

Theological Criticism of Qadariyah and Jabariyah in Maziyyah by KH. Ambo Dalle: The Perspective of Islam in the Indonesian Archipelago

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini menganalisis kritik teologis KH. Abdurrahman Ambo Dalle terhadap dua kutub ekstrem dalam teologi Islam, yaitu Jabariyah dan Qadariyah, serta memetakan posisi moderat Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah (ASWAJA) sebagaimana dirumuskan dalam karya Maziyyah Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah Bayna al-Nihāl wa al-Firaq al-Mubtadi'ah. Studi ini signifikan karena menawarkan perspektif Islam Nusantara dalam diskursus klasik tentang kehendak bebas dan predestinasi. Dengan pendekatan kualitatif berbasis studi teks, penelitian ini menggunakan analisis tematik dan tafsir kontekstual terhadap teks berbahasa Bugis, serta memperkuat data dengan referensi akademik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Ambo Dalle menempatkan ASWAJA sebagai poros teologis moderat melalui konsep kasb-manusia sebagai pelaku amal yang bertanggung jawab, namun dalam cakupan kehendak ilahi. Spektrum proporsional antara predestinasi, kehendak bebas, dan tanggung jawab moral merepresentasikan posisi teologis ASWAJA secara sistematis. Temuan ini

berimplikasi pada penguatan Islam moderat dalam kurikulum pesantren dan memperkaya wacana Islam Nusantara. Orisinalitas terletak pada pembacaan kontekstual terhadap pemikiran ulama lokal yang jarang disentuh dalam literatur global, sekaligus mengintegrasikan teologi klasik dan ekspresi lokal secara reflektif.

Kata Kunci: ASWAJA; kasb; Islam moderat; Jabariyah; Qadariyah.

Abstract

This study analyses the theological criticism of KH. Abdurrahman Ambo Dalle towards the two extreme schools of Islamic theology (Jabariyyah and Qadariyyah) while mapping the moderate position of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah (ASWAJA) as articulated in his work *Maziyyah Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah Bayna al-Nihāl wa al-Firaq al-Mubtadi'ah*. The research is significant in that it offers a Nusantara Islam perspective on the classical theological debate concerning human free will and divine predestination. Employing a qualitative textual approach, the study applies thematic analysis and contextual hermeneutics to a classical text written in Bugis, supported by relevant academic literature. The findings demonstrate that Ambo Dalle constructs a theological typology in which ASWAJA occupies a moderate axis through the concept of kasb-humans as morally accountable agents, though the power to act originates from God. The proportional spectrum between divine predestination, human volition, and moral responsibility systematically illustrates the integrative theological model of ASWAJA. These findings have practical implications for strengthening the narrative of moderate Islam in Indonesia, especially within the pesantren curriculum and the discourse of Islam Nusantara. The originality of this study lies in its contextual reading of local theological thought, which remains underexplored in global scholarship, offering a reflective integration of classical theology with lived expressions of local Islam.

Keyword: : ASWAJA; kasb; moderate Islam; Jabariyyah; Qadariyya.

Introduction

Within the context of Islamic diversity in Indonesia, the debate concerning the relationship between divine will and human freedom continues to be a crucial issue that reflects the tension between theological determinism and moral agency. Extremist narratives such as “everything is predetermined by God; humans merely carry it out” or “human beings fully determine their own fate” have become increasingly prominent, particularly through digital proselytisation and social media, which often present oversimplified and contradictory views of the doctrine of destiny.¹ This

¹ Yohanes Andy Rias et al., “Effects of Spirituality, Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices toward Anxiety Regarding Covid-19 among the General Population in Indonesia: A Cross-Sectional

phenomenon exemplifies what has been described as digital fatalism (a tendency to surrender to technological constructions and deterministic religious discourses) wherein individuals feel a loss of agency in interpreting and responding to their social realities.

Such communicative patterns are widespread not only in online sermons or viral religious quotes on TikTok and Instagram but also influence the collective consciousness of Muslims (especially among the younger generation) in understanding moral responsibility, the role of Islamic law, and the significance of personal effort (*ikhtiar*). This aligns with Widiawati who found that youth participation in religious activities is declining due to a perceived disconnect between normative teachings and the realities of everyday life. Extremist theological interpretations of destiny often erode the values of *tawāsuth* (moderation), *tasāmuh* (tolerance), and *ta’ādul* (balance), which are the hallmarks of Islam Nusantara, and contribute to the weakening of ethical awareness and social responsibility.²

This condition is exacerbated by the banalisation of religious information in digital spaces, where scholarly authority is often replaced by superficial popularity. While visually engaging digital preaching has succeeded in reaching younger audiences, it often produces theological misinformation when not accompanied by robust epistemic control. In this context, critique of Jabariyyah and Qadariyyah doctrines becomes particularly relevant, as both represent theological extremes that are being symbolically reproduced in the digital era.

Furthermore, in Indonesia’s pluralistic Muslim society rooted in local traditions, the simplification of destiny concepts can result in spiritual disorientation and social fragmentation, potentially leading to epistemological disarray in understanding the dual role of humans as both servants (*‘abd*) and vicegerents (*khalifah*) of God. A theological approach is therefore needed one that is not only normatively doctrinal but also contextually transformative, rooted in classical traditions yet responsive to

Study,” *Journal of Clinical Medicine* 9, no. 12 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.3390/jcm9123798>.

² Muhammad Nasir and Muhammad Khairul Rijal, “Keeping the Middle Path: Mainstreaming Religious Moderation through Islamic Higher Education Institutions in Indonesia,” *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 11, no. 2 (2021): 213 – 241, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v11i2.213-241>; Imam Subchi et al., “Cyber Fatwa and Da’wah Acceptance in New Media: How Technology Affects Religious Message by Female Ulama,” *Ahkam: Jurnal Ilmu Syariah* 22, no. 1 (2022): 35 – 58, <https://doi.org/10.15408/ajis.v22i1.23687>.

contemporary challenges. This underscores the importance of revisiting the contribution of Indonesian scholars such as KH. Abdurrahman Ambo Dalle, who, through his work *Maziyyah Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah*, presents theological critiques of Jabariyyah and Qadariyyah as part of a broader effort to restore a moderate theology within Indonesia's Islamic landscape.

Academic studies on the relationship between divine will and human freedom in the Islamic tradition have yielded various approaches, which can be classified into three main categories. First, the historical-classical approach, which documents the emergence and development of the Jabariyyah and Qadariyyah schools from the Umayyad to the Abbasid period. Scholars such as Wolfson³ and Nasution⁴ mapped debates around predestination and human agency within classical kalām. Saputra⁵ further identified the influence of these schools on the development of Ash'arite and Maturidite theology.

Second, the contemporary philosophical-theological approach, which explores the dynamic relationship between divine will and human agency. Scholars such as Maria⁶ examined how concepts of providence and freedom were reflected in the works of al-Ghazali, the Mu'tazilites, and other philosophical traditions. Power⁷ and Jaffer⁸ also highlighted how the tension between determinism and freedom impacts individual ethics and moral responsibility. Tanui offered comparative perspectives by examining similar theological problems across religious traditions.

³ Harry A Wolfson, "Ibn Khaldūn on Attributes and Predestination," *Speculum* 34, no. 4 (1959): 585–97, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2850659>.

⁴ Hotnidah Nasution and Ahmad Rifqi Muchtar, "Access to Justice for Women and Children in Divorce Cases in the Indonesian Religious Courts," *Ahkam: Jurnal Ilmu Syariah* 20, no. 2 (2020): 361 – 384, <https://doi.org/10.15408/ajis.v20i2.15702>.

⁵ Nadzmi Akbar et al., "Guidance Patterns for Developing the Multicultural Character of Students in Salafiyah Islamic Boarding Schools, South Kalimantan, Indonesia," *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research* 2022, no. 99 (2022): 174 – 188, <https://doi.org/10.14689/ejer.2022.99.010>.

⁶ Maria Costanza Torri and Daniel Hollenberg, "Indigenous Traditional Medicine and Intercultural Healthcare in Bolivia: A Case Study From the Potosi Region," *Journal of Community Health Nursing* 30, no. 4 (2013): 216 – 229, <https://doi.org/10.1080/07370016.2013.838495>.

⁷ Edmund Power, "Fatalism and Free Will in Islam," *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 2, no. 5 (1913): 860–72.

⁸ Tariq Jaffer, "The Mu'tazila on Covenantal Theology: A Study of Individualist Approaches," *Oriens* 49, no. 1/2 (2021): 131–71.

Third, the sociological and practical approach explores how doctrines of destiny affect the social structure and collective consciousness of Muslims. Studies by Burga et al.⁹ and Denny¹⁰ revealed that theological understandings of fate can influence social participation, decision-making, and the capacity to navigate modern social change. In the digital era, as discussed by Sharma, the phenomenon of digital fatalism reflects the symbolic reproduction of religious determinism within technological and media cultures.

Despite these contributions, a gap remains in the literature; particularly in exploring the contributions of Nusantara scholars within the local Indonesian context. Much of the existing literature remains centred on Middle Eastern discourse and has not sufficiently accommodated local thinkers who reinterpret theological notions of destiny within uniquely Indonesian cultural, linguistic, and social frameworks. As Ahmad¹¹ argue, local systems of religious authority such as the Anregurutta hold strong legitimacy in shaping communal religious understanding. Thus, this study addresses this gap by analysing the thought of KH. Abdurrahman Ambo Dalle as a locally embedded articulation of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah theology situated within the distinct cultural setting of Bugis Islam.

This study adopts a qualitative research design using content analysis as its primary method. The unit of analysis is KH. Abdurrahman Ambo Dalle's work *Maziyyah Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah Bayna al-Niḥal wa al-Firaq al-Mubtadi'ah*, a classical theological text composed in Bugis-Arabic-Malay script. The methodological choice reflects the aim of uncovering the theological structure and argumentative depth of the text in a contextual and interpretive manner. Primary data are drawn from the aforementioned manuscript, complemented by secondary sources such as peer-reviewed Scopus-indexed articles related to determinism, human agency, and the doctrine of kasb in Sunni theology.

Data collection was conducted through intensive document analysis and textual annotation of doctrinal passages within the text, particularly those

⁹ Muhammad Alqadri Burga and Muljono Damopolii, "Reinforcing Religious Moderation Through Local Culture-Based Pesantren," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 8, no. 2 (2022): 145 – 162, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v8i2.19879>.

¹⁰ Frederick Mathewson Denny, "Islamic Theology in the New World: Some Issues and Prospects," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 62, no. 4 (1994): 1069–84.

¹¹ Ahmad Safrudin, "Demokrasi Dalam Islam" (UIN Sunan Kalijaga, 2008).

related to the theological positions of Jabariyyah, Qadariyyah, and Ahl al-Sunnah. The data were then categorised thematically and interpreted using a three-phase process: (1) structural identification of relevant content, (2) contextual interpretation based on the linguistic and cultural setting of Bugis Islam, and (3) critical analysis of the author's theological stance within the epistemological framework of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah. This approach enables the study to offer not only a descriptive reading of the text but also a contextual and reflective theological interpretation.

Results and Discussion

1. The Typology of Jabariyah according to Anregurutta KH. Abdurrahman Ambo Dalle

In his work *Maziyyah Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah Bayna al-Niḥal wa al-Firaq al-Mubtadi'ah*, Anregurutta KH. Abdurrahman Ambo Dalle characterises Jabariyah as a theological sect that negates human free will. According to him, this school maintains that all human actions (good or bad) are the direct result of divine will, without any human volition. In Bugis, he quotes: "*naia iya tojaqeng polei assalaqna batarae*," which translates as "humans are like trees blown by the wind." This metaphor vividly illustrates the passive and powerless position of human beings, whose every movement is driven solely by divine will.

In another excerpt from the text, Ambo Dalle writes:¹²

"Iyanaritu golongeng patanapienggi apegau'na atae maja' madeceng napabatimanenggi lao ripuang alla ta'ala jaji iyaro atae riakkelo'na puwang allata'ala padai raukkajie na'angingeng,"

meaning:

"Jabariyah is a group that denies the essence of human acts. Whether good or evil, all is attributed to God. Thus, a servant's relationship with God's will is like a tree swayed by the wind."

Ambo Dalle further classifies Jabariyah among the deviant sects, including its sub-sects such as al-Jahmiyyah, al-Dhirariyyah, and al-Najjariyyah. He delivers a sharp theological critique, arguing that their

¹² Abdurrahman Ambo Dalle, *Maziyyah Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jama'ah Bayna An-Nahli Wal Firaq Al-Mubtadi'ah* (Pare-pare: Percetakan Khairiyah, n.d.).

doctrines abolish human moral and legal responsibility, contradicting the principle of divine justice (*al-'adl*) upheld by Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah.

This view aligns with contemporary literature which demonstrates that Jabariyah theology emphasises *al-qaḍā' wa-l-qadr* (divine decree and destiny) in an extreme manner. Maher and Bissoondath¹³ and Bahmani and Hosseini¹⁴ note that in Jabariyah doctrine, there is no room for human agency, as all actions are preordained by God. In contrast, Ash'arite theology introduces *kasb* as a form of compromise, while Mu'tazilite theology stresses moral autonomy through free will.

Jabariyah's theological concept of absolute predestination (where human free will is denied and all actions are determined by divine will) mirrors fatalistic tendencies that have been challenged by other Islamic schools. This includes "digital fatalism" and modern notions of determinism, in which individuals perceive themselves as powerless in the face of technological systems and life conditions.¹⁵

Anregurutta KH. Abdurrahman Ambo Dalle identifies three primary sects within Jabariyah, each with distinctive deterministic doctrines and varying degrees of extremity:

1. **Al-Jahmiyyah:** Theological Determinism and Conceptual Distortion of Faith and Eschatology. Attributed to Jahm bin Ṣafwān (d. 128 AH), al-Jahmiyyah represents the most extreme manifestation of Jabariyah in Islamic theological history. It entirely denies the existence of human *qudrah* (capacity) and *irādah* (will) in action. All human deeds (internal and external) are regarded as the sole creation and will of God, rendering humans passive recipients of divine determination.

¹³ Shiraz Maher and Alexandra Bissoondath, "Al-Qaḍā' Wa-I-Qadr: Motivational Representations of Divine Degree and Predestination in Salafi-Jihadi Literature," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 46, no. 1 (2019): 14 – 28, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13530194.2017.1361317>.

¹⁴ Seyed Mojtaba Hosseini Kashani and Ahmad Beheshtimehr, "A New Reflection on the Historical Connection between Mu'tazilism and Tafwīd," *Journal of Philosophical Theological Research* 23, no. 2 (2021): 27 – 52, <https://doi.org/10.22091/JPTR.2021.6517.2479>.

¹⁵ Gabriel A Acevedo, "Islamic Fatalism and the Clash of Civilizations: An Appraisal of a Contentious and Dubious Theory," *Social Forces* 86, no. 4 (2008): 1711 – 1752, <https://doi.org/10.1353/sof.0.0033>; Maher and Bissoondath, "Al-Qaḍā' Wa-I-Qadr: Motivational Representations of Divine Degree and Predestination in Salafi-Jihadi Literature."

Ambo Dalle outlines three core beliefs of al-Jahmiyyah in *Maziyyah* that highlight both theological and eschatological deviations. These include the rejection of human volition, the annihilation of paradise and hell after judgement, and the claim that one who attains *ma'rifah* (gnosis) is no longer required to pronounce the *shahada* (creed).

Such beliefs contradict key Islamic theological doctrines, particularly the notion of eternal paradise and hell (as affirmed by *ijmā'*, scholarly consensus), and undermine the verbal and actionable dimensions of faith. It is no surprise that figures such as al-Dhahabi and al-Baghdadi categorised Jahm and his followers as *ahl al-bid'ah* (people of innovation). Al-Dhahabi explicitly criticises this doctrine for its destructive implications on divine justice and moral accountability. Similarly, Maher and Bissoondath¹⁶ suggest that Jabariyah (including Jahmiyyah) reflects a type of extreme theological determinism that fosters social fatalism.

2. **Al-Dhirariyyah:** Effort Without Causal Efficacy in Middle-Ground Theology Founded by Dhirar bin 'Amr (2nd century AH), al-Dhirariyyah sought a compromise between fatalistic Jabariyah and voluntaristic Qadariyah by asserting that while human acts are created by God, they are exerted through human effort. Ambo Dalle summarises that, for this sect, human effort (*ikhtiyār*) lacks independent causal power—an idea that mirrors *kasb* but with greater subordination to divine will.

Dhirar's approach included philosophical elements, such as the notion of a "sixth sense" that allows humans to see God in the hereafter. This, as noted by Campanini ¹⁷, reflects the influence of Hellenistic epistemology on classical Islamic theology. Nevertheless, Mu'tazilite theologians rejected this view for undermining divine justice, as it separates moral effort from moral consequences.

¹⁶ Maher and Bissoondath, "Al-Qadā' Wa-I-Qadr: Motivational Representations of Divine Degree and Predestination in Salafi-Jihadi Literature."

¹⁷ Massimo Campanini, "Science and Epistemology in Medieval Islam," *Social Epistemology Review and Reply Collective* 4, no. 12 (2015).

3. **Al-Najjariyyah:** Jabariyah Affinity and Rejection of Divine Attributes Al-Najjariyyah, associated with Ḥusayn bin Muḥammad al-Najjar (3rd century AH), developed a more systematic theology combining Jabariyah's notion of created acts with the denial of God's eternal attributes-especially *kalam* (speech). Al-Najjar taught that if God creates a good act, it becomes good, and likewise for evil-undermining the notion of objective moral value based on human intention.

This position resembles the theological trajectory of extreme rationalism, denying divine *ṣifāt* (attributes), and viewing revelation as a created, historical text. As al-Baghdadi (1999) explains, such positions lead to epistemological relativism and undermine the notion of transcendence that classical Sunni orthodoxy upholds.

Visualisation and Comparative Patterns The theological spectrum, visualised by Ambo Dalle in percentage form, helps clarify the distinctions among these sects regarding divine predestination, human free will, and moral responsibility:

Sect	Divine Predestination	Human Free Will	Moral Responsibility
Al-Jahmiyyah	100%	0	0
Al-Dhirariyyah	85%	10%	5%
Al-Najjariyyah	90%	7%	3%

This quantitative typology reveals several theological patterns: (1) a core commitment to divine determinism across all three, (2) varying degrees of recognition for human agency, and (3) increasing complexity in rational-philosophical articulation. Despite minor variations, each deviates from Sunni orthodoxy in critical doctrines, such as belief in eternal punishment, causal moral agency, and divine attributes.

These doctrinal configurations offer insight into how determinism was differently conceptualised and defended, yet equally challenged by classical and modern Sunni thinkers. In today's context, such doctrines risk encouraging passivity or moral disengagement, as noted by scholars like

Yazdani,¹⁸ Danesh¹⁹, and Keskin & Azhar²⁰. Conversely, theological moderation (such as in Ash'arism) offers a viable ethical framework that upholds both divine sovereignty and human responsibility.

2. Qadariyah According to Anregurutta KH. Abdurrahman Ambo Dalle

In *Maziyyah Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah Bayna al-Niḥal wa al-Firqah al-Mubtadi'ah*, Anregurutta KH. Abdurrahman Ambo Dalle describes Qadariyah as a theological school that affirms the complete freedom of human will in action. This school maintains that human beings possess full control over their actions and bear full responsibility for all their decisions, whether good or evil. According to Anregurutta, the Qadariyahs deny any divine intervention in determining human fate, asserting instead that all actions stem solely from human volition.

In a Bugis-language excerpt from the text, he writes:²¹

"Iyyanaritu golongeng peiyya sekienggi sipa' ullewe napunnai atae. Jaji sigilingennai golongeng jabariyah'e nasai sai ateka'na majeppu atae de' namamala' bantuang (pattulung) riai manenna gau'gau'na."

Translation:

"Qadariyah is the group that emphasises the power possessed by the servant. This stands in contrast to the Jabariyah, who believe that the servant requires no divine assistance in any of his actions."

Anregurutta underscores that this Qadariyah view places extreme emphasis on human freedom. Every action is seen as the result of individual choice, entirely free from divine determinism or interference. This sharply contrasts with Jabariyah theology, which rejects human free will and asserts absolute predestination by God.

¹⁸ Abbas Yazdani, "The Culture of Peace and Religious Tolerance from an Islamic Perspective," *Veritas*, no. 47 (2020): 151 – 168, <https://doi.org/10.4067/S0718-92732020000300151>.

¹⁹ Javad Danesh, "Free Will and Moral Responsibility in Islamic Philosophy," *Religious Inquiries* 8, no. 15 (2019): 37 – 58, <https://doi.org/10.22034/ri.2019.92731>.

²⁰ Zuleyha Keskin and Rinto Azhar, "Navigating Belief in Qadar (Destiny) with the Contemporary Understanding of Risk Management," *International Journal of Islamic Thought* 25 (2024): 194 – 203, <https://doi.org/10.24035/ijit.25.2024.296>.

²¹ Dalle, *Maziyyah Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jama'ah Bayna An-Nahli Wal Firqah Al-Mubtadi'ah*.

This perspective aligns with scholarly literature identifying Qadariyah as the theological opposite of extreme determinism, upholding the view that humans possess autonomy over their own fate.²²

A previous bar chart clearly illustrated how Qadariyah theology assigns full weight to human free will (100%), eliminating any share of divine predestination or moral responsibility derived from divine decree. This visualisation supports Anregurutta KH. Abdurrahman Ambo Dalle's assertion in *Maziyyah* that Qadariyah firmly denies God's will in human deeds. Humans are viewed as sole agents of their actions, hence morally and legally accountable. From this perspective, God does not create human acts; rather, humans themselves choose, initiate, and perform them; be they virtuous or sinful. This represents an extreme position on human freedom that effectively dismisses the doctrine of *qadar* as integral to Islamic theology.

From the analysis of the text, four principal patterns can be identified in Qadariyah theology according to Anregurutta:

1. **Absolute Emphasis on Human Freedom:** Qadariyah assumes that humans possess full autonomy in choosing and acting. They are considered entirely independent agents, not subject to divine will. Every action stems from human initiative, denying all forms of divine determinism.
2. **Rejection of Divine Intervention:** Qadariyah negates any direct divine involvement in the unfolding of human life. God neither creates nor controls human acts. Responsibility lies wholly with the individual; unlike the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah view, which balances divine will and human effort (*ikhtiyār*).
3. **Full Attribution of Moral Responsibility to Humans:** As Qadariyah believes in total human freedom, they also place full moral and legal responsibility on the individual. People are deemed fully deserving of reward or punishment, independent of any divine decree.
4. **Extreme View of *Qadar*:** The final notable trait is Qadariyah's radical stance on predestination. *Qadar* is understood merely as a general potential with no direct influence on human acts. This deviates from

²² Keskin and Azhar, "Navigating Belief in Qadar (Destiny) with the Contemporary Understanding of Risk Management."

mainstream Islamic moderation by negating the divine role in human existence.

Anregurutta KH. Ambo Dalle's interpretation of Qadariyah reveals an extreme strand in the discourse of human will in Islamic theology. By denying divine involvement in human actions, Qadariyah places humanity at the centre of full moral and legal accountability. This perspective promotes individualism and autonomy but risks weakening spiritual consciousness of human dependence upon divine will and decree.

In the Indonesian context, which values religious moderation (as seen in the *tawassuṭ* (balance) of Islam Nusantara) the Qadariyah stance is considered incompatible with the spirit of balance between *ikhtiyār* (effort) and *tawakkul* (trust in God). The extreme nature of Qadariyah also threatens the transcendental dimension of faith, where trials and destiny are no longer understood as part of divine wisdom.

Moreover, Anregurutta's criticism of Qadariyah underscores the importance of maintaining integration between human autonomy and divine decree to avoid falling into anthropocentric views that neglect the vertical axis of Islam. From the standpoint of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah, the balance between *qadar* and *ikhtiyār* forms the foundation of an active yet spiritually surrendered life. Therefore, extreme interpretations like Qadariyah must be critically examined to prevent ethical and spiritual deviation within Muslim communities.

3. The Position of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah According to Anregurutta KH. Abdurrahman Ambo Dalle

In his work *Maziyyah Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah Bayna al-Niḥal wa al-Firaq al-Mubtadi'ah*, Anregurutta KH. Abdurrahman Ambo Dalle firmly asserts the theological position of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah (ASWAJA) as a middle path that rejects the two extreme poles of theological thought: Jabariyah, which denies human free will, and Qadariyah, which entirely excludes divine intervention. In a powerful narrative written in the Bugis language, he writes:

"They are the group that follows the middle path regarding human agency. They differ from the Jabariyah, who deny the ability of humans to act, and also from the Qadariyah, who believe humans are entirely independent. In

the teachings of Ahl al-Sunnah, humans are the doers of their actions, but they do not create their deeds, as everything remains dependent on the will of Allah. Hence, absolute attribution of actions to humans is rejected.”

By referencing Ibn Taymiyyah, al-Ash’ari, and other Sunni scholars, Anregurutta positions the ASWAJA doctrine as a theological model that recognises both aspects in balance: God as the *khāliq* (Creator) of all things and humans as *fā’il* (agents) who bear moral and legal responsibility for their choices.

This understanding reveals a strong connection between Anregurutta’s perspective and the concept of *kasb* (acquisition of acts), developed by Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash’arī. This view was further developed by scholars such as al-Bāqillānī and al-Juwaynī, who explained that while actions are created by God, humans acquire them through intention and effort, thus retaining accountability.

Furthermore, this perspective aligns with the phenomenological approach within Ash’arism, which asserts that even though the human will is created by God, humans consciously experience their own sense of freedom in acting—an idea elaborated by Masrukhin²³ in his article *The Will and the Presence of Human Being in Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash’arī’s Thought*.

Table 1. Theological Spectrum of Human Action According to KH. Ambo Dalle

Theological Group	Divine Predestination	Human Free Will	Moral Responsibility	Additional Notes
Al-Jahmiyah	100%	0%	0%	Humans are passive objects; all actions are entirely created by God.
Al-Dhirariyah	85%	10%	5%	Recognises human effort (ikhtiyār), but denies causal efficacy.
Al-Najjariyah	90%	7%	3%	Denies divine speech attributes; all acts are

²³ Mohammad Yunus Masrukhin, “The Will And The Presence Of Human Being In Abu Al-Hasan Al-Ash’ari’S Thought: Explaining the Relation between Human and God in Kalam Discourse,” *Al-Jami’ah* 59, no. 1 (2021): 221 – 254, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2021.591.221-254>.

				God's creations, good or evil.
Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah	60%	25%	15%	Strikes a balance between divine decree and human effort using kasb.
Qadariyah	0%	100%	100%	Denies divine intervention; humans are sole creators of their actions.

From KH. Abdurrahman Ambo Dalle's explanations, ASWAJA emerges as a distinctive moderate position between the extremes of Jabariyah; which completely denies human agency (and Qadariyah) which entirely excludes divine will. ASWAJA strongly opposes both, and according to Anregurutta, humans are *fā'il*, meaning they act with intent and choice, but within the framework of God's will and creative power.

This position is not merely a doctrinal compromise, but a theologically grounded stance rooted in the belief that human will is *kasb*-acquired, not created. As articulated in Ash'arite theology, humans do not independently create their deeds, but are morally accountable because they will and intend them. This implies the existence of phenomenological free will, as described by Masrukhin²⁴, who notes that despite the will being created by God, humans experience it consciously and authentically.

The spectrum visualisation in Table 1 reinforces this moderate stance, placing ASWAJA at a balanced estimate of 60% divine predestination, 25% human free will, and 15% moral responsibility. This distribution reflects a model that integrates divine sovereignty and human agency-a model further confirmed in the works of Taskin²⁵ and Güdekli²⁶, both of whom argue that

²⁴ Masrukhin.

²⁵ Zeyneb Betul Taskin, "An Occasionalist Reading of Al-Ash'arī's Theory of Kasb in Kitāb Al-Luma'," *Muslim World* 113, no. 4 (2023): 399 – 415, <https://doi.org/10.1111/muwo.12478>.

²⁶ Hayrettin Nebi Güdekli, "The Ontology of Free Will in the Post-Classical Maturidite Kalām: Analysis, Critical Edition and Translation of Saçaklızâde's Treatise on Free Will; [Müteahhirin Dönemi Mâtürîdî Kelâmında İradenin Ontolojisi Sorunu: Saçaklızâde'nin Risâletü'l-İrâdeti'l-Cü]," *İslam Araştırmaları Dergisi* 2019, no. 41 (2019): 85 – 129, <https://doi.org/10.26570/isad.513141>.

while the power to act originates from God, responsibility rests with the human agent's intention and preference.

From the data, at least four main theological patterns can be identified in Anregurutta's interpretation of ASWAJA:

First, a balance between divine will and human effort. Anregurutta emphasises that ASWAJA does not adhere to either extreme determinism (Jabariyah) or extreme voluntarism (Qadariyah). Instead, it affirms humans as moral agents operating within the bounds of divine will-mirroring the classical Sunni paradigm formulated by al-Ash'arī through *kasb*.

Second, the rejection of moral reductionism. In Anregurutta's view of ASWAJA, humans retain moral accountability for their actions due to their capacity for intention and choice. This challenges the Jabariyah's claim that humans are mere passive objects of divine will. By preserving responsibility, ASWAJA upholds Islamic ethical frameworks based on accountability.

Third, the affirmation of phenomenological free will. ASWAJA, as interpreted by Anregurutta, creates space for the conscious human experience of choosing to act. Although that volition is created by God, it is subjectively felt by humans as part of their awareness. This resonates with Ash'arite phenomenological interpretations,²⁷ where free will is considered an existential reality-not an illusion.

Fourth, a quantitatively balanced theological model. Based on Table 1, ASWAJA occupies the centre with 60% divine predestination, 25% human free will, and 15% moral responsibility. This proportional pattern reflects a rational and integrative approach to theological moderation, not merely symbolic but methodically constructed.

The ASWAJA position, as outlined by Anregurutta KH. Abdurrahman Ambo Dalle, is not merely a symbolic middle ground but a coherent and functional theological construction. It holds particular significance in the context of Islam Nusantara, as it mediates between the extremes of theological determinism (Jabariyah) and radical human autonomy (Qadariyah). Within this framework, humans remain *fā'il* (actors) who

²⁷ Masrukhin, "The Will And The Presence Of Human Being In Abu Al-Hasan Al-Ash'Ari'S Thought:Explaining the Relation between Human and God in Kalam Discourse."

choose and intend, while God remains the ultimate Creator of all deeds, as emphasised in Anregurutta's Bugis narrative underscoring balance.

The theological depth of this position lies in its recognition of moral responsibility without sacrificing the principle of *tawhīd*, that no power or will exists except by God's will. This aligns with the Ash'arite concept of *kasb*, where humans do not create their actions independently but remain responsible due to their intention and preference. This is further supported by Masrukhin,²⁸ who maintains that the human will, even though created by God, is experienced consciously as a real, not illusory, phenomenon.

The proportional theological spectrum (60% divine predestination, 25% human free will, and 15% moral responsibility) facilitates public understanding of this complex doctrine and reflects a systematic approach to theological moderation. In this regard, Taskin's²⁹ study on *An Occasionalist Reading of Al-Ash'arī's Theory of Kasb* and Güdekli's³⁰ work on *The Ontology of Free Will in Maturidite Kalām* confirm that distinguishing between volition, preference, and enactment allows for moral accountability without compromising divine sovereignty.

The implications of these findings enrich Islamic theological discourse, especially within the Indonesian context. ASWAJA is not merely a traditional Sunni legacy but serves as a theological strategy that is both relevant and applicable to nurturing a religious life that balances faith, reason, and social responsibility. Hence, Anregurutta's interpretation of ASWAJA offers a significant contribution to the development of a distinctively Nusantara form of moderate Islam—one that remains faithful to classical scholarship while also opening dialogical pathways to address contemporary challenges.

4. Theological Reflection and Implications for Islam Nusantara

This study demonstrates that KH. Abdurrahman Ambo Dalle, in his work *Maziyyah Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah Bayna al-Niḥal wa al-Firaq al-Mubtadi'ah*, formulated a systematic and contextual theological typology concerning the positions of three major schools of thought in the discourse

²⁸ Masrukhin.

²⁹ Taskin, "An Occasionalist Reading of Al-Ash'arī's Theory of Kasb in Kitāb Al-Luma'."

³⁰ Güdekli, "The Ontology of Free Will in the Post-Classical Maturidite Kalām: Analysis, Critical Edition and Translation of Saçaklızâde's Treatise on Free Will; [Müteahhirîn Dönemi Mâtürîdî Kelâmında İrâdenin Ontolojisi Sorunu: Saçaklızâde'nin Risâletü'l-İrâdeti'l-Cü.]"

on divine will and human action. Jabariyah is identified as the extreme determinist pole, which denies human agency and attributes all actions solely to the will of God. Conversely, Qadariyah is positioned as the extreme voluntarist school, rejecting divine intervention and asserting complete human freedom and responsibility for their actions.

Situated between these two poles, Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah (ASWAJA) is portrayed as a moderate position, balancing God's power as *khāliq al-aʿfāl* (the Creator of actions) with human free will as *fā'il bi al-ikhtiyār* (agents who act with choice). This position is in line with the doctrine of *kasb* in Ash'arite theology, which posits that while the power to act originates from God, humans acquire their deeds through intention and choice.³¹ The proportional visualisation across the parameters of divine predestination, human free will, and moral responsibility illustrates ASWAJA's distinct epistemological integration.

Conceptually, the Jabariyah position is rooted in the pursuit of *tawhīd al-aʿfāl* (the oneness of God in actions), thus viewing all human deeds as mere manifestations of divine will. In contrast, Qadariyah rests on the principle of *al-'adl* (divine justice), which necessitates full human autonomy to render them morally and legally accountable. ASWAJA avoids both extremes through the doctrine of *kasb*, which maintains that humans choose and intend their actions, though the power of creation belongs to God. This synthesis merges phenomenological dimensions, as emphasised by Masrukhin³² (2021), with classical *kalām* methodology, as articulated by Taskin³³ and Güdekli.³⁴

Comparatively, KH. Ambo Dalle's approach remains coherent with classical Ash'arism, yet distinguishes itself through the use of the Bugis language and local narratives to convey abstract theological concepts. This approach bridges classical theological discourse with the lived expression of

³¹ Taskin, "An Occasionalist Reading of Al-Ash'arī's Theory of Kasb in Kitāb Al-Luma'"; Masrukhin, "The Will And The Presence Of Human Being In Abu Al-Hasan Al-Ash'ari's Thought: Explaining the Relation between Human and God in Kalam Discourse."

³² Masrukhin, "The Will And The Presence Of Human Being In Abu Al-Hasan Al-Ash'ari's Thought: Explaining the Relation between Human and God in Kalam Discourse."

³³ Taskin, "An Occasionalist Reading of Al-Ash'arī's Theory of Kasb in Kitāb Al-Luma'."

³⁴ Hayrettin Nebi Güdekli, "The Ontology of Free Will in the Post-Classical Maturidite Kalām: Analysis, Critical Edition and Translation of Saçaklızâde's Treatise on Free Will; [Müteahhirin Dönemi Mâtürîdî Kelâmında İrâdenin Ontolojisi Sorunu: Saçaklızâde'nin Risâletü'l-İrâdeti'l-Cüz'iyye'sinin Tahlil, Tahkik ve Tercümesi]," *İslam Araştırmaları Dergisi* 2019, no. 41 (2019): 85 – 129, <https://doi.org/10.26570/isad.513141>.

Islam Nusantara, while expanding the scope of *kalām* studies in cultural context. As such, *Maziyyah* not only elaborates on ASWAJA doctrines but also represents the internalisation of moderate Islam rooted in Indonesian cultural realities.

Theologically, this finding suggests that the balance between divine sovereignty and human freedom is not exclusively an Arab-centric legacy, but also contextually articulated by local scholars. This reinforces Keskin & Azhar's³⁵ argument that understanding *qadar* and *ikhtiyār* in contemporary Muslim societies demands an adaptive reinterpretation of responsibility, risk, and moral choice. In this regard, *Maziyyah* stands as evidence that theological moderation can be cultivated through local dialectics that remain both substantial and reflective.

Positioning ASWAJA as the moderate axis within the spectrum of theological thought is crucial in mitigating extremism. The concept of *kasb* forms the foundation of Islamic ethics that helps avoid the traps of both deterministic fatalism and extreme moral liberalism. However, this position also faces contemporary challenges, particularly when perceived by puritan groups as compromising or insufficiently assertive. Such tensions reflect internal dynamics within Islamic discourse, wherein moderation is often contested by rigid purificationist currents.

Ultimately, the findings of this study offer promising policy directions. The ASWAJA model advanced by KH. Ambo Dalle should be mainstreamed into the curricula of Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), madrasahs, and Islamic higher education institutions as a counter-narrative strategy to theological extremism. Government and religious institutions could draw upon these insights to strengthen cultural diplomacy and promote a contextual, inclusive, and locally grounded expression of Indonesian Islam. Academically, *Maziyyah* opens pathways for integrating Nusantara ulama into a more participatory global theological discourse.

Conclusion

This study concludes that KH. Abdurrahman Ambo Dalle, through his work *Maziyyah Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah Bayna al-Niḥal wa al-Firq al-*

³⁵ Keskin and Azhar, "Navigating Belief in Qadar (Destiny) with the Contemporary Understanding of Risk Management."

Mubtadi'ah, successfully formulated a theological typology that not only reflects the moderate position of *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah* (ASWAJA) but also affirms the epistemic richness of Islam Nusantara in addressing classical theological problems concerning divine will and human action. By identifying Jabariyah as the determinist extreme and Qadariyah as the voluntarist extreme, KH. Ambo Dalle situates ASWAJA as the centrist position, balancing divine omnipotence with human moral responsibility through the concept of *kasb*.

The primary contribution of this research lies in its re-mapping of classical theological doctrines through a contextual visual and phenomenological approach. It not only revives the heritage of classical *kalām* within a framework of local culture (Bugis), but also expands the discourse of moderate Islam by integrating traditional narratives with contemporary academic language. The proportional visualisation of divine predestination, human agency, and moral responsibility offers a novel conceptual model that can be applied in theological studies and Islamic education in Indonesia.

Nevertheless, this research is limited in its scope of analysis, focusing solely on one text and one scholar within the ASWAJA tradition. Future studies should undertake comparative analyses of other Nusantara ulama across various regions to strengthen the data base, broaden regional perspectives, and deepen the understanding of diverse formulations of moderate Islam in the Indonesian context. Additionally, the integration of historical, anthropological, and semiotic approaches into textual analysis represents a promising direction for further interdisciplinary and comprehensive research.

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