



## **The Wahhabi Ideological Doctrine: Islam Must Be Free from All "Bid'ah"**

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### **Abstract**

The behavior of fanaticism towards religion and radicalism often occurs in the living environment of society, with the pretext of jihad, purification of religion, even preaching to invite society back to the straight and true path as taught in the Quran and Hadith, in fact, often leads to the emergence of radical behavior with the presence of various terrorists, religious coercion, violence, even resulting in murder. The focus of this research is on the Wahhabi sect and teachings, where Indonesia rejects the presence of the Wahhabi sect because it is considered dangerous to the sustainability of the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia. This research uses qualitative research with a descriptive approach, data collection is done through library research. To this day, fanaticism and radicalism still often occur in Indonesia. Indonesia, as a multicultural country where cultural and religious acculturation can be said to be characteristic of each region in Indonesia. Wahhabi teachings that strongly oppose innovation, if we look at the conditions in Indonesia, will certainly lead to radicalism because it is considered a wrong belief.

**Keywords:** Wahhabi Sect, Cultural and Religious Acculturation, Radicalism.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The development of Islamic teachings has experienced an expansion among communities, not only in societies where the majority of the population is Muslim, such as Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Malaysia, and several other countries with a Muslim majority. However, Islam, with the passage of time, has spread to various Western countries. The spread of Islam has had a significant impact on the growth of its followers, which, in turn, demonstrates rapid development. It is not just the growth in the number of Muslims, but in the dynamics of the development of Islam itself, one can observe remarkable progress, especially in Islamic thought.

Islamic thought continues to evolve over time, influenced by the social, cultural, and intellectual context of the communities embracing this religion. Islamic thinkers from various eras have made significant contributions to the understanding and interpretation of religious teachings, creating a diverse and profound framework of thought. Throughout the ages, Islamic thought has developed in line with the demands of the times, covering various aspects of life, from science, philosophy, law to contemporary issues. Therefore, the development in Islamic thought not only reflects the continuity of the

spirituality of Muslims but also mirrors the richness and diversity of intellectualism in addressing various challenges of the time. Observing this dynamic is crucial for understanding and appreciating the evolving intellectual heritage of Islam and responding to the demands of the time with a deeper and contextual understanding of Islamic teachings. To date, various Islamic thinkers continue to develop and contribute to contemplation and understanding of these religious teachings. However, in the expanding development of Islam, we are also faced with the reality that various teachings from external groups claim to be part of the Islamic teachings, whereas they are actually part of radical groups. Radicalism in the context of Islam can be defined as religious behavior that seeks drastic change to achieve a specific desired goal (Thoyyib, 2018).

In this context, it is important to understand that radicalism does not always reflect the true essence of Islam, which is peaceful and values pluralism. On the contrary, radical groups may use religion as a tool to achieve certain political or ideological agendas. Therefore, a profound understanding of the true values of Islamic teachings and wise information selection is necessary to avoid falling into misunderstandings and prevent the spread of radicalism among Muslims.

In Indonesia, there are still several radical groups, and this also extends to fanaticism, even leading to radicalism in the name of jihad and the purification of religion. Fanaticism is an excessive attitude or behavior towards something, such as religious teachings, politics, or other things. Someone with a fanatical sense often unwittingly triggers radical behavior. The growth of radicalism in Indonesia since the reform era with the introduction of ideologies from the Middle East into Indonesia and the dissemination of its teachings has become an opportunity for the emergence of freedom of expression, giving rise to various movements such as Wahhabism. The presence of Wahhabism is considered an extreme ideology, as it is a radical belief. Purifying religion that Islam must return to its pure early teachings without the use of ideology in religion, Wahhabism considers any teaching that does not conform to the Quran and Hadith as bid'ah.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This research employs a qualitative method with a descriptive approach, which is an analysis of data that provides an elaboration or explanation of the themes discussed in the form of a narrative description. The data collection process is conducted through library research, extracting information from various sources, including books, international and national journals, as well as other relevant references. The research focuses on Wahhabism as the object of study. It will delve into several fundamental aspects related to Wahhabism, such as the history of Wahhabism, the doctrines advocated by this movement, and how Wahhabism intersects with contemporary realities, particularly in Indonesia. The analysis will commence by reviewing the history of Wahhabism to provide

context regarding the journey and development of this movement since its inception. Subsequently, a detailed explanation will be provided regarding the doctrines embraced by Wahhabism, including the core values and main principles that shape the identity of this movement. It is also essential to discuss the relevance of Wahhabism in the context of the contemporary era, especially in Indonesia. How Wahhabism adapts and evolves amid the dynamics of Indonesian society and social systems will be the focus of the analysis. Therefore, this research aims to provide a deeper understanding of Wahhabism and its contribution to the landscape of diversity and religious dynamics in Indonesia.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **History of Wahhabism in Indonesia**

The history of the emergence of Wahhabism is inseparable from its founder, Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahab, in the 8th century, in the year 1703-1791 AD. It can be seen that the name of the Wahhabi sect is taken from its founder's name, Abdul Wahab. The founder and followers of this Wahhabi sect are called "muwahidun and muwahidin," which means the unifying group, system, or order (Idris and Sahlan, 2018). The Wahhabi sect claims that they are not a school of thought or a movement of Islamic reform, but their goal is solely to preach and implement the correct teachings of Islam in society.

Wahhabi followers also claim to be part of the Sunni group, following the Hanbali school of thought, particularly the version of Ibn Taymiyyah. This can be seen in their numerous writings that excessively praise the sheikhs of orders. Ibn Taymiyyah serves as a model and guide for Ibn Abd Al-Wahab in his thoughts and behavior, especially regarding matters of creed. However, Ibn Abd Al-Wahab's fanaticism towards Ibn Taymiyyah's thoughts has led to various perspectives that differentiate him from Ibn Taymiyyah (Salafi groups). These differences not only involve matters of innovation, where the behavior of the community must adhere to the rules found in the Qur'an, Sunnah, and the customs of society. Anything that deviates from these sources is considered an innovation, even seemingly trivial matters like smoking, drinking coffee, or performing group dhikr (Moh. Mukri, 2015). The goal of the Wahhabi sect is to restore the teachings of Islam in society to the purity of the time of the Prophet, without acculturation.

The Wahhabi sect is often known for its extreme, rigid, and harsh ideology, traits consistently displayed by its followers (Arthur, 2020:50). This is because Wahhabism can be a dangerous threat to the continuity of the Indonesian state. Wahhabism has a radical doctrine, where, according to Wahhabi views, Islam must be pure, without innovation, superstition, and devoid of any form of innovation. Anything not in accordance with the pure teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith is considered an innovation, and those who deviate from Wahhabi

doctrine are deemed infidels and polytheists. According to Islamic law, infidels or polytheists are considered legitimate and allowed to be killed. The pure teachings in Wahhabi doctrine are the teachings of Islam as practiced during the time of the Prophet, companions, and the Tabi'in, extending only until the 3rd century AH (Mansur, 2008). The history of Wahhabism is closely associated with murder, violence, and attacks on groups outside their own to enforce Sharia, succeeding only in establishing discipline through violence in religion. However, the Wahhabi sect suppresses the intellectual development of society, ignores culture, and vehemently rejects new civilizations, such as issues of modern administrative governance systems (Arthur, 2020). As a result, Wahhabi ideology is often labeled as a doctrine that frequently accuses innovation against anything it deems inconsistent with the teachings of Islam.

In his thoughts, Ibn Abd Al-Wahab conveyed that there have been many practices within the Muslim community that contain various innovations, acts of polytheism, and superstitions that are contrary to the teachings of monotheism. Thus, according to him, there is a need for purification or purification of monotheism (Moh.Mukri, 2015:99). The Wahhabi group is also known for its exclusive actions, always showing that their teachings are the most correct because they are in line with the pure teachings of Islam. It is no wonder that the Wahhabi sect vehemently rejects the laws and clashes with state authorities (Arthur, 2020). If we look at this situation, the harsh behavior with the rejection of laws and modern governance systems, as seen today, leads people to believe that Wahhabism has radical tendencies, often considered dangerous because it can lead to conflicts, even to more extreme acts of violence.

### **Wahhabi Ideological Doctrine**

The Wahhabi doctrine or teachings are divided into three main pillars: Tauhid Rububiyah, Tauhid Asma Wa Sifat, and Tauhid Ilahiah. Firstly, Tauhid Rububiyah encompasses the understanding that Allah is the creator of the universe and the determiner of everything. Secondly, Tauhid Asma Wa Sifat relates to Allah's Oneness and His unique attributes, which differ from His creatures. In the verse QS. Thaha (20:6), it is emphasized that everything in the heavens, the earth, and within the earth belongs to Allah, confirming His control over all life. Thirdly, Tauhid Ilahiah concerns the devotion in worshipping Allah. Wahhabis emphasize that worship should only be directed towards Allah, without acknowledging any divine attributes other than His. According to Ibn Abd Wahab, this third tauhid is often deviated by Muslims, who tend to follow the first and second tauhids. However, Ilahiah tauhid should be the main focus to be guarded and practiced by Muslims.

Wahhabi teachings create some controversial views regarding religious practices. They view the use of honorific titles, such as "Sayyiduna" or

"Habibuna," to honor angels, prophets, or saints as an act of polytheism. Additionally, interpreting the Qur'an with takwil is considered a form of disbelief, and following the fiqh schools is deemed an innovation. In the context of its relevance to religious practices, Wahhabis also reject practices like visiting graves, commemorating the Prophet's birthday, and prohibit activities such as smoking and singing the Qur'an. Thus, Wahhabi teachings create a very strict and exclusive religious view, establishing stringent norms and rejecting practices deemed as innovations or polytheism. This creates a difference in perspectives between Wahhabis and other Islamic sects in the interpretation and implementation of religious teachings.

From the explanations above regarding Wahhabi doctrines and teachings, it can be understood that the Wahhabi sect rejects all forms of innovation, even declaring some teachings as polytheistic if they are considered inconsistent with the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith. Wahhabi teachings also consider several existing sects as infidels, such as the Khawarij, Qadariyah, Shi'ah, Jabariyah, Mu'tazilah, Ash'ariyah, Murji'ah, Maturidiyah (Fikri, 2019), and several others. According to Ibn Abd Al-Wahab, spreading Islamic teachings should not only be done through words but also requires action in the dissemination process (Fatmawatun, 2019).

This understanding leads the followers of Wahhabism to believe that actions are crucial in spreading Islamic teachings and inviting the Islamic community to return to pure teachings. Coercion, violence, and even murders against those who refuse to comply and follow this doctrine occur, as dissenters are considered polytheists, and the blood of polytheists is judged permissible to shed. In this context, some people perceive Wahhabism as a dangerous radical ideology threatening society.

Islam, believed by every community in every region of Indonesia, undergoes acculturation with the culture of each region. This characteristic becomes unique to each area. For example, in Javanese society, there is "Javanese Islam," where Islam undergoes acculturation with Javanese culture, creating a new cultural blend. Contrary to this, Wahhabi teachings in the above context consider Indonesia to have many innovations and polytheistic practices in its religion. This could potentially lead to bloodshed in Indonesia, as many people are considered polytheists by Wahhabi followers. Religious practices that involve the mixing or influence of culture are considered innovations, polytheistic, deviant, and can even lead to disbelief according to Wahhabi teachings. Purifying religion, according to Wahhabism, where religion must be free from all forms of innovation, polytheism, and superstitions, if applied in Indonesia today, would undoubtedly lead to rebellion and rejection in society. This is because Islam in Indonesia, with cultural acculturation in each region, can be said to be deeply embedded in the lives of the Indonesian people.

## **CONCLUSION**

Conclusion drawn from the above exposition is a profound understanding of the Wahhabi movement and its teachings regarding the Oneness of God (Tauhid). This movement aims to purify Islam and bring it back to the teachings found in the Qur'an and Hadith. According to the Wahhabi perspective, anything not grounded in the Qur'an and Hadith is considered innovation, polytheism, and could even lead to declaring someone an unbeliever. In their effort to spread Islamic teachings with a focus on purifying the religion, the Wahhabi movement tends to exhibit a rigid stance, with some even identifying it as a radical movement. The concept that someone deemed polytheistic or an unbeliever is considered permissible to be killed is one of the steadfast beliefs held by this movement.

In the context of Indonesia, a country where Islam has acculturated with local culture, the Wahhabi view on religious practices in Indonesia is seen as innovation, polytheism, and even regarded as an act of disbelief. This viewpoint has the potential to generate conflict and bloodshed in Indonesia, given the diverse and inclusive understanding of religion and culture among Indonesian society. Therefore, there is a need for dialogue and a deeper understanding among various religious sects to maintain harmony and peace within Indonesian society.

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