

The Dynamics of Contemporary Islamic Thought in Indonesia: Contesting Traditionalism, Modernism, and Fundamentalism through Public Communication and Social Discourse

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Abstract:

This article aims to examine the dynamics of contemporary Islamic thought in Indonesia by highlighting the contestation between traditionalism, modernism, and fundamentalism in Islamic intellectual history. These three currents of thought reflect the response of Indonesian Muslims to social, political, and cultural changes, as well as the challenges of globalization and modernity. Traditionalism seeks to preserve the legacy of classical scholars and religious practices rooted in local traditions. Modernism seeks to reinterpret Islamic texts to suit scientific developments and the demands of the times. Meanwhile, fundamentalism emphasizes the purification of Islamic teachings by returning to the Qur'an and Hadith in a textual and strict manner. This study uses a library research method with a descriptive-qualitative approach, namely reviewing various relevant literature related to the development of Islamic thought in Indonesia. The results of the study indicate that (1) the emergence of these three currents of thought cannot be separated from historical dynamics, such as colonialism, the development of Islamic education, and the process of global modernization that influences the socio-religious structure of Indonesian Muslim society. (2) The contestation between traditionalism, modernism, and fundamentalism is not always conflictual, but also produces dialogue and intellectual dialectics that enrich the treasury of Islamic thought in Indonesia. The interaction of these three currents shapes the face of Indonesian Islam, which is plural, dynamic, and adaptive to changing times, both in education, politics, and socio-religious life. This study concludes that the dynamics of contemporary Islamic thought are a complex historical process, in which these three main currents interact to shape Islamic discourse in Indonesia. The novelty of this research lies in its analytical emphasis on the patterns of contestation and dialectics between traditionalism, modernism, and fundamentalism in shaping the construction of Indonesian Islamic thought in a more integrative and contextual manner.

Keywords: Contemporary Islam, Traditionalism, Modernism, Fundamentalism, Indonesia.

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INTRODUCTION

The dynamics of Islamic thought in Indonesia are an intellectual phenomenon inseparable from the social, political, and cultural history of the Muslim community itself. Islam in Indonesia does not exist in a singular form, but rather develops through a long dialectical process between religious texts, local realities, and the influences of globalization and modernity. In this context, Islamic thought is always in a dynamic contestation, where various currents of thought meet, interact, and even debate to determine the direction of the religious development of Muslims in Indonesia (Arrasyid, Al-Hakim, & Yusuf, 2023). This development demonstrates that Islam in Indonesia is not only understood as a spiritual belief system but also as a social system that continuously adapts to changing times. This is evident in the emergence of various modes of thought, such as traditionalism, modernism, and fundamentalism, each of which has a distinct perspective on understanding Islamic teachings. Traditionalism, for example, tends to uphold the authority of classical ulama and long-rooted religious traditions in society. Meanwhile, modernism seeks renewal by emphasizing rationality and reinterpreting religious texts to make them relevant to current developments. On the other hand, fundamentalism emerged as a response to modernity, emphasizing a re-emphasizing of a more literal, textual understanding of the Quran and Hadith (Djafri et al., 2023).

These three currents of thought cannot be understood separately, as in practice, there is constant interaction, intersection, and even ideological conflict that shapes the face of contemporary Islam in Indonesia. In many cases, traditionalism and modernism often find themselves in a dialogical position, resulting in compromised thinking, while fundamentalism often emerges as a critique of both, which are considered too compromising toward modernity. This situation demonstrates that Islamic thought in Indonesia exists in a highly complex and not static space, but rather continues to evolve in response to the social dynamics of society (Taufan Djafri et al., 2023). In the context of Islamic intellectual history, the emergence of these three main currents is also inseparable from the influence of colonialism, the development of Islamic education, and the influx of reformist ideas from the Middle East. Islamic modernism, for example, was heavily influenced by reformist movements that emphasized *ijtihad* and rationality in understanding religion. Meanwhile, traditionalism developed from the Islamic boarding school

(pesantren) education system, which maintained the continuity of classical scholarship. Fundamentalism emerged as a response to dissatisfaction with modernity, which was perceived as distancing the community from the purity of Islamic teachings (Ningsih, 2022).

Furthermore, in the contemporary Indonesian context, these three schools of thought influence not only the theological realm but also the social, political, educational, and cultural spheres. Islam plays a crucial role in shaping society's social identity, so differences in understanding Islam often impact patterns of social interaction. This demonstrates that Islamic thought is not merely academic discourse but also has real implications for everyday life (Yusdani, 2023). This contestation of ideas has become increasingly complex in the era of globalization and digitalization. The rapid flow of information and the openness of the digital public sphere have led to a highly intense exchange of Islamic ideas. While this creates opportunities for strengthened intellectual dialogue, it also creates the potential for a sharper polarization of thought between traditionalists, modernists, and fundamentalists. This condition shows that contemporary Islamic thought is not only influenced by internal religious factors, but also by external factors such as technology, social media, and global social change (Hikmah & Halimi, 2023).

Furthermore, several recent studies have shown that categories of Islamic thought, such as traditionalism, modernism, and fundamentalism, are not completely rigid, but rather fluid and overlapping. An individual or religious organization may have traditionalist tendencies in one aspect but modernist in another. This demonstrates that Islamic thought in Indonesia is dynamic and continually negotiates meaning according to the surrounding social context (Majid et al., 2022). Based on these developments, it can be understood that the dynamics of contemporary Islamic thought in Indonesia are the result of a long process of interaction between tradition, modernity, and efforts to purify religious teachings. These three constructs form a structure of Islamic discourse that not only contains differences but also makes important contributions to building the character of Indonesian Islam, which is pluralistic, moderate, and adaptive to changing times.

Therefore, this research is crucial in examining how the contestation between traditionalism, modernism, and fundamentalism in the intellectual history of Islam in Indonesia not only produces differences but also forms a

new synthesis in contemporary Islamic thought. Thus, this study is expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how Indonesian Islam developed in the context of increasingly complex global social changes. The novelty of this study lies in the analysis that not only discusses three currents of Islamic thought (traditionalism, modernism, and fundamentalism) separately, but also emphasizes the patterns of interaction, contestation, and synthesis that occur between the three in the context of Islamic intellectual history in contemporary Indonesia. This study also highlights how these three currents are not static, but rather influence each other and shape the new face of Indonesian Islam in the era of globalization and digitalization.

THEORETICAL STUDY

The Concept of Contemporary Islamic Thought

Contemporary Islamic thought is an intellectual development of Islam that emerged in response to social, political, economic, cultural, and scientific changes in the modern era. In the context of Indonesian Muslim society, contemporary Islamic thought is not solely concerned with issues of religious interpretation but also encompasses how Muslims understand and respond to modernity, globalization, and the rapid social transformations occurring in everyday life. Therefore, contemporary Islamic thought is dynamic, flexible, and continuously evolving in accordance with the context of the times surrounding it (Hasan & Abidin, 2022). Furthermore, contemporary Islamic thought cannot be separated from the long history of interaction between local Islamic traditions and various external influences, both from the global Islamic world and modern Western civilization. This interaction process has given rise to various modes of thought that engage in dialogue, competition, and even, in some cases, experience ideological tension. Thus, contemporary Islamic thought can be understood as the result of a complex dialectic between religious texts, social contexts, and the ever-changing historical realities of Muslims (Ningsih, 2022). In further developments, contemporary Islamic thought also demonstrates that Islam is not a static teaching system, but rather possesses the ability to adapt to changing times. This is evident in the emergence of various new approaches to understanding Islam, such as contextual, historical, and sociological approaches, which are used to reread religious texts to maintain their relevance to the needs of modern society.

Islamic Traditionalism

Islamic traditionalism is a school of thought that emphasizes the importance of the continuity of the teachings of classical scholars (turats) and the preservation of religious practices that have long been rooted in Muslim society. According to traditionalism, religious authority derives not only from the texts of the Quran and Hadith, but also from the intellectual heritage of previous scholars who have undergone a rigorous and continuous process of scholarly transmission. In the Indonesian context, Islamic traditionalism is closely linked to the existence of Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) and the role of kiai (Islamic scholars) as scholarly and spiritual authorities. Pesantren serve as centers for the reproduction of classical Islamic knowledge and as spaces for the formation of the community's religious character. Traditionalism does not reject change, but rather emphasizes the principle of caution (ihtiyath) in accepting new elements to avoid conflict with the established fundamental principles of Islamic teachings (Djafri et al., 2022). Furthermore, traditionalism plays a crucial role in maintaining a balance between Islamic teachings and local culture. This acculturation process has given Islam in Indonesia an inclusive, moderate character, and the ability to adapt to the socio-cultural diversity of society. Thus, traditionalism serves not only as a guardian of tradition but also as a social mechanism for maintaining religious stability amidst changing times.

Islamic Modernism

Islamic modernism is a movement of thought that emerged in response to intellectual stagnation in the Islamic world and the challenges of modernity that have developed from the colonial era to the contemporary era. Modernism emphasizes the importance of rationality, opening the door to ijtihad (inquiry), and reinterpreting religious texts to align with scientific developments and the needs of modern society. In the Indonesian context, Islamic modernism plays a crucial role in encouraging reform of Islamic education, particularly through the integration of religious knowledge and general knowledge. Modernism also gave birth to various modern educational institutions that adopted a more open, systematic, and progress-oriented learning system (Hasan & Abidin, 2022). Furthermore, Islamic modernism sought to eliminate the dichotomy between religion and science by emphasizing that the two could coexist harmoniously. However, modernism

was often criticized for being too adaptive to modern Western values, leading to concerns that it could shift the authenticity of Islamic teachings. Nevertheless, modernism remains a significant current in the development of Islamic thought in Indonesia due to its contribution to fostering intellectual and socio-religious renewal..

Islamic Fundamentalism

Islamic fundamentalism is a school of thought that emphasizes a return to pure Islamic teachings based on the Quran and Hadith, with a rather literal approach. Fundamentalism emerged as a reaction to modernity, which is perceived to have negatively impacted religious values and distanced Muslims from authentic Islamic teachings. In practice, fundamentalism often rejects contextual interpretations of religious texts and prioritizes textual understandings considered closest to the original meaning of revelation. In Indonesia, the phenomenon of fundamentalism is part of a complex socio-religious dynamic, as it is seen as a manifestation of sincerity in upholding religious purity, but is also often associated with potential social tensions in a pluralistic society (Tasman & Valencia, 2023). However, in recent academic studies, fundamentalism is not always understood negatively. Some research suggests that fundamentalism can also emerge as an expression of strong religious identity in the face of globalization, which is perceived to erode religious values. Therefore, fundamentalism needs to be understood more proportionately and contextually in understanding the dynamics of contemporary Islamic thought.

Method

This research employs a library research approach with a qualitative paradigm. This approach was chosen because the research focuses not on field data collection but rather on the study of various written sources related to the dynamics of contemporary Islamic thought in Indonesia. From a methodological perspective, library research is understood as a research approach that emphasizes the collection and analysis of data from documents, books, scientific journals, and other academic literature relevant to the research object. This approach is highly appropriate for examining concepts, ideas, and developments in intellectual and historical thought (Hasan & Abidin, 2022). Theoretically, a qualitative approach to library research is used because the objects of study, religious thoughts, ideas, and discourses, cannot

be measured quantitatively but must be understood through a process of in-depth interpretation of the text and context. Qualitative research focuses on the meaning of social and intellectual phenomena occurring in society, making it suitable for analyzing the complex, dynamic, and multi-interpretive dynamics of Islamic thought. In this context, Islamic thought is viewed as a product of the interaction between religious texts, social reality, and the intellectual constructions of Muslim thinkers (Ningsih, 2022).

Research Data Sources

The data sources in this study consist of two types: primary and secondary. Primary data sources were obtained from national scientific journals that directly discuss contemporary Islamic thought, particularly those related to traditionalism, modernism, and fundamentalism in Indonesia. These journals were selected based on their content relevance and academic credibility to ensure the accuracy of the analysis of the phenomena being studied. Meanwhile, secondary data sources came from academic books, supporting scientific articles, and other literature relevant to the research theme. These secondary sources were used to strengthen the analysis, broaden theoretical perspectives, and provide additional context for the development of contemporary Islamic thought. Thus, the combination of primary and secondary sources is expected to produce a comprehensive and in-depth analysis (Djafri et al., 2022).

Data Collection Techniques

The data collection technique in this study was conducted through documentation study. Documentation study is a data collection technique that involves searching, reading, recording, and reviewing various written documents related to the research focus. This process was carried out systematically by identifying relevant literature, particularly from accredited scientific journals, academic books, and other scientific publications. The collected data was then classified based on the main research themes, namely traditionalism, modernism, and fundamentalism in Islam. This classification aims to facilitate the analysis process and clarify the relationships between the concepts studied. Thus, documentation techniques serve not only as a data collection process but also as the initial stage in developing the research analysis structure (Hasan & Abidin, 2022).

Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis in this study utilized content analysis techniques. Content analysis is a method used to understand, interpret, and deeply examine the content of various collected literature sources. This technique allows researchers to identify patterns, themes, concepts, and relationships between ideas contained in the analyzed academic texts. The analysis process involves several stages. The first stage is data reduction, which is the process of selecting and simplifying data relevant to the research focus. The second stage is data presentation, which involves grouping data into specific categories such as traditionalism, modernism, and fundamentalism. The third stage is drawing conclusions, which is the process of interpreting the results of the comprehensive analysis to gain a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of contemporary Islamic thought in Indonesia (Ningsih, 2022).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Results

Historical Background of the Emergence of Traditionalism, Modernism, and Fundamentalism in Indonesian Islam

The results of this study indicate that the emergence of three main currents of Islamic thought in Indonesia traditionalism, modernism, and fundamentalism cannot be separated from the long historical dynamics surrounding Indonesian Muslim society. Factors such as colonialism, the development of Islamic education, and the currents of global modernization played a significant role in shaping the structure of Muslim religious thought. During the colonial period, Indonesian Muslims faced social and political pressures that gave rise to diverse intellectual responses. On the one hand, groups emerged that maintained Islamic traditions through Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), and on the other, groups that advocated for the renewal of Islamic thought through modern education. Meanwhile, the currents of globalization and the exchange of ideas with the international Islamic world contributed to the emergence of a tendency to purify Islamic teachings, which later became known as fundamentalism. The emergence of three main currents of Islamic thought in Indonesia traditionalism, modernism, and fundamentalism cannot be understood separately from the long historical

context of the development of Islam in the archipelago. These three currents emerged in response to social, political, and intellectual changes that have occurred since the colonial period through the era of globalization. Historically, Islam in Indonesia developed through a process of acculturation with local cultures, then underwent major transformations due to Western colonialism and the modernization of education and communication systems that entered the Muslim world (Saputra et al., 2023)..

Table 1. Historical Background of the Emergence of Islamic Thought Currents in Indonesia

School of Thought	Period of Development	Main Historical Factors	Character of Response	Developmental Impact
Traditionalism	Colonial period – present	Islamic boarding schools (<i>pesantren</i>), classical scholars, and local culture	Preservation of Islamic traditions and <i>madhhab</i> -based jurisprudence	Development of an Islam that accommodates the cultures of the Indonesian archipelago
Modernism	Early 20th century – present	Western education, Middle Eastern reform movements, and colonialism	Rationalization, <i>ijtihad</i> , and educational reform	Emergence of a modern Islamic education system
Fundamentalism	Late 20th century – present	Globalization, identity crises, and purification movements	Return to the Qur'an and Hadith through a literal interpretation	Strengthening of religious identity and increased

Based on the table above, it can be understood that Islamic traditionalism in Indonesia grew out of the Islamic boarding school (pesantren) education system, which has existed since the early days of Islam's spread in the archipelago. Pesantren became centers for the transmission of classical Islamic knowledge, emphasizing the authority of ulama and the continuity of Islamic traditions based on schools of thought, particularly the Shafi'i school. Traditionalism also developed through the process of acculturation between Islam and local culture, resulting in a more adaptive and moderate form of Islam in community life (Traditionalism in Indonesia, 2024). Meanwhile, Islamic modernism emerged as a response to intellectual stagnation and the pressures of Western colonialism in the late 19th to early 20th centuries. This movement was influenced by Islamic reformist thought in the Middle East, which emphasized the importance of rationality, *ijtihad*, and the rejection of blind imitation. Modernism then developed in Indonesia through educational and social organizations that encouraged the renewal of the Islamic education system to better align with developments in modern science (Modernism in Indonesia, 2024).

Islamic fundamentalism emerged more recently as a response to the currents of globalization and modernity, which are perceived to have eroded Islamic values. In the Indonesian context, fundamentalism is often associated with a purification movement that emphasizes a textual understanding of the Qur'an and Hadith and a rejection of religious practices deemed inconsistent with pure Islamic teachings. Its emergence cannot be separated from global socio-political dynamics, including the identity crisis of Muslims worldwide (Astuti et al., 2022). Historically, these three currents of thought did not emerge suddenly but resulted from a long process of interaction between Islam, local culture, colonialism, and global modernization. During the colonial period, Indonesian Muslims faced pressure from the Western education system introduced by the colonial government, which then gave rise to two main responses: traditionalists who maintained the Islamic boarding school system, and modernists who adopted the modern education system. Subsequent developments also led to the emergence of a fundamentalist movement that emphasized the purification of Islamic

teachings in response to social changes deemed too far from religious values. Thus, the historical background of the emergence of these three currents of thought demonstrates that Islam in Indonesia has always been dynamic, adaptive, and responsive to changing times. The three cannot be separated, because each was born from a different historical context but interacted with each other in shaping the complex face of Indonesian Islam to this day.

Contestation and Dialectics of Islamic Thought in Indonesia

The research also shows that the contestation between traditionalism, modernism, and fundamentalism is not always open conflict, but more often takes the form of a mutually influencing intellectual dialectic. In many cases, these three currents of thought engage in dialogue within the socio-religious space, whether through educational institutions, community organizations, or the digital public sphere. This contestation creates a complex dynamic, where each group not only maintains its own identifiable thought but also adapts to each other to some extent. For example, traditionalism has begun to adopt a modern approach in Islamic boarding school education, modernism maintains Islamic values in its renewal efforts, while fundamentalism, in some cases, has begun to use an intellectual approach to convey its ideas. The contestation of Islamic thought in Indonesia between traditionalism, modernism, and fundamentalism is an intellectual phenomenon born of differing perspectives on understanding religious texts, social realities, and the relationship between Islam and modernity. These three currents of thought do not exist in isolation but interact with each other within the same socio-religious space, resulting in a dialectical process that continues to evolve over time. In the Indonesian context, this contestation does not always take the form of open conflict, but also takes the form of dialogue, negotiation, and compromise of ideas that shape the unique and plural character of Islam (Hidayat et al., 2023)..

Table 2. Forms of Contestation and Patterns of Dialectics in Islamic Thought in Indonesia

Relationship Between Schools of Thought	Form of Contestation	Pattern of Interaction	Outcome of the Dialectic
Traditionalism	Differences in	Academic	Partial

vs. Modernism	methods of interpreting Islamic texts and law	dialogue, educational institutions, and social organizations	integration of educational systems and reforms in Islamic jurisprudence (<i>fiqh</i>)
Modernism vs. Fundamentalism	Differences in approaches to religious texts (contextual vs. literal)	Ideological criticism and public discourse	Strengthening of each group's religious arguments and intellectual foundations
Traditionalism vs. Fundamentalism	Differences in scholarly authority (classical scholars vs. literal textual interpretation)	Socio-religious tensions	Reinforcement of boundaries of religious authority and legitimacy
All three simultaneously	Competition of Islamic discourses in the public sphere	Media, education, organizations, and digital platforms	Formation of a pluralistic and dynamic Indonesian Islam

Based on the table above, it can be understood that the contestation between the three currents of Islamic thought in Indonesia not only produces differing views but also creates a productive dialectical space. Traditionalism, modernism, and fundamentalism each offer distinct perspectives on understanding Islam, yet in social practice, they often influence each other and even adopt certain elements. In practice, traditionalism, for example, is not completely closed to modernity. Many Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) have begun to adopt modern educational systems, such as the use of formal curricula, learning technology, and the integration of general knowledge, without abandoning the yellow books as primary sources. This demonstrates a process of adaptation that manifests as a dialectic between tradition and modernity (Ma'arif et al., 2022). Meanwhile, Islamic modernism, which initially emphasized rationality and renewal, has also, over time, maintained basic Islamic values as a moral foundation in the process of

modernization. Modernism does not completely reject tradition, but seeks to reinterpret it to remain relevant to the current context. This process demonstrates that modernism is not the absolute antithesis of traditionalism, but rather part of an interconnected spectrum of Islamic thought.

Islamic fundamentalism, while often viewed as rigid, is not entirely isolated from social developments. In some contexts, fundamentalism utilizes modern media and intellectual approaches to convey its ideas, particularly through digital platforms. This demonstrates that even groups emphasizing the purification of Islamic teachings cannot be completely free from the influence of modernity. Theoretically, this contestation can be understood as a form of dialectical interaction, namely the process of mutual influence between various religious ideologies that produces a new synthesis in the social space. In the Indonesian context, this dialectic creates a unique character of Islam: one that is not monolithic, but rather plural, adaptive, and continuously evolving in accordance with the social dynamics of society (Rahman & Sulaiman, 2022). Furthermore, contestation of Islamic thought also occurs in various social spaces, such as education, religious organizations, mass media, and digital spaces. Social media, for example, has become a new arena for the increasingly intense battle of Islamic discourse. This strengthens the dynamics of contestation and expands the dialectical space between various Islamic thought groups in Indonesia. Thus, it can be concluded that the contestation between traditionalism, modernism, and fundamentalism not only produces sharp differences but also creates a dialectical process that enriches the treasury of Islamic thought in Indonesia. This dialectic is evidence that Islam in Indonesia is alive, dynamic, and always adapts to changing times without losing its historical roots and religious identity.

Socio-Religious Dynamics as a Result of the Interaction of Three Currents of Thought

The interaction between traditionalism, modernism, and fundamentalism also impacts the socio-religious life of Indonesian society. In practice, Indonesian Muslims are not always tied to a particular school of thought, but often combine various approaches according to the social context they face. This phenomenon demonstrates that the boundaries between these three schools of thought are not rigid, but rather fluid and overlapping. In some

cases, an individual or group may exhibit traditionalist tendencies in aspects of worship, modernist tendencies in aspects of education, and still maintain sensitivity to fundamentalist ideas in aspects of religious identity. The interaction between traditionalism, modernism, and fundamentalism in Islamic thought in Indonesia is not limited to the ideological or academic realm but also has a very real impact on the socio-religious dynamics of society. These three schools of thought form diverse, intersecting, and in many cases mutually influencing patterns of religiosity in the daily lives of Muslims in Indonesia. This demonstrates that religion is not merely a belief system but also a part of a social construct that continually changes according to the context of the times (Rahmawati et al., 2023).

Table 3. Socio-Religious Dynamics of the Three Currents of Islamic Thought in Indonesia

Social Aspect	Traditionalism	Modernism	Fundamentalism	Impact of Interaction
Education	Islamic boarding schools (<i>pesantren</i>), classical texts (<i>kitab kuning</i>), and the authority of <i>kiai</i>	Modern Islamic schools and integration of religious and secular sciences	Education based on the purification of Islamic teachings	Islamic education becomes more diverse and inclusive
Worship & Rituals	Flexible, based on <i>madhhab</i> traditions and local culture	Contextual and rational approach	Literal and textual approach	Greater diversity of religious practices within society
Social Life	Accommodates local cultural traditions	Adaptive to modernity	Selective toward external cultural influences	Emergence of plural forms of socio-religious practices

Politics & Identity	Moderate and culturally oriented	Reformist and institutional	Ideological and normative	Dynamic construction of Islamic identity in the public sphere
Media & Da'wah	Traditional sermons and preaching	Modern digital media outreach	Ideological online da'wah	Competition among religious discourses in the digital sphere

Based on the table above, it can be understood that the interaction between these three currents of Islamic thought has produced a highly diverse form of religiosity in Indonesian society. Traditionalism maintains its crucial role in maintaining the continuity of religious values based on tradition and local wisdom. Modernism emerges as a force of renewal, encouraging the integration of Islamic teachings with the development of modern science. Meanwhile, fundamentalism emphasizes the purity of religious teachings, often acting as a check on excessively rapid social change. In the context of education, for example, the interaction of these three currents has given rise to a multi-layered Islamic education system. Pesantren (Islamic boarding schools) continue to exist as centers of traditional education, but at the same time, modern Islamic schools and madrasas have developed, adopting the national education system. In some cases, educational institutions have even emerged that attempt to combine the three into a more integrative system. This demonstrates a process of adaptation and synthesis within Islamic education in Indonesia (Huda & Anwar, 2022).

In the social sphere, this dynamic is also evident in the diverse ways in which Indonesian Muslims practice their religion. On the one hand, some groups adhere to local religious traditions passed down through generations. On the other hand, some groups prefer a modern and rational approach to understanding religion. Meanwhile, others emphasize the purification of religious teachings and avoidance of practices deemed inconsistent with religious texts. These differences do not always lead to conflict, but rather, in many cases, shape patterns of pluralism and tolerance in religiosity (Suryani,

2023). In the realm of politics and identity, the interaction of these three schools of thought also influences how Muslims express their religious identity. Traditionalism tends to project a cultural and moderate Islamic identity, modernism emphasizes social and institutional reform, while fundamentalism emphasizes a strong ideological identity.

These differences create complex dynamics in political and social life in Indonesia, particularly in the context of democracy and freedom of expression. Furthermore, the development of digital technology has expanded the interaction between these three schools of thought. Social media has become a new arena for the dissemination of religious ideas, where traditionalism, modernism, and fundamentalism each have increasingly open spaces for expression. This has led to increasingly intense competition in Islamic discourse, but also opened up opportunities for broader dialogue within the digital society (Putra & Hakim, 2022). Overall, it can be concluded that the socio-religious dynamics in Indonesia are a direct result of the complex interaction between traditionalism, modernism, and fundamentalism. These three do not exist in isolation, but rather intersect to shape the face of Indonesian Islam, which is pluralistic, adaptive, and continually evolving with the changing times..

Discussion

The research results indicate that the dynamics of Islamic thought in Indonesia, divided into three main currents: traditionalism, modernism, and fundamentalism, cannot be understood as isolated phenomena, but rather as the result of a long and complex historical process. These three currents emerged in response to social, political, educational, and cultural changes that have occurred since the colonial period through the era of globalization. In this context, Islam in Indonesia has developed through a continuous process of adaptation to the various challenges of the times, thus shaping a pluralistic and dynamic character of thought (Hasan & Abidin, 2022). Historically, traditionalism developed from the Islamic boarding school (pesantren) education system, which has become deeply rooted in Indonesian Muslim society. Traditionalism maintains the authority of classical ulama (Islamic scholars) and the continuity of scholarly traditions based on yellow books and specific schools of Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh). This makes traditionalism a crucial force in maintaining socio-religious stability in society, especially in

the face of rapid change.

In practice, traditionalism also demonstrates adaptive capacity through accommodation to local culture, resulting in Islam in Indonesia being known for its moderate and inclusive character (Djafri et al., 2022). Meanwhile, Islamic modernism emerged as a response to the stagnation of religious thought and the influence of colonialism and Western modernity. Modernism emphasized the importance of rationality, *ijtihad*, and the reinterpretation of religious texts to suit the context of the times. Over time, modernism played a significant role in reforming the Islamic education system in Indonesia, including the integration of religious and general knowledge. This demonstrates that modernism operates not only within the theological realm but also within broader social and institutional spheres (Hasan & Abidin, 2022). Islamic fundamentalism emerged as a reaction to modernity, which was perceived as distancing Muslims from the purity of religious teachings. Fundamentalism emphasizes a literal understanding of the Quran and Hadith and rejects interpretations deemed too contextual or influenced by external cultures.

In the Indonesian context, fundamentalism is part of a complex socio-religious dynamic. On the one hand, it is seen as a serious commitment to maintaining religious purity, but on the other, it is often considered to have the potential to cause social tension if not managed wisely (Tasman & Valencia, 2023). Furthermore, research findings indicate that these three schools of thought are not always in sharp conflict, but often form dialectical patterns of interaction. This means that each school of thought influences and adapts to one another to some extent. For example, traditionalism has begun to adopt a modern education system, modernism has maintained Islamic values in the process of renewal, and fundamentalism has begun to utilize digital media to spread its religious ideas. This demonstrates that the boundaries between these three schools of thought are not rigid, but rather fluid and intersect in the socio-religious practices of society (Ningsih, 2022). This dynamic is also evident in the social life of Indonesian Muslims, who are highly diverse in their religious practices.

Differences in understanding Islam do not always lead to conflict, but instead create space for tolerance and diversity in religious practices. In many cases, communities combine various approaches in their daily lives, creating

flexible and contextual patterns of religiosity tailored to the social needs of each community. Furthermore, in the context of the digital era, interactions between these three schools of thought have become increasingly intense through social media and other digital platforms. The digital space has become a new arena for the contestation of Islamic discourse, with each group seeking to disseminate ideas and strengthen its influence. This situation expands the dialectical space of Islamic thought, but simultaneously increases the potential for polarization if not accompanied by a critical and moderate attitude in receiving religious information (Hikmah & Halimi, 2023). Overall, the discussion of this research shows that the dynamics of contemporary Islamic thought in Indonesia are the result of a complex interaction between historical, social, educational, and globalization factors. Traditionalism, modernism, and fundamentalism are not only distinct categories of thought but also interact to shape the face of Indonesian Islam, which is plural, adaptive, and continually evolving in accordance with the demands of the times.

This article differs from the research conducted by Siregar (2020), Anwar (2021), and Maulana (2022). Essentially, these studies focus more on discussing each current of Islamic thought separately. Siregar (2020) focuses more on analyzing Islamic traditionalism in the context of Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) and the role of classical ulama, Anwar (2021) discusses Islamic modernism from the perspective of educational reform and the rationalization of religious teachings, while Maulana (2022) examines Islamic fundamentalism in relation to religious purification movements and socio-political dynamics. These three studies tend to discuss currents of thought individually without considering the dialectical relationship between them. Meanwhile, this article has a broader scope because it not only discusses each current of Islamic thought separately but also examines the interaction, contestation, and dialectic between traditionalism, modernism, and fundamentalism in shaping the dynamics of contemporary Islamic thought in Indonesia. This article focuses not only on conceptual aspects but also connects them to the historical, social, and educational contexts, as well as developments in globalization that have influenced changes in patterns of religious thought in Indonesia in the modern era.

This article aligns with research conducted by Hidayat and Rahman (2021), Yusuf (2023), and Ramadhani (2022). Essentially, these studies

highlight the relationships and interactions between various currents of Islamic thought in Indonesia and their impact on the socio-religious life of society. Hidayat and Rahman (2021) discuss the dialectic of Islamic thought within the realm of education and religious organizations, Yusuf (2023) examines the plurality of Islamic thought in the social context of Indonesian society, while Ramadhani (2022) highlights the dynamics of contemporary Islam in the digital era and globalization. These articles also address the same theme: the dynamics and diversity of Islamic thought in Indonesia. However, this article provides a more comprehensive emphasis by integrating historical, sociological, and ideological contestations between traditionalism, modernism, and fundamentalism within a single, coherent analytical framework.

The novelty of this article lies in its discussion, which not only views traditionalism, modernism, and fundamentalism as three separate schools of thought, but also as a system of interactions that influence each other in shaping the face of contemporary Indonesian Islam. This article examines these three currents from a more integrative perspective, emphasizing the patterns of contestation, dialectics, and synthesis of thought that occur within the socio-religious sphere of society. Furthermore, this article also provides a new perspective by connecting the dynamics of contemporary Islamic thought with the challenges of globalization, educational modernization, and the development of digital technology that influence how Muslims understand and express their religion. Thus, this article offers a broader and more in-depth study than previous research, addressing not only conceptual aspects but also historical, social, and contemporary dimensions of the development of Islamic thought in Indonesia..

Conclusion

Based on the research and discussion on the dynamics of contemporary Islamic thought in Indonesia, focusing on traditionalism, modernism, and fundamentalism, several important points can be drawn. First, the emergence of these three currents of Islamic thought cannot be separated from a complex historical background, particularly the influence of colonialism, the development of the Islamic education system, and the influx of modernization and globalization into Indonesia. Traditionalism grew out of the pesantren tradition and the authority of classical ulama, modernism developed through

the push for educational reform and the rationalization of Islamic thought, while fundamentalism emerged as a response to modernity perceived as threatening the purity of religious teachings. Second, the contestation between traditionalism, modernism, and fundamentalism is not always open conflict but also gives rise to a dialectical process of mutual influence. These three currents of thought interact in social spaces, education, religious organizations, and even digital media, thus shaping an Islamic intellectual dynamic that is more complex, pluralistic, and adaptive to changing times. Third, the interaction between these three currents of thought has a significant impact on the socio-religious life of Indonesian society. In practice, society is not bound by a single school of thought but often combines various approaches to understanding and practicing Islamic teachings according to their respective social contexts. This demonstrates that Islam in Indonesia is dynamic, open, and continually evolving. Thus, it can be affirmed that the dynamics of contemporary Islamic thought in Indonesia are the result of a long historical process and ongoing interaction between various currents of thought, ultimately shaping the moderate, pluralistic, and contextual face of Indonesian Islam.

Recommendations

Based on the results of this study, several recommendations can be made as follows. First, academics and researchers are encouraged to continue developing studies on contemporary Islamic thought with a broader and more in-depth approach, particularly those examining the interaction between traditionalism, modernism, and fundamentalism in more specific social contexts such as education, politics, and digital media. Second, Islamic educational institutions, particularly Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), *madrasahs* (*madrasas*), and Islamic universities, are advised to continue developing learning systems that integrate traditional values with modern approaches in a balanced manner, thereby producing a generation of Muslims who are critical, adaptive, and adhere to Islamic values. Third, the Muslim community in general is encouraged to be more discerning in responding to existing differences in Islamic thought. The differences between traditionalism, modernism, and fundamentalism should be understood as part of the intellectual richness of Islam, not as a source of social division. Fourth, the government and policymakers are expected to support the creation of a healthy and inclusive space for religious dialogue,

so that the dynamics of Islamic thought in Indonesia can develop constructively without giving rise to detrimental social conflict. With these recommendations, it is hoped that studies on contemporary Islamic thought in Indonesia can continue to develop and make a positive contribution to strengthening a harmonious and civilized religious life

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