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THE ROLE of HUMANITIES in PROMOTING RELIGIOUS MODERATION

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Abstract

The Humanities are a collection of disciplines that focus on creating human culture, including beliefs, ideas, ethics, and traditions. This article investigates how it can contribute to stimulating moderation in religious contexts. Through the Humanities, it can help understand the role of religion in society more deeply, stimulate interfaith dialog, and encourage a broader understanding of the diversity of beliefs. Using a qualitative research method based on library research, this article outlines the importance of the Humanities as a facilitator to promote moderate attitudes toward diversity, positively contributing to harmony and understanding between religious communities. Among the roles of the humanities in promoting religious moderation are: 1. Unraveling a Deep Understanding of Religious Moderation Through the Study of Ancient Texts, 2. Integrating Islamic Philosophy with Religious Moderation to Minimize Radicalism, 3. Anthropological Approach as an Alternative Solution to the Study of Religious Moderation in Indonesia, 4. Exploring the Roots of Community

Religious Traditions to Strengthen Religious Moderation, 5. Culture-Based Religious Moderation.

Keywords: *Humanities, Roles, Religious Moderation*

Abstrak

Ilmu Humaniora dilihat sebagai kumpulan disiplin ilmu yang fokus pada penciptaan budaya manusia, termasuk aspek-aspek seperti keyakinan, ide-ide, etika, dan tradisi. Artikel ini menyelidiki bagaimana ilmu ini dapat memberikan kontribusi dalam merangsang sikap moderat dalam konteks keberagaman. Melalui Ilmu Humaniora dapat membantu memahami peran agama dalam masyarakat dengan lebih mendalam, merangsang dialog antar keyakinan, dan mendorong pemahaman yang lebih luas tentang keragaman keyakinan. Dengan menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif, berbasis library research (studi kepustakaan), artikel ini menguraikan pentingnya peran Ilmu Humaniora sebagai fasilitator untuk mempromosikan sikap moderat dalam konteks keberagaman, memberikan kontribusi positif terhadap harmoni dan pemahaman antar umat beragama. Diantara peran ilmu humaniora dalam mendorong moderasi beragama ialah, 1. Mengurai Pemahaman Mendalam Mengenai Moderasi Beragama Melalui Kajian Teks-Teks Kuno 2. Mengintegrasikan Filsafat Islam dengan Moderasi Beragama Guna Meminimalisir Radikalisme, 3. Pendekatan Antropologi Sebagai Solusi Alternatif Kajian Moderasi Beragama di Indonesia, 4. Mengulik Akar Tradisi Keagamaan Masyarakat Guna Penguatan Moderasi Beragama, 5. Moderasi Beragama Berbasis Budaya

Kata Kunci: *Ilmu Humaniora, Peran, Moderasi Beragama*

INTRODUCTION

In this era of globalization, the role of the humanities in developing and promoting moderation is becoming increasingly important. As a branch of science that focuses on studying people and society, humankind has a significant capacity to address our concerns about religion and build moderate values. In this context, moderation is not just a goal but also an urgent need in the face of the globalization of social and religious complexity.¹

The importance of understanding the role of humanities in religious moderation lies in its ability to penetrate and interpret religious values deeply. The

¹ Redaksi, "Pentingnya Pendidikan Moderasi Beragama," *UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung* (blog), 12 Juli 2023, <https://uinsgd.ac.id/pentingnya-pendidikan-moderasi-beragama/>.

humanities do not only see religion as a set of rules and norms but also as a social phenomenon that is closely related to everyday human life. Through this approach, the humanities can elaborate on the historical, social, and cultural contexts surrounding religious practices, thus helping us understand the essence of religious moderation as a necessity closely related to the context of human life.

Practicing religious moderation has become increasingly evident amid religious polarization and tensions in various world regions. Many conflicts and ideological shifts often stem from a lack of understanding of spiritual values. This is where the humanities take on an essential role as enlighteners, guiding us toward a more profound and more intelligent version of established religions. By examining the historical evolution of beliefs, the humanities form an objective perspective, freeing us from the constraints of dogmatism that often catalyze strife and disputes.²

In academic circles, the humanities are a platform to encourage critical thinking and deep contemplation of religious doctrines. Examining religious literature, philosophy, and historical aspects serves to study the universal principles embedded in every belief system. At the same time, it enables a more comprehensive perspective on various beliefs. The humanities, therefore, play an essential role in encouraging individuals to see religion as a source of peace, tolerance, and understanding rather than a trigger for discord and division.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research refers to the literature research method, specifically using a descriptive analysis approach. This research mainly describes certain phenomena, events, or symptoms using quantitative and qualitative data. Data sources were collected from various literature, such as books, scientific journals, and other supporting instruments, to investigate the concepts and outcomes that are the focus of this research. The information obtained from the literature was structured to provide a thorough explanation related to the object of description in this study. The descriptive analysis approach follows the framework proposed by Sugiyono.³

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

A. Understanding Humanities through Scope

The humanities encompass a wide range of disciplines that focus on the results of abstract and concrete human creativity, including beliefs, ideas, aesthetics,

² Moh Asvin Abdur Rochman, Moh Hazim Ahrori, dan Ratna Pangastuti, "Pendekatan Sosiologi dan Antropologi Sebagai Solusi Alternatif Moderasi Beragama di Indonesia," *Al-Mikraj: Jurnal Studi Islam dan Humaniora* 3, no. 2 (Januari 2023).

³ Sugiyono, *Cara Mudah Menyusun Skripsi, Tesis, dan Desertasi* (Yogyakarta: Alfabeta, 2015), 337.

morality, law, language, life experiences, and traditions. Therefore, the object of study involves subtle aspects, indirect realities, and cultural phenomena represented by language, customs, law, art, and so on. Understanding these diverse cultural phenomena is very important and necessary for the people involved in the culture.⁴

The humanities are often equated with the social sciences, also known as the social humanities. However, some consider them two fields: social sciences and humanities. According to Wilardjo, the humanities are defined as humans' moral attitudes and behaviors towards each other. Kuntowijoyo argues that the humanities are a branch of science that studies and gives meaning to the symbols created by human individuals and societies. Regarding Cassirer's view, Kuntowijoyo states that these symbolic forms include religion, philosophy, art, science, literature, myth, and language. All these forms of symbolism are the main focus of study in the humanities.⁵

Based on this understanding, the social sciences and humanities complement each other. While the social sciences focus on the different types and forms of individual behavior in society, the humanities emphasize the symbolic forms used by the community. Both fields involve ideographic data. If sociology, anthropology, economics, history, political science, communication, and the like fall under the social sciences category, then the humanities include language, literature, art, and religion as disciplines within the group.⁶

Humanities, as a field of study centered on human life, emphasizes creativity, innovation, originality, and uniqueness. The goal is to seek meaning and value, so it is norm-oriented. In the humanities, rationality not only includes thinking based on rational principles but also includes imaginative elements. For example, Leonardo da Vinci could create drawings resembling helicopters long before helicopters were invented. The field of humanities includes aspects such as language (both modern and classical), linguistics, literature, history, literary criticism, art theory, artistic practice, and all aspects of the social sciences that relate to humanity and use humanities methods.⁷

In an article in KOMPAS, J. Drost explains that initially, humanities disciplines that focus on improving human quality consisted of the trivium, which

⁴ Sigit Purnomo dkk., *Islam dan Ilmu Sosial Humaniora* (Yogyakarta: CV Multiartha Jatmika, 2021), 36.

⁵ Ichwansyah Tampubolon, "Islamic Studies Dalam Perspektif Ilmu Humaniora," *Al-Muaddib : Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial dan Keislaman* 4, no. 4 (2019): 256.

⁶ Mudjia Rahardjo, "Apa itu Ilmu Sosial dan Humaniora?," 12 Desember 2022, <https://humaniora.uin-malang.ac.id/index.php>.

⁷ M. Alie Humaedi, "Pemikiran Islam Dalam Jejak Kajian Humaniora," *Al-Tahrir* 12, no. 2 (November 2012): 399.

includes grammar, logic, and rhetoric. Grammar, or syntax, aims to assist individuals in understanding how to communicate effectively. Logic is designed to teach individuals how to convey ideas understandably and logically. Meanwhile, rhetoric seeks to train individuals to sense the feelings and needs of the audience and adapt to them in their delivery.⁸

The humanities encompass various disciplines that focus on forming human culture, including beliefs, ideas, beauty, morality, laws, language, life experiences, and traditions. These studies cover abstract and concrete aspects, including research into the values embedded in language, beliefs, and customs. To understand these cultural phenomena, interpretation and understanding of the people involved in the culture is required.⁹

In this context, the Humanities are responsible for investigating, explaining, and interpreting human cultural phenomena. The approach taken is through a single discipline, the Humanities, with a limited and specific focus, as outlined below:¹⁰

1. The Philological Perspective of Manuscripts or ancient texts studies ancient texts emphasizing philological interpretation. The focus is on understanding the essence of religious texts, often associated with basic concepts, ways of life in Islam, activities, and socio-cultural historical structures. From a philological point of view, there are three main types: first, classical philology, which analyzes and understands ancient religious texts without considering the historical, social, political, and cultural context—second, comparative philology, which compares linguistic elements found in various old readings. Third, modern philology seeks to connect lessons with their sources.
2. The Philosophical Science Perspective involves examining the content of a book and its concepts using critical, thorough, radical, explicit, systematic, rational, comprehensive, and detailed methods of reasoning, as described by Dr. R. S. The philosophical approach also entails honest, open, and fair discussion, dialogue, and debate about the arguments for or against an issue. From this perspective, there is a continuous and objective contact and relationship between the philosophical thinker and the surrounding world. The main goal is to reveal and define the various ideas or concepts found in the readings in a fundamental, essential, transcendental, general, abstract, and challenging-to-understand way. However, the conclusions drawn are speculative and never definitive, allowing further exploration and reflection to develop new findings.

⁸ “Apa itu Ilmu Sosial dan Humaniora?”

⁹ Tampubolon, “Islamic Studies Dalam Perspektif Ilmu Humaniora,” 265.

¹⁰ Tampubolon, “Islamic Studies Dalam Perspektif Ilmu Humaniora.”

3. The Theological Perspective is an approach used to understand concepts found in sacred texts or the views of individuals or groups (sects or schools) on topics of faith. This research focuses on aspects such as the concepts of God, angels, spirits, prophecy, miracles, demons, jinn, sin, reward, the relationship between God, humans, and the universe, and themes related to eschatology.
4. The legal science perspective is a scientific approach that examines legal issues, including the normative nature of law and legal events in the context of social law, using specific methods, structures, and concepts. The aim is to thoroughly investigate and understand the signs or facts of law to address the problems arising from these legal indicators. It also involves the study of Islam and the Humanities and Social Sciences.
5. The Historical Science Perspective is a valuable approach to scientifically recounting past events or history, especially incidents that occurred in the past. Its research results build on theoretical foundations that examine the long-term timeframe of historical events. Symbolic communication systems, rituals, attitudes, behaviors, and cultures, among other factors, often influence, shape, and define the development of human civilization. The goal is to discover and reveal past events or phenomena to understand them better and evaluate and draw valuable lessons from them, contributing to a better future for humanity.
6. Perspectives Anthropological Science focuses on creating scientific narratives about a society's phenomena, cultural events, and traditions. Furthermore, it builds a more in-depth theoretical framework based on these structures. Anthropology is the study of the structure of civilizations. In the context of anthropology, cultural structures are investigated from an ontological perspective, which includes thoughts (ideas), social systems (activities), and objects (artifacts). Artistic ideas refer to the concepts, values, and standards prevalent in cultural communities, which serve as guidelines for their way of life and are traditionally passed down from generation to generation. These are experiences that are local, temporal, communal, and exclusive. Furthermore, social activities refer to the actions people perform from age to generation, continuously forming a distinctive socio-cultural structure. Finally, cultural artifacts are objects or tools developed by a cultural group, inherited from generation to generation, used daily to meet their needs, and symbolize creativity and group identity.

B. Religious Moderation and Its Scope

It is important to understand moderation in the context of religion as an attitude that respects the religious practices of others with different beliefs (inclusive) while still practicing their religion (exclusive). This is because religious moderation is

the key to fostering harmony, peace, and tolerance at the local, national, and global levels. According to Professor Abuddin Nata, an expert in Islamic studies at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, Allah commands His servants to be fair, meaning maintaining balance and justice in all aspects of life and following the guidance in the Quran while doing good (Ihsan). The concept of justice reflects equality and harmony between rights and obligations. It is important to note that human rights should not be reduced because of commitments.¹¹

Lukman Hakim Saifuddin explained that moderation in religion should be understood as how we live our faith, not changing the teachings of faith itself. This is because religious teachings themselves are mostly moderate. However, when religion is interpreted by humans with limited understanding, various interpretations and views emerge. Therefore, moderation in religion becomes necessary to prevent excessive performance and extreme religious beliefs so as not to cause conflict between adherents of different faiths.¹²

In the Indonesian context, the values of Islamic moderation are implemented in the form of summation. Its characteristics, as stated by Afrizal Nur, are as follows:¹³

1. Tawazun is taking the middle path.
2. Tawasuth, taking the middle way
3. Tawazun, balance
4. I'tidal, straight and decisive
5. Tasamuh, tolerance
6. Musawah, egalitarian means not discriminating against others because of differences in beliefs, traditions, and origins.
7. Syura, that is, deliberating on every issue to reach a consensus with the principle of benefit above all else.
8. Ishlah, namely, prioritizing the principle of prioritizing reformative principles to achieve a better situation that accommodates better that accommodates change and progress.
9. Aulawiyah, prioritize
10. Tathawwur wa Iftikhar, dynamic and innovative

¹¹ Muria Khusnun Nisa dkk., "Moderasi Beragama: Landasan Moderasi Dalam Tradisi Berbagai Agama Dan Implementasi Di Era Disrupsi Digital," *Jurnal Riset Agama* 1, no. 3 (15 Desember 2021): 740, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jra.v1i3.15100>.

¹² Lukman Hakim Saifuddin, *Moderasi Beragama: Tanggapan Atas Masalah, Kesalahpahaman, Tuduhan, dan Tantangan yang Dihadapinya* (Yogyakarta: Yayasan Saifuddin Zuhri, 2022).

¹³ Lukmanul Hakim, Aziza Meria, dan Sartika Suryadinata, "Religious Moderation in Indonesian Context," *Al-Albab* 12, no. 1 (27 Juni 2023): 97, <https://doi.org/10.24260/alalbab.v12i1.2619>.

C. The Role of Humanities in Promoting Religious Moderation

As a field that focuses on understanding people, culture, and values, the humanities plays a vital role in supporting moderation in religious diversity. In an era of globalization and increasing social complexity, a deeper understanding of the contribution of the humanities to religious moderation is increasingly essential. This article will explore how the humanities contribute to a deeper understanding of religion and belief and how this understanding can help build harmony and tolerance among diverse religious communities.¹⁴ Emphasizing aspects such as the analysis of sacred texts, the study of religious thought, interfaith dialogue, and cultural analysis, this article will discuss how the humanities sciences contribute to strengthening religious moderation to achieve harmony in society.

1. Unraveling a Deeper Understanding of Religious Moderation Through the Study of Ancient Texts

Understanding religious moderation in the context of philological studies is to undergo religion with an approach that emphasizes careful understanding, interpretation, and investigation of sacred texts or religious literature. Philology allows us to explore and understand the roots of words, cultural contexts, and meanings contained in religious texts. In this case, religious moderation in philological studies can refer to understanding religious texts carefully and avoiding extreme or excessive interpretations that can trigger conflict. Thus, in philological studies, religious moderation means a thoughtful approach to understanding and investigating religious texts to promote a deeper and more harmonious understanding.

2. Integrating Islamic Philosophy with Religious Moderation to Minimize Radicalism

Religious moderation in the study of Islamic philosophy is an approach that prioritizes a balanced, tolerant, and wise understanding of religion. Learning Islamic philosophy makes attitudes more moderate and less passionate. In solving various problems, reasonable Islam takes a compromise approach. He is in the middle, promoting tolerance and mutual respect while still believing in the truth of each religion and school of thought so that all can accept gracefully without engaging in anarchist actions. A true Muslim is a Muslim who upholds the principle of moderation in all aspects of his life, even in worship activities.¹⁵

¹⁴ Abdul Halik, "Reintegrasi Tradisi Islam Dan Ilmu Sosial-Humaniora (Komparasi Riset Komunikasi Islam Dan Kajian Sejarah)," *Jurnal Komodifikasi* 7 (2019): 48.

¹⁵ Usan Usan dan Betty Mauli Rosa Bustam, "Filsafat Islam Sebagai Asas Moderasi Beragama Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Yaqzhan: Analisis Filsafat, Agama Dan Kemanusiaan* 8, no. 1 (1 Juni 2022): 102-16, <https://doi.org/10.24235/jy.v8i1.9413>.

Islamic philosophy enables in-depth analysis of theological concepts in Islam, including the images of God, the universe, and the afterlife. This helps to understand religion more contextually and inclusively. By applying religious moderation in the study of Islamic philosophy, the ultimate goal is to achieve harmony between religious belief and rational thought. This helps build a more inclusive, tolerant, and moderate understanding of diverse religious beliefs, contributing to peace in an increasingly diverse society.

3. Anthropological Approach as an Alternative Solution to the Study of Religious Moderation in Indonesia

Religious moderation in anthropological studies refers to an approach that encourages a balanced and tolerant understanding of various religious beliefs in society. Anthropological studies help explore, understand, and respect religious diversity in a cultural context. It involves the study of spiritual practices, rites, symbols, and values in different societal groups. Anthropology also promotes interfaith dialog and harmony and seeks the preservation of local wisdom related to religion. Thus, religious moderation in anthropological studies helps create a more inclusive and harmonious understanding of diverse religious beliefs in various societies.

An anthropological approach can explain how cultural values and traditions influence religious views and practices. Using this approach, we can examine how Indonesian society views concepts such as tolerance, religious freedom, and human rights within a religious framework. We can develop appropriate policies and strategies to enhance tolerance and interfaith harmony in Indonesia by understanding the various social, cultural, and spiritual factors influencing religious moderation. Therefore, anthropology is essential in addressing the challenges of religious moderation in Indonesia.¹⁶

4. Exploring the Roots of Community Religious Traditions to Strengthen Religious Moderation

The field of history in the humanities enables research into the origins and development of religious traditions. This helps in understanding how religious beliefs and practices have changed over time. Strengthening religious moderation through historical studies involves an in-depth understanding of the development and evolution of religious beliefs and practices in various societies throughout history. Through understanding the historical context, we can identify patterns of change in spiritual interpretation and practice and understand the root causes of religious

¹⁶ Rochman, Ahrori, dan Pangastuti, "Pendekatan Sosiologi dan Antropologi Sebagai Solusi Alternatif Moderasi Beragama di Indonesia," 108.

conflicts in history. History also helps us analyze the role of religious leaders in shaping religious views and practices.

Understanding the diverse religious beliefs in societies throughout history promotes respect for religious pluralism and reduces exclusionary attitudes toward other faiths. In addition, the study of history also plays a role in preserving local traditions and wisdom related to religion. With a deep understanding of the history of religious development, societies can learn from past experiences and work towards better understanding and tolerance of diverse religious beliefs, which in turn can strengthen religious moderation and promote interfaith harmony in society.

5. Culture-Based Religious Moderation

Culture has a vital role in the development of religious tolerance, how the culture of a society can contribute to the formation of an attitude of religious moderation, and how the efforts of religious believers in dialoguing understanding, acceptance, and fostering tolerance in a multi-religious society are essential. Such is the case in the Kaloran Temanggung, Central Java community, which has a unique religious composition. All official Indonesian religions have adherents in this region. This religious diversity also occurs in one family, where the husband, wife, and children embrace different beliefs.

Despite the diversity of religions, the people of Kaloran rarely experience conflicts caused by differences in beliefs. They embrace the concept of "religion aging aji," which embodies the idea that all religions teach salvation and virtue and aim to create prosperity. This philosophy serves as a unifier of religious diversity in Kaloran society and is the basis for religious moderation. According to the 2018 census, the Kaloran community has a unique religious composition, including Islam (37,874 people), Buddhism (5,287 people), Christianity (1,994 people), Catholicism (308 people), Hinduism (5 people), and local beliefs (163 people). For example, in Kalimanggis Village, each hamlet has a place of worship for local believers, such as a mosque, church, monastery, and meditation. In celebrating religious holidays, all community members participate regardless of religious differences. Religious leaders from different faiths are also asked to lead prayers in turn.¹⁷

D. Implementation of Religious Moderation in the Faculty of Adab and Humanities

Implementing studies on religious moderation in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities can involve various measures and initiatives to foster an inclusive and

¹⁷ Ali Sodiqin, "Moderasi Beragama Berbasis Budaya," diakses 14 November 2023, <https://ilmusyahidoktoral.uin-suka.ac.id/id/liputan/detail/1885/moderasi-beragama-berbasis-budaya>.

tolerant understanding of diverse religious beliefs within the context of the humanities. Here are some examples of the implementation:

1. Inclusive Curriculum Development: The faculty can develop a curriculum with specialized courses or modules addressing religious moderation, religious ethics, and interfaith dialogue. This approach will assist students in understanding the role of religion in culture and society.
2. Religious Research and Studies: The faculty can support research and scholarly studies on religious moderation issues. This involves both faculty and students in exploring topics such as interfaith dialogue, pluralism, and understanding religion within the context of the humanities
3. Establishment of Study and Discussion Groups: The faculty can establish study and discussion groups on religious moderation among students and lecturers. This platform will facilitate sharing thoughts, experiences, and ideas on promoting a more inclusive understanding of religion.
4. Cooperation with Religious Institutions: Faculties can collaborate with religious institutions and leaders to support moderation efforts. This includes inviting speakers from diverse religious backgrounds to share their views

Through the implementation of these measures, the Faculty of Arts and Humanities can play an essential role in promoting religious moderation and fostering an inclusive understanding of religion in their educational environment. This will contribute to building a more harmonious and tolerant society towards diverse religious beliefs.

CONCLUSIONS

This study focuses on the role that Humanities can play in religious moderation. The research results indicate that this field significantly contributes to promoting a moderate attitude within society in the context of spiritual life. The discussion encompasses various perspectives, including philology, philosophy, theology, law, history, and anthropology. The findings of this research highlight the importance of developing studies on religious moderation across various faculties and schools in Indonesia. Therefore, it is recommended that religious moderation be integrated into the educational curriculum. The dissemination of this moderate attitude within the academic environment can assist communities in building a more comfortable and tolerant life toward diverse religious beliefs.

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