Religious Pluralism in the Thoughts of Religious Leaders in Malang, Indonesia

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Social and political considerations alone are inadequate to be the basis for pluralist attitudes so as to build relationships between religious communities because conflicts between religious communities still occur. This pluralist attitude needs a theological foundation to be made reliable. The purpose of this study is to explore the thoughts of religious leaders in Malang on the scriptural basis of religious pluralism, the methods of thinking used and the forms of activities applied. The analysis method uses the interview as the source of primary data. Document analysis was also carried out. Twelve religious leaders were the subjects, representing six religions in Malang: Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism. The results of the study showed that the thoughts of religious leaders were divided into two: pluralist and inclusive. There are four models of their thinking methods: privatisation, filtering, hermeneutics and proportionality. The thought of religious pluralism were applied in two forms: doctrine and social activities. The findings of this study are twofold: first, correcting Webber's theory of the relationship of beliefs and deeds; second, a new method called "Patterns of Pluralism Interpretation". Based on this, the research suggests that pluralist verses continue to be socialised and more interfaith social activities have been carried out.

Key words: *Exclusive, inclusive, pluralism, religious leaders, religious thought and scriptures.*

Introduction

Religious pluralism is a contemporary and vital issue in the lives of people living in a pluralistic society. This is especially important in Indonesia, because pluralist attitudes, as well as an inclusive and exclusive attitude, will influence the harmony of human life (Rahaman, 2017).

Historically, the attitude of religious pluralism that emerged in Europe in the 1930s was based on political considerations and also to obtain equality of rights for minorities, especially Christians who were oppressed by the Catholic majority (Greenberg, 2019). The same reason also exists in Malaysia; it is to guarantee religious rights and individual freedom (Hilmi, 2019).

In Malang itself, based on interviews with several religious leaders, the idea of religious pluralism and inter-religious activities are also based more on political and social considerations, especially with the emergence of the economic and social crisis in 1998.

According to Farid Esack, pluralist thoughts and practices of cooperation between religious communities based on political and sociological considerations as above are not strong enough to build harmonious relations between religious communities. This is because a lot of people who conduct dialogue and cooperation with other religious communities still feel superior (their religion stands above others) and continue to reject all forms of means to salvation that are outside their religion. That is, they still deny the existence of other religions and the humanity of adherents of other religions, even though they have lived side by side, had frequent dialogues and have collaborated with them. They remain prone to conflict and harbour tension (Esack, 1997). Cases of religious harassment are still common, especially with issues such as the emergence of VCD training programs by the Indonesian Student Services Institute (LPMI) that contain prayers condemning the Koran. Moreover, Islamic harassment carried out by Priest Ali Mark at the East Java Christian Church (GKJW) Tulungrejo, Batu, Malang, on March 17, 2007 has aggravated the situation and disturbed the peace.

Based on this, the inclusions and religious pluralism that develop, as well as dialogues and inter-religious cooperation carried out so far, need to be given another stronger foundation. This is the gap that needs to be addressed. The foundation is the theological foundation extracted from the sacred texts of each of the religions so that the individual and combined interpretations which show similarity makes the effort become stable and unshakeable.

Efforts to provide a theological basis for pluralist thinking have been carried out in several circles. In Russia, for example, reformulation of theological teachings has been carried out to

provide a basis for religious pluralism thinking. However, this activity is still limited to Catholics, not involving other religions (Payne, 2016).

This research intends to fill these shortcomings, by exploring the basis of the sacred texts of religions that can be the basis of notions of inclusive and religious pluralism, as well as the practices of cooperation between religious communities that have been carried out. The excavation of these sacred religious texts was carried out based on the thought of religious leaders who were judged to understand and could explain the problem in question.

The purpose of this study is: (1) exploration of religious thoughts and attitudes of religious leaders in Malang; (2) exploration of the methods used to explain their religious thought; and (3) exploration of the forms of application of their religious thought.

Methods

This research uses the data from interviews as the primary source, which is also supported by documents. The researchers conducted interviews with twelve religious leaders, two representing each of the six religions in Malang namely: Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism. Each religion was represented by two religious leaders. Twenty hours were spent in total interviewing all 12 of the subjects. It took 5 days until data saturation was achieved.

Religious leaders from Nahdlatul Ulama (Revival of the Scholars) (NU) and Muhammadiyah represent Islam; religious leaders from Gereja Kristen Jawi Wetan (East Java Christian Church) (GKJW) and Indonesian Christian Church (GKI) Bromo Street, represents Protestantism; religious leaders from the Catholic Church, Ijen Street and Seminary Congregation of the Mission (CM) Langsep Street, represent the Catholics; religious leaders from Parisada Hindu Dharma Indonesia (PHDI) of Malang City and Parisada Hindu Dharma Indonesia (PHDI) of Malang Regency representing Hinduism; religious leaders from the Dhammadipa Arama Vihara, Batu and Kartaradjasa Batu College of Religion (STAB) representing Buddhism; religious leaders from the Malang Ang Ang Kiong Temple and the Indonesian Confucian Religion Council (MAKIN) Malang representing the Confucian religion.

The religious leaders who were the resource persons were chosen based on three essential reasons: (1) they came from their religious social institutions, so that they could be judged to represent their religious institutions; (2) they often carry out dialogue activities between religions; and (3) they are recommended by their religious institutions as their opinions reflect the official opinions of their religious groups.

There were three Research Questions answered in this paper:

1. What are the religious thought patterns identified among the representatives of the different religious and what are their characteristics?
2. What is the relationship between religious-theological and social thought?
3. What are the patterns in pluralistic interpretations and what applications go with it?

Results and Discussion
Religious Demographics

Malang, which is the location of this research, is a district located in the province of East Java, Indonesia. Malang region itself is composed of three regions namely: Malang city, Malang district and Batu city.

Malang Raya, which is the location of this research, is a district located in the province of East Java, Indonesia.

Six religions that were established in the Malang region were Islam as the majority religion, then Protestantism, Hinduism, Catholicism, Buddhism and Confucianism. These religions actively carry out programs, and if there are sensitivities involved they are likely to contribute to conflict if not appropriately managed.

Table 1: Religious Demographics in Malang, 2016.

No		Malang City	Malang Regency	Batu City	Total	%
1	Islam	1.754.009	2.460.847	172.982	4.387.833	92.57
2	Protestantism	52.050	74.080	10.109	136.239	2.87
3	Hinduism	56.426	45.071	3.489	104.986	2.21
4	Catholicism	43.424	32.329	3.407	79.160	1.67
5	Buddhism	9.621	18.846	3.118	31.585	0.67
6	Confucianism	287	83	28	398	0.008
		1.915.817	2.631.256	193.133	4.740.206	

Inter-Religious Relationship

Formally, conflict between people of different religions in Malang began to take place in 1998 after riots in Jakarta. According to KH Chamzawi, at that time several interfaith leaders gathered at the Nahdlatul Ulama (Revival of the Scholars) Malang office to find a solution and anticipate the possibility of a similar riot in Malang. The meeting then produced a forum, namely the Interfaith Harmony Forum (FKAUB). Their activities include discussions on

religion carried out in turns in each religion and social cooperation (Chamzawi, 2017). In 2006, this interfaith meeting in Malang was intensified and supported by the government, so the Religious Harmony Forum (FKUB) was formed (Bratayana, 2017).

In the next phase, interfaith communication involved not only religious leaders but also women and young activists, so that there were many harmony forums initiated. Among others were the Interfaith Women (PAUB) forum, the Interfaith Youth Movement (Gema UB) and the Joint Prayer Forum (FDB). The activities of these forums are not only limited to interfaith seminars but also joint work involving grassroots levels.

Even so, the actions and behaviours that cause disharmony between religious communities did still occur, such as the case of the defamation of the Koran by the Indonesian Student Service Institute (LPMI) when they conducted training at the Aside Hotel, Batu, Malang, December 17-21 2006. Likewise, religious abuse cases carried out by Priest Ali Mark, in the East Java Christian Church (GKJW), Tulungrejo, Selekta, Batu, March 19, 2007 (Zainuddin, 2019).

Findings on Research Questions

Research Question 1:
What are the religious thought patterns identified among the representatives of the different religious and what are their characteristics?

The religious thoughts and attitudes of the religious leaders who were the primary data source of this study emerged in two views: inclusive and pluralist.

Inclusive thinking and attitudes are that associated to believe in truth and salvation in other religions, but the standards of truth and salvation remain in their own religion. That which illustrates this case appears in Catholicism. In the "the Anonymous Christian", introduced by Karl Rahner (1904-1984), he states that non-Christians will also be saved in the hereafter if they live in sincerity to God and he who saves them is Christ even though they don't know that (Hick, 1995).

The pluralist thoughts and attitudes are paradigms of thought which argue that each religion has its truth and path of salvation so that no one has the right to claim that only his is true religion (Lyden, 1995). The expressions that expresses this paradigm is "other religions are equally valid ways to the same truth" (John Hick, b., 1922), and "other religions speak of different but equally valid truths" (John B. Cobb Jr., b., 1925). Another illustration to this is, "each religion expresses an important part of the truth" (Raimundo Panikar, 1918-2010) (Rahman, 2001).

Inclusive religious thinking is apparent in Islamic religious leaders and the Catholic religious leaders of the Congregation of Mission Seminary (CM).

Table 2: Inclusive Religious Thought

No	Religion	Leader	Argument
1	Islam	KH. Chamzawi, M.HI (NU Malang)	There is no text of the Qur'an which explicitly recognises the truth of other religions, but socially Muslims are still instructed to respect and cooperate with people of other religions. (QS. Al-Hujurat, p. 13).
2	Islam	Abd Haris, M.Ag (Muhammadiyah, Malang)	The religion that is recognised correctly and accepted by Allah is only Islam (QS. Ali Imran, p. 19), but Muslims are still instructed to respect and respect the people of other religions (QS. Al-Hujurat, p. 13).
3	Catholic	Priest Dr. Petrus Maria Handoko, CM (CM Seminary, Malang)	Something that can free humanity from sin and save them is only Jesus Christ even though other religions also contain the truth as a manifestation of the work of the Holy Spirit (The Hebrew, I, p. 1-2).

Meanwhile, pluralistic religious thought is apparent in Catholic religious leaders from the church: Protestants, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucians.

In the summary, the thought of the religious leaders is apparent in the following table.

Table 3: Pluralism Religious Thought

No	Religion	Leader	Argument
1	Catholic	Priest Suyatno, S.Th (Parish Church, Jl. Ijen)	The key to salvation is not in the baptism procession and atonement of Jesus (entering Catholicism), but loving-kindness and pleading to God; and all religions teach this so that they are safe and true (Lucas, 10, p. 25-37).
2	Protestant	Priest Rudy Siwoyo, S.Th (GKJW, Bale Wiyata, Malang)	Right and wrong justification in religion is God's prerogative, and we have no right to claim to be the correct owner of religion then to blame other people and religions (Matthew, 5, p. 21-22).

3	Protestant	Priest Didik Tridjatmiko, S.Th (GKI, Jl. Bromo, Malang)	The concept of salvation in the Gospels does not refer to specific religions or institutions, for example Protestants, but to loving attitude; and all religions teach the principle of love, so they are safe and true (Matthew, 25, p. 32-40).
4	Hinduism	1. Kudari, S.Ag (Kendali Usada Temple, Pakisaji, Malang & PHDI Malang District) 2. Drs. Ida Bagus Made Putra (IHDI Malang city)	Hinduism explicitly justifies the existence of differences in religion or belief, and God will accept any religion directed at Him, even He will make it even stronger (Bhagavad Gita, IV, p. 11)
5	Buddhism	1. Banthe Kanthidaro (Dhammadipa Monastery, Batu) 2. Banthe Subhapanno (STAB, Kerta Radjasa, Batu)	All religions are principally the same and right (both towards God), differences that exist are only in aspects of the method for expressing them (Diagha Nikaya, 16, p. 5, 27).
6	Confucianism	1. Brata Ongkowijaya, XDS, (MATAKIN Malang) 2. Ws. Hanompramana, (Eng An Kiong Temple, Malang)	Confucians have never claimed to be the only bearers of truth & their people are forbidden to question the differences between the paths of truth (religion) because all religions are principality the same and true (Holy Word, XV, p. 40)

Research Question 2:
What is the relationship between religious-theological and social thought?

Related to religious attitudes, GKJW Bale Wiyata divides one's attitude towards adherents of other religions into five models: (1) ignorance - each religious community runs alone without caring about other religious communities; (2) exclusive - each religious community knows about other religious communities but they do not know each other, as they are busy with themselves; (3) apologetic - each religious community knows each other and interacts but they are more likely to show differences, strengths that are owned and ultimately overthrow

or attack each other's religions; (4) co-existence - the people of a religion can accept the presence of other religious communities but only in social aspects, not in substance; and (5) pro-existence - acknowledgment that life is not for itself but also life together with other religious communities, so that all religious communities struggle together to uphold the basic principles of religious teachings, such as upholding justice and truth, together to overcome problems humanity like ignorance and poverty (GKJW, 2006).

Theoretically, one's religious attitudes tend to be in harmony with the model of religious thought that they believe. However, in this study it was found to be different, namely that one's religious attitudes and behaviour are not always in line with the model of thought they believe. That is, a pre-existing religious attitude does not always accompany religious thinking that is plural. In contrast, inclusive thinking does not always give birth to tolerant religious attitudes.

The relationship between theological views and social behaviour of religious leaders is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Relationship between Religious Theological & Social Thought

No	Religion	Leader	Theology	Social
1	Islam	KH. Chamzawi, M.HI	Inclusive	Pro-existence
2	Islam	Abd Haris, M.Ag	Inclusive	Tolerant
3	Christian	Priest Rudy Sewoyo, S.Th	Pluralist	Pro- existence
4	Christian	Priest Didik Trijadmiko, S.Th	Pluralist	Pro- existence
5	Catholic	Priest Suyatno, S.Th	Pluralist	Pro- existence
6	Catholic	Priest Dr. Petrus M Handoko	Inclusive	Tolerant
7	Hinduism	Kudari, S.Ag	Pluralist	Pro- existence
8	Hinduism	Drs. Ida Bagus Putra	Pluralist	Pro- existence
9	Buddhism	Banthe Kanthidaro	Pluralist	Tolerant
10	Buddhism	Banthe Subhapanno	Pluralist	Tolerant
11	Confucius	Brata Ongkowijaya, XDS	Pluralist	Pro- existence
12	Confucius	Ws. Hanompramana	Pluralist	Pro- existence

The difference between religious thought and behaviour above can be understood and explained from the psychological perspective as follows. According to Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961), the behaviour is the result of an accumulation of experiences and interactions of a person with his environment, while attitude is a person's mental readiness to act or do something in a certain way (Jung, 1971). Thus, attitudes are only one factor for the birth of behaviour, but not the only one, so that aspects of attitude do not always give birth to behaviour.

Some psychological studies also prove that the attitude aspect is not the main factor that shapes a person's behaviour. In addition to attitudes, the environmental aspects, especially close family, are the dominant factor in directing one's behaviour (Heriansyah, 2018).

The difference between attitudes and behaviour found in religious leaders in Malang is an exciting finding. This meeting also corrects Max Weber's (1864-1920) theory which states that beliefs or thoughts automatically give effect to one's behaviour (Weber, 1995).

Furthermore, for the context of inter-religious relations in Malang, this study also shows that religious leaders are the most influential factor in building harmony among religious communities, followed by the role of government and traditions that are already running. This statement also reinforces Riza's conclusion that there is a significant and robust influence contributed by religious leaders on the behaviour of the people they lead (Riza Casidy, Ian Phau, Michael Lwin, 2016).

On the other hand, this study also found several obstacles that could hamper the formation of harmonious communication and religious harmony. First, the attitude of fanaticism in each religion, that which always gives rise to suspicion of anything done by other religious communities. Second, there is a gap between religious leaders and the grassroots, so that the dialogue carried out still looks elitist, not down to earth and does not involve the grassroots. Third, the lack of facilities and infrastructure to support the implementation of dialogue between religious communities. Fourth, there is a lack of a strong spirit to continue to fight for dialogue and cooperation between faiths.

This finding reinforce the conclusions given by Sumbulah that the obstacles that hinder the formation of harmony between religious communities in Malang are the attitudes leading to religious fanaticism and the lack of mutual understanding between them (Sumbulah, Pluralism and Religious Harmony in Religious Elites Perspectives in Malang City, 2015)

The Interpretation Method

Religious leaders show that with relations between religious communities, the sacred text of religion can lead to three attitudes: exclusive, inclusive and pluralist. Understanding verses that are plural or inclusive is no problem. However, the reading of exclusive verses requires a specific method of interpretation, so that it can give birth to thoughts that are plural or at least inclusive.

There are at least four methods of interpretation by religious leaders regarding verses. First, placing verses exclusively in the private domain so that they do not use them in relations between religious communities. Instead, religious leaders take verses inclusively and then

relate them to social verses so that they can give birth to pluralist understandings as do Catholic religious leaders. Secondly, select exclusive verses that are appropriate and partake of them so that they can be explained to be pluralist as per the Buddhist leaders.

Third, interpreting verses exclusively in a contextual hermeneutic so that they can produce plural thinking as practised by Christian religious leaders. Fourth, continue to use exclusive verses but relate them to pluralist social verses and interpret them in such a way as to produce more detailed thought. For example, that exclusivity is related to theological issues, while plurality is related to social or working (muamalah) areas, as consistent with Islamic religious leaders.

Table 5: The Scripture table that illustrates the Exclusive, Inclusive and Pluralist

No	Religion	Scripture	Doctrine	Interpretation
1	Hindu	Yajurveda, 36, 18; Atharvaveda, XII, I, 45, Bhagavad Gita, IV, 11, Bhagavad Gita, VII, 21. Bhagavad Gita, IX, 29.	Pluralist	Pluralist
2	Buddha	Samyutta Nikaya, 56; 31 Diagha Nikaya, 16; 5.27	Exclusive	Select exclusive verses then interpret them to be pluralist.
		Diagha Nikaya, 26; 25	Pluralist	Pluralist
3	Confucianism	Holy Word, XV; 40.	Pluralist	Pluralist
4	Catholic	Johannes, 14; 6. Matthew, 28; 18-20. Mark, 16; 15-16. Dominus Iesus, 20-22, Th 2000	Exclusive	Placing these verses exclusively in individual and private domains, so that they do not use them in inter-religious relations.
		Letter to the Hebrews, I; 1-2 Vatican Council, II, Th. 1965 Gaudium Et Spes, 22, Th 1965. Redemptoris Missio, 55, Th 1990	Inclusive	Linking inclusive verses with social verses
5	Cristian	Johannes, 14; 6 Matthew, 28; 18-20	Exclusive	Interpret exclusive verses with hermeneutic contextual

				methods.
		Matthew, 5; 21-22	Pluralist	Pluralist
6	Islam	QS. Ali Imran, 19. QS. Ali Imran, 85.	Exclusive/ Pluralist	Link scripture exclusively with scripture focusing pluralist then explain them proportionally
		QS. Al-Baqarah, 62 dan 148. QS. Al-Maidah, 48 QS. Al-Maidah, 69 QS. Al-Hajj, 40 QS. Al-Hajj, 47 QS. Al-Hujurat, 13	Pluralist	Pluralist

Based on this description, this study found that religious leaders used four forms of interpretation methods for exclusive verses called "Patterns of Pluralism Interpretation", namely privatisation, selection, hermeneutics and proportionality.

Privatisation is a pattern of interpretation by placing exclusive verses into the private realm so that they do not use them in social relations with other religious communities. Selection is a pattern of interpretation by selecting exclusive verses before using it to build relationships between religious communities. Hermeneutics pattern is a contextual interpretation of exclusive verses, while proportional patterns are interpreted by combining exclusive verses with pluralist verses and then linking them with the current social context.

Research Question 3:
What are the patterns in pluralistic interpretations and what applications go with it?

These four patterns of interpretation can be considered to build an attitude of religious pluralism and harmony among religious communities in society.

Figure 1: Patterns of Pluralism Interpretation

These four patterns of interpretation of pluralism can complement the previous researcher's description of the three models of interpretation of hermeneutics, namely objective hermeneutics, subjective hermeneutics and hermeneutics of liberation (Soleh, 2011).

Application Models

This research found that religious leaders apply their religious pluralism in two forms: via doctrine and social.

Applications in the form of doctrine are all activities related to the socialisation of religious pluralist teachings, while applications in human form are more a matter of joint activities to build togetherness and harmony between religious communities.

Applications in the form of doctrine are: (1) creating spiritual songs that contain teachings about religious pluralism; (2) reformulating the meaning of da'wah or mission that is exclusive; (3) publishing books, journals or mass media that discuss pluralism issues in religion; (4) weekly sermons or routine recitals; and (5) limited seminars.

The applications in the form of social activities are: (1) carrying out joint social activities such as joint community service, training, disaster relief activities and the like; (2) live-in activities among different religious communities; and (3) forming harmony forums between religious communities, such as FKAUB, FKUB, and PKUB.

This statement can add to Sumbulah's findings that in addition to these activities, the family can be the first institution to minimise the emergence of radicalism born from exclusive thinking so that excellent communication within the family and inculcation of moderate attitudes in the family become important (Sumbulah, Preventing Radicalism by Family and Civil Society Organizations in Indonesia , 2019).

Table 6: Application Model of the Thought of Religious Pluralism

No	Classification	Models	Religious Leaders
1	Doctrine	Creating spiritual songs that contain or teach about religious pluralism.	GKJW (Protestant)
		Review the meaning of da'wah or exclusive missions.	GKI (Protestant) Young NU (Islam)
		Publish books, journals or mass media that contain and teach about religious pluralism.	Hindu, Catholic, Protestant and Islam
		Giving religious lessons or regular recitation.	Hinduism, Confusions, Protestant and Islam
		Seminar activities or scientific studies.	All religious leaders
2	Social activities (action)	Conduct joint social activities involving other religious communities, such as community service, disaster relief and others.	All religious leaders
		Conduct "live-in" activities together between religions.	Protestant, Islam
		Create forums for inter-religious harmony, such as FKAUB, FAUB, PAUB.	All religious leaders

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the results and analysis above, the following conclusions can be submitted. First, the thoughts of religious leaders in Malang about religious pluralism appear in two models, namely inclusive and pluralist. However, the idea born out of this is that inclusivity does not always give way to inclusive activities. Conversely, pluralist thinking also does not ever present itself to events that are pro-existence. That is, a person's behaviour is not always the same as his thinking. This finding corrects Max Weber's theory (1864-1920) that his beliefs or thoughts determine a person's behaviour.

Second, many verses are pluralist in each religion, besides being inclusive and exclusive. Religious leaders use four methods when reading these verses exclusively. The four models are: (1) placing scripture exclusively into the private domain; (2) filtering exclusive scripture; (3) interpreting verses exclusively using the hermeneutic approach; and (4) linking exclusive scripture with social verses then explain their interpretation appropriately according to their respective contexts.

However, the four reading models are only preliminary findings that do not necessarily truly represent the religious community, so they cannot be generalised. However, the four interpretive models called "Four Patterns of Pluralism Interpretation" are essential findings of the study.

Third, there are two forms of application carried out by religious leaders for their pluralistic thoughts, namely doctrine and social activities. The use of faith bound theories is academic, while social activities are practical.

Based on these conclusions, this study recommends the following. First, pluralist verses must be continuously socialised to balance out exclusive verses that are often used by some people for radical movements.

Second, four interpretive methods used by religious leaders can be developed to explain exclusive verses, to provide the pluralist theological understanding and moderate religious attitudes. More than that, the liberation via the hermeneutical method that I have proposed in other writings can be the basis of discussion and social movements.

Third, social activities involving interfaith communities should be carried out more frequently because they have a more significant influence on the harmony of life in multi-religious communities.

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