

DECONSTRUCTING THE MEANING OF PLURALISM: THE RELEVANCE OF GUS DUR'S FIKRAH PLURALISM AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR RELIGIOUS LIFE IN INDONESIA

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Abstract: *The purpose of this study is to describe Gus Dur's pluralism thinking and the resolution of conflicts between religions by Gus Dur. Therefore, it is essential to know how Gus Dur's pluralism thinking developed in Indonesia and its implications for the lives of religious people. The approach taken in this research is a qualitative approach with descriptive analysis, which is used because this research provides a clear and detailed explanation. The type of research is library research. Data collection comes from books and journal articles relevant to the theme. Data processing is done by analyzing the sources and sorting them, then choosing the source that is closest to the discussion in this study. The results of this study indicate that Gus Dur's pluralistic thought is slightly different. Gus Dur does not generalize all religions but recognizes that each religious adherent has its aspects of true belief. Gus Dur's thought of pluralism was realized with the revocation of the Presidential Instruction, the defense of the Ahmadiyah, and the rejection of establishing an Islamic state.*

Keywords: *Gus Dur, Pluralism, Implications, Religious People*

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country with a large population and a plurality of cultures, races, languages, ethnicities, tribes, and religions that occupy parts of Indonesia with diverse cultures.¹ Therefore, as a country with a million pluralities, it becomes a bit of an obstacle for mutual respect and moderate attitudes. However, on the other hand, the plurality of Indonesian society can actually encourage mutual respect because of the circumstances that force them to live together in one social sphere. Diversity in Indonesia is certainly inevitable, especially in religious life, considering that Indonesia does not only recognize one religion, but there are 6 recognized religions based on Law Number 1 of 1965, namely Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism.²

¹ Laode Monto Bauto, "PERSPECTIVES OF RELIGION AND CULTURE IN INDONESIAN SOCIETY LIFE (A Review of the Sociology of Religion)," *Journal of Social Sciences Education* 23, no. 2 (2014): 11–25, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.17509/jpis.v23i2.1616>.

² Ari Susandi, "Life Skills Education in Instilling Islamic Values in Elementary Schools," *Al-Insiyiroh: Journal of Islamic Studies* 6, no. 2 (2020): 95–111, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.35309/alinsiyiroh.v6i2.178>.

The Indonesian nation with the slogan “Bhineka Tunggal Ika” which implies that Indonesia is a country that highly upholds the proposition of pluralism in the axis of statehood. Likewise, Pancasila contains five fundamental principles, including the principle of divinity.³ Therefore, plurality is a necessity in life, especially in the realm of religion. Even though plurality occurs in the scope of the state, the smallest scope such as in the household, the element of plurality always colors. It is not impossible, when in one family there are individuals with a variety of different religions, such as in the Linggoasri area whose people survive with religious plurality in one family.⁴

The existence of plurality must be realized by every human being, especially in the era of modernity and globalization which is an era to transform into a more humane human being. Religious plurality is one of the important elements discussed. The issue of religion has always been the base of conflict and violence which then made various efforts to avoid and minimize these conditions. Religion also gave birth to teachings of humanity and mutual respect, because in fact all religions teach goodness. Therefore, every religion has no right to claim that it is the most correct religion. This concept then gave birth to the justification for the emergence of the idea of religious pluralism.⁵

The journey of the Indonesian nation in realizing life in diversity is not a journey without challenges. History shows that religious diversity in Indonesia has been going on for a long time, and inter-religious conflicts have always participated in the process of realizing a moderate attitude in Indonesia. Interreligious conflict is not only sourced from the religious element itself, but also often sourced from other elements, such as from the flames of economic and political conflicts which then religion is used as fuel by certain parties to enlarge the conflict. therefore, the acceptance of the view of religious plurality in Indonesia becomes a fairly serious and important review to do. In the contemporary context, the discourse of pluralism is not only spread among religious figures, but also politicians, intellectuals, and culturalists.⁶

KH Abdurrahman Wahid is one of the figures who is loved by all religious groups. This is a result of his extraordinary tolerance, even when his death was attended by various other religious leaders. Gus Dur always campaigned for the principle of anti-exclusivism in religious life. According to him, exclusivism is a

³ Fokky Wasitaatmadja Fuad Heri Herdiawanto, *Pancasila Spiritualism*, 1st ed. (Jakarta: Prenada Media Group, 2018).

⁴ Firotunnisa', "Family Resilience of Interreligious Couples in Linggo Asri Village, Kajen District, Pekaalongan District" (UIN K.H. ABDURRAHMAN WAHID PEKALONGAN, 2023), <http://etheses.uingusdur.ac.id/id/eprint/6151>.

⁵ Hendar Riyadi, *Beyond Pluralism: Al-Qur'an Ethics Concerning Religious Diversity*, ed. Budi Rahman Hakim and Rizaludin Kurniawan, 1st ed. (Jakarta: RMBOOKS & PSAP, 2007).

⁶ Riyadi.

stumbling block to the many inter-religious riots that have occurred. Instead of being exclusivist in religion, Gus Dur campaigned for pluralism. President SBY during Gus Dur's funeral speech said that Gus Dur was the Father of Indonesian Pluralism. The 6th President's speech, implies how instrumental Gus Dur was in his thoughts on pluralism in Indonesia.⁷

Pluralism in the perspective of Gus Dur's thinking is more centered on an open attitude to find a truth anywhere, besides that pluralism must be interpreted through action not only rotating in the context of mere "thought", because of the actualization and action that causes the emergence of tolerance in the midst of society. Gus Dur's various roles in fostering an attitude of diversity with various efforts he made, so the ideas or efforts made by Gus Dur became a weighty discussion that we need to review further. His reputation in this field has made Gus Dur always remembered and recognized both at the national and international levels.⁸ This article comes to dialogue or discuss the concept, foundation, and implementation process of Gus Dur's pluralism thinking.

Previous research that is quite relevant to the discussion of this paper is an article by Taufani entitled "Gus Dur's Pluralist Thoughts", published by the Tabligh Journal Volume 16 Number 2 of 2018. This article discusses Gus Dur's pluralist thoughts. Gus Dur believes that Pluralism is in harmony with Islamic values, Pancasila, and the state constitution, all of which place respect for human rights and equality in a very important position. Therefore, the concept of pluralism can be a strategic solution to protect Indonesia from the dangers of strengthening religious radicalism in the future.⁹

The next relevant research is an article by Asripa, et al entitled "Pluralism in the Perspective of Gus Dur and Nurcholish Majid's Thought", published by the Falasifa Journal, Volume 12 Number 2 of 2021. This article discusses the thought of pluralism in the perspective of Gus Dur and Nurcholish Majid. Gus Dur promoted pluralism to realize harmony in Indonesia's diverse society. He was consistently at the forefront of fighting threats to diversity, which he considered to be an unchangeable sunnatullah. Nurcholish Madjid emphasized that pluralism must be sincerely

⁷ Surya Adi Sahfutra, "Gus Dur's Ideas of Religious Pluralism for Equality and Harmony," *Religion: Journal of The Study of Religions* 10, no. 1 (2014): 89-113, <http://digilib.uin-suka.ac.id/id/eprint/18609>.

⁸ Eko Setiawan, "Gus Dur's Theological Concept of Pluralism in Addressing Diversity in Indonesia" *Ascetic: Journal of Religion and Social Change* 1, no. 1 (2017): 57-68, <https://jurnalfuda.iainkediri.ac.id/index.php/asketik/article/view/1102>.

⁹Taufani, "Gus Dur's Pluralist Thought," *Tabligh Journal* 19, no. 2 (2018): 198-217, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.24252/jdt.v19i2.7475>.

accepted as God's grace, not just a social reality. He sees pluralism as a positive value that enriches culture and encourages diversity to grow harmoniously.¹⁰

The three studies above broadly touch on similar main themes, namely the thought of Gus Dur's pluralism. The three articles above do not mention broadly and deeply about the implications of Gus Dur's thinking, the three of them only review Gus Dur's pluralism thinking in general. Meanwhile, this article has a much more complex and comprehensive discussion related to detailed, clear, and structured explanations with a research focus that touches on a new theme, namely how the relevance and implications of Gus Dur's fikrah pluralism for the life of religious people in Indonesia. In addition, this paper also reviews how the narrative of pluralism in general discourse was later deconstructed by Gus Dur.

The novelty of this research lies in the deconstruction approach in analyzing the meaning of Gus Dur's pluralism thought, which not only describes but also reinterprets and criticizes the concept in the context of religious life in Indonesia. In contrast to previous studies that only explain Gus Dur's pluralism thought philosophically, this study emphasizes the relevance of this thought in the social dynamics in Indonesia today. In addition, this research also examines the real implications of Gus Dur's idea of pluralism for the lives of religious people, and explores the possibility of aspects of his thought that need to be recontextualized or revisited in line with changing times.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses qualitative research methods. This type of qualitative research was chosen because it was deemed appropriate and in accordance with this research, considering that the discussion in this article is in the form of an explanatory description of how Gus Dur's fikrah pluralism, its relevance, and its implications for the lives of religious people, while qualitative research itself is descriptive research.¹¹ This research refers to how Gusdur's pluralism thought has relevance and implications for the life of religious people in Indonesia. In addition, the data applied in this research are e-books, journal articles, theses, theses, and other sites relevant to this research.

The method of data collection in this article is the documentation method, namely by tracing various data sources (library research) related to how the figure of Gus Dur, how his pluralism thought, and finally the implications for the life of

¹⁰ Asripa, Devy Habibi Muhammad, and Ari Susandi, "Pluralism in The Perspective of Gus Dur and Nurcholish MAjid's Thought," *FALASIFA: Journal of Islamic Studies* 12, no. 02 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.36835/falasifa.v12i02.555>.

¹¹ Rukin, *Qualitative Research Methodology Revised Edition*, 1st ed. (Takalar: Indonesian Ahmar Scholars Foundation, 2019).

religious people in Indonesia both from e-books, journal articles, theses, theses, and other supporting sites. While data analysis is carried out with data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. It is hoped that this research can gain an in-depth understanding of how the picture relates to the relevance and implications of Gus Dur's pluralism thinking on the life of religious people in Indonesia.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The figure of K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid

Abdurrahman Wahid, better known as Gus Dur, was a cleric and national figure from Jombang, East Java. Born on September 7, 1940, Gus Dur is the son of K.H. Wahid Hasyim, a former important figure of Masyumi and NU who also served as Minister of Religion. K.H. Wahid Hasyim himself was the son of two founders of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), namely K.H. Hasyim Asy'ari and K.H. Bisri Syansuri. Gus Dur lived in a pesantren environment which made him an expert in religious sciences. Gus Dur also followed in the footsteps of his father and grandfather, he also became one of the scholars who played a major role in the running of the NU organization into a modern Islamic organization that was worldwide.¹²

Gus Dur began his education by attending elementary school in Jakarta in 1953. After that, he continued to the First Economic Secondary School (SMEP). During this time, Gus Dur lived at the residence of a Muhammadiyah cleric who was also a member of the Muhammadiyah Tarjih Council, K.H. Junaid. Gus Dur also took his non-formal education at the Tegalrejo Islamic Boarding School, which is an NU boarding school. In addition to studying at Tegalrejo, Gus Dur once studied at the Krapyak Islamic Boarding School, Yogyakarta, led by K.H. Ali Ma'shum. At that time Gus Dur occupied the residence of K.H. Ali Ma'shum from 1959-1963. Gus Dur was also a student at Tambak Beras Islamic Boarding School, Jombang under the care of K.H. Bisri Syansuri. While studying at Tambak Beras, Gus Dur was asked to teach the students there including Sinta Nuriyah who is now his wife.¹³

Gus Dur's educational journey, not only ended in the country, Gus Dur also continued his studies abroad, precisely in 1964 in Cairo Egypt. Gus Dur studied at the renowned Al-Azhar University, Faculty of Shari'ah. Gus Dur filled his days by participating in various discussion activities in taverns, studying how Arab nationalism became a popular ideology in Egypt, reading books in the library,

¹² Taufani, "Gus Dur's Pluralist Thought."

¹³ Muh Rusli, "Gus Dur's Thoughts, Religion & Nationality," *Farabi Journal* 12, no. 1 (2015): 50-71, <http://journal.iaingorontalo.ac.id/index.php/fa%0A>.

watching American and European films, and so on. One of the books that had a major influence on Gus Dur's views on Islam and the state was Ali Abd al-Razik's *al-Islam wa Usul al-Ahkam* (Islam and the Principles of Government). After Egypt, Gus Dur took his education at the Faculty of Letters at Baghdad University. Regarding the acquisition of his degree is still a controversy. Some say that Gus Dur obtained an L.C degree, others say that Gus Dur did not obtain his degree.¹⁴

In 1971, Gus Dur continued his education to a university in Europe. However, his plans stalled as the academic qualifications of students from the Middle East were not recognized by universities there. This prompted him to continue his studies at McGill University in Canada, where he studied Islamic studies. Nonetheless, Gus Dur eventually decided to return to Indonesia after being intrigued by interesting news about the development of the *pesantren* world. Upon his return from Europe, Gus Dur was again active in the *pesantren* world. Between 1972 and 1974, he taught as a lecturer at the Faculty of Ushuluddin at Hasyim Asy'ari University, Jombang. Then, in the period 1974 to 1980, Gus Dur was trusted to be the general secretary of *Pesantren Tebuireng Jombang* on the mandate of his uncle, K.H. Yusuf Hasyim. During this time, Gus Dur was also active in the *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU) organization and served as *Katib Awal Syuriah PBNU* since 1979.¹⁵

Gus Dur is often a speaker at seminars and discussions. Gus Dur was also active as a teacher of training programs in NGO activities. In addition, through his involvement in LP3ES (Institute for Economic and Social Research, Education, and Information), Gus Dur initiated a *pesantren* community development project. Over time, his activities at LP3ES encouraged Gus Dur to establish P3M (Pesantren and Community Development Association), an institution that functions as an educational forum for various religious and social phenomena to *kyai* and *santri*. Gus Dur also held the position of chairman of PBNU in 1984 in the 27th congress, but he gave up his position after being elected as the fourth president of Indonesia. Before passing away, Gus Dur suffered from various diseases, such as eye disease, diabetes, stroke, and impaired kidney function. Thus, Gus Dur died on December 30, 2009 and was buried in the *Tebuireng Islamic Boarding School* complex area, Jombang, East Java.¹⁶

¹⁴ Andy Rosyidin, Ridwan et al., *IDENTITY AND GLOBALIZATION: Measuring Political, Economic and Cultural Awareness of In*, ed. Benny donesian Muslim Communities Faculty of Ushuluddin Adab Dan Humanities IAIN Salatiga, 1st ed. (Salatiga: Faculty of Ushuluddin Adab dan Humaniora IAIN Salatiga, 2018).

¹⁵ Umaruddin Masdar, *Reading The Thoughts of Gus Dur and Amin Rais on Democracy*, 1st ed. (Yogyakarta: Student Library, 1999), <https://lib.ui.ac.id/detail?id=20221096&lokasi=lokal>.

¹⁶ Firdaus Syah, "Intellectual Tradition of Thought and Biography of Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur)" *journal of Islamic and Religious Education* 5, no. 2 (2021): 112–33, <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.47006/er.v5i2.12914>.

Gus Dur Deconstructing Pluralism: The Ideology of Pluralism from Gus Dur's Perspective

During his lifetime as previously explained, Gus Dur was not only known as the 4th President of Indonesia, but he was a competent figure in all fields. Gus Dur was known as an intellectual, cleric, activist, writer, culturalist, politician, and many more. Interestingly, Frans Magnis Suseno, an intellectual from Germany, described Gus Dur as a figure who lived Islam with an open understanding, Gus Dur apart from a person full of primordialistic, and sectarian pettiness. Frans said that Gus Dur's Islam was so fixed that he was not worried about plurality.¹⁷

Gus Dur viewed pluralism as a concept that recognizes and respects the diversity of identities, such as ethnicity, religion, culture, race, and others. However, Gus Dur's understanding of pluralism is different from the assumptions that are often misinterpreted. For him, pluralism is not an idea that seeks to equalize all religions, because each religion has its own characteristics and uniqueness. According to Gus Dur, diversity in life should not be a source of conflict, but instead a means of understanding God's gifts. Thus, pluralism can support the creation of a humanist life, which prioritizes the values of tolerance and harmony between religious communities. Gus Dur also emphasized that pluralism needs to be understood through the perspective of an ethic of dignity, namely as a gift from God.¹⁸

Gus Dur often described his view of pluralism as a big house with many rooms, where each person has their own room. Inside the room, each individual is free to take care of and do whatever they want. However, when outside the room, such as in the living room or family room, all residents of the house must respect each other and maintain common interests for the continuity of the house. All residents are also responsible for caring for, maintaining and protecting all parts of the house. When there is an attack from outside, they must unite to fight the threat regardless of which room they come from. This is in line with the principle of pluralistic Indonesian society, where every citizen must jointly maintain and protect the Republic of Indonesia from threats, even though it consists of various diverse backgrounds.

Gus Dur's pluralist thinking is supported by verses of the Qur'an, such as Qs. Al-Hujurat verse 13, which reads, "O people, indeed We created you from male and female, and made you nations and tribes so that you know each other." Gus Dur understood this verse was not only addressed to Muslims, but to all humans, in order to uphold the principle of equality and prioritize humanism in all aspects of life. In addition to the theological foundation of the Qur'an, Gus Dur also strengthened his

¹⁷ Abdurrahman Wahid, *The Prism of Gus Dur's Thought*, 2nd ed. (Yogyakarta: LKiS Pelangi Aksara, 2010).

¹⁸ Musda Asmara, "Islam and Pluralism in Political Development in Indonesia (Abdurrahman Wahid's Perspective of Thought)," *Focus: Journal of Islamic and Social Studies* 2, no. 1 (2017): 68–88, <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.29240/jf.v2i1.259>.

thinking with the principles of Pancasila. The five precepts in Pancasila reflect an attitude of tolerance and humanism that encourages harmonious and diverse religious life.¹⁹

Gus Dur, in relation to Islam, believes that Islam is a teaching with noble and universal values that is suitable in all situations and conditions. Gus Dur always emphasized to Muslims that differences are not a disaster but a gift that must be grateful to achieve prosperity and prosperity. According to him, religion does not prohibit a difference, but religion condemns the attitude of dividing and intimidating each other because of differences. Gus Dur in this case adheres to Qs. Ali Imran verse 103 "Hold on to the rope of God and as a whole and do not be divided and disagree with each other".²⁰

Gus Dur's Implementation of Pluralism and Its Implications for Religious Life in Indonesia

Fathorrahman mapped Gus Dur's pluralism thinking in three levels. The first level is pluralism in the dimension of thought. This dimension is Gus Dur's thoughts on pluralism which then influenced intellectual figures in interpreting it. According to Gus Dur, pluralism is not just recognizing pluralism. However, Gus Dur also criticized uniformity efforts and various forms of hegemonization, including in the understanding and application of religious teachings. The second level is pluralism in the behavioral dimension. Gus Dur tried to enter the boxes of the pro-Democracy and Human Rights communities and various interfaith communities. Gus Dur's presence is certainly a race for the general public not to be fixated in homogeneous associations, and to be willing to open up to various groups with various differences, although in the process it is often blocked by some extreme right groups that are excessive.²¹

The third level, pluralism in the dimension of action can be seen when Gus Dur was inaugurated as the 4th President of the Republic of Indonesia in 1999. Gus Dur, who was later dubbed the Father of Pluralism, actively fought for the rights of minorities, such as ethnic Chinese. Gus Dur's concrete actions were reflected in the revocation of Presidential Instruction No. 4 of 1967 concerning Chinese religion and customs, which previously restricted the freedom of ethnic Chinese to celebrate important days of their religion, such as Chinese New Year and traditions such as Barongsai and Liang-liong. The revocation of this Presidential Instruction was later followed by President Megawati, who established Chinese New Year as a National

¹⁹ Abdurrahman Wahid, *My Islam is Your Islam, Our Islam: The Religion of a Democratic Society*, ed. M.Syafi'i Anwar, 1st ed. (Jakarta: Wahid Institute, 2006).

²⁰ Greg Barton, *Biografi Gus Dur: The Authorized Biography of Abdurrahman Wahid*, 9th ed. (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2010).

²¹ Fathorrahman Fathorrahman, "Pluralistic Jurisprudence in The PErerspective of NU Ulama," *Asy-Syir'ah: Journal of Sharia and Legal Science* 49, no. 1 (2015), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.14421/ajish.v49i1.134>.

Holiday. In addition, Gus Dur also apologized for the 1965-1966 massacre to the families of the victims, affirming his commitment to reconciliation and pluralism.²²

Gus Dur's pluralism is not only limited to theory and discourse, but Gus Dur's pluralism is realized in the dimensions of behavior and action, so that it has very implications for the lives of religious people. The leadership and power that Gus Dur has is an added value considering that Gus Dur has a relatively higher authority than the general public. Gus Dur's pluralism sensibility is truly reflected in his daily life. Gus Dur mastered the classical Islamic science tradition and had a deep understanding of modern science. In his view of religious pluralism, Gus Dur emphasized the importance of dialogue based on common interests for the common good, improving the common fate, individuals and interfaith groups can work together by using their respective teachings.²³

The existence of dialogue efforts certainly requires an attitude of mutual listening, mutual respect, mutual understanding, mutual learning how the character of other people's thoughts can have implications for the fulfillment of moderate attitudes in interfaith life. Dialogue should aim to understand the insights possessed by the interlocutor, not be used as a means to generate hatred. Therefore, dialogue must be based on love, maturity, and family spirit, so that the results are more meaningful and beneficial for both parties. Gus Dur also continued to remind us that inter-religious debates should be avoided because the beliefs of each individual cannot be totally generalized, which is feared to lead to actions that impose one's beliefs or beliefs.²⁴

Since 1970, Gus Dur has consistently campaigned for the idea of religious pluralism through seminars, dialogues, and various writings that are widely distributed in magazines, newspapers, books, and academic journals. The community organizations he worked for were also used as a place to introduce ideas about religious pluralism. Gus Dur even changed the face of traditional NU to a more modern organization, he not only introduced the idea of pluralism, but also ideas about democracy, and human rights. various modern ideas that Gus Dur brought in particular were instilled in young NU cadres. In the 90s during Gus Dur's leadership, NU's success in the scientific field increased rapidly, so that NU became an organization that was active in promoting and fighting for democracy, human rights, and pluralism.²⁵

²² Fathorrahman.

²³ Masykuri Abdillah, *Democracy at The Crossroads of Meaning: Indonesian Muslim Intellectual Responses to The Concept of Democracy (1996-1993)*, ed. Imron Rosyidi, 1st ed. (Yogyakarta: Yogyakarta Tiara Wacana, 1999).

²⁴ Abdurrahman Wahid, *Cosmopolitan Islam: Indonesian Values and Cultural Transformation*, ed. Agus Maftuh Abegebriel and Ahmad Suaedi, 1st ed. (Jakarta: The Wahid Institute Jakarta, 2007).

²⁵ Abdurrahman Wahid, *God Doesn't Need to be Defended*, 5th ed. (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2010).

Gus Dur rejected the idea of establishing an Islamic state that began to be echoed since the 1980s, as seen in an article entitled "Islam: Has the Concept of Statehood?" which he wrote in Tempo Newspaper. Gus Dur argued that the establishment of an Islamic state was not an obligation for Muslims. The more important obligation is to create a state that upholds justice and prosperity. In addition, Gus Dur argued that diversity in Indonesia is a destiny from God, so that diversity should be cared for and maintained to maintain the principle of diversity. According to Gus Dur, Islam is not the only religion that should be used as an alternative. Islam should be present in the harmony of differences, enriching and giving color to Indonesia. The implementation of Islamic law, according to Gus Dur, should not be forced, especially in a country with diverse ethnicities, religions, tribes, and cultures such as Indonesia.²⁶

According to Gus Dur, to be a good Muslim, there is no need to establish an Islamic state. It is enough with five principles derived from the verses of the Qur'an, such as accepting the teachings of faith, implementing the pillars of Islam in full, helping others in need, upholding professionalism, and being patient in the face of trials and tribulations. Instead of supporting the movement to establish an Islamic state, considering that Gus Dur is also a Muslim. However, a different attitude was shown by Gus Dur with his pluralist thinking, that individual attitudes must have the truth of their respective beliefs so that it is unethical for Muslims to impose their will only for the benefit of their group.²⁷

Gus Dur was known as a figure who dared to fight the arrogance of radical Islam. In the internal context of Muslims, he often faced interventions against minority Muslim groups, such as the Ahmadiyah. Violence against the Ahmadiyah community escalated after the MUI issued a fatwa declaring Ahmadiyah a cult. The fatwa triggered riots, in which various facilities belonging to Ahmadiyah, such as mosques, schools, houses, and other properties, were vandalized and burned by certain groups, including the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI). Ironically, the government remained passive in the face of these acts of vandalism. Seeing the situation that damaged the spirit of diversity in Indonesia, Gus Dur did not remain silent. He even opened his house in Ciganjur as a refuge for the threatened Ahmadiyah community.²⁸

²⁶ Hisanori Kato, *Islam in The Eyes of The Japanese: Ulil, Gusdur, Until Baasyir*, 1st ed. (Jakarta: Kompas, 2014).

²⁷ Wahid, *My Islam is Your Islam, Our Islam: The Religion of a Democratic Society*.

²⁸ Alamsyah M. Dja'far, 'Gus Dur's Heroism and The Dissolution of Ahmadiyah', *Gusdur.Net*, 2011

<www.gusdur.net/opini/Detail/?id=212/hl=id/Kepahlawan_Gus_Dur_Dan_Pembubaran_Ahmadiyah> [accessed 7 September 2024].

CONCLUSION

Indonesia is one of the countries with a very large population. This number encompasses a variety of community diversity, including ethnicity, religion, and culture. With the plurality of its society, it is certainly necessary to recognize, respect, and appreciate the existence of this diversity or can be called pluralism. Pluralism has become the study of figures, both among scholars, politicians, and intellectuals. The highlighted thought of pluralism was born from a figure called the father of pluralism, namely K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid, better known as Gus Dur. Gus Dur, who is a cleric as well as a politician and intellectual figure, contributed his thoughts on pluralism.

Pluralism according to Gus Dur is not only in the dimension of thought, but also in the dimension of behavior and action. Pluralism according to Gus Dur does not then generalize all religions but rather recognizes that each religious adherent has its own aspects of the truth of belief. Gus Dur's efforts in campaigning for pluralism are quite complex. Gus Dur actively campaigned for pluralism in his writing works, such as magazines, newspapers, articles, and so on. In addition, Gus Dur also rejected the establishment of an Islamic state because it would trigger divisions between religious communities. Gus Dur also became a protector of the Ahmadiyah who were victims of violence from the conflict over the MUI fatwa that the Ahmadiyah were heretics by providing his house in Ciganjur as a shelter. Gus Dur's attitude made him well known in the eyes of Indonesia and the world.

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