

Research article

Transcendental Humanism for Equality: Abdurrahman Wahid's Thoughts on Women

Iswahyudi

Institut Agama Islam Negeri (IAIN) Ponorogo, Indonesia
iswahyudi@iainponorogo.ac.id

Abstract

The study of feminism is currently dominated by women, even though gender-fair relations will not be realized without awareness from the male side. One of the Indonesian male intellectuals who has a high response to women is Abdurrahman Wahid. Unfortunately, the study of Abdurrahman Wahid still revolves around three studies, namely, as a great thinker in Pluralism, liberalism, and pribumisasi, or privatization of Islam; as a political actor and as an educational thinker. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is first to find the pattern of Abdurrahman Wahid's thinking about women, second, to look for influencing factors; and third, to look for the relevance of his thoughts. This study is a literature study, which is a study that relies on the main source of Abdurrahman Wahid's works or writings on women. The works or comments of intellectuals who discuss Abdurrahman Wahid's thoughts on women are complementary sources of this paper. Various thoughts of Abdurrahman Wahid will be researched and reduced based on the themes discussed about women. These themes are then analyzed using qualitative content analysis. The study found three things. First, Abdurrahman Wahid's style of thinking about women is transcendental humanism. This pattern is a discontinuity from the previous thought, where the perspectives of Mu'tazilah, Marxian, and Sufism also give color to his thoughts. Second, the factors that affect the pattern are family, education, life experience, and madhhab thought. These factors are the structure of cultural and ideological understanding. Third, the religious and patriarchal Indonesian people make Abdurrahman Wahid's thoughts relevant. Abdurrahman Wahid's modality and habitus (pattern of thinking) allow his thinking to be received and developed by the community. However, this paper has not outlined the continuity and change of Abdurrahman Wahid's thinking and does not see her intellectual position compared to other female thinkers.

Keywords

Abdurrahman Wahid; School of Thought; Transcendental Humanism; Women.

Article history

Submitted: 25/03/2025; revised: 09/05/2025; accepted: 11/06/2025.



© 2025 by the author(s). This is an open-access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY SA) license, <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>.

1. INTRODUCTION

Feminists who defend women's rights are almost always seen as women and ignore the significant role of men in protecting women. Discussions about feminists have rarely mentioned the names of the male gender. Muslim feminist names such as Rifat Hasan, Amina Wadud, Fatima Mernissi, Nawal al-Saadawi, Taslima Nasreen, and others are female. The relationship between men and women will not be balanced if it is only the consciousness of one gender. Muhajarah pointed out that violence against women is mainly caused by men who are not gender-conscious (Muhajarah, 2016). Chisamnya also gave an example of male dominance in education (Chisamya et al., 2012). Men's defense, therefore, is urgently needed to build gender-unfair relationships between men and women (Wandi, 2015).

Many scientists have carried out studies on Abdurrahman Wahid's thinking. The studies can be seen in three areas. First, studies that place Abdurrahman Wahid's thought in significant themes such as Pluralism, liberalism, and the pribumisasi or privatization of Islam (Firdaus, 2018; Hunain et al., 2024; Iswahyudi, 2016; Suhairi et al., 2022). Second, a study that discusses Abdurrahman Wahid's thoughts on politics in Indonesia (Ahmad Nurhuda & Yera Zettira Agesti, 2021; Bistara & Fuady, 2022; Hidayatulloh, 2018; Yusdani, 2023). Third, a study that discusses Abdurrahman Wahid's thoughts on education, especially multicultural education and character education (Burhani et al., 2020; Kurniawati & Junaidi, 2023; Sa'diyah & Nurhayati, 2019; Sari & Dozan, 2021). From these three tendencies, no study has explicitly discussed Abdurrahman Wahid's thinking concerning his defense of women.

As a defender of women, Abdurrahman Wahid has not been widely seen in academic works. Abdurrahman Wahid's ideas, especially regarding the defense of women, are essential to be seen and researched. There are at least three reasons why researching Abdurrahman Wahid's defense of women is necessary.

First, Abdurrahman Wahid has strong legitimacy in Indonesia from a cultural and religious perspective. Abdurrahman Wahid is often mythologized as a 'saint' (Sukidi, 2001). After his death, approximately 3,000 pilgrims visited his grave on weekdays, and around 7,000 to 8,000 pilgrims were on holidays before Ramadan (Muhammad, 2012). This cultural and religious aspect allows his ideas to be readily accepted by Indonesian Muslims. As is known, the average Indonesian pesantren still studies various gender-biased books, such as 'Uqūd al-Llijain by al-Nawawi, Ihyā' 'Ulūm Al-Dīn, and various other fiqh books. To counter-argue these works requires a charismatic figure with cultural and religious power. It is what other intellectuals defending

women, such as Hussein Muhammad, Quraish Shihab, Masdar F. Mas'udi, Nasaruddin Umar, Zaitunah Subhan, and others do not have. Religiously, these intellectuals may not be in doubt, but culturally, they cannot be compared to Abdurrahman Wahid. In addition to having cultural strength, Abdurrahman Wahid also has ideological cadres who are deeply rooted in society, so the transformation of his ideas becomes easier.

Second, Abdurrahman Wahid's defense of women correlates with other major themes he promotes, such as Islamicity, Indonesianness, human rights, etc. It means that Abdurrahman Wahid's views on women are not placed separately from other ideas that surround him. Abdurrahman Wahid's offer of the law of 'perpantangan' in inheritance matters, for example, is an offer of religious teachings based on water culture in communities near the Barito and Mahakam rivers in the Banjar community of Kalimantan (Wahid, 2010a). Regarding leadership, Abdurrahman Wahid saw women from an anthropological and constitutional perspective as the right of every citizen (Wahid, 2007). The prohibition of women becoming leaders, therefore, violates human rights. Abdurrahman Wahid also criticized the gender-biased model of Indonesian mystical history, such as the tradition of Javanese kings having sex with beautiful women during the coronation ceremony. For him, this is a non-factual history that must be straightened out (Wahid, 2010a).

Third, Abdurrahman Wahid was not alone in defending women. He invited his wife, Shinta Nuriyah, to fight with him. Shinta Nuriyah founded PUAN Amal Hayati, an organization concerned with women's empowerment to eliminate violence against them. This activity was also transferred to his daughter, Yenny Zanuba Wahid by being active in The Wahid Institute, which promotes moderate Islamic thought, including women's justice. Moreover, Abdurrahman Wahid came from a family that defended women. His father, KH Wahid Hasyim, was the minister of religion who allowed female students to take sharia courses, especially at the State Islamic Institute (IAIN), after previously (before 1968) female students were not allowed, as was the old tradition, to take such courses (Ikeda, 2010). Similarly, Abdurrahman Wahid's mother, Sholihah Munawaroh, was a female community servant. Munawaroh is a core organizer of the Muslimat (women's movement) of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). Munawaroh was once a member of the DKI Jakarta DPRD (1957), a member of the DPR-GR/MPRS (1960), and a member of the DPR/MPR (1971-1987). Moreover, Abdurrahman Wahid had a female cousin who became the first female judge in Indonesia, Abidah Ma'shum (Wahid, 2010c). Abdurrahman Wahid, therefore, was not

only a theoretician of gender but also an actor in the gender justice movement in Indonesia.

This paper aims to complete the lack of studies on Abdurrahman Wahid, who has attracted much attention from researchers and scientists. Scientists often refer to Abdurrahman Wahid as a democratic figure, a Liberal or Neo-Modernist Islamic figure, a figure of Islamic humanism or Pluralism, and others. There is one side that is still very little attention paid to by researchers, namely Abdurrahman Wahid's defense of women. Therefore, the following three questions are essential to ask. First, what is Abdurrahman Wahid's style of thinking about women? Second, what factors influence Abdurrahman Wahid's thinking about women? Third, what is the relevance of Abdurrahman Wahid's idea of women, especially when faced with gender-biased ideologies in Indonesia? This paper is based on three arguments. First, one's thinking pattern is not historical. As historical creatures, human thought is directed to build civilization in terms of religion and culture. Likewise, Abdurrahman Wahid has a mindset that tends to defend groups that are considered marginal. Second, many factors can trigger the formation of a person's thinking when responding to something. Abdurrahman Wahid, who has inherited many brilliant thoughts so far, is nourished by the context in which he lives and interacts with the outside world. Third, an idea has relevance to the social situation if it is supported by the modality of thinking to develop and the consistency of the agents in disseminating the concept.

2. METHODS

This type of research is qualitative, looking for aspects of Abdurrahman Wahid's thoughts on women contained in his works and the writings of others on the same issue. Abdurrahman Wahid's works in the form of articles and books are the primary sources of this research. Abdurrahman Wahid's works such as *Tabayun Gus Dur: Pribumisasi Islam*, *Hak Minoritas*, *Reformasi Kultural* (1998), *Prisma Pemikiran Gusdur* (1999), *Tuhan Tidak Perlu Dibela* (2000), *Pergulatan Negara, Agama dan Kebudayaan* (2001), *Islamku, Islam Anda, Islam Kita: Agama, Masyarakat, Negara dan Demokrasi* (2006), *Islam Kosmopolitan, Nilai-nilai Indonesia dan Transformasi Kebudayaan* (2007), *Menggerakkan Tradisi* (2007), *Membaca Sejarah Nusantara: 25 Kolom Sejarah Gus Dur* (2010) are important sources for this paper. Writings or works by intellectuals on Abdurrahman Wahid will be valuable secondary sources.

As a literature research, this research will first collect various data from both primary and secondary data on the topic under study. The data obtained will be

reduced by classifying the data to focus more on the subject of study. In this classification process, simplification and abstraction are inevitable. After the data is classified, it will be displayed in the research findings. It is called a data display. Through data display (Nasution et al., 2024), Abdurrahman Wahid's thoughts on women can be known. Data display will facilitate the conclusion of a study.

The data will be analyzed using the following steps: First, look for Abdurrahman Wahid's thoughts and actions reported, documented, and written in books, articles, or mass media news as a purposeful discourse. Second, looking for the context of the discourse. It is necessary to know that there is no silent production of knowledge and action from the impulses surrounding it. Third, looking for aspects of the historicity of discourse in other discourse stages. Fourth, looking for the relationship between the discourse and the power relations present in the same theme, namely, about women. Fifth, look for ideologies that differ from the discourse produced by Abdurrahman Wahid.

Data analysis in this paper is done by interpreting Abdurrahman Wahid's thoughts on women. Interpretation is intended to find patterns of Abdurrahman Wahid's thoughts on women, the factors that influence him, and his model of thought. According to Abdurrahman Wahid, interpretation work also pays attention to the relationship of one thought with other thoughts in various texts about women. Interpretation aims to find the relationship between one idea and another to form a unity. In addition to looking for the correlation of thoughts, the interpretation also continues by looking for the relevance of Abdurrahman Wahid's thoughts to the condition of contemporary women in Indonesia, especially in providing alternative solutions to women's problems in Indonesia.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 School of Thought

School of Thought is a form of defining and creating a school of thought that can help people to identify, expand and modify a context (Marynowicz-hetka, 2019), on the category of thinking and methods of mastering reality (Losev et al., 2019). The formation of the madhhab of thought can also provide ideas about interpersonal relationships characterized by symbolic and formal surpluses, which lead to dominance. The formation of the madhhab of thought makes the school of thought a symbolic category, which can build symbolic institutions by seeing the need for

relationality. With this relationality, the school of thought is not isolated from a relational process, where the process considers the importance of a social relationship shown through the emergence of a group of people who collect new ideas. That formation, then, can create cultural construction as a form of artistic expression and practice, which can move to formal authority and authority ownership within the school of thought (Marynowicz-hetka, 2019).

Marynowicz-hetka (2019) adds that the school of thought also requires process breaks and discontinuity to maintain ideas within various constraints. However, the school of thought must be developed and refined as a form of thought. The school of thought is due to the need to reproduce the mind so that there is an evolution of consciousness that moves further (Losev et al., 2019). One of these forms of thinking was explained by (Karim, 2014), who initiated feminism. According to him, feminist thought is a diverse thought that must be seen more deeply by looking at the definition, waves, and schools of thought on the worldview of modernism and postmodernism. According to Karim, feminist thought will become a non-monolithic ideology because of the inequality of thought in it, such as liberal, radical, socialist, Marxist, psychoanalytic, or neo-Marxist feminism. Karim then discussed further liberal feminists based on the school of thought that upholds equal freedom and equality for men and women.

3.2 Gender Equities and Equality

The concept of gender equality is a concept that looks at conditions of equality between men and women who are free and able to develop their abilities without any stereotypes that shackle them. The idea of gender equality includes the form of practice and way of thinking about justice for women, namely in the treatment of obligations, benefits, rights, and opportunities (Arifin, 2018). Jiang & Wang (2019) sees this conception through two thoughts, namely Marxism and Confucianism. According to Marxist thought, gender equality is seen as realizing the value of fundamental human rights. Gender equality is seen through the process of class revolution, which takes place until the ownership of the socialist public achieves equality for women. Meanwhile, in Confucian thought, equality is seen as an idea that women and men must be equal in the political, economic, educational, and social fields. However, what distinguishes it from Marxist thinking is how Confucian thinkers see the ability of everyone to be Shin and Yao and see the need for a harmonious relationship between men and women.

In the conception of gender, Money (2019) sees that equity is a form of means and equality is a form of results. Without both or one of them, gender equality cannot be indeed enforced. Wang then gave an example through education, where education has an offense to gender equality because women's access to education is still considered low. This access is exemplified by the stereotype of women's roles in textbooks and the loss of women's roles both in the curriculum and in the involvement of learning activities. This fact then made Money (2019) See an opportunity to integrate the understanding of gender equality in education, where education is a place for students to receive basic education that will be useful to trigger students to think critically and be able to overcome all problems regarding gender bias when they are in the community. Money (2019) explained that integration into education is achieved through music as a form of popular culture, which allows students to understand gender equality better. Music was chosen because it can provide positive opportunities for many students to combine logical and cognitive knowledge with emotional and spiritual thinking (Wang, 2019).

3.3. Transcendental Humanism: Abdurrahman Wahid's Pattern of Thought on Women

Abdurrahman Wahid's style of thinking on women's issues is transcendental humanism. This pattern is based on three basic foundations: the theory of Ushul Fiqh (legal theory), the principle of justice, and Pluralism. Perspective Ushūl Fiqh (legal theory) is an essential principle of Abdurrahman Wahid's thought. This principle is taken from the purpose of the present religion, namely as a principle *maqāṣid al-syarīah*, which is the purpose set by the Shari'a for humankind. *Maqāṣid al-syarīah* based on *Al-Kulliyat al-Khams* (the fifth basis) is to maintain religion (*Hifẓ Al-Dīn*), maintaining reason (*Hifẓ Al-'Aql*), keeping the soul (*Hifẓ Al-Nafs*), maintaining offspring (*Hifẓ Al-Nasl*) and safeguarding property (*Hifẓ Al-Māl*). *Al-Kulliyat al-Khams* was reconstructed by Abdurrahman Wahid into freedom to practice religion (*Hifẓ Al-Dīn*), freedom of exploration of ideas (*Hifẓ Al-'Aql*), the existence of guarantees and legal defenses (*Hifẓ Al-Nafs*), the existence of family longevity (*Hifẓ Al-Nasl*) and the existence of a guarantee of wealth and ways to obtain it (*Hifẓ Al-Māl*) (Wahid, 2007b). Defending women, according to Abdurrahman Wahid, is the same as defending humans. Defending one human being is the same as defending all human beings (Wahid, 2006). Placing women in the second grade or mistreating women is against the purpose of religion itself. To strengthen his view, Abdurrahman Wahid

quoted the Qur'an surah QS. Al-Hujurat, 49:13, explains that God created man differently, and Surah Al-Maidah, 5:32, explains that helping one person is the same as helping all people (Wahid, 2006).

The Second basic is justice. Justice is another basis for Abdurrahman Wahid's defense of women. For Abdurrahman Wahid, the concept of justice is inherent in God himself. God calls Himself the God of the Most Righteous. Suppose Allah SWT is a source of justice. Of course, Kalām Allah SWT. The Qur'an is the source of thought about justice (Wahid, 2007b). In the Qur'an, there are two words to show justice: al-Qist and al-'adl. These two words refer to the exact meaning of justice, acting justly and equally (QS. al-Nisa', 4: 58 and QS. al-Nisa', 4: 135). For Abdurrahman Wahid, justice's implications are two things: first, it encourages humans to fulfill their promises, duties, and mandates. Second, protecting the suffering, weak, and deprived. Abdurrahman Wahid, therefore, appreciated Mu'tazilah, who made God's justice the main principle of religion (Wahid, 2007b).

The third basic is Pluralism. According to Abdurrahman Wahid, defending women is based on the fact that Plurality is sunnatullah and given as revealed by God Himself in QS. Al-Hujurat, 49: 13 (Wahid, 2006). Abdurrahman Wahid sees the implications of Pluralism as part of the dialectic of the local community's attitude towards the religion of Islam that he adheres to. According to Abdurrahman Wahid, the case of "restraint" from Shaykh Arsyad Banjar's idea of inheritance (a wife gets half of her husband's property before the property is divided among other heirs) is one of the proofs. The tradition of "Perpantangan" occurs because Banjar women are always together to earn a living (Wahid, 2010b). To answer this Plurality, Abdurrahman Wahid reconstructs fiqh with an ethical basis, namely fiqh that is adaptive to the human condition and human life experience that changes and is adjusted to the esoteric inner experience of human beings (Iswahyudi, 2017). Sufism figures such as al-Rumi (1207-1273 AD), Atha'illah al-Sakandari (1250-1309 AD), and al-Hujwiri (1009-1077 AD) are often quoted by him (Wahid, 2000, 2007b).

3.4 Factors That Influence Abdurrahman Wahid's Thinking About Women

Abdurrahman Wahid's thinking about women is influenced by several interrelated factors and not in a short span. These factors are grouped into four things: family factors, educational factors, life experience factors, and madhhab thought factors (the school of thought). Firstly, Family Factors. The award to women was

received by Abdurrahman Wahid, the first in the family: his father, KH. Wahid Hasyim very much appreciates his wife. He taught his wife Dutch and Latin (Gokkai, 2010). As a minister, her father made a government policy so that female students were allowed to take Sharia courses at IAIN, which before 1968 was banned. According to Abdurrahman Wahid, no one has proposed this issue in the previous Parliament (Gokkai, 2010). In his grandfather's family, Tebuireng, there has also been a learning where men and women can intermingle. According to Tebuireng, the key to morality is not separation but how much the school can implement and enforce the rules vigorously so that the relationship between men and women does not fall into immoral acts. More than that, her mother, Sholihah, is an active woman in public life. Sholihah was an administrator of Muslimat NU, a member of the DKI Jakarta DPRD (1957), a member of the DPR-GR/MPRS (1960), and a member of the DPR/MPR (1971-1987)(Gokkai, 2010).

Secondly is the Educational Factor. Abdurrahman Wahid's appreciation and defense of women are also based on a plural educational process. He received his basic education (SD) at a non-Islamic-based school in Jakarta in 1953. After that, he continued to the First Economics High School (SMEP) in Yogyakarta (graduated in 1957). In Yogyakarta, he lived in the house of the Muhammadiyah administrator, KH. Djunaid. After graduating from SMEP, he became a student in Tegalrejo, where KH. Chudhori in 1957-1959, a mystical kiai. After that, he continued his studies at the Jombang Rice Farm in 1959-1963. In 1963, he went to Egypt al-Azhar University but did not finish. He then continued his studies at the University of Baghdad, which opened in 1966. After leaving Baghdad, Abdurrahman Wahid moved to the Netherlands, Germany, and France for a few months between mid-1970 and May 1971(Barton, 2010).

Thirdly, Life Experience. At 13, Abdurrahman lived under the care of his mother and his father, KH. Wahid Hasyim died on 18 April 1953 at a young age (39 years old). She respects women because she sees the struggle of a strict mother in raising her six children (Gokkai, 2010). When he grew up, his maternal grandfather, Bisri Syamsuri, did not discriminate against women, becoming his future wives (not the children of respected people and not the children of great Kiai). Shinta Nuriyah is the daughter of H. Syakur, an ordinary person from Jombang (married in 1968). In living life, Abdurrahman Wahid saw his strict wife become a housewife even though he was paralyzed due to an accident in 1993. Abdurrahman Wahid sees violence in the name of anything, including women, as permanently traumatizing and unpleasant. He found out this when he was with Ramin (between 1966 and 1970), a Jew who moved

to Baghdad from Russia due to the pressure of racial differences or actions and also women's vents to him as a religious and national figure (Barton, 2010).

Fourthly, Madzhab thought. Abdurrahman Wahid's thoughts about women cannot be separated from the madhhab of his thoughts, which are substantial. In a substantive madhhab, a religious text must be seen from the spirit of the text. The spirit of the text is known from the reasons for the presence of the text, the social situation surrounding the text, and the economic, social, and cultural analysis in which the text is applied. In interpreting the verse about male leadership over women (QS, al-Nisa, 4: 34), for example, Abdurrahman Wahid interprets it as a personal seventh-century tribalistic leadership. For leadership divided in a system, women are not an obstacle to becoming leaders (Wahid, 2010c). In response to the problem of the headscarf example, Abdurrahman Wahid sees the function and ethical value of the headscarf as a tool to prevent men and women from falling into immoral acts. According to him, included in the category of a headscarf is a table or chair in schools as people practice now so that men and women in the same class in the learning process are not a problem (Wahid, 2007b).

3.5 The Relevance of Abdurrahman Wahid's Thoughts on Women

Women's issues are included in the realm of religion and cultural issues. The realm of religion concerns the existence of women defined by verses and hadiths. In Surah An-Nisa, it is said that women are under the control of men (QS, al-Nisa, 4: 34). The cultural realm concerns the ideas and values that govern society's attitudes towards women and culturally expected practices. In Javanese culture, it is known as a saying *swarga nunut neraka katut* (heaven come, hell carried), which contains the meaning of a woman's fate (heaven or hell) depending on her husband. Religious and cultural principles have structured the relationship between men and women unevenly. This spiritual and cultural fact has become an object of study for Indonesian Islamic thinkers. Generally, the model of ideas about women in Indonesia is categorized into three. First is the traditionalist model, namely models that still adhere to classical Islamic studies and local traditions in conceptualizing women. This model is followed by, among others, traditional Islamic boarding schools belonging to the NU organization.

Second is the scriptures model, which adheres to the original texts of Islamic teachings. This model was followed by Adian Husaini, Hamid Fahmi Zarkasyi (A. Husaini, 2015; Zarkasyi, 2012), and followers of Wahhabi Salaf. Third, the substantive model contextualizes Islamic texts with their social conditions. This model was

followed by Husein Muhammad, Sinta Nuriyah Wahid, Masdar F. Mas'udi (Rahman, 2017; Tirmidzi, 2015; Widiyanto, 2015). This substantial model is the position of Abdurrahman Wahid's thinking.

In the substantive model, Abdurrahman Wahid's thinking is very relevant to the condition of Indonesian society, which is religious and has a dominant culture of patriakhi. Abdurrahman Wahid's thinking has enough modalities to develop. Abdurrahman Wahid's modalities are grouped into three: the religious symbolic modality, which is shown by his position as a kiai and a figure considered a "guardian." His grave in Tebuireng Jombang was visited with the motivation to get blessings every day (Mulyani & Daryono, 2017). The Haul event for Abdurrahman Wahid (prayer commemorating his death) can even spread inter-religious dialogue (Sulthon et al., 2024). Second, the socio-cultural modality that he has as the grandson of the founder of the largest religious organization in Indonesia, NU, as well as the former Executive Board of the organization (according to the LSI survey in January 2013, the number of NU residents is 36.75% of the total 249 Indonesian population). He is also the son of the former Minister of Religious Affairs from 1949-1952. The third intellectual modality is shown by Abdurrahman Wahid's capacity to think about social, religious, and political issues. Abdurrahman Wahid's works are in the form of articles; according to research Incres, until 2000, there were 493 pieces.

The modality owned by Abdurrahman Wahid goes hand in hand with the agencies he owns. Agencies for Abdurrahman Wahid's thoughts are grouped into two, namely institutional agencies and personal agencies. Institutional agencies are institutions that have programs to spread Abdurrahman Wahid's ideas. The Agency's Institutions are The Wahid Institute and the Gusdurian Network. The Wahid Institute was established on 7 September 2004. The motto of The Wahid Institute is Seeding Plural and Peaceful Islam. Meanwhile, the Gusdurian Network was established around 2012 with a network of 60 local communities. The personal agencies belong to the NU Progressive groups and others concerned with their thoughts, such as Suadi, Ulil Abshar Abdalla, Zuhairi Misrawi, and others.

3.6 Patterns of Thought, Factors Influencing and Relevance of Abdurrahman Wahid's Thoughts in Indonesia

Abdurrahman Wahid's transcendental humanism implies the religious meaning he created. The problem of fiqh and theology that was then formulated in his idea of the need to return to the origin of fiqh, namely Ushul Fiqh and the existence of God as

a provider of justice and Plurality, has given Abdurrahman Wahid an umbrella in seeing women. As Watke points out, this transcendental humanism has become the school of thought Abdurrahman Wahid toward women (Marynowicz-hetka, 2019). Ushul fiqh, which Abdurrahman Wahid constructed, was an adoption of the thought of al-Ghazali (1058-1111 AD) regarding the purpose of establishing sharia developed by al-Shatibi (1320-1388), an expert legal theory in the Maliki madhhab known as Al-Kulliyat al-Khamsi namely maintaining religion, guarding the soul, maintaining intellect, protecting descendants and safeguarding property (Iswahyudi, 2016). Meanwhile, the theory of justice and Plurality was derived by Abdurrahman Wahid from the concoction of various Islamic knowledge, such as Mu'tazilah's view of justice, the Plurality of Sufi philosophy, and Marxian's defence of human suffering. This knowledge places human beings as the center of religious defence.

Abdurrahman Wahid's transcendental humanism thought pattern results from the break or discontinuity of previous thoughts. This discontinuity is the same as the expression by (Marynowicz-hetka, 2019) that the school of thought is a discontinuity of knowledge that precedes it. This discontinuity can be seen in Abdurrahman Wahid's rejection of traditional interpretations in religious texts. The conventional interpretation of QS, al-Nisa, 4:34 as Wahbah Zuhaili, for example, puts women in the guidance and leadership of men (Sartika et al., 2017) interpreted by Abdurrahman Wahid as collective leadership in the modern era. With this kind of thinking, Abdurrahman Wahid is a feminist. Abdurrahman Wahid's feminism has a more religious style. In contrast to the radical feminist, Marxist, socialist, liberal, ecofeminist, theological (Karim, 2014), which is lonely from the perspective of Sufism, Abdurrahman Wahid makes it the basis of life (Iswahyudi, 2016).

Abdurrahman Wahid's thoughts cannot be separated from his life. As stated by Martin Heidegger, one's view of reality is influenced by fore structure of understanding, which includes three things: first, what you already have. Second, what he has seen, and third, what has been conceived of that reality before (Palmer, 1969). A life full of drama begins with a single parent. The mother, the paralysis of the wife, and the plural family environment make Abdurrahman Wahid very sensitive to the suffering of women. Karl Mannheim showed a strong influence of life on a person (Mannheim, 2005). This sensitivity has become Abdurrahman Wahid's individuality, which differs from others. The individuality is then released in the public realm, which comes out of the mainstream idea of the community, namely the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) organization. The community in which he expresses his individuality is, in a

certain intensity, against his thoughts. Simmel called what Abdurrahman Wahid experienced as resistance against him counter-conformity (Bueno, 2019).

The factors that influence Abdurrahman Wahid's thinking can be classified into two, namely, cultural factors and ideological factors. Mannheim has shown cultural factors above as social environmental factors (Mannheim, 2005). These factors include family factors and life experience factors. The ideological factor is the educational factor, and the madhhab factor is his thought. The educational factor is very decisive for a person. As shown by Subkhan, education is a medium through which one can transform ideology into a person (Subkhan, 2018). Abdurrahman Wahid's pluralistic education began with a Christian elementary school in Jakarta, lived with the management of Majelis Tarjih Muhammadiyah when he was a junior high school in Yogyakarta, Pesantren education to universities in Egypt and Baghdad, made himself open and respected differences. In this educational process, Abdurrahman Wahid's reading is also plural. The collection of classical literature of pesantren and the critical perspective of European thinkers makes her thinking about women grounded (humanistic) but also religious (transcendent).

Abdurrahman Wahid's thoughts on women are not something utopian in nature. This thinking also has the potential to shift the ideology of gender bias (traditionalist groups and spiritualist groups) that has taken root today, especially in Indonesia. Two facts make this statement plausible, namely cultural facts and ideal facts. Among these cultural facts is the patriarchal tradition that is rooted in almost all tribal cultures in Indonesia except for the Minangkabau tribe of West Sumatra, which follows a matrilineal pattern or lineage from the mother's side (Munir, 2016). Abdurrahman Wahid agreed with South Kalimantan riverside communities, *perpantangan* (restraint) pattern, which divided half of their inheritance after her husband died. *Perpantangan* is contrary to the classical *fiqh* tradition, which divides 1/4 of the husband's property if he does not have children or 1/8 if he has children and evidence of women's leadership in the public sphere (ministers, governors, regents, and others). Another cultural fact is that there are community protests against patriarchal traditions in society. Isabella's research shows that Batak women resist the patrilineal system, not only through actions but also through films such as the film *Demi Ukok* (Isabella, 2012). Meanwhile, the ideal fact is that there is a paradigmatic change in Indonesian society due to education in terms of gender relations. Research shows that Maliangga, Walewangko, and Londa have improved education (Maliangga, 2019).

As a factual reality in Indonesia, these cultural facts and ideal facts make Abdurrahman Wahid's thoughts relevant to contemporary Indonesian life. This

thinking not only places women as objects that gain social recognition but also has factual legitimacy, similar to the position of equal human beings. In this case, women, who in some contexts are marginalized, are repositioned as an essential part of culture and religion. Indonesian society's religious and cultural base allows the realization of a transcendental humanist social life order born from religious and cultural accommodation. Some groups, of course, consider this thinking to be an effort to 'dismantle' the establishment that sees women as weak, marginal, and backward. The modality and agency of Abdurrahman Wahid's thought contributed to the massification of thought. For Adib, in social struggle, the owner of modalities and habitus (thinking system) will win the contest (Adib, 2012). Contestations often present symbolic violence in the form of heretic accusations and even physical violence. Physical violence was experienced by Abdurrahman Wahid in 2006 when defending women by opposing the passage of the Anti-Pornography and Pornoaction Bill (Iswahyudi, 2017).

4. CONCLUSION

It turns out that feminism, which has been widely assumed as a women's movement to defend herself as well as carried out by people who do not understand religion, is not appropriate. This article shows evidence to the contrary. Abdurrahman Wahid comes from a traditional religious community but can counter-conformity from the mainstream of his community. This counter-conformity is precisely under the fact that people want a gender-fair relationship by placing women and men who are symbiotic. This paper also shows that counterconformity does not permanently alienate a person's individuality. Abdurrahman Wahid's thoughts and movements about women have become a madhhab of thought that continues to be developed and disseminated by agents in Indonesia. Based on a critical interpretation of Abdurrahman Wahid's thoughts and actions on women, it is known that transcendental humanism is an essential basis of all of Abdurrahman Wahid's defenses against women who are mistreated. This base is an authentic pattern that is formed gradually and plurally in the course of life and intellectual journey. This basis makes Abdurrahman Wahid's thinking continue to develop and be relevant to this day in Indonesia. This basis does not exclude Abdurrahman Wahid and his followers from the religious norms and cultural values that are adhered to. Religious norms are religious, ethical views, while cultural values are the local seedbeds of these spiritual and moral values.

This paper only focuses on studying Abdurrahman Wahid's thinking about women with the limitations of the object of thought patterns, influencing factors, and the relevance of thoughts. This study does not capture aspects of Abdurrahman Wahid's thinking about women from the perspective of continuity and change. Examining the elements of continuity and change will help to identify the traces of his thoughts at a particular time. This article also does not compare Abdurrahman Wahid's thoughts on women with other thought figures in Indonesia, such as Mansour Fakihi, Irwan Abdullah, Husein Muhammad, Nasaruddin Umar, and others or foreign thinkers such as Nasr Hamd Abu Zaid, Shahrur, Asghar Ali Engineer, and others. This paper suggests further research on the above two themes through comparative studies. A comparative study of figures in the same theme will show the originality of Abdurrahman Wahid's thought and enrich the treasures of knowledge, especially regarding the comprehensive survey of women from different types of thinking.

REFERENCES

- A. Husaini, R. Hu. (2015). *PROBLEMATIKA TAFSIR FEMINIS: Studi Kritis Konsep Kesetaraan Gender*. Al-Tahrir: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam.
- Adib, M. (2012). Agen dan Struktur dalam Pandangan Piere Bourdieu. *BioKultur*, I(2), 91–110.
- Ahmad Nurhuda, & Yera Zettira Agesti. (2021). Masa Pemerintahan Abdurrahman Wahid (1999-2001). *Tarikhuna: Journal of History and History Education*, 3(1), 113–114.
- Barton, G. (2010). *Biografi Gus Dur: The Authorized Biography of Abdurrahman Wahid*. LKIS Yogyakarta.
- Bistara, R., & Fuady, F. (2022). Islam Wasathiyah dalam Gagasan Politik Islam: Menguak Pemikiran Islam Wasathiyah Abdurrahman Wahid. *Vox Populi*, 5(2), 208–220. <https://doi.org/10.24252/vp.v5i2.33423>
- Bueno, A. (2019). Arthur Bueno Simmel and the Forms of In-dividuality.
- Burhani, Y., Jinan, G. Y., Saepulloh, M. I., & Islam, R. C. (2020). Pendidikan Multikulturalisme Gus Dur. *JAQFI: Jurnal Aqidah Dan Filsafat Islam*, 5(2020), 1–15.
- Chisamya, G., DeJaeghere, J., Kendall, N., & Khan, M. A. (2012). Gender and education for all: Progress and problems in achieving gender equity. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 32(6), 743–755.
- Firdaus, A. (2018). *Menjahit Kain Perca: Gusdurian Dan Konsolidasi Gerakan*

- Pluralisme Di Indonesia. *Kontemplasi: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin*, 6(1), 119–131. <https://doi.org/10.21274/kontem.2018.6.1.119-131>
- Gokkai, T. W. & S. (2010). *Dialog Peradaban untuk Toleransi dan Perdamaian*. Gramedia Jakarta.
- Hidayatulloh, N. S. (2018). *Dagelan Politik Gus Dur Tahun 1999-2001*. AVATRA: *Jurnal Pendidikan Sejarah*, 6(4), 1–13.
- Hunain, I., Qomariyah, F., Ramadhana, M., & Kamil, M. (2024). Universalisme Islam Cosmopolitan Di Indonesia Dalam Prespektif Gus Dur Dan Cak Nur. *Al-Mutharahah: Jurnal Penelitian Dan Kajian Sosial Keagamaan*, 21(02), 821–834. <https://doi.org/10.46781/al-mutharahah>.
- Ikeda, A. W. dan D. (2010). *Dialog Peradaban Untuk Toleransi dan Perdamaian*. Gramedia Pustaka Utama.
- Isabella, R. (2012). *ADLN - Perpustakaan Universitas Airlangga* 64. 4(3), 2003–2005.
- Iswahyudi. (2016). *Pluralisme Islam Pribumi (Melacak Argumen-Argumen Abdurrahman Wahid tentang Pluralisme Islam di Indonesia)*.
- Iswahyudi, . (2017). MUI dan Nalar Fatwa-fatwa Eksklusif. *Al-Ihkam: Jurnal Hukum & Pranata Sosial*, 11(2), 361. <https://doi.org/10.19105/al-ihkam.v11i2.785>
- Karim, A. (2014). (Model Penelitian Kualitatif tentang Perempuan dalam Koridor Sosial Keagamaan). *Fikrah*, 2(1), 57–74.
- Kurniawati, O. B., & Junaidi, M. (2023). Konsep Pendidikan Islam Perspektif Kh. Abdurrahman Wahid. *Dar El-Ilmi: Jurnal Studi Keagamaan, Pendidikan Dan Humaniora*, 10(1), 135–166.
- Losev, Y., Paul, A., Frenkel-Pinter, M., Abu-Hussein, M., Khalaila, I., Gazit, E., & Segal, D. (2019). Novel model of secreted human tau protein reveals the impact of the abnormal N-glycosylation of tau on its aggregation propensity. *Scientific Reports*, 9(1), 2254.
- Maliangga, W. dan L. (2019). Pengaruh Kebijakan Pemerintah Kartu Indonesia Di Kecamatan Dumoga Timur. 19(01), 32–43.
- Mannheim, K. (2005). *Ideology and Utopia*. In Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Marynowicz-hetka, E. (2019). *The School of Thought: Relational Processes of Lasting Existence and Transformation*. 1(8), 109–125.
- Muhajarah, K. (2016). Kekerasan terhadap perempuan dalam rumah tangga: Perspektif sosio-budaya, hukum, dan agama. *Sawwa: Jurnal Studi Gender*, 11(2), 127–146.
- Muhammad, H. (2012). *Sang Zahid Mengarungi Sufisme Gus Dur (1st ed.)*. LKIS.
- Mulyani, S., & Daryono. (2017). *Kajian Terhadap Daerah Asal, Motivasi Pengunjung*

- Dan Fasilitas Penunjang Objek Wisata Religi Makam Kh. Abdurrahman Wahid Di Kecamatan Diwek Kabupaten Jombang. *Swara Bhumi*, 4(02).
- Munir, M. (2016). Sistem Kekerabatan Dalam Kebudayaan Minangkabau: Perspektif Aliran Filsafat Strukturalisme Jean Claude Levi-Strauss. *Jurnal Filsafat*, 25(1), 1. <https://doi.org/10.22146/jf.12612>
- Nasution, A. H., Naria, N., & Romadhon, D. (2024). STUDI PERADABAN ISLAM MASA KOLONIAL BELANDA BIDANG. 3, 13–34.
- Palmer, R. E. (1969). *Hermeneutics*.
- Rahman, Y. (2017). Feminist Kyai, K.H. Husein Muhammad The feminist interpretation on gendered verses and the Qur'ān-based Activism. *Al-Jami'ah*, 55(2), 293–326. <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2017.552.293-326>
- Sa'diyah, H., & Nurhayati, S. (2019). Relevansi Pemikiran Kh. Abdurrahman Wahid Terhadap Pendidikan Islam di Era Modern. *Tadris : Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, Volume14(2), 175–188. <https://doi.org/10.19105/tjpi>.
- Sari, E. S., & Dozan, W. (2021). Konsep Pluralisme Pendidikan Islam Di Indonesia Dalam Perspektif Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur). *Journal TA'LIMUNA*, 10(2), 21–39. <https://doi.org/10.32478/talimuna.v10i2.770>
- Sartika, E., Rodiana, D., & Syahrullah. (2017). Keluarga Sakinah dalam Tafsir Al-Qur'an. *Al-Bayan: Jurnal Studi Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir*, 2(2), 103–131.
- Subkhan, E. (2018). *Journal of Indonesian History*. Ideologi, Kekuasaan, Dan Pengaruhnya Pada Arah Sistem Pendidikan Nasional Indonesia (1950-1965), 7(1), 19–34.
- Suhairi, B., Salim, A., & Ridwan, M. (2022). Pluralisme dalam Perspektif Pemikiran Gus Dur . *Jurnal Indragiri Penelitian Multidisiplin*, 2(3), 155–163. <https://doi.org/10.58707/jipm.v2i3.242>
- Sukidi. (2001). *Teologi Inklusif Cak Nur* (1st ed.). Kompas.
- Sulthon, M., Koroglu, O., & Adeni, A. (2024). Spreading the value of inter-faith dialogue through Gus Dur's Haul video. *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies*, 80(1), 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v80i1.9025>
- Tirmidzi, A. (2015). *MENURUT MASDAR FARID MAS'UDI*. 5.
- Wahid, A. (2000). *Tuhan Tidak Perlu Dibela*. Yogyakarta: LKIS.
- Wahid, A. (2006). *Islamku, Islam Anda, Islam Kita: Agama Masyarakat Negara Demokrasi*. The Wahid Institute.
- Wahid, A. (2007a). *Islam Kosmopolitan: Nilai-Nilai Indonesia dan Transformasi Kebudayaan* (1st ed.). The Wahid Institute.
- Wahid, A. (2007b). *Islam Kosmopolitan, Nilai-Nilai Indonesia dan Transformasi*

- Kebudayaan. Jakarta: The Wahid Institute.
- Wahid, A. (2010a). *Membaca Sejarah Nusantara* (1, Ed.). LKIS.
- Wahid, A. (2010b). *Membaca Sejarah Nusantara: 25 Kolom Sejarah Gus Dur*. Yogyakarta: LKIS.
- Wahid, A. (2010c). *Misteri Kata-Kata*. Jakarta: Pensil-324.
- Wandi, G. (2015). Rekonstruksi maskulinitas: Menguak peran laki-laki dalam perjuangan kesetaraan gender. *Kafaah: Journal of Gender Studies*, 5(2), 239–255.
- Widiyanto, A. (2015). Female religious authority, religious minority and the Ahmadiyya: The activism of Sinta Nuriyah Wahid. *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, 9(1), 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2015.9.1.1-24>
- Yusdani, Y. (2023). Gagasan Politik Gus Dur Dan Cak Nur Tentang Indonesia Pasca Reformasi. *SEIKAT: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial, Politik Dan Hukum*, 2(2), 165–174. <https://doi.org/10.55681/seikat.v2i2.482>
- Zarkasyi, H. F. (2012). Liberalism, Liberalization and Their Impacts of Muslim Education (Special Case of Indonesian Intellectuals). *Tsaqafah*, 8(1), 183. <https://doi.org/10.21111/tsaqafah.v8i1.23>