PORTRAITS OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION IN THE SALAF PESANTREN EDUCATION SYSTEM IN INDONESIA

Lailiyatul Azizah
Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia
Email: azizahlailiyatul@gmail.com

Abstract

In the history of the development of Islam, many faces of Islam have been tainted by understandings that are not actually from the teachings of Islam itself. Radicalism, liberalism, and extremism have created intolerance and terrorism in the religion. The existence of Islam as a wasaṭiyah religion is an answer to the phenomena that occur in Islam as stated in the al-Qur'ān. Due to these waves of understandings, religious institutions or even the country were unable to position themselves as moderate institutions. Salaf pesantren are considered to be the only institutions that represent religious moderation in the Islamic revival century in Indonesia. The presence of the salaf pesantren is considered as a forum for negotiating Islamic identity as a wasaṭ wa i'tidāl religion and displays a polite and peaceful Islamic figure, by offering a salafiyah curriculum and kiai as the main actors in the management of the pesantren, as well as the role of pesantren graduates in social, religious and patriotic ontexts that are proven to carry a mission and moderate values that can bring Indonesian Islam to become a peripheral.

Keywords: Religious Moderation, Salaf Pesantren, Wasaṭiyah, Islamic Education.

Abstrak

Dalam sejarah perkembangan Islam, tidak sedikit wajah Islam dinodai oleh paham yang sebenarnya bukan dari ajaran Islam itu sendiri. Radikalisme, liberalisme, dan ektrimisme telah melahirkan intoleran dan terorisme dalam beragama. Keberadaan Islam sebagai agama yang *wasaṭiyah* merupakan jawaban atas fenomena yang terjadi pada Islam sebagaimana yang tercantum di dalam al-Qur'ān. Atas gelombang paham tersebut, institusi keagamaan atau bahkan negara sekalipun pun tidak mampu menempatkan dirinya sebagai intitusi yang moderat. Pesantren salaf dianggap sebagai satu-satunya

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institusi yang merepresentasikan moderasi beragama dalam abad *revival* Islam di Indonesia. Hadirnya pesantren salaf dianggap sebagai wadah negosiasi identitas Islam sebagai agama yang *wasaṭ wa i'tidāl* dan menampilkan sosok Islam yang santun dan damai, dengan menawarkan kurikulum *salafiyah* dan *kiai* sebagai aktor utama dalam pengelolaan pesantren, serta peran lulusan pesantren dalam percaturan konteks bermasyarakat, beragama, dan bernegara yang terbukti membawa misi dan nilai-nilai moderat yang mampu membawa Islam Indonesia menjadi *peripheral*.

Kata Kunci: Moderasi Beragama, Pesantren Salaf, Wasaṭiyah, Pendidikan Islam.

A. Introduction

Since long time ago, Islam has existed as a religion that brings peace[1]. Its existence which covers various fields and aspects of life such as the relationship with His god (*ḥabl min Allāh*) and between human beings (*ḥabl min al-Nās*). However, several Islamic groups desecrate this peaceful religion by representing it as a radical religion[2] and terrorists[3]. Even so, extreme action in religion is a reality that is often found in the historical series of development of Muslims[4], so that wars in the name of "religion" are always repeated in history[5]. Therefore, a-middle-path (*wasaṭ*) face of Islam is needed to bridge the challenges of Islam in this era of globalization[6].

Islam has presented the argument that calls for being in the middle (*i'tidāl* or moderation) and avoiding transgressing attitudes. In the holy book al-Qur'ān, moderation is identified with 2 (two) words namely *'adl*, *al-wasṭ*, and *al-mīzān*

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[1] Juan Cole, "Peace in Islam, Islam in Peace," *Journal of Islamic and Muslim Studies* 2, no. 1 (2017): 109–12, https://doi.org/10.2979/jims.2.1.10.

[2] Amra Sabic-El-Rayess, "Epistemological Shifts in Knowledge and Education in Islam: A New Perspective on the Emergence of Radicalization Amongst Muslims," *International Journal of Educational Development* 73 (March 1, 2020): 102148, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2019.102148.

[3] Mark A. Heller, "Islam and Terrorism:: A Futile Debate" (Institute for National Security Studies, 2015), JSTOR, https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep08446.

[4] Mohammad Hashim Kamali, "Extremism , Terrorism and Islam : Historical and Contemporary Perspectives," *Islam and Civilisational Renewal* 274, no. 2624 (April 2015): 1–18, https://doi.org/10.12816/0019163; Abiodun Alao, "Islamic Radicalisation and Violent Extremism in Nigeria," *Conflict, Security & Development* 13, no. 2 (May 1, 2013): 127–47, https://doi.org/10.1080/14678802.2013.796205.

[5] Mehmet Gurses, "War and Religion," in *Anatomy of a Civil War*, Sociopolitical Impacts of the Kurdish Conflict in Turkey (University of Michigan Press, 2018), 93–112, https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvh4zj0p.9.

[6] Muhammad Adil Iqbal and Shaikh Abdul Mabud, "Challenge of Globalisation to the Muslim Ummah: Religious Extremism and the Need for Middle Path (Wasat)," *Strategic Studies* 39, no. 3 (2019): 73–88, https://doi.org/10.2307/48544311.

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which have the same meaning, namely "middle" which can be interpreted that Islam is a religion that has a middle attitude; neither harsh, nor weak, but balanced.[7] Lots of religious institutions and even countries are unable to position themselves as moderate institutions.[8] In the Indonesian context, there is an institution that is considered a prototype of religious moderation in the development period of Islamic civilization in Indonesia, namely the salaf pesantren.

The Salaf Pesantren have Islamic scientific buildings that focus on "*ngaji*", the learning model using turāth (The Yellow Book or *Kitab Kuning*), as a characteristic of the pesantren as stated by Zamachsari Dhofier[9] and Martin van Bruinessen[10]. The education system carried out in pesantren is a traditional learning system (salaf) which has been going on for hundreds of years which has been preserved until today. If we examine the contents of the books being taught, they provide understandings and practices to the students of the importance of being moderate (moderation) in various matters. Also in religious activities, Islamic boarding schools instil the values of moderation education in religion in activities such as *pengajian*, *selametan*[11], *istighāthah*, and others.

This paper is based on logical reasoning[12] that something Islamic basically teaches religious moderation, because Islam is a religion that is *Rahmaṯ lil 'Ālamīn*. So it is very appropriate if the pesantren is an institution that teaches religious moderation to students and society. A question in people's minds is why some Muslims sometimes display the face of radicals, liberals, and even terrorist

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[7] Nurcholish Madjid, "Islam Keindonesiaan Dan Kemodernan," *Bandung: Mizan*, 2013.

[8] Murat Somer, "Moderation of Religious and Secular Politics, a Country's 'Centre' and Democratization," *Democratization* 21, no. 2 (February 23, 2014): 244–67, https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2012.732069; Ibrahim Ibrahim, Zaenuddin Hudi Prasojo, and S. Sulaiman, "Preventing Radicalism: Islamic Moderation and Revitalization in the Border," *Wawasan: Jurnal Ilmiah Agama Dan Sosial Budaya* 4, no. 1 (July 30, 2019): 1–15, https://doi.org/10.15575/jw.v4i1.4400.

[9] Zamakhsyari Dhofier, "The Pesantren Tradition: A Study of the Role of the Kyai in the Maintenance of the Traditional Ideology of Islam in Java," 1980, https://doi.org/10.25911/5d74e363a6ded; Zamakhsyari Dhofier, *Tradisi Pesantren: Studi Tentang Pandangan Hidup Kyai* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1982).

[10] Martin van Bruinessen, "Kitab Kuning, Pesantren Dan Tarekat: Tradisi-Tradisi Islam Di Indonesia," *Bandung: Mizan* 17 (1995).

[11] Jochem van den Boogert, "The Role of Slametan in the Discourse on Javanese Islam," *Indonesia and the Malay World* 45, no. 133 (September 2, 2017): 352–72, https://doi.org/10.1080/13639811.2017.1345166.

[12] Musa Akrami, "From Logic in Islam to Islamic Logic," *Logica Universalis* 11, no. 1 (March 1, 2017): 61–83, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11787-017-0158-3.

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extremists. Schwedler (2011) in an inclusion-moderate study also questioned why people who present "Islamists" tend to have harsh, unfriendly, and some exclusionary understandings. Even conflicts in several developing countries that have resulted in war are caused by elements of terrorism that are intentionally installed to worsen the image of Islam, as Schwartz's findings (2011)[13].

Schwedler's hypothesis is in line with several entities that interpret the face of Islam in this way. Müller (2017) finds the involvement of Islamic political institutions initiated by Muslims in Germany to erase the negative stigma of Islam that is extremist in various sectors of government[14]. Negative stereotypes about Islam can be seen in Switzerland, where Islam is seen as an exclusive and extremist religion so that several public entities such as government, private institutions, and educational institutions with Islamic nuances will be marginalized. However, Yendell's research in 2020 found that not all Islamic public entities are viewed negatively by Swiss society. Based on his findings, those with spiritual attitudes who put humanity first are seen as closer and accepted by society than those who do not.[15]

This research was conducted to provide an understanding on the assumption of pesantren as a portrait of an institution that teaches religious moderation through its salaf education system that has been preserved and preserved for centuries. Moderate Islamic values instilled in students and adaptive to the times is a unique phenomenon that is interesting to study, especially now that Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia are in a process of development and progress that combines religious knowledge with general sciences, and finally, pesantren is the only educational institution that continues to maintain the value of moderation in religion and socializing in the society.

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[13] Stephen Schwartz, "The Terrorist War against Islam: Clarifying Academic Confusions," *Academic Questions* 24, no. 1 (March 1, 2011): 59–73, https://doi.org/10.1007/s12129-010-9204-9.

[14] Tobias Müller, "Engaging 'Moderates' Against 'Extremists' in German Politics on Islam," *The Review of Faith & International Affairs* 15, no. 2 (April 3, 2017): 55–65, https://doi.org/10.1080/15570274.2017.1329398.

[15] Alexander Yendell and Stefan Huber, "Negative Views of Islam in Switzerland with Special Regard to Religiosity as an Explanatory Factor," *Zeitschrift Für Religion, Gesellschaft Und Politik* 4, no. 1 (May 1, 2020): 81–103, https://doi.org/10.1007/s41682-020-00053-x.

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B. Method

The method used in writing this article is in the form of a *literature review* or based on literature review, which is a study with a tendency to carry out text. The stages of compiling this article begin with collecting data by reading, understanding and analyzing the required reference sources according to the theme of the portraits of religious moderation in the salaf pesantren education system in Indonesia

C. Result and Discussion

1) *Al-Tawassuṭ wa-l I'tidāl:* Moderate Concepts in Pesantren Education

The concept of diverse moderation in the Qur'ān which is commonly referred to in moderate Islamic conversations is QS. Al-Baqarah: 143; "And likewise (also) We have made you umma wasaṭ so that you become witnesses of (actions) humans ...". Afsaruddin (2009) in his writing categorizes *Umma wasaṭ* from the commentators who provide different interpretations of this term[16]. *First*, *umma wasaṭ* means a just person or a just society entity. This is the meaning put forward by classical interpreters, such as Mujahid b. Jabr (d. 104/722) and Ibn 'Abbas (d. 68/687). By this definition, the status of umma wasaṭ refers to the pesantren's community being represented as a religious institution that upholds justice in this world. The values of justice are taught in the pesantren, like all *santri* are treated equally regardless of whether it is santris from among the common people, from the Kiai (*gus*), or the descendants of *habāib* (*yik*). The enforcement of these rules and treatments is evident in the reward and punishment system for all santri without "pilih kasih" or exception.[17]

Second, some mufassir such as al-Tabari (d. 310/923) and al-Wahidi (d. 468/1076) see that the term *umma wasaṭ* shows that Islam is the middle religion in this context which means a moderate or balanced entity, neither too ascetic nor too legalistic, neither too radical nor too liberal and extreme; not rely on two

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[16] Asma Afsaruddin, "The Hermeneutics of Inter-Faith Relations: Retrieving Moderation and Pluralism as Universal Principles in Qur'anic Exegeses," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 37, no. 2 (2009): 331–54, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9795.2009.00389.x.

[17] Sofyan Sauri, Nunung Nursyamsiah, and Yayan Nurbayan, "A Critique of Local Wisdom Values in Indonesia's Pesantren.," *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities*, no. Vol. 26 (T) Mar. 2018 (2018).

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extremes: excess and deficiency (*al-ghuluw wa-l taqsīr*). The position of Islam as the "middle religion" makes Islam a religion that carries *wasaṭiyah*.

Third, *umma wasaṭ* is the "best people". This is the interpretation of mufassir such as al Zamakhshari (d. 538/1143) and Ibn Kathir (d. 774/1373). This meaning is closely related to the second one but emphasizes that wasaṭ means "centre", "funnel", "role model" or "chosen". A *wasaṭ* society is those who excel not only because a just society can avoid excesses, but also because they have a central position, as the Prophet Muhammad SAW said: "*khair al-umūr ausaṭuhā*" (the best things are born out of or are always in the middle). This meaning is often assumed that "the middle one" is the best. The term *umma wasaṭ* is used to show that Islam is a portrait of Allah's perfect religion for all beings on Earth.

2) Adoption of NU to Moderate Islam

The moderate Islamic discourse on large mass organizations such as NU is a dispute. NU is very excited to adopt this idea and even multiplies itself as a representative of Moderate Islam. Although this is not completely justified because NU is more oriented towards political opportunism[18]. Mark R. Woodward find the big reasons that are used based on these accusations. *First*, the institution for ruling on religious matters Baḥt al-Masāil at the end of the Dutch colonial rule in Indonesia issued a controversial *fatwā* which decreed the defence of the Netherlands from the Japanese aggression. A polemic decision which gave the fact that the Dutch gave freedom to Muslims to practice their religion even though the colonial government had colonized Indonesia[19]. Second, Nakamura and Siddique (2001) in 1945-1966 during the Old Order era, NU was the only party that was allied with the Communist Party with Soekarno supporting the ideology of Nasakom (Nationalism, Religion and Communism) although this accusation

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[18] Gregory Fealy, "Divided Majority: Limits of Indonesian Political Islam" (United Kingdom: Routledge Curzon, 2003), https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/handle/1885/88056; Gregory Fealy, "The Political Contigency of Reform-Mindedness in Indonesia's Nahdlatul Ulama: Interest Politics and the Khittah" (United Kingdom: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2007), https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/handle/1885/30218.
[19] Mark R. Woodward and Arizona State University, eds., *Toward a New Paradigm: Recent Developments in Indonesian Islamic Thought*, Program for Southeast Asian Studies (Tempe, Ariz: Arizona State University, Program for Southeast Asian Studies, 1996).

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was denied by Gus Dur (KH . Abdurrahman Wahid) that NU is a party based on fiqḥ with the pure goal of fiqḥ[20].

Another accusation is that NU's moderate attitude was pointed out by several groups of extreme right Muslim activists carrying missions from the West, especially American donor agencies[21]. This accusation reinforces that the principle of moderation is an opportunistic attitude to flexible Western ideals in programs of pluralism, tolerance, human rights, democracy and gender equality[22]. Even so, NU as one of the Islamic organizations in this era has received full trust in the hearts of the people and the government. The moderate direction has brought NU as the best choice for the emergence of Islamic mass organizations that tend to be more radical, intolerant and exclusive.

This mass organization exclusively has a strong jargon claiming to be an Aswaja (short for Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah) mass organization and is often referred to as Sunni. This designation is a characteristic inherent in NU, although several mass organizations also claim to be Aswaja such as MMI (*Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia* - Indonesian Mujahidin Council) dan FPI (*Front Pembela Islam* - Islamic Defenders Front)[23]. NU has a very well-known fundamental Aswaja doctrinal principle called *al-usūs al-Thalātha fī I'tiqādi ahl al-Sunna wa al-Jamā'a* by following the theology of al-Ash'ari and al-Maturidi, adopting one of the four madhāhib (Hanafite, Malikite, Shafi'ite, and Hanbalite), its fiqḥ follows Shafi'ite, its following sufism al-Ghazali and al-Baghdadi.

3) Religious Moderation Curriculum in Pesantren

The perspective of extremism arises as a result of incompleteness in understanding religious teachings. Those who are extreme tend to understand textually so that they are trapped in the puddle of fanatical groups from one perspective. Even in the findings of Asif, et.al. (2020), the attitude of a group's

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[20] Abdurrahman Wahid, "The Nahdlatul Ulama and Islam in Present Day Indonesia," *Civil Society in Southeast Asia*, 1986, 175–86.

[21] Amy L. Freedman, "Civil Society, Moderate Islam, and Politics in Indonesia and Malaysia," *Journal of Civil Society* 5, no. 2 (September 1, 2009): 107–27, https://doi.org/10.1080/17448680903154907.

[22] Andrew Higgins, "As Indonesia Debates Islam's Role, US Stays Out," *The Washington Post* 25 (2009); "Strategi AS Habisi Kelompok Muslim Fundamentalis," accessed February 9, 2021, http://www.voa-islam.com/read/intelligent/2011/01/01/13046/strategi-as-habisi-kelompok-muslim-fundamentalis/;

[23] Imam Baehaqi, *Kontroversi Aswaja: Aula Perdebatan dan Reinterpretasi* (Yogyakarta: Lkis Pelangi Aksara, 2000), 174–78.

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sentiments towards religious teachings which causes them to take an extremist position is due to the textual understanding of religion through information from social media which is continuously "boomed" to brainwash several people. Tines' findings (2019)[24] and Farnen (2014)[25] in line with Asif, terrorism propaganda is mostly caused by the *letterlijk* understanding of several community groups on the phenomena that arise from textual social media.

The cause of this case phenomenon is due to the superficiality of information and the relatively low level of education of the Indonesian people. Also, economic factors and uncertain political stability are the causes of society to accuse certain parties (such as state officials and religious organizations) of not being able to manage the state and society, resulting in a "motion of no confidence" which causes the seeds of terrorism to emerge.

The presence of the salaf pesantren is pointed out as a means of negotiating the identity of Islam as a religion *wasaṭ wa i'tidāl* and displays a polite and peaceful Islamic figure. So many people imitate the model and method of Islamic boarding schools in teaching Islamic moderation which is framed by a series of worship, independence, and simplicity originating from al-Qur'ān, al-Ḥadīth, and the interpretation of the results of ijtihad by previous' ulamās through salaf books composed by these 'ulamās[26].

The pesantren curriculum uses the *salafiyah* system (or the traditional curriculum of the salaf 'ulamā'). Santris at the pesantren are required to take part in the lessons presented by the *mashāyikh* or *ustādh* using the *sorogan* and *bandongan* learning methods[27], which follows salaf tradition by teaching classical

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[24] Judith Tinnes, "Bibliography: Terrorism and the Media (Including the Internet)," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 13, no. 2 (2019): 79–141.

[25] Russell F. Farnen, "Media and Terrorists," in *E-Political Socialization, the Press and Politics*, ed. Russell F. Farnen et al., The Media and Government in the USA, Europe and China (Peter Lang AG, 2014), 251–302, https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv2t4csq.16.

[26] Dhofier, "The Pesantren Tradition."

[27] A. G. Muhaimin, "The Transmission of Religious Traditions: The Role of Pesantren," in *The Islamic Traditions of Cirebon*, Ibadat and Adat Among Javanese Muslims (ANU Press, 2006), 203–46, https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt2jbkqk.13; Endang Turmudi, "Kiai and the Pesantren," in *Struggling for the Umma*, Changing Leadership Roles of Kiai in Jombang, East Java (ANU Press, 2006), 21–42, https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt2jbk2d.9; Florian Pohl, "Islamic Education and Civil Society: Reflections on the Pesantren Tradition in Contemporary Indonesia," *Comparative Education Review* 50, no. 3 (August 1, 2006): 389–409, https://doi.org/10.1086/503882; Ronald A. Lukens-Bull, "Two Sides of the Same Coin: Modernity and Tradition in Islamic Education in Indonesia," *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 32, no. 3 (2001): 350–72; M. Dawam Rahardjo,

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books[28]. The time spent by students in learning usually uses *istiwa'*[29] time-with this time the students attend all the activities of the boarding school according to the schedule set by the pesantren.

viewed from the curriculum pattern in pesantren, this institution is a prototype for anti-radicalism education by instilling *wasaṭiyah* values in applying the religion[30], although there are several pesantren that are categorized as "Islamist"[31]. Salaf Islamic boarding schools combine moderate Islamic learning materials that uphold the value of the purity of the turāth book, such as in the field of fiqḥ (kitab *Fatḥ al-Qarib* or *Taqrib*), then the upper-level books like *Fatḥ al-Mu'in*, small kitab like Safinah, and others. For example, the Aqidah field refers to the book of *'Aqīdah al-'Awwām*, *'Arba'īn fī Uṣūl al-Dīn*, and others. The field of tafsir refers to the book of Tafsir *Al-Jalālain*, Tafsir *Ali al-Ṣabuni*, Tafsir *al-Munīr*, Tafsir *Ibnu Kathīr*, Tafsir *al-Ibrīz*, and others. The field of akhlak or morality refers to the book of *Ta'līm al-Muta'allim*, *'Uqūd al-Lujain*, and others.

With the application of this curriculum model, pesantrens are the vanguards that prevents the society from radicalism, extremism, to terrorism. Moderation is not only shown by "welas asih" towards fellow Muslims, but also by high tolerance because Islam teaches good values for the benefit of the entire universe (*Rahmaṯ lil 'Ālamīn*).

4) Implementation of Religious Moderation in Pesantren

Pesantren is the basis for the internalization of moderatism as mentioned in the al-Qur'ān (*umma wasaṭ*). This wasaṭiyah paradigm differentiates Islam from other religions and also groups that claim to be Muslim but are not in line with what is categorized by the al-Qur'ān. This attitude must be a reflection of Muslims

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"The Life of Santri Youth: A View from the Pesantren Window at Pabelan," *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia* 1, no. 1 (1986): 32–56.

[28] *Islam in Indonesia: Contrasting Images and Interpretations* (Amsterdam University Press, 2013), https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt46mwqt.

[29] Istiwā' time is the prayer time according to Islam. Usually a difference of 15 minutes (more than 15 minutes or less than 15 minutes). See in Qaiser Shahzad, "Ibn 'Arabī's Theory of Divine Roots and the Question of God and Ten Categories," *Islamic Studies* 51, no. 4 (2012): 445–59.

[30] Ahmad Najib Burhani, "Al-Tawassuṭ Wa-l I'tidāl: The NU and Moderatism in Indonesian Islam," *Asian Journal of Social Science* 40, no. 5/6 (2012): 564–81.

[31] Martin van Bruinessen, "Traditionalist and Islamist Pesantrens in Contemporary Indonesia," in *The Madrasa in Asia*, ed. Martin van Bruinessen, Farish A. Noor, and Yoginder Sikand, Political Activism and Transnational Linkages (Amsterdam University Press, 2008), 217–46, https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt46n10w.12.

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in the midst of the onslaught of "slander" at the end of time which deliberately destroys Islam from within. Pesantren have become miniature implementers of institutions that teach religious moderation in Indonesia, which has proven to be *umma wasaṭ*.

Pesantren as educational institutions with understanding *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah* has guaranteed that all students in the pesantren have been shaped with religious knowledge that teaches moderate attitudes. Another example of implementation is to exemplify the attitudes and morals of the kiai and *ustādh* as moderate caregivers and teachers. Santri imitate all the actions of kiai and ustādh as a reflection of morals and blessings of knowledge. The moderate attitude in religion is exemplified by the example of being tolerant with society[32]. This attitude will not be able to be obtained if the students do not imitate the nature and actions of the kiai and their *ustādh*.

Ni'am (2015) illustrates why Islam is accepted in Indonesia due to the exemplary role of community leaders such as kiai and the community itself who teach exemplary (uswah) in every word and action[33]. Nilan (2009) even illustrates that pesantren is an institution that uses "bio-power" with moral and behavioural exemplary as the main identity in attracting people's interest. When connected with Raya's research (2020), pesantren has a special icon, namely educating the "morals" of the students as a trend that is needed by today's society[34].

Also, before graduating and entering society, students are required to devote themselves to the kiai or what is called *khidmah*. The form of his service can be ordered to teach in the boarding school, serve the needs of the kiai (or called *khaddām*), even be sent to remote areas to teach the people in the area. Upon their return from *khidmah*, the students were ready to preach in society with examples

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[32] *Beyond Religious Tolerance: Muslim, Christian & Traditionalist Encounters in an African Town*, NED-New edition (Boydell & Brewer, 2017), https://doi.org/10.7722/j.ctt1pc5gbk.

[33] 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.

[34] Moch Khafidz Fuad Raya, "Marketing Jasa Di Institusi Pendidikan (Analisis Pemasaran Dalam Pendidikan)," *FALASIFA : Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 7, no. 1 (April 15, 2016): 21–52; Moch Khafidz Fuad Raya, "Pemasaran Pendidikan Islam: Studi Multi Kasus di Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang dan Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Surabaya" (doctoral, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim, 2019), http://etheses.uin-malang.ac.id/14501/.

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and carrying Islamic values. The students are educated with exemplary in such ways, thus they will not be possible to commit radical acts, even acts of terrorism.

D. Conclusion

The existence of Islam as a religion of grace in a series of histories, has been tainted by the negative stigma of an intolerant, radical, extreme face of Islam, and has resulted in acts of terrorism committed by certain individuals. The presence of a peaceful and tolerant Islam is a form of wasaṭiyah Islam as reported in the al-Qur'ān as *umma wasaṭ*, a representation that Islam is the best ummah ever on Earth. In the Indonesian context, the entity that reflects wasaṭiyah Islam is the pesantren. There are evidences from the entire historical records that this institution has embraced Indonesia with justice, tolerance, and a middle attitude, neither radical, illiberal, nor extremist. Pesantren as the oldest Islamic educational institution can provide an example of how beautiful the religious moderation protests in this country are by carrying out the concept of *al-Tawassuṭ wa-l I'tidāl* which can balance various understandings that threaten the country. Pesantren comes with a unique curriculum that has been maintained for hundreds of years by 'ulamā' who rely on turāth books using unique learning methods (*bandongan* and *sorogan*). The portrait of religious moderation which is exemplified by the pesantren in the daily life of the santris can change the social order of society to have good morality and be moderate.

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