

Religious Moderation from The Viewpoint of Persaudaraan Alumni 212

Helmi Maulana

Universitas Islam Darussalam (UID) Ciamis-Indonesia
Email: helmimaulana1984@gmail.com

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to elucidate the phenomena of religious moderation based on the actual experiences of religious groups in terms of comprehension, expression, and moderation. The study focused on the Persaudaraan Alumni 212 in Ciamis West Java, which was selected as a representative example of various activities conducted within the context of religious political movements. The presence of these activities essentially constitutes a strategy of challenging individuals and religious factions in the public domain, therefore establishing a new dominant ideology known as populist Islam. The aims of this study are to investigate the conceptual comprehension of religious moderation, examine the notion of moderation as an epistemological and theological foundation in practical terms, and analyze the elements that influence behavior within the socio-political multicultural environment of the nation and state. This study employs qualitative research methods to examine interviews conducted with religious figures and ulama. The analysis is based on new social movement theories, religious authorities, contextual Islamic epistemology, and religious dialogue. The aim is to foster religious harmony in terms of thinking, application, and action/expression. The study findings suggest a significant correlation between the social, political, economic environment, religious organization affiliation, regional and national election political conditions, and the development of a religious moderation model in a certain

jurisdiction. Moreover, the internet, social media, and electronic mass media offer extensive opportunity for accessing diverse religious information.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini berupaya memaparkan fenomena moderasi beragama yang digali dari pengalaman empirik kelompok umat beragama memahami, mengekspresikan, dan melakukan moderasi. Objek penelitian dilakukan kepada Persaudaraan Alumni 212 di Kabupaten Ciamis yang merupakan representasi dari beberapa aksi yang dilakukan dalam rangka gerakan politik berbalut agama. Kemunculan aksi tersebut pada dasarnya merupakan bentuk dari kontestasi individu maupun kelompok keagamaan dalam ruang publik yang menciptakan arus utama baru berupa Islam populis. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menggali pemahaman moderasi beragama secara konseptual; menganalisis konsep moderasi sebagai basis epistemologis dan teologis dalam tataran penerapan/praktiknya; dan menganalisis faktor-faktor yang melandasi aksi dalam konteks pluralitas kehidupan sosial-politik berbangsa dan bernegara. Analisis dilakukan terhadap hasil wawancara terhadap tokoh keagamaan dan ulama tentang moderasi beragama dengan menggunakan teori gerakan sosial baru, otoritas keagamaan, epistemologi Islam kontekstual, dan dialog agama sehingga diharapkan mampu menciptakan kerukunan umat beragama dalam tataran pemikiran, penerapan, dan aksi/ekspresi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya pengaruh kuat antara konteks sosial, politik, ekonomi, afiliasi organisasi keagamaan, situasi politis elektoral regional dan nasional, terhadap pembentukan model moderasi beragama dalam suatu wilayah. Selain itu, terbukanya kesempatan yang luas terhadap akses media dalam jaringan internet, media sosial, dan media masa elektronik yang menyediakan berbagai konten keberagamaan.

Keywords: Religious moderation, PA 212, religious contestation, popular Islam, religious harmony

Introduction

This study is a follow-up study of previous research on the strengthening of the role of religious figures and ulama as one of the important actors contesting in the public space. The research of Noorhaidi Hasan et al.¹ highlights several central issues along with the strengthening of the role and discourse of ulama after the collapse of the New Order related to the perception of Indonesian ulama in the political debate of the nation-state idea and its derivative concepts. The strengthening of conservatism and radicalism amidst the moderate and progressive religious currents adopted by religious groups during the reform era has given rise to diverse and interesting dynamics that are not always in line with the national social, political, defense, security, and religious contexts. It is necessary to target the local context so that the variety of understanding of religious moderation in terms of interpretation and action can be clearly and distinctively understood. That religious moderation which is considered as the capital of national and state life in the scope of diversity and religion as an inspiration for harmonious life has actually become a disaster in society when religion is an aspiration.² The Islamic Defense Action (ABI) is a new experience as a model of the role of religious figures in the public space. The actions carried out did not work as expected as religious solidarity. Instead of being an act of defending religion, what actually emerged was the politicization of religion and excessive contestation of religious figures in the public space.

Religious moderation is the main issue in this study by taking clerics and religious figures of Ciamis Regency, especially those who are members of the Alumni Brotherhood 212 (PA 212). Religious moderation is an important issue echoed by the government and religious figures in knitting together humanity and brotherhood as well as the issue of the nation's political stability.³ ABI gave birth to a series of large demonstrations based on the Ahok (Basuki Tjahaja Purnama)

¹ Noorhaidi Hasan, ed., *Ulama Dan Negara-Bangsa: Membaca Masa Depan Islam Politik Di Indonesia* (Yogyakarta: Pusat Pengkajian Islam, Demokrasi, dan Perdamaian (PusPIDeP), 2019).

² Ibnu Burdah, Najib Kailani, and Munirul Ikhwan, eds., *Ulama, Politik, Dan Narasi Kebangsaan: Fragmentasi Otoritas Keagamaan Di Kota-Kota Indonesia* (Yogyakarta: Pusat Pengkajian Islam Demokrasi dan Perdamaian (PusPIDeP), 2019).

³ Badan Litbang dan Diklat Kementerian Agama RI, *Moderasi Beragama* (Jakarta: Kementerian Agama RI, 2019).

case, which was considered to have committed blasphemy in the context of the 2016 DKI Jakarta regional head election.⁴ The action gave birth to a religious-based social movement and gave birth to a new group or affiliation known as the 212 Alumni Brotherhood. Regional religious leaders and clerics in Ciamis Regency became very significant because they were pioneers in the movement, especially the call of KH. Nonop Hanapi who encouraged his students to walk (long march) from Ciamis to Jakarta in the 212 Action.⁵ In addition, this action became an inspiration for the growth of new movements from non-mainstream groups taking over the mainstream in the arena of religious alternation and the formation of socio-political identity politics that attracted national attention.⁶

Research that has been conducted on the relationship between religious moderation and religious harmony has developed from early studies on the neglect of religious moderation values. Mainstream religious organizations, such as NU and Muhammadiyah, in addition to prioritizing greater national interests, these groups also tend to be more moderate and rational. However, the opposite is shown by non-mainstream religious figures who have a literal interpretation basis promoting political identities that are opposed to other religious groups.

The tendency of existing studies is that religious moderation is positioned as the basis for harmony in religious, national and state communities, capable of creating a conducive climate for the development of a pluralistic national and state life. Therefore, research

⁴ Syamsul Arifin, "Islam, Populisme dan Masa Depan Demokrasi di Indonesia," *Maarif* 14, no. 1 (June 30, 2019): 9–28, <https://doi.org/10.47651/mrf.v14i1.46>.

⁵ Rizky Suryarandika, "Mengenal Sosok Penggagas *Long March* Ciamis pada Aksi 212 (Bag 1)," *Republika Online*, December 7, 2016, sec. Khazanah, <https://republika.co.id/berita/dunia-islam/islam-nusantara/16/12/07/ohtdmq365-mengenal-sosok-penggagas-long-march-ciamis-pada-aksi-212-bag-1>.

⁶ Gili Argenti, "Islam Politik Di Indonesia: Transformasi Gerakan Sosial Aksi Bela Islam 212 Dari Gerakan Demonstrasi Ke Gerakan Kelembagaan Sosial, Politik Dan Ekonomi," *Jurnal Politikom Indonesiana* 4, no. 2 (2019): 1–23; Almuzammil Yusuf, Ibnu Hammad, and Arif Subhan, "Subjective View of Political Officers on Social Action: Phenomenology Study of Aksi Bela Islam (ABI) 212 (Action of Defending Islam) among Members of House of Representative of the Republic of Indonesia (DPR RI)," *South Asian Journal of Social Studies and Economics* 5, no. 1 (2019): 1–9; Encup Supriatna and Rizki Hegia Sampurna, "Politics of Identity in Indonesia: Evidences and Future Directions," in *Proceeding of International Conference on Social Sciences* (The 2nd International Conference on Social Science 2019, Jakarta: Universitas Muhammadiyah Jakarta, 2020), 117–29.

on religious moderation among PA 212 as a representation of non-mainstream Islamic understanding finds its urgency.

The problems described in the background above need to be limited. In addition to considerations from the researcher's side with theoretical abilities and methods used, the many problems found are not all worthy of being studied in the research title currently being submitted. The main focus of this research problem is religious moderation in the conceptual, implementation, and action levels that have been carried out by the Alumni Brotherhood 212 group in Ciamis Regency, West Java. This study aims to show the conceptualization of religious moderation, the experience of its application in the social life of society, and the actions taken by PA 212. First, to explain the theory and concept of religious moderation among scholars and religious figures who are members of the Action Brotherhood 212 in Ciamis Regency, West Java. Second, to analyze how the theory and concept of moderation as an epistemological and theological basis in its application level in religious life. Third, to analyze what factors underlie the action in the socio-political context of national and state life as a model of religious contestation in diverse public spaces.

Literature Review and Theory

The results of the search for literature related to the theme of this research are divided into five issues that are debated as follows. First, religious-based political movements use mass action and the use of online media. ABI is seen as a religious-based political movement⁷ using mass action in large groups⁸ and is considered a political jihad⁹ and fight against the hegemony of the global political system.¹⁰ It was recorded that there were several mass actions in large numbers starting from the National Movement to Guard the Indonesian Ulema Council Fatwa (GNPF MUI) Action on October 4, 2016 (1410), the First Islamic

⁷ Muhammad Ainun Najib, "Sublimasi Politik Dalam Aksi Bela Islam 212," *Resolusi: Jurnal Sosial Politik* 1, no. 2 (2018): 212.

⁸ Meistra Budiasa, "Mediatisasi Aksi Massa Islam 2 Desember 2016," *Profetik: Jurnal Komunikasi* 10, no. 1 (2017): 35–49.

⁹ Assyari Abdullah, "Membaca Komunikasi Politik Gerakan Aksi Bela Islam 212: Antara Politik Idenütas dan Ijtihad Politik Alternatif," *Jurnal An-Nida'* 41, no. 2 (February 12, 2018): 212.

¹⁰ Bagus Riadi and Diki Drajat, "Analisis Framing Gerakan Sosial: Studi Pada Gerakan Aksi Bela Islam 212," *Holistik* 3, no. 1 (November 30, 2019): 10–18, <https://doi.org/10.24235/holistik.v3i1.5562>.

Defense Action on November 4, 2016 (411), the Second Islamic Defense Action on December 2, 2016 (212), the Third Islamic Defense Action in 2017, the 212 Reunion in 2017-2019. Some of these actions were carried out in the context of electoral politics,¹¹ both regional head elections and presidential elections and there are also actions that do not have a political context in them.

FPI as the organization that is most active in calling for action to defend Islam cannot be separated from the role of its figures and leadership which is fully supported by the political power of the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS).¹² In addition, the research results of Liberti et al.¹³ and Vermonte et al.¹⁴ shows that ABI, apart from being supported by an alliance of religious figures and organizations, political parties, ABI is supported by other parties, namely the involvement of students in the 212 Islamic Defense Action Movement in Jakarta.

The organization and management of mass gathering in ABI successfully utilized buzzers on online social media networks.¹⁵ Results

¹¹ Juhana Nasrudin, "Politik Identitas Dan Representasi Politik (Studi Kasus Pada Pilkada DKI Periode 2018-2022)," *Hanifiya: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama* 1, no. 1 (2018): 34–47, <https://doi.org/10.15575/hanifiya.v1i1.4260>; Sofyan Sawri, "Friksi Politik-Agama Dalam Kontestasi Elektoral Pilkada DKI Jakarta 2017-2022 : Studi Atas Pembentukan Jejaring Konstituen Anies-Sandi," *Politeia: Jurnal Ilmu Politik* 12, no. 1 (January 30, 2020): 14–27, <https://doi.org/10.32734/politeia.v12i1.2883>.

¹² Wiradetia Abiyoso and Slamet Thohari, "Gerakan Front Pembela Islam (FPI) Dalam Aksi Bela Islam Tahun 2016 Di Jakarta," *Jurnal Kajian Ruang Sosial-Budaya* 3, no. 2 (2019): 78–100; Lusy Asa Akhrani, "Front Pembela Islam: Menggali Akar Konflik Beragama Ditinjau Dari Fanatisme Agama, Prasangka Agama Dan Intensi Konflik," *Fenomena* 27, no. 1 (June 30, 2018), <https://doi.org/10.30996/fn.v27i1.1482>; Nabil Lintang Pamungkas, Agung Widiyantoro, and Moddie Alvianto Wicaksono, "Relasi Politik dan Isu Agama: Dinamika Politik PKS dan Aksi Bela Islam pada Pemilu Serentak 2019," *Jurnal Sosial Politik* 6, no. 1 (2020): 70–84; Mark Woodward and Amanah Nurish, "Quo Vadis FPI Dalam Aksi Bela Islam," *Maarif: Jurnal Arus Pemikiran Islam Dan Sosial* 11, no. 2 (2016): 105–22.

¹³ "Keterlibatan Mahasiswa Dalam Aksi Bela Islam 212 Di Jakarta," *Jurnal Perspektif* 1, no. 4 (2018): 22–26.

¹⁴ "Gerakan 'Hibrida' Aksi Bela Islam Aktor, Struktur, Motivasi Dan Pendanaan," CSIS Working Paper Series (Jakarta: Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) Indonesia, January 2020), : <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep25371>.

¹⁵ Stephani Laurensia, "Propaganda Anti Basuki Tjahaja Purnama Di Media Sosial: Studi Netnografi Pada Grup Facebook Alumni Aksi Bela Islam 212" (PhD Thesis, Universitas Multimedia Nusantara, 2017); Arie Setyaningrum Pamungkas and Gita Octaviani, "Aksi Bela Islam Dan Ruang Publik Muslim: Dari Representasi Daring Ke Komunitas Luring," *Jurnal Pemikiran Sosiologi* 4, no. 2 (2017): 65–87; Ario Seto, "Islamist Buzzers: Message Flooding, Offline Outreach, and Astroturfing," *Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies* 12, no. 2 (December 26, 2019): 187–208, <https://doi.org/10.14764/10.ASEAS-0021>; Iswandi Syahputra, "Media Sosial Dan Prospek Muslim Kosmopolitan: Konstruksi & Peran Masyarakat Siber Pada Aksi Bela Islam," *Jurnal Komunikasi Islam* 8, no. 1 (2018): 19–40.

of Halimatusa'diyah's research¹⁶ which is strengthened by Nawawi¹⁷ find the perspective of social media users in expressing religious desires in their meeting spaces. Armed with research on big data, it can be seen that there are five models of religious understanding that have emerged, namely liberal, moderate, conservative, Islamic, and radical (extremist). In addition, the results of Karim and Wajdi's research¹⁸ shows that the elements of da'wah in the digital world include cyber-bullying and propaganda in the form of hoaxes which are more prominent.

Second, the emergence of new religious authorities and identity politics. The response to the presence of new religious authorities shows the transformation of the ABI movement towards new religious authorities and religious contestation in the public space.¹⁹ ABI became a symbol of the emergence of the spirit of Islamization and breaking the secularism movement.²⁰ Post-Islamism as an alternative that has developed amidst freedom of expression in Indonesia during the reform era has attempted to position Islam as a political ideology and has helped enliven the contestation of Islam in the public space²¹ by not taking a position that is at odds with the idea of a nation-state with a democratic system.²² This has an impact on the growth of social

¹⁶ "Beragama di Dunia Maya: Media Sosial dan Pandangan Keagamaan di Indonesia," Merit Report, Monografi Merit Indonesia (Jakarta: Pusat Pengkajian Islam dan Masyarakat (PPIM) UIN Jakarta, 2020).

¹⁷ "Digital Cloud: Representasi Transparansi Keberagamaan di Facebook," *Fikrah* 6, no. 2 (December 27, 2018): 367–90, <https://doi.org/10.21043/fikrah.v6i2.4117>.

¹⁸ "Propaganda and Da'wah in Digital Era (A Case of Hoax Cyber-Bullying Against Ulama)," *Karsa: Journal of Social and Islamic Culture* 27, no. 1 (June 12, 2019): 172–205, <https://doi.org/10.19105/karsa.v27i1.1921>.

¹⁹ Argenti, "Islam Politik Di Indonesia"; Ahmad Najib Burhani, "Aksi Bela Islam: Konservatisme Dan Fragmentasi Otoritas Keagamaan," *Maarif* 11, no. 2 (2016): 15–29.

²⁰ Ginanjar Kartasmita, "Agama Dan Sekulerisme: Kematian Sekulerisme Dalam Perspektif Aksi Bela Islam," *Religious: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama Dan Lintas Budaya* 2, no. 1 (2017): 8–14.

²¹ Carool Kersten, *Islam in Indonesia: The Contest for Society, Ideas and Values* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), <https://public.ebookcentral.proquest.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=4413945>.

²² Noorhaidi Hasan, "Post-Islamist Politics in Indonesia," in *Post-Islamism: The Changing Faces of Political Islam*, ed. Asef Bayat (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 157–82; Asef Bayat, *Islam and Democracy: What Is the Real Question?* (Leiden: Amsterdam University Press, 2007); Asef Bayat, *Pos-Islamisme*, ed. Haqqul Yaqin, trans. Faiz Tajul Milah (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2011); Asef Bayat, ed., *Post-Islamism: The Changing Faces of Political Islam* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); Muh. Khamdan and W. Wiharyani, "Islam Nusantara in Political Contestation Identity Religion in Indonesia," *Addin* 12, no. 2 (August 2018): 491–520.

movements²³ and new religious authorities and actors in Indonesia, including the kiai.²⁴ However, Zuly Qodir²⁵ stated that Indonesian Islam has not only developed in a modernist, revivalist, traditionalist format, but also progressive, neo-traditionalist and popular Islam as a logical consequence of the contestation over public space that is open to anyone.

In addition to the birth of the issue of Islamism, puritanism, conservatism, identity politics carried by ABI has led to increased intolerance and radicalism in society. The movement has exploited fellow believers, carried out hate propaganda, and sharpened the issue of SARA to people outside its group.²⁶

Third, the relationship between religion and the discourse of modernity, democracy, and the nation-state, as well as local culture. Modernity and religion can contribute to the development process if both are considered as something constructive rather than as a conflict and a threat. The existence of support for the values of religious spirituality, religious moderation, and solidarity of religious communities in the public space of the state (*ukhuwah watanīyyah*) in making the agenda of national development a success with the dynamics of religiosity in Indonesia.²⁷

²³ Asef Bayat, *Life as Politics: How Ordinary People Change the Middle East*, ISIM Series on Contemporary Muslim Societies (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010).

²⁴ Atmari, "Islamisme Dan Post-Islamisme Kyai: Memantapkan Nalar Dan Sikap Islamisme Ala Intelektual Pesantren," in *2nd Proceedings Annual Conference for Muslim Scholars* (Annual Conference for Muslim Scholars, Surabaya: UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, 2018), 26–38.

²⁵ "Public Sphere Contestation: Configuration of Political Islam in Contemporary Indonesia," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 1, no. 1 (June 1, 2011): 123–49, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v1i1.123-149>.

²⁶ Nurul Annisa Hamudy, "The 212 Movement in the Ethical Frame of Emmanuel Levinas," *Jurnal Bina Praja: Journal of Home Affairs Governance* 11, no. 2 (November 8, 2019): 197–207, <https://doi.org/10.21787/jbp.11.2019.197-207>; Yusa Djuyandi and Rahmah Ramadhani, "The Effectiveness of Political Identity in Post 212 Movement," *Central European Journal of International and Security Studies* 13, no. 4 (2019): 456–68; Ari Sulistyanto, Rina Sovianti, and Syaifuddin Syaifuddin, "The Agenda Formation of the Fantasy of Identity Politics in the Digital Media and Its Effect towards Cohesiveness of 212 Alumni Brotherhood," in *Proceedings of the First International Conference on Administration Science (ICAS 2019)*, vol. 343, *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research* (Proceedings of the First International Conference on Administration Science (ICAS 2019), Bandung, Indonesia: Atlantis Press, 2019), 97–102, <https://doi.org/10.2991/icas-19.2019.21>; Ida Susilowati, Nur Rohim Yunus, and Muhammad Sholeh, "Politics of Identity on Great 212's Reunion," *Dauliyah Journal of Islamic and International Affairs* 4, no. 1 (February 25, 2019): 58–79, <https://doi.org/10.21111/dauliyah.v4i1.2933>.

²⁷ Anwar Firmansyah and Tiffany Setyo Pratiwi, "Agama dan Pembangunan: Beragam Pandangan dalam Melihat Keberkaitan Agama terhadap Proses Pembangunan dan

The relationship between Islam, state, democracy and contemporary Indonesian society²⁸ helped shape the phenomenon of the proliferation of Islamic movements during the democratic-reform era which transformed from a traditional to a modern model using social media/internet to form new religious discourse and authority.²⁹ Political attitudes that are not related to the socio-cultural context of society have an impact on moderate and tolerant religious models.³⁰

Muhammad Ali's Research³¹ shows a dynamic relationship between Islam and local culture in Indonesia. This dynamic relationship also contributes to the formation of religious harmony in Indonesia.³² This is reinforced by the research results of Prasojo et al.³³ regarding the relationship between religion and culture practiced in West Kalimantan shows that social constructions that include cultural issues,

Modernisasi," *Jurnal Ilmiah Hubungan Internasional* 15, no. 1 (July 1, 2019): 1–12, <https://doi.org/10.26593/jihi.v15i1.2966.1-12>; Gusnanda and Nuraini, "Menimbang Urgensi Ukhuwah Wathaniyah Dalam Kasus Intoleransi Beragama Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Fuaduna: Jurnal Kajian Keagamaan Dan Kemasyarakatan* 4, no. 1 (June 30, 2020): 1–14, <https://doi.org/10.30983/fuaduna.v4i1.3237>.

²⁸ Taufik Abdullah, "Islam, State and Society in Democratizing Indonesia: An Historical Reflection," *Studia Islamika* 18, no. 2 (2011), <https://doi.org/10.15408/sdi.v18i2.432>; Yogi Supriadi, "Hubungan Agama Dan Negara Dalam Perspektif Aksi Bela Islam," *Jurnal Aqidah Dan Filsafat Islam* 1, no. 2 (2016): 37–48; Muhammad Wildan, "Islamism and Democratization in the Post 411 and 212 Rallies of Indonesia," *Thinking ASEAN*, no. 19 (2017): 2–5; Arif Rahman and Zalik Nuryana, "Islamic Identity and Transitional Democracy in Indonesia: Ideology, Public Sphere and Domination" (Proceedings of 1st Workshop on Environmental Science, Society, and Technology, WESTECH 2018, December 8th, 2018, Medan, Indonesia, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.4108/cai.8-12-2018.2283967>.

²⁹ Muzayyin Ahyar, "Islamic Clicktivism: Internet, Democracy and Contemporary Islamist Activism in Surakarta," *Studia Islamika* 24, no. 3 (December 31, 2017): 435–68, <https://doi.org/10.15408/sdi.v24i3.4859>; Muzayyin Ahyar and Alfitri Alfitri, "Aksi Bela Islam: Islamic Clicktivism and the New Authority of Religious Propaganda in the Millennial Age in Indonesia," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 9, no. 1 (May 24, 2019): 1–29, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v9i1.1-29>.

³⁰ Muh Khamdan and Wiharyani Wiharyani, "Mobilisasi Politik Identitas dan Kontestasi Gerakan Fundamentalisme," *Al-Tahrir: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 18, no. 1 (May 31, 2018): 193–218, <https://doi.org/10.21154/altahrir.v18i1.1198>.

³¹ "Muslim Diversity: Islam and Local Tradition in Java and Sulawesi, Indonesia," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 1, no. 1 (June 1, 2011): 1–35, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v1i1.1-35>.

³² Kustini, ed., *Monografi Kerukunan Umat Beragama di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Litbangdiklat Press, 2019).

³³ "Moderate Islam and the Social Construction of Multi-Ethnic Communities in the Hinterland of West Kalimantan," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 9, no. 2 (December 25, 2019): 217–39, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v9i2.217-239>.

local potential and wisdom as well as inter-ethnic relations play an active role in shaping Islamic moderation in a region.

In the Indonesian democratic system, there is a conflict between two factions: mainstream religious leaders and emerging non-mainstream groups. This conflict arises from the competition of radicalism for the dissemination of Islamic populism, which exists within the authority of Islamic groups itself.³⁴ The results of Kusumo and Hurriyah's research³⁵ using Vedi Hadiz's argumentation regarding Islamic populism with elements such as multi-class alliances and the narrative of one ummah, but ABI is more of a pseudo Islamic populism, rather than a new Islamic populism. Seeing the increasingly central role of *santri* and ulama in the state, government, and national politics today, the victory of Joko Widodo and Ma'ruf Amin, as former chairman of the MUI and rais am of NU, which was predicted to provide political and religious satisfaction for Islamic groups, but instead gave birth to new sectarianism and feuds between Muslims.³⁶

Fourth, religious moderation and the problematic of post-ABI religious studies. The importance of religious moderation as a process of understanding and practicing religious teachings fairly and balanced in order to avoid extremism in a plural and multicultural society.³⁷ In addition to the cultural role, educational institutions also serve as models for sowing the seeds of Islamic moderation. Syamsun Ni'am said that Islamic boarding schools as typical Indonesian Islamic educational institutions play a major role in the formation of understanding, thinking, practice, and action on religious

³⁴ Dian Dwi Jayanto, "Mempertimbangkan Fenomena Populisme Islam Di Indonesia Dalam Perspektif Pertarungan Diskursif: Kontestasi Wacana Politik Antara Gerakan Nasional Pengawal Fatwa Ulama (GNPF-Ulama) Dan Nahdlatul Ulama (NU)," *Jurnal Filsafat* 29, no. 1 (2019): 1–25; Wahyudi Akmaliah, "Kebenaran Yang Terbelah: Populisme Islam dan Disinformasi Politik Elektoral," *Maarif* 14, no. 1 (June 30, 2019): 129–49, <https://doi.org/10.47651/mrf.v14i1.53>; Arifin, "Islam, Populisme dan Masa Depan Demokrasi di Indonesia"; Muhammad Nida' Fadlan and Rangga Eka Saputra, "Islam, Radicalism, Democracy, and Global Trends in Southeast Asia," *Studia Islamika* 24, no. 3 (December 31, 2017): 643–47, <https://doi.org/10.15408/sdi.v24i3.6566>; Moh Shofan, "Populisme Islam dan Tantangan Demokrasi Islam di Indonesia," *Maarif* 14, no. 1 (June 30, 2019): 3–8, <https://doi.org/10.47651/mrf.v14i1.30>.

³⁵ "Populisme Islam di Indonesia: Studi Kasus Aksi Bela Islam oleh GNPF-MUI Tahun 2016-2017," *Jurnal Politik* 4, no. 1 (December 2, 2018): 87–114, <https://doi.org/10.7454/jp.v4i1.172>.

³⁶ Ahmad Najib Burhani, "Ulama dan Negara *Santri*," *Maarif* 14, no. 1 (June 30, 2019): 60–66, <https://doi.org/10.47651/mrf.v14i1.49>.

³⁷ Badan Litbang dan Diklat Kementerian Agama RI, *Moderasi Beragama*.

expressions.³⁸ Higher education institutions such as PTKI have a fairly large basic capital in developing religious moderation. Adequate human resource support, both input from students, lecturers, education staff, and alumni in campaigning for moderate attitudes and behavior. The abundance of scientific knowledge produced by scientists from conceptualization and research in the social field that is scientifically tested and the academic climate that is carefully maintained are strong capital in the insemination of science with a basis of moderate values. In addition, strong political support from the government and society makes Islamic educational institutions the most potential in forming religious moderation.³⁹

Syamsul Huda's Research⁴⁰ towards the theological concept of blasphemy which was the initial cause of the birth of ABI which was shown by mainstream religious figures (NU and Muhammadiyah) besides prioritizing greater national interests, this group also tends to be more moderate and rational.⁴¹ However, the opposite is shown by non-mainstream religious figures who have a literal interpretation basis promoting political identities that are opposed to other religious groups. In addition, research by Putri Ramadani et al.⁴² strengthens the previous opinion that there are differences in religious motivation between groups that do ABI and those that do not.

³⁸ Syamsun Ni'am, "Pesantren: The Miniature of Moderate Islam in Indonesia," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 5, no. 1 (June 1, 2015): 111–34, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v5i1.111-134>.

³⁹ Maimun and Mohammad Kosim, *Moderasi Islam di Indonesia*, ed. Faidi Haris (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2019).

⁴⁰ "The Local Construction of Religious Blasphemy in East Java," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 13, no. 1 (June 2, 2019): 96–114, <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2019.13.1.96-114>.

⁴¹ Mohamad Salik, *Nahdlatul Ulama Dan Gagasan Moderasi Islam*, ed. Salik (Malang: Edulitera & PT. Literindo Berkah Jaya, 2020); Amanah Nurish, "Muhammadiyah dan Arus Radikalisme," *Maarif* 14, no. 2 (December 30, 2019): 59–74, <https://doi.org/10.47651/mrf.v14i2.62>; Zuly Qodir, "Muhammadiyah Memperkuat Moderasi Islam Memutus Radikalisme," *Maarif* 14, no. 2 (December 30, 2019): 12–29, <https://doi.org/10.47651/mrf.v14i2.58>; Benni Setiawan, "Sayap Moderasi Muhammadiyah, Progresif-Dinamis untuk Indonesia (Berke)Maju(An)," *Maarif* 14, no. 2 (December 30, 2019): 50–58, <https://doi.org/10.47651/mrf.v14i2.61>; Moh Shofan, "Mendiskusikan Kembali Makna Moderatisme Muhammadiyah," *Maarif* 14, no. 2 (December 30, 2019): 4–11, <https://doi.org/10.47651/mrf.v14i2.57>.

⁴² "Berbedakah Motivasi Beragama Kelompok Aksi Bela Islam 212 Dengan Kelompok Non Aksi Bela Islam 212?," in *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Penguatan Riset Dan Luarannya Sebagai Budaya Akademik Di Perguruan Tinggi Memasuki Era 5.0*, 2019, 150–60.

Nur Ichwan's research⁴³ towards the role of the MUI proves that in addition to the shift in the role after the New Order towards accommodating national political life, it also proves that the moderation of Islam adopted by the MUI is basically a puritanical moderate Islam version of Sunni Islamic orthodoxy. The birth of the MUI fatwa that supports the mission and legitimizes the ABI further confirms that the MUI is throwing itself into political defense. The position of the MUI in this case proves that it does not take a moderate stance according to the "government."⁴⁴

The effects of ABI invite the presence of various problems in society. Musahwi's Research⁴⁵ shows that ABI gave birth to the phenomenon of symbolic hatred in the discourse and media text levels. In the social level, the phenomenon of widespread hatred with the existence of acts of persecution against individuals and groups who are considered to insult religion and ideologies that are considered opposing. This phenomenon has become a snowball that erodes the values of harmony and religious moderation in society. The ABI phenomenon that has succeeded in leading public feelings with media exploitation of the piety of Muslims has created its own difficulties for religious studies researchers. Masduki Research⁴⁶ mentioned three problems, namely the use of religious sentiment as a basis for mobilizing the masses becomes a problem in conducting interfaith dialogue. The activity of organizing and mobilizing the masses at the grassroots level can make interfaith sentiment even stronger. The issue of democracy that provides freedom of religion becomes increasingly limited in its space due to the monopoly in providing the stigma of popular piety determined by the majority.⁴⁷ These discussions are strengthened by

⁴³ "Towards a Puritanical Moderate Islam: The Majelis Ulama Indonesia and the Politics of Religious Orthodoxy," in *Contemporary Developments In Indonesian Islam Explaining The "Conservative Turn,"* ed. Martin van Bruinessen (Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2013), 60–104, <http://digilib.uin-suka.ac.id/16231/>; "MUI, Gerakan Islamis, Dan Umat Mengambang" 11, no. 2 (2016): 87–104.

⁴⁴ Ahmad Rizky Mardhatillah Umar, "A Genealogy of Moderate Islam: Governmentality and Discourses of Islam in Indonesia's Foreign Policy," *Studia Islamika* 23, no. 3 (December 30, 2016): 399–433, <https://doi.org/10.15408/sdi.v23i3.3157>.

⁴⁵ "Wacana Bela Islam dan Kebencian Struktural (2016-2017)," *Jurnal Tamaddun: Jurnal Sejarah dan Kebudayaan Islam* 8, no. 2 (November 30, 2020): 246–73, <https://doi.org/10.24235/tamaddun.v8i2.7266>.

⁴⁶ "Masa Depan Studi Agama-Agama Di Indonesia; Pasca Peristiwa Aksi Bela Islam 212," *Toleransi: Media Ilmiah Komunikasi Umat Beragama* 10, no. 1 (2018): 1–17.

⁴⁷ Muhammad Wildan, "Aksi Damai 411-212: Kesalehan Populer, Dan Identitas Muslim Perkotaan Indonesia," *Maarif* 11, no. 2 (2016): 188–202; Imron Rosidi, "Muslim Saleh atau

the research results of Ahmad Sholikin⁴⁸ which mentions the existence of a new map of Islamic politics in Indonesia.

Fifth, the research model that analyzes ABI through news media. Pradipta et al.'s research was conducted to conduct a framing analysis of the ABI 212 news broadcast by two local media, BBC Indonesia and Republika.⁴⁹ Research by Simorangkir et al.⁵⁰ who analyzed the news frame related to the PA 212 reunion in 2018 in the Republika Online media. Sekar Utami⁵¹ researching the credibility of ABI's reporting on Kompas.com. Angga Wijaya⁵² researching the representation of ABI protesters in the Kompas and Republika newspapers. Nurul Zakiah's Thesis⁵³ researching ABI news coverage in the construction of Pamela J. Shoemaker and Stephen D. Reese's hierarchy of influence theory on media content in BeritaSatu. Rochmah's Research⁵⁴ analyzing the news broadcasts of Radio Dakwah Syariah (RDS FM) Solo in mobilizing ABI both in Solo and Jakarta from the perspective of Islamic Populism.

Radikal: Prospek Toleransi Agama di Indonesia Pasca 2-12," *Toleransi: Media Ilmiah Komunikasi Umat Beragama* 8, no. 2 (January 9, 2017): 188–203, <https://doi.org/10.24014/trs.v8i2.2478>; Arie Setyaningrum Pamungkas, "Membela Islam? Dakwah, Konstruksi Moralitas Dan Ruang Publik Muslim Dalam Sejarah Media Islam Di Indonesia," in *Agama Dan Negara Di Indonesia: Pergulatan Pemikiran Dan Ketokohan (Prosiding Seminar Sejarah Nasional 2017)*, ed. Sri Margana, Siti Utami Dewi Ningrum, and Abmi Handayani (Yogyakarta: Penerbit Ombak, 2017), 9–31; Dina Amalia Susanto, "Lirik Lagu Dan Representasi Kesalehan Dalam Aksi Bela Islam," *Kandai* 14, no. 1 (2018): 59–76.

⁴⁸ "Gerakan Politik Islam Di Indonesia Pasca Aksi Bela Islam Jilid I, II Dan III," *Madani* 10, no. 1 (2018): 12–33; "Islamic Political Movement in Indonesia After "Aksi Bela Islam Jilid I, II and III," *Madani Jurnal Politik Dan Sosial Kemasyarakatan* 10, no. 1 (2018): 12–33.

⁴⁹ Abidatu Lintang Pradipta et al., "Analisis Bingkai Pemberitaan Aksi Bela Islam 2 Desember 2016 (Aksi 212) Di Media Massa BBC (Indonesia) & Republika," *Informasi* 48, no. 1 (July 25, 2018): 109–24, <https://doi.org/10.21831/informasi.v48i1.20203>.

⁵⁰ "Frame Pemberitaan Terkait Reuni Persaudaraan Alumni (PA) 212 Pada Tahun 2018 Di Media Republika Online," *Komunika: Journal of Communication Science and Islamic Da'wah* 3, no. 1 (August 15, 2019): 170–79.

⁵¹ "Kredibilitas Pemberitaan Tantang Aksi Bela Islam 64 Di Kompas.Com" (Skripsi, Semarang, UIN Walisongo, 2018).

⁵² "Representasi Pengunjuk Rasa Aksi Bela Islam Di Media Cetak: Studi Analisis Wacana Dalam Pemberitaan Aksi Bela Islam Jilid I Sampai Jilid Iii Pada Surat Kabar Kompas Dan Republika Periode 15 Oktober 2016, 5 November 2016, Dan 3 Desember 2016" (Skripsi, Surakarta, Universitas Sebelas Maret, 2018).

⁵³ "Pemberitaan Gerakan Aksi Bela Islam dalam Konstruksi Hierarki Pengaruh Isi Media di *Beritasatu*" (Tesis, Jakarta, UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, 2018), <https://repository.uinjkt.ac.id/dspace/handle/123456789/44786>.

⁵⁴ "Islamism and the Emergence of Islamic Populism The Role of Da'wah Media in Mass Mobilization on 'Bela Islam' Action: Case Studies of Dakwah Syariah Radio (RDS FM) Solo," *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Indonesia* 1, no. 1 (September 2, 2020): 1–8–8, <https://doi.org/10.15408/jisi.v1i1.17105>.

From the debate on the issues in the research above, the theme of religious moderation that has been studied tends to target the issue of religious-based political movements using mass action that is considered a form of jihad and piety determined by the majority has given rise to an intolerant religious attitude and legitimized symbolic and social violence with persecution. The existence of ABI which has many volumes erodes the joints of religious values that are friendly, moderate, just, and uphold the values of unity and oneness. The intensive development projects in every field initiated by the government need the support of social, political, and economic conduciveness pioneered by all parties, especially religious figures and clerics. Post-ABI is seen as having given birth to a new religious mainstream that is clearly contesting for control of the masses and control of religion. Regarding the issue of religious moderation among PA 212 as a representation of the successors and guardians of the ABI tradition, it has not been studied, thus creating a knowledge gap so that this research finds its urgency.

Several theories are used in this study to explain and analyze the data obtained from the research results. Theories on the contestation of Islam in public space, new social movements, religious authority, religious moderation, contextual Islamic epistemology, and religious dialogue are used in this study.

The reforms that occurred after the collapse of the New Order opened up more freedom of movement for the birth of several religious phenomena and movements, thus creating a “free religious market.”⁵⁵ Public Islam that resonated loudly during the New Order refers to the diverse calls and struggles for Islamic ideas and practices that increasingly influenced socio-political life.⁵⁶ Public Islam refers to the diverse calls and struggles for Islamic ideas and practices that increasingly influence political and social life in much of the world.

The new social movement theory is used to see the actions that have been carried out by PA 212, which were born when there was

⁵⁵ Munirul Ikhwan, “Produksi Wacana Islam(Is) Di Indonesia: Revitalisasi Islam Publik Dan Politik Muslim,” in *Literatur Keislaman Generasi Milenial: Transmisi, Apropriasi, Dan Kontestasi*, ed. Noorhaidi Hasan (Yogyakarta: Pascasarjana UIN Sunan Kalijaga Press, 2018), 63–108.

⁵⁶ Armando Salvatore and Dale F Eickelman, eds., *Public Islam and the Common Good* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2004), <http://site.ebrary.com/id/10234757>; Noorhaidi Hasan, “The Making of Public Islam: Piety, Agency, and Commodification on the Landscape of the Indonesian Public Sphere,” *Contemporary Islam* 3, no. 3 (2009): 229–50, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11562-009-0096-9>; Ikhwan, “Produksi Wacana Islam(Is) Di Indonesia: Revitalisasi Islam Publik Dan Politik Muslim.”

dissatisfaction in a society, so besides the support of resources, motivation, and political environment, there were also actors and organizations that could mobilize large numbers of people.⁵⁷

The idea of religious moderation, more specifically Islamic moderation, is needed to stem the symptoms of extremism in the thinking and understanding of religious texts that are often used as the theological basis for intolerant and violent actions. There needs to be epistemological and methodological capital in understanding legal sources, such as the Qur'an, hadith, and also religious texts that align the text and the social context of society at the time the text was formed and at the time of its application (contextualization). The holy book contains truths that are able to embrace all groups and interests, but when born by interpreters it becomes the only correct interpretation. It should be a product of "diverse" interpretations that are able to embrace all groups, but it only becomes a product of interpretation that tries to "uniform" and "force" acceptance of the results of its interpretation. Even the results of its own interpretation are considered absolute truth and apply anywhere and anytime. In the name of God, human products only because humans think and have opinions about God's text, the results do not immediately become God's text with absolute truth. One of the epistemological models of interpretation that needs to be developed in order to foster an attitude of religious moderation is *maqashidi* interpretation.⁵⁸

As an inseparable system, Islamic epistemology must be a leader in producing welfare or benefits. By using a system approach in the new *uṣūl al-fiqh*, for example, Jasser Auda⁵⁹ views that all legal and scientific products must be directed towards benefit. The five things (*al-ḍar'urrah al-khamsah*) are the main and most important parts of Islam that must be fulfilled which make it impossible to create signs of a moderate attitude in religion.

⁵⁷ Oman Sukmana, *Konsep dan Teori Gerakan Sosial* (Malang: Intrans Publishing bekerjasama dengan Dewan Pengurus Daerah Jawa Timur Ikatan Pekerja Sosial Profesional Indonesia (IPSPI), 2016); Asef Bayat, *Revolution without Revolutionaries: Making Sense of the Arab Spring*, Stanford Studies in Middle Eastern and Islamic Societies and Cultures (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2017).

⁵⁸ Abdul Mustaqim, *Argumentasi Keniscayaan Tafsir Maqashidi Sebagai Basis Moderasi Islam*, Pidato Pengukuhan Guru Besar Dalam Bidang Ulumul Qur'an (Yogyakarta: UIN Sunan Kalijaga, 2019).

⁵⁹ *Maqasid Al-Shariah as Philosophy of Islamic Law: A Systems Approach* (London-Washington: The International Inst. of Islamic Thought, 2007).

The plurality of contemporary world relations is required to be able to create peace and friendship. Without world peace, it is impossible for humans to live on earth with a mission as the earth's prosperity (*khalifah fi al-ardh*). Friction of interests and intolerant attitudes create gaps and conflicts, especially religious conflicts. Dialogue between beliefs (religions) is not directed at finding theological similarities, but rather trying to find similarities in the realm of humanity, justice, and the teachings of love. Dialogue between faiths is aimed at being able to understand the presence of "other parties" who also offer salvation. Theologically, religions are certainly different even though they have the same root tradition. Islam and Christianity in the Abrahamic tradition both claim to be monotheistic religions, but on the surface they present different theologies. Islam with Tawhid, Christianity with the trinity. Two things that at the exoteric level do not meet. In fact, religious theology must be directed at how humans with full awareness build the economy, health, friendship, and peace between communities in a pluralistic world.⁶⁰

Method

Academic study on religious moderation is primarily qualitative, relying on the findings obtained from interviews conducted with specifically chosen individuals as informants. The informants who were questioned were chosen based on their character, knowledge, and experience on the topic of religious moderation in the Persaudaraan Alumni 212, which defined the research emphasis. Religious moderation encompasses the principles, implementation, and specific activities outlined in PA 212. Furthermore, the chosen religious moderation not only takes into account pertinent issues but also incorporates the firsthand experiences of individuals and groups that are directly affected by the challenges faced by the religious community. Thus, the subject of religious moderation addressed in this paper encompasses the notion of religious moderation, its implementation, and the activities conducted by PA 212. The data derived from the mapping of the interview findings were

⁶⁰ Waleed El-Ansary et al., eds., *Kata Bersama: Antara Muslim Dan Kristen*, trans. Hadrianus Tedjoworo (Yogyakarta: UGM Press, 2019).

verified by the cohort of individuals who were involved as participants in the study. The study participants were restricted to groups of individuals who possessed a more extensive understanding of religious moderation. However, they were required to possess competence in formulating the research topic. Simultaneously, the group possessing this knowledge encountered significant religious disputes within the social and political sphere. A sample of ten individuals was chosen for comprehensive interviews. Gender balance and variances in character level were considered during the choosing of figurines. The selection of Islamic boarding schools was based on considering social and economic factors that were pertinent to religious moderation following the Islamic defense/ulama action.

This study examines the figures from four categories of Islamic boarding schools in Ciamis Regency, West Java. These Islamic boarding schools are located in the northern, middle, and southern districts of Ciamis Regency and exhibit both similar and distinct characteristics. The interview standards served as the foundation for development of interview questions during the data collecting procedure. Open-ended questions addressed three specific domains. Firstly, data pertaining to the notion of moderation inside Islamic boarding schools (*santri* and *kiai*) becomes a determinant in the participation of informants in PA 212. Secondly, the idea and notion of moderation serve as an epistemological and theological foundation for its implementation in religious life. Furthermore, the considerations that drive the behavior within the socio-political framework of national and state existence serve as a paradigm for religious conflict in various public domains. The study was conducted over a period of four months, namely from late 2022 to early 2023. The participants in this study were deliberately interviewed. All questions were posed individually and candidly in a casual setting, both indoors and outdoors. Chat interviews were performed using the messaging application WhatsApp. Survey participants were requested to provide details on their personal experiences and understanding of the idea of religious moderation.

The data collected from interviews were categorized thematically to highlight the chosen research topic. The data classification was conducted not only based on topics but also by taking into account the dimensions addressed. Analysis was conducted to determine the importance of variations in experience within the context of relevant factors, including gender, category of Islamic boarding schools, and socio-economic status.

The analysis of the data involved three distinct stages: data restatement, data description, and data interpretation. Restatement was conducted by cross-referencing interview quotations expressed from the respondent's perspective. An analysis of the data was conducted to reveal patterns or trends in the typology of data collected on religious moderation. The interpretation procedure was conducted by taking into account the interpersonal, social, and institutional circumstances that underpin religious moderation. These three steps of analysis served as the foundation for formulating conclusions (inferences). The data collected from the participants formed a mutually complimentary comparison derived from the interview findings.

Results and Discussion

The Concept of Religious Moderation PA 212

PA 212 interprets religious moderation as the same as religious tolerance. All informants view the concept of religious moderation as an attitude of tolerance. The tolerance in question is respecting the stance or beliefs of others that are different or contradictory to one's own stance and beliefs. Moderation is also interpreted as a fair attitude (*'adliyyah*) towards views that may be contrary to one's stance. This fair attitude is manifested in the attitude of assessing similarities in the use of arguments and perhaps only different interpretations.

The orientation of moderation is more focused on fellow Muslims. If religious differences are the problem, then what needs to be done is an attitude of respecting that other religions are different from Islam

and there is no need to interfere in the internal affairs of their religion. The end of the verse of Surah *Al-Kâfirûn* is the basis for this attitude, namely *lakum dînukum wa liya dîn* (for you your religion, for me my religion.)

In their view, Islam already contains moderate teachings. Religion teaches good, justice, humanity, obedience in carrying out goodness, rejecting evil, respecting each other, loving the young, respecting the older, loving cleanliness, and obeying the rules.⁶¹

This is in line with what was said by one of the informants who was interviewed, “Don’t let non-Muslims be tolerant, but fellow Muslims because they have different schools of thought or organizations attach the stigma of being intolerant and radical.”⁶²

Islam teaches tolerance so that every Muslim is on the straight path. The straight path is the sharia that upholds justice and respects different parties. Every adherent of a religion is obliged to obey and practice its teachings. Therefore, for PA 212, tolerant people are those who obey the teachings of their religion. As citizens, Muslims must obey the agreed rules and norms. The country has the 1945 Constitution, Pancasila. Muslims must also obey the leader (*ulil amri*). In the view of PA 212, obedience to a leader is not the same as obedience to Allah and the Messenger. The Messenger received direct guidance from Allah and was protected from every mistake. The Messenger also carried out an apostolic mission equipped with the Qur’an as a guideline whose truth is final, while the leader is an ordinary human being who is chosen to be a commander in life, of course his truth is not absolute.

Any provisions or laws that contradict the laws of Allah and His Messenger are the laws of ignorance. The absence of belief in the best law is the law of Allah and His Messenger leads someone to be labeled an infidel. In the Indonesian context, in line with Bachtiar Nashir’s opinion, the law of ignorance is the return of laws that insult the values of divinity, humanity, unity, and justice that are summarized in Pancasila.⁶³

Muhammad Rizieq Shihab is seen as a role model for PA 212 as a very Pancasilaist figure. His master’s thesis in Malaysia entitled “The Influence of Pancasila on the Implementation of Islamic Law in Indonesia” shows that Pancasila has similar values and is in line with

⁶¹ Informan 1, Wawancara, Desember 2022.

⁶² Informan 7, Wawancara, Desember 2023.

⁶³ Bachtiar Nasir, *Tadbir Rabbani Rekayasa Allah di Balik Aksi 212*, ed. Azhar Azis and Mahmud Budi Setiawan (Jakarta Selatan: AQL Pustaka, 2017), 45–52.

Islamic teachings. He views that the institutionalization of Islamic law in Indonesia will not conflict with Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. He also wants Islamic law to be institutionalized in the context of positive law by the state.⁶⁴ The Medina Charter and the Jakarta Charter should serve as the primary references for PA 212 and so must be vigorously defended. Non-Muslims need not be concerned about the applying of Islamic law, as it will not replace the principles of moderation or religious tolerance. For a Muslim, it is inherent to desire the complete execution of Islamic law. Complete religious devotion necessitates that every facet of life be grounded in the divine precepts of Allah. The cluster of Islamic Defense Actions conducted in 2016 centered on the matter of complete adherence to Islamic religious beliefs. The call to punish Ahok, who is perceived as a blasphemer of the Quran, is essentially a component of the political call for Muslims to choose leaders just from their own community. Furthermore, apart from the matter of Islamic leadership, there is an additional requirement that the current leader in Indonesia should not be of foreign descent, particularly Chinese descent. The third concerned matter pertains to the concepts of autonomy and social equity.⁶⁵ The action carried out shows love for the homeland and nation. This view is the belief of all informants that in addition to jihad, the Islamic Defense Action event is to anticipate so that other people do not commit despicable or sinful acts.

Epistemological and Theological Basis of Religious Moderation among PA 212

The concept of *amar ma'rûf nahy munkar* is the most important part in the view of PA 212. The field of struggle of PA 212 is in the fields of da'wah, hisbah, and jihad. The hisbah in question is *amar ma'rûf nahy munkar*. Bachtiar Nashir emphasized that the concept of *amar ma'rûf nahy munkar* is part of monotheism that must be upheld. Nashir considers that the Action to Defend Islam is not a demonstration, but rather a way to uphold *amar ma'rûf nahy munkar*.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Informan 3, Wawancara, January 24, 2023; Informan 7, Wawancara.

⁶⁵ Informan 7, Wawancara.

⁶⁶ Nasir, *Tadbir Rabbani*, 54.

The concept of monotheism used by PA 212 is the monotheism of *Ahlussunnah Wal Jamaah* (Aswaja). However, the Aswaja they understand is not the same as the concept of Aswaja in Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah because it is strongly influenced by the field of struggle of the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI). The Articles of Association and Bylaws of the Islamic Defenders Front (AD-ART FPI) outline that the field of struggle that they are working on is Islamic preaching, hisbah (*amar ma'rûf nahy munkar*), and jihad. Of the three, the most prominent and most prioritized is *amar ma'rûf nahy munkar* and is seen as the main obligation of the other two concepts.

In terms of language, an-nahy means preventing something from happening, including the meaning of prohibiting, distancing, avoiding, opposing, threatening, fighting, warning, reprimanding and ending which prevents something from being done. The word *al-munkar* means something that is denied. All *munkar* acts can distance the perpetrator from Allah. So, forbidding *munkar* or *al-nahyu* 'an *al-munkar* is preventing all evil from happening. In fiqh terminology, *amar ma'rûf nahy munkar* is called al-hisbah.⁶⁷ Islamic preaching will not be realized if immorality is still rampant in society. Governing and inviting people to Islam are already included in the teachings of preaching and jihad. Even "*nahy munkar* itself is the most noble jihad." That's what one of the interviewees said.⁶⁸

The obligation of Muslims in the preaching of *amar ma'rûf nahy munkar* as a manifestation of the anti-vice movement. The enforcement of *amar ma'rûf nahy munkar* is seen as Islamic preaching and criticizes the weak control of the government in enforcing the law. As a guideline in enforcing *amar ma'rûf nahy munkar* in the life of the nation and state in Indonesia, it is necessary to pay attention to the interests desired by Islamic law and remain obedient to the leaders and applicable laws. The stages in *amar ma'rûf nahy munkar* are determined by the level of strength of the perpetrator and also the type and sin to be eradicated. If the sin is of great strength, then great strength is also needed to eradicate it. In this case, it is necessary to involve the police as representatives of the government in carrying out actions to eradicate sin. If a verbal warning has been given and is still ignored, then the next action needs to be a written warning so that it becomes a warning to the perpetrators of sin. And the last stage is if they still commit sins, then real action is needed by reminding them directly, if necessary,

⁶⁷ Informan 2, Wawancara, January 15, 2023.

⁶⁸ Informan 4, Wawancara, January 21, 2023.

using all abilities and strengths to realize *nahy munkar*. Forbidden *munkar* is done because every evil that is prohibited by religion will damage the lives of individuals and society. If *nahy munkar* is not done, then the social order that is directed and contains an ideal social life according to sharia. “The most important thing is *nahy munkar* because if *nahy munkar* has been realized then directly *amar ma’rûf* has been done.”⁶⁹

The argument that is used as the basis for *amar ma’rûf nahy munkar* is a verse from the Koran (QS Ali ‘Imran: 104) which is very popular among people who want change for the better. Hadith *man râ minkum munkarân falyugayyir biyadihi, fain lam yastaṭi‘ fabilisânihi, fain lam yastaṭi‘ fabiqalbihi, wadhâlika aḍ’af al-îmân* narrated by Imam Muslim from Abû Sa’îd Al-Khudrî. Faith is not only a form of confession and speech, but it needs to be realized in real actions. The 212 Islamic Defense Action is a form of proof that only people with strong faith will be moved to join the “jihad” to the capital to provide support to the government to try Ahok as a blasphemer of the Qur’an.

The concept of *amar ma’rûf nahy munkar* as an order to do good and forbid people from doing evil or sin needs to be realized in the form of a call/invitation (command). If it cannot be done then it is considered something weak in terms of faith. Of course, Ciamis Muslims who are thick with the culture of *santri* do not want to be seen as *santri* who do not have the spirit (girah) of faith and jihad.⁷⁰ There was no negative response to the local culture, culture, or customs in Ciamis. As a region with strong religious history, Ciamis does not have many cultures that are far from the *santri* culture. What is used as a guideline is the *fiqh* principle of *al-’âdatu muḥakkamah*. Local customs, culture, and habits as long as they do not conflict with the main principles of Islamic teachings can be accommodated as a consideration of their legal permissibility.

Religious Contestation in Public Space

The Islamic Defense Action is seen as a political movement wrapped in religion. The movement has penetrated various economic sectors and independence. In addition to carrying the “pious message” the movement directly or indirectly became very iconic with evidence of the struggle of Muslims against injustice in various aspects of life. Now there are many economic movements that use the 212 brand, such as

⁶⁹ Informan 6, Wawancara, Desember 2022.

⁷⁰ Informan 5, Wawancara, Desember 2022.

212 mart, 212 cooperative, 212 stalls, and others. The movement became a momentum to carry out the movement of Indonesian Muslims towards an Islamic society, at least the Islamic version of 212.⁷¹

Views and attitudes towards blasphemy and religious symbols have become very sensitive and easily provoked. The experience of the 2016 mass action which continues to be commemorated every year has had a psychological effect on Muslims, especially the *santri* in Ciamis Regency who are affiliated with the 212 alumni. It is not easy to maintain the harmony carried out by the Interfaith Communication Forum (FKUB). The Launching of “Harmony Village” with a ceremonial ceremony was held in April 2022 in Lebak Village. In Lebak Village itself, there are four houses of worship, namely the Al-Mujahidin Mosque, the Santa Yohanes Church, the Hok Tek Bio Temple, and the Confucian Litang. In Ciamis, there are two Harmony Villages (multi-religious), namely Susuru Village and Lebak Village, which are continuously assisted by FKUB and harmony activists.

“What FKUB does comes from below, from the people of Ciamis themselves, and this needs to be supported. With interfaith art, culture, sports, and other programs, a life of mutual respect is embedded. This is very important because prevention is better than cure. For some of us who are used to living as the majority, and have not experienced living as a minority, we do and can tend to think that things are just harmonious. Therefore, there is a need to experience living as a minority, how happy we are to be invited, recognized and treated equally as part of the mainstream society.”⁷²

Views and attitudes towards diversity batik, for example, among PA 212 are considered excessive and excessive moderation. Batik launched by the Ministry of Religion is considered to have tarnished the faith of Muslims because the wearer of the batik must wear clothes that contain logos or symbols of other religions. The cross, for example, is found in the batik image/pattern above the image of a Catholic worship building in the batik. For people who consciously wear batik clothing, they are considered to have apostatized. This is in line with the views and attitudes towards the MUI fatwa No. 7/MUNAS VII/MUI/11/2005 concerning pluralism, liberalism, and secularism of Religion. “Moderates don’t have to wear diversity batik clothing either... they can apostatize if they wear it.”⁷³

The characteristics or distinctive features of Muslims in Ciamis Regency uphold Islamic values. Historically, Ciamis is part of the East

⁷¹ Informan 8, Wawancara, February 9, 2023.

⁷² Informan 9, Wawancara, March 11, 2023.

⁷³ Informan 10, Wawancara, January 23, 2023.

Priangan region which became the main headquarters of the DI-TII power base in the 1950s. Not a few great clerics who led Islamic boarding schools participated in guerrilla warfare in the mountains to defend the Islamic State of Indonesia founded by S.M. Kartosuwiryo. What is unique is that the spirit of Islam is still maintained to this day, even though it has transformed into a general Islamic movement. So when there was the ABI movement which was sparked by the case of blasphemy of the Al-Quran by Ahok in the 2015 Jakarta gubernatorial election, the Ciamis students with their al-jihad spirit were able to prove their existence on the national stage. "The spirit of the movement will continue to be passed on by the cleric to his students."⁷⁴

The role of educational institutions as centers of scientific study. As the oldest Islamic educational institution, Islamic boarding schools play an important role. Data from 2017 to 2022, the number of Islamic boarding schools in Ciamis reached 501. The 212 Islamic Defense Action incident attracted the attention of the Ciamis public, even rising to a national scale. However, the data on students reaching 26,000 people did not increase significantly after the incident. It's just that there was a concentration of students at the Bayasari Islamic Boarding School led by K.H. Nonop Hanafi, the initiator of the Ciamis-Jakarta long march in the 212 action. The concentration in question was that students who were originally spread across other Islamic boarding schools in Ciamis decided to switch to studying at the Al-Huda 2 Bayasari Islamic boarding school. Data from the Ministry of Religion of Ciamis Regency noted that in 2017 there was a one hundred percent increase in students in Bayasari, which originally had 1,500 students increasing to 3,000 students.⁷⁵ The 212 Movement has become a special attraction for increasing the number of students in several other Islamic boarding schools affiliated with the 212 Islamic Defense Action movement. Although not very significant, this illustrates that the action has become a model of "Islamic" life according to 212. The chosen organizational affiliation is the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI). With the teachings and doctrines of Islam that are *haraki*, the mindset and actions of students are very thick with actions to eradicate sin.

The form or practice of tolerance between religions in Ciamis Regency is quite harmonious. There is no friction and casuistic events that tarnish the harmony of relations between different religious communities. However, the escalation of friction between

⁷⁴ Informan 8, Wawancara.

⁷⁵ Informan 8.

organizational differences between fellow Muslims is observed to be increasing. NU together with the Ministry of Religion, which is the guardian of religious moderation, often have different opinions, views, and actions in responding to religious issues. Although the PA 212 group adheres to the *Ahlussunnah Wal Jamaah* school of thought, namely holding firmly to the four schools of thought, it is very different in terms of thought (*fikrah*) and movement (*harakah*). NU's mindset upholds moderation (*tawasutiyah*) and prioritizes Islam that is *rahamutiyah* (anti-violence), *insâniyah* (humanity), *'adliyyah* (fair), *mubâdalah* (balanced), *mashlahah* (public welfare), and *mu'âhadah waṭaniyah* (national commitment). The PA 212 group carries the doctrine of da'wah, hisbah, and jihad. A movement that is very thick with the FPI. The attitude or views of Muslims in Ciamis Regency towards religious moderation programmed by the Ministry of Religion have not been openly rejected. Since being echoed by the central Ministry of Religious Affairs since the end of 2018, religious moderation has continued to be campaigned by all stakeholders in Ciamis Regency. The Regent of Ciamis and top officials of the Regency inaugurated the Harmonious Village in Lebak Village and promoted Susuru Village to become an icon of religious tolerance. FKUB, MUI, and Kesbangpol Ciamis joined hands to promote harmony in Ciamis.

Critical Analysis

The concept of religious moderation initiated by the Ministry of Religious Affairs contains nine values, namely *rahamutiyah* (anti-violence), *insâniyah* (humanity), *'adliyyah* (fairness), *mubâdalah* (balanced), *maṣlahah* (public welfare), *mu'âhadah waṭaniyah* (national commitment), *dustûriyah* (obedience to the constitution), *tasâmuhiyah* (tolerance), and *'urfiyah* (respect for local traditions). Being moderate requires knowledge and good character. In addition to having broad religious knowledge, moderate people are able to control their emotions, have noble morals, uphold exemplary behavior (*uswah/qudwah*), and are able to empathize with others who are different.⁷⁶

Religious moderation is very necessary because extreme attitudes in religion are not in accordance with the essence of religious teachings

⁷⁶ Tim Penyusun Ditjen Bimas Islam, *Moderasi Beragama Perspektif Bimas Islam*, ed. Dedi Slamet Riyadi, Cetakan I (Jakarta: Direktorat Jenderal Bimbingan Masyarakat Islam, Kementerian Agama RI, 2022), 92.

themselves. Extreme behavior in the name of religion also often triggers the birth of conflict, hatred, intolerance, especially hostility and war that destroys civilization. Such attitudes need to be moderated. Religious moderation is an effort to restore the explanation and application of religion so that it is in accordance with the essence of religion and being religious. The essence of religion is to protect human dignity, honor, and civilization, not the other way around. Religion should not be used to disturb civilization, because since it was revealed, religion has essentially been intended to build civilization itself. Since the beginning, all civilizations, religions, traditions, and cultures have taught moderation in all levels of life. All of them refer to one point of the same meaning, namely that moderation is choosing a middle path between two extreme poles and not being excessive in religious behavior.⁷⁷

The Ministry of Religion as the guardian of religious moderation is none other than one of the strategies for maintaining Indonesia. As a pluralistic nation, the founders of this nation were moderate in choosing to be a nation, not making this nation a religion. However, they also do not ignore religious life, implementing religious values combined with local wisdom that is deeply rooted in society. This nation is known for its polite, tolerant character and respect for diversity. Therefore, religious moderation is used as a cultural strategy to maintain the identity of the Republic of Indonesia. *Wasathiyah* Islam is challenged by transnational Islam which still questions the concept of the nation-state, carrying out rigid, literal, and radical religious streams.⁷⁸ Tolerance is also associated with Muslim morality. In the case of Abdurrauf Singkel, for example, when criticizing the extreme attitudes of the followers of Sheikh Hamzah Fansuri and the radical attitudes of Nuruddin ar-Raniri, he still paid attention to ethics by not mentioning names and addressing them directly. Of course, in Acehese culture at that time it was considered a form of “politeness” and Abdurrauf’s very high tolerance.⁷⁹

The historicity of the series of ABIs is not only motivated by the politically charged Ahok incident, but much more than that, there is economic-social jealousy and inequality between Muslims and non-

⁷⁷ Badan Litbang dan Diklat Kementerian Agama RI, *Tanya Jawab Moderasi Beragama*, Suplemen (Jakarta: Kementerian Agama RI, 2019).

⁷⁸ Azyumardi Azra, *Relevansi Islam Wasathiyah: Dari Melindungi Kampus Hingga Mengaktualisasikan Kesalehan*, ed. Idris Thaha (Jakarta: Penerbit Buku Kompas, 2020), x.

⁷⁹ Oman Faturrahman, “Abdurrauf Singkel: Ulama Santun Dari Serambi Mekkah,” in *Seribu Tahun Nusantara*, ed. J.B. Kristanto (Jakarta: Penerbit Harian Kompas, 2000), 465.

Muslims. Juharmen's research confirms that the series of ABIs did not stand alone and were the culmination point and movement of non-mainstream Muslim groups. The ambiguity of the NU and Muhammadiyah groups in responding to this action also contributed to the fact that the movement was part of the struggle that Indonesian Muslims had to undertake.⁸⁰

Economic inequality in urban Muslim communities, especially in big cities that even have the status of the nation's capital, which in the case of the Action to Defend Islam gave birth to the concept of "Economic Jihad" according to the action figures. ABI which started from the action to defend the Al-Quran because of the Ahok case widened with the presence of demands for economic independence specifically for Muslims. The social justice that has been trumpeted has not been realized. Economic inequality continues to occur in every line of community life. Important assets are controlled by minority groups. Capital holders freely become the determinants of economic and even political policies. This economic colonization is one of the underlying causes of similar actions.⁸¹

The ABI Manifesto leads to the transformation of theology towards humanism. The phenomenon of defending the holy book as a cause that seems to be directed at a further effect leading to the action of defending and demanding Muslim rights that are believed to have been trampled by non-Muslim capitalists. ABI's accentuation is more on guarding the welfare of the people, control of assets and natural resources.⁸²

Many popular stories of "jihad" heroism in defending Islam have emerged to enliven ABI. One of the former FPI activists also told the story of someone who was willing to sell goats to pay for traveling during the long march and to feed the marchers even though his daily life was not that of a well-off person. Something similar is also found in the stories written in books. The story of a "mujahidah" grandmother who already has nine grandchildren who was called to take action. There are also several other stories that accompany ABI, both stories

⁸⁰ Juharmen, "Konstruksi 'Islam Moderat' Pasca Aksi Bela Islam 212," *Kontekstualita: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan* 33, no. 2 (2018): 145–70.

⁸¹ Nasir, Bachtiar, *Tadbir Rabbani: Rekayasa Allah Di Balik Aksi 212*, ed. Azhar Azis (Jakarta: AQL Pustaka, 2017), 262–68.

⁸² Ahmad Doli Kurnia and Iswandi Syahputra, *Aksi Bela Islam 212 Gerakan Hati Kekuatan Bangsa*, ed. Rema K. Soenendar and Nunik Siti Nurbaya (Bandung: Simbiosis Rekatama Media, 2017), 2010–2211.

that are considered directly related to the action and “miraculous” stories experienced by ABI participants.⁸³

Reviews of unexpected stories or events are discussed by several authors who describe that ABI is an action that is desired by Allah and protected by angels. There are also many stories of non-Muslims converting to Islam because of ABI. The story is also used as a legitimacy for the “Super Peaceful” persecution of non-Muslim leadership and the social, economic, and cultural inequality experienced by Indonesian Muslims.⁸⁴

As Azra stated, democracy is not a one hundred percent perfect system without any flaws. However, Azra still believes that democracy is still the best system, at least democracy is the system of government that has the least harm compared to authoritarianism, military, and theocracy.⁸⁵

Democracy has advantages and disadvantages. Democracy opens up space for political freedom and political participation of its people, but that freedom sometimes goes too far. Because it exceeds the limits or goals that have been determined, democracy is often blamed conceptually. According to Jusuf Kalla as quoted by Azra, it is not democracy that is wrong, but the system and procedures have failed to achieve the goal of improving the welfare of the people. In the context of Indonesia, Azra said that our democracy is still focused on procedural democracy, not much touching on substantive democracy.⁸⁶

In the socio-cultural context, democracy in Indonesia is smoother than in the Middle East. Indonesia has more opportunities than the West to conduct diplomacy and mediate Arab and Middle Eastern nations in promoting democracy. Azra said there are three factors that influence it.⁸⁷

First, the political system, structure, and culture of Indonesia have had a democratic basis since the founding of the Indonesian nation.

⁸³ Monte Selvanus Luigi, Widi Astuti, and Yannah Akhras, *Hari Ini Kita Bela Al-Qur'an: Semoga Kelak Al-Quran Membela Kita*, ed. Yasir (Jakarta Timur: Istanbul, 2017).

⁸⁴ M. Dani Sulisty, *Mengetuk Pintu Langit: Kesaksian Peserta Aksi 411 & 212*, ed. Lis Sutinah, Cet. 1 (Jakarta: Visimedia, 2017); HR. Ali Badri Zaini, *Tanda-Tanda Kekuasaan Allah pada Aksi Bela Islam: Mengetuk Pintu Langit Memanggil Para Malaikat*, Cetakan Pertama (Depok: PT Melvana Media Indonesia, 2017); Kurnia and Syahputra, *Aksi Bela Islam 212*; Luigi, Astuti, and Akhras, *Hari Ini Kita Bela Al-Qur'an*.

⁸⁵ Azyumardi Azra, *Transformasi Politik Islam: Radikalisme, Khilafatisme, dan Demokrasi*, Edisi pertama, cetakan ke-1 (Jakarta: Prenadamedia Group bekerja sama Pusat Pengkajian Islam dan Masyarakat (PPIM) UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, 2016), 276–79.

⁸⁶ Azra, 277.

⁸⁷ Azra, 268–72.

During the Old Order, guided democracy was implemented, although it became a cover for Soekarno's authoritarianism. The New Order implemented Pancasila democracy with only three parties, thus almost closing the space for state freedom. However, Indonesia is still considered to have a democratic cultural basis compared to most Arab countries that do not have and are weak in democratic cultural and political infrastructure.

Second, a very diverse civil society forms groups or organizations based on religion, profession, and other interests. Groups that gather in a community organization or simply an association become a kind of social glue so that society is protected from disintegration that can arise from political, religious, tribal, and ethnic sectarianism. This is not found in Arab or Middle Eastern societies that prioritize and are strong in their tribes. It is not uncommon for tensions to occur in the name of defending the honor of the clan and extended family. In addition, historically the roots of authoritarianism have been strengthened by being preceded by a theocratic system that will only strengthen independent civil society. Third, Islam *wasatīyah* is a form of Islam practiced by the Indonesian people, the majority of whom do not like various forms of extremism, both right-wing and left-wing. Azra even emphasized that the future of Islam is nothing but Islam *wasatīyah*, not hard-line, rigid, or fierce Islam. Islam *wasatīyah* is a middle path that is moderate, inclusive, and tolerant.⁸⁸ Indeed, Islam in Indonesia is marked by differences in schools of thought or schools of thought in fiqh, kalam, and tasawuf. It is not uncommon for differences (*khilâfīyah*) to trigger debates, but only at the level of the branches of the issue (*furū'iyah*) so as not to disrupt the fundamental stability. The majority of Indonesian Muslims follow the fiqh school of thought choosing one of the four Imams (Hanafi, Maliki, Syafi'i, and Hanbali). In the field of theology or kalam only *ahlu as-sunnah wa al-jamâ'ah* from Ash'arî or Al-Mâturîdî. In the field of tasawuf and tarekat, they adhere to the teachings of Imam Al-Gazâlî or Imam Junaid Al-Bagdâdî. If there are differences, they are considered a minority and not Indonesian Muslims. Muslim figures accept Pancasila as the ideology of the nation and state. Pancasila as a joint agreement (*kalimatun sawâ*) is considered the final decision for the benefit of the nation.⁸⁹ Mohammad Natsir (1908-1993), one of the most enthusiastic Muslim scholars and politicians in voicing Islam as the state ideology, as quoted by Deliar

⁸⁸ Azra, *Relevansi Islam Wasathiyah*, ix-x.

⁸⁹ El-Ansary et al., *Kata Bersama*.

Noer, once stated that a Muslim is not prohibited from imitating “a system used by non-Muslims as long as this system does not conflict with Islamic teachings.” Natsir also expressed that “in the recognition of the Quran, Pancasila will thrive. One with the other does not conflict but is not identical (the same).”⁹⁰ This means that Natsir’s view of Pancasila in relation to the interpretation of the Qur’an can be understood as a form of recognition of the universal values contained in Pancasila. However, it needs to be explained that there is a fundamental difference between ideology and religion. According to Kuntowijoyo⁹¹, ideology is a secular force and ideology without religion will cause chaos. Thus, Pancasila, emphasized by Kuntowijoyo, is not secular, but also not a religion.

When compared with the opinion of K.H. Masjkur, a Nahdlatul Ulama figure in the Constituent Assembly, that Islam and Pancasila both desire: a prosperous and happy country; a democratic government; anti-capitalism and imperialism; a basic family economic life; and upholding morals in family life, society, and in wider social interactions. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri (1919-1986), another NU figure who gave a speech at the Constituent Assembly session, said that Pancasila still has many weaknesses because it does not cover the five primary benefits (*darûriyyât khamis*), namely maintaining and preserving religion, life, mind, household, and property. Although they did not reject it explicitly, according to Noer, the views of these two NU figures still require Islam to be the state ideology because Islam has detailed state legal systems and family laws.⁹²

The magnanimity and the open-mindedness of the Islamic figures in accepting Pancasila as the final decision of the state ideology reflects a noble attitude in moderate religion. Their basis is that the greater and more general welfare must be prioritized over the welfare that only represents a portion of the community in this newly established unitary state. The price of unity is higher than division. If the intrigue of division begins to appear, then it must be prioritized to handle and resolve the problem. Although during the struggle in the Constituent Assembly sessions they insisted on fighting for Islam as the state ideology, the basic awareness of the Islamic figures clearly did not disappear that Indonesia was independent by the grace of Almighty Allah. The Islamic figures did not forget how the fatwa of the jihad

⁹⁰ Deliar Noer, *Partai Islam Di Pentas Nasional: Kisah Dan Analisis Perkembangan Politik Indonesia 1945-1965*, Cetakan II (Bandung: Penerbit Mizan, 2000), 137, 140.

⁹¹ *Identitas Politik Umat Islam* (Yogyakarta: IRCiSoD, 2018), 103–4.

⁹² Noer, *Partai Islam*, 152–53.

resolution of K.H. Hasyim Asy'ari was to prove that unity is a non-negotiable price that must be fought for. Islamic figures were not selfish in implementing sharia. In fact, accepting Pancasila is also part of the sharia, namely implementing the teachings (rules) of public interest about prioritizing rejecting harm rather than achieving harm (*dar'u al-mafâsid muqaddamun 'alâ jalbi al-mașâlih*). Once again, Islamic figures display a noble attitude of tolerance as an example for the nation. Aware of the plurality of the Indonesian nation, tolerance is public interest itself.⁹³

Public interest as a concept that is able to absorb the development of the times, social dynamics, culture, and politics without having to lose the “spirit” of religion. The normative argument that rejects public interest is “there is no public interest when it contradicts the main arguments of the Qur'an and Hadith.” This argument has been refuted by itself above, it has been conveyed that Islamic figures view that none of the Pancasila principles contradict Islamic teachings. On the contrary, there is not a single Islamic teaching that contradicts Pancasila. Even the first principle of Pancasila which is considered the most sensitive, Islamic figures accept it as part of the value of monotheism, even after the seven legendary words were removed.⁹⁴

The journey of Pancasila as a state ideology from the old order to the post-reformation era was not always smooth. Challenges came alternately and perhaps simultaneously from extreme right and extreme left groups. The Islamic State of Indonesia (NII) founded by R.M. Kartosuwiryo in Java which was also followed by the Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia (PRRI) in Sumatra or the Universal People's Struggle (Permesta) in Sulawesi and DI/TII in South Sulawesi made other than Pancasila an ideology. The communist rebellion in Indonesia in Madiun in 1948 and the September 30, 1965 Movement (G30S/PKI) challenged Pancasila to duel with socialist-communist ideology. During the New Order, some ex-Masyumi figures who had been banned by Soekarno became more radical by establishing the Indonesian Islamic Propagation Council (DDII) under the leadership of Natsir at the beginning of Soeharto's reign. The birth of DDII was seen as a trigger for the birth of radical

⁹³ Syamsun Niam, Imam Fuadi, and Muhammad Ridho, *Pancasila Vis A Vis Islam: Pandangan Tokoh Muslim Terhadap Upaya De-Ideologisasi Pancasila Dan Implikasinya Dalam Kehidupan Kebangsaan Di Indonesia* (Tulungagung: Kurnia Kalam Semesta & IAIN Tulungagung, 2018).

⁹⁴ Kuntowijoyo, *Identitas Politik*, 105; Niam, Fuadi, and Ridho, *Pancasila Vis A Vis Islam*, 29.

political and propagation movements in Indonesia. In the 1980s, the Wahabi and Ikhwanul Muslimin groups and ideologies, as well as the transnational ideology of Hizbur Tahrir, also participated in carrying out propaganda to purify Islamic teachings, anti-American, anti-Jewish, entering Indonesia. The group challenged the authority of Pancasila by saying that Pancasila was a product of infidels (tâghût) that must be rejected. The label of infidel was easily attached to other Muslims who opposed it.⁹⁵

After the Reformation, Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI), Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI), Jamaah Islamiyah, Laskar Jihad, Front Pembela Islam (FPI), and others were established, proclaiming Islam as the state ideology. They carried out bomb terror and actions in the name of jihad against infidelity. Brainwashing the suicide bombers' "brides" with the promise of heavenly angels. The group carries a transnational ideology, the caliphate, to replace the democratic ideology of Pancasila. Their subjects are young people who have high religious enthusiasm, but lack knowledge and understanding of their religion.⁹⁶ Propaganda through the internet and social media is being carried out intensively. The instant nature of the internet coupled with its negative values causes the short fuse to burn, eroding the joints of tolerance, "growing grass and weeds in the garden of knowledge."⁹⁷

Pancasila is under ideological threat from the Middle East. The entry of transnational Islamic movements in Indonesia is a threat to the sovereignty of the Republic of Indonesia. The most serious threat is to their worldview on the concept of state and nation. Pancasila is considered a product that is not Islamic and contradicts religion. In fact, it is clear, as stated by the freedom fighters and during the national revolution, the figures acknowledged that Pancasila is a collective memory squeezed from the noble values of Indonesian culture and contains universal values. Although not the result of religious thought, Pancasila is recognized as not contradicting Islam, in fact Islam is not contradicting Pancasila. This will not be found in the mindset of

⁹⁵ Haidar Bagir, *Islam Tuhan Islam Manusia Agama Dan Spiritualitas Di Zaman Kacau* (Bandung: Mizan, 2017), 52–53.

⁹⁶ Ihsan Ali-Fauzi and Samsu Rizal Panggabean, eds., *Politik Identitas Dan Masa Depan Pluralisme Kita* (Jakarta - Yogyakarta: PUSAD Paramadina dan MPRK-UGM, 2010), 21–26; Niam, Fuadi, and Ridho, *Pancasila Vis A Vis Islam*, 56–57.

⁹⁷ Tom Nichols, *Matinya Kepakaran The Death of Expertise: Perlawanan Terhadap Pengetahuan Yang Telah Mapan Dan Mudaratnya*, ed. Andya Primanda and Avicenna Raksa Santana, trans. Ruth Meigi P., Cetakan Keenam (Jakarta: Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia (KGP), 2022), 135.

adherents of ideologies imported from the Middle East. They also reject democracy simply because it is practiced by the West. Everything that smells of the West is automatically rejected. The Khilafah that was campaigned for was accepted because, from the term, it comes from Arabic. This is in contrast to Islam that entered and developed in Indonesia. Islam entered Indonesia in an inclusive manner, accepting local culture and noble values that already existed in the archipelago. If there is a culture or tradition that is considered not in accordance with Islam, the Nusantara scholars do not label it *bia'ah* let alone infidel. If the culture is still at the level of *mu'âmalah* and is not related to the issue of faith, the label of infidel is never accused of the Indonesian Muslim community. Subtle ways full of tolerance and justice are taken in straightening out the issue of faith that is considered not in accordance with Islam. This attitude will not be found from adherents of Middle Eastern ideology. Clearly, this threatens the sovereignty, unity, and integrity of the nation.⁹⁸

The Islamic group began to enter and participate in the political arena with, of course, identity politics as its mainstay. According to Ahmad Syafii Maarif, identity politics was born triggered by the a-historical understanding of Muslims about the classical concept of *dâr al-islâm* and *dâr al-ḥarb*. For the Salafi-jihadi group, Europe and the West are infidels who must be fought against *dâr al-ḥarb*. In the context of modern Indonesia, the emergence of the Salafî ideology is anti-democratic and anti-nationalism. Its demands are the same: the implementation of Islamic law in national life. The background to its birth is not far away: discrimination against Islam. The background to the birth of the FPI, for example, is said that Muslims have become victims of discrimination, violence, and oppression in several regions of Indonesia (Aceh, Lampung, Tanjung Priok, Madura, and others) the perpetrators were not revealed and did not receive justice. Syafii Maarif also noted that radicalism is not the same as terrorism. It's just that radicalism that is not controlled by common sense has a high potential to become terrorism.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ M. Mujibuddin, *Radikalisme, Terorisme, Dan Islamisme*, Cetakan pertama (Banguntapan, Yogyakarta: IRCiSoD, 2022), 68–71, 99–102.

⁹⁹ Ali-Fauzi and Panggabean, *Politik Identitas*, 3–30, 122–23.

Conclusion

Considering the preceding explanation and discussion, the following conclusion can be drawn. Initially, the social, political, economic environment, religious organization affiliation, regional and national electoral political conditions exert a significant impact on the development of a religious moderation model in a certain area. Moreover, the historical events of religious movements that took place in a certain area played a significant role in influencing the paradigm of religious moderation and served as the theoretical foundation for practice of their faith. Attitudes characterized by extreme interpretations of religious scriptures have also played a role in the emergence of intolerant and aggressive behaviors. Furthermore, the internet offers a vast extent of media accessibility through social media and electronic mass media, which disseminate diverse religious content. The real-time and fast nature of online media facilitates swift social transformation, therefore influencing individuals' attitudes towards their religious beliefs and their expression of such beliefs in public domains. Limitations in exerting control over information acquired from the media also influence the paradigm of understanding, execution, and religious behavior. Thirdly, the challenge of religious authorities and clergy in public areas also helps to the emergence of a new dominant force in religious moderation. This change in the primary participants in religious discourse is instigated by the diminishing influence of prominent religious personalities and institutions in advocating for religious moderation.

Furthermore, the inadequate regulation of society and government in handling the cultural opposition to moderate principles that are already ingrained in the local culture. Investigation of a certain non-mainstream group typically encounters conflicts with groups that are regarded as mainstream. NU and Muhammadiyah should assume a more proactive role in establishing a paradigm of religious moderation within a given region. It is imperative for the Ministry of Religion and moderate groups like NU and Muhammadiyah to assume responsibility for the function of social media and news media in advancing religious moderation. Thus far, social media has been inundated with Islamic instructional material that fosters radicalism, posing a considerable threat to the Republic of Indonesia. Study conducted using such a paradigm is susceptible to the rationalization or categorization of specific Islamic factions, resulting in a significant level of opposition or even rejection faced by researchers in the given

domain. Future study should include the participation of the local government and establish partnerships with campuses outside of Islamic Religious Colleges.

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Ethical Considerations

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