



Nahdlatul Ulama's Perspective on Religious Moderation for Global Peace and Justice

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Abstract

Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the largest socio-religious organization in Indonesia, has a significant task in conveying Islamic teachings. The distinctive Islamic teachings brought by NU have four basic sublimations: *tawasut*, *tawazun*, *tasamuh*, and *ta'adul*. The value of *tawasut* (moderation) brought by NU as a way of thinking is urgent in society, both related to religion, social, politics, and even the domestic sphere. With this value of moderation, NU's presence can provide a legal umbrella for the values of Islamic teachings that have been misinterpreted by some groups, such as radicals who misunderstand the verses of *jihad* with inhumane offensive actions reinterpreted into a methodological argument for self-defense by applying the meaning of tolerance. This study found that NU's idea of moderation (*tawasut*) is reflected in three main areas: interfaith relations, gender relations, and contemporary legal *ijtihad*. NU emphasizes the importance of tolerance based on respect for existence, not theological truth, in the interreligious realm. In gender relations, NU rejects patriarchal domination and offers a reconstruction of women's jurisprudence based on *maqasid al-sharia* and hermeneutics. In modern legal *istinbat*, NU relies on scientific approaches such as *tabqiqul manath*, assessing legal validity based on the current *illat* and benefits, as in the case of the halal status of four types of crab, previously considered questionable.

Keywords: Multi-Sectoral; *Nahdlatul Ulama*; Religious Moderation.

Abstrak

Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), organisasi sosial keagamaan terbesar di Indonesia, memiliki tugas penting dalam menyampaikan ajaran Islam. Ajaran Islam khas yang dibawa NU memiliki empat sublimasi dasar: tawasut, tawazun, tasamuh, dan ta'adul. Nilai tawasut (moderasi) yang dibawa NU sebagai cara berpikir sangat mendesak dalam masyarakat, baik yang berkaitan dengan agama, sosial, politik, bahkan ranah domestik. Dengan nilai moderasi ini, kehadiran NU dapat memberikan payung hukum bagi nilai-nilai ajaran Islam yang selama ini disalahartikan oleh sebagian kelompok, seperti kaum radikal yang salah memahami ayat-ayat jihad dengan tindakan ofensif yang tidak manusiawi, ditafsirkan ulang menjadi argumen metodologis untuk membela diri dengan menerapkan makna toleransi. Studi ini menemukan bahwa gagasan NU tentang moderasi (tawasut) tercermin dalam tiga bidang utama: hubungan antar agama, hubungan gender, dan ijtihad hukum kontemporer. Dalam ranah antar agama, NU menekankan pentingnya toleransi yang didasarkan pada penghormatan terhadap eksistensi, bukan kebenaran teologis. Dalam relasi gender, NU menolak dominasi patriarki dan menawarkan rekonstruksi yurisprudensi perempuan berdasarkan maqasid al-syariah dan hermeneutika. Dalam istinbat hukum modern, NU mengandalkan pendekatan ilmiah seperti tabqiqul manath, yang menilai keabsahan hukum berdasarkan illat dan manfaat yang ada, seperti dalam kasus kehalalan empat jenis kepiting, yang sebelumnya dianggap meragukan.

Kata Kunci: *Nahdlatul Ulama*, Moderasi Beragama; Multisektoral.

INTRODUCTION

Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) was born in Surabaya on January 31, 1926. From 1926 to 1952, NU began to actively participate in the national stage as a socio-religious organization, and then from 1945 to 1952, it joined in a federative form within the Masyumi party. From 1952 to 1973, NU participated independently as an independent political party and separated from the Masyumi party. From 1973 to 1984, NU merged into the PPP (United Development Party) by channeling its political aspirations.¹ However, since 1984, NU declared itself to return to the line of its initial fighting spirit, the NU *Khittah*,² namely to become a socio-religious organization and at the same time leave the hustle and bustle of the stage of practical political battles.

When looking at NU as an organization, it certainly has religious characteristics and practices that underlie its movement. He used the Qur'an, Hadith, Ijma', and Qiyas to guide life. Likewise, when understanding NU from its source, in the field of theology, it follows the *Ablusunnah Wal Jamaah* (Sunni) ideology pioneered by Abu Hasan al-Asy'ari and Abu Manshur al-Maturidiyah.³ In the field of Fiqh, NU follows one of the four schools of thought (Hanafi, Maliki, Syafi'i, and Hanbali),⁴ following Imam Junaid al-Bagdadi and al-Ghazali in the field of Sufism.

The imams emerged as moderate thinkers in the two theological schools mentioned above. On the one hand, they sought to avoid the overly rational Mu'tazilite understanding, which glorified freedom of thought, thus subordinating the Qur'an and Hadith as initial guidelines. However, they disagreed with the Salafi understanding, disregarding reason and favoring a textual interpretation of the Qur'an. They sought to combine the two approaches, creating a comprehensive and moderate theological concept. This connection makes Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) a distinctively traditional Islamic organization, embracing the values of moderation in its movement in Indonesia. However, NU currently faces a difficult challenge: how to compromise on Western-born values such as human rights, democracy, freedom from patriarchal values, anti-violence, modernization, and so on.

Thus, young NU intellectuals see the future clearly regarding the alienation of traditional NU thoughts practiced in Islamic boarding schools, in particular, unable to communicate with the values of modernity that continue to grow and develop in a mighty wave. References to the yellow book *Al-Mu'tabarab*, which has been indoctrinated as a reference capable of answering all society's problems, have not been proven by reality. Conservative thoughts that want to be

¹ Faisal Ismail, "The Nahdlatul Ulama: Its Early History and Contribution to the Establishment of Indonesian State," *JOURNAL OF INDONESIAN ISLAM* 5, no. 2 (December 2011): 247–82, <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2011.5.2.247-282>.

² Robin Bush, "Redefining 'Political Islam' in Indonesia: Nahdlatul Ulama and Khittah '26," *Studia Islamika* 7, no. 2 (2000): 59–86, <https://doi.org/10.15408/sdi.v7i2.709>; Nathan Franklin, "Gus Dur's Enduring Legacy: Accruing Religious Merit in the Afterlife," *Politics and Governance* 12, no. 7874 (March 2024): 1–16, <https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.7874>.

³ Imam Machali, Edi Safitri, and Fitria Wulandari, "Shifting Variants and Ideological Affiliations of Islamic Education Institutions in the Special Region of Yogyakarta," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 10, no. 1 (June 2021): 107–32, <https://doi.org/10.14421/jpi.2021.101.107-132>; Saifuddin Zuhri Qudsy, Achmad Fawaid, and Althaf Husein Muzakky, "Ahlu Sunnah Views of COVID-19 in Social Media: The Islamic Preaching by Gus Baha and Abdus Somad," *Al-Abwab* 10, no. 1 (July 2021): 115–34, <https://doi.org/10.24260/alalbab.v10i1.1921>.

⁴ Ismail Jalili, Fadillah Ulfa, and Mualimin Mochammad Sahid, "Nahdlatul Ulama's Ijtihad Method in Fatwa: Analysis of the Content of Legal Decisions and Their Validity in Indonesia," *Justicia Islamica* 20, no. 2 (November 2023): 341–60, <https://doi.org/10.21154/justicia.v20i2.5971>; Nadirsyah Hosen, "Nahdlatul Ulama and Collective Ijtihad," *New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies* 6, no. 1 (2004): 5–26.

forced are facing the inevitable onslaught of modernity. On the other hand, in answering several cases, the yellow book seems no longer a satisfactory reference.

For example, consider the case of women's public leadership. The yellow book *Mu'tabarab* does not provide a satisfactory answer and is inappropriate for the current Islamic context. Moreover, it is not only about women's public leadership, but also the position of women in judicial positions, which, according to the fiqh of *Ahlussunnab wal Jamaab* (the Sunni Muslim jurisprudence) or within the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), also provides answers that are not in her favor.

Similarly, in social problems such as terrorism, anarchism, brutality, and other acts of violence, NU analyzes that perpetrators of these crimes often continue to use various apologetic arguments throughout their lives to justify their violence. These include economic inequality, injustice, political stability, and some even use religion as an excuse.⁵ Why does this happen? Because it is clear that there is currently no concrete concept of the meaning of tolerance and moderation in religion that satisfies the views of various Islamic scholars and other socio-religious organizations, especially Nahdlatul Ulama. Alone.⁶

In this short analysis, the research aims to solve the problems of NU in the context of Cosmopolitan Islam by reading moderate movements in multi-sectoral, both interpersonal relationships, religion, and in the household as an alternative or choice in creating world peace, justice, and equality, so that Islam, revealed by Allah SWT. As *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin*, it truly becomes part of the effort to solve problems in religious life based on tolerance, dialogue, and love.⁷ However, when the Qur'an, revealed by the Most Just Being towards the most just creature, is still used as a tool of injustice, this thought must be debated.

METHODS

The methodology of this research involved qualitative research using a library research design.⁸ The data sources come from various literature, primarily journal articles and books on NU's views on tolerance between religious communities, moderation in masculine and feminine relations, and moderation in *Istinbat al-Hukmi* on modern casuistics. The obtained data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis techniques to identify similarities and differences in approach, emphasis, and conclusions.⁹

The historical and cultural contexts relevant to the study's focus are also linked to several major conflicts that occurred in the name of or were triggered by religious sentiment. It is done to understand the urgency of the values of moderation intertwined with tolerance, masculine-feminine relations, and *Istinbat al-Hukmi* (the principle of righteousness) in contemporary cases.

⁵ Abdurrahman Wahid, "God Needs No Defense," in *Abraham's Children: Liberty and Tolerance in an Age of Religious Conflict*, ed. Kelly James Clark (Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2012).

⁶ Irwan Masduqi, *Berislam Secara Toleran: Teologi Kerukunan Umat Beragama* (Bandung: Mizan, 2011), 148, Bandung.

⁷ Helen Rose Ebaugh, "Islam and the State Throughout Turkish History," in *The Gülen Movement: A Sociological Analysis of a Civic Movement Rooted in Moderate Islam*, ed. Helen Rose Ebaugh (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2010), 13, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4020-9894-9_2.

⁸ Nihan Sölpük Turhan, "Qualitative Research Design: Which One Is the Best for Your Research?," *European Journal of Special Education Research* 4, no. 2 (May 2019): 124–36, <https://doi.org/10.46827/ejse.v0i0.2448>.

⁹ Niklas Humble and Peter Mozelius, "Content Analysis or Thematic Analysis: Similarities, Differences, and Application in Qualitative Research," in *ECRM 2022 21st European Conference on Research Methods in Business and Management*, ed. Manuel Au-Yong-Oliveira and Carlos Costa (UK: Academic Conferences and Publishing Limited, 2022).

This research methodology allows a better understanding of NU's perspective on religious moderation for global peace and justice.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Islam is an ideal and perfect religion. His teachings are relevant to every time and place (*shalih likulli zaman wa makan*),¹⁰ and accommodating various life problems.¹¹ Always act reasonably towards humans without distinguishing between race, ethnicity, nation, religion, skin color, etc.¹² Islamic teachings, especially those from the NU organization, are the most vocal when discussing justice, moderation, and equality.

Interestingly, Islamic teachings emphasize moderation, but they must be developed through a universal lens. Moderation isn't merely viewed as the initial step in fostering interfaith communication to foster deradicalization and deterrorization. Moderation also needs to be understood in gender relations, such as marriage and leadership, to encourage good communication between husband and wife, rather than the opposite, where individual rights are prioritized without regard for the rights of others within the relationship.

However, none of this is proven in the real world. The proof is that perpetrators of violence still use various apologetic arguments to justify their violence. These include economic inequality, injustice, political stability, and some even use religion as justification. Likewise, in gender relations, women often experience discrimination and exploitation under the pretext of religion. In the name of religion, women are prohibited from participating in politics and becoming heads of state because it is considered an *aurat* (a thing of modesty) and is feared to bring disaster to the nation.

This problematic reality violates the concept of moderation within religion. From this blunt analysis, it is necessary to reread and attempt to reconstruct old *ijtihad* or interpretations that do not provide solutions or are considered gender biased to find the valid moral message, such as equality and moderation in carrying out the dynamics of life. This reality further demonstrates the importance of socializing the values of religious moderation so that they can serve as a foundation for thinking and acting for every human being, especially for every Muslim.

NU and the Idea of Tolerance in Moderation between Religious Communities

Tawasut can be interpreted as moderation, standing in the middle, not being extreme right or left,¹³ and having a stance and conviction. *Tawasut* is one of the values that governs thought patterns and actions, namely how we should direct our thoughts and actions in various sectors related to religion and non-religion. In inter-religious issues, for example, we find facts on the ground about the proliferation of terrorism and radicalism, often under the pretext of involving Muslims or being blamed on them. That is nothing less than a severe blow to Muslims and Islam itself, which must bear the burden of the global community's perception that Islam

¹⁰ Claire Alkoutli, "Pedagogies in Becoming Muslim: Contemporary Insights from Islamic Traditions on Teaching, Learning, and Developing," *Religions* 9, no. 11 (November 2018): 367, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel9110367>.

¹¹ Faruq Abu Zaid, *Al-Syari'ah al-Islamiyah Baina al-Muhafizhin wa al-Mujaddidin* (Kairo: Daral-Taufiq al-'Arabi, n.d.), 29, Kairo.

¹² Abdel Wahab Ibrahim Muhammad Abu Suleiman, *Al Fiker al Ushuli: Dirasah Tablīliyah Naqdiyah* (Jeddah: Dar al Syuruq, 1984), 24.

¹³ Kasan Bisri et al., "Strengthening Religious Moderation for High School and Vocational School Spiritual Activists in Semarang City," *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Education Studies (IJIES)* 6, no. 2 (December 2023): 190–206, <https://doi.org/10.33367/ijies.v6i2.4208>.

is considered a frightening, radical, cruel religion, one that does not recognize plurality, and so on.

The proof is that, in recent times, there have been many acts of violence in the country with various triggers, both in the name of religion, such as the Pekalongan Riots in 1995. The riot was sparked by an ethnic Chinese citizen who reportedly tore up and urinated on the Quran.¹⁴ The Ambon Riots in 1999 were triggered by a fight between two people of different religions, which ultimately led to mass riots between Muslims and Christians.¹⁵ In Central Kalimantan (*Sampit*), the background was disharmony in social and ethnic relations and others.¹⁶

This frightening portrayal of Islam on the surface is what concerns the members of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). For him, Islam is not the primary source of problems, but rather a problem-solver. "Real Muslims cannot be terrorists," he cites an excerpt from Gülen's press statement in response to the September 11 tragedy.¹⁷ For Gülen, Muslims should represent peace, prosperity, and well-being.¹⁸

The social conflicts with religious nuances around us are caused by temptations of primordialism and individual egocentrism, resulting in polarization between the injured parties.¹⁹ Likewise, research shows that social conflicts with ethnic and religious nuances are not initially due to religious factors themselves, but rather by various interconnected causes such as crises in multiple fields that create a loss of public trust in the government that lacks empathy, or due to the flow of globalization of information that creates exclusivity and sensitivity to group interests.²⁰ Therefore, we must further understand the meaning of tolerance to avoid misinterpretation in its application. *Webster's World University Dictionary* defines tolerance as liberality toward the opinions of others.²¹ Meanwhile, Abu Husain ibn Faris ibn Zakariya defines it as ease, generosity, and tranquility.²² Victor I. Tanja defines it as assurance or steadfastness.²³

Based on this definition, a person can be considered tolerant if they are open-minded enough to allow others to have differing views and acknowledge the existence of others who can freely behave, think, and act according to their beliefs without being disturbed by others. However, there are still differences regarding the meaning of tolerance, which makes its application difficult. For example, there is a perception that there is no room for religious tolerance, especially in faith and worship. Tolerance in these two areas implies a mixture of

¹⁴ M. Ngisom Al-Barony, "Mengurai Konflik SARA di Pekalongan," NU Online, Desember 2023, <https://jateng.nu.or.id/nasional/mengurai-konflik-sara-di-pekalongan-ZE8r9>.

¹⁵ Eunike Mutiara Himawan, Annie Pohlman, and Winnifred Louis, "Revisiting the May 1998 Riots in Indonesia: Civilians and Their Untold Memories," *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs* 41, no. 2 (August 2022): 240–57, <https://doi.org/10.1177/18681034221084320>.

¹⁶ Faisal Ismail, *NU, Moderatisme, dan Pluralisme* (Yogyakarta: IRCISOD, 2020), 98.

¹⁷ M. Arfan Mu'ammam and Abdul Wahid Hasan, *Studi Islam Kontemporer Perspektif Insider Outsider* (Yogyakarta: IRCISOD, 2017), 486.

¹⁸ Masduqi, *Berislam Secara Toleran*, 147.

¹⁹ Md. Intekhab Hossain, "Creation of 'Other' in Their Own Country, Politicized Identity-Based Division, and the Rise of Hostility toward 'out-Group' in a Multi-Ethnic, Poly-Cultural World: A Study on Genocide Prevention, Human Security, and Peacebuilding," *Social Identities* 30, no. 2 (March 2024): 88–109, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13504630.2024.2342613>.

²⁰ Maksimus Regus, "Interreligious Conflicts in Post-Authoritarian Indonesia: Assumptions, Causes, and Implications," *Jurnal Politik* 5, no. 2 (March 2020), <https://doi.org/10.7454/jp.v5i2.1013>.

²¹ Lewis Mulford Adams, Edward N. Teall, and Charles Ralph Taylor, *Webster's World University Dictionary* (Washington DC: Publisher Company, 1965), 1050, Washington DC.

²² Abu al-Husain Ahmad bin Faris bin Zakaria bin Muhammad bin Habib ar-Razi al-Lughawi, *Mu'jam Maqayis al-Lughah. Vol. 1* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiah, 1999), 85.

²³ Victor Immanuel Tanja et al., *Pluralisme agama dan problema sosial: diskursus teologi tentang isu-isu kontemporer* (Jakarta: Pustaka Cidesindo, 1997), 13.

different religions. This opinion is certainly not relevant to the proposed definition of tolerance.²⁴

Tolerance is not a theological recognition of the truth of another religion. Every religious follower believes only their religion is the most accurate and effective path to achieving true salvation. Instead, tolerance focuses on recognizing the existence of each religion, with all its unique characteristics, and diversity, fostering mutual respect and appreciation among adherents of different faiths. In this way, the reality of each religion's beliefs and rituals is recognized without interference or criticism of their rightness or wrongness. What is recognized is its existence, not its religious truth.

NU and the Idea of Moderation in Masculine and Feminine Relations

The value of moderation extends to interfaith relations and domestic aspects, to create a harmonious family, as taught by religion. However, socio-culturally, in Muslim communities, it is clear that women still experience discrimination, exploitation, and violence from masculine forces, with various triggers.²⁵ Strangely, many of these problems are perpetrated in the name of religion. In the name of religion, women are not recognized as complete human beings like men, thus denying them the right to represent themselves in marriage contracts. Under Islamic law, women are prohibited from participating in politics and becoming leaders, as this is feared to bring disaster to the nation. Furthermore, women are not permitted to be heads of households within the domestic sphere.

In the name of religion, women are considered unclean creatures and are therefore expelled from houses of worship during menstruation, and are not permitted to lead religious rituals. In the name of religion, women are subordinated to domestic roles, confined to taking care of the home, the kitchen, and the bed. In the name of religion, women are shunned by society from achieving their aspirations of professional activity in the public sphere because women are seen as lacking in intelligence and weak in their religion.²⁶ Again, in the name of religion, women are expected to be obedient wives to their husbands, satisfying their lusts whenever needed; women must accept polygamy if their husbands claim it will provide them with heavenly rewards.

Moreover, in the name of religion, women are viewed as half-male creatures,²⁷ so their inheritance rights are determined to be only half that of men; the number of goats for a girl's *aqiqah* is half that of a boy's; the testimony of two women is considered equal to the testimony of one man. The dowry payment is often mentioned as the price of a woman's body. This bleak portrait of women in society then leads to the emergence of community resistance to the formalization of Islamic law. Based on this, an effort is needed to solve the above problems by involving several parties in efforts to strengthen the equality of relations between men and women, such as the Islamic Boarding School and Community Development Association (P3M),

²⁴ Hendro D. Puspito, *Sosiologi Agama* (Jakarta: Gunung Mulia, 1992), 170.

²⁵ Saïda Douki Dedieu et al., "Violence Against Women in the Arab World: Eyes Shut Wide Open," in *Handbook of Healthcare in the Arab World* (Springer, Cham, 2021), 207–55, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-36811-1_169.

²⁶ Umi Supraptiningsih et al., "Inequality as a Cultural Construction: Women's Access to Land Rights in Madurese Society," *Cogent Social Sciences* 9, no. 1 (December 2023): 2194733, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2023.2194733>.

²⁷ Muhammad Rikza Muqtada et al., "Fiqh Contestation on Women's Public Leadership in Indonesia and Malaysia: Reproducing Qur'anic and Hadith Interpretations," *AL-IHKAM: Jurnal Hukum & Pranata Sosial* 19, no. 1 (June 2024): 221–48, <https://doi.org/10.19105/al-lhkam.v19i1.13163>.

especially the firm stance of Nahdlatul Ulama itself as the majority organization in Indonesia, as a central pillar in providing this understanding to the community.

As a NU cadre, it believes that the foundation of NU's understanding contains aspects of equality and justice as the basis of sublimation of the four principles within NU: *tawazun*, *tasamuh*, *tawasut*, and *ta'adul*. They use *tawasut* to balance the thoughts and texts of the Qur'an and Hadith as the primary foundation in life. The NU movement has always been fair in carrying out the community's aspirations without distinguishing between race, ethnicity, nation, and religion. Therefore, NU today is the organization that is most active in voicing equality between humans, free from gender bias, both packaged in the form of fatwas such as the fatwa on the permissibility of women to become a vice president at the NU National Conference in Lombok in 1997, or with books published by Lakpesdam NU. Not only that, NU scholars have also had a shared commitment to empowering women and providing various theological arguments for women's rights issues.²⁸

One of them is the progressive generation of NU, Husein Muhammad, whose book *Fiqh Perempuan* tries to reconstruct and reinterpret women's rights dominated by Patriarchy by analyzing traditional books.²⁹ Masdar F. Mas'udi wrote a book on *Islam and Women's Reproductive Rights*; these roles are not presented empty-handed, but through an in-depth analysis of women's problems that appear on the surface, including rights regarding leadership, reproduction, and others.³⁰

The presence of problems regarding the issue of women's injustice can be concluded to be due to at least three factors: *first*, in general, Muslims understand the Islamic religion purely dogmatically, not through critical and rational reasoning efforts regarding its sources (the Qur'an and Hadith), especially regarding the position of women in public. *Second*, most Muslims acquire religious knowledge through the sermons of religious scholars, which are generally steeped in patriarchal bias. *Third*, understanding of these relationships relies more on textual understanding.

So, what is the epistemological solution? This question offers a solution to the difficult task of resolving this problem through several mechanisms. *First*, by distinguishing between religion and religious thought. More specifically, religion is the Qur'an and Hadith, while religious thought is a series of interpretations of religion. Religion is static, while religious understanding is dynamic and diverse, so we cannot guarantee that all religious understandings are the same. *Second*, using the theory of *maqasid*,³¹ the interpretation of the double movement, and the use of *ta'wil* and hermeneutic methods.³² For example, regarding polygamy taken from Surah An-Nisa', when read from the perspective of its *maqasid*, the husband's second marriage brings benefits to the household or even worsens it. With this method, it is necessary to adapt the verse to the current context.

Similarly, Fazlur Rahman, from Pakistan, introduced the theory of double movement. According to him, in this connection, there are two key approaches: *first*, understanding the Qur'an in its proper context, namely, trying to find the *asbabun nuzul* (cause for revelation) of

²⁸ Robin Bush, *Nahdlatul Ulama and the Struggle for Power Within Islam and Politics in Indonesia* (Pasir Panjang: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2009), 20.

²⁹ Husein Muhammad, *Fiqh Perempuan* (Yogyakarta: IRCiSoD, 2019).

³⁰ Masdar F. Mas'udi, *Islam & Women's Reproductive Rights* (Malaysia: Sister in Islam, 2002).

³¹ Abd al-Malik ibn Yusuf Abu al-Ma'ali Al-Juwaini, *Al-Burhan Fi Usul al-Fiqh* (Kairo: Dar al-Ansar, 1399H), 290.

³² Farid Esack, *Qur'an Liberation and Pluralism: An Islamic Perspective of Interreligious Solidarity Against Oppression* (London: Oneworld Publications, 1997).

the verse, and then returning it to the present to adjust the dynamics of the interpretation of the Qur'anic verse and *second*, ensuring that the "unity of the Qur'an" underlies all interpretations. That is, only considering the verse's textual side will invite ambiguity in interpretation. The method is how the current context can be brought to the past to adjust the meaning of the Qur'an to be more acceptable to the human mind.

Thus, it becomes clear that, when adopting the first movement method, the Quranic verses discussing polygamy were a past social response to the phenomenon of many companions being martyred in the Battle of Uhud, resulting in many women losing their husbands and becoming widows. The recommendation for polygamy at that time was simply to help widows and orphans abandoned by their parents. However, it is also important to remember that this permissibility still has limits based on justice. This limited and just attitude is the general socio-moral and ethical goal of the legalization of polygamy. The second movement is to apply the general socio-moral goal of this event to the current or modern context. Therefore, the just moral goal in the contemporary context is monogamous marriage, because justice in the modern era requires a dialogue with human rights (human rights), including women's rights.

NU and the Idea of Moderation in *Istinbat al-Hukmi* Modern Casuistics

NU follows Imam Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hambali as moderate thinkers in Islamic law. They each have their distinctive approach to developing Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) based on the Qur'an and Hadith, but their understanding is not trapped in a fiqh that relies too much on texts or mere rational reason. These two approaches enrich their understanding: a collaborative understanding of the Qur'an and Hadith as a first step, then relying on reason to sharpen their analysis of legal conclusions. However, the current progressive generation of NU considers that some of their arguments are no longer relevant to the modern world.

For young intellectuals of Islamic boarding schools and NU, the statement that the yellow book provides answers to all life's problems is truly apologetic, unrealistic, and ahistorical; no matter how many legal texts there are, they will still not be able to accommodate the issues of life and living. Because texts containing comparative law with life's problems are like a drop of water in the face of an ocean that never dries, but strangely, it is unethical when something limited is said to be able to answer something unlimited. So, what epistemology do you want to build? It believes many theories can be used to analyze these problems, such as the *Maslahah method* (*Mu'tabarab and Murlab*),³³ *Urf*,³⁴ *Sad ad-Dzari'ah*, etc. However, it is more interested in using the *Tabqiqul Manath* as a tool for analysis.

This method uses science and science-based approaches to see whether the illat of haram in law is no longer there. The MUI and NU are among the institutions that are active in checking the *illat's* validity of the illat and ensuring whether or not there are benefits contained in it with

³³ Soni Zakaria, Syariful Alam, and Agus Supriadi, "Review of Maslahah Theory of Shari'a Regulation in Indonesia," Atlantis Press, March 4, 2020, 100–104, <https://doi.org/10.2991/aebmr.k.200226.020>; Mhd Dayrobi and Dhiauddin Tanjung, "Maqasid Syariah Perspective Abu Hamid Muhammad Bin Muhammad Al-Ghazali," *AMK: Abdi Masyarakat UIKA* 3, no. 3 (September 2024): 111–16, <https://doi.org/10.32832/amk.v3i3.2218>.

³⁴ Ali Abubakar et al., "The Postponement of the Implementation of Inheritance Distribution in The Seunuddon Community, North Aceh In The Lens Of 'Urf Theory and Legal Pluralism," *El-Usrab: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga* 6, no. 2 (December 2023): 411–29, <https://doi.org/10.22373/ujhk.v6i2.10207>; Dr Syed Ameer Hassanaa and Dr Masooma Batool, "Concept of 'urf (Custom) in Islamic Law and Its Application in Social Affairs: An Analytical Study," *Mobi Ud Din Journal of Islamic Studies* 2, no. 1 (June 2024): 1–30.

science in a process carried out by the MUI and NU themselves. For example, regarding the *halal* status of 4 types of crabs in the archipelago,³⁵ namely: *Scylla Serreta*, *Scylla Transquebarrica*, *Scylla Olivacea*, and *Scylla Paramamosain* in Sulistiono's paper entitled "eco-biology of mangrove crabs (*Scylla spp*)", including aquatic animals because they breathe with gills, even though in various traditional books they are prohibited because they live in two realms.

CONCLUSION

Nahdlatul Ulama believes that the violence in Indonesia, with its various triggers, occurs because radicals and terrorists fail to understand the verses of jihad and resort to inhumane, offensive actions. As a result, the war, which was initially characterized by self-defense, has turned into an offensive. It then gave rise to anti-tolerance within religious moderation. Therefore, it is necessary to correctly reinterpret the meaning of tolerance within religious moderation, as tolerance is not a theological recognition of the truth of other religions. Instead, tolerance focuses more on recognizing the existence of each religion with all its unique characteristics and diversity, thus fostering an attitude of mutual protection.

NU is currently the most active organization in voicing equality between humans and freedom from gender bias, both packaged in the form of fatwas such as the fatwa on the permissibility of women as vice president at the 1997 NU National Conference in Lombok or in books published by Lakpesdam NU. These studies are presented with moderate thinking; on the one hand, they seek to avoid the Mu'tazilite understanding that is too rational and worships freedom of thought. However, conversely, they disagree with the Salafi understanding that completely excludes reason and is dominated by textual understanding. They combine the two approaches to create a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between the masculine and the feminine.

For young NU intellectuals, the claim that the "yellow books" provide answers to all of life's problems is truly apologetic. The "yellow books" still need to adapt to compromise with Western values such as human rights, democracy, freedom from patriarchal values, and so on. Therefore, a new, modern understanding, namely the *Tabqiqul Manath* method in the methods of knowledge and science, as an analytical tool, is needed. This method uses science and knowledge to determine whether the *illat* forbidding it is no longer in the law, thus producing an appropriate understanding of the modern context.

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³⁵ Imam Syamsuddin Muhammad bin Abu al-Abbas Ahmad bin Hamzah bin Syihabuddin al-Ramli al-Manufi al-Mishri al-Anshari, *Nihayat al Muhtaj Ila Syarh Al Minhaj*, Juz 27 (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1984), 336.

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