Islam's View of Pluralisme: A Study of Maudhu'i Tafsir

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Abstract

This research discusses the Islamic perspective on diversity and efforts to create harmony between religious differences. The primary sources of this research are the Koran, hadith, and the words of scholars about diversity. Meanwhile, the secondary sources of this research are derived from the literacy of several articles. The results of this study highlight the importance of communication and mutual understanding in creating a friendly environment for all. This research will also deepen our understanding of Islamic diversity and encourage peace-building between people of different faiths. Then, this research is conducted using the thematic approach method, which is to collect verses related to pluralism and identify the interpretation of the verse by clarifying the background of the revelation of verses related to pluralism and its relationship with other verses in the Qur'an.

Keywords: Diversity; Qur'an; Pluralism.

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Introduction

In Indonesia, plurality and pluralism seem destined to always be in a problematic position. Given the very diverse conditions of Indonesian society, with the motto Bhineka Tunggal Ika, which means different but still one[1]. So that differences will continue to emerge, one of which is about understanding and belief, namely pluralism[2]. The term pluralism itself emerged in the 19th century in the West[3]. Pluralism in short means an understanding of diversity, it covers many things, one of which is religious pluralism[4]. In Indonesia itself, the idea of pluralism, especially in terms of religion, was opened by a Muslim scholar named Nurcholis Madjid[5]. The discourse of pluralism in Indonesia began to become more and more crowded after the MUI published fatwa No.7/MUNAS VII/MUI/11/2005 which forbids pluralism, liberalism, and secularism which are considered contrary to Islamic teachings[6]. Islam as the majority religion in this country, is believed to be a perfect religion by its adherents, which does not need to collaborate or mix with other religions, as Allah says in Q.S Al Baqarah: 42[7].

In a world marked by diverse cultures and beliefs, the quest for understanding and coexistence among different religious communities has never been more crucial[8]. This research, titled "Islam's View of Pluralism: A Study of Maudhu'i Tafsir," explores the Islamic perspective on pluralism through the lens of thematic exegesis[9]. By examining primary sources such as the Koran, hadith, and the interpretations of esteemed Islamic scholars[10], this study seeks to uncover the foundational principles within Islam that advocate for pluralism and mutual respect[11]. Additionally, it incorporates insights from secondary sources, including scholarly articles[12], to provide a well-rounded analysis[13]. The research highlights the significance of communication and mutual understanding in fostering a harmonious environment for individuals of all faiths[14]. Employing a thematic approach, the study systematically collects and interprets relevant verses[15], elucidating their context and interrelations within the Qur'an[16]. This comprehensive examination aims to deepen our understanding of Islamic teachings on diversity and contribute to peace-building efforts among varied religious communities[17].

In an increasingly interconnected and diverse world, understanding and fostering harmony among different religious communities is essential[18]. This research delves into the Islamic perspective on diversity and the efforts to create harmony amidst religious differences[19]. Utilizing primary sources such as the Koran[20], hadith, and the insights of scholars on diversity, this study aims to explore the foundational Islamic teachings that advocate for pluralism and
mutual respect[21]. Complementing these primary sources, the research also
draws on secondary sources, including various scholarly articles, to provide a
comprehensive view[22]. By emphasizing the role of communication and
mutual understanding, the findings underscore the importance of creating an
inclusive and respectful environment for all[23]. This study not only enhances
our comprehension of Islamic views on diversity but also promotes peace-
building among people of different faiths[24]. Employing a thematic approach,
the research meticulously collects and interprets verses related to pluralism[25],
clarifying the context of their revelation and their interconnections within the
Qur'an[26]. Through this method, the study offers a nuanced understanding of
how Islamic teachings can contribute to fostering interfaith harmony[27].

Method

The research methodology used is library research methodology or
literature study and tafsir maudhu'i method, two different types of research but
both are used to examine specific research[1]. Library research is a written
summary of articles from journals, books, and other documents that describe
theories and information both past and present[29], organizing the literature
into topics and documents needed for research[30].

The Tafsir Maudhu'i method seeks to find answers to the Quran by
collecting Quranic verses that are in accordance with these objectives,
discussing certain topics/titles, and arranging them according to their time of
origin[31], following the reasons for their descent (asbabun nuzul), then
observing the verses accompanied by their explanations (interpretation of the
verses)[32], and after observing the relationship between the explanation and
other verses (munasabah verses), and obtaining the law/getting the
conclusion[2].

Result and Discussion

Pengertian Pluralisme

Pluralism comes from the word pluralist which means plural, more than
one, or pluralizing is equal to the number that shows more than one, or more
than two that have dualism[34], while pluralism is equal to the state or
understanding in a plural society related to its socio-political system as a
different culture in one society[3]. In the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI),
pluralism is the state of a plural society (regarding its social and political
systems)[36]. And in Islam itself, pluralism is termed with various sentences
that contain different meanings according to the context of the sentence that
accompanies it[37].
Correlation between Islam and Pluralism

Islam and Pluralisme

In the context of Islam and pluralism, there is complex discussion and thinking about the relationship of Islam to the diversity of cultures, beliefs and worldviews prevailing in society[38], some positions emphasize the importance of tolerance, interfaith dialogue and respect for different values. Contained in the teachings of Islam[39]. As a religion that has a broad base around the world, Islam has the potential to promote diversity, mutual understanding and social justice in an increasingly pluralistic society[40]. However, there are also views that emphasize that Islam has strict limits in accepting or recognizing diversity and maintaining a distinctive Islamic identity[41].

Pluralism is a concept that recognizes the diversity of society in terms of religion, culture and political views. In the Islamic context, pluralism is often associated with interfaith harmony and tolerance of differences[42]. The concept of pluralism in Islam does not mean giving up all religious beliefs or truths, but rather respecting differences and creating harmonious relationships with other groups[43]. In Islamic understanding, pluralism is considered a form of social justice that recognizes the rights of individuals and different social groups[44].

A similar opinion was expressed by Nurcholish Madjid in his book “Islam, Pluralism and Democracy”. According to Madjid, pluralism is a form of perspective that recognizes the diversity of society, whether religious, cultural, or political[45]. According to the Islamic approach, pluralism does not mean equal and correct recognition of all religions, but rather a form of respect for diversity and community harmony[46]. Islamic pluralism also emphasizes the importance of dialogue and communication between different groups in creating harmony and peace in society[47].

Meanwhile, according to Syafii Antonio in his book entitled “Refreshing Islamic Understanding in the Framework of Pluralism” reveals that Islam itself provides a holistic view of pluralism[48]. Islam teaches to respect the rights of different individuals and groups to achieve understanding and harmony in society[49]. According to the Islamic approach, pluralism is not a threat, but rather an opportunity to learn to grow together as human beings[50].

In understanding this, it is important to recognize the differences in Islamic views of themselves, both in terms of theology, understanding of religious teachings, and the social and historical context of Islamic societies[51]. Some studies address theological views and philosophical thoughts related to
pluralism in Islam, while others address practices and in-depth experiences of the relationship between Islam and pluralism.

The Concept of Islam and Pluralism

There is a correlation between the concept of pluralism and the Islamic context. Pluralism refers to a view or attitude that respects and accepts diversity[52]. Religious pluralism in the Islamic context emphasizes the importance of dialogue, tolerance and mutual understanding between Muslims and followers of other religions, as well as recognition of human rights and religious freedom[53]. In a real situation where various religions, beliefs and worldviews coexist in one community or society. Islamic pluralism contains challenges and opportunities to create harmonious relationships between Muslims and people of other religions in a heterogeneous environment[54]. According to Azizah al-Hibri, a Muslim thinker and American Muslim, plurality and multiplicity are things that are valued and recognized. In fact, diversity is seen as a sign of Allah's power[55].

The concept of pluralism also has a correlation with the concept of tawhid. Tawhid refers to a belief that there is only one God who has power over everything[56]. However, tawhid does not make differences and diversity in achieving truth. Instead, this diversity is considered a miracle that reflects the greatness of Allah SWT. This opinion is shared by scholar and cleric Muhammad Hashim Kamali who argues that diversity is something that is valued in Islam and proof of God's power[57]. In the Islamic context, the concept of pluralism has important implications for Islamic thought and action[58]. Pluralism, as a view that respects differences and promotes harmony, is important in dealing with society[59]. Abdullah Saeed's study on Islamic pluralism and contemporary Muslim society also provides a rich illustration of the importance of affirming the values of pluralism in creating harmonious relations between Muslims and other religious communities[60]. It highlights how Islamic pluralism can contribute to the development of an inclusive society[61], where individuals and groups feel valued and their rights are recognized. By better understanding the relationship between the concept of pluralism in the Islamic context, it is hoped that there will be a deeper understanding[62], mutual respect between Muslims and other religious communities and encouraging harmonious living in a religiously and culturally diverse society[63].
The Islamic Concept of Pluralism in Society

Islam teaches to respect differences and promote harmony between religious communities. Some Islamic thinkers also consider that Islam recognizes and respects the diversity of religions and beliefs and strives for peace, tolerance and interfaith harmony[64]. Others argue that pluralism can be a gift that enables the exchange of ideas, mutual learning and cooperation between religious communities. According to this view, pluralism enriches human life and creates a spirit of mutual respect and belonging. As Zainal Abidin Bagir, an academic and researcher in the field of religious studies, puts it, “The Islamic vision of pluralism is manifested as an attitude of tolerance and respect for differences in religion and belief.”

A Muslim scholar, Wahbah al-Zuhaili. Noted that “Pluralism should not be interpreted as recognizing all religions as true, because religions that contradict Islam have no truth.” At the same time, he also emphasized that “Pluralism does not require the denial or reduction of differences between religions, but requires tolerance, harmony and respect for these differences”[65].

Tafsir Maudhu’i and Pluralisme

One of the linguistic meanings chosen by the author that is appropriate in relation to pluralism, namely “different”, is اختلاف in Arabic. After finding Mufradat, the author then searched for verses in the Quran and used the word اختلاف as a reference to the verse using the book Mu’jam Mufaroshi li Al-Fa’ajul Quran Al-Karim. The author sourced the Quranic verse or QS Ar Ruum (30): 22, QS. Al Baqarah (2): 42.

Q.S Ar Ruum (30): 22,

وَمِنَ عَلَیْهِهِ خَلْقُ السَّمَّاءِ وَلِلۡعََٰلِمِ وَٱخۡتِلََٰفُ أۡوَمِّ‍ٰنَّ يُعْرِفُونَ

Among the signs of His greatness are the creation of the heavens and the earth, the difference in your languages and the color of your skin. Surely in such there are signs for those who are knowledgeable. (Ar-Rum/30:22).

In the interpretation of Ibn Kathir, the nature of the power and majesty of Allah SWT means that He created a very high and vast sky with stars, the moon, the sun, then He created the earth and its contents such as plains, mountains, oceans, humans, animals, rivers[66]. In addition, there are also differences according to language, nationality, race and religion. There are also differences in color such as black, white, brown etc. All of them have their own
characteristics, advantages and disadvantages. Some of these differences are observed clearly and vaguely, some are complete and incomplete[67].

The meaning of the signs of Allah's power in Jalalain's commentary (Allah created the heavens and the earth and their contents and their different languages). First, according to the different languages (and your language is different), it means Arabic, Indonesian, Thai, and other languages. Secondly, regarding the differences in skin (and your skin color is also different), meaning that some people have white skin, some have black skin, some have brown skin, and so on. Whereas humans came from the first man and woman on earth, namely Prophet Adam and Siti Eve. The third (there are signs here) means that Allah shows His power and those who are wise and experienced can recognize and believe in it.[68]

Asbabun Nuzul QS Ar Ruum: 22

Asbabun nuzul means the event or momentum that is the basis for the revelation of one or more verses in response to an event. There are verses of the Qur'an that were revealed without a background (ghairu ibtida') and there are also verses of the Qur'an that were revealed with a background (ibtida'). And Q.S Ar Ruum: 22 is included in the ghairu ibtida' verse which does not have asbabun nuzul[69].

Munasabah QS Ar Ruum: 22

Among His signs is that He created mates for you from your own kind so that you may feel at ease with them. He makes love and affection between you. Surely in that are signs for those who think.”(Ar-Rum/30:21)

Among the signs (of His greatness and power) are your sleep by night and by day and your seeking some of His bounty. Surely in such there are signs for those who listen. (Ar-Rum/30:23).

Quraish Shihab agrees with Imam Al-Qurthubi in his second commentary stating that verses 21 and 22 of Surat Ar-Rum are egg-tailed verses. In addition, verse 23 is also correlated with Surah Ar-Rum verse 22. Surah Ar Ruum verses 21, 22, and 23 contain expressions that explain the power
and greatness of Allah SWT with various arguments. One of them is in verse 21, which is about the creation of humans carried out by paired creatures, then repeated in the process of fertilization to produce children. The next verse, verse 22, explains the power and greatness of Allah in the creation of the heavens and the earth which have parallels as well as the creation of men and women[70].

Human creation has differences in skin color and language. This is influenced by the area where each lives, also influenced by the existence of the heavens and the earth and its circulation. Allah then explains in verse 23, that he created the heavens and the earth with its cycles so that the cycle of day and night is formed, where the day is used for work, and the night is used for rest.

Q.S Al Baqarah: 42,

Do not confuse the truth with falsehood and do not conceal the truth when you know it. (Al-Baqarah/2:42)

The word related to pluralism is تَلْبَسُوْا derived from the root لِي بَس which means to mix. We traced the vocabulary in Kitab Fathurrahman Li Tholabi Ayatil Qur'an, and found a verse related to pluralism, namely وَلَا تَلْبِسُوا. this verse refers to a prohibition, in this context the prohibition is addressed to the Children of Israel. Mixing and hiding are prohibited here. First, it is emphasized that mixing truth and falsehood in any way is not allowed, especially regarding religious teachings[71].

Islam itself is a perfect religion and does not require the teachings of other religions to be considered on the scale of whether our religion is good or bad. Islam itself is a complete religion that no longer needs cooperation by incorporating other religious teachings or forms of worship into its teachings. Secondly, concealment is prohibited, meaning that there is something that we cannot see or hide. In the case of tawhid, for example, we already know the concept of God Almighty, tawhidullah, but we still don't want to admit it, closing ourselves off because of pride or other factors. In this situation, we have covered ourselves, even though we already know it[72].

Hiding the truth can also mean not wanting to fight for the truth, not wanting to protect justice, and not wanting to give people their true rights. The purpose of this prohibition is, of course, to prevent the bad consequences of these two actions. When the truth is mixed with falsehood, the obvious may be
skewed towards falsehood and the truth may appear imprecise or even obscure. Hiding the truth has many negative consequences such as oppression of the innocent, oppression of the weak due to distorted justice, violation of human rights and many more.

Munasabah

40. O Children of Israel, remember My favors that I have bestowed upon you and fulfill your promise to Me, surely I will fulfill My promise to you. Only of Me should you fear. (Al-Baqarah/2:40).

This verse is continuous with the verses that follow it, as it is a series of Allah's demands on the Children of Israel. Among them, as explained in this verse, they are commanded to remember the many blessings of Allah, which are so abundant. They are encouraged to realize and act to become grateful servants.

42. Do not confuse the truth with falsehood and do not conceal the truth when you know it. (Al-Baqarah/2:42).

70. O People of the Book, why do you deny the verses of Allah, when you know the truth? (Ali 'Imran/3:70).

If Qs. Al-Baqarah: 42 it is pronounced in the form البسوا while in this verse the word is تلبسون. The meaning of the above verse is that the People of the Book made up their own words to cover up the words of Allah written in the Torah and Gospel, including the truth of the prophecy of the Prophet Muhammad, even though the truth is already written. In the Torah and Gospel. Through these two verses we also know how the parties who want to deceive Muslims[73].

Then in this verse of Ahlul Kitab or mentioned in Tafsir Al-Mishbah "People who know the truth best", Allah curses them for their efforts to deceive others. They try to confuse by mixing what is right, which is so perfect and what is wrong, here what is wrong happens because of their mistakes, many excuses and attempts to protect their people. the truth as mentioned in the verse وتاكْتُمُونَاَ الحاق above, the text of the holy book and deleting and changing the Prophet's narrations[74]. This verse is also a reference so that we do not do
wrong to ourselves or even others. I myself am oppressed because I am forced not to accept the truth even though our nature affirms God[75].

Others are oppressed because we hold only the truth, we hold important religious teachings, we are never called to cooperate for the salvation of others. As a result of these two similar verses, Qs. Al-Baqarah: 42 and Qs. Ali Imran: 71, the one who wants to deceive to achieve his goal aims at two ways. First, truth and falsehood merge into one, as is the case with propaganda[76]. Propaganda that contains some truth, or maybe more, but also lies in disguise, except for those who are careful. This is what Quraish Shihab means in his explanation of “mixing the true and the false”. Another attempt is “hiding the truth when one knows it”. Hiding the truth is said to exist in two contexts, namely denying it and communicating it when necessary. So if someone who knows a problem still silence, when you really need an explanation of a problem, is a form of concealing the truth[77].

In Tafsir Ibn Kathir there are two things that are forbidden in Q.S Al-Baqarah: 42 includes the first prohibition on interfering with the truth and the second on hiding the truth. The truth must be revealed clearly or we must fight for it. More clearly here, it means mixing, for example mixing Jewish and/or Christian teachings with Islamic teachings, if that happens it is considered heretical, something new. Of course Islam, which is rahmatan lil ‘alamin, is the true, perfect religion. What is meant by hiding the truth is seen from the actions of the Jews, namely hiding the entire figure of the last prophet, Prophet Muhammad SAW[78].

In addition, Tafsir Al-Munir explains that you should not confuse the truth of Allah's revelation with lies that you create, and do not distort the contents of the Torah with lies that you create. The meaning of Q. Al Baqarah verse 42 relates to the agreement of the Qur'an revealed by Allah to support and justify the teachings of the Torah revealed to the Children of Israel and the books of the previous prophets, calling for strengthening Allah and refraining from bad actions. and the command to do good and forbid bad deeds. The attributes of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) are described in the Torah, so you people of the book, do not be the first to deny them. Obey those who believe in Him, because His truth is the proof of the Torah[79].

Do not confuse the truth contained in the Torah with the falsehoods that you yourself created and wrote about the pronunciation of the verse لحق بالبطل which is true and which is false. also does not include the attributes mentioned by the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and the predictions about their appearance[80]. That's right, even knowing the danger of hiding such knowledge, because in the Hereafter the reward for knowing is not the same as
the reward for not knowing. The nature of the truth known to the people is deliberately hidden by personal ego lust with ambition so that only the people of Israel have a prophet from their own group and none other than their group[81]. Similarly, this verse of Tafsir Al-Misbah contains a continuation of the conditions for the Children of Israel. In this verse the Children of Israel should not be misled, if it has previously been discussed that they are not forbidden to be misled. First, the above verse refers to His word which reads:

\[
\text{وَلَا تَلۡبِسُواْ ٱلَّقَّ بِٱلۡبََٰطِلِ}
\]

Don't confuse it with the truth that you're not lying. It's starting to spread. You can hear campaigns where half the content is true, in fact it seems like most of it is true, yet there are very subtle lies that even the most careful people don't realize. Secondly, to err is indicated by His word:

\[
\text{وَتَكۡتُمُواْ ٱلَّق}
\]

The prohibition of hiding the truth to those who do not know, even though you know that because of this knowledge you cannot convey it now[82]. know the true teaching cannot be hidden intentionally, because it is clear from the explanation of Tafsir Al- Misbah that it is forbidden to deceive others, even if they themselves are misled and fall into the doctrine of the prohibition of hiding the truth for any reason. Covering up heresy in detail with invisible lies will have a major impact on future generations. His words:

\[
\text{وَأَنَّمۡنَ أَلۡعَلَّمُونَ}
\]

Although you know, this is the true picture of their situation, and this is a greater accusation against them. If they do not know, then their sin is their unwillingness to ask, yet they know and hide it. Teaching the uninitiated is a religious teaching. “Whereas you know”, meaning what they received from the prophet, namely prophet Moses, in the form of the laws of God in which there is monotheism so that they fear Him[83]. So, in the short interpretation of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, in this verse God forbids the Israelites to mix up the true and the false. And do not, O people of Israel, mix truth with falsehood by adding to the Torah what is not the word of God, and do not hide the truth of the word of God, such as the news of the coming of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, if you know it. The Jews prevented people from believing in the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Hiding the news of his coming which is written in the Torah. We get further clarification by understanding the following hadith:
اللهم أرنا الحق حقاً وارزقننا التباعة وأرنا الباطل باطلاً وارزقننا اجتنابهُ

"O Allah the rightful, grant us and show us what is right, what is right, what is right, the power of wrong remains wrong. stay away from him." (H.R. Bukhari dan Muslim)

This hadith explains that the hope of a servant who believes in his Lord is inspired to facilitate the understanding and knowledge of the context of the Oneness of Allah in order to get closer to the One who is the most important. Creating people of sound mind. So from this lie, if you know good faith, you can avoid the provocation of people or demons, at least because of the power of faith[84]. So the Qur'an view on plurality is certainly very reassuring. As explained in Tafsir Ibn Kathir, we are prohibited from interfering with religious teachings. For example, mixing Jewish and/or Christian teachings with Islamic teachings. Another example is when Rammohan Ray (1772-1833), one of the founders of the Brahma Samaj who was originally a Hindu, explored the concept of faith... teachings of Islam (Thoha, 2005)[85]. The reason for this religious pluralism is that they are based on the single premise that all religions have the same God. One of the rules of the Qur'an is that if you do not mention the original name, then the Qur'anic story will be repeated, such as Fir'aun, the character Qarun, etc. Like the Israelites or the People of the Book, their existence is now or will be again. Thus, Allah shows that the Children of Israel or People of the Book will not have descendants in the future through His Word. Al-Baqarah: 42[86].

Conclusion

In relation to Islam and pluralism, Islam teaches respect and tolerance for diverse cultures, religions and worldviews. This is reflected in Islamic principles such as Rahmatan lil'alamin (blessing for all nature), which shows that Islam is a friendly religion and has great respect for other religions. In this modern context, pluralism requires a lot of dialog and mutual understanding, both between religions and between cultures. Therefore, in order to achieve harmonious peace and tranquility, it is very important for Muslims to deepen their understanding of their religion and foster an attitude of tolerance to be open to other religions. However, we can see that pluralism does not mean eliminating differences such as religion and culture. On the contrary, it recognizes differences and promotes mutual respect and mutual building, caring, and repairing when something goes wrong on the other side. In this sense, pluralism can strengthen the values underlying Islamic teachings, such as justice, equality and compassion for all of nature. The Qur'an also affirms
that every individual has the freedom to choose his or her religion but must respect the religious choices of others.

**Author Contributions**

**Lalu Bustanil Ulum:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing – review & editing, Supervision, Project administration. **Novi Amalia Putri:** Methodology, Writing – review & editing, Investigation. **Nur Farhati:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing – review & editing, Investigation.

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