

Rhetoric of KH. Ahmad Nawawi's Prophecy in Improving the Religious Moderation of Students at the Mambaus Sholihin Islamic Boarding School Ciwaringin Chamber, Cirebon Regency

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Abstract : Da'wah rhetoric plays a crucial role in shaping students' understanding and attitudes towards religious teachings, including enhancing religious moderation. KH Ahmad Nawawi, as the head of Pondok Pesantren Mambaus Sholihin Babakan Ciwaringin in Cirebon Regency, utilizes his da'wah to deliver messages of religious moderation relevant to contemporary challenges. Amidst the rise of extremism and intolerance, KH Ahmad Nawawi emphasizes a da'wah approach that integrates classical religious texts with contemporary issues, using a structured and logical method in his delivery. Through effective rhetoric, he aims to instill values of moderation, tolerance, and inclusivity among students, enabling them to apply balanced Islamic teachings in their daily lives. This research aims to examine the processes of *Inventio* (finding materials) and *Ordo Collocatio* (organization) in KH Ahmad Nawawi's da'wah rhetoric in enhancing religious moderation among students at Pondok Pesantren Mambaus Sholihin Babakan Ciwaringin, Cirebon Regency. This study employs a qualitative method, using data collection techniques such as observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis is conducted through data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and data drawing. The findings indicate that the *Inventio* and *Ordo Collocatio* processes in KH Ahmad Nawawi's da'wah rhetoric at Pondok Pesantren Mambaus Sholihin Babakan Ciwaringin are carried out meticulously and systematically to enhance religious moderation among students. He classical religious texts with contemporary knowledge, follows social issue developments, and combines in discussions with scholars and students. His da'wah is organized in a structured manner, beginning with engaging introductions followed by relevant evidence, making it easier for students to understand and apply the principles of moderation in their daily lives according to current contexts. It is hoped that these findings will enrich the literature of the Islamic Communication and Broadcasting Studies Program at the Faculty of Da'wah and Communication, Bunga Bangsa Islamic University, Cirebon. This research makes a significant contribution to understanding the rhetorical aspects of moderate da'wah through an in-depth analysis of the process of *inventio* and the order of *collocatio* KH. Ahmad Nawawi.

Keywords: Rhetoric Da'wah, Religious Moderation, Among Students, Islamic Boarding School

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country with religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity that stretches from Sabang to Merauke. This diversity is both a wealth and a challenge in building a harmonious national and state life. In the context of this diversity, the role of religious figures is very strategic in instilling the values of religious moderation in society. Religious moderation or *wasathiyyah* is an important concept promoted by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia as a middle way to deal with various forms of extremism and radicalism that threaten the integrity of the nation. As stated by Lukman Hakim Saifuddin (2019), "Religious moderation is a way of practicing religion in the middle way, not extreme right or left, tolerant, maintaining balance, and always prioritizing dialogue in understanding religion."

Pesantren as a traditional Islamic educational institution has an important role in instilling the values of religious moderation to students. Mambaus Sholihin Islamic Boarding School located in Babakan Village, Ciwaringin District, Cirebon Regency is one of the Islamic boarding schools that consistently instills the values of religious moderation through various educational and preaching activities. The Islamic boarding school, which was founded in 1980, has developed into a modern Islamic educational institution but still maintains the tradition of classical Islamic knowledge. As expressed by Zamakhsyari Dhofier (2011), "Pesantren is a traditional Islamic educational institution that still maintains the teaching of classical Islamic books as the core of its education, and a boarding system where students receive religious education under the direct guidance of one or several kyai."

KH. Ahmad Nawawi as the caretaker of the Mambaus Sholihin Babakan Ciwaringin Islamic Boarding School has a central role in shaping the character and mindset of the students. His moderate and inclusive preaching is a characteristic that distinguishes him from other kyai. In the current context, where the flow of information is so massive and unstoppable, the role of the kyai as a central figure in the Islamic boarding school is becoming increasingly important to provide a moderate understanding of religion and shape students who have a strong national insight. As expressed by Abdurrahman Wahid (2007), "Islamic boarding schools are a unique life, with the kyai as its central figure, the mosque as the center of activities, and Islamic religious teachings under the guidance of the kyai as its main activity."

The rhetoric of preaching became an important instrument for KH. Ahmad Nawawi in conveying messages of religious moderation to students. Rhetoric as the art of speaking to influence others has long been known in Islamic and Western scientific traditions. In the Western tradition, Cicero became one of the important figures in the development of rhetorical theory. According to Effendy (2013), "Cicero's rhetorical theory includes five stages, namely *inventio* (searching for materials), *dispositio* (arranging materials), *elocutio* (style of language), *memoria* (memorization), and *pronuntiatio* (delivery)." Among the five stages, *inventio* and *ordo collocatio* (part of *dispositio*) are crucial stages that determine the effectiveness of a speech or lecture.

The invention or search for materials stage is the initial stage in formulating a preaching message. At this stage, a preacher searches for and collects materials to be delivered to the audience. In the context of Islamic boarding school preaching, the main sources of preaching materials are the Qur'an, Hadith, and classical books (yellow

books). KH. Ahmad Nawawi is known to have deep religious knowledge and broad national insight, so that he is able to integrate Islamic values with the Indonesian context in his preaching. As expressed by Quraish Shihab (2018), "A preacher must have a deep understanding of religion and the ability to contextualize religious teachings in the life of society."

ordo collocatio or arrangement of materials stage is the second stage which is no less important. At this stage, a preacher arranges the materials that have been collected systematically and logically so that they are easy for the audience to understand. Good arrangement of materials will make it easier for the audience to follow the preacher's train of thought and capture the important messages conveyed. Jalaluddin Rakhmat (2011) stated that "A good message arrangement not only makes it easier for the audience to understand the message, but also increases the appeal of the message and facilitates the persuasion process."

Religious moderation is an important focus in KH. Ahmad Nawawi's preaching amidst the strengthening of radicalism and extremism in Indonesia. The challenge of radicalism and extremism that utilize social media as a means of spreading extreme ideology is a serious threat to Indonesia's diversity. According to Azyumardi Azra (2020), "Religious moderation (*wasathiyyah*) is a middle way between extremism and liberalism in religion. Religious moderation does not mean reducing religious teachings, but understanding religion in a balanced way by considering the social, cultural, and political context."

Mambaus Sholihin Babakan Ciwaringin Islamic Boarding School as an Islamic educational institution has a strategic role in instilling the values of religious moderation in students. This Islamic boarding school, which combines traditional and modern education systems, has made a positive contribution in forming moderate and tolerant students. The students are not only equipped with in-depth religious knowledge, but also with strong national insight so that they can become agents of religious moderation in society. Abu Rokhmad (2020) emphasized that "Islamic boarding schools with a distinctive Nusantara Islamic scientific tradition have strong resistance to the infiltration of radicalism and have the potential to become a stronghold of religious moderation in Indonesia."

The rhetoric of KH. Ahmad Nawawi's preaching in increasing religious moderation of students at the Mambaus Sholihin Babakan Ciwaringin Islamic Boarding School is interesting to study for several reasons. First, KH. Ahmad Nawawi is known as a kyai who has a deep understanding of religion and broad national insight, so that his preaching is full of religious moderation values. Second, the preaching method used by KH. Ahmad Nawawi combines classical Islamic scientific traditions with a contemporary approach that is relevant to the current context. Third, the influence of KH. Ahmad Nawawi's preaching on increasing religious moderation of students is a model that can be adapted by other Islamic boarding schools in facing the challenges of radicalism and extremism.

Research on the rhetoric of kyai's da'wah in the context of Islamic boarding schools has been conducted by several previous researchers. Saiful Akhyar (2019) researched "The Rhetoric of KH. Zainuddin MZ's Da'wah in Instilling Islamic Values in Urban Society." The study found that KH. Zainuddin MZ's distinctive rhetorical style

was able to attract the attention of urban society to follow his religious studies. Meanwhile, Nurhayati (2017) researched "The Strategy of Islamic Boarding School Da'wah in Facing Religious Radicalism: A Case Study of Al-Hikmah Islamic Boarding School Benda Brebes." The study found that Al-Hikmah Islamic boarding school implemented preventive and curative da'wah strategies in facing the challenges of religious radicalism.

Different from previous studies, this study specifically examines the rhetoric of KH. Ahmad Nawawi's da'wah using Cicero's rhetorical theory, especially in the aspects of *inventio* (search for materials) and *ordo collocatio* (arrangement of materials) in the context of increasing religious moderation of students at the Mambaus Sholihin Babakan Ciwaringin Islamic Boarding School. This study is expected to provide theoretical and practical contributions in the development of da'wah science and strategies for increasing religious moderation in Islamic boarding schools.

Based on the background above, the research on "KH. Ahmad Nawawi's Preaching Rhetoric in Increasing Religious Moderation of Students at the Mambaus Sholihin Babakan Ciwaringin Islamic Boarding School, Cirebon Regency" is important to be conducted. This research will analyze how *the inventio* and *ordo collocatio stages* in KH. Ahmad Nawawi's preaching rhetoric and its implications for increasing religious moderation of students at the Mambaus Sholihin Babakan Ciwaringin Islamic Boarding School, Cirebon Regency.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach to understand the phenomena experienced by the research subjects in the form of words in the natural environment. This approach was chosen because it is in accordance with the objectives of the study, namely to analyze and describe the rhetoric of KH. Ahmad Nawawi's preaching in increasing religious moderation of students at the Mamba'ul Sholihin Islamic Boarding School, Ciwaringin, Cirebon. This approach allows researchers to explore the meaning, communication patterns, and preaching strategies used by KH. Ahmad Nawawi in conveying the values of religious moderation to students (Murdiyanto, 2020).

Data collection was carried out using three main techniques, namely observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Primary data were obtained directly through observation of KH. Ahmad Nawawi's preaching activities and interviews with key informants, including KH. Ahmad Nawawi as the main informant, 1 ustadz and 2 people as representatives of the students. Meanwhile, secondary data were obtained from literature studies, previous research, and documentation related to preaching rhetoric and religious moderation (Febrianti, 2022).

Data analysis in this study was carried out through the stages of data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Data reduction aims to filter relevant information from the results of observations and interviews, so that only meaningful data and data in accordance with the focus of the study are analyzed further. The reduced data are then presented systematically in the form of descriptive narratives to facilitate interpretation. Research conclusions are drawn inductively, namely developing findings based on empirical data obtained in the field. To ensure data validity, this study uses four data validity test criteria according to

Lincoln and Guba (1985), namely credibility *with* source and method triangulation techniques, transferability *by* providing detailed descriptions, dependability *with* a transparent documentation process, and certainty (*confirmability*) by ensuring that the research results are based on objective and verifiable data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Invention Process (Finding Materials) of KH. Ahmad Nawawi's Preaching Rhetoric

The process of *inventio* or searching for material is a fundamental stage in the rhetoric of preaching that determines the depth and quality of the message conveyed. According to Cicero in Effendy (2013), "*Inventio* is a creative process of finding the right arguments to support a presentation." In the context of preaching, *inventio* is the initial step for a preacher to formulate messages that will be conveyed to *the mad'u (audience)*. The results of the study show that the process of invention in the rhetoric of KH. Ahmad Nawawi's preaching is sourced from four main things, namely the Qur'an and Hadith, yellow books, socio-cultural context, and national insight.

The Qur'an and Hadith are the main sources in the process of *inventing* the rhetoric of KH. Ahmad Nawawi's da'wah. As the basis of Islamic teachings, the Qur'an and Hadith provide a solid foundation in formulating messages of religious moderation. KH. Ahmad Nawawi consistently refers to the verses of the Qur'an that emphasize the concept of *wasathiyyah* (moderation), such as the word of Allah SWT in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 143: "And thus We have made you (Muslims) a just and chosen nation that you may be witnesses over (the deeds of) mankind and that the Messenger (Muhammad) may be a witness over (the deeds) of you." KH. Ahmad Nawawi interprets the word "*wasathan*" in the verse as a middle way that prioritizes balance and justice, not extremism. As stated by Miftah Faridl (2019), "The concept of *wasathiyyah* in the Qur'an contains the meaning of balance, justice, and goodness which are the basis for religious moderation in Islam."

Yellow books or classic books by previous scholars became the second source in the process of KH. Ahmad Nawawi's invention. Books such as *Ihya 'Ulumuddin* by Imam Al-Ghazali, *Fathul Qarib* by Ibn Qasim Al-Ghazi, and *Tafsir Ibn Katsir* became important references in formulating the message of da'wah. Through these books, KH. Ahmad Nawawi took the moderate thoughts of classical scholars that were relevant to the current context. As expressed by Martin van Bruinessen (2015), "Yellow books in the pesantren tradition are not just dead texts, but living texts that continue to be interpreted and contextualized according to the development of the times."

The socio-cultural context of society is the third source in the process of rhetorical invention of KH. Ahmad Nawawi's da'wah. As a kyai who understands the socio-cultural dynamics of the Cirebon community, KH. Ahmad Nawawi is able to integrate local wisdom values with Islamic teachings in his da'wah. This approach is in line with the *Walisongo da'wah* method which accommodates local culture without sacrificing the principles of Islamic teachings. Agus Sunyoto (2017) emphasized that "The da'wah approach that accommodates local wisdom is an effective method in instilling Islamic values without causing resistance from the local community."

National insight is the fourth source in the process of rhetorical invention of KH. Ahmad Nawawi's preaching. As an Indonesian citizen, KH. Ahmad Nawawi has a strong commitment to national values such as Pancasila, Bhinneka Tunggal Ika, NKRI, and the 1945 Constitution. In his preaching, KH. Ahmad Nawawi often emphasizes that loving one's country is part of faith (*hubbul wathan minal iman*) and maintaining the integrity of NKRI is part of maintaining religion (*hifdzud din*). Quraish Shihab (2018) states that "Love of one's country does not contradict Islamic teachings, in fact Islam teaches its people to do good to the country where they live."

The process of invention in the rhetoric of KH. Ahmad Nawawi's preaching reflects his ability to integrate various sources of reference to formulate comprehensive and contextual messages of religious moderation. As stated by Cicero in Effendy (2013), "The success of rhetoric lies in the orator's ability to find relevant and convincing arguments." KH. Ahmad Nawawi succeeded in finding relevant and convincing arguments in instilling the values of religious moderation to the students of the Mambaus Sholihin Babakan Ciwaringin Islamic Boarding School.

The Process of Collocatio Order (Composition) of KH. Ahmad Nawawi's Preaching Rhetoric

The collocatio order or arrangement of materials is the second stage in rhetoric which is no less important than the inventio. According to Cicero in Effendy (2013), "The collocatio order is the process of arranging and organizing materials that have been found in the inventio systematically and logically so that they are easily understood by the audience." The results of the study show that the *collocatio order process* in the rhetoric of KH. Ahmad Nawawi's preaching has a systematic structure, including the opening (*exordium*), presentation of facts (*narratio*), argumentation (*confirmatio*), and closing (*peroratio*).

The opening (*exordium*) in the rhetoric of KH. Ahmad Nawawi's preaching always begins with greetings, praise to Allah SWT, prayers to the Prophet Muhammad SAW, and an introduction that attracts the attention of students. KH. Ahmad Nawawi often uses humor, inspirational stories, or current issues as an introduction to attract the attention of students. Jalaluddin Rakhmat (2011) stated that "An interesting opening will determine the success of the entire communication process, because at that time the audience decides whether they will continue to listen or ignore the message being delivered."

Presentation of facts (*narratio*) is the second part in the rhetorical structure of KH. Ahmad Nawawi's preaching. In this section, KH. Ahmad Nawawi presents facts and data that are relevant to the theme of preaching, such as the phenomena of radicalism, intolerance, or conflict in the name of religion. The presentation of these facts is the basis for building arguments about the importance of religious moderation. As stated by Taufik Al-Wa'i (2019), "Presentation of accurate and relevant facts will strengthen the credibility of the preacher and make it easier for the audience to understand the problems discussed."

Argumentation (*confirmatio*) is a core part of the rhetorical structure of KH. Ahmad Nawawi's preaching. In this section, KH. Ahmad Nawawi builds a strong argument about the concept of religious moderation based on the evidence of the Qur'an,

Hadith, opinions of scholars, and rational logic. KH. Ahmad Nawawi uses the comparative method (*muqaranah*) to compare moderate understanding with extreme or liberal understanding, so that students can understand the middle position (*wasathiyyah*) which is the essence of Islamic teachings. Ali Mustafa Yaqub (2015) emphasized that "The comparative method in preaching allows mad'u to understand various perspectives and choose the understanding that is most in accordance with the principles of Islamic teachings."

The closing (*peroratio*) is the final part of the rhetorical structure of KH. Ahmad Nawawi's preaching. In this section, KH. Ahmad Nawawi delivers conclusions, appeals, and prayers. The conclusion contains a summary of the arguments that have been built, the appeal contains an invitation to implement the values of religious moderation in everyday life, and the prayer contains a request to Allah SWT that the students be given guidance and guidance in practicing moderate Islamic teachings. Deddy Mulyana (2016) stated that "A good closing will give a deep impression and motivate the audience to take concrete actions in accordance with the message conveyed."

The collocatio order process in KH. Ahmad Nawawi's preaching rhetoric not only pays attention to structure, but also considers the psychological condition of the students. KH. Ahmad Nawawi understands that students have various social backgrounds, cultures, and different levels of religious understanding. Therefore, KH. Ahmad Nawawi composes preaching messages with simple language, concrete examples, and easy-to-understand analogies. This approach is in line with the principle of preaching *bil hikmah* as stated by Allah SWT in Surah An-Nahl verse 125: "Call (people) to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and refute them in a way that is good."

KH. Ahmad Nawawi's ability to organize preaching messages systematically and logically reflects his mastery of rhetorical principles. As stated by Cicero in Effendy (2013), "Good organization will make it easier for the audience to follow the orator's train of thought and grasp the important messages conveyed." KH. Ahmad Nawawi succeeded in organizing religious moderation messages systematically and logically, so that students of the Mambaus Sholihin Babakan Ciwaringin Islamic Boarding School can understand and implement the values of religious moderation in everyday life.

Integration of Inventio and Ordo Collocatio in the Preaching Rhetoric of KH. Ahmad Nawawi

The integration between *inventio* and *ordo collocatio* in the rhetoric of KH. Ahmad Nawawi's preaching produces comprehensive and systematic messages of religious moderation. KH. Ahmad Nawawi successfully integrated various reference sources (*inventio*) and arranged them systematically (*ordo collocatio*) so that messages of religious moderation can be understood and implemented by students. As stated by Deddy Mulyana (2016), "The integration between message content and message structure will determine the effectiveness of the persuasive communication process."

The rhetoric of KH. Ahmad Nawawi's preaching in improving religious moderation of students at the Mambaus Sholihin Babakan Ciwaringin Islamic Boarding School reflects the application of Cicero's rhetorical principles combined with the tradition of Islamic scholarship. This approach produces an effective preaching model

in instilling the values of religious moderation in students amidst the increasingly complex challenges of radicalism and extremism.

This research makes a significant contribution to understanding the rhetorical aspects of moderate da'wah through an in-depth analysis of the process of *inventio* and the order of *collocatio* KH. Ahmad Nawawi. The findings of the study reveal a da'wah model that integrates authoritative sources (Qur'an, Hadith, yellow book) with socio-cultural context and national insight, which are then systematically compiled through the structure of *exordium*, *narratio*, *confirmatio*, and *peroratio*. This model offers a practical approach for preachers in communicating the values of religious moderation, especially in the *pesantren* environment. The impact of this research lies in its contribution to the strategy of deradicalization and strengthening religious moderation in Indonesia, by providing a framework for da'wah rhetoric that can be adapted by other Islamic boarding schools. This is very relevant in the midst of increasing challenges of extremism and intolerance, so that it can strengthen the role of *pesantren* as a fortress of Islamic moderation that balances Islamic and Indonesian values.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion that has been done, it can be concluded that the process of *inventio* in the rhetoric of KH. Ahmad Nawawi's preaching in improving religious moderation of students at the Mambaus Sholihin Babakan Ciwaringin Islamic Boarding School is carried out by selecting preaching materials sourced from the Qur'an, Hadith, classical books, and personal and social experiences that are relevant to the current context. KH. Ahmad Nawawi also adapts the values of religious moderation with an inclusive approach, so that his preaching message can be accepted by various groups of students. In addition, in searching for preaching materials, he considers aspects of local culture and social realities that are developing in society, so that the messages conveyed have high relevance and appeal to students.

Meanwhile, in the process of *collocatio order* or the preparation of preaching materials, KH. Ahmad Nawawi applied a systematic structure so that the message of religious moderation could be conveyed well and effectively. The preparation of his preaching materials followed an opening pattern that attracted attention, the delivery of the core message containing an invitation to prioritize a moderate attitude in religion, and a closing that emphasized the implementation of the values of moderation in the daily lives of students. In addition, he used simple but profound language, as well as a persuasive and interactive communication style, so that students could more easily understand and apply the values of moderation in their lives. With this approach, KH. Ahmad Nawawi's preaching rhetoric was able to build students' awareness of the importance of a moderate attitude in religion, which ultimately had an impact on the formation of a harmonious and tolerant *pesantren* environment.

Recommendations for further research explore the long-term impact of this rhetorical pattern on students' behavior and thinking after they return to society, particularly in the face of contemporary issues that have the potential to trigger intolerance. Comparative research comparing the rhetoric patterns of da'wah from various Islamic boarding schools with different ideological backgrounds also needs to be conducted to identify the determinants of the success of instilling the value of

religious moderation. In addition, interdisciplinary studies that integrate the perspectives of communication, social psychology, and Islamic education can enrich the understanding of the mechanisms of persuasion in moderate da'wah rhetoric. Exploration of the use of digital technology and social media in adapting the rhetorical model of KH. Ahmad Nawawi for millennials and Gen Z is also a potential research area, considering the change in religious information consumption patterns in the younger generation. The results of these studies are expected to contribute to the development of a more comprehensive and adaptive education curriculum for moderate dai cadres.

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