



Islam and Culture in Harmony: A Study of the Local Wisdom Values of Islam Nusantara

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Abstract

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Islam in the Archipelago is a form of Islam that developed by prioritizing local values and local culture, thus presenting a peaceful, moderate and inclusive face of Islam. This research aims to reveal and analyze the values of Islamic teachings that developed in the archipelago, as well as its distinctive and effective methods of dissemination. The method used is a qualitative approach with a type of library research, which is analyzed descriptively. The results show that the main values contained in the Nusantara Islamic teachings include tawazun (balance), tasamuh (tolerance), and tawassuth (moderation), all of which are rooted in Islamic teachings but packaged in the context of local culture. The method of spreading Islam is through education, marriage, and cultural acculturation, which makes Islam easily accepted by multicultural communities. Islam Nusantara is a contextual model of Islam, able to answer the challenges of the times, and strengthen the Islamic and national identity of Indonesian society.

Keywords: *Islam Nusantara, Islamic Values, Tawazun, Tasamuh, Tawassuth, Local Culture*

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INTRODUCTION

The emergence of Islam in the Archipelago is part of a very long history, due to various problems and problems when spreading the teachings of Islam by adjusting the local culture and customs that existed in Indonesia at that time. However, the style and development of Islam in Indonesia has previously been recognized as a teaching that carries the values of tolerance and peace. Islam as a religion of rahmatanlil'al-'ālamīn is accepted in the community because the teachings brought are easy to understand, namely about aqidah, sharia, and morals (Hasbullah, 1999 dalam Nurjannah & Aderus, 2025).

Islamic thought in the archipelago also has a very unique understanding of teachings in each region in Indonesia, because Islamic teachings must adjust to local culture and local customs. In thought is the result of Ijtihad or Ijma of the Muslim community in an effort to combine the values of diversity and local cultural values that exist, so that the development of Islam in the archipelago is much faster.

In the study of Islamic thought in the archipelago is very important to discuss, in order to easily understand the culture of society and culture that exists, so that when there are problems and problems can be resolved quickly. Islamic thought is one of the da'wah methodologies that teaches the values of the teachings of ahlu sunnah waljamaah to the people of Indonesia, this method is also very easily

accepted by all groups or mass organizations that exist so that it does not conflict with the teachings of shari'ah (Qomar, 2016).

Islam Nusantara is Islam that is unique to Indonesian culture, a combination of theological Islamic values with the values of local traditions, culture, and customs in the homeland (Baso, 2015). However, Islam Nusantara does not only combine theological Islamic values, but also incorporates the values of local traditions, culture and customs as a form of equality and unity in spreading the teachings of Islam in Indonesia.

METHODS

This research uses qualitative methods and library research by using descriptive analysis methods, by collecting data, compiling or clarifying, interpreting and systematizing (Pratama & Apriani, 2023). In other words, a qualitative approach is a research work mechanism that relies on descriptive descriptions of words, or sentences that are arranged carefully and systematically from collecting data to interpreting and reporting the results of research (S et al., 2024).

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Results

Definition of Islam Nusantara

The origin of Nusantara Islam is part of the characteristics of the Indonesian state, because Nusantara Islam only exists in Indonesia itself. Islam Nusantara is said to be a universal religion that has various laws such as Islamic law, sharia law, fiqh law, tawhid, and morals. Even though Islam comes to bring a new flavor and nuansa in the development of Islamic teachings by combining local culture and customs, it will not reduce the purity of the Al-Qu'an and sunnah of the prophet Muhammad Saw. Islam provides lessons about the values of diversity, tolerance, cooperation, consensus and peace and many good things under the teachings of Islam. We know that religion is a very basic need for creatures (Humans), because religion is able to be controlling and supervising, even more able to provide advisory or advice on what we should do and what we should not do (Lubis, 2005 dalam Misnan, 2024).

Islam is a religion brought by the prophet Muhammad Saw to his servants who teach that mutual assistance to humans with one another, is an aspect that needs to be applied in community life, in order to realize a safe and peaceful life (Widiani, 2018). It can be seen from this that the teachings of Islam are very good to be practiced and disseminated to all other countries.

Meanwhile, the word Nusantara itself according to the Big Indonesian Dictionary is a designation or name for all islands in Indonesia (Misnan, 2024). The essence of Islam Nusantara is Islam that adapts local values and has special characteristics, namely peace, harmony and silaturahmi (harmony & compassion) (Zahroh, 2019).

In Gur Dur's own opinion, he believes that Nusantara Islam contains teachings that instill noble social values, if these values permeate the minds of most people (Penaganutnya). Then the teaching means that it is one of the important elements that form a cultural value system or value orientation, therefore. Religion

as one of the elements that instill social values, religious teachings also undergo changes in accordance with the understanding of the value itself (Fatah, 2020). In the development of Islam Nusantara in Indonesia, it must be adjusted to the conditions and geography in Indonesia, including the prevailing cultural values and customs. However, it needs to be observed, pointing in an area can also be understood as revealing everything, and elements contained in an area. Therefore, like it or not, inevitably the Indonesian people must maintain and embrace the style, characteristics and character of a region called the archipelago, therefore the archipelago has its own characteristics in applying Islamic values that are fused to the culture of the Indonesian people.

Methods of spreading Islam in the archipelago

The method is a way or step to identify to achieve certain goals to be achieved (S et al., 2025). So method means the path taken to achieve the goal. Method comes from two words, meta and hodos. Meta means “through” while Hodos means “way or method” (Arifin, 2016). To know the method of spreading Islam in the archipelago, effective steps are needed so that young people are understood by Muslims in Indonesia. There are several paths that will be presented in spreading Islam in the archipelago:

Dissemination through educational channels

Through education, the spread of Islamic teachings in the archipelago is much better and faster, because it is done by directly transferring the knowledge possessed by educators. The educational path is very impactful in spreading the teachings of Islam in the archipelago can provide teaching understanding of the values of Islamic teachings in the archipelago and unify local culture and customs that exist. This can be felt directly by the younger generation. Islamic religious education is not enough to just provide knowledge about religion, but more emphasis is placed on feeling bound, personal ideals and belief activities (Anwar Arifin, 2023). So this is one of the methods that can be taken to instill an understanding of the teachings of Islam Nusantara.

Spread through marriage

Marriage is sunnatullah for humans as a means of survival for humans. In addition, marriage in Islam aims to make the family sakinah, mawadah and warahman (Anwar Arifin, 2023 dalam Thobibatussaadah, 2013). In the spread of Islam in the archipelago, marriage is the most important part of the mission of spreading Islam in the archipelago. Because through this route, the unification and unity of tribes, races, cultures and customs is easier to do.

Spread through the path of Cultural Acculturation

Cultural acculturation is one of the processes of unification of two or more other cultures, so that changes occur in the original culture without eliminating previous cultures. then in this case it can reduce conflicts that occur in the social environment. That acculturation or culturization is a social process that arises when a human group that has one culture is faced with elements of a foreign culture, then it can be accepted and processed into its own culture without eliminating its original cultural personality (’Alim, 2022). The method used in spreading the teachings of Islam is very interesting, so that there is no difference between the religion they have embraced and the new religion (Islam) (Sjamsudduha, 1990).

Understanding Islam Nusantara

In the understanding of Islam Nusantara, it has become a topic of discussion among Muslims, especially in Indonesia, because various groups consider the presence of Islam Nusantara as a new Islam and not in accordance with religious teachings as brought by the prophet Muhammad Saw. So the understanding of Islam Nusantara has some very inherent teachings such as Tawazun, tawassut and tasamuh:

Balance (Tawazun)

In the daily life of individuals or groups, understanding tawazun is the most important part in achieving one's success. Islam always teaches its followers to behave well, politely, morally and civilized among fellow creatures. In personal life, Islam encourages the creation of a balance between spirit and mind, between mind and heart, between rights and obligations and so on (Safira et al., 2023). The presence of the notion of balance (Tawazun) is to provide a sense of peace and justice for Muslims, giving freedom to humans so that how to organize between revelation and reason so that there is no dispute against Muslims.

The understanding of Balance (Tawazun) adopted by Islam Nusantara is the main part of talking about the world and the hereafter, including the use of Islamic values and culture and customs in Indonesia. Every culture and custom that contradicts the teachings of Islam, then in this understanding becomes a material consideration and study to solve all existing problems. By harmonizing the attitude of khidmat to Allah SWT and khidmat to fellow human beings (Fadeli & Subhan, 2007).

So Islam Nusantara with this Tawazun understanding can provide a positive energy in spreading the teachings of Islam Nusantara in Indonesia, Islam Nusantara teaches Muslims to maintain harmony with various aspects of social life. As in the word of God in the Qur'an Surah Ar-Rahman verses 7-9:

وَالسَّمَاءَ رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ الْمِيزَانَ () أَلَّا تَطْغَوْا فِي الْمِيزَانِ () وَأَقِيمُوا الْوَزْنَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا تُخْسِرُوا الْمِيزَانَ

Meaning “And He has exalted the heavens and created a balance, so that you do not break the balance. And establish the balance with justice and do not diminish the balance.” (Q.S. Ar-Rahman Verses 7-9).

Tolerance (Tasamuh)

The word tolerance comes from the Latin “tolerare” which means to endure, to bear. Religious tolerance is tolerance that includes issues of belief in humans related to the creed or divinity they believe in. Tolerance must also be distinguished from conformism, which is just accepting what others say, as long as there is peace and harmony in social life (Syah et al., 2024).

The Republic of Indonesia is a pluralist country, which means that Indonesia is a nation inhabited by various cultures, races, tribes, languages, customs and religions. There are Javanese, Batak, Madurese, Sundanese and other cultures. With these differences illustrating the beauty of social life in Indonesia, it means that tolerance in Indonesia is very good. However, the issue of tolerance is an issue that is always hot to discuss. Therefore, the attitude of tolerance must be detected early and make it the basis for developing a culture of tolerance, in order to maintain the integrity of the Indonesian State. While tolerance is a basic element needed to foster an attitude of mutual understanding and respect for existing differences (Bahari, 2010; dalam Widiani, 2018).

To realize a peaceful and tranquil Islam Nusantara, humans are creatures who always interact socially with each other, so that tolerance is needed in this social life. So the importance of complementary life and mutual assistance to humans with one another, is an aspect that needs to be applied in community life, in order to realize a safe and peaceful life (Widiani, 2018). The attitude of tolerance is very influential for the development of Islam Nusantara in Indonesia, but sometimes this attitude of tolerance is little people can apply it.

This attitude of tolerance must be able to tolerate between the teachings of Islam, culture and customs that exist in Indonesia, because the real concept of tolerance is to give everyone the right to choose a religion and the right to embrace according to their respective beliefs without having to force someone to embrace Islam themselves.

In building relationships with tolerance, it is rather difficult for some people to do, however, the consideration is to ensure that the Indonesian state remains safe and peaceful. The attitude of tolerance must really be felt by everyone, so tolerance is religious harmony, which with different bases and starting points, bear each other to achieve a certain goal. The attitude of tolerance is realized in the form of interaction and cooperation between various groups. (Rehayati, 2009; dalam Safira et al., 2023).

Tolerance is an attitude that always respects one another, accepts every difference that exists and respects the diversity of cultures and customs in each region in Indonesia, this is part of the big picture related to tolerance to be carried out by everyone. On the other hand, that this attitude of tolerance has another meaning, namely the chest to accept people to embrace their religion according to their beliefs and beliefs. Because Allah Swt will never mix the beliefs of each person, as in the words of Allah Swt in the Qur'an surah Al-kafirun verse 6:

لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ ﴿٦﴾

It means “For you your religion and for me my religion.” (Q. S. Al-Kafirun Verse 6).

Moderate (Tawassuh)

Tawassuth is an understanding or attitude that is in the middle (Moderate), an understanding that is not too hard (Radical) and an understanding that is not extreme (Liberal). With this understanding, Islam can be accepted by all levels of society in general (Karim, 2019). Dengan paham ini Islam bisa diterima oleh segala lapisan masyarakat pada umumnya. Tawassuth juga dikenal sebagai “Moderasi” yang merupakan paham yang sedang atau tidak berlenbihan, maka bisa dikatakan bahwa paham ini adalah paham moderat yang berarti ialah paham biasa-biasa saja dan tidak ekstrim kanan ataupun kiri.

So moderate is an understanding that tries to provide a view or information that this understanding is always a position that is in the middle of the two sides of right Islam and left Islam, so the presence of moderate understanding (Tawassuth) is to minimize and prevent the occurrence of extreme right and extreme left in the midst of Islamic society in Indonesia. The understanding of tawassuth is in a principle that always upholds the values of justice and balance in the social order. The middle

position makes a person can be seen by anyone in different directions, at this time a moderate person can be a role model for all parties (Shihab, 2000).

Even though this understanding of tawassuth has been explained in the Qur'an and As-Sunnah, but among the people there are still many social imbalances, where the extreme right (Radical) and the extreme left (liberal) are rampant in the scope of Indonesian society. So in that case the understanding of Tawassuth must really be broadcast in Muslims in order to maintain the security and peace of the Republic of Indonesia.

Discussion

The results showed that the values of Islamic teachings in the Archipelago have undergone a harmonious integration process with local culture, making Islam easily accepted and growing rapidly in various parts of Indonesia. Islam Nusantara does not only spread the teachings textually, but also prioritizes a cultural approach, so that Islamic values such as tolerance (tasamuh), balance (tawazun), and moderation (tawassuth) can be internalized in the lives of multicultural communities.

The spread of Islam in the archipelago was carried out through various methods such as education, marriage, and cultural acculturation. The education route allowed the younger generation to gain a comprehensive understanding of Islam, while the marriage route accelerated socio-cultural integration between communities. Cultural acculturation is a means of conveying Islamic teachings without causing conflict of values, because of its adaptive approach to local culture.

In the context of Islamic thought, Islam Nusantara is positioned as a teaching that is contextual and relevant to the social reality of Indonesian society. Islamic teachings are not imposed, but harmonized with local values such as deliberation, mutual cooperation, and mutual respect. Thus, Islam is not present as a hegemonic force, but as a value system that builds a peaceful and inclusive civilization.

The uniqueness of Islam Nusantara is also evident in the efforts of scholars and preachers in delivering humanist da'wah and embracing all levels of society. This approach has proven effective in minimizing conflict and strengthening social cohesion. Understanding the values of Islam Nusantara is important to strengthen the national and religious identity of Indonesian society, as well as a reference in facing the challenges of globalization and radicalism.

Thus, this research confirms that Islam Nusantara is a representation of rahmatan lil 'alamin Islam, which does not only prioritize formal sharia, but also internalizes humanitarian and cultural values in its religious practice.

CONCLUSION

This research shows that Islam in the Archipelago developed through an adaptive approach to local culture and traditions of Indonesian society. The values of Islamic teachings such as tawazun (balance), tasamuh (tolerance), and tawassuth (moderation) characterize Islam in the Archipelago which distinguishes it from the style of Islam in other regions.

The spread of Islam in the archipelago was done through various non-confrontational methods, such as education, marriage, and cultural acculturation.

This approach makes Islam acceptable to all levels of society without causing social or cultural conflicts, even strengthening social integration and harmony.

Islam Nusantara not only offers theological teachings, but also a representation of Islam that is friendly, inclusive, and upholds human values and unity. This is proof that Islam can coexist peacefully with local culture and make a positive contribution to the life of the nation.

Thus, Islam Nusantara is a form of religion that is relevant in the context of pluralistic Indonesia, and can be a model of moderate Islam in facing global challenges such as intolerance and radicalism.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest to any party from the contents of this article or the purpose of publication of this article which is not directed to any party because this research is purely a form of research results needed for the benefit of social science, especially in Islamic education.

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