

THE POLITICS OF MODERATE ISLAM IN INDONESIA Between International Pressure and Domestic Contestations

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Abstract

This article focuses on understanding how Muslim-majority countries adapt to the discourse of moderate Islam to their political circumstances. Using Indonesia's experience as a case study, the article argues that countries' political configurations influence decisions to apply the discourse in domestic politics. In the Indonesian context, political leaders' unwillingness and inability to confront the Islamists are crucial factors that limited the influence of moderation discourse in former Presidents Megawati's and Yudhoyono's reigns. During that period, the presidents used the discourse mainly to signal to the international community that Indonesia did not align itself with the transnational network of terrorism. In contrast with his predecessors, President Widodo is willing to use the discourse to undermine the influence of the Islamists, thereby neutralising their challenges and cementing his political power. Moreover, this article demonstrates that the content of the discourse of moderation is indeterminate. Although the concept is usually associated with positive democratic attitudes, Widodo's emphasis on support for national unity in his definition of moderation shows that political actors can appropriate the concept and adjust it to their particular political needs. [Tulisan ini berusaha memahami bagaimana negara mayoritas Muslim beradaptasi dengan wacana Islam moderat dalam kehidupan politiknya. Menggunakan pengalaman Indonesia sebagai studi kasus, tulisan ini berpendapat bahwa keputusan untuk menerapkan wacana tersebut dalam politik domestik dipengaruhi oleh konfigurasi politik dalam negeri. Dalam konteks Indonesia, ketidakinginan dan ketidakmampuan para pemimpin

politik untuk menghadapi kelompok Islamis adalah faktor krusial yang membatasi pengaruh wacana moderasi di masa kepemimpinan Presiden Megawati dan Yudhoyono. Dalam periode tersebut, kedua presiden menggunakan wacana moderasi utamanya untuk mengirim sinyal kepada komunitas internasional bahwa Indonesia tidak berpibak pada jaringan teroris transnasional. Berbeda dengan pendahulunya, Presiden Widodo memanfaatkan wacana tersebut untuk melemahkan pengaruh kelompok Islamis, dalam rangka menetralsisir tantangan dan mengukuhkan kekuatan politiknya. Lebih dari itu, tulisan ini menunjukkan bahwa isi dari wacana moderasi tidaklah pasti. Walaupun konsep tersebut umumnya diasosiasikan dengan sikap demokratik yang positif, penekanan Widodo pada dukungan bagi persatuan bangsa dalam definisi moderasinya menunjukkan bahwa para aktor politik dapat menyesuakannya dengan kepentingan politik mereka yang spesifik.]

Keywords: moderate Islam, Islamism, nationalism, Indonesia.

A. Introduction

After declaring war on terror in 2001, ‘moderate Islam’ has arguably emerged as one of the most important lexicons in global counter-terrorism strategies. Quoting Hussain, “There is a general consensus that ‘moderate’ Muslims can somehow counter [the] phenomenon of ‘Islamist’ terrorism”.¹ Defined as “those who share the key dimensions of democratic political culture”,² early analyses published by US-based influential think tanks such as RAND Corporation and American Enterprise Institute (AEI) considered the groups instrumental for the US and its Western allies in fighting radical Islamism.³ Since radicalism’s prevalence over moderates is often attributable to better organisation and resources, the West needs to carefully identify their potential moderate partners in Muslim-majority countries and support them with resources, networks, and capacity-building to reverse the configuration.⁴

¹ Alex P. Schmid, “Moderate Muslims and Islamist Terrorism: Between Denial and Resistance”, *Internasional Center for Counter-Terrorism Journal*, vol. 8, no. 9 (2017), p. 3.

² Angel Rabasa et al., *Building Moderate Muslim Networks* (RAND Corporation, 2007), p. 66, <https://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG574.html.w>

³ Angel Rabasa et al., *Building Moderate Muslim Networks*; Joshua Muravchik and Charlie Szrom, “In Search of Moderate Muslims”, *American Enterprise Institute - AEI* (1 Feb 2008), <https://www.aei.org/articles/in-search-of-moderate-muslims/>.

⁴ Rabasa et al., *Building Moderate*, p. xii.

Although this strategy was initially devised to inform policymakers in the US, particularly under the George Bush administration,⁵ it seems that similar approaches have been taken by Muslim-majority countries such as Morocco⁶ and Jordan⁷ to address their own challenges of radicalism. The governments of those countries have attempted to establish moderate Islam as its 'official' discourse of Islam by providing moderate religious authorities with financial, political, and institutional resources while undermining the power of extremist groups.

Indonesia is one of the countries which has increasingly positioned moderate Muslims as the centrepiece of its counter-radicalism strategies. Despite its initial reluctance to fully support the global war on terror,⁸ under President Megawati Soekarnoputri, Indonesia began to claim its Islam was essentially moderate and to support initiatives leading to moderation.⁹ These efforts were escalated by her successors, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and, later, Joko Widodo. Despite differences in their approaches, they repeatedly framed radicalism as a significant threat while simultaneously striving to empower so-called moderate groups, expecting them to outflank the power of Islamic radicalism. For example, in July 2017, despite a recent surge of conservative attitudes in the country, Widodo asserted that "radical Islam is not Indonesian Islam" while claiming that Indonesia remains a role model for moderation.¹⁰

⁵ Gregorio Bettiza, "Constructing Civilisations: Embedding and Reproducing the 'Muslim World' in American Foreign Policy Practices and Institutions Since 9/11", *Review of International Studies*, vol. 41, no. 3 (2015), pp. 575-600.

⁶ Cheryl Benard, "'Moderate Islam' Isn't Working", *The National Interest* (20 Dec 2015), <https://nationalinterest.org/feature/moderate-islam-isnt-working-14693>; Ann Marie Wainscott, "Religious Regulation as Foreign Policy: Morocco's Islamic Diplomacy in West Africa", *Politics and Religion*, vol. 11, no. 1 (Cambridge University Press, 2018), pp. 1-26.

⁷ Stacey Gutkowski, "We are the Very Model of a Moderate Muslim State: The Amman Messages and Jordan's Foreign Policy", *International Relations*, vol. 30, no. 2 (2016), pp. 206-26.

⁸ Anthony L. Smith, "A Glass Half Full: Indonesia-U.S. Relations In the Age of Terror", *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, vol. 25, no. 3, 2003), pp. 449-72.

⁹ Ahmad Rizky Mardhatillah Umar, "A Genealogy of Moderate Islam: Governmentality and Discourses of Islam in Indonesia's Foreign Policy", *Studia Islamika*, vol. 23, no. 3 (2016), pp. 399-433; James Bourk Hoesterey, "Public Diplomacy and the Global Dissemination of 'Moderate Islam'", in *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Indonesia*, 1st edition (England: Routledge, 2018), pp. 406-16.

¹⁰ "Jokowi: Indonesia Tetap Jadi Model Islam Moderat", *dw.com*, <https://www.dw.com/id/jokowi-indonesia-tetap-jadi-model-islam-moderat/a-39523538>; "Jokowi: Islam Radikal Bukan Islam Bangsa Indonesia", *suara.com* (15 Jul 2017), <https://www.suara.com>.

Such a position, which echoed Yudhoyono's assertion in June 2011 that Indonesian Islam does not contradict democracy,¹¹ is coupled with policies aiming to weaken the power of the so-called radical groups and strengthen the moderates. As the government banned Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) for threatening national unity, Indonesia under Widodo demonstrated strong support to Nahdlatul Ulama (NU)'s 'Islam Nusantara', both believed to offer alternatives to radical Islam ideologies; invited NU's and Muhammadiyah's leaders to sit on the Steering Board of the Pancasila Ideology Development Board (BPIP); and facilitated high-profile international ulama meetings, which allowed moderate organisations to improve their reputation in the eyes of the global Islamic community. It is such preferential treatment to moderate interpretations of Islam that this article dubs a 'moderate Islam strategy'.

Analysing Indonesia's experience as a case study, this article examines the implementation of a moderate Islam strategy in Muslim-majority countries. The manner through which the strategy is adapted by these states to their respective political contexts is particularly interesting. It argues that the implementation of the strategy is followed by the emergence of a discourse of moderation which deviates in varying degrees from the strategy. In contrast with the presumptions of a moderate Islam strategy that define moderation, more or less, as an acceptance of democratic rules and norms, this article contends that the meaning of moderate Islam is and always has been susceptible to alterations, thus rendering the concept essentially indeterminate. Such indeterminacy can be partly attributed to the political contestations in the community within which the strategy is applied and the way the state, especially its political leadership, responds to such circumstances. As the idea of moderation is ingrained within particular political configurations, political actors may appropriate the concept for the advancement of their respective interests. The structure of these discourses reflects the pattern of power relations in the society.

Political actors are interested in instrumentalising the notion of moderate Islam because it holds a 'discursive' power which may support their political aims. This important feature is largely unrecognised by the moderate Islam strategy literature. The concept of moderate Islam has

com/news/2017/07/15/020716/jokowi-islam-radikal-bukan-islam-bangsa-indonesia.

¹¹ "Indonesia's President: 'We Can Be Model for Islam and Democracy'", <http://www.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/asiapcf/06/15/indonesia.president.yudhoyono/index.html>.

the power not only to discursively demarcate moderate Muslims from their radical counterparts but also to claim a higher moral ground for the 'good' and 'normal' moderate, thus undermining any normative claims made by the 'bad', 'abnormal', and 'dangerous' radicals.¹² Therefore, by positioning themselves as champions of moderate Islam while framing their adversaries as radicals, actors can strengthen their leverage and weaken the power of their opponents. It should be noted, however, that actors' political aspirations do not necessarily correspond to the purposes of moderate Islam strategy. Consequently, the language of moderate Islam can be weaponised for purposes that are incompatible with the initial goals of the approach.

In Indonesia, the discourse of moderate Islam has become increasingly entangled, both with particular political configurations confronted by political leaders as well as broader contestations about the nature of the Indonesian state. Regarding the former, political leaders' decisions to or not to incorporate the discourse of moderation into their political strategies are determined by their calculations regarding the possible consequences such actions would have on their political power. The structure of political configurations at the time, therefore, is influential in orienting actors' decisions. These configurations, however, are embedded in Indonesia's historical contestations over the nature of the state itself, within which the Islamists and the nationalists compete to secure their access to and power over the state.

This article argues that the discourse of moderate Islam began to permeate Indonesia's political arena in the later years of Megawati's administration and gradually penetrated further into the state in Yudhoyono's years. During this period, however, the discourse of moderation was mainly to signal to the international community that Indonesia did not align itself with the transnational network of terrorism. At this stage, the discourse of moderate Islam did not tend to exert significant influence on Indonesia's domestic politics partly because of Megawati's and Yudhoyono's inability and, to some degree, unwillingness to confront Indonesian Islamists. The discourse, however, is strongly embraced by Widodo, although he mainly employs the discourse

¹² Mahmood Mamdani, "Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: Post-Apartheid Perspectives on America and Israel", *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review*, vol. 27, no. 1 (2004), pp. 1-15; Wendy Brown, *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire*, 1st edition (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2008), <https://press.princeton.edu/books/paperback/9780691136219/regulating-aversion>.

to contain Islamists' influence domestically rather than to improve Indonesia's reputation abroad. Politically, Widodo has pursued this strategy to neutralise the challenges of the Islamists, thereby consolidating his political power. A closer reading of Widodo's discourse of moderation reveals that he has altered the structure of the narrative. While the West and Yudhoyono largely associate moderation with democratic attitudes, Widodo defines moderation, first and foremost, as support for Indonesia's national ideology, Pancasila.

This article is structured as follows. The first section discusses the logic of the moderate Islam strategy and assesses some criticisms which have been directed at the approach. Although the strategy highlights the importance of empowering moderate Islam groups, this article contends that it fails to take into account the 'discursive' power of the moderation narrative. The second section examines the historical trajectory of contestations over Indonesia's national identity. It focuses on identifying the nature of the tug-o-war between the nationalistic and Islamic perspectives, particularly between 1945 and 2001, and on their legacy for contemporary politics in Indonesia. It is followed by an analysis of how the discourse of moderate Islam has become immersed in struggles over the Indonesian state after the declaration of the war on terror.

B. The Moderate Islam Strategy

After the 9/11 tragedy, defeating Islamic radicalism became one of the most crucial policy priorities for the US. Recognising that its security was under threat, the government of the US under George W. Bush and Barrack Obama ruminated over the best approach to "confront, engage, win over, reach out to, or transform 'Islam'"¹³ thereby neutralising the potential hostility of the Muslim world toward the US. Such preoccupation stimulated debates over appropriate approaches to mitigate the dangers of radical Islamism in Muslim-majority countries. From this debate, the proposal to support Muslim groups whose ideological and political positions resemble those of the US began to gain its prominence. After appropriating terminology such as 'modernist Islam', scholars and decision-makers eventually collectively named the group 'moderate Islam'.¹⁴

¹³ Bettiza, "Constructing Civilisations", p. 576.

¹⁴ Cheryl Benard, *Civil Democratic Islam: Partners, Resources, and Strategies*, The General Public (California: RAND Corporation, 2004); Angel Rabasa et al., *The Muslim World After 9/11* (USA: RAND Corporation, 2004), <https://www.rand.org/pubs/>
24 *Al-Jāmi'ah*, Vol. 61, No. 1, 2023 M/1444 H

The concept of moderate Islam is deeply entrenched in the strategy of the US to protect its geostrategic interests. As the US has been systematically targeted by terrorist attacks, Rabasa argues that its policy priorities should revolve around the idea of mitigating physical threats against US citizens and facilities; maintaining the stability of its allies; and ameliorating anti-US, anti-Western, and anti-democratic attitudes.¹⁵ It has been argued that such interests could be pursued insofar as the US is able to influence the outcome of internal contestations that, at that moment, plague Islamic nations.¹⁶ The US has an interest in ensuring that the struggles result in the triumph of a version of Islam that is compatible with democracy and modernity over the ascendancy of radical Islamism, whose interests are antagonistic to those of the US. In their earlier works, Rabasa et al. suggested that the US should fully support the ‘modernist’ (who believes in the compatibility between Islam and modernity), provide measured assistance to the ‘traditionalist’ (who promotes conservative values) and ‘secularist’ (who relegates religious matter to the private sphere), while weakening the power of the ‘fundamentalist’ (who opposes the West and tries to establish an authoritarian system of government).¹⁷ However, in their later works, they began to adopt ‘moderate Islam’ as a term to designate Muslims who may form potential partnerships with the US to prevent the spread of radical Islamism.¹⁸

The literature opines that empowering moderate Islam groups is essential to counter the influence of radical Islamism in Muslim-majority countries. According to Benard, the moderates are expected to cool Muslims’ hostile attitudes to the West by disseminating religious teachings that emphasise Islam’s peaceful and cooperative dimension.¹⁹

The goal was to find religious leaders and scholars and community ‘influencers’—to use the lingo of the counter-radicalisation specialists—who could explain to their followers and to any misguided young people that Islam is a religion of peace, that the term jihad refers mainly to the individual’s personal struggle against temptation and for moral betterment, and that tolerance and interfaith cooperation should prevail.²⁰

monographs/MG246.html; Angel Rabasa et al., *Building Moderate Muslim Networks*.

¹⁵ Rabasa et al., *The Muslim World*.

¹⁶ Cheryl Benard, *Civil Democratic Islam*.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*; Rabasa et al., *The Muslim World*.

¹⁸ Rabasa et al., *Building Moderate*.

¹⁹ Benard, “‘Moderate Islam’”.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

However, the activism of moderate groups in Muslim-majority countries is impeded by ‘structural factors’, namely the hegemony of authoritarian governments and the absence of vibrant civil societies. They limit citizens’ opportunities to articulate their political aspirations, thus leaving radical groups as the only meaningful alternative to the status quo.²¹ Rabasa et al. add that such situations are aggravated by the fact that moderate Islam groups have not yet developed their ability to contest the growing influence of radical Islamism, mainly due to inadequate funding and underdeveloped organisational capacities. This contrasts with the radical groups who have received financial backing from the Saudi government and have established a reliable transnational network to support their operations. Against this backdrop, Rabasa et al. propose that the government of the US work as a ‘catalyst’ to bolster the initiatives of moderate Islam groups in Muslim-majority countries, mainly by providing resources and assisting them with capacity-building. More practically, the support should be manifested in programs such as developing a curriculum that promotes democracy and pluralism, disseminating anti-radicalism messages through the media, fostering gender equality, and advocating policy changes. Rabasa et al. further suggest the importance of the US using the groups as its proxy in countering radicalism and refraining from making a direct intervention, for it is believed that compared to the US government, the groups have more credibility to deliver anti-radicalism messages to their fellow Muslims.

To maintain the effectiveness of this strategy, the US government needs to identify moderate Islam groups in Muslim-majority countries. Establishing a rigorous definition of moderate Islam, US expects to correctly distinguish such groups from radicals and ensure that assistance is given to organisations that support US’ geostrategic interests. Ideological alignment with democracy is one of the most important criteria applied to assess whether an organisation can be classified as moderate. Rabasa et al. defines moderate Islam as those who believe in a democratic political culture, indicated by their acceptance of liberal democracy, human rights, pluralism, and non-sectarian law, as well as a rejection of terrorism and violence.²² Similarly, Muravchik and Szrom argue that moderation is characterised by support for democracy, non-violence, minority rights, gender equality, and pluralist interpretations of Islam.²³

²¹ Rabasa et al., *Building Moderate*.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Muravchik and Szrom, “In Search of Moderate Muslims”.

The discussion thus far has outlined the character of the moderate Islam strategy. The approach basically attempts to elevate particular understandings of Islam by framing them as a true representation of Islamic teaching as well as by providing its supporters with resources, networks, and technical assistance. At an ideological level, it largely prefers an interpretation of Islam that embraces values that are compatible with liberal democratic norms. The strategy further believes that the dissemination of such an interpretation may prevent Muslims from being influenced by radical ideologies, thereby weakening the power of radical Islamists.

Although the strategy was initially devised to protect the interests of the US, several Muslim-majority countries have used the approach to address the challenges of radicalism. Since the strategy is based on efforts to elevate particular interpretations of Islam over others, its application in the countries often results in the emergence of an ‘official’ discourse on Islam, articulated by “the elements of religious authority that are under the direct or indirect control of the regime”.²⁴ Provided with financial backing, political support, and institutional power, these institutions are expected to disseminate discourses capable of countering extremism.²⁵ Despite the various iterations, official narratives of Islam in countries such as Morocco, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Indonesia often rely on the concept of ‘moderate Islam’ to establish their discursive coherence. In Jordan, for example, the Hashemite regime has attempted to contain the influence of Salafism, jihadism, as well as the Muslim Brotherhood by delivering the Amman Message in 2004, claiming that Jordanian Islam is moderate. This has been followed by state-sponsored interfaith dialogue initiatives.²⁶ In Morocco, the government has significantly strengthened important institutions such as Mohammed VI Institute for the Training of Imams, Mourchidin, and Mourchidat, and the Mohammed VI Foundation for African ‘Ulama to educate moderate Islamic preachers who, in turn, are expected to “protect Morocco from the attempts of extremism” and “preserve its [Morocco’s] identity, which carries the distinction of valuing openness and tolerance”.²⁷

Some commentators are critical of this trend. In her observation of

²⁴ Michael Robbins and Lawrence Rubin, “The Ascendance of Official Islams”, *Democracy and Security*, vol. 13, no. 4 (2017), p. 4.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Gutkowski, “We are the Very Model”.

²⁷ Wainscott, “Religious Regulation”.

the rise of moderate Islam narratives in the Middle East, Sheline argues that the adoption of the discourse of moderation in the region has been motivated more by desires to maintain the survival of the regimes rather than by an eagerness to disseminate a moderate teaching of Islam.²⁸ In making such decisions, the states are interested mainly in enhancing their international reputation and delegitimising political oppositions.²⁹ This often results in vague interpretations of moderation, which differ significantly from the definition originally propounded by the West. In the Middle East's context, Sheline finds that the definition of moderation tends to overemphasise its non-violent aspects, thus disregarding other elements of moderation, such as the protection of human rights or accountability of political institutions.

Generally, the response of this moderate Islam strategy supporters is to narrow the definition of moderate Islam in the hope of establishing more reliable criteria for distinguishing, borrowing terminology from Muravchik and Szrom, the 'genuine' from the 'illusory' moderate groups.³⁰ Hoveyda, for instance, argues that Islamist groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt do not deserve the label since their political aspirations are essentially conservative and that their support for democratic norms is "purely tactical".³¹ This argument is amplified by Benard, who asserts that rejection of violence and terrorism cannot be simply interpreted as a sign of moderation, particularly because Islamist groups can still express "attitudes of hostility and alienation that in turn become the breeding ground for extremism and the safe harbour for extremists".³² Hoveyda's and Benard's arguments, therefore, imply that moderate Muslims are groups and individuals that not only renounce violence or formally accept democratic mechanisms but also hold ideological positions that support democratic values.

Such responses, however, leave the phenomena—that the concept of moderate Islam has been widely appropriated by actors to serve their self-interests—inadequately explored. The literature appears to believe that the appropriation occurs because the idea has been loosely defined. With this in mind, the appropriate response is to establish a rigorous

²⁸ Annelle Rodriguez Sheline, "Branding Islam: The Strategic Use of Official Religious Discourse", Ph.D. Thesis (USA: The George Washington University, 2018).

²⁹ Gutkowski, "We are the Very Model"; Wainscott, "Religious Regulation".

³⁰ Muravchik and Szrom, "In Search of Moderate Muslims".

³¹ Fereydoun Hoveyda, "Moderate Islamists"?, *American Foreign Policy Interests*, vol. 23, no. 2 (2001), pp. 54.

³² Benard, "Moderate Islam".

definition which would, in turn, reduce the concept's vulnerability to actors' self-interests. In contrast with the literature, this article argues that the seizure of the concept takes place because the notion has acquired a 'discursive' power which may strengthen actors' leverage in their respective political struggles. This discursive aspect of the moderate Islam narrative has been inadequately addressed by moderate Islam strategy literatures.

Critical approaches to the study of moderate Islam offer interesting insights into the discursive dimension of the strategy. According to Appleby the identity of individuals and social groups are shaped by labels that are attributed to them.³³ Because labels carry social expectations, actors are pressured to follow them in order to appear normal and acceptable. For instance, Aly and Green show that the attribution of the moderate label to the Australian Muslim population has encouraged them to behave in a specific way—such as refraining from questioning the West's approach to terrorism—not only to demonstrate their conformity to the prevailing discourse of moderation but also to prove that they are 'good citizens'.³⁴ Failure to behave in this manner may lead to the perception that they support extremism. This case, therefore, illustrates that the discourse of moderation can induce behavioural shifts among actors by exploiting actors' fear of being perceived as abnormal or even dangerous. Such repressive dimensions of moderate Islam discourse have been thoroughly examined by various academic works. Grossman, for example, argues that the imposition of the discourse on the Muslim population in Australia has led to their disenchantment in counter-extremism efforts. Muslims begin to question the accuracy of the West's account of terrorism and to believe that the West is conspiring against them.³⁵ Meanwhile, a study by Cherney and Murphy in Australia finds that Muslims are often confused with the actual meaning of moderation yet are feeling powerless to refute the label of moderate Islam that has been ascribed to them.³⁶

³³ Nicholas Appleby, "Labelling the Innocent: How Government Counter-Terrorism Advice Creates Labels That Contribute to the Problem", *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, vol. 3, no. 3 (2010), pp. 421-36.

³⁴ Anne Aly and Lelia Green, "Moderate Islam?: Defining the Good Citizen", *M/C Journal*, vol. 10, no. 6 (2008).

³⁵ Michele Grossman, "Disenchantments: Counterterror Narratives and Conviviality", *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, vol. 7, no. 3 (2014), pp. 319-35.

³⁶ Adrian Cherney and Kristina Murphy, "What Does It Mean to Be a Moderate Muslim in the War on Terror? Muslim Interpretations and Reactions", *Critical Studies Al-Jāmi'ah*, Vol. 61, No. 1, 2023 M/1444 H

Furthermore, the discourse of moderation may also influence the landscape of political contestations in a given nation. In her assessment of the impacts of the discourse of toleration in the US, Brown argues that the dissemination of such narrative has significantly influenced the structure of political conflicts, mainly by introducing a powerful framework for understanding the organisation of (global) society.³⁷ According to the narrative, there is currently opposition between “the free, the tolerant, and the civilised” morally superior West and “the fundamentalist, the intolerant, and the barbaric” others³⁸ who are “in need of the civilising project of the West”.³⁹ In such circumstances, attributing the tolerant label to actors is mainly political. It does not only shape actors’ political subjectivities by requiring them to behave in a specific manner that merits the label, but it also results in “the legitimization of a new form of imperial state action”⁴⁰ framed as a war against an uncivilised community.⁴¹

While the literature has shown the moderation discourse’s capacity to direct the actors’ attitudes, it vastly underestimates the ability of the narrative to enhance actors’ political leverage. Referring to Brown’s argument, on the one hand, actors subjected to the narrative of toleration are compelled to behave in manners expected from tolerant individuals.⁴² On the other hand, such subjection enables them to acquire a morally superior status compared to their ‘intolerant’ counterparts, thereby reinforcing their political standings.

Similar principles can be applied to the discourse of moderation. In addition to the financial and organisational support identified by Rabasa et al., the application of the moderate Islam strategy also strengthens the power of particular groups in Muslim-majority communities by attributing moderate labels to them.⁴³ Within the prevailing War on Terror environment, such attribution enables the groups not only to

on Terrorism, vol. 9, no. 2 (2016), pp. 159-81.

³⁷ Brown, *Regulating Aversion*.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁴¹ Mark B. Salter, “Not Waiting for the Barbarians”, in *Civilizational Identity: The Production and Reproduction of “Civilizations” in International Relations*, ed. by Martin Hall and Patrick Thaddeus Jackson (New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2007), pp. 81-93, https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230608924_6; Sedef Arat-Koç, “Dance of Orientalisms and Waves of Catastrophes: Culturalism and Pragmatism in Imperial Approaches to Islam and the Middle East”, *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 35, no. 9 (2014), pp. 1656-71.

⁴² Brown, *Regulating Aversion*.

⁴³ Rabasa et al., *Building Moderate*.

appear ‘normal’—in contrast with the radicals who are perceived to be ‘abnormal’ or ‘threatening’ and thus need to be closely monitored and controlled—but also to acquire the image of ‘good citizens’ who participate in a noble endeavour to counter radicalism. These effects prove advantageous for the so-called moderate groups as they enhance the power of the groups while simultaneously undermining the efforts of their adversaries. In turn, this allows them to have a greater stake in the politics of their communities. Therefore, in contrast with the critical literature, this article argues that the discourse of moderation cannot simply be comprehended as a discourse of normalisation. Actors are instead captured in tension between completely submitting themselves to the discourse and using the discourse for the advance of their political goals. This results in a mutual compromise: whether actors dismiss some of their political demands to maintain their compatibility with the discourse or adjust the idea of moderation as a pretext to justify their demands, resulting in the emergence of interpretations which deviate from the definition proffered by the US. The balance between these poles is fragile, nonetheless. Actors are left at risk of compromising their interests too much or abandoning the discourse of moderation entirely.

Actors’ political struggles, therefore, are one of the most crucial determinants of the meaning of moderation in Muslim-majority countries. Understanding the configuration of political powers as well as the nature of contestations are essential steps in explaining the rise of a multitude of interpretations of moderation in the countries.

C. The Indonesian Background

The role of Islam in constructing Indonesian national identity has been largely perceived as ambiguous. Following Sukma, Indonesia is captured in a “dual identity dilemma” requiring it “to move beyond strict secularism by taking into account Muslim aspirations but short of moving towards the establishment of an Islamic state”.⁴⁴ Due to its majority Muslim population, Islam is a critical source of social norms that not only orient individuals’ attitudes but also determine the nature of legitimate political action in society as well. Yet, Sukma adds, Indonesian ethnic, cultural, and religious pluralism prohibits the state from making

⁴⁴ Rizal Sukma, “Indonesia and the Challenge of Radical Islam After October 12”, in *After Bali: The Threat of Terrorisism in Southeast Asia* (USA: World Scientific and Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, 2003), p. 22, https://doi.org/10.1142/9789812561749_0016.

Islam its official religion, for it would put the nation's unity into peril.

Managing this delicate balance between these opposing tendencies has become one of the primary missions of the state. While the narrative of national unity tends to prevail, the discourse of Islamism continues to haunt the construction of Indonesia's national identity, persistently disrupting the hegemony of the former. The discourses on national unity and of Islamic state, therefore, are in perpetual tension. Following Seo, the forms of these contestations, in turn, are determined by "the religio-political realities of the time".⁴⁵

Although Indonesia's status as "neither an Islamic nor a secular state" is often framed in contemporary Indonesian politics resulting from a so-called 'national consensus', Islamic groups have actually rejected the formula from the outset. Within the BPUPKI, for example, Muhammad Natsir argued that Islam should be positioned as the fundamental principle of the state because it encompassed not only theological teachings but also guidance about the appropriate interactions among individuals and between individuals and society as well.⁴⁶ Although the Islamists and the nationalists had reached a compromise with the adoption of the Jakarta Charter, within which the privilege of Islam in the republic was explicitly mentioned, the tensions between them immediately reappeared as Sukarno and Hatta removed the 'seven words' from the charter to protect the newly found republic from potential disintegration. The Islamists did not immediately contest the decision because, as mentioned by Sukma, securing independence was of paramount urgency at the moment. In addition, Sukarno initially promised the Islamists that the role of Islam in Indonesia's constitution would be readdressed after Indonesia's independence was ensured. However, Sukarno apparently did not fulfil his promise as he began to overtly support the *kebangsaan* narrative in 1953, implying that he believed that the state should be established on a non-religious basis. His decision to dissolve the Konstituante in 1959 (which tried to reopen debates on the role of Islam in the national constitution at the time) and to ban Masyumi in 1960 for its alleged involvement in PRRI rebellion further aggravated the tension between the nationalists and Islamists. In the last years of the Old Order, it was increasingly apparent that the power of the Islamists was severely weakened, allowing them to exert only limited influence on Indonesia's political arena.

⁴⁵ Myengkyo Seo, "Defining 'Religious' in Indonesia: Toward Neither an Islamic Nor a Secular State", *Citizenship Studies*, vol. 16, no. 8 (2012), p. 1056.

⁴⁶ Sukma, "Indonesia and the Challenge".

Notably, however, the Islamists' limited influence on the construction of Indonesia's national identity partially stems from its inability to meaningfully engage with the struggle for national independence. Van Der Kroef, identifies a "gradual emergence of a severe doctrinal split" among Islamic groups in Indonesia prior to the World War II, reflecting a profound conflict in interpretations of Islamic laws and traditions.⁴⁷ On the one hand, there were Islamic groups who refuted the idea of cooperating not only with non-Muslims but also movements which did not embrace their ideals of Islam in their 'purest' form. On the other hand, influenced by reformist and modernist ideologies, some Islamic groups were prepared to collaborate with the nationalist movement. The decision of the first groups to refrain from joining the movements for theological reasons significantly impaired their political power in independent Indonesia. Although the groups revised its approach by fostering its political involvement under the banner of Masyumi during the Japanese occupation and later formed the 'United Front' with the communists, socialists, and Partai Nasional Indonesia (PNI) to counter the Dutch aggression, the nationalist movements were generally suspicious of the positions of the Islamists. Elson is, therefore, correct in arguing that the Islamists "failed to engage from the outset in the escalating politics of Indonesian nationalism" because of their "diffidence in adopting the emerging discourse of nation".⁴⁸ Furthermore, Fogg identifies splits among the political leaders, the theological leaders, and the grassroots elements of the movements.⁴⁹ The conflicts escalated after the independence, culminating in the withdrawal of Nahdlatul Ulama from Masyumi in 1952.

It would, however, be erroneous to interpret Islamists' reluctance to join nationalist movements as indicative of their rejection of the idea of a unified Indonesia. Although the influence of non-statist alternative ideologies such as pan-Islamism cannot be downplayed, the majority of the Islamists supported the establishment of the republic. Their point of contention was that Islam should be adopted as the foundational principle of the nation-state. For instance, in her study on Darul Islam,

⁴⁷ Justus M. Van Der Kroef, "The Role of Islam in Indonesian Nationalism and Politics", *Western Political Quarterly*, vol. 11, no. 1 (1958), p. 46.

⁴⁸ R.E. Elson, "Nationalism, Islam, 'Secularism' and the State in Contemporary Indonesia", *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 64, no. 3 (2010), p. 329.

⁴⁹ Kevin W. Fogg, "The Fate of Muslim Nationalism in Independent Indonesia", Ph.D. Thesis (New Haven: Yale university, 2012).

Formichi argues that Kartosuwiryo actually holds that “only through religion—‘with Allah and for Allah’—could the Indonesian people be freed from the physical and ideological oppression of the West, and that the future of Indonesia as an independent nation-state could only be ensured if based on Islam and sharia law”.⁵⁰ This indicated that his disagreements with the nationalists lay more in the republic’s structure than in the idea of Indonesia as a nation-state.⁵¹ In addition, the Islamists deployed their transnational Islamic network to assist the republic in pursuing independence. As shown by Fogg, individuals closely aligned with the Masyumi spearheaded Indonesia’s early diplomatic efforts to obtain international recognition after the declaration of Indonesian independence.⁵² Using the narrative of the Islamic brotherhood, they encouraged Arab countries to recognise Indonesia’s sovereignty.

The Islamists were part of the “military-Islamic-Western alliance” that violently repressed the Indonesian Left group in the 1960s and contributed to the demise of the Old Order. The fall of Sukarno gave the groups a glimpse of hope that their political aspirations would be accommodated in the coming political establishment.⁵³ Yet, as President Soeharto consolidated his power, it became increasingly apparent that the Islamists would remain relegated to the fringe of the political arena.

Since the New Order perceived them as potential forces capable of challenging Soeharto’s authority, it implemented policies to demobilise Islamists’ social base and limit their political representation. The government, for instance, prohibited the establishment of Parmusi in the 1960s, merged Islam-oriented political parties into PPP in 1973, and imposed Pancasila as the only ideology that Islamic organisations were allowed to adopt. In addition, coercive measures were taken to restrain activities that could have mobilised Islam-inspired political aspirations and threatened political stabilities—for example, the ban of DDII’s Media Dakwah in the 1970s, the arrest of DI’s leaders in 1981, the dissolution

⁵⁰ Chiara Formichi, *Islam and the Making of the Nation: Kartosuwiryo and Political Islam in Twentieth-Century Indonesia* (Lieden-Boston: Brill, 2012), p. 9.

⁵¹ Edward Aspinall, “From Islamism to Nationalism in Aceh, Indonesia”, *Nations and Nationalism*, vol. 13, no. 2 (2007), pp. 245-63.

⁵² Kevin W. Fogg, “Hamka’s Doctoral Address at Al-Azhar: The Influence of Muhammad Abduh in Indonesia”, *Afkaruna: Indonesian Interdisciplinary Journal of Islamic Studies*, vol. 11, no. 2 (2015), pp. 125-56.

⁵³ Vedi R. Hadiz, “Indonesian Political Islam: Capitalist Development and the Legacies of the Cold War”, *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs*, vol. 30, no. 1 (2011), p. 97.

of Muslim intellectuals meeting in early 1990s, as well as the Tanjung Priok and Talangsari massacre in 1984 and 1996 respectively.

Interestingly, the New Order administration worked closely with liberal Islam intellectuals who provided the regime not only with ideological justification for the compatibility between Islamic teaching and the New Order developmentalism project, but also with criticism to delegitimise—and therefore reduce the political potency of—Islamists' aspirations. The strategy centred around attempts to portray the demands of the Islamists as a threat to national unity and economic development as well as theologically problematic. Liberal Islamic thinking was, in the word of van Bruinessen, Soeharto's "favoured Muslim discourse".⁵⁴ This was particularly due to its insistence on a "secularised" political realm by removing Islam's influence in politics—well-captured in Madjid's slogan: "Islam Yes, Partai Islam No". The strand also dismissed Islamists' interpretation—that Islam offered a specific and superior conception of state—as incorrect and, instead, suggested that Indonesia and its Pancasila ideology were completely compatible with Islam. Not surprisingly, the New Order administration attempted to integrate liberal teachings into its "religious engineering" mission.⁵⁵ Soeharto, for instance, used the network of IAIN established during Soekarno's administration to develop and spread curricula of religious teachings inspired by this liberal interpretation. A textbook for IAIN written by Sjadzali in 1991 clearly echoed this position by arguing that "in Islam, there is no governmental system, but there is a set of ethical values for life in a state".⁵⁶

In response to this strategic context, political Islam resorted to *dawa* and other social activities to avoid the state's persecution. A small faction within the movement developed contact with *jihadis* groups in the Philippines and Afghanistan and resorted to extreme violence to further their goals. It is clear that the Islamists were reluctant to alter their political demands at the time.⁵⁷

This landscape gradually changed in the early 1990s. As Soeharto found it difficult to rely on his armed forces for political support, he

⁵⁴ Martin van Bruinessen, "Overview of Muslim Organizations, Associations and Movements in Indonesia", in *Contemporary Developments in Indonesian Islam: Explaining the "Conservative Turn"* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISAEAS), 2013).

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ Malcolm Cone, "Neo-Modern Islam in Suharto's Indonesia", *New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 4, no. 2 (2002), p. 59.

⁵⁷ Solahudin, *The Roots of Terrorism in Indonesia: From Darul Islam to Jem'ah Islamiyah*, trans. by Dave McRae (Cornell University Press, 2013).

started to develop a closer relationship with Islamist activists. In the mid-1980s, Soeharto began to implement policies favouring Islamists' aspirations. As observed by Liddle, for instance, the jilbab was no longer prohibited in public schools, an Islamic court was established, Islamic family law was codified, and interfaith marriage was forbidden.⁵⁸ Soeharto also performed the hajj ritual in 1990 to demonstrate his devotion to Islam. More importantly, Soeharto encouraged the establishment of ICMI to garner support from conservative Muslims. The founding of ICMI reflected Soeharto's effort to cement its political power by capturing ongoing societal trends at the moment, particularly the growth of the pious Muslim middle class. In addition, these manoeuvres were made to counter stronger pressure from students, popular organisations, and pro-democracy activists for democratic reform.

The Islamists became important allies for Soeharto due not only to their ability to strengthen political support for the New Order, particularly by giving the regime "religious legitimacy", but also—like liberal-progressive Islam in previous years—with ideological weapons to scorn the growing demand for democratisation. For instance, KISDI, formally established in 1987, campaigned on the concept that liberal democracy and human rights were foreign to Islam and that those notions were potentially instrumentalised by Western countries to limit Islam's influence. In 1998, DDII and KISDI also propagated the idea that Soeharto's economic and political crisis—including the accusation that Soeharto violated human rights in East Timor—was deliberately crafted by the "enemies of Islam", referring to Western countries, Israel, and, most importantly, Indonesian Chinese and Christians. Although this sectarian sentiment was previously rejected by Soeharto's secular stance, his decision to develop strategic alliances with these groups was instrumental in deriding the demands of pro-democracy movements—which were articulated, among others, by New Order's former alliance, liberal-progressive Islam movement. As succinctly put by Hefner, the strategy was also a "repressive 'scaling down' of the heretofore ascendant movement for democratic Islam".⁵⁹

The analysis thus far has demonstrated that contestations between the nationalists and the Islamists have been an important feature of

⁵⁸ R. William Liddle, "The Islamic Turn in Indonesia: A Political Explanation", *The Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 55, no. 3 (1996), pp. 613-34.

⁵⁹ Robert W. Hefner, "Global Violence and Indonesian Muslim Politics", *American Anthropologist*, vol. 104, no. 3 (2002), p. 759.

Indonesian politics. It also indicates that such struggles are inseparable from unique political circumstances within which the contestations arise, for it is the political configurations which determine the outcomes of the struggles.

D. The Moderate Islam Strategy in Indonesia

1. *The Emerging Discourse of Moderation*

The declaration of the War on Terror was immediately joined by Bush's divisive rhetoric, which diametrically opposed the supporters of the war against its dissenters. As he claimed that the war was "the fight of all who believe in progress and pluralism, tolerance and freedom" instead of "just America's fight",⁶⁰ he compelled Muslim-majority countries to either side with the US in its global offensive against terrorism or to be accused of being tacitly sympathetic to the violence. As the discourse of the war gradually acquired its hegemonic status, rejection of it could have not only damaged the states' reputation but also denigrated their relationship with the US, putting their security at risk.

Despite these potential consequences, Indonesia was initially unwilling to declare its support for the War on Terror. Prior to the 2002 Bali Bombing, mainstream politicians and Muslim intellectuals were reluctant to admit that some elements within Indonesian Islam were possibly supportive of terrorist activities.⁶¹ The War on Terror campaign was, consequently, met with scepticism. Interestingly, such attitudes were shared among the Islamists, nationalists, as well as leaders of major Islamic organisations such as NU and Muhammadiyah. While Salahuddin Wahid, one of the leaders of NU, believed that reports regarding terrorist cells in Indonesia were US' "propaganda tricks",⁶² Hamzah Haz, Megawati's vice president representing the Islamist PPP, argued that the US might use the 9/11 attacks as a pretext for scapegoating Islam.⁶³ For the nationalists, the War on Terror threatened Indonesia's national security. Zen Maulani,

⁶⁰ "President Declares 'Freedom at War with Fear'", <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html>.

⁶¹ Amitav Acharya and Arabinda Acharya, "The Myth of the Second Front: Localizing the 'War on Terror' in Southeast Asia", *The Washington Quarterly*, vol. 30, no. 4 (2007), pp. 75-90.

⁶² Anthony L. Smith, "A Glass Half Full"; Stephen Sherlock, *The Bali Bombing: What It Means for Indonesia*, Paper, no. 4 (Australia: Department of the Parliamentary Library, 2002), <https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id:%22library/prspub/DWO76%22>.

⁶³ Hefner, "Global Violence", p. 754.

the former head of BIN, argued that the war was merely an instrument for the US to exert its power over Indonesia.⁶⁴

Although Megawati had offered her condolences to the US in a high-profile visit to the country after the 9/11 tragedy, her stance on the war closely resembled the position of Indonesia's elite. It seems that Megawati did not perceive terrorism as an "existential threat" to Indonesia.⁶⁵ In 2001, for instance, she criticised the US invasion of Afghanistan and stated that Indonesia did not support such aggression.⁶⁶ Additionally, in her speech addressing the 2003 UN General Assembly (UNGA), Megawati argued that terrorism would perish if "major powers behave in a more just manner and make clear their impartiality in the Middle East".⁶⁷ This statement was crucial because it reasserted Islamists' disdain for US ruthless unilateral attacks on Muslim-majority countries in the Middle East and distanced Indonesia from the US counter-terrorism campaign. At this stage, it became apparent that Megawati was unwilling to embrace the discourse of moderation. Instead, she primarily supported the narrative which claimed that the West was conspiring to undermine the power of Indonesia and the Muslim world writ large.

The international community was largely dissatisfied with Indonesia's approach to addressing its domestic threats of radicalism. Indonesia attracted international attention when it hesitated to disband the JI, arrest its theological leader, Abu Bakar Baasyir, and freeze the assets of suspected terrorist groups.⁶⁸ As suggested by Rabasa, the US considered Indonesia's responses "inadequate".⁶⁹ This perception was also shared by Indonesia's neighbours, such as Singapore, which was gravely concerned with the gap between Singapore's and Indonesia's counter-terrorism efforts.⁷⁰

⁶⁴ Bilveer Singh, "The Challenge of Militant Islam and Terrorism In Indonesia", *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 58, no. 1 (2004), pp. 47-68.

⁶⁵ Acharya and Acharya, "The Myth".

⁶⁶ Smith, "A Glass Half".

⁶⁷ "Megawati Hits Out at US War on Terrorism", *The Sydney Morning Herald* (25 Sep 2003), <https://www.smh.com.au/world/megawati-hits-out-at-us-war-on-terrorism-20030925-gdhgd8.html>.

⁶⁸ Acharya and Acharya, "The Myth"; Matt Cianflone et al., *Anatomy of Terrorist Attack: An In-Depth Investigation into the 2002 Bali, Indonesia, bombings* (Pennsylvania: The Ridgway Center the University of Pittsburgh., 2007).

⁶⁹ Angel Rabasa, "Working Together: Megawati and the Terrorists" (11 Mar 2002), <https://www.rand.org/blog/2002/03/working-together-megawati-and-the-terrorists.html>.

⁷⁰ Singh, "The Challenge".

Megawati's decision to criticise the West and refrain from condemning the acts of terrorism resulted from the prevailing political landscape. Motivated by a desire to maintain her already fragile political base, Megawati's main priority was to appease the Islamists, on whom her political power partially rested. As the Islamists apparently gave "an indirect show of support" to the Jamaah Islamiyah, Megawati's ability to crack down on the organisation's network in Indonesia was significantly inhibited.⁷¹ Furthermore, to protect her image, Megawati also needed to constantly assert that Islam was not responsible for the proliferation of terrorist attacks. Instead, as she implicitly implied in her speech in UNGA, Muslims' global resistance against the US was somehow legitimate. The stigmatisation of Islam that occurred during the War on Terror campaign further limited Megawati's options. In the midst of the public's distrust of the US, mainly due to its involvement in the secession of East Timor and the imposition of IMF's Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) for Indonesia, aligning Indonesia with US foreign policy strategies was a costly decision that could have undermined Megawati's prospect for re-election in the looming ballot.⁷²

However, Megawati's position on terrorism shifted dramatically after the 2002 Bali Bombing.⁷³ The government began to investigate JI and hunt down its leaders, issue a new anti-terrorism law, form a special task force for countering terrorism, and resolve communal ethnic and religious conflicts in the archipelago.⁷⁴ It was noticeable that Megawati began to align Indonesia more closely with the War on Terror. This was illustrated by the decision of the US to provide Indonesia with \$530 million of aid as well as to explore the potential recovery of its military-to-military relationships with the under-sanctions Indonesian Armed Forces, all "in exchange for Indonesia's general endorsement of the US-led anti-terrorism campaign".⁷⁵ Internationally, He suggests that the US would levy pressure on Indonesia regarding the separatist movement in

⁷¹ Zachary Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

⁷² Smith, "A Glass Half".

⁷³ Acharya and Acharya, "The Myth"; John Mueller, "Is There Still a Terrorist Threat?", *Foreign Affairs*, no. September/October 2006 (2006), <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2006-09-01/there-still-terrorist-threat-myth-omnipresent-enemy>.

⁷⁴ Singh, "The Challenge".

⁷⁵ Sheldon Simon, "Mixed Reactions in Southeast Asia to the U.S. War on Terrorism", *Comparative Connections Journal of Bilateral Relations In Indo-Pacific*, vol. 3, no. 4 (2002), p. 4, <https://cc.pacforum.org/2002/01/mixed-reactions-southeast-asia-u-s-war-terrorism/>.

Aceh, thus enabling Megawati's administration to respond to the conflict with military force.⁷⁶

The public's hysterical reaction to the 2002 Bali Bombing forced the Islamists to temporarily retreat from the centre of the political arena while retaining their suspicion that the US was behind the bombing.⁷⁷ This allowed Megawati to revise some of her positions, nevertheless. It was against this backdrop that the discourse of moderation began to gain momentum in Indonesian politics. In her joint statement with Bush in 2003, Indonesia was framed as a country with a strong tradition of "religious toleration, moderate attitudes, and commitment to democracy".⁷⁸ In 2004, Megawati instructed the Ministry of Religion to monitor the "fanatics".⁷⁹ Furthermore, the state also fostered initiatives that asserted Indonesia's moderate status. For example, in 2004, the government facilitated the 1st International Conference of Islamic Scholars (ICIS) in Jakarta in collaboration with NU. The conference declared that "the teachings of Islam uphold the values of human dignity and recognise the equal opportunity of human beings in inter-personal relationships, in maintaining harmonious interfaith relations and in the entire process of international decision making".⁸⁰ Following Hoesterey, ICIS is arguably one of the earliest endeavours of the Indonesian government in disseminating moderate interpretations of Islam.⁸¹ At this phase, although the concept of moderate Islam had begun to permeate the Indonesian political arena, the term was used more to signal the international community that Indonesian Islam was moderate rather than to distinguish moderate Islamic groups from their radical counterparts.⁸² Although the meaning of moderation was largely indeterminate at this

⁷⁶ Kai He, "Indonesia's Foreign Policy After Soeharto: International Pressure, Democratization, and Policy Change", *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, vol. 8, no. 1 (2008), pp. 47-72.

⁷⁷ Riza, "Peledakan Bom di Bali Rekayasa CIA", *Hidayatullah.com* (14102002), <https://hidayatullah.com/berita/internasional/2002/10/14/198/peledakan-bom-di-bali-rekayasa-cia.html>.

⁷⁸ "President Bush, Indonesian President Megawati Hold Joint Press Conference" (22 Oct 2003), <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/10/20031022-2.html>.

⁷⁹ Deddy Sinaga, "Presiden Minta Depag Perhatikan Fanatisme Beragama", *Tempo* (2004), <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/42685/presiden-minta-depag-perhatikan-fanatisme-beragama>, accessed 27 Jan 2023.

⁸⁰ Umar, "A Genealogy", p. 420.

⁸¹ Hoesterey, "Public Diplomacy".

⁸² *Ibid.*

point, Megawati's administration marked the beginning of the concept's gradual involvement in Indonesia's political contestations.

2. *Moderation and Democracy: a Quest for International Recognition*

In contrast with Megawati's hesitancy in embracing the narrative of moderation, President Yudhoyono was relatively clear not only in arguing that Indonesian Islam was fundamentally moderate but also in establishing his definition of moderate Islam. Not long after coming into power, Yudhoyono claimed that Indonesia was "the country where democracy, Islam, and modernity go hand-in-hand".⁸³ Major Islamic organisations such as NU and Muhammadiyah were often displayed as examples of Indonesia's moderate Muslims. It was apparent that by crafting such a discourse, Yudhoyono was trying to align Indonesia closer with the West. While improving the image of Indonesian Islam was one of the purposes of this strategy, Yudhoyono apparently also used it to leverage Indonesian diplomatic efforts and to promote his reputation as the "ambassador of moderate Islam" in front of the Western audience.⁸⁴ Regarding the latter, it seems that the strategy was able to accomplish its goals. In 2009, the US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, praised Indonesia for its ability to demonstrate that Islam, democracy, and modernity can "thrive together".⁸⁵

Yudhoyono's activism abroad, however, did not materialise into a commitment to address the domestic challenges of radicalism. Despite the imminent threat of terrorism in Indonesia, countering extremism was not his priority. Although Yudhoyono frequently articulated his commitment to combat terrorism, Jones argues that he was reluctant to "spend political capital at home to campaign against extremism and, in particular, its instigators".⁸⁶ This was indicated by his failure to push

⁸³ Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, *Transforming Indonesia: Selected International Speeches with Essays by International Observers*, 2nd edition (Jakarta: Office of Special Staff of the President for International Affairs and PT Buana Ilmu Populer, 2005); Hoesterey, "Public Diplomacy".

⁸⁴ Ahmad Fuad Fanani, "SBY and the Place of Islam in Indonesian Foreign Policy", Master Thesis (Adelaide: Flinders University, 2012), p. 78.

⁸⁵ Our Foreign Staff and Agencies in Jakarta, "Hillary Clinton Courts Muslim World with Indonesia Visit", *The Telegraph* (London, 18 Feb 2009), <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/indonesia/4688668/Hillary-Clinton-courts-Muslim-world-with-Indonesia-visit.html>.

⁸⁶ Sidney Jones, "8 Yudhoyono's Legacy On Internal Security: Achievements and Missed Opportunities", in *The Yudhoyono Presidency: Indonesia's Decade of Stability and Stagnation* (Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2015), p. 147, <https://doi.org/10.1355/9789814620727-018>.

for national counter-radicalism strategies or to strengthen the Desk for Coordinating the Eradication of Terrorism in the Coordinating Ministry for Political and Security Affairs. It even seems that Yudhoyono's decision to establish the BNPT in 2010 was motivated more by his fear for his own security after a plan to ambush him and his family was revealed in 2009 rather than genuine concern over the threat of terrorism within the country.⁸⁷

Yudhoyono's ambiguous stance on radicalism was further illustrated by his positions on pluralism. During his presidency, Yudhoyono continually supported the MUI by requesting the body function as the 'police' on issues related to morality and beliefs.⁸⁸ The body, however, used the endorsement to issue a series of fatwa that were detrimental to Indonesia's pluralism. In 2005, for instance, MUI banned the notion of pluralism itself, claiming that the idea would harm the purity of Islam's monotheism. MUI also accused 14 Islamic groups, including Ahmadiyah and Shia, as deviant.⁸⁹ Yudhoyono was also largely silent on multiple assaults against religious minorities in Indonesia.⁹⁰ Djohan Effendi mentioned that 2010 and 2011 were the worst years for religious freedom since independence.⁹¹

The contrast between his international activism and domestic inaction indicates Yudhoyono's reluctance to confront the Islamists, who appeared to consolidate their power gradually. As this relates to the MUI, for example, Ichwan observes that the Islamists increasingly obtained access to the body.⁹² This was followed by Islamist rallies to urge the state to enact MUI's fatwas. According to Fealy, Yudhoyono's general approach was to "whenever possible [...] avoid conflict with major political or

⁸⁷ Jones, "8 Yudhoyono's Legacy"; Ihsan Ali-Fauzi and Solahudin, "Deradikalisasi di Indonesia: Riset dan Kebijakan", in *Kebebasan, Toleransi dan Terorisme Riset dan Kebijakan Agama di Indonesia*, ed. by Ihsan Ali-Fauzi, Zainal Abidin Bagir, and Irsyad Rafsadi (Jakarta: Pusat Studi Agama dan Demokrasi Yayasan Paramadina, 2017).

⁸⁸ Syafiq Hasyim, "Majelis Ulama Indonesia and Pluralism In Indonesia", *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, vol. 41, nos. 4-5 (2015), pp. 487-95.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ Phelim Kine, "Dispatches: Tackling Indonesia's Religious Intolerance", *Human Rights Watch* (3 Aug 2015), <https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/08/03/dispatches-tackling-indonesias-religious-intolerance>.

⁹¹ Greg Fealy, "Indonesian Politics in 2011: Democratic Regression and Yudhoyono's Regal Incumbency", *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies*, vol. 47, no. 3 (2011), p. 347.

⁹² Moch Nur Ichwan, "'Ulamā', State and Politics: Majelis Ulama Indonesia After Suharto", *Islamic Law and Society*, vol. 12, no. 1 (Brill, 2005), pp. 45-72.

economic forces and tries not to push against the tide of public opinion”.⁹³ Such an approach inevitably led to government inaction, as the state was reluctant to suffer a backlash from its risky decisions. Von Luebke highlights another important factor. Especially in his second presidential term, Yudhoyono was incapable of managing diverging interests within his own government. In his first term, Yudhoyono did not suffer from such difficulties because Kalla, using his extensive political network, was able to maintain a certain level of coherence within Yudhoyono’s cabinet.⁹⁴

Following the 2011 Cikeusik attack, for example, Yudhoyono was confronted not only with the public perception that treated Ahmadiyya more as villains rather than as victims but also with Islamists as well as politicians and regional leaders who overtly expressed their opposition to Ahmadiyya.⁹⁵ Facing such circumstances, Yudhoyono apparently decided to remain silent instead of expressing his purported belief in the moderate nature of Indonesian Islam. The incoherence of Yudhoyono’s cabinet was revealed at the time as well. Despite Yudhoyono’s early condemnation of the attacks, his ministers’ comments, including those of Gamawan Fauzi, Patrialis Akbar, and Suryadharma Ali, contradicted Yudhoyono’s statement. Similarly, Yudhoyono was largely inert when Densus 88 was criticised for its alleged violent and illegal tactics in 2010. Yet, at the same time, he announced Densus 88’s accomplishment in killing Dulmatin during his visit to Australia to impress the international community.⁹⁶

At this point, Yudhoyono’s strategy had become clear. His decision to disseminate a moderate Islam narrative in international fora was precisely made because he was unwilling to pay the political costs of articulating it at home. In this regard, although Yudhoyono’s narrative resembled that of the West, he did not really use the framework articulated above to empower the moderates and weaken the radicals in Indonesia. Rather, it was a method of acquiring international recognition while maintaining distance from Indonesia’s actual problems. Despite his capitulation, however, Islamists were critical to Yudhoyono’s regime. The state was portrayed as unable to protect the interests of its Muslim population as it, for instance, allowed those whom they thought of as

⁹³ Fealy, “Indonesian Politics”, p. 335.

⁹⁴ Christian von Luebke, “The Politics of Reform: Political Scandals, Elite Resistance, and Presidential Leadership in Indonesia”, *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs*, vol. 29, no. 1 (2010), pp. 79-94.

⁹⁵ Fealy, “Indonesian Politics”.

⁹⁶ Jones, “8 Yudhoyono’s Legacy”.

deviant sects, such as Ahmadiyya, to proselytise their teachings. This often became the rationale for the Islamists to organise vigilante action.⁹⁷ The organisations were also critical of Yudhoyono's claim about the compatibility of Islam and democracy. Rizieq Shihab of FPI, for example, contended that, for Muslims, adopting democracy was worse than eating pork.⁹⁸

3. *The Exclusionary Politics of Moderation*

Although the concept of moderation had become part of Indonesia's political discourse since Megawati's administration, it was not until Joko Widodo came into power that the meaning of the notion became truly contested. This was partly caused by Widodo's decision to deploy the moderate Islam strategy to Indonesia's domestic politics. Not only did he elevate certain interpretations of Islam of others and support them with political and institutional capital, but he also attempted to undermine the power of Islamic groups incapable of demonstrating their conformity to Widodo's preferred Islam. Widodo's strategy contrasts with those of Megawati and Yudhoyono, who largely use the idea of moderate Islam to gain international recognition. In their campaign manifesto, Widodo and Kalla were explicit in arguing that the state's failure to manage pluralism had contributed to the "widespread intolerance" that Indonesia was currently suffering from.⁹⁹ To address this challenge, Widodo apparently believes that the state should actively foster "a synergy between religion, tolerance, and democracy".¹⁰⁰ This statement accurately captures Widodo's approach to tackling extremism. Compared to Megawati's and Yudhoyono's administrations, Widodo's government assumes a more active role in encouraging established religious institutions in Indonesia to craft and promote versions of Islam, which can limit the influence of extremist ideology.

At the ideological level, Widodo's endeavours revolve around

⁹⁷ Riza, "Peledakan Bom".

⁹⁸ Ian Wilson, "Resisting Democracy: Front Pembela Islam and Indonesia's 2014 Elections", in *Watching the Indonesian Elections 2014*, 1st edition, ed. by Ulla Fionna (Singapore: ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, 2015), pp. 32-40.

⁹⁹ Joko Widodo and Jusuf Kalla, *Jalan Perubahan untuk Indonesia yang Berdaulat, Mandiri, dan Berkepribadian: Visi Misi, dan Program Aksi Jokowi, Jusuf Kalla, 2014* (Jakarta: Seknas Jokowi, 2014), p. 1.

¹⁰⁰ Edward Febriyatri Kusuma, "Kasus Penistaan Agama, Ahok Digugat Rp 470 Miliar", *detiknews* (8 Dec 2016), <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-3366348/kasus-penistaan-agama-ahok-digugat-rp-470-miliar>.

creating alternative interpretations of Islam that may contest the influence of Wahabi-inspired versions of Islam. This has been done by disseminating interpretations of Islam which are compatible with Pancasila, in particular, the idea of national unity. In recent years, such attempts have materialised in Widodo's support of NU's 'Islam Nusantara'. Broadly understood, Islam Nusantara is "an interpretation of Islam that takes into account local Indonesian customs in forming its fiqh [law]" or "indigenised Islam [Islam yang terindigenisasi]".¹⁰¹ Widodo believes that Islam Nusantara, whose roots are "deeply entrenched" in Indonesia, is essentially tolerant and supportive of the nation's unity.¹⁰² In the midst of widespread violence that plagued Muslim-majority countries such as Syria, Iraq, and Libya, Widodo maintains that the uniqueness of Indonesian Islam will enable the country to avoid violent crises.¹⁰³ In this regard, NU's Islam Nusantara has become the embodiment of Widodo's vision of Indonesia's moderate Islam, for it is believed to be capable of discouraging violence and strengthening Indonesia's social fabric.

Subsequently, Widodo has tried to cultivate this interpretation by offering political and institutional resources. Not only does he frequently give Islam Nusantara official endorsements, but he also provides NU with access to power. For example, in June 2017, Widodo requested Said Aqil Siradj and Maruf Amin, both on the leadership board of NU, to be members of the recently established UKP-PIP.¹⁰⁴ Widodo also chose Amin to be his vice-presidential candidate in the then forthcoming 2019 election. This is not to mention initiatives that seemingly aimed to appease NU, such as the stipulation of 22 October as the national day of *santri*, the day when NU issued its historic 'jihad resolution' in 1945, and support for NU's International Summit of the International Islamic Leaders (ISOMIL).

Consistently, Widodo simultaneously attempts to assert the primacy of Pancasila in the nation. For him, since Pancasila and Islam are not

¹⁰¹ Azis Anwar Fachrudin, "The Face of Islam Nusantara", *The Jakarta Post* (24 Jul 2015), <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2015/07/24/the-face-islam-nusantara.html>.

¹⁰² "Jokowi: Alhamdulillah, Islam Kita Islam Nusantara", *www.jpnn.com* (14 Jun 2015), <https://www.jpnn.com/news/jokowi-alhamdulillah-islam-kita-islam-nusantara>.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ Fabian Januarius Kuwado, "Perppu Ormas Disahkan, Jokowi Nilai Banyak yang Dukung Jaga Pancasila", *Kompas.com* (26 Oct 2017), <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2017/10/26/10334761/perppu-ormas-disahkan-jokowi-nilai-banyak-yang-dukung-jaga-pancasila>.

contradictory, individuals should maintain their commitment to the national ideology, thus protecting the nation's unity against the threat of "political agenda".¹⁰⁵ This standpoint manifests in his decision to establish a specialised body for the "implementation of Pancasila as the state ideology", UKP-PIP (later, BPIP).¹⁰⁶ According to the president, the purpose of the agency is to "socialise and actualise the values of Pancasila in the life of the nation".¹⁰⁷ Widodo's actual aim is, however, to use Pancasila as a "stronghold" to contain the influence of radicalism, extremism, and terrorism.¹⁰⁸ In addition, Widodo has also initiated the "I am Indonesia, I am Pancasila" (Saya Indonesia, Saya Pancasila) campaign, claiming that Pancasila is the "unifier of the state and the nation".¹⁰⁹

While Widodo is highly appreciative of Islam Nusantara, implicitly framing it as the true face of Indonesia's moderation, he openly regards radical Islam as "not Indonesian".¹¹⁰ Although Widodo rarely explicates his argumentation on radical Islam, it seems that he defines extreme Islam not only as an interpretation of Islam which inspires violence but also as teachings which induce intolerance, question the legitimacy of Pancasila, and, consequently, leave national unity at risk. With such a definition, Widodo effectively extends the definition of radicalism. Instead of using the word to designate terrorists, it seems that he also uses the term to refer to some elements of Indonesian Islamists.

Widodo's perspectives can partially explain his decision to ban HTI in July 2017 and propose the Bill on Community Organisations (UU Ormas). Earlier in May 2017, his Coordinating Political, Legal, and Security Affairs Minister, Wiranto, promulgated that HTI promoting the caliphate has breached "the security and order of society as well as

¹⁰⁵ Eva Mazrieva, "Jokowi: Islam Radikal Bukan Islam Indonesia", *VOA Indonesia* (14 Jul 2017), <https://www.voaindonesia.com/a/jokowi-islam-radikal-bukan-islam-indonesia-/3943369.html>.

¹⁰⁶ "Jokowi Inaugurates Chief Advisors of Pancasila Working Unit", *The Jakarta Post* (7 May 2017), <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2017/06/07/jokowi-inaugurates-chief-advisors-of-pancasila-working-unit.html>.

¹⁰⁷ Agung DH, "Saat Jokowi Singgung UKP-PIP dan Pengamalan Pancasila", *tirto.id* (16 Aug 2017), <https://tirto.id/saat-jokowi-singgung-ukp-pip-dan-pengamalan-pancasila-cuFr>.

¹⁰⁸ "Jokowi: Pancasila Benteng Melawan Radikalisme dan Ekstremisme", *BBC News Indonesia* (1 Jun 2016), https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/berita_indonesia/2016/06/160601_indonesia_jokowi_hari_pancasila.

¹⁰⁹ Fabian Januarius Kuwado, "Perppu Ormas Disahkan, Jokowi Nilai Banyak yang Dukung Jaga Pancasila".

¹¹⁰ Mazrieva, "Jokowi".

the unity of NKRI”. To protect “the unity of the nation according to Pancasila and the 1945 National Constitution”, it is, therefore, necessary to ban the organisation.¹¹¹ The adoption of Perppu Ormas, later revised the Bill on Community Organisations, indicating the presence of a similar mentality of siege. Regarding the Bill, Widodo believes that amidst the growing threat to Pancasila, the Bill is necessary for protecting the ideology, thus maintaining the unity and diversity of the nation.¹¹²

At this point, it is interesting to compare Widodo’s moderate Islam with that of Yudhoyono. Although Widodo certainly does not disqualify democratic attitudes as an indicator of moderation, positive standpoints to national unity and ideology are arguably Widodo’s most important element of moderation’s definition. The inability to demonstrate support for Pancasila is largely considered an indication of radicalism. The ban of HTI and the adoption of the Bill on Community Organisations reveal this logic. While the ban reflects Widodo’s perception regarding the illegitimate nature of HTI political demands, the Bill is largely designed to prohibit the intrusion of intolerant political ideologies into Indonesia’s political arena. Widodo’s discourse of moderation, therefore, slightly deviates from that of the West, whose emphasis lies on individuals’ subscriptions to democratic culture. To some degree, this explains why Widodo’s administration is often considered as having an ‘illiberal’ bent.¹¹³

Widodo’s decision to bolster moderation in domestic politics is motivated by a desire to stabilise his own political power. As Warburton demonstrated, the early years of Widodo’s presidency marked his inability to navigate political configurations in Jakarta,¹¹⁴ especially due to the presence of vested interests which could inhibit him from pursuing his policy agenda.¹¹⁵ This difficulty prevented him from having a stable and fully functional administration until mid-2016, when his political

¹¹¹ Aulia Bintang Pratama, “Wiranto: Langkah Hukum Diambil untuk Bubarkan HTI”, *nasional* (8 May 2017), <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/nasional/20170508140554-20-213154/wiranto-langkah-hukum-diambil-untuk-bubarkan-hti>.

¹¹² Kuwado, “Perppu Ormas”.

¹¹³ Vedi R. Hadiz, “Indonesia’s Year of Democratic Setbacks: Towards a New Phase of Deepening Illiberalism?”, *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies*, vol. 53, no. 3 (2017), pp. 261-78.

¹¹⁴ Eve Warburton, “Jokowi and the New Developmentalism”, *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies*, vol. 52, no. 3 (2016), pp. 297-320.

¹¹⁵ Olle Tornquist et al., *Dilemmas of Populist Transactionalism* (Yogyakarta: Research Center for Politic and Government UGM, 2017), <https://polgov.fisipol.ugm.ac.id/dilemmas-of-populist-transactionalism/>.

base eventually began to stabilise. In consolidating his power, Widodo's approach generally is to weaken his political oppositions, particularly by inducing factionalism within their organisations, and to craft coalitions with powerful actors. The former is evident in Widodo's decision to split Golkar and PPP and to compel them to reelect their parties' leadership, through which pro-Widodo figures finally come into power.¹¹⁶ This is further coupled with his tactic to develop alliances with "wealthy politico-business elites and former generals with the financial resources and political networks".¹¹⁷

Widodo's strategy regarding moderate Islam is a part of his broader efforts to consolidate his power. As the Islamists gradually pose more serious challenges to his administration, sometimes in collaboration with his political opposition, Widodo is compelled to seek an effective strategy to neutralise their threat. It is against this backdrop that the decision to disseminate moderate Islam discourse is made. By crafting a discourse of moderation which combines Islamic and nationalistic values, Widodo expects not only to undermine the social base of the Islamists but also to mobilise social groups who share the strong nationalistic and secular commitment, particularly within Indonesia's growing middle class. Under such circumstances, Widodo exploits the power of moderate Islam discourse to give him moral superiority and to delegitimise the political demands of the Islamists who oppose him. As Widodo claims to represent the moderate segment of Islam, the radical label is consequently attributed to the Islamists. This labelling has important implications for the Islamists, for they are increasingly perceived as dangerous or simply abnormal. In the Indonesian context, the threat of the Islamists comes not only from their tendency to exert violence but also from their disagreement with the basic principles of the republic.

Such attribution compels the Islamists to demonstrate their conformity with the national ideology. Otherwise, their demands may continue to be dismissed as illegitimate. Moreover, as experienced by HTI, they may also suffer from the government's crackdown. The general responses of the Islamists are to show that they are completely committed to the idea of Indonesia. In December 2016, GNPF-MUI clarified that they do not aim to overthrow the government.¹¹⁸ They also

¹¹⁶ Warburton, "Jokowi and the New Developmentalism".

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 304.

¹¹⁸ Bachtiar Nasir, "Tudingan Aksi Bela Islam, Dari Anti NKRI Hingga Makar", *GNPF MUI* (2 Dec 2016).

assert that Aksi Bela Islam is an expression of “Islamic unity that aims to strengthen *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* based on the original values of the National Constitution”.¹¹⁹ The Islamists further condemn some terrorist attacks to alter the violent image attributed to them. For instance, FPI, HTI, and GNPF-MUI strongly condemned Sarinah and Kampung Melayu bombings in 2016 and 2017.¹²⁰ Wahdah Islamiyah goes further by advancing their own conception of *wasathiyah* democracy. In addition to their claim that terrorism threatens the unity of the nation and *umma*,¹²¹ the organisation proposes a system of democracy capable of balancing Islamic values and freedom of expression.¹²²

E. Concluding Remarks

This article focuses on understanding how Muslim-majority countries adapt the discourse of moderate Islam to their political circumstances. The article has revealed that the countries’ respective political configurations influence the degree of application of the discourse in domestic politics. In the Indonesian context, political leaders’ unwillingness and/or inability to confront Islamists have been crucial factors limiting the moderation discourse influence in Megawati’s and Yudhoyono’s reign. In contrast with them, Widodo is willing to use the discourse to undermine the influence of the Islamists. Politically, such a decision is to cement his political power. Moreover, this article has also demonstrated that the content of the discourse of moderation is indeterminate. Widodo’s emphasis on support for national unity in his definition of moderation shows that actors can appropriate the concept and adjust them to their unique political situations.

¹¹⁹ Bachtiar Nasir, “Esensi Aksi Bela Islam Jilid III”, *GNPF MUI* (1 Dec 2016).

¹²⁰ Bachtiar Nasir, “Pernyataan Resmi Ketua GNPF MUI Atas Kasus Bom Bunuh Diri di Terminal Kampung Melayu”, *GNPF MUI* (25 May 2017); Ahmad Shobari Lubis, “Pernyataan Sikap Dewan Pimpinan Pusat Front Pembela Islam (DPP FPI) Tentang Terkait Teror Bom Jakarta” (14 Jan 2016), <http://habibrizieqweb.blogspot.com/2016/01/pernyataan-sikap-dpp-fpi-terkait-teror.html>.

¹²¹ “10 Rekomendasi Eksternal Muktamar III Wahdah Islamiyah” (21 Jul 2016), <https://wahdah.or.id/rekomendasi-eksternal-muktamar-iii-wahdah-islamiyah/>.

¹²² “Gema Muktamar III Wahdah Islamiyah- Zaitun Rasmin Kembali Pimpinan Wahdah Islamiyah”, *Republika Online* (21 Jul 2016), <https://republika.co.id/berita/koran/islamia/16/07/21/oannk210-gema-muktamar-iii-wahdah-islamiyah-zaitun-rasmin-kembali-pimpin-wahdah-islamiyah>.

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