



LOCAL RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS AND RELIGIOUS MODERATION: A PERSPECTIVE OF *FIQH AHLUSSUNNAH WAL JAMA'AH AN-NAHDLIYAH*

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini membahas tradisi keagamaan lokal dan moderasi beragama dalam perspektif Fiqh Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji hubungan antara tradisi keagamaan lokal dengan penguatan moderasi beragama dalam kehidupan sehari-hari masyarakat Islam di Nusantara. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan library research. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tradisi keagamaan lokal seperti tahlilan, yasinan, haul, maulid Nabi, dan ziarah kubur sangat penting sebagai sarana untuk menyebarkan ajaran agama, memperkuat rasa solidaritas sosial, dan memperkuat nilai-nilai Aswaja seperti tawassut, tawazun, tasamuh, dan i'tidal. Pemikiran Imam al-Maturidi dan Imam al-Asy'ari juga memberikan dasar teologis yang kuat dalam membangun sikap moderat, serta menolak ekstremisme dan radikalisme. Dengan demikian, Fiqh Aswaja Nusantara mampu menghadirkan model keberagamaan yang moderat, toleran, dan harmonis di tengah masyarakat multikultural Indonesia.

Kata kunci: *Aswaja An-Nahdliyah; Moderasi Beragama; Tradisi Keagamaan Lokal*

Abstract

This study discusses local religious traditions and religious moderation from a religious perspective Fiqh Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah. This study aims to examine the relationship between local religious traditions and the strengthening of religious moderation in the daily lives of Muslim communities in the Indonesian archipelago. This study uses qualitative methods with a library research approach. The results of the study indicate that local religious traditions such as tahlilan, yasinan, haul, Maulid Nabi, and grave pilgrimage are very important as a means to spread religious teachings, strengthen the sense of social solidarity, and strengthen Aswaja values such tawassut (moderation), tawazun (balance), tasamuh (tolerance), and i'tidal (justice). The thoughts of Imam al-Maturidi and Imam al-Asy'ari also provide a strong theological foundation for developing a moderate stance and rejecting extremism and radicalism. Thus, Fiqh Aswaja Nusantara is able to present a moderate, tolerant, and harmonious model of religiosity within Indonesia's multicultural society.

Keywords: *Aswaja An-Nahdliyah; Local Religious Traditions; Religious Moderation*

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country rich in cultural diversity, ethnicities, languages, and religious traditions. In the Indonesian archipelago, religious practices have developed through a process of acculturation with local cultures. This process has given rise to various traditions such as *tahlilan*, *maulidan*, *haul*, *yasinan*, and *selamatan*. These traditions serve not only as a means of worship but also as a means of strengthening social ties and maintaining social harmony. (Suwandana et al., 2023)

From the perspective of the *Fiqh of Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah* (Aswaja), local religious traditions are acceptable as long as they do not conflict with the basic principles of Islamic law. The moderate understanding of *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* is influenced by the thoughts of Imam Abu Mansur al-Maturidi and Imam Abu al-Hasan al-Asy'ari. They emphasize a balance between reason and revelation, tolerance, and a rejection of extremism in religious life. (Mardhiah & Sauqi, n.d.) Therefore, local traditions are considered as a means of preaching and strengthening moderate Islamic values.

In the modern era, religious life faces various challenges such as intolerance, radicalism, and the growth of exclusive religious ideologies. Some groups consider local religious traditions to be heretical practices that are inconsistent with Islamic teachings. This situation can lead to social conflict and weaken the spirit of tolerance in a pluralistic society. Therefore, religious moderation is crucial to maintain a balance between religious teachings and local cultural wisdom.

Several previous studies have shown that the religious traditions of the Nahdliyin community play a role in instilling *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* values and strengthening the community's socio-religious identity. However, previous studies have tended to discuss religious traditions, *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* values, and religious moderation separately. Therefore, the novelty of this study lies in analyzing the relationship between local religious traditions and the strengthening religious moderation from the perspective of *Fiqh Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah An-Nahdliyah*.

Based on this, the study of local religious traditions and religious moderation from the perspective of *Fiqh Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah An-Nahdliyah* is crucial. This study is expected to provide an understanding of the moderate and tolerant character of Islam in the Indonesian archipelago, capable of engaging in dialogue with local cultures without abandoning the fundamental values of Islamic teachings.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses qualitative methods with a library research approach. Primary data sources include Imam Abu Mansur al-Maturidi's *Kitāb al-Tauḥīd* and

various official books and literature published by Nahdlatul Ulama discussing *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah An-Nahdliyah*, local religious traditions, and religious moderation. Secondary data sources include books, journals, scientific articles, and previous research related to *Fiqh Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah An-Nahdliyah* and religious moderation. Research data were collected through literature studies, and then analyzed using a descriptive-analytical approach to examine the relevance of local religious traditions in strengthening religious moderation from the perspective of *Fiqh Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah An-Nahdliyah*.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah, or better known as Aswaja, is a moderate school of thought within Islam. The term *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* itself comes from the word *ahlun*, meaning family or group, and *sunnah*, meaning a way of life approved by Allah through the example of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions. (Arifin et al., tt) Therefore, *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* is a community that follows the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad and adheres to the consensus of the Islamic scholars. (Ahmad & Sein, 2024)

In the context of Nahdlatul Ulama, *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah An-Nahdliyin* is the primary foundation for religious practice. This understanding of *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* refers to the four schools of Islamic jurisprudence: Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hanbali. (Ahmad & Sein, 2024) Additionally, *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* is founded upon four main values, namely *tawassut* (moderation), *tawazun* (balance), *tasamuh* (tolerance), and *i'tidal* (justice). (Rofiq, 2023) These values form the basis for building a peaceful and harmonious religious life.

Nahdlatul Ulama or NU is a religious organization founded on 16 Rajab 1344 H or 31 January 1926 M. This organization was established by Islamic scholars and pesantren kiai as a forum to gather scholars and their followers in maintaining and developing Islamic teachings based on the creed of *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah*. KH. Hasyim Asy'ari is a central figure in the founding of Nahdlatul Ulama. (Suwandana et al., 2023) Nahdlatul Ulama is not only active in the religious field, but also active in social activities to promote public welfare and advance the nation. (Mughtar et al., 2007) In the Indonesian context, Nahdlatul Ulama is seen as one of the organizations that best represents the *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* ideology. (Somantri et al., 2024)

In its da'wah practices, Nahdlatul Ulama emphasizes the importance of respecting local culture and traditions. Its da'wah approach is open and tolerant of local wisdom, as exemplified by the Walisongo in the spread of Islam in the archipelago. The Islamization that took place in the 16th and 17th centuries was not carried out through coercion, but through a harmonious process of acculturation between Islamic teachings and local culture. Islamic values were conveyed wisely without eliminating community traditions that did not conflict

with the principle of monotheism. This *da'wah* model became known as moderate Islam, which continues to thrive today. (Somantri et al., 2024)

A. Local Religious Traditions from the Perspective of *Fiqh Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah An-Nahdliyah*

Local religious traditions in the Indonesian Muslim community are closely linked to the development of *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* teachings. These include *tahlilan*, *yasinan*, *haul*, grave pilgrimages, *manaqiban*, and *maulid Nabi*. These traditions are not merely cultural practices. They also serve as media for *da'wah*, religious education, and strengthening social solidarity.

From the perspective of Nusantara *Fiqh Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah*, local traditions are viewed as forms of *'urf*, or social customs, that are acceptable as long as they do not conflict with the basic principles of Islamic law. This approach is based on the following principles:

الأصلح بالجد والأخذ بالصالح القديم على المحدث

That means preserving good old traditions while adopting new and better practices. (Somantri et al., 2024)

In addition, there are the rules of Islamic jurisprudence:

محاكمة العادة

This means that customs or habits can be used as a basis for legal considerations. (Somantri et al., 2024)

These two rules show that *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* does not view culture rigidly. *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* views culture from a proportional and contextual perspective. Tradition is understood based on the values and goals within it, not just from its external form. (Somantri et al., 2024) Therefore, traditions that contain the values of togetherness, prayer, friendship, and spiritual strengthening can be accepted as part of the religious practices of society. (Andiono, 2021)

Tahlilan, for example, is not only seen as a prayer ritual for the deceased but also as a way to strengthen social ties among residents. During the ceremony, the community gathers to recite verses from the Quran, recite *tahlil*, recite *dhikr* (remembrance of God), and pray together. This activity fosters social solidarity and strengthens the value of mutual cooperation within the community. (Arifin et al., tt)

Likewise, the traditions of the *yasinan* and the *maulid Nabi* have both educational and spiritual functions. Reciting Surah Yasin in congregation strengthens Islamic brotherhood. (Ahmad & Sein, 2024) while the *maulid Nabi* is a means of instilling love for the Prophet Muhammad. through reading history and the example of his life. (Andiono, 2021) This tradition shows that local culture can be a medium for internalizing Islamic values in a peaceful and humane manner.

The tradition of *haul* and grave pilgrimage also shows the relationship between the spiritual and social dimensions in the life of the *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* community. (Ahmad & Sein, 2024) Apart from praying for the deceased, this activity is a means of remembering the services of scholars and saints in spreading Islam in the archipelago. (Andiono, 2021) This strengthens the religious identity of the community while maintaining the continuity of Islamic scientific traditions.

These religious traditions demonstrate that *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah's* approach to local traditions is an inclusive and adaptive form of religiosity. *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* does not reject the culture that develops in society. Instead, *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* selects and adapts to ensure it remains in line with the principles of monotheism and Islamic law. Thus, *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah Fiqh An-Nahdliyah* can present a model of religiosity that is moderate, tolerant, and close to people's lives.

B. Religious Moderation in the *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* Tradition *An-Nahdliyah*

The values of religious moderation have been strongly internalized in the *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah An-Nahdliyah* religious tradition. The word "moderation" in Arabic is interpreted as "*al-wasathiyah*," which comes from the word "*wasath*." According to Ibn 'Asyur, "*wasath*" means "middle ground." Terminologically, "*wasath*" refers to Islamic values based on a balance and moderate mindset, namely, not being excessive in certain matters. (Sulfinadia & Roszi, 2024)

The principle of moderation in Islamic jurisprudence relates to the balanced implementation of Islamic teachings, namely, not being excessive (*ghuluw*) or neglectful (*tafrith*). Furthermore, it avoids extremism and encompasses understanding and implementing Islamic law according to the circumstances and times. (Prof. Dr. Achmad Kholiq, 2025)

The principle of *tawassut* teaches a moderate attitude and rejects all forms of religious extremism. In practice, the *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* community is able to maintain a balance between religious texts and socio-cultural realities. This is evident in their ability to maintain local traditions without abandoning the basic principles of Islam. (Prof. Dr. Achmad Kholiq, 2025)

Meanwhile, the principle of tolerance (*tasamuh*) is reflected in an open attitude toward differences of opinion, culture, and religious traditions. The *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* traditions not only strengthen relationships among Muslims but also foster social harmony in a pluralistic society. Tolerance is a crucial factor in maintaining the stability of religious life in Indonesia. (Prof. Dr. Achmad Kholiq, 2025)

Religious moderation in *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah An-Nahdliyah* It is also strengthened through the principles of *ijtihad* and the flexibility of Islamic law. Scholars are given the freedom to interpret the law according to changing times

and societal needs. With this approach, Islam is presented contextually without losing the core values of the sharia. (Prof. Dr. Achmad Kholiq, 2025)

In the modern context, these values of moderation are crucial for countering the growth of radicalism and intolerance. Radicalism generally stems from a narrow, literal, and exclusive understanding of religion. This makes it easy to blame other groups. In contrast, *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah An-Nahdliyah* presents a peaceful, dialogical, and respectful image of Islam. (Ahmad & Sein, 2024)

C. The Thoughts of Imam Al-Maturidi and Imam Al-Asy'ari in Countering Radicalism

The thoughts of Imam Abu Mansur al-Maturidi and Imam Abu al-Hasan al-Asy'ari are highly relevant in building religious moderation and fighting radicalism. (Māturīdī, 1970) Imam Al-Maturidi emphasized the importance of maintaining a balance between reason and revelation in understanding Islamic teachings. (Somantri et al., 2024) According to him, reason is a gift from Allah SWT that can be used to understand the truth. Revelation serves as the primary guide to prevent humanity from falling into deviant understandings. This approach demonstrates that Islam is not merely understood textually but can also be understood rationally and contextually. (Māturīdī, 1970)

Al-Maturidi's thoughts also reject *ghuluw* or excessive attitudes in religion, including the tendency to easily declare other groups as *kafir*. In the Maturidiyah perspective, differences of opinion regarding branches of religion should not be a reason for violence and hostility. (Māturīdī, 1970) Therefore, Al-Maturidi's thoughts are highly relevant as a basis for strengthening religious moderation in a multicultural society like Indonesia.

Meanwhile, Imam Al-Asy'ari offered a theological approach that balanced the use of reason and textual evidence. Asy'ari thought emerged as a middle ground between extreme rationalists and rigid textualists. This approach demonstrates the moderate, non-extremist character of Islam. In the modern context, Asy'ari thought is highly relevant in confronting the growth of radical ideologies that often understand religion narrowly and exclusively. (Rafi et al., tt)

The thoughts of Imam Al-Maturidi and Imam Al-Asy'ari have a strong connection with the principles of *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah An-Nahdliyah*, especially the values of *tawassut*, *tasamuh*, *tawazun*, and *i'tidal*. (Mardhiah & Sauqi, n.d.) These two figures provided a theological foundation for the birth of a moderate, tolerant, and peaceful model of religiosity in the life of the Indonesian Islamic community.

D. The Challenge of Religious Moderation in the Modern Era

Today, the values of religious moderation within the *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* Nusantara tradition face various challenges, particularly due to the development of social media and the globalization of information. Digital media

often becomes a vehicle for the spread of extremist ideologies, hate speech, and intolerant propaganda, which can influence public perceptions of religion.

To address these challenges, strengthening education on religious moderation education is crucial. Nahdlatul Ulama, through its *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* An-Nahdliyin teachings, strives to instill the values of moderation through education, religious activities, the preservation of local traditions, and the positive use of digital media. (Amirudin La Dae et al., tt)

Furthermore, improving digital literacy and fostering open dialogue are also necessary to enable the public to critically understand religious information. This will prevent them from being easily influenced by radical ideologies. (Leftungun et al., tt) Thus, the values of *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* Nusantara can continue to serve as the foundation for building a peaceful and harmonious religious life amidst the diversity of Indonesian society.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Local religious traditions in the Indonesian Muslim community are closely linked to the values of *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah*. Traditions such as *tahlilan*, *yasinan* (recitation of the Yasin), *haul*, *maulid Nabi* and grave pilgrimages serve not only as cultural practices and religious rituals, but also as a means of *da'wah*, Islamic education, and strengthening social solidarity. From the perspective of Nusantara *Fiqh Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah*, local traditions are acceptable as long as they do not conflict with the basic principles of Islamic law.

The values of religious moderation in the *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* An-Nahdliyah tradition reflected through the principles of *tawassut*, *tawazun*, *tasamuh*, and *i'tidal*, which form a peaceful and tolerant religious character. The thoughts of Imam Abu Mansur al-Maturidi and Imam Abu al-Hasan al-Asy'ari provide a theological foundation for establishing a balance between reason and revelation and rejecting extreme and radical attitudes in religion. Thus, *Fiqh Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* An-Nahdliyah presenting a model of religiosity that is moderate, harmonious, and adaptive to local culture in the midst of Indonesia's diverse society.

Strengthening the values of religious moderation needs to be done through education, religious activities, and the preservation of local traditions based on *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* An-Nahdliyah. Furthermore, wise use of digital media and increasing public religious literacy are also crucial to prevent the growth of radicalism and intolerance. Future research is expected to examine the implementation of local religious traditions in community life in more depth through field research to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the practice of religious moderation in Indonesia.

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