

“Siger Tengah” as a Moderate Principle in Religion in the Miftahussa’adah Pesantren, Sukabumi Regency

Iu Rusliana, Abdillah, R. Yuli Ahmad Hambali
Fakultas Ushuluddin, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung
iurusliana@uinsgd.ac.id

Abstract

Recently, pesantren and ulama have been facing various social and religious issues, such as intolerance, persecution, and violent acts in the name of religion. Based on this fact, Western media and western policymakers accused pesantren communities as the nest of terrorism. Hence, this paper tries to examine the values of Islamic moderation in pesantren. This study will also examine religious understanding and the potential for local wisdom in West Java as a way of life that encourages tolerance and moderation in religion. In this study, the authors used a phenomenological approach. In phenomenology, truth is placed on the value that the research subject believes in her life experience. In this paper, pesantren is categorized as a traditionalist Muslim community. This study concludes that the pesantren community has a moderate religious understanding. Islam moderation in Miftahussa’adah pesantren is influenced by the educational system, local wisdom, and the pedigree of Islamic science developed by pesantren. The implication of this finding is for the government to respond to various acts of violence with a Soft Approach by suppressing prevention and diluting radical ideology with a humanitarian approach. Besides, all *pesantren* ulama must campaign for moderate Islam to *santri* and all Muslims. Finally, religious leaders, in general, must start paying attention to local values and adjusting to the values of religious teachings to de-radicalization.

Keywords: *Traditional Pesantren, Ulama, traditionalist Muslim, Islam Moderat*

Introduction

The existence of pesantren in Indonesia and the Sundanese area is mainly related to Islam’s spread in West Java. Islam and Sundanese have a harmonious relationship. The presence of Islam amid the Sundanese community does not cause conflict. There is acculturation between Islam as a religion and Sundanese customs. This acculturation can be seen in art, especially in literary arts.¹ Haji Hasan Mustapa, as quoted by Jajang A. Rohmana, explained that “Sunda mah geus Islam memeh Islam (Sundanese was Islam before Islam).” It means that Sundanese culture is considered to conform to the values of Islamic teachings, as seen in the expressions and proverbs and various aspects of Sundanese art.²

¹ Aam Masduki, “Puisi Pupujian Dalam Bahasa Sunda,” *Patanjala* 1, no. 1 (2009): 55–63.

² Jajang A Rohmana, “Sastra Sufistik Sunda Dan Peneguhan Identitas Islam Lokal: Kontribusi Dangding Haji

In traditional Sundanese pesantren, which are generally located in villages, Islam is introduced and taught to children in a relaxed manner. For example, children are trained to pray and fast by getting used to it. It also depends on their respective abilities, not by force. Religion is also taught with great joy, such as memorizing the prophets' names, memorizing the Prophet's family, memorizing the pillars of faith, and Islam's pillars. Everything is done through singing, through nadoman. With a relaxing method like this and a moderate dose, religion penetrates children's souls without being felt and very natural.³

The presence of pesantren in Sundanese land has had a tremendous impact on West Java's socio-cultural community. The religious tradition brought by pesantren and kyai has become one of the core elements of the formation of the great tradition of Islam in West Java, which is the result of acculturation and interaction between Islam and pre-Islamic traditions. Another thing that can be seen is that the pattern of diversity developed in Islamic society in West Java cannot be separated from the influence of medieval ulama thought. His religious thought based on the classical book or the yellow book by medieval scholars had a strong enough authority among Muslims in West Java. These books, especially those related to the issue of "religious law," are widely circulated among pesantren and various recitation bases in West Java.⁴

Pesantren and kyai have had a significant influence on the development of Indonesian society. In this regard, there are two functions of the pesantren, which were conveyed by several figures. First, as it appears in Clifford Geertz's view, he described the pesantren as *the climax of kolot culture*. Second, the opinions expressed by researchers such as Dawam Raharjo, Manfred Ziemek, and Horikoshi. They describe pesantren as dynamic institutions and often encourage social change.⁵

However, recently, Pesantren has been facing various social and religious issues. Intolerant and violent acts in the name of religion will always be associated with pesantren due to many violent actors, and suicide bombings in various places in Indonesia are mostly the alumni of pesantren. Besides, due to Islamic education's central position amid Muslim societies, whatever occurs in social life regarding Muslim communities will be positively related to pesantren.

The involvement of pesantren alumni becoming radical and intolerant actors had emerged the West's assumption that pesantren is the nest of terrorism. Although only a small number of pesantren are getting involved in radical actions, media has been accusing pesantren as a fertile ground for radical Islam in general.⁶ Several bomb blasts in Bali and Legian by Amrozi, Imam Samudra and Ali Imron, all under the command of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, categorized as the head of the pesantren.⁷ Ironically, their action, according to

Hasan Mustapa (1852-1930," 1991, 22-51.

³ Masduki, "Puisi Pupujian Dalam Bahasa Sunda." 55-63

⁴ Irwan Evarial, "Tafsir Al-Qur'an Dan Tradisi Sunda: Studi Pemikiran Moh. E. Hasyim Dalam Tafsir Ayat Suci Dalam Renungan," *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Literature and Muslim Society* 2, no. 1 (2017): 85-108, <https://doi.org/10.22515/islimus.v2i1.788>.

⁵ Cucu Setiawan Rosihon Anwar, dan Dadang Darmawan, "Kajian Kitab Tafsir Dalam Jaringan Pesantren Di Jawa Barat," *Wawasan: Jurnal Ilmiah Agama Dan Sosial Budaya* 1, no. 1 (2016): 56-69.

⁶ Raihani (2012), "Report on Multicultural Education in Pesantren," *Compare: a journal of Comparative and International Education* 42, no. 2, pp. 585-605.

⁷ Afif Muhammad (2012), *Agama Dan Konflik Sosial: Studi Pengalaman Indonesia*, Bandung: Marja, 2012, p. 61.

preliminary research outcomes conducted by Nurrohman, had gotten support from some pesantren leaders in West Java and had acknowledged it as a part of Jihad.⁸

Various social and religious issues have emerged since the reform era. According to Robert W. Hefner, movements of radical Islamists already developed to the surface in number, especially since the collapse of the New Order regime in 1998. Most of them reject Pancasila pluralism, and even the emergence of anti-Christian and anti-minority has increased significantly.⁹

Based on these facts, it is considered very important to re-examine pesantren's religious thoughts, which are related to local wisdom. It is essential to overcome the development of radicalism, liberalism, and extremism among Muslims. In this study, the author will explore the understanding of Islamic moderation in the Miftahussa'adah Islamic boarding school. This pesantren is one of the oldest Islamic boarding schools in Sukabumi. Apart from that, in this pesantren, the kyai also introduce religious teachings by harmonizing with local wisdom principles. Kyai, in this pesantren, introducing Sundanese principles that are in line with Islamic teachings regarding tolerance and moderate thinking. Research in Miftahussa'adah is also a response to the pesantren community's moderate attitude in responding to various violence perpetrated by several Islamic organizations against the Ahmadiyah Islamic group in the Sukabumi area in recent years.

This study uses a phenomenological method. In phenomenology, truth is placed on the value that the research subject believes in her life experience.¹⁰ There is human experience, wisdom, conflict, reconciliation, and truth that the subjects interiorize.¹¹ Experts in phenomenological methods introduce what is called Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). IPA aims to capture as closely as possible how each continuously experiences the phenomena of individual life. The individual experience develops as a social perception produced culturally and linguistically in everyday life.¹²

The research subjects were kyai of pesantren and some students (santri) of the Miftahussa'adah pesantren. Then, the data collection technique is through in-depth interviews and online Focus Group Discussions (FGD). The phenomenological method uses a semi-structured interview format to gather the informants' knowledge and subjective experiences.¹³

⁸ Nurrohman, "Pesantren Responses to Religious Tolerance, Pluralism, and Democracy in Indonesia," *International Journal of Nusantara Islam* 2, no. 1 (2014): 69, <https://doi.org/10.15575/ijni.v2i1.49>.

⁹ Mun'im Sirry (2010), "The Public Expression of Traditional Islam: The Pesantren and Civil Society in Post-Suharto Indonesia," *The Muslim World* 100, pp. 60-78.

¹⁰ L.M. Cuthbertson, Y.A. Robb, S. Blair. "Theory and Application of Research Principles and Philosophical Underpinning for a Study Utilising Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis." *Radiography* 11, no. 92 (2019)

¹¹ Eladio J. Collado-Boira, Estefanía Ruiz-Palomino, Pablo Salas-Media, Ana Folch-Ayora, and Pablo Baliño Maria Muriach. "'The COVID-19 outbreak'—An Empirical Phenomenological Study on Perceptions and Psychosocial Considerations Surrounding the Immediate Incorporation of Final-Year Spanish Nursing and Medical Students into the Health System." *Nurse Education Today*, 92, no. 104504, (2020).

¹² L.M. Cuthbertson, Y.A. Robb, S. Blair. "Theory and Application of Research Principles and Philosophical Underpinning for a Study Utilising Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis." *Radiography*, 11, no. 92 (2019)

¹³ Eladio J. Collado-Boira, Estefanía Ruiz-Palomino, Pablo Salas-Media, Ana Folch-Ayora, and Pablo Baliño Maria Muriach. "'The COVID-19 outbreak'—An Empirical Phenomenological Study on Perceptions and Psychosocial Considerations Surrounding the Immediate Incorporation of Final-Year Spanish Nursing and Medical Students into the Health System." *Nurse Education Today*, 92, no. 104504, (2020).

Data analysis was carried out by identifying the relationship between the themes and information provided by the informants. The first step is to analyze the data from the source to get the essence of personal experience. Second, understand all the informants' statements from personal to group. Third, all the consistent source statements' subjective meanings are then analyzed and synthesized into conclusions.¹⁴

There are three fundamental questions posed by researchers to obtain phenomenological explanations, namely; 1). How do pesantren kyai understand the "*siger tengah*" principle in relation to the values of Islamic teachings? 2). How does local wisdom influence the principles of pesantren kyai in developing moderate Islam? 3). How do students (*santri*) accept and understand the principles of local wisdom with moderate understanding?

Introducing the Miftahussa'adah Pesantren

The Miftahussa'adah pesantren was one of the oldest pesantren in Sukabumi, based on the information from one of the kyai who currently teaches and resides with his father named H Ismat that the history of the Miftah as-Sa'adah pesantren has two versions. The first version of the Miftahussa'adah pesantren founded by a charismatic ulama named KH Ahmad Junaedi bin H.M Anam. Based on the stories of the children of the pesantren leader, this pesantren was founded around 1920. Although, he was not so sure about the year of the establishment of the Miftahu as-Sa'adah pesantren, because according to him, many opinions explained the history of pesantren and no witnesses of history.

Miftahussa'adah pesantren is a traditional Islamic educational institution that is developed and recognized by the surrounding community. The system used by the *santri* in the dormitory receives religious education through *sorogan*, *bandongan*, *pengajian* (teaching) in *madrasah*, which is entirely under the control and the leadership of the charismatic kyai.

The Miftahussa'adah Pesantren adalah pesantren yang tetap menjaga tradisi salaf (tradisional) dengan mengkaji kitab-kitab klasik atau kitab kuning. Pesantren, as mentioned by Dhofier, is a traditional Islamic education hostel where its students (*santri*) live together and study under the guidance of a teacher (*kyai*). Besides, the kyai also provides mosques for worship as well as learning. The next element of pesantren is the recitation of the classical text, better known as the "Kitab Kuning". The classical books taught in pesantren consist of eighteen types of study groups: 1). Nahwu (syntax) and shorof (morphology); 2). Fiqh; 3). Usul fiqh; 4). Hadith; 5). Tafsir (Interpretation); 6). Sufism and ethics; 7). Tawhid; 8). Other branches such as *tarikh* (history) and *balaghah*.¹⁵

¹⁴ Eladio J. Collado-Boira, Estefanía Ruiz-Palomino, Pablo Salas-Media, Ana Folch-Ayora, and Pablo Baliño Maria Muriach. "The COVID-19 outbreak'—An Empirical Phenomenological Study on Perceptions and Psychosocial Considerations Surrounding the Immediate Incorporation of Final-Year Spanish Nursing and Medical Students into the Health System." *Nurse Education Today*, 92, no. 104504, (2020).

¹⁵ Zamakhsyari Dhopier, *Tradisi Pesantren: Studi Pandangan Hidup Kyai Dan Visinya Mengenai Masa Depan Indonesia*, Jakarta: LP3ES, 2015.79-80

“Siger Tengah” as a Moderate Principle in Religion in the Miftahussa’adah Pesantren

Pesantren Miftahussa’adah is a pesantren that maintains the ideology of Ahlu Sunah Wal Jama’ah. Based on the statement from the kyai pesantren (K-1), Ahlu Sunah Wal Jama’ah is a religious ideology that is in accordance with the character of the Indonesian nation that is multicultural and multi-religious. According to him, Ahlu Sunah Wal Jama’ah’s scholars have already provided tolerant and moderate Islamic principles. Moderate, in Arabic is *tawasuth* from *wasatha*, which means being between two sides. Muslims who hold a moderate attitude always act balanced, so they do not lean left or right. Islam rejects radical groups that carry out such violence in the name of religion. According to the informant (K-1), the Miftahussa’adah pesantren had always been developing and teaching Islamic moderation using the principle of “*siger tengah*”. This principle is a form of rejection of the extreme right and left.

Kyai of pesantren strongly emphasizes santri and Muslims to maintain balance both in socio-religious life and in worship. Hence, Based on this fact, giving a bad stigma towards traditional pesantren as the breeding ground of radicalism and terrorism is, in fact, contrary to the fundamental character of pesantren from the early days of its establishment that have characteristics such as 1) Tawassut, means impartiality or moderation, 2) Tawazun, maintain balance and harmony, 3) Tasāmuh, tolerance, 4) Tashawwur, deliberation, 5) Adl, being fair in action or react.¹⁶

According to the informant (K-1), the moderate attitude developed by the ulama of Ahlu Sunah Wal Jama’ah is based on the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad. The Prophet taught Muslims to be able to take a middle course in every problem. According to the source, the term moderate is understood by the pesantren environment as “*siger tengah*”. This term is the philosophy of the Sundanese people and the essence of Sundanese local wisdom. Since a long time ago, the Sundanese people have held this principle. Islam and Sundanese culture have a wonderful harmony. On this basis, Jajang A Rohmana, who quoted Mustapa, stated that “*Sunda mah geus Islam memeh Islam* (Sundanese was Islam before Islam).” It means that Sundanese culture is considered to conform with the values of Islamic teachings as seen in the expressions and proverbs as well as various aspects of Sundanese art.¹⁷

“*Sineger tengah* atau *siger tengah*”, in Indonesian it can be interpreted as a middle way. Moderate thought treats all the qualities or qualities of mutually existing things, compliment and complement each other. Perfection is to harmonize everything contradictory in a new entity (existence), which contains contradictory characteristics, which is paradoxical. The paradox in a positive sense, namely complementing each other’s shortcomings by each other’s strengths, makes the pair appear contradictory.¹⁸

¹⁶ Mukhibat, “Deradikalisasi Dan Integrasi Nilai-Nilai Pluralitas Dalam Kurikulum Pesantren Salafi Haraki Di Indonesia,” *Al-Tahrir: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 14, no. 1 (2016): 181–204, <https://doi.org/10.21154/al-tahrir.v14i1.121>.

¹⁷ Rohmana, “Sastra Sufistik Sunda Dan Peneguhan Identitas Islam Lokal: Kontribusi Dangding Haji Hasan Mustapa (1852-1930).”

¹⁸ Cece Rakhmat, “Komunitas Sunda Pakidulan: Studi Tentang Pengaruh Orientasi Nilai Budaya Paham Dualistik Dunia, Dan Kontraproses Modernisasi Terhadap Etos Kerja ⑆,” *Mimbar Pendidikan* 26, no. 1 (2007):

The term “*siger tengah*” is the ulama’s original attitude in a traditional boarding school in West Java (Sundanese). “*Siger tengah*” is the philosophy of life of the Sundanese people who, when resolving conflicts, adhere to the principle of “*caina herang, laukna Benang*”. It means that it can solve problems both social, political, and religious without causing ongoing conflict. The informant (K-1) stated that Muslims must prioritize a fair attitude in solving problems. Able to appreciate differences and put justice above everything. Humanity must be a priority for Muslims in order to create harmony in life. Islam must be a blessing for all humankind regardless of differences in race, ethnicity, and religion. Islam *rahmatan lil alamin* will be achieved if Muslims have a “*siger tengah*” attitude, respect for others, and love for humanity as taught by the Prophet and Allah. Respondent (K-1) stated that: “The Prophet in a *hadith* has conveyed the concept of Islam moderation:

الرَّاحِمُونَ يَرْحَمُهُمُ الرَّحْمَنُ ، اَرْحَمُوا مَنْ فِي الْاَرْضِ يَرْحَمَكُمُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاءِ

Translation: Compassionate people are those who are loved by Allah the Most Merciful. Then love the creatures on earth, surely you will be loved by the essence in the sky.¹⁹

The point of this *hadith* is love. It means that Muslims must love all the creatures of God on the surface of the earth. Angels will love people who love all creatures.” Moreover, the respondent explained the word “*man*” in the *hadith*. According to him, the word “*man*” In the *hadith* has a universal and global meaning. It means that Muslims must love their fellow Muslims and all human beings, all of God’s creatures.

Furthermore, the term moderate (*washathiyah*), which was stated by Chafid Wahyudi as quoted by Abdillah was used to find a middle way between modernism / liberalism and fundamentalism. The dialectic of modernism and fundamentalism does not only occur in Islam but also in Christianity. The term modernism was originally defined as a religious school that interpreted religious doctrines to fit modern thought development. Meanwhile, fundamentalism is considered as a flow that sticks to the “fundamentals” of Christianity through rigid and literal interpretations.²⁰

The term “*siger tengah*” which is the philosophy and principles of the Sundanese people’s lives, is very much in accordance with the values of Islamic teachings, namely “*at-Tawasuth*”. Islam places great emphasis on moderation. In al-Qur’an surah al-Baqarah verse 43, as quoted by the source, Allah says:

“And so (also) we have made you (Muslims), a just and chosen people so that you become a witness for (your) actions and for the Prophet to be a witness for your (actions).”

The meaning of *wasath* (moderate) in the Qur’an as explained by the commentators, means fair. Tawasuth also means “*tawazun*” which means balance. “*siger tengah*” as a principle or philosophy of the Sundanese people is very much in accordance with what is explained by the al-Qur’an. According to the respondent (K-1), Muslims must be able to do justice. It means that Muslims must become mediators. The respondent (K-1) provides an analogy for Muslims to become like a referee in a soccer match. As the referee in the field, Muslims are between two camps, reconcile conflicts, and do not incline to one group. The respondent

14–26.

¹⁹ Imam Turmudzi narrated *hadith* *shahih* in Sunan Turmudzi, Juz 3, p. 388

²⁰ Abdillah, “Peran Pesantren Dalam Mengembangkan Islam Moderat Di Indonesia,” *Yaqzan: Analisis Filsafat, Agama Dan Kemanusiaan* 5, no. 2 (2019): 76–86.

(K-1) believes that people who have a “middle siger” attitude will put something in its place. People can manifest an attitude of tolerance and consideration for others regardless of ethnic, racial, and religious differences.

Umatan wasathan is a human being whose attitude and sense of justice, honesty, kindness, and tolerance towards all people. If Muslims’ attitude and character are like this, then Islam can become a *rahmatan lil’alamin* religion for all humanity amid the struggle for extreme and fundamentalist belief patterns that have plagued the last decade.

As followed by Chafid Wahyudi, Abou Fadl said that moderate Islam believes in Islam, respects obligations to God, and believes that Islam is appropriate for every time and age, *li kull zamân wa makân*. They do not treat religion as a standard monument but treat it within a dynamic and active faith framework. Consequently, moderate Islam respects fellow Muslims’ achievements in the past to be actualized in the present context.²¹

Besides, During the interviews and FGD, many students (*santri*) frequently and confidently discussed moderation of Islam’s values, respect, and togetherness that accompanied living in *pesantren*. One of the students (S-1) stated that moderate Islam is Islam, a good for all nature (*rahmatan lil alamin*). The meaning of Islam is in accordance with what is taught by the *kyai* of the *pesantren*. Islamic boarding school clerics, especially *pesantren* Miftahussa’adah, teach students to respect differences and uphold justice. The students are students to be able to provide benefits to society. Besides that, the students are taught to become upright pillars in the midst of society. This means that students can become support and guidance for all people in society. The other students (S-2) also stated that the *pesantren* and *kyai* taught students to respect and do good to all humans. Muslims, as conveyed in the *hadith*, must respect their neighbors. The neighbor in question is not only Muslim but also non-Muslim.

Furthermore, according to other respondents (S-3), Muslims, as conveyed by Islamic scholars in classical books, must love others, not discriminate, and do justice. Muslims must become “*siger tengah*”. Respondents said that the best case is middle. Another *Santri* (S4) also revealed that the students were educated to be able to guide the community. The *pesantren* is where they learn. While at the *pesantren*, students are taught to respect each other’s differences. Values like these are provisions for living in a society that has more complex problems.

Paying attention to the *santri*’s explanation of moderate understanding, of course, contains values that respect differences. According to Arkoun, the value of plurality is a universal moral value of humanity that is not discriminatory, which views others with respect, tolerance, and cooperation. Everything has been practiced by the Prophet Muhammad. At the time of Medina. The Prophet lived side by side with Jews, Christians, and Magi peacefully in accordance with the concept of *al-Qur’ān* as a potential text and open to interpretation.²²

Many Muslim scholars recognized that Muslims should respect and love all people in Islamic teachings. This attitude of tolerance could be seen from God’s command to be fair and just. God commands humans to be fair, not discriminate among people, protect

²¹ Chafid Wahyudi, “Tipologi Islam Moderat Dan Puritan: Pemikiran Khaled M. Abou El-FadL,” *Teosofi: Jurnal Tasawuf Dan Pemikiran Islam* 1, no. 1 (2011).

²² Muhammad Arkoun, *Nalar Islami Dan Nalar Modern: Berbagai Tantangan dan Jalan Baru*, Jakarta: INIS, 1994.50

others' rights, and not commit violence. Furthermore, the Prophet Muhammad taught Muslims in order to treat people from different races and place justly. The Prophet said in the *hadith* as follow:

يا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَلَا إِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ وَاحِدٌ وَإِنْ أَبَاكُمْ وَاحِدٌ إِلَّا لَا فَضْلَ لِعَرَبِيٍّ عَلَى أَعْجَمِيٍّ وَلَا لِعَجَمِيٍّ عَلَى عَرَبِيٍّ وَلَا لَأَحْمَرَ عَلَى أَسْوَدٍ وَلَا أَسْوَدَ عَلَى أَحْمَرَ إِلَّا بِالتَّقْوَى

Translation: O people! Your God is one, and your forefather (Adam) is one. An Arab is not better than a non-Arab, and a non-Arab is not better than an Arab, and a red (i.e., white tinged with red) person is not better than a black person, and a black person is not better than a red person, except in piety. Indeed, the noblest among you is the one who is deeply conscious of God.²³

Based on the testimony and historical facts, the traditional pesantren basically has a tolerant attitude and moderate thinking. This fact is inseparable from the history of the traditional pesantren's existence, which appeared from the beginning in Indonesia and initiated by the Wali Songo, who had moderated religious understandings because they were able to spread Islam peacefully and even fused with the existing culture.

The traditional pesantren emerged along with the spread of Islam in Indonesia. We could perceive several theories about the spread of Islam in Indonesia, which will significantly influence Indonesian Muslims' thoughts and religious practices. In this case, for example, the traditional pesantren are directly established by the preachers of Islam. The spread of Islam in Indonesia indeed has many theories.

However, the most convincing theory is the Islamization process conducted by the Sufi ulamas.²⁴ The attitudes of Sufi ulamas, who were open, flexible, and more moderate, had received better responses from the natives, who had faith. The religious ideology brought by the Sufi scholars is a Sunni ideology that has an open attitude.

Sufi ulama coming to the archipelago, especially the island of Java, was highly appreciated the existing culture. They acculturated some cultures that do not conflict with Islamic teachings. The Sufi ulama are relatively close to the indigenous community and showed an attitude of compassion, care, and respect for diversity. Based on this reason, Islam was spread and developed rapidly throughout the archipelago peacefully without violence. History has recorded that the method of propagating and preaching of these Sufi ulama has attracted sympathy from local people to accept Islam as their religion.

Regarding this fact, Abbas Mahmud al-Aqqad, as quoted by Syamsun Ni'am said that "perhaps the Indonesian archipelago is the most appropriate place to prove the fact that Islam is accepted and thrived amid people who adhere to other religions. In every corner of the country, there is evidence of how good an exemplary role in spreading non-violent means".²⁵

²³ Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, *kitāb bāqī* Musnad al-Ansar, no. 22391. This *hadith* in *Mu'jam al-Mufahras li Alfāḍil-Hadith*, which contains nine *kitāb* of *hadith*, only narrated by Imam Ahmad alone, and the value of this tradition is *Mursal Sahābi*, because Abu Naḍrat was a *tabi'in* and in narrating the *hadith* did not mention the name of companions

²⁴ Syamsun Ni'am, "Pesantren : The Miniature of Moderate Islam in Indonesia," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 5, no. 1 (2015): 111-34.

²⁵ Syamsun Ni'am. (2015), "Pesantren : The Miniature of Moderate, pp. 111-134

It was proved that the carriers and disseminators of Islam had been aware of Indonesian society's prevailing socio-cultural and socio-psychological approach, so the approach and methods used suited properly for Indonesian people. The most influential Sufi figure in the history of Islamization in Indonesia is the "Wali Songo" (Nine Saints or Nine Friends of God).²⁶

Since then, many pesantren had produced ulama who had open minds. The traditional pesantren are mainly those who maintain the knowledge and thought of tolerant Sufi scholars. According to Anthony Johns, as quoted by Ronald Lukens, stated that Islam first came to Indonesia when Islam and Sufism were indivisible to a Muslim, it was to be a mystic or a Sufi. Likewise, the development of traditional pesantren in Indonesia could not be separated from Sufis's role, especially Wali Songo, who became the founder of the pesantren tradition.²⁷

Apparently, "Wali Songo" was aware of how it should be grounded in Indonesian Islam. They understood that Islam should be contextualized, without losing the essence of the principles and teachings, in accordance with the conditions of the region or the world in which Islam has been spread. It is later known as the concept of "Indigenization of Islam." The idea is meant to dissolve Islam's pattern and character as normative and religious practices into something contextual.²⁸

The pesantren developed by Wali Songo follows Sunni ideology or Ahl Al-Sunnah wa Al-Jamā'ah. Hence, the characteristic of Ahl al-Sunnah wa Al-Jamā'ah is moderate and tolerant. In the field of theology, they followed Ash'ariyyah and al-Maturidiyyah. They are not like Mu'tazillah, which prioritizes reasoning rather than naql or revelation, nor like the Jabariyyah or Qodariyyah groups, which prioritize revelation and deny reasoning (aql). Like the ulama of Ahl al-Sunnah wa Al-Jamā'ah, the traditional pesantren ulama combined reasoning and revelation.

The ideology of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah has highly followed the conditions of a multicultural and multi-religious Indonesia. Therefore, the traditional pesantren ulama believed that the teachings of asy-Shafi'I, al-Ash'ari-al-Maturidi, and al-Junaid are the only ones who guard the nation. The Sunni ideology, initially followed by pesantren ulama has encouraged them to become more tolerant and maintain a culture of peace among Indonesian Muslims.²⁹

As the central part of Islamic religious education, traditional pesantren has proven their loyalty and struggle to help fight all forms of religious radicalism. In the era of globalization, in contemporary Indonesian Islam, pesantren, according to Robert Hefner as quoted by Mun'im Sirry has become part of "civil Islam." They are Muslims who reject the Islamic State's discourse and claim that modern ideas such as freedom, democracy, and equality are not Western values but modern imperatives that are in accordance with Islam.³⁰

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 111-134

²⁷ Ronald Lukens-bull, "The Traditions Of Pluralism, Accommodation, And Anti-Radicalism," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 2, no. 1 (2008): 1-15.

²⁸ Syamsun Ni'am, "Pesantren : The Miniature of Moderate Islam in Indonesia." pp. 111-134

²⁹ BadrusSholeh, *Budaya Damai Komunitas Pesantren*, Jakarta: LP3ES, 2007. 45

³⁰ Sirry, "The Public Expression of Traditional Islam: The Pesantren and Civil Society in Post-Suharto Indonesia." 60-78

The characteristic that is very prominent in pesantren as an educational institution could be said to be multicultural since the learning in pesantren emphasizes more on the moral character and indigenous culture of Java. In contrast, the Islamic face transmitted by the kyai in pesantren is essentially Islamic inclusive and spread peace on earth (*rahmatan lil'alam*). The pesantren kyai usually also continues the teachings of the Wali songo, which always teach courtesy, moderate, tolerant, and respect for the local culture.

Based on religious understanding followed by traditional pesantren, the researchers believe that pesantren rejects all forms of radicalism that have been developing in modern Indonesia. At the same time, the moderate attitude of the pesantren community rejects all accusations of Western media and Western Policymakers.

Conclusion

The implication of this finding is for the government to respond to various acts of violence with a Soft Approach by suppressing prevention and diluting radical ideology with a humanitarian approach. The government and Muslim societies must strengthen relations and cooperation with religious leaders, ulama, and Kyai of pesantren in de-radicalization. Besides, traditional *pesantren* ulama must campaign for moderate Islam to *santri* and all Muslims. Finally, religious leaders must start paying attention to local values and adjusting to religious teachings' values to de-radicalization.

Based on the research results, the researcher wants to state some recommendations and suggestions for improvement in a better direction. This study was conducted in Sukabumi, an area in West Java. The researcher acknowledges the shortcomings in this study, especially in the scope of research and the research methods used. Besides, the issues raised in this study are still general. Therefore, the researcher expects Muslim scholars to follow up on this study to supplement this study's shortcomings.

Bibliography

- Abdillah. "Peran Pesantren Dalam Mengembangkan Islam Moderat Di Indonesia." *Yaqzan: Analisis Filsafat, Agama Dan Kemanusiaan* 5, no. 2 (2019): 76–86.
- Afif Muhammad. *Agama Dan Konflik Sosial: Studi Pengalaman Indonesia*. Bandung: Marja, 2012.
- Badrus Sholeh. *Budaya Damai Komunitas Pesantren*. Jakarta: LP3ES, 2007.
- Chafid Wahyudi. "Tipologi Islam Moderat Dan Puritan: Pemikiran Khaled M. Abou El-Fadl." *Teosofi: Jurnal Tasawuf Dan Pemikiran Islam* 1, no. 1 (2011).
- Eladio J. Collado-Boira, Estefanía Ruiz-Palomino, Pablo Salas-Medina, Ana Folch-Ayora, and Pablo Baliño Maria Muriach. "'The COVID-19 outbreak'—An Empirical Phenomenological Study on Perceptions and Psychosocial Considerations Surrounding the Immediate Incorporation of Final-Year Spanish Nursing and Medical Students into the Health System." *Nurse Education Today* 92, no. 104504 (2020).
- Irwan Evarial. "Tafsir Al-Qur'an Dan Tradisi Sunda: Studi Pemikiran Moh. E. Hasyim Dalam Tafsir Ayat Suci Dalam Renungan." *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Literature and Muslim Society* 2, no. 1 (2017): 85–108. <https://doi.org/10.22515/islimus.v2i1.788>.

- L.M. Cuthbertson, Y.A. Robb, S. Blair. "Theory and Application of Research Principles and Philosophical Underpinning for a Study Utilising Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis." *Radiography* 11, no. 92 (2019).
- Lukens-bull, Ronald. "The Traditions Of Pluralism , Accommodation , And Anti-Radicalism." *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 2, no. 1 (2008): 1–15.
- Masduki, Aam. "Puisi Pupujian Dalam Bahasa Sunda." *Patanjala* 1, no. 1 (2009): 55–63.
- Muhammad Arkoun. *Nalar Islami Dan Nalar Modern: Berbagai Tantangan Dan Jalan Baru*. Jakarta: INIS, 1994.
- Mukhibat. "Deradikalisasi Dan Integrasi Nilai-Nilai Pluralitas Dalam Kurikulum Pesantren Salafi Haraki Di Indonesia." *Al-Tahrir: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 14, no. 1 (2016): 181–204. <https://doi.org/10.21154/al-tahrir.v14i1.121>.
- Nurrohman. "Pesantren Responses to Religious Tolerance, Pluralism and Democracy in Indonesia." *International Journal of Nusantara Islam* 2, no. 1 (2014): 69. <https://doi.org/10.15575/ijni.v2i1.49>.
- Raihani. "Report on Multicultural Education in Pesantren." *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education* 42, no. 2 (2012). <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2012.672255>.
- Rakhmat, Cece. "Komunitas Sunda Pakidulan: Studi Tentang Pengaruh Orientasi Nilai Budaya Paham Dualistik Dunia, Dan Kontraproses Modernisasi Terhadap Etos Kerja ¶." *Mimbar Pendidikan* 26, no. 1 (2007): 14–26.
- Rohmana, Jajang A. "Sastra Sufistik Sunda Dan Peneguhan Identitas Islam Lokal: Kontribusi Danding Haji Hasan Mustapa (1852-1930," 1991, 22–51.
- Rosihon Anwar, Dadang Darmawan, dan Cucu Setiawan. "Kajian Kitab Tafsir Dalam Jaringan Pesantren Di Jawa Barat." *Wawasan: Jurnal Ilmiah Agama Dan Sosial Budaya* 1, no. 1 (2016): 56–69.
- Sirry, Mun'im. "The Public Expression of Traditional Islam: The Pesantren and Civil Society in Post-Suharto Indonesia." *The Muslim World* 100 (2010): 60–78.
- Syamsun Ni'am. "Pesantren : The Miniature of Moderate Islam in Indonesia." *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societis* 5, no. 1 (2015): 111–34.
- Zamakhshari Dhopier. *Tradisi Pesantren: Studi Pandangan Hidup Kyai Dan Visinya Mengenai Masa Depan Indonesia*. Jakarta: LP3ES, 2015.