

# NEO-AHL AL-HADÎTS IN CONTEMPORARY ISLAMIC LEGAL THOUGHT: The Influence of Nâshir al-Dîn al-Albânî in the Salafist Movement in Indonesia

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**Abstract:** Nâshîr al-Dîn al-Albânî is one of the most influential figure in the contemporary Salafist movement, alongside Bin Bâz and Uthaymin. This article will discuss the influence of Nasir al-Din al-Albani on Indonesian Salafi Islamic legal thought. In the discourse of Islamic legal thought in Indonesia, some scholars explain the importance of al-Albani's role in defending Ibn Bâz's fatwas by writing dozens of works, including his fatwas, that have been translated into Indonesian. On the other hand, other scholars emphasized al-Albani's central role in the global Salafist movement as a contemporary Salafist ideologue. This figure calls for ijtihad based on authentic traditions and rejects tackled and bequeaths his brand of Salafism in deconstructing the traditions of schools of *fiqh*. The research question is what is the influence of al-Albani's *takhrîj* traditions on Indonesian Salafist Islamic legal thought? This is qualitative research with a historical, hadith scientific, and sociological approach. The findings of this study are that the traditions of *takhrîj* al-Albani and its understanding have led to the strengthening of a strict literal way of Islamic law. Al-Albani greatly influenced Indonesian Salafists in forming a pattern of thought called "Neo-Ahl al-Hadîts". The Neo-Ahl al-Hadîts legal thought inflicts radical and intolerant attitudes among Indonesian Salafist.

**Keywords:** Neo-Ahl al-Hadîts, Nâshir al-Dîn al-Albânî, *takhrîj*, Indonesian Salafist, Islamic legal thought

**Abstrak:** Nâshir al-Dîn al-Albânî adalah salah satu tokoh paling berpengaruh dalam gerakan Salafi kontemporer, bersama Bin Bâz dan Uthaymin. Artikel ini akan membahas pengaruh Nâshir al-Dîn al-Albânî dalam pemikiran hukum Islam Salafi Indonesia. Dalam wacana pemikiran hukum Islam di Indonesia, beberapa ulama menjelaskan pentingnya peran al-Albânî dalam membela fatwa-fatwa Ibnu Bâz dengan menulis puluhan karya, termasuk fatwanya, yang telah diterjemahkan ke dalam bahasa Indonesia. Di sisi lain, ulama lain menekankan peran sentral al-Albânî dalam gerakan Salafi global sebagai ideolog Salafi kontemporer. Tokoh ini menyerukan ijtihad berdasarkan hadis shahih dan menolak menegur dan mewariskan merek Salafismenya dalam mendekonstruksi tradisi mazhab fikih. Pertanyaan penelitiannya adalah bagaimana pengaruh tradisi *takhrîj* al-Albânî terhadap pemikiran hukum Islam Salafi Indonesia? Jenis penelitian ini adalah kualitatif dengan pendekatan sejarah, ilmu hadis, dan pendekatan sosiologis. Temuan penelitian ini adalah bahwa hadis *takhrîj* al-Albânî dan pemahamannya telah menyebabkan penguatan hukum Islam secara literal yang sangat kaku. Al-Albani sangat mempengaruhi kaum Salafi Indonesia dalam membentuk pola pemikiran yang disebut "Neo-Ahl al-Hadîts". Kemudian, pemikiran hukum Neo-ahl al-Hadîts melahirkan sikap radikal dan intoleran di kalangan Salafi Indonesia.

**Kata kunci:** Neo-Ahl al-Hadîts, Nâshir al-Dîn al-Albânî, *takhrîj*, Salafi Indonesia, pemikiran hukum Islam

## Introduction

The contemporary Salafist movement was popularized again at the University of Medina in the 1960s, especially among the followers of Muhammad Nâshir al-Dîn al-Albânî (hereafter al-Albânî), who called themselves Jama'ah Salafiyyah Muhtasibah (JSM). The nature of this Salafist movement has led some observers to attribute it to the Wahhabism of the religious elite in

Saudi Arabia. However, it should be remembered that Salafism and Wahhabism have differences, especially attitudes towards the Hanbali school of thought.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Stephane Lacroix, "Between Revolution and Apoliticism: Nasir Al-Din Al-Albani and His Impact on the Shaping of Contemporary Salafism" dalam Roel Meijer, (ed.), *Global Salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement*, (Oxford: Oxford Scholarship Online, 2014), pp. 59-61.

The followers of al-Albânî developed his thinking centred in Jordan, Medina, and Yemen. In Jordan, there is Ali asan al-Halabî; in Medina, there is Rabî' al-Madkhalî; while in Yemen, there is Muqbil al-Wâdhî.<sup>2</sup> According to Stephane Lacroix, as a contemporary Salafi ideologue, al-Albânî had an important role in the rise of Neo-Ahl al-Hadîts.<sup>3</sup> Al-Albânî provided the doctrinal corpus necessary for the emergence of a strong Neo-Ahl al-Hadîts current, infused with a revolutionary desire to regenerate Wahhabism through hadith as well as stressed the militant stance of not getting involved in any politics. This currently dominates Salafism in some countries, such as France and Yemen.<sup>4</sup>

Emad Hamdeh mentions that al-Albânî's contribution to this movement is a unique brand of Salafism, a movement whose adherents promote an enduring model of Muslim creeds, practices, interpretations, and behaviours that are in stark contrast to traditional schools of *fiqh*. This is marked by simplicity in interpretation and dependence on textual literalism, as well as scepticism towards traditional ulama groups.<sup>5</sup> According to Bernard Heykel, the Salafist ideas and their manhaj are modern developments which, according to him."<sup>6</sup>

This influence was also explained by 'Abd al-Razzâq Aswad, who placed al-Albânî as a reference figure who gave birth to the style of Salafism in the field of contemporary hadith studies. The adherents of this pattern or trend are those who followed the *manhaj* of the early Muslim groups, namely the generation of companions, *tabi'in*, and later who were believed to be a pure generation from the influence of non-Arabic

elements, philosophy, Hellenism, and others. In other words, they want to understand the hadith as the pious early generations (*al-salaf al-shalih*).<sup>7</sup>

Al-Albânî is very critical of the traditions contained in canonical hadith books as well as religious traditions based on the tradition of classical schools of theology and *fiqh*.<sup>8</sup> Al-Albânî's critique, referred to by some Western scholars such as Emad Hamdeh and Bernard Heykel, is an attitude of deconstructing *fiqh* that has been established to its roots.<sup>9</sup> This methodology does not provide space for the approach of reason and intellectualism.<sup>10</sup>

Al-Albânî's scriptural-literalist approach to hadith gave birth to a different religious perspective from modernist groups and traditional scholars who have developed methods for understanding the Quran and hadith, such as the science of interpretation, *ushûl al-fiqh*, and others. The scriptural-literalist method only relies on non-comprehensive *isnâd* studies, so he makes a fatwa that classical or contemporary scholars have never embraced. An example is the attitude of al-Albânî, who forbids gold jewellery for women based on his understanding of several hadith narrations that he considers valid.<sup>11</sup>

This controversy caused al-Albânî's fatwa to be the subject of criticism from other scholars. His critics state that al-Albânî, in understanding the hadith, ignores the science of *Mukhtalaf al-Hadîts*, the science of *Nasikh wa al-Mansûkh*, *Asbâb al-Wurûd*, and the context of hadith, resulting in a partial and literalist understanding. Whereas in the case of the prohibition of gold for women, by

<sup>2</sup> Felix Heiduk, "Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Radical Islam in Post-Suharto Indonesia" *International Journal of Conflict and Violence*, vol. 6, no. 1 (2012), pp. 26-40.

<sup>3</sup> Stephane Lacroix, "Between Revolution and Apoliticism...", p. 59-61.

<sup>4</sup> Stephane Lacroix, "Between Revolution and Apoliticism...", p. 79.

<sup>5</sup> Emad Hamdeh, "The Emergence of an Iconoclast: Muhammad Nâshir al-Dîn al-Albânî and His Critics", (Dissertation, Exeter University, United Kingdom 2014); and "Qur'ân and Sunna or the *Madhabs*?: A Salafi Polemic Against Islamic Legal Tradition", *Islamic Law and Society*, vol. 24, Issue 3 (2017), pp. 211-253.

<sup>6</sup> See Bernard Heykel, "On Nature of Salafi Thought and Action," in Roel Meijer (ed.), *Global Salafism*..., pp. 43-44.

<sup>7</sup> Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Razzâq Aswad, *al-Ittijâh al-Mu'âshirah fî al-Dirâsah al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah fî Bilâd Mishr wa al-Sham*, (Damascus: Dâr al-Kalam al-Thayyib, 2008M/1429), 1st edition, pp. 333-370.

<sup>8</sup> Jonathan Brown, *The Canonization of al-Bukhari and Muslim: The Formation and Function of the Sunni Hadith Canon*, (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2007), pp. 204-237; and Kamaruudin Amin, "Nasiruddin al-Albânî on Muslim's Sahih: A Critical Study of His Method", *Islamic Law and Society*, vol. 11, no. 2 (2004), pp. 149-176. <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>, accessed on 6/1/2015.

<sup>9</sup> Adis Duderija, "Islamic Groups and Their World-Views and Identities: Neo-Traditional Salafist and Progressive Muslims", *Arab Law Quarterly*, vol. 21, no. 4 (2007), pp. 341-363. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27650599>, accessed 04-03-2016.

<sup>10</sup> Adis Duderija, "Islamic Groups and Their World-Views and Identities...", pp. 341-363.

<sup>11</sup> See more Aswad, *al-Ittijâhât al-Mu'âshirah* ..., p. 443-452.

paying attention to other traditions, the hadiths stated by al-Albânî have been cancelled (*mansûkh*) by the traditions that allow it. In addition, the context of these traditions is specifically to prevent excessive behaviour in decorating.<sup>12</sup>

In Indonesia, Din Wahid mentions al-Albânî as the most influential writer in Islamic boarding schools or educational institutions of the Salafi movement in Indonesia.<sup>13</sup> Chris Chaplin even mentions that al-Albânî's works are among the books most widely used as study material among them.<sup>14</sup>

Noorhaidi explained the important role of al-Albânî in defending Ibn Bâz's fatwas by writing dozens of works, including his fatwas, which have been translated into Indonesian.<sup>15</sup> In general, al-Albânî's purification ideas are embodied in the form of hadith criticism with his *takhrîj*<sup>16</sup>. They strongly reject religious practices based solely on *dha'if* or false hadiths and consider it a heresy that must be purged from the religious practice of Indonesian Muslims. *Takhrîj* al-Albânî is often a reference in books and lectures by Indonesian Salafi figures with different intensities in criticism of other Muslim scholars, whether affiliated with Salafism or not.

Based on the above, this article will discuss the adoption of the Indonesian Salafi movement to the traditions that have been *takhrîj* by al-Albânî and their implications for the Islamic legal thought of the Indonesian Salafist movement.

## Method

This type of research is a qualitative research, considering the object of research is a qualitative

phenomenon. While the approaches used in this research are various approaches. The first is the historical approach. With this approach, the author can reconstruct the process of knowing the origins of certain thoughts/attitudes/opinions from the Indonesian Salafi movement which refers to al-Albânî's thoughts. The second is the approach to the sciences of hadith (*'ulûm al-hadîth*) to explain the theoretical aspects used by al-Albânî and the Indonesian Salafi movement in researching the authenticity of hadith (*naqd al-hadîth*) and understanding of it (*fiqh al-hadîth*). The sociological approach will be used to explain the patterns of interaction that trigger the birth of Salafist religious understanding in Indonesia as well as its socio-political impact.

It is possible to combine the three techniques to obtain adequate information from these research questions. *First*, the documentation study is intended to analyze the traditions of *takhrîj* by al-Albânî in the form of books, recordings, writings, lectures, and others. *Second*, the study of related literature. This step is done by studying writings about social, political, and legal history in the form of books, articles, and papers. *Third*, the results of this document study were enriched by interviews with Salafist figures in Indonesia.

## Nâshir al-Dîn al-Albânî and Neo-Ahl al-Hadîts

Muhammad Nâshir al-Dîn al-Albânî was born in Ashkodar, Albânia in 1332 AH/1914 AD. His father, Nuh Najati ibn Adam, was a scholar of the Hanafi school. In 1923 right after Albânia's independence from the Ottoman Empire and turned into a secular state, his father decided to leave the country and settle down with his family in Damascus, Syria. When he moved to Damascus, young al-Albânî was only nine years old. He first studied Arabic at the elementary-level madrasah at Jam'iyah al-Is'af al-Khairî. Then he worked as a clockmaker while his father taught him the basics of religion in the Hanafi *fiqh* tradition. His education might have stopped there if he had not been very fond of reading since he was a teenager. Thus, in his spare time, he spent much of his time in the library of Ahiriyya, the first public library in Syria, which was founded in the early 1880s by one of the forerunners of Islamic reformism in the

<sup>12</sup> Aswad, *al-Ittijâh al-Mu'âshirah...*, p. 443-452. Also see Ismâ'il ibn Muhammad al-Anshârî, *Ibâhah al-Tahalli bi al-Dhahab al-Muhallaq li al-Nisâ' wa al-Radd 'alâ al-Albânî fî Tahrimihi*, (Riyâdh: Maktabah al-Imâm al-Shâfi'î, 1408 H/1988 M).

<sup>13</sup> See Din Wahid, "Nurturing The Salafi Manhaj: A Study Of Salafi Pesantrens In Contemporary Indonesia", (Dissertation, Leiden University, 2014), p. 223.

<sup>14</sup> See Chris Chaplin, "Imagining the Land of the Two Holy Mosques: The Social and Doctrinal Importance of Saudi Arabia in Indonesian Salafi Discourse," p. 226.

<sup>15</sup> Noorhaidi, "Laskar Jihad Islam, Militancy and The Quest For Identity In Post-NewOrder Indonesia" (Dissertation Leiden University, 2005), p.75.

<sup>16</sup> Maḥmûd al-Thaḥḥân, *Ushûl al-Takhrîj wa Dirâsât al-Asânid*, (Riyad: Maktabah al-Ma'ârif, 1417 H/1996 M), 3th Edition, pp. 10-11.

region, âhir al-Jazâ'irî (d. 1376 AH). In this way, he became a self-taught expert on Islam, learning from books from the ulama, besides working as a watch repairman.<sup>17</sup>

Al-Albânî only studied with his father in studying linguistics and religious sciences. He also studied with Sa'id al-Burhânî in studying the Hanafi school of jurisprudence and the book *Shudhûrudh al-Dhahab* in the science of nahwu and several books in the science of Balaghah. His interest in hadith studies began at the age of 20. The first book he studied was the book of *takhrij* by al-'Iraqi (d. 806 H) entitled *al-Mughnî 'an aml al-Asfâr fî al-Asfâr fî Takhrîj mâ fî lhyâ' min al-Akhbâr*.<sup>18</sup> Muhammad Raghîb al-Tabbâkh (d. 1370 H) gave him a certificate of transmission of hadith. He gave his book, entitled *al-Anwâr al-Jaliyah fî Mukhtashar al-Athbat al-Halabiyah*. He is al-Albânî's teacher by *ijâzah*.<sup>19</sup>

Inspired by reading the journal *al-Manâr* led by Rashid Rida, which has been the main means of spreading Muslim reformist ideas, and his presence in the assembly of Muhammad Bahjat al-Baitar, student of Jamal al-Dîn al-Qâsimî (d. 1332 H/1914 AD), a Muslim reformer in Syria, al-Albânî at the age of twenty embraced the reformist tradition that was so popular among the "outer cleric" community of Damascus. From here, he inherited his hatred of Sufism and popular Islamic traditions. This hostility he theorized at the beginning of his first work, entitled "*Tahdhîr al-Sâjid min Ittikhâdh al-Qubûr Masâjid*". In his hands, the idea of reform will take a more radical form than other Muslim reformers<sup>20</sup>

From this source, he also rejected *taqlid*, which he emphasized in rejecting the *madhâhib* (four schools of law) and calling for the renewal of *ijtihad*. His stance caused him to have a polemic with Ramadhan al-Buthî, the mufti of Syria. al-Buthî strongly rejected the views of al-Albânî

and other anti-school thinkers in his book *al-Lâ Madhhabiyyah*.<sup>21</sup>

To place the hadith as the heart of the process of reforming *ijtihad*, al-Albânî evaluates the traditions contained in the canonical hadith books, including those related to *fiqh*. He, in the *silsilah*, only adheres to summary books such as Ibn Hajar al-Asqalânî's *al-Taqrîb* and al-Dhahabî's *al-Kâshif* without referring to the baboon book, so there are often contradictions in the assessment of hadith in one book of his writings with others as criticisms made by him.

Few hadith scholars provide a critical response to the methodology of criticism and understanding of al-Albânî hadith. Ismail ibn Muhammad al-Ansharî (d. 1429 H), in the book *Tashhîh al-Hadîth alât at-Tarâwîh 'Ishrinâ Raka'ah wa ar-Radd lâ al-Albânî fî Tadh'îfihî* criticizes al-Albânî's opinion which weakens the traditions of *tarâwih* prayers 20 cycles in his book *Salat al-Tarâwih*. Sa'id Mamduh is one of the critics of al-Albânî's volume entitled *Silsilah al-Ahâdîth al-Dha'îfah wa al-Maudhû'ah wa Athâruha al-Sayyî' fî al-Ummah* by writing a book entitled *al-Ta'rîf bi Auhama man Qassama al-Sunan ilâ al-Shahîh wa Dha'îf* in 7 volumes. Al-Ghumârî (d. 1354 H), one of the hadith scholars from Morocco, also considered that the assessment of the status of hadith carried out by al-Albânî could not be justified.<sup>22</sup>

On the other hand, many from the group also praised al-Albânî and appreciated his efforts. He even named al-Albânî a hadith expert of this century (*muhaddith*). One of al-Albânî's major projects is to create works on the compilation of hadiths based on the discussion of certain themes with easy technical and *takhrîj* in order to make it easier for Muslims to refer to the traditions of the Prophet instantly without having to struggle to learn the ins and outs of *takhrîj* and analyze the criticisms of the hadiths in detail deep. The project has a popular jargon as *taqrîb al-sunnah baina yaday al-ummah* (bringing the sunnah closer

<sup>17</sup> Ibrahim Muhammad al-'Ali, *Muhammad Nâshir al-Dîn al-Albânî Muḥaddith al-'Ashrwa Nâshir al-Sunnah*, (Damascus: Dar al-Qalam, 2001), 1 st Edition, p. 11-12.

<sup>18</sup> Âshim Abdullah al-Qaryutî, *Mûjazah li Fadḥilah al-Muḥaddith Abî Abdillâh Muḥammad Nâshir al-Dîn al-Albânî*, (Medina: Dâr al-Madanî, t.tp.), p.5.

<sup>19</sup> Muhammad ibn Ibrâhîm al-Shaibânî, *Hayât al-Albânî*, (Kairo: Maktabah al-Sirrawî, 1407 H/1987), pp. 45-46.

<sup>20</sup> al-Majdhûb, *'Ulamâ'...*, vol. 1, p. 290.

<sup>21</sup> For more on al-Bûthî's refutation of al-Albânî's views see *al-Lamadhhabiyyah*, ninth edition, pp. 191-195

<sup>22</sup> See Abdullah al-Ghumârî, *al-Radd ala al-Albânî*, (Marocco: Dâr al-Mashârî, 1424 H/2004 M), 2nd Edition, pp. 53-54; and Jonathan A.C. Brown, "Even If It's Not True It's True: Using Unreliable Ḥadîths in Sunni Islam", *Islamic Law and Society*, vol. 18, no. 1 (2011), pp. 1-52.



to the ummah). Of the many works written by al-Albânî, several books are considered the most popular and phenomenal, including: *Asl Salat al-Nabî min al-Takbîr ilâ al-Taslîm*, *Silsilah al-Ahâdith al-Dha'îfah*, *Silsilah al-Ahâdith al-SHahîhah*, *Irwa' al-Ghail*, *Sahîh wa a'îf Jami' al-SHaghîr wa Ziyâdatih*, *SHahîh Sunan Abi Dâwud* and *Dha'îf Sunan Abi Dâwud*, *SHahîh Sunan al-Tirmidhî*, *Sahîh Sunan al-Nasâ'i*, *Dha'îf Sunan al-Nasâ'i*, *Sahîh Sunan Ibn Majah*, *Dha'îf Sunan Ibn Majah* and others.<sup>23</sup>

## The Acceptance of Indonesian Salafist to Nâshir al-Dîn al-Albânî

According to Indonesian Salafist, Nâshir al-Dîn al-Albânî is a reformist scholar in hadith (*mujaddid*), *mujtahid*, and expert on hadith (*muhaddith*). Although harsh criticisms are often directed at him by different scholars, as explained in the previous chapter, the Indonesian Salafist *manhaj's* followers are not influenced by criticism and even blasphemy against al-Albânî. His intellectual excellence in the field of hadith and his numerous works are a guarantee for Indonesian Salafists not to question al-Albânî's competence. Al-Albânî's shortcomings or mistakes in his *ijtihâd* do not reduce his scientific qualifications as a hadith scholar of this century. They argued that previous scholars were also often criticized by other scholars in their *ijtihâd* results. If there are criticisms of some of their research results, it is normal, and it does not mean that all of their research results are invalid. In addition, al-Albânî's intellectual abilities were based on the testimonies or testimonies of other Salafi scholars of his time, such as Abd al-Aziz ibn Bâz, Uthaymin, and al-Shinqithî, as well as his students, such as Muqbil al-Wâdhi'î and Rabi' al-Madkhâlî who states that al-Albânî is a hadith expert (*muhaddith*) and reformer (*mujaddid*) this century.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> A complete list of al-Albânî's books and writings can be found in Abdullah ibn 'Aqil, *al-Imam al-Albânî: Durûs wa Mawâqif wa 'Ibar*, (Riyad: Dâr al-Tawhîd, 1429 H/2008 M), 1 st edition, pp. 204-216.

<sup>24</sup> Abû Ibrâhim Ahmad bin Nashrullah, *Asâs al-Bâni fî Turâth al-Albânî*, (Thantha: Dâr al-SHahâbah li al-Turâth, 14128 H/2008), 1 st Edition, vol. 1, p. 15; Muhammad Ibrahim al-Shaibani, *Hayah al-Albânî wa Atharuhu wa Thanâ'u Ulamâ 'alaihi*, (np.: Maktabah al-Sirawi, 1407 H/1987 M), p. 555.

Table 1. The Acceptance of Indonesian Salafist to Nâshir al-Dîn al-Albânî

| No. | Indonesian Salafist     | Acceptance to al- Albânî  |
|-----|-------------------------|---|
| 1   | Khalid Basalamah        | Al-Albânî is a mujtahid in the science of hadith. He recorded the hadith of al-kutub al-sittah in the book of <i>Silsilah al-Ahâdith al-SHahîhah</i> , <i>Silsilah al-Ahâdith al-Dha'îfah</i> , and others. This does not mean that he defeated other scholars of hadith before him, as is often misunderstood by those who dislike him <sup>25</sup> |
| 2   | Khidir Sunusi           | If there is a difference of opinion ( <i>khilâf</i> ) between al- Albânî and other Salafi scholars, <sup>26</sup> people can follow the opinion of al- Albânî or other scholars because the argument is stronger. This is commonplace in the intellectual world <sup>27</sup>   |
| 3   | Yazid Abdul Qadir Jawas | The only person who can judge a person's ability in a particular field is the person who is involved in that field, not left to ordinary people <sup>28</sup>   |
| 4   | Ainul Haris             | It is wrong if there is an assumption or claim that the followers of the Salafi <i>manhaj</i> only follow one opinion of the ulama <sup>29</sup>  |
| 5   | Abu Yahya Badrussalam   | Al-Albânî's scientific confession was unquestionable, such as that of Bin Baz and Uthaimin. However, as an ordinary person, we are not free from mistakes <sup>30</sup>   |
| 6   | Abdul Hakim Abdat       | al-Albânî as an absolute mujtahid in the field of hadith, it is the right of al-Albânî to evaluate the traditions that previous scholars have collected <sup>31</sup>   |

<sup>25</sup> See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oh5IDBSLS5A>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X-fCTdIT4So>. For more on Al-Albânî's differences with other scholars, see. 'Akashah 'Abd al-Mannân al-Thayyibi, *Fatawâ al-Shaikh al-Albânî wa Muqâranatuha bi Fatâwâ al-'Ulamâ'*, (Kairo: Maktabah al-Turâth al-Islâmî, 1414 H/1994) and Sa'd bin 'Abdullah al-Barîk, *al-Îjâz fî Ba'dh ma Ikhtalafa fih al- Albânî wa Ibn Uthaymin wa Ibn Bâz*, (tt.:tp., 1430H/2009 M).

<sup>27</sup> Khidir bin Sunusi was a student of Muqbil al-Wadhi'î, the brother of Dzulqarnain Sunusi. Personal Interview on February 28, 2020, at Asunnah Islamic Boarding School, Makassar.Makassar.

<sup>28</sup> See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tWQVN-DF1pE&t=88s>; and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Tv903-Dfs8&t=196s>.

<sup>29</sup> Ainul Haris is an alumnus of LIPIA born in Gresik and completed his master's and doctoral degrees at UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya. Once founded the Al-Sofwah Foundation Jakarta with Abu Bakar Mutweli. Now he is the leader (*mudîr*) of an Islamic boarding school in Surabaya. Personal Interview, on July 22, 2020, in Surabaya.

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gnOWHmYSzJo>.

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=epv5YePbPmQ>. For a comparison of al-Albânî's method of criticism of hadith including *tanbihat* (warning) that several hadiths that were translated by al-Albânî turned out to have 'illah (defects), see

Even in cyberspace, internet sites founded by followers of the Salafi *manhaj* have vigorously defended the accusations levelled against al-Albânî. The almanhaj.com portal once published an article entitled “Nine false accusations against Sheikh Albânî”. This article contains a refutation of 9 accusations often addressed to al-Albânî, such as hadith experts who do not understand *fiqh*, do not have teachers, and others.<sup>32</sup>

In the following, some examples of the hadiths that al-Albânî have taken into account in his books were adopted by the Salafi movement and influenced their Islamic legal thought. In this case, the writing categorizes based on the *fiqh* themes that al-Albânî most widely discusses.

#### 1. Hadith about Putting Hands on Chest in Prayer

Narrated by Abû Dâwud (d. 275 H) in Sunan Abi Dâwud:

حدثنا أبو توبة، قال: حدثنا الهيثم - يعني ابن حميد -، عن ثور، عن سليمان بن موسى عن طاووس قال: كان رسول الله - صلى الله عليه وسلم - يضع يده اليمنى على يده اليسرى، ثم يشدُّ بهما على صدره، وهو في الصلاة<sup>33</sup>

Naratted by Ibn Khuzaimah (w. 311 H) in his *shahîh*:

نا أَبُو مُوسَى، نا مَوْلَى، نا سُفْيَانُ، عَن عَاصِمِ بْنِ كُلَيْبٍ، عَن أَبِيهِ، عَن وَاثِلِ بْنِ حُجْرٍ قَالَ: «صَلَّيْتُ مَعَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، وَوَضَعَ يَدَهُ الْيُمْنَى عَلَى يَدِهِ الْيُسْرَى عَلَى صَدْرِهِ»<sup>34</sup>

Abû Yahyâ Zakaria bin Ghulâm Qâdir, *al-Albânî wa Manhaj al-'Aimmah al-Mutaqqidîn*, (Riyâdh: Maktabah al- Ma'ârif, 1431 H), p. 251.

<sup>32</sup> <https://almanhaj.or.id/2324-semblan-tuduhan-dusta-terhadap-syaikh-al-Albani.html>

<sup>33</sup> See. *Sunan Abi Dâwud*, (tt.: Dâr al-Risâalah al-Âlamiyah, 1439 H/2009 M), vol. 1, hadith no. 759, p. 201.

<sup>34</sup> See *SHahîh Ibn Khuzaimah*, tahqiq Musthafâ al-A'zhamî, (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islâmiy, 14124 H/2003 M), 3th Edition, vol. 1, hadith no. 479, p.243.

Al-Albânî cites the two hadiths above as the legal basis for the recommendation to put hands on the chest after *takbîrat al-ihram* in prayer. Al-Albânî evaluates the hadith narrated by Abû Dâwud as authentic, while Ibn Khuzaimah's narration is weak (*dha'îf*) because Mu'ammal bin Ismail has poor memorization. However, there is another valid sanad (Abû Dâwud) which means that it is valid. Associated with the hadith of putting hands on the chest, some traditions become *shâhid* (reinforcement).

In this subject, al-Albânî rejects the majority of the opinions of the four madhhab *fiqh* scholars, including the Hanbali school, which is not guided by the traditions of putting one's hands on one's chest when one prays. In other words, al-Albânî wants to show his detachment from classical *fiqh* views and rely only on hadiths that he considers valid in responding to this problem, Indonesian Salafists vary in expressing their views.

Table 2. Indonesian Salafist Views of al- Albânî Fatwa on Hadith about Putting Hands on Chest in Prayer

| No. | Indonesian Salafist   | Their View Responding His Fatwa  |
|-----|-----------------------|--|
| 1   | Khalid Basalamah      | chose the opinion chosen by al-Albânî regarding the law of putting his hands on his chest  |
| 2   | Abu Yahya Badrussalam | hadiths about placing the hands on the chest are more valid than the narrations about placing the hand on the navel or stomach <sup>35</sup>   |
| 3   | Firanda Andirja       | Hadith about putting hands on the chest is <i>shâhdh</i> because it contradicts other narrations that are more <i>thiqah</i> (credible). It is considered <i>makruh</i> according to Imam Ahmad's opinion. Thus, people can choose between placing it above the navel, at it, or below it. <sup>36</sup> |

#### 2. Hadith about Tarâwih Prayer 20 Rak'ahs

Ibn Abi Shaibah (w. 235 H) narated in his *Mushannaf*:

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ، عَنْ حَسَنِ، عَنْ عَبْدِ الْعَزِيزِ بْنِ رُفَيْعٍ قَالَ: «كَانَ أَبِي بْنُ كَعْبٍ يُصَلِّي بِالنَّاسِ فِي رَمَضَانَ بِالْمَدِينَةِ عِشْرِينَ رَكْعَةً، وَيُوتِرُ بِثَلَاثٍ»<sup>37</sup>

<sup>35</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zv\\_xDI64UwE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zv_xDI64UwE)

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ntxWUwWaXNY>

<sup>37</sup> See *Mushannaf Ibn Abi Shaibah*, (Riyâdh: Maktabah al-Rushd, 1409 H), vol. 2, hadith no. 7684, p. 163.

Al-Baihaqi narrated:

أَوْقَدَ أَخْبَرَنَا أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ الْحُسَيْنُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنِ الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ فَجْوَيْهِ الدِّينَوْرِيُّ بِالدَّامَغَانِ، ثنا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنِ إِسْحَاقَ السُّنِّيَّ، أَنبَأَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْعَزِيزِ الْبَغَوِيُّ، ثنا عَلِيُّ بْنُ الْجَعْدِ، أَنبَأَ ابْنُ أَبِي ذَنْبٍ، عَنْ يَزِيدَ بْنِ خُصَيْفَةَ، عَنِ السَّائِبِ بْنِ يَزِيدَ قَالَ: «كَانُوا يَقُومُونَ عَلَى عَهْدِ عُمَرَ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ فِي شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ بِعِشْرِينَ رَكْعَةً» قَالَ: «وَكَانُوا يَقْرَأُونَ بِالْمَنِينِ، وَكَانُوا يَتَوَكَّنُونَ عَلَى عَصِيهِمْ فِي عَهْدِ عُثْمَانَ بْنِ عَفَّانَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ مِنْ شِدَّةِ الْقِيَامِ»<sup>38</sup>

Al-Albânî stated that the narration of al-Baihaqi from the path of Yazid bin Khusaifah from al-Saib bin Yazid. However, it seems valid and validated by some scholars, but it contains defects and even hidden defects that do not allow history to be valid. The reasons are: First, Ibn Khusaifah, even though *thiqah* is a narrator of *munkar* hadiths, as Imam Ahmad once said in one narration. In the words of Imam Ahmad, Albânî concluded that narrating alone is a *syâdhah*. The narration of the *tarâwih* hadith from al-Saib bin Yazid by Ibn Khusaifah contradicts Muhammad bin Yusuf who narrated 11 cycles. Thus the narration of Ibn Khusaifah, which narrates 20 cycles, must be considered weak. Second, Ibn Khusaifah hesitated in narrating the hadith. Ibn Umayyah once asked Muhammad bin Yusuf about the number of *rak'ahs* or not 21 *rak'ahs*. He replied: Ibn Khusaifah himself narrated from al-Saib. So Ibn Umayyah asked Khusaifah: I think al-Saib said it was 21 cycles." Al-Saib's statement later became the basis for inconsistency with the previous narration, which stated 20 cycles. Third, Muhammad bin Yusuf is the nephew of al-Sa'ib, so he is closer and more certain about the narrations from him than Ibn Khusaifah.<sup>39</sup>

Al-Albânî's opinion above was later refuted by Isma'îl al-Anshârî, a researcher from Dâr al-Iftâ' Saudi Arabia, in the book *Tashhîh adîth alâh al-*

Tarâwih 'Ishrîna Rak'atan wa Radd 'alâ al-Albânî fî Tadh'îfihî Indonesian Salafi figures have various opinions in response to al-Albânî's view on this issue.

Table 3. Indonesian Salafist Views of al-Albânî Fatwa on Hadith about Tarâwih Prayer 20 Rak'ahs

| No. | Indonesian Salafist | Their View Responding His Fatwa   |
|-----|---------------------|---|
| 1   | Abdul Qadir Jawas   | reject the narrations about the 20 <i>rak'ahs tarâwih</i> prayer <sup>40</sup>  |
| 2   | Abdul Hakim Abdat   | companions performed the 20 <i>rak'ahs</i> of <i>tarâwih</i> prayers were all weak <sup>41</sup>  |
| 3   | Khalid Basalamah    | both can be done as in the Grand Mosque and the Prophet's Mosque. This is the area of <i>khilâfiyah</i> where people do not need to be rigidly guided by one opinion                              |
| 4   | Badrussalam         | Allows more than 11 <i>raka'ah</i> ; only 11 <i>rak'ahs</i> are more important because that is what the Prophet exemplified. <sup>42</sup>  |
| 5   | Firanda Andirja     | <i>Tarâwih</i> prayer is not limited to <i>rak'ahs</i> as agreed by the Salaf. The Prophet absolutes the number of <i>rak'ahs</i> and does not limit it to only 11 <i>rak'ahs</i> . <sup>43</sup> |

### 3. Hadith about Tasyabbuh with Disbelievers

Narrated by Ahmad and Abu Dawud:

عن ابن عمر قال: قال رسول الله - صلى الله عليه وسلم -: "بُعْتُ بَيْنَ يَدَيِ السَّاعَةِ بِالسَّيْفِ حَتَّى يَعْبُدَ اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَجُعِلَ رِزْقِي تَحْتَ ظِلِّ رُحْمِي، وَجُعِلَ الذَّلَّةُ وَالصَّغَارُ عَلَى مَنْ خَالَفَ أَمْرِي، وَمَنْ تَشَبَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ فَهُوَ مِنْهُمْ"

The hadith narrated by Ahmad from Ibn Umar, according to Ahmad Shâkir's sanad, is valid and repeated. Meanwhile, according to Arnû'ut, Abu Dawud's sanad is weak. Al-Albânî considers this hadith to be valid.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xy1i4osGT1s>

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cfBIP--pCZM>.

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P7Poyx5HV5Y>; and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=66PXzGP43tE>.

<sup>43</sup> See *BekalIslam* dan <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=66PXzGP43tE>

<sup>44</sup> See *Musnad Ahmad*, vol. 4, p. 515-516, hadith number 5514, 5516; vol. 5, hadith no. 5567, p. 171 ; *Sunan Abi Dâwud*, vol. 6, hadith no 4031, p. 144.

<sup>45</sup> See *Irwa' al-Ghalîl*, vol. 5, p. 109.

<sup>38</sup> See *al-Sunan al-Kubrâ*, vol. 2, hadith no. 4291, p. 699,

<sup>39</sup> See *SHalâh al-Tarâwih*, (Riyâdh: Maktabah al-Ma'ârif, 1421 H), 1 st Edition, pp. 57-59.

Narrated by al-Tirmidhi:

عَنْ عَمْرِو بْنِ شُعَيْبٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ جَدِّهِ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: «لَيْسَ مِنَّا مَنْ تَشَبَّهَ بِغَيْرِنَا، لَا تَشَبَّهُوا بِالْيَهُودِ وَلَا بِالنَّصَارَى، فَإِنَّ تَسْلِيمَ الْيَهُودِ الْإِشَارَةُ بِالْأَصَابِعِ، وَتَسْلِيمَ النَّصَارَى الْإِشَارَةُ بِالْأَكْفُفِ»<sup>46</sup>

According to al-Tirmidhi, this hadith has a weak sanad, but according to al-Albâni, it is a marqû'ah hadith with Hasan status.<sup>47</sup>

Indonesian Salafi figures have various opinions in response to al-Albâni's view on this issue.

Table 4. Indonesian Salafist Views of al-Albâni Fatwa on Hadith about *Tasyabbuh* with Disbelievers

| No. | Indonesian Salafist   | Their View Responding His Fatwa  |
|-----|-----------------------|--|
| 1   | Abduh Tuasikal        | The forbidden <i>tasyabbuh</i> is all actions that are specific to the teachings of infidels and are taken from the teachings of infidels, not taught in Islamic teachings <sup>48</sup>           |
| 2   | Abu Yahya Badrussalam | The meaning of prohibition of the hadith is only in terms of special characteristics possessed by the disbelievers. In worldly matters, <i>tasyabbuh</i> is allowed to disbelievers. <sup>49</sup> |
| 3   | Abu Haidar al-Sundawy | <i>tashabbuh</i> in dressing that as long as it is not a special feature of a particular religion, such a dress is not prohibited. <sup>50</sup>   |
| 4   | Dzulqarnain Sunusi    | Ban on <i>tasyabbuh</i> is related to two things, namely religious symbols and special habits of infidels <sup>51</sup>  |

## It's Implications to Indonesian Salafist Islamic Legal Thought

Based on the examples above, Indonesian Salafi groups who accept or adopt traditions that are in *takhrîj* al-Albâni have given birth to a process of understanding Islamic law that is very rigid and less tolerant of differences of opinion (*ikhtilaf*) among *fiqh* experts. Often they place outside the Salafi *manhaj* as a deviant group

(*munharifah*) or contrary to the Sunna (*yukhalif al-Sunnah*) or heretics. It is even more “extreme” if the concept of heresy described by al-Albâni, which includes any worship that is “contrary to the Sunnah”, even though it is based on *ijtihad* and religious practice is based on weak *hadith* as an act of “*bid'ah*”, such as the practice of praying *Tarâwih* or rubbing hands after praying as is generally practised by Indonesian Muslims. Generally, Salafist scholars in Saudi state praying 20 cycles of *tarâwih*, as in the Haram and Prophet's Mosques, is not heresy because it has a strong history. Moreover, the *da'i* did not question it, like Uthaymin, because there was a view of the scholars who stated that the narration was *asan li ghairih* because of the many paths. This group has difficulty accepting and tolerant of other Islamic legal discourses sourced from the established *fiqh* traditions of the four *madhabs*. Labelling their *da'wah* to groups outside their group as “heretics” or those who do not like “*da'wah* tawhid and Sunnah” as they are influenced by the “whispers” of the devil is very vulnerable to triggering conflict as stated by Jawas.<sup>52</sup> So what happened as in 2021 was the conflict between the Salafi group and the people of East Lombok which led to physical violence.

Abdul Hakim Abdat stated that the hadith “every heresy is heretical” does not give an exception to the *hasanah bid'ah*. If no *nass* argument provides an exception, then how is it possible to make exception rules (*dhawâbit*)? Something impossible to do if it is only based on personal opinion. As for what Umar said about “good *bid'ah*” (*ni'mat al-bid'ah*) it is a linguistic *bid'ah*. Umar did not add anything new because the Prophet performed the *tarâwih* prayer in the mosque in the congregation. So that what Umar did to appoint Ubay ibn Ka'ab and Tamîm al-Dârî as priests for the *tarâwih* prayer did not violate the *sunnah* of the Prophet. While history states that Umar ordered the *tarâwih* prayer 20 *rak'ahs*, history is weak. A strong history is that Umar ordered Ubay bin Ka'ab and Tamim al-Dari to pray *tarâwih* and *witr* 11 *rak'ahs*.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>46</sup> See *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, vol. 5, p. 56

<sup>47</sup> See *Irwa' al-Ghail*, vol. 5, p. 111

<sup>48</sup> <https://rumaysho.com/3076-mengikuti-gaya-orang-kafir-tasyabbup.html>

<sup>49</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Fp1kviQWPo>.

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g9HiFYARL8>.

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gfKLIQU-oK4>.

<sup>52</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pCU5l8zyu3A>

<sup>53</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oyY\\_CPZRqol](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oyY_CPZRqol).



In this context, the author argues that the traditions of *takhrîj* al-Albânî and their understanding have led to the strengthening of a very rigid literal Islamic legal *manhaj* in placing the position of hadith as a proposition related to the birth of the process of “radicalization” of religious understanding. Yazid Jawas’s assertion that *khilâf* based on *ra’y* (opinion) is not a proposition. The words of the sheikh, kyai, and ustad are not proof. The evidence is the Quran and hadith. This approach is quite revolutionary in looking at the differences in interpretation (*khilafat*) among the ulama. Returning all problems to the Quran and Sunna as the practice of the salaf is a *manhaj* choice. The rebuttal that Umar also performed the 11 *rak’ahs* of *tarâwih* and with prayers performed by Abdat and Yazid Jawas through a hadith critique by al-Albânî, both wanted to show that the practice of the residents of Mecca and Medina, which has continued until now, and the views of school scholars cannot be used as evidence. Only the authentic Sunnah is used as a guide. Sahih Sunnah that Umar meant *tarâwih* prayer and with 11 *rak’ahs* as the hadith of Aishah.

Yazid Jawas stated that every valid Sunnah from the Prophet must be accepted, even though it is a week. By citing the views of Imam al-Shafi’i, Jawas places hadith as a source parallel to the Quran. What the Sunnah forbids is the same as what the Quran forbids. Because both come from revelation. The Sunna is the *hujjah* or source of *tashri’* (law-making) and becomes a disbeliever for those who deny it. The evidence is established with the Sunna, and other arguments are invalidated.

The verses al-Nisa’ [4]: 59 and al-Hasr [50]:7 were quoted by Jawas to emphasize that the hadiths, both *ahad* and *mutawatir*, are absolute sources of teachings, putting aside the views of schools or the opinions of scholars. This is where the Indonesian Salafists have done the “absolutization” of *fiqh*, whose basic character is relative (*Zanni*). What is claimed by some Salafi figures to be most in line with the Sunnah of the Prophet is also relative (*Zanni*). An example is al-Albânî’s assessment of the traditions regarding *tarâwih* 20 cycles as *bid’ah*, where some Indonesian Salafists follow al-Albânî’s opinion.

In addition, the emphasis on hadith in al-Albânî’s thinking and ignoring the vast and rich treasures of *fiqh* has caused Indonesian Salafi legal thought to be trapped in the purification of issues of worship rituals. On the other hand, they do not offer another understanding of the hadith.

## Conclusion

Based on the discussion above, the author thinks that the traditions of *takhrîj* al-Albânî and their understanding have strengthened a very rigid literal way of Islamic law. This approach places the position of hadith above *fiqh*, often seen as Islamic jurisprudence. Differences (*khilâf*) that are diverse based on *ra’y* (opinions) must be confronted textually with hadith. This process is often described as a “deconstruction” of classical legal jurisprudence. This approach is quite revolutionary in viewing the different interpretations (*khilafiyah*) among the ulama as a form of deviation. This is where Indonesian Salafist writers have done the “absolutization” of *fiqh*, whose basic character is relative (*Zanni*). What some Salafi figures claim is the most appropriate to the Sunna of the Prophet is also relative (*Zanni*). Here, al-Albânî greatly influenced Indonesian Salafists in forming a pattern of thought called “Neo-Ahl al-Hadits”. Then, the Neo-ahl al-Hadits legal thought gave birth to radical and intolerant attitudes among Indonesian Salafists.

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