

QUR'ANIC ANALYSIS OF GAMELAN SINGO MENGKOK AND TEMBANG PANGKUR AS SUNAN DRAJAT'S CULTURAL DAKWAH

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Abstract

This study examines the role of Gamelan Singo Mengkok and Tembang Pangkur as cultural da'wah media used by Raden Qasim (Sunan Drajat) to spread Islam along Java's northern coast during the 15th–16th centuries. While research on the Walisongo is widespread, few studies integratively analyze the symbolic meaning of Singo Mengkok and the textual message of Pangkur through a Qur'anic perspective, leaving a critical gap in understanding how art, scripture, and da'wah values interconnect. This study explores how these traditional art forms functioned as persuasive media for conveying moral, spiritual, and social teachings, and identifies the specific Qur'anic values embedded within them. Employing a descriptive qualitative method with a historical-analytical and interpretive approach, the research draws on primary sources—including Tembang Pangkur lyrics, field observations at the Sunan Drajat Museum, and custodian interviews—alongside secondary literature on Javanese culture and Qur'anic studies. The findings reveal that Gamelan Singo Mengkok symbolizes humility and self-control, serving as an effective tool for da'wah bil-hikmah

(wise propagation). Meanwhile, *Tembang Pangkur* conveys core values of monotheism, repentance, obedience, knowledge-seeking, social responsibility, and national unity. These elements align with Qur'anic principles of wisdom and cultural accommodation, allowing Islamic teachings to integrate harmoniously with local traditions. In conclusion, the synthesis of *Gamelan Singo Mengkok* and *Tembang Pangkur* represents a transformative da'wah model relevant for addressing contemporary moral, spiritual, and social challenges. Future research should leverage digital humanities to preserve and adapt these traditional arts through modern technology.

Penelitian ini mengkaji peran *Gamelan Singo Mengkok* dan *Tembang Pangkur* sebagai media dakwah kultural yang digunakan oleh Raden Qasim (Sunan Drajat) untuk menyebarkan Islam di sepanjang pantai utara Jawa pada abad ke-15 hingga ke-16. Meskipun penelitian tentang *Walisongo* sudah meluas, belum banyak studi yang menganalisis secara integratif makna simbolis *Singo Mengkok* dan pesan tekstual *Pangkur* melalui perspektif *Al-Qur'an*. Hal ini menyisakan celah kritis dalam memahami bagaimana seni, kitab suci, dan nilai-nilai dakwah saling keterkaitan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi bagaimana bentuk-bentuk kesenian tradisional tersebut berfungsi sebagai media persuasif untuk menyampaikan ajaran moral, spiritual, dan sosial, serta mengidentifikasi nilai-nilai *Al-Qur'an* yang terkandung di dalamnya. Dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif melalui pendekatan historis-analitis dan interpretatif, penelitian ini bertumpu pada sumber-sumber primer—termasuk lirik *Tembang Pangkur*, pengamatan lapangan di Museum Sunan Drajat, dan wawancara dengan juru kunci—serta literatur sekunder tentang kebudayaan Jawa dan studi *Al-Qur'an*. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa *Gamelan Singo Mengkok* melambangkan kerendahan hati dan pengendalian diri, yang berfungsi sebagai sarana efektif untuk dakwah bil-hikmah (penyeruan yang bijaksana). Sementara itu, *Tembang Pangkur* menyampaikan nilai-nilai inti berupa tauhid, pertobatan, ketaatan, pencarian ilmu, tanggung jawab sosial, dan persatuan nasional. Elemen-elemen ini selaras dengan prinsip-prinsip *Al-Qur'an* tentang hikmah dan akomodasi kultural, yang memungkinkan ajaran Islam berintegrasi secara harmonis dengan tradisi lokal. Kesimpulannya, sintesis antara *Gamelan Singo Mengkok* dan *Tembang Pangkur* merepresentasikan sebuah model dakwah transformatif yang relevan untuk menjawab tantangan moral, spiritual, dan sosial kontemporer. Penelitian di masa depan perlu memanfaatkan pemanfaatan humaniora digital untuk melestarikan dan mengadaptasikan kesenian tradisional berbasis dakwah ini melalui teknologi modern.

Keywords: cultural da'wah, *Gamelan Singo Mengkok*, Sunan Drajat, *Tembang Pangkur*, Qur'anic perspective

Introduction

The spread of Islam in the Indonesian Archipelago took place through a

complex historical process in which the interaction between Islamic teachings and local culture played an important role in shaping the religious character of Indonesian society. Historical studies show that Islam was widely accepted in various regions of the Archipelago through persuasive, educational, and cultural approaches (Sunyoto, 2017). This approach illustrates how Muslim scholars and early Islamic missionaries utilized cultural media—including artistic traditions, local languages, and social practices—as channels of religious communication. This model later became known as cultural da‘wah, namely a da‘wah approach that integrates Islamic values with the cultural context of society so that religious messages can be understood more contextually. In the Javanese context, traditional arts play a significant role in building ethical and spiritual understanding.

Gamelan, as a traditional musical system, functions not only as entertainment but also carries strong symbolic and social dimensions, as explained in both classical and contemporary ethnomusicological studies (Becker, 1980; Sutton, 1991). Alongside this, the *macapat* (Javanese poetic verse) tradition—including *Tembang Pangkur*—serves as an important medium for conveying moral values, character education, and self-reflection within Javanese culture. The values contained in these traditional poetic songs are often used in cultural and social education, both in *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) and in the broader community.

A number of contemporary studies emphasize that traditional arts remain relevant as instruments of religious communication and education. Research shows that performing arts such as *wayang* and *gamelan* continue to serve as effective media for Islamic preaching because they adapt to changing social contexts while preserving their philosophical and cultural values (Setiawan, 2022). Studies on non-Arabic Islamic arts further demonstrate that local cultural expressions contain symbolic meanings reflecting the integration of Islamic teachings with indigenous traditions (Lutfianto & Junaidi, 2022). Likewise, recent systematic reviews confirm the significant role of Indonesian traditional arts in transmitting educational, moral, and religious values, particularly in strengthening character formation and cultural identity (Asrori et al., 2025). However, research on the integration of Islamic da‘wah values within traditional arts—especially the relationship between the symbolism of *Gamelan Singo Mengkok* and the teachings of *Tembang Pangkur*—remains limited. Existing studies generally examine music, literary texts, and religious values separately, leaving a lack of comprehensive understanding of how these

art forms function as integrated media of da'wah.

Based on this research gap, the present study aims to analyze the Gamelan Singo Mengkok and Tembang Pangkur as cultural da'wah media employed by Sunan Drajat through the perspective of Qur'anic values. This focus is particularly significant because Singo Mengkok is not merely a musical instrument, but a unique cultural artifact that embodies layered symbolic meanings rooted in Javanese-Islamic synthesis. The term "Singo" (lion) represents strength, courage, and authority, while "Mengkok" (bowing or bending) symbolizes humility and submission. This paradoxical combination reflects a profound moral teaching: true strength must be guided by humility before God. Such symbolism aligns closely with Qur'anic values that emphasize the balance between power and piety, as well as the integration of inner spirituality and outward conduct.

Moreover, the use of gamelan as a medium of da'wah demonstrates Sunan Drajat's adaptive and contextual approach in conveying Islamic teachings. Rather than rejecting local culture, he transformed it into a vehicle for spiritual education, making religious messages more accessible and emotionally resonant for the community. This makes Singo Mengkok culturally distinctive compared to other forms of Islamic preaching, as it bridges aesthetic expression with theological depth. Its performative and communal nature also strengthens its function as a tool for collective reflection and moral formation.

The focus on Tembang Pangkur is equally important because it serves as a textual and lyrical articulation of ethical teachings, complementing the symbolic dimension of the *gamelan*. While Singo Mengkok communicates through sound and symbolism, Pangkur conveys explicit moral guidance through language, creating a holistic da'wah model that engages both emotional and intellectual dimensions. By combining these two elements, this study is able to capture a more comprehensive picture of how Qur'anic values are internalized within cultural practices.

Therefore, this research integrates historical approaches, symbolic analysis, and thematic interpretation of the Qur'an to explain how the principles of monotheism, social ethics, spirituality, and humanitarian values are constructed within these artistic forms. The main objectives of this study are to identify the Qur'anic values contained in Sunan Drajat's Tembang Pangkur, interpret the symbolism of the Gamelan Singo Mengkok, and assess their relevance for the development of cultural da'wah and character education in the modern era.

Method

This study employs a qualitative approach within an interpretive paradigm to explore the symbolic meanings, da'wah values, and historical context of the Gamelan Singo Mengkok and Tembang Pangkur in the da'wah tradition of Sunan Drajat (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017). A historical-analytical approach is applied to examine the origins, development, and transformation of these art forms within the socio-cultural and religious context of Javanese society. This approach facilitates an understanding of how Sunan Drajat integrated Islamic teachings with local cultural traditions through artistic expression, while also revealing the dynamic relationship between history, culture, and religion. Consequently, Gamelan Singo Mengkok and Tembang Pangkur are understood not only as cultural heritage but also as effective media for transmitting moral and spiritual values across generations (Kuntowijoyo, 2003). The research subjects include cultural artifacts, namely the Gamelan Singo Mengkok and the text of Tembang Pangkur, as well as informants knowledgeable about Sunan Drajat's traditions and da'wah history, including custodians and managers of the Sunan Drajat Museum.

The research procedure was carried out in three stages: (1) historical exploration through the study of documents, archives, and literature; (2) direct observation of the Gamelan Singo Mengkok collection and exhibition spaces at the Sunan Drajat Museum; and (3) in-depth interviews with key informants to obtain explanations regarding symbolic functions, contextual usage, and da'wah messages in the tembang. The materials and tools used in the study include interview guidelines, documentation devices (camera and note-taking tools), and the manuscript of Tembang Pangkur, which serves as the primary object of analysis.

Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, and subsequently verified through source and methodological triangulation. Data analysis was conducted through stages of data reduction, thematic categorization, interpretation of symbolic meanings, and drawing conclusions to answer the research questions regarding how the Gamelan Singo Mengkok and Tembang Pangkur function as cultural da'wah media of Sunan Drajat and their relevance to modern socio-religious contexts.

Finding and Discussion

The Singo Mengkok Gamelan as an Artistic Medium of Da'wah

Gamelan art is one of the oldest cultural heritages in the Indonesian archipelago. In ancient Javanese tradition, gamelan was not merely a musical instrument but also part of a spiritual and social system that reflected harmony between human beings, nature, and God (Sutton, 1991). When Islam began to enter Java in the 15th century through the Walisongo, gamelan was not rejected; instead, it became a medium for da'wah. The saints—including Raden Qosim (Sunan Drajat)—recognized the emotional closeness of Javanese society to their artistic traditions. Therefore, they Islamized existing art forms by giving them new meanings infused with da'wah values. Raden Qasim (Sunan Drajat) is known as a saint who spread Islam in the region of Paciran, Lamongan, East Java, using social and cultural approaches. Through these methods, Islam was peacefully accepted by coastal communities without cultural conflict.

One of the da'wah methods applied by Raden Qasim (Sunan Drajat) to attract the attention of the people of Drajat and its surroundings was through traditional musical arts, using a set of gamelan known as Gamelan Singo Mengkok. The name derives from a carved wooden statue of a lion in a bowing posture (*dodok mengkok*), symbolizing a transformation from ferocity to gentleness. According to oral tradition, Singo Mengkok comes from *singo* (lion, symbol of strength) and *mengkok* (bowing, symbol of humility). In Javanese-Islamic symbolism, the lion represents strength and courage, while the bowing posture signifies humility before God (Qibtiyah, 2020).

The art of Gamelan Singo Mengkok represents a form of cultural acculturation between Hindu-Buddhist traditions and Islamic teachings, as the surrounding community at that time largely adhered to Hinduism. To enable da'wah to be more easily accepted, the gamelan was named Singo Mengkok, symbolizing wisdom, gentleness of heart, and the control of desire blessed by God. Physically, the Gamelan Singo Mengkok has an instrumental composition similar to that of Javanese *gamelan* in general, such as *bonang*, *kendang*, *kenong*, *saron*, and *gong*. However, its distinctive feature lies in the carved motif of a bowing lion, embodying the philosophy of humility within strength.

Thus, the symbol of *singo mengkok* represents the teaching that the truly strong person is one who can subdue his desires and show humility before God. Symbolically, it conveys the idea that true strength does not lie in physical power but in one's ability to restrain the ego, as reflected in the saying: "*Jalma kang kuat kuwi dudu kang kuat otot lan balunge, nanging kang kuat*

ngempet hawa nafsune,” meaning “A strong person is not someone with strong muscles and bones, but someone who can restrain his desires.”

This meaning aligns with the *da‘wah* principles of Raden Qasim (Sunan Drajat), which emphasize ethics, humanity, and balance in life. In his various poetic teachings, he consistently instilled values such as sincerity, simplicity, and compassion for others. Gamelan Singo Mengkok was used by Raden Qasim (Sunan Drajat) as a tool of *da‘wah bil-hikmah*—inviting people to goodness through gentle, beautiful, and culturally appropriate means. In each performance, the gamelan was accompanied by *Tembang Pangkur* as a medium for conveying *da‘wah* messages.

The custodian of the Sunan Drajat Museum explained that while gamelan performances during that period were historically restricted to the nobility, Sunan Drajat transformed the art form into an egalitarian medium of *da‘wah* accessible to all social strata. By doing so, he successfully drew large audiences and fostered a wider acceptance of Islamic teachings across various social levels. Consequently, this artistic approach served as a critical conduit between Islam and local culture, ensuring that moral and spiritual messages were communicated in an engaging and accessible manner to the broader community. Figure 1 displays the Gamelan Singo Mengkok photographed during fieldwork at the Sunan Drajat Museum in Lamongan. Detail (a) isolates the *gender* (gamelan instrument), highlighting the Singo Mengkok carving that serves as the ensemble’s defining iconographic feature. Detail (b) shows the remaining instruments in the set, including the *kenong*, *gambang*, *peking*, and related components.



(a)



(b)

Figure 1. The Gamelan Singo Mengkok: (a) Singo Mengkok carving (b) Singo Mengkok instruments

Discussion about this *gamelan* is also found in a manuscript copied by Raden Fatah Kusumo, a descendant of Sunan Drajat, in a work titled 'Ilmu Roso', quoted as follows:

"*Sanadyan siro gamelan
Ojo lali syariat lan tarekat
Hakekat lawan ma'rifat
Gamelan ya sun jarwani
Pemasunih galih*" (Dasy, 1998)

[Even if you love *gamelan*, Do not forget the *shari'ah* and the *tariqah*, Along with *haqiqa* and *ma'rifa*. I explain *gamelan*. As a purifier of the heart.]

To this day, Gamelan Singo Mengkok is stored and displayed at the Sunan Drajat Museum located within the Sunan Drajat Cemetery Complex in Drajat Village, Paciran Subdistrict, Lamongan Regency. This collection forms an important part of the Islamic cultural heritage of East Java.

Tembang Pangkur as a Medium for Islamic Da'wah

Raden Qasim (Sunan Drajat) is known as one of the Walisongo who spread Islamic teachings through popular and culturally acceptable methods, particularly by using the *Tembang Pangkur* accompanied by *gamelan* melodies. In Javanese society of the 15th–16th centuries, *tembang* served as a highly effective medium for delivering moral messages and religious teachings because they could be sung beautifully and were easy for the community to remember. This tradition of *da'wah* through artistic media began in Kampung Gendhingan. According to oral tradition, before Raden Qasim (Sunan Drajat) recited *Tembang Pangkur* or other songs, a set of *gamelan* would first be played in the courtyard of the mosque. The melodious sound of the *gending* at night drew people's attention, prompting them to come and witness the activity. Beyond serving as entertainment, the *gending* accompanied verses of *tembang* that contained messages of *da'wah*. The selected melodies were usually those that evoked joy and curiosity, encouraging people to listen attentively and understand the Islamic values embedded in the lyrics (Qibtiyah, 2020).

Raden Qasim (Sunan Drajat) made use of *Tembang Pangkur*, one of the *macapat* poetic forms traditionally used to advise people to restrain their desires and increase good deeds. Therefore, he infused the *Pangkur* with Islamic messages and teachings of monotheism (*tawhid*). Iksan (2014) explained that Sunan Drajat's *Tembang Pangkur*, composed around the 16th century, is as follows:

“..... Mitraningsun duratmoko pirengno swara Singo Mengkok edi angakua,
Mumpung durung siniksa Gusti Allah, mula balia mring mukmin kang mituhu,
Angudi isine Al-Qur’an supaya kinasih Gusti.
He para jin lan manungsa, pada taato mring Rosul lan Nabi,
Ibadah kanti mituhu, mengkono dawuh Allah,
Remena piweweh mring jalma kang butuh,
Manfaati nusa lan bangsa, miwah jejereng agami.”

[O my brothers who have erred, listen to the sound of the Singo Mengkok, Echoing its beautiful melody. Acknowledge your mistakes before receiving punishment from Allah. Return to the right path as faithful Muslims. Seek the knowledge contained in the Qur’an, that you may become beloved servants of God. O jinn and humankind, obey the teachings of the Messenger and the Prophets. Worship with sincerity, for such is Allah’s command. Be a helper to those in need. Be beneficial to the nation and homeland, and uphold the laws of religion.]

The Da’wah Meaning in Tembang Pangkur

Personal Advice and Monotheistic Teaching

The verse says, “*Mitra ningsun duratmoko, pirengno swara Singo Mengkok edi...*” [O my sinful brother, listen to the sound of Singo Mengkok, echoing a beautiful melody]. It conveys that humans (*mitra ningsun*) are called to listen to the voice of truth—Islamic teachings symbolized through the sound of the Singo Mengkok Gamelan. The phrase “*Pirengno swara Singo Mengkok edi*” is not merely an invitation to enjoy music, but a symbolic call to a beautiful form of da’wah. The sound of the *gamelan* is described as *edi* (beautiful), yet *mengkok* (bowing), illustrating harmony between beauty and submission to God. Thus, Sunan Drajat uses the gamelan as a spiritual bridge—the sound becomes a medium for self-awareness so that humans do not become heedless and return to faith.

A Call to Repentance and Self-Awareness

The line stated, “*Mumpung durung siniksa Gusti Allah, mula balia mring mukmin kang mituhu*” [Admit your mistakes before receiving the punishment of Allah; return to the right path as an obedient believer]. It carries a da’wah message urging people to repent before facing the punishment of Allah. Sunan Drajat emphasizes the importance of returning to true faith before divine retribution comes. This message aligns with the Islamic principle of *amar ma’ruf nahi munkar*—calling people to goodness through gentle and heart-

softening artistic expression.

An Invitation to Study and Practice the Qur'an

The verse mentioned, “*Angudi isine Al-Qur'an supaya kinasih Gusti*” [Seek the knowledge contained in the Qur'an so that you may be loved by God]. It emphasizes Islam's commitment to knowledge and spirituality, teaching that Allah's love is granted to those who learn and practice the Qur'an. In the context of da'wah, Sunan Drajat shows that Islam is not only ritualistic but also rooted in deep understanding and reflection on divine revelation—representing *da'wah bil 'ilm* (da'wah through knowledge).

A Call to Obey the Teachings of the Prophet

The verse says, “*He para jin lan manungsa pada taato mring Rosul lan Nabi*” [O jinn and humankind, obey the teachings of the Prophet and the Messengers]. It refers to the Qur'an (51:56): “I did not create jinn and humankind except to worship Me.” It highlights that obedience to the Prophet and proper worship are the essence of servitude to Allah.

A Call to Worship with Sincerity and Obedience

The line stated, “*Ibadah kanti mituhu, mengkono dawuh Allah*” [Worship with full obedience—such is the command of Allah]. It urges Muslims to perform worship with sincerity and wholehearted obedience. The word *mituhu* in Javanese means being truly devoted and submissive. Worship is not merely outward rituals but must be accompanied by inner awareness and heartfelt devotion. Sunan Drajat stresses that the essence of worship is to draw closer to Allah and to cultivate noble character—encouraging deep spiritual practice rather than mere formalism.

Social and Humanitarian Teachings

The verse says, “*Remena piweweh mring jalma kang butuh, manfaati nusa lan bangsa, miwah jejering agami*” [Be a helper to those in need; benefit the nation and society; and uphold the teachings of religion]. It reflects the Islamic values of sincerity, compassion, and social responsibility. Sunan Drajat promotes generosity, societal welfare, and communal solidarity. This message aligns with his well-known *Catur Piwulang* (Four Teaching): “*wenhono teken marang wong kang wuto* [give a stick to the blind], *wenhono mangan marang wong kang luwe* [give food to the hungry], *wenhono payung marang wong kang kaudanan*

[give shelter to one caught in the rain], *wenehono sandang marang wong kang kawudan* [give clothing to the unclothed]”. Basically, these teachings were part of *Pepali Pitu* (Seven Teaching) showing that Sunan Drajat’s da’wah is practical and action-oriented, emphasizing real contributions to social welfare and moral upliftment.

The Da’wah Values in Tembang Pangkur Contained in the Qur’an and Their Relevance in the Modern Context

The Value of Moral and Spiritual Responsibility

The verse stated, “*Pirengno swara Singo Mengkok edi angakua, mumpung durung siniksa Gusti Allah.*” [Heed the beautiful sound of the Singo Mengkok and humble yourself in repentance, before the punishment of God Almighty befalls you]. It contains a call to become aware of oneself before it is too late, encouraging self-improvement before the punishment of Allah comes. This value reflects an effort to instill spiritual responsibility and a sense of self-introspection. Through this awareness, a person is expected to be able to evaluate their actions, correct their mistakes, and improve the quality of their faith and piety. Furthermore, this teaching also reminds that the time humans have is very limited, so every opportunity should be used to do good deeds and draw closer to Allah. Thus, this message is not only a warning, but also a motivation to continuously improve oneself, maintain good character, and live life in accordance with the values of Islamic teachings.

The value of moral and spiritual responsibility in Tembang Pangkur by Sunan Drajat is clearly reflected in the verse, “*Pirengno swara Singo Mengkok edi angakua, mumpung durung siniksa Gusti Allah,*” which urges humans to realize their mistakes before the punishment of Allah befalls them. This principle aligns with the Qur’anic teaching in Surah Al-Hashr verse 18, which commands believers to engage in *muhasabah* (self-reflection) and to pay attention to their deeds as preparation for the afterlife: “O believers! Be mindful of Allah and let every soul look to what ‘deeds’ it has sent forth for tomorrow.¹ And fear Allah, ‘for’ certainly Allah is All-Aware of what you do.”

Zainuddin et al., (2024) emphasizes that *muhasabah* is the core of spiritual education in Islam and functions as a mechanism of self-awareness for every Muslim. In the context of cultural da’wah, Sukarman and Saifullah (2023) explain that Sunan Drajat used Tembang Pangkur and the Gamelan Singo Mengkok as a form of humanistic da’wah that cultivates introspection, piety, and moral refinement through gentle and aesthetic methods rather than

threats. This is supported by Masyhadi (2019), who notes that Sunan Drajat's teachings are deeply rooted in Sufi values—particularly spiritual purification, moral awareness, and closeness to Allah.

Thus, the introspective message of *Tembang Pangkur* not only has a strong theological foundation but also serves as a manifestation of cultural *da'wah* that remains highly relevant in the modern era. In contemporary life—filled with distractions and fast-paced routines—these values of *muhasabah*, spiritual responsibility, and moral self-control become crucial in shaping the moral awareness of modern society so that people remain disciplined, ethical, and connected to divine values. Sunan Drajat emphasized that moral awareness should not be built through fear, but through a gentle awakening that arises from a heart filled with faith and knowledge.

The Value of Tawhid: Faith in Allah

The line says, “*Mumpung durung siniksa Gusti Allah, mula balia mring mukmin kang mituhu.*” [Before the punishment of God Almighty befalls you, return to the path of the devout and faithful believers]. Sunan Drajat reminds the community to immediately return to Allah by strengthening their faith and piety before death and punishment arrive. This message emphasizes the importance of maintaining strong belief and devotion to Allah. In addition, this teaching also encourages every individual to continuously improve themselves through righteous deeds, avoid sinful actions, and strengthen relationships with others within the framework of noble character. Furthermore, this message implies that life in this world is only temporary, so humans need to prepare the best provisions for the hereafter. By increasing good deeds and maintaining consistency in worship, a person can attain inner peace as well as safety in this world and the hereafter. Therefore, this teaching is not only a warning but also a guide for life so that humans remain on the path that is blessed by Allah.

The value of *tawhid* and faith in Allah in *Tembang Pangkur* by Sunan Drajat is reflected in the verse “*Mumpung durung siniksa Gusti Allah, mula balia mring mukmin kang mituhu,*” which is a call for humans to repent and return to Allah before death and divine retribution for their deeds come upon them. This message aligns with the fundamental principles of Islamic *da'wah*, which prioritize calling people back to Allah with hope and without despair from His mercy, as stated in Surah Az-Zumar, verse 53: “Say, ‘O Prophet, that Allah says,’ ‘O My servants who have exceeded the limits against their souls! Do not lose

hope in Allah's mercy, for Allah certainly forgives all sins.¹ He is indeed the All-Forgiving, Most Merciful." This verse teaches that Allah opens the door of repentance to anyone willing to return to Him. The message reflects the same moral guidance in Sunan Drajat's *tembang*, urging Muslims to awaken before punishment befalls them. The values of *tawhid* and repentance form the core of Islamic da'wah, reminding people of Allah's mercy and compassion rather than focusing solely on the threat of punishment.

Zainuddin et al., (2024) explains that the awareness to return to Allah through the mechanism of repentance is an integral part of spiritual education in Islam. In the context of cultural da'wah, Sukarman and Saifullah (2023) show that Sunan Drajat's approach emphasizes humanistic values, particularly the call to self-improvement and strengthening one's relationship with Allah through gentle, culturally grounded methods. Findings from Masyhadi (2019) also illustrate that Sunan Drajat's teachings are rich in values of *tawhid* and Sufism, such as the awareness of Allah's presence, purification of the soul, and humility as the foundation of faith.

Thus, the call to return to Allah in the verse reflects a cultural da'wah strategy that places *tawhid* at the center of character formation. In contemporary society, where material progress and consumerist lifestyles often distract individuals from spiritual values, this message remains highly relevant. The *tawhid* values emphasized by Sunan Drajat foster spiritual awareness, inner tranquility, and moral guidance, enabling individuals to maintain their relationship with Allah and navigate the complexities of modern life with ethical discipline and balance.

The Value of Religious Education and Knowledge

The verse stated, "*Angudi isine Al-Qur'an supaya kinasih Gusti.*" [Strive to comprehend the depth of the Al-Qur'an, so that you may earn the love of God Almighty.] Sunan Drajat emphasizes the importance of learning and understanding the Qur'an so that humans may attain the mercy and love of Allah. This understanding should not stop at merely reading, but must be accompanied by deep reflection on its meanings and their application in daily life. Thus, the Qur'an is not only a text to be recited, but also a guide for life that directs human attitudes, decisions, and the course of life. Furthermore, this teaching encourages people to continually draw closer to Allah through knowledge and good deeds, so as to form individuals of noble character, wisdom, and responsibility. Through an intensive engagement with

the Qur'an, a person is expected to gain inner peace, clarity of thought, and spiritual strength in facing various challenges of life.

The value of religious education and knowledge in *Tembang Pangkur* by Sunan Drajat is reflected in the verse "*Angudi isine Al-Qur'an supaya kinasih Gusti,*" which instructs believers to study and comprehend the Qur'an in order to obtain Allah's mercy. This message corresponds to the divine command in Surah Al-'Alaq, verses 1-5: "Read, 'O Prophet,' in the name of your Lord who created— created humans from a clinging clot. Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous, who taught by the pen— taught humanity what they knew not." These verses serve as the first divine call for humanity to read, seek knowledge, and establish intellectual and spiritual foundations. They also emphasize the importance of learning as a means of drawing closer to Allah. This aligns with Sunan Drajat's teaching that encourages people to study the Qur'an as the ultimate source of knowledge and guidance.

Idris and Ridho (2024) stated that Islamic education based on the Qur'an and Hadith is not merely a transfer of knowledge, but a process of forming moral character and deep religious awareness. In the modern context, Sunan Drajat's message remains relevant for strengthening learning systems that integrate Qur'anic knowledge with faith, thereby shaping Muslim generations who are not only intellectually capable but also possess strong religious integrity.

The Value of Obedience to the Messenger and the Prophets

The line says, "*He para Jin lan manungsa, pada taato mring Rosul lan Nabi,*" [O assembly of *jinn* and humanity, submit yourselves in obedience to the Messenger and the Prophet]. Sunan Drajat reminds that both *jinn* and humans must obey the commands of Allah and His Messenger with sincere faith. This obedience is not only expressed through ritual worship, but is also reflected in attitudes, behavior, and social interactions in daily life. With sincere faith, every individual will develop moral awareness to distinguish between right and wrong, as well as a strong motivation to always do good. Furthermore, This teaching highlights that obedience grounded in sincerity will bring inner peace and order to life. On the other hand, without strong faith, obedience can become meaningless and easily shaken. Therefore, this teaching encourages people not only to be outwardly obedient, but also to build a deep spiritual awareness so that every action carries the value of worship and brings benefit to oneself and others.

The value of obedience to the Messenger conveyed in *Tembang Pangkur* by Sunan Drajat aligns with the Islamic concept of *tha'ah* (obedience), particularly as described in Surah An-Nisa', verse 59, which commands the believers to obey Allah and His Messenger: "O believers! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you. Should you disagree on anything, then refer it to Allah and His Messenger, if you 'truly' believe in Allah and the Last Day. This is the best and fairest resolution."

This verse affirms that obedience to the Messenger is an extension of obedience to Allah. Sunan Drajat embeds this value gently through the artistic medium of Gamelan Singo Mengkok and *Tembang Pangkur*, encouraging the community to emulate the noble character of Prophet Muhammad. This value forms the foundation of Islamic da'wah, guiding believers to live in accordance with the Prophet's teachings in matters of worship, morality, and social relations. This emphasis aligns with Ramadhani et al., (2024), who assert that the Prophet is the ultimate role model for shaping exemplary character through obedience, spiritual discipline, and moral consistency. Thus, the message of obedience in *Tembang Pangkur* is not only spiritual but also educational, as it encourages the community to follow the Prophet's teachings as a practical guide for daily life.

The Value of Obedience and Sincerity

The verse stated, "*Ibadah kanti mituhu, mengkono dawuh Allah.*" [Perform your worship with steadfast sincerity, for such is the decree of Almighty God]. Sunan Drajat emphasizes that true worship is not merely a routine or a formal obligation, but an act of complete submission to Allah. Worship performed without awareness, sincerity, and obedience holds no value in the sight of Allah. Therefore, the da'wah in this verse calls the community to improve the quality of their worship—whether prayer, fasting, almsgiving, or social good deeds—so that outward actions align with inner intention, and behavior aligns with spiritual consciousness.

The value of obedience and sincerity in Sunan Drajat's *Tembang Pangkur* appears in the line "*Ibadah kanti mituhu, mengkono dawuh Allah,*" which affirms that worship carries true meaning only when performed with wholehearted obedience and sincerity toward Allah. This message aligns with the Qur'anic principle in Surah Al-Bayyinah, verse 5, which stresses that the essence of worship is to purify obedience and dedicate one's heart solely to Allah: "Even though they were only commanded to worship Allah 'alone' with sincere

devotion to Him in all uprightness, establish prayer, and pay alms-tax. That is the upright Way.”

This verse affirms that the core of worship lies in sincerity and obedience to Allah. In modern life, many people practice worship as a routine devoid of deep spiritual meaning. This *tembang* serves as a reminder that proper worship must arise from awareness and love for Allah, not just social obligation or religious symbolism. Sunan Drajat’s da’wah teaches the importance of spiritual awareness in every act of worship so that worship does not stop at physical movements, but instead cultivates noble character and transformative behavior.

Daud et al., (2017) explains that sincerity (*ikhlas*) is the foundation of all acts of devotion, free from ostentation or motives other than seeking Allah’s pleasure. Rahmanudin (2022) also emphasizes that worship lacking spiritual consciousness and pure intention loses its essential meaning, for it does not represent complete submission to God. In the context of Islamic education, Hasanah (2022) notes that sincerity has a transformative role in shaping character, as sincere worship fosters moral integrity, discipline, and consistent behavior.

Thus, Sunan Drajat’s *Tembang Pangkur* does not merely teach rituals; it cultivates inner spiritual consciousness, reminding believers that worship must harmonize intention, obedience, and deep spiritual reflection. In modern life, this message is highly relevant to restoring the true meaning of worship—not as empty routines, but as a process of soul purification that brings peace, moral discipline, and heightened religious quality.

The Value of Social Responsibility and Humanity

The verse says, “*Remena piweweh mring jalma kang butuh*” [Cultivate a love for benevolence and charity toward those who are in need] Sunan Drajat teaches Muslims to cultivate social sensitivity and a willingness to help others. This teaching is also expressed in the seventh verse of the *Pepali Pitu*. The value of social concern and humanity in this line shows that Sunan Drajat places social compassion at the heart of his da’wah. This teaching emphasizes the obligation to help those in need, which is also reflected in the *Pepali Pitu*, known for its emphasis on compassion and social actions. This spirit aligns with the moral message found in Surah al-Ma’un (107):1–3, which describes that a person is considered to deny the religion if they neglect orphans and fail to encourage feeding the poor: “Have you seen the one who denies the

‘final’ Judgment? That is the one who repulses the orphan, and does not encourage the feeding of the poor.” This verse shows that a person is deemed to deny their faith if they lack social concern. The da‘wah values in Sunan Drajat’s *Tembang Pangkur* correspond directly to this message, because Sunan Drajat emphasizes the importance of sharing sustenance, helping the weak, and contributing to society. His teachings affirm that true faith must be manifested through real actions that spread goodness and bring benefit. This is consistent with the final teaching of the *Pepali Pitu*.

Gunawan (2018) argues that Surah al-Ma‘un is not merely a critique of individual behavior but a social theology that requires Muslims to actualize faith through concrete actions, including protecting vulnerable groups and empowering communities. This interpretation closely aligns with Sunan Drajat’s da‘wah approach, which prioritizes social engagement over ritual observance alone. Similarly, Idrus et al. (2025) contend that Surah al-Ma‘un contains socio-economic principles such as wealth distribution, social solidarity, and the reduction of inequality, forming a foundation for an Islamic economic system oriented toward collective welfare. In this context, *Tembang Pangkur* may be understood as a historical effort to internalize the values of Surah al-Ma‘un within Javanese culture, positioning art as both a medium of da‘wah and a vehicle for social education.

Thus, the social values in *Tembang Pangkur* are not merely moral appeals but represent a concrete implementation of the theology of Surah al-Ma‘un: that true faith must be expressed through care for the poor, community empowerment, and humanitarian action. In the midst of modern issues such as poverty and social inequality, this message remains highly relevant, emphasizing the importance of humane da‘wah that sides with the marginalized. Sunan Drajat also instills the spirit of *hablun minannas* (maintaining good relations among people) by stressing the importance of sharing and helping others. This value is crucial in the modern context, where poverty and inequality remain major challenges, making social da‘wah an inseparable part of Islam as *rahmatan lil‘alamin*.

Values of Nationalism and Unity

The value of nationalism and unity in the verse “*Manfaati nusa lan bangsa, miwah jejering agami*” reflects Sunan Drajat’s teaching that service to the nation and service to religion must go hand in hand. This message is closely aligned with the Qur’anic teaching in Surah Ali ‘Imran (3:103), which commands

the ummah to hold firmly to the rope of Allah together, avoid division, and be mindful of the blessing of unity that Allah has bestowed: “And hold firmly together to the rope of Allah¹ and do not be divided. Remember Allah’s favour upon you when you were enemies, then He united your hearts, so you—by His grace—became brothers. And you were at the brink of a fiery pit and He saved you from it. This is how Allah makes His revelations clear to you, so that you may be ‘rightly’ guided.” (Khattab, n.d.)

This verse emphasizes the importance of unity and togetherness in Islam. Sunan Drajat reinforces this value by instilling the spirit of patriotism, mutual cooperation, and interfaith harmony. This value is highly relevant in the context of modern Indonesia, a diverse nation, as it teaches that devotion to the country is part of practicing faith and fulfilling the mandate of Islamic da’wah. It aligns with the concept of *hubbul wathan minal iman* (love for the homeland is part of faith). From the Qur’anic perspective, the value of unity emphasized in Surah Ali ‘Imran (3:103) commands the community to hold firmly to Allah’s rope (religion) and avoid division.

Hadari et al. (2023) states that *ukhuwah Islamiyah* (Islamic brotherhood) in the Qur’an is not merely brotherhood among Muslims but a universal, Islamic brotherhood that becomes the moral foundation for social unity. Furthermore, Asfar (2020) adds that the concept of *ukhuwah* in the Qur’an remains relevant in modern dynamics, especially as a basis for social solidarity and harmony in national life, particularly when unity is tested in times of crisis such as the pandemic. In addition, Ma’ruf (2020) highlights that the value of *ukhuwah* must be internalized through education so that unity does not remain a slogan, but is manifested in daily social behavior—an appeal parallel to Sunan Drajat’s da’wah, urging Muslims to contribute positively to the nation without neglecting their religious ties.

The values of nationalism and unity in the Pangkur song of Sunan Drajat are not merely symbolic or cultural expressions, but are deeply rooted in ethical and spiritual principles that align with Qur’anic teachings. The Qur’an consistently emphasizes the importance of unity (*ukhuwwah*), cooperation in goodness (*ta’awun*), and the recognition of diversity as part of divine wisdom, as reflected in the idea that humanity was created in different nations and tribes to know and support one another. In this context, Sunan Drajat’s message can be understood as a contextualization of these universal teachings into the socio-cultural reality of Javanese society.

Moreover, the integration of religious devotion with social responsibility demonstrates that Islam does not advocate a dichotomy between faith and civic duty. Instead, it promotes a holistic worldview in which serving the community and contributing to national well-being are integral parts of religious practice. The Pangkur song, therefore, functions not only as moral guidance but also as a medium of social transformation, encouraging individuals to embody Islamic values in ways that strengthen collective harmony and national cohesion. Thus, the values of nationalism and unity in the Pangkur song of Sunan Drajat are not merely local rhetoric, but a real expression of Qur'anic teachings that call the ummah to unite in faith, serve the nation, and maintain harmony within diversity.

Conclusion

This study aims to identify the Qur'anic values contained in Tembang Pangkur of Sunan Drajat, interpret the symbolism of the Gamelan Singo Mengkok, and assess its relevance for the development of cultural da'wah and character education in the modern era. Based on historical, interpretative, and thematic Qur'anic analysis, this study concludes that Gamelan Singo Mengkok serves as an instrument of *da'wah bil-hikmah*, integrating symbols of humility, self-control, and artistic aesthetics as a medium for fostering the community's moral awareness. Tembang Pangkur itself is proven to contain strong da'wah values, including: monotheism (*tawhid*), repentance and self-evaluation (*taubat* and *muhasabah*), Qur'anic education, obedience to the Messenger, sincerity in worship, social responsibility, and national ethics that align with Qur'anic principles. Crucially, these moral and ethical dimensions directly contribute to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4 (Quality Education) by promoting cultural diversity and a sustainable global citizenship mindset through transformative character education, as well as SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) by fostering inclusive, peaceful, and socially cohesive societies built upon a foundation of shared civic responsibility.

These findings demonstrate that the da'wah of Sunan Drajat embodies a cultural-transformative character, utilizing local arts as a medium for the persuasive and contextual internalization of Islamic values. This approach was not only effective in the 15th century but continues to be important for modern society, which continues to face moral, spiritual, and social challenges. Thus, this research provides new contributions in the form of: (1) an

integrative model linking *gamelan* symbolism, song texts, and Qur'anic values; (2) a reinterpretation of traditional *tembang* as da'wah texts rather than mere aesthetic heritage; and (3) the strengthening of cultural da'wah paradigms as strategic alternatives in Islamic education and religious moderation.

This study also reflects that traditional arts, when understood within a Qur'anic value framework, can serve as effective instruments for shaping character, social ethics, and national cohesion. Therefore, the results of this research are expected to enrich the literature on cultural da'wah and reinforce humanistic approaches in Islamic education. Based on these findings, further research is recommended to: (1) examine comparative da'wah arts among other Walisongo figures; (2) conduct in-depth ethnomusicological analysis of the musical structure of Gamelan Singo Mengkok; (3) investigate the implementation of these *tembang* values within contemporary Islamic education curricula; and (4) develop digital humanities studies for the preservation of da'wah-based traditional arts through technology. Ongoing studies related to cultural da'wah, religious moderation, and the revitalization of traditional arts indicate that this theme remains relevant and strategic for the development of Islamic scholarship and the preservation of Nusantara cultural heritage.

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