



A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE MEDINA CHARTER AND BHINNEKA TUNGGAL IKA IN UPHOLDING INDONESIA'S NATIONAL UNITY: A HADITH PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

In a pluralistic society, the primary challenge lies in fostering harmony among diverse religious and cultural groups. This study aims to explore the relevance of the Medina Charter in the context of Bhinneka Tunggal Ika (Unity in Diversity) as an effort to strengthen religious moderation in Indonesia. The research employs a literature review method, analyzing various sources related to the Medina Charter and the philosophy of Bhinneka Tunggal Ika. The findings reveal a congruence between the principles of the Medina Charter and Bhinneka Tunggal Ika, particularly in terms of recognizing diversity and providing mechanisms to manage differences for the sake of social stability. These results suggest that Islam offers a comprehensive framework for managing pluralism, which can serve as a foundation for efforts to strengthen religious moderation in Indonesia.

Keywords: Medina Charter, *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, Religious Moderation, Pluralism

ABSTRAK

Dalam masyarakat plural, tantangan utama yang dihadapi adalah menciptakan harmoni di antara berbagai kelompok agama dan budaya. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi relevansi Piagam Madinah dalam konteks Bhinneka Tunggal Ika sebagai upaya untuk memperkuat moderasi beragama di Indonesia. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kajian pustaka dengan menelaah berbagai literatur yang berkaitan dengan Piagam Madinah dan filosofi Bhinneka Tunggal Ika. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kajian pustaka dengan menelaah berbagai literatur yang berkaitan dengan Piagam Madinah dan filosofi Bhinneka Tunggal Ika. Penelitian ini menemukan keselarasan antara prinsip-prinsip Piagam Madinah dan Bhinneka Tunggal Ika, terutama dalam hal pengakuan terhadap keragaman dan mekanisme untuk mengelola perbedaan demi menjaga stabilitas sosial. Hasil ini menunjukkan bahwa Islam memiliki kerangka kerja yang komprehensif untuk mengelola pluralisme, yang dapat menjadi landasan bagi upaya memperkuat moderasi beragama di Indonesia.

Kata Kunci: Piagam Madinah, *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, Moderasi Beragama, Pluralisme



INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is known as a country with vast religious, cultural, and ethnic diversity. One of the primary challenges faced by the nation is maintaining harmony amidst this diversity. The concept of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, which translates to “Unity in Diversity,” serves as the ideological foundation for uniting various elements of society. In this context, managing religious diversity is a crucial issue, particularly with the increasing sectarian tensions in various regions. As a sovereign state grounded in the ideology of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution, Indonesia adopts a comprehensive worldview and philosophy deeply rooted in the principles of Pancasila, which serve as the foundation of the nation. The national motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* emphasizes the coexistence of various ethnicities, religions, and languages within one unified nation, Indonesia (Hartanto, 2017; 307-344). Despite the diversity, this motto reflects the commitment of the Indonesian people to national unity and harmony, fostering cohesion in the realms of religion, nationhood, and governance (Mustansyir, 1995; Rangkuti, 2024).

On the other hand, Islam also has a long history of managing pluralistic societies, one of which is exemplified by the Medina Charter, initiated by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). This charter, one of the earliest documents regulating social and political life between Muslim and non-Muslim communities in Medina, is considered an early model of pluralism within Islam. It embodies values of inclusivity, openness, peace, equality, and tolerance, forming a binding agreement among diverse tribes, cultures, and religions. The Medina Charter’s emphasis on mutual acceptance and harmony parallels the ideological foundation of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* and highlights its relevance to the pluralistic context of Indonesian society.

Although the Medina Charter has been widely discussed in various academic literature, its relevance in the modern context, particularly in a religiously diverse nation like Indonesia, has not been thoroughly examined. The efforts to connect the values of the Medina Charter with *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* as a framework for religious moderation are vital for formulating strategies that address the challenges posed by Indonesia’s diversity. Given the current trend of declining diversity and unity, as reflected in conflicts based on ethnicity, religion, and politics, this study becomes even more crucial. Rising individualism, intolerance, and a lack of communal spirit threaten the integrity of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) and the ideals embedded in *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*.

Therefore, this study aims to explore the alignment between the principles of the Medina Charter and *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, and how these two concepts can be utilized as a foundation for strengthening religious moderation in Indonesia.

Previous studies have addressed both the Medina Charter and *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* independently. However, attempts to link these two concepts in the framework of religious moderation specific to the Indonesian context remain limited. This research contributes to closing this gap by analyzing the synergy between the values encapsulated in the Medina Charter and the philosophy of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* to provide a comprehensive approach to managing pluralism in Indonesia.

This study seeks to answer the following key questions: How can the values embedded in the Medina Charter be applied within the framework of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*? How can these concepts support social stability in a pluralistic society like Indonesia?

The article will begin with an exploration of the historical context of the Medina Charter, followed by a comparative analysis with *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, and conclude with its implications for religious moderation in Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach, specifically a literature review, using books and other documents as primary sources (Sutrisno Hadi, 1995: 3). This method was chosen because the research focuses on analyzing texts and documents related to the Medina Charter and the concept of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*. The literature review approach is suitable for exploring the historical and philosophical relevance of these concepts in the context of religious moderation, aligning with the research objectives.

The research is qualitative in nature, meaning that it produces information in the form of notes and descriptive data embedded in the texts being analyzed (Mantra, 2008: 30). This approach is most appropriate as it allows for a contextual and interpretative analysis of the texts, which is crucial for understanding the alignment between the principles of the Medina Charter and *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*.

The primary sources for this study are secondary literature, including books, journal articles, and documents related to the Medina Charter and *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*. The selection of sources is based on their relevance to the theme of religious moderation and pluralism studies in Indonesia. Data was gathered from various academic literature indexed in databases such as Google Scholar and the National Library of Indonesia, ensuring a comprehensive collection of relevant materials (Afliya, 2019: 2).

The collected data was analyzed using a descriptive-analytical method. The descriptive-analytical method provides a clear,

objective, systematic, and critical interpretation of the Medina Charter, initiated by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). This analysis also explores the relevance of the charter to Indonesia's national motto, *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity), as part of an effort to formulate strategies that foster religious moderation in a pluralistic society. The process involves coding and grouping of key themes emerging from the texts (Afliya, 2019: 2).

The literature review approach was selected because this study does not require empirical field data; instead, it focuses on theoretical and textual analysis. The descriptive-analytical approach allows the researcher to map the alignment of pluralistic values between the two concepts without relying on empirical data from surveys or experiments. This approach ensures the study remains centered on exploring theoretical and philosophical aspects (Sutrisno Hadi, 1995: 3).

One limitation of this research is that the qualitative, literature-based approach does not provide empirical data that could measure the direct impact of religious moderation concepts in the field. However, this approach's strength lies in its ability to offer a deep understanding of relevant philosophical and historical concepts, which is essential for constructing a comprehensive theoretical framework (Afliya, 2019: 2). Additionally, the study acknowledges that qualitative analysis may not yield quantifiable results but instead focuses on in-depth textual interpretation to support its findings.

By employing the descriptive-analytical method within the literature review approach, this study aims to provide a significant contribution to understanding the relevance of the Medina Charter and *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* in supporting religious moderation in Indonesia. This method enables a

comprehensive and systematic exploration of the principles contained in both concepts, supporting the overall research objectives (Mantra, 2008: 30).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Bhinneka Tunggal Ika

Bhinneka Tunggal Ika, as previously mentioned, serves not only as the national motto but also as a guiding life philosophy for Indonesia. This phrase, derived from Old Javanese, is frequently translated as “Unity in Diversity,” highlighting the idea of diversity coexisting within a unified whole. A word-for-word translation reveals that “Bhinneka” signifies “various” or “different,” with “neka” in Sanskrit denoting “types” or “kinds,” forming the meaning of “variety” in Indonesian. “Tunggal” translates to “one,” while “Ika” means “that.” Thus, the literal interpretation of “Bhinneka Tunggal Ika” is “Unity in Diversity.” This encapsulates the notion that, despite differences in ethnicity, race, religion, and culture, all citizens share a common purpose as part of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) (Santoso et al., 2023).

The diversity within the NKRI is not seen as a conflicting divide but as a cohesive synthesis that enriches both the nature and essence of national unity. This motto reaffirms and strengthens the unity and integrity of the Indonesian nation-state, which comprises a rich mosaic of cultures, languages, races, ethnicities, religions, and beliefs. These principles were officially recognized and formalized by the government through Government Regulation No. 66 of 1951 on October 17, 1951, and were legally enshrined on October 28, 1951 (Tamara et al., 2023).

In essence, the motto “Bhinneka Tunggal Ika” is of critical importance as it symbolizes tolerance and cohesion. Tolerance fosters an environment where differences are not

divisive but instead serve to prevent discord and conflict. Therefore, diversity must be understood through the lens of multiculturalism, supported by multicultural education that is grounded in spiritual strength. This form of education seeks to address ethnic, religious, and ideological differences. The movement for multicultural education, as defined by James A. Banks (2002), aims to reform educational institutions to offer equal opportunities for all, regardless of their ethnic, cultural, or gender backgrounds. It equips individuals with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to effectively engage in ethnically and culturally diverse national and global societies.

The Charter of Medina (Sahifah Medina)

As previously discussed, the Medina Charter refers to the *sahifah*, a document or manuscript authored by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). In its essence, a charter is an official document drafted by a governing authority or legislative body, outlining the recognition of rights, including those of social groups and individuals alike. It may also encompass various forms of official decrees, agreements, awards, or constitutions that declare statements on a particular issue (Hari Mulyo, 2023).

The Medina Charter is a seminal political and legal document that served as a foundational step towards the establishment of the State of Medina in the 7th century CE. Its significance lies in the fact that Yathrib (the city’s name prior to its renaming as Medina) was home to a diverse array of ethnic and religious groups, necessitating a formal accord to ensure mutual protection among different communities. The Charter represents one of the Prophet’s key initiatives following his migration to Medina, aimed at fostering unity and stability within the society. It contains provisions on religious freedom, intergroup relations, obligations to maintain social

cohesion, and other critical matters. The inception of the Medina Charter also demonstrates the Prophet's political foresight as the leader of the Muhajirun, recognizing the ongoing political instability in Medina and drafting the Charter as a means to mitigate potential unrest.

Often referred to as the Medina Agreement, Dustur al-Medina, or Sahifah al-Medina, this document stands as both a peace treaty and a legislative framework. It governs the pluralistic society of Medina, addressing a wide array of issues including political, social, legal, economic matters, human rights, equality, religious freedoms, defense, security, and peace. It was the Prophet himself who spearheaded the implementation of this policy, in collaboration with the various inhabitants of Medina who aligned with the Charter's stipulations (Musa, 2014; p. 110; Sukarja, 2015; pp. 78-79).

The Conception of the Medina Charter

The Medina Charter, established in 622 AD., is a historic document that formalized a binding agreement between the Prophet Muhammad and the various tribes residing in Yathrib, now known as Medina. This seminal document outlined the rights and responsibilities of Muslims, Jews, and other communities, creating a unified societal framework under the newly established state. It played a pivotal role in fostering cooperation and coexistence among the diverse groups. The content of the Medina Charter includes the following provisions:

صحيفة المدينة

(Medina Charter)

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

هذا كتاب من محمد النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم بين المؤمنين والمسلمين من قريش ويثرب ومن تبعهم فلحق بهم وجاهد معهم.

In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful. This document is the charter of Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), for the believers and Muslims who have migrated from the Quraish and Yathrib (Medina), as well as those who have aligned themselves with them, joined their cause, and fought alongside them.

١. انهم امة واحدة من دون الناس.

Indeed, they form a distinct community, separate from other human societies (Chapter 1)

٢. المهاجرون من قريش على ربعتهم يتعاقلون بينهم

اخذالدية واعطائنا وهم يفدون عانيهم بالمعروف

والقسط بين المؤمنين

The Muhajirun from Quraish, according to their social norms, assist one another in paying blood money and jointly manage their obligations. They also redeem captives with fairness and justice among the believers (Chapter 2)

٣. وبنوعوف على ربعتهم يتعاقلون معاقلمهم الاولى وكل

طائفة تفدى عانيها بالمعروف والقسط بين المؤمنين

The tribe of Banu 'Auf, according to their traditions, continue to fulfill their responsibility of paying the blood money as they have done in the past, and every group redeems their captives with justice and equity among the believers (Chapter 3)

٤. وبنوساعدة على ربعتهم يتعاقلون معاقلمهم الاولى وكل

طائفة منهم تفدى عانيها بالمعروف والقسط بين المؤمنين

Banu Sa'idah, adhering to their customs, collaborate in paying blood money as before. Each faction redeems their captives with fairness and justice among the believers (Chapter 4).

٥. وبنو الحرث على ربعتهم يتعاقلون الاولى وكل طائفة

منهم تفدى عانيها بالمعروف والقسط بين المؤمنين

Banu al-Harith, in keeping with their traditions, cooperate in fulfilling the payment of blood money as they did previously, and each tribe redeems their captives with fairness and equity among the believers (Chapter 5).

٦. وبنوجشم على ربعتهم يتعاقلون معاقلمهم الاولى وكل

طائفة منهم تفدى عانيها بالمعروف والقسط بين المؤمنين

The tribe of Banu Jusham, following their established customs, continue to assist one another in paying blood money, just as they had done in the past. Each faction redeems their captives with fairness and justice among the believers (Chapter 6)

٧. وبنو النجار على ربعتهم يتعاقلون معاقلمهم الاولى وكل

طائفة منهم تفدى عانيها بالمعروف والقسط بين المؤمنين

Banu al-Najjar, according to their traditions, work collectively to fulfill their obligations in paying blood money as they had previously. Each tribe redeems their captives with fairness and justice among the believers (Chapter 7)

﴿٨﴾. وبنو عمرو بن عوف علبعتهم يتعاقلون معاقلمهم

الاولى وكل طائفة منهم تفدى غانيها بالمعروف والقسط

بين المؤمنين

Banu 'Amr bin 'Auf, in line with their customs, collaborate to pay blood money as they have always done, and each tribe redeems their captives fairly and justly among the believers (Chapter 8)

﴿٩﴾. وبنو النبيت علبعتهم يتعاقلون معاقلمهم الاولى وكل

طائفة منهم تفدى غانيها بالمعروف والقسط بين المؤمنين

The tribe of Banu al-Nabit, following their customs, continue to manage their responsibilities for paying blood money as they have done in the past. Each faction redeems their captives fairly and justly among the believers (Chapter 9).

﴿١٠﴾. وبنو الاوس علبعتهم يتعاقلون معاقلمهم الاولى وكل

طائفة منهم تفدى غانيها بالمعروف والقسط بين المؤمنين

Banu al-'Aws, in accordance with their traditions, cooperate in paying blood money as before. Each tribe redeems their captives with fairness and justice among the believers (Chapter 10).

﴿١١﴾. وان المؤمنين لا يتركون مفرجا بينهم ان يعطوه

بالمعروف في فداء او عقل.

Indeed, the believers should not leave anyone heavily burdened by debts without assistance. They must help in paying ransom or blood money with goodwill and fairness (Chapter 11).

﴿١٢﴾. ولا يحالف مؤمن مولى مؤمن دونه.

No believer should form alliances with the allies of another believer without that believer's consent (Chapter 12).

﴿١٣﴾. وان المؤمنين المتقين على من بغى منهم او ابتغى د

سيعة ظلم اثم او عدوان او فساد بين المؤمنين وان

ايديهم عليه جميعا ولو كان ولد احدهم.

The believers, those who fear God, must stand against anyone who seeks injustice, sin, enmity, or corruption among them. All believers must unite against such a person, even if he is the son of one of their own (Chapter 13).

﴿١٤﴾. ولا يقتل مؤمن مؤمنا في كافر ولا ينصر كفرا على

مؤمن.

A believer should never kill another believer over the killing of a disbeliever, nor should a believer support a disbeliever against a fellow believer (Chapter 14).

﴿١٥﴾. وان ذمة الله واحدة يحيد عليهم ادناهم وان المؤمنين

يعضهم موالى بعض دون الناس.

The covenant of God is one, and the lowest among them must be protected. The believers are allies to one another, distinct from other people (Chapter 15).

﴿١٦﴾. وانه من تبنا من يهود فان له النصر والاسوة غير

مظلومين ولا متناصر عليهم.

The Jews who join us are entitled to protection and support without being wronged or opposed (Chapter 16).

﴿١٧﴾. وان سلم المؤمنين واحدة لا يسالم مؤمن دون مؤمن

في قتال في سبيل الله الا على سواء وعدل بينهم.

The peace of the believers is unified. No believer should make peace without the participation of other believers when fighting for the cause of God, except on the basis of equality and justice among them (Chapter 17).

﴿١٨﴾. وان كل غازية غزت معنا يعقب بعضها بعضا.

All groups that engage in battle with us must take turns, supporting one another (Chapter 18)

﴿١٩﴾. وان المؤمنين يبي بعضهم على بعض بمانال دماءهم

فسبيل الله وان المؤمنين والمتقين على احسن هدى

واقومهم.

The believers are bound to seek retribution for bloodshed in the cause of God. The pious believers remain on the best and straightest guidance (Chapter 19).

﴿٢٠﴾. وانه لا يجير مشرك مالا لقريش ولا نفسا ولا يحول دونه

على مؤمن.

The polytheists of Yathrib shall not protect the wealth or the lives of the Quraysh, nor shall they intervene on behalf of the believers (Chapter 20).

﴿٢١﴾. وانه من اعتبط مؤمنا قتلا عن بينة فانه قودبه الا ان

يرضى ولي المقتول وان المؤمنين عليه كافة ولا يحل لهم

الاقيام عليه.

Whoever intentionally kills a believer, with sufficient evidence against him, must be punished with death, unless the family of the deceased agrees to accept blood money. All believers must unite in this punishment, and it is not permissible for anyone to avoid this responsibility (Chapter 21).

﴿١٢٦﴾. وانه لا يحل لمؤمن أقر بما في هذه الصحيفة وآمن بالله واليوم الآخر ان ينصر محدثا ولا يؤويه وانه من نصره او آواه فان عليه لعنة الله وغضبه يوم القيامة ولا يؤخذ منه صرف ولا عدل.

It is forbidden for any believer who acknowledges this document and believes in God and the Last Day to shelter or support someone guilty of murder. Whoever does so will incur the curse of God and His wrath on the Day of Judgment. No ransom or compensation will be accepted from them (Chapter 22).

﴿١٢٧﴾. وانكم مهما اختلفتم فيه من شيء فان مرده الى الله عزوجل والى محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم
If you disagree on any matter, its resolution must be referred to God, the Almighty, and to Muhammad, peace be upon him (Chapter 23).

﴿١٢٨﴾. وان اليهود ينفقون مع المؤمنين ماداموا محاربين
The Jews shall share the financial burden with the believers as long as they remain at war (Chapter 24).

﴿١٢٩﴾. وان يهود بني عوف امة مع المؤمنين لليهود دينهم وللمسلمين دينهم مواليهم وانفسهم الا من ظلم واثم فانه لا يوتخ الا نفسه واهل بيته.

The Jews of Banu 'Anf are one community with the believers. The Jews will follow their religion, and the Muslims will follow theirs, including their allies and their persons, except for those who commit injustice and wrongdoing. Such individuals will only harm themselves and their families (Chapter 25).

﴿١٣٠﴾. وان ليهود بني النجار مثل ماليهون بني عوف
The Jews of Banu Najjar shall enjoy the same rights as the Jews of Banu 'Anf (Chapter 26).

﴿١٣١﴾. وان ليهود بني الحرث مثل ماليهون بني عوف
The Jews of Banu Harith shall enjoy the same rights as the Jews of Banu 'Anf (Chapter 27)

﴿١٣٢﴾. وان ليهود بني ساعدة مثل ماليهون بني عوف
The Jews of Banu Sa'idah shall enjoy the same rights as the Jews of Banu 'Anf (Chapter 28).

﴿١٣٣﴾. وان ليهود بني جشم مثل ماليهون بني عوف

Chapter 29

The Jews of Banu Jusham shall enjoy the same rights as the Jews of Banu 'Anf (Chapter 29).

﴿١٣٤﴾. وان ليهود بني الاوس مثل ماليهون بني عوف
The Jews of Banu al-'Aws shall enjoy the same rights as the Jews of Banu 'Anf (Chapter 30).

﴿١٣٥﴾. وان ليهود بني ثعلبة مثل ماليهون بني عوف الامن ظلم واثم فانه لا يوتخ الا نفسه واهل بيته.

The Jews of Banu Thalabah shall enjoy the same rights as the Jews of Banu 'Anf, except for those who commit injustice and wrongdoing, for they will harm only themselves and their families (Chapter 31).

﴿١٣٦﴾. وان جفنه بطن ثعلبه كأنفسهم
The branch of Banu Thalabah known as Jafnah are to be treated as part of their own community (Chapter 32).

﴿١٣٧﴾. وان لبني الشطيبة مثل ماليهون بني عوف وان البر دون الاثم

The Jews of Banu Shutaybah shall enjoy the same rights as the Jews of Banu 'Anf, and virtue will always prevail over wrongdoing (Chapter 33)

﴿١٣٨﴾. وان موالي ثعلبه كأنفسهم
The allies of Banu Thalabah shall enjoy the same rights as Banu Thalabah (Chapter 34).

﴿١٣٩﴾. وان بطانة يهود كأنفسهم
The relatives of the Jews are to be treated as themselves (Chapter 35).

﴿١٤٠﴾. وانه لا يخرج احد منهم الا باذن محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم وانه لا ينجر على ثار جرح وانه من فتك فبنفسه فتك واهل بيته الا من ظلم وان الله على ابرهذا.

No one may go to battle without the permission of Muhammad, peace be upon him. Revenge for wounds shall not be withheld, and whoever commits a crime shall bear the consequences alone, unless they are wronged. Truly, God approves this (Chapter 36).

﴿١٤١﴾. وان على اليهود نفقتهم وعلى المسلمين نفقتهم وان بينهم النصر على من حارب اهل هذه الصحيفة وان بينهم النصح والنصيحة والبر دون الاثم وانه لم ياثم امرؤ بحليفه وان النصر للمظلوم.

The Jews are responsible for their expenses, and the Muslims for theirs. Together, they must defend one another against any enemy of this agreement. They are to be loyal to one another and refrain from treason. Support must be extended to the oppressed (Chapter 37).

﴿١٤٢﴾. وان اليهود ينفقون مع المؤمنين ماداموا محاربين.
The Jews and the believers share the costs of war while engaged in conflict (Chapter 38).

﴿١٤٣﴾. وان يثرب حرام جوفها لاهل هذه الصحيفة.

Yathrib is a sacred land for all who are bound by this agreement (Chapter 39).

❦. وان الجار كالنفس غير مضار ولا اثم.

Those who are granted protection are to be treated like those who grant it, provided they cause no harm or act treacherously (Chapter 40)

❦. وانه لا تجارحرمة الا باذن اهلها

No protection can be granted without the permission of its people (Chapter 41)

❦. وانه ما كان بين اهل هذه الصحيفة من حدث

واشتجار يخاف فساد فانه مردد الى الله عزوجل والى

محمد صلالله عليه وسلم وان الله على اتقى ما فى هذه

الصحيفة وابره.

In case of any dispute or incident that may cause harm among those bound by this agreement, the matter should be referred to God, the Almighty, and to Muhammad, peace be upon him. God is the most faithful and just regarding this document (Chapter 42).

❦. وانه لاتجار قريش ولا من نصرها

The Quraysh and their allies shall not be granted protection (Chapter 43).

❦. وان بينهم النصر على من دهم يثرب.

All parties to this agreement shall unite against any who attempt to invade Yathrib (Chapter 44).

❦. واذا دعوا الى صلح يصلحونه (ويلبسونه) فانهم

يصلحونه ويلبسونه وانهم اذا دعوا الى مثل ذلك فانه لهم

على المؤمنين الا من حارب فى الدين على كل اناس حصتهم

من جانبهم الذى قبلهم.

If they are invited to make peace, and they accept, then peace must be honored. If they are invited to a similar peace, the believers are obligated to accept, except those who fight for religion. Each party has its share of responsibilities (Chapter 45).

❦. وان يهود الاوس مواليتهم وانفسهم على مثل مالا هل

هذه الصحيفة مع البر الحسن من اهل هذه الصحيفة وان

البر دون الاثم.

The Jews of al-'Aws, their allies, and themselves, shall have the same rights and obligations as all other parties to this agreement, provided they fulfill their commitments and avoid treachery. Virtue stands apart from sin (Chapter 46).

❦. ولا يكسب كاسب الاعلى نفسه وان الله على اصدق

فى هذه الصحيفة وابره وانه لا يحول هذا الكتاب دون

ظالم واثم. وانه من خرج آمن ومن قعد آمن بالمدينة الا

من ظلم واثم وان الله جار لمن برواقتى ومحمد رسول الله

صلى الله عليه وسلم

This document does not protect the unjust and wrongdoers. Those who travel shall be safe, and those who stay in Medina shall be safe, except for those who commit injustice and sin. God is the protector of those who are righteous, and Muhammad is the Messenger of God (Chapter 47).
(Ibnu Hisyam, 2011; 119-133)

The authenticity of the Medina Charter can be discerned from the hadith containing the Sahifah of Medina, as narrated by Ubayd Al-Qassim bin Sallam in his work *Al-Ammal*. The narration reads as follows:

“Yahya bin Abdullah bin Bukayr and Abdullah bin Salih told us that Al-Layth bin Sa’ad told us that Uqail bin Khalid reported from Ibn Shihab who said: ‘It has reached me that the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, wrote this document: This is a document from Muhammad, the Prophet, the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, between the believers and the Muslims from Quraysh and the people of Yathrib, and those who follow them, join them, and strive alongside them. They are one community apart from all other people. The emigrants from Quraysh shall be responsible for their own tribe, and they shall ransom their captives in accordance with the customary practices of goodness and justice among the believers. And Banu Awf shall be responsible for their own tribe and shall ransom their captives in accordance with the customary practices of goodness and justice among the believers. And Banu Harith shall be responsible for their own tribe, and they shall ransom their captives according to the same principles. Likewise, Banu Saïda, Banu Jusham, Banu Najjar, and Banu Amr bin Awf are responsible for their own tribes, following

the same terms. The believers shall not abandon a heavily burdened debtor without helping him in fairness concerning blood money or ransom payments. The believers, pious and righteous among them, shall band together against anyone who rebels, seeks wrongdoing, or aims to spread injustice, sin, or enmity between the believers. They shall be united in their actions against him, even if he is one of their own sons. No believer shall kill another believer for the sake of an unbeliever, nor shall they support an unbeliever against a believer.”

Abu Ubayd stated: “What is preserved for us is that their tribes will be responsible for their captives, and they shall ransom them according to their first agreements.” Abdullah bin Salih adds: “Their tribes will ransom their captives, and each group shall release its own prisoners according to fairness and justice.” The document also outlines that the Jews of Banu Awf are part of the community of the believers, with their religion and the believers with theirs, except for those who commit wrongdoing or sin, and this will only affect themselves and their families. The Prophet, peace be upon him, decreed that all differences be referred to Allah and His Messenger for judgment.

A second version of this narration is found in Ibn Hisham’s account of the Sahifah of Medina. Ibn Hisham writes that when the Prophet migrated to Medina, he immediately began implementing social, political, and security measures, one of which was forming a treaty with the Jews of Medina. This included the tribes of Banu Qaynuqa, Banu Qurayza, and Banu Nadir. Modern scholars argue that this document is among the clearest evidence of Islam’s tolerance towards those who differ in belief, and some even claim it is the first human rights charter, while others view it as a citizenship agreement ahead of its time.

The Medina Charter as written by the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, binds the Muslims of Quraysh and Yathrib and anyone who follows them to form a single community, separate from others. Each tribe was responsible for its own affairs, including ransoming captives according to the same standards of justice. Furthermore, no believer was permitted to ally with an outsider against another believer, and the believers would stand united against anyone who sought to wrong or harm the community. The Prophet also decreed that the Jews would be treated equally, their rights and religion respected, provided they did not commit injustice.

Hemawati et al.’s research concludes that the hadith narrated by Abu Ubayd Al-Qassim bin Sallam in *Al-Ammal* includes an authentic chain of transmission, providing credibility to the Medina Charter. However, the narration from Ibn Hisham lacks a chain of transmission, as the redaction is written without a sanad (a chain of narrators), merely presenting the manuscript of the Sahifah of Medina. In contrast, Abu Ubayd’s narration contains a reliable chain, tracing back to notable narrators such as Al-Layth bin Sa’ad and Ibn Shihab Al-Zuhri, one of the most prominent Tabi’in (followers of the Companions).

Thus, based on the research of Hemawati et al., it can be concluded that the Sahifah of Medina was indeed created in the first year of Hijra, shortly after the Prophet’s migration to Medina. While the complete text of the Sahifah is not found in standard Hadith collections due to the presence of weak transmitters and gaps in the chain (mursal sahabi), the partial inclusion of the Sahifah in multiple narrations, coupled with its appearance in *Sirah Nabawiyah* by Ibn Hisham, renders the Medina Charter as generally authentic and historically reliable.

Medina Charter and Its Relevance to Indonesia's Commitment

Based on the content of the Medina Charter as presented by Ibn Hisham, it becomes evident that this document, which was established in 622 AD. as a social contract for the people of Medina, explicitly lists thirteen distinct community groups. These groups, explicitly referenced in the text of the charter, include: (i) Believers and Muslim Emigrants (Muhajirun) from the Quraysh tribe of Mecca, (ii) Believers and Muslims from Yathrib (Medina), (iii) Jews from Banu 'Awf, (iv) Jews from Banu Sa'idah, (v) Jews from Banu al-Harith, (vi) Banu Jusham, (vii) Jews from Banu al-Najjar, (viii) Jews from Banu 'Amr ibn 'Awf, (ix) Banu al-Nabit, (x) Banu al-'Aws, (xi) Jews from Banu Thalabah, (xii) Jafnah tribe from Banu Thalabah, and (xiii) Banu Shuthaibah (Dja'far Suaedy, 2012).

The Medina Charter, instituted by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), represents a socio-political contract (mu'ahadah) aimed at ensuring equal rights and protections for all parties bound by its terms. Often hailed as a hallmark of modern governance—a testament to an advanced and rational political system—this constitution was, in fact, pioneered by the Prophet over twelve centuries ago. Medina, at that time, was a multicultural and multi-religious society, comprising various ethnic and religious groups, including Jews, Christians, and Magians. The Prophet (PBUH) intentionally designed this collective agreement to safeguard the fundamental rights of all citizens—without exception—such as the right to life, property ownership, and protection against unjust treatment. In essence, this demonstrated the Prophet's acknowledgment and acceptance of diversity (NU Online, 2024).

Moreover, like any constitution that upholds and respects pluralism, those who attempt to disrupt this diversity are viewed as

traitors and subject to sanctions. The Medina Charter not only acknowledges diversity but mandates mutual respect and protection. Thus, those who undermine this diversity, regardless of whether they are Muslim or not, would face strict penalties. For instance, if a Muslim were to unjustly kill a non-Muslim under the protection of the agreement (mu'ahad), they would be sanctioned accordingly. Even though the Prophet was at the zenith of his political authority, he did not impose Islam on others, discriminate against minorities, or perpetrate injustices. Instead, he positioned himself as a just leader and protector, recognizing diversity as a strength for nation-building and a pathway to peace (Dja'far Suaedy, 2012).

In addition to establishing the Medina Charter as the constitution of the state of Medina, the Prophet repeatedly instructed his companions to exhibit respect and tolerance, both towards fellow Muslims and non-Muslims. One notable example is when the Prophet accepted an invitation from a Jewish person to dine at their home, illustrating respect for individuals with different beliefs. This act conveyed a profound message: differences in faith should not be a cause for animosity or antagonism, especially when no harm is inflicted upon Muslims. This act of mutual respect serves as a clear demonstration of the Prophet's acceptance of religious and cultural diversity (Ghazali, 2009; 76).

Perhaps even more remarkable is the account of polytheists during the Prophet's time who, despite their theological differences, were willing to lend vessels and water for ablution—a ritual that is part of Islamic worship. Although their beliefs starkly contrasted with those of Muslims, they maintained cordial relations with the Prophet and his companions, treating them with respect and courtesy. This exemplifies the Prophet's practice of fostering peaceful

coexistence with those of different faiths, which in turn led to harmonious relationships with non-Muslims (Abu Bakar, 2015; 238).

The teachings of Islam, as demonstrated through these examples, emphasize the importance of treating non-Muslims with kindness and respect as part of embracing the principles of diversity within the context of the Indonesian state. Islam explicitly prohibits the destruction of churches, Christian places of worship, and other religious sites without valid reason. For instance, the Caliph Umar bin Abdul Aziz once forbade his troops from demolishing churches and religious establishments belonging to non-Muslims.

This principle aligns with the actions of Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab during his control over Al-Aqsa Mosque in Palestine. Rather than destroying churches and synagogues, he ensured the religious freedom of non-Muslims, exemplifying Islamic justice. He even guaranteed their safety, property, churches, crosses, and protection for the vulnerable among them, without coercing them to abandon their religion. None felt threatened or displaced from Jerusalem. The Jews, however, were not allowed to reside in Jerusalem at the request of its Christian inhabitants, who had a deep-seated animosity toward them due to past transgressions, such as the massacre of Christian prisoners by Jews in Persian territories. Historical records suggest that Umar guaranteed that no Jew would be allowed to spend the night in Jerusalem (Wahyudi, 2019; 133-139).

Moreover, the Quran, as a reflection of the Prophet's character, teaches that when engaging in religious discourse, criticism of other faiths should be avoided. This principle is fundamental in Islamic preaching and forms the basis of peaceful interfaith relations, as affirmed by the Quran:

وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْوًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ كَذَلِكَ زَيْنًا لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ عَمَلُهُمْ
ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ مَرْجِعُهُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا
يَعْمَلُونَ

"Refrain from insulting the deities they worship besides Allah, for they might retaliate by cursing Allah without knowledge, driven by excess and ignorance. Thus, We have made the deeds of every community appear pleasing in their own eyes. In the end, they will return to their Lord, and He will inform them of all they have done." (QS. Al-An'am: 108).

Regarding the above verse, Sheikh Wahbah al-Zuhayli in Tafsir al-Munir said as follows:

ينهى الله تعالى رسوله والمؤمنين عن سب آلهة
المشركين. وإن كان فيه مصلحة. إلا أنه يترتب عليه
مفسدة أعظم منها. وهي مقابلة المشركين بسب إله
المؤمنين. وهو الله لا إله إلا هو كما قال ابن عباس لا
تسبوا أيها المسلمون آلهة المشركين التي يدعونها من
دون الله إذ ربما نشأ عن ذلك سبهم لله عز وجل
عدوانا. أي ظلما وتجاوزا منهم للحد في السباب
والمشاتمة. لا غاظة المؤمنين. جهلا منهم بقدر الله
تعالى وعظمته. وهذا يدل على أن الطاعة أو
المصلحة إن أدت إلى معصية أو مفسدة تترك.

Allah, the Almighty, has prohibited the Prophets and the believers from denouncing the deities of the polytheists. While there may be some perceived advantages in doing so, the potential harm is significantly greater. The polytheists, in response, may retaliate by reviling Allah excessively and may insult the believers, all without truly understanding Allah's grandeur. This underscores a crucial principle: any act of righteousness or benefit that leads to disobedience or harm must be abandoned. (Wahbah Al-Zuhayli, 2017).

The variations that exist among humans are a manifestation of sunnatullah, the divine law that we must embrace. Some examples of

these differences, which reflect God's will, include the diversity of human opinions (Qur'an 51:8), the variance in skin color and languages (Qur'an 30:22), distinctions in laws and beliefs (Qur'an 22:67), disparities in social status (Qur'an 6:165), and the economic divide between the rich and the poor (Qur'an 6:53). These differences were created by Allah SWT so that we, as citizens of Indonesia, can know, rely on, and support one another. Therefore, it is essential to nurture harmonious relationships through frequent social interactions and friendships. Through these connections, we can better understand each other and learn to accept differences, not as sources of division, but as opportunities for positive competition in doing good deeds. As responsible citizens, it is imperative that we embrace these differences in order to maintain harmony and peace, thereby strengthening the integrity and dignity of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia in the global arena.

In our role as good citizens, we are also obligated to treat everyone with kindness, regardless of their attributes, such as ethnicity, religion, status, occupation, or wealth. When faced with challenges, we are encouraged to seek consensus through deliberation and to follow the guidance of experts and leaders who are both honest and just. The key to preserving diversity lies in refraining from arrogance or self-righteousness, avoiding insults toward others' beliefs, and not harboring prejudice or fault-finding toward individuals or groups. Furthermore, we must guard against excessive pride in one's own group or religion; instead, we should demonstrate our values through actions, particularly by excelling in doing good to others.

This principle is illustrated in the story recounted by Ibn Abbas, where the Roman King received a letter from the Prophet Muhammad. The king sought out a Meccan

trader who was in Syria, and eventually met with Abu Sufyan, who was engaged in trade in Sham. A dialogue ensued between the king and Abu Sufyan—before the latter embraced Islam—regarding the characteristics of the Prophet who had been sent to Mecca. In addition to sending a letter to the Roman King, the Prophet also addressed correspondence to King al-Najashi. However, not all of the Prophet's letters were met with positive responses. While the Roman King and King al-Najashi received the Prophet's letters with respect, the King of Persia did not. The Prophet sent his letter to the Persian King via his messenger, Abdullah Ibn Hudzafah as-Sahmi, with the same content as the letters sent to the other rulers.

Upon receiving the letter, the King of Persia immediately tore it up without offering any response to the Prophet. When the Prophet learned from his envoy that his letter had been destroyed, he did not instruct his followers to retaliate against the Persian Empire, despite this highly unconventional and disrespectful treatment of his invitation. This response illustrates that the core of da'wah (Islamic missionary work) is not about forcing others to accept it. Ultimately, the Persian Empire met its downfall, losing to the Roman Empire, and in the 7th century Hijri, the Persian king was killed by his own son, Syirawaih.

This episode clearly demonstrates the Prophet Muhammad's inclination towards peace. His diplomatic approach, particularly towards foreign kingdoms, exemplified his method of promoting mutual respect and coexistence. If successful, such diplomacy could have fostered harmonious cooperation between the Prophet and those who accepted his message. In this context, it becomes evident that the Prophet embodied the spirit of diversity, as seen in his avoidance of coercion when inviting others to Islam. To

further nurture this spirit of diversity, he forbade Muslims from looking down on others or focusing on their shortcomings, as this could breed arrogance. After all, no human is perfect, except for the Prophet himself. Therefore, harboring prejudice due to pride not only harms the individual but also endangers diversity, as it can threaten unity and integrity.

As followers of the Prophet, Muslims are encouraged to refrain from actions that could harm diversity, such as arrogance, self-righteousness, or unjustly cursing non-Muslims. On one occasion, the Prophet's companions requested that he curse the polytheists who were harassing the Muslims. They believed that the Prophet's prayers were always granted, and thus expected a curse to befall their enemies. However, the Prophet refused this request, explaining that he had been sent not to curse, but to serve as a messenger of mercy to all creation. Moreover, the Prophet consistently modeled kindness and goodwill toward others, emphasizing that the best people are those who bring the most benefit to others. Conversely, he strictly forbade causing harm, whether through speech or action, including the spread of malicious rumors or hateful speech.

In light of these teachings, the Medina Charter, established by the Prophet to ensure unity and coexistence among the diverse population of Medina, remains highly relevant to Indonesia's national motto, "*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*" (Unity in Diversity). Just as the Prophet maintained the unity of Medina's multi-ethnic and multi-religious society through the Charter, Indonesia too has the responsibility to safeguard its diversity. Numerous hadiths serve as historical evidence of the Prophet's commitment to diversity, and it was the strength of this commitment that caught the attention of empires such as Rome and Persia during his time.

In modern Indonesia, a country forged through the sacrifices of its Muslim leaders and national heroes, the nation now faces serious challenges. The rising tide of religiously motivated radicalism, often associated with intolerance toward differences, has led many to neglect "*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*" as the guiding philosophy of the nation. The persistent issues surrounding ethnic, religious, and social divisions threaten the very fabric of Indonesia's identity. Today, the country seems to have drifted away from its historical reputation as a nation characterized by tolerance, friendliness, and the ability to foster peaceful coexistence amidst diversity.

In Islam, however, diversity is a natural condition of humanity, and to impose uniformity upon such diversity is to violate this nature. Resorting to violence in the pursuit of conformity runs counter to the very essence of Islam. The term "Islam" itself means submission, obedience, and peace, underscoring that the religion's fundamental principles center on fostering peace in human life. Revealed through the Prophet Muhammad, Islam seeks to promote safety, harmony, and peace, especially in the context of a diverse society.

CONCLUSION

Based on the aforementioned explanation, it is clear that embracing diversity is inherently part of adhering to the practices and traditions exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Conversely, rejecting diversity equates to rejecting the Prophet's traditions, which can be seen as undermining Islam itself. Our love for Islam is inseparable from our ability to present its compassionate and inclusive nature within the context of diversity, ultimately fostering a harmonious and peaceful coexistence. The motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, which serves as a symbol of Indonesia's identity and originates

from the ancient Archipelago's philosophy during the Majapahit Kingdom, is, in essence, not far removed from the principles outlined in the Medina Charter. Pluralism and diversity, by their very nature, demand a collective commitment to unity, ensuring the prevention of conflicts that could harm individuals, communities, and the nation at large.

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