

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

The Indonesian nation is known as a very diverse nation. One aspect of this diversity is seen in the religions and beliefs held by the population. In Indonesia, there are various major religions such as Islam, Catholic Christianity, Protestant Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism, even Judaism. The founding fathers understood that religious freedom is the right of every citizen, which must be guaranteed by the state.¹ This is stated in the 1945 Constitution, Article 29 paragraphs (1) and (2), which states that "the State is based on the belief in One Almighty God," and "the State guarantees the freedom of each resident to embrace their own religion and to worship according to his religion and beliefs."²

The issue of religious diversity or plurality has been a significant concern throughout the ages. This phenomenon exists amidst the absolute truth claims of each religion, which often contradict each other. Each religion considers its teachings to be the only true path, while other beliefs are considered heretical. This belief resulted in what is known as the "doctrine of salvation," which states that salvation or enlightenment only applies to adherents of certain religions, while those with different beliefs will face danger. This kind of doctrine also occurs between sects within one religion, for example between Catholics and Protestants in Christianity, between Mahayana and Theravada in Buddhism, as well as in various schools of Islam. This brings the concept of pluralism into an increasingly broad and complex discourse.³

¹ Zulkarnain, "Hubungan Antarkomunitas Agama Di Indonesia: Masalah Dan Penanganannya," *Jurnal Kajian* 16(4) (2011): 681–705.

² Julita Lestari, "PLURALISME AGAMA DI INDONESIA (Tantangan Dan Peluang Bagi Keutuhan Bangsa)," *Wahana Akademika: Jurnal Studi Islam Dan Sosial* 6, no. 1 (2020): 1, <https://doi.org/10.21580/wa.v6i1.4913>.

³ DR. Anis Malik Thoha, *TREN PLURALISME AGAMA: TINJAUAN KRITIS*, 1st ed. (Depok: GEMA INSANI, 2005).

One of the latest tragedies that rocked Indonesian society related to religious intolerance was the suicide bombing that occurred at the Makassar Cathedral Church on March 28 2021. In this incident, a terrorist blew himself up in front of the church while Christians were carrying out Palm Sunday services. This attack involved a terrorist network suspected of being affiliated with a radical group that wanted to spread fear and trigger inter-religious conflict. As a result of this attack, at least 20 people were injured, and riots and tensions between religious groups increased in various areas. The main cause of this tragedy is the existence of extremism which rejects diversity and the claim of absolute truth held by the perpetrator, who believes that acts of violence can be justified for religious purposes.⁴

On the other hand, some groups actually have the opposite attitude. They participate in celebrating the holidays of other religions, believing this is permissible in the name of tolerance and pluralism, mixing religious agendas with others, while ridiculing groups that are at odds with them. The labels of radical and extremism were thrown at their 'ideological opponents', as were the labels liberal to the opposite. This social chaos and commotion always appears every year with intonations of hate speech and hostility that are contradictory to Indonesia's culture of politeness which should have been internalized in society in accordance with the 2nd principle of Pancasila.

Referring to Islamic teachings, the principle of religious moderation is actually not difficult to find. This can be seen from the history of Islamic civilization in the world and in the archipelago. In its place of origin, namely Arabia, we can learn from the way Rasulullah Muhammad SAW and his friends became agents of moderation in creating peace between tribes and religions, as reflected in the Medina Charter. In the archipelago, we can trace the concept of moderation from the preaching methods of wise and wise Wali songo, sunan, sheikh, sayid, habaib and kiai. They spread Islam with a cultural approach that was far from violence,

⁴ Rizki Akbar Putra, "Bom Makassar: Protokol Penanganan Terorisme Tak Boleh Kendur," Deutsche Welle, 2021, <https://www.dw.com/id/bom-makassar-protokol-penanganan-terorisme-tak-boleh-kendur/a-57030738>.

thereby creating peace which later became an inspiration for the nation's founders in formulating the Pancasila ideology.⁵

However, implementing religious moderation is not easy. Political, cultural, economic and social factors often influence the way a person or group understands and practices religious teachings.⁶ Therefore, it is important to explore how Islam and religious moderation can interact and contribute positively in this context of diversity.⁷ With in-depth research on Islam and religious moderation, it is hoped that a better understanding can be achieved regarding the moderate application of Islamic principles in everyday life.⁸ In this way, efforts to overcome tension and conflict in the name of religion can be increased, and society can live side by side in harmony while respecting existing differences in beliefs and values.⁹

Islamic moderation, or what is known as *Islam Wasathiyah*, is a very interesting topic to discuss. In conveying Islamic teachings, sometimes extreme views emerge from some groups, which in turn can trigger acts of intolerance and violence. In Islam, the main source of teachings is centered on the al-Qur'an and Hadith. However, reality shows that the forms of Islam are diverse, where various Islamic groups have unique characteristics in their religious practices and practices. It seems that this difference is a natural thing, a *sunatullah*, and can even be considered a blessing.¹⁰ Quraish Shihab noted that diversity in life is a necessity that Allah desires. This includes differences in views in the scientific field, and even includes diverse human responses to the truth of the holy books, interpretation of their contents, and forms of practice.¹¹

⁵ Mustaqim Hasan, "Prinsip Moderasi Beragama Dalam Kehidupan Berbangsa," *Jurnal Mubtadiin* 7, no. 2 (2021): 111–23, <https://journal.an-nur.ac.id/index.php/mubtadii>.

⁶ A. F. R, "Hermeneutics of Gender : A Comparative Study of Hermeneutical Models Amina Wadud and Farid Esack," *Bull. Islam* 2, no. 1 (2024): 21–38.

⁷ S. Fitria A. Nirwana, S. Hidayat, H. Hayati, F. Furqan, F. Arfan, "SOSIALISASI DAN KONSOLIDASI PROGRAM REMAJA MASJID /REMAS TERHADAP TRANSFORMASI AKHLAK REMAJA," *Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat* 2, no. 1 (2020), doi: %0A10.32529/tano.v3i1.480.

⁸ A. A. Muhyi P. Dewi, R. N. Putri, "Islamic Views on Radicalism and Terrorism," *Bull. Islam* 2, no. 1 (2024): 39–52.

⁹ Fauziah Nurdin, "Moderasi Beragama Menurut Al-Qur'an Dan Hadist," *Jurnal Ilmiah Al-Mu'ashirah* 18, no. 1 (2021): 59, <https://doi.org/10.22373/jim.v18i1.10525>.

¹⁰ Nurdin.

¹¹ M. Quraish Shihab, *Secercah Cahaya Ilahi: Hidup Bersama al-Qur'an*. (Bandung: Mizan, 2007).

B. Problem Formulation

From the background discussion above, we will obtain several problem formulations which will become the focus of research in writing this thesis proposal. The formulation of the problem is:

1. How do Zamakhshari in *al-Kashshāf* and Sayyid Qutb in *Fī Zilāl al-Qur’ān* interpret pluralism verses?
2. What similarities and differences exist between the two interpretations in their theological response to religious pluralism?
3. How do the conclusions drawn from both interpretations contribute to the framework of religious moderation in a plural society?

C. Research Purposes

A research has a goal that must be achieved so that the author's wishes can be fulfilled. The expected objectives of this research are:

1. To explain the interpretation of Zamakhshari in *al-Kashshāf* and Sayyid Qutb in *Fī Zilāl al-Qur’ān* regarding pluralism verses.
2. To discover the similarities and differences exist between the two interpretations in their theological response to religious pluralism.
3. To draw the conclusions from both interpretations contribute to the framework of religious moderation in a plural society.

D. Research Uses

The purpose of this research is to produce something that will be achieved in the research. So, the use of research is formulated which will later bring the research benefits both academically and non-academicly. Academically, it is hoped that this research will be useful in the following ways.

1. Theoretically, this research contributes to the enrichment of Islamic scholarship, particularly in the fields of Qur’anic exegesis and religious studies, by presenting a critical and comparative analysis of the concept of religious pluralism through the interpretations of *al-Kashshāf* and *Fī Zilāl*

al-Qur'ān. It also aims to bridge classical exegetical insights with contemporary discussions on religious moderation in pluralistic societies.

2. Practically, the results of this research aim to provide guidelines for Muslims in interacting with others, maintaining harmony and integrity of the nation and state, as well as internalizing the principles of Islamic theology in a good perspective explained by ulama and interpreters.

E. Literature Review

The discussion in the literature review aims to broaden understanding of the subject matter researched by the author. Literature review is a scientific activity that is used to describe the limitations of material that will be used as a valid reference source. This section will discuss previous research results that are relevant and directly related to the academic issue to be analyzed (previous research on the topic). Therefore, this section is not the same as a bibliography or reference description used in writing theses and dissertations, although it is often misunderstood as such.

1. Article by Abdul Rohman entitled "The Concept of "Religious Pluralism" in the al-Qur'an (Application of Roland Barthes' Semiotics to Qs. al-Baqarah [2]: 62)." This article discusses the concept of "religious pluralism" in Q.S al-Baqarah [2]: 62. This article wants to answer several questions regarding how Roland Barthes's semiotic application applies to the concept of "religious pluralism" in the Qur'an, showing the message that the verse wants to convey, the ideology he built and whether the Qur'an really recognizes religious pluralism. The purpose of this article is to seek knowledge about the structure of the text contained in Q.S al-Baqarah [2]: 62 and the message contained in the verse using Roland Barthes' semiotic theory approach. This research was written using a qualitative method based on literature review. The results obtained are that Q.S al-Baqarah [2]: 62 according to the linguistic system is interpreted as adherents of the heavenly religion and the only religion that will survive after the prophet Muhammad was sent is Islam. Meanwhile, the mythological system is that the Qur'an recognizes the existence of religious plurality but does not recognize the

existence of religious pluralism. The ideology he built was religious exclusivism in the context of his interactions with other religions.¹²

2. Muhammad Dzikrullah's thesis entitled "The concept of pluralism in the Qur'an: a comparative study of the interpretation of al-Kashshāf by Zamakhshari and al-miṣbāḥ by Muhammad Quraish Shihab." This research aims to describe Zamakhshari and M Quraish Shihab's interpretation of Surah al-Baqarah verse 62 and Surah al-Mā'idah verse 69, describe Zamakhshari and M Quraish Shihab's interpretation of pluralism in Surah al-Baqarah verse 62 Surah al-Mā'idah verse 69, and describes the similarities and differences in Zamakhshari and M Quraish Shihab's interpretation of pluralism in surah al-Baqarah verse 62 and surah al-Mā'idah verse 69. This research concludes that according to Zamakhshari and Quraish Shihab, the statement of pluralists that all religions are the same is wrong. This is because it is not in accordance with Islamic teachings. As explained in the Qur'an, every religious community will reach God on condition of believing in Allah and the Last Day and doing good deeds. Meanwhile, these criteria are only found in Muslims.¹³
3. Muhamad Khusnul Muna's thesis entitled "THE VALUE OF RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE IN SURAH al-HUJURAT VERSES 11-13 AND ITS RELEVANCE TO THE GOALS OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION (Interpretive Analysis Study of the book Tafsir al-Munir by Wahbah al-Zuhaili)" This research aims to find out and explain comprehensively the values of religious tolerance contained in the Qur'an surah al-Hujurat verses 11-13 in Tafsir al-Munir, and find out the relevance of the values of religious tolerance in the Qur'an surah al-Hujurat verses 11-13 in Tafsir al-Munir with the Aim of Islamic Education. The conclusion in this research is the values of religious tolerance contained in Surah al-Hujurat verses 11-13 in Tafsir al-Munir Fil Aqidah wa al-Syari'ah wa al-

¹² Abdul Rohman, "Konsep 'Pluralisme Agama' Dalam al-Qur'an (Aplikasi Semiotika Roland Barthes Terhadap Qs. al-Baqarah [2]: 62)," *Bayani* 1, no. 2 (2021): 190–209, <https://doi.org/10.52496/bayaniv.1i.2pp190-209>.

¹³ MUHAMMAD DZIKRULLAH, "KONSEP PLURALISME DALAM al-QUR'AN (Studi Komparatif Tafsir al-KASHSHĀF Karya Zamakhshari Dan al-miṣbāḥ Karya Muhammad Quraish Shihab)," 2021.

Manhaj by Prof. Musthofa Zuhaili's Wahbah covers four aspects, namely Human Values, Plurality, Harmony of Life and Egalitarianism/Equality.¹⁴

4. Article by Julita Lestari entitled "RELIGIOUS PLURALISM IN INDONESIA, Challenges and Opportunities for National Integrity". On the one hand, religious diversity tends to give rise to divisions among religious communities. On the other hand, unity is driven by mutual respect for existing differences. This article examines both sides of pluralism in Indonesia as a country built on religious diversity. The plurality of religions in Indonesia has challenges and opportunities for the integrity of the nation. The biggest challenge to the plurality of this nation is the tendency for conflict to originate from the truth claims of each religious group. Meanwhile, the opportunity for plurality is an attitude of tolerance of each religious adherent that supports the integrity of the nation.¹⁵
5. IMAM SUBARUL ADZIM's thesis entitled "HERMENEUTIC APPROACHES IN INTERPRETING RELIGIOUS PLURALISM VERSES." Based on the theory of historical hermeneutics, it is stated that interpreting human expressions, whether related to law, literary works or holy books, requires historical understanding. This is because differences in historical conditions can influence differences in interpretation. So religious pluralism in Indonesia in the public sphere is a necessity considering that the condition of Indonesian society has various ethnicities, cultures and religions which have been recognized and regulated by the government in the Constitution.¹⁶
6. Muhammad Imron Syihab's thesis entitled "RELIGIOUS MODERATION IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE INTERPRETATION OF AL MARAGHI." This research aims to find out how Al Maraghi interprets the meaning of *tawasuth*, *I'tidal*, *Tawazun*, as well as Al Maraghi's concept of religious moderation. This research concludes that Ahmad Mustafa al-Maraghi's interpretation of the verses on *tawasut*, *itidal*, and *Tawazun* in religious moderation explains that what is meant by the *Wasathan ummatan* is being in *tinag-tangah* (not biased towards

¹⁴ Muhamad Khusnul Muna, "Nilai Toleransi Beragama Dalam Surah al- Hujurat Ayat 11-13 Dan Relevansinya Terhadap Tujuan Pendidikan Islam. (Kajian Analisis Interpretatif Kitab Tafsir al-Munir Karya Wahbah al-Zuhaili)," *Tesis*, 2016, 1–101.

¹⁵ Lestari, "PLURALISME AGAMA DI INDONESIA (Tantangan Dan Peluang Bagi Keutuhan Bangsa)."

¹⁶ IMAM SUBARUL ADZIM, "PENDEKATAN HERMENEUTIK DALAM MENAFSIRKAN AYAT-AYAT PLURALISME AGAMA" (INSTITUT PTIQ JAKARTA, 2021).

one side), being fair and balanced. then *wasath* (religious moderation) can also be interpreted as *khiyar* the best choice, the highest degree or in the middle. So someone can be said to be a *wasathan ummatan* if he is given a higher place than the chosen group who follow in the footsteps of the Prophet Muhammad.¹⁷

7. Fransiska Anggraini's thesis entitled "The Concept of Religious Pluralism in the Views of Abdurrahman Wahid and John Hick." This thesis discusses how the phenomenon of religious and cultural diversity which often leads to division, conflict and hostility is interpreted within the scope of the philosophy of pluralism. In his discussion, the author takes and compares the concept of pluralism initiated by Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur) with John Hick.¹⁸
8. Siti Hajar & Umayah's article entitled "Tafsir Ayat-Ayat Pluralisme Agama Perspektif Husein Muhammad." This article explores the interpretation of religious pluralism in the works of Husein Muhammad, a prominent Indonesian Muslim scholar known for his engagement with issues of justice, human rights, and interfaith dialogue. Employing Farid Esack's liberation hermeneutics, the authors show how Husein Muhammad reads pluralism-related verses (e.g., QS. Al-Hujurat [49]:13, QS. Al-Kafirun [109]:1–6, QS. Al-Baqarah [2]:256) as theological affirmations of equality and coexistence. For Husein, pluralism is more than mere plurality; it is a theologically justified worldview rooted in *tawhīd*, which calls for acknowledging religious difference as divine will and fostering interreligious brotherhood without compromising faith identity. His approach bridges normative theology and contextual humanism, contributing a localized Indonesian voice to the global discourse on religious pluralism.¹⁹
9. Hendrikus Maku, Alfian Tanggang, Joannes George Maria, & Julio Pius Zoraida Dopo's article entitled "Diskursus dan Kritik terhadap Teologi Pluralisme." This paper provides a critical discussion of pluralistic theology, particularly the philosophical tendencies that suggest all religions are equally valid paths to salvation. The study highlights how this notion has sparked controversy among

¹⁷ Imron Syihab, "Moderasi Beragama Dalam Perspektif Tafsir Al Maraghi" (IAIN Kudus, 2023).

¹⁸ Fransiska Anggraini, "KONSEP PLURALISME AGAMA DALAM PANDANGAN ABDURRAHMAN WAHID DAN JOHN HICK" (IAIN Kediri, 2023).

¹⁹ Siti Hajar and Umayah Umayah, "Tafsir Ayat-Ayat Pluralisme Agama Perspektif Husein Muhammad," *Diya Al-Afkar: Jurnal Studi Al-Quran Dan Al-Hadis* 8, no. 02 (2020): 236, <https://doi.org/10.24235/diyaafkar.v8i02.7545>.

Muslim scholars, especially when it undermines the doctrinal exclusivity of Islam. The author critically examines figures such as John Hick and Wilfred Cantwell Smith, juxtaposing their claims with the critiques offered by Islamic scholars. The study underscores that while respect and coexistence are fundamental, equating all religions theologically is not acceptable in Islamic orthodoxy. This work helps clarify the boundary between sociological tolerance and theological relativism and argues for a pluralism that allows peaceful coexistence without compromising Islamic aqidah.²⁰

10. Ahmad Khoirul Fata's article entitled "Diskursus dan Kritik terhadap Teologi Pluralisme Agama di Indonesia." This article presents a sharp criticism of religious pluralism, especially as promoted by Western thinkers and some Muslim intellectuals. The author argues that pluralism—understood as the claim that all religions are equally valid paths to salvation—contradicts the theological foundation of Islam. He explains the typology of exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism, and proposes an "exclusive-tolerant theology" in which Muslims can maintain their faith's absolute truth while practicing tolerance. He also supports the MUI fatwa (2005) that declares pluralism, liberalism, and secularism as haram, due to their threat to the purity of Islamic faith and aqidah. The article is valuable as a reference for theological rebuttals against syncretic pluralism.²¹

Among the reviewed literature, Ahmad Khoirul Fata's article entitled "Diskursus dan Kritik terhadap Teologi Pluralisme Agama di Indonesia" bears a thematic resemblance to this study. The article critically engages with the philosophical and theological foundations of religious pluralism—especially the works of Western thinkers such as John Hick—while defending the exclusivist position of Islamic doctrine. However, Fata's approach is primarily discursive and conceptual, relying on analytical criticism and fatwas to oppose pluralism. This present research, while sharing the critical stance toward pluralism, adopts a more textual and exegetical approach by exploring Qur'anic interpretations in two authoritative commentaries: Zamakhshari's *al-Kashshāf* and Sayyid Qutb's *Fī Zilāl*

²⁰ Hendrikusi Maku et al., "Cak Nur Pluralism: Criticism Of The Phenomenon Religious Intolerance In Indonesia," *International Journal Of Humanities Education and Social Sciences (IJHESS)* 3, no. 4 (2024): 1913–24, <https://doi.org/10.55227/ijhess.v3i4.803>.

²¹ Ahmad Khoirul Fata, "Teologi Pluralisme Agama Di Indonesia," *Miqot* XLII, no. 1 (2018): 105–28.

al-Qur'ān. By focusing on how these commentators interpret key verses related to pluralism, this study seeks to assess pluralism through a direct theological lens rooted in the Qur'an. Additionally, this research situates the tafsir findings within the framework of religious moderation (*wasatiyyah*) as endorsed by contemporary Indonesian Islamic discourse. In doing so, this study contributes to bridging the theological rejection of pluralism with the ethical imperative for coexistence in a plural society.

F. Theoretical Study

1) Pluralism Theories

Religious pluralism is a special term in the study of religions that cannot be equated with concepts such as tolerance or mutual respect. As an understanding or "ism" that refers to a certain point of view towards religions, religious pluralism has been a topic of long discussion among scientists and researchers in the field of religious studies.

Although there are various sociological definitions of pluralism, the main attention of researchers and religious figures is on definitions that see religious truth as something relative and place each religion in an "equal" position regardless of the type of religion. In fact, some supporters of pluralism also adhere to the view of religious syncretism.²²

In the Indonesian Islamic context, the Indonesian Council of Ulama (Majelis Ulama Indonesia or MUI) firmly distinguishes between the sociological reality of religious plurality (*pluralitas agama*) and the ideological doctrine of religious pluralism. According to MUI's Fatwa No. 7/MUNAS VII/MUI/11/2005, religious pluralism is defined as the belief that all religions are equally valid and true, and therefore, no religious group should claim exclusive truth or salvation. MUI rejects this view, stating that it contradicts the core tenets of Islam which assert the uniqueness and finality of the Islamic message as the only divinely accepted religion. This fatwa emphasizes that Muslims must maintain theological exclusivity

²² DR. Adian Husaini, "Pluralisme Agama," no. PLURALISME AGAMA MUSUH AGAMA?AGAMA (2015): 2–3.

while being inclusive in social interactions. Thus, for MUI, religious pluralism—understood as a relativistic and syncretistic ideology—is considered haram (prohibited), while religious plurality is an accepted sociological fact to be managed with justice and mutual respect.²³

One figure who illustrates this pluralist thinking is Gus Dur. Gus Dur's thoughts on religion are rooted in experiences in the world of Islamic boarding schools which formed a religious view full of ethics, formality and structure. Furthermore, his experience in the Middle East exposed him to various styles of religious thought, ranging from conservative and symbolic fundamentalist to liberal and radical. In the humanitarian field, his thinking was influenced by Western humanist philosophy, which was also supported by the influence of kiai during his time at Islamic boarding school, thus forming Gus Dur's sensitivity to humanitarian issues.

According to Greg Barton, Abdurrahman Wahid is a combination of two intellectual traditions, namely traditional Islamic scholarship and modern Western education.²⁴ One result of this fusion was his great attention to the reform of Islamic thought and practice, which was also a focus in Islamic modernism. His environment, education and nature of liking to interact with society also influenced Gus Dur's views on humanism and pluralism.²⁵

In Gus Dur's view, religious pluralism is openness to seeking the truth wherever the truth is, and the actualization of pluralism must be visible in actions and ways of thinking, because this is what gives birth to tolerance. Gus Dur is a figure who is accepted by almost all religious groups. In fact, when he died, many interfaith figures felt lost and prayed for him. This cannot be separated from Gus Dur's good relationship with people of other religions. Gus Dur developed anti-religious exclusivism views; For him, the many inter-religious conflicts in various regions are caused by this exclusive attitude.

²³ MUI, "Fatwa MUNAS VII Majelis Ulama Indonesia," *Majelis Ulama Indonesia*, no. 9 (2005).

²⁴ Greg Barton Greg Fealy, "Tradisionalisme," *Yogyakarta: LKiS*, 2010, 247.

²⁵ Nila Khoirunimatul Azizah, "KOHERENSI PLURALISME GUS DUR DAN MODERATISME NU" (STAIN Kediri, 2015).

On the other hand, Nurcholish Madjid emphasized that religious pluralism means an attitude of diversity that does not only focus on meeting the needs of Muslims, but also seeks shared needs through interaction and acceptance of other cultural traditions as long as they do not conflict with Islamic values. Islam, according to Nurcholish, teaches diversity and respect for people of other religions in order to create Indonesian values that are fought for together regardless of differences. Nurcholish emphasized the importance of the principles of tolerance and respect for diversity as the main capital for Indonesian Muslims in facing various problems. This capital is very relevant in the context of Indonesia, which is known as a nation with a high level of diversity.²⁶

According to Nurcholish, pluralism is not only about accepting the existence and rights of other people or other groups, but also involves the ability to act fairly between groups and adhere to the principles of peace and mutual respect.²⁷ If differences within a religion are not handled well, this has the potential to trigger conflict. For example, in recent years, Muslims have even experienced disputes within Islamic organizations which sometimes lead to clashes between camps. First, it is very important to maintain harmony between religious communities. Second, it is also necessary to strengthen relations between religious communities and the government in order to create a peaceful and safe religious life.²⁸

2) Zamakhshari Tafsir Methodology (al-Kashshāf)

Zamakhshari was a commentator who lived in the 12th century, who was widely known for his tafsir, al-Kashshāf, with a linguistic and rhetoric-based approach. Zamakhshari's method emphasizes aspects of the Arabic language and balaghah (rhetoric) as central elements in interpreting the verses of the Qur'an. His linguistic

²⁶ Johan Setiawan, "Pemikiran Nurcholish Madjid Tentang Pluralisme Agama Dalam Konteks Keindonesiaan," *Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* Vol. 5, No (2019): 32–33.

²⁷ M. Thoriqul Huda dan Isna Alfi Maghfiroh, "Pluralisme Dalam Pandangan Pemuda Lintas Agama Di Surabaya," *Jurnal Studi Agama* 2, no. 1 (2019): 5.

²⁸ Fransiska Anggraini, "KONSEP PLURALISME AGAMA DALAM PANDANGAN ABDURRAHMAN WAHID DAN JOHN HICK" (IAIN Kediri, 2023).

approach is highly analytical and includes in-depth explanations of grammar, word meaning, and use of stylistics.

As a follower of the Muktaẓilah, Zamakhshari was also influenced by rationalist views in theology. This can be seen from the style of interpretation which tends to strengthen the principles of justice and truth, with a focus on individual responsibility. In the context of pluralism, Zamakhshari's methodology leads to a logical and inclusive understanding, although limited by the social context of his time which still emphasized religious exclusivism in Islamic society.²⁹

3) Sayyid Qutb Tafsir Methodology (Fī Zilāl al-Qur'ān)

Sayyid Qutb, a contemporary commentator who lived in the 20th century, had a different approach to interpretation through his work Fī zilāl al-qur'ān. This tafsir was written against a socio-political background full of tension, especially his experience dealing with Egypt's authoritarian regime and the influence of Islamist thought at that time. This makes Qutb's interpretations highly influenced by ideological perspectives and critical political situations, where he sees the Qur'an as a revolutionary guide for creating an ideal Islamic society.

Qutb emphasized a contextual approach in interpreting the verses of the Qur'an, with a more political and essentialist view. The focus is on the formation of an Islamic society based on the values of the Qur'an, with strong criticism of all forms of kufr and hypocrisy. In the context of pluralism, Qutb's approach tends to be critical of the concept of liberal pluralism and encourages an understanding of pluralism that remains based on Islamic principles.³⁰

The socio-political background of these two commentators greatly influenced their methods and styles of interpretation. Zamakhshari, who lives in a more

²⁹ Asep Mulyaden, Muhammad Zainul Hilmi, and Badruzzaman M. Yunus, "Manhaj Tafsir al-KASHSHĀF Karya al-Zamakhshari," *Jurnal Iman Dan Spiritualitas* 2, no. 1 (2022): 85–90, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jis.v2i1.16492>.

³⁰ Abdul Kallang, "Sayid Qutub Dan Tafsirnya Fī Zilāl al-Qur'Ān (Metodologi Tafsir Dan Pemahaman Nasakh)," *al-Din: Jurnal Dakwah Dan Sosial Keagamaan* 8, no. 1 (2022): 84–96, <https://doi.org/10.30863/ajdsk.v8i1.3247>.

peaceful environment and is based on rationalist thinking, tends to use interpretive methods that are more academic and focused on the logic of language. On the other hand, Qutb, who faced a repressive regime in Egypt, developed an interpretation that emphasized the ideology of liberation and political resistance through the principles of the Qur'an.

In the context of pluralism, the two commentators have different approaches in viewing religious diversity. Zamakhshari tends to be more open and emphasizes aspects of morality in relations between religious believers, while Qutb views pluralism from a more firm perspective, rejecting pluralism that is not based on Islamic teachings. These differences in approach reflect how social, cultural and political backgrounds can shape methods and perspectives in interpreting the Qur'an.

G. Research methods

The comparative or *muqāran* approach is a method used to analyze two or more sources by comparing different points of view in understanding a theme, in this case related to the concept of pluralism in religious moderation. This approach is considered appropriate for this research because it aims to explore and compare the views of two mufasir, namely Zamakhshari through his al-Kashshāf tafsir and Sayyid Qutb through *Fī Zīlāl al-Qur'ān*, regarding verses relevant to pluralism.

These two interpretations were chosen because they represent different perspectives, both from historical, social and theological contexts. Zamakhshari, a classical interpretator who is famous for his rational, grammatical and rhetorical approaches in al-Kashshāf, provides a strong view in understanding the verses of the Qur'an linguistically. Meanwhile, Sayyid Qutb in *Fī Zīlāl al-Qur'ān* interprets the Qur'an from a socio-political background which is influenced by his experience of facing tense social situations. This comparative approach allows exploration of how these different contexts influence the interpretation of the theme of pluralism.

1. Comparison Steps

In this research, there are several comparative steps that will be taken to produce an in-depth and systematic analysis, among others:

1) Identify Verses Related to Pluralism:

The initial step is to identify verses in the Qur'an that are relevant to the theme of pluralism, such as verses that discuss tolerance, religious freedom and relations between religious believers.

2) Determining Comparison Criteria:

To facilitate comparative analysis, several criteria will be used as a basis for comparison, namely:

- Theological: Seeing how the two commentators understand Islamic religious doctrine regarding pluralism, including how they view other religions in relation to salvation.

- Social: Analyze how the interpretations of the two commentators respond to the social context, especially in terms of interactions between religious communities.

- Culture: Examining how the culture or background of each commentator, both classical and modern Arabic, influences their perspective on pluralism verses.

3) Comparison of Historical Background:

In this stage, an analysis will be carried out of the socio-political context in which each interpretation is written. For example, Zamakhshari lived in the classical Islamic era with a more academic approach, while Sayyid Qutb wrote his tafsir in a more modern era with personal experiences full of political pressure. These contexts will be compared to see their influence on each interpreter's interpretation of pluralism.

4) Interpretation Content Analysis of Related Verses in Both Tafsir:

Once the verses are selected and the comparison criteria determined, this research will analyze how each tafsir explains the verses. This analysis includes an understanding of the literal, contextual and symbolic meaning of the verses discussed, as well as how the two commentators give certain emphasis according to their point of view.

5) Drawing the Red Thread between Tafsir Zamakhshari and Sayyid Qutb:

The final step is to conclude the main similarities and differences between these two interpretations in viewing pluralism. This research will identify whether there is a common thread between the two interpretations in terms of the principles of religious moderation, as well as the contribution of each interpretation in forming views on pluralism in Islam.

2. Purpose of Using the Comparative Method

The comparative or *muqāran* method allows researchers to explore a richer understanding of pluralism by comparing two different perspectives. The differences in social, cultural and political backgrounds between Zamakhshari and Sayyid Qutb provide diverse and complementary views. With this approach, research can show how classical and modern perspectives in Islam are unique in understanding contemporary issues, such as pluralism, which are relevant for the multicultural context in Indonesia.

3. Types of research

This research is library research, where data is collected from sources such as the al-Qur'an, tafsir books, Islamic encyclopedias, articles and other related literature. In addition, a qualitative approach was applied in data collection. The aim of this research is to produce a *muqāran* interpretation (comparison). The data that has been collected is then analyzed to answer the problem formulation using the interpretive approach method.³¹

³¹ Wahyudin Darmalaksana, "Metode Penelitian Kualitatif Studi Pustaka Dan Studi Lapangan," *Pre-Print Digital Library UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung*, 2020.

4. Research object

The research object in this study is the scientific target of obtaining objective, valid and reliable data, which has certain goals and benefits. The material object is the verses about pluralism which were interpreted by Zamakhshari and Sayyid Qutb in their tafsir books. Meanwhile, the formal object of this research consists of data that analyzes the comparison between the two interpretations (including similarities and differences) and their relevance to the concept of pluralism.

5. Data and Data Sources

This research uses data sources consisting of two sources, namely: basic (primary) information material and supporting (secondary) information material.

a. Primary Data Source

Primary data sources are the main sources obtained directly from research subjects as the source of the information sought. The main source used as the first reference source in this research is in the form of a comparative or *muqāran*, so the primary sources are the tafsir al-Kashshāf by Zamakhshari and the tafsir Fī Zilāl al-Qur'ān by Sayyid Qutb, the first publication of which is 10 volumes which are currently widely circulated in Indonesia and each volume consists of 3 juz of the al-Qur'an in certain verses that discuss religious pluralism.

b. Secondary Data Source

Secondary data sources are data sources obtained indirectly as support for the research subject. In this research, the author uses the al-Kashshāf interpretation and the Fī Zilāl al-Qur'ān interpretation as the main guidelines in writing and books about the concept of pluralism in religious moderation, one of which is entitled "Trends in Religious Pluralism: A Critical Review" by DR. Anis Malik Thoha. Apart from books, the author also uses articles, theses and theses that are still related to the theme, including an article by Julita Lestari entitled "RELIGIOUS PLURALISM IN INDONESIA, Challenges and Opportunities

for National Integrity", by Fadhil Hidayat Akbar entitled "The Concept of Religious Moderation in Review of the Qur'an Hadith.", Fauziah Nurdin's work entitled "Religious Moderation according to the Qur'an and Hadith." and so on.

1) Method of collecting data

Data collection techniques are a strategic step in research, which is carried out to obtain comprehensive information about the main problem being discussed. Data can be collected through various methods or techniques adapted to the type of research being conducted. In this study, the author used the documentation method, namely by collecting information from various written sources such as scientific works, articles and other references that are relevant and scientific in nature. The author also collects al-Qur'an verses related to the concept of pluralism in religious moderation, then traces the interpretation of these verses using Tafsir al-Kashshāf and Fī Zilāl al-Qur'ān.

2) Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of studying, selecting, describing, changing and compiling data to produce information that is useful in drawing conclusions. After completing the data processing steps, the author used content analysis techniques to analyze it. This technique involves identifying messages or information systematically and objectively, so that they can be concluded and linked to current conditions, resulting in a relevant and in-depth understanding of the research topic.

H. Systematic Discussion

The systematics of writing a thesis proposal is divided into several chapters, namely:

CHAPTER I – Introduction: Contains background of the problem, problem formulation, research objectives, research uses, literature review, theoretical studies, research methods, and systematic discussion.

CHAPTER II - Theoretical Basis: This chapter discusses key concepts in research, namely pluralism and religious moderation. It will explain in detail

the definitions, typologies (exclusivism, inclusivism, pluralism), key figures (John Hick, Wilfred Smith, Gus Dur, etc.), and criticism (e.g., MUI fatwa), religious moderation, and the relationship between pluralism and moderation. This chapter also provides a brief introduction to the tafsir of al-Kashshāf and Fī Zilāl al-Qur’ān as well as the tafsir methodology used by the two interpreters.

CHAPTER III - Zamakhshari and Sayyid Qutb's Interpretation of Pluralism Verses: This chapter contains a comparative study of the interpretations of Zamakhshari in al-Kashshāf and Sayyid Qutb in Fī Zilāl al-Qur’ān. To perfect the flow of analysis, this chapter is divided into several sub-sections, namely:

- a. **Verses related to Pluralism:** Selection and explanation of verses from the Qur’an related to pluralism.
- b. **Interpretation of al-Kashshāf:** Analysis of Zamakhshari's interpretation regarding pluralism verses, including the theological understanding and interpretation he provides.
- c. **Interpretation of Fī Zilāl al-Qur’ān:** Analysis of Sayyid Qutb's interpretation of the same verses, including his theological and sociological views.
- d. **Comparative Analysis of The Interpretation of al-Kashshāf and Fī Zilāl al-Qur’ān:** This section will elaborate on the comparative analysis by adding sub-sections that clarify the context of the two interpretations, viz:
 - i. **Historical Background:** Discusses the social background and historical conditions that influenced Zamakhshari and Sayyid Qutb in interpreting pluralism verses.
 - ii. **Socio-Political Conditions:** Reviewing the influence of the political and social environment surrounding the two interpreters, which played a role in the form of interpretation they produced.
 - iii. **Contextual Influences on Interpretation:** Analyze how each mufasir's life context influences their understanding of religious pluralism and moderation.

CHAPTER IV - The Relevance of Interpretations of Pluralism Verses to Modern Concepts of Pluralism: This chapter discusses the relevance of the results of the comparison of the two interpretations in the current socio-religious context. This chapter includes an analysis of the application of the concept of pluralism and the challenges of religious moderation, with the following structure:

- a. **Theological Critique of Religious Pluralism:** Including confrontation with Western pluralist theology and syncretism.
- b. **Socio-Religious Realities of Intolerance:** Case studies and phenomena of intolerance in contemporary Indonesia (e.g., discrimination, misinterpretation of tolerance).
- c. **Relevance to Religious Moderation Framework:** How Qur'anic interpretation supports inclusive coexistence without compromising theological truth.

CHAPTER V - Closing: Contains conclusions from research results, suggestions for further research development, as well as practical implications of these findings in the context of religious moderation and pluralism in Indonesia.

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