



# ULISA: Uluslararası Çalışmalar Dergisi

## Journal of International Studies

Cilt 8, Sayı 2 - Volume 8, Number 2

Murat Kaçer\*

\* Dr. Araştırma Görevlisi; Siyaset Bilimi ve Kamu Yönetimi Bölümü, Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt Üniversitesi, Ankara, Türkiye; muratkacer@aybu.edu.tr; 0000-0001-6076-3403.

### Understanding Islam Nusantara: Principles, Features and Challenges

Established in 1926, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) is Indonesia's largest and most influential Islamic organization. NU introduced the concept of Islam Nusantara in 2015, emphasizing a spiritually enriched Islam in Indonesia that promotes character, cultural diversity, and universal love while rejecting extremist interpretations. Islam Nusantara advocates for a pluralistic approach, embracing diversity, rejecting authoritarian views, and aligning with core Islamic teachings. It encourages peaceful coexistence with followers of other religions, rejects extremism, and adheres to Sunni Islam principles. This article aims to analyze the concept of Islam Nusantara from diverse viewpoints, conducting a thorough examination of its principles, essential features, and distinctive characteristics. Additionally, it addresses the primary criticisms and challenges associated with it.

**Keywords:** Indonesia, Nahdlatul Ulama, Islam Nusantara, Nusantara.

### Nusantara İslam'ını Anlamak: İlkeler, Özellikler ve Sorunlar

1926 yılında kurulan Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Endonezya'nın en büyük ve etkili İslami örgütüdür. NU, 2015'te "Nusantara İslam'ı" kavramını ortaya atarak, kültürel çeşitliliği ve evrensel sevgiyi teşvik eden, aşırılığı reddeden ve manevi açıdan zengin bir Endonezya İslam'ını savunmuştur. Nusantara İslam'ı, çeşitliliği kucaklayan, otoriter görüşlere karşı duran ve temel İslami öğretilerle uyumlu olan çoğulcu bir yaklaşımı benimsemektedir. Ayrıca, Sünni İslam ilkelerine bağlı kalarak diğer dinlerin takipçileriyle barış içinde bir arada yaşamayı teşvik etmekte ve aşırılığı reddetmektedir. Bu makale, Nusantara İslam'ı kavramını çeşitli bakış açılarıyla analiz etmeyi, ilkelerini, temel özelliklerini ve ayırt edici özelliklerini detaylı bir şekilde incelemeyi amaçlamakta; aynı zamanda bu kavrama yönelik temel eleştirileri ve bu bağlamdaki zorlukları ele almaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Endonezya, Nehdatü'l Ulema, Nusantara İslamı, Nusantara.

Araştırma Makalesi | Original Article

**Atıf:** *Ulisa: Uluslararası Çalışmalar Dergisi*, Cilt 8, Sayı 2(2024), ss. 81-94.

**Citation:** *Ulisa: Journal of International Studies*, Vol 8, No 1(2024), pp. 81-94.

Başvuru 18.11.2023 Received | Kabul 27.12.2024 Accepted

Ulisa: Uluslararası Çalışmalar Dergisi, Uluslararası İlişkiler ve Stratejik Araştırmalar Enstitüsü (ULİSA) tarafından yayınlanmaktadır.

Ulisa: Journal of International Studies is published by the Institute for International Relations and Strategic Studies (ULİSA).

E-ISSN:2602-3245 | <https://aybu.edu.tr/yulisa>

# Understanding Islam Nusantara: Principles, Features and Challenges

## 1. Introduction

Islam has been a primary socio-political force in Indonesia, the country with the largest Muslim population in the world. Nahdlatul Ulama, established in 1926, stands as the largest and most influential Islamic organization in Indonesia.

Nahdlatul Ulama promoted Islam Nusantara during the 33rd Conference in 2015, focusing on spiritually enriched Islam in Indonesia. Islam Nusantara highlights character, cultural diversity as God's will, and promotes universal love while opposing extremist interpretations. Islam Nusantara opposes extremist interpretations of Islam and advocates for a pluralistic approach. It embraces diversity, rejects authoritarian views, and aligns itself with core Islamic teachings. Furthermore, Islam Nusantara encourages peaceful coexistence with followers of other religions, rejects extremism, and adheres to the principles of Sunni Islam. The central message is to promote a moderate and inclusive interpretation of Islam that emphasizes tolerance, peace, and coexistence with other belief systems.

This article aims to examine the concept of Islam Nusantara from multiple perspectives, conducting a detailed examination of its principles, key features, and distinctive characteristics. After providing a comprehensive understanding of the fundamental aspects of Islam Nusantara, the study will then investigate the primary criticisms and challenges that this concept faces, both within Indonesia and on a global level.

Given the profound influence of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) as the largest and most powerful Islamic organization worldwide, extending well beyond Indonesia, alongside Indonesia's global position as the world's most populous Muslim country, this article is significant. The main focus of this study is the concept of Islam Nusantara promoted by NU. It is particularly valuable as it examines the primary objections and challenges posed to this relatively recent idea, offering its comprehensive analysis.

This study is structured into three main parts. The first part provides a historical overview of Islam in Indonesia and Nahdlatul Ulama. The subsequent part explores Islam Nusantara, examining its principles, key features, and distinctive characteristics. Lastly, the third part addresses the primary criticisms and challenges associated with Islam Nusantara.

## 2. Islam in Indonesia

The spread of Islam in the Indonesian archipelago is linked to the movements of Indian, Persian, and Arab traders who followed and established sea routes to the Far East, including the Moluccan islands known for spices. Arab traders, mainly from the Hadramaut in South Arabia, appeared in the area in the ninth century, with increasing influence in the following decades. Persian traders also participated in east-west trade, contributing to the early Islamization of trade centers like Pasai in Sumatra. The Islamic influence in Southeast Asia strengthened in the 13th century, especially after the fall of Baghdad in 1258. Muslim merchants gained political power and wealth in the southeast Asian seaports, consolidating control and promoting Islam from the end of the 13th century onward (Schuman, 1974: 429-430).

Islam in Indonesia has been significantly influenced by developments in the Islamic mainland. Religious movements outside Indonesia have often resonated within the Indonesian Muslim community, with prompt reporting of events in the Arabian Peninsula and adjacent Arab countries to Indonesian teachers. Communication was facilitated through pilgrimages to Mecca, where Indonesian ulama (scholars) studied and brought back ideas, such as the puritanical teachings of Abd al-Wahhab, which influenced the padri movement in Sumatra in the early 19th century. In the late 19th century, some ulama traveled to Egypt to study the ideas of Muhammad Abduh, emphasizing the need to modernize Islamic education. The influence of Middle Eastern

thinkers, particularly Muhammed Rashid Rida, became prominent in Indonesian reform movements, especially in Minangkabau. Rida's emphasis on legal issues, reactions to the abolition of the caliphate in 1924, and criticism of Western politics and influences, including Christian missionary activities, fueled the independence movement in Indonesia. Muslim groups, particularly from Minangkabau and Java, played a key role in the early stages of the movement (Schumann, 1974: 430-431).

It is necessary to mention the unique character of Islam in Indonesia. Indonesian Islam is distinct due to historical reasons. Firstly, the arrival and establishment of Islam in Indonesia took place at a later point in time compared to its introduction in other countries, so it is relatively a late Islam. Secondly, Islam's spread in Indonesia was characterized by a deliberate avoidance of military conquest, opting instead for a more gradual and adaptive approach. Similar to how Hinduism and Buddhism integrated into the region's culture in the past, Islam slowly became a part of the local way of life in the archipelago. This integration was a natural process, emphasizing a non-forceful approach, where Islam blended into the cultural landscape over time rather than imposing itself through coercion. Thirdly, unlike in Iran and India, it is not an "Arab" Islam. While Arabic remains the religious language, the language of Islamization was Malay. Malay, conveyed by Muslim merchants, contributed to cultural unity and became the national language in the 20th century, known as "Indonesian." The number of individuals from Arabia in Indonesia has always been limited, and fluency in Arabic is rare among Indonesians. In connection with this, Islam adapted and coexisted with diverse local customs (*adat*) and power structures in Indonesia (Kato, 2021: 110-111; Staquf, 2015: 21-22).

The first Muslim political organization based on religious grounds in Indonesia was Sarekat Islam, founded in November 1911 by Haji Samanhoudhi. Initially a union of Muslim traders formed in 1905 against Chinese batik traders in Surakarta, it evolved into a political party, Partai Sarekat Islam (PSI), in 1927. Omar Sayyid Tjikroaminoto, a key leader, played a significant role in the organization and the nationalist movement until his death in 1934. The PSI faced challenges in the late 1920s, including dealing with Communist infiltration, but continued to contribute to the national movement. In 1972-3, the PSI merged into the Unity Development Party (Schumann, 1974: 431).

Developments in Middle Eastern politics in the mid-1920s influenced Indonesian Muslims, leading to a split between conservative leaders and reformists in the wake of events like the abolition of the caliphate in Turkey and Ibn Sa'ud's victory over Sharif Husain of Mecca in 1924. This situation has given rise to two fundamental movements representing these opposing poles in Indonesia: Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama.

Muhammadiyah was founded by Haji Ahmad Dahlan in 1912 in Jogjakarta, a non-political yet influential social organization with a strong Islamic foundation. Differing from the Javanese-focused Bud Uromo organization he joined in 1909, Muhammadiyah aimed to reshape traditional Islamic thinking with modern science and reform the Islamic educational system. Ahmad Dahlan also addressed public health issues, promoted health education, and sought to improve living standards for Muslims by supporting small entrepreneurs and farmers. Similar to Rashid Rida in Cairo, Muhammadiyah was open to adopting activities aligned with Islamic doctrines from Christian missions. Despite allowing its members to join political parties like Sarekat Islam, Muhammadiyah itself resisted becoming a political entity. Following Dahlan's death in 1923, an apologetic attitude emerged within the organization. Muhammadiyah played a crucial role in advancing Muslim society in Indonesia without succumbing to political temptations. The term "da'wa" gained prominence, representing an Islamic mission to strengthen and spiritually fortify the Muslim community, making it appealing to those outside. Mohammad Natsir, a former Prime Minister, became a key figure in promoting da'wa and collaborated initially with Persatuan Islam (Persis), another Muslim organization focused on spreading Islamic teachings through schools and publications. Unlike Muhammadiyah, Persis was more polemic and less engaged in social issues (Schumann, 1974: 433).

The second important pole, Nahdlatul Ulama founded in 1926 is a powerful Islamic association representing traditionalists in Indonesia. Due to its importance and relation with Islam Nusantara, I will examine Nahdlatul Ulama in detail.

## **2.1. Nahdlatul Ulama**

Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) was founded in 1926 in Surabaya, Java, by religious scholars Hashim Ash'ari and Abdulwahhab Hasbullah, embodying the principles of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamaat with a strong commitment to the four major Sunni sects (Saenong, 2021: 130; Ismail, 2011). The origins of NU can be attributed to two fundamental dynamics—one at the national (local) level and the other on the international stage. Nationally, the rise of the Muhammadiyah movement, advocating religious reform and innovation in Indonesia, gained prominence and influence across the country (Göksoy, 2006: 541; Ismail, 2011: 253). Internationally, socio-political changes in other Islamic nations, such as the growing Wahhabi influence in the Hejaz region and the establishment of a new state in Turkey with the abolishment of the caliphate, resonated deeply with traditional and conservative scholars in Java, sparking reflections and discussions (Göksoy, 2006: 541; Ismail, 2011: 250).

In response to these developments, conservative scholars, led by Abdul Wahab Hasbullah, proposed participation in the Mecca congress and the continuation of traditional religious practices from the Saudi administration. However, the majority of scholars at the Bandung Congress rejected this proposition, leading to the formation of the Hejaz Committee and the establishment of Nahdlatul Ulama in Surabaya on January 31, 1926. The Dutch colonial government officially recognized the organization on January 6, 1930 (Göksoy, 2006: 541; Ismail, 2011: 256; Saenong, 2021: 131-132).

Nahdlatul Ulama's formation goals elucidate its organizational structure, primarily defined by its religious identity and adherence to the Sunni tradition, specifically the Shafi'i school of thought. The organization aimed to engage in various activities spanning religious, educational, cultural, and socio-economic spheres, including spreading religious education, promoting traditional culture, strengthening connections among scholars, ensuring alignment of religious publications with the Sunni tradition, propagating Islam in line with the teachings of the four main Sunni schools of thought, publishing religious books, establishing religious schools, overseeing maintenance and repair of institutions like mosques and madrasas, and managing foundations and religious organizations. These goals predominantly pertained to the fields of religion, education, and culture (Göksoy, 2006: 541; Ismail, 2011: 260-261).

Additionally, Nahdlatul Ulama sought to address social justice issues by safeguarding the rights of the poor and orphans, stimulating economic activities through cooperatives and trade, and establishing infrastructure to ensure that activities in agriculture, trade, and industry aligned with Islamic principles within society (Göksoy, 2006: 541).

Nahdlatul Ulama's emblem encapsulates its theology, characters, and ideals through various symbolic elements. The globe, inspired by Quranic verse Q. 20:55, represents Earth and underscores NU's dedication to conserving and protecting the planet for present and future generations. This reflects a universal ideal, signaling that NU's mission extends beyond its immediate members and communities to encompass all of humanity. The inclusion of the Indonesian map on the globe emphasizes NU's deep roots in the country. The ropes encircling the globe, in line with Quranic verse Q. 3:103, symbolize NU's commitment to tying together the global population in terms of humanity, with the number of lines corresponding to the 99 beautiful names of Allah, reflecting concepts of brotherhood and unity. Nine stars on the emblem signify key figures in Islamic history, aligning with NU's adherence to mainstream Islamic theological principles. The colors green and white symbolize Indonesia's fertile land and the saintliness of Nahdlatul Ulama's characters, while the Arabic and Roman text on the emblem identify the organization (Saenong, 2021: 133-134).



*Figure 1. NU's Emblem*

In the 1930s, Nahdlatul Ulama underwent significant expansion, emerging as one of Indonesia's two major religious organizations and movements prior to World War II. This period saw a rise in the organization's economic endeavors, with cooperative initiatives established in its branches to oversee donated lands and product sales. Rooted in traditional religious education, specifically the "pesantren" (Islamic boarding schools), the organization's foundation played a crucial role in its societal empowerment and growth both qualitatively and quantitatively. Initially concentrated in Java, the organization later expanded to the Kalimantan region, incorporating smaller structures and local organizations into its fold as it grew (Göksoy, 2006: 541-542; Ismail, 2011: 262, Pektas, 2021: 196).

The latter half of the 1930s witnessed a shift from sharp divisions between conservative religious scholars and innovative Muslim circles to a more tolerant atmosphere. Hasyim Ash'ari, a key figure, played a significant role in establishing the Indonesia High Islamic Council in 1937, representing Nahdlatul Ulama and assuming its presidency. While the organization initially avoided politics during the colonial period, it focused on religious and socio-economic activities, expressing sensitivity to national issues and opposing government regulations related to religion. Notably, it strongly objected to the 1925 Guru Law and the transfer of inheritance cases to civil courts in 1935 (Göksoy, 2006: 542).

During the Japanese occupation (1942-1945), the relationship between Islamic organizations and the government underwent significant changes. The Japanese administration sought to mobilize the populace against Western powers, uniting all Islamic organizations under the Indonesian Muslim Consultative Council (MASYUMI), led by Hasyim Ash'ari. A declaration of jihad was made against the Allies, and a militia force, Hizbullah, was formed. Additionally, the Native Affairs Bureau transformed into the Religious Affairs Department, with Ash'ari as its head (Saenong, 2021: 139-141; Ismail, 2011: 268).

With the end of the Japanese occupation in 1945, Nahdlatul Ulama representatives participated in constitutional drafting for Indonesia's independence. Despite efforts to base the new republic on Islam, they eventually accepted President Sukarno's "Five Principles." In October 1945, the organization issued a fatwa, declaring it a religious duty to participate in the military struggle against the Dutch, who sought to reassert colonial rule after World War II. This fatwa played a significant role in the battle when Surabaya was invaded by the Allies in November 1945.

By November 1945, the Indonesian Muslim Consultative Council transformed into a political party, and Nahdlatul Ulama became part of this entity. However, in 1952, it separated and independently participated in the 1955 elections. In 1973, along with other Islamist parties, it joined the United Development Party as per a government decision. Throughout this evolution, Nahdlatul Ulama expanded its organizational framework, establishing Ansor in 1934, Muslimat in 1946, and Fatayat in 1950. In 1984, the organization decided to withdraw completely from political activities, returning to its status from its founding years (Göksoy, 2006: 542; Saenong, 2021: 139-141; Ismail, 2011: 266).

### **3. Islam Nusantara**

The concept of Islam Nusantara was officially introduced and subjected to formal deliberation for the first time at the 33rd Conference of Nahdlatul Ulama in Jombang, East Java, in 2015. The conference was held under the theme "Affirming the Islam Nusantara Concept for the Indonesian and World Civilization." (Baytarrahma August 2015; Muhammad & Duderija, 2022: 92; Arifianto, 2016; Pektas, 2021: 197).

In this conference, Islam Nusantara was introduced as representing a spiritually enriched form of Islam prevalent in the Malay Archipelago, placing emphasis on noble character, acknowledging cultural diversity as an expression of God's will, and advocating for universal love and compassion. This concept opposes extremist interpretations by embracing pluralism and rejecting authoritarian views, making it incompatible with the ideologies of Islamist extremists (Baytarrahma August 2015).

After this conference, Nahdlatul Ulama organized the International Summit of Moderate Islamic Leaders (ISOMIL) to promote Islam Nusantara in May 2016. Following ISOMIL, Nahdlatul Ulama issued a declaration on Islam Nusantara, emphasizing key points such as alignment with core Islamic teachings, advocating peaceful coexistence with other religions without dominance, rejecting extremism, and affirming adherence to Sunni Islam (Baytarrahma October 2016; Kato, 2021: 112)

#### **3.1. Main Key Features**

Islam Nusantara encompasses Indonesia's rich national and socio-cultural heritage. Central to its essence is the recontextualization of Islamic orthodoxy, advocating for a moderate and inclusive interpretation of the faith. This distinctive form of Islam is characterized by a commitment to religious pluralism, fostering open dialogue among various religious communities. Notably, it emphasizes state-backed collaboration, forging a cooperative partnership between the government and religious institutions. Standing resolutely against terrorism and extremism, Islam Nusantara serves as a beacon of peace and tolerance, positioning itself as a role model that inspires not only Indonesia but also other Muslim nations aspiring to cultivate a balanced and inclusive societal framework.

##### **3.1.1. Integration of Nation, Nationalism, Culture and Religion**

Islam Nusantara is a way of understanding Islam that embraces the diverse cultural and historical aspects of the Nusantara region. Instead of just coexisting, it actively flourishes alongside the various traditions, customs, and historical backgrounds that make up the Nusantara region. This approach to Islam is dynamic and inclusive, recognizing and valuing the rich cultural context. It's not just about Islam influencing the region; it's also about the region enriching and being enriched by Islamic values. Essentially, Islam Nusantara creates a harmonious blend between the Islamic faith and the varied heritage of the Nusantara region, forming a unique and balanced synthesis (Baytarrahma August 2015; Baytarrahma October 2016).

Therefore, primarily, it is highlighted that the Nusantara region possesses a highly diverse identity in terms of ethnicity, language, and culture. Additionally, dynamic interactions among individuals from various groups play a significant role in shaping the region's rich tapestry. Secondly, Islam Nusantara emphasizes that the Islam spreads harmonized with the established values, local customs, principles and institutions, and adapted to them peacefully in Nusantara region. In this regard, it distinguishes itself from other manifestations of Islam, such as Turkish, Arab, and Persian versions. It does not adhere to an Islam predominantly influenced by Arabs and Arabic culture. Nonetheless, it is explicitly mentioned that Islam Nusantara is neither a separate nor a novel religion. Instead, it is described as the authentic manifestation of Islam that evolved naturally within its cultural milieu. It is underscored that this form of Islam aligns harmoniously with the principles of Islamic Sharia, without conflicting with the tenets upheld by the broader traditional Sunni Muslim community, known as Ahl al-Sunnah wal Jama'ah (Arifianto, 2016;

Muhammad & Duderija, 2022: 92)

In the realm of specific socio-cultural, historical, and national elements pertaining to Indonesia, or as favored by Nahdlatul Ulama, I will discuss some key references include Pancasila ("Five Principles"), Bhinneka Tunggal Ika ("Unity Amid Diversity"), and the wali songo within the context of Islam Nusantara. The concept of Pancasila is derived from Sanskrit meaning "Five Principles." Pancasila comprises five principles: belief in one supreme God, just and civilized humanity, unity of Indonesia, democracy guided by inner wisdom, and social justice for all Indonesians. This concept emerged amidst debates over whether Indonesia would adopt a Sharia state model during its founding period, sparking deliberations between secular nationalists and the traditional religious community, particularly the Nahdlatul Ulama group. Eventually, a decision was reached that the state would be established not according to Islamic principles but based on Pancasila. Pancasila was thus embraced as the fundamental pillar of the state, a stance also endorsed by Nahdlatul Ulama. With the inclusion of Islam Nusantara in their agenda, Nahdlatul Ulama recognized it as an integral part of their cultural heritage ((Saenong, 2021: 129; Ismail, 2011: 274).

Another essential element is "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika," Indonesia's national motto, coined during the Majapahit golden age. "Bhinneka" signifies "different" or "diverse," "Tunggal" means "one," and "Ika" means "that." Translated, it conveys "Variative Yet One/Unity Amid Diversity," highlighting unity despite significant differences in ethnicity, language, culture, geography, and religion among the people of Indonesia. The motto symbolizes the idea that they are all citizens of a single, unified nation. Notably, Nahdlatul Ulama endorses this motto (Staquf, 2015: 19).

Wali Songo also holds significant importance as a national, religious, historical, and socio-cultural value. The Wali Songo, a group of nine saints, played a significant role in promoting Islam in Java. They achieved this by integrating Islamic values into pre-existing cultural practices, such as incorporating Islamic themes into wayang kulit (shadow puppet performances). This approach facilitated the active promotion of Islam while simultaneously preserving pre-Islamic traditions (Muhammad & Duderija, 2022: 93-94).

Illustrating the cultural, national, and religious amalgamation within the context of Islam Nusantara, a compelling example emerges through Indonesia's initiative to relocate its capital from Jakarta to Nusantara in East Kalimantan by 2045, under the leadership of President Joko Widodo. The proposed relocation aims to accommodate up to 1.9 million individuals in Nusantara by 2045. Notably, preliminary steps are anticipated to commence, with the initial wave of civil servants transitioning to Nusantara as early as 2024 (CNBC, Aug 27, 2023). This plan extends beyond mere infrastructural changes; as mentioned, it encapsulates a vision of cultural unity and national integration.

After highlighting the historical, religious, and socio-cultural aspects of Indonesia (Nusantara) in the context of Nahdlatul Ulama's Islam Nusantara, it becomes crucial to address a topic closely connected to the intersection of religion and nationalism. For instance, the late NU cleric Wahab Hasbullah asserted that "nationalism plus basmallah is Islam," highlighting the interconnectedness of Islamic teachings and nationalism. This perspective underscores the importance of viewing Islam as a religion that is friendly, tolerant, and patriotic. According to Muslim scholar Azyumardi Azra, Islam Nusantara represents an empirical and practical Islam that has adapted and thrived through dynamic interactions with Indonesian social, cultural, and religious realities, embodying contextualization, indigenization, and vernacularization of universal Islamic principles (Pektas, 2021: 206). Furthermore, in the 2016 declaration on Islam Nusantara, Nahdlatul Ulama explicitly asserted that there is no inherent conflict between Islam and nationalism. This declaration underscores the nationalist and patriotic position adopted by Islam Nusantara. Islam Nusantara holds the perspective that there is no conflict between religion and nationalism. The phrase "Hubul watan minal iman" signifies that patriotism is considered an integral part of faith. In simpler terms, being a patriot is seen as inseparable from being a faithful person. From the viewpoint of Islam Nusantara, if someone lacks patriotism, it suggests either they

do not have a homeland, or they lack an emotional attachment to it. This implies that having a strong connection to one's homeland is crucial for individuals who follow this perspective. Without such a connection, it is suggested that individuals may become detached from their historical and cultural origins. Essentially, Islam Nusantara emphasizes a harmonious coexistence of religious and national identities, with a strong emphasis on the importance of patriotism in one's faith.

*“From the perspective of Islam Nusantara, no conflict exists between religion and nationalism. Hubul watan minal iman: “Patriotism is integral to faith.” Whoever lacks patriotism either has no native land or is devoid of attachment to it. Those who lack a native land will be devoid of history”* (Baytarrahma October 2016).

Moreover, Abdurrahman Wahid, a former influential leader of Nahdlatul Ulama and the first democratically elected president of Indonesia in 1999, founded the National Awakening Party (NAP) (Pektas, 2021: 196). This decision in naming stands as a noteworthy illustration, underscoring the nationalist sensitivities ingrained within Nahdlatul Ulama.

### **3.1.2. Recontextualizing Islamic Orthodoxy and A Moderate Islam**

Nahdlatul Ulama identifies the exploitation of Islam and attributes it to specific aspects within Islamic orthodoxy. To address this, Nahdlatul Ulama advocates for the reform of Islamic orthodoxy, aiming to mitigate the exploitation of Islam. One challenge of Islamic orthodoxy relates to the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims, which NU seeks to address by promoting peaceful resolutions and harmony among individuals of different religious backgrounds (Baytarrahma October 2018a; Baytarrahma October 2018b).

NU also addresses problematic tenets, such as the idea of a single Islamic state, emphasizing compatibility with the nation-state concept. Another issue involves the rejection of laws from modern political processes, which Nahdlatul Ulama seeks to resolve by asserting the harmony between state constitutions and Islamic principles. Nahdlatul Ulama's reform efforts involve transforming prejudices and negative perceptions within the Muslim community through intellectual and theological discussions (Baytarrahma May 2017; Baytarrahma October 2018a; Baytarrahma October 2018b).

The distinction between sharia (expressing perennial values) and fiqh (interpreted Islamic law) is crucial in this reform process. NU sees Islam as dynamic, with transcendent elements (immutable values) and temporal elements (responses to historical circumstances). They argue for adapting certain aspects of Islam to changing times, recognizing global transformations since the First World War. NU contends that the lack of systematic adjustment of traditional Islamic teachings contributes to the crisis in the Muslim world, and they propose applying principles like fiqh and Mutaghayyirāt to address these challenges (Baytarrahma May 2017; Baytarrahma October 2018a; Baytarrahma October 2018b).

Islam Nusantara stands as a pivotal facet of Nahdlatul Ulama's initiatives, embodying a nuanced and moderate interpretation of Islam that approaches issues with a lens of compassion and mercy. The title of the 2016 conference, labeled the International Summit of the Moderate Islamic Leaders (ISOMIL), explicitly underscores its commitment to the concept of moderation (tawassut) within Islamic principles. Islam Nusantara emphasizes the need to avoid extremism and encourages a well-balanced approach in different aspects of life, such as religious practices, social interactions, and political engagements. Moreover, it strongly underscores the value of embracing diversity and fostering an atmosphere of acceptance. The philosophy actively advocates that tolerance (tasamuh) is vital for promoting harmony and peaceful coexistence among individuals with diverse backgrounds and faiths (Baytarrahma August 2015; Baytarrahma October 2016; Muhammad & Duderija, 2022: 93; Pektas, 2021: 197; Kato, 2021: 123-124). Therefore, Nahdlatul Ulama's reform of Islamic orthodoxy and moderate Islam project constitute an important aspect of Islam Nusantara.



### 3.1.3. Religious Pluralism and Inter/Intra-Religious Dialogue

Islam Nusantara places significant importance on religious pluralism, asserting that participating in dialogues within Islam and with other religions and beliefs is not in conflict with the fundamental principles of Islam. Instead, it considers such engagements as essential components contributing to the cultural richness and diversity of Indonesia. A concrete manifestation of this outlook is the Indonesian government's official recognition of six religions, namely Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Catholicism, Protestantism, and Confucianism (Baytarrahma August 2015; Kato, 2021: 110).

Once again, in the context of this conversation, the significance of the *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* concept becomes evident. As mentioned earlier, it encapsulates the notion of embracing diversity within a unified whole, fostering meaningful dialogue specific to Indonesia. Indonesia, known for its rich socio-cultural diversity comprising approximately 300 distinct ethnic groups, provides a vibrant setting for embodying this principle. Staquf, a prominent figure in Nahdlatul Ulama, emphasizes this ethos as a crucial aspect of the Nusantara civilization. This underscores NU's stance on religious pluralism, showcasing a dedication to recognizing and appreciating the diversity of religious beliefs coexisting within the nation (Kato, 2021: 110; Staquf, 2015: 19).

It is noteworthy that Abdurrahman Wahid played a pivotal role in shaping NU's contemporary approaches, such as Islam Nusantara and Humanitarian Islam. Appointed as the general secretary of N.U. in 1984, Wahid spearheaded Forum Democracy, a political discussion group that significantly influenced NU's evolving perspectives. Wahid's establishment of Forum Democracy marked a pivotal moment, as he brought together dissidents and human rights activists. Internally and externally, Wahid earned recognition as a proponent of interfaith dialogue. He also faced criticism for being perceived as having pro-Israel tendencies and for defending Salman Rushdie (Esfandiar, 2022: 30).

### 3.1.4. State-Backed Collaboration

Nahdlatul Ulama's Islam Nusantara enjoys support from the state, with high-level government officials actively participating in related events. Notably, the 2015 congress received support from the Indonesian Prime Minister, Joko Widodo. During his address at the event, Widodo expressed profound concern about the political turmoil and violence in the Muslim Middle East, specifically mentioning the tumultuous situations in Syria and Iraq. He contrasted these challenges with what he termed "our Islam," referring to Islam Nusantara—a form of Islam characterized by its gentleness, politeness, and civilization. In articulating his support, Widodo emphasized the values of tolerance embedded in Islam Nusantara, highlighting its contrast with the unrest in other regions.

*"I am profoundly concerned by the political upheavals and bloodshed in the Muslim Middle East. Syria and Iraq are shaking violently (like buildings in an earthquake). Praise be to God, our Islam is Islam Nusantara. Islam that is gentle and polite. Islam that is civilized. That is Islam Nusantara: Islam full of tolerance"* (Baytarrahma August 2015; Arifianto, 2016).

Certainly, a substantial number of members from Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) hold key positions, particularly in religious and educational bureaucracies. A notable example is Ma'aruf Amin, the former supreme leader of NU, who assumed the role of Vice President in April 2019. Concurrently, Yahya Cholil Staquf, presently the Secretary-General of NU, has been instrumental in shaping the organization's stance on jihadist insurgence and global engagement. Notably, he was appointed by President Widodo in May 2018 to join the influential Presidential Advisory Council. These instances highlight a symbiotic relationship evolving between the Indonesian state and NU. The incorporation of NU leaders into significant governmental roles not only signifies a collaborative partnership but also underscores the government's recognition of NU's pivotal role in shaping societal discourse and addressing intricate geopolitical challenges (Pektas, 2021: 196; Kato, 2021: 118; Arifianto, 2016).

Furthermore, in the aftermath of an IS-inspired bomb blast in central Jakarta in 2016, Indonesia's anti-terror governmental organizations have incorporated the principles of peace, moderation, and compassion into their anti-radicalization programs. Additionally, the Ministry of Religion in Indonesia has launched the 'Islam Rahmatan lil 'Alamin' curriculum, with the objective of training 200,000 public school religion teachers. This curriculum emphasizes the teaching of Islam with a focus on peace and moderation, reflecting a proactive approach towards countering radical ideologies and fostering a more tolerant society (Hoesterey, 2020: 196-197). Similarly, Nahdlatul Ulama is actively collaborating with the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to promote “cultural diplomacy” in the Middle East. The main goal is to better understand and address the complex reasons behind radicalism and extremism in the region. (Arifianto, 2016).

As mentioned earlier, I emphasized the upcoming shift of Indonesia's capital to Nusantara. This signifies the government's adoption of the "Nusantara" concept, elevating it beyond a conceptual notion to a substantial and impactful policy, as illustrated by the deliberate decision to move the capital.

### **3.1.5. A Stand Against Terrorism and Extremism**

Islam Nusantara seeks to construct cohesive historical and ideological narratives against Islamic extremism, aligning with Indonesia's identity as a moderate Muslim nation. In an increasingly interconnected world, the phenomenon of Islamic extremism is on the rise. NU acknowledges that the current surge in extremism is frequently driven by ideologies rooted in ultra-conservative interpretations of Islamic orthodoxy. In response to this growing challenge, NU not only promotes Islam Nusantara as an exemplar of Islam characterized by moderation and tolerance, asserting that these qualities are inherent in the DNA of Indonesian Islam, particularly in comparison to other regions, notably the Arab world. Beyond mere advocacy, NU takes active measures to address the pressing need to prevent and counteract extremist movements (Mandaville & Hamid, 2018: 25; Pektas, 2021: 197, Arifianto, 2016).

A central focus of NU's efforts lies in recognizing the imperative for reform within Islamic orthodoxy to effectively diminish the influence of radical ideologies. In this regard, NU's stance surpasses the mere presentation of Islam Nusantara as a peaceful alternative; it involves a proactive commitment to confronting and reforming the fundamental underpinnings of extremism within the broader Islamic context. By acknowledging the necessity for internal reform, NU seeks to curb the roots of extremism, emphasizing a comprehensive approach that not only showcases a more moderate interpretation of Islam but also actively engages in efforts to reshape the ideological landscape and foster a more tolerant and peaceful Islamic discourse by introducing Islam Nusantara (Baytarrahma August 2015; Baytarrahma October 2016; Baytarrahma October 2018a)

### **3.1.6. A Role Model: Inspiring Muslim Nations**

In 2016, at the ISOMIL event, NU (Nahdlatul Ulama) explicitly stated that Islam Nusantara is not intended to be “exported” but rather serves as an invitation for Muslim countries to deeply contemplate and appreciate the historical interplay between Islam and diverse local cultures. NU emphasizes that the symbiosis between Islam and the cultures of the Nusantara region has played a significant role in shaping civilizations, particularly evident in the rich heritage of the Malay Archipelago. Islam Nusantara is described as a unique manifestation of Islam that has naturally evolved within the cultural fabric of the Nusantara region. Islam Nusantara is an example that highlights a harmonious coexistence with the traditions and customs of the local populace. NU states that Islam Nusantara is in alignment with the fundamental principles, beliefs, and practices of traditional Sunni Islam. It stresses the seamless connection with the broader global community of Sunni Muslims, adhering to the teachings and principles of Islamic shari'a without any deviation.

*“Nadhlatul Ulama does not seek to “export” Islam Nusantara to other regions of the world. Rather, it is simply inviting others to recall the beauty and dynamism that emerged from the historic*

*encounter of the spirit and teachings of Islam with the reality of local cultures throughout the world, which gave birth to numerous great civilizations, including that of the East Indies, or Malay, Archipelago. Islam Nusantara is not a new or distinct religion. Rather, it is the expression of Islam that spontaneously flourished amid the culture of Nusantara, and does not conflict with Islamic shari'a, as understood, taught and practiced by the traditional ahlussunnah wal jamaah (Sunni Muslim) community worldwide"* (Baytarrahma October 2016).

Additionally, NU is in the process of forging a collaboration with the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the realm of cultural diplomacy, as previously mentioned. This strategic partnership is consistent with NU's perspective on Islam Nusantara as a valuable tool for addressing radical and extremist movements in the Islamic world. NU envisions Islam Nusantara as a positive model for other Islamic countries and aims to enhance Indonesian soft power by advocating for its adoption among fellow Muslim nations. The emphasis lies in utilizing Islam Nusantara not as an exported ideology but as a means to counteract radicalism and extremism, all while fostering cultural understanding and cooperation among Islamic nations (Baytarrahma August 2015; Baytarrahma October 2016)

#### **4. Discussions: The Primary Criticisms and Challenges**

Certainly, Nahdlatul Ulama has significantly influenced the agenda through its promotion of Islam Nusantara. Nevertheless, it is important to highlight that Islam Nusantara confronts a range of challenges, not only within Indonesia but also in other Islamic nations.

Firstly, a critique centers around the uniqueness of Islam Nusantara in its association with Indonesia. In accordance with this perspective, Islam Nusantara, which is rooted in the Indonesian, particularly Javanese, interpretation of Islam, is unique to the local context. It is argued that the practices and institutions that support Islam Nusantara are closely tied to Indonesia and cannot be easily replicated or transplanted to other regions beyond Indonesia's borders. In essence, it is suggested that the specific cultural and historical elements that have shaped Islam Nusantara are integral to its existence and are not universally applicable to other Muslim communities outside of Indonesia (Arifianto, 2016; Muhammad & Duderija, 2022 97).

Secondly, Islam Nusantara faces substantial criticism within Indonesia, particularly from more reformist entities like Muhammadiyah, as well as from groups like Hizbut Tahrir that oppose the democratic system and modern political processes. Intellectuals within the country also contribute to the critique. Critics, such as Irfan Awwas from the Indonesian Mujahideen Council, argue that Islam Nusantara is an innovation (*bid'ah*) that deviates from the essence of Islam, claiming it damages the true nature of the faith by asserting differences from Islam in the Arab world. H.A. Fallah, an advocate for shariah implementation with a history of involvement in a terrorist scheme, questions the legitimacy of Islam Nusantara, contending that it promotes radicalism and exacerbates sectarian divisions. Abdul Rohim, an executive of the hard-line organization Jammah Ansharusy Shariah, accuses 'moderate Muslims' supporting Islam Nusantara of leading others away from the correct path of Islam. Critics, including TV host Mama Dedeh, argue that the concept lacks Quranic or Sunna basis and could create divisions between Indonesian Islam and its counterparts in the Middle East. Ismail Yusanto, a leader of the banned Hizb ut-Tahrir Indonesia, supports the view that there should be no distinct "Islam Nusantara" but instead advocates for a unified concept of "Islam in Nusantara." He argues for a singular and undivided understanding of Islam in the Nusantara region, opposing any attempt to separate it into distinct categories or interpretations (Kato, 2021: 118; Muhammad & Duderija, 2022: 98; Hoesterey, 2020: 197).

It is plausible to anticipate that the criticisms directed at Islam Nusantara in Indonesia may resonate in other Islamic nations as well. This becomes particularly significant when considering the adherence of Nahdlatul Ulama to the principles of traditional ahlussunnah wal jamaah (Sunni Muslim). The organization follows both Ashar'i and Maturidi theology, acknowledges the four major Sunni schools of Islamic jurisprudence, and embraces tasawwuf, or Islamic mysticism.

Notably, the establishment of Nahdlatul Ulama is closely linked to perceived challenges posed to this traditional interpretation of *ahlussunnah wal jamaah* by the Muhammadiyah and Wahhabism movements. But at this point, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) has been actively involved in promoting thoughtful dialogue and reforms within Islamic jurisprudence, emphasizing on Islam Nusantara (Baytarrahma October 2016; Baytarrahma May 2017; Baytarrahma October 2018a; Baytarrahma October 2018b). However, this reformist stance will face resistance from groups aligned with the Ahl al-Sunnah community. These groups hold a belief in the Quran's timeless and unchangeable nature, considering any reform efforts as a threat to the authenticity and integrity of Islam. There is also tension regarding NU's collaboration with non-Muslims and other religious communities, with opposition to interfaith dialogue due to suspicions of hidden agendas and skepticism about the use of conceptual terms as a façade (Sifil, 2005; Sezen, 2006: 91; Oruç, 2004: 227; Eygi, 2008; Öztürk, 2009: 9). This case will also raise the question of whether NU is departing from its original philosophy or redefining its stance within the *Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah*. The need for NU to clearly communicate its position to the global Islamic community is highlighted, considering the interconnected nature of today's world.

Finally, there is a challenge faced by Islam Nusantara concerning the relationship between Islam and nationalism. Islam Nusantara promotes the integration of Islam, culture, and nationality, asserting that nationalism and Islam can coexist without contradiction. However, there are alternative perspectives within the Islamic world that strongly separate Islam and nationalism, arguing that a Muslim's allegiance should be solely to their faith, rejecting any association with a specific nation. According to this view, nationalism is seen as a divisive force that weakens the unity of the Muslim community (Ummah) and makes it more vulnerable to religious and civilizational threats (Garia, 1991: 28; Zubaida, 2004: 407; Nakavi, 2005: 86). In light of these differing perspectives, Nahdlatul Ulama and Islam Nusantara need to establish a comprehensive framework that accommodates and addresses the complexities of integrating culture, nation, nationalism, and religion.

## **5. Conclusion**

In this study, I explored the concept of Islam Nusantara, introduced by Nahdlatul Ulama during its 2015 congress. Initially, I provided a brief overview of Islam in Indonesia, followed by an examination of Nahdlatul Ulama.

Following that, I conducted a thorough examination of Islam Nusantara. The concept of Islam Nusantara (IN) was formally introduced and discussed at the 33rd Conference of Nahdlatul Ulama in 2015 in East Java. Islam Nusantara represents a spiritually enriched form of Islam in the Malay Archipelago, emphasizing noble character, cultural diversity as God's will, and promoting universal love and compassion. It opposes extremist interpretations, embracing pluralism and rejecting authoritarian views. After the conference, Nahdlatul Ulama organized the International Summit of Moderate Islamic Leaders (ISOMIL) in 2016 to promote Islam Nusantara. A declaration on Islam Nusantara was issued, emphasizing alignment with core Islamic teachings, advocating peaceful coexistence with other religions, rejecting extremism, and affirming adherence to Sunni Islam.

Subsequently, I discussed the fundamental characteristics of Islam Nusantara. Firstly, Islam Nusantara is an inclusive interpretation of Islam rooted in the cultural and historical diversity of the Nusantara region. It embraces various traditions, coexisting harmoniously with the region's diverse heritage while aligning with Islamic Sharia. Rejecting heavy Arab influence, it presents itself as an authentic, culturally evolved manifestation of Islam. In Indonesia, it aligns with principles like Pancasila and emphasizes unity amid diversity. The proposed capital relocation to Nusantara reflects a vision of cultural unity, endorsed by Nahdlatul Ulama, which sees the interconnectedness of Islamic teachings and nationalism. This perspective emphasizes the harmonious coexistence of religious and national identities, influenced by leaders like Abdurrahman Wahid.

Secondly, I highlighted that Islam Nusantara serves as a cornerstone in Nahdlatul Ulama's (NU) efforts to reform Islamic orthodoxy. This involves addressing challenges in Muslim-non-Muslim relations, advocating for peaceful resolutions, and promoting harmony. NU's reform initiatives aim to challenge prejudices within the Muslim community through intellectual discourse, making clear distinctions between sharia and fiqh. Recognizing Islam as dynamic, NU advocates adapting to contemporary circumstances, considering global transformations since the First World War. As a significant NU undertaking, Islam Nusantara embodies a moderate interpretation of Islam, emphasizing compassion, mercy, and a balanced approach across various aspects of life. The philosophy underscores the importance of tolerance for the harmonious coexistence of individuals from diverse backgrounds and beliefs, thus integrating NU's reform of Islamic orthodoxy and the moderate Islam project into the essence of Islam Nusantara.

Thirdly, Islam Nusantara promotes religious pluralism, contending that engaging in dialogues within Islam and with other faiths is in accordance with Islamic principles. Advocates of Islam Nusantara actively strive to foster connections among various religious communities, underscoring the significance of mutual understanding and coexistence in the rich and diverse fabric of Indonesian society.

Fourthly, I addressed the connection between Islam Nusantara and the state. The Indonesian government actively supports Nahdlatul Ulama's Islam Nusantara, as evidenced by high-level officials participating in related events. The 2015 congress received backing from Prime Minister Joko Widodo, who praised Islam Nusantara for its gentleness, politeness, and civilization, contrasting it with the turmoil in the Middle East. Key NU members, such as former supreme leader Ma'aruf Amin and Secretary-General Yahya Cholil Staquf, hold influential government positions, indicating a close relationship between the state and NU.

Fifthly, I highlighted that Islam Nusantara, endorsed by Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in Indonesia, endeavors to counter Islamic extremism by formulating historical and ideological narratives aligned with Indonesia's identity as a moderate Muslim nation.

Finally, I emphasized that Nahdlatul Ulama doesn't want to forcibly impose ("export") Islam Nusantara; instead, it aims to showcase it as an inspiring example (role model) for other Muslim nations. The intention is to encourage these nations to reflect on and appreciate the complex historical relationships that have developed over time as Islam has interacted harmoniously with various local cultures.

In the discussion section, I also addressed the challenges that Islam Nusantara is anticipated to encounter in both Indonesia and other nations, citing diverse reasons for these potential difficulties. Within Indonesia, reformist groups like Muhammadiyah and anti-democratic entities like Hizb ut-Tahrir criticize Islam Nusantara, labeling it as an innovation that deviates from true Islam. The tension extends to Nahdlatul Ulama's reformist stance, especially its collaboration with non-Muslims, facing resistance from conservative groups within the Ahl al-Sunnah community. The integration of Islam, culture, and nationality promoted by Islam Nusantara challenges the conventional separation of Islam and nationalism, raising questions about allegiance and unity within the global Muslim community. The need for clear communication from Nahdlatul Ulama to the wider Islamic community becomes crucial, considering the interconnected nature of today's world.

## **Bibliography**

Arifianto, A. R. (2016). Islam Nusantara: NU's Bid to Promote 'Moderate Indonesian Islam.'. *RSIS Commentary*, 114.

Baytarrahmah (August 2015): Historic Nahdlatul Ulama Congress a Battleground Between Opposing Forces, [https://baytarrahmah.org/2015\\_08\\_30\\_historic-nahdlatul-ulama-congress/](https://baytarrahmah.org/2015_08_30_historic-nahdlatul-ulama-congress/) ((last accessed March 17, 2023).

- Baytarrahmah (October 2016): International Summit of Moderate Islamic Leaders (ISOMIL) Nahdlatul Ulama Declaratio, <https://www.baytarrahmah.org/media/2016/NU-Declaration-and-ISOMIL-Sample-Media-Coverage.pdf> (last accessed March 10, 2023).
- Baytarrahmah (May 2017): Gerakan Pemuda Ansor Declaration on Humanitarian Islam, [https://www.baytarrahmah.org/media/2017/Gerakan-Pemuda-Ansor\\_Declaration-on-Humanitarian-Islam.pdf](https://www.baytarrahmah.org/media/2017/Gerakan-Pemuda-Ansor_Declaration-on-Humanitarian-Islam.pdf) (last accessed November 8, 2023).
- Baytarrahmah (October 2018a): The Nusantara Manifesto, <https://www.baytarrahmah.org/media/2018/Nusantara-Manifesto.pdf> (last accessed November 8, 2023).
- Baytarrahmah (October 2018b): Nusantara Statement, <https://www.baytarrahmah.org/media/2018/Nusantara-Statement.pdf> (last accessed November 8, 2023).
- CNBC (Aug 27, 2023). Indonesia is moving its capital from Jakarta to Nusantara. Here's why it won't be so easy, <https://www.cnbc.com/2023/08/28/indonesia-to-move-capital-from-jakarta-to-nusantara-but-it-wont-be-easy.html>
- Esfandiar, M. (2022). Islam Nusantara and The Challenges of Political Islam in The Contemporary World. *Islam Nusantara: Journal for the Study of Islamic History and Culture*, 3(1), 21-36.
- Eygi, M. Ş. (2008). Dinde Reform Sapıklığı, <https://www.milligazete.com.tr/makale/875417/mehmed-sevket-eygi/dinde-reform-sapikligi>
- Garia, M. (1991). Kur'an- Kerim'in ve Sünnetin Işığı Altında Milliyetçilik, içinde İslam Dünyası ve Milliyetçilik (ed. M. Gıyaseddin), (çev. Taha Cevdet), İstanbul: Pınar
- Göksoy, İ. H. (2006). "Nehdatü'l-Ulemâ", TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi 32. Cilt, pp. 541-542
- Hoesterey, J. B. (2020). Islamic soft power in the age of Trump: Public diplomacy and Indonesian mosque communities in America. *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, 31(2), 191-214.
- Ismail, F. 2011. "The Nahdlatul Ulama: Its Early History and Contribution to the Establishment of Indonesian State." *Journal of Indonesian Islam*. 5:2, 247-282.
- Kato, H. (2021). The Islam Nusantara Movement in Indonesia. In *Handbook of Islamic Sects and Movements* (pp. 110-128). Brill.
- Mandaville, P., & Hamid, S. (2018). *Islam as statecraft: How governments use religion in foreign policy*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.
- Muhammad, C. L., & Duderija, A. (2022). Understanding the Context and Concept of Islam Nusantara. *ICR Journal*, 13(1), 92-111.
- Nakavi, A. M. (2005). İslam ve Milliyetçilik, İstanbul: Çıra
- Oruç, M. (2004). Dinlerarası Diyalog Tuzağı ve Dinde Reform, İstanbul: Arı Sanat
- Öztürk, M. (2009). İslam Dünyasında Yenilik ve Yenilikçilik Karşıtlığının Zihniyet Kodları- Modern Türkiye Örneği. *Çukurova Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi (ÇÜİFD)*, 9(1), 1-21.
- Pektas, S. (2021). A comparative analysis of three Sunni Muslim organizations on 'moderate'and 'radical'İslam in Egypt, Morocco and Indonesia. *Religion*, 51(2), 190-213.

- Saenong, F. F. (2021). Nahdlatul Ulama (NU): A Grassroots Movement Advocating Moderate Islam. In *Handbook of Islamic sects and movements* (pp. 129-150). Brill.
- Schumann, O. (1974). ISLAM IN INDONESIA. *International Review of Mission*, 63(251), 429–438
- Staquf, Y. C. (2015). “How Islam Learned to Adapt in ‘Nusantara’?” *Strategic Review: The Indonesian Journal of Leadership, Policy, and World Affairs* 5 (2): 18–28.
- Sezen, Y. (2006). *Dinlerarası Diyalog İhaneti: Dini-Psikolojik-Sosyolojik Tahlili*, İstanbul: Kelam Yayınları
- Sifil, E. (2005). *Dinlerarası Diyalog ve Misyonerlik Faaliyetleri*, <https://ebubekirsifil.com/dergi-yazilari/dinlerarasi-diyalog-ve-misyonerlik-faaliyetleri-inkisaf-dergisi-eylul-kasim-2005-arsiv/>
- Zubaida, Sami. “Islam and Nationalism: Continuities and Contradictions.” *Nations and Nationalism* 10, no. 4 (2004): 407–420. doi: 10.1111/j.1354-5078.2004.00174.x