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**The Culture of Deliberation Amongst the Muslims Society and
the Challenge of Mutual Respect Among Cultures: Social &
Political Perspective**

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The paper makes a brief account of what H.A.R. Gibb said the historic event—the classical practice of succession of the Prophet employing the procedure of *al-Shura* or deliberation or consultation in the seventh century; the success of democratically electing the leader of the new emerging Muslims society. The paper further explores several cases of the more institutionalized or culture of deliberation amongst the (Sunni) Muslims society across the world in the context of socio-cultural changes in the medieval century until the present day world, in multi-cultural societies. Special attention is given to a variety of practices in Indonesia's setting: a few cases of al-Mawardi's influence in Islamic kingdom, adoption by NU organization, and a few practices in politics and government. The account finally looks into the contribution of its culture of deliberation to promoting mutual respect among cultures. The central issue is—in theoretical perspective of deliberative democracy—capacity to deliberate; adat-based deliberation is often hindered by socio-cultural obstacles that is impacting negatively on what Habermas calls communicative rationality.

Deliberation is roughly of two type—democratic as it is theorized by the advocates of deliberative democracy in the West and a few practices of contemporary Taiwanese society and participatory democracy of Chavez's Venezuela, and the path of Scandinavian nations at the U.N. level; but also non-democratic type in the context of Chinese political system. *Al-Shura* or Deliberation is culture-bound in a given society; deliberation in Muslim society

is firstly mandatory from the Quran, and is also a further mode of *al-Shura*'s institutionalization that can give impacts on a given society. Al-Mawardi's term of *Ahl Hall Wal Aqd* (AHWA)—developed in the 10th century or three hundred years after that—is a mechanism to elect Chief Executive officer (CEO) in state governments convey its capacity to deliberate of the members at an AHWA with high competence of experts in public matters. This term and concept has been widely used by rulers in many Sunni Muslims society across the world. His term will be described in brief and will be used in our analyses; our account will see that several events of deliberation amongst the Indonesia people can be interpreted as a reflective of AHWA used by cross-cultural dimensions: special envoy of “tradisionalists ulama” to Saudi Arabia two years before NU organization was established, sessions held by BPUPKI before 17 August 1945, entering our nation-state system, Sekarno's visit and deliberation with prominent NU Leader, KH Hasyim Asy'ari resulted in Asy'ari's affirmation to make Pancasila into effect; governor of East Java, Soekarwo,'s informal talk or deliberation which he thinks Gotong Royong custom in Java has been influenced by Islam's social piety.

The study employs qualitative method, with secondary data gathered from books and articles, especially those that are made available electronically. Studies on the classical history of early Muslims, along with al-Mawardi's conceptualization of AHWA are collected from scholarly work. Data on the subsequent practices of deliberation include those taking place in the Medieval era and those taking place in contemporary Indonesia. Theoretical perspective of deliberative democracy is used to interpret the data. The practices of deliberation in non-liberal democracy function as one justifying the legacy of deliberation of Muslims society which, in this exploration, presents influence and impact on the societies.

The study is expected to contribute to the re-invention of the democratic deliberation in the past for better understanding of contemporary move towards deliberative turn in democratic politics—which eventually give positive impact on development of mutual respect among multi-cultural societies.

The finding of the study is significant spread of the deliberation in politics and governments among Muslims societies in the cases of the countries and has impacted on customs of deliberation in a given society; with al-Mawardi's conceptualizing AHWA, the practice of deliberation has achieved comparatively high level as in the standard proposed by Deliberative Democratic Theory, i.e.

capacity to deliberate—thus have promoted better ways of deliberating. Mutual respects can be promoted given characteristics of good deliberation.

In conclusion, *al-Shura* or deliberation in Muslims society has been in practice since the seventh century and continue to be apply amongst Muslims societies in various era and political systems and it has given more or less significant impacts on democratic deliberations across cultures—thus contribute to developing mutual respect among multi-cultural societies.

Key words : *al-Shura, deliberation, theory, Muslims society, multi-cultural societies*