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THE POWER OF THE SANAD NETWORK AND ISLAMIC DISCOURSE IN THE ARBA'IN HADITH MANUSCRIPTS OF NUSANTARA SCHOLARS

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Abstract

Islam Nusantara was introduced as a response to the issue of radicalism and terrorism that was emerging on the international stage. The pesantren-style education model, which focuses entirely on studying the *kitab kuning* (*turats*), is considered effective in addressing this issue. The *kitab kuning* serves as an effective medium for promoting religious moderation within the socio-cultural context of Muslims in the Nusantara. One approach is by exploring the manuscript heritage written by Nusantara scholars. This paper

examines *Arba'in* hadith manuscripts written by Nusantara scholars, namely the works of Mahfuzh al-Tarmasi, Hasyim Asy'ari, Nawawi al-Bantani, and Yasin al-Fadani, from the 17th to the 20th century. Using a philological approach, the findings of this study show that these books were written in the context of Indonesia's colonial period and aimed to provide a counter-narrative to religious orthodoxy. The Islamic discourse embedded in these works relates to: 1) Morality, which encourages a moderate attitude towards everyone, all creatures on earth, even towards enemies; 2) Religious moderation, by considering those of different faiths as brothers; 3) Work discipline, aimed at fostering the spirit of striving for a decent life; 4) The concepts of sunnah and bid'ah are explained to provide a counter-narrative to the Wahhabi-style religious discourse that attacks local traditions. Furthermore, at roughly the same time, Muslims in Haramain took a stricter stance toward tradition and sought to return religion solely to the Qur'an and Hadith, while Muslims in the Nusantara were more receptive to local traditions. This is evidenced by the incorporation of local contexts into *Arba'in* hadith works, such as the emphasis on mutual compassion in the context of Dutch colonialism. This represents the scholarly independence of hadith studies developed by Nusantara hadith scholars.

Keywords: Islamic Discourse; Nusantara *Arba'in* Hadith; The Power of *Sanad* Networks.

Abstrak

Kuasa Jaringan Sanad dan Diskursus Keislaman dalam Naskah Hadis Arba'in Ulama Nusantara. Islam Nusantara diperkenalkan sebagai respon atas isu radikalisme dan terorisme yang sedang mencuat di kancah internasional. Model pendidikan ala pesantren yang tertumpu penuh pada pengkajian kitab kuning (turats) dinilai efektif untuk membendung isu tersebut. Kitab kuning menjadi media yang efektif untuk melakukan gerakan moderasi beragama dalam konteks sosio-kultural umat Islam di Nusantara. Salah satunya dengan menggali khazanah manuskrip yang ditulis oleh ulama Nusantara. Tulisan ini mengkaji naskah-naskah hadis *Arba'in* yang ditulis oleh ulama Nusantara, yakni karya Syaikh Mahfuzh al-Tarmasi, karya Syaikh Hasyim Asy'ari, karya Syaikh Nawawi al-Bantani, dan karya Syaikh Yasin al-Fadani, pada abad ke-17 hingga ke-20. Dengan pendekatan filologi, temuan dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa kitab-kitab tersebut ditulis dalam konteks penjajahan Indonesia sekaligus bertujuan untuk kontra narasi terhadap ortodoksi beragama. Diskursus keislaman yang ditanamkan adalah berkaitan dengan; 1) Moralitas yang mengarah pada upaya moderasi sikap terhadap siapapun, seluruh makhluk di muka bumi, sekalipun terhadap musuh. 2) Moderasi beragama dengan cara mengangap saudara kepada mereka yang tidak seiman. 3) Kedisiplinan dalam bekerja ditujukan untuk menumbuhkan semangat perjuangan mendapatkan kehidupan yang layak. 4) sunnah dan bid'ah dijelaskan untuk memberikan kontra narasi terhadap wacana keagamaan ala Wahabisme yang menyerang tradisi-tradisi lokal. Selanjutnya, dalam waktu yang relatif bersamaan, Muslim di Haramain lebih keras terhadap tradisi dan mencoba mengembalikan agama kepada al-Qur'an dan hadis an sich, sementara Muslim di Nusantara lebih ramah terhadap tradisi lokal. Terbukti memasukkan konteks lokalitas dalam penyusunan karya hadis *Arba'in*, seperti saling mengasihi kepada sesama dalam konteks penjajahan Belanda. Inilah bentuk independensi keilmuan hadis yang dimiliki oleh ulama hadis di Nusantara.

Kata kunci: *Diskursus Keislaman; Hadis Arba'in Nusantara; Kuasa Jaringan Sanad.*

Introduction

The reaffirmation of Islam Nusantara is an effort to respond to the negative stigma surrounding Islam, which has intensified after the September 11, 2001 tragedy. Jeffrey A. Ritchey and Nurhaya Muchtar highlight how Islam is often linked with radicalism and terrorism, despite the fact that Islamic teachings do not promote violence (Ritchey & Muchtar, 2014, pp. 420–425). They found that Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) in Indonesia have successfully created moderate Muslims through a learning system based on the *kitab kuning* (classical Islamic texts). These texts are not only sourced from the Middle East but also written by Nusantara scholars who adapted Islamic teachings to local cultures (Akhiyat, 2017, pp. 256–257; Wirajaya, 2016, p. 59). As a result, in recent decades, there have been increasing calls to rediscover the intellectual treasures of Nusantara scholars' works as part of efforts to moderate Islam.

The history of hadith studies in Nusantara began in the 17th century, when scholars like Nuruddin al-Raniri and Abdur Rouf al-Sinkili started translating and interpreting hadiths into Malay to make them more accessible to local Muslims (Samsukadi, 2015, pp. 50–51). However, Islamic literacy activities sharply declined during the Dutch colonial period due to repression and political pressure. At the same time, the spread of takfirism from the Middle East led to local religious practices, such as *tahlilan* and *maulidan*, being considered deviations from Islamic teachings (Muqtada, 2016, p. 28; Tasrif, 2004, pp. 271–272). This situation sparked resistance from Nusantara scholars, culminating in the Hijaz Committee event (1926), where Hasyim Asy'ari and other scholars opposed the ban on freedom of madhab (school of thought) in Mecca (Nizar, n.d., p. 71; Putra, 2016, pp. 50–52).

In the development of hadith studies in Nusantara, several important works emerged in the 19th and 20th centuries, such as *Tanqih al-Qaul* by Nawawi al-Bantani and the works of Mahfuz al-Tarmasi. Al-Tarmasi is recognized as a pioneer of hadith studies in Nusantara, which was later continued by his student, Hasyim Asy'ari, who established a special *pesantren* for hadith studies in Tebuireng, Jombang. The sanad (chain of transmission) of hadith from Nusantara scholars is acknowledged up to the early Islamic narrators, although formally, the transmission of hadith through graduation processes remains limited (Muhajirin, 2016a, p. 103).

Hadith studies in Nusantara have three main characteristics. First, the trend of writing *Arba'in* (compilations of 40 hadiths) has become a distinctive feature of Nusantara scholars' works. Second, the main themes discussed in these works focus on theology (*aqidah*), morality (*akhlaq*), and the worship practices of Muslims (al-Tarmasi, 2008b, p. 20). Third, despite many Nusantara scholars studying in the Haramain (the Two Holy

Cities), their works still contain local elements adapted to the character of Indonesian society (Mas'ud, 2006, pp. 163 and 179; Samsukadi, 2015, p. 47). Therefore, the Islamic intellectual tradition in Nusantara not only enriches hadith studies but also becomes part of efforts to maintain a moderate Islam rooted in local cultural values.

The local elements in the hadith works of Nusantara scholars are clearly visible in the structure of the chapters they organize. Unlike the hadith books of prominent imams in the Middle East, which follow patterns in *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) books, Nusantara scholars take a more independent approach. This reflects their scholarly characteristic of not merely following the mainstream trends from the Middle East but also considering the local context. One interesting aspect of these works is the selection of hadith themes. For example, in the *al-Minhah al-Khairiyah* by Mahfuz al-Tarmasi, the first hadith listed is about compassion (*rahmah*) (al-Tarmasi, 2008b, p. 20). This hadith emphasizes the importance of mutual love and care, which was highly relevant in the social conditions of the time, where colonialism caused widespread suffering and torture.

The emphasis on morality is also evident in the works of Mahfuz al-Tarmasi's student, Hasyim Asy'ari. In Hasan Su'aidi's study, it was found that 19 of the 40 hadiths in Hasyim Asy'ari's *Arba'in* are related to the moral teachings embraced by the Nahdlatul Ulama (H. Asy'ari, n.d.-b, p. 4). The hadiths he selected are consistent with his teacher's, reinforcing the importance of compassion in social life (Su'aidi, 2015, p. 51). Similarly, in the *Hadis Arba'in* by Yasin al-Fadani (Al-Fadani, 1983, pp. 7–8), Ilyas Daud notes that about 21 hadiths in this book focus on morality. In fact, in the second section of his book, al-Fadani writes a hadith that stresses brotherhood among Muslims, teaching that a Muslim should not oppress their brother and must assist each other in times of hardship (Daud, 2016, pp. 152–156).

The main focus of the Islamic discourse in the *Arba'in* hadith works of Nusantara scholars is morality (Harnadi, n.d.). This shows that ethical values and *akhlaq* are prioritized in Islamic teachings in Nusantara. Therefore, rediscovering the classical Islamic heritage of Nusantara scholars becomes an important strategy in the discourse of religious moderation in Indonesia. By reviving this intellectual legacy, pesantren can contribute to countering radical movements that also use literacy as a propaganda tool. The intellectual tradition of pesantren based on *turats* has proven to be able to maintain moderate Islam in Indonesia. In the context of this research, exploring the hadith works of Nusantara scholars will help trace the roots of Nusantara Islam, especially in terms of morality, which has long been a key pillar in maintaining national unity.

The Developmental Context of Hadith Studies in the Nusantara from the 8th to the 20th Century

Although the intellectual tradition of Islam Nusantara has its roots in Islam from the Middle East, manuscripts found since the 17th century have focused more on *tasawuf* (Sufism) and *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), while disciplines such as *tafsir* (Qur'anic exegesis) and *syarh hadith* (hadith commentary) have been less developed. The dominance of *fiqh* and *tasawuf* studies is closely linked to colonial intervention, which restricted the entry of certain Islamic works into the Nusantara. As a result, hadith studies received less attention compared to other disciplines. However, this does not mean that no scholars paid attention to hadith studies. For example, in the 17th century, Nuruddin ar-Raniri wrote a manuscript titled *Hidayat al-Habib Fi al-Targhib Wa al-Tarhib* in Malay, which connects hadiths with Qur'anic verses to strengthen religious arguments (Bruinessen, 1993, p. 161; Danarto, 2004, p. 73).

Hadith holds an important position in Islam as it is regarded as the second source of law after the Qur'an. All aspects of life, including worship, *muamalah* (social transactions), politics, and education, are explained in the hadith. Therefore, hadith plays a significant role in shaping the social life of Muslim communities. Hadith studies in Indonesia gained more attention since the 17th century, particularly due to the colonial context. At that time, pesantren (Islamic boarding schools) communities revered *kiai* (religious leaders) more than colonial government leaders. The *kiai* played two key roles: as religious leaders guiding the community in eschatological matters and as socio-political leaders involved in the independence struggle. During the fight against colonization, many *kiai* used hadith and religious texts as ideological foundations, such as the slogan *hubbul wathan minal iman* (love for the homeland is part of faith) to inspire the fighting spirit of the santri (students) (Mas'ud, 2006, p. 179).

The development of hadith studies in Indonesia was also driven by the emergence of the purification movement, which emphasized a return to the Qur'an and hadith as the primary foundations of religious life. However, this movement was often unfriendly towards local traditions, leading to internal conflicts within the Muslim community. Since hadith plays a major role in shaping the social paradigm of Nusantara society, pesantren began to pay more attention to hadith studies. Mahfuzh at-Tarmasi (d. 1919/1920) became a pioneer of hadith studies in pesantren, making it a standalone subject in the curriculum (Danarto, 2004). His student, Hasyim Asy'ari, continued this tradition by establishing a special hadith pesantren in Tebuireng, Jombang. Since 1900, hadith and *ilm al-musthalah al-hadith* (science of hadith terminology) have been officially included in the curricula of various educational institutions in Indonesia. Since then, many Indonesian scholars have

started writing works related to hadith, in the form of books, articles, and scholarly journals.

Mahfuzh at-Tarmasi is an important figure in the development of hadith studies in Indonesia. In addition to being a freedom fighter, he was also highly respected in pesantren communities for his vast knowledge. His distinction lay in his reputation as a teacher at the Masjid al-Haram from 1890 to 1919, and as a Javanese hadith scholar—something rare at the time, given that hadith scholarship was more developed in the Middle East. With his mastery of various disciplines, Mahfuzh at-Tarmasi became a reference for many students, including those from outside Indonesia, and his contributions to hadith studies had a significant impact on the development of Islamic thought in the Nusantara (Mas'ud, 2006, p. 163).

Intellectual Tradition and Hadith Literacy in Nusantara

The genealogy of Islamic thought in the Nusantara is rooted in Islamic thought from the Middle East; however, Islamic manuscripts in the Nusantara since the 17th century have focused more on *tasawuf* (Sufism) and *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) than on *tafsir* (Qur'anic exegesis) and *syarh hadith* (hadith commentary) (Azra, 2004, p. 210 and 239; Munirah, 2018; Putra, 2016, p. 46; Samsukadi, 2015, pp. 50–51). This can be attributed to colonial intervention that restricted the entry of Islamic literature into the Nusantara, which hindered the development of hadith studies (Tasrif, 2004, pp. 271–272). Nevertheless, figures like Sheikh Nuruddin ar-Raniri began compiling hadith and connecting them with Qur'anic verses in their approach.

Hadith studies gained more attention starting in the 17th century, along with the increasing role of pesantren and *kiai* (religious leaders) in the independence struggle, where many used religious texts to build the spirit of nationalism. Furthermore, the rise of the Islamic purification movement also led to a greater focus on hadith, although this movement sometimes caused social tensions due to its tendency to judge differing religious practices. Hadith studies continued to develop after KH. Mahfuzh at-Tarmasi included hadith as part of the pesantren curriculum, a tradition continued by KH. Hasyim Asy'ari in Tebuireng.

The study of hadith further expanded into the 20th century, with important works from Nusantara scholars such as Muhammad Yasin al-Fadani. History shows that hadith studies in the Nusantara often emerged as a response to social-political conditions, including the independence struggle, dynamics of religious authority, and the influence of external ideas such as Wahhabism. This made the hadith works of Nusantara scholars

crucial in understanding the tension between traditional Islam and Arab Islamism (Fathurahman, 2011, p. 448; Wirajaya, 2016, p. 59).

After the death of Nuruddin al-Raniri (1658 CE) and his work *Hidayat al-Habib fi al-Targhib wa al-Tarhib* in Malay, the authority of scholars in the field of hadith experienced a vacuum. Muhammad bin Umar al-Nawawi al-Bantani (1897 CE) did not write an independent hadith book but only annotated (syarh) the *Arba'in* hadith collection by Jalaluddin al-Suyuti (1505 CE), titled *Tanqih al-Qaul fi Syarh Lubaab al-Hadis*. This vacuum ended in the late 19th century with the emergence of Mahfuzh al-Tarmasi (1919/1920 CE), who wrote three important works in the field of hadith: *al-Minhah al-Khairiyyah fi Arba'ina Hadisan min Ahadis Khair al-Bariyah*, its annotation *al-Khil'ah al-Fikriyah bi Syarh al-Minhah al-Khairiyyah*, and *Manhaj Zawi al-Nazhar bi Syarh Manzumat Ilm al-Asar* in the field of hadith sciences. Through these works, al-Tarmasi became a leading figure in hadith scholarship and was the first scholar to incorporate hadith into the pesantren curriculum, which had previously focused on *fiqh* and *tasawuf*. He also taught at the Masjid al-Haram from the early 1890s until 1919 due to his expertise. In *al-Khil'ah al-Fikriyah* (al-Tarmasi, 2008a, p. 6; Muhajirin, 2016b, p. 77), he emphasized that the forty hadiths he wrote had a *sanad musalsal* (connected chain of narrators) leading back to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), further solidifying his authority in hadith.

Al-Tarmasi's efforts were then continued by his student, Hasyim Asy'ari (d. 1947), a Nusantara hadith scholar who had a direct *isnad* (chain of transmission) from his teacher (H. Asy'ari, n.d.-a, p. 5). He was respected for two main reasons: first, as a charismatic scholar and founder of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU); and second, for his work *Risalah Ahlu al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah*, which became a key reference in hadith studies and a tool for filtering out modernist movements affiliated with Wahhabism and the Muslim Brotherhood. He also compiled forty hadiths in line with the NU's vision and mission to counter the takfirist ideology of Wahhabism, which were later codified in *Arba'una Hadisan Tata'allaqu bi Mabadi' Jam'iyyatu Nahdlatul Ulama* (Putra, 2013). This book cites authoritative sources, both from the *kutub al-sittah* (six major hadith collections) and non-canonical texts, and became a foundation for NU practices as a response to the social dynamics of his time.

The Style and Structure of Hadith Arba'in in the Archipelago

The majority of hadith works in the Nusantara follow the *arba'in* format, which typically consists of about 40 thematic hadiths. While hadith collections can be written in various other formats—such as *musannaf* (following fiqh chapters), *musnad* (listing

hadiths without indicating their authenticity), *sunan* (based on fiqh chapters with only *marfu'* hadiths), *jami'* (covering all aspects of religion), *ajza'* (gathering hadiths from a single narrator), *sahih* (only authentic hadiths), *atraf* (based on the beginning or end of the hadith), *mustakhraj* (quoting hadith text from authoritative books), and *mustadrak* (gathering hadiths that are not recorded in standard books)—the *arba'in* format is the most commonly adopted in Nusantara.

The primary reason for the widespread use of the *arba'in* format among Nusantara scholars is based on a hadith where the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) mentions that those who memorize 40 hadiths will be resurrected as a group of knowledgeable and pious individuals on the Day of Judgment. Another hadith promises that those who memorize 40 hadiths related to religious matters will be allowed to choose any gate of Paradise they wish (Muhajirin, 2016b, p. 83). This theological foundation is why scholars like Mahfuzh al-Tarmasi (1919/1920 CE) and other hadith scholars wrote their hadith collections in the *arba'in* format, addressing key themes such as *akidah* (faith), *ibadah* (worship), and *mu'amalah* (social interactions).

In addition to theological reasons, the *arba'in* format has a long-standing tradition, having been used by several scholars before, including Yasin al-Fadani. Al-Fadani noted that several scholars had written *arba'in* books, including Zahid Abdullah bin Mubarak with *al-Zuhd*, al-Hafidz Abu al-Qasim 'Ali bin Husain bin 'Asakir, and Ismail bin Abdul Ghafir al-Farisi (Al-Fadani, 1983, p. 3). In their works, the writing methods of al-Tarmasi and Hasyim Asy'ari employed *atraf* and *isnad* approaches. The steps they followed included: first, quoting a hadith by mentioning its primary narrator and source; second, quoting the text of the hadith only; and third, listing only the first narrator. These methods ensured the accuracy of the *sanad* (chain of narrators) and the validity of the hadiths they recorded, while also asserting their authority in the study of hadith in the Nusantara.

The *Arba'in* hadith works of Nusantara scholars played a significant role in preserving and developing Islamic understanding rooted in the hadith sources. One influential work is *al-Minhah al-Khairiyyah fi Arba'ina Hadisan min Ahadis Khair al-Bariyah* by Sheikh Mahfuzh al-Tarmasi. The hadiths in this book are taken from various trusted hadith collections such as *Sahih al-Bukhari*, *Sahih Muslim*, *Sunan al-Nasa'i*, *Sunan Abu Dawud*, *Sunan Ibn Majah*, *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, *Sahih Ibn Hibban*, and others. The majority of these hadiths are highly authoritative, with only a few being *mauquf* (attributed to companions) or *maqtu'* (attributed to the tabi'in) (Su'aidi, 2015, pp. 42–50). Al-Tarmasi also emphasized that the hadiths in his book came from the early and later parts of the *kutub al-sittah* (the six major hadith books) as well as *Sulasiyat al-Bukhari*, all of which were compiled with *sanad musalsal* (continuous chains) alongside his teachers. Thematically, these hadiths are divided into several categories, including

religion and dawah (11 hadiths), ethics (8 hadiths), worship (9 hadiths), leadership and politics (7 hadiths), and crime (4 hadiths). Compared to the *Arba'in* of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari, the theme of morality in al-Tarmasi's book only includes eight hadiths, whereas in Asy'ari's work, it constitutes almost half of the content, with 19 hadiths (al-Tarmasi, 2008a, p. 6; Muhajirin, 2016b, p. 7; Sakdiyah & Widayaningsih, 2017, p. 45).

The study of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's *Arba'in* is essential as it reveals the values that underpin the teachings of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). In this collection, the 40 hadiths compiled by Asy'ari convey strong messages about the unity of the Muslim community, respect for differences, and the legitimacy of the practices commonly carried out by NU members (KH. H. Asy'ari, n.d.; Putra, 2013, 2016). The key themes of these hadiths include the concept of religion as advice, warnings against incompetent leadership, characteristics of hypocrites, the importance of continuous good deeds, and the virtues of good conduct in daily life. These hadiths can be classified into five main categories: religion (5 hadiths), leadership (2 hadiths), good deeds (7 hadiths), ethics (14 hadiths), and sunnah and bid'ah (5 hadiths). Additionally, there are hadiths related to the importance of seeking knowledge (H. Asy'ari, n.d.-b). From the study of this collection, it is evident that Asy'ari's selection of hadiths was closely aligned with the mission of establishing NU and the social context of his time. Therefore, *takhrij* (the verification of hadith chains) becomes a crucial part of research to test the authenticity of the *sanad* and *matan* (content) of the hadiths used.

Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani's *Tanqih al-Qaul* is an annotation on the *Arba'in* hadith collection of al-Suyuthi. This book consists of 40 hadiths discussing the virtues of various pillars of Islam and daily religious practices. The topics covered in these hadiths include the virtues of *wudu* (ablution), *adhan* (call to prayer), *sadaqah* (charity), *salawat* (prayers for the Prophet), *istighfar* (seeking forgiveness), *tawbah* (repentance), marriage, and various moral behaviors such as humility, silence, laughter, visiting the sick, and remembering death. Nawawi organized the book systematically, beginning with praise for God and blessings on the Prophet, followed by a critique of al-Suyuthi's introduction, and then an explanation of each chapter's title, referencing the Qur'an, hadith, opinions of the *tabi'in*, and scholars. The analysis of the hadiths in this work includes criticism of the *sanad* and *matan*, with an emphasis on their authenticity and linguistic analysis, as well as the relevant Qur'anic verses, opinions of the companions, and classical Arabic poetry. Thus, *Tanqih al-Qaul* does not only serve as an annotation of al-Suyuthi's *Arba'in*, but also enriches understanding through a multidisciplinary approach.

The *Arba'in Hadith* collection by Sheikh Yasin al-Fadani is unique compared to other *Arba'in* works. Written in Arabic, this collection contains a long *sanad* chain linking the hadiths back to the author, al-Fadani. This indicates that al-Fadani still placed

importance on the composition of the *sanad*, even though, in modern hadith studies, the validation of the *sanad* after the great codifications (such as those by Imam Bukhari) is considered final. The method used in this collection resembles the *mustakhraj* approach, where each hadith is accompanied by a narration chain from al-Fadani to the companions of the Prophet. Another distinctive feature of this work is its structure, where each hadith is presented in four paragraphs: first, the *sanad* chain from al-Fadani to the codification era; second, the chain from the codification period to the companions; third, the text of the hadith; and fourth, an analysis of the hadith's narration quality. This approach shows that al-Fadani not only wanted to present selected hadiths, but also provide justification for the narration chains used. However, the challenge remains in the standard validation of narrations beyond the codification era, and how to assess the credibility of the narration chains used by al-Fadani. This remains an area for further research into the methodology of hadith in al-Fadani's *Arba'in*.

From the discussion of these four *Arba'in* collections, it is clear that each scholar had a different approach and objective in compiling their works. Al-Tarmasi focused on compiling hadiths from the *kutub al-sittah* with a variety of themes, while KH. Hasyim Asy'ari collected hadiths relevant to NU's teachings and the social context of his time. Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani provided in-depth annotations of al-Suyuthi's *Arba'in*, while al-Fadani emphasized the importance of the *sanad* in his compilation. These works show that Nusantara scholars made significant contributions to hadith scholarship, in terms of compilation, annotation, criticism, and contextualization for their communities.

Islamic Discourse in the Hadith Books of Arba'in in the Archipelago

The discourse on morality in the *Hadis Arba'in* works of the Nusantara scholars raises the theme of akhlak (moral character) as the main foundation in social interaction (bermuamalah). This reflects the character of the scholars, who are morally upright and wish to teach these morals to the people through the collection of 40 hadiths. According to them, akhlak is essential for every seeker of knowledge, as noble character is at the core of the mission of the Prophet, who was sent to perfect the moral character of humankind. The central themes that emerge from the hadiths collected include ethics toward all creatures and the ethics toward enemies who have surrendered. Mahfuz al-Tarmasi and Hasyim Asy'ari emphasize the importance of mutual love and compassion, including toward animals, citing hadiths that teach that those who show compassion will be shown compassion by Allah. Furthermore, they also teach that there is no place for hatred or killing enemies who have surrendered, as reflected in the hadith about Osama bin Zaid, who was forbidden from killing an enemy who had uttered the shahada. This

moral education aims to build a nation with good character, mutual respect, and compassion toward one another (al-Tarmasi, 2008b, p. 20; H. Asy'ari, n.d.-b).

The issue of religious moderation is also discussed in the *Hadis Arba'in*, particularly in the work of Syaikh Nawawi al-Bantani. He emphasizes the importance of tolerance between religious communities and rejects the takfiri ideology, citing a hadith that states that the faith of a person is incomplete unless they love their brother as they love themselves. Additionally, Nawawi criticizes egoism in religious practice, highlighting the importance of not only being physically present in the mosque but also keeping the heart always connected to the mosque as a symbol of closeness to Allah.

The theme of work discipline becomes the second focus in the *Hadis Arba'in* of Hasyim Asy'ari. During the colonial period, he urged the people to rise against injustice through character education that emphasized the importance of good deeds, avoiding envy and arrogance, and always speaking well. This is related to his role in the Jihad Resolution, which mobilized the santri to fight the colonizers and defend Indonesia's independence.

Finally, the discourse on sunnah and bid'ah in the work of Hasyim Asy'ari also receives attention. In *Risalah Aswaja*, he explains the difference between authentic sunnah and deviant bid'ah. For him, bid'ah is only accepted if it has a basis in the Qur'an or hadith, such as the compilation of the Qur'an by Umar bin Khattab, which, although not previously done, was intended for the benefit of the ummah. Emphasizing unity among the ummah and preserving the correct aqidah became the core of his struggle to face the division of the ummah caused by differences in religious understanding.

Overall, the works of the Nusantara scholars teach moral values, religious moderation, discipline, and a proper understanding of sunnah and bid'ah as a foundation to strengthen the character of the ummah and maintain the unity of Muslims in Indonesia.

Conclusion

The discourse on Islam in the *Hadis Arba'in* manuscripts written by Nusantara scholars such as Syaikh Mahfuzh al-Tarmasi, Syaikh Hasyim Asy'ari, Syaikh Nawawi al-Bantani, and Syaikh Yasin al-Fadani shows that the *kitab kuning* or *turats* (traditional Islamic texts) became an effective medium for religious moderation in Islam. These books were written with consideration for the socio-cultural context of Muslims in the Nusantara, especially during the colonial period, and aimed to present a counter-narrative to the more rigid religious orthodoxy. The teachings in the *Hadis Arba'in* emphasize a

morality that promotes moderation in attitudes toward all creatures, including enemies, as well as discipline in work to achieve a better life.

Furthermore, the themes of sunnah and bid'ah are addressed to respond to the Wahhabist attacks on local traditions. On the other hand, there is a notable difference in attitudes between Muslims in the Haramain (the holy cities of Mecca and Medina) and those in the Nusantara. In the Haramain, the stance on tradition was more rigid, focusing on returning the religion to pure Qur'anic and hadith practices. Meanwhile, in the Nusantara, the scholars were more tolerant toward local traditions, incorporating the context of Dutch colonialism into their works, such as teachings on mutual love and compassion among fellow Muslims. This reflects the independence of Nusantara scholars in developing Islamic knowledge, while still considering the local context and needs of their communities.

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