

MUJAMIL QOMAR'S PERSPECTIVE ON RELIGIOUS MODERATION AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION FOR THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY IN INDONESIA

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Abstract: *This article attempted to find out Mujamil Qomar's perspective on religious moderation and its implementation for the Muslim community in Indonesia, which was increasingly needed by the Indonesian people. This article aimed to provide an understanding to readers of the importance of instilling the spirit of religious moderation taught by experts in the field of Islamic education and thought. This article was written using a unit analysis study in a book entitled "Moderasi Islam Indonesia: Wajah Keberagaman Progresif, Inklusif, dan Pluralis" written by Mujamil Qomar. Then, several book reviews with the same discussion on religious moderation were added to compare, complement, and continue discussions that have not been discussed in previous books. The important findings of this article explained that religious moderation was a means to select Islamic thoughts, understandings, and practices carried out in the form of violence or radicals. In addition, the researcher wanted to provide a positive view of religious moderation in Indonesia, where the Muslim community appeared very elegant, egalitarian, flexible in socializing, and able to accept opinions from people of different faiths.*

Keywords: *Mujamil Qomar, Religious Moderation, Muslim Community, and Indonesia.*

INTRODUCTION

This book entitled "Moderasi Islam Indonesia: Wajah Keberagaman Progresif, Inklusif, dan Pluralis". The author, Mujamil Qomar, completed his doctoral program at Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic Institute Jakarta (now State Islamic University) in 1999, with expertise in Islamic education and Islamic thought. Since 2003, has been a Professor of Modern Thought in Islam at State Islamic Institute of Tulungagung, teaching at the undergraduate programs of State Islamic Institute of Tulungagung and Tarbiyah College of Sciences of Ibnu Sina Malang, masters programs of State Islamic Institute of Tulungagung and State Islamic Institute of Kediri, as well as the doctoral programs of State Islamic Institute of Tulungagung and State Islamic University of Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. His activities in addition to providing lecture materials, he is actively researching and writing for both journals and books, while the writings in the form of books produced have amounted to 30, according to his scientific family, namely Islamic education and Islamic thought. This book is Qomar's last writing published by IRCiSoD in Yogyakarta in 2021 and discusses the discourse of religious moderation, which the Indonesian people increasingly need [9]

As seen in the title, the 316 pages thick book above discusses the big theme of Islamic moderation or moderate Islam, which has recently been used as a model and approach in

practicing Islam, as well as countering radically expressed thoughts, understandings, and practices of Islam with various acts of violence, such as murder, bombing, hostage-taking, and others [9]

From Islamic Archipelago or Indonesian Islam, Qomar tries to reflect on the role of moderate Islam to deliver flexible Indonesian Muslims in dealing with problems, especially when interacting with people of other faiths. Therefore, the focus of this book study includes: First, Indonesian Islam in the fields of kalam (theology), fiqh, and Sufism are discussed in chapter 3. Second, Indonesian Islam in politics, education, and culture (tradition) are discussed in chapter 4. Third, the implications of Indonesian Islam on the dynamics of civilization, the diversity of friendly Islam, and the stability of peace are discussed in chapter 5. While chapters 1 and 2 contain an introduction and study of Islam, which is viewed from various perspectives, and chapter 6 (last) is closing [1].

METHODOLOGY

This article employed a unit analysis study by dissecting the entire contents of the book entitled “Moderasi Islam Indonesia: Wajah Keberagaman Progresif, Inklusif, dan Pluralis” as the main reference source to find out how Mujamil Qomar’s perspective as the author of the book, particularly related to religious moderation as I have described briefly and explicitly in each chapter. Then, the researcher tried to find its implementation for the Muslim community in Indonesia in the last part of the discussion. In addition, the researcher also added a review of several books that had a similar topic to what Mujamil Qomar taught in his book related to efforts to voice religious moderation through literacy. On the other hand, the existence of these books was to clarify the direction of discussion and views of Mujamil Qomar, both to compare, explore, and continue the discussions left by previous writers. [12]

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The discussion in the book starts from chapter 3. Qomar explains the three dimensions that most influence the pattern of Islamic diversity, including kalam (theology), fiqh, and Sufism. The trio of dimensions includes explaining the beliefs, thoughts, understanding, and practices of a Muslim. Qomar argues that the Asy’ariyah school is the most well-known and widely taught science of monotheism in Indonesia, compared to other schools. One of the teachings is that God has an absolute will [9]

In the field of fiqh, Qomar mentions the Syafi’i school as the most widely adopted by Indonesian Muslims, such as NU, Muhammadiyah, and Persis. This is because NU scholars follow one of the four well-known schools (Hanafi, Maliki, Syafi’i, and Hanbali), and its codified school (mudawwam) is an obligation. While in the field of Sufism, Qomar noted that Sunni Sufism contributed a lot to the process of Islamization in Indonesia, which the “Alawiyyin” preachers introduced in the 13th century in Sumatra, then grew in Java starting in the 15th century through the role of Wali Sanga [9]

Then in chapter 4, Qomar discusses Indonesian Islam in terms of politics, education, and culture (tradition) as a continuation of the trio of dimensions in the previous chapter 3. Qomar describes the politics of Muslims in Indonesia, which is very dynamic because it underwent relatively brief changes, starting from the Japanese colonial period to the 1998 Reformation era. There are various kinds of parties founded by Islamic figures, such as PKB, PAN, PNU, PKU, Sunni Party, and so on [9]

In the field of education, Qomar states that education in Islamic boarding schools has a major contribution to preaching Islam in Indonesia. This is because apart from simply teaching Islam, Islamic boarding schools are also very adaptive to the paternalistic culture of the Indonesian nation. Even during the colonial period, Islamic boarding school education is oriented toward pure worship and the struggle against the invaders. Meanwhile, in the field of culture, Qomar assumes that Islam in Indonesia has developed rapidly through the process of cultural acculturation, the integration of Islamic thought is always adapted to the peculiarities of local culture, and Islamic da'wah also sees the socio-cultural environment through the eyes of wisdom [9]

Finally, in chapter 5, Qomar tries to explain the implications of Islamic moderation on the dynamics of civilization, the diversity of friendly Islam, and the stability of peace. Qomar again gives the example of NU, which is certain that the dynamics of civilization and thought will be more advanced if it is more inclined to al-Maturidi. It occupies the middle position between the two opposing camps of thought (Qadariyah and Jabariyah). In addition, Qomar also reveals that the friendly diversity of Islam is the impact of the distinctive and flexible characteristics of Indonesian Islam. Apart from the result of the influence of Islamic teachings developed in Indonesia, namely creed or theology, this is contrary to the previous view. In this case, Qomar views al-Asy'ari as the most suitable theology to describe moderate Indonesian Islam [9]

Furthermore, Qomar tries to see where the differences between Muhammadiyah and NU are. Muhammadiyah focuses more on the issue of faith to return to the Al-Qur'an and Hadith, while NU focuses on the study of fiqh, and the attitude of NU prefers to build relations between the two so that they are harmonious, stable, and full of peace [9]

Returning to the moderation issue of Indonesian Islam that Qomar has discussed, he understands that Islamic teachings in three dimensions (kalam, fiqh, and Sufism) are all moderate. The use of these three dimensions in examining Islamic moderation has been carried out by [5], [7], [10] and is used as the basis for understanding moderate Islam, while [2], [3] focus more on the role of the two organizations. Muslims in Indonesia, namely NU and Muhammadiyah, are at the forefront of voicing religious moderation. These books refer to the verses of the Al-Qur'an and Hadith as authentic evidence that moderate understanding and practice is the main characteristic of being Muslim. This is because Islam is a religion that gives grace to everyone, not only Muslims but also non-Muslims and the universe. [13]

Meanwhile, [6] considers that religious moderation at this time means a balance in beliefs, attitudes, behavior, order, muamalah, and morality, which proves that Islam is truly a moderate religion, not excessive in all worldly matters, and not too much in matters of religion. In other issues related to politics, education, and Indonesian Islamic culture (tradition), Qomar shows a model of moderate Islam, namely the moderation of ideological politics through The Five Principles as the basis of the Indonesian state, complementing the explanation from [4]. regarding the principle of moderation based on The Five Principles to guarantee freedom in embracing religion and creating peace. [14]

Through the book he wrote, Qomar encourages the birth of policies from Indonesian Islamic figures in establishing formal schools to instill the values of religious moderation, this is in line with [1] regarding this step in the Islamic boarding schools environment as an original Indonesian Islamic educational institution. This includes [11] who views that Islamic Religious Colleges need to produce graduates who can provide a basic understanding of religious moderation to each individual. The moderation of Islamic culture lies in the

acculturation process of local culture. Qomar takes the example of Islamic culture in Java. This strengthens the opinion of [8] that Islam emphasizes the need to maintain local culture as long as it does not conflict with Islamic religious values. [15]

CONCLUSION

Even though there have been many recent studies on religious moderation, which are considered an alternative step in disseminating it to the public, various kinds of disputes between religious communities in Indonesia still occur. Qomar explicitly proposed to the Indonesian government as a controller of power, especially with the principles of democracy that he upholds so that it is not understood from a literal meaning alone. However, more emphasis is placed on its mission, namely building justice, agreement, equality, and equality (egalitarianism), as one of the implementations of Islamic moderation on a state system that substantively reflects Islamic values.

At the main point of this book review, Qomar wants to get rid of the negative stigma about Islam in the eyes of ordinary people, such as Islam is thought to teach violence, hostage-taking, murder, and bombing, so Qomar's solution is the moderation of Indonesian Islam which is born from the day of the Muslim community's conscience to display Islam that is elegant, egalitarian, and flexible in getting along with other communities who have differences.

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