

contestation

by Hatta Fakhurrozi

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Contestation of Islam Nusantara: Reasoning of Pluralism in Constructing Religious Harmony in Indonesia Context



Saepudin Mashuri¹, Hatta Fakhurrozi², Ruslin³, Sugiyar⁴

^{1,2,3}Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Datokarama Palu, Sulawesi Tengah

⁴Institute Agama Islam Negeri (IAIN) Ponorogo, Jawa Timur

ABSTRACT: The existence of religious pluralism in Indonesia cannot be separated from the dynamics of Islamic contestation in the Archipelago. The reasoning and practice of religious pluralism have not yet received full support from Muslims. Social conflicts are often injured in practice, such as intolerance, violence, and persecution between religious believers. This study aims to reveal the significance of reasoning and practice of religious pluralism in building religious harmony in the context of the plurality of the Indonesian as a nation. This literature research seeks to explore relevant data from various sources such as books, proceedings, and journals (Zed, 2004: 2-3). Data analysis was conducted through content analysis related to Indonesia's concept and practice of religious pluralism. This study shows that the reasoning and practice of religious pluralism have great significance for shaping the understanding, awareness, and religious attitudes of the majority of Indonesian Muslims who are tolerant in responding to differences in faith, worship rituals, and religious cultures. This religious attitude can display the moderate face of Islam in interfaith social and humanitarian interactions in society. The dialectical reasoning of religious pluralism in this study resulted in five basic findings, namely: Islam Nusantara: a localized meaning of Islam; religious plurality from a multiculturalism perspective; pluralism reasoning in building inclusive religious attitudes; religious meeting point towards religious harmony; and Pancasila (Five Principles of the republic) as the indigenous style of Islam Nusantara. The original form of Islamic contestation in the Archipelago is reflected in Pancasila is a common consensus, the estuary of encounter, and the style of the struggle of Islam Nusantara to date.

KEYWORDS: Islam Nusantara, Religious Pluralism, Harmony of Religious Community, Inclusive

INTRODUCTION

The discourse of Islam Nusantara (localized meaning of Islam) in the reality of religious pluralism is getting stronger, both at the level of thoughts and practices. It took its shape immediately after the 1998 reformation of the Republic of Indonesia. Islam Nusantara's contestation has a distinctive dialectical form style between sacred religious texts and the local context of a pluralistic Indonesian society. This condition is the main attraction for the global community to understand the concepts and practices of Islam Nusantara about the religious plurality that surrounds it. Futaqi (2019, 342) mentions that several countries and universities abroad have raised Islam Nusantara as a study theme in various scientific forums.

The spiritual reality that frames the contestation of Islam in the Archipelago, which is strengthened by the spirit of openness in the reform era, should become a valuable moment for Indonesian in forming an inclusive-pluralist understanding, awareness, and religious attitude. This condition is in line with the reality that Indonesia as a nation has long been established with a plurality. However, the faucet of openness also creates resistance in the nation's life. Religious people easily use religious issues to justify acting intolerantly and committing violence that triggers social conflicts.

The conflicts that occurred in Maluku, Poso, Papua, Aceh, Sampit, and Madura (Salim, 2018: 169) were clear evidence of the persecution of religious plurality in the contestation of Islam in the Archipelago. Fellow nationals and religious adherents attack each other, burn, destroy, and even kill in the name of God and the religion they believe in. A heartbreaking human tragedy must occur in the Archipelago, which is well-known with the concept of a trilogy of religious harmony. This tragedy contradicts the rationale of religious pluralism. It injures the noble culture of the Indonesians who are accustomed to living in harmony despite having different religions for a long period.

Another condition that cannot be separated from the contestation of Islam in the Archipelago and is suspected to be the cause of strengthening the discourse on religious pluralism is the MUI (Council for Indonesian Moslem Scholars) fatwa Number 7, 2005. The fatwa (a ruling on the point of Islamic law given by recognized scholars) has forbidden religious pluralism and forbade Muslims to adhere to this understanding (Kristianto, 2018: vi). This study does not want to have a polemic about the MUI fatwa despite the case. Rather, it aims to reveal the significance of reasoning and practices of religious pluralism in constructing religious harmony, which is in line with the sociological plurality of Indonesian society.

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Looking at the reality, religious groups with an inclusive-pluralist orientation are persistent in fighting for religious pluralism in academia through various studies and scientific publications on a massive scale. In addition, the rise of interfaith social life dialogues, charity auctions, and humanitarian works shows how reasoning and practice of religious pluralism in Indonesia are growing.

Religious pluralism figures, such as Abdurrahman Wahid, Nurcholish Madjid, Budy Munawar Rachman, Syafi'i Maarif, Amin Abdullah, Komaruddin Hidayat, and Munir Mul Khan continue to voice the importance of reasoning and practice of religious pluralism in the contestation of Islam in the Archipelago. The practices are unique, making them distinctive from those practiced in other countries in the world. Naim (2014, 47) argue that many believe that religious pluralism can lead people to a tolerant, inclusive, and democratic life for the peace of all Indonesians.

In the context of the plurality of Indonesia, the contestation of moderate Islam Nusantara becomes the spirit of the republic in managing the plurality of religions and religious traditions. The figures of Islam Nusantara with moderate views, such as K.H. Ahmad Hasyim Muzadi, K.H. Said Aqil Siraj, K.H. Thohah Hasan, and K.H. Ahmad Baso, offer an inclusive-pluralist theology based on the values of tolerance, respect, care, justice, equality, and peace. They also emphasize a dialogical-persuasive approach to solve various social problems among religious believers by prioritizing the *tabayyun* (crosscheck information before making a decision) attitude in the national spirit of the Indonesian people.

In the multi-religious Indonesian society, social conflict due to religious issues is likely to occur. In many cases, conflicts with religious nuances are potentially caused by many factors such as racial, ethnic, cultural, political differences, legal injustice, and socio-economic inequality. However, religious sentiments are the most sensitive issues that could easily ignite the flames of conflict. Religion and conflict are like magnets where the axis of the two has a strong attraction to each other.

In reality, wherever conflict occurs, religion will always frame the thoughts, views, emotions, and attitudes of the people of each religious community in the area around the conflict. They often use religion as an argument to legitimize acts of violence, even killing people of other religions. The relationship between religion and conflict is explained by Ury as quoted by Moix in Baehaqie (2016, 663) as follows:

Given the great and continuing appeal of religion, the diversity of religious traditions throughout human experience, and the powerful influence of religion on people's lives, religion and conflict cannot escape one another.

In the contestation of Islam in the Archipelago, this condition becomes a practical experience that continues to occur from time to time, accompanying the religious life of the Indonesian. Intolerance, religious domination, racial and ethnic discrimination, and identity-based politics have often triggered social conflicts since the reform era. Based on the context of the study, the significance of reasoning and practices of religious pluralism in the contestation of Islam Nusantara in its attempt to construct religious harmony is an interesting issue for research. Hence, it is of great importance to discuss it to be understood by the Indonesians at large.

LITERATURE REVIEWS

In the contestation of Islam in the Archipelago, studies on religious pluralism and harmony have been carried out by intellectuals, academics, researchers, and moderate Islamic leaders. However, studies related to the significance of reasoning and practices of religious pluralism in building religious harmony are still under-researched. It is further classified as having not been widely adopted into the map of Islamic studies in Indonesia.

Some Muslim figures, academics, and researchers worry and reject religious pluralism. They claim that the concept and practices of religious pluralism are a jargon of modernism from the West (Rahman, 2016) and are considered an attempt to shallow the faith of Muslims. Although it is somewhat lacking, several writings and research results are quite close to the theme of this study from various dimensions.

Religious pluralism in the concept of Islam means religious diversity, which gives birth to different truths based on the version of each religion. In his perspective, Shihab (1999: 42-43) explain that Islam deliberately refuses to equate the truth of all religions (relativism) or integrate the teachings of all religions into a new religion or syncretism. There is no single truth that must be mutually agreed upon by all religious people. If the truth of all religions is the same, then it cannot be called religious pluralism.

Soedjono (2021, 205-236), in his article, reveals that religious pluralism in the Western perspective is different from pluralism according to Islam. Western pluralism is built on the value of secularism which seeks to separate religion and worldly affairs. Pluralism in Islam, however, comes from the Qur'an and Hadith. Strictly speaking, these two normative sources of Islam recognize differences in religion embraced by humankind, not equating the truth of all religions to be believed collectively.

The study's findings regarding religious pluralism from the perspective of communicative action above seem different from the focus of this study. In this study, the main issue is the significance of reasoning and practices of religious pluralism for the harmony of religious communities within the framework of Islam Nusantara.

Futaqi (2019, 342-358) explores Islamic education in the frame of the historicity of Islam in the Archipelago. In his study, Futaqi mentioned that Islamic education characteristics in the Archipelago have a distinctive archipelagic spirit and style while focusing on three dimensions, namely: divine, humanity, and nature.

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In practice, Islamic education with an Archipelago style is linear with the dynamics of the rise of Islam since the beginning of its presence in the Archipelago. Islamic education in the Archipelago is carried out in an integrative way to build the nation's character where the spirit of multicultural and Sufistic perspectives are carefully taken into account. This clarifies that Futaqi's study is different from the focus of the current study.

Salim (2018, 160) asserts that pluralism is an acknowledgment of human plurality and gains theological legitimacy in Islam in which Allah is positioned as the Creator of diversity. Therefore, diversity as an objective reality of human sociology cannot be denied by anyone. He also described that the Archipelago became the initial process of the birth of Indonesia, a national state that was able to unite all cultural pluralities in Indonesia. The ethical awareness of the nation's founders about pluralism can lead to the formation of a sovereign government to protect all Indonesian people and territories from various threats. Salim's writing shows the difference from the theme under study.

Kristianto (2018, vi), in his research, reveals two typologies of religious pluralism: non-indifferent and indifferent. Non-indifferent religious pluralism is a moderate religious attitude that recognizes and respects religious pluralism. Religious people can coexist and cooperate in pre-existence without lessening the faith of people of different religions. Meanwhile, indifferent religious pluralism is the attitude of religious people who are anti-religious pluralism by referring to the MUI fatwa Number 7, 2005. He emphasized that the MUI legal fatwa, which forbids religious pluralism, must be reviewed because it potentially harms religious pluralism activists.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method with descriptive, verbalized, and holistic characteristics (Lichman, 2010: 12-19). With a library research approach, this study aims to examine and narrate data related to concepts, thoughts, and rules regarding the practice of religious pluralism for the harmony of religious communities in the contestation of Islam Nusantara.

The study employs library resources to collect data regarding the issues and practices of religious pluralism. The data resources could be in the form of books, journals, proceedings, and handbooks relevant to this study's issues (Zed, 2004: 2-3). Data collection is carried out through conceptualizing and observing various phenomena of religious pluralism in the Archipelago. The data collected is then mapped out and interactively analyzed. This technique aims to ensure the relevance of the data to address the questions raised in the study properly.

Furthermore, the data were analyzed using content analysis to examine concepts, perspectives, approaches, messages, and academic views of the figures who have been long concerned with the theme of the study (Moleong, 2002: 163). Krippendorff, as cited by Bengtsson, defined content analysis as "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use" (Bengtsson, 2016). Thus, this study uses an interpretative approach to provide a means for discovering the practical understandings of meanings and actions (Lune & Berg, 2017: 182). Content analysis is carried out simultaneously through some stages: sorting, displaying, and discussing before concluding the study.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Research about the reasoning and practices of religious pluralism in the contestation of Islam Nusantara to build harmony among religious believers find five basic dimensions as follows:

1. Islam Nusantara: A Localized Meaning of Islam

The presence of Islam in the Archipelago did not deal with a vacuum space without civilization. However, Islam came and dialectically interacted with many understandings, beliefs, cultures, and local religions that had started the civilization of the people in the Archipelago. The plurality of religions and cultures has been peacefully responded to. Hence, the meaning of Islam as a religion of totality and rahmatan lil'alamin (blessings for all the creatures on the face of the earth) is not distorted.

Geographically, Islam in the Archipelago is a form of embodiment of Islamic locality, which can also occur in other parts of the world. Islam Nusantara is interpreted as a study of Islamic values that exist, grow and develop in the Archipelago (Salim, 2018: 162). Then, Susanto and Karimullah (2016, 56) explain that Islam Nusantara is a thing strongly rooted in the tradition of Indonesian people and has already grown in the early age of Islam and introduced by the *Walisongo* (the nine priests). Thus, Islam Nusantara has a distinctive style, namely Diversity in Unity within the framework of a complete nationality despite differences.

The form of Islam Nusantara is more about an effort to present the important role of Muslims in the establishment of the Archipelago. They can bring equal interactions of the teachings of Allah and His Messenger in the practice of theology, sharia, and morals that are adaptive and moderate to the context of the people in the Archipelago. In this way, the messages and traditions of Islam become easier to be accepted by people in various regions of the Archipelago without violence and conquest.

Azra called the diversity of the people of the Archipelago with the term *flourish*. This means that a typology of the religious, social life of the Archipelago is colorful and unmatched to any part of the world. The plurality is a God-gifted grace for the good of all humans in the Archipelago. The fact of the plurality of religion and culture of Islam is a heritage of national civilization that must

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be accepted, respected, upheld, and cared for sustainably. Azra (2011, 18) emphasized that efforts to care for the plurality of the Indonesian nation are of great importance for all the nation's children in a systematic, integrated, and sustainable manner.

However, some Indonesian Muslims ignore the localized meaning of Islam by saying that Islam is still Islam. There is no Nusantara Islam, European Islam, American Islam, African Islam, Chinese Islam, Russian Islam, Australian Islam, let alone Papuan Islam. Islam Nusantara is not understood as a difference in creed, holy books, the Messenger of Allah, the direction of the Qibla (Kaaba), and the concept of hereafter.

As the universal religion of Allah, Islam is in harmony with the time and place wherever it is grounded. Islam is never present in a vacuum or a space. Rather, it always has a dialogue with the local culture of the society that surrounds it. This interaction in Madjid's term is the Islam of Civilization.

When Islam was first revealed in the Arabian Peninsula, it dealt with Arab culture in those days. Islam came to respond to various problems related to cultures and religious practices of the Arab community, which was completely deviated from the divine prophetic and human values. Islam was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad in the time of the worst civilization of the Arab as a nation. Sudarto (2014) mentions several forms of deviation from Arab society: idol worshipers, oppressors of human values, capitalist traders, murderers of women, and rampant immoral actors.

Likewise, Islam in the Archipelago dealt with local and pluralistic Indonesian society. Thus, Islam as a religion in totality must be able to answer various problems of religious communities and interact with various religious practices of those days. Indeed, this is the mission that Islam Nusantara wants to achieve. Hence, Muslims need to seriously understand and bring an equal dialogue with the context of the plurality of the people of the Archipelago. In this way, Islamic teachings can exist and are strongly rooted in the Archipelago and become a historical religious life of the people.

2. Religious Plurality from The Perspective of Multiculturalism

In the Indonesian context, the presence of a new community in many islands forms a new culture, which to some extent causes local culture and society to become increasingly marginalized. New communities often dominate social life in religion, politics, education, trade, agriculture, and other sources of life. This condition has colored the contestation of Islam Nusantara related to the practice of religious pluralism in constructing harmony among religious believers. Thus, the presenting of religious pluralism in the contestation of Islam Nusantara requires a multiculturalism approach in a systematic, programmatic, integrated and sustainable manner. Through this approach, the management of religious plurality in Indonesia can be carried out democratically based on the value of justice by giving equal rights to religion and worship to all Indonesian citizens.

The reasoning and practice of religious pluralism in a multicultural society like Indonesia plays a strategic role in shaping inclusive, tolerant, and peaceful religious understanding, awareness, and attitudes. This typology of religious people is believed to be able to support the creation of harmony in religious life. The management of religious plurality in the perspective of multiculturalism aims to provide equal recognition to all religions and guarantee justice to all people of religion in presenting their respective religious beliefs and rituals in the public sphere.

The management of religious plurality in the perspective of multiculturalism requires the involvement of all elements of the nation, both structurally and culturally. Indonesian Islamic figures (Islamic scholars and intellectuals) are currently expected to be able to unite their thoughts, attitudes, movements, and functional roles in building religious harmony by prioritizing pluralist-inclusive theology and dialogical-transformative approaches.

The synergy between Islamic scholars and intellectuals is urgently needed so that disagreements over the 2005 MUI decision in which religious pluralism is forbidden will no longer happen. Until now, the negative impact of the decision is considered a stumbling block in the attempt of Indonesia to build harmony among people of religion.

In the contestation of Islam Nusantara, acceptance of religious diversity with mutual respect, mutual care, and cooperation in social and humanitarian affairs becomes the basis for pluralist-inclusive theology in managing the plurality of Indonesian society. Suparman (2002, 16-20) asserts that multiculturalism is an ideology where equality in cultural and ethnic differences are emphasized. They can accept and respect each other's regional, cultural, and religious diversity. With this concept, multiculturalism should be used as an ideology in managing the nation's life. This condition is expected to bring the existence of religious pluralism to a proper place.

In an ideal practice, the implementation of multiculturalism in all aspects of human social life is used to see the reality of diversity between different individuals or communities as God's creatures who think and are cultured. The main aspect of multiculturalism as an ideology in Sirry's view (2018, 88) is recognizing and respecting cultural differences, including religious diversity, upholding universal human values and rights, and responsibility to the nation and the world community. All the realities of religious differences are important to be treated with respect, especially when interacting socially amid the plurality of Indonesian society and nation.

Therefore, the contestation of Islam Nusantara amid the plurality of religions in Indonesia will increasingly show its significance for the good of all citizens of the nation. Suppose religious plurality is managed with a multiculturalism approach with the principle of peacefully living together in religious differences. In that case, the rights of all religious people will be fulfilled and protected equally.

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The last estuary of the multiculturalism approach is to support the establishment of harmonious religious life for the common welfare of the Indonesian people. Nugroho in (Ujan, 2009: 16) asserts if differences are not managed appropriately, it could cause conflict. However, if managed properly, differences will enrich each other and produce productive work.

3. Pluralism Reasoning in Building Inclusive Religious Attitude

The contestation of Islam in the Archipelago has always been intertwined with the discourses and practices of religious pluralism. It has become the empirical reality of Indonesian society since its establishment. Religious pluralism is defined as an understanding or view that recognizes religious pluralism (Ismail, 2014: 17). Thoha (2005, 14) explains that religious pluralism is a community that still pays attention to the characteristics of each religion's teachings. Meanwhile, Osman (2012) interprets religious pluralism as not just passive co-existence and limited to tolerance. Rather, it is a will from every religious adherent to understand other parties and work together to build the common good with mutual respect.

In Islam, the study of religious pluralism has a strong foundation, both from the holy texts of the Qur'an and Hadith as well as the historical experience of Muslims from one to another period. Islam, from the beginning, has recognized religious pluralism that every religion has its theological concepts, worship rituals, scriptures, and religious attributes. Hence, they cannot be exchanged or equated with one another.

In principle, every religion has theological concepts and worship rituals that are different and can never be equated. Rachman in Philips (2016, xxv) explains that:

Seeing all religions as the same is impossible because the reality of existing religions is different in many ways (aqidah and sharia). However, pluralism gives recognition and the right of each religion to co-exist with the freedom to practice their respective religions to construct a common civilization.

Mulkhan (2005, 186) elucidates that every religious community believes that their religion contains truth, instructions, and teachings of salvation that serve to organize worldly life for salvation after death. Commonly, religion is God's holy teaching, teaching all his followers to have noble morality when interacting with individuals or communities of different religions.

Religious morality as above can only be created if religious people understand the substantive essence of their religious teachings. It is important for every religious community, including Muslims, to use the essence of Islam as a guide in living life based on universal goodness for all humans, regardless of religious differences.

The setting of religious plurality in Indonesia when it comes to the context of inter-religious people in the contestation of Islam has fallen into many clashes, turmoils, and conflicts that disrupt social integration and national stability in life of the nation. Muhammad (2013, 18) explained that in its history, the Indonesian nation had experienced various conflicts related to ethnic and ideological differences. The conflict has disrupted stability and hampered national development agendas.

In the context of the diverse Indonesian nation, the substantive moral message of religions to construct universal goodness based on pluralist-inclusive theology becomes urgently to develop. In addition, since the beginning, the people of the republic have developed tolerance, moderation, and a peaceful attitude as their lifestyle. This type of life has been put forward in the realm of Islam Nusantara, where religious and cultural localities are carefully taken into account for the harmonious lives of the people could be brought into play.

Reflecting on Nata's view (2001), a religious community has no right to claim that truth belongs to it is the only truth that everyone should believe in. The truth of each religion cannot be used to judge the truth of other religions and negate followers of other religions as misguided, unbelievers, going to hell and justifying their group as the most correct and has the right to enter God's heaven.

The absolute truth belongs to the Absolute God. It is believed by all religious people and exists in each religion which is believed by its adherents to be the exclusive territory (esoteric dimension) of religious people. At the same time, the truth that exists in humans is a relative truth (exoteric dimension) due to the construction of thoughts of its adherents based on the sacred texts of their religions.

To examine the religious attitude above, Swidler's (1984) theory is relevant to how all religious people should practice. He mentioned that it is almost impossible to express the truth of other religions theologically. As theological doctrines, each religion has a subjective dimension of belief. In other words, all religions contain truth claims which are prone to social conflicts.

The last estuary to be achieved through reasoning and practices of religious pluralism in the context of Indonesia is pluralist-inclusive religious understanding and attitudes. This effort is a part of actualizing the doctrinal message of God's sacred text in social life.

4. Religious Meeting Point Towards Religious Harmony

The reasoning and practice of religious pluralism in a dialectical social life will be strengthened when people of religion can understand each other and bring the meeting point of their religion into a good play. The meeting point of religious communities begins with sincerity to understand, respect, and accept each other's religious differences. The practices of mutual understanding should be an entry point to build harmony in inter-religious life. Regarding harmony, Rahman (2016, 300) interpreted it as a good and peaceful atmosphere amongst people of religion.

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Open views about living together in harmony despite religious differences are part of an intelligent life attitude to guard the reasonings and practices of religious pluralism in the contestation of Islam in the Archipelago. The more inclusive-pluralist a person in religion, the more they contribute to strengthening religious harmony and national integration. On the other hand, the more exclusive a person in religion, the more negative impact on efforts to construct religious harmony, which in the long run could potentially cause division, conflict, and national disintegration.

Reflecting on the interest of religious harmony, the construction of every religious community on God's sacred text as an inclusive area provides a space for dialogue to find common ground between religions. The space for dialogue would enable cooperation in social and humanitarian affairs collectively and peacefully. Azra in Taher (2011: 27) describes that inter-religious cooperation at the level of non-theological space covers the ethical, social, political, and economic lives of the people.

Understanding the people of religion about the meeting point of religions could lead all people to an attitude of being tolerant, inclusive, moderate, and peaceful despite differences they have in their belief about the truth. Quraish in Hidayat and Gaus (2001: 188) elaborates that "developing an attitude of tolerance and religious freedom is a recommendation of any religion and applies in any society, regardless of the majority and minority"

In Misrawi (2010: 162), Walzer mentioned five substances of the essence of tolerance that would bring religious harmony into play. First, it is to accept differences to live in peace. Second, it is to make diversity into a difference and negate uniformity. Third, it is to build a moral stoicism in which the rights of others should be fully respected. Fourth, it is to express openness to others. In addition, it is to build enthusiastic support for autonomous differences. Each religious community strives to build goodness for universal humanity in the differences. Synergy in spreading universal goodness is a strategy to bring dialectical practices of God's teachings by referring to our national consensus of the Republic of Indonesia, i.e., Pancasila.

In practice, the contestation of Islam Nusantara in the attempt to construct harmony among religious believers, the government establishes Forum Komunikasi Umat Beragama (FKUB) or the inter-religion communication forum to accommodate the aspirations of all religious adherents. The work program of FKUB is centered on the concept of a trilogy which is carried out systematically, integrated, and continuously.

In the context of Indonesia, the seven types of dialogue can be brought forward to build harmony amongst religious believers. Every religious community must build common ground through a synergistic-mutualistic dialogue based on tolerant attitude, mutual understanding, equality as God's creatures and citizens, avoiding prejudice, peace with those who are different, and sincerity in interfaith collaboration as a form of respect for God's commandments.

In the contestation of Islam in the Archipelago, this attitude manifests religious inclusiveness. It should not just be a slogan but a noble moral ethic and a guide for building harmony in diversity.

5. Pancasila: Indigenous Islamic Archipelago Pattern

The contestation of Islam Nusantara shown by the nation's founding fathers is the Five Principles (Pancasila) of the country. The principle becomes the estuary of encounter and unification of religious plurality. The founding father emphasized that Indonesia is not a theocratic state based on a particular religion. It is not a secular state that separates religion from the state in an extreme way (Qodir, 2014: 204). Rather, Indonesia is a nation-state that is founded on the ideology of Pancasila. It is established to protect the religious diversity of the Indonesians.

The founders of the country realized that the birth of Indonesia as a nation was the result of the struggles and sacrifices of all people from different religious, racial, regional, and cultural backgrounds. Differences must be accommodated in the state system according to the principles of a nation-state that adheres to democracy. The state recognizes religions and their adherents equally to construct peace and harmony in diversity. Reconciling the relationship between religion and state through the philosophy of Pancasila is a final and irrevocable mutual agreement of all stakeholders of the country.

Although religion is a matter of privacy for citizens, the Indonesian government deliberately gives official recognition and legal rules regarding the life of people of religions. The legal formalities of religion and religious communities are officially stated in Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution, where freedom of religion is guaranteed (Alwi, 1999: 132). The government officially recognized six official religions, and therefore there is no room for people of non-religion in the republic.

As a country where plurality in all its aspects grows fruitfully, the existence of diversity and multiculturalism has a strong foundation, and therefore, its future is bright. Sanaky (2005, 411) argues that since the country's establishment as the republic, the founding fathers placed multicultural ideology as the basis for state and nation. Hence, *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (unity in diversity) as the philosophy of the republic should become a solution for encountering all forms of religious diversity.

The above statement was emphasized by Madjid, an Indonesian progressive thinker in Buddy (2010, xxxiii) who said: "The values of Pancasila are the meeting point of all views of life that co-exist in the republic, including the view of life summarized by recognized religions in Indonesia." So, the plurality of Indonesian society must be managed based on the principles of justice and equality to create religious harmony, which in the long run reinforces the integration of Indonesia as a nation.

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The question, however, is how dialectical practices of religion could create mutual understanding, respect, share, and synergize based on brotherhood among citizens. Brotherhood in national bonds requires all religious adherents to exercise reconciliation in all forms of differences by bringing forward the spirit of nationalism.

The results of various research conducted by western researchers on socio-religious life globally, Indonesia places the highest rank beating other countries. In Muhammad's view (2013), Indonesia is the meeting place of the world's major religions were differences due to religious adherents coexisting in harmony for a long period.

DISCUSSION

The contestation of Islam in the Archipelago, in many historical studies, stated that the struggle of Islam with various local cultures has been going on for a very long period. In the view of Baso (2015, ix), Islam's diversity can be seen from various aspects, ranging from religion, race, ethnicity, culture, language, artifacts, geography, politics, social status, economy, education and characters.

In the context of Indonesia, where religious plurality is the main issue, clashes, turmoil, and divisions as a consequence of the social dynamics of a pluralistic society could easily occur. Adherents of conflict theory, Dahrendorf in Jamaludin (2015, 47), observe that society is not always integrated, harmonious, safe, and mutually fulfilling. Rather, other faces are prone to conflict and change.

Referring to the religious plurality that is prone to social conflict, it is important for Indonesian societies to understand the different causes of conflict better. According to Kymlicka (2003, 13), conflict is caused by two factors: the co-existence of more than one tribe in a certain country or region. Second is the emergence of diversity due to immigration, both individuals and families integrate and fuse with the local community.

The multiculturalism approach has played an important role in managing religious plurality in this context. The main spirit of multiculturalism in the contestation of Islam in the Archipelago is recognizing religious plurality as an objective reality of society. The next plan is to seek common ground from all existing differences with mutual respect based on justice and equality. Nugroho in Ujan (2009, 15) explains that multiculturalism is not a view that equates to local truth but helps different parties to be able to build mutual respect to create peace and mutual prosperity.

As an objective reality in the interaction of social life, religious pluralism is an acknowledgment and acceptance of the religious pluralism that exists in the Archipelago and cannot be denied. Qodir (2014, 204) explains that denying religious pluralism means denying God's decrees for humankind. Religious pluralism has grown and is deeply rooted in Muslims' religious life and nationality in the Archipelago whose existence cannot be denied.

The reality of inter-religious life expressed by Madjid (2008, 12) cannot be separated from two areas: First, religion as ideal doctrinal teaching contained in the holy book (textual). Second, religion is the actualization of doctrinal teachings in religious practice where the historical locality of its adherents (contextual) is placed in a dialectical practice. In the context of building harmony among religious believers in Indonesia. These two areas should bring awareness of all religious adherents to anticipate the attitudes of being a literalist, scripturalist, and textualist towards sacred religious texts, which in turn construct exclusiveness of people in religion (Nata, 2001).

The inclusive-pluralist religious attitude above aligns with the context of building religious harmony in a pluralistic Indonesia. Regarding the practice, Sirry (2018, 207) describes that inclusive and pluralist theology was developed to support harmonious dialogue between religious communities. Schuon (2003, 26-27) explains that there are two types of unity in the core of religions. First, it is a metaphysical, theological unity in which absolute truth is positioned. Second, it is a moral-ethical unity for universal humanity. In this type of unity, each community of religions could bring their religious teaching into play.

Azra's view in Taher (2011, 18) asserts that Muslims have implemented the theology of Islamic harmony throughout history. This began with the migration of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings are upon him-p.b.u.h.) to Medina in 622 AD. However, at the practical level, they speak differently. Religion is often displayed by its followers as "*double-faced*." Religion explicitly teaches its people about brotherhood, peace, love, care, justice, and equality between fellow human beings in the theological-doctrinal realm. At the same time, however, it is easy for religious adherents to use religious teachings as justification for committing acts of violence, intolerance, being rude, spreading hatred, and even committing murder in the name of God and their religion. Revell (2010) explained this action as an absolute individual truth where respect of other religious adherents is intentionally ignored. According to Islam, even though people have different religions, beliefs, and worship rituals, they are required to build tolerance and peaceful interfaith communication through real-life collaboration and dialogue. The importance of dialogue between religious believers to build cooperation prepared for resolving different social lives of the community, create prosperity, justice, and mutual prosperity (Wahid, 2006: 134). In this position, a real-life dialectical practice amongst religious adherents is deemed an effective means for building harmony. This is particularly important in areas that experienced conflicts over religious issues. Regarding the practices, Nursyam (2009, 219) highlights that amid differences, there is still room for integration between fellow human beings by prioritizing dialogue in the name of humanity.

Banawiratma in Listia et al. (2016, 17) proposes seven forms of life dialogue to build religious harmony in Indonesia. First, it is important to establish a daily life dialogue to understand each other's differences better. Second, there is a need to establish a dialogue through social analysis and contextual ethics. Third, another form of dialogue needed should be developed by studying differences

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in religious traditions. This is aimed to help people of religions practices respect for each other. Fourth, there is a need to create a dialogue on the religious experiences of each community of religions. Fifth, it is no doubt that a dialogue of theologians amongst religions is paramount. Sixth, a dialogue through various religious communities is exceptionally needed for establishing harmony amongst them. Finally, internal dialogue of the people of religion should especially be established to protect the religious adherents from the act of violence.

According to Qardhawi (2005, 278), the inter religious dialogue needs tolerance certainly. He explains that tolerance in Islam which is the basic value for constructing harmony among religious believers, is based on four main reasons: First, humans have a noble position, regardless of religion, nation, race, ethnicity, skin color, and other backgrounds. Second, religious differences are the will of God as a consequence of freedom of human endeavor. Third, the issue of reckoning, disbelief, and punishment for misguidance is the full right of Allah. Fourth, Muslims are commanded to be fair and avoid injustice to anyone.

In the context of religious differences in Indonesia, the national consensus, called Pancasila, should help Indonesian people build a better understanding, paradigm, and practice of tolerance. In this context, religious leaders and their followers must display their respective religious teachings and practices inclusively.

Madjid in Budhy (2010, xxxiii) explains that Pancasila should be the only source of all social and state views since the founders of the republic agreed upon the Five Principles as the foundation for the country. This is a part of the pattern of the contestation of Islam Nusantara. Pancasila is the meeting point of all recognized religions and beliefs in the republic. The meeting point would enable all religious communities in Indonesia to achieve better progress in constructing an inclusive and moderate perspective, understanding, practice in the context of religious harmony.

According to the author, the form of the contestation of Islam in the Archipelago, namely the existence of religions in Indonesia, has been tested with various problems and even conflicts. However, all these experiences become a strengthening immune for building harmony in the middle of diversity. The upheavals and conflicts in various regions in Indonesia have succeeded in reconciling the boiling relationship amongst believers of all recognized religions.

Consequently, relations between religious people continue to take place in harmony. There is an interactive partnership in the national philosophy, Pancasila, which brings mutual agreement into play at a certain point. Islamic dialectics and the cultural locality of the Archipelago have succeeded in formulating distinctive features of Indonesian people, which makes the practices of Islam different from other countries in the world.

CONCLUSION

Islam in the Archipelago is a form of a localized meaning of Islam that interacts with the social reality of the plurality of the people in the Archipelago. As humans born in the Archipelago, Muslims have played an important role in bringing an equal interaction between the sacred texts of Allah and His Messenger with the localities of the Indonesian people for peace and harmony of the nation and humanity.

The reasoning and practices of religious pluralism cannot be separated from the contestation of Islam in the Archipelago, which continues to accompany the dynamics of the rise of Islam from generation to generation. Following the context of a plurality of Indonesia, religious pluralism should not be forbidden, misled, and blasphemed. Rather, it should be used as an instrument to shape pluralist-inclusive religious understanding and attitudes to support the creation of religious harmony.

In all the differences that arise, all religious people should be proud to live in the Archipelago where moderation in religious practices is very much considered. The contestation of Islam Nusantara, its inclusive-pluralist theology, is believed to be able to bring unity for the plural nature of the Indonesian nation in the future. People of religion in Indonesia are obliged to reconcile religious practices within the framework of nationality--Pancasila--if they want to remain to live in harmony in diversity as what has been mutually agreed upon since the founding of the great country.

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