

## HARMONY AND FRICTION: THE POPULARITY OF SHALAWAT BADAR AMONG SANTRI

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**Abstract:** *Shalawat Badar is a poetic composition in Arabic that is dedicated to the Prophet Muhammad. The verses in this poem contain elements of Islamic political ideology. It was composed during a period of significant political upheaval, specifically the era of Guided Democracy (Demokrasi Terpimpin). During this period, Muslims in Indonesia experienced profound political unrest, largely attributable to the growing hegemony of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). The present study seeks to contribute to the existing scholarship on Shalawat Badar by offering an analysis of its contemporary spread and popularity. Despite the theological critiques leveled by modern santri regarding its theological content, which is often seen as bid'ah, Shalawat Badar has witnessed a notable proliferation, defying the obstacles often associated with the dissemination of such works. The findings of this study suggest that Shalawat Badar has gained a widespread presence among Santri from diverse sub-cultures, performed by individuals across various contexts. This paper utilizes a qualitative method, employing a descriptive-analytical approach augmented by literature studies and in-depth interviews with multiple sources, to address the various aspects of Shalawat Badar that are frequently criticized yet still held in various parts of Indonesian.*

**Keywords:** *Santri; Modernist; Traditionalist; Shalawat Badar; Shalawatan.*

### Introduction

*Shalawatan* is an oral tradition that originates from the practice of reciting the Prophet's *shalawat*, which is a prayer or communication from the Santri to God for the Prophet Muhammad PBUH.<sup>1</sup> The *Santri* engage in this ritual with the expectation of receiving both divine reward and the intercession of the Prophet on the Day of Judgment.<sup>2</sup> The Prophet, as the

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<sup>1</sup> Muhammad Jamil Zainu, *Bershalawat Kepada Nabi ﷺ Ibadah Yang Agung* (Raudhatul Anwar, 2023).

<sup>2</sup> Ibnu Qayyim Al-Jauziyah, *Jala'ul Afham : Kentamaan Shalawat Nabi SAW*, 1st ed. (Solo : Al Qawam, 2013).

intermediary between humanity and the divine, has been entrusted with the responsibility of conveying divine messages. The Prophet is regarded as a mercy to all of creation (*rahmatan li al-'alamîn*) and a leader for the pious, as well as a guide to the straight path. Given the Prophet's profound contributions to humanity, Allah has prescribed a specific action for him: the salutation of *shalawat*. One of the most robust foundations in Islamic law upon which *shalawat* is based is the verse:

*Innallaha wa malaiikatahu yushalluna 'ala al-nabi ya ayyuha al-ladzi<sup>na</sup> amanu shallu 'alaihi wa calsallimu taslimu.*

Means: *Verily, Allah and His angels send blessings on the Prophet. O you who believe, send blessings on him and greet him with peace.* (QS. Al-Ahzab: 56).

In Islamic worship rituals, particularly those pertaining to prayer, the text of *shalawat* is concise and easily memorizable. It is commonly expressed as follows:

*Allâhumma shalli 'alâ Muhammad wa 'alâ âli Muhammad*

Means: *O God, bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad.*

The practice of reciting *shalawat* is deeply entrenched in the *Santri* community's cultural fabric. It is a recurrent theme in their spiritual practices, where every instance of the name of the Prophet Muhammad is accompanied by the chanting of *shalawat*. In this context, there is no discernible distinction between traditionalist and modernist *Santri* sub-cultures. The practice of reciting *shalawat* is performed by *Santri* in various settings, including the commencement of speeches and recitations, and it is a daily ritual observed by some. However, it is at this point that differences begin to emerge within the *Santri* environment. The practice of *shalawat* is a tradition commonly observed by traditionalist *Santri*, though it is often challenged by modernist-reformists.

The controversy surrounding *shalawat* texts composed by *ulama* intensifies, particularly when these texts are examined within the context of Islamic jurisprudence. For traditionalist *Santri*, the diverse *shalawat* texts crafted by *ulama* serve as a reflection of their profound love for the

Prophet.<sup>3</sup> The *ulama* who created these texts were the leading *ulama* of their time, and their work was not intended to be playful, despite the sacred messages it contains, as evidenced by Shalawat Badr. It is therefore understandable why the traditionalist Santri subculture incorporates various *shalawat* created by *ulama* into its routine rituals, such as *Barjanjen* (the collective reading of the Book of al-Barzanji), *Dzibaan* (the collective reading of the Book of al-Dziba'i), *Ratiban* (the collective reading of *ratib*, a practice undertaken by certain *ulama*), *Manakiban* (the collective reading of the biography of certain *ulama*), and the collective recitation of *shalawat*, with an emphasis on Shalawat Badar.<sup>4</sup>

*Shalawat Badar* contains elements of Islamic political ideology. This ideological dimension is built due to the creation of *Shalawat Badar* against the background of the political turmoil of the Guided Democracy era (Demokrasi Terpimpin), which put Indonesian *Muslims* in an uneasy situation due to the existence of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) increasingly hegemonic. Because of the unique background of its creation, even though the existence of the oral tradition of shalawatan is theologically generally criticized by modernist *Santri* because it is substantively considered part of *bid'ah*, in the case of *Shalawat Badar* it turns out to be growing rapidly, even as if it belongs to all Santri from any sub-culture.<sup>5</sup>

Although *Shalawat Badar* is so popular in Indonesian, the fact is that scientific studies on this *shalawat* are difficult to obtain either in the form of scientific journals or in the form of books. Zahrul Wafa once wrote *Shalawat Badar by KH Ali Mansur: A Study of the Role of Shalawat Badar*

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<sup>3</sup> Hamdan Thoriqun Ni'am and Diyan Putri Ayu, "Penguatan Karakter Cinta Sholawat Pada Santri Melalui Pendampingan Ekstralikululer Hadroh di Madin Miftahul Ulum Kesugihan Pulung Ponorogo," *Social Science Academic Journal*, 2023, 357–66, <https://doi.org/10.37680/ssa.v0i0.3722>.

<sup>4</sup> Dhurorudin Mashad, "Menelaah Sisi Politiko-Historis Shalawat Badar : Dimensi Politik Dalam Sastra Lisan Pesantren," *Jurnal Penelitian Politik* 16, no. 1 (June 28, 2019): 83, <https://doi.org/10.14203/jpp.v16i1.784>.

<sup>5</sup> Mashad.

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*in the Political Dynamics of Banyuwangi in 1963-1971 (Shalawat Badar Karya KH. Ali Mansur: Kajian Terhadap Peran Shalawat Badar dalam Dinamika Politik Banyuwangi tahun 1963–1971)*. This study was conducted from the perspective of Islamic history and culture which focused on describing the content and role of Shalawat Badar in 1963-1971, especially related to the first election of the New Order era in 1971 in Banyuwangi.<sup>6</sup>

Additionally, the publication *The Creator of Shalawat Badar: KHR. Ali Manshur*, authored by Saiful Islam and published by Amantara-LTMPustaka Surabaya in 2004. This book contains a biography written based on several notes about the events experienced by the creator of *Shalawat Badar*. Saiful Islam's book can be regarded as a foundational text for researchers who have limited knowledge about *Shalawat Badar*, particularly in conjunction with the work and thoughts of the figure who was once a member of the constituent assembly.

In the context of scientific journals, Dhurorudin has encountered a dearth of literature on *Shalawat Badar*, with the exception of a single publication in the *Journal of Political Research (Jurnal Penelitian Politik)* titled "Examining the Politic-Historical Side of Shalawat Badar" (*Menelaah Sisi Politiko-Historis Shalawat Badar*). In light of this, the presence of the present manuscript is of significant importance, as it introduces a novel perspective to the extant literature on *Shalawat Badar*, a subject that has gained considerable popularity in the Indonesian socio-political landscape.<sup>7</sup>

## **Method**

The present study utilizes a qualitative research method, adopting a descriptive-analytical approach, which is enriched by a comprehensive review of the extant literature and in-depth interviews with a number of

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<sup>6</sup> Zahrul Wafa, "SHALAWAT BADAR KARYA K.H. ALI MANSUR Kajian Terhadap Peran Shalawat Badar Dalam Dinamika Politik Di Banyuwangi Tahun 1963-1971" (Skripsi, Yogyakarta, UIN Sunan Kalijaga, 2013).

<sup>7</sup> Mashad, "Menelaah Sisi Politiko-Historis Shalawat Badar," June 28, 2019.

subject matter experts. A review of literature reveals that Shalawat is a tradition frequently embraced by the majority of Muslims as a form of veneration for the Prophet Muhammad saw. Despite the absence of any discrepancy in the definition of shalawat, divergent perspectives emerge concerning the methodology for its execution. This diversity of opinion is intricately interwoven with the multifaceted nature of the Muslim community, which is characterized by the presence of numerous sub-cultures. These sub-cultures, in turn, give rise to divergent perspectives on the optimal manner in which shalawat should be delivered.

Geertz, division among Indonesian Muslims between the old (conservative/traditionalist) and the modernist. The term “traditionalist” in this context, denotes adherents who uphold traditional Islamic values and practices, emphasizing the preservation and continuity of established Islamic principles in their daily lives and actions. In contrast, the modernist tendency is more aligned with contemporary trends, often seen most distinctly among the santri sub-culture. This creates a division within the santri group itself, further highlighting the complexity of religious identity and practice within the Muslim community.

However, within the context of this study, Geertz emphasizes a particular understanding of "unity amid differences" among the *Santri*. The relationship between the two groups, that is, *Santri* traditionalists and modernists, is characterized by a subtle and non-adversarial nature. The intensity of any perceived differences rarely reaches a level that would threaten the communal bonds of religious belief among the entire community. This sense of unity is further reinforced by the pervasive hostility of non-*Santri* towards *Santri*. Paradoxically, this lesser degree of hostility between the two relatively balanced halves of the community functions as an integrative force, uniting the group in the face of external threats to its cohesion.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Cliffordz Geertz, *Agama Jawa : Abangan, Santri, Priyayi dalam Kebudayaan Jawa*, 2nd ed. (Depok : Komunitas Bambu, 2014). 157  
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In order to gain insight into the roots of *Shalawat Badar* popularity amidst the differences in *Santri* sub-cultures, primary and secondary data were traced through literature studies. These data sources encompass literature, journals, electronic and print media, as well as internet media, which offer critical insights relevant to the analysis. To ensure a precise and nuanced analysis, in-depth interviews were conducted with several resource persons who adhered to systematic interview guidelines and were supplemented by Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with various resource persons, particularly experts and academics related to the subject of study.

## **Result and Discussion**

### **Cultural Dynamics within the Santri Community**

To carry out a total reconstruction of understanding (religion) of Islam according to Rahman<sup>9</sup>, it must be distinguished between Normative Islam and Historical Islam. Normative Islam is the Qur'an and Al-Hadith as the original source. Meanwhile, Historical Islam is Islam translated by Muslims in the context of place and time (history), which is taken into consideration to understand the normative Islam. Although Islam is universal, but in its spread it experienced domestication, where domestic elements where Islam was introduced finally contributed to the characterization of Islamic universalism.<sup>10</sup>

At this level there is what is called the difference between Islam Text (Normative Islam) and Islam Context (Historical Islam) because of interpretation of the text. The relationship between the two is sometimes dichotomized, although not infrequently it is cultural adaptation. The gradation reality of the universalism - parochialism relationship eventually gave birth to pluralism, which is a variety of religious understanding among Muslims both in religious understanding, religious practice, and different religious fellowships. Some *Muslim* groups are classified as *santri* with the

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<sup>9</sup> Fazlur Rahman, *Islam Modern: Tantangan Pembaruan Islam* (Yogyakarta : Salahuddin Press, 1987). 12-13

<sup>10</sup> Dhurorudin Mashad, *Politik Kaum Santri dan Abangan : Refleksi Historis Perseteruan NU – PKI* (Jakarta : Pustaka Al-Kautsar, 2021). 22-23

characteristic of holding firmly to their Islamic values, but there are Muslims who are called *abangan* groups who are dominant with local cultural values. In fact, this second group often appears as *Muslims* who no longer have an Islamic orientation.

The cleavage of Muslims is not only manifested in the *Santri* and *Abangan* cultures, because each culture also still experiences internal cleavage. For example, Geertz<sup>11</sup> has reconstructed the history of the spread of Islam and the dynamics of Islamic thought and has identified the existence of a traditionalist *Santri* and a modernist. Geertz notes that this is a division between the traditional (conservative) and the modern. Conservative means traditional, the way things used to be. Whereas modern means exactly what the word itself sounds like, which is modern. The contrast between traditional and modern appears sharpest among the *Santri*, which has brought about a serious rift within the group.

*Santri* modernists in general have literalist thinking in theological-rite matters. They introduced a puritanical religious model by opposing all cultural elements in religious practice, while at the same time having a call for *ijtihad* and abandoning the necessity of having a school of thought (*mazhab*). The combination of the two logics gave rise to a combination of literalistic and rationalistic tendencies. In theological rite matters they tend to stick to the text and be literalistic, while in matters outside these areas, such as ethics, politics and economics, they tend to be rationalistic. For modernist-reformists, Islam appears more as an ideology and less as a theoretical arrangement of divine knowledge. This means that in Indonesia, the modern movement's appeal lies more in its socio-political programs than in religious reform.<sup>12</sup>

Many of these modernist *Santri* organizationally joined Muhammadiyah, and politically in the Old Order era (*Orde Lama*), they

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<sup>11</sup> Fazlur Rahman, *Gerakan Pembaruan dalam Islam di Tengah Tantangan Dewasa Ini* (Jakarta : Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 1985). 22

<sup>12</sup> Hendro Prasetyo and Ali Munhanif, *Islam & Civil Society : Pandangan Muslim Indonesia* (Jakarta : Gramedia, 2002). 28  
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mostly joined the Indonesian Muslim Syuro Council (Masyumi) party. The traditionalist *Santri* are based on different religious assumptions from modernist Islam, although they have relatively the same goal of achieving religious authenticity. If reformists achieve authenticity through *ijtihad* by directly accessing the Qur'an and Al-Hadith, then traditionalists achieve it through tradition.

For traditionalists, the content of the Al-Qur'an and Al-Hadith is not easy to understand, and to understand it, special requirements are needed, such as linguistics, history and logic. All these disciplines can be used to reach the meanings contained in the two main sources of Islam. Consequently, contemporary *Muslims* encounter major obstacles when trying to access the Qur'an and Al-Hadith directly. In this case, in addition to the scholarly requirements, the distance in time and space between the two does not allow for a smooth flow of reciprocal communication. To connect this distance, according to the traditionalist *Santri*, a bridge is needed that is able to connect the two, which is the tradition that has been built by previous ulama.

However sophisticated the current generation may be, the *ulama* who lived during the early years of Islam knew more about the direction and purpose of Islam. They still had access to witnesses of the Prophet's life journey, important social events, and dominant religious discourses, so their understanding of the sacred text was more comprehensive.<sup>13</sup> It is based on this assumption that traditionalists hold tightly to the Islamic tradition built by the ulama in the early years of Islam. In other words, compulsory *mazhab* for traditionalists means nothing other than an effort to carry out religious orders correctly as explained by early scholars, the authority on the interpretation of sacred texts. As history records, the number of early scholars who formulated religious beliefs was quite large, but those who later became influential were few in number. In the field of law, among the few were Imam Malik, Imam Hanafi, Imam Shafi'i and Imam Hanbali. These are the ones that Indonesian traditionalists look up

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<sup>13</sup> Zamakhsyari Dhofier, *Tradisi Pesantren: Studi Tentang Pandangan Hidup Kiyai* (Jakarta : LP3ES, 2019). 34



to in deciding legal cases. In theology they followed Abu Hasan al-Asy'ari and al-Maturidi and in mysticism they followed the teachings of al-Ghazali and Imam Abu Qasim al-Junayd.<sup>14</sup>

Although there are differences in the context of *kebilafiah*, the two *santri* subcultures (traditionalists and modernists) still have a common goal, the authenticity of Islam. Although the relationship between the two is often fragmented in *furu'* (branches), but on substantive issues, both of them still adhere to the same *ushul* (principles of teaching), so that they always remain in one line. In this context, Geertz, for example, also emphasizes the reality of “unity amid differences” among the *Santri*. Whereas the relationship between the two groups is only slightly adversarial, the sense of difference rarely reaches an intensity high enough to obliterate the sense of community in religious belief among the whole community, a sense that is reinforced by the almost universal hostility of non-*santri* to *santri*, the lesser degree of hostility between the two relatively balanced halves of the community paradoxically also serves as an integrative force to unite the group in the face of external dangers that threaten their unity.<sup>15</sup>

This means that the word “Islam” actually remains as a unifier (read: integration). When establishing *Sarekat Dagang Islam* (SDI) and then becoming *Sarekat Islam* (SI) in 1906, for example, various modernist and traditionalist *santri* supported it, so that this organization could spread in various directions from Aceh in the West to Maluku in the East, in addition to covering all people of various statuses, because it was more driven by a sense of religion, not because of ethnicity, region, or other attributes.<sup>16</sup> Based on a similar awareness in 1935 KH. Hasyim Asy'ari, the leader of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) could also encourage *santri* and or traditionalist-

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<sup>14</sup> Dundin Zaenuddin, *Budaya Kewargaan: Komunitas Islam di Daerah Aman dan Rawan Konflik* (Jakarta : LIPI Press, 2008). 31-34

<sup>15</sup> Geertz, *Agama Jawa : Abangan, Santri, Priyayi dalam Kebudayaan Jawa*. 251

<sup>16</sup> Deliar Noer, *Partai Islam di Pentas Nasional 1945-1965*, 2nd ed. (Bandung : Mizan, 1987). 5-6

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modernist Islamic organizations together to realize cooperation and or integration.<sup>17</sup> Based on the spirit of unity amidst the reality of differences, KH Mas Mansur (Muhammadiyah/modernist subculture), KH Abdul Wahab Hasbullah (NU/traditional subculture), KH. Achmad Dahlan finally met to mobilize unity in the face of an increasingly crisis. They finally agreed to form the Majelis ‘Ala Muslimin Indonesia (MAI) so that the position of Islam could be commensurate with the importance and size of the Muslim ummah.<sup>18</sup> MAI is essentially a manifestation of a sense of longing for unity, by reducing *kbilafiah*<sup>19</sup>, and uniting the Islamic movement against Dutch colonialism, MAI succeeded in integrating various Islamic organizations, originally only seven organizations finally (in 1941) included 21 organizations.<sup>20</sup>

However, the difference between traditionalist and modernist santri in Indonesia turns out not only to be based on *kbilafiah* issues but also on other dimensions that are cultured. That is, apart from different religious assumptions, it must also be underlined that the non-religious dimension is also considered in the polarization of modernists versus traditionalists. The importance of this dimension is rooted in the historical conditions of the birth of the modern Islamic movement. They were familiar with the problems faced by the average *Muslim* at that time, which were colonization and backwardness. For a region that once experienced the golden age of Islam, colonization is not just a loss of independence but also the destruction of pride and self-esteem. Common memory embedded in their historical discourse always reminds them that *Muslims* once ruled the world, and for centuries European society was under the control of the

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<sup>17</sup> Deliar Noer, *Gerakan Modern Islam Di Indonesia* (Jakarta : LP3ES, 1982). 261

<sup>18</sup>Kumpulan karya KH Mas Mansur dalam Amir Hamzah Wirjosukarto (ed), *Mas Mansur, Pemikiran tentang Islam dan Muhammadiyah*, (Yogyakarta: Hanindita, 1986), hlm. 113-116. Juga Amir Hamzah Wirjosukarto (ed), *Wawasan Politik Seorang Muslim Patriot: Soekiman Wirjosendjojo, 1889-1974*, (Malang: YP2LPM, 1984), hlm. 61. Tentang alasan pokok yang melandas didirikannya MAI juga dapat dibaca, Deliar Noer, *Gerakan Modern Islam di Indonesia, 1900-1942*, (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1982), 90.

<sup>19</sup> A.Syafi'i Maarif, *Islam dan politik: teori belah bambu masa demokrasi terpimpin (1959-1965)* (Jakarta : Gema Insani Press, 1996).

<sup>20</sup> Noer, *Partai Islam di Pentas Nasional 1945-1965*.

Islamic *daulah*. Unfortunately, this common memory was confronted with the opposite reality, where *Muslims* became the colonized nation while Europeans became the masters.<sup>21</sup> The desire to escape from the colonizers was present across the board in all *Muslim* communities. Yet the drive to move forward while adopting the values of modernity only came from certain groups of *Muslims*.

The choice of modernity seems to be related to one's chances of comparing oneself with European society. At the very least, those who chose to become modern realized that modernity was the best alternative. Such a conclusion can only be formulated if one has an in-depth knowledge of Europe at the time. The most likely group was urban Muslims who were not only well informed about modern culture but were also in direct contact with it. This is one of the factors why modern movements in Islam emerged in cities and tended to be well-received by urbanites as well. They were not only concerned with independence, but also the ability to catch up with the colonizers who they believed were more advanced.<sup>22</sup>

Thus, the difference between modernist-reformist and traditionalist *Santri* lies not only in Islamic views, but also in cultural orientation. In fact, this latter difference is more fundamental than differences in religious perspectives that are *furu'iah*.

As can be seen, cultural systems involve worldviews, preferences, personal norms, social structures and values. This means that if the differences between the two are cultural in nature, they will be fundamental because their interests are also different. The values promoted by reformists, such as openness, egalitarianism, system-oriented, or modernity, also seem to have no place in the daily lives of traditionalist *Santri*. Conversely, the traditions that are so highly valued by traditionalists do not seem to be treated in the same way by reformist *Santri*. Even the orientation of life that focuses on the area of eschatology is often the target

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<sup>21</sup> Prasetyo and Munhanif, *Islam & Civil Society: Pandangan Muslim Indonesia*. 30

<sup>22</sup> Prasetyo and Munhanif. 31

of criticism by reformists. The wide scope of differences between the two in this cultural area provides a solid basis for the formation of self-identity and groups for each party. In this context Geertz writes:

*Conservatives are more flexible towards the ceremonies of the Abangan on the one hand, and the Priyayi mystics on the other. Paradoxically, however, this flexibility does not imply greater tolerance. Thus, in conservative circles, the tradition of rotating slametan still persists, only slightly refined for the sake of austerity and with more Islamic than non-Islamic elements emphasized. In modern circles, on the other hand, slametan has often disappeared altogether.<sup>23</sup>*

### **Shalawat Badar: An Expression of Traditionalist Santri Culture and Spirituality in Indonesia**

In the traditionalist Santri circles many oral traditions developed, such as *berjanjen*, *dzibaan*, *ratiban*, and so on. *Berjanjen* is reading a book by Shekh Ja'far ibn Hasan ibn Abdulkarim ibn Muhammad al-Barzanji. While *dzibaan* is reading a book by Shekh Abu Muhammad Abdurrahman al-Dziba'i, a leading hadith scholar, memorizing 100.000 hadith complete with *sanad*. *Ratiban* is the recitation of the *ratib*. *Ratib* (meaning to organize and arrange) is something that is arranged, neatly organized. *Ratib* is composed of Qur'anic verses, prayers, *shalawat*, *istighfar*, and others.

There are many texts of non-*mu'tabarab shalawatan* as a result of *ulama* work, such as<sup>24</sup> *Shalawat Tafrijiyah* or *Nariah*, *Shalawat Munjiah*, *Shalawat Badawiah*, *Shalawat Nûrul Annâr*, *Shalawat* in order to be invited to perform pilgrimage to Baitul Haram, *Shalawat al-Fâtih*, *Shalawat Sa'adatu al-Darain*, *Shalawat* for a long life and fortunes, *Shalawat Ra'ûfu rahîm*, *Shalawat al-Wahidi Tsani*, *Shalawat Alfiah*, *Shalawat al-Qadri al-'Azhim*, *Shalawat al-Nabiyyul Ummi*, *Shalawat al-Dzâtiyah*, *Shalawat* to obtain a sense of security from all fearful things, *Shalawat al-Faraji*, *Shalawat Thibbu al-Qulûb*, *Shalawat Ahmad Shibagh*, *Shalawat al-Rizqi*, *Shalawat Kunûz al-Asrâr*, *Shalawat Ibn Mas'ûd*, *Shalawat* joy for all time, *Shalawat Ighatsah*, *Shalawat* to eliminate forgetfulness, *Shalawat* to quickly understand a science, *Shalawat* to achieve

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<sup>23</sup> Geertz, *Agama Jawa: Abangan, Santri, Priyayi dalam Kebudayaan Jawa*. 219

<sup>24</sup> Idrus H. Alkaf, *Keagungan, Keampuhan Dan Kehebatan Khasiat Shalawat Badar* (al Ibris, 2003). 51-75

what is desired and cover disgrace, *Shalawat* for intercession on the Day of Judgment, *Shalawat* in order to be invited to the grave of the Prophet Muhammad saw. In addition, since the 1960s there has been another *shalawat* that until now can be said to be one of the most popular and very often hummed by the Santri-Nahdliyyin community, which is *Shalawat Badar*.

*Shalawat Badar* is an original work of Nahdliyyin followers in the 1960s, not a work of Middle Eastern ulama as other *shalawat*, so that *shalawat Badar* can be called typical of the Nusantara. In fact, *Shalawat Badar* was thought to be the work of Arab ulama, because *shalawat* whose text is in Arabic. Generally, it has become an authority of Middle Eastern *ulama* as its author. This kind of uncertainty about the creator of a *shalawatan* (and other oral traditions) in traditionalist *Santri* culture often occurs, because the socialization of *pesantren* traditions generally proceeds orally, so who the creator of the *pesantren* oral tradition is, when it was created, and especially in what context the oral literature was created, is usually not included in the teaching process (and or giving certificates). *Kiai-Santri* generally focus more on describing the *fadlilah* contained in the oral tradition (*shalawatan*). As a result, slowly but surely many do not understand about certain *ijazahs* for *santri*, including about the important figure behind the *ijazah*. The same thing happened in the case of *Shalawat Badar*, so that the important figure behind the creation of *Shalawat Badar* also became obscure. In fact, *Shalawat Badar* turned out to be the work of a native Indonesian *ulama*, KH. Muhammad Ali Manshur (Kiai Ali).<sup>25</sup>

The original number of lines of *Shalawat Badr* is thirty in total, although some say twenty-eight. This difference is actually not essential, as the first two lines are just the opening verses, followed by 28 verses, as shown in the full text.

The existence of this *shalawat* does not have a direct historical

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<sup>25</sup> Dhurorudin Mashad, "Menelaah Sisi Politiko-Historis Shalawat Badar : Dimensi Politik Dalam Sastra Lisan Pesantren," *Jurnal Penelitian Politik* 16, no. 1 (June 28, 2019): 83, <https://doi.org/10.14203/jpp.v16i1.784>.  
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relationship with the events of the Badr War in 614M/2H, but in substance the *ghirah* of Shalawat Badr was deliberately created by referring to the spirit of the heroes of the Badar war. Therefore, substantively *Shalawat Badar* is even dominant with *tawasul* on the *Ahli Badar*, 315 people of the prophet's troops who were involved in the War of Badr. Indeed, it is different from the verses of *shalawatan* in general whose content and meaning are dominant in praising, longing, loving wholeheartedly, and hoping for the intercession of the Prophet Muhammad saw.

*Shalawat Badar* presents the background of the conflict of the *umat*, which provides a meaning that is more dominant in reproach and asking for help, so that Muslims are united and survived from any harm. The author as a *pesantren* ulama and NU activist deliberately tried to use the prayer as a means of empowering and mobilizing the increasingly marginalized Islamic political forces. The context of Indonesian Muslims when *Shalawat Badar* was created was indeed facing the slander of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI).<sup>26</sup> This reality has motivated Kiai Ali, who is adept at making Arabic poetry, to write a poem as a means of praying for the help of Allah Swt. to reduce political slander against the *Santri*. Almost the entire content of the prayer contained in *Shalawat Badr*, at the end of each verse is always offered with the phrase "Because of the Blessing of Ahli Badar". Moving on from that content or substance, it stands to reason that the *shalawat* created by Kiai Ali is finally known as Shalawat Badar.<sup>27</sup>

Shalawat Badar broadly contains the *shalawat* of the Prophet and in detail a series of *tawasul* prayers through the intercession of the name of Allah, the Prophet Muhammad saw, and the noble position of 313 companions of *Badar*. Philosophically, *Shalawat Badar* reflects the *Santri*'s worldview and ideological-cultural beliefs. It contains deep conceptions and ideas about life: about the relationship between man and his God, man and the Prophet, and the horizontal relationship between man to man in

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<sup>26</sup> Mashad.

<sup>27</sup> Akhmad Saehudin, *Shalawat Badar: Santra Pesantren yang Menggerakkan*, 1st ed. (Depok: Rajawali Press, 2022).

the socio-cultural and socio-political context. *Shalawat Badar* is part of the representation of *Santri* culture, the essence of a *Santri's* experience that is transcendental, reflective, and relevant to the socio-political context. *Shalawat Badar* is able to symbolize, reflect, and strengthen *Santri's* worldview and norms, including in dealing with socio-political challenges.<sup>28</sup>

The entity of *shalawat Badar* in substantive terms actually leads to: sociological function (expression of civilization) and pedagogical function (expression of learning). The sociological function is implemented as a means of revealing the cultural origins of the *pesantren* oral tradition, as a means of revealing the social structure of the *Santri* according to the political context, and as a means of mobilizing them according to the ongoing socio-political context. The pedagogical function strengthens *Shalawat Badar* as a model of moral ethical education within the framework of love for God and His Prophet, teaching about the self-esteem and self-confidence of the *Santri*, teaching the symbolic language of mobilizing the courage and political unity of the *Santri* to face the current political context.<sup>29</sup>

According to the NU cultural paradigm, *Shalawat Badar* does have a solid foundation, because its existence was created from the tradition of *shalawatan-tawasulan* which is one of the characteristics of Nahdliyin culture (as its followers are called). This characteristic also seems to be deeply embedded in K.H. Ali Manshur, as reflected in the *Shalawat Badar* that he created.<sup>30</sup> There are three important paradigms that underlie *Shalawat Badar* as a reflection of the *Santri Nahdliyin* culture, among others:

- 1) The meaning of dreams

*Shalawat Badar* was inspired by the dream of encountering the Prophet Muhammad saw, the “dream” of being visited by *Ahlu al-Badri*. Kiai Ali's dreams in the Nahdliyyin paradigm are not viewed as just fleeting

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<sup>28</sup> Mashad, “Menelaah Sisi Politiko-Historis *Shalawat Badar*,” June 28, 2019.

<sup>29</sup> Mashad.

<sup>30</sup> Sachudin, *Shalawat Badar: Santra Pesantren yang Menggerakkan. Khazanah*, Vol. 17 (1), 2019

dreams, because dreams for the righteous are always considered to have meaning. Many *bisyarah* through dreams have been told in the Qur'an. Ibrahim a.s. for example, was ordered by Allah Swt to slaughter his son Ismail a.s also through a dream (Q.S. Al-Shaffat: 103). The dream, for the father-son, Ibrahim a.s and Ismail a.s, is a truth that must be carried out, even though it is contrary to human logic. Various dream stories related to the existence of Yusuf a.s. are also told in the Qur'an, both the dreams he experienced himself (the sun, the moon, and eleven stars were bowed down to him) and the dream of the governor of Egypt (seven fat oxen were eaten by seven thin oxen), the dream of two friends of Yusuf in prison (milking grapes and bread that was put on the head was eaten by birds), all of which have their own interpretations and signs.

That is the the role of dreams for kiai with Nahdliyyin culture, which is interpreted as a cue in life. This also applied to Kiai Ali, the grandson of Mbah Shiddiq Jember. Therefore, the dream of his wife, Khatimah, who saw the Prophet embrace Kiai Ali, was a sign.<sup>31</sup> Moreover, the Prophet said,

*“Whoever meet me in a dream, he has really met me, for the devil is unable to imitate my appearance”.* (H.R. Bukhari and Muslim).

In the same way, the dreams of the neighbors, who were all the same, saw a nation of *sayids* or *habibs* entering Kiai Ali's house were also understood as a sign that they were the *Abli Badr*. Belief as a sign, the two dreams by Kiai Ali were used as a starting point for doing a big job of making *munajat* verses, *Shalawat-Tawasul* to arouse the enthusiasm or motivation of the Santri to fight the PKI and their Genjer-Genjer song.<sup>32</sup>

## 2) The tradition of *Shalawatan-Tawasulan*

From NU's paradigm, *Shalawat Badar* has a solid foundation, because it is a manifestation of the *shalawatan* tradition as well as the

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<sup>31</sup> Saeful Islam, K.H.R. *Ali Manshur: Sang Pencipta Shalawat Badar* (Surabaya : Amantar, 2004).

<sup>32</sup> Mashad, “Menelaah Sisi Politik-Historis Shalawat Badar,” June 28, 2019.



*tawasulan* tradition which is indeed a characteristic of the Nahdliyin. Shalawatan is a form of shalawat reading activity.<sup>33</sup> *Shalawat* is the plural form of the word *salat*, which means prayer to Allah. Reading *shalawat* for the Prophet, has the intention of invoking the blessings of Allah Swt. for the Prophet with greetings, states and wishes, may the Prophet prosper (lucky, without lacking anything, state of good and healthy). *Shalawatan* is an oral tradition that arises from the activity of reciting the Prophet's *shalawat*, which is a prayer or communication of the Santri to God for the Prophet Muhammad saw.

Through this ritual, the Santri seek the reward of Allah as well as the intercession of the Prophet on the Day of Judgment. Allah has sent the Prophet and has given him the specialty and glory to convey the message. Allah has made him a mercy to all nature (*rahmatan li al-'âlamîn*) and a leader for the pious and made him a person who can give (cause) guidance to the straight path.<sup>34</sup> With all the Prophet's services to mankind, then Allah mentions the appropriate action for him, which is to recite shalawat.

*'Innallâba wa malâikatahu yushallûna 'ala al-nabi yâ ayyuha al-ladzîna âmanu shallû 'alaihi wa sallimu taslîma.*

Meaning: "Verily, Allah and His angels shall bless the Prophet. O you who believe, bless him and salute him. (Q.S. Al-Abzâb: 56).

This is common belief among all Santri of whatever sub-culture, modernist or traditionalist. *Shalawat* is no stranger to Santri, because whenever the name of the Prophet Muhammad is mentioned, they will recite shalawat for him. The recitation of *shalawat* is also done on various occasions, for example at the opening of a speech, recitation (limited or public), and there are even daily practices in a certain number of counting.

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<sup>33</sup> Fitri Fauziyah, "Solidaritas sosial melalui tradisi Tawasulan : Studi di Kampung Keramat Batok Desa Jayabakti Kecamatan Cabangbungin Kabupaten Bekasi." (Sarjana Thesis, Bandung, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati, 2023).

<sup>34</sup> Alkaf, *Keagungan, Keampuhan Dan Kebebatan Khasiat Shalawat Badar. Khasanah*, Vol. 17 (1), 2019

However, it is at this point that differences finally begin to occur, that is: the traditionalist *santri* traditionally recite the *shalawat*. Traditionalist *santri* traditionally recite *shalawat* (eventually known as *shalawatan*), while modernist *santri* often oppose it, especially when the recitation refers to the text of *shalawat* created by *ulama*.

The traditionalist *santri* believe that the various texts of *shalawat* created by *ulama* are essentially a reflection of their love for the Prophet, especially since the *ulama* who created the *shalawat* were prominent *ulama* in their time, so that the resulting works also contain sacred messages. Based on this conception, the traditionalist *santri* sub-culture even makes it a routine ritual, such as the tradition of *barjanjen*, *dzibaan*, *ratiban*, *manakiban*, which also contains many *shalawatan* texts. *Barjanjen* is reading a book by Shekh Ja'far ibn Hasan ibn Abdulkarim ibn Muhammad al-Barzanji. While *dzibaan* is reading a book by Shekh Abu Muhammad Abdurrahman al-Dziba'i. The *ratiban* is an event to read the *ratib*. *Ratib* (means to organize, arrange) is something that is arranged, neatly organized. *Ratib* is composed of Qur'anic verses, prayers, *shalawat*, *istighfar*, and others. There are at least two kinds of *ratib*, that are very influential, especially in the Nusantara, i.e. *Ratib al-Haddad* and *Ratib al-Atthas*. In many *pesantren*, *barjanjen* and *dzibaaan* are routinely recited as a kind of *wirid*.<sup>35</sup>

As for the *tawasulan* tradition, which semantically means taking an intermediary. Something that is used as an intermediary to get closer (*tawajjub*) to Allah to reach something expected from Him. For Nahdliyyin, *tawasul* is interpreted as a way of praying and one of the many doorways to approach the Khaliq by using intermediaries (*washilah*). The Nahdliyyin are accustomed to introspection, including in the form of visiting the grave of a *wali* or *kiai* with all the arguments they have.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Risda Alfi Fat Hanna et al., "Rutinan Maulid 'Zibā' di Pondok Pesantren Al-Munawwir Komplek Nurussalam Putri Yogyakarta," *Jurnal Riset Agama* 2, no. 1 (2022): 42–53, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jra.v2i1.15648>.

<sup>36</sup> Mashad, "Menelaah Sisi Politiko-Historis Shalawat Badar," June 28, 2019.

### **A Modernist Islamic View of the *Shalawatan* Tradition**

*Shalawatan*, especially *Shalawat Badar*, has become a characteristic of traditionalist *Santri*. This tradition is often criticized by modernist *Santri*, because it is considered as excessive respect, even leading to a cult, even though it is dedicated to the prophet Muhammad saw. In general, the *shalawatan* tradition from the modernist *Santri*'s point of view focuses on three things: the procession of *shalawat* which is often accompanied by certain time and number rules, the discourse of certain benefits (*fadlilah*) attributed to the reader of *shalawat*, and the substance of the *lafadz shalawat* itself.

**First**, *shalawatan* created by ulama is often attached to a rule: it is performed at a certain time and number. During the month of Rabi'ul Awwal, for many Muslims commemorate the *maulid* of the Prophet saw, reciting *shalawat* and reading *al-Barzanji*. This practice is considered heresy by the modernist *Santri*,<sup>37</sup> as although the recitation of *shalawat* is commanded in Islam, but Allah and His messengers never specified it in the *Rabi'ul Awwal*. In contrast to Friday, *Muslims* are commanded to multiply *shalawat*.

**Second**, the ritual recitation of *shalawat* made by the *ulama* is often added with a magical-mystical dimension in the form of *fadlilah* (benefits), which modernist *Santri* consider unsubstantiated. This type of *shalawat* is usually practiced among *Sufi* orders. According to the modernist *Santri*, this belief has no validation; in fact, it is nothing more than a lie, because the *Shari'a* cannot be taken from a "dream", especially since the Prophet saw did not actually practice this when he was alive. But this dimension of *fadlilah* is precisely what motivates traditionalist *Santri* to practice this non-*mu'tabarab shalawat*, including *Shalawat Badar*, to obtain its mystical-magical side.

Lastly, modernist *Santri* argue that much of the substance of the *ulama*'s *shalawat* is contrary to the basic principles of Islam, especially as it

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<sup>37</sup> Wasisto Raharjo Jati, "TRADISI, SUNNAH & BID'AH: Analisa Barzanji Dalam Perspektif Cultural Studies," *Jurnal El-Harakah* 14, no. 2 (2012): 226. *Khazanah*, Vol. 17 (1), 2019

is often combined with *tawasulan*.<sup>38</sup> For example, in *Shalawat Nariab*, there is a verse:

*Tanhalu bibi al-uqadu, wa tanfariju bibi al-keurabu, wa tuqdlu bibi al-hawâju.*

Meaning: *With him (Prophet Muhammad saw) are released all bonds of distress, and relieved all difficulties, and all needs will be fulfilled.*

Whereas only Allah is able to release all distress, to fulfill all needs, and to give happiness to people who are sad. Similarly, in *Shalawat Burdah*, there are sentences that are considered problematic:

*“O my Rabb! Through the intercession of Musthafa, fulfill all our wishes and forgive our past sins, O One Who is Most Generous.”*

These verses are problematic because they indicate *tawasul* to the Prophet saw, especially when he has passed away, which can lead to *syirik* because of the belief that God needs an intermediary. The same thing is found in *Shalawat Badar*, especially in verse below,

*Tawassalnâ bi bismillah, wa bi al-Hâdi rasulillâh, wa kulli mujâbidin lillâh bi Ahli al-Badri yâ Allâh*

Meaning: *We make tawassul with the Name of Allah, and also with the bearer of guidance, the Messenger of Allah, and also make tawassul with all the mujahids of Allah, with the warriors of Badr, O Allah.*

In addition to the *shalawatan* tradition that has been criticized intensively, both in terms of number, text content, and the promise of *fadliab* or benefits, *tawasulan* has also received sharp criticism from the modernist *santri* group. *Tawasul* is taking something to be used as a means of getting closer to Allah Swt. *Tawasul* is praying to Allah through a *wasilah* (intermediary). One of the reasons for this is the following verse:

*“O you who believe, fear Allah and seek a way that draws near to Him” (Q.S. Al-Maidah: 35).*

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<sup>38</sup> Raharjo Jati.

For example, it is contained in the Dhuha prayer:

*Allahumma in kâna rizqka fi al-samâ`i fa anzilhu, wa in kâna fi al-ardli fa akbrijhu, bi haqqi dluhâ ika, wa qummatika, wa al-qudratika.*

This means: O Allah, if it is in the heavens, send it down, and if it is in the earth, bring it out, by the right of Your dhuha, power, and might.

Islamic scholars agree that *tawasul* is permissible in relation to three matters, i.e.:

1) *Tawasul* with the name of Allah, as He says:

*“And to Allah belongs only the Asma Albusna, so supplicate to Him by mentioning the Asmaul Husna.”* (Q.S. Al-A'raf: 180).

This has also been exemplified by the Prophet who prayed:

*“O Allah, I ask You by all the names that You have, which You named Yourself by. Or You taught it to one of Your servants, or You revealed it in Your book, or You kept it with You in the knowledge of the unseen.”* (Ahmad, Abu Ya'la and others, authenticated by Syekh al-Bani).

- 2) *Tawasul* with the good deeds, as in the story of the three men who were trapped in a cave, then they *tawasul* in prayer with their good deeds (HR. Bukhari Muslim),
- 3) *Tawasul* with the prayers of a righteous person who is still alive, asking the righteous person to pray for him (HR. Bukhari related to the prayer for rain at the time of Caliph Umar (may Allah be pleased with him!), which was offered through the Prophet's uncle Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him!)).

However, according to modernist Santri, when *tawasul* goes beyond these three types, such as *tawasul* to the dead, there are different views: some allow it, some disfavor it, and some even forbid it. This occurs in the case of *tawasul* on the *Shalawat Badar*: 1) *Tawasul* with the Names and

Attributes of Allah. The scholars are unanimous in their opinion that it is acceptable, as is the supplication when make a prayer for the sick:

*“O our Lord in the heavens, pure is Your name, Your affairs in the heavens and the earth. As Your mercy in the heavens make mercy on the earth. Forgive us our sicknesses and faults. You are the Lord of the good. Send down a mercy from Your mercy. Heal from Your healing of this sickness, and the man is cured.”* (Hadith Hasan, narrated by Abu Daud and others).

In this Hadith there is *tawasul* to Allah Swt by praising Him through His Rububiyah and Ilahiyah and sanctifying His name and majesty over His creatures. 2) *Tawasul* with oneself, such as the Prophet and righteous people, such as the ahli Badar, who have passed away. Yusuf Qardhawi considered this to be disputed, even if it is just a technical matter of supplication and does not come under the heading of matters of belief.

The modernist *santri* argue that there is not a single *sabeeh* evidence that permits, let alone prescribes *tawasul* with the deceased Prophet. According to the modernist *santri*, the evidence for the prohibition of *tawasul* to the Prophet and the righteous is stronger in scientific scales, which is the door of Allah Swt. open to every creature, there is no barrier (guard) like the door of the ruler (king). In fact, Allah opens the door of His mercy to even those who disobey Him and attributes them to His Essence.

*“Say: “O My servants who transgress against themselves, do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Verily, Allah forgives the sins of all. Indeed, He is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful”* (Q.S. Al-Zumar: 53).

In addition, the acceptance of *tawasul* may open the way for ordinary people to pray and ask for help from other than Allah. Many people have mixed up these two things, so closing this path for the common people takes precedence. Hence, the *manhaj* for teaching, preaching and issuing fatwa is that if we can worship Allah with what is agreed upon, then there is no room for us to enter into matters of

dispute.”<sup>39</sup>

### **Shalawat Badar: The Persistence of Popularity Behind the Dispute**

Despite criticism from modernist *Santri*, the *shalawatan-tawasulan* tradition has continued to develop among traditionalist *Santri*, along with the development of the *shalawatan* texts produced. Moreover, when the *kiai* create *shalawatan* combined with *singir* (a kind of Javanese verse) for the purpose of proselytizing Islam, the form of the text and its rhythm become more diverse. Some of these *shalawat* texts are simply, but some are performed with a certain rhythm, either individually or collectively, whether using musical instruments or not.<sup>40</sup>

For traditionalist *Santri*, the additional *fadlilab* in *shalawatan-tawasulan* even occupies a very important position, as in *Shalawat Badar*, especially when they have to face difficult times, when they have to face dangerous chaos both in the revolutionary era and face PKI agitation in the era of Guided Democracy. Even within this framework, the *Santri* had to hunt for certificates (*rajab* and *wirid*) from the *Kiai* in order to maintain their personal safety. The traditional *Santri* as practitioners of the *ulama's shalawatan* certainly have their own arguments, i.e:

#### 1) Tawasul

This word comes from the *wasīlah*, meaning an intermediary. In more detail, it means a) praying to Allah indirectly; b) by interceding for someone else; c) by mentioning something other than Allah. The proof of *wasīlah* is: “O you who believe, fear Allah and seek a *wasilah* to Him.” (Q.S. Al-Maidah: 35).

The Prophet once treated an illness by sticking a finger into the soil, mixed with saliva, then rubbed it over the affected area with the

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<sup>39</sup> Mashad, “Menelaah Sisi Politiko-Historis Shalawat Badar,” June 28, 2019.

<sup>40</sup> Muhammad Muzakka, “Tradisi Lisan Pesantren dan Pemberdayaan Politik Kaum Santri : Kajian Terhadap Tradisi Shalawatan” (Seminar Internasional Tradisi Lisan Nusantara IV dan Festival Pesisir, Semarang, Hotel Patra Jasa, 2003).  
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supplication: “*In the name of Allah, with the soil of our earth, with the saliva of some of us, heal our illness, with the permission of our Lord.*” (HR Bukhari-Muslim). This means that the Prophet permitted *tawasul* with inanimate objects such as soil and saliva. The logic is that if *tawasul* with soil and saliva is acceptable, then *tawasul* with more noble ones such as the Prophet, the *Abli Badar*, saints, and pious people who have died, is certainly not prohibited. If the prayer is still directed at Allah and does not worship the one being prayed to. Moreover, pious people even though they have died do not actually die:

“*And do not say of those who fall in the way of Allah that they are dead; rather they are alive, but you do not recognize it*”. (Q.S. Al-Baqarah: 154).

2) *Muslims* are commanded to follow the *ulama*, while they transmitted knowledge from the Prophet saw

If an *ulama* creates shalawat as an expression of his love for Allah and His Messenger, it does not mean that he is changing the text of the *shalawat* from the Prophet. The text of the Prophet’s *shalawat* remains the most important, but that does not mean that the *ulama* are not allowed to create the text of the *shalawat*. In the opening part of various books written by *ulama*, there are always sentences of *shalawat*, which almost have different texts for different books, as an expression of the author’s love for the Prophet. It is therefore understandable that many *ulama* created special verses and *shalawat* for the Prophet saw.<sup>41</sup>

The Nahdliyin believe that every *tariqah* has prayers, *ziker*, and *shalawat* that they believe have virtues and will bring them immediately to the degree of the righteous and even to the *maqom wali*.<sup>42</sup> Because, among the virtues of the prayers and *shalawat* is that the *syekh* of the *tariqah* have taken them from the Prophet directly either in a conscious state or in a dream, because dreams of encountering the Prophet are a truth. There is a belief about the many magical aspects surrounding the existence of *shalawat*

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<sup>41</sup> Saehudin, *Shalawat Badar : Santra Pesantren yang Menggerakkan*.

<sup>42</sup> Muhammad Nur, “Konsep Tawassul Dalam Islam.”



created by ulama, *Shalawat Badar* also with all the *fadlilab* for whoever recites it.

There are two reasons for the success of *Shalawat Badar* among cross-cultural Santri, which are:

*First*, historically, the existence of *Shalawat Badar* was presented in the context of the *Santri* confronting the threat of the communists. The logic of the *Santri's* struggle is what finally binds all *Santri* to feel convenient to recite it together. In 1960 when this *Shalawat* was created, Indonesian *Muslims* were indeed facing extraordinary slander from the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). The PKI was rampant with an extraordinary political pattern of mass mobilization. At the national and local levels, Islamic organizations, *kiai* and *Santri* became victims of PKI agitation. In fact, *Muslims* are faced with an acute weakening, along with the dissolution of the Indonesian Muslim Shuro Council (Masyumi) party, a representation of modernist Islam, in August 1960. As a result, the strength of the *Muslims* only relied on *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU) in facing the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). This reality caused K.H. Ali Manshur (Kiai Ali) to feel very uneasy, worried, and finally encouraged this figure to look for ways to build a means to pray for the help of Allah Swt, so *Shalawat Badar* was created.<sup>43</sup>

*Second*, *Shalawat Badar* is the work of Indonesian ulama. This *shalawat* is different from various Middle Eastern *shalawat* verses in general, whose content and meaning are dominant in praising, longing, loving wholeheartedly and hoping for the intercession of the Prophet Muhammad saw, then *Shalawat Badar* is present against the background of the conflict of the *ummah*, which in it gives a more dominant meaning to complaints and asking for help so that Muslims remain united.<sup>44</sup> In addition, the characteristics of Middle Eastern-style verse are usually very deep in the meaning of words and rarely found repetition of words. While this characteristic is not found in the *Shalawat Badar* verse, which repeats a

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<sup>43</sup> Mashad.

<sup>44</sup> Saehudin, *Shalawat Badar: Santra Pesantren yang Menggerakkan. Khazanah*, Vol. 17 (1), 2019

sentence “*bi ahli al-badri ya Allah*”. In Shalawat Badar, there is also no convoluted and difficult to understand meaning. The sentences are simple and to the point, having Javanese *dzauq*, Javanese-style *balaghah*.

## **Conclusion**

Many *pesantren* oral traditions, for example *shalawatan* and *tawasulan*, have been the object of bid’ah labeling by modernist *santri*. This labeling has become a kind of mental terror always suffered. In the current context, the oral tradition of traditionalist *Santri* is no longer only confronting modernists such as Muhammadiyah and Persis, but also other groups that are even more violent through the concept of *takfiri*.

The controversy of modernist versus traditionalist *santri* in the context of *pesantren* oral tradition is certainly the biggest disruptor in the relationship between the two *santri* sub-cultures. For traditionalists, Universal Islamic cosmology to be considered more relevant by local Muslims requires a process of adaptation that is not simple, because the situation and moral conditions of local culture have undergone an intense process of dialogue with the people. When religion is manifested in social life, it is no longer stagnant in normative religion (according to the text), but it has interacted with the context, so that what is referred to as interpretations of religious texts appear in the form of religious understanding, as well as religious practices, even religious fellowship. In this context, religion is finally understood as a cultural system, which includes symbols of social culture. Religion coexists with the development of local culture, often becoming the dominant pattern in religion, so that the sacredness of religion is often determined by local traditions that have become myths. The result is, when religion loses the values of certain cultural systems, then religious adherents will experience the aridity of religious sacredness and emotional values.

The only way to connect the gap between these two *Santri* subcultures is for modernist *Santri* to no longer see various *pesantren* oral traditions, such as *shalawatan*, *tawasulan*, *berjanjen*, *manakiban*, and *talqinan*, monolithically only from the theological realm. The oral tradition of

*pesantren*, because of its essence, has been addressing the sociological dimension (cultural civilization) so that civilization in religion becomes less dry. Only through such an attitude, the harmony between *Santri* sub-cultures can be realized. It seems that the existence of *Shalawat Badar* in the socio-political context of Indonesia has been able to facilitate the gap of opinion between traditionalist *santri* and modernist *santri*.

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