



# State and Religious Pluralism (Study of Hasyim Muzadi's Thoughts on Religious Pluralism in Indonesia after the New Order)

**Anang Lukman Afandi**

Political Science Study Program, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University

## ARTICLE INFO

### Article history:

Received May 25, 2021

Revised Jun 02, 2021

Accepted Jun 20, 2021

### Keywords:

The new order  
Religious Pluralism

## ABSTRACT

Religious pluralism seems to have met its golden age again. At a time when Indonesian people often have conflicts with religious nuances, the discussion of pluralism will again become a topic of conversation among interfaith leaders in Indonesia. In this case, the author will try to review the meaning of pluralism according to one of the moderate figures in Islam, namely Hasyim Muzadi, Rois Syuriah, the Executive Board of Nahdlatul Ulama. The study of Hasyim Muzadi's religious pluralism in this thesis is based on the background that the author considers that so far there are still few works that contain Hasyim Muzadi's thoughts. The author's aim is to deepen the knowledge of Hasyim Muzadi's thoughts on pluralism and the steps he took to fight for religious plurality in Indonesia. Hasyim Muzadi as one of the moderate figures who consistently fights for Pluralism, offers a solution to the impasse of dialogue between religions and beliefs. Pluralism is considered a necessity to maintain religious plurality in Indonesia and maintain harmony between people of different religions and beliefs so as to strengthen the integrity of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. Conclusion from the discussion of Hasyim .s thoughts Among other things, Muzadi thought about Pluralism as part of Humanism and the differences between theological pluralism and sociological pluralism. According to Hasyim Muzadi, religious people in Indonesia must be aware that the problems they have faced so far are the deadlock of dialogue between groups with different interpretations of the religious teachings they profess. So according to the author, this discussion is very important to re-awaken the understanding of religious pluralism with the aim of creating harmony among religions and between religions even though differences in belief and religion are a necessity in the life of this pluralistic nation and state.

*This is an open access article under the [CC BY-NC](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/) license.*



### Corresponding Author:

Anang Lukman Afandi,  
Political Science Study Program, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences,  
Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University  
E-mail: [ananglukman@gmail.com](mailto:ananglukman@gmail.com)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the context of the future of Indonesian Islam in particular and Islam in general, what is happening today is a strong indication to jointly build a new paradigm of Islam, especially Indonesian Islam in the eyes of the international community (Yaqin, 2016). Because Islam, especially after the September 11, 2001 attacks that destroyed the WTC (World Trade Center), has been interpreted by the West as a religion of violence, and at that time matters relating to religion became

increasingly sensitive. Even though the majority of the Muslim community in the world have never considered the West as an enemy (Ilyasin, 2017).

The case of the destruction of the World Trade Center (WTC) building in New York and the Pentagon in Washington DC, which was allegedly carried out by a group of Islamic extremists under the command of Osama bin Laden, made Western society's negative assessment of Muslims stronger and the relationship between the two reached its lowest point (Ulfah, n.d.). This condition causes Muslims in the world to be seen as bad and referred to as followers of religious teachings whose dogma only spreads terror and violence. This very bad view occurs because western society vents its disappointment with Muslims who they believe are a people who cannot live side by side with other people. In fact, most of the western population do not know for sure the true teachings of Islam and are only based on reporting on terrorism cases from the mass media whose news and content only corners Muslims, who are stigmatized as people who are attached to the world of violence and cannot make peace with other teachings. This makes other people angry with Muslims (Zainal & Hamdani, 2018).

The challenges faced today are actually not in the economic, political, social and cultural fields, but are challenges of thought. Because the problems posed by the economic, political, social, and cultural fields actually originate from thoughts. Among the most serious thought challenges today are in the field of religious thought. Challenges that have long been recognized are internal challenges in the form of fanaticism, blind taklid, heresy, kurafat, and so on. Meanwhile, the external challenge that is currently being faced is the entry of liberalism, secularism, relativism, religious pluralism and so on into the discourse of Indonesian religious thought (Asyari, n.d.).

Pluralism, so far the Indonesian people are too afraid and even antipathy with this word. Indeed, this word is very sensitive to talk about, but this can become a fire in the husk if people are left with their ignorance of this term. The author is interested in the editorial presented by Media Indonesia with the title "Fortunately there is still NU and Muhammadiyah".

Indonesia is not a country that has encountered interfaith problems for the first time. Since its inception, interfaith issues have become an interesting discussion among national leaders. Soekarno, as the first president of Indonesia, has long warned that there will be religious clashes if the Indonesian people do not prioritize pluralism and religious freedom. Two organizations that have existed since before independence, namely Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, are still loyal to promoting tolerance in religious and national life. This attitude is mandatory in order to maintain the unity of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia because Indonesia is not only composed of one religion. Indonesia has many cultures, races, ethnicities, and customs. Social, racial, or theological friction has the potential to occur in society. And if the government is silent and tends not to care about this then it is tantamount to allowing civil war to occur everywhere in remote parts of the country.

Within that framework, Hasyim Muzadi, as one of the leaders of the largest Islamic organization in Indonesia, has intensively carried out an agenda related to the importance of building the spirit of plurality. This is shown by the holding of meetings of Sunni-Shia Ulama' all over the world which he initiated. Such meetings seem to be a bright spot for his efforts to organize Indonesian Islam towards a better global Islam as the actualization of rahmatan lil-alamiin. While in essence, a growing heterogeneous society, such as the Indonesian nation, is certainly difficult to develop mutual understanding between various ethnic elements and regional cultures. Even if there is no basic misunderstanding of these elements, at least the mutual understanding achieved will only be nominal, in other words.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

In the discussion related to this research, the authors need to describe the research methods used. These include the type of research, the nature of the research, data collection techniques, approaches and data analysis.

### 1. Types of research

This study is a library research, which prioritizes library materials as the main source. Since this is a character study, there are two main methods for obtaining the character's thoughts.

First, research the thoughts and beliefs of the character. Second, research on his biography from the beginning to the end of his political thought.

## 2. Nature of Research

This study, which is a literature study, is more of a descriptive-analytic technique. What is meant by descriptive in this context is describing the characteristics and phenomena found in society or literature. In other words, the characters and phenomena studied in this study are the characters of Hasyim Muzadi and the phenomena that influence his thinking. The analysis here is an analysis in a historical sense, namely examining the historical roots that underlie his ideas, in this case the author focuses more on the contemporary Islamic schools of thought, namely modernists and neo-modernists which the author considers to be a representation of him.

## 3. Data Collection Technique

The data used in this study include two kinds, namely: primary data and secondary data. His original works, both books, articles and written collections, are considered primary data. Meanwhile, works that examine his ideas and research results relevant to this study are included as secondary data.

## 4. Approach

In this study, the approach used is a normative and socio-historical approach. What is meant by the normative approach is an approach to explain the problem being studied with the applicable norms or law (fiqh) as an affirmation effort. This is important to do because the discourse of Islam and the state is part of the study of Islamic law, especially fiqh siyasah. The socio-historical approach is an approach which states that each product of thought is the result of the thinker's interaction with the socio-cultural and socio-political environment that surrounds it. In connection with this research, of course, the socio-political and cultural background of Hasyim Muzadi's method of thinking will be studied as long as these events influence his thinking on this issue.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### 3.1 Hasyim Muzadi's Pluralism Thoughts

To begin the description in this section, the author quotes several points from one of Hasyim Muzadi's writings which says:

"There are at least four pillars that urgently need to be worked on in this congress. First, the pillars of religious understanding, experience and insight. This is a fundamental factor. This really should get priority, it's not like NU has left religious understanding, experience and insight. But what is the optimal way of religious *fi al-dunya hasanah* and *wafil Akhiroti hasanah*. So how we as religious gives birth to personal piety and social piety. How was born a generation that is *solihun lidinihi* but also *solihun lizamanihi*. Pious to his religion but also pious to the level of development of his time.

"The second pillar is the formulation and standardization of the relationship between religion and the state. The embryo has been around since the 27th congress in Situbondo. But in the current context, there needs to be sharpening and further development. Especially in the phenomenon, where now many extremists use religious labels and then create disintegration between religion and the state. Under these conditions, the NU concept, which is known to be moderate, is very relevant in placing religion in Indonesia's pluralism system. NU's level of moderation is seen from its teaching framework which lays down a substantially inclusive relationship between religion and the state".

On the other hand, Hasyim as a figure who cares about the conditions of Indonesia and Islam, of course, has thoughts as a representation of Islamic thought as well as which distinguishes his thoughts from other thinkers according to the spirit of his era, so to understand first what is meant by Islamic thought, it would be better if you look at the writings of Muslim Abdurrahman who said:

"Unlike the *ulama* who usually emphasize authority, Islamic thinkers can be said to belong to the "rebel" group. They, with their intellectual uneasiness, always question why normative and scripturalist Islam is no longer transmitting its basic message in the new age. People like this (as children of their time), actually have historical creativity, which can carry out transformation and transcendence in advancing civilization. Because basically, they are people who live in faith and

their minds are always fighting against "formalism", which is a form of religious appreciation that places faith only in routine ritual activities. Meanwhile, the emphasis on Islamic "structuralism" which sanctifies tradition has killed the spirit of the search for *ijtihad* to revive innovation, creativity, and change". Therefore, "Thinking Islamically" is a search for a reasonable Islamic meaning. The holy book, al-Qur'an and sunnah, does not contain all-inclusive ideas, or is a "dream of heaven" that is already perfect. The relationship between the holy book and its traditional heritage (*turast*) as a guide to life requires an open reading, because Muslims encounter different eras and cultural loci.

From the writing above, the writer is inspired and intends to explain the position of (Islamic) thought, especially the thoughts of Hasyim Muzadi, and then what the writer wants to emphasize first is the meaning of Islamic thought. Fakhri Ali in one of his writings as quoted by Ihsan Ali Fauzi defines Islamic thought as a systematic intellectual "reflection" in responding to individual, socio-political, economic and cultural problems from the perspective of Islamic teachings. We can accept this definition with two notes. First, that Islamic thought is not co-opted for certain interests and as something that is indeed open to accepting dialogue space for the forms of change that are taking place. Second, making education the basis for change, where mature education will give birth to Muslim intellectuals.

When the incident occurred when the WTC was hit on September 11, 2001, which led to direct US accusations against the Al Qaeda movement as the perpetrators and the arresting of people and Islamic groups suspected of being linked to the Al Qaeda network, the position of moderate Islam in Indonesia went unnoticed. But that doesn't mean the problem is over. Hasyim Muzadi has the view that the international community needs to know the condition of Islam in Indonesia and the behavior of those who do not approve of acts of violence. For this reason, intensive communication efforts with the outside world are needed, including the US. The more and more intense the communication and contact between Indonesia's moderate mass organizations with the international and the US, the more positive it will be. Moreover, amid the economic downturn, furthermore as a follow-up response to Hasyim's statement above, he became a figure who received an invitation from the US government to provide an explanation of the understanding of the Islamic community in Indonesia. He quite clearly explained the map and structure of Indonesian Islam. The US is lucky to get a direct picture of Indonesia's largest Muslim mass organization. Indonesia is also grateful because a prominent Muslim mass organization explained the problems of Indonesian Islam to outsiders. He gave an illustration that Muslims in Indonesia are basically moderate, culturally and domestically, and do not know the international network of violence.

Furthermore, Hasyim suggested that the alternative approach if repression is removed is to approach it with an educational approach. Cultural and social problem solving In this way, violent movements will disappear.<sup>100</sup> On another occasion when the Sunni-Shi'a conflict occurred in East Java, Hasyim advised groups to stick to their respective beliefs, and maintain balance and tolerance for other groups.<sup>101</sup> That is why, when the Black September incident occurred, namely the tragedy of the collapse of the WTC building in America, which placed Muslims as terrorist actors, this kiai who was blessed with six sons, appeared by explaining to the international world that Indonesian Muslims are moderate Muslims. cultural and have no links with international violent organizations. He is a number of community leaders in Indonesia who are used as a reference by the western world in explaining the characteristics of Muslims in Indonesia.

In relation to the writing of Hasyim Muzadi's thoughts on religious pluralism, the author finds at least three of his important views that can be captured, namely the Islamic principle of *Rahmatn Lil 'Alamin* as an alternative solution to the problems of the nation and the world so far, the civilizational dialogue approach, and pluralism as Humanism.

#### **1. slam Rahmatan lil Alamin**

The religious color (Islam) which is "typical" of the people in Indonesia is facing a lawsuit with the presence of the phenomenon of radicalism in recent years. In the midst of the rush of various flows of information, ideas and ideologies that entered the archipelago, it's time for NU as an organization that from the start has positioned itself as a national subject with a socio-religious mission that has the characteristics of *fakih fi mashalalihi-l-khalqi*, that is, always thinks about the benefit of mankind, reconceptualizes the movement. Since its establishment in 1926, the problem

that has been a challenge for NU is a global challenge, namely the rise of religious fundamentalism by using Wahhabi and puritan clothing, and rampant colonialism by exploiting the wealth of Muslim nations with the idea of modernization and liberalization as the entrance.

In bridging this problem, there is a great hope from the public that Islam Rahmatan lil al'amin can be translated into social life, especially in terms of its contribution as a solution to global conflicts that have occurred so far that affect the system and joints of life. In Hasyim Muzadi's view, in order for Islam to become an Islam that is rahmatan lil 'alamin, it must rely on two things. First, Islam in resolving global conflicts should prioritize a dialogue approach. Second, the implementation of Islam must be built based on intelligence and piety in the sense that religion should be positioned in a proportional human dimension which will later form social piety, not individual piety. These two things are practically interrelated.

## **2. Theological and Sociological Pluralism**

According to Hasyim Muzadi, the pluralism championed by Nahdlatul Ulama in Indonesia is sociological pluralism, not theological pluralism. Theological pluralism actually harms the theology of all religions. There is no faith or "know-mix" belief in religion. The concept of pluralism is being discussed again following the death of KH Abdurrahman Wahid, who was called by President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) as the father of pluralism.

According to Hasyim, issues of theology and rituals are the original rights of each religion which should not be interfered with from outside. So that interfaith prayer is not an exchange of theology or faith, but only at the same time and place. While sociological pluralism is the togetherness of religious "people" in a worldly or immanent community as the embodiment of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* or unity and diversity, because every religion outside of theology and rituals must have a room for humanism and that is where interfaith people meet. According to Hasyim, what he said about pluralism had been conveyed and agreed upon through ICIS envoys while in the Vatican, Vienna, WCC/Christians in Porto Alegre Brazil in the 9th Assembly in 2006, and with Orthodox Catholics in Moscow and monks in Thailand. .

## **3. Civilization Dialogue Approach**

The quarrels between the East and the West, especially after the WTC attack carried out by irresponsible individuals, have raised concerns from various circles. Muhadjir Darwin argued that the position and role of religion would become completely paradoxical if the problem was expanded to issues of democracy, humanism, and the like. Not to mention the issue of plurality where the anti-plurality method brought about because of politics then what happens next is exclusive behavior, which tends to discriminate against the political rights of other citizens who have different religions. conflict between the two parties. A number of concepts were attempted to overcome this tension. To achieve this, Islam and the Muslims must dare to make bolder breakthroughs, namely one of them, religion must be returned to its true position, namely as a unifier of the people. Religion does not exist for violent purposes. This means that religion must be returned to rahmatan lil 'alamin, which is to be a guide to a life full of grace and compassion. This is where the importance of the past world has the opportunity to organize itself.

### **3.2 Implementation of Religious Pluralism as Part of Humanism**

Objectively, the facts on the ground show that, this nation is in a state of rift riots and prolonged conflicts that are almost endless. Indonesia's territory is so vast, there are a number of areas that are still in a situation of prolonged conflict, ranging from racial, ethnic, separatist conflicts as well as political and religious conflicts. For example, one can mention a number of areas that are prone to conflict, such as Aceh, Maluku, Ambon, East Kalimantan, Papua Irian Jaya, Makassar, and so on. Hasyim Muzadi's commitment and conception related to religious phenomena will be explained in the following section.

#### **a. Dimensions of Humanism in Religion**

Indonesia's religious pluralism in Hasyim's view as expressed by Anshori is how religions display their human dimension, namely coexistence and development on the fundamentals of religious traditions that respect each other, the tradition of mutual cooperation, the tradition of deliberation and dialogue and a polite culture. More specifically, in this discussion, Hasyim Muzadi's views on the relationship between Islam and other religions will be presented in the discourse of religious pluralism.

According to Hasyim, meetings that are deliberation in nature as a form of dialogue between religious communities are something that has become a tradition for NU members in Indonesia. NU residents are used to having meetings with Christian and Catholic friends, especially on matters that must be resolved together. A number of changes have occurred in Indonesia. This requires sufficient intensity in strengthening dialogue with people of all religions, even almost every week a dialogue is held with Christians, Catholics, Buddhists, Hindus, and Confucians to discuss matters concerning the interests and needs of living together. Hasyim Muzadi is of the view that Islam has three parts, namely the problem of theology or faith, the problem of ritual worship, and the problem of humanism (humanity). The difference between Islam and other religions is about theology and religious rituals. So explained Anshori.

In the aspect of human values, all religions recognize it as something of universal value and must be upheld indiscriminately. Human relations that have been built should not be damaged just because of differences in theology and rituals. That may be what distinguishes NU from other Islamic organizations. For the problems of humanism (humanity), which includes the concept of brotherhood, justice, equality of prosperity, love, tolerance, cooperation, and also anti-violence, all are shared responsibility. The principle referred to is universal life values that are also desired by other religions, not limited to Muslims alone.

#### **b. Islamic Cooperation with Other Religions**

Hasyim Muzadi argues that cooperation between religions can be carried out on the dimension of humanism. Meanwhile, in terms of belief, the differences are different. But neither Islam nor Christianity could bear to see the people suffer. At this point it is necessary to build cooperation, work hand in hand with one another without distinguishing one belief from another.

Therefore, it is understandable that NU's relations with other religions are very good and genuine. So it's not a "pretend" and full of lies. Especially in Indonesia, a country that has never experienced inter-religious pressure. Maybe in contrast to the Middle East which uses the theme of religion in violence. In Indonesia, these are not significant difficulties for inter-religious relations. Freedom to practice religion and worship is guaranteed by the state.

So far, it is acknowledged that there are cases that hinder inter-religious harmony in Indonesia. But this is not due to NU's understanding of Islam. It is possible that these cases were caused by the influx of hard thoughts from outside Indonesia. Likewise, there are economic disparities and local cultural conflicts or resistance to the government, so that these movements sometimes also lead to clashes between religions. This is only a small part and can be resolved by Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) through the role of the existing ulama.

Another factor that sparked the conflict was the influence of certain groups who entered Indonesia as migrants. These are some of the minorities who do not like Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) which has been a value among Muslims in Indonesia. NU is considered too compromising, too kind to all religions and has too much tolerance for local culture (local wisdom). In the end, they even claimed NU as heresy, superstition and superstition.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

As a figure who once led the largest religious organization in Indonesia, Hasyim Muzadi has several thoughts, one of which is about religious pluralism. Hasyim Muzadi's thought in terms of religious pluralism is the idea of Islam Rahmatan lil 'Alamin which according to him is an alternative solution to the global deadlock that has not yet been resolved. Basically Hasyim Muzadi's thoughts started with anxiety over the implications that emerged over various cases that threatened plurality and the birth of radical movements in the name of religion, where these movements did not reflect the reality of the cultural, social and cultural conditions that developed in Indonesia. Civilization dialogue approach. For the application of the Islamic concept of Rahmatan lil 'Alamin, according to him, The first thing to do is through amar ma'ruf and nahi munkar by taking the opinion expressed by Imam al-Ghazali in the book *Ihya 'Ulumuddin*, that amar ma'ruf nahi munkar has ethics, namely adabu al-amri bi al-ma' ruf and adab al-nahy 'anil al-munkar. There are three ethics presented by al-Ghazali. One of them is to command people to do good and prevent doing evil so as not to cause greater evil, and from Islamic jurisprudence "akhaffu aldhararain". From the two conceptions above, Hasyim Muzadi tries to realize a pluralist attitude, especially in the context of dialogue

between East and West gaps. Religious pluralism as part of humanism. This can be understood considering the dimension of humanism in religion and the demands for cooperation between one religion and another. The relevance of Hasyim Muzadi's view of pluralism to Indonesian society in general and Muslims in particular is very much needed considering the condition of the nation which is facing a multidimensional crisis including its socio-religious relation, so the idea of Islam Rahmatan lil 'alamin is an alternative solution to the deadlock of the nation. According to Hasyim, Islam can be Rahmatan lil 'alamin by relying on two things. First, Islam in resolving global conflicts should prioritize a dialogue approach. With this dialogue, it is hoped that problems that were previously unresolved due to non-delivery of interests will be resolved. Second, the implementation of Islam must be built on intelligence and piety. From there, religion will become something humanist which is expected to form social piety, not just individual piety. In addition, the dynamics of Islam that are currently rife in Indonesia should be directed at the following: First, Muslims must be aware that the problems currently being faced are not only in Indonesia, but also in global-mondial issues, and to solve these problems requires knowledge and thought. Indonesian Muslims who will later merge with international Islamic thought. Second, efforts to educate in various disciplines of science and technology and enter all sectors of modern life, so that all idioms are mastered, Muslims will rediscover their civilization. In addition to this, efforts to Islamize and or extract original Islamic knowledge must also be carried out. As well as the discussion of Islamic social, economic and political systems also need to be sharpened

## REFERENCES

- Abidin, MZ (2014). Civil Society in the Face of Islam and Indonesianness. *Khazanah: Journal of Islamic Studies and Humanities*, 12(2).
- Anggito, A., & Setiawan, J. (2018). *Qualitative research methodology*. CV Jejak (Jejak Publisher).
- Fiqi, A. (nd). The role of the center for dialogue and cooperation among civilisations (CDCC) in the context of strengthening free public spaces.
- Hamdi, AZ, Shofwan, M., & Muhammad, A. (2019). The role of moderate Islamic organizations in countering violent extremism: case studies of Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah. -.
- Ihsan, M. (2012). Islamic Law and Morality in Civil Society. *Al-Ahkam*, 22(1), 27–42.
- Mazid, S., & Suharno, S. (2019). Implementation of multicultural values in Civics learning. *Social Harmony: Journal of Social Studies Education*, 6(1), 72–85.
- MOKLIS, NUR (nd). ANALYSIS OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY MOVEMENT ON DEMOCRATIZATION IN INDONESIA BY.
- Santoso, CWB, & Harefa, H. (2015). The Urgency of Supervision of Community Organizations by the Government. *Journal of Bina Praja: Journal of Home Affairs Governance*, 7(1), 1–20.
- Tine, N. (2018). *Molonthallo Tradition: Observing Local Culture in Gorontalo*. Ideas Publishing.
- Asyari, M. S. (n.d.). *ISLAM WATCH DAN KEBENCIAN ATAS ISLAM: Sanggahan Modern Terhadap Penafsiran Sūrah al-Fātiḥah Menurut "Islam Watch."*
- Ilyasin, M. (2017). *Teroris & Agama: Kontruksi Teologi Teoantroposentris*. Prenada Media.
- Ulfah, T. M. (n.d.). *Islam di mata media massa Amerika Serikat: studi kasus The New York Times (2001-2015)*. Jakarta: Fakultas Adab dan Humaniora UIN Syarif Hidayatullah.
- Yaqin, N. (2016). Manajemen Lembaga Pendidikan Islam. *Madinah: Jurnal Studi Islam*, 3(2), 93–105.
- Zainal, E. H., & Hamdani, M. F. (2018). *Religiusitas, Gender dan Intoleransi (Studi Tentang Radikalisme di Kalangan Perempuan di Kota Medan dan Padang)*.