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## Pluralism Theology of Nurcholish Madjid Andi Ahmad Zahri Nafis<sup>1</sup>, Barsihannor<sup>2</sup>, Indo Santalia<sup>3</sup>

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### Kata Kunci:

Nurcholish Madjid  
Pluralisme

### Abstrak

Pluralisme merupakan paham saling menghargai dan memahami adanya perbedaan dalam kehidupan masyarakat. Pemikiran Nurcholish Madjid dianggap relevan untuk di perbincangkan, mengingat beliau adalah seorang tokoh yang diperhitungkan di Indonesia, Keberadaannya dianggap dapat mewakili bangkitnya pemikiran pembaruan di nusantara. Dikaitkan dengan kondisi umat beragama di Indonesia, pemikiran beliau tentang pluralisme dianggap sebagai sebuah keniscayaan. Pernyataan didasarkan pada kondisi kemajemukan agama yang dianut penduduk Indonesia. Jika kemajemukan agama yang dianut tidak direkat dengan cara pandang pluralistik, maka kemajemukan agama tersebut sangat potensial memicu konflik. Penelitian ini bertujuan mendeskripsikan konsep teologi pluralisme menurut Nurcholish Madjid. Metode yang digunakan adalah studi pustaka dengan mengambil referensi dari berbagai sumber seperti buku cetak dan digital, serta jurnal terkait penelitian. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ada tiga pendekatan yang digunakan oleh Nurcholish Madjid dalam merumuskan konsep Pluralisme yaitu pertama, pendekatan Taubid yaitu pengembalian harkat dan martabat manusia kembali ke dalam posisinya sebagai makhluk Allah swt. Manusia memandang ke "atas" hanya kepada Allah, kepada sesama manusia harus memandang dalam rangkaian kesetaraan. Kedua, Pendekatan Filologi yakni Redefinisi makna Islam atau lebih tepatnya perluasan atas definisi Islam sebagai sikap pasrah, berserah diri, dan tunduk patuh terhadap Tuhan Yang Maha Esa. Ketiga adalah Pendekatan Historis adalah nilai atau semangat yang terkandung dalam sejarah itu. Dalam hal ini setiap penganut agama perlu mengambil contoh seperti nilai-nilai keterbukaan

*masyarakat Madinah pada masa lampau, yang ideal untuk diterapkan pada saat ini.*

**Keyword:**

*Nurcholish Madjid  
Pluralism*

**Abstract**

*Pluralism is an understanding of mutual respect and understanding of differences in people's lives. Nurcholish Madjid's thoughts are considered relevant to be discussed, considering that he is a figure who counts in Indonesia, his existence is considered to represent the rise of renewal thinking in the archipelago. Associated with the condition of religious communities in Indonesia, his thoughts on pluralism are considered a necessity. The statement is based on the condition of religious pluralism embraced by the Indonesian population. If the plurality of religions embraced is not glued with a pluralistic perspective, then the plurality of religions is very potential to trigger conflict. This research aims to describe the concept of pluralism theology according to Nurcholish Madjid. The method used is a literature study by taking references from various sources such as printed and digital books, as well as journals related to the research. The results show that there are three approaches used by Nurcholish Madjid in formulating the concept of Pluralism, namely first, the Tawhid approach, which is the return of human dignity back to its position as a creature of Allah SWT. Humans look "up" only to Allah, to fellow humans must look in a series of equality. Second, the philological approach is the redefinition of the meaning of Islam or more precisely the expansion of the definition of Islam as an attitude of surrender, surrender, and submission to God Almighty. Third, the Historical Approach is the value or spirit contained in that history. In this case, every religious adherent needs to take examples such as the values of openness of the Medina community in the past, which are ideal to be applied today.*

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## INTRODUCTION

The term pluralism means "a pluralistic society". It is related to social and political systems and culture. (Bahasa & Kamus, 2001) Religious plurality is something that cannot be avoided in human life, therefore pluralism cannot be faced with antipathy, because God gives humans the freedom to choose to

have faith or disbelief in Him. Islam believes that if there is a religious doctrine that teaches that it is necessary to force someone to accept or follow a certain religion, this is a doctrine that is incorrect and cannot be accounted for. The presence of religion in every nation (generation) makes a positive contribution to the continuity of human life. First, humans have certain needs for survival and maintenance. Second, religion functions to fulfill some of these needs, even though there are contradictions in how to meet these needs.

Nurcholish Madjid's thoughts are considered relevant for discussion. As a figure to be reckoned with in Indonesia, his existence is considered to represent the rise of reform thinking in the archipelago. He was aligned with religious figures and national fighters such as Muhammad Natsir, who he was nicknamed "Young Natsir". Why he is named like that, no serious observation has been made, but it is said that he along with Dawam Rahardjo and friends are Muslim intellectuals who studied with Natsir, the "father" of Indonesian Islamic intellectuals who experienced "enlightenment" on the treasures of Western intellectuals. the first.

His thoughts on pluralism are considered a necessity associated with the condition of religious communities in Indonesia. The statement is based on the condition of the religious Indonesian population condition of religious pluralism religions adhered to is not glued together with a pluralistic perspective, then the plurality of religions has the potential to trigger conflict.

This study uses the literature study method to develop theoretical aspects using various sources such as printed and digital books and related journal articles. The research was conducted from September to November by using one figure as the research sample, namely Nurcholis Madjid. The research procedure begins with collecting references taken from printed and digital books and journals related to research, reducing relevant materials, then the reduced data is then displayed and

analyzed to produce relevant data.

## **RESULT**

### **Biography of Nurcholish Madjid**

In everyday life, Nurcholish Madjid is always called Cak Nur as his nickname. He was born in Mojoanyar, Jombang, East Java, on March 17, 1939, to coincide with 26 Muharram 1358 H died in Jakarta on August 29, 2005.(Alamsjah, 1952) He was raised in an Islamic boarding school family background. His family environment included those who were devoutly religious, even his father was a staunch defender of Masjumi. His father is named KH. Abdul Majid, a prominent scholar in NU, the most influential Islamic ideological party at the time, Abdul Madjid was also a kyai who graduated from the Tebuireng Jombang Islamic boarding school which was founded and led by the founder of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Hadratus Syaikh Hasyim Asy'ari. Therefore, it is not surprising that Abdul Madjid is very close to K.H. Hasyim Ash'ari. The relationship between the student and the teacher is getting closer for several reasons. First, Kiai Madjid is a kinasih student of Hasyim Asy'ari, a charismatic figure who pioneered the birth of NU.(Z., 2007, p. 82) Second, Madjid himself was married to Halimah, a niece of his teacher. About this, Nurcholish Madjid himself once told him, "At that time, Kiai Hasyim Asy'ari himself wanted his father to be his son-in-law."(Z., 2007, p. 83) But the marriage did not produce children. For that reason, they "separated" on good terms. After that K.H Abdul Madjid married Nyi Fatonah, the daughter of a kiai and an activist figure for the Syarikat Dagang Islam (SDI) in Kediri. Fatonah herself is the head of Masyumi at the sub-district level.

The couple K.H Abdul Madjid and Fatonah were blessed with five children: two girls (one died), and three boys: Nurcholish Madjid, Muklisah, Saifullah, and Muhammad Adnan.(Monib & Bahrawi, 2011) He first studied religion through his father and mother. Incidentally, the two of them did establish their own Madrasa in 1948 and Nurcholish Madjid was a student at the madrasa. Apart from that, little Nurcholish Madjid

also attended the People's School (SR) in his village.

After graduating from the People's School in 1952, his father sent him to the Darul 'Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Rejosa, Jombang. However, Darul „Ulum Nurcholish Madjid only lasted two years and had time to complete the Ibtidaiyah level, then proceed to the Tsanawiyah level. According to Nurcholish Madjid, there are two reasons why he only lasted two years studying there. First, for health reasons and Second, for ideological or political reasons. However, it seems that political reasons are quite interesting given Nurcholish Madjid's attitude. As is well known, in 1952 NU left Masyumi and since then NU has gone from the role of religious Jam'iyah to becoming a political party. Nurcholish Madjid's father was simultaneously active in the traditional Islamic organization NU and the political party under the influence of the Islamic modernist Masyumi. When NU separated politically from Masyumi in 1952, his father still chose Masyumi and sent his son from a traditional pesantren to a modern school that was famous for Gontor.(William & Liddle, 1997)

At that time Nurcholish Madjid's father, who happened to be a heavy Masyumi activist, felt "disappointed" with NU when the organization left Masyumi and formed its political party. Because of this behavior of his father, the young santri Nurcholish Madjid was often nicknamed by his NU friends as a "mised Masjumi child.(William, n.d., p. 15)

Remembering that time, Nurcholish Madjid once said: "My father himself was despised by the Jombang kiai. Because of this situation, I asked my father to move to NU." However, his son's proposal was rejected by his father because it was Masyumi who could engage in politics, not NU. That's how Nurcholish Madjid recalled. After all, that was Nurcholish Madjid while driving the words his father had said, that K.H. Hasyim Asy'ari himself once argued that Masyumi was the only forum for the aspirations of Indonesian Muslims. It's a shame because Hasyim

Asy'ari had already died in 1949 so he didn't have the chance to witness NU which then changed its "clothes" to become a political party because of "tensions" with Masyumi in 1952. and on the other hand keeping NU members in check, making it impossible for Nurcholish Madjid to linger in Darul Ulum.

In 1955, Nurcholish Madjid was transferred to Darussalam Gontor Islamic Boarding School. His father assumed that Gontor was at a Masyumi Islamic boarding school. Apparently at Gontor Nurcholish Madjid felt more comfortable. According to Nurcholish Madjid's confession, Gontor himself impressed him a lot. For Nurcholish Madjid, it was Gontor who inspired him regarding modernization and non-sectarianism. Pluralism here is quite awake. The students may go to NU or Muhammadiyah. Because of this kind of atmosphere, Nurcholish Madjid felt so fit to study at Gontor. It was also at this pesantren that Nurcholish Madjid showed again that he was someone to be reckoned with. He again became one of the students by winning the class so that from class I he could jump to class III. (Ibrahim, 1998, p. 123)

Nurcholish Madjid admits that at Gontor he has always achieved quite good results. Nurcholish Madjid's intelligence came to the attention of K.H. Zarkasyi became the leader of the pesantren, so that in 1960, when Nurcholish Madjid finished his studies, he intended to send Nurcholish Madjid to Al-Azhar University, Cairo. But because at that time the Suez Canal crisis was going on which was quite controversial, Nurcholish Madjid's departure could not be carried out. While waiting for his departure to Egypt, Nurcholish Madjid used the time to teach at Gontor for one year. However, the time that Nurcholish Madjid had been waiting for to leave for Egypt never came. Recently, there was news that at that time it was difficult to obtain a visa in Egypt, which made it impossible for Nurcholish Madjid to go to Egypt. Nurcholish Madjid himself was indeed disappointed. However, Mr. Zarkasyi was able to cheer him up and didn't lose his head. Then he sent a letter to IAIN Jakarta and asked that his

favorite student be accepted at this prestigious Islamic higher education institution. So, thanks to the help of one of the Gontor alumni at IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah, Jakarta, Nurcholish Madjid was then accepted as a student at the adab faculty.

In 1984 Nurcholish Madjid has successfully obtained a Doctorate from UCLA, Chicago. In Chicago, Nurcholish Madjid has successfully defended his cum laude dissertation on: Ibn Taymiya on Kalam and Philosophy: Problems of Reason and Revelation in Islam.

Nurcholis Madjid is a prominent Muslim scholar in Indonesia. He is called Cak Nur, a familiar greeting that is very down-to-earth among Muslim activists, especially in the Islamic Student Association (HMI), which has helped raise his name on the national stage. Cak Nur was then destined to emerge as a heavyweight intellectual, the focus of his thoughts on issues of Islam, modernity, Indonesianness, and universal humanity. Cak Nur was once nicknamed the young Natsir because of his brilliant intellect. (Nafis, 2014)

Madjid's Islamic and Indonesian ideas have become important manifestations of the HMI cadre foundation until now. In 1969 Madjid made a major contribution to HMI's Islamic views through the formulation of the NDP (Basic Values of Struggle) which he wrote after returning from the Middle East. NDP is a summary of Madjid's endeavors in studying and exploring Islamic ideology. The HMI's NDP officially became the guideline for HMI's struggle during the 9th HMI congress in Malang. 2 Madjid's reorientation of renewal of Islamic thought did not only make an impression among HMI students but has spread to various other Muslim activist groups. Until now Madjid's biggest contribution is still being developed by his successors, especially among progressive Islamic activists, is Islamic thinking about pluralism.

### **Nurcholish Madjid's works**

Nurcholis Madjid or better known as Cak Nur is not only a scientist and intellectual who has contributed a lot to the world

of politics and education, but he is also a prolific writer, which he has proven through several great works which he has devoted both in letters -newspapers, magazines/journals, or in the form of books, which are often found today. Some of his works include: *Khasanah Intelektual Islam, Islam, Doktrin dan Peradaban, Islam Agama Peradaban, Islam Agama Kemanusiaan, Masyarakat Religius, Dialog Keterbukaan: Artikulasi Nilai Islam Dalam Wacana Sosial Politik Kontemporer, Cita-cita Politik Islam Era Reformasi, Islam Kemodernan dan Keindonesiaan, Islam Kerakyatan dan Keindonesiaan : Pikiran-Pikiran Nurcholis Muda, Pintu-pintu Ijtihad, Kontekstualisasi Doktrin Islam Dalam Sejarah*, and *Bilik-Bilik Pesantren Sebuah Potret Perjalanan. Thirty Spiritual Sermons, Reflections in the Month of Ramadan*, Bandung: Mizan, 1998, *Islamic Political Ideals of the Reform Era*, Jakarta: Paramadina, 1999, *Scholars and Community Religiosity*, Jakarta: Paramadina and *Determination*, 1999. Besides the books above, there are still many other academic-intellectual works that are scattered in various forms, such as papers, working papers, articles, and His books such as *Khasanah Intelektual Islam, Islam, Doktrin dan Peradaban, Islam Agama Peradaban, Islam Agama Kemanusiaan, Masyarakat Religius, Dialog Keterbukaan: Artikulasi Nilai Islam Dalam Wacana Sosial Politik Kontemporer, Cita-cita Politik Islam Era Reformasi, Islam Kemodernan dan Keindonesiaan, Islam Kerakyatan dan Keindonesiaan : Pikiran-Pikiran Nurcholis Muda, Pintu-pintu Ijtihad, Kontekstualisasi Doktrin Islam Dalam Sejarah*, and *Bilik-Bilik Pesantren Sebuah Potret Perjalanan*.

### **Kalam Nurcholish Madjid's thoughts on pluralism**

The definition of Pluralism when viewed from the aspect of language comes from two syllables, namely Plural which means plural, many, or various. more than one. Meanwhile, Ism means understanding. According to Amin Abdullah, he interprets pluralism with diversity. (Abdullah, 1996, p. 6) Broadly speaking, pluralism is an understanding that respects differences in society. According to the term, many figures provide their definitions.



According to Syamsul Ma'arif, he argues that pluralism is an attitude of mutual understanding and respect for differences to achieve harmony between religious communities. According to Mohammad Shofan, pluralism is an effort to build theological normative awareness and theological normative awareness and social awareness. Meanwhile, according to Koentjaraningrat, he divided pluralism into religious pluralism, ethnic pluralism, cultural pluralism, media pluralism, and educational pluralism.

Pluralism according to Nurcholis Madjid as explained in a thesis entitled pluralism in the view of Nucholis Madjid written by Apriliana explains that a true affinity is in the bonds of civility. Pluralism is a necessity in civilized life, not a condition that should not exist. But it exists and must be accepted. Pluralism can even be a mechanism to guarantee human safety. (Apriliana, 2018, pp. 53–54)

Nurcholis Madjid gave a lot and put forward the concept of religious pluralism in his various writings. As in his book entitled *Islam Doctrine and Civilization, A Critical Examination on Issues of Faith, Humanity, and Modernity*, he explains that religious pluralism is a variety of paths to God. Religious pluralism is simply a plurality of paths leading to one truth, namely the truth of God. Many doors lead to God. (Apriliana, 2018, p. 55)

Nurcholis Madjid's point of view in promoting religious plurality by quoting the words of Allah SWT. in the Qur'an Surah al-Baqarah verse 62 which is translated into English.

Translation: “Indeed, the believers, the Jews, the Christians, and the Sabians, whoever among them truly believes in Allah, the Last Day and does good deeds, they will receive a reward from their Lord, not there is a concern for them, and they do not (also) grieve”.

The logical explanation in this verse guarantees that as Muslims, Jews, Christians, and Sabians, as long as they believe in Allah, the One and Only God, and in the Hereafter (on which day humans will be held accountable for all their actions in a

Divine judgment, and which is when a human being is only in personal contact with God), then, based on that belief, they do good, then all logically "go to heaven" and "get out of hell".

The verse above indeed invites controversy among commentators, but to support his opinion, Nurchlisch Madjid chose Muhammad Asad's interpretation of the verse, namely the idea of safety based on the above argument depends only on three elements, namely: belief in God, belief in the next day, and action. good in life.(Madjid, 1988, p. 187) The pluralism of all religious teachings according to Nurcholish Madjid lies in the attitude of "not worshiping other than God", this concept is in line with the meaning of uniting God. Therefore, I Nurcholis Mdjid said that, although exoterically, religion has a plural face, esoterically, all religions lead to one God, God Almighty. Especially monotheistic religions, such as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, all of which lead to the Abrahamic line. This further confirms the basic nature of the oneness of God (tawhid).(Sukidi, 2001) The main points of discussion in pluralism material according to Nurcholis Madjid can be seen in the points below:

### **Pluralism values in Spirituality**

Religious pluralism according to Nurchlisch Madjid can be seen from the pluralism of spiritual values contained in religious teachings. Faith is the first and foremost spiritual value of religion. In his book *The Doors to God*, he asserts that faith is believing in God in the quality of being the only one who is divine or divine. Faith is not enough just to believe, faith must be accompanied by an attitude of complete submission (to Allah), an attitude that is the core of true religious teachings in the sight of Allah. Those who submit to God's presence, according to mufassir al-Zamakhshari in the interpretation of al-Kashshaf, are called Muslims.(Madjid, 1995, p. 5–6)

This confirms that in Nurcholish Madjid's view religion without surrender to God, no matter how much someone claims to be a "Muslim" or a follower of "Islam" is not right and "will not be accepted" in God's sight. Therefore, in Nurcholish

Madjid's view, Islam is not only understood as a religion (organized religion), but as a way, as understood various terms used in the Holy Scriptures, such as shirath, sabil, shari'ah, tariqah, minhaj, and mansakh. All of these terms contain the meaning of "way", and are metaphors showing that Islam is the way to God's approval. In Nurcholish Madjid's view, all religions contain a spiritual value of surrendering completely to God Almighty, so the teachings to be open, peaceful, gentle, not arrogant and the like are spiritual teachings of all religions. Nurcholish Madjid admits that the path to God is different for every religion, but the essence of surrender is the same, so the spiritual values tend to be the same. (Apriliana, 2018, p. 60–64)

### **The values of pluralism in social and community life**

Discussing the values of pluralism in social and community life, Nurcholish Madjid started by presenting the concept of secularization. Nurcholish Madjid defines secularization as liberation, namely liberation from inappropriate attitudes of purification or in other words desacralization, namely the removal of taboos and sacredness from objects that should not be taboo and not sacred. Sociologically, secularization means the removal of the sacred which is not appropriate, while philosophically, secularization means the separation between the affairs of God and the affairs of the world.

According to Nurcholish Madjid, humans should pay attention to both aspects of their lives, namely the life of the world and the hereafter. To pay attention to both aspects of his life, humans must carry out religious teachings as well as possible, to prepare for his life in the Hereafter, or Religious Day, and to be serious in this worldly life, by following the provisions that apply, especially in social life, or associating with other humans

Nurcholish Madjid's explanation of human attitudes in dealing with his relationships with fellow human beings above shows that in his life with other humans, one must use his mind so that these relationships can take place harmoniously. The harmony of a relationship must be supported by mutual respect,

mutual understanding, mutual assistance, and mutual love. Mutual respect between people can be manifested in various forms. (Apriliana, 2018, p. 60–64)

Responding to religious pluralism, mutual respect can be manifested in the form of respect for other people's religions. Respect for other people's religions is based on the notion that religion should not be imposed on other people. God's Word about the freedom to choose religion is based on the assumption that humans have already made their choice, because religious humans are mature and intelligent humans. Maturity of human beings has certainly been able to lead him to distinguish and choose for himself what is right and wrong.

### **Analysis of the concept of religious pluralism Nurcholis Madjid**

There are 3 approaches used by Nurcholis Madjid in formulating the concept of Pluralism as proposed by Purwanto in a journal entitled Religious Pluralism in Nurcholis Madjid's perspective, namely:

#### Tawhid approach

Nurcholis Madjid's rationale is his understanding of monotheism, including his thoughts on religious pluralism. Tauhid itself comes from the word "wahid" which means "one" or "one". Monotheism is closely related to the attitude of belief or faith in Allah, however, the deeper meaning of monotheism is not only interpreted as an attitude of belief in Allah SWT, but must be followed by an understanding of who Allah SWT believes in, how our attitude is towards Him and how other forms other than Allah swt trusted him.

The main problem in matters of divinity is shirk, namely associating partners with Allah. Therefore, according to him, the main purpose of the coming of Islam is to liberate mankind from false gods. This is summarized in the creed sentence "There is no god but Allah" as a declaration of basic belief. The phrase "There is no God" means the process of liberating humans from false gods or things. The phrase "other than Allah" denotes belief in

something that is true as a continuation of freedom from false things. (Purwanto, 2011b)

Understanding monotheism means returning human dignity and status back to its position as a creature of Allah SWT. Humans look up "up" only to God, to fellow human beings must look in a series of equality. Therefore, for him the divine principle will give birth to the understanding of human equality. All human beings, in terms of their basic dignity and worth, are the same.

Such an understanding of monotheism will lead to the acceptance of pluralism awareness, because by viewing Oneness as only belonging, the pluralism of His creatures is a necessity. If Allah is the possessor of true oneness, then the human world as His creature will be full of plurality. Thus, plurality which will increase to pluralism is a provision of Allah (sunnatullah). One of Allah's fitrah is that humans will always be different throughout time. The understanding that human beings are one and the same in all respects is impossible. (Purwanto, 2011b)

Philological approach

The redefinition of the meaning of Islam or more precisely the expansion of the definition of Islam is a key aspect of the notion of pluralism. This redefinition is also one of the rationales for creating the notion of religious pluralism. Islam is defined as an attitude of surrender, submission, and obedience to God Almighty. This redefinition is based on the basic understanding of Islam itself, which means surrender, from the words *aslama*, *yuslimu*, *Aslim*, *Islam*, and *Muslim*. Al-Islam in the sense of surrender is related to the nature of the universe, the nature of the submission of Allah's creatures to His creator in a series of natural laws. In contrast to the form of surrender, surrender to the universe which occurs automatically, human obedience is a choice that will be accounted for in the future.

This explanation is a truly religious attitude which is Islam, an attitude of complete submission and surrender to Allah sincerely. The attitude of submitting oneself to other than Allah is

an attitude of non-true religion, in other words, polytheism, a religious attitude that is the main problem of humanity today. Through this redefinition, Islam has two meanings, first in a general sense as an attitude of submission to Allah and second in a special sense as the name of a religion brought by the Prophet Muhammad.

The interpretation of the meaning of Islam as in the understanding of Nurcholis Madjid will have consequences for expanding the view of truth. The owner of the truth does not only belong to Islam in the sense of the name of a religion but also to other religions that contain Islam (surrender, surrender to God Almighty). The exclusive claim based on the verse "Surely the religion (which is acceptable) in the sight of Allah is only Islam" will become inclusive when Islam is understood in a general sense as an attitude of submission. According to him that all true religions are essentially al-Islam. For him (through the teachings of prophetic unity), Judaism and Christianity basically contain al-Islam. In this context, he wants to convey the message that adherents of Islamic teachings must foster harmonious relationships, because Islam, Christianity, and Judaism are a series of Islamic beliefs.(Purwanto, 2011b)

Nurcholish Madjid's reflection on the meaning of Islam does not mean relativizing Islam, but it shows that the essence of Islam is Islam in the sense of submission to Allah. Anyone who surrenders to God or anyone who is Muslim, even if outside the religion of Islam will get salvation. In this case, Nurcholish Madjid also does not sacrifice his Islamic values, but he also tries to show that even on the basis of the Islamic religion the safety of people who are outside it can be accepted (inclusive).

He believes that his religious beliefs are the most correct is a must, because a religious attitude cannot be based on doubts, but this attitude of belief cannot be supplemented by assuming other beliefs are wrong. These theological considerations do seem complicated, but they are very profound and reinforce the basis of religious pluralism, because they allow us to see other people's

deviations in their beliefs, without relativizing our own beliefs. (Purwanto, 2011, p. 47–68)

The philological approach used by Nurcholish Madjid is in a perspective that separates words from what those words refer to and prioritizes the latter from the first. As a consequence, it is not surprising that Cak Nur defines "Islam" as an attitude of surrender. For him Islam is not just a name or identity of a religion but behind that name there is a reality.

#### Historical Approach

Historical events that are often used as references as a discourse on religious pluralism include the formation of the Medina community with its Medina Charter, Spanish society during the Islamic domination, and Jerusalem with its Aelian Charter. The Medina Charter was made in the formation of a new society in Medina. This charter contains the same rights and obligations. each group of the population of Medina. Therefore, this charter is widely praised as the first official political document that lays down the basic principles of freedom of religion. This charter contains equal rights and obligations between Jews and Muslims. Some of the quotes from the Medina Charter above show that the Prophet Muhammad was a figure of how to create brotherhood to create a civilized society by not discriminating between ethnicity, ethnicity, religion, and belief within the framework of inter-religious harmony, hereinafter referred to as religious pluralism.

The second historical fact that is often used as a basis for Nurcholish Madjid is the classical Islamic community of Jerusalem during the reign of Umar bin Khatab after the city was liberated by Muslim troops. Freedom of religion in that society is reflected in the agreement of Aelia (another name for Jerusalem). According to him, the Aelia Agreement was in line with the spirit and soul of the Medina agreement made by the Prophet Muhammad when he was in Medina. The agreement shows the attitude of freedom, equality, security, and prosperity, all of which are guaranteed by Islam. For Islam, recognition of the existence

of others needs to be done as long as they do not commit injustice.

Religious pluralism has been recorded (happened) in history, and history is *sunnatullah*, therefore religious pluralism at times is a necessity and needs to be implemented, therefore historical awareness is very much needed, without looking at historicism (in the sense of absolutizing what is in history). ) then it is necessary to see it as an example of the possibility of actual embodiment and implementation of a value in the demands of the times and places. So, what is most important is the value or spirit contained in that history. In this case, every religious follower needs to take as an example the values of openness in the Medina community at that time. This historical approach is different from group thinking which emphasizes the form of history, such as taking the form of the reign of the Prophet Muhammad in Medina to be applied to the present.

## **CONCLUSION**

Nurcholish Madjid or Cak Nur was born in Mojoanyar, Jombang, East Java, on March 17 1939 to coincide with 26 Muharram 1358 H died in Jakarta on August 29, 2005. He was a Muslim activist in the Islamic Student Association (HMI). His concept of thinking about religious pluralism can be seen in his various writings. In his book entitled *Islam Doktrin dan Peradaban, Telaah Kritis tentang Masalah Keimanan, Kemanusiaan, dan Kemodernan*, ia menjelaskan bahwa pluralisme agama adalah keragaman jalan menuju Tuhan. Religious pluralism is simply a plurality of paths leading to one truth, namely the truth of God. Many doors lead to God.

The *Doors to God* is his work which contains faith, namely believing in God in the quality of being the only one who is divinity or divine. Faith is not enough just to believe, faith must be accompanied by an attitude of complete submission (to Allah), an attitude that is the core of true religious teachings in the sight of Allah.

There are three approaches used by Nurcholis Madjid in



formulating the concept of Pluralism, namely first, the approach of Tawhid, namely the return of human dignity and status back to its position as a creature of Allah SWT. Humans look up "up" only to God, to fellow human beings must look in a series of equality. Second, the Philological Approach, namely the redefinition of the meaning of Islam or more precisely the expansion of the definition of Islam as an attitude of surrender, submission, and obedience to God Almighty. The third is the Historical Approach, which is the value or spirit contained in that history. In this case, every adherent of religion needs to take as an example the values of openness of the people of Medina at that time, not to take the form of the government of the Prophet Muhammad in Medina to be applied today.

There are several implications in studying Nurcholish Madjid's Thoughts on Pluralism, including being able to know the biography and works of Nurcholish Madjid. This material can provide a deeper understanding of Nurcholish Madjid's thoughts on pluralism.

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