing to Muhammadiyah had declared not to

---

<sup>51</sup>M. Rusli Karim, *Dinamika*, p. 218-9.

<sup>52</sup>Faisal Ismail, *Pancasila as Sole Basis*, p. 43.

<sup>53</sup>Djarnawi Hadikusumo, "Muhammadiyah dalam Dinamika Nasional Pasca Perubahan Anggaran Dasar", in *Muhammadiyah dan tantangan Masa Depan: Sebuah Dialog Intelektual*, (eds.) Sujarwanto et. al. (Yogyakarta: Tiara wacana, 1990), p. 16.

<sup>54</sup>M. Siradjuddin Syamsuddin, *Religion and Politics in Islam*, p. 251.



involve in practical politics after the Government refused to rehabilitate Masjumi in the early 1970s, Muhammadiyah should have accepted Pancasila easily.

The problem for Muhammadiyah was probably the degree of Government's interference on the internal business of Indonesians in Indonesia. The tension was between the ruler and the ruled when the ruler much stronger than the ruled. The Muhammadiyah members viewed the Government insistence on *asas tunggal* an extreme interference on Muslims' matter. In line with this argument, Syamsuddin asserts that Muhammadiyah's attitude towards *asas tunggal* Pancasila was more political than theological in nature.<sup>55</sup> Therefore, the acceptance of Pancasila indicated the intensified interference of the New Order regime to private life of the community. Facing this growing interference, some Muhammadiyah leaders believed that Muhammadiyah should not loose its vitality. As it was estimate in fact did not hamper Muhammadiyah activities as many Muhammadiyah members tried to reformulate Muhammadiyah role and position after its acceptance of Pancasila as its sole basis.

The main issue for Muhammadiyah after accepting Pancasila as sole basis was how to place Muhammadiyah among its members and Indonesian community in general. The acceptance of Pancasila as sole basis forced Muhammadiyah to reformulate its role and position. Machrus Irsyam argues that Pancasila demands to create the comprehensive Indonesian people whereas Islam insists on the high position of humankind. As a result, Muhammadiyah will not face any difficulty to place itself after accepting Pancasila as *asas tunggal*.<sup>56</sup> Another opinion is that the Muhammadiyah *da'wah* mission (proselytization of faith) could be more effective for both political and communal target after accepting Pancasila as its sole basis.<sup>57</sup> However, all new

---

<sup>55</sup>*ibid*, p. 245.

<sup>56</sup>Machrus Irsyam, *Aktualisasi Politik Muhammadiyah*, p. 142.

<sup>57</sup>Mohammad Djazman al-Kindi, "Muhammadiyah dalam Dinamika Politik Bangsa", in *Muhammadiyah dan tantangan Masa Depan: Sebuah Dialog Intelektual*, (eds.) Sujarwanto et. al. (Yogyakarta: Tiara wacana, 1990), p. 26.

formulation did not successfully satisfy the Muhammadiyah members, but accepting *asas tunggal* did not impede Muhammadiyah activities and programs as well.

The enactment of Pancasila as sole basis had forced both NU and Muhammadiyah to revise their statutes. They both struggled to accommodate Pancasila as the sole basis without causing their Islamic identity. After putting Pancasila as its sole basis in second article of its statute, NU created in the third article a place for Islam as its *aqīdah* (theological framework). Then NU continued in the same article its adherence to *sunnism* (one big Islamic group) and *madhhab* (Islamic law school).<sup>58</sup> On the other hand, Muhammadiyah in the first article of its statute put Islam as identity. In the same article it was stated that Muhammadiyah was formed to promote good deeds and prohibit evil (*amr al-ma'rūf nahy an al-munkar*) and it relied on the Quran and the Hadith as its religious sources. Then, Muhammadiyah put Pancasila as its sole basis in the second article.<sup>59</sup> The revision of NU and Muhammadiyah showed that the enactment of Pancasila as their sole basis did not indicate their Islamic identity.

So far, there was no fundamental difference on theological background for NU and Muhammadiyah in accepting Pancasila. The difference was only on the direct political consequence after accepting Pancasila. NU leaders were of the opinion that it was the time that NU realised its position as one element of the state of Indonesia. It was an opinion that made NU accepting Pancasila. The political constellation in which NU in a peak disappointed period within PPP and the desire to restore NU's harmonious relationship with the New Order regime also precipitated NU's acceptance of Pancasila. Meanwhile, Muhammadiyah felt that the condition prior *asas tunggal* was a relatively ideal to conduct its role in the context of Indonesia. Muhammadiyah leaders believed that they were already in a minimum position they could tolerate to promote Islam in

---

<sup>58</sup>Einar M. Sitompul, *NU dan Pancasila*.

<sup>59</sup>Lukman Harun, *Muhammadiyah dan Asas Pancasila*, p. 70.

Indonesia. Muhammadiyah institutionally left political arena in the early 1970s. Muhammadiyah only had its social and intellectual role to elevate Islam in Indonesia. Therefore, the plan to replace Islam with Pancasila was simply intolerable. Replacing Islam with Pancasila meant directly abrogating its identity and very reason of its existence. Considering the magnitude, role and influence of Muhammadiyah in the context of Indonesia, there was no enough reason for the New Order regime to dissolve it even if Muhammadiyah would not accept *asas tunggal* Pancasila. Nonetheless, Muhammadiyah had decided to accept Pancasila.

### **E. Conclusion**

The New Order regime's ploy to control over Indonesian community using the ideological issue of *asas tunggal* Pancasila had really aroused the reaction of Muslims. Recognising Pancasila would threatened the Islamic identity they had, Muslims' initial responses was identical. They simply refused to accept *asas tunggal* Pancasila. However, many factors had influenced the Muslims changing attitude towards the issue. As politics would never separated from Islam, political consideration changed Muslims' attitude towards Pancasila. as the representation for Muslim in politics, PPP had initiated the adoption of Pancasila as their basis even before Suharto invented the idea. PPP became the first Muslim organisation to adopt Pancasila. For PII and some members of HMI, their political consideration had convinced them to refuse the enactment of Pancasila. The result was the ban of PII and the formation of HMI-MPO. Meanwhile, NU's weak political position both in PPP and a relatively distant position from the New Order regime had contributed their changing position towards Pancasila. Having a good relationship with the New Order regime was good enough for NU to breakaway from PPP as well as accepting Pancasila. Muhammadiyah faced a quite difficult position in the issue. Knowing that it could not escape the mass organisation law, Muhammadiyah did what their best at least to influence the

bill so it would not too difficult to accept. Many of its leaders still felt that Muhammadiyah decision was based on pragmatism. The debates and responses surrounding the issue of asas tunggal revealed that Islam even only as an ideological justification of their presence in Indonesia was still important for Muslims.

### References

- Abdurrahman Wahid, *Prisma Pemikiran Gus Dur*, Yogyakarta, LKiS, 1999.
- Ali Haidar, "Al-Islam wa al-Pancasila fi Dau'i Kifah Nadlatul Ulama (NU)", in *Studia Islamika*, 1 (3), 1994.
- Djarnawi Hadikusumo, "Muhammadiyah dalam Dinamika Nasional Pasca Perubahan Anggaran Dasar", in *Muhammadiyah dan tantangan Masa Depan: Sebuah Dialog Intelektual*, (eds.) Sujarwanto et. al., Yogyakarta, Tiara Wacana, 1990
- Douglas E. Ramage, *Politics in Indonesia: Democracy, Islam and the Ideology of Tolerance*, Singapore, Routledge, 1995.
- Faisal Ismail, Pancasila as Sole Basis. *Studia Islamika* 3 (4). 1996.
- Lukman Harun, *Muhammadiyah dan Asas Pancasila*, Jakarta, Pustaka Panjimas, 1986.
- M. Rusli Karim, *HMI MPO Dalam Kemelut Modernisasi di Indonesia*, Bandung, Mizan, 1997.
- M. Rusli Karim, *Islam di Indonesia: Suatu Tinjauan Sosial dan Politik*, Yogyakarta, Hanindita, 1985.
- M. Siradjuddin Syamsuddin, *Religion and Politics in Islam: the Case of MUhammadiyah in Indonesia's New Order*, Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1991.
- M. Syafii Anwar, *Pemikiran dan Aksi Islam Indonesia*, Jakarta, Paramadina, 1995.
- Marchrus Irsyam, "Aktualisasi Politik Muhammadiyah", in *Muhammadiyah dan tantangan Masa Depan: Sebuah Dialog Intelektual*, (eds.) Sujarwanto et. al., Yogyakarta, Tiara wacana, 1990.

- Mohammad Djazman al-Kindi, "Muhammadiyah dalam Dinamika Politik Bangsa", in *Muhammadiyah dan tantangan Masa Depan: Sebuah Dialog Intelektual*, (eds.) Sujarwanto et. al., Yogyakarta, Tiara Wacana, 1990
- Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, "Pancasila as the Sole Foundation", *Indonesia*, 38, 1984.
- Suzaina Abdul Kadir, *Traditional Islamic Society and the State in Indonesia: the Nahdlatul Ulama, Political Accommodation and the Preservation of Autonomy*, Michigan, An Arbor, 1999.
- Tempo interaktif, *Ketika Kapal HMI sampai di Pelabuhan Orde baru*, edition 29/3/1997 at <http://www.tempo.com>.
- Einar M. Sitompul, NU dan Pancasila, online editon at <http://www.kmnu.org>. visited at May 2002
- Martin Van Bruinessen, *Nahdlaul Ulama: Tradisi, relasi-Relasi Kuasa dan Pencarian Wacana Baru*, online edition at <http://www.kmnu.org>, visited at May 2002.
- <http://www.pelajarislam.or.id/Jurnal>, visited at May 2002