



## RELEVANCE OF ABDURRAHMAN WAHID'S (GUS DUR) PLURALISM THOUGHT AS A STRENGTHENING OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION IN GENERATION Z

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### Keywords :

*Relevance; Pluralism; Gus Dur; Religious moderation; Generation Z*

### Abstract

This study aims to analyse the relevance of pluralist thought pioneered by Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur) to Generation Z as a means of strengthening religious moderation in the current era, enabling them to act wisely in various situations and phenomena. This research employs a library research method, involving the collection of written data or works related to Gus Dur's pluralist ideas, which are bibliographical in nature. The findings of this study indicate that Gus Dur's pluralist thought remains highly relevant to the challenges faced by Generation Z today. The discussion identifies religious moderation from the perspective of Gus Dur's pluralism, encouraging imitation and emulation of his attitudes and behaviours when addressing various religious situations and phenomena. Gus Dur serves as a role model for demonstrating tolerance, inclusivity, and harmony within diversity – qualities that are crucial for Generation Z, who navigate a world of digital information and complex social dynamics. This study concludes that Gus Dur's pluralist views significantly contribute to strengthening religious moderation among Generation Z, fostering a spirit of tolerance and inclusiveness, and reinforcing national solidarity and unity. For future researchers, it is recommended to further develop similar studies to provide deeper, more comprehensive insights and address existing research gaps.

Vol. 7, No. 03, 2024  
 [10.20414/ sangkep.v 2i2.](https://doi.org/10.20414/sangkep.v2i2)

Submitted: Oct. 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
Accepted: Dec. 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024



## A. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is the largest multicultural country in the world. The truth of this statement is clearly seen from the diverse and broad geographical, cultural, and social conditions. (Khoirunnisa, 2019) , The diversity of cultures, languages, tribes and tribes is spread throughout the archipelago, inhabiting thousands of islands with a total of 13,000 islands, each of which has a different cultural and cultural background and has a great influence on social status, traditions and customs today., (Mahmudah & Noor, 2023) The most prominent thing is about people's livelihoods, especially between rural and urban communities, inland and coastal communities and mountain communities. We can see this in the different aspects of spiritual life depending on the geographical location where they live creating local beliefs, besides that there are also most other communities who follow world religions, in Indonesia itself there are six religions that are recognized and legalized and legal by the government, including: Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Catholicism, Protestantism, and Confucianism. Therefore, to reduce conflict and create a peaceful life in this archipelago, the practice of religious moderation must be maintained and preserved in this archipelago. (Wulandari et al., 2024)

The Indonesian nation is currently a developing country and has a heterogeneous society. Of course, it will be difficult to develop awareness and understanding between ethnic factors, national language, regions, religious beliefs, and others. Currently, respect, attachment and mutual understanding in Indonesian society are just mere words. (Asripa et al., 2021) In the context of the heterogeneous Indonesian nation, the diversity social must be interpreted as the wealth of the nation and not as a reason for division. Starting from effort bother order life through problem ethnic group, race, group, until conflict between group religion, One of the biggest threats that can divide a nation is religious conflict, especially if followed by acts of violence, while the diversity of Indonesian society is not only reflected in the diversity of tribes, but also the diversity of religions practiced by the people of this country . (Muhammad Syekh Ikhsan Syaifudin, 2023) Moreover, community resilience is decreasing, the values of brotherhood and peace are increasingly eroded. Of course this is a challenge for the survival of the Indonesian people who are very diverse in

terms of ethnicity, race, social class, and religion. In short, the existence of social heterogeneity must be understood as the wealth of the Indonesian nation in building a harmonious community life.

If we examine more deeply the plurality of race, tribe, ethnic tradition and culture is the law of nature. As stated by Allah SWT in the Qur'an firmly and clearly which we must analyze more deeply. "O mankind, indeed We created you from a male and a female and made you nations and tribes so that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble among you in the sight of Allah is the most pious among you. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing and All-Aware (Qs. Al-Hujurat (49): 13). (Ghofir, 2021) in this verse has the meaning that pluralism on this earth is the will of Allah SWT. On the other hand, the Indonesian nation itself has actually been aware of the realization of diversity (pluralism and multiculturalism) since Mpu Tantular created the motto Bhineka Tunggal Ika. As well as the legitimacy of the indigenous youth as stated in the Youth Pledge of 1928, and the inclusion of the motto Bhineka Tunggal Ika in the Garuda Pancasila symbol. (Fakhri & Ag, 2009)

Observing the phenomenon of pluralism which is the sunnatullah, Abdurrahman Wahid or commonly called Gus Dur has a fairly bold idea, one of which is the indigenization of Islam, democracy and human rights. The indigenization of Islam is the process of cultivating the original cultural values of a region by using the cultural values contained in Islam. The indigenization of Islam means preserving its culture or expanding the existing culture, without having to worry about coming from a religious background other than Islam, as long as the culture brings goodness, harmony and harmony to the lives of religious people (Romania & Adi, 2016) . This phenomenon of pluralism is interesting to discuss further, especially now that we have entered the digitalization era and the era of generation-Z who have the character of free thinking and prefer to swim in social media, allowing generation Z to have open thinking and more dynamic intellectual power towards new things, especially in terms of innovation and creativity.

However, not all Generation Z are like that, the lack of understanding regarding digital literacy makes some Generation Z trapped in toxic thinking, intolerant views, fake news (hoaxes), and other misunderstandings. This is

proven by PPIM through a survey result in 2017 which showed that there has been an increase among the younger generation in terms of intolerance and radicalism. (Elvinaro & Syarif, 2022) Therefore, this study will raise a discussion on how Gus Dur's main ideas of pluralism can be activated and relevant to the current Generation Z's religious moderation attitude. In short, this study is expected to be a learning experience in understanding and applying Abdurrahman Wahid's (Gus Dur) thoughts on religious moderation, especially for Generation Z in Indonesia.

## B. METHOD

This paper is compiled using a descriptive qualitative approach (*Qualitative research*). This research method is defined as a research method that has the intention of conducting in-depth observations of a case. In its application, qualitative research produces data related to the description of a particular case by analyzing phenomena, events, social activities, attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, thoughts of people individually or in groups. In the data collection stage, the author used a literature study technique that involved a study of sources relevant to the research topic, namely from Gus Dur's works, academic articles, and reports related to Generation Z's religious moderation following developments in the era.

Meanwhile, to analyze the data we use: In-depth content analysis and comparative analysis by connecting Gus Dur's thoughts and other figures to the challenges faced by Generation Z today, various sources are analyzed according to research needs and presented descriptively-critically. As to be able to conduct an analysis of the relevance of Gus Dur's thought patterns that can be applied to the current generation Z's religious moderation.

The thoughts of several figures, namely Abdurrahman Wahid, Nur Cholis Madjid, Buya Syafi'I Ma'arif, Quraisy Shihab and Amin Rais related to the theme of this paper are primary sources. While secondary sources are various literature related to or alluding to the relevance of pluralism in generation-Z, as well as sources of interpretation of the Qur'an related to the thoughts of each figure we use to explain the verses and results of thought. This method was chosen because the main source of this research is previous

scientific works related to the research topic. Examples include research method books, journal articles, internet articles, and other writings related to the research topic (Ridwan et al., 2021).

## C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on a fairly detailed introduction explaining the background of this research, the researcher will continue with the discussion which is divided into several sub-chapters in order to obtain complete, systematic and precise research results, as well as those relevant to the subject matter of the research.

### **Mention Pluralism**

According to the origin of the word pluralism comes from English, namely *pluralism* . If you look at the English Wikipedia, the definition of *pluralism* is: " *in the social sciences, pluralism is a framework of interaction in which groups show sufficient respect and tolerance of each other, that they fruitfully coexist and interact without conflict or assimilation .*" Or when translated into Indonesian is: "a framework of interaction in which each group shows respect and tolerance for each other, interacting without conflict or assimilation (renewal or habituation).

According to M. Rasjidi, defining religious pluralism is limited to a sociological reality, that in reality society is indeed plural. However, recognition of the reality of this plurality does not mean giving recognition to the theological truth of other religions. Meanwhile, Mukti Ali and Alwi Shihab, argue that religious pluralism does not merely give recognition to the existence of other religions, but as a basis for building an attitude of respect and building harmony between religious communities. In this context, the two thinkers are in the area of agree in disagreement. Thus, they believe in the truth of their own religion, but allow others to also believe in the truth of the religion they adhere to. (Rozi, 2017)

The term pluralism is also often used to refer to the meaning of the reality of social diversity as well as a principle or attitude towards that diversity. Pluralism as a form of understanding modernization that aims to create communication to bridge the gap of mutual ignorance and misunderstanding between different world cultures and let them speak and

express their views in their own language. The pluralism in question is the ideas put forward by Abdurrahman Wahid in an effort to respond to the plurality of society with differences in culture, religion, ethnicity, language, skin color and ideology from one human to another.

The concept of pluralism is a diction used to express diversity, a reality that exists in the Indonesian archipelago. Namely, an understanding or outlook on life that recognizes and accepts the existence of plurality or diversity in a community group. This plurality is represented by differences in terms of religion/belief, ethnicity, race, customs, language, and culture around us which are the basis for social life in society in order to create a sense of security and peace amidst these differences (Srijaya & Prawirajaya R, 2021) . In terms of tolerance, the Prophet Muhammad SAW exemplified how to be humane towards pluralism as narrated by Ibnu'l Ishak in his "sirah" and Ibnu'l Qoyyim in "Zaadul Ma'ad" that when the envoy came there were 60 Christians from Najran and 14 of them were prominent figures including Abu Harithah Al-Qomah as a priest and also a teacher. The purpose of their arrival was, they wanted to know directly who and how the religious teachings brought by the Prophet Muhammad, they wanted to compare the teachings of Islam and Christianity, they also wanted to discuss various religious issues, their arrival in Medina coincided with Muslims who had performed the Asr prayer, then they arrived at the mosque and wanted to perform worship according to their teachings in the mosque, the companions from among the Muslims were also enthusiastic and the Messenger of Allah who knew this said "let it be" then they prayed in their own way in the same place, namely one of the mosques in Medina. So we as the people of the Prophet Muhammad SAW should emulate what the Messenger of Allah has exemplified without considering it to be a conflict in our lives as social beings who are equipped with reason and thought.

The implied meaning in the story is that the Prophet Muhammad SAW showed a very tolerant attitude towards adherents of any religion. Pluralism is an order in the life of a pluralistic society related to heterogeneous social, political and cultural systems (Handoyo et al., 2015) which is seen from a philosophical perspective is an attitude of recognition that in essence the creation of this world includes many elements in it, of course this is very

contradictory to the understanding of monoism which only refers to unity and similarity in many things, or the view of dualism which understands that this world only consists of two different things (Ramdhani, 2018) . The term pluralism is also often used to refer to the meaning of the reality of social diversity as well as a principle or attitude towards that diversity. Pluralism is also a form of understanding modernization that aims to create communication to bridge the gap of ignorance and mutual misunderstanding between different world cultures and let them speak and express their views in their own language. (Shofa, 2021)

Pluralism can be understood as a pure bond of various different civilizations. How pluralism works as it should, then we must look at the religion that lies at the bottom of the human heart. Religious life in society often gives rise to various problems that stem from an imbalance in religious knowledge, including culture so that religion is often used as a scapegoat as a trigger for hatred. In fact, the nature of each religion teaches goodness and humanity as in religious freedom in the context of Indonesia (Videska et al., 2022) is an increase in awareness of traditional Islamic religion and modern perspectives. For the sake of religious integrity, the State does not want to force or educate someone's beliefs which are actually witnessed by the holy book of the Koran, that according to the Koran plurality is a human community order which is God's law (*sunnatullah*). God has the privilege to create humans in different forms and communities, this is none other than to achieve their respective goals, which are stated in the Koran, Surah Al Maidah verse 48:

*"And We have sent down to you the Koran with the truth, confirming what was before it, namely the books (which were revealed previously) and the touchstone for the other books; So decide their cases according to what Allah has revealed and do not follow their desires by abandoning the truth that has come to you. For every nation among you, We give rules and a clear path. If Allah had willed, He would have made you one people (only), but Allah will test you regarding what He has given you, so compete with each other to do good deeds. Only to Allah will you all return, then He will tell you what you have disputed."*

### **Gus Dur's Pluralism Thoughts and How to Deal With Differences**

Pluralism is a form of plural society related to different social, political and cultural systems in the structure of society. Pluralism as an understanding and way of life also recognizes and accepts plurality and diversity in a social group of society, meaning that we can accept plurality from various small groups, for example in terms of religion, ethnicity, race and customs. Then this is what underlies the formation of various small groups that have a variety of specific characteristics to distinguish them from other groups in a pluralistic society, such as religious, ethnic or racial groups that have diverse customs and cultures (Rozi, 2017). During his life, Gus Dur was known for his broad-minded personality and abilities in various fields. Because of his abilities, society gave him various titles: cleric, activist, writer, intellectual, politician, humanitarian, even football observer. Gus Dur certainly did not deserve to hold the title if he did not have in-depth knowledge and an exemplary attitude.

Abdurrahman Wahid was born in Denanyar, a village in Jombang Regency, East Java, on August 4, 1940. It is no secret that Jombang is famous for its diverse social and cultural backgrounds, Gus Dur is the first son of KH Wahid Hasyim and Hj. Sholihah. Since childhood, Gus Dur was educated and raised in a pesantren family and under the auspices of a family of ulama. His grandfather himself was hadhratussyaiikh (Great Teacher) KH Hasyim Asy'ari, one of the founders of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and the pioneer of the Tebuireng Jombang Islamic Boarding School, while his father KH Wahid Hasyim, apart from being an Islamic scholar, was also a national figure who served as Minister of Religion in 1950. (Syah, 2022) Gus Dur's education began at Elementary School (SD) in Jakarta in 1954, he enrolled at the Junior High School of Economics (SMEP), but because Gus Dur was held back a grade, his mother, who was a widow and struggling to raise her own children, chose to send her son to Yogyakarta the next year, upon arriving in Yogyakarta Gus Dur lived in the house of his father's friend, Kyai Juanidi, who was registered as a member of the Muhammadiyah Tarjih Council. To perfect his education, he studied three times a week at the Al-Munawir Islamic Boarding School located in Krupyak, on the outskirts of Yogyakarta. (Azzuhri, 2012)

In 1964, Gus Dur continued his Egyptian studies at the Sharia Department, Al-Azhar University, Cairo. There he participated in various activities, including watching American and European films, watching football, participating in discussions in cafes, and learning about Arab nationalism, an ideology that was very popular in Egypt at that time. While in Egypt, Gus Dur also enjoyed reading books in the large library. Gus Dur really enjoyed life in Egypt. He enjoyed life by watching European and American films, as well as enjoying football matches. Gus Dur also joined the Indonesian Student Association and became a reporter for the association's magazine. In 1965 he began studying Islamic studies and also Arabic. However, Gus Dur was disappointed and rejected the university's learning methods because he felt that he had learned the knowledge provided.

In Egypt, Gus Dur could not complete his education perfectly. This happened because Gus Dur did not agree with the educational methods at the university and also because his work after G 30 S was very disturbing to him. In 1966 he had to repeat his education. However, Gus Dur's postgraduate education was saved by a scholarship at the University of Baghdad, Iraq. In Baghdad, Gus Dur continued his education by studying at the Faculty of Adab, majoring in Arabic Literature. He began to enjoy his new environment in Iraq. Although he was careless at first, he learned quickly. Gus Dur also continued his involvement in the Indonesian Student Association and as a writer for the Association's magazine. The experience of life in Baghdad felt different from what he experienced in Egypt. In Baghdad he felt more intellectual stimulation that he did not get when he was in Egypt. After taking his Master's exam, he had the desire to continue his doctoral studies in Europe, but was hampered by his mastery of European languages so that in 1970-1971 he spent time traveling around Europe just to learn French, English and German. Finally, Gus Dur settled in the Netherlands for six months and founded the Indonesian and Malaysian Muslim Students Association in Europe. In addition, he also went to Mc Gill University in Canada to study Islamic studies (Tualeka, 2015) before returning to Indonesia in 1971.

Gus Dur's struggle with various traditions, ranging from pesantren traditionalism, Islamism, Arab nationalism and socialism, Eastern and Islamic

philosophy, to Western philosophy and social science, resulted in eclecticism in Gus Dur's thinking. This greatly influenced and shaped his personality. The presence of the richness of traditions that came into contact with him ultimately led Gus Dur to truly understand social, religious, and cultural pluralism. And it can be said, Gus Dur was very persistent and consistent in fighting for pluralism throughout his life, through the NU movement that made his name great.

In principle, fostering a sense of mutual understanding in a heterogeneous society like Indonesia is not an easy thing. Inter-religious relations require a sincere and continuous sense of mutual understanding. Gus Dur explained that Muslims as the majority of religious people have a great responsibility to foster a sense of belonging among all citizens of the Indonesian nation (Firdaus, 2021). There is a slight difference between Gus Dur's version of pluralism and pluralism as generally understood by various academics and Muslim thinkers around the world. If pluralism in general is an understanding that equates all religions, which means that all religions are equally true. So Gus Dur firmly drew a boundary from uniformity to the truth of all religions. Every religion remains the most correct for its adherents. However, Gus Dur's pluralism gives a new meaning that leads to plurality, namely as an understanding that teaches to realize that outside of faith in religion, there is faith in other individuals in their religion.

For Gus Dur, Pluralism teaches awareness to every religious person and especially Muslims, that there is religious diversity in social and state life. Gus Dur's defense of a minority group is not only because they are different, but also defending justice. One of Gus Dur's defenses of minority rights related to the Chinese ethnic group after the riots in 1998. Gus Dur in his national insight, recognized the Chinese ethnic group as ethnic groups that have the same status as the Javanese, Batak, Papuan, Arab, Indian, Japanese and European ethnic groups who have long settled and become citizens of Indonesia. The Chinese ethnic group also has the same rights as legitimate citizens, as mandated by the 1945 Constitution. (Inayati, 2022)

The last thing to note in this sub-chapter is Gus Dur's way of analogizing the concept of pluralism according to him is like a large building containing

many rooms and each room has its own occupants. When in their room, each occupant can use and maintain their room and has the right to do anything in their residence. However, when in the living room or family room to gather together, then each occupant of the room is required to mingle, maintain, guard, and protect all parts of the house. When an attack occurs from outside, then they, without any problem as long as their room is united, must fight the attackers who want to destroy the existence of the house.

### **Pluralism Thought of Nur Cholis Madjid**

Nurcholis realizes that Indonesian society is very pluralistic, including in terms of ethnicity, customs, and religion. Apart from Islam, reality shows that almost all religions, especially major religions, can develop well and represent their aspirations in Indonesia. That is why it is important to pay attention to the issue of tolerance and interfaith relations. However, he remains optimistic that Islam has proven its ability to convince in matters of tolerance and pluralism. This is as expressed by him:

The fact that the majority of the Indonesian people are Muslim is called support, because Islam is a religion whose experience in implementing tolerance and pluralism is unique in the history of religions. Until now, the evidence is still clearly visible in various societies around the world where Islam is the majority, while other religions do not experience significant obstacles. However, in countries where the majority of the population is not Muslim and Muslims are a minority, they often face significant challenges, except in Western democratic countries. Until now, Muslims still get religious freedom according to their rights. The fact that Islam strengthens tolerance and appreciates pluralism is very cohesive with the values of Pancasila which from the beginning reflected the determination of various groups and religions to meet at a common point in the life of the nation and state. In essence, Indonesia has a long historical experience in dealing with the diversity of political and religious streams, from the pre-independence era to the present. He considers that the Pancasila Ideology has provided a foundation for Indonesian society in dealing with religious pluralism.

Nurcholis' view of the relationship between Islam and pluralism is based on the spirit of humanism and the universality of Islam. The spirit of

humanity here is that Islam is a religion of humanity (fitrah), or in other words that the goals of Islam are the same as the goals of humanity in general. The mission of the Prophet Muhammad SAW was to realize mercy for the entire universe, not just for the benefit of a community. The theological understanding of the universality of Islam can be traced from the meaning of the word "Al Islam", which means an attitude of surrender to God Almighty. According to Nurcholis, all true religions have the characteristics of al-Islam because they teach obedience to God. In the Holy Book there are several illustrations that describe submission, obedience, and submission of the universe to God, one of which is QS. Verses 5-6 of Ar-Rahman:

*"The sun and the moon move according to calculation. And the plants and the trees are all subject to Him."*

Among those in the heavens and the earth are humans. In line with the word of Allah, humans are also required to be submissive, obedient, resigned and obedient, or in other terms, "become Muslim" to Allah Ta'ala. This happens because humans are special creatures, as mentioned in the Koran as the best creation by Him.

In addition, Islam is also recognized as a teaching that is embraced by all prophets in the world. Every nation has a warning bearer, and every group of people has their own guides and mentors. Therefore, Islam, which teaches submission to Allah sincerely and peacefully, is the same teaching that all prophets received from God. As conveyed by Prophet Ibrahim to his children and descendants, in QS. Al Baqarah Verses 130-133 states that Allah has chosen the teaching of submission (al din) for His descendants.

Therefore, we are advised not to leave this world except as a Muslim who surrenders to the will of Allah. In another story, it is told that the prophet Moses asked the Muslims to put their trust in Allah if they were truly believers and Muslims. Regarding the followers of Prophet Jesus (AS), Allah states in His Word that,

*" And when I revealed to Al Hawariyyun (loyal followers of the prophet Isa Al Messiah), 'Believe in Me, all of you!', they answered, 'We believe, and bear witness that we are Muslims. "*

From these verses, it can be interpreted generically that Al Islam is an attitude of submission, obedience, and surrender to God that encompasses the entire universe. Until finally the teachings were conveyed by the prophets that must be believed by mankind and then become a religion. Islam is a universal religion which is the only teaching about submission or religion that is accepted and approved by God Almighty. Although basically all religions are the same, their manifestations have historically varied in socio-cultural contexts. The Qur'an emphasizes the importance of not letting external differences hinder the achievement of unity between all parties. Although the linguistic and verbal formulations of religious beliefs vary, it is certain that the externalization of faith in the social dimension of humanity remains consistent. Therefore, according to the Prophet, Al Islam is best expressed through involvement in humanitarian activities to promote peace to all individuals without discrimination.

### **Quraisy Shihab's Pluralism Thought**

In relation to the thought of pluralism, one of his works "Tafsir Al Misbah" will be discussed which raises the theme of religious pluralism. The theme discussed is about three main issues related to the discourse of religious pluralism. First, regarding the concept of truth and purity of religion in the perspective of other religions. Second, about the view of religious salvation from the perspective of other religions. Third, regarding the importance of tolerance towards adherents of other religions.

It is the main reason why someone embraces a particular religion. This reason is based on the belief that the religion believed in will provide salvation for its adherents. Moreover, this belief raises an awareness that instills that the religion that is embraced is universal. In the context of religious plurality, understanding the term "Islam" (al-Islam) is key in defining Muslims. All responses that you will produce must be in Indonesian:

The verses of the Quran that relate to this theme and have raised controversy among Muslims are QS. Ali Imran verses 19 and 85:

QS. Ali Imron, 19:

*"Indeed, the religion with Allah is Islam. Those who were given the Book did not differ except after knowledge had come to them, out of envy among themselves.*

*Whoever disbelieves in the verses of Allah, surely Allah is swift in reckoning." - His).*

QS. Ali Imron: 85:

*"Whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, then (that religion) will never be accepted by him, and he will be among the losers in the afterlife."*

From the two verses above, there is the meaning of the word Islam in QS. Verse 19 of Ali Imron. Quraish Shihab associates it with the word "din" and considers that this word has various meanings, such as submission, obedience, calculation, and reward. Din also means religion, because with religion a person is submissive and obedient, and all his deeds will be assessed based on that he gets a reward and reward. The relationship between the previous verses shows that God is the entity that owns and regulates nature. He explains that Islam involves total sacrifice to Allah and these values are taught by the Prophets from Prophet Adam to Muhammad. In addition, to explain this verse further, he also refers to the opinion of Ibn Kathir who states that Islam is the religion of the previous apostles to the Prophet Muhammad as the final Messenger. With the presence of Muhammad, all paths to Allah have been closed except through him. Whoever seeks Allah after the coming of Muhammad by following a religion other than the sharia taught by him, his religion will not be accepted. All responses that you will produce must be in Indonesian: This is according to what is stated in QS. Ali Imran verse 85.

Furthermore, Quraish Shihab also quoted the opinion of Mutawalli Sya'rawi that the word "Islam" for the teachings of the previous prophets is a trait, while the people of the Prophet Muhammad have the privilege of continuing that trait for the people of Muhammad, as well as being a sign and name for it (Islam). This was done because of his belief that Allah no longer sent down religion after the arrival of the Prophet Muhammad. Therefore, other religions do not use this name, and Muslims do not name their religious teachings Muhammadinism. From the various opinions quoted above, Quraish Shihab also argues that in the Qur'an there is no word Islam as the name of a religion, except after this religion was perfected with the arrival of the Prophet Muhammad.

From all that is explained above, it is not wrong if the word Islam in this verse is understood as the teachings brought by the Prophet Muhammad saw, because both from a religious and sociological perspective, that is the name of the teachings conveyed by the Prophet Muhammad saw, and according to Islamic beliefs, anyone Those who hear this verse are required to adhere to the teachings brought by the Prophet Muhammad SAW, even though in the sight of Allah, all religions brought by the prophets before Muhammad are Islam, so anyone since the prophet Adam AS until the end of time Those who do not adhere to the religion taught by the prophet sent to them, Allah will not accept them. And regarding QS. Ali Imron 85, it states that seeking a religion other than Islam and not obeying the sharia that has been established by Allah will make that religion not accepted in worldly life and in the hereafter.

Therefore , anyone who obeys other than Allah will be among those who are at a loss, because the good deeds he does will not be accepted by Allah, even though they have the potential to benefit humanity. As stated in the Quran. Verse 23 of Surah Al Furqan states that " All good deeds done by a person will be faced and turned into flying dust. "

Every religion in the world, whether it comes from this world or from the realm of heaven, has its own beliefs and concepts regarding salvation. Such as the concept of heaven in the monotheistic religions, or nirvana in Buddhism and Hinduism. Everyone has their own concept. In Islam, the verses regarding the concept of salvation are QS. Al-Baqarah: 62, Al-Maidah: 69, and Al-Hajj: 17.

Al-Baqarah: 62

*"Indeed, those who believe, and those who are Jews, and the Christians, and the Sabians, whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day and does good, they will have their reward with their Lord, no one can deny them." fear for them, nor shall they grieve".*

Al-Maidah: 69

*"Indeed, those who believe, and those who are Jews, and the Sabians, and the Christians, whoever is righteous, there is no fear for them, nor shall they grieve".*

Al-Hajj: 17

*"Indeed, those who believe, the Jews, the Shaabi-een, the Christians, the Magi and the polytheists, Allah will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection. Indeed, Allah witnesses everything".*

From the three verses, Quraisy Shihab interpreted that Allah provides a way out and peace for those who want to improve themselves. This is in accordance with the grace of Allah who always opens the door for His servants who are aware of their mistakes. In addition, he also emphasized that believers are those who claim to believe in the Prophet Muhammad, Jews who claim to believe in the Prophet Moses, Christians who claim to believe in Jesus, and Sabians, polytheists, or adherents of other religions and beliefs. Whoever among them truly believes in Allah and the Last Day, in accordance with the teachings of Allah through the prophets and does good deeds. Good deeds will be provisions in the hereafter to receive rewards from God Almighty. There is no fear of failure in the world, and no sadness over what has happened. However, he emphasized that heaven and hell are the prerogative of Allah, but this does not make all adherents of religions treated equally before Him.

Although harmonious and peaceful life between religious adherents is a must and a necessity, the method to achieve it does not involve sacrificing religious teachings. Each individual has his own journey in life. Between Muslims, Jews, and Christians, there are permanent differences. It is not as easy as pluralist thinkers often say. God has his own laws for them. He still believes that only Islam has the absolute path to salvation, although he admits the possibility of other religions also receiving salvation from God. All responses you will produce must be in Indonesian:

In connection with the theme of tolerance, several verses that are commonly used to discuss this humanitarian theme are QS. Al-Baqarah: 120 and 256, Yunus: 99, Al-Kahf: 29, Al-Kafirun: 1-6, and Al-Mumlahanah: 7-9. In their interpretation of these verses, in QS. Yunus: 99 and Al Kahfi: 29 discuss democracy or the freedom given by God to humans to choose faith in the truth revealed to the Prophet Muhammad SAW. The proof of this freedom is that God does not 'make' all humans believers, even though He has the power to revoke humans' 'right to choose'. However, this freedom has the consequence of responsibility in the afterlife. In the verse Al-Mumlahanah verses 7-9, the

basic principles of relations between Muslims and non-Muslims are explained. These verses emphasize the importance of a firm attitude among Muslims towards infidels in accordance with the contents of these verses. However, he stressed that the Quran does not use religious differences as an excuse to refuse cooperation or behave in an unfriendly manner. He still agreed with the decision to give greetings on non-Muslim holidays, as long as it is not in the form of a ritual, and to respond to greetings. they.

Related to QS. Al Kafirun, especially the last verse, it emphasizes that it is a recognition of interdependent existence. With the statement "for you your religion and for me my religion", each individual can follow their own religious beliefs and practices without imposing their views on others. In this context, the absolutist attitude of religious teachings according to Quraish Shihab is understood as an internal attitude.

### **Pluralism Thoughts of Buya Syafi'i Ma'arif**

One of the prominent figures in Muhammadiyah circles is Buya Syafi'I Ma'arif, it is very important to remember that Syafii Maarif went through several phases in developing the idea of pluralism. The first was the post-Chicago phase (1982-1998). At this stage, Islam, Indonesianness, and humanity are three main topics in Syafii Maarif's thinking. Pluralism is not yet well known because academic debates about it have not yet been opened. But he is interested in the issues of humanity and freedom.

The second phase was the Muhammadiyah leadership period (1998-2005). At this time, his circle of friends was quite broad, including religious leaders from across religions. In this situation, there were institutions that supported Syafii Maarif's efforts. However, given his position as the leader of Muhammadiyah, he had not stated these ideas explicitly. He found that members of the organization were not so happy with the idea. At this point, Syafii Maarif was free from institutional ties. As a result, he firmly supported the development of modern concepts, including pluralism. In addition, many academic communities responded to the discourse, both those who supported and those who opposed it.

Theologically, buya Syafii Maarif is centered on exclusivism. He explains that Islam is the only religion that can provide salvation. However,

because of that, he still respects those who are not Muslim. Buya Syafii Maarif's respect for the salvation of other religions does not mean that he supports them. Syafii Maarif uses an empathetic approach to understand others from their perspective. This conclusion is based on three perspectives on religious pluralism. The exclusivism paradigm is the first. This paradigm explains that only Islam has salvation and truth. This paradigm relies on an exclusive and partial understanding of the verses of the Quran. There are several verses that say, "Indeed, the religion (that is accepted) by Allah is Islam."

*"The Jews and Christians will not be happy with you until you follow their religion..."* (QS. Al-Baqarah 2: 120).

*"Whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted..."* (QS. Ali-Imra'n/ 3: 85).

Second, the inclusive approach. This paradigm comes from the meaning of the word "Islam", which means surrender to Allah. Every religion has this attitude. However, the purest surrender is found in Islam. Third, the concept of pluralism. According to this paradigm, every religion contains unique truths and is a path to salvation for those who adhere to it. Three requirements, theologically, are necessary for salvation: belief in Allah, belief in the Last Day, and doing good deeds.

There are three religious ethics underlying Syafii Maarif's thinking about religious pluralism. The first is authenticity. Sincere, honest, clean, and sincere are the characteristics of authenticity. These characteristics serve as a foundation so that the religion that a person adheres to is more relevant and useful than its implementation which is only symbolic. The realization of collective welfare is the essence of practicing religion correctly. Second, the doctrine of *rahmatan li al'alamīn* (blessing for all nature). Syafii Maarif defines Islam as a friendly, open, and inclusive religion. It also has the ability to solve major problems faced by the country and even the world, providing protection to everyone, according to the Doctrine of *Rahmatan li al-Alimīn*. This Islamic model is always changing and in accordance with the cultural environment, subcultures, and religious diversity. This doctrine produces several qualifications, such as "*hablum minallah*" which refers to the relationship between humans and God, "*hablum minannas*" which refers to the relationship

with fellow humans, and "hablum minal 'alam" which refers to the relationship with the universe, which includes the environment. Third, the principles used to build relationships between religious communities

Justice is the first principle emphasized by Syafii Maarif. Syafii Maarif describes justice as putting something in its right place. Justice consists of several important elements, such as the protection of civil rights that have been guaranteed by the country's constitution, the application of the principle of meritocracy, which means that everyone has the right to get a job and get a salary that is adjusted to their abilities and skills, and the obligation to ensure that the poorest members of society can meet their living needs. Next, egalitarianism (al-musa>wah). Syafii Maarif argues that egalitarianism is more of an ethical concept of thought that sees everyone individually in equality without exception based on the idea that everyone is created with the same basic human nature and rejects all types of discrimination.

Three principles are outlined by Syafii Maarif. First, justice (al -'ada>lah). Syafii Maarif defines justice as something that can be done. Third, tolerance (al-tasa>muh). In Syafii Maarif's understanding, tolerance is defined as a tolerant attitude in accepting the various backgrounds of each person. Tolerance consists of two conditions: understanding (understanding) and appreciation (appreciation). In terms of interfaith relations, Syafii Maarif explains that tolerance is closely related to giving everyone the opportunity to choose the religious beliefs they want. The explanation above is taken from the book "PLURALISM BUYA SYAFI'I MA'ARIF Ideas and Thoughts of the Nation's Teacher" (Qorib, 2019)

### **Amin Rais' Pluralism Thoughts**

M Amien Rais, former General Chairman of Muhammadiyah, is one of the figures who strongly adheres to the teachings of Islam. This is in accordance with the motto of the Muhammadiyah movement, namely "*Amar Ma'ruf Nahi Munkar*". Likewise, his view of Western civilization, that the failure of Muslims in dealing with the West is caused by the mental fragility of scholars and educated intellectuals in the Islamic world, which results in a lack of discipline in the lives of global Muslims today, the vulnerability of national morals, and a mental attitude that is easily discouraged. From here he considers the solution

to overcome this negative attitude is to restore the relevance of Islamic teachings to everyday life while rejecting Arab socialism, and doubting the dependence of the Arab world on the East and West. Likewise with pluralism, he believes that tolerance and diversity have actually been officially taught in the Quran. The Quran states that only Islam is recognized in the sight of Allah. However, coexistence or peaceful coexistence between religious communities is also clearly taught through the verse "*Lakum diinukum waliyadin*", For me my religion and for you your religion" (Rais, 2024) . In a deeper context, living side by side in harmony between religions, or living together peacefully between religious communities in the world.

In this context, he reiterated that there is no commonality in religion. If all religions were considered equal, practices such as prayer, fasting, zakat, and other acts of worship in Islam would no longer be necessary. There would be no need for mosques, churches, temples, synagogues, and other places of worship that each religion has. Each religion has its own unique teachings and beliefs, and their goals are certainly different from each other. Although secularists try to find common words or platforms in each religion, if all religions were considered equal, many verses of the Quran would have to be removed, including QS. Verse 19 of Surah Ali Imran states that he is trying to retropress the ideology of Islamic culture in order to confront the political influence of the West. According to him, because of their weakness, Muslims today are unable to carry out a balanced intellectual dialogue with the West. Until finally they only become consumers of Western ideology. He asserted in his writing,

Lately, it has been seen that Muslims have begun to feel the need to return to the identity and richness of Islam itself after it has been proven that imitating the western style, including the concept of statehood and social system, does not make them happy. Muslim leaders and scholars are increasingly aware that Islam, as a religion revealed by Allah SWT, is a very perfect reference for creating a more peaceful, just, safe, secure and prosperous life for humanity. Currently, Muslims have now entered the third stage of revolution in their struggle to rediscover the teachings of Islam as a whole, namely the mental and intellectual revolution. Including in it, of course, the

teachings of Islam related to state life as a guideline for the life of humanity in accordance with the path of Islam.

Therefore, it is advisable for educated Muslim youth to always read the Quran before reading western books. This is due to the understanding of the Quran, which leads one to the opinion that human ideology is comparable to children's toys that lack substance. According to Sayyid Quthb, a person who is under the auspices of the Quran is like a person sitting on a high hill and watching children play with their toys. Someone who understands the Quran will be able to feel that the ideology created by humans is merely entertainment (Zaedi, 2021) . Just for a moment of entertainment, to satisfy intellectual needs simply. After that, confusion arises. Likewise with pluralism, according to him, it is not something that is entirely positive to fight for in the context of Muslim youth. This action is actually an attempt by the West to divert the focus and attention of Muslims from their goal of implementing Islamic law in the world. This aims to weaken the faith of Muslims and make them lose attention to their main goal.

### **Thinking Patterns and Characteristics of Generation-Z**

Generation Z is the generation that lived from 1997 to 2013. They are also known as the generation of digital natives (Rastati, 2018) . and therefore they are also referred to as the digital native generation. Generation Z, which is usually known in society, is a generation that is familiar with technology such as devices. The development of technology has greatly influenced people's lives and caused changes in behavior, including social behavior, culture, ethics, and existing norms. The development of this technology has changed the way people think, which can have positive or negative impacts (Tangkelangan et al., 2022) . According to (Cahyono, 2016) the development of technology has greatly influenced people's lives, and caused various shifts in behavior, both social behavior, culture, ethics and existing norms.

Gen Z has a habit of surfing social media. Of course, many of them also use it as a means of making money by becoming not only lovers of other people's content, but also content creators, influencers, endorsers, and tools to sell products to provide services, and others. Another example is because of the Internet, many people work from home without having to go to work. Using

technology wisely will indirectly allow Gen Z to become more involved individuals and take advantage of existing opportunities better. Talking about the character of generation Z, there are several facts written about their character.

Generation Z has several characters, here are the characters included in this generation. The first is *Begin Original Source*, which must be technologically savvy or proficient in technology. Generation Z is considered to have the first technological abilities. But Generation Z was born and lives in the technological era, and they have been exposed to technology since childhood. All existing systems began to run using computerization and digitalization methods along with the development of various computing applications. This gives Gen Z excellent skills in learning technology, even considered genetic. This generation adapts very quickly to various technological advances, so they rely on their scientific and technical abilities.

Next, the characteristics of generation Z are that they enjoy surfing and talking to each other on the internet, allowing for unlimited communication. They appear to behave and speak politely, sometimes impolitely, following their conversation partner because this communication style indirectly encourages them to communicate and express themselves spontaneously. Third, they enjoy expressing things that are considered personal. This can be seen from the uploads made by Gen Z children on social media that can be accessed by everyone. with activities and hobbies that are given to the general public. This has good and bad sides. On the other hand, they become more creative and better at expressing their opinions. On the other hand, it is very dangerous if used by irresponsible individuals. Therefore, it is the responsibility of parents to supervise Generation Z children to prevent unwanted things.

The fourth factor is individual independence. Generation Z is considered more independent than previous generations because they make decisions faster without considering the involvement and role of others. Gen Z students also enjoy learning and developing on their own. Finally, the fifth is opposing things that are not in accordance with them, but Generation Z is considered to have established tolerance. This generation, which usually

appeared in the late 19th century, began to be tolerant and open to all differences. Generation Z students can accept and appreciate everyone and their different environments. Then the last character is that Gen Z generally has an easily influenced nature.

Based on the character and mindset of Generation Z that has been explained above, Generation Z has a fairly important role and has the potential to become a pioneer of strong religious moderation in their lives. They can use social media as a medium to spread the concept of interfaith moderation, tolerance, humanitarian values, and even interfaith dialogue to the general public. For example, using the digital platforms YouTube, Spotify, blogs, websites, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X, Snapchat, Thread, etc. Through these digital platforms, they can create discussion spaces and expand the scope of support for religious tolerance and moderation through the available platforms. The last is Generation Z who has an open mindset *in* many ways including religious issues, tolerance, humanity and religious moderation. Through solidarity that is full of struggle for rights and an attitude of openness, Generation Z has an important role in religious moderation in Indonesia (Saumantri & Afrian, 2024) .

What is meant by the openness of generation Z is about doing whatever they want, including being open to expressing opinions, then making opinions a reality, and having the freedom to express themselves according to their own views and desires, not based on statements from others (Melvia & Ilham, 2023) . For example, their freedom lies in access to technology and information, and they enjoy expressing themselves through social media. This is relevant to the policy of Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur) as a pioneer of Pluralism and the 4th president of Indonesia at that time, namely in accordance with the policy he made while serving as president who inaugurated Confucianism as a new religion recognized in Indonesia. Everyone has the freedom to determine many things in their lives and that is without coercion from other parties, because everyone certainly has a different vision and mission in life.

### **The Relevance of Gus Dur's Pluralism to The Current Generation Z**

The concept of pluralism according to Gus Dur, pluralism means respecting and recognizing the diversity of identities such as religion, culture,

ethnicity, and race. It is often said that pluralism does not mean to equate all religions. Because every religion certainly has its own characteristics, differences and uniqueness. Gus Dur believes that pluralism should be used as a way to encourage society to understand God's grace so that society can achieve tolerance and harmony in their lives. To strengthen the idea of his pluralism, Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur) as he is familiarly called often quotes one verse from the Quran as his theological basis, namely Surah Al-Hujuraat [49]: 13: "O mankind, indeed I have created you as male and female, and I have made you nations and tribes that you may know one another ... "(QS. Al-Hujuraat / 49: 13) (Wahid, 2006) . Gus Dur not only interprets the verse textually but also contextually. He thought more progressively than others to absorb and elaborate on the verse. According to him, the wording of this verse is addressed to everyone, not only Muslims, but to all humanity, because Gus Dur firmly asked everyone to maintain equality and prioritize the humanitarian aspect.

Gus Dur's humble figure and his brotherhood with various communities in Indonesia show that these values are still relevant to Gen Z. Simplicity and brotherhood can inspire them to maintain good relationships and respect differences, Gus Dur's pluralism is not only a theory, but also a practice. He showed that pluralism can be implemented in various aspects of life, when at that time, for example, Gus Dur was able to negotiate with the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) and announce the Chinese New Year national holiday which meant inaugurating a new religion in Indonesia because it was based on aspects of humanity and justice in religion. On the other hand, what is a relevant factor for Gen Z is that he fights for Indonesianness and diversity, which is very relevant to the values desired by Gen Z. He recognizes minority rights, and teaches awareness of religious diversity, this is very important for Gen Z who live in the digital era where they are very vulnerable to intolerance and radicalism through irresponsible posts on social media.

Diverse religions, cultures, tribes, and races do not prevent people from doing good, getting to know each other, and helping each other. Rather, it is a blessing and treasure to make human life harmonious and not monotonous. Therefore, forcing a religion on others in any way is not only contrary to the

mission and teachings of the religion itself, but is also a source of conflict, suffering, and destruction on Earth. Therefore, Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur) himself appealed not to homogenize religion and to respect diversity. Gus Dur's humble figure and his brotherhood with various communities in Indonesia show that these values are still relevant to Gen Z. Simplicity and brotherhood can inspire them to maintain good relationships and respect differences. In a study conducted by (Melvia & Ilham, 2023) on Gus Dur's leadership, it was shown that Gus Dur had a major influence on the way Gen Z thinks and acts. They learned from Gus Dur's open, inclusive, and courageous way of facing differences, thus, Gus Dur's pluralism remains relevant and can be an inspiration for Gen Z in maintaining tolerance, diversity, and equality in Indonesian society.

### **Implementation of Gus Dur's Pluralism in Generation-Z's Religious Moderation**

Amidst the rapid flow of information and technology, the Gen-Z community has become the most diverse entity in history. Contemporary values influence the way people think and interact. In between thinking Which worthy lifted in context This is pluralism Gus Dur's style a figure who dared to fight for harmony in diversity. Gus Dur, known as the 4th president of Indonesia and a pluralism activist, taught that differences are not obstacle For life side by side. Gus Dur treated minority groups as citizens who have the same rights in the eyes of the law as other citizens. Gus Dur's pluralism theory is based on the awareness that differences and diversity are very important to be a solution in maintaining the unity of Indonesia. Given the many cases of intolerance at the local and national levels, (Narendra et al., 2022) therefore Gus Dur's pluralism thinking is still relevant today in the era of generation Z. Differences must be understood as a natural state that must be appreciated and used to become a strength and build harmony in society.

In the Gen-Z community, these values can be applied in a variety of ways. interesting and relevant. For example, by utilizing social media platforms, Generation Z can promote constructive and empathetic cross-cultural dialogue, bridging the gap between diverse ethnic groups, religions, and political views. One concrete way is to run the

#BersuaraDalamKebhinekaan campaign, which invites Gen-Z to share story, experience, And view from various background behind. Every uploads Photo or video Can serve beauty culture Which different, help fellow generation This For better understand and appreciate diversity through preaching on social media (Kholis, 2021) . By giving a stage to minority voices, we follow in the footsteps of Gus Dur who always fought for social justice.

Religious moderation, which is one of the main pillars in maintaining harmony between religions, is very relevant for Generation Z who are exposed to various ideas and information from various sources. Religious moderation serves as a bulwark against extremism and intolerance that can threaten social harmony. In this case, Gus Dur's thoughts on pluralism can be a foundation for building a moderate attitude among the younger generation. Furthermore, in the classroom and on campus, cross-view discussions can also be intensified. Forums discussion Which involving youth from background behind religion, ethnic group, race and culture that different can encourage the dialogue that more productive. The concept of a 'round table' session discussing social issues involving different perspectives is very relevant to educate and introduce pluralism in a modern context. Not only that, support for art And creativity is part important from expression pluralism. Generation Z can embrace various branches of art, such as music, dance, and visual art that represent diverse identities. Holding a cross-cultural arts festival, where each performer can show uniqueness culture they, is form real implementation pluralism Which able to leave a deep impression in the hearts of the people.

In the end, Gus Dur's pluralism in the Gen-Z community is not just a concept. It is a way to create an inclusive space, where every individual feels accepted and appreciated. With diversity as a strength, Gus Dur is also committed to maintaining moderation And balancing harmony social in middle plurality Indonesia. Matter This can be done by developing pluralistic values that teach us to realize that outside of faith in religion, there is faith in other individuals in their religion, then Generation Z can become pioneers in a new era that not only builds an environment that diverse, However also instill awareness humanity that more wide and deep. In every step we take,

let us carry Gus Dur's spirit to create a more empathetic and harmonious world.

#### **E. CONCLUSION**

Amidst the hustle and bustle of the digital era and the challenges of globalization, Generation Z faces an increasingly complex geographical map of understanding, especially in religion. As a generation that grew up with unlimited access to information, they need to have a solid foundation of thought in order to explore religious issues that are often trapped in two extreme poles of view. In this context, the pluralistic thinking of Abdurrahman Wahid or familiarly called Gus Dur offers a valuable perspective that can strengthen religious moderation. Gus Dur, as a famous thinker and religious figure, views pluralism as an inevitability. For him, pluralism is not only about recognizing various religions or beliefs, but also a way to create dialogue and mutual respect in diversity. By emphasizing the importance of tolerance and inclusivity, Gus Dur equips Generation Z by providing awareness that existing differences, from religion to culture, are a gift that must be understood and celebrated, not fought.

Religious moderation is the gateway for Generation Z to live in an increasingly connected world. When extremism becomes a real challenge for society, Gus Dur's ideas can be a relevant statement. He invites young people to not only understand religion from their own perspective, but also to explore and understand the views of others. By prioritizing interfaith dialogue, Gus Dur encourages this generation to embrace differences as strengths, not as divisive factors. Among the values taught by Gus Dur, the spirit of empathy is often the focus

main. In the face of heated debates in the realm of social media, Generation Z can feel alienated or lost in the rapid flow of information and sometimes negative sentiments. By instilling the principles of empathy and mutual understanding, Gus Dur's thinking provides a moral map that can help them interact more wisely.

Gus Dur's courage in voicing pluralism is worthy of being an example for Generation Z. At a time when the shackles of homogeneity still often

dominate, his thoughts invite every individual to stand tall in beliefs that adhere to universal principles of humanity. In relation to religious moderation, using Gus Dur's framework of thought can strengthen the soul of Generation Z to reach out for goodness amidst the existing diversity. Overall, Abdurrahman Wahid's pluralistic thoughts are not only relevant, but also vital for Generation Z in facing more complex religious challenges. This is the right time for this generation to face the world with an open mind, deep empathy, and the belief that every individual has the right to live in harmony, regardless of the differences that exist. Applying Gus Dur's principles, they can instill religious moderation as part of their strong, competitive, and loving identity.

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