ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
DIVERSITY VALUE (A Study in Bangka Island Islamic Boarding School)

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Abstract
This article aims to explain the diversity in the concept of Islam in Bangka Island which consists of tolerance values, equality values, democracy values, and justice values. As for internalizing the value of diversity on Bangka Island, it includes four cultures, namely, religious culture, scientific culture, social culture, and political culture. Meanwhile, the pesantren’s strategy in maintaining diversity is the absence of dichotomy in education, no ethnic and cultural exclusivity, teaching moderate understanding, instilling a sense of love for the motherland, and opportunities for women to develop intellectual power on an equal footing with men.

Keywords: diversity, Islam, internalization.

Abstrak
Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan kebhinekaan dalam konsep Islam yang ada di Pulau Bangka yang terdiri dari nilai toleransi, nilai kesetaraan, nilai demokrasi, dan nilai keadilan. Adapun dalam internalisasi nilai kebhinekaan di Pulau Bangka meliputi empat budaya yaitu, budaya keagamaan, budaya keilmuan, budaya sosial, dan budaya politik. Sedangkan strategi pesantren dalam menjaga kebhinekaan adalah dengan tidak adanya dikotomi dalam pendidikan, tidak ada eksklusifitas baik suku dan budaya, mengajarkan paham yang moderat, menanamkan rasa cinta tanah air, dan kesempatan pada perempuan untuk mengembangkan daya intelektualitas yang setara dengan laki-laki.

Kata kunci: kebhinekaan, islam, internalisasi.

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A. Introduction

Discourse on tolerance and relations between religious adherents is always actual, both in the past, present and in the future. It is based on an assumption that as long as humans believe in “religion” as a way of life or a source of truth and moral strength inherent in divine values, then humans always refer to and need religion.1 Meanwhile, it turns out that in this world there is more than one religion where in subsequent developments there is an interesting phenomenon to observe, namely the existence of an attempt by some of the people or followers of a religion to influence, either passively or actively, towards people or followers of other religions.2

The cause of this is none other than the existence of a truth claim—based on Max Weber’s term, as quoted by M. Syafi’i Anwar—which is exaggerated from some religious adherents (Syafi’i, 1993). This means that out of all religions, only one is true while other religions are wrong.3 This means that out of all religions, only one is true while other religions are wrong. Thus, according to John Cobb—a theologian, consultant at Hartford Seminary, Macdonald Center USA—the views that claim the truth are categorized as “theological-exclusive” views. This view is then rejected by the “theological-inclusivism” view which states that there is no truth claim as such. Even though it is not through a certain religious institution, as long as the target is the essential truth, the person concerned will still receive a guarantee of safety. In subsequent developments, a more moderate view appears, called the “theological-pluralist” view, which states that truth can be achieved through many (religious) paths.4 For this reason, adherents of a particular religion have no right to convict whether the beliefs held by other religions are true or not.

Then Cobb suggested, it is necessary to create a communicative environment, learn from each other, and mutually explore the wisdom that exists in each religion in order to find "points of commonality" or in the language of the Qur’an it is called "sawa

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sentence" in which it underlies the birth of the "theological-transformative".\(^5\) Starting from this latter point of view, it seems that there is an interesting phenomenon in Indonesia, namely the intensification of inter-religious relations, especially those carried out by Islamic boarding school leaders. Just to mention an example—and it seems that it should be mentioned first, namely—the late Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur). Many sources from the mass media record well that almost half of his age, he had dedicated to realizing tolerance in a more active form, namely in true bonds of brotherhood among followers of religions, both nationally and internationally\(^6\), such as his involvement as one of the presidents in the WCRP (World Conference Religion and Peace) which is now held by Hasyim Muzadi, namely an organization of religions that is intense in realizing world peace. Hasyim Muzadi has also successfully delivered the International Conference of Islamic Scholars (ICIS) four times in Jakarta.\(^7\)

What was done by the two NU figures, who were graduates of pesantren and even owned pesantren, was a representation of the character of pesantren in general, which upholds the principles of tasamuh (tolerance) and tawassuth (moderation). The question that arises now is whether this attitude is also followed and owned by the kyai and ustaz/zah in pesantren in the midst of a multi-ethnic society such as the people of Bangka Island. Where SARA issues often emerge as a public discourse as a result of the recent high political constellation. This is what will be examined academically in this article.

This article is based on the results of research conducted in several Islamic boarding schools representing four regencies and one municipality, namely, Bangka

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\(^6\) Such as his involvement in several institutions or organizations, for example the DIAN/Interfidei institute (Institut for Inter-Faith Dialogue in Indonesia) based in Yogyakarta which he founded during the old order. Recently, on July 18, 2012, the "Abdurrahman Wahid Center for Inter-Faith Dialogue and Peace-Universitas Indonesia" (AWC-UI) was inaugurated as an institution specializing in dialogue, research, academic development, and conflict mediation as a form of respect and recording Gus Dur’s footsteps. See Aula, "UI Resmikan Gusdur Center," Edisi 08/SNH XXXIV (Agustus, 2012), h. 59.

Regency, Pangkalpinang City, Bangka Tengah Regency, Bangka Selatan Regency, and Bangka Barat Regency. The Islamic boarding schools that became the place of this research were: Pesantren Ilzamun Maju Bahrin, Kimak village (Bangka); Pesantren Nurul Muhibbin, Kemuja village (Bangka); Pesantren Darul Abror, Kace village (Bangka); Pesantren Bahrul Ulum, Sungailiat (Bangka); Pesantren Al-Islam, Kemuja village (Bangka); Pesantren Nurul Ihsan, Baturusa village (Bangka); Hidayatussalikin Islamic Boarding School, Pangkalpinang; Nurul Falah Islamic Boarding School, Mesu Village (Bangka Tengah); Darurrahmah Islamic Boarding School, Lubuk Village (Bangka Tengah); Miftahun Najah Islamic Boarding School, Rias Village (Bangka Selatan); and Miftahul Jannah Islamic Boarding School, Pelanggas Village (Bangka Barat). It was chosen because it is a vital agent in providing understanding in the religious field as a source of legitimacy for all the activities of the community life of its students in the community.

While the research subjects of this study are the caregivers, teachers, and some students at the boarding school. The research is a combination of field and library research. This field research is qualitative in nature using an anthropological approach. Because this research is anthropological, in collecting data, researchers use interviews, observation, and documentation methods.

B. Islamic Boarding School and Diversity in Bangka Island

The people of Bangka Island have various backgrounds; race, ethnicity and religion, which affect the behavior and mindset of each individual. In terms of religion, the six religions that have been decided to be the official religions for the Indonesian population, namely: Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism are practiced by the people of the island. Not only that, but there are also people who still uphold the values of life through beliefs that are the foundation of life. The plurality of the people of Bangka Island is an attraction in itself, although it is undeniable that this aspect also has a negative part that needs to be watched out for, especially in terms of religious diversity which often causes social conflict. This phenomenon can be seen, for example, in some social situations after the reformation, 

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when the euphoria of freedom swept Indonesian society. At the beginning of the reform era, various conflicts arose that were nuanced in sara such as the Sambas, Sampit, Maluku, Poso and Shia conflicts in Madura. These social conflicts were the result of the New Order government’s uniformity policy in the name of maintaining national unity. This diversity policy covers various aspects of life, both political, economic and socio-cultural. This shows that in the new order era the diversity of society was suppressed so that during the reformation period there was an explosion in the form of social conflict.

Recently, there have also been events that are considered to threaten the diversity of Indonesian society. These events include rampant corruption, economic inequality, poverty, fighting between students, fighting between villages, terrorism, religious radicalism, the spread of hate speech, and the growing issue of the revival of the PKI (Indonesian Communist Party). These events should be addressed appropriately so that they do not become a threat to the integrity of the diversity of Indonesian society, especially plural societies such as the people of Bangka Island.

The maintenance of the diversity of Indonesian society, especially the people of Bangka Island, is the responsibility of all elements of society including Islamic educational institutions, in this case Islamic boarding schools on Bangka Island. As a social and educational institution, Islamic boarding schools are believed to have an important role in instilling the values of diversity or multiculturalism education to students so that there is an awareness of how important the values of diversity are for a society rich in diversity. Pesantren institutions, which have often been known as miniature practices of diversity because there are students who come from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds brought from where they come from, are expected to be able to maintain this label and then be able to provide solutions and solutions to social problems rooted in differences in ethnicity, race, religion, and values that occur in the community.

In relation to the above, this article tries to explain the role of Islamic boarding schools on Bangka Island in an effort to instill the values of diversity to their students in particular and to the pesantren community in general. The presentation consists of three parts: First, Diversity and tolerance in Islamic texts. Second, the pesantren community’s

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understanding of these religious texts. Third, the strategies applied by the pesantren in applying and or instilling the values of diversity to the santri and other pesantren communities.

C. Diversity In Islamic Conception

As a prophetic treatise, Islam essentially calls on all mankind, including the followers of other religions, towards a common ideal of the unity of humankind, regardless of race, color, ethnicity, culture and religion. Because mankind is like time, both of them are advancing irresistibly. And just as no clock has a special position, so no single person, group or nation can boast of being God’s chosen people. This can mean that racial domination and discrimination in the name of anything is an anti-Tawheed force, and therefore must be denounced as polytheism and at the same time a crime in the name of humanity (read human rights). This message of unity is explicitly signaled by the Qur’an which means: Say: "O People of the Book, come (hold) to a sentence (decree) about which there is no dispute between us and you, that we worship none but Allah and that we associate nothing with Him and that we do not make some of us lords besides Allah." If they turn away then say to them: "Behold, we are those who surrender (to Allah).” (Q.S Ali Imran: 64)

The spirit of the verse above can actually be translated by Zakiyuddin Baidhawy: "Say: O all adherents of religions (and cultures)! Hurry towards dialog and multicultural encounters (kalimatun sawa’) between us and you". Dialogue is not just a conversation, but it is a form of communication between two minds and hearts about common issues with a commitment that each participant can learn from the other so that they can change and develop. Dialogue is the base of enlightenment of conscience and reason (tanwir al-qulub wa al ‘uqul) towards the maturity of religious ways that respect diversity. Thus

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12 The prophetic term in this study means an awareness that underlines the importance of a Muslim not to dissolve in a religious experience that is personal and lost from mortality, but the mystical experience of encountering God is forwarded to earth to make social, cultural, political, economic, and intellectual changes in humans. This theory was popularized by Muhammad Iqbal. For further explanation of this theory please see Muhammad Iqbal, Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam. (Bandung: Mizan, 2016), hal. 100.

13 Zakiyuddin Baidhawy, Pendidikan Agama Berwawasan Multikulturalisme (Jakarta: Erlangga, 2005), hal. 45.
kalimatun sawa' is about the way humans encounter and understand themselves and the other world at the deepest level, opening up possibilities to explore and reach the fundamental meaning of life individually and collectively with its various dimensions. Kalimatun sawa', therefore, not only recognizes the plurality of life. Rather, it is a manifestation and movement that encourages plurality and diversity as a core principle of life and affirms the view that all multicultural and diverse groups are needed equally and with dignity.

In the context of inter-religious relations in Indonesia, the formation of Pancasila can be said to be a manifestation of the desire to develop kalîmatun sawâ in Islam, namely policy making that is a win win solution to bridge differences of opinion in the formation of Pancasila. The acceptance of Pancasila clearly shows that Islamic leaders prioritize national harmony and integrity rather than only thinking about the interests of Muslims. In the view of the majority of Indonesian Muslims, the acceptance of Pancasila is the greatest gift of Muslims to maintain the unity and integrity of the Indonesian nation and state which is plural in terms of religion, ethnicity, customs, and others.

Diversity is a sunnatullah that will never change forever. Because it is God’s nature and an undeniable reality, an attitude of tolerance and mutual understanding and mutual respect for plurality and diversity is a must in living and living life. The necessity of this attitude has been explained long ago in the Quran, which means: O mankind, indeed We have made of you male and female, and made you into groups and nations, so that you may understand and respect each other. Indeed, the most dignified people in the sight of Allah are those who can best understand and appreciate the differences between you.” (Q.S Al-Hujaraat: 13).

This verse contains at least three main principles related to living in diversity and difference. First, the principle of plural and usual. Namely, the belief and practice of living together that emphasizes plurality as something that is commonplace and does not need to be debated, let alone contested. The diversity of humanity’s ways of thinking and acting in the context of space and time has always and will forever continue to exist. Existence - whether in religion and culture - is always present to give the nuances of a spectrum of life that is not watching, it is always dynamic and dialectical, thus, Islam does not recognize stagnation and dogmatism. Second, the principle of equal is usual. The verse is normative for humanity’s new awareness of the plural world reality. This awareness is
not only because it has been able to see the number of ethnicities and nations that are very diverse in this world. Third, the principle of modesty in diversity. Being mature in responding to diversity requires modesty. It is a moderate attitude that guarantees wisdom of thought and action, far from fanaticism that often legitimizes the use of violent instruments in achieving goals.\(^\text{14}\)

Conceptually, the understanding of religious texts which then manifests in the conception of Islam in viewing diversity as mentioned above can be elaborated and elaborated in more detail in accordance with the times. The conceptual formulation of diversity and multiculturality in society requires the application and cultivation of values that reflect the spirit of achieving harmony in diversity.\(^\text{15}\) For this reason, it is necessary to elaborate on the values of diversity to be instilled in all members of society, including pesantren communities living in a pluralistic society such as the people of Bangka Island, including (1) the value of tolerance is an attitude to recognize and respect fundamental rights in social life, (2) the value of equality is an attitude that emphasizes equality and equality towards other ethnic cultures, (3) the value of democracy is an attitude that recognizes that everyone has the same rights and obligations, and recognizes diversity as a natural thing, and (4) justice is an action that gives equal rights to people who have the same status.

The value of diversity can be represented from other values such as national character values as long as these values are useful as an adhesive in strengthening the diversity of Indonesian society. National character values are derived from religion, Pancasila, culture and national education goals. Based on the four sources of value, the values of diversity can be detailed as follows; (1) religious values, (2) honest values, (3) tolerance, (4) discipline, (5) work values, (6) creative, (7) independent values, (8) democratic values, (9) curiosity values (10) national spirit values, (11) love for the country, (12) respect for achievement, (13) friendly/communicative values, (14) peace-

\(^{14}\) Ngainun Naim dan Ahmad Syauqi, *Konsep dan Aplikasi Pendidikan Multikultural*, (Yogyakarta: Ar-Ruzz Media, 2008), hal. 123.

loving values, (15) love to read, (16) environmental care values, (17) social care values, and (18) responsibility values.16

D. Internalization of Diversity Values in Islamic Boarding School

As a pedagogical institution, Pesantren has a strong historical value in the history of the archipelago. This institution became one of the first movers in the effort to educate Nusantara Muslims, especially in the field of deepening Islamic teachings. It is not known exactly which was the first pesantren established by the scholars in this effort. De Graaf, a Dutch scientist, could only surmise that the first pesantren established in Java was the Giri Kedaton pesantren built by Sunan Giri, one of the nine saints who spread Islam in Java.17

Based on the data above, many scholars have concluded that pesantren is an original Indonesian educational institution. Nurcholis Madjid, for example, said that pesantren is an institution that contains the original meaning of Indonesianness, indigenous to Indonesia18, although it has international affiliations, especially Makkah, and has roots in other religious traditions. One of the prominent characteristics related to the meaning of Indonesianness is the pattern of pesantren adaptation to local culture which is quite strong. For pesantren that are fairly old, such as Tebuireng (1899), Lirboyo (1909), Gontor (1926), the adaptation is not only seen in the religious traditions maintained in the pesantren, but also in the naming of this institution. These large pesantren, for example, prefer local names rather than Arabic names. In line with the adaptation above, the teachings developed by early pesantren were also full of tolerance values, or at least displayed a peaceful, moderate, and non-violent face of Islam.

But lately, the adaptive and tolerant nature of this institution has been questioned. The reason is that a number of acts of terror, violence and other anarchist attitudes that tarnish respect for the noble values of diversity that have occurred in Indonesia in recent years have been carried out by several perpetrators who are actually pesantren.

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16 Hasan, S. H. dkk., Bahan Latihan Pengembangan Pendidikan Budaya dan Karakter Bangsa. Jakarta: Kementerian Pendidikan Nasional Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan Pusat Kurikulum, 2010), hal. 8-10
17 Azyumardi Azra, Islam in the Indonesian World, An Account of Institutional Formation, (Bandung: Mizan, 2006), hal. 70.
18 Nurcholis Madjid, Bilik-Bilik Pesantren. (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1997), hal. 3.
graduates. Some people then generalize that pesantren is the breeding ground that produces militant cadres with a strong Islamic religious understanding who are ready to spread terror and violence to parties who are considered different or other groups, including from among Muslims themselves. Is this assumption true? And what about the Islamic Boarding School institutions on Bangka Island?

Based on direct observations and interviews conducted with several pesantren institutions on Bangka Island, both those with salaf (traditional) typology such as Ilzamun Maju Bahrin Islamic boarding school, Kimak village (Bangka) and Nurul Muhibbin Islamic boarding school, Kemuja village (Bangka), khalaf (modern) typology pesantren such as Darul Abror Islamic boarding school, Kace village (Bangka) and Bahrul Ulum boarding school, Sungailiat (Bangka), as well as those with a comprehensive typology such as Al-Islam boarding school, Kemuja village (Bangka) and Nurul Ihsan boarding school, Baturusa village (Bangka) and several other boarding schools in other municipalities and districts on Bangka Island such as Hidayatussalikin boarding school, Pangkalpinang; Pondok Pesantren Nurul Falah, Mesu village (Central Bangka); Pondok Pesantren Miftahun Najah, Rias village (South Bangka); and Pondok Pesantren Miftahul Jannah, Pelanggas village (West Bangka), it can be seen in general that the cultural practice of cultivating and realizing the values of diversity for the entire pesantren community, from the kyai to the students, occurs through four cultures, namely: 1) religious culture; 2) scientific culture; 3) social culture; and 4) political culture.

E. Islamic Boarding School Strategies in Maintaining Diversity

As the oldest Islamic education system in Indonesia, whose existence is estimated to have existed around five hundred years ago, various levels of society blend into one. From the commoners to the "priyayi" studied there. They communicate and interact with each other. There is no sense of egoism or dichotomization due to the different degrees of each individual. The education system in Islamic boarding schools is oriented towards understanding the yellow (classical) books, as well as producing future cadres of scholars. From this, it is expected that community leaders will emerge who are capable of fostering
and directing people towards goodness. In addition, building the spiritual side (tasawuf) also occupies a major portion in the teaching of Islamic boarding schools.

Related to the strategies carried out by pesantren in maintaining diversity, based on the results of observations of pesantren institutions on the island of Bangka, it is found that pesantren is a miniature practice of diversity considering that the students who stay in pesantren come from various backgrounds, both ethnic, racial, and cultural. To maintain harmony and peace in the diversity of these students, they (boarding schools) have several strategies that are manifested in educational activities and the daily lives of their students. This can be seen in general in several educational systems and teaching activities in pesantren as follows:

First, there is no dichotomization between the rich and the poor. In the pesantren tradition, both commoner and noble santri live under the same roof. They gather, study, and sleep in rooms that have been previously provided. Likewise, in the teaching-learning process, all students are treated equally regardless of social status.

Second, there is no ethnic and cultural exclusivity in Islamic Boarding School. Santri who stay (read: study) at the pesantren do not only come from one region. However, sometimes they come from various geographical areas on the island of Bangka. For example, Pesantren Al-Islam, Kemuja, and al-Darul Abror in Kace, and Pesantren Bahrul Ulum in Sungialiat have students from various regions on Bangka Island. All students are treated equally. Both santri who come from local areas and immigrant areas, both have the opportunity to advance and develop their creativity and knowledge.

Third, teaching tasamuh (tolerance), tawasuth (moderate), tawazun (balanced), and i’tidal (upright). In pesantren-style education on Bangka Island, these understandings are always echoed for every santri. It is hoped that from here, moderate, fair, and able to accept plurality will emerge.

Fourth, Teaching an attitude of tolerance between religious communities. Pesantren is an Islamic educational institution. Therefore, it is impossible to have santri from non-Muslims. So, how do pesantren behave and interact with non-Muslims, especially in the context of diversity? In response to this, pesantren always voice the verse "La ikraha fi al-Din" (There is no compulsion in religion). This shows the

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pesantren's concern for their fellow countrymen and countrymen from non-Muslims. Different beliefs are an empirical reality that cannot be covered up, but not because it then causes discrediting and hostility towards other religions.

**Fifth**, instilling a sense of love for the country. Regarding this, in the study of pesantren there is a jargon - not to say hadith - "Hubbu al-Wathan min al-Iman" (loving the homeland is part of faith). The implication is that if someone does not love his homeland, then he is not considered a believer. Of course, this jargon has a serious impact on plurality in Indonesia. Because with such pesantren teaching, implicitly, pesantren voices always accept the condition of our nation and country as it is, which indeed consists of various ethnicities, cultures and religions.

**Sixth**, providing opportunities for women to develop their intellectual power on par with men. It is undeniable that in the classical era, women were considered not comparable to men. However, over time, these views have faded. Now, many pesantren have begun to improve with this gender problem. Female santri now get many opportunities as obtained by male santri.

Some of the Islamic Boarding School education systems above are the basis for the author's opinion that in essence, Islamic boarding schools on Bangka Island have actualized the principles of diversity in their education system. Whether we realize it or not, pesantrens, which include folk education, have actually taught an attitude of diversity, equality, humanity, justice, and democratic values.

This attitude must be further enhanced by integrating the established theories of diversity in pesantren studies. So that pesantren-style education, which actually already applies the principles of diversity, can become more humanist, plural, and democratic again. From this, it is expected that pesantren will produce students who are not only Islamic-minded, but also have a multicultural and global paradigm. This process is important in order to make a maximum contribution to the unity and integrity of the Indonesian nation in the future.

**F. Conclusion**

Islamic Boarding School never ceases to be side by side with the community, and provide answers to problems that exist in the community. Pesantren is present in the midst of society as a place to solve some of the problems of society, especially in the social
and religious fields. Although pesantren is not an education that is devoted to producing an expert in the field of statehood, it has produced someone who has a firm stance to protect and love his country fully.

The boarding school also maintains a good social tradition, by educating students to become a righteous society according to Islamic teachings, upholding humanity, by maintaining brotherhood among others, and respecting differences between humans. Helping each other, working together with each other, helping the weak, prioritizing the interests of others over personal interests. These are all human values that are used as principles and guidelines for life in social society. The Islamic boarding school has succeeded in building the social structure of the community, maintaining the Islamic religious tradition of the archipelago, which characterizes the typical Indonesian Islamic religion, moderate Islam, upholding differences and implementing Islam *rahmatan Lil alamin*. Islam that upholds humanity, and tries as much as possible to eliminate violence in religion. Islam that fully supports national unity and integrity, which always takes part in maintaining the unitary State. This is an illustration of the form of social teachings built by pesantren education, pesantren does not produce an expert in the State, but produces people who have a good social life and love and uphold their country.

**DAFTAR PUSTAKA**


Tim Penyusun Kamus Pusat Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Bahasa Departemen

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