RELIGIOUS PLURALISM IN LABUHAN PARANGKUSUMO TRADITION: COMMUNICATING LOCAL JAVANESE WISDOM AND THE MORAL MESSAGE OF THE QUR’AN

Kahfaya Nuzulanisa
Universitas Islam Negeri Salatiga Salatiga Indonesia
dafhayanuzulanisa@gmail.com

Zidna Fariha
Universitas Islam Negeri Salatiga Salatiga Indonesia
farihafinajah@gmail.com

Abstract: This article discusses the religious pluralism contained in the procession of the Labuhan Parangkusumo tradition. The problem underlying this study is that Indonesia, rich in culture, tradition, and religion, is prone to conflict and violence due to a lack of public understanding of the value of pluralism. This study used the living Qur’an approach with a descriptive-qualitative method. Data collection techniques were obtained from informants conveying the Labuhan Parangkusumo tradition as primary data and supported by some secondary data in the form of literature and sources from other media related to the Labuhan Parangkusumo tradition. In the end, this research shows a form of religious pluralism in the traditional harbor prayer procession that involves all religions. As well as there are signs of religious pluralism in Q.S. Al-Kāfirūn (109): 6, which talks about religious tolerance.

Keywords: Pluralism; Parangkusumo; Living Qur’an
Introduction

Indonesia is a country that is rich in culture and tradition; therefore, in a multicultural society, culture, ethnicity, and religion cannot be separated. One of the traditions and cultures exists, especially in Java. Java is still rich in culture and traditions, in which until now, the Javanese people still believe in the cultural heritage of their ancestors. The culture inherited from our ancestors that has become a habit in society is not easily let go. This proves that Indonesia has a very acculturative pattern of diversity (Ayu Nurul Izayanti, 2021).

In Indonesia, religious life has a plurality of various races, ethnicities, religions, and cultures, which is a place that has the potential for the development of many religions. The Indonesian state officially recognizes six religions: Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Confucianism (Hanik, 2015). Based on these facts, Nurcholis Madjid said that Indonesia is one of the most pluralist countries in the world, and Indonesia's population is rich in religious and cultural diversity (Moko, 2017).

On the other hand, the existence of Indonesia, which is rich in various cultures, ethnicities, and religions, makes it easy for conflicts to occur. To reduce the potential for conflict in society, it is necessary to understand pluralism. In recent decades, the term pluralism has become an exciting discussion to study. Pluralism can be interpreted as an approach to understanding other understandings of differences (Shihab Ali, 1998). From this meaning, pluralism can be interpreted as tolerance which means mutual respect.

In the context of Indonesian society, plurality is a necessity. Religion is human nature. Indonesia is inhabited by around 210 million people with different religious backgrounds. Each religion has a different historical context. Therefore, the existence of religious pluralism has the potential to improve the meaning of the essence of pluralism itself. Religious people will
avoid potential conflicts if they uphold the value of tolerance; on
the contrary, if in a community, religious people consider their
religion to be the most correct, then conflicts cannot be dammed
(Sumbulah & Nurjanah, 2013).

Today joint interfaith prayer is becoming a trend amidst
the diversity of adherents of religions because a joint prayer has
not marked a national state event. Especially when being hit by a
natural disaster or calamity (Azizah et al., 2020). In general, joint
prayer events in Indonesia involve six religions: Islam, Hinduism,
Confucianism, Catholicism, and Protestantism. Then the different
religions sat in one place to carry out a prayer event together.

Conceptually there are various ways to create harmonious
relations between religious communities. Among them is based on
local cultural wisdom. In Indonesia, various kinds of local wisdom
can bridge harmonious relations between religions (Wahyudi,
2019). Especially the Javanese people, who are thick with their
culture and traditions. One of the people who still carry out the
tradition of their ancestors is the people of Yogyakarta, who are
still thick with their religious culture, such as the Labuhan
ceremony. The people who live in the Yogyakarta palace area still
uphold their cultural values and traditions. Various ceremonies
and rituals are still carried out routinely by the general public and
the palace as a form of effort to preserve traditions from their
ancestors. Of the many ceremonies carried out by the Yogyakarta
palace, there is the Labuhan tradition, a religious ceremonial ritual
held on Parangkumo beach. This research will focus on this
Labuhan tradition with a review of the living Qur’an.

The focus of this research is vital because Islam is a
universal religion that highly values tolerance and is open to
religious pluralism. Signs regarding religious pluralism are found in
many of the Qur’an, one of which is in Q.S. Al-Kāfirūn (109): 6;
(For you your religion and to me mine). The embodiment of
religious pluralism is found in the interfaith prayer procession in
the Labuhan Parangkusumo tradition.
The Labuhan ceremony was held as a form of expression of gratitude to God Almighty, including the Kraton family. In the Labuhan procession, there is a prayer reading procession led directly by the modin. This tradition has a unique side where the prayer reading procession is not only attended by adherents of one religion but from various religions.

From the prayer reading procession, which was attended by various cross religions, it became an exciting thing for the writer to study further. In this study, researchers will examine the religious pluralism contained in the Parangkusumo Labuhanan procession and its relation to Q.S. Al-Kāfirūn (109): 6.

Research on the Parangkusumo Laburan tradition is one of many research objects raised. In previous research, many researchers focused on the object of the Labuhan Parangkusumo tradition from various points of view. For example, the research conducted by Lucia Windita Aprilia with the research title “Ritual Labuhan Pantai Parangkusumo Yogyakarta Dalam Perspektif Performance Studies.” In his thesis work at the Yogyakarta Art Institute in 2021, Aprilia photographed Labuhan Parangkusumo from the point of view of performance studies. In short, if we look at the Labuhan ritual from a Performance Studies point of view, the people who are present and involved in the Labuhan ritual have their own goals. It is a liminal process, a society that is free of structure and has free nature so that it will provide its perspective for people’s lives, where the peak of performativity is at the peak or climax of the performance, namely ngalap blessing.

Another researcher is Abdul Jalil, with the research title “Memaknai Tradisi Upacara Labuhan Dan Pengaruhnya Terhadap Masyarakat Parangtritis.” In the research in the form of a journal, Jalil discussed the meaning of the Labuhan ceremonial tradition and its influence on the people of Parangtritis, which arose when Jalil assisted the students of Madrasah Aliyah Wahid Hasyim as a final project in the form of a field trip-based scientific work. The
results of this study indicate that according to the people of Parangtritis, Labuhan is not merely a myth from their ancestors to avoid bad luck. However, Labuhan is preserved solely as gratitude to the almighty Essence for the bestowal of gifts received..

Apart from the two researchers above, similar research was carried out by Andika Setiawan, later published in the Aqlania journal in 2020 with the title “Prosesi Hajad Dalem Labuhan Keraton Yogyakarta dalam Perspektif Semiotika C.S., Peirce.” With Charles Sanders Peirce’s semiotic perspective, Setiawan wants to reconcile the two conflicting perspectives of groups in responding to the implementation of the Hajad Dalem Laburan Keraton Yogyakarta, between those who think that the procession is a manifestation of piety to God and others who think that it is an act of shirk.

Of the previous studies above with the same research object, none has taken the perspective of the Qur’an. This is where this research becomes interesting, especially related to the living Qur’an.

This research uses the living Qur’an approach with a descriptive-qualitative method (Bernard, 2018). This method reveals and clearly describes the model of religious pluralism contained in the procession of the Labuhan Parangkusumo tradition. The data collection technique used is the delivery of sources about the Labuhan Parangkusumo tradition as primary data. It is supported by some secondary data from literature and sources from other media related to the Labuhan Parangkusumo tradition.

**Traditions of Labuhan Parangkusumo: Historical Background**

The history of Mount Merapi is closely related to the philosophy of the city of Yogyakarta and the Yogyakarta palace as its center. Yogyakarta is divided by an imaginary axis that connects the South Sea, Krapyak Stage, the Palace, Tugu Pal Putih, Mount
Merapi, and Parangkusumo (Permana & Hartanto, 2019). Yogyakarta is described as a mother's womb, rich in manners, culture, and traditions, while Parangkusumo is described as the world's life. One tradition that is still alive in Yogyakarta society is the Labuhan Parangkusumo tradition.

The word “Labuhan” comes from the Javanese language, namely harbor. Labuh has the same meaning as larungan, namely throwing something into the water that flows into the sea. The word “larung” means giving offerings to spirits that rule somewhere. Thus, the word “labuh” or “larung” means throwing something into flowing water as a form of offering to the spirits that rule in a place, such as the Parangkusumo sea. To obtain the Sultan's personal safety, the Labuhan tradition at the Yogyakarta Palace was carried out on Parangkusumo beach. This location was chosen based on the consideration that in ancient times the place was used by the kings of Mataram, namely during the Panembahan Senopati period, for meditation (Widyatwati et al., 2017).

In the Yogyakarta Palace Encyclopedia, as quoted by Jalil, it is explained that Labuhan is a ceremony of throwing palace objects in a particular form into the South Sea, Mount Merapi, Mount Lawu, and certain places. Objects that were harbored included: 1) pieces of nails (kenaka) from Sri Sultan, which had been collected for one year; 2) a haircut (rikma) from Sri Sultan collected for one year; 3) scraps of Sri Sultan’s used clothing; 4) used objects belonging to Sri Sultan in the form of paying (songsong); 5) several flowers that have withered and dried, used as flower offerings for heirlooms (layon sekar) collected for one year: 6) and several items which mainly consist of cloth. The harbor tradition is carried out to prevent disaster or catastrophe for future generations (Jalil, 2015).

The Labuhan ceremony in its history was a form of socialization influenced by the traditional ritual ceremony of the Mataram Palace, which was previously used in the interest of the
political system to give confidence to the people that Panembahan Senopati wants a peaceful, prosperous, and just life. However, Panembahan Senopati could only get this with the help of Kanjeng Ratu Kidul, a queen who rules the southern seas. Then they carry out a spiritual marriage which, in the end through this marriage will bind all the Javanese kings as their descendants. From this, the people believe that Kanjeng Ratu Kidul will give all of that if the people make offerings that are currently manifested in the form of the Labuhan ceremony as a form of gratitude to her. Some people believe that Kanjeng Ratu Kidul is only an intermediary of gratitude to God Almighty, including the royal family (Jalil, 2015).

*Pisungsung Jaladri Bhecti Pertiwi*, is an offering ceremony for the sea as an expression of gratitude to Allah for the bestowed sustenance. Based on the results of the researcher’s interview with the resource person, Mr. Suraji, on June 7, 2022, the *Pisungsung Jaladri Bhecti Pertiwi* is held once a year on May Tuesday wage. Held in that month because after the main harvest as a form of expression of gratitude.

In a traditional procession, there are offerings which are the actualization of the perpetrator’s thoughts, feelings, and the perpetrator’s desire to get closer to the creator; efforts to approach oneself through offerings are a form of cultural accumulation that is abstract. The offering is a symbolic discourse that functions as a suggestion for “negotiation” in spiritual matters to something that smells of the occult (Sabila, 2021).

According to Mr. Suraji, the Parangkusumo Labuhan procession begins with the handing over of uburampe (equipment) or offerings in Labuhan. Each of the offerings used during the ritual has meaning, and the food offerings must be in the order in which they are prepared. Foods used in offerings include Jenang Puro, which means asking forgiveness; Janur, opo-opo leaves, reed leaves which mean ojo ono alangan opo wae; fruits; plantains are called plantains because they mean to ask for anything; Sanggar bananas
which consist of two combs means a satirical sentence in the Javanese language *mikul duwur mendem jero* which in the middle is filled with betel, Jambe, fireflies which means at home there is an intention to support a heart.

Then, the *uburampe* in the form of the sultan’s goods and the offerings were washed away in the waves that hit the beach. Of the items that are floated, the community believes that the tradition of *ngalap* blessing by throwing themselves into the sea will get objects belonging to the Sultan. Uburampe Labuhan is believed to bring good luck to anyone who manages to get it (Jalil, 2015).

After the goods are dissolved, the next procession is the prayer procession. In the Labuhan ceremony, prayers are led by the local *modin*. The prayer that the *modin* brings is the prayer of the Islamic religion, which involves people from various religions because they have the principle لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ which means for you your religion and me my religion.
Religious Pluralism in Q.S. Al-Kāfirūn

Religion and man are one unit; they cannot be separated. In language, the word religion comes from Sangsakerta, which is closely related to Hinduism and Buddhism, which means “not to go,” “stay in place,” and “inherited from generation to generation.” As for Islam, religion comes from the word *dīn*, which means mastering, subduing, obedience or recompense (Miskiyah, 2022).

Religion can be said as a set of rules that bind humans about God, fellow humans, and nature. So a religious person is orderly and at peace, both with himself and in matters relating to aspects of his life. Religion contains three foundations (Yunus, 2014): belief, worship, and a system that regulates good relations between humans and the universe.

M. Rasiji argues that religion is not a house or clothes, which can be changed as needed (Hanik, 2015). If someone embraces a belief, that belief cannot be separated from him. Religion is the right of every human being. There is no compulsion to choose a belief. So, the difference in religion is a certainty. Or often referred to as religious pluralism.

Pluralism comes from the English language, consisting of plural (various) and ism (understanding). In terms of pluralism means various understandings or various understandings. In the dictionary of philosophy, pluralism has three characteristics: first, fundamental reality has a plural character, in contrast to dualism which states that there are two fundamental realities, while monism states that there is only one fundamental reality. Second, several levels in the universe are separate and irreducible and in themselves independent. Third, the universe is undefined in form and has no fundamental harmonious unity or continuity, or one can say there is no fundamental cohen and rational order (Rahman, 2014).

Thus, religious pluralism means believing in the existence of other religions with an attitude of respect and respect within the
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community. The phenomenon of religious pluralism promises a life of peace and harmony in a heterogeneous society. There are three principles in viewing religious pluralism (Yunus, 2014). First, pluralism can be understood by seeing one with many forms (various religions). Second, there is a shared acknowledgment of the quality of religious experience. Third, spirituality is known and validated through the imposition of its criteria on other religions.

The spearhead of religious pluralism is religious tolerance. Islam is a very tolerant religion. Islam loves peace and peace within the scope of fellow Muslims and interfaith relations. The concept of tolerance in Islam is carried out in its holy book as a human guide. One is written in Q. S. Al-Kāfirūn (109): 6.

Surah Al-Kāfirūn belongs to the group of Makiyah letters, one of the characteristics of which is to discuss faith. This can be seen in the mention of unbelievers, and substances worshiped in the letter. Besides that, Surah Al-Kāfirūn also talks about worship and religion. The background for the revelation of Al-Kāfirūn’s letter was the offer made by the Quraysh infidels to the Prophet Muhammad, where the Quraysh were concerned about the rapid development of Islam. They did everything to reduce the existence of Islam, starting from bullying, and violence, even intimidation, until finally, the Quraysh offered four agreements to the Prophet Muhammad. The four agreements contain; 1) the infidels of Quraysh were ready to give wealth to Muhammad and make him the richest man, 2) the infidels of Quraysh were ready to facilitate the needs of the Prophet Muhammad to marry any woman he wants, 3) the Quraysh infidels are ready to make the Prophet Muhammad saw. as a leader, and 4) the Quraysh infidels and the Prophet Muhammad worshiping idols and Allah alternately each year.

If the Prophet Muhammad saw. accept offers one, two, and three, then the Prophet Muhammad. should stop making fun of their gods. Moreover, if the Prophet Muhammad saw. rejecting
the offer, a fourth offer was made as a form of peace with the Prophet Muhammad. The offer was rejected by the Prophet Muhammad. Religious pluralism in society cannot be avoided, but that does not mean that mixing beliefs is the right thing. Allah says in Q.S. Al-Kāfirūn which reads:

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْْحنِ الرَّحِيْمِ
قُلْ يهٓا يُّهاا الْكهِفِرُوْنا
۝ لَاۤ ااعْبُدُ ماا
ت اعْبُدُوْنا
۝ وَلاۤ اأنْتُمْ عِبَدُونَ مَااۤ ااعْبُدُمَا
۝ وَلاۤ اأنْتُمْ عِبَدُونَ مااۤ ااعْبُدُ
۝ وَلاۤ اأنْتُمْ عِبَدُونَ مااۤ ااعْبُدُ
۝ لَكُمْ دِينٌ وَلِيَ
۝ دِينٍ

“(1) Say, “O disbelievers, (2) I do not worship what you worship, (3) Nor are you worshippers of what I worship (4) Nor will I be a worshipper of what you worship (5) Nor will you be worshippers of what I worship (6) For you is your religion, and for me is my religion”.

In Surat Al-Kāfirūn, the concept of tolerance in religion has been explained, including in matters of worship. Verses 2-5 state that there is no tolerance regarding faith and worship of Allah (Ahmad Murtaza MZ dan Muhammad Mulkam, 2021). Every adherent has the right to carry out all forms of worship of his/her belief without disturbing other adherents or interfering with worship. With an emphasis on the last verse, namely, “to you your religion, and to me my religion.”

Discussing the concept of tolerance means doing only some forms of worship of other religions in order to create a peaceful environment. But more to mutual respect and respect for all beliefs and forms of worship of religion. Creating harmony between religious communities in society must be done without compromising the beliefs of each religion.
Religious Pluralism in the Labuhan Parangkusumo Tradition: An Overview of the Living Qur’an

Religious pluralism (religious pluralism), phenomenologically, is a fact related to the history of religions which displays plurality in various traditions. Philosophically, religious pluralism is related to theory and its relation to various perceptions, conceptions, and responses regarding the reality of divinity. The existence of pluralism is a form of effort to create harmonious relations and harmony between religious communities (Pangeran, 2017).

In essence, pluralism means tolerance between religious communities where one religion does not bring the other down and still upholds the value of brotherhood by the beliefs of their respective religious teachings. Especially in Indonesia, this is nothing new and has become a necessity that cannot be avoided or changed (Setiawan, 2019).

The form of the realization of pluralism in Indonesia itself can be seen in the existence of Pancasila as the Indonesian state ideology. This is evidenced by the sound of the first precept, which reads “Belief in the One and Only God”. From this term, Indonesia does not only side with the Islamic religion but regulates several religions with a plurality that has the principle of Bhineka Tunggal Ika (Unity in Diversity)” (Jurdi, 2007).

If traced in history, the seeds of pluralism have existed since the Dutch colonial era with the spread of theosophical teachings. However, religious pluralism in the theological context is found in the records of Ahmad Wahid, one of the pioneers of the Indonesian Liberal Islamic movement, besides Dawam Raharjo and Djohan Effendi. On September 16, 1969, in his note, Ahmad Wahid admitted that he was a pluralist and wrote the sentence, “I don’t know if God had the heart to put my parents into the fires of hell; I hope this doesn’t happen and fall for it” (Aldian Husaini, 2005).
Indonesian people highly uphold the values of tolerance and respect for all existing religious communities because Indonesia, full of diversity, consists of various religions, ethnicities, and cultures. However, in reality, conflicts and divisions quickly occur even just because of trivial issues (Pangeran, 2017). The existence of religious pluralism can be seen as a solution because the existence of pluralism itself can be seen as a source of problems and divisions; on the other hand, it can be a source of strength if it is directed towards the goal of national unity and prosperity.

Local wisdom values in the form of traditions or social norms in society can functionally strengthen the cultural system as a way of life for the community, which is then trusted and recognized as a tool to strengthen accommodation between communities. Thus local wisdom can be accommodated in interfaith life, even cross-cultural, to provide a dynamic and peaceful togetherness value, especially for multicultural and plural societies. In religious ceremonies, this can be used as a vehicle to solve the problems faced by the community. This includes strengthening, maintaining tolerance and inter-religious harmony, and reducing conflict.

The Labuhan Parangkusumo tradition is one of the local wisdom still alive in the broader community and can be used as a medium to build unity in a plural society. The Labuhan Parangkusumo ceremony is a tradition of the people in Parangtritis which has been entrenched for a long time. The essence of the Labuhan ceremonial tradition is as a form of gratitude to God Almighty for the grace given, and at the same time as gratitude to Ratu Kidul and her ancestors who have protected them all this time from all harm and disaster (Basid, 2020).

In essence, pluralism is not always synonymous with matters related to religion but also about a view that expresses pluralism or diversity in a society, be it customs, culture, or
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ethnicity. For example, the diversity that exists in the Parangkusumo harbor tradition (Husna et al., 2022; Romziana, 2021).

![Figure 2: Parangkusumo Beach harbor ceremony to float uborampe to the South Beach. (The figure was taken from detikcom)](image)

The figure above depicts the Labuhah ceremony. The ceremony began with the handing over the Labuhan uborampe (equipment) by Kanjeng Raden Tumenggung Sumowijoyo as an order envoy from Sri Sultan Hamengku Buwono X to be handed over to representatives of Bantul Regency at the Hall of Kretak District one day before the Labuhan ceremony. Then, the uborampe, which consisted of the sultan's goods and offerings, was brought to the Parangkusumo pavilion before finally being brought to Cepuri Parangkusumo.

The building of religious pluralism is evident in the tradition of the Labuhan Parangkusumo ceremonial procession. In the Labuhan tradition, a prayer procession is led by a local kyai or modin using Islamic religious prayers. However, in this Labuhan ceremony, the prayer procession is not only attended by followers of one religion but also from various religions such as Islam, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, and Confucianism. This shows that the plurality of Indonesian society is normal, but that does not
mean they are free to do all things, including praying (Saputro & Muhammad, 2021). In dealing with the reality that occurs in society, it must be balanced with providing a strong understanding of faith so as not to fall into disbelief.

The concept of religious pluralism has existed since the beginning of the Islamic religion because it is a principal part of Islam itself, a religion that loves peace. This is in line with the word of Allah swt. contained in the Q.S. Al-Kāfirūn (109: 6), which shows that Islam views plurality as a form of tolerance between religious communities. According to the researcher’s opinion, religious pluralism is a blessing from Allah swt. whose existence cannot be denied by humanity.

Figure 3: Praying together before the Labuhan procession. (Figure courtesy of Trisna Purwoko, iNews.id)

Figure three above is a procession by interfaith leaders before it starts. The meaning of the interfaith prayer procession in the Labuhan Parangkusumo tradition shows a combination and, at the same time, describes religious pluralism in the land of Java. They do not simply eliminate their previous beliefs by acculturating them into various traditions. The meaning of religious pluralism in tradition should not only be a hereditary
formality but can be a source for implementation as a rule of social life in Indonesia.

Conclusion

Labuhan means throwing something into the water (river or sea) by offering offerings to the spirits that rule Parangkusumo. Initially, the ceremony was held during the reign of Panembahan Senopati to seek moral support to strengthen his position. This support was obtained from Kanjeng Ratu Kidul (a spirit that rules the southern seas). This tradition begins with reading a joint prayer that several religious leaders and their adherents attend.

The Labuhan ceremony is a form of plurality in society reflected in the procession of reading interfaith prayers. Each religion’s adherents pray according to their beliefs with the same ceremonial purpose. This is in line with the word of Allah in Q.S. Al Kafirun (109): 6, emphasizing the last verse, namely, “to you your religion and me my religion.” Harmony and peace in society must be realized without compromising the beliefs of each adherent of religion.

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