Vol 25, No 2, Juli - Desember 2025 ISSN: 1858-4357

el harakah

JURNAL BUDAYA ISLAM

INTERWEAVING JAVANESE CULTURAL WISDOM AND ISLAMIC LEADERSHIP ETHICS: AN ANALYSIS OF ARJUNA IN ARJUNAWIWAHA
Tya Resta Fitriana, Djoko Sulaksono, Prima Veronika, Islahuddin

DISCOURSE OF ASCETICISM: A CRITICAL TEXTUAL ANALYSIS AND SOCIAL-IDENTITY PRACTICES IN PESANTREN
Wevi Lutfitasari, Mujtahidin, Made Arya Vidiarama

STOIC RESILIENCE, MORAL AUTONOMY, AND THE DICHOTOMY OF CONTROL PARALLEL TAWAKKUL, SABR, AND IKHTIYAR
Michael Yurievich Kuznetsov

RECONSTRUCTING QUR'ANIC RECEPTION TYPOLOGY IN PESANTREN: EXTENDING A. RAFIQ'S THEORY
Muhammad Jamil, Aswadi Aswadi, Suqiyah Musafa''ah

THE TRADITION OF POSTPONING COHABITATION UNTIL WALIMATUL 'URSY IN CERENTI: DURKHEIM'S SOLIDARITY ANALYSIS
Musdalifa, Alif Andaru Riyadi, Rahmayani, Khoirun Nisa, Abdur Rahman Syahid

TERAKREDITASI NO.200/M/KPT DIKTI 2020

el harakah
JURNAL BUDAYA ISLAM

EL HARAKAH Jurnal Budaya Islam (ISSN 1858-4357 and E-ISSN 2356-1734) is peer-reviewed journal published biannually by Maulana Malik Ibrahim State Islamic University (UIN) of Malang. The journal is accredited based on the decree No. 200/M/KPT/2020 on 23 December 2020 by the Minister of Research and Technology of Indonesia, for the period December 2019 to June 2024 (SINTA 2). The journal emphasizes on aspects related to Islamic Culture in Indonesia and Southeast Asia and local wisdom. We welcome contributions from scholars in the field. Selected papers are written in English or Arabic.

EDITOR IN CHIEF
Triyo Supriyatno (Scopus ID: 57203357062)
UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Rohmani Nur Indah (Scopus ID: 57216787660)
UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia
Wildana Wargadinata (Scopus ID: 57218910252)
UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia
Jauhar Azizy (Scopus ID: 57420910500)
Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, Indonesia
Benny Afwadzi (Scopus ID: 57347145300)
UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia

INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD
Carool Kersten (Scopus ID: 13806911800)
King's College London, United Kingdom
John L. Esposito (Scopus ID: 16041944900)
Georgetown University, Washington D.C., United States
Mohammad Elius (Scopus ID: 57205121389)
University of Dhaka, Bangladesh
Mohd Roslan Mohd Nor (Scopus ID: 54793295000)
University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Jan A. Ali (Scopus ID: 56544038700)

Western Sydney University, Penrith, Australia
Hyung-Jun Kim (Scopus ID: 56981633200)
Kangwon National University, Chuncheon, South Korea
Kundharu Saddhono (Scopus ID: 55571941200)
Universitas Sebelas Maret, Surakarta, Indonesia
Mohd. Anuar Ramli (Scopus ID: 57190127556)
University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Ali Maksum (Scopus ID: 57201709282)
Universitas Brawijaya, Malang, Indonesia
Olivier Leaman (Scopus ID: 6504491608)
University of Kentucky, Lexington, United States
Umi Sumbulah (Scopus ID: 57203370944)
UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia
Ghazali Bin Darusalam (Scopus ID: 55806128700)
University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Syamsul Arifin (Scopus ID: 57189493608)
Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang, Indonesia
Ismail Suardi Wekke (Scopus ID: 35076859100)
Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri Sorong, Indonesia
Abur Hamdi Usman (Scopus ID: 56301129900)
Kolej Universitu Islam Antarabangsa Selangor, Malaysia

PEER REVIEWER
Umi Julaihah (Orcid ID: 0000-0002-7558-9812)
UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia
Syamsul Ma'arif (Scopus ID: 57196279085)
UIN Walisongo, Semarang, Indonesia
Faisal Mahmoud Adam Ibrahim (Scopus ID: 58892068300)
University of the Holy Quran and Islamic Sciences, Omdurman, Sudan
Galuh Nur Rohmah (Scopus ID: 57216781105)
UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia
Bakrei Mohammed Bakheet Ahmed
University of the Holy Quran and Islamic Sciences, Omdurman, Sudan
Mohd Rashid Bin Mohd Saad (Scopus ID: 60090601)
University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Happy Susanto (Scopus ID: 57210679883)
Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo, Indonesia
Azhar Ibrahim Alwee (Scopus ID: 7202979037)
National University of Singapore, Singapore
Muhbib Abdul Wahab (Scopus ID: 57223412608)
UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, Indonesia
Suad Sayed Mahgoub
University of Fujairah Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Agus Maimun (Scopus ID: 57224577379)
UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia
Muhammad Mustafa al-Zuhaili
College of Islamic Studies, University of Minnesota, Minnesota, United States
Uril Bahruddin (Scopus ID: 57223052548)
UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia
Imam Machali (Scopus ID: 57226733310)
UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Lanui Awang (Orcid ID: 0000-0001-6747-7215)
Prince of Songkla University, Hatyai, Thailand
Siti Noor Fazelah Mohd Noor (Scopus ID: 57205322772)
Universiti Tun Hussein Onn, Batu Pahat, Johor, Malaysia
Nangkula Utaberta (Scopus ID: 36769577900)
Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia
Zakiyah Arifa (Scopus ID: 58135501900)
UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia
Rajeev Kumar Singh, Central University of Haryana, India
Muhammad Muslih (Orcid ID: 0000-0001-8890-5215)
Institut Studi Islam Darussalam Gontor, Ponorogo, Indonesia
Wasisto Raharjo Jati (Scopus ID: 57200659132)
Indonesian Institute of Sciences, Jakarta, Indonesia
Didouh Omar Ibn Abdelkader
University Abu Bekr Belkaid, Tlemcen, Algeria
Aksin Wijaya (Scopus ID: 572165225815)
STAIN Ponorogo, Indonesia
Hamza Hassan Sulieman
University of the Holy Quran and Islamic Sciences, Umdurman, Sudan

Ishomuddin (WoS Researcher ID: AAE-6015-2021)
Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang, Indonesia

ASSISTANT TO EDITORS
Umaiyatus Syarifah (Scopus ID: 57204557792)
UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia
Iffatunnida (Orcid ID: 0009-0007-2826-8278)
UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia
Shofiy Petrina Mufidah (Orcid ID: 0009-0004-0025-4382)
UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia
Yunasman Salam (Orcid ID: 0000-0002-9183-1015)
UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia

IT SUPPORT
Muslikhudin, UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia
Abadi Wijaya, UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia

Mailing Address
Humas, Informasi & Publikasi UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang
Rektorat/Gd. I.R. Sukarno Lt. IV Jl. Gajayana No. 50, 65144 Malang
Telp./Fax.: +62 341 551354, Phone +6282333435641

Principal Contact
Rohmani Nur Indah Gedung Perpustakaan Pusat Lt. I
Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Maulana Malik Ibrahim Jl. Gajayana No. 50, 65144 Malang
Email: elharakahjurnal@gmail.com/elharakah@uin-malang.ac.id

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTERWEAVING JAVANESE CULTURAL WISDOM AND ISLAMIC LEADERSHIP ETHICS: AN ANALYSIS OF ARJUNA IN ARJUNAWIWAHA
Tya Resta Fitriana, Djoko Sulaksono, Prima Veronika, Islahuddin..... 215
DOI: 10.18860/eh.v27i2.34207

DISCOURSE OF ASCETICISM: A CRITICAL TEXTUAL ANALYSIS AND SOCIAL-IDENTITY PRACTICES IN PESANTREN
Wevi Lutfitasari, Mujtahidin Mujtahidin, Made Arya Vidiarama..... 235
DOI: 10.18860/eh.v27i2.32305

STOIC RESILIENCE, MORAL AUTONOMY, AND THE DICHOTOMY OF CONTROL PARALLEL TAWAKKUL, SABR, AND IKHTIYAR
Michael Yurievich Kuznetsov..... 271
DOI: 10.18860/eh.v27i2.36570

RECONSTRUCTING QUR'ANIC RECEPTION TYPOLOGY IN PESANTREN: EXTENDING A. RAFIQ'S THEORY
Muhammad Jamil, Aswadi Aswadi, Suqiyah Musafa'ah..... 297
DOI: 10.18860/eh.v27i2.35525

THE TRADITION OF POSTPONING COHABITATION UNTIL WALIMATUL 'URSY IN CERENTI: DURKHEIM'S SOLIDARITY ANALYSIS
Musdalifa, Alif Andaru Riyadi, Rahmayani Rahmayani, Khoirun Nisa, Abdur Rahman Syahid *317*
DOI: 10.18860/eh. v27i2.36881

REFLECTION OF TAWHID IN 3D MINIATURE ART: ANALYSIS OF SURAH IBRAHIM 35 THROUGH CLASSICAL AND MODERN TAFSIR
Rusdeana *341*
DOI: 10.18860/eh. v27i2.37023

ISLAMIC CONTRIBUTIONS TO SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT IN ASTRONOMY, MATHEMATICS, MEDICINE, AND CHEMISTRY
Yandra Agusta Putra, M. Mujab *367*
DOI: 10.18860/eh. v27i2.37106

THE DIALECTICS OF WAYANG IN THE WALI SONGO'S DA'WAH: QUR'AN AND HADITH PERSPECTIVE
Muhammad Kudhori, Sri Purwaningsih, Karina Tri Maulidina, Mayu Maulida Salama *391*
DOI: 10.18860/eh. v27i2.36314

RELIGIOUS VALUES AND CHARACTER EDUCATION IN THE DRAMA "CELENGAN TRESNA"
Budi Waluyo *409*
DOI: 10.18860/eh. v27i2.36523

RITUAL, THEOLOGY, AND ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION: THE GREBEK BESAR TRADITION IN DEMAK REGENCY
Dita Kurniawati, Moh. Rosyid, Mas'udi Mas'udi, Achmad Sopian, Ahmad Makki *435*
DOI: 10.18860/eh. v27i2.37306

el harakah

JURNAL BUDAYA ISLAM

el Harakah: Jurnal Budaya Islam Vol. 27 No. 2, 2025

DOI: 10.18860/eh.v27i2.34207

INTERWEAVING JAVANESE CULTURAL WISDOM AND ISLAMIC LEADERSHIP ETHICS: AN ANALYSIS OF ARJUNA IN ARJUNAWIWAHA

Tya Resta Fitriana[1], *Djoko Sulaksono*[1], *Prima Veronika*[1], *Islahuddin*[2]
[1]Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Sebelas Maret University, Indonesia
[2]Faculty of Liberal Arts and Social Science, Fatoni University, Thailand
Email: tyarestafitriana@staff.uns.ac.id

Received: June 15, 2025
Revised: September 1, 2025
Accepted: September 23, 2025

Abstract

This study addresses the growing need to reinterpret classical Javanese figures through an Islamic ethical lens, offering a unique framework for understanding indigenous models of moral leadership. Previous studies have not yet examined how the concept of leadership in Arjuna Wiwaha can be interpreted through the framework of Islamic moral and ethical principles. Therefore, this study offers a novel perspective by integrating Javanese cultural wisdom and Islamic leadership ethics to reinterpret Arjuna's character as a model of moral and social leadership in the Javanese-Islamic context. The aim of this paper is to examine Arjuna's leadership as depicted in the Javanese puppet story of Arjunawiwaha, focusing on the integration of Javanese social wisdom and Islamic moral leadership. In the context of Javanese-Islamic reinterpretation, Arjuna, traditionally considered a holy man in Hindu-Buddhist legends, is reimagined as a perfect pioneer. Using a cultural hermeneutic approach and comparative analysis, this investigation examines how Islamic leadership principles, including trust (Siddiq), dependability (Amanah), insight (Fathanah), and the obligation to convey the truth (Tabligh), are integrated into Arjuna's leadership narrative. The study, furthermore, highlights key Javanese social values such as humility, resilience, and wisdom, adapted from Islamic moral lessons. Through a careful examination of Arjunawiwaha,

this paper illustrates a method of social adjustment and integration, which examines knowledge of how Javanese Islamic characters shape conceptualizations of governance in conventional and modern environments. The use of an interdisciplinary approach that integrates Javanese cultural wisdom and Islamic leadership ethics in analyzing the character of Arjuna in the Arjunawiwaha is a perspective still rare in leadership studies based on classical Javanese literary texts. This research thus positions the Javanese-Islamic leadership synthesis as a relevant ethical paradigm in Southeast Asia and beyond. The finding also offers a framework for culture-based leadership training integrating Javanese and Islamic values to foster ethical, culturally sensitive, and spiritually grounded leaders.

Penelitian ini menanggapi meningkatnya kebutuhan untuk menafsirkan kembali tokoh-tokoh klasik Jawa melalui lensa etika Islam, dengan menawarkan kerangka unik untuk memahami model kepemimpinan moral yang bersifat lokal. Penelitian-penelitian sebelumnya belum mengkaji bagaimana konsep kepemimpinan dalam Arjuna Wiwaha dapat diinterpretasikan melalui kerangka prinsip moral dan etika Islam. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini menawarkan perspektif baru dengan mengintegrasikan kearifan budaya Jawa dan etika kepemimpinan Islam untuk menafsirkan kembali karakter Arjuna sebagai model kepemimpinan moral dan sosial dalam konteks Jawa-Islam. Makalah ini menganalisis kepemimpinan Arjuna sebagaimana digambarkan dalam kisah pewayangan Jawa tentang Arjunawiwaha, dengan fokus pada penggabungan kearifan sosial Jawa dan moral kepemimpinan Islam. Dalam konteks penafsiran ulang Jawa-Islam, Arjuna, yang secara tradisional dianggap sebagai orang suci dalam legenda Hindu-Buddha, dibayangkan kembali sebagai seorang pelopor yang sempurna. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan hermeneutika budaya dan analisis komparatif, penyelidikan ini menyelidiki bagaimana prinsip-prinsip kepemimpinan Islam seperti kepercayaan (Siddiq), ketergantungan (Amanah), wawasan (Fathanah), dan kewajiban untuk menyampaikan kebenaran (Tabligh) dimasukkan dalam kisah kepemimpinan Arjuna. Pengkajian tersebut, lebih jauh, menyoroti nilai-nilai sosial Jawa yang utama seperti kerendahan hati, ketahanan, dan kearifan, yang diadaptasi dari pelajaran moral Islam. Melalui penelaahan Arjunawiwaha yang cermat, makalah ini menggambarkan metode penyesuaian dan integrasi sosial, yang mengkaji pengetahuan tentang bagaimana karakter Jawa-Islam membentuk konseptualisasi pemerintahan dalam lingkungan konvensional dan modern. Penggunaan pendekatan interdisipliner yang mengintegrasikan kearifan budaya Jawa dan etika kepemimpinan Islam dalam menganalisis tokoh Arjuna dalam Arjunawiwaha, sebuah perspektif yang masih jarang dalam kajian kepemimpinan berbasis teks sastra klasik Jawa. Sehingga penelitian ini bisa menempatkan sintesis kepemimpinan Jawa Islam sebagai paradigma etis yang relevan di Asia Tenggara dan sekitarnya. Temuan penelitian ini juga menawarkan kerangka pelatihan kepemimpinan berbasis budaya yang mengintegrasikan nilai-nilai Jawa dan Islam untuk membentuk pemimpin yang beretika, peka budaya, dan berlandaskan spiritual.

Keywords: *Islamic leadership ethics, Javanese culture, Arjunawiwaha, intercultural study, cultural adaptation*

Introduction

Discourse on leadership and leaders is a topic that is continuously and actively discussed. Leadership itself is defined as an individual's ability to instill confidence in others so that they willingly agree to carry out the individual's will or ideas (Kartono, 2003). Leadership is closely tied to the character inherent in the person of the leader. The Qur'an discusses many aspects of social and political life, one of which is leadership. In the Qur'an, leadership is expressed using various terms such as *Khalifah*, *Imam*, and *Uli al-Amri* (Zuhdi, 2019). Leadership in Islam is not measured solely by power or authority, but by moral and ethical qualities that reflect the principles of religious teachings. This is embodied in the figure of the ideal leader according to Islam, namely the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), through the model of prophetic leadership (Zuhdi, 2019).

From an Islamic perspective, the concept of leadership also possesses a spiritual dimension, though with an emphasis that differs from other viewpoints. Islam teaches that leadership is a trust (*amanah*) that must be borne by individuals who possess competence, integrity, and noble character (Riam & Putri, 2024; Zuhdi, 2019). In the Qur'an, Allah says: *"Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due, and when you judge between people, to judge with justice."* (QS. An-Nisa: 58). This indicates that leadership in Islam is not determined by lineage or supernatural signs, but by competence, justice, and the trust given by the community.

The concept of Islamic leadership is interesting when juxtaposed with Javanese leadership, which is more metaphysical in nature. In the Javanese perspective, leadership is not only based on the power of authority and influence, but also on moral exemplarity, self-control, and harmony with cosmic and social values. Leadership in Javanese culture is ideally manifested through the teaching of *Astabrata*, namely the eight leadership traits derived from the characteristics of nature and the gods, which reflect the perfection of a king's or leader's behavior (Adhit & M. Asbari, 2024; Andoko et al., 2022; Endraswara, 2013; Floriana et al., 2018; Aziz, 2013; Perdana & Sobri, 2021; Wahyudi, 2011).

Even so, there are points of convergence between the metaphysical view of Javanese thought and Islamic spirituality, particularly in the belief that a

leader must not only be intellectually and administratively capable but also possess noble inner qualities. In this context, Javanese literature containing leadership philosophy can serve as a contemplative space that unites local values with the universal teachings of Islam, thereby producing a more holistic understanding of leadership—intelligent in mind, pure in heart, and just in action.

Discussing leadership is indeed very engaging. Leadership remains imbued with nuances and cloaked in symbolic systems and myths. In the past, leaders were regarded as chosen by the gods, and thus any order issued by the king was considered a divine utterance that had to be obeyed and carried out by the people. There existed a strong societal belief in the parallelism between the macrocosm (*jagat gede*) and the microcosm (*jagat cilik*). Within this perspective, the king occupies not only the top of the social hierarchy but also the pinnacle of supernatural leadership. This belief is reflected in the conception of the God-King, or in Javanese, *Ratu-Binanthara*—a notion representing the position of the leader in Javanese society as the representative of the gods on earth (Anderson, 1990; Suseno, 1984).

One of the figures who represents leadership values in a cultural context is Arjuna, who is often depicted as a wise and considerate leader (Mulder, 2001). The character of Arjuna is known as an ideal hero—a leader who possesses extraordinary physical and mental abilities. However, the understanding of Arjuna's leadership within the context of Javanese culture is often inseparable from the development of Islamic teachings that have also influenced the social life of Javanese society. The tale *Arjunawiwaha*, one of the well-known stories in the *Mahabharata* epic, presents a depiction of Arjuna's struggle in facing leadership challenges that go beyond mere warfare.

In the historical and cultural development of Javanese society, the representation of leadership as reflected in the figure of Arjuna cannot be separated from the dynamics brought about by the arrival of Islamic teachings, which subsequently enriched the meaning and values of local leadership. Islam entered Java in the 15th century and had a significant impact on the transformation of local culture, including in the sphere of leadership. As stated by Aziz (2013), Islam in Java not only functioned as a religion shaping spiritual beliefs but also became a foundation for building a more civilized social character through the values of fair and wise leadership. Thus, in the context of Javanese-Islamic culture, Arjuna as a *wayang* character can be viewed through the lens of Islamic teachings, which emphasize the importance of

justice, trustworthiness (*amanah*), and responsibility in leadership.

The character of a leader emerges as an ideology and principle of leadership that is wise and firm, yet remains grounded in the nature of an ordinary human being. Meanwhile, other leadership styles often assume that a leader must always occupy a superior position in order to be consistently respected by subordinates (Perdana & Sobri, 2021). The concept of leadership—or what is also referred to as the philosophy of leadership—that will be used as a reference for analyzing leadership in this study is the concept of *Asthabrata* leadership. Broadly speaking, society recognizes many philosophies of leadership (Adhit & M. Asbari, 2024), such as the *Tribrata* philosophy, the leadership philosophy of Gajah Mada, the leadership philosophy of Sultan Agung, and the *Astabrata* philosophy. However, this study will focus on *Astabrata*, which originates from a Hindu text in Sanskrit, the *Manawa Dharma Sastra*. *Asta* means eight, and *Brata* means acts of self-control or conduct. *Astabrata* is a teaching of eight leadership elements that serve as advice or guidance given by Sri Rama to Wibisana during his coronation as king of Alengka Pura. Likewise, it is part of Sri Rama's teachings to Bharata. The leadership concept in *Asthabrata* teaches that a leader must have *wiweka*, that is, a cautious attitude in behavior and in decision-making, because the people will emulate every action of their leader. It can be said that the behavior of the leader reflects the behavior of the people (Andoko et al., 2022; Selvarajah et al., 2017; Weatherbee, 1994).

The *Astabrata* teaching is, in principle, a process of *dewataisation*—that is, endowing a leader with divine qualities so that the people under his leadership may live in prosperity and happiness (Endraswara, 2013). The concept of *Astabrata* leadership is a Hindu leadership philosophy in which a leader is likened to possessing the power of eight gods who are manifestations of God dwelling within him. This teaching, of course, guides a leader toward achieving harmony within the society or organization he leads (Aryawan, 2021). The eight teachings of *Astabrata* contain various doctrines that are highly influential in determining whether a government can run successfully or not.

Another definition related to *Asthabrata* is conveyed differently by Tedjowirawan, who explains that the *Asthabrata* teaching initially adopted the characteristics of the gods, but later shifted to embrace the characteristics of natural elements of the universe, including *kisma* (earth/soil), *tirta* (water), *samirana* (wind), *samodra* (ocean/sea), *candra* (moon), *baskara* (sun), *dahana* (fire), and *kartika* (star), which are also referred to as the traits of the mountain. This concept aligns with the *Asthabrata* teachings conveyed by Yasadipura I

(1729–1803) of the Surakarta Palace, who explained that a leader's character must be in accordance with the *Asthabrata* principles (Endraswara, 2013).

The study of *Astabrata* originates from ancient Hindu scriptures, particularly the *Manawa Dharma Sastra* written in Sanskrit, which outlines eight divine leadership traits. This cultural value has been historically passed down through Javanese traditions such as the art of *wayang* and the drama *Wahyu Makutha Rama* (Andoko et al., 2022). *Astabrata* means the "way" that must be undertaken by someone who becomes a leader (Endraswara, 2013). The eight "ways" are personifications of eight natural elements that serve as models for the character of a leader. If a person—not only a leader—is able to embody these eight elements, then they will become a person of noble character and high moral conduct.

The meaning of the *Astabrata* teaching, when interpreted deeply, does not stop merely as a doctrine for leaders but can be applied by all people. The context of leadership is not limited to the relationship between rulers and their people, because, in essence, every person is a leader—at least for themselves. This statement aligns with the opinion of Aryawan (2021), who states that the concept of *Astabrata* can also be applied by ordinary individuals to improve the quality of their inner self and soul in the effort to perfect themselves and their lives. Every human being is essentially a leader—at the very least for themselves, and on a broader scale, as a leader of their family and environment.

According to the research of Floriana et al. (2018), *Astabrata* is a leadership concept originating from Javanese and Hindu culture, meaning "the eight behaviors of the gods," namely confidence, openness, communicativeness, facilitation, interactivity, politeness, and attentiveness to performance. In line with that research, Aryawan (2021) explains that the philosophy of *Astabrata* directs a leader to embody the traits of eight deities in Hinduism: *Indra Brata*, *Surya Brata*, *Yama Brata*, *Bayu Brata*, *Candra Brata*, *Baruna Brata*, *Agni Brata*, and *Kuwera Brata*. Within *Astabrata* leadership lies a conceptual framework that can serve as a tool or medium to reduce conflict.

The purpose of this study is to examine the representation of Arjuna's leadership in *Arjunawiwaha* through a cultural hermeneutic approach and a comparative analysis of the harmonization between Javanese and Islamic leadership values. This research explores the meeting points and harmonization of local and Islamic leadership principles in shaping the characteristics of Indonesian local leadership. The urgency of this study lies in its interdisciplinary approach, which integrates Javanese cultural wisdom and Islamic leadership

ethics in analyzing the character of Arjuna in *Arjunawiwaha*. This perspective remains rare in leadership studies based on classical Javanese literary texts.

Previous studies on Javanese classical works such as *Arjuna Wiwaha* have primarily emphasized moral integrity (Sulaksono et al., 2021), explored symbolism and ideology (Budi & Susilo, 2025), and examined the ethical structure of these works (Mukaffa, 2018). The role of a leader can be considered central and strategic, as a leader is expected to serve as a motivator, communicator, and mediator in the process of development (Wahyudi, 2011). Therefore, this current study fills a research gap by relating the Javanese classical work *Arjuna Wiwaha* to the context of Islamic leadership.

This study is significant because, in many literary works and traditional performing arts, the fusion of religious elements and local cultural values often produces leadership models that are not only historically relevant but also applicable in contemporary society. As explained by Wahyudi (2011), leadership within Islamic culture in Java cannot be separated from the processes of assimilation and adaptation between Islamic principles and local wisdom, which emphasize morality and social sustainability. Although studies on the values of *Astabrata* as a leadership philosophy in Javanese culture have been widely conducted, and the principles of Islamic leadership have also been extensively analyzed from normative-theological perspectives, there remains a lack of research that philosophically compares the values of both traditions to construct a contextual leadership model rooted in the local Islamic wisdom of the *Nusantara*. This research is important because it offers a synthesis of Javanese-Islamic leadership as an alternative ethical paradigm that is relevant for Southeast Asia elevating local wisdom into a regional leadership discourse that is more inclusive and deeply rooted in cultural and spiritual values.

Method

This study employed a cultural-hermeneutic approach and a comparative analysis. The analysis process began by identifying words, phrases, and sentences in the text that referred to Arjuna's leadership. The hermeneutic assessment was divided into two stages: comprehension hermeneutics and explanatory hermeneutics. Comprehension hermeneutics was used to decipher the literal meanings of linguistic elements. Explanatory hermeneutics was used to explore the deeper or implied meanings contained within the text, particularly those related to leadership values (Wachid et al., 2015).

This approach was used to illustrate the interaction between Islam and

local culture, as well as its conceptual contribution to Islam Nusantara and to studies on local leadership. The primary data source for this research was the transcript of a wayang performance by the *dalang* Sunaryo Guna Prayitno from Sanggar Dwija Laras, Purworejo. The data consisted of words and sentences that represented leadership values. The data were validated through theoretical validation and source validation. The study explored information related to the object of study by describing systems of signs that could provide an in-depth understanding (Sutopo, 2002).

The data-collection technique used in this study was content analysis. Content analysis supported the interpretation of the text under examination—not merely by noting explicit content in documents or archives, but also by uncovering implicit meanings (Sutopo, 2002). Thus, understanding the leadership values in *Arjunawiwaha* was not merely an investigation of cultural heritage but also an effort to construct a leadership paradigm rooted in the identity and spiritual values of the Indonesian people.

Finding and Discussion

Exploring leadership philosophy through literary texts is indeed a worthwhile endeavor. This is based on the understanding that literary works represent the socio-cultural conditions of a society. The philosophy of leadership is an interesting subject of analysis, particularly because the Javanese are an ethnic group with distinct characteristics and unique ways of interpreting and perceiving the world. Javanese leadership is metaphysical in character, often associated with spiritual concepts such as *wahyu* (divine revelation), *pulung* (charismatic blessing), *drajat* (rank), *keturunan* (lineage or ancestral descent), and so on. It is as if the ability to lead is not viewed as an acquired capability but rather as a miraculous gift.

When viewed through the classification proposed by Hobman et al. (2011), the Javanese leadership doctrine of *Astabrata* falls under the trait approach—that is, an understanding of the traits and attitudes proper to a leader. As emphasized by As'ad et al. (n.d.), *Astabrata* is rooted in the philosophical notion that effective leadership is shaped through understanding and emulating the characteristics symbolized by eight natural elements: earth, sea, sky, stars, sun, moon, wind, and fire. Each element carries a distinct symbolic meaning that reflects the characteristics of the ideal leader according to Javanese culture.

The analysis of literary works—particularly those that examine leadership philosophy through *wayang* narratives—was considered appropriate by the

researcher. This choice is justified by the fact that *wayang* stories are closely tied to Javanese life and are rich in philosophical meaning. The *Arjunawiwaha* episode is one of the best-known *wayang* narratives and has been widely studied by scholars.

Synthesis of Javanese Spiritual Leadership and Islamic Leadership

The interpretation of leadership in Javanese culture cannot be separated from a metaphysical and spiritual framework of thought. In the *Arjunawiwaha* text, Arjuna's leadership does not merely arise from intellectual capacity or physical strength but from a spiritual practice (*laku*) undertaken with full sincerity. The ascetic practice (*tapa brata*) performed by Arjuna prior to receiving the mandate from the gods symbolizes inner readiness, submission to a higher power, and sincerity in carrying out responsibility. In this context, leadership is the result of a deep process of self-purification.

This Javanese wisdom converges strongly with leadership values in Islam, particularly in spirituality, morality (*akhlak*), and moral responsibility. Islam views leadership not as a hereditary privilege but as a trust (*amanah*) (Qur'an, Surah Al-Ahzab: 72) for which one will be held accountable before Allah SWT. In a hadith narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, "Each of you is a leader, and each of you is responsible for your leadership."

The connection between the concept of *Asta Brata* leadership and the Prophet's leadership lies in symbolic traits: the sun (*rahmatan lil'alamin*), the moon (gentle, full of compassion), the stars (*qudwah hasanah*), and the wind (humble and attentive to the people). A detailed explanation is presented below.

Table 1. Interconnection between Javanese Leadership and the Leadership of Prophet Muhammad

Asta Brata in Arjunawiwaha	Meaning of Leadership	Islamic Values	Leadership Characteristics of Prophet Muhammad
Sun	The leader gives light and life, is just, and shines on everyone.	Rahmatan lil 'alamin, justice without discrimination	The Prophet was a mercy to all worlds (QS Al-Anbiya:107), just to both friend and foe.

Asta Brata in Arjunawiwaha	Meaning of Leadership	Islamic Values	Leadership Characteristics of Prophet Muhammad
Moon	Calming, gentle, comforting, full of love.	Gentleness, compassion	The Prophet was gentle with his companions (QS Ali-Imran:159), even to his enemies.
Stars	Role model, direction giver, "guide to the path."	Qudwah hasanah (good example)	The Prophet is the ultimate example in all aspects of life (QS Al-Ahzab:21).
Wind	Listen to the people, present without arrogance, flexible, close to the people.	Humility, listening to the ummah	The Prophet often discussed with companions, accepted criticism, never acted superior despite being Allah's messenger.
Ocean	Big-hearted, patient, broad-minded, able to embrace differences and social dynamics.	Tolerance, patience, openness	The Prophet forgave those who harmed him, such as during the Conquest of Mecca (Fathu Makkah).
Fire	Firm against falsehood, uncompromising in justice.	*Amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*	The Prophet upheld justice firmly, without tyranny. His firmness was full of wisdom.
Water	Refreshing, cooling, cleansing, beneficial.	Brings benefit, source of goodness	The Prophet purified the people with knowledge and character (QS Al-Jumu'ah:2).
Earth	Benefits others without expecting return, full of sincerity and wholeheartedness.	Sincerity for Allah alone	The Prophet never sought reward (QS Saba:47), dedicating his entire mission solely to Allah.

The Sun Trait (Rahmatan lil 'alamin, Justice without Discrimination)

The interweaving of the Prophet Muhammad's leadership with that of Arjuna can be observed through the concept of *Asta Brata*, particularly the principle that a leader should embody the qualities of the sun. A leader, like the sun, must provide illumination, warmth, and energy evenly to all corners of the earth. Similarly, a leader should be capable of offering motivation and sharing knowledge with those they lead. This principle is reflected in the dialogue of Bathara Narada, who says:

> *Bathara Narada: Wani menika wau adhi Guru, mboten ateges jejering ratu utawi tetungguling dewa ingkang ngasta panguaos lajeng kumingsun kumelewat kados dene tiyang ingkang ngregem jimat menika babar pisan mboten. Naming bilih titah wonten madya pada menika tertampu badhe ngraosaken kalih perkawis wonten bingah wonten sisah, wonten padhang wonten peteng, wonten begja lan wonten cilaka.* [To be brave does not mean that a king or divine ruler who holds power should become arrogant, like someone who possesses a talisman—absolutely not. It means that beings in this middle world will experience both joy and sorrow, light and darkness, gain and loss].

In this passage, *wani* conveys a profound leadership value, referring to the ability to face life's dualities with wisdom. It illustrates that a leader's bravery must be grounded in discernment and resilience across diverse circumstances. In this discourse, the sun serves as a metaphor for the ideal qualities of a leader. A good leader is likened to the sun, which radiates light, warmth, and energy evenly throughout the world. This symbolizes a leader's responsibility to enlighten, motivate, and educate those under their care (Peyton et al., 2019; Salas-Vallina et al., 2020; Selvarajah et al., 2017).

This principle is also reflected in the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). One example can be seen during a battle between the Muslims and the Quraysh, in which seventy prisoners from the Quraysh were captured. Even in that context, the Prophet demonstrated compassion, mercy, and wisdom toward his enemies. Another striking example appears in a hadith narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim, where the Prophet stated: "If Fatimah bint Muhammad were to steal, I would cut off her hand." This hadith underscores that the Prophet's justice did not discriminate, not even in favor of his own daughter. His commitment to justice was absolute—just as the sun shines impartially on all creation.

Arjuna, as depicted in *Arjunawiwaha*, represents a leader who is prepared not only physically and intellectually but also spiritually. When confronted with worldly temptations in the form of celestial maidens, Arjuna remains steadfast (*istiqamah*) in his ascetic practice. This mirrors the Islamic concept of *taqwa*, a deep inner awareness and commitment to remaining on the righteous path even when faced with severe trials. Such leadership, which emerges from spiritual discipline, is inherently oriented toward devotion rather than ambition, and toward service rather than domination (Zuhdi, 2019).

In this light, the synthesis between Javanese local wisdom and Islamic values provides a meaningful contribution to the development of leadership paradigms in Indonesia. Leadership need not be viewed as a dichotomy between

local cultural heritage and religious doctrine. Instead, it can be contextualized as a coherent and integrated value system—one that is spiritual, ethical, and humanistic in nature. In an era increasingly defined by pragmatism and the pursuit of power, such an approach offers a reflective, accountable, and welfare-oriented model of leadership (Olifiansyah et al., 2020; Zuhdi, 2019). These values should serve as the foundation for cultivating leadership that is principled, rooted in character and integrity, and grounded in the wisdom of noble traditions.

The Moon Trait: Gentleness and Compassion

The second trait that highlights the interconnection between the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad and Arjuna is the *moon* aspect within the *Asta Brata* doctrine, which symbolizes gentleness and deep compassion. A leader, like the moon that brings light in the night, should provide direction and resolution when the people face difficulties.

> *Bathara Masna: Dewa ki yen pancen mempengan ora kaya Bethara Masna. Ora kakehan gunem, ning sing baku tandhang grayange, solah bawane mrantasi. Nyatane during nganti sakkedheping Netra mungsuhe njerbabah. Butane mati. Iki lho Kang kadangipun Kakang. Adhi Bethara Penyarikan sawangen, wong yen umure tuwa ora mung umure sing okeh, ning kapinterane, kawruhe ya tuwa. Mula diarani piyayi sepuh yen disep ilmune kuwi ampuh. Mula Adhi Penyarikan aja ngremehke, kawruhipun Kakang aja ngremehke, aja ngina karo wong tuwa. Nyatane jeneng ulun maju neng palagan, ulun tamakne jemparing. Butane mati, Mamangdana mati.* [A true god is not like Bathara Masna. He does not talk much, but his actions his deeds and conduct—are complete. Proof? In less than a blink of an eye, the enemy falls. The giant dies. This is the real brother of Kakang. Look, dear Penyarikan. An old person is not merely measured by age, but by wisdom and profound knowledge. That is why one is called elder when their knowledge holds power. So don't underestimate it. Do not insult the elder. When I stepped into the battlefield and released an arrow, the giant Mamangdana was slain].

In this dialogue, Bathara Masna represents the ideal concept of leadership through the symbol of the Moon (*Laku Hambeging Candra*). The moon, with its role as a light in the darkness, serves as a metaphor for a leader who must be capable of finding a path forward when the people are confronted with difficulties. Masna asserts that a great leader does not need to speak excessively; what matters most are concrete actions and behaviors that produce thorough and meaningful outcomes. The phrase *"ora kakehan gunem, ning sing baku tandhang grayange, solah bawane mrantasi"* ("not too much talk, but what truly matters are actions—conduct that leads to resolution") underlines the primacy of tangible deeds over rhetorical performance in leadership. This representation

is reinforced by Masna's concrete example of battlefield action—demonstrating how decisive conduct led to victory and the defeat of giants. The implication is clear: effective leadership is defined not by words, but by results—by the capacity to confront and resolve real-world challenges.

In this dialogue, Masna also reminds listeners of the importance of respecting the wisdom and experience of elders and warns against underestimating the intellectual and moral authority that comes with age. This moment reflects a dynamic of power in which the more seasoned figure provides critical advice to the younger one, signaling that honoring knowledge and accumulated insight is fundamental to becoming an effective leader. This reflection aligns closely with the *Asta Brata* philosophy, which holds that a leader must emulate specific traits and personal dispositions—not merely performative virtues, but deeply internalized qualities of character (Andoko et al., 2022).

This interconnection is also evident in Islamic leadership, as reflected in Qur'anic verse *Ali 'Imran* 3:159: "It is by the mercy of Allah that you were gentle with them. Had you been harsh and hard-hearted, they would have dispersed from around you." This verse was revealed after the Battle of Uhud, when some companions made tactical errors that led to the Muslims' defeat. Despite the gravity of the mistake, the Prophet did not scold or harshly punish them. Instead, he responded with gentleness, forgiveness, and consultation. This illustrates that a leader's primary focus when facing problems must be on finding solutions—not assigning blame. A wise leader is one who maintains peace, provides resolution, and seeks a way out of every crisis with discernment and grace (Alkattani & Ramdanu, 2023; Faujiah & Muslihah, 2024; Hidayat et al., 2020).

A similar quality is reflected in Javanese cultural leadership, especially in the figure of Arjuna, who is portrayed as a leader with a gentle heart. Throughout the narrative, Arjuna is never depicted as harsh; rather, he is consistently shown as someone who exercises self-control. Like the Prophet Muhammad SAW, Arjuna demonstrates that effective leadership is not determined by brute force or power, but by the ability to lead with heart, gentleness, and wisdom.

This has significant implications for modern leadership, particularly in a complex social landscape often marked by conflicting interests, polarization, and waning public trust. The leadership values of the Prophet Muhammad SAW in Islam, like those of Arjuna in Javanese culture, emphasize gentleness, self-restraint, and heart-centered leadership. These values offer an alternative

model for contemporary leaders to adopt a more humanistic and ethical approach. To foster inclusive, visionary, and sustainable leadership environments, it is increasingly crucial to embrace leadership styles centered on empathy, wise communication, and spiritual-emotional maturity. By integrating these values, modern leaders can build strong moral legitimacy and earn genuine trust from the people they serve.

Qudwah Hasanah (Good Example)

The third aspect illustrating the interconnection between the leadership of Prophet Muhammad SAW and Arjuna lies in the exemplary nature of their character, symbolized by the star. A leader is expected to become a moral compass, someone who guides and inspires their people through personal example.

> *In the words of Bathara Narada: Perkara ngulungake gampang. Nanging yen nganti Ulun ulungake widadari klawan Ratu Gusti kita. Padha karo Ulun nerak pepali, nerak bebaya. Gajah midak rapah, palang mangan tandhuran. Gawe pranatan ning ora dilakoni, gawe pranatan lha kok malah diterak dhewe. Mundhak ora kajen para dewa.* [Giving is easy. But if I were to give a celestial nymph to our Lord the King, it would mean breaking the taboo, violating the rules. Like an elephant trampling an ant, or a barrier consuming a crop. Making rules but not following them, even breaking them oneself, such a leader would lose the respect of the gods].

The star symbol (*Laku Hambeging Kartika*) represents a leader as a beacon—one who provides direction and embodies the values they espouse. Narada emphasizes that true leadership is not merely about generosity or symbolic gestures but about upholding ethical standards and respecting moral boundaries. His statement implies that good leadership must be grounded in principles and adherence to rules. It also illustrates the critical importance of consistency between what a leader says and what they do.

The intertwining of Javanese philosophy and Islamic ethics is also expressed in *QS Al-Ahzab* 33:21: "Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah (Muhammad) you have a good example (*uswatun hasanah*) to follow—for the one who hopes for (the mercy of) Allah and the Last Day, and who remembers Allah often." The *Tafsir* of *QS Al-Ahzab* 33:21 by Imam Ibn Kathir underlines that this verse serves as a firm basis for making Prophet Muhammad SAW the role model in all aspects of life—including patience, steadfastness, and sincere perseverance in seeking Allah's guidance.

The alignment between the figure of the Prophet and that of Arjuna can also be seen in their spiritual disposition. The Prophet was steadfast

in worship and deep contemplation, while Arjuna reflected this spiritual dimension through his meditative retreat to Mount Indrakila, choosing isolation to distance himself from worldly desires. This mirrors the Islamic concept of *taqwa*—a deep inner consciousness that guides one to remain on the straight path even amid relentless trials. Leadership rooted in spiritual practice, as demonstrated by both figures, tends to be devotional rather than ambitious, and service-oriented rather than controlling. By integrating these values, a modern leader can build strong moral legitimacy and earn genuine trust from those they lead.

The spiritual connection between the Prophet and Arjuna thus offers a vital insight for contemporary leadership: a leader's true strength arises from reflection and self-restraint, not merely strategic power. In today's world—dominated by the pursuit of material success, popularity, and political power—a spiritually based approach to leadership provides an alternative path: deeper, more ethical, and more sustainable. A leader who acts from a place of service will be better equipped to earn trust, uphold integrity, and deliver social justice (Salwa & Rohimat, 2025). In this context, spiritual practice is not separate from the public realm; rather, it becomes the ethical foundation that guides a leader's direction and decisions amidst the complexities of the times.

The Wind-like Trait (Humility, Listening to the People)

A leader must embody the principle of Laku Hambeging Samirana. A good leader is one who can position themselves anywhere, at any time, and in any circumstance. A leader with the trait of wind is not easily shaken by external pressures or the will of others.

> *Bathara Narada: Jeneng kita sakkadang didhawuhi supaya nggiri-godha, supaya nggodha tapane Begawan Ciptaning. Yen digodha mengko kokjogar ateges wurung ora entuk gawe, ora entuk kamulyan, ora nampa kebegjan. Ning yen mengko kita sakkadang nggodha Begawan Ciptaning kok tetep panggah madhep manteb nggone nglakoni tapabrata ateges lulus saka pendadaran.* [We have been ordered to tempt, to test the meditation of Begawan Ciptaning. If he wavers, if he succumbs to temptation, then he fails. He will not gain his purpose, not attain glory, not receive fortune. But if we tempt him and he remains steadfast in his meditation, then he will pass the test."]

In Javanese philosophy, the element of wind (*Laku Hambeging Samirana*) represents flexibility and adaptability. A leader with the quality of wind is expected to navigate through various situations and conditions without losing direction or core principles. The wind also symbolizes a gentle yet penetrating

force—it reaches everywhere, brings coolness, and offers calm. This subtle power of the wind serves as a metaphor for a leadership style that does not dominate but influences and stabilizes.

In the dialogue between Bathara Narada and his companions, they are instructed to tempt Begawan Ciptaning during his meditation. Should Ciptaning waver and yield to temptation, he would be deemed to have failed—rendered unfit for his designated role, unworthy of honor, and undeserving of divine favor. This concept finds resonance in the Qur'anic verse, *Surah Al-Furqan* 25:63: "And the servants of the Most Merciful are those who walk upon the earth humbly, and when the ignorant address them harshly, they respond with peace."

This is where the interweaving of Javanese philosophy and Islamic ethics becomes evident. The Javanese concept of *tapa*—a practice of intense meditation and self-discipline—can be paralleled with the Islamic notion of *mujahadah*, the spiritual struggle against one's own desires aimed at inner purification (Suwandi & Setyobudi, 2020). Likewise, the Javanese understanding of *wahyu* or *pulung*—seen as a form of mystical legitimacy for leadership—can be reinterpreted through an Islamic lens not as supernatural favoritism but as *taufik* and *hidayah*: divine guidance granted to those who sincerely strive and dedicate themselves to service (Daryono, 2021). It reinforces the view that localized leadership models, when critically examined, reveal profound resonance and continuity with Islamic leadership ideals.

Conclusion

From the discussion above, it is evident that there is a fundamental convergence in meaning and function between Javanese and Islamic concepts of leadership. Moreover, Javanese philosophy and Islamic ethics are not inherently contradictory; rather, they can be mutually enriching when interpreted contextually. This means that Javanese spirituality does not need to be seen in opposition to Islam; instead, it can be understood as a cultural expression that aligns with the core principles of the Islamic tradition. A model of leadership rooted in spirituality offers a deeper and more sustainable alternative. A leader who builds actions on a foundation of service and devotion is better positioned to foster public trust, uphold integrity, and promote social justice.

In this light, spiritual practice is not something detached from public life; it serves as an ethical compass that shapes decisions and direction in the face of contemporary challenges. The practical implications of this study

can be applied in culture-based leadership training programs that integrate Islamic values. By using the synthesis of Javanese and Islamic leadership values exemplified by Arjuna in *Arjunawiwaha* as a model, such training can be directed at developing leaders who possess not only strategic competence but also character, ethical commitment, and rootedness in local wisdom.

Values such as *andhap asor*, *waskita*, and *sabar*, together with the principles of *siddiq*, *amanah*, *fathanah*, and *tabligh*, can equip participants with a leadership framework that is contextual, spiritual, and relevant to the challenges of leadership in multicultural societies. This leadership model—a synthesis of Javanese and Islamic values—has the potential to be applied widely across Asia and beyond, particularly in multicultural contexts that require ethical, inclusive, and locally grounded leadership approaches.

Acknowledgment

This article is part of the research output funded by the UNS PNBP scheme in 2022 under contract number 254/UN27.22/PT.01.03/2022. The authors would like to express their gratitude to Universitas Sebelas Maret (UNS) for providing the opportunity to receive this competitive research grant.

References

Adhit, A., & M. Asbari. (2024). Falsafah Kepemimpinan Jawa: Nilai dan Karakter Seorang Pemimpin Menurut Budaya Jawa. *Literaksi: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan*, *2*(2), 141-145. https://doi.org/10.70508/literaksi.v2i02.470

Alkattani, A. H., & Ramdanu, A. (2023). Kepemimpinan Nabi Muhammad Shalallahu 'Alahi Wasallam Dalam Sistem Pendidikan. *Tawazun: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, *16*(1), 99–106. https://doi.org/10.32832/tawazun.v16i1.8239

Anderson, B. R. O. (1990). *Exploring Political Cultures in Indonesia*. Cornell University Press. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7591/j.ctv3s8n2s

Andoko, B. W., Haryono, S., Wahyuningsih, S. H., Purnomo, E. P., & Fadhlurrohman, M. I. (2022). The Study of Literature Review: Local Leadership in the Java Culture Perspective "Asta Brata" in Organizations. *Webology*, *19*(1), 2731–2747. https://doi.org/10.14704/web/v19i1/web19182

Aryawan, I. W. (2021). Penerapan Kepemimpinan Asta Brata dalam Pendidikan dari Sudut Pandang Teori Konflik. *Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Sosial*, *7*(1), 56. https://doi.org/10.23887/jiis.v7i1.31628

Asrori, M., Asy'arie, B. F., Akhirudin, Yusup Sofian, G., Syakir Hidayat, A. F., Suja, A., & Roibin. (2025). Islamic educational and cultural values in Indonesian puppetry art: a systematic literature review. *Cogent Education*, *12*(1), 2490445. https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2025.2490445

Aziz, D. K. (2013). Akulturasi Islam dan Budaya Jawa, *Fikrah 1*(2), 253-286.

Daryono, D. (2021). Filsafat Etika Masyarakat Islam Jawa: Konsep Baik dan Buruk. *Academic Journal of Islamic Principles and Philosophy*, *2*(1), 59–82. https://doi.org/10.22515/ajipp.v2i1.2633

Endraswara, S. (2013). *Falsafah Kepemimpinan Jawa*. Narasi.

Faujiah, H., & Muslihah, E. (2024). *Model Kepemimpinan Profetik (Nabi Muhammad Saw) dan Implementasinya di Pondok Pesantren Miftahunnajah Lamongan Serang* (Vol. 7, Issue 2). http://Jiip.stkipyapisdompu.ac.id

Floriana, I., Rostiana, dan, Kunci, K., Hasta Brata, K., & kerja, K. (2018). Peran Kepemimpinan Hasta Brata terhadap Keterikatan Kerja pada Konteks Perusahaan BUMN dan Perusahaan Swasta. *Jurnal Muara Ilmu Sosial, Humaniora, dan Seni*, *2*(2), 587-596. https://doi.org/10.24912/jmishumsen.v2i2.1699

Hobman, E. V., Jackson, C. J., Jimmieson, N. L., & Martin, R. (2011). The effects of transformational leadership behaviours on follower outcomes: An identity-based analysis. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, *20*(4), 553–580. https://doi.org/10.1080/1359432X.2010.490046

Kartono, K. (2003). *Pemimpin dan Kepemimpinan: Apakah Kepemimpinan Abnormal Itu?* Raja Grafindo Persada.

Mukaffa, Z. (2018). The era of uncertainty and ethical arrangement in Javanese classical texts: disseminating Ranggawarsita's works as source of Islamic ethics in Islamic higher education. *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies*, *56*(2), 461-493. https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2018.562.461-493

Mulder, N. (2001). *Mistisisme Jawa: Ideologi dalam Kebudayaan*. LKiS.

Olifiansyah, M., Hidayat, W., Diaying, B. P., & Dzulfiqar, M. (2020). Kepemimpinan dalam Perspektif Islam. *At-Tajdid: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pemikiran Islam, 4 (01), 102*. https://doi.org/10.24127/att.v4i01.1205

Perdana, R. N., & Sobri, A. Y. (2021). Peran Falsafah Kepemimpinan Jawa terhadap Peningkatan Kompetensi Tenaga Pendidik di Sekolah. *Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan*, *38*(1), 12-16. http://dx.doi.org/10.15294/jpp.v38i1.28538

Peyton, T., Zigarmi, D., & Fowler, S. N. (2019). Examining the relationship between leaders' power use, followers' motivational outlooks, and followers' work intentions. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *9*(FEB). https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.02620

Riam, Z. A., & Putri, S. A. (2024). *Relevansi Kepemimpinan Perspektif Islam dengan Dunia Modern*. *Raqib: Jurnal Studi Islam*, *1*(2), 133-143. https://jurnal.isqi.or.id/index.php/raqib/article/view/17

Salas-Vallina, A., Simone, C., & Fernández-Guerrero, R. (2020). The human side of leadership: Inspirational leadership effects on follower characteristics and happiness at work (HAW). *Journal of Business Research*, *107*, 162–171. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.10.044

Salwa, I. R., & Rohimat, A. M. (2025). Influence of Spiritual Leadership and Religious Leadership on Employee Performance: The Mediating Role of Organizational Justice in Solo Peduli Employees. *Journal of Business and Management Review*, *6*(3), 172–188. https://doi.org/10.47153/jbmr.v6i3.1485

Selvarajah, C., Meyer, D., Roostika, R., & Sukunesan, S. (2017). Exploring managerial leadership in Javanese (Indonesia) organisations: engaging Asta Brata, the eight principles of Javanese statesmanship. *Asia Pacific Business Review*, *23*(3), 373–395. https://doi.org/10.1080/13602381.2016.1213494

Sulaksono, D., Veronika, P., & Fitriana, T. R. (2021, September). Strengthening Moral Integrity Using Arjuna Wiwaha's Story: A Sociocultural Analysis. In *Proceedings of the 5th International Conference on Learning Innovation and Quality Education* (pp. 1-5). https://doi.org/10.1145/3516875.3516995

Suseno, F. M. (1984). *Etika Jawa*. Gramedia.

Sutopo, H. B. (2002). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif: Dasar Teori dan Terapannya dalam Penelitian*. Universitas Sebelas Maret Press.

Suwandi, & Setyobudi, T. (2020). The Synthesis of Islamic Law and Javanese Culture: A Prophetic Approach. *De Jure: Jurnal Hukum dan Syar'iah*, *12*(2), 255–278. https://doi.org/10.18860/j-fsh.v12i2.10090

Wachid, A., Tinggi, B. S. S., Islam, A., & Purwokerto, N. (2015). *Hermeneutika sebagai Sistem Interpretasi Paul Ricoeur dalam Memahami Teks-teks Seni*. *Imaji: Jurnal Seni dan Pendidikan Seni, 4*(2), 197-209. https://doi.org/10.21831/imaji.v4i2.6712

Wahyudi, S. S. (2011). Kepemimpinan Tradisional Jawa-Islam dalam Masyarakat jawa. *Sabda: Jurnal Kajian Kebudayaan*, 6(1), 23-29. https://ejournal.undip.ac.id/index.php/sabda/article/view/13283

Weatherbee, D. E. (1994). The Astabrata, Saptadewawrtti, and Nagarakrtagama VII: 1-2. *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land-en Volkenkunde*, *150*(2), 414. https://www.jstor.org/stable/27864555

Zuhdi, M. H. (2019). Konsep kepemimpinan dalam perspektif Islam. *Akademika: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam*, *19*(1), 35-57. https://e-journal.metrouniv.ac.id/akademika/article/view/405

DOI: 10.18860/eh.v27i2.32305

DISCOURSE OF ASCETICISM: A CRITICAL TEXTUAL ANALYSIS AND SOCIAL-IDENTITY PRACTICES IN PESANTREN

Wevi Lutfitasari, Mujtahidin, Made Arya Vidiarama
Universitas Trunojoyo Madura, Bangkalan, Indonesia
Email: wevi.lutfitasari@trunojoyo.ac.id

Received: March 5, 2025
Revised: August 7, 2025
Accepted: August 12, 2025

Abstract

The discourse of asceticism functions as a distinctive identity that reflects the idealization of pesantren life, rooted in a high level of spirituality. Previous studies have explored pesantren traditions from various angles but none have provided a holistic account of asceticism within pesantren. This research offers novelty by analyzing ascetic traditions through both discourse and social practice, highlighting how santri's interaction with their social environment shapes and sustains these values. This study aims to present expressions of asceticism within linguistic discourse and to describe its dimensions in pesantren traditions as reflections of that discourse. This research is categorized as descriptive qualitative research, employing Fairclough's conception of discourse theory, focusing on both the textual level and the dimension of social practice. Two key findings emerge: first, the linguistic characteristics of the three pesantren reflect asceticism through calligraphy and Islamic advice, promoting spiritual deepening, socio-spiritual relationships, the strengthening of faith and reliance on God, the development of intellect and character, self-restraint from materialism, and a simple way of life. Second, the dimension of asceticism in the pesantren tradition is reflected in spiritual practices and a distinctive lifestyle, such as concentration on God, affirmation of monotheism, love for the Prophet Muhammad, self-restraint from arrogance, and the creation of harmony through self-discipline. In conclusion, within the pesantren tradition, the conception of ascetic discourse is expressed

through linguistic discourse that reflects the distinctive aspects of pesantren life in deepening Islamic spirituality and embracing simplicity. Further studies are needed to compare the varying ascetic traditions practiced in pesantren across different regions. In addition, conducting surveys with santri would help reveal their perspectives on how linguistic discourse shapes and influences these ideals.

Wacana asketisme berfungsi sebagai identitas khas yang mencerminkan idealisasi kehidupan pesantren, yang berakar pada aspek spiritualitas tinggi. Kajian sebelumnya telah meneliti tradisi pesantren dari berbagai sudut namun belum ada yang memberikan gambaran menyeluruh tentang asketisme dalam pesantren. Penelitian ini menawarkan kebaruan dengan menganalisis tradisi asketis melalui perspektif wacana dan praktik sosial, serta menyoroti bagaimana interaksi santri dengan lingkungan sosialnya membentuk dan mempertahankan nilai-nilai tersebut. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyajikan ekspresi-ekspresi asketisme dalam diskursus linguistik dan mendeskripsikan dimensinya dalam tradisi pesantren sebagai refleksi dari diskursus tersebut. Penelitian ini tergolong penelitian kualitatif deskriptif dengan mengambil konsepsi Fairclough tentang teori wacanan kebahasaan pada tataran tekstual dan dimensi praktis sosial. Dua temuan utama muncul: Pertama, karakteristik linguistik di tiga pesantren mencerminkan ekspresi asketisme yang berasal dari seni kaligrafi dan nasihat Islam. Wacana ini menyampaikan rekomendasi untuk memperdalam hubungan spiritual dengan Allah, hubungan sosial-spiritual, keimanan dan tawakal, pengembangan intelektualitas dan akhlak, pengendalian diri terhadap materialisme, dan kesederhanaan hidup. Kedua, dimensi asketisme dalam tradisi pesantren terwujud dalam praktik-praktik spiritual dan gaya hidup yang khas. Dimensi-dimensi ini mengarah pada fenomena seperti latihan konsentrasi yang diarahkan kepada Allah, praktik yang menegaskan keesaan Allah, mencintai Rasulullah sebagai bagian dari rukun iman, pengendalian diri terhadap kesombongan, serta upaya untuk menciptakan keharmonisan melalui saling mengatur diri. Sebagai kesimpulan, dalam tradisi pesantren, konsepsi wacana asketisme diekspresikan melalui wacana linguistik yang berisi kekhasan kehidupan pesantren dalam memperdalam spiritualitas islami dan kesederhanaan. Penelitian lebih lanjut diperlukan untuk membandingkan berbagai tradisi asketis yang dipraktikkan di pesantren di berbagai daerah. Selain itu, pelaksanaan survei terhadap para santri akan membantu mengungkap perspektif mereka mengenai bagaimana wacana kebahasaan membentuk dan memengaruhi ideal-ideal tersebut.

***Keywords**: Expression of asceticism; Islamic spirituality; linguistic discourse; pesantren tradition; social-identity practices*

Introduction

This study focuses on the concept of asceticism as a distinctive reflection of life within the *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) environment. Asceticism

is a crucial component in shaping the distinctive character of *santri* (a student who studies in pesantren), encompassing spiritual aspects, particularly in self-control and the pursuit of simplicity in life. According to the Republic of Indonesia Law No. 18 of 2019 (*UU* Pesantren) concerning Pesantren, Chapter III on the Establishment and Management of Pesantren, Section Two on Establishment, particularly Article 6, Letter a, it is stated that pesantren must have a commitment to instilling the values of *Islam rahmatan lil-alamin*, which relates to cultivating a spirit of simplicity among every santri. This spirit of simplicity is associated with self-control and resilience.

According to Schaefer (2007), asceticism is defined as self-control over idealistic desires aimed at achieving self-perfection through self-restraint, worship practices, and mastery over words and passions. Thus, pesantren serve not only as institutions for religious education but also as spaces for religious practice and application, aiming for a higher dimension of spirituality. Consequently, various pesantren traditions reflect distinctive ascetic practices, making asceticism a significant subject for examination.

As stated by the Director General of Islamic Education at the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the tradition of pesantren dates back to the 15th and 16th centuries, rooted in the era of Walisongo, who made significant contributions to the development of religious education and scholarly references framed for spiritual practice and the achievement of *akhlakul karimah* or noble character (Kemenag.go.id, 2022). A hallmark of pesantren education is the use of a holistic approach that not only shapes cognitive and spiritual aspects but also preserves the cultural integrity of Indonesia. This aligns with Azra's (2006, p. 74) concept of pesantren as institutions that teach religious knowledge and local culture to form a distinctive Indonesian Islamic identity.

According to Wahid (1974), pesantren are part of a specific culture that shapes unique values and undergoes cultural acculturation, resulting from the fusion of pesantren culture and local wisdom. This means that selecting the pesantren environment as the research site is relevant for examining the dimension of religiosity as a distinctive socio-cultural identity in Indonesia. The environment plays a significant role in the preservation of unique cultural traditions, as it serves as a fundamental framework for human activity (Lung & Dong, 2024, p. 3). Moreover, the pesantren represents a space for self-expression, which is reinforced by the view of Stucky and Andy (2020, p. 355), who assert that the environment reflects the religious elements of individuals in expressing a particular faith.

A critical discourse analysis of pesantren traditions aims to understand how ascetic practices shape students' behavior toward their environment. By comprehending the ascetic values embedded in pesantren traditions, this study seeks to identify sustainable solutions to address increasingly complex environmental challenges. In general, critical discourse serves as a form of textual linguistic inquiry that explores human activities within various interactions, particularly interactions with ecological elements, with the goal of sustaining life through human-to-human, human-to-other-organism, human-to-environment, and organism-to-environment relationships (He, 2018, p. 23).

The term ecology in this research is used to represent the symbolic embodiment of human activities that are unique to a particular environment, as reflected through textual (discourse) presentations. This aligns with Fairclough's (2010) discourse analysis framework, which divides analysis into three aspects: text, discursive practices, and social practices, connecting textual elements of discourse with socio-cultural meanings (Fairclough, 2010). Accordingly, this research focuses on Fairclough's discourse theory at the textual level and the dimension of social practices as a means of developing social aspects from existing discourse. The discourse analyzed is drawn from the linguistic texts within the pesantren environment, as well as from the social practices and ideals embedded in that linguistic discourse.

Issues regarding asceticism and pesantren traditions have been addressed in previous studies. Six earlier studies provide inspiration for this research. *First*, Sunjana et al. (2024, p. 171) discuss the transition of ascetic practices from the Hindu-Buddhist period to the Islamic period on the slopes of Mount Kumbang, reconciling pre-Islamic ascetic practices with Islamization. *Second*, Muafiah et al. (2022, p. 454) provide insights into the characteristics of pesantren as child-friendly environments through the optimization of three main areas: curriculum, management, and facilities. *Third*, Suhatrini (2016, p. 429) presents the internalization of Islamic values to shape the character of santri at Miftahul Muhajirin pesantren through spiritual activities (prayers, fasting, and the recitation of Surah Yasin). *Fourth*, Aulia et al (2024, p. 225) explore eco-friendly pesantren models as manifestations of positive environmental behaviors and sustainable best practices. *Fifth*, Adnani et al (2016, p. 143) discuss discourses regarding women's resistance within pesantren contexts. *Sixth*, Khotimah, et al. (2024, p. 409), provide a detailed description of the distinctive pesantren tradition that contains elements of humility among santri.

Based on these six previous studies, the present research examines new

aspects by providing a comprehensive description and interpretation of the dimensions of asceticism from both discourse and social practice perspectives within the unique traditions of pesantren. This approach highlights how ascetic values are embedded in pesantren life and expressed through linguistic and behavioral practices among santri. Ultimately, the study reflects the interactive relationship between santri and their social environment, emphasizing the role of asceticism in shaping sustainable cultural and spiritual behaviors.

The urgency of this research stems from three elements. *First*, examining linguistic discourse within pesantren is essential for a comprehensive understanding of textual idealization aimed at developing students' character based on high spirituality. This understanding fosters self-control against materialism, hedonism, and consumerism, and can serve as a reference for shaping Islamic character within individuals. *Second*, a thorough analysis of the relevance between linguistic discourse and the unique social–spiritual practices of pesantren provides evidence that textual elements (language) are used as tools for shaping identity and the distinctive characteristics of pesantren life. *Third*, an important aspect of this research involves examining the simple lifestyle characteristic of pesantren, which is grounded in Islamic principles. Therefore, the results of this analysis are useful for formulating indicators for implementing character education for children based on the principles of a simple lifestyle and environmental friendliness in the era of modernization.

This study departs from two research questions: First, how is asceticism expressed in the linguistic discourse of Pondok Pesantren Bangkalan? Second, how is the dimension of asceticism in the unique traditions of pesantren reflected in linguistic discourse? Accordingly, the objectives of this research are to describe the expression of asceticism in the linguistic discourse of Pondok Pesantren Bangkalan and to provide an in-depth description and interpretation of the dimension of asceticism in the unique traditions of pesantren as reflected in the linguistic discourse.

Method

This study employs a qualitative research design, in which the presentation of data consists of descriptive accounts of asceticism as expressed in linguistic discourse and within the unique traditions of pesantren. The research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive type, adopting Fairclough's conception of discourse theory at both the textual level and the dimension of social practice. According to Arikunto (2016, p. 234), descriptive research presents

data naturally and is not intended for hypothesis testing. In this context, the descriptive method is relevant because the focus of this study lies in the natural characteristics of ascetic expressions within linguistic discourse and in the dimensions of asceticism present in the unique traditions of Islamic boarding schools (pesantren).

The data include textual descriptions within *pesantren* discourse that contain elements of asceticism, statements from informants, and depictions of pesantren traditions that embody ascetic values. The data sources consist of calligraphy, textual discourse, photographs of santri activities, and interviews with pesantren administrators from Pondok Pesantren Nurul Cholil, Al-Hikam Kemayoran, and Assahliyyin 4 Putri. Three Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) were selected as research sites: Pondok Pesantren Nurul Cholil, Al-Hikam Kemayoran, and Assahliyyin 4 Putri. The selection of these locations was based on the distinct characteristics of each *pesantren*, which are situated in different environments and apply different educational and social principles. Pondok Pesantren Nurul Cholil and Al-Hikam Kemayoran are located in the urban center of Bangkalan, whereas Assahliyyin 4 Putri is situated in a rural area, far from the reach of the city.

Data collection techniques include documentation and interviews. The documentation technique was used to collect written materials such as discourses present in the pesantren environment and photographs of santri activities. The interview technique was used to conduct structured question-and-answer sessions with pesantren administrators. The data collection process consisted of three stages: (1) the development of data collection instruments, (2) data gathering at the three pesantren (Pondok Pesantren Nurul Cholil, Al-Hikam Kemayoran, and Assahliyyin 4 Putri), and (3) data selection.

The data analysis in this study employs the extralingual matching method (*metode padan*), one of the approaches commonly used in linguistic analysis. According to Sudaryanto (2015, p. 15), the matching method focuses on analyzing elements external to language as references for interpreting particular meanings or patterns. The use of this method is reflected in the following stages of the data analysis process.

The validity of the data in this study was tested using the technique triangulation method. According to Sugiyono (2015, p. 127), technique triangulation is one form of triangulation used to test data validity by utilizing more than one data source. This is reflected in the use of two methods in this research: documentation and interviews. This study was conducted in three

stages: the pre-research stage (literature study, topic and title determination, problem formulation, and background preparation), the research stage (data collection and analysis), and the post-research stage (writing scientific articles).

Findings and Discussion

The results and discussion of this study are organized into two parts: the expression of asceticism within the linguistic discourse of Pondok Pesantren Bangkalan and the dimensions of asceticism reflected in its unique traditions. Overall, the discourse fulfills multiple functions—commanding, prohibiting, inviting, persuading, describing, and informing—which aligns with Critical Discourse Analysis principles that view linguistic expressions as tools for influencing and mobilizing communities (Haryatmoko, 2017, p. 5). In the Islamic setting, such expressions also act as a medium of da'wah, corresponding to TGH. M. Najmuddin's shift from oral to written da'wah (Ahyar et al., 2024, p. 115)

The Expression of Asceticism in the Linguistic Discourse of Assahliyyin 4 Putri Pesantren

At Pondok Pesantren Assahliyyin 4 Putri, linguistic discourse reflecting ascetic values appears in both the physical environment of the pesantren—such as inscriptions on the walls—and in its social media posts. The following description illustrates several linguistic expressions that embody asceticism within the environment of Pondok Pesantren Assahliyyin 4 Putri.



Figure 1. Linguistic Discourse at Pesantren Assahliyin 4 Putri

Figure 1 illustrates the linguistic discourse found in the environment of Pondok Pesantren Assahliyyin 4 Putri. This discourse appears in the *musala* (prayer hall) of the pesantren in the form of Arabic calligraphy. The expression of asceticism in the discourse is reflected in the Arabic inscription derived from QS Al-Mu'minun verses 1–2, which state: قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ. الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ. The meaning of these verses is that "successful indeed are the believers (those who have faith), those who humble themselves in prayer." This discourse is categorized as an expression of asceticism at Pondok Pesantren Assahliyyin ٤ Putri, emphasizing humility and spiritual focus in worship as fundamental aspects of ascetic life

The expression of asceticism in the linguistic discourse above is reflected through informational messages or reminders that encourage performing prayer (*salat*) with full devotion. This aligns with Syukur's (2001, p. 1) view that asceticism is an activity related to the concept of *zuhud* (renunciation), which involves striving to detach oneself from worldly concerns and focus solely on worship. Prayer (*salat*) is a form of worship performed by Muslims as a means of interacting with God, the Creator. According to Darat (1906, p. 34), prayer represents a servant's interaction with their Lord in pursuit of ultimate truth and the attainment of the spiritual state of *musyahadah* (direct awareness or witnessing of God's presence).

Fahrudin et al. (2024, p. 83) explain that within the Sufi framework, the stages of interaction or closeness with God serve the purpose of purifying the soul and achieving spiritual perfection. The meaning of humility (*khusyu'*) based on QS Al-Baqarah verses 45-46 is that it refers to individuals who truly believe that they will meet their Creator—an awareness that deepens their appreciation of God's presence. This understanding strengthens a servant's detachment from worldly attachments and fosters spiritual consciousness as a meaningful interpretation of human life in this transient world. Furthermore, the function of the linguistic discourse serves as a written reminder from the pesantren to its students to maintain humility during prayer. The humility practiced in prayer directly reflects an ascetic attitude modeled after the Prophet Muhammad's devotion, embodying spiritual depth in approaching God (Nawir, 2024, p. 408).



Figure 2. Linguistic Discourse at Assahliyin 4 Putri Pesantren

Figure 2 presents a collection of linguistic discourses found within the environment of Pondok Pesantren Assahliyyin 4 Putri. These discourses are displayed above the entrances of rooms designated for female students and are presented in the form of Arabic calligraphy. The boarding school provides four rooms for female students' accommodation. Based on interview results, the linguistic discourses placed above each room entrance carry specific philosophical meanings. This philosophy relates to the placement of the discourses, which is viewed as the initial step in the students' journey toward becoming better individuals.

Moreover, each linguistic discourse above the entrances of the female students> rooms at Assahliyin 4 Putri Pesantren carries specific meanings. First, the discourse featuring the Arabic phrase الرَّحْمَة (*Ar-Rahmah*) translates to «The Most Merciful.» This phrase appears above the entrance of Room 1. The use of the term *Ar-Rahmah* aims to encourage the students residing in this room to receive God>s mercy, as it reflects one of God>s attributes. Second, the linguistic discourse above the entrance of Room 2 contains the Arabic term الهداية (*Al-Hidayah*), meaning «Guidance.» This term signifies a wish for the female students entering this room to receive divine guidance in both worldly and spiritual matters. Third, the linguistic discourse above the entrance of Room 3 features السلامة (*As-Salamah*), which translates to «Safety.» The term *As-Salamah* conveys a desire for the students in this room to always receive safety from God. Fourth, the Arabic calligraphy الإسلام (*Al-Islamiyah*) appears above the entrance of Room 4, meaning «Islam.» The use

of *Al-Islamiyah* is intended to ensure that the students residing in this room develop strong faith and consistently practice and deepen their understanding of Islamic teachings.

The linguistic discourses displayed above the entrances of Rooms 1–4 collectively embody key dimensions of asceticism within Sufi ethics. The inscription in Room 1 invokes *ar-rahmah*, reminding students of God's compassion and cultivating gratitude, which reduces materialistic inclinations and aligns with ascetic values (Husna, 2016, pp. 16–17), while also encouraging compassion toward others in accordance with Sufi teachings that enhance well-being (Aqil, 2024, p. 5384). The discourse in Room 2 reflects surrender and trust in divine guidance, a core principle of ascetic faith in God's decrees (Taimiyah, 1963, p. 361). The expression associated with Room 3 conveys reliance on God for protection, representing *zuhud mutaqaribin*, an ascetic state of drawing near to God through complete dependence upon Him (Al-Tahanawi, 1996, p. 914). Meanwhile, the inscription in Room 4 emphasizes dedication to learning and prioritizing worship, embodying *zuhud* as a concrete form of ascetic practice (Nurkhalis, 2014, p. 196).





Figure 3. Linguistic Discourse on the Social Media of Assahliyyin 4 Putri Pesantren

Figure 3 represents a form of linguistic discourse found on the official social media account of *Pondok Pesantren* Assahliyin 4 Putri. This discourse was posted on July 14, 2024, on Instagram under the account @busatanularifin_putri, which belongs to the foundation of the boarding school. The content of Figure 3 features a photograph of one of the caretakers of Assahliyyin 4 Putri, KH. Abdul Wadud Al-Hafudz, accompanied by a textual element containing his advice written in Arabic, along with its translation: "Strong Will Cannot Break Through the Walls of Destiny." The advice shared by KH. Abdul Wadud

Al-Hafudz on the institution's official Instagram account is categorized as a reflection of ascetic expression.

In Figure 3, the expression of asceticism is symbolized through the meaning of KH. Abdul Wadud Al-Hafudz's advice regarding destiny. The phrase "Strong Will Cannot Break Through the Walls of Destiny" implies that human strength and determination are inherently limited, and that divine decrees are beyond human alteration. God alone possesses ultimate knowledge and authority over the course of creation. This meaning corresponds to the ascetic aspect of self-control—namely, the surrender or submission of individuals to God's decrees. Such surrender reflects faith and trust in divine will, aligning with the Islamic concept of asceticism, which emphasizes deep conviction and acceptance of all matters that originate from God (Taimiyah, 1963, p. 361).

The Asceticism in the Linguistic Discourse of Nurul Cholil Pesantren

A linguistic discourse originating from Pondok Pesantren Nurul Cholil embodies characteristics of ascetic expression. This discourse appears in the form of linguistic messages displayed within and around the boarding school, as well as on its social media platforms. Figure 4 below illustrates a form of linguistic discourse from the social media account of Pondok Pesantren Nurul Cholil in Bangkalan, posted on June 14, 2022. It features a visual depiction of students performing prayer in the prayer hall, accompanied by the title *"Bersikap Tawakal"* (Attitude of Surrender) and a description emphasizing submission to Allah following effort and prayer. Together, the textual and visual elements embody key aspects of ascetic expression.



Figure 4. Linguistic Discourse on the Social Media of Nurul Cholil Pesantren

In this linguistic discourse, asceticism is symbolized through the informative message conveyed by the institution to students and the public regarding *tawakal* (trust in God). *Tawakal* represents human submission to Allah after exerting effort in worldly matters (Ghoni, 2016, p. 111). This submission signifies complete trust in Allah as the Owner and Regulator of life. There are three essential connections between *tawakal* and asceticism. *First*, submission aligns with ascetic values because it positions Allah as the ultimate goal in all endeavors, highlighting the temporary nature of worldly matters and the higher value of divine blessings. *Second*, surrender to Allah reflects detachment from material dependency and worldly wealth, making it a practical manifestation of asceticism. *Third*, *tawakal* nurtures inner peace by preventing excessive attachment to worldly affairs through contentment with divine decrees. This attitude reflects the Islamic understanding of asceticism, which emphasizes effort guided by divine will while distancing oneself from materialism and luxury (David, 2007, p. 244).

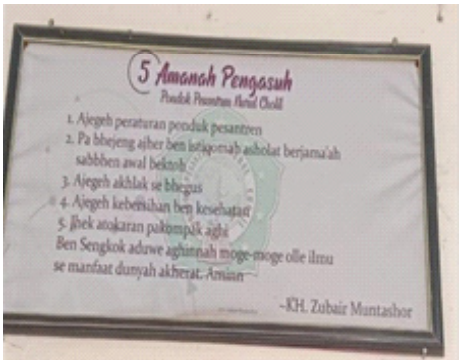


Figure 5. Linguistic Discourse at Nurul Cholil Pesantren

Figure 5 presents a linguistic discourse found within the environment of Pondok Pesantren Nurul Cholil, located in front of the male students' dormitory complex. This discourse consists of five written points representing the message of KH. Zubair Muntashor, a caretaker of Nurul Cholil Pesantren and a descendant of KH. Muntashor, the school's founder. The caretaker's message, shown in Figure 5, is written in the Madurese language. Among the points in this discourse that reflect ascetic expression is the phrase *"Pa bhejeng ajher ben istiqomah asholat berjama'ah sabbhen awal bektoh,"* which means "Diligently study and be steadfast in performing congregational prayers at the beginning of each time."

The expression of asceticism is symbolized through this exhortation

reminding students to be punctual in performing congregational prayers. Timeliness in worship reflects sincerity in fulfilling religious obligations, which embodies the Sufi interpretation of prayer. According to Istianah (2015, p. 50), prayer represents an individual's spiritual awareness of the uncertainty of time, prompting believers to perform prayers promptly as a means of detachment from worldly concerns. Moreover, the command for congregational prayer in this discourse specifically applies to male students, as males are one of the key participants required for congregational prayer (Serawat, 2018, p. 20). This indicates that the message aims to instill discipline and obedience among male students in fulfilling one of Allah's commands—performing prayer in congregation.

Thus, there are two close connections between the timely performance of congregational prayers and the expression of asceticism. First, the command to perform prayers on time symbolizes the prioritization of spiritual obligations over worldly affairs, aligning with the concept of *zuhud* (asceticism), which values the afterlife above worldly concerns (Al-Ghazali, 2003, p. 351). Second, the practice of congregational prayer serves as a means of cultivating a deep inner relationship with the Creator, thereby achieving harmony between humans and God. Asceticism, as an expression of *zuhud*, seeks to attain true happiness through a harmonious relationship between humanity and the Divine (Fajri et al., 2022, p. 167).



Figure 6. Linguistic Discourse at Nurul Cholil Pesantren

Figure 6 illustrates a form of linguistic discourse at Nurul Cholil Pesantren, placed in front of the male students' dormitory. The Arabic text, translated as "A wise person speaks more in their heart, while a foolish person converses excessively without thinking," reflects the expression of asceticism.

The ascetic expression is evident in the advisory message directed at male students, emphasizing the importance of controlling one's thoughts

before speaking so that speech arises from a clear and rational mind. This aligns with the concept of asceticism as a spiritual discipline involving the control of the soul and intellect (Olson, 2011:194). Moreover, the discourse conveys the value of silence and contemplation—encouraging individuals to speak only when necessary and to avoid unproductive debates. Regulating thoughts, speech, and emotions fosters inner peace, representing ascetic practices that cultivate spirituality through restraint, silence, and self-control (Campo, 2009:65). Such discipline contributes to emotional regulation, as it harmonizes the actions of the soul, intellect, and speech (Fredrick, 2013:175). Contextually, the advice to control thoughts, the soul, and speech—or to avoid arguments—helps students guard against arrogance, reflecting the core of Islamic asceticism (*zuhud*), which seeks freedom from pride and attachment to worldly praise (Nurkholis, 2014:191).

The Expression of Asceticism in Al Hikam Kemayoran Pesantren

The expression of asceticism at Al Hikam Kemayoran Pesantren is reflected through various forms of linguistic discourse. These discourses appear both within the pesantren environment and across its social media platforms. Figure 7 below presents a form of linguistic discourse located in front of the central office of Al Hikam Kemayoran Pesantren. The discourse features a textual quotation: "Whoever abandons sin, their heart will be gentle; and whoever avoids what is forbidden and consumes what is lawful, their mind will be clear." Presented in Indonesian, this discourse embodies elements of asceticism.

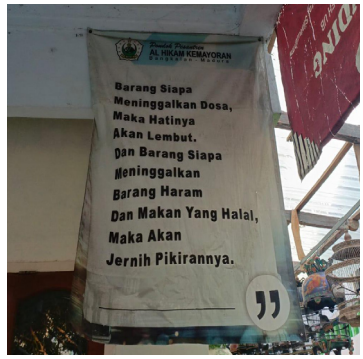


Figure 7. Linguistic Discourse at Al Hikam Kemayoran Pesantren

In Figure 7, the expression of asceticism appears through informative and advisory messages addressed to students, emphasizing the importance of

avoiding sinful and forbidden acts. The quotation highlights a key Islamic principle—the distinction between what is lawful (*halal*) and unlawful (*haram*). This message encourages self-control in refraining from indulgence in forbidden worldly matters. Self-control represents a vital component of ascetic practice, particularly in exercising restraint over consumption and avoiding material excess (Ibn & Ustman, 2003, p. 249).



Figure 8. Linguistic Discourse at Al Hikam Kemayoran Pesantren

Figure 8 represents a form of linguistic discourse at Al Hikam Kemayoran Pesantren. This figure is located in the multimedia room of the pesantren. The discourse consists of two components: visual and textual. The visual component includes a photograph of the pesantren>s founder, Dr. KH. Muhammad Hasan Syafi'I, M.Ag, while the textual component conveys his advice, stating, «There are two blessings, besides faith and Islam, that people often overlook: the blessing of health and the blessing of time.» This discourse contains elements of asceticism.

In Figure 8, the expression of asceticism emphasizes the importance of appreciating the blessings of health and time—gifts that are often neglected. This advice serves as a reminder to students who use the multimedia room to remain grateful for Allah's blessings, particularly those that are not materially visible, such as well-being and the opportunity to live. Gratitude is regarded as a practice that nurtures asceticism (*zuhud*) and contributes to psychological well-being (Husna, 2016, pp. 16–17). Therefore, this linguistic discourse functions as a medium for cultivating ascetic attitudes among students within the environment of Al Hikam Kemayoran Pesantren.

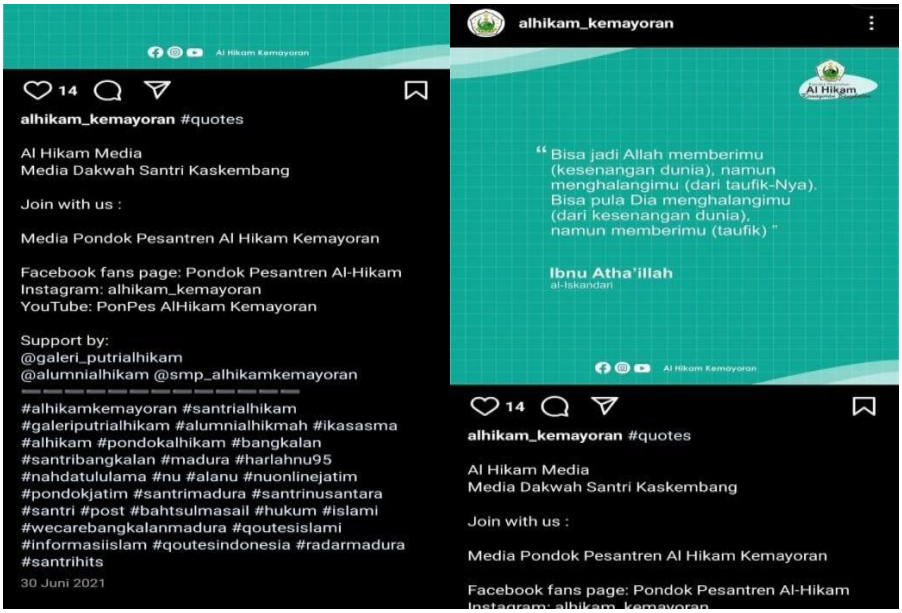


Figure 9. Linguistic Discourse on Social Media from Al Hikam Kemayoran Pesantren

Figure 9 presents a form of linguistic discourse shared through the official Instagram account of Al Hikam Kemayoran Pesantren, @alhikam_kemayoran, posted on June 30, 2021. The discourse cites a saying of Ibn Atha'illah: *"Allah may grant you worldly pleasures but withhold His guidance, or He may deny you worldly pleasures but grant you guidance."* This expression embodies elements of asceticism.

The ascetic expression in this linguistic discourse is reflected in the profound concept of the relationship between worldly pleasures and divine guidance from Allah. This relationship encourages self-control, particularly in how individuals perceive and respond to Allah's decrees. The discourse teaches the importance of maintaining a positive disposition toward Allah while avoiding attachment to worldly pleasures that may hinder divine guidance. This notion aligns with the core principle of asceticism, which emphasizes detachment from material indulgence and luxury. Robinson (2012, p. 120) notes that one of the essential values of asceticism is the restraint from the pleasures of modern, materialistic life.

Asceticism in the Unique Traditions of Pesantren

Asceticism originates from the root word *zuhud*, which etymologically derives from the Arabic term *al-zuhd*, meaning "a lack of greed toward worldly matters" (Hafiun, 2017, p. 78). According to Ismail (2014, p. 136), *zuhud* is understood as a characteristic of a perfect Muslim, aimed at drawing closer to Allah. In this sense, *zuhud* is interpreted as a spiritual discipline focused on the afterlife through continuous self-approach to the Divine. Within the *pesantren* environment, the practice of asceticism serves not only as a form of spiritual devotion but also as an integral part of students' daily routines and social interactions.

The analysis of asceticism's dimensions provides a deeper interpretation of the meanings embedded within linguistic discourse. Examining these dimensions reflects the application of discourse analysis within the framework of social practices, as proposed by Fairclough. Fairclough (2001, p. 136) explains that the social practice dimension in discourse analysis focuses on how discourse represents and influences social, situational, and institutional contexts. Thus, linguistic discourse functions as a symbolic representation of *pesantren* social practices and identity, shaping students' spiritual and moral character.

This interpretation is further supported by the framework of ecological linguistics, which analyzes language and discourse to uncover the lived experiences and values of specific communities, especially those tied to philosophical ideals or the preservation of certain environmental characteristics (Stibbe, 2015, pp. 183–184). The dimensions of asceticism within *pesantren* environments, therefore, correspond to the meanings expressed in linguistic discourses that encompass spiritual practices and lifestyle orientations.

The Dimension of Asceticism in the Spiritual Practices of Pesantren

Spiritual practice refers to activities intended to draw closer to Allah and to cultivate inner awareness. These practices are often shaped by specific environments, such as *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools). According to Suryaningsih and Tedi (2022, p. 969), pesantren function as environments for acquiring knowledge, nurturing morals, and fostering spiritual values. Below are reflections of spiritual practices in three pesantren locations that embody elements of asceticism.



Figure 10. Congregational Prayer at Al-Hikam Kemayoran, Nurul Cholil, and Assahliyin 4 Putri

Figure 10 serves as concrete evidence of the implementation of asceticism consistent with the linguistic discourse in three pesantren: Al-Hikam Kemayoran, Nurul Cholil, and Assahliyin 4 Putri. The implementation of congregational prayers in these three pesantren has unique characteristics: 1) male students typically wear white clothes, sarongs, and caps; 2) female students are required to wear long prayer garments (*mukenah*); 3) after the congregational prayers at Al-Hikam Kemayoran, it is mandatory to read specific prayers, including Surah Al-Ikhlas 33 times, Surah Al-Falaq 33 times, Surah An-Nas 33 times, Ayat Kursi 33 times, Surah Al-Waqiah seven times, and Surah Al-Baqarah seven times; 4) at Nurul Cholil, students are required to recite *dhikr* (including *istighfar*, prayers for protection from hellfire, *tasbih, tahmid, takbir*, and the *shahada*) and a prayer after obligatory prayers; 5) at Assahliyin 4 Putri, students are required to read a general *wirid* prayer along with Salawat Shifa and prayers for safety after congregational prayers.

Based on observations, congregational prayers have become mandatory activities for students in each pesantren. This means that these activities represent a principal tradition of pesantren as they are related to the fundamental acts of worship for Muslims. The procedures for prayer are specifically regulated in Islamic jurisprudence, including in the book Maroqil 'Ubudiyah, which outlines how to pray as a means of drawing closer to Allah. It also describes how to supplicate to Allah (in prayer) with humility, including activities of dhikr, focus, and submission to Allah (Al-Jawai, 2019, pp. 223-224).



Figure 11. The Tradition of Samman Congregational Prayer (Nurul Cholil Pesantren)

Figure 11 illustrates a distinctive pesantren practice known as the *Samman* tradition, which reflects asceticism through the linguistic discourse of the pesantren. Originating from the *Sammaniyyah* order founded by Sheikh Muhammad bin Abdul Karim As-Samman in the 18th century (Interview with santri F, 2024), this tradition remains preserved on the island of Madura and continues to be practiced at Nurul Cholil pesantren.

The Samman tradition at Nurul Cholil consists of rhythmic praises to Allah—such as La ilaha illallah, Allah Hayyu, and Allahu Rabbi—performed in a circular formation with coordinated clapping and alternating kneeling and standing as expressions of devotion, gratitude, and unity. Led by a designated guide, participants—male students and alumni dressed in white to symbolize purity—combine bodily movement with salawat recitations, strengthening spiritual bonds and *ukhuwah* during weekly Thursday-night gatherings. The tradition is also performed at major events, especially during Maulid commemorations, serving as a collective remembrance of Allah, affirmation of His oneness, and emulation of the Prophet's character.

The *Samman* tradition at Nurul Cholil thus exemplifies a unique pesantren practice imbued with an ascetic dimension. Its meaning and purpose center on deepening spiritual awareness—realizing Allah's greatness and focusing on the human–divine relationship through the affirmation of divine oneness. This aligns with the *Samman* practice at Ar-Raudhah pesantren, where the recitation of *Sammaniyyah* poetry functions as *dhikr* (Bakri, 2020, pp. 72–73). Hence, the *Samman* tradition emphasizes the human connection with the Creator and reflects the essence of ascetic spirituality—the highest form of devotion

in Islam, characterized by piety and remembrance of God in all aspects of life (Gülen, 2006, p. 16). Consequently, the *Samman* tradition serves as both a spiritual and social expression of asceticism within the distinctive cultural framework of Nurul Cholil pesantren.



Figure 12. Ishari Traditions at Nurul Cholil Pesantren

Figure 12 represents one of the practices of the Ishari tradition, a distinctive custom found at Pondok Pesantren Nurul Cholil. The Ishari tradition involves the recitation of Ishari prayers, which are an ancient heritage from the Salafunassholih era that originated in Java. This prayer is one of the older forms of salawat compared to the Banjari prayer. Ishari, as a form of *salawat* (praises upon the Prophet), holds a high spiritual value due to its emphasis on the elements of *tarekat* (spiritual paths), thereby distancing itself from commercial activities and existing solely within the context of ulama commemorations (*haul*). The implementation of the Ishari tradition aims to deepen the awareness of Allah's presence through spiritual paths that honor the Prophet Muhammad by reciting prayers. Thus, the recitation of Ishari prayers is believed to be a means of demonstrating love and respect for the Prophet Muhammad, which subsequently leads to seeking Allah's blessings. Moreover, this recitation functions as a foundation for cultivating human piety (Ni'mah, 2020, p. 313).

Piety (*taqwa*) is interpreted as a condition in which a person who loves the Prophet Muhammad also obeys Allah's commandments, as loving and honoring the Prophet is part of the articles of faith. Based on interviews, the

Ishari tradition possesses unique characteristics at Pondok Pesantren Nurul Cholil, including: 1) participation in the Ishari tradition is mandatory for male students, who must wear white clothing as a symbol of purity or a clean heart; 2) the Ishari tradition is performed every Friday after the Ashari prayer; and 3) Ishari is celebrated during large gatherings such as the commemoration of ulama (*haul*) attended by members of Ishari from Java and Madura.

The Ishari tradition reflects a form of asceticism as it is related to spiritual practices, such as the appreciation of Allah's presence and the belief in Allah's commandments (faith in the Prophet Muhammad) through the recitation of prayers as an expression of love and respect for the Prophet Muhammad. Belief and faith in Allah's commandments are reflections of the ascetic aspect connected to the act of loving Allah in all matters (Taimiyah, 1963, p. 135). This distinctive tradition in the pesantren is also mirrored in the Cocoghen tradition at Pondok Pesantren Al-Hikam.



Figure 13. Cocoghen Traditions at Al Hikam Kemayoran Pesantren

The figures above depict the unique practices of Pondok Pesantren Al-Hikam, particularly the *Cocoghen* tradition. Cocoghen, derived from the Madurese language, means "to match" and contextually refers to the night welcoming the month of Maulid. The term Maulid in Arabic is referred to as *waqtul wiladah*, meaning the day of birth (Waskito, 2014). The celebration of Maulid was popularized by Salahuddin al-Ayyubi to invigorate Islamic spirit through competitions praising the Prophet Muhammad (Anwar, 1988, p. 11).

The *Cocoghen* tradition originates from a distinctive practice within the

Madurese community that continues to this day as a means of welcoming the month of Rabi'ul Awwal, particularly on its first night (Sahid, 2019). At Pondok Pesantren Al-Hikam Kemayoran, the Cocoghen tradition is characterized by the recitation of the *Barzanji* prayer. The Barzanji prayer comes from the Barzanji text written by Sheikh Ja'far bin Hasan, which narrates the life of the Prophet Muhammad from childhood to his prophethood and his struggles in spreading Islam (Ya'cub, 1974, p. 5).

The recitation of Barzanji reflects an expression of love and devotion to the Prophet Muhammad. Within the Cocoghen tradition, this love manifests as both obedience and belief in the Prophet, deepening one's faith in one of the articles of belief—faith in Allah's messengers. Such devotion represents an ascetic dimension, as it involves striving to strengthen one's obedience to Allah through spiritual love and pious remembrance (Nurkhalis, 2014, p. 192). Therefore, the Cocoghen tradition at Pondok Pesantren Al-Hikam Kemayoran stands as a distinctive expression of asceticism and serves as a reflection of pesantren social practice embedded within its linguistic discourse.



Figure 14. Quran Memorization at Al Hikam Kemayoran Pesantren

Figure 14 depicts the implementation of linguistic discourse at Pondok Pesantren Al-Hikam Kemayoran, particularly in relation to spiritual aspects. Memorization of the Qur'an is mandatory for all students, who are required to report their progress to the *ustad*. This process takes place either individually or in groups after the Maghrib prayer in the *musala*. Under the supervision of the *ustad*, students recite the verses while standing in the courtyard to improve focus and concentration, ensuring they comprehend the meanings

of the verses being memorized.

Qur'an memorization represents a distinctive pesantren tradition that cultivates discipline, as students dedicate their time and attention to spiritual growth. The memorization process not only trains students in recitation but also deepens their understanding of Allah's teachings. Such devotion and sacrifice illustrate a form of spiritual training aimed at drawing closer to Allah. Consequently, this practice reflects spiritual discipline that embodies the ascetic dimension of Islam, viewed as a form of *zuhud* or asceticism (Nurkhalis, 2014, p. 196). In this sense, the tradition of Qur'an memorization stands as evidence of linguistic discourse practices that manifest asceticism through focused attention, self-control, and appreciation of the Creator's teachings.



Figure 15. The Tradition of Reciting Burdah Prayers at Assahliyyin 4 Putri Pesantren

Figure 15 depicts a unique tradition practiced at Pondok Pesantren Assahliyin 4 Putri, known as the tradition of reciting *Burdah* prayers. Burdah refers to a poem that expresses praise as a manifestation of love for the Prophet Muhammad. It is a significant work by Imam Al-Bushiri that narrates the life journey of the Prophet Muhammad, includes prayers, and serves as a means of intercession to him. The emergence of the Burdah poem was a response by Imam Al-Bushiri to the social and cultural decline of morals in society, marked by a relentless pursuit of worldly desires. Thus, the Burdah prayer was initiated to remind the Muslim community to emulate the life of the Prophet Muhammad, control their desires, and return to the teachings and laws of Islam (Abroh, 2018:5).

The implementation of the Burdah prayer at this pesantren has distinctive features: 1) all female students are required to recite the Burdah while wearing a *mukenah* (prayer garment) and forming a circle as a symbol of sanctity, reflection, and unity in remembering Allah and His Messenger; and 2) the recitation of Burdah is conducted every Friday night, a time considered auspicious for religious activities.

Certain aspects of the *Burdah* recitation embody values of asceticism, particularly in their focus on spiritual devotion as an expression of love for Allah and the Prophet Muhammad. Consequently, the tradition of reciting Burdah at Pondok Pesantren Assahliyin 4 Putri represents a distinctive pesantren practice that cultivates love for Allah and His Messenger, fosters self-restraint, and encourages the internalization of Islamic teachings. This aligns with the concept of asceticism, understood as the pursuit of self-perfection through the restraint of desires and the performance of acts of worship in accordance with divine commandments (Schaefer, 2007, p. 194).

The Dimensions of Asceticism in the Distinctive Lifestyle of Pondok Pesantren

The character of santri is shaped through the distinctive culture and traditions of pondok pesantren. According to Osborne and Nikolas (2024, pp. 3–6), tradition, as a form of social culture, significantly influences the development of human personality. The formation of santri character is reflected in the distinctive lifestyle of the pesantren. This pesantren lifestyle represents a way of living within the pesantren environment that embodies religious values and traditions. It is characterized by simplicity in clothing, meals, and sleeping arrangements—a simplicity rooted in the exemplary behavior of the Prophet Muhammad as described in *Al-Syamail al-Muhammadiyyah* (Ghofur, 2023). A simple lifestyle reflects the ascetic dimension of avoiding worldly luxuries, aligning with Perrin's (2007, p. 244) view that the essence of asceticism in Islam lies in renouncing worldly excess and acting in accordance with divine will. There are specific traditions within pondok pesantren that exemplify this simple lifestyle and contain elements of asceticism, representing the continuation of social practices embedded within the linguistic discourse of Pondok Pesantren Al-Hikam Kemayoran, Pondok Pesantren Nurul Cholil, and Pondok Pesantren Assahliyyin 4 Putri.



Figure 16. Santri Clothing Style at Pondok Pesantren Nurul Cholil

Figure 16 exemplifies the clothing style of santri at Pondok Pesantren Nurul Cholil. A notable feature is the long-sleeved garments that extend to the wrists, accompanied by a *songkok* (cap) and a *sarung* (wrap). According to interview findings, this attire is mandatory for santri during activities or programs at the pesantren, with the long sleeves symbolizing respect for the *Kyai* or *Ustad*. Furthermore, male santri are taught to dress simply while maintaining propriety and purity. Clothing considered *halal* and pure includes all garments not made of silk, are not from stolen goods (*ghashaban*),not contaminated by impurities such as urine, and not derived from the skin of carrion (Mujieb, 1994, p. 256). Thus, within the environment of Pondok Pesantren Nurul Cholil, santri are accustomed to dressing in accordance with the pesantren's distinctive norms that uphold purity, modesty, and simplicity.

The clothing style of santri reflects simplicity, embodying the principles of asceticism. This is evident in the uniformity of dress—all santri wear similar long-sleeved garments, *songkok*, and *sarung*—ensuring that no one appears luxurious or distinguished by wealth. According to Yanggo (2010, p. 15), clothing mirrors a person's spirit or personality, particularly in its expression of simplicity. Islam encourages moderation in dress—neither excessive nor shabby (Bahammam, 2013, p. 177)—aligning with Ansharullah's (2019, p. 70) view that Islamic clothing should avoid extravagance or luxury. The prescribed clothing style at Pondok Pesantren Nurul Cholil therefore accords with Islamic law and ascetic principles, emphasizing modesty and restraint. This practice, which discourages anything that hinders obedience to Allah or promotes material excess in dress, exemplifies asceticism, particularly the concept of

zuhud in its exoteric dimension (Taimiyah, 1963, p. 361).



Figures 17. Santri eating practices at Nurul Cholil Pesantren & Al-Hikam Kemayoran Pesantren

Figure 17 highlights the unique eating traditions of santri at Pondok Pesantren Nurul Cholil and Al-Hikam Kemayoran, particularly the communal sharing of food from a single tray among three santri. This practice aims to foster solidarity and curb greed. According to the teachings of the Prophet, excessive consumption can weaken faith, shifting focus to eating and potentially leading to lustful desires or health issues due to overindulgence (Irfan et al., 2023, p. 394). Second, santri are required to sit cross-legged while eating, following the Prophet's recommended etiquette, which promotes proper digestion (Irfan et al., 2023, p. 399). Additionally, eating while standing is discouraged as it does not conform with Islamic dietary etiquette (Rahma et al., 2022, p. 129). Third, santri use the fingers of the right hand to bring food to their mouths, following the practice described by Ibn Ka'ab ibn Malik in HR. Muslim, which emphasizes using three fingers.

These distinctive eating practices embody aspects of asceticism, particularly in reducing desires related to food and consuming meals simply. Al-Tahanawi (1996, p. 915) explains that *zuhud* in asceticism reflects reliance solely on Allah, supported by a simple, non-luxurious dietary pattern. Similarly, Abdullah (2024, p. 231) notes that *zuhud* involves detachment from worldly material affairs to focus on worship. Core elements of asceticism include modest wealth and minimal food consumption (Nurkhalis, 2014, p. 184). The eating practices of santri at Nurul Cholil and Al-Hikam Kemayoran thus illustrate a distinctive pesantren lifestyle characterized by asceticism, particularly in dietary habits that

avoid luxury. This tradition also reflects broader social practices embedded within the pesantren's linguistic discourse. Additional distinctive pesantren traditions that embody social and ascetic practices are described below.



Figures 18. The Tradition of Ro'an at Nurul Cholil Pesantren & Assahliyin 4 Putri Pesantren

Figure 18 represents one of the distinctive traditions of pesantren known as *ro'an*, practiced at Pondok Pesantren Nurul Cholil and Assahliyyin 4 Putri. This tradition involves activities for cleaning the pesantren environment, carried out collectively by santri according to a designated schedule. The *ro'an* tradition is held every Friday, where *santri* cooperate to clean assigned areas, symbolizing togetherness and equality. Contextually, this practice aims to protect *santri* from arrogance while fostering attentiveness to their surroundings as a form of gratitude to the Creator. This concept aligns with the ecological or environmental function as a foundation for developing individual spiritual aspects (Stucky & Andy, 2023, p. 357).

A key component of the *ro'an* tradition reflects asceticism, particularly through the promotion of equality and environmental care as expressions of gratitude to Allah. Instilling equality helps santri avoid pride, which is a behavior contrary to the principles of asceticism described in *al-Zuhd* (Al-Islamiyah, 1999, p. 54). Similarly, cultivating gratitude is an activity aimed at achieving asceticism or *zuhud*, contributing to psychological well-being (Husna, 2016, pp. 16–17). Therefore, the *ro'an* tradition at both Nurul Cholil and Assahliyin 4 Putri is considered a pesantren practice embodying ascetic

principles, emphasizing humility and gratitude.



Figures 19. The Tradition of Reng-Jhereng at Assahliyin 4 Putri Pesantren

The figures above depict the distinctive tradition of Pondok Pesantren Assahliyyin 4 Putri known as *reng-jhereng*. This tradition involves communal cooking activities conducted by santri during *haul* events at the pesantren. A distinctive feature of this activity is that the female santri have specific roles in the cooking process, such as cooking rice, frying vegetables and side dishes, and chopping ingredients. This activity serves as a form of implementing *ukhuwah islamiyah* (Islamic brotherhood) among the santri, fostering a strong sense of solidarity. Additionally, cooking together symbolizes equality in task division, promoting tolerance and controlling the desires of pride. Tolerance, as a form of religious moderation in Indonesia, aligns with the noble values of Pancasila (Aderus, et al., 2024, p. 489).

The ascetic aspect reflected in this activity is the cultivation of self-control and restraint over personal desires, thereby fostering harmonious social interactions. From a contemporary perspective, asceticism emphasizes creating communal values as a means of preserving ecological and social balance (Nurkhalis, 2014, p. 194). Therefore, the *reng-jhereng* tradition represents a distinctive pesantren practice that embodies ascetic principles through social harmony, continuing the social practices expressed in the linguistic discourse of the pesantren.

Conclusion

This research contributes to critical discourse analysis, eco-pesantren studies, and the philosophy of religion by providing a thorough examination of linguistic discourse within pesantren settings, their unique socio-religious practices, and the ideals underpinning religious development. These elements are essential in shaping the distinct identity of pesantren life and in fostering the moral and spiritual character of santri. Consequently, this study offers a foundational understanding for exploring the dimensions of religious philosophy. In the context of globalization, insights from this research on asceticism can inform the development of values and social ethics to address the complexities of modern life. Practically, these findings can guide the creation of character education frameworks within Islamic-based educational environments.

The study produces two major findings. *First,* linguistic discourse reflecting asceticism is expressed through textual descriptions of Qur'anic verses, calligraphic aesthetics, moral guidance from pesantren leaders, and advice from classical scholars. This discourse conveys informative messages regarding spiritual experiences, humility, punctuality in prayer, social-spiritual teachings to avoid arrogance, aspiration towards Allah, trust in Allah (*tawakal*), the importance of knowledge and morality, self-control over worldly pleasures, and gratitude towards Allah. The concept of asceticism in these discourses draws from theories of *zuhd* (renunciation), psychological well-being, morality, Sufism, and reliance on God. *Second,* the unique traditions of pesantren that embody ascetic dimensions are evident in spiritual practices such as congregational prayers, the Samman, Ishari, and Cocoghen traditions, Qur'an memorization, and Burdah recitation. These practices cultivate concentration, establishing a pure spiritual and physical connection with Allah, fostering surrender, practicing monotheism, affirming belief in the Prophet Muhammad, nurturing love for him, and encouraging modest lifestyles. Additionally, these traditions involve simple attire, disciplined eating habits to counteract greed and arrogance, maintaining a clean environment as an expression of gratitude, and promoting social harmony through mutual control of desires and negative traits.

This research focuses specifically on analyzing discourse related to asceticism and its role in shaping ascetic character through the unique traditions of pesantren. It does not explore the effects of ascetic discourse as perceived by *santri*, nor does it extend beyond the three pesantren studied in Bangkalan Regency. Therefore, further research is recommended to conduct comparative analyses of ascetic traditions across different regions and to survey *santri* to

capture their perceptions of the impact of these linguistic discourses.

Acknowledgment

This research is fully supported by the LPPM of Universitas Trunojoyo Madura. The researcher expresses profound gratitude to the institution and all parties who contributed to the implementation of this study.

References

Abdullah, M. (2024). Understanding The Concept of Zuhud in Fashion Trends in The Young Generation of Muslim Women**.** *el Harakah: Jurnal Budaya Islam, 26*(2), 227-244. http://dx.doi.org/10.18860/eh.v26i2.29133

Abroh, I. (2018). *Qoshidah Burdah dengan Makna Pesantren dan Terjemahnya*. Kediri: Pustaka Isyfa' Lana.

Aderus, A., Huda, N., & Pratama, R. (2024). Religious Moderation and Transnational Islamic Ideology: Phenomena and Implications in Indonesia. *Ulumuna: Journal of Islamic Studies, 28*(1), 485-509. https://doi.org/10.20414/ujis.v28i1.969

Adnani, K., Udasmoro, W, Noviani, R. (2016). Resistensi Perempuan Terhadap Tradisi-Tradisi di Pesantren Analisis Wacana Kritis Terhadap Novel Perempuan Berkalung Sorban.*Kawistara: Jurnal Ilmiah Sosial dan Humaniora,* 7(2), 143-156. https://doi.org/10.22146/kawistara.15520

Ahyar & Nurul, I. (2024). Culture-Based Dakwah and Education Values: A Study of TGH. M. Najamuddin Makmun's Work. *Ulumuna: Journal of Islamic Studies , 28*(1), 108-135. https://doi.org/10.20414/ujis.v28i1.702

Al-Ghazali, I. (2003). *Ihya' Ulumuddin*. Surabaya: Gitamedia Press.

Al-Jawi, M.N. (2019). *Maroqil 'Ubudiyah Syarah Bidayah Al-Hidayah*, *Penerjemah: Zaid Husein Al-Hamid*. Surabaya: Mutiara Ilmu.

al-Tahanawi, M. A. (1996).*Mausuat Kasfu Ishtilahat al-Funun Wa al-Ulum*, tahqiq Ali Dahruj. Beirut: Maktabah Libanun Nasyirun.

Ansharullah. (2019). Pakaian Muslimah dalam Perspektif Hadis dan Hukum Islam. *Diktum: Jurnal Syariah dan Hukum* 17(1), 65-86. https://doi.org/10.35905/diktum.v17i1.664

Anwar, M. (1998). *Sejarah Nabi Muhammad Saw.* Jakarta: S.A Alaydrus.

Arikunto, S. (2016). Manajemen Penelitian. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta

Aulia, R. N., et al. (2024). Eco-Pesantren Modeling for Environmentally Friendly Behavior: New Lessons from Indonesia.*International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education (IJERE)* 13 (1), 223-229. http://doi.org/10.11591/ijere.v13i1.25930

Azra, A. (2006).*Islam in the Indonesian World: An Account of Institutional Formation*. Bandung: Mizan Pustaka.

Bahammam, F. S. (2013). *Fikih Modern Praktis 101 Panduan Hidup Muslim Sehari-hari*. Jakarta: Kalil.

Bakri, F.A. (2020). Living Qur'an: Tradisi Ratib Samman dalam Tarekat Naqsabandiyah di Yayasan Syekh Abdul Wahab Rokan Pekanbaru dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an. *Skripsi*. Riau: Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau.

Campo, J.E. (2009). *Encyclopedia of Islam.* New York: Fact on File Inc.

Central Government, "Undang-Undang (UU) Nomor 18 Tahun 2019 tentang Pesantren" (Regulation Database of the BPK's Legal Documentation and Information Network, 2019), https://peraturan.bpk.go.id/Details/122743/uu-no-18-tahun-2019

Darat, S. (1906) *Lathaif al-Taharat wa Asrar al-Sholah Fi Kaifiyat Sholat al-Abidin wa al-Arifin*. Semarang: Toha Putera.

Fahrudin, F., Islamy, M., Faqihuddin, A., Parhan, M., & Kamaludin, K. (2024). The Implications of Sufism Akhlaqi to Strengthen The Noble Morals of Indonesian Students. *el-Harakah: Jurnal Budaya Islam, 26*(1), 74-93. http://dx.doi.org/10.18860/eh.v26i1.26192

Fairclough, N. (2001). *Language and Power*. England:Pearson Educated Limited.

Fairclough, N. (2011). Critical Discourse Analysis," in *Buku Fairclough Bab I*, eds. Nurpadillah, Veni dan Aristia, Fatmawati. Semarang.

Fajrin, D. I., Muda'is, H., Yulianti, Y. (2022). Konsepsi Pengendalian Diri dalam Perspektif Psikologi Sufi dan Filsafat Stoisisme: Studi Komparatif

dalam Buku Karya Robert Frager dan Henry Manampiring. *Jurnal Riset Agama,* 2(1), 164-182. https://doi.org/10.15575/jra.v2i1.17122

Fredricks, R. (2013). *Fasting: An Exceptional Humn experience*. Bloomington: All Things Well Publications.

Ghofur, W.A. (March 28, 2023). *Gaya Hidup di Pesantren.* nuonline.or.id. https://www.nu.or.id/opini/gaya-hidup-di-pesantren-ONtbi

Ghoni, A. (2016). Konsep Tawakal dan Relevansinya dengan Tujuan Pendidikan Islam: Studi Komparasi Mengenai Konsep Tawakal menurut M. Quraish Shihab dan Yunan Nasution.*An-Nuha: Jurnal Kajian Islam, Pendidikan, Budaya dan Sosial,* 3 (1), 109-121. https://ejournal.staimadiun.ac.id/index.php/annuha/article/view/103/66

Gulen, F. (2006). *Key Concept in The Practice of Sufism: Emerald Hills Of Heart*, tras. Ali Unal. New Jersey: The Light Inc.

Hafiun, M. (2017). Zuhud dalam Ajaran Tasawuf.*Hisbah: Journal of Islamic Counseling and Da'wah Guidance* 14 (1), 77-93. https://doi.org/10.14421/hisbah.2017.141-07

Haryatmoko. (2017). *Critical Discourse Analysis (Analisis Wacana Kritis)*. Depok: RajaGrafindo Persada.

He. (2018). Shengtai Yuyanxue de Chaoxueke Fazhan: Alun Sitibu Jiaoshou Fangtanlu [Interdisciplinary development of ecological linguistics: Interview with Professor Alan Stibbe],". *Foreign Language Studies 2*.

Husna, A.N. (2016). Psikologi Anti-Materialisme. *Buletin Psikologi,* 24 (1),12-21. https://doi.org/10.22146/bpsi.12676

Ibn, A. a., & Utsman, al. (2003). *Fatawa An al-Katub*. Saudi Arabia: Dar al-Shami'i li al-Natsar Wa al-Tauqi.

Irfan, F., Rahman, N., Azzahra, S. F., Husin, G. M. I. (2023). Pola Makan Sesuai Anjuran Nabi Muhammad SAW Menurut Perspektif Kesehatan. *Journal of Creative Student Research (JCSR), 1*(5), 393-406. https://doi.org/10.55606/jcsrpolitama.v1i5.2730

Ismail, A. M. (2014).Journal of the Concept of Zuhud According to Imam Ghazali and Ibn Qayyim.*In International Conference On Islamic Educations*, *At UKM*

Bangi Selangor. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/305476033_Konsep_Zuhud_Menurut_Imam_Ghazali

Istianah. (2015). Shalat Sebagai Perjalanan Ruhani Menuju Allah. *Esoterik, 1*(1), 47-64. http://dx.doi.org/10.21043/esoterik.v1i1.943.

Khoeron, M. (2022). Pesantren: Dulu, Kini, dan Mendatang. Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia. https://kemenag.go.id/opini/pesantren-dulu-kini-dan-mendatang-ft7l9d.

Khotimah, K. Lutfitasari, W., Taembo, M., & Hipni, M., (2024). Tawaduk Santri In Nusantara Cultural Perspective: A Multi-Discourse Analysis. *el-Harakah: Jurnal Budaya Islam, 26*(2), 393-417. http://dx.doi.org/10.18860/eh.v26i2.28684

Kitab al-Zuhd. (1999). Dar al-Basya'ir al-Islamiyah.

Luan, L., & Dong Z. (2024). Ecological discourse analysis of Russian educational texts based on the transitivity system," *Cogent Arts & Humanities, 11*(1), 1-14. https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2024.2399369

Muafiah, E., Sofiana, N. E., & Khasanah, U. (2022). Pesantren Education in Indonesia: Efforts to Create Child-Friendly Pesantren," *Ulumuna: Journal of Islamic Studies, 26*(2), 447-471. https://doi.org/10.20414/ujis.v26i2.558

Mujieb, M. A. A. (1994). *Kamus Istilah Fiqih*. Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus.

Nawir, M. Y., & Indo S. (2024). Tasawuf Maqamat dan Ahwal Serta Perkembangannya dalam Dunia Islam. *Madani: Jurnal Ilmiah Multidisiplin, 2*(3), 407-414. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.12666257

Ni'mah, Z. A. (2020). Selawat Nabi in The Construction of Local Sufis and Revivalists in Indonesia.*Didaktika Religia* 8(2), 311-334. https://doi.org/10.30762/didaktika.v8i2.2703

Olson, C. (2011).*Religious Studies: The Key Concept*. New York: Routledge.

Osborne, T., & Nikolas R. (2024). Against Posthumanism: Notes towards an Ethopolitics of Personhood." *Sage Journals: Theory, Culture & Society, 42*(1), 3-21. https://doi.org/10.1177/02632764231178472

Perrin, D.B. (2007). *Studying Christian Spirituality*. New York: Routledge.

Rahmah, N. M. (2022). Etika Makan Nabi Dalam Perspektif Sains Medis. *Prosiding Konferensi Integrasi Interkoneksi Islam dan Sains, 4*(1), 128-133. https://ejournal.uin-suka.ac.id/saintek/kiiis/article/view/3277

Robinson, J.T. (2012).*Asceticism, Eschatology, oppotion To Philosophy: The Arabic Translation And Commentary Of Salmon Ben Yerohan On Qohelet (Ecclesiates).* Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV.

Sahid. (October 29, 2019). Cocoghen, Tradisi Masyarakat Madura Menyambut Tanggal 1 Bulan Maulid Nabi. *jtvmaduranews.com*. https://jtvmaduranews.com/cocoghen-tradisi-masyarakat-madura-menyambut-tanggal-1-bulan-maulid-nabi/bangkalan/

Sarawat, A. (2018).*Shalat Berjamaah.* Jakarta Selatan: Rumah Fiqih Publishing.

Schaefer, U. (2007). *Baha'i Ethics in Light of Scripture: An Introduction*, Vol. 1. Oxford: George Ronald Publisher.

Stibbe, A. (2015). *Ecolnguistics: language, ecology, and the stories we live by.* London and New York: Routledge.

Stucky, K., & Andy. (2022). The evolution of religiosity by kin selection. *Routledge Taylor & Francis Group: Religion, Brain & Behavior, 12*(4), 347-364. https://doi.org/10.1080/2153599X.2022.2076727

Sudaryanto. (2015). Metode dan Aneka Teknik Analisis Bahasa. Yogyakarta: Sanata Dharma University Press.

Sugiyono. (2015). Memahami Penelitian Kualitatif. Bandung: Alfabeta.

Suhartini, A. (2016). The Internalization of Islamic Values In Pesantren. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam: Islamic Educational Institution Concerning Islamic Education, 2*(3), 429-444. https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v2i3.827

Sunjana, D., Saringendyanti, E. ., & Nugrahanto, W. (2024). Praktik Asketisme Pra Islam dan Rekonsiliasi terhadap Islamisasi di Gunung Kumbang, Brebes, Jawa Tengah (Abad XVI-XXIM). *Jayapangus Press Ganaya: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Humaniora, 7*(4), 170-184. https://doi.org/10.37329/ganaya.v7i4.3485

Suryaningsih & Tedi, G. (2023). Hegemoni Pesantren Bahrul Ulum di Desa

Tambak Rejo, Jombang." *Jurnal Locus: Penelitian & Pengabdian, 2*(10), 964-975. https://doi.org/10.58344/locus.v2i10.1773

Syukur, A. (2000). *Zuhud di Abad Modern.* Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.

Taimiyah, I. (1963). *Majmuah al-Fatawa Shaikh al-Islam*. Riyadh: Matabi Riyadh.

Taskiyatuz, Z. A., Aziz, A., Lestari, P. (2024). Peran Tasawuf Untuk Kesehatan Mental Masyarakat Modern." *Jurnal Review Pendidikan dan Pengajaran, 7*(2), 5383-5388. https://doi.org/10.31004/jrpp.v7i2.27702

Wahid, A. (1971). *Pesantren dan Sub-Kultur dalam Bunga Rampai Pesantren*. Jakarta: Dharma Bhakti.

Waskito, AM. (2014). *Pro dan Kontra Maulid Nabi*. Jakarta: Pustaka Al Kautsar.

Ya'cub, A. B. (1974). *Makna al-Barzanji dan Pidato Memperingati Sejarah Nabi Muhammad s.a.w.* Firma Islamiyah.

Yanggo, H.T. (2010). *Fiqh Perempuan Kontemporer*. Jakarta: Ghalia Indonesia.

DOI: 10.18860/eh.v27i2.36570

STOIC RESILIENCE, MORAL AUTONOMY, AND THE DICHOTOMY OF CONTROL PARALLEL TAWAKKUL, SABR, AND IKHTIYAR

Michael Yurievich Kuznetsov
V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University, Kharkiv, Ukraine
Email: pwanz87@gmail.com

Received: September 21, 2025
Revised: November 22, 2025
Accepted: November 27, 2025

Abstract

The need to uncover how Islamic intellectual and spiritual traditions have historically interacted with non-Islamic systems of thought to develop a distinct ethical psychology grounded in revelation. Despite the Qur'an and Islamic scholarship offering profound frameworks for emotional resilience–such as tawakkul, sabr, and rida bil-qada'–the specific historical reception of Epictetus's Stoic ethics within Islamic thought remains largely underexplored. This research addresses that gap by systematically tracing how Muslim philosophers and theologians received, adapted, or Islamized Epictetus's ideas of self-mastery and rational discipline. Its novelty lies in integrating historical-philosophical analysis with contemporary Islamic psychology, thereby offering a new interpretive bridge between Stoic practical ethics and Qur'anic models of inner reform and mental resilience. This article examines Epictetus' Stoicism as a timeless practical philosophy of moral freedom and resilience, with particular emphasis on its striking structural parallels and historical reception within Islamic ethical thought. The central purpose is to demonstrate that the famous Stoic "dichotomy of control" (what is eph'hemin and what is not), the discipline of assent, and the concept of the inner citadel find close equivalents in core Islamic concepts of ikhtiyar (sphere

of moral choice), tawakkul (trust in divine decree), sabr (patient perseverance), and rida bil-qada' (contentment with God's ordainment). Using a comparative textual and historical-critical method, the study analyses primary sources from Epictetus (Discourses and Enchiridion) alongside Muslim thinkers who explicitly or implicitly engaged Stoic ideas. The analysis reveals that Stoic therapeutic techniques entered the Islamic tradition through the Graeco-Arabic translation movement and were consciously adapted to enrich Qur'anic-Sufi ethics of self-mastery and spiritual resilience. The scholarly contribution of this study goes beyond general "Stoicism–Islam" comparisons. It demonstrates how Epictetus' practical methods were integrated into Islamic moral psychology. This approach provides contemporary Muslim scholarship with a pre-modern, cross-cultural resource to address mental health, ethical decision-making amid uncertainty, and cosmopolitan responsibility in a globalized world.

Kebutuhan untuk mengungkap bagaimana tradisi intelektual dan spiritual Islam secara historis berinteraksi dengan sistem pemikiran non-Islam guna mengembangkan psikologi etis yang khas dan berlandaskan wahyu masih sangat penting. Meskipun Al-Qur'an dan khazanah keilmuan Islam telah menawarkan kerangka mendalam bagi ketangguhan emosional–seperti tawakkul, sabr, dan rida bil-qada'–penerimaan historis terhadap etika Stoa Epictetus dalam pemikiran Islam masih jarang dikaji secara mendalam. Penelitian ini berupaya mengisi kekosongan tersebut dengan menelusuri secara sistematis bagaimana para filsuf dan teolog Muslim menerima, mengadaptasi, atau mengislamkan gagasan Epictetus tentang penguasaan diri dan disiplin rasional. Kebaruan penelitian ini terletak pada integrasi antara analisis historis-filosofis dan psikologi Islam kontemporer, sehingga menghadirkan jembatan interpretatif baru antara etika praktis Stoa dan model Qur'ani tentang reformasi batin serta ketangguhan mental. Artikel ini mengkaji Stoikisme Epiktetus sebagai filosofi praktis kebebasan moral dan ketahanan yang abadi, dengan penekanan khusus pada kesejajaran strukturalnya yang mencolok dan penerimaan historisnya dalam pemikiran etika Islam. Tujuan utamanya adalah untuk menunjukkan bahwa "dikotomi kendali" Stoik yang terkenal (apa yang eph'hemin dan apa yang tidak), disiplin persetujuan (assent), dan konsep benteng batin memiliki padanan yang erat dalam konsep inti Islam: ikhtiyar (lingkup pilihan moral), tawakkul (kepercayaan pada ketetapan ilahi), sabr (ketekunan yang sabar), dan rida bil-qada' (kerelaan terhadap ketetapan Tuhan). Dengan menggunakan metode komparatif tekstual dan historis-kritis, penelitian ini menganalisis sumber-sumber primer dari Epiktetus (Discourses dan Enchiridion) di samping para pemikir Muslim yang secara eksplisit atau implisit melibatkan ide-ide Stoik. Analisis mengungkapkan bahwa teknik terapeutik Stoik memasuki tradisi Islam melalui gerakan penerjemahan Yunani-Arab dan secara sadar diadaptasi untuk memperkaya etika Al-Qur'an-Sufi tentang penguasaan diri dan ketahanan spiritual. Kontribusi ilmiah dari penelitian ini melampaui perbandingan umum antara "Stoisisme dan Islam." Studi ini menunjukkan bagaimana metode

praktis Epictetus diintegrasikan ke dalam psikologi moral Islam. Pendekatan ini memberikan khazanah keilmuan Islam kontemporer sumber daya lintas budaya dari masa pra-modern untuk menghadapi isu kesehatan mental, pengambilan keputusan etis di tengah ketidakpastian, serta tanggung jawab kosmopolitan dalam dunia yang semakin mengglobal.

Keywords: *Epictetus Stoicism, dichotomy of control, Islamic ethical thought, resilience, moral autonomy*

Introduction

The Islamic and Western civilizations, from the moment of their formation and their claims to dominant positions in the world, have been in a state of constant rivalry and confrontation, while simultaneously engaging in mutual cultural interaction. The twentieth century, which elevated Western civilization to global leadership and made it the foundation of an emerging world civilization under globalization, simultaneously placed Islamic civilization before a difficult choice: either adapt to new conditions by reforming its core values or remain a stagnating periphery. This situation generated an acute ideological and socio-political crisis in the Muslim world and compelled the search for an adequate response to the challenge of modernity. Many Muslim thinkers and movements find this response in Islam itself, which was and remains the dominant form of social consciousness and the chief symbol of Muslim identity. The slogan "Islam is the solution" thus appeals to the historical past while simultaneously serving as a reaction to the deepening Western influence in Muslim countries under globalization (Komar, 2004, pp. 6-7).

This pattern of a civilization turning inward to its own philosophical and spiritual resources during periods of disruptive, large-scale transformation finds a powerful historical parallel in the origins of Stoicism. The roots of Stoicism reach deeply into the soil of a transforming society. Following the death of Alexander the Great, the Greek world fragmented into sprawling kingdoms, where the once-proud city-states lost their autonomy to larger, more impersonal structures. This shift marked a profound alteration in the social fabric: the old aristocratic bonds dissolved, giving way to a cosmopolitan mix of peoples, cultures, and classes (Sellars, 2006; Wenley, 1924). Merchants from Phoenicia and Cilicia mingled with Greek scholars, slaves from Phrygia rose to influence, and kings sought wisdom to legitimize their rule. In this environment, philosophy could no longer afford to be the leisure pursuit of the elite; it had to address the realities of displacement, economic flux, and

the erosion of traditional communities (Sellars, 2006).

Stoicism, with its emphasis on moral self-sufficiency (Becker, 2017; Epictetus, 1925–1928; Long, 2004), emerged as a response to these material conditions, proclaiming that true freedom lies not in wealth or status, but in the rational control of one's inner world (Epictetus, 1968; Robertson, 2010; Robertson, 2019). Its founder—a man of Semitic origin—arrived in Athens not as a conqueror but as a shipwrecked trader. His experiences on the high seas, where fortunes could vanish in a storm, shaped a worldview that distinguished between what we can control and what we cannot. He taught on a public porch, accessible to all, drawing listeners from diverse walks of life—laborers, foreigners, and the curious alike. His doctrine posited a universe governed by a divine reason (*logos*) that permeated all things (Colish, 1990; Sellars, 2006), making every individual part of a greater whole. This idea of cosmic unity was revolutionary in a time of division, suggesting that social hierarchies were mere illusions and that virtue alone defines human worth (Epictetus, 1925–1928; Sellars, 2006; Wenley, 1924).

Contemporary interest in ancient philosophy, ranging from Nietzsche to present-day thinkers, stems from the search for responses to the challenges confronting today's civilization. Particular attention is paid to reflective attitudes and the recurring symptoms of civilizational crisis, which are often linked to the sense of human "belittling" in both existential and cultural terms. The current global crisis resembles the situation that arose during the emergence of Hellenistic philosophy, when humans first recognized themselves as part of the Cosmos. The transition from polis to empire, and the dominance of culture over nature, led to a profound loss of meaning and sense of place in the world. Under globalization, this problem has once again become relevant, prompting people to turn to ancient philosophical traditions for answers. One major pathway for the renewed engagement with Stoic ethics in modern discourse has been psychology—particularly psychotherapy. The revival of interest in Stoic reflection, efforts to reconstruct an image of happiness aligned with Stoic ideals, and the adaptation of these ethical attitudes to the modern scientific worldview, now unite historical, philosophical, and applied studies of Stoicism (Korobeinikov, 2024).

In contemporary Muslim societies, including Indonesia, individuals increasingly face challenges such as mental health struggles, economic uncertainty, globalization-induced alienation, and complex ethical decision-making under conditions of amid rapid social change. These issues have prompted a growing

interest in practical philosophies that cultivate inner resilience and moral autonomy. Although Stoicism—particularly the teachings of Epictetus—is already widely recognized in Indonesia through popular literature, CBT-based therapy, and public intellectual discussions, its potential as a framework for Islamic ethical reflection remains largely underexplored in academic scholarship. This gap is notable because Epictetus' core doctrines—namely the dichotomy of control (what is "up to us" versus what is not) (Epictetus, 1925–1928; Long, 2004), the discipline of assent, and the inviolability of moral purpose—display remarkable structural and functional parallels with central Islamic ethical concepts such as *ikhtiyar* (sphere of moral choice) (Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, 2020), *tawakkul* (active trust in divine decree), *sabr* (patient perseverance), *rida bil-qada'* (contentment with God's ordainment), and *taqwa al-qalb* (piety of the heart) (Al-Ghazali, 1993; Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, 2020).

The Islamic tradition already possesses a rich reservoir of psychological resources for resilience—*tawakkul, sabr, rida bil-qada',* and the Qur'anic emphasis on transforming oneself before expecting change in the external world (Qur'an 13:11). However, only a few studies have systematically explored how Epictetus's practical philosophy was historically received and adapted by Muslim thinkers. Moreover, even fewer have examined its potential relevance for contemporary Islamic mental-health discourse.

Previous comparative studies have generally adopted one of three approaches: (a) broad surveys of Hellenistic influence on early Islamic philosophy (Gutas, 1998; Adamson, 2016); (b) focused examinations of individual thinkers such as al-Kindi or Miskawayh who explicitly engaged with Stoic texts (Fakhry, 2013; Groff, 2004); (c) modern psychological comparisons between Stoic practices and Islamic spirituality that emphasize therapeutic parallels but often lack sufficient historical depth and contextualization (Rothman & Coyle, 2018). None, however, systematically traced the reception and adaptation of Epictetus's practical ethics across the full spectrum of classical and post-classical Muslim thought while grounding the analysis in primary Islamic sources.

In essence, Stoicism is a philosophy of empowerment—born from the material struggles of antiquity yet timeless in its moral insight. It invites us to embrace the flux of the world, to cultivate virtue as the ultimate good, and to live with the tranquil confidence that arises from rational self-mastery. As societies continue to evolve, driven by economic forces and cultural shifts, Stoicism endures as a steadfast companion, reminding humanity that the greatest empire is the one within.

The Stoic lexicon begins with *logos*, the rational principle governing the universe and serving as an analogue to divine reason. It underpins all Stoic thought, suggesting that human reason participates in the cosmic order and thereby enables ethical action (Wenley, 1924, p. 32). *Apatheia*, often misunderstood as emotional suppression, refers instead to a state of inner tranquility free from destructive passions, achieved through the rational regulation of *pathe* (emotions) (Wenley, 1924, p. 45). The dichotomy of control—distinguishing *ta eph' hemin* (things within our power, such as thoughts and actions) from *ta oukeph' hêmin* (things beyond our power, such as wealth or health)—is central to Stoic ethics. This binary guides moral practice, urging focus on internal mastery rather than futile resistance to fate (*heimarmene*), the predetermined cosmic order (Wenley, 1924, p. 34). *Karteria* (endurance) and *sophrosyne* (temperance) further reinforce resilience, while *aret* (virtue)—comprising wisdom, courage, justice, and temperance)—defines the supreme good, rejecting external possessions as morally indifferent (*adiaphora*).

Table 1. Comparison of Core Stoic and Islamic Ethical Concepts

Stoic Concept (Epictetus)	Islamic Parallel	Key References
Dichotomy of control (*eph' hemin*)	*Ikhtiyar* vs. *qadar*; human responsibility vs. divine decree	Qur'an 13:11; al-Ghazali, Ihya' IV
Judging impressions (*prohairesis*)	*Husn al-zann* vs. *su'u al-zann*; *taqwa* of the heart	Qur'an 49:12; Ibn Qayyim, Madarij
Amor fati / acceptance of fate	Rida bil-qada'; *tawakkul*	Qur'an 2:156; Hadith "tie your camel..."
Endurance of hardship (*karteria*)	Sabr and muraqaba	Qur'an 2:155–157, 94:5-6; al-Ghazali
Inner citadel / moral autonomy	*Hima al-qalb*; protection of the *nafs*	Ibn ʿAta' Allah, Hikam; al-Muhasibi
Cosmopolitanism (citizen of the universe)	*Ukhuwwa insaniyya*; umma beyond race	Qur'an 49:13; Hadith "all creatures are God's family"

Stoic ontology is strictly materialist and monistic: all reality consists

of corporeal substances animated by *pneuma*, a fiery breath that creates a continuum from stones to human souls. The cosmos is an organic unity (*holon*) sustained by varying degrees of tension (*tonos*) and governed by *logos* (Wenley, 1924, p. 33). Unlike Platonic dualism, the Stoics rejected incorporeal forms; the soul was viewed as a corporeal disposition (*hexis*) that disperses at death, followed by periodic cosmic renewal through *ekpyrosis*. Muslim thinkers who encountered this ontology through the Graeco-Arabic translation movement generally reframed it theocentrically while retaining its functional parallels. Al-Kindi and al-Razi accepted the Stoic notion of a single active principle (*pneuma* ≈ divine heat or *ruh*) permeating and organizing passive matter, but they identified it with the Qur'anic light of divine creation (Qur'an 24:35). Miskawayh explicitly adopted the Stoic continuum of being and the concept of *tonos* as degrees of perfection of the soul's perfection, mapping it onto the Islamic hierarchy of mineral, vegetal, animal, and rational souls (Miskawayh, 1968, pp. 24-28). Later Ash'arite theology rejected strict materialism yet preserved the idea of interconnected corporeal causality under divine habit (*'ada*), echoing the Stoic *sympatheia*.

Stoic ethics centres on *orthos logos* (right reason) as the sole guide to virtue (*arete*). Only moral purpose (*prohairesis*) is "up to us"; everything else is indifferent (*adiaphora*). Perfect actions (*katorthomata*) fully align with nature, while appropriate actions (*kathekonta*) retain moral value even when imperfect. The goal is *apatheia*—freedom from destructive passions (*pathe*)—replaced by rational *eupatheiai* (good emotions) (Wenley, 1924, p. 81). Epictetus's stark maxim, "What need is there to weep over parts of life? The whole of it calls for tears" (Discourses, I.27), underscores radical acceptance of the human condition. Islamic receptions recast *apatheia* as a disciplined spiritual state harmonized with revelation. Al-Ghazali maps Stoic *propatheiai* and *eupatheiai* onto the Islamic distinction between involuntary first movements of the heart (*khatir*) and blameworthy or praiseworthy settled emotions, prescribing rational assent (*tashdiq*) to achieve inner peace (Ihya', Book 21 & 35). Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya repeatedly cites the Qur'anic principle "God does not change a people's condition until they change what is in themselves" (13:11), as an exact equivalent of the Stoic dichotomy, insisting that true *sabr* and *rida* are rational *eupatheiai*, not emotional suppression. Shah Waliullah explicitly equates *prohairesis* with *ikhtiyar al-qalb*—the sovereign moral choice that remains free even under external compulsion.

Stoic cosmology is deterministic and teleological: *heimarmene* (fate) is

identical with providence (*pronoia*) executed through *logos*. The cosmos is a living being (*zoon*) renewed through *ekpyrosis*, and all parts are linked by *sympatheia*. Cleanthes's "Hymn to Zeus" celebrates humanity as "citizens of the universe" (*kosmou politai*) bound by rational duty (Wenley, 1924, p. 33). Muslim thinkers reinterpreted this framework through the lens of *tawhid*. The Stoic *logos-pronoia* becomes divine wisdom (*hikma*) and mercy (*rahma*), while *heimarmene* is re-expressed as *qadar* and *qada'*. The vision of the cosmos as a living, sympathetic unity appears in Sufi formulations of *wahdat al-wujud* (Ibn Arabi) and in the Ash'arite notion of continual creation (*khalq jadid*). The Stoic cosmopolis is directly echoed in the Qur'anic universal brotherhood (49:13) and in al-Ghazali's description of the believer as one who sees the world as a single city governed by divine law. Shah Waliullah, drawing upon both Stoic and Persian sources, describes the cosmos as an interconnected moral order in which human moral effort participates in divine harmony—almost verbatim the Stoic *sympatheia*. Thus, while ontological materialism was softened or retheologized, the functional core of Stoic ontology (unity and interconnection), ethics (focus on moral choice and rational equanimity), and cosmology (providential order and cosmic citizenship) found deep resonance and creative adaptation throughout Islamic intellectual history.

The research problem lies in the overlooked role of Stoicism as a moral toolkit for addressing modern mental health crises—despite its ancient origins in Hellenistic social upheaval. The present study therefore poses the following central research question: "How can Epictetus's core ethical principle—the dichotomy of control—be historically and theologically reconciled with Islamic concepts of *ikhtiyar, tawakkul,* and *sabr* to provide a robust framework for cultivating psychological resilience and moral agency among contemporary Muslims facing conditions of uncertainty and distress?".

The working hypothesis is that Epictetus's practical ethics, far from being alien to Islam, were consciously adopted or independently mirrored by major Muslim thinkers across centuries. These principles can thus be re-appropriated today as an Islamic-compatible therapeutic philosophy of moral strength and resilience. Through comparative textual analysis of Epictetus and seven key Muslim intellectuals—al-Kindi, al-Razi, Miskawayh, al-Ghazali, Ibn Tufayl, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, and Shah Waliullah—this article aims to advance discourse on comparative Islamic philosophy and support the development of Islamic psychology and counselling in Indonesia and beyond.

Method

This study adopts a qualitative research design employing a comparative textual-historical method integrated with elements of philosophical hermeneutics. The primary sources consist of the original Greek texts of Epictetus—*Discourses* (as preserved by Arrian) and *Enchiridion* (critical editions: Oldfather, 1925–1928; Boter, 1999)—which serve as the foundational reference point for authentic Stoic teachings on the dichotomy of control, moral purpose (*prohairesis*), and therapeutic practice.

Data collection and analysis proceed in four systematic stages. *First,* a close reading and thematic extraction from Epictetus's works were conducted to identify core doctrines—the dichotomy of control, discipline of assent, inner citadel. *Second,* seven representative Arabic-Islamic primary sources were selected and examined: al-Kindi's *Fi al Hila li-daf' al-ahzan*, al-Razi's *al-Uibb al-Ruhani*, Miskawayh's *Tahdhib al-akhlaq*, al-Ghazali's *Ihya'* Book 35, Ibn Tufayl's Hayy ibn Yaqzan, Ibn Qayyim's *Madarij al-Salikin*, Shah Waliullah's *Hujjat Allah al-Baligha*—each chosen for its explicit or implicit engagement with Stoic therapeutic motifs. *Third,* a comparative conceptual mapping was undertaken (e.g., *eph' hemin - ikhtiyar/tawakkul*; *apatheia - sabr/rida*) through parallel-text tables and philological analysis of key terms. *Fourth,* a historical-contextual interpretation was performed to trace possible transmission routes (Graeco-Arabic translation movement, Persian intermediaries) and to evaluate the extent of convergence versus direct influence. No quantitative instruments or statistical analysis are employed, as the objective is interpretive understanding of textual parallels and their theological-ethical significance rather than measurement of empirical variables.

This research contributes a distinct scholarly advancement to the field of Islamic cultural studies and comparative philosophy by offering the first systematic examination of Epictetus's practical ethics—particularly the dichotomy of control—as a historically received and theologically compatible therapeutic framework within classical and post-classical Islamic thought. While previous research has either examined the broader Hellenistic influence on early Islamic philosophy, analyzed individual *falasifa* who explicitly engaged Stoic texts, or proposed psychological parallels between Stoicism and Islamic spirituality without sufficient historical grounding, no prior study has traced the reception and creative adaptation of Epictetus's core doctrines *(eph' hemin, prohairesis,* inner citadel) across seven representative Muslim thinkers spanning from the 9th to the 18th century (al-Kindi, al-Razi, Miskawayh, al-Ghazali, Ibn Tufayl,

Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, and Shah Waliullah) while consistently anchoring the comparison in primary Arabic sources and Qur'anic-Sufi concepts of *ikhtiyar, tawakkul, sabr,* and *rida bil-qada'*.

The originality of this study lies in three interrelated aspects. *First,* it moves beyond generic or partial parallels to demonstrate precise structural isomorphisms and identifiable historical transmission routes, thereby establishing Epictetus's Stoicism as an authentic pre-modern resource already assimilated into the Islamic ethical tradition. *Second,* it positions this integration as a legitimate and enriching framework for contemporary Islamic psychology and mental-health discourse in Muslim-majority societies—particularly Indonesia, where anxiety and depression rates continue to rise. *Third,* by focusing on the theological reconciliation of the Stoic dichotomy of control with Islamic anthropology, the study proposes a novel Islamically grounded model of resilience that complements indigenous concepts without compromising *tawhid* or prophetic authority.

Thus, the study not only fills a significant gap in comparative Islamic philosophy, but also offers practical value for Islamic counselling, *da□wa*, and educational programs aimed at cultivating psychological well-being and moral agency in an era of globalized uncertainty.

Finding and Discussion

The analysis of primary texts from Epictetus (*Discourses* and *Enchiridion*) and seven major Muslim thinkers—al-Kindi, al-Razi, Miskawayh, al-Ghazal, Ibn Tufayl, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, and Shah Waliullah—yields several key findings:

First, Epictetus's dichotomy of control (*eph' hemin / ouk eph' hemin*) was directly adopted by early falasifa (al-Kindi, al-Razi, Miskawayh) and independently replicated by later scholars (al-Ghazali, Ibn Qayyim, Shah Waliullah) through Qur'anic hermeneutics, resulting in a consistent Islamic formulation: full moral responsibility lies only in *ikhtiyar* and inner assent, while external outcomes belong to divine *qadar*, expressed through active *tawakkul*.

Second, the Stoic concepts of *prohairesis* (moral purpose), discipline of assent, and the inner citadel find exact functional equivalents in Islamic psychology of the heart (*qalb*), *tasdiq,* and *hima al-qalb,* affirming that true freedom and resilience are preserved regardless of physical or social circumstances.

Third, *apatheia* and rational *eupatheiai* are transformed into disciplined states of *sabr* and *rida bil-qada'*—not as passive resignation, but as cognitively

reframed equanimity grounded in *tawhid*.

These findings confirm that Epictetus's practical ethics was historically assimilated into the Islamic intellectual tradition as a legitimate therapeutic framework. It offers contemporary Muslims a pre-modern, Islamically authentic model for cultivating psychological resilience amid mental-health crises and economic instability. Moreover, the findings demonstrate that Epictetus' practical philosophy was never perceived as incompatible with Islamic theology. Rather, Muslim thinkers consciously integrated—or independently converged—identical therapeutic principles, transforming Stoic rational self-mastery into a theocentric ethic of *tawakkul*-informed resilience.

In the contemporary Indonesian and wider Muslim context, this historical integration holds significant practical implications, particularly in relation to mental-health challenges, economic uncertainty and social pressure. Regarding the first issue—mental health—Indonesia currently records more than 19 million cases of anxiety and depressive disorders (Basrowi et al., 2024; WHO SEARO, 2024). Many sufferers experience fatalistic interpretations of *qadar*, which can foster learned helplessness. The reconciled Epictetan-Islamic model offers a clinically and theologically coherent alternative: individuals are responsible only for their judgments and efforts (*ikhtiyar* + dichotomy of control), while outcomes rest with God (*tawakkul*). This framework aligns directly with cognitive reframing techniques already utilized in Islamic CBT programmes (e.g., Rumah Konsultasi Islam, UIN Malang) and aligns with the Ministry of Health's 2020–2024 mental health strategy.

The second implication concerns economic uncertainty and social pressure. Rapid urbanization, gig-economy precarity, and social-media comparison culture increasingly generate chronic stress and feelings of inadequacy. The Epictetan-Islamic emphasis on distinguishing "what depends on us" from "what does not" provides a practical cognitive and spiritual tool for young Muslims to maintain agency and inner peace amid job insecurity, debt, or social expectations.

By recovering this pre-modern cross-cultural synthesis, the study offers Islamic counsellors, *ustadz*, and mental-health practitioners an authentically indigenous yet universal therapeutic resource—both Qur'anic and evidence-based. Rather than importing secular Stoicism, contemporary Muslims can legitimately reclaim a tradition that their own intellectual forefathers had already integrated and enriched.

Stoicism and Islamic Ethics

The practical philosophy of Epictetus—centered on the dichotomy of control (*eph' hemin*), the discipline of assent (*prohairesis*), patient endurance (*karteria*), and the inner citadel of moral purpose—exhibits profound structural parallels with core Islamic concepts such as *tawakkul* (trust in God), *sabr* (patient perseverance), *ikhtiyar* (moral choice), and the guardianship of the heart (*hima al-qalb*). These affinities arise not merely by coincidence but through both the direct reception of Stoic ideas via the Greek–Arabic translation movement (e.g., through Galen and the ninth-century Baghdad school) and independent convergence in addressing human agency amid divine providence.

From the formative period onward, Muslim thinkers engaged with Stoicism as a therapeutic ethic compatible with revelation, adapting its rational self-mastery to the Qur'anic framework of *taklif* (human responsibility) and *qadar* (divine decree). The following discussion examines seven pivotal Islamic intellectuals who explicitly or implicitly drew upon Epictetean themes, highlighting their synthesis of Stoic resilience with Islamic spirituality.

Al-Kindi (ca. 801–873 CE)–often regarded as "the Philosopher of the Arabs"—was the inaugural Muslim philosopher who directly appropriated Stoic therapeutic techniques in his epistle On the Means of Dispelling Sorrows (*Fi al-Hila li-daf' al-ahzan*). his work draws from a now-lost Greek anthology that included Epictetus and Seneca. Al-Kindi posits that sorrow arises not from events themselves but from erroneous judgments about them, closely mirroring Epictetus's dictum: "Men are disturbed not by things, but by the views they take of them" (Enchiridion 5). Al-Kindi's remedy—rational reframing to achieve inner sovereignty—aligns Stoic *apatheia* with Islamic *tawakkul*, urging trust in divine wisdom over attachment to externals. As he states, "Grief is caused by opinion, not by the thing itself," a near-verbatim echo of Epictetus, recast to affirm God's providential order (Adamson & Pormann, 2012, pp. 34-37). By consciously Islamicizing Stoic cognitive therapy, al-Kindi effectively became the first Muslim thinker to integrate Epictetan-style practical philosophy into the emerging Islamic ethical tradition, laying the foundation for its reception by al-Razi, Miskawayh, al-Ghazali and later scholars.

Al-Razi (Rhazes, 854–925 CE)—the polymath physician—explicitly championed Stoic equanimity (*ihtimal*) in Spiritual Medicine (*al-Tibb al-ruhani*), defending philosophy against religious detractors while incorporating Epictetus's cardinal virtues and dichotomy of control. He argues that only moral choices are "up to us," rendering the sage unshakably content even amid suffering—a

direct parallel to Epictetus's Discourses (2.1.21–29). Al-Razi's emphasis on rational mastery over passions anticipates Islamic *sabr*, interpreting endurance as ethical triumph under divine decree, and he critiques excessive fear as irrational, akin to Stoic *amor fati* (Al-Razi, 1990; Adamson, 2016, pp. 56–58; Pormann, 2009, p. 45).

Miskawayh (932–1030 CE). In the Refinement of Character (*Tahdhib al-akhlaq*), Miskawayh synthesizes Stoic ethics from Bryson and Ptolemy with Islamic sources, explicitly citing Epictetus as "one of the greatest Stoics." He formulates the dichotomy as "*al-umur allati fi qudratina wa-ma laysa fi qudratina*" (matters in our power and those not), urging focus on virtue amid fate's inevitability. This resonates with Qur'anic *ikhtiyar* (13:11), where human agency aligns with divine will, transforming Stoic *karteria* into a path of moral purification (Miskawayh, 1968, pp. 112–114; Fakhry, 2013).

Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (1058–1111 CE). Although often critiqued as anti-philosophical, al-Ghazali subtly embeds Epictetean parallels in *Ihya' ʿulum al-din*, particularly in Books 21 ("Wonders of the Heart") and 35 ("Patience and Gratitude"). He distinguishes "what is in your power" (*ma fi qudratik*) from external circumstances, echoing the Stoic dichotomy, and teaches that *eudaimonia* (*falah*) arises from rational assent to divine *qadar*, not worldly flux. His cognitive reframing of impressions aligns Stoic *prohairesis* with *taqwa*, fostering *sabr* as resilience against passions (Al-Ghazali, 1993, vol. 1).

Ibn Tufayl (ca. 1105–1185 CE). In the allegorical philosophical novel Hayy ibn Yaqzan, Ibn Tufayl portrays the autodidact Hayy achieving monotheism and ethical maturity through solitary rational inquiry, paralleling Stoic *askesis* (spiritual exercises) and the inner citadel of self-mastery. Hayy's voluntary endurance of hardship in pursuit of moral self-perfection mirrors Epictetus's *karteria*, confirming Stoic conclusions independently through *fitra* (innate disposition). In this way, Ibn Tufayl bridges philosophy and Sufi mysticism without explicit reliance on revelation (Goodman, 2009).

Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (1292–1350 CE). In Madarij al-salikin, Ibn Qayyim develops a sophisticated psychology of self-transformation, interpreting Qur'an 13:11—"God does not change a people's condition until they change what is in themselves"—as a direct expression of Epictetus's dichotomy: focusing on *ikhtiyar* (choice) rather than *qadar*. His "heart as king with soldiers" metaphor evokes the Stoic inner citadel, promoting *tawakkul* and *sabr* as forms of rational equanimity in which fear and hope are balanced under divine wisdom (Ibn Qayyim, 2020, vol. 2, pp. 174–179; Ovadia, 2018, p. 114-174).

Shah Waliullah al-Dihlawi (1703–1762 CE). The Mughal-era reformer Shah Waliullah integrated Stoic ethics through Persian translations of Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, as reflected in his *Hujjat Allah al-Baligha*, stating: "Human perfection lies in harmonizing *ikhtiyar* with divine wisdom, accepting the unchangeable while striving in what one can." This restates the dichotomy as *tawakkul-rida bil-qada'*, blending Stoic fate-acceptance with Sufi-Qur'anic conceptions of providence for communal resilience (Shah Waliullah, 2021, vol. 1, pp. 312–315; Baljon, 1986, p. 203).

These thinkers collectively illustrate the seamless assimilation of Stoicism into Islamic intellectual thought, transforming Epictetus's secular rationalism into a distinctly theocentric ethic. Direct transmissions through Hellenistic intermediaries facilitated explicit adaptations, while shared anthropological concerns—particularly the tension between human agency and divine providence—encouraged conceptual convergence. Far from being an alien import, Stoic moral tools enriched Islamic moral psychology, reframing resilience (*sabr*) as submission to *logos* (divine reason), much as Cleanthes's *Hymn to Zeus* finds resonance in the Qur'anic vision of a moral cosmopolis (49:13). This intellectual legacy underscores the enduring relevance of comparative philosophy for contemporary ethical discourse, serving as a bridge between the Hellenistic and Abrahamic traditions.

Stoicism and the Transmission of Knowledge in Islamic Civilization

The Middle Ages (c. 500–1500 CE) marked a critical period for the transmission and transformation of Stoic thought, as its ethical framework—emphasizing virtue as the sole good and endurance (*sabr*) amid the vicissitudes of fate—found fertile ground within the burgeoning Islamic philosophical tradition. Unlike the Latin West, where direct access to Greek texts was limited, the Islamic world, particularly during the Abbasid era in Baghdad, served as the principal preserver and transmitter of Hellenistic knowledge. Stoic ideas entered Islamic civilization not as an autonomous school of thought, but as an integral part of the broader corpus of Aristotelian and Neoplatonic philosophy, transmitted through the Graeco–Syriac–Arabic translation movement.

The Stoic concept of Universal Reason (*Logos*)—conceived as the divine, providential order governing the cosmos—resonated deeply with the Islamic concept of *al-`Aql al-Fa'al* (the Active Intellect) and with the principle of *Tawhid* (divine unity) which emphasizes the oneness of divine command. Similarly, the Stoic ideal of self-mastery and rational control over passions found close

affinity with Islamic teachings on *tahdhib al-akhlaq* (refinement of character) and *jihad an-nafs* (struggle against the lower self).

Al-Kindi (c. 801–873 CE), known as the "Philosopher of the Arabs," drew extensively upon Stoic and Neoplatonic ideas—particularly those mediated through Seneca—to address ethical and psychological problems. His treatise *On the Means of Repelling Sorrows* (*fi al-Hila li-daf' al-ahzan*) mirrors the Stoic principle of detachment from external attachments as a means of achieving tranquility and spiritual balance. Later, Al-Farabi (c. 872–950 CE) extended Stoic cosmopolitan ethics into political philosophy. In his conception of *the Virtuous City* (*al-Madinah al-Fadhilah*), the ideal ruler governs in harmony with universal law and reason—an idea strongly reminiscent of the Stoic cosmopolis.

The emphasis on the four cardinal virtues—wisdom, justice, courage, and temperance—later influential in Thomistic ethics, also found a firm parallel in the Islamic moral tradition of *akhlaq* (ethics). This system was systematically developed by Ibn Miskawayh (c. 932–1030 CE) in *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq*, where he harmonized Aristotelian, Stoic, and Islamic moral insights. Thus, while Stoicism was never adopted wholesale, it provided a rational ethical framework that was selectively assimilated, refined, and integrated into the theological and philosophical structures of the Islamic Golden Age—allowing its legacy to flow into the broader intellectual history of humanity.

Islamic ontology, rooted in absolute *tawhid*, is both theocentric and creationist. God is the sole necessarily existent being (*wajib al-wujud*), while all other existents are contingent (*mumkin al-wujud*) and continuously dependent upon the divine creative act (*khalq jadid*). Matter and space-time are created *ex nihilo* and sustained through divine will and habitual custom (*'adah ilahiyyah*). The cosmos is not divine in itself but functions as a purposeful sign (*ayah*) of divine wisdom and mercy (Gutas, 1998).

Despite the apparent metaphysical incompatibility between Stoic materialist monism and Islam's radical creator-creature distinction, Muslim thinkers who encountered Stoic sources through the Graeco-Arabic translation movement systematically reinterpreted and theologically recontextualized key functional elements of Stoic ontology and cosmology. The concept of *pneuma/logos* was recast as the Qur'anic *ruh* or *nur* Allah (Quran 24:35) by al-Kindi and al-Razi, and later associated with the *'aql fa'al* (active intellect) in Peripatetic philosophy (Adamson & Pormann, 2012). The Stoic notion of *cosmic sympatheia* was retained within Ash'arite occasionalism as the interconnected *'adah ilahiyyah*

(divine custom) and in Sufi metaphysics as *wahdat al-wujud* (unity of being). Meanwhile, *heimarmene/pronoia* was transformed into *qadar* and *qada'*, while preserving the Stoic insight that divine order is both rational and benevolent (Fakhry, 2013).

Table 2. Ontological Foundations: A Comparative Analysis of Stoic and Islamic Frameworks

Concept	Stoicism (Epictetus)	Islamic Adaptation	Key Theological Reconciliation
Ultimate Principle	*Logos* (Divine, immanent reason ordering the cosmos)	Allah (Transcendent Creator, sustained by divine will - *Qur'an 2:255*)	The Stoic immanent Logos is re-conceptualized as a transcendent attribute of God (Divine Wisdom - *Hikma*).
Nature of Reality	Strict Monism and Materialism: All that exists is corporeal, permeated by *pneuma*.	Theocentric Dualism: Creator is distinct from creation, which comprises both corporeal and spiritual realms.	The Stoic continuum of being is adapted into a hierarchy of creation under God, rejecting pure materialism.
The Human Soul	A corporeal faculty (*hexis*), a fragment of the cosmic Logos, disperses at death.	An immaterial spirit (*ruh*) created by God, accountable in the afterlife.	The soul's divine connection is maintained, but its nature is spiritualized and its destiny tied to eschatology.
Cosmos	An organic, living whole (*zoon*) bound by deterministic fate (*heimarmene*).	A created universe (*'alam*) governed by divine habit (*'ada*) and causal principles within God's ultimate will.	Stoic determinism is softened by the Ash'arite principle of occasionalism, preserving divine omnipotence.

Concept	Stoicism (Epictetus)	Islamic Adaptation	Key Theological Reconciliation
Divine Providence	Identical with fate; a rational, impersonal necessity inherent in the cosmic order.	Active, purposeful management of creation (*tadbir*) by a personal, all-knowing, and merciful God.	Providence is personalized and moralized, moving from impersonal fate to a divine plan rooted in wisdom and justice.

Thus, while Stoic materialism was formally rejected, the operative concepts of cosmic unity, rational providence, and interconnected causality were retained —yet theologically purified within an Islamic framework. The result is a functional ontological convergence: both traditions conceive of the universe as a single, purposeful whole governed by divine wisdom, wherein human moral effort participates in a larger rational-divine order. Medieval Stoicism, therefore, was not a mere relic of antiquity but a vital graft onto both Islamic and Christian intellectual traditions, providing ethical substance for scholastic rigor and poetic vision amid the turbulence of the co-called Dark Ages (Verbeke, 1983, p. 78).

Contrast and Continuity: Stoicism in Northern Europe vs. Islamic Ethics

While Neo-Stoicism flourished in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the Northern Netherlands, offering a pragmatic moral framework for the turbulence of the Dutch Golden Age, the Islamic world had already developed a comprehensive and rational ethical system that rendered direct Neo-Stoic syncretism largely unnecessary. In the Netherlands, thinkers such as Justus Lipsius (1547–1606) adapted *animi constantia* (unshakable resolve) to confront the chaos of religious conflict and mercantile uncertainty, translating Stoic *apatheia* into Christian patience and endurance. Similarly, Hugo Grotius (1583–1645) secularized the Stoic doctrine of natural right (*ius naturale*) to lay the foundation for modern international law, a crucial development for an emerging commercial republic. This movement was characterized by the need to reconcile pagan rationality with Christian dogma. This Northern-European movement sought to reconcile classical pagan rationality with Christian dogma, transforming Stoic ethics into a civic virtue suitable for the modern state.

In contrast, the core Stoic emphasis on rational self-mastery and endurance had long been absorbed into Islamic moral philosophy through a broader, earlier intellectual synthesis. Between the ninth and eleventh centuries, key Stoic and Hellenistic ethical concepts were systematically incorporated into Islamic philosophical discourse through the Graeco–Syriac–Arabic translation movement. The Stoic triad of virtues—prudence (*prudentia*), courage (*fortitudo*), and temperance (*temperantia*)—found close parallels in the Islamic discipline of *'ilm al-akhlaq* (the science of ethics), as articulated by Ibn Miskawayh (932–1030 CE) in *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq*. His synthesis of Greek, Persian, and Islamic moral principles emphasized purification and balance of the soul (*tazkiyat al-nafs*) as the foundation of ethical refinement.

The Stoic ideal of aligning one's will with the providential necessity of *logos* (divine reason) finds its counterpart in the Islamic principles of *tawakkul* (reliance on God) and *qada' wa qadar* (divine decree and destiny), both of which demand inner composure and patience perseverance (*sabr*) in the face of adversity. This spiritual posture serves the same functional purpose as the Neo-Stoic doctrine of constancy but is rooted directly in *Tawhid* (the oneness of God). Thus, whereas Northern-European Neo-Stoicism emerged as a specific, late-stage response to the religious and political crises of Reformation Europe, the Islamic world had long internalized comparable ethical concerns through a fully integrated philosophical and theological synthesis.

Modern Stoicism: Virtue Ethics and Therapeutic Resilience

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Stoicism re-emerged as a moral and therapeutic philosophy amid the alienation of industrial modernity and the moral disillusionment of two world wars. It profoundly influenced both virtue ethics and the development of psychotherapy. Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900), the Basel classicist, critiqued Stoicism in Götzen-Dämmerung (1889) as a form of "slave morality," yet paradoxically admired its affirmation of fate (*amor fati*): "My formula for greatness in a human being is *amor fati*" (Nietzsche, 2005, p. 68). His concept of the *Übermensch* echoes Zeno's Stoic sage, transforming resigned acceptance into an affirmative will to power.

William James (1842–1910), the Harvard pragmatist, incorporated Stoic resilience into the Varieties of Religious Experience (1902), describing "healthy-mindedness" as rational acceptance: "The stoical strength… is a real tonic" (James, 1982, p. 123). His radical empiricism parallels Chrysippus's theory of impressions (*phantasiai*), grounding ethics in lived experience and

cognitive interpretation.

Bertrand Russell (1872–1970), the Cambridge philosopher, endorsed Stoic composure in The Conquest of Happiness (1930): "The secret of happiness… is this: let your interests be as wide as possible" (Russell, 1996, p. 89). Amid the anxieties of the atomic age, Russell's cosmopolitan humanism revived the Stoic idea of the kosmopolis, echoing Posidonius's universalism.

In psychotherapy, Aaron T. Beck (1921–2021), the founder of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), explicitly acknowledged Epictetus as a foundational influence: "Men are disturbed not by things, but by the views which they take of them" (Beck, 1976, p. 10). CBT's method of cognitive restructuring thus embodies Stoic "reframing," treating emotional disturbance as the result of faulty judgments.

Albert Ellis (1913–2007), founder of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT), further integrated Stoicism into modern psychotherapy. In Reason and Emotion in Psychotherapy (1962), he asserted: "Irrational beliefs… are the primary cause of emotional disturbance" (Ellis, 2004, p. 45). His ABC model—Activating Event, Belief, Consequence—mirrors the Stoic dichotomy of control, highlighting that belief, not circumstance, shapes emotion.

Lawrence C. Becker (1939-2018) advanced a comprehensive reconstruction of Stoic ethics in A New Stoicism (1997), proposing "universal perfectibility through reason" as the modern articulation of Stoic virtue (Becker, 2017, p. 3). Massimo Pigliucci (b. 1964) popularized Stoicism as a practical philosophy through How to Be a Stoic (2017), combining ancient spiritual exercises with secular mindfulness and scientific rationalism.

This modern Western revival of Stoicism as a "way of life" finds a powerful and parallel contemporary expression within the Islamic world. Several modern Muslim thinkers—while not explicitly identifying as Stoics—have drawn upon and integrated Stoic principles of resilience, self-mastery, and moral autonomy into their frameworks for Islamic revival and spiritual renewal. Together, they represent a distinct lineage of "Modern Islamic Stoicism," uniting ancient rational discipline with contemporary Islamic ethics.

Table 3. Practical Techniques: From Stoic Exercises to Islamic Spiritual Disciplines

Stoic Practice	Islamic Equivalent	Common Therapeutic Goal
Premeditatio Malorum (Premeditation of Evils)	***Dhikr al-Mawt*** (Remembrance of Death) and ***Al-Rida bil-Qada'*** (Contentment with Divine Decree)	To reduce attachment to worldly matters and develop resilience by mentally preparing for and accepting life's inevitable hardships.
Discipline of Assent (Withholding judgment on impressions)	***Muhasabah al-Nafs*** (Self-examination) and ***Husn al-Zann*** (Cultivating positive assumptions)	To achieve inner peace by critically examining one's thoughts, rejecting negative impulses, and reframing perceptions.
View from Above (Contemplating the cosmos to gain perspective)	***Tafakkur fi al-Khalq*** (Reflection on God's Creation)	To diminish the ego and worldly anxieties by contemplating the vastness of the universe and one's place within a divine order.
Practice of Adversity (Voluntary discomfort, e.g., fasting)	***Sawm*** (Fasting) and **Sabr** (Patient Perseverance through trials)	To strengthen willpower, build endurance, and cultivate gratitude by voluntarily enduring and patiently accepting hardship.

Modern Islamic Stoics

Muhammad Iqbal (1877–1938), the poet-philosopher from British India and often hailed the "spiritual father of Pakistan," integrated Stoic resilience and self-mastery into his modern reconstruction of Islamic thought. In the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam (1930), Iqbal echoes Epictetus' dichotomy of control by emphasizing human agency (*ikhtiyar*) within the framework of divine *qadar*, urging Muslims to cultivate inner fortitude amid the moral and political crises of colonial subjugation. His concept of the "perfect man" (*insan kamil*) parallels Stoic virtue ethics, blending Sufi dynamism with rational self-discipline as the foundation for spiritual and civilizational renewal (Iqbal, 2013).

Ali Shariati (1933–1977), the Iranian sociologist and revolutionary thinker, fused Stoic endurance (*karteria*) with Shi□a notions of redemptive

suffering and martyrdom in works such as Religion vs. Religion (1970s). He interpreted *sabr* (patient perseverance) not as resignation but as active moral resistance to injustice, closely resembling Epictetus' ideal of the inner citadel as defiance against external tyranny. Influenced by existentialism and Hellenistic ethics through his exposure to French intellectual circles, Shariati reformulated Stoic self-mastery into a paradigm of spiritual autonomy and social activism, which profoundly shaped the ideological ethos of the 1979 Iranian Revolution (Shariati, 1993).

Hamza Yusuf (b. 1958), the American Muslim scholar and co-founder of Zaytuna College, explicitly engages Stoic principles in his lectures and writings, particularly in Purification of the Heart (2004). He draws analogies between *tawakkul* (trust in God) and *amor fati* (love of fate), adapting Epictetus' discipline of assent to the Islamic spiritual praxis (*riyadah*) of the heart. Yusuf's approach addresses modern mental health and spiritual allenation, promoting a Stoic-Islamic synthesis of resilience and moral serenity as an antidote to secular anxiety and emotional disorder (Yusuf, 2004; Robertson, 2019).

Modern Stoicism, revitalized by A. A. Long's Problems in Stoicism (1971), continues to thrive as a practical philosophy for the modern world, countering disillusionment through rational *eudaimonia*–the cultivation of human flourishing through virtue (Urmson, 1988, p. 201). The tradition's adaptability is reflected in its enduring lineage: from Anselm's contemplative faith to Pigliucci's popular podcasts, Stoicism remains a perennial *ars vitae*—an art of living. As Ilsetraut Hadot (b. 1928) observed, "Philosophy is a way of life," continually renewed in response to the human condition (Hadot, 1995, p. 83). Peter Sloterdijk (b. 1947) likewise interprets Stoicism as a foundational "psychopolitics,"—a philosophical art of self-management essential for enduring the turbulence of modern existence. In his Spheres trilogy and You Must Change Your Life, Sloterdijk argues that Stoicism pioneered the ethic of disciplined self-training, offering existential shelter and moral orientation in a disenchanted world.

Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that Epictetus' practical philosophy—centered on the dichotomy of control, the discipline of assent, and the inviolability of moral purpose—was neither alien to nor marginal within the Islamic intellectual tradition. Through direct reception during the formative period (al-Kindi, al-Razi, Miskawayh) and creative convergence in later centuries (al-Ghazali, Ibn

Tufayl, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, Shah Waliullah), Muslim thinkers consistently integrated or independently replicated Stoic therapeutic principles, reframing them within the Qur'anic concepts of *ikhtiyar*, *tawakkul*, *sabr*, and *rida bil-qada'*. The synthesis represents not a superficial similarity but a deep structural and functional isomorphism: both traditions locate genuine human freedom and psychological resilience in the rational governance of the self, while entrusting external outcomes to divine providence.

The historical evidence confirms the central hypothesis: that Epictetus' ethics was consciously appropriated where Greek-Arabic translations provided access and independently rediscovered wherever revelation and reason converged on similar truths. Rather than compromising *tawhid*, this convergence enriched Islamic moral psychology by supplying precise cognitive tools to distinguish responsible agency from fatalistic passivity—tools that remain fully consistent with the prophetic imperative to combine maximum effort with ultimate trust in God (*tawakkul*).

In the contemporary Muslim world—and particularly in Indonesia, where over 19 million individuals currently experience anxiety and depressive disorders amid rapid socio-economic change—this pre-modern Epictetan-Islamic synthesis offers a powerful, authentic resource. It provides a theologically grounded alternative to both secular Stoicism and overly passive interpretations of *qadar*, enabling believers to cultivate active resilience without falling into either self-reliant arrogance or paralyzing helplessness.

The findings therefore possess both scholarly and practical significance. Academically, they fill a substantial gap in comparative Islamic philosophy by documenting the reception and adaptation of Epictetus across thirteen centuries of Muslim thought. Practically, they offer Islamic mental-health professionals, educators, and religious counselors a historically validated framework that may be confidently applied in da'wa, psychotherapy, and community development programs.

Future research could usefully extend this analysis in three directions. *First,* empirical evaluation of Epictetan-Islamic cognitive interventions within clinical and counselling settings for Muslim populations. *Second,* exploration of similar receptions within other schools of Islamic thought—particularly the Mu□tazilite, Illuminationist, and modern reformist traditions. *Third,* comparative investigation of Stoic-inflected ethics within contemporary Sufi practices and Islamic self-help literature.

Ultimately, the enduring relevance of Epictetus within the Islamic

tradition affirms that genuine philosophical wisdom—when harmonious with revelation—transcends cultural and historical boundaries. By reclaiming this shared intellectual heritage, contemporary Muslims may confront the psychological and ethical challenges of modernity with resources that are at once deeply traditional and profoundly universal.

Acknowledgements

The author wishes to express sincere gratitude to his father, Colonel Yuri Kuznetsov, and Colonel Vadim Boychenko. Their personal example embodies the Stoic ideal of "men who have made themselves." Their lives and service have provided me with a powerful lesson in willpower, discipline, and resilience, inspiring the deep study of Stoic philosophy undertaken in this work.

References

Adamson, P. (2016). Philosophy in the Islamic world: A very short introduction. Oxford University Press.

Adamson, P., & Pormann, P. E. (Eds. & Trans.). (2012). The Philosophical Works of al-Kindi. Oxford University Press.

Al-Ghazali, A. H. (1993). Ihya' 'ulum al-din (Vol., 1). Dar al-Ishaat. https://sufipathoflove.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/ihya-ulum-al-din-vol-1.pdf

Al-Razi, A. B. (1990). Dukhovnaia meditsina [The Spiritual Medicine]. Irfon. https://tiu-edu.uz/media/books/2024/11/16/NamDU-ARM-14293-%D0%94%D1%83%D1%85%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%BD%D0%B0%D1%8F_%D0%BC%D0%B5%D0%B4%D0%B8%D1%86%D0%B8%D0%BD%D0%B0.pdf

Basrowi, R. W., Wiguna, T., Samah, K., Djuwita F Moeloek, N., Soetrisno, M., Purwanto, S. A., Ekowati, M., Elisabeth, A., Rahadian, A., Ruru, B., & Pelangi, B. (2024). Exploring Mental Health Issues and Priorities in Indonesia Through Qualitative Expert Consensus. Clinical practice and epidemiology in mental health: CP & EMH, 20, e17450179331951. https://doi.org/10.2174/0117450179331951241022175443

Baljon, J. M. S. (1986). Religion and Thought of Shah Wali Allah Dihlawi. Brill.

Beck, A. T. (1976). Cognitive Therapy and the Emotional Disorders. New York, NY: International Universities Press.

Becker, L. C. (2017). A New Stoicism: Revised Edition. Princeton University Press.

Boter, G. (1999). The Encheiridion of Epictetus and its Three Christian Adaptations: Transmission and Critical Editions. Boston: Brill. Edited by Gerard Boter.

Colish, M. L. (1990). The Stoic Tradition from Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages: Stoicism in classical Latin literature. I (Vol. 1–2). Brill.

Descartes, R. (1985). The Passions of the Soul. In J. Cottingham, R. Stoothoff, & D. Murdoch (Trans.), The philosophical writings of Descartes (Vol. 3). Cambridge University Press.

Ellis, A. (2004). Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy: It works for me—it can work for you. Prometheus Books.

Epictetus. (1925–1928). The Discourses as reported by Arrian, the manual, and fragments (W. A. Oldfather, Trans.). Harvard University Press.

Epictetus. (1968). The Discourses of Epictetus (P. E. Matheson, Trans.). Heritage Press, New York.

Epictetus. (2004). Enchiridion (G. Long, Trans.). Dover Publications.

Fakhry, M. (2013). Islamic Occasionalism: and its critique by Averroes and Aquinas. Routledge.

Grotius, H. (2005). The Rights of War and Peace (J. Clarke Trans.). Liberty Fund.

Groff, Peter S. (2004). Al-Kindi and Nietzsche on the Stoic Art of Banishing Sorrow. Journal of Nietzsche Studies 28 (1):139-173.

Goodman, L. E. (Trans.). (2009). Ibn Tufayl's Hayy Ibn Yaqzan: A Philosophical Tale. University of Chicago Press. https://maypoleofwisdom.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/ibn-tufayls-hayy-ibn-yaqzan-a-philosophical-tale.pdf

Hadot, P. (1995). Philosophy as a way of life. Wiley-Blackwell.

Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya. (2020). Ranks of the Divine Seekers: A Parallel English-Arabic Text (Vol. 2). (O. Anjum, Trans.). Brill. https://www.kalamullah.com/Books/Ranks%20of%20the%20Divine%20Seekers%20vol%202.pdf

James, W. (1982). The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature. Penguin Classics.

Komar, V. I. (2004). Islam, Islamism and Western civilization: Analytical review. Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, (2), 6-44. https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/islam-islamizm-i-zapadnaya-tsivilizatsiya-analiticheskiy-obzor

Korobeinikov, V. S. (2024). Three trends in modern studies of Stoic ethics. (3), 123–131. https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/sovremennye-issledovaniya-stoicheskoy-etiki-tri-napravleniya

Iqbal, M. (2013). The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam. Stanford University Press. (Original work published 1930).

Lipsius, J. (2006). On Constancy (J. Sellars, Trans.). Bristol Phoenix Press.

Long, A. A. (2004). Epictetus: A Stoic and Socratic Guide to Life. Clarendon Press. (Original work published 1971).

Miskawayh, A. (1968). The refinement of character: a translation from the Arabic of A□mad ibn-Muhammad Miskawayh's Tahdhib al-akhlaq. American University of Beirut Press.

Nietzsche, F. (2005). The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols: And Other Writings (J. Norman, Trans.). Cambridge University Press.

Ovadia, M. (2018). Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya and the Divine Attributes: Rationalized Traditionalistic Theology. Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Science: Texts and Studies, 104. Brill.

Robertson, D. (2010). The Philosophy of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy: Stoic Philosophy as Rational and Cognitive Psychotherapy. London: Routledge.

Robertson, D. (2019). How to Think Like a Roman Emperor: The Stoic Philosophy of Marcus Aurelius. St. Martin's Publishing Group.

Russell, B. (1996). The Conquest of Happiness. Liveright.

Rothman, A., & Coyle, A. (2018). Toward a Framework for Islamic Psychology and Psychotherapy: An Islamic Model of the Soul. Journal of religion and health, 57(5), 1731–1744. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-018-0651-x

Shah Wali Allah al-Dihlawi. (2021). The Conclusive Argument from God: Shah Wali Allah of Delhi's Hujjat Allah al-Baligha (M. K. Hermansen, Trans.). Brill. (Original work published 1996). https://dn721907.ca.archive.org/0/items/book-shah-wali-allah-hujjat-allah-al-baligha.-english/Book-Shah%20Wali%20Allah%20-%20%E1%B8%A4ujjat%20Allah%20Al-Baligha.%20English.pdf

Sellars, J. (2006). Stoicism. University of California Press.

Shariati, A. (1993). Religion vs. religion. Abjad Book Designers & Builder's. (Original work published 1979).

Urmson, J. O. (1988). Aristotle's Ethics. Wiley-Blackwell.

Verbeke, G. (1983). The Presence of Stoicism in Medieval Thought. Catholic University of America Press.

Wenley, R. M. (1924). Stoicism and its influence. Marshall Jones Company.

WHO SEARO/World Health Organization. (2024). WHO results report 2024–2025: South-East Asia Region (SEARO). Retrieved July 19, 2024, from https://www.who.int/about/accountability/results/who-results-report-2024-2025/region-SEARO

Yusuf, H. (2004). Purification of the heart: Signs, symptoms and cures of the spiritual diseases of the heart. Starlatch Press.

DOI: 10.18860/eh.v27i2.35525

RECONSTRUCTING QUR'ANIC RECEPTION TYPOLOGY IN PESANTREN: EXTENDING A. RAFIQ'S THEORY

Muhammad Jamil[1], *Aswadi*[2], *Suqiyah Musafa'ah*[2]
[1]STAI Al-Anwar, Sarang, Rembang, Indonesia
[2]UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, Indonesia
Email: arinjamil9@gmail.com

Received: July 17, 2025
Revised: November 3, 2025
Accepted: November 6, 2025

Abstract

Studies on the Living Qur'an in pesantren mostly emphasize exegetical, aesthetic, and functional aspects, with limited attention to how Qur'anic meaning emerges through lived experience. Prior research has also not examined how spiritual and socio-economic engagements with the Qur'an extend beyond Rafiq's typology. This gap underscores the need to reassess Qur'anic reception through a phenomenological lens. This research examines the dynamics of Al-Qur'an reception in pesantren by expanding A. Rafiq's typology–which includes exegesis, aesthetics, and functional–through two new categories: eternal and economic reception. The study aims to reconstruct and enrich the Living Qur'an framework through daily practices in pesantren with different characteristics. Langitan Islamic Boarding School and al-Muhibbin Jatirogo Islamic Boarding School, Tuban were selected because they represent the two main pesantren models in Indonesia: salaf and modern. Langitan is known as a historical salaf pesantren that maintains classical methods such as sorogan, bandongan, and halaqah, along with a strong emphasis on classical texts and established traditions. Meanwhile, al-Muhibbin represents a modern pesantren with a collective management system, an integrated curriculum, and programs to strengthen foreign languages. This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with Edmund Husserl's phenomenological analysis. Data were collected through interviews, observation, and documentation. The results show that in a Husserlian phenomenological view,

Qur'anic reception in pesantren is seen as an intentional act of consciousness in which meaning emerges through lived experience rather than mere interaction with the text. Within this process, the Qur'an functions as a dynamic noema shaped by communal practices and pedagogical structures, generating forms such as divine blessing, spiritual nobility, legitimized authority, and economic value. These findings show that Qur'anic meaning in pesantren is shaped through embodied practice and economic engagement. Further research may examine how these dimensions interact in pesantren and wider Muslim communities amid digitalization and modern educational reforms.

Penelitian tentang Living Qur'an di pesantren selama ini lebih banyak menekankan aspek eksegesis, estetis, dan fungsional, sementara perhatian terhadap bagaimana makna Al-Qur'an terbentuk melalui pengalaman hidup masih terbatas. Kajian sebelumnya juga belum menelaah bagaimana keterlibatan spiritual dan sosial-ekonomi terhadap Al-Qur'an melampaui tipologi Rafiq. Kesenjangan ini menunjukkan perlunya meninjau kembali resepsi Al-Qur'an dengan perspektif fenomenologis. Penelitian ini mengkaji dinamika resepsi Al-Qur'an di lingkungan pesantren dengan mengembangkan tipologi A. Rafiq–yang mencakup resepsi eksegetis, estetis, dan fungsional–melalui penambahan dua kategori baru, yaitu resepsi eternal dan resepsi ekonomi. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah merekonstruksi dan memperkaya kerangka Living Qur'an melalui praktik keseharian di pesantren yang memiliki karakteristik berbeda. Pesantren Langitan dan Pesantren al-Muhibbin Jatirogo, Tuban dipilih karena mewakili dua model utama pesantren di Indonesia, yakni salaf dan modern. Langitan dikenal sebagai pesantren salaf bersejarah yang mempertahankan metode klasik seperti sorogan, bandongan, dan halaqah, serta penekanan kuat pada kitab-kitab tradisional dan tradisi keagamaan. Sementara itu, al-Muhibbin merepresentasikan pesantren modern dengan sistem manajemen kolektif, kurikulum terpadu, dan program penguatan bahasa asing. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif dengan analisis fenomenologi Edmund Husserl. Data diperoleh melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa dalam pandangan fenomenologi Husserlian, resepsi Al-Qur'an di pesantren dipahami sebagai tindakan kesadaran intensional, di mana makna muncul melalui pengalaman hidup, bukan semata-mata interaksi tekstual. Dalam proses tersebut, Al-Qur'an berfungsi sebagai noema yang dinamis, dibentuk oleh praktik komunal dan struktur pedagogis, sehingga memunculkan bentuk-bentuk seperti berkah ilahi, kemuliaan spiritual, otoritas yang dilegitimasi, dan nilai ekonomi. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa makna Al-Qur'an di pesantren terbentuk melalui praktik keagamaan yang dihayati secara langsung dan melalui keterlibatan ekonomi komunitas. Penelitian lanjutan perlu mengkaji lebih jauh interaksi antara dimensi ekonomi dan transendental dari resepsi Al-Qur'an di pesantren maupun masyarakat Muslim yang lebih luas, khususnya dalam konteks digitalisasi dan kebijakan pendidikan modern.

Keywords: *Husserlian phenomenology, Indonesian pesantren, living qur'an, qur'anic reception*

Introduction

The reception of the Qur'an in contemporary Muslim societies has increasingly attracted scholarly attention, particularly within the theoretical framework of the Living Qur'an, which examines how Muslims engage with the sacred text beyond formal exegesis (Rafiq, 2021). In Indonesia, pesantren serve as dynamic centers of Qur'anic reception, where religious texts are not only studied but also lived and embodied in daily practice (Annas et al., 2024). Despite this central role, studies on Qur'anic reception in pesantren remain limited and tend to focus primarily on interpretive traditions *(tafsir)*, while other forms of engagement—such as aesthetic, functional, and economic aspects—have received comparatively little attention.

A. Rafiq's (2014) influential typology of Qur'anic reception—comprising interpretive, aesthetic, and functional forms—has shaped much of the subsequent research on the Living Qur'an. However, this tripartite framework does not fully capture the complexity and diversity of Qur'anic engagement across pesantren cultures. Recent studies also highlight additional dimensions, including symbolic reverence and economic instrumentality, yet these categories remain theoretically underdeveloped and underexplored empirically (Fais, 2021; Fathurrosyid et al., 2024).

Preliminary findings from ethnographic interviews with several students at Pondok Pesantren al-Muhibbin in Tuban indicate that they interpret the verse 'Indeed, it is We who sent down the Reminder, and indeed, We will be its guardian' (Qur'an, al-Hijr: 9) as a form of human involvement in preserving the purity of the Qur'an. This interpretation extends beyond classical exegesis, which generally positions God as the sole guardian of revelation (Mukholik, 2017), emphasizing instead that humans are commanded to participate actively in safeguarding the text. Such practices reflect what this study terms "eternal reception"—a dimension of Qur'anic reception in which the act of memorization and transmission constitutes both spiritual devotion and social responsibility, ensuring the text's ongoing relevance and preservation in the communal life of the pesantren.

This perspective resonates with scholarship on Qur'anic transmission and preservation, which recognizes the interaction between divine protection and human agency, such as the collection and memorization efforts of the

Companions (Annas et al., 2024). By highlighting human participation alongside divine guardianship, this study offers a more nuanced typology that broadens existing understandings of Qur'anic reception in pesantren contexts. Rather than restricting itself to normative interpretations that view God as the sole guardian, this study underscores that human involvement is also seen as integral to the preservation process. Accordingly, some of them memorize the Qur'an not merely to earn divine reward or spiritual proximity to noble angels, but because they understand this practice as a contribution to sustaining the spiritual and social continuity of the Qur'anic tradition. This reflects a new dimension in the typology of Qur'anic reception, which this study categorizes as eternal reception.

Furthermore, fieldwork also reveals that at Pondok Pesantren Langitan, there is an open practice of selling copies of the Qur'an to both students and the wider community. Notably, the profits generated from these sales are incorporated into the pesantren's economic system and allocated specifically to improving the welfare of the *asatidz* (teachers). This practice illustrates a dimension of economic reception, in which the sacred text is positioned not only as a source of spiritual inspiration but also as an economic object managed within a framework of religious ethics. It further demonstrates how sacred values and economic pragmatism intersect in pesantren life—an aspect that remains largely overlooked in existing Qur'anic reception studies.

Pondok Pesantren Langitan hosts thousands of students from across the Indonesian archipelago and has become a primary reference for *salaf* (traditional) pesantren due to its scholarly authority in the study of *kitab kuning* (classical Arabic Islamic textbooks used in salaf pesantren). In contrast, Pondok Pesantren al-Muhibbin is known for its integrative approach that combines religious knowledge with modern sciences, as well as foreign language training in Arabic, English, Japanese, and Mandarin—characteristics that are typical of post-*Reformasi* modern pesantren.

Moreover, most existing studies still view pesantren as a homogeneous institution, without paying much attention to their internal diversity—particularly between traditional (*salaf*) and modern pesantren (Nihwan & Paisun, 2019). This dichotomy reflects a broader transformation in Islamic education in Indonesia, which has moved from the classical model emphasizing *kitab kuning* mastery and oral transmission through *sorogan* and *bandongan*, toward more modern systems that integrate general education, foreign language competence, and contemporary management practices (Harmathilda et al., 2024). The ways in

which these different institutional forms shape the reception of the Qur'an remain insufficiently examined in academic studies.

This study argues that it is important to synthesize multiple studies on Qur'anic reception in Indonesian pesantren contexts. Previous research highlights the diverse ways in which the Qur'an is engaged with, interpreted, and preserved in local and socio-cultural settings. For example, Baidowi and Ma'rufah (2025) discuss the localization of the Qur'an in Javanese pesantren, showing how socio-cultural interpretations shape students' understanding of texts such as *Al-Ibriz* and *Al-Iklil*. Hasan et al. (2025) examine Qur'anic reception in Javanese kris preservation traditions, highlighting how ritual and material culture participate in sustaining Qur'anic values.

Other studies further demonstrate the breadth of Qur'anic reception practices across different institutional settings. Labib and Pamungkas (2024) explore "living Qur'an" practices at Al-Muhammad Cepu Islamic Boarding School, illustrating daily enactments of memorization and teaching as forms of engagement with the sacred text. Similarly, Hamidinnor et al. (n.d.) emphasize the functional reception of Qur'anic calligraphy, where visual and spatial practices in mosques reinforce Qur'anic presence in public life, while Haryanto et al. (2024) examine how pesantren-based universities navigate between tradition and modernity—suggesting that institutional structures influence various forms of Qur'anic reception.

Building on these findings, the present study examines the dynamics of Qur'anic reception in two pesantren with contrasting characteristics in Tuban, East Java: Pondok Pesantren Langitan (traditional) and Pondok Pesantren al-Muhibbin Jatirogo (modern). By extending Rafiq's typology to include two additional categories—eternal and economic reception—this research contributes to reconstructing and expanding the theoretical framework of the *Living Qur'an*, situating it within everyday practices across diverse pesantren types. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach and Husserlian phenomenological analysis, the study analyzes how these five reception types manifest in each institution and how they are mediated by differing educational systems and cultural logics.

To further strengthen this framework, the study reintroduces and elaborates the categories of eternal and economic reception, positioning them as integral components of Qur'anic engagement grounded in empirical observation. The term "economic reception" is theoretically anchored in scholarship on the commodification and social valuation of religious practices (Akhdiat &

Marisa, 2023), ensuring that it is not misunderstood as mere fundraising or commercialization. For instance, at Pesantren Langitan, proceeds from mushaf sales supplement institutional operational needs while maintaining the Qur'an sacred value. This approach underscores the Qur'an as an active entity in social, spiritual, and economic life, drawing on anthropological and phenomenological studies that shift attention from textual meaning to lived reception practices (Esack, 2008; Ahimsa-Putra, 2012b).

Although research in the Middle East and North Africa has been extensive, studies on Qur'anic reception in Indonesia remain relatively limited despite the country's status as the world's largest Muslim-majority nation. Accordingly, this study deepens and enriches the Living Qur'an model by offering a typology of Qur'anic reception based on empirical findings from pesantren, while also demonstrating how institutional models—both salaf and modern—shape the forms and meanings of engagement with the Qur'an.

Method

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach within a Husserlian phenomenological framework to explore and understand the receptive experiences of *santri* (pesantren students) toward the Qur'an in their daily contexts at two different *pesantren:* Pondok Pesantren Langitan and Pondok Pesantren al-Muhibbin Jatirogo, Tuban. This approach was chosen because it helps reveal the hidden meanings behind visible religious practices and captures the complexity of the consciousness and intentionality of the *santri* in responding to the sacred text.

Through phenomenology, this study emphasizes the concepts of *epoche* (the suspension of theoretical assumptions) and *eidetic reduction* (the discovery of the essence of meaning) to understand how the Qur'an is experienced socially, spiritually, and even functionally within the context of pesantren life. This approach is relevant within the theoretical framework of the Living Qur'an, which views the text not merely as an object of interpretation but as a living entity that actively shapes and is shaped by the practices of the community.

Two pesantren were purposively selected to represent the two main institutional typologies of *pesantren* in Indonesia: the salaf pesantren (Langitan) and the modern *pesantren* (al-Muhibbin). Pondok Pesantren Langitan is known for its strong scholarly tradition in the study of *kitab kuning*, classical teaching methods *(sorogan, bandongan, halaqah)*, and a Sufi orientation. Meanwhile, al-Muhibbin represents a modern approach with an integrated educational

system combining religious and general sciences, supported by foreign language training and more structured institutional management.

Informant selection was conducted using a snowball sampling technique to obtain representative and in-depth narratives until recurring patterns or data saturation emerged. The process began with key figures such as pesantren administrators, senior *ustaz*, or active alumni. Sampling continued until data saturation was reached—that is, when the narratives started to repeat and no substantively new information emerged. The study involved a total of 21 primary informants, consisting of 7 key figures—including the male caretaker, the head of the pesantren, and members of the board of teachers (*dewan asatidz*)—as well as 7 senior students and 7 junior students. Data collection remained focused on these groups until thematic repetition confirmed saturation.

Data were collected through two main techniques: semi-structured in-depth interviews that allowed open and reflective exploration of the santri's experiential meanings, and participant observation, where the researcher engaged in daily activities such as religious study sessions (*pengajian kitab*), Qur'an recitation (*tilawah*), collective *dzikir*, and other forms of religious ritual practices. This combined strategy allowed the researcher to capture both verbal expressions and embodied practices, as well as interactional patterns and the broader spiritual atmosphere within the pesantren community.

Data analysis followed the stages of the Husserlian phenomenological tradition, namely: First, *Epoche* (bracketing), in which the researcher suspended theoretical assumptions and focused on the subjective experiences of the informants. Second, *Horizontalization*, where all statements in the transcripts were treated with equal value before being thematically organized. Third, *Clustering of themes*, the process of grouping essential meanings into receptive themes: spiritual, aesthetic, functional, symbolic, and instrumental. Fourth, *Textural and structural description*, which involved detailed descriptions of how the experiences occurred (textural) and the contexts in which they were structured (structural). Finally, *the synthesis of meaning and essence*, which aimed to articulate the core of the santri's receptive experiences of the Qur'an across both *salaf* and modern pesantren contexts. To ensure data validity, the study employed source and technique triangulation by comparing the results of interviews and observations.

Finding and Discussion

The Plurality of Qur'anic Reception in the Social Context of Pesantren

These findings explicitly affirm that the reception of the Qur'an within *pesantren* settings is far from homogeneous. Rather, it is multi-layered and shaped by the socio-cultural context and epistemic orientation of each institution. Qur'anic reception is dynamic and contextual, reflecting the interdependent relationship between the sacred text and the social construction of pesantren as spaces for producing and negotiating religious meaning (McAuliffe, 2006; Mukholik, 2017).

At Pondok Pesantren Langitan, the economic mode of reception represents a distinctive example of how the Qur'an functions as symbolic capital that can be converted into social and economic capital, in line with Pierre Bourdieu's theoretical framework. Practices such as religious endowments (*wakaf*), the publication of tafsir books, paid Qur'anic study sessions, and donations associated with specific verses demonstrate that the Qur'an serves not only as a spiritual reference, but also as a source of institutional authority that facilitate networks of trust with tangible economic implications (Bourdieu, 2011).

In other words, at Langitan, there is a circulation of value between the sacred and the profane, between text and institution, between *barakah* and economic sustainability. The reception of the Qur'an is therefore not limited to normative engagement, but has evolved into an integral component of the pesantren's broader sustainability ecosystem. In this context, the Qur'an operates as an instrument for maintaining and legitimizing a social system grounded in reverence for the text, religious scholars (*ulama*), and tradition.

In contrast, at Pondok Pesantren al-Muhibbin, Qur'anic reception tends to emphasize cognitive and pedagogical transformation. Economic reception is less prominent, as al-Muhibbin's educational orientation prioritizes the integration of religious and general curricula, alongside the enhancement of soft skills such as foreign language proficiency. Here, the Qur'an is positioned primarily as a foundational source of values for shaping religious-modern agents capable of engaging competitively in a global environment.

This comparison indicates that economic reception is not entirely absent or at al-Muhibbin, but is instead constructed through different mechanisms—not through institutionalized economic structures, but through the accumulation of cultural capital in the form of strengthened Islamic competencies for participation in the modern public sphere. Thus, the contrast between Langitan and al-Muhibbin does not represent a strict dichotomy, rather, it

reflects a plurality of orientations in interpreting and operationalizing the Qur'an in accordance with each pesantren's institutional structure, cultural environment, and long-term vision.

Thus, the diversity of reception practices in the two pesantren not only reflects the richness of Islamic expression but also challenges the myth that *pesantren* are static and anti-modern institutions. On the contrary, through their engagement with the Qur'an, pesantren construct adaptive religious ecosystems capable of responding to social change while maintaining the authenticity of their scholarly tradition. This underscores the need for a more transdisciplinary, contextual, and open Living Qur'an approach—one that accommodates emerging categories and analytical frameworks for understanding the dynamics of contemporary Muslim religiosity.

Eternal and Economic Dimensions—An Expansion of Typology

The two new typologies emerging from this study—eternal reception and economic reception—offer fresh perspectives in the study of the Living Qur'an, particularly within the context of Indonesian *pesantren*. These findings expand the theoretical scope of Qur'anic reception, which has previously been dominated by exegetical, aesthetic, and functional emphases, by introducing spiritual-transcendent and pragmatic-economic dimensions that have not previously been mapped in a systematic manner.

Ethnographic interviews with santri at Pondok Pesantren al-Muhibbin demonstrate that their understanding of the verse *'Inna nahnu nazzalna al-dzikra wa inna lahu lahafizun'* (Qur'an 15:9) extends beyond its normative-theological meaning that God alone safeguards the purity of revelation. The verse is interpreted instead as a call for human participation in the preservation of the sacred text, particularly through the practice of memorization. The activity of memorizing the Qur'an is viewed not merely as a path to spiritual reward or honor, but as a participatory act in maintaining the existence and continuity of the Qur'an across generations.

Within the santri's lifeworld, the term *lahafizun* (its Preserver) does not function merely as a doctrinal affirmation of divine protection. Rather, it opens itself as an invitation—a summons that both challenges and attracts human involvement, especially that of the *hafiz*, into the ongoing process of preserving the revelation. This meaning emerges not from detached intellectual reflection, but from the embodied encounter between the santri and the practice of *hifz* (memorization) within the pesantren environment (Dimas,

personal communication, May 2024).

In this phenomenological horizon, the act of memorizing the Qur'an is not experienced as a pursuit of reward external to the practice itself. Instead, it reveals itself as an existential and communal participation in maintaining the presence of the sacred text within the flow of human history. Through the disciplined embodiment of *hifz*, the santri come to experience themselves not simply as individuals striving for merit, but as agents woven into a larger, transhistorical endeavor: the preservation of revelation. In this lived experience, the meaning of *lahafizun* unfolds as an active obligation and as a continuing engagement that gives shape to the Qur'an's eternal reception.

This dimension of reception reflects an existential and functional relationship between humans and the sacred text, in which the santri are not merely recipients of revelation but cultural agents who ensure that the Qur'an remains alive within the reasoning and practice of the community. Within the Husserlian phenomenological framework, this signifies a shift from passive reception toward intentional consciousness—a mode of subjective experience in which meaning is constituted through direct engagement with the text. This intentionally is intersubjective and collectively transmitted through the pedagogical structures of the pesantren.

Thus, eternal reception encompasses not only belief in the metaphysical sacredness of the Qur'an but also manifests in praxis: memorizing, teaching, and safeguarding for the text as part of a shared spiritual and social responsibility. Here, the Qur'an is not merely a book to be read but a living entity continually preserved by the *pesantren* community as the custodian of divine knowledge.

In contrast, economic reception emerges explicitly at Pondok Pesantren Langitan. The findings show that the pesantren openly sell Qur'anic mushafs to santri and the wider community, with the proceeds allocated to supporting the welfare of the *asatidz*. This practice reflects a form of reception in which the Qur'an functions not only as a spiritual source but also as an object of economic value—one managed within the ethical boundaries of pesantren life.

The lifeworld of the Langitan community reveals a distinctive mode of engagement that extends beyond spiritual veneration. In their consciousness, the Qur'an presents itself both as a sacred source of religious distinction and as an object with concrete economic significance. The practice of selling mushafs is not an anomaly; it emerges as a legitimate modality through which the pesantren manages and presents the Qur'an within its social and economic

system (Ato', personal communication, April 7, 2024).

The act of selling mushafs and using the profits to support the asātiz produces a new layer of meaning: within the Langitan experience, the Qur'an reveals itself as a source of ethical funding, integrated into the pesantren's internal moral economy. Economic value here is not understood as contradictory to sacredness; rather, it is woven into the management of pesantren life through a distinctive ethical framework. This lived experience demonstrates that the meaning of the Qur'an is constituted not only through spiritual practices but also through economic practices embedded in the pesantren's everyday world.

It is important to emphasize that this practice is not commercial in a capitalist sense, but rather embodies a collective ethos and local wisdom in managing resources according to Islamic ethical values. By utilizing the Qur'an as a medium to support its internal economy, Langitan demonstrates the sacred text can function as symbolic capital—in Pierre Bourdieu's terms—in which is then converted into social and economic capital within the institutional structure of the pesantren.

This illustrates a significant intersection between sacred values and economic pragmatism, a dimension often overlooked in studies of Qur'anic reception that focus predominantly on spiritual or epistemic aspects. In this context, the Qur'an is not merely an object of reading but also a source of institutional sustainability and a mechanism for enhancing community welfare. This model provides a clear example of how pesantren harmoniously integrate revelatory values with worldly needs in a harmonious manner that does not compromise the sacredness of the text.

The inclusion of these two typologies expands the theoretical framework of the Living Qur'an, which has thus far insufficiently captured the complexity of the relationship between text and context. Eternal reception illustrates that spirituality toward the Qur'an is not a merely passive or symbolic orientation, but an active practice embodied through collective experience and the pedagogical processes of pesantren education. Meanwhile, economic reception affirms that the sacred text also operates within the realm of value production and distribution, and that these economic dimensions can be ethically managed within traditional Islamic institutional systems.

Thus, the addition of these two typologies renders the Living Qur'an theory more inclusive and more accurately reflective of the diverse dynamics operating within contemporary pesantren. It opens space to acknowledge

that the reception of the Qur'an is manifested not only in exegesis or artistic recitation, but also in spiritual participation and socio-economic innovations rooted in the text. In this sense, the Qur'an truly lives in all dimensions of pesantren life—both in the realm of meaning and in the realm of practice.

Salaf vs Modern Comparison: Nuances of Reception

One crucial finding of this study is the fundamental variation in the patterns of Qur'an reception between traditional (salaf) pesantren and modern pesantren—differences that emerge not only from curriculum and pedagogical models but also from the distinct epistemological orientations and institutional structures through which each relates to the sacred text. This analysis affirms that the reception of the Qur'an is neither singular nor universal but always contextual, embedded within the social, historical, and ideological fields in which it is lived. These findings resonate with broader scholarship in global Living Qur'an studies (Muttaqin, 2021) and align with research on Indonesian pesantren, which emphasize how local educational and cultural settings shape modes of Qur'anic engagement (Labib & Pamungkas, 2024).

Pondok Pesantren Langitan, as a representation of an established and historical *salaf pesantren*, maintains a reception rooted in the legacy of *turats* or classical Islamic heritage. Learning methods such as *sorogan, bandongan*, and the study of *kitab kuning* serve as core channels for understanding the Qur'an, which is absorbed through exegesis, law, and social ethics. Reception here is textualistic and contemplative, anchoring interpretive authority in the *ulama* as inheritors of transgenerational knowledge.

Interestingly, Langitan is not merely confined to the romanticism of classical scholarship. This study found that the pesantren also cultivates an economic reception, in which the Qur'an functions as a source of inspiration and legitimacy for productive practices such as the sale of mushafs, publication of tafsir books, and the allocation of generated resources for the teacher welfare. This reflects an effort to rearticulate sacredness within a pragmatic framework—demonstrating that the preservation of Qur'anic values can operate alongside the strengthening of the *pesantren's* economy (Akhdiat & Marisa, 2023).

Thus, the reception of the Qur'an at Langitan exists within a conservative-adaptive spectrum: preserving classical scholarly authority while also creating space for the Qur'an to function as an active agent within a value-based economic system. This dynamic can be read as a form of strategic resistance—an effort by

a traditional institution to navigate modern pressures without compromising its identity.

In contrast, Pondok Pesantren al-Muhibbin exemplifies a modern pesantren model that is more transformative and functional in its reception of the Qur'an. Here, the sacred text is not merely treated as a scholarly inheritance but as a framework of values supporting an integrative educational vision—combining religious and general sciences, together with the development of soft skills such as foreign languages, digital literacy, and organizational competencies.

Students at al-Muhibbin interpret Qur'anic verses as ethical and spiritual motivation to become productive, adaptive, and competitive individuals. This approach produces a strong functional reception—showing how the Qur'an is used to shape character, work ethic, and future orientation. Verses related to responsibility, discipline, and honesty, for example, are embedded into the pesantren's informal curriculum for student development.

The findings on eternal reception further reinforce this dimension. As discussed in the previous section, the al-Muhibbin students' understanding of Surah al-Hijr: 9 reflects an intensely personal and spiritual form of reception: memorizing the Qur'an is seen not merely as a meritorious act but as a collective human contribution to the preservation of revelation. This marks a shift from a reception pattern grounded in *ulama*-centered authority toward one rooted in community participation—a sign of a more democratic transformation in the culture of Qur'anic reception (Musthofa & Farid, 2024).

Taken together, the comparison between Langitan and al-Muhibbin reveals that the Qur'anic reception is not solely a product of scholarly tradition but also a reflection of each institution's ideological orientation and value system. Langitan, with its *salaf* character, tends to interpret the Qur'an as a means of preserving scholarly authority and sustaining tradition, whereas al-Muhibbin treats it as a tool for accelerating social and educational transformation.

This difference also reveals that models of Qur'anic reception cannot be separated from the underlying structures of power relations and the modes of knowledge production. In *salaf pesantren*, the text is interpreted through a transmissive, lineage-based mechanism of scholarly inheritance, whereas in modern pesantren, it is received within a framework of critical engagement and transformative interaction. The Qur'an, therefore, becomes a discursive field for the articulation of ideology—whether for conservation or for emancipation.

Borrowing from Foucault's framework, the action taken by Pesantren Langitan in selling copies of the Qur'an and allocating the profits for the

welfare of *asatidz* can be understood as a "site of ideological articulation" where power and knowledge intersect in concrete practices. This practice is not merely economic; it becomes a space where various forms of power and knowledge interact to shape reality. Through the act of selling *mushaf*, the Qur'an in Langitan presents itself not only as a sacred text, but also as an economic asset strategically managed to sustain institutional life. This constitutes a new form of knowledge regarding the function of the Qur'an within the pesantren context—one that is deeply interconnected with internal power structures governing resource management and institutional priorities (in this case, the welfare of religious teachers). Such a practice actualizes a reception model that can be interpreted as a form of *conservation*—preserving the pesantren's economic system through the economic value of the Qur'an—but also potentially as *emancipation*, insofar as it enables educators to focus more fully on intellectual and spiritual service (Foucault, 1999).

Furthermore, this difference also reveals how the reception of the Qurʾān both shapes and is shaped by the relational dynamics among teachers and students, institutions and communities, and traditions and innovations. Reception is not merely about how the text is read, but also about how it is linked to the institutional project of the *pesantren*: whether it is aimed at preserving identity (as in Langitan), or at promoting social and intellectual mobility (as in al-Muhibbin).

Reception as Phenomenon: From Object to Noema

In Husserl's phenomenological approach, religious experience of the Qur'an is understood as an intentional act—namely, a form of consciousness that is always directed toward something (*intentionality*). In this framework, the Qur'anic text in the pesantren context cannot be reduced to a mere material object (such as the physical *mushaf*), but is instead a *noema*—a structure of meaning constructed through the relational dynamic between the subject (santri) and the object of revelation (the Qur'an) as lived in their consciousness (Butler, 2016). This shift moves the analysis from the level of textual objecthood to the realm of meaning-constitution.

When santri memorize QS. al-Hijr:9, they are not merely repeating sounds, but entering into a noetic–noematic relation: their consciousness intentionally directs itself toward the meaning of *lahafizun* as a lived obligation rather than as fixed dogma (Lely, personal communication, July 7, 2024).

Within the framework of Husserlian phenomenology, the reception

of the Qur'an in pesantren cannot be understood merely as an external or normative relationship between subject and object. Rather, reception is a phenomenon of consciousness that is intentional in nature—namely, a *noetic* activity that actively directs awareness toward a meaning-object (*noema*). In this view, the Qur'an emerges as a horizon of meaning that is constituted through the interplay of subjective experience and the intersubjective world of the pesantren (Hewitson, 2014; Nugraheni et al., 2023).

Religious meanings are not inherent in the object (the Qur'an) itself, but are "brought forth" through intentional relations and the social context in which the object is understood and lived. This marks a fundamental distinction between viewing the Qur'an as a doctrinal object versus as a phenomenon of meaning. Such a perspective allows the researcher to disclose layers of lived significance—affective, ethical, ritual, and communal—that are not immediately visible in the written text, but which become present in the experiential world of the santri (Ahimsa-Putra, 2012; Schmidt, 1985).

The concept of *noema* allows us to move beyond reducing reception to mere acts of reading or memorization. *Noema* refers to the meaning presented by an object within the horizon of consciousness, and in the pesantren context, it manifests as *"barakah,"* "piety," "spiritual strength," or even "economic value." Thus, meaning becomes a multilayered phenomenon that attaches itself to the mushaf as lived and circulated within community practice. For instance, in the practice of Qur'an manuscript sales at Pesantren Langitan, the *mushaf* is not merely a material artifact, but presents itself as a symbol of *barakah* that generates flows of social and economic benefit. In phenomenological terms, this represents the constitution of *noema* through a collective shared *noesis* within the *lebenswelt* (lifeworld) of the pesantren.

Furthermore, within the horizon of the pesantren, the meaning of the Qur'an is shaped through what Husserl calls *noematic constitution*—that is, how meanings are structured by consciousness based on lived experience. In this case, the spiritual experience of *santri* at al-Muhibbin, who interpret QS. al-Hijr:9 not merely as a divine promise of revelation's preservation, but as a participatory call to safeguard the Qur'an through memorization, exemplifies the constitution of *noema* born from *praxis-based noesis*. Here, the verse shifts from functioning as a normative theological claim to becoming an ethical–existential reality embodied in the daily lived experience of the memorizers.

This "*noematic constitution*" is not merely an individual act; rather, it is profoundly shaped by the intersubjective structures and the "*collective*

lebenswelt" of the *pesantren*. The *noema* of *barakah* attached to the *mushaf*, or the *noema* of honor tied to Qur'anic memorization, arises from the dynamic interaction between the subject (santri), the teacher *(kyai),* and the collective values embedded in the pesantren culture. Such intersubjective meaning-making aligns with Alfred Schutz's insight that social meanings are constituted through a shared "stock of knowledge" that members of a community continuously draw upon and reproduce (Zakiyah & Izza, 2024; Schutz, 1967).

Thus, the reception of the Qur'an in pesantren can no longer be understood merely as a relationship between "text" and "interpretation," but rather as a phenomenological process in which the Qur'an is constituted as *noema* within a collective consciousness shaped by social practices, daily rituals, moral economies, and pedagogical structures. This approach expands the Living Qur'an paradigm by foregrounding the lived, embodied, and intersubjective dimensions of reception—showing how the sacred text becomes continually reconstructed through human experience and intentional consciousness.

Conclusion

Through Husserlian phenomenology, Qur'anic reception in pesantren is not merely an interaction between subject and text, but as a process of intentional consciousness in which meaning is actively constituted through lived experience. The Qur'an appears as *noema*—a dynamic representation of meaning shaped through collective practices, social interactions, and the pedagogical structures of the pesantren. This process produces various forms of noema, including divine blessing, spiritual nobility, legitimization of authority, and even economic resources. The case of Pesantren Langitan, for instance, shows how economic reception supports operational needs rather than commercialization, illustrating how sacredness and pragmatism can coexist without contradiction.

Thus, the Qur'an emerges as a lived entity within the social world of the pesantren, and awareness of it is sustained through ongoing intentional acts. Studying its reception illuminates the interrelations between religion, consciousness, and meaning-making in dynamic human contexts. Future research could explore how economic and eternal forms of reception interact in other pesantren or broader Muslim societies, including the influence of digitalization and modern educational policies. This study remains limited to two pesantren in East Java and relies heavily on self-reported experiences, which may be shaped by institutional norms, suggesting the need for more

diverse and comparative investigations.

Acknowledgment

The author expresses deep gratitude to the caretakers, kiai, and students of Pondok Pesantren Langitan and Pondok Pesantren al-Muhibbin for sharing their spiritual and social experiences in engaging with the Qur'an. Sincere thanks are also extended to academic advisors, Prof. Dr. H. Aswadi, M.Ag., and Dr. Hj. Suqiyah Musafa'ah, M.Ag., as well as colleagues for their theoretical guidance and critical input, particularly in strengthening the Husserlian phenomenological framework underpinning this study.

References

Ahimsa-Putra, H. S. (2012). Fenomenologi agama: Pendekatan Fenomenologi untuk memahami agama. *Walisongo: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan*, *20*(2), 271–304. https://doi.org/10.21580/ws.20.2.200

Akhdiat, A., & Marisa, S. N. (2023). Dimensi Komodifikasi Mushaf Alquran. *Basha'ir: Jurnal Studi Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir*, *3*(2), 99–111.

Annas, M. A., Saputra, R. D., & Said, H. A. (2024). Living Qur'an sebagai Cerminan Praktik Keagamaan: Analisis Fenomena Sosial dan Normatif. *Ulumul Qur'an: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir*, *4*(2), 274–289. https://doi.org/10.58404/uq.v4i2.333

Baidowi, A., & Ma'rufah, Y. (2025). Localizing The Qur'an in Javanese Pesantren: A Socio-Cultural Interpretation of Al-Ibriz and Al-Iklil. *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Quran dan Hadis*, *26*(2), 302–326.

Bourdieu, P. (2011). The forms of capital.(1986). *Cultural Theory: An Anthology*, *1*(81–93), 949.

Butler, J. L. (2016). Rediscovering Husserl: Perspectives on the epoché and the reductions. *The Qualitative Report*, *21*(11), 2033. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2016.2327

Esack, F. (2008). *The Qur'an: A user's Guide*. Oneworld.

Fais, N. L. (2021). Komodifikasi Al-Quran: Analisa Sosial Terhadap Mushaf Al-Quran Grand Maqamat. *Maghza: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir*, *6*(2), 172–188. https://doi.org/10.24090/maghza.v6i2.4848

Fathurrosyid, F., Fairuzah, F., & Nadhiroh, W. (2024). The Printing of the Qur'an, Gender Issues, and the Commodification of Religion. *Suhuf*, *17*(1), 115–139. https://doi.org/10.22548/shf.v17i1.1003

Foucault, M. (1999). *Religion and culture*. Manchester University Press.

Hamidinnor, H., Tahe, N. A., Munirah, M., Supriadi, A., & Malisi, M. A. S. (n.d.). The Functional Reception of Qur'anic Calligraphy at the Grand Mosque of Nurul Islam, Palangka Raya. *Al-Qudwah*, *2*(1), 68–82.

Harmathilda, H., Yuli, Y., Hakim, A. R., & Supriyadi, C. (2024). Transformasi Pendidikan Pesantren di Era Modern: Antara Tradisi dan Inovasi. *Karimiyah*, *4*(1), 33–50. https://doi.org/10.59623/karimiyah.v4i1.51

Haryanto, S., Sukawi, S., & Muslih, M. (2024). Uniting Tradition and Modernity: Scientific Paradigms of Pesantren-Based Universities. *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, *7*(3), 684–704. https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v7i3.48

Hasan, F., Sany, U. P., & Ridwan, M. K. (2025). The Reception of The Qur'an in The Preservation Tradition of Javanese Kris. *Mutawatir: Jurnal Keilmuan Tafsir Hadith*, *15*(1), 22–45. https://doi.org/10.15642/mutawatir.2025.15.1.22-45

Hewitson, J. M. (2014). Husserl's epoché and sarkar's pratyáhára: Transcendence, ipseity, and praxis. *Comparative and Continental Philosophy*, *6*(2), 158–177. https://doi.org/10.1179/1757063814Z.00000000039

Labib, H. A., & Pamungkas, M. I. (2024). Living qur'an: Al-qur'an reception in al muhammad cepu islamic boarding school. *Amorti: Jurnal Studi Islam Interdisipliner*, 104–110. https://doi.org/10.59944/amorti.v3i3.309

McAuliffe, J. D. (2006). *The Cambridge companion to the Qur'ān*. Cambridge University Press.

Mukholik, A. (2017). The variation of the Quran reception 21st century in Central Java Indonesia. *IJASOS-International E-Journal of Advances in Social Sciences*, *3*(7), 268–275.

Musthofa, M., & Farid, A. (2024). Qur'an-based Economic Sociology: Formulation of A Qur'anic Model for The Socio-Economic Resilience of Muslim Society in Indonesia. *Mushaf: Jurnal Tafsir Berwawasan Keindonesiaan*,

5(1), 181–213. https://doi.org/10.33650/mushaf.v5i1.11253

Muttaqin, A. (2021). From Contextual to Actual Approach: Towards a Paradigm Shift in Interpreting the Qur'an. *Mutawatir: Jurnal Keilmuan Tafsir Hadith*, *11*(2), 203–230. https://doi.org/10.15642/mutawatir.2021.11.2.203-230

Nihwan, M., & Paisun, P. (2019). Tipologi pesantren (mengkaji sistem salaf dan modern). *Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Ilmu Keislaman*, *2*(1), 59–81.

Nugraheni, S., Marchela, D. P., Al Ghozali, S. K., Ahya, M. K., Junaedi, M., & Roesner, M. (2023). Konsep Fenomenologi Edmund Husserl dan Relevansinya dalam Konsep Pendidikan Islam. *Akhlaqul Karimah: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, *2*(2), 143–154.https://doi.org/10.58353/jak.v2i2.140

Rafiq, A. (2014). *The Reception of the Qur'an in Indonesia: A Case Study of the Place of the Qur'an in a Non-Arabic Speaking Community*. Temple University. http://dx.doi.org/10.34944/dspace/3421

Rafiq, A. (2021). The Living Qur'an: Its Text and Practice in the Function of the Scripture. *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis*, *22*(2), 469–484. https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.2021.2202-10

Schmidt, J. (1985). *Maurice Merleau-Ponty: Between phenomenology and structuralism*. Macmillan.

Schutz, A. (1967). *The phenomenology of the social world*. Northwestern university press.

Zakiyah, A., & Izza, F. N. (2024). Motif Fenomena Pembacaan Al-Qur'an dengan Naghamat: Analisis Fenomenologi Alfred Schutz. *Maghza: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir*, *9*(2), 311–328. https://doi.org/10.24090/maghza.v9i2.12696

DOI: 10.18860/eh.v27i2.36881

THE TRADITION OF POSTPONING COHABITATION UNTIL *WALIMATUL 'URSY* IN CERENTI: DURKHEIM'S SOLIDARITY ANALYSIS

Musdalifa[1], Alif Andaru Riyadi[2], Rahmayani[2], Khoirun Nisa[1], Abdur Rahman Syahid[3]
[1]Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Ampel Surabaya, Indonesia
[2]International Islamic University Malaysia, Selangor, Malaysia
[3]Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau, Pekanbaru, Indonesia
Email: musdalifa0209@gmail.com

Received: October 12, 2025
Revised: November 9, 2025
Accepted: November 11, 2025

Abstract

Marriage customs in Malay communities continue to evolve amid shifting social values, yet scholarly attention to how local traditions mediate the relationship between Islamic law and indigenous norms remains limited. Although various studies have examined marriage rituals in Indonesia, no research has specifically analyzed the tradition of postponing cohabitation until the walimatul 'ursy in Cerenti District, nor how this custom functions as a socio-religious mechanism that maintains communal harmony. This gap highlights the urgency of investigating how the practice negotiates the potential tension between Islamic permissibility for immediate cohabitation and customary restrictions rooted in Malay moral philosophy. Its novelty lies in analyzing Malay marriage traditions through the perspective of social cohesion, demonstrating how local and religious values interact in shaping social order. This study discusses the tradition of postponing cohabitation until walimatul 'ursy (wedding celebration) in the Malay community in Cerenti District as a socio-religious practice that reflects the balance between Islamic customs and sharia, and functions as a social mechanism that strengthens community cohesion. The purpose of the research is to analyze the social function

and religious value of the tradition through Emile Durkheim's theory of social solidarity. The research uses a qualitative approach with field data through in-depth interviews with four indigenous figures, data analysis is carried out descriptive-analytically using Durkheim's concept of mechanical and organic solidarity. The results of the study show that postponing cohabitation serves as a mechanism of self-control, family respect, and guardian of the sanctity of marriage. These findings confirm that the tradition strengthens social unity through the common values and collective norms of the Cerenti community. Practically, this research provides insights applicable to family development and the preservation of customs based on Islamic values. In conclusion, this tradition does not restrict individuals freedom but plays a role in maintaining the moral and social balance of the community.

Tradisi pernikahan dalam masyarakat Melayu terus mengalami dinamika seiring perubahan nilai sosial, namun kajian ilmiah mengenai bagaimana adat lokal memediasi hubungan antara hukum Islam dan norma budaya masih terbatas. Meskipun sejumlah penelitian telah membahas ritual pernikahan di Indonesia, belum ada studi yang secara khusus menganalisis tradisi penundaan tinggal bersama hingga pelaksanaan walimatul 'ursy di Kecamatan Cerenti, maupun bagaimana praktik tersebut berfungsi sebagai mekanisme sosial-keagamaan yang menjaga keharmonisan komunal. Kekosongan kajian ini menunjukkan urgensi untuk menelusuri bagaimana tradisi tersebut merundingkan potensi ketegangan antara kebolehan syariat untuk langsung tinggal bersama dan pembatasan adat yang berakar pada filosofi moral masyarakat Melayu. Kebaruan penelitian terletak pada analisis tradisi pernikahan Melayu melalui perspektif kohesi sosial yang menunjukkan bagaimana nilai lokal dan religius berinteraksi dalam membentuk ketertiban sosial. Penelitian ini membahas tradisi penundaan tinggal bersama hingga walimatul 'ursy pada masyarakat Melayu di Kecamatan Cerenti sebagai praktik sosial keagamaan yang mencerminkan keseimbangan antara adat dan syariat Islam, serta berfungsi sebagai mekanisme sosial yang memperkuat kohesi masyarakat. Tujuan penelitian adalah menganalisis fungsi sosial dan nilai religius tradisi tersebut melalui teori solidaritas sosial Emile Durkheim. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan data lapangan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan empat tokoh adat, analisis data dilakukan secara deskriptif-analitis dengan menggunakan konsep solidaritas mekanik dan organik Durkheim. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penundaan tinggal bersama berfungsi sebagai mekanisme pengendalian diri, penghormatan keluarga, dan penjaga etika kesucian pernikahan. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa tradisi tersebut memperkuat kesatuan sosial melalui kesamaan nilai dan norma kolektif masyarakat Cerenti. Secara praktis, penelitian ini memberikan wawasan yang dapat diterapkan dalam pembinaan keluarga dan pelestarian adat berbasis nilai Islam. Kesimpulannya, tradisi ini tidak membatasi kebebasan individu, tetapi berperan menjaga keseimbangan moral dan sosial dalam komunitas.

Keywords: *Collective norms, Malay customs, postponing cohabitation, social solidarity, Walimatul 'ursy*

Introduction

Marriage is a fundamental aspect in social life that is not merely understood as a natural bond between a man and a woman as husband and wife, but also as the foundation for forming a family that plays an important role in ensuring the continuity of generations and the stability of society. The quality and integrity of the family are crucial factors in realizing social welfare and human happiness. In Islamic view, the institution of marriage receives great attention, as sharia provides clear guidelines along with its rules and procedures (Malisi, 2022).

Islam views marriage as a sacred covenant and an act of worship to Allah, as well as a form of practicing the Prophet's Sunnah. Its implementation is based on the principles of sincerity, responsibility, and adherence to religious law. In line with that, regulations in Indonesia through Law Number 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage, Chapter I Article 1, define marriage as an innate bond between a man and a woman as husband and wife, aimed at forming a happy, eternal family founded on the belief in the One God (Musyafah, 2020).

The discussion of marriage can be analyzed from two main dimensions. First, it represents a religious obligation that has a normative basis in Islamic teachings. Second, it serves as the only legitimate means for fulfilling human sexual needs within the framework permitted by religion. Hence, the practice of marriage is not solely intended to satisfy biological desires inherent in human nature but also carries religious significance that affirms obedience to Shari'a (Ichrom et al., 2024).

In Islamic law, marriage is considered part of the sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH, serving as both a moral and spiritual foundation for the ummah. The essence of marriage lies in the ijab-qabul procession, symbolizing mutual consent and acknowledgment of the rights and responsibilities of husband and wife. Family involvement, particularly the role of wali (guardian), reflects the importance of social support in building a household. Islamic Shari'a regulates in detail the relationship between husband and wife in order to create balance and prevent the occurrence of adultery that can damage the morals of society. While marriage is highly esteemed, Islam also allows for divorce as a final resort, provided it is pursued justly and with caution. Thus, marriage in Islam extends beyond worldly concerns—it is a path toward

spiritual closeness to Allah SWT and the attainment of happiness in the hereafter (Amalia, 2009).

The commandment of marriage is explicitly stated in the Qur'an, including in surah An-Nahl verse 72 that means: "Allah has made for you spouses (husband or wife) of your own kind, made for you from your spouses children and grandchildren, and bestowed upon you good sustenance". In this verse, Allah explains His favor of creating a pair for them of their own kind, through whom humanity continues its lineage and fulfills its divine duty as caliphs (stewards) on earth. Furthermore, Allah reminds believers that He provides sustenance, encouraging them not to fear scarcity but to focus on nurturing and educating their offspring to become righteous successors (Al-Qur'an, 2019).

For the Malay community, marriage is not merely a union between two people of different sexes but a social institution imbued with cultural, religious, and symbolic meanings. Marriage is viewed as a means of ensuring lineage continuity, preserving family honor, and strengthening relationships between social groups. In Indonesia, marriage also symbolizes the union of two extended families rooted in traditional values and local customs, each with its own distinct character. One such example is found in Cerenti District, Kuantan Singingi Regency, Riau Province. The wedding procession there in accordance with local customs, including the tradition of postponing cohabitation until the Walimatul 'ursy, a wedding celebration held at the bride's residence.

From an Islamic perspective, walimah represents a form of gratitude and celebration that should be conducted in moderation, without extravagance. It is encouraged as a means of expressing hospitality and fostering social solidarity. However, the implementation should align with the economic capacity of the bride and groom to avoid hardship. Islam emphasizes that walimah should never impose undue burden or cause social harm (Azizah, 2023).

Unlike most other regions, the people of Cerenti observe the tradition of postponing cohabitation for newlywed couples. This customary practice does not simply delay the couple's physical union but embodies moral and social purposes deeply valued by the local community. From an Islamic standpoint, marriage is not limited to the contract itself but encompasses a system of rights, obligations, and ethical conduct between spouses. Accordingly, the tradition of postponing cohabitation in Cerenti may be understood as an effort to uphold social order and ensure the realization of a harmonious and ideal family life.

The explanation is rooted in the philosophy of the Cerenti Malay Community, which states:

"*Balanggang ka urang banyak*
Basulua ka Matoaghi"

This expression reflects that the marriage tradition in Cerenti carries profound social meaning, particularly concerning the public legitimacy of marriage. After the marriage contract, the bride and groom are not fully considered "legitimate," creating the potential for public misunderstanding or slander if the union is not promptly announced. To address this, the local community holds a special procession known as *pendudukan Niniak Mamak*, a symbolic handover from the groom's family to the bride's family through the intermediary of the *Niniak Mamak* (customary elders). This procession serves as a formal affirmation of the marriage according to custom before proceeding to the *Walimatul 'ursy* or wedding celebration. Thus, the postponement of cohabitation among newly married couples is understood as a customary mechanism in Cerenti society to secure social recognition and prevent negative prejudices within the community (Syahid, 2025).

Several previous studies have explored marriage and social solidarity from Emile Durkheim's theoretical perspective. These include Zakia et al. (2024), who examined *sipaindongan* marriage in Mandar its deviation from established customs; Dayanti and Hidayat (2023), who investigated changes in social solidarity resulting from the introduction of catering services at weddings; and Naibaho et al. (2015), who analyzed the symbolic meaning of *jambar* in traditional Batak Toba marriages. Other relevant research includes Kurniawan and Suharman (2022), who studied social solidarity in the *Samadiyah* tradition of Aceh, and Perwitasari (2017), who examined solidarity practices through marriage donations in Cepokojajar Village, Yogyakarta. In contrast to these studies, the present study specifically investigates the tradition of postponing cohabitation until the *walimatul 'ursy* in Cerenti District, which combines religious and customary values as a form of social legitimacy, analyzed through Durkheim's theory of solidarity to reveal its role in sustaining community cohesion.

This phenomenon illustrates the dynamic interaction between customs and religion in Malay society. From an Islamic perspective, the marriage contract (*akad nikah*) constitutes the essential element of marital validity, whereas the *walimah* is regarded as a *sunnah mu'akkadah* (a highly recommended practice in Islam). However, for the Malay community of Cerenti, the *walimah* represents

the culmination of social legitimacy in marriage. In other words, it serves to reinforce social solidarity, ensuring that a marriage is recognized not only in the eyes of religion but also within the customary social order.

The central issue lies in the potential normative tension between Islamic law and local customs. Islam does not prohibit married couples from cohabitation after the marriage contract, while the Cerenti custom imposes social restriction that forbids it prior to the *walimah*. This divergence highlights the importance of examining the tradition through the lens of social solidarity, in order to understand why the community preserves such practices and how they function to maintain social integration. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the social function and religious significance of the tradition of postponing cohabitation in the Cerenti Malay community. This research also contributes to a broader understanding of the interaction between Islamic custom and sharia in shaping social cohesion within contemporary Malay society.

Method

This study employs a qualitative approach using field research methods (Abdussamad, 2021) to explore the tradition of postponing cohabitation until the *walimatul 'ursy* in Cerenti District. The primary data were collected through in-depth interviews with four traditional leaders who possess extensive knowledge of the rules, values, and meanings embedded in local marriage traditions. The selection of informants was conducted purposively to ensure that the data accurately represented customary perspectives on social practices that continue to be preserved within the Malay community of Cerenti.

The interview data were analyzed through the theoretical framework of Emile Durkheim's concept of social solidarity, which distinguishes between mechanical and organic solidarity. The concept of mechanical solidarity was applied to examine how this tradition reinforces shared values and collective norms within society, while organic solidarity was used to identify the functional roles of each actor involved in the traditional wedding procession. Accordingly, this study not only provides a descriptive account of the tradition but also interprets how it contributes to maintaining social cohesion and strengthening the collective bonds of the Cerenti community.

Finding and Discussion

The findings of the study reveal that the Malay Muslim community of Cerenti continues to uphold the tradition of postponing cohabitation

between the bride and groom until the implementation of the *walimatul 'ursy*. This practice is understood as an ancestral heritage that remains relevant and consistent with the principles of Islamic law. The postponement is interpreted as a means of preserving marital honor, preventing slander, and fostering prudence in beginning domestic life. The values embodied in this custom demonstrate a harmonious relationship between local customs and Islamic teachings.

From the perspective of Emile Durkheim's theory of social solidarity, this practice represents mechanical solidarity—a collective adherence to customary and religious norms that serve as shared moral guidelines. Through commitment to these norms, the tradition strengthens social cohesion and nurtures moral consciousness within the Cerenti Malay community. Beyond its social dimension, the practice also encompasses psychological and cultural aspects, providing couples with time for adjustment before cohabitation, maintaining harmony among extended families, and strengthening overall social integration. Thus, the tradition reflects the integration of custom and sharia in maintaining marital dignity and promoting community stability.

Wedding Traditions in Malay Islam in Cerenti

Similar to other traditional wedding traditions in general, wedding ceremonies in Cerenti comprise a series of ritual stages rich with symbolic meaning (Akmal, 2015). In the Malay Islamic community of Cerenti, marriage is regarded as a sacred event that unites not only two individuals but also two extended families, thereby strengthening social networks within the community. Accordingly, each stage of the wedding procession is performed sistematically—from the preliminary ceremonies to the culmination of the *walimah* celebration—reflecting the harmonious synthesis of Malay cultural values and Islamic teachings.

The first stage in Malay wedding customs is *merisik*, an exploratory process officially conducted through a *telangkai penghulu* (intermediary leader). At this stage, the groom's family gathers information regarding the conditions and requirements set forth by Islamic customs and teachings. The female representatives convey these stipulations in detail through the *telangkai* leader. After obtaining a response from the female side, the male family holds deliberations with relatives to discuss the *merisik* results and to determine an appropriate time for the marriage ceremony (Takari et al., 2014).

After the *merisik* stage, the procession continues with *meminang* or

antar tanda. Once both families agree to the proposed marriage, the groom's family sends a representative to formally convey the intention to propose to the bride. The messengers are typically respected family elders or traditional leaders known for their wisdom and deep understanding of local customs. The proposal ceremony is conducted in a traditional manner using poetic language and meaningful *petatah-petitih* (proverbs), beginning with the singing of Malay betel nut as a symbol of respect and the initiation of sacred marital bond (Juswandi, 2018).

In the Malay Islamic wedding tradition of Cerenti, the proposal or *intersigning* marks an important stage following mutual agreement between the two families. At this stage, the groom's side formally sends parents or traditional leaders to deliver the proposal to the bride's family. The procession is performed in poetic form, filled with rhymes and proverbial expressions, and begins with the presentation of betel nut symbolizing the sanctity of custom. During the event, both family representatives sit facing one another, and through their spokespersons, deliver introductions and the formal declaration of the marriage intention. After the exchange of betel nut symbolic gifts, the bride's family responds by either accepting or rejecting the proposal. If the proposal is accepted, the ceremony concludes with the placement of a ring on the bride-to-be's ring finger, signifying the official bond of the two families (Taswin, n.d.)

The next stage, known as *mangampuang*, represents a tradition of communal cooperation in preparing for the wedding celebration. This activity involves neighbors, relatives, and villagers who gather to assist in fulfilling the wedding needs prior to the ceremony. Tipically, the mothers work together to cook, while in the evening, the *niniak mamak* (customary elders) from both sides gather at the bride's house for deliberation. Residents are invited to share meals, and voluntarily contribute monetary donations to support the host family. This tradition not only strengthens social bonds and friendship but also embodies collective participation in helping the financial responsibilities of the wedding and the *walimah* (Hendri, n.d.).

Before the wedding day, the people of Cerenti observe the tradition of *manggiliang ghompah*, a form of communal cooking carried out through *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation). This activity usually takes place on the day preceding the main ceremony, when the community jointly prepares dishes for the guests. Public participation in this event is remarkably high, with residents working together until late at night, or even until dawn, as an expression of

social solidarity. For the Cerenti Malay community, this tradition is an inherited ancestral practice that continues to be preserved because it reflects the values of kinship, togetherness, and the spirit of mutual cooperation. Furthermore, its preservation serves as a means of safeguarding cultural identity amidst the pressures of modern social change. (Noviandri, 2011).

After all the preparations were completed, the marriage contract (*akad nikah*) was conducted. In the Malay tradition of Cerenti, this procession tipically begins when the groom's entourage arrives at the bride's house and is welcomed through customary rituals. The ceremony commences with the exchange and communal sharing of *tepak sirih* as a gesture of respect and hospitality. Following this, the *ijab qabul* is performed led by the guardian (*wali*) and witnessed by two witnesses, signifying the formalization of the marriage contract. The ceremony is then followed by the *tepung tawar* (unsalted flour) ritual, conducted by elders as a prayer of blessing for the newlyweds. During the *ijab qabul*, the bride remains in a separate room and listens to the proceedings. Afterward, the *sighat taklik* is recited, serving as the husband's solemn vow to treat his wife kindly and fulfill his obligations in accordance with Islamic law. This entire sequence affirms the validity of the marriage in both religious and customary terms while embodying the values of sacredness, respect, and responsibility in family life (Budiawan, 2021).

Following the marriage contract, the ceremony proceeds with the *bararak* or *manjapuik tabak* procession—one of the sacred traditions of the ancestral heritage of the Malay people that continues to be observed today. This ritual takes place after the wedding ceremony, with the *tabak* (ritual offering) typically prepared at the house of *mak bako* (the father's sibling) who belongs to the same tribe as the groom. This tradition consists of three stages: first, the preparation stage involves deliberation at the bride's house to determine the wedding day and the customary day. Second, the preparation of the *tabak* includes preparing ingredients and arranging ritual items in accordance with customary rules. Third, the procession of *bararak tabak* entails the symbolic delivery of the *tabak* from *Mak Bako*'s residence to the bride's home (Restika et al., 2023). In Cerenti, this tradition is often enlivened by the performance of *randai* (a traditional Malay theatrical art) performed between family households, reflecting communal joy and unity (Marlis, n.d.).

Another significant tradition is the *khatam al-Qur'an* (Qur'an recitation completion ceremony), which is usually carried out after the procession of *berandam* (purification bath rituals) to reject reinforcements as a form of

self-improvement of the bride-to-be, symbolizing the bride's spiritual and physical preparation. This ceremony signifies that the bride has completed her Qur'anic studies under her parents' guidance and is spiritually prepared to assume her role as a wife and future mother. It also demonstrates the family's commitment to Islamic education and moral upbringing. The procession of *khatam al-Qur'an* is led by a Qur'an teacher or a respected religious figure appointed by the family, with the bride accompanied by her parents, peers, or recitation teachers. During the ritual, selected surahs—such as al-Dhuha, al-Fatihah, and others—are recited, followed by a collective supplication (*doa khatam Qur'an*) for seeking Allah's blessings (Ashsubli, 2018).

The next tradition is *malam berinai* (henna night). In the Malay community, including Cerenti, this procession is not merely an act of applying *inai* (henna) to the bride's hands and nails, but a symbolic expression of emotional and spiritual readiness for married life. The patience of the bride while waiting for the henna to deepen in color symbolizes inner beauty, virtue, and preparedness for her new role. This ceremony is typically held at night, either before or after the wedding day, depending on family custom. In addition to *inai* procession, the ritual includes various symbolic acts led by *Mak Andam* (the traditional beautician) with the assistance of close female relatives. When conducted before the wedding, each bride and groom performs the ritual separately; when held afterward, it is performed jointly at the bride's house. In Cerenti, the atmosphere of *malam berinai* is made more festive with tambourine (*rebana*) performances, creating a sacred yet joyful ambiance (Ashsubli, 2018).

Alongside these ceremonies, the *tepung tawar* (unsalted flour) ritual is also performed, symbolizing prayers for the well-being of the couple and protection from harm. In Malay custom, this ritual represents purification from misfortune, the expression of gratitude, and the hope for harmony in family life. This procession begins with the sprinkling of water mixed with powder, citrus, and rose petals onto the bride's palms, which rest on a white pillow. This is followed by the sprinkling of turmeric rice, washed rice, and potpourri, while special guests sprinkle water onto the bride's head accompanied by *salawat* (praises to the Prophet). The next stage is to sprinkle the couple with fresh flour water, followed by the application of henna to the hands, and conclude with a collective prayer. The number of participants performing the sprinkling—always an odd number such as three, five, seven, nine, or thirteen—symbolizes balance and prosperity in Malay custom (Maini & Perdamean, 2023).

In addition, the Malay community—particularly in Cerenti—also preserves the tradition of *Makan Sepughun*, which refers to a communal meal shared during celebratory or traditional events. This tradition is usually performed after a certain procession within a series of wedding or traditional ceremonies, during which all invited guests, families, and community participants dine together. The core meaning of "*Makan Sepughun*" extends beyond the act of eating; it symbolizes togetherness, equality, and the strengthening of social bonds. Through this tradition, the values of mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*) and gratitude are expressed, while fostering solidarity and friendship among community members (Salim, n.d.).

The highlight of the entire wedding series is the *walimah* or wedding reception. Over time, its implementation has evolved no longer limited to the bride's house, but also held public venues such as hotels, multipurpose buildings or community halls, or other appropriate places. Unlike earlier stages that emphasize ritual and religious symbolism, the *walimah* focuses more on joy, social interaction, and strengthening kinship ties. The essential purpose of *walimah* is to gather family, friends, and community members in a spirit of togetherness to celebrate the sanctity of marriage (Takari et al., 2014).

The final event in the Cerenti Malay wedding tradition is the post-wedding visitation to close relatives, particularly the *niniak mamak* (maternal uncles and customary elders). In the Malay tradition of Cerenti, the bride and groom are expected to visit the homes of their close relatives from both the husband's and wife's families. The visits serve not only as social gatherings but also accompanied by bringing traditional dishes or food as acts of respect for the family visited. In return, the hosts customarily offer gifts—often in the form of money or household items—to the newlyweds. According to local belief, failure to present such gifts during the visit is viewed as an inauspicious sign that may bring misfortune to the family (Ferawati et al., 2023).

Thus, the sequence of wedding ceremonies in Malay Islam in Cerenti shows a harmonious integration between customs and Islamic teachings. While customs contribute warmth, symbolism, and communal values, Islam provides the normative and spiritual framework that ensures the sanctity and legitimacy of marriage. The two dimensions complement one another, transforming marriage from a mere formal ritual into a cultural and spiritual celebration that reinforces Malay Islamic identity and community solidarity.

Postponement of Cohabitation: Between Custom and Sharia

The phenomenon of postponing cohabitation or living together after marriage represents a local customary practice that continues to be preserved within the Cerenti Malay Community. This tradition—commonly referred to as "living separately"—refers to a situation in which a married couple does not immediately reside together for a certain period following the marriage contract. This practice is seen as a mechanism of social and cultural transition in establishing domestic life. In Cerenti District, this custom has been passed down generations and is maintained under the supervision of customary authorities, especially *Niniak Mamak* or tribal elders, who serve as custodians of traditional governance and moral order.

In Cerenti there are four tribes—*Malay*, *Pitopang*, *Plyang Loe*, and *Plyang Soni*. Each—each led by a tribal elder serving as chief. According to Marlis Salim and Fadel, the tradition of postponing cohabitation after the marriage contract is rooted in a customary philosophy grounded in sharia, as the saying "*adat bersendi syara'*, *syara' bersendi Kitabullah*" (custom is founded upon religious law, and religious law is founded upon the Book of Allah). Islam regards marriage as a sacred covenant, while local custom introduces an additional stage following the religious and administrative formalization of the contract at the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA). At this stage, *Niniak Mamak* deliberated to formally acknowledge the couple's marital status within the customary framework. Before the traditional inauguration was carried out, the couple is not permitted to live in the same house, as affirmed in the local proverb saying "*Balanggang ka urang banyak*, *basulua ka mato aghi*," which emphasizes the importance of social validation through traditional processions (Marlis, n.d.).

This inauguration process is carried out during *Makan Sepughun* ceremony, a symbolic handover of the male nephew by the *Niniak Mamak* to the woman's family, signifying that the couple is now recognized as husband and wife according to custom. The event is attended by *Niniak Mamak* from both families, along with the village leaders, officials, and local residents, indicating that customary ratification is a communal affair. Once the *Makan Sepughun* procession concludes, the bride and groom carry out *Walimatul 'ursy* as the highlight of the wedding celebration (Marlis, n.d.).

According to Hendri and Taswin, the tradition of postponing cohabitation represents an ancestral heritage that remains integral to the community's cultural identity. This practice not only perpetuates tradition but also serves as an educational and moral means for the bride and groom.

The postponement period offers time for the bride and groom to prepare for the *Walimatul 'ursy* and to internalize the values of family life. As a process of social learning, this stage instills discipline, etiquette, and moral conduct in marital relationships. Moreover, the postponement functions as a period of emotional and spiritual maturation, fostering responsibility and readiness before living a married life. Thus, this tradition not only preserves traditional values but also serves as a social mechanism that cultivates marital readiness to face family life (Hendri, n.d.).

The primary purpose of the tradition of postponing cohabitation is to uphold the social legitimacy of marriage in the eyes of the customary community. Before obtaining customary legalization, newly married couples are not yet considered fully legitimate as husband and wife; hence, a transitional period is observed to prevent slander, gossip, or moral suspicion within the community. Through this traditional procession, the couple's marital status is publicly affirmed before the *Niniak Mamak*, relatives, and neighbors. Consequently, the tradition serves as a communal mechanism that reinforces social recognition, validating the marriage not only in religious terms but also within the moral and customary norms of the society (Salim, n.d.).

Throughout this series of traditional processions, the *Niniak Mamak* play a vital role reaffirming kinship structures and genealogical lines, including the recognition of familial roles such as uncles and ancestral elders. This demonstrates that the tradition of postponing cohabitation is not merely a ceremonial ritual but also a social institution for maintaining lineage, hierarchy, and customary authority within the indigenous community.

Taswin explained that the legitimacy of customary law in the practice of postponing cohabitation was collectively agreed upon by all *Datuk Suku* (tribal chiefs) as part of the Minangkabau customary heritage, originating from *Datuk Parpati Nan Sabatang*. Thus, this tradition is regarded as an ancestral legacy possessing both historical depth and cultural authority. One of the traditional leaders, the *Datuk* of the *Plyang Loe* Tribe, Mr. Taswin reaffirmed this principle through the customary expression, "*Dak lapuak dek ujan*, *dak lokang dek pane*," meaning that inherited traditions will never fade despite the passage of time and the pressures of change. This expression reflects the community's belief that the preservation of traditions is ensured through continuous practice, transmitted across generations, and thereby remains alive within the socio-cultural order of the Cerenti Malay community (Taswin, n.d.).

The authority of customary law in Cerenti District is perceived as binding

and enforceable, as mutually recognized by all tribal leaders. Customary regulations cannot be disregarded without consequence, since any violation incurs sanctions in accordance with established customary provisions. This foundational principle emphasizes a causal and moral balance—sanctions are implemented in a fair and deliberative manner to maintain social harmony without inflicting harm upon either party. Nevertheless, the application of customary sanctions also accommodates flexibility and tolerance, allowing adjustments in cases of necessity or extenuating circumstances. Thus, customary law in Cerenti is not only binding but also adaptive, reflecting a dynamic legal culture that evolves in response to social change while preserving communal stability (Salim, n.d.).

The tradition of postponing cohabitation signifies that even after a marriage is formally registered at the Religious Affairs Office (KUA), the bride and groom must still obtain customary legitimacy through a special procession known as *Makan Sepughun*. This practice demonstrates that marital legalization is understood not solely in the religious or administrative domain, but also as an essential element within the socio-cultural system of the community. Through this dual process, religious validity and social recognition coexist harmoniously, reinforcing the unity between sharia and local tradition (Taswin, n.d.).

From the perspective of Islamic law, this tradition does not contradict the sharia but can instead be viewed as a form of *'urf* (customary practice) consistent with Islamic ethical values. This is because it generates positive outcomes—not only for the couple and their families, but also for the wider Cerenti community. The harmony between this tradition and Islamic teachings is further affirmed through the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH *"What is considered good by the Muslims, is also good in the sight of Allah; and what is considered bad by the Muslims, is also bad in the sight of Allah."* (H.R. Ibnu Mas'ud) (Hanbal, 2010). Accordingly, the custom of postponing cohabitation may be classified as *'urf sahih* (legitimate custom), as it supports social virtue, preserves marital sanctity, and strengthens communal morality.

Based on the analysis of the purpose behind the tradition of postponing cohabitation, it can be concluded that this practice embodies the value of togetherness, which plays a crucial role in strengthening family ties. This tradition not only serves as a medium for reinforcing kinship structures—including the recognition of the role of uncles and elders within the extended family system—but also as a social mechanism designed to protect newlyweds from potential slander, gossip, or social suspicion. Consequently, the underlying

intent of this custom is inherently positive, as it promotes harmony and mutual benefit for both families involved.

From the perspective of Islamic law, this tradition does not contradict the principles of sharia, as it can be categorized as 'urf sahih, a legitimate social custom that supports the realization of moral and communal good. This interpretation aligns with the established rule of fiqh: "Benefits can be achieved through the prescribed means" (Hanbal, 2010). The principle emphasizes that as long as a customary practice produces social benefit (*maslahah*) and does not contravene fundamental sharia principles, it may be recognized as a valid and lawful social institution. Therefore, the tradition of postponing cohabitation represents a form of local wisdom that harmoniously integrates Islamic values with indigenous cultural practices, contributing to the preservation of social order and collective morality within the community.

Durkheim's Social Solidarity Against Postponing Cohabitation

According to Emile Durkheim, social solidarity constitutes the fundamental basis of social cohesion within a community. In such a system, individuals tend to conform to the collective moral structure, since society itself functions as a moral entity that transcends the individual. Consequently, the scope for expressing personal autonomy becomes limited, as one's social identity is largely shaped by shared norms and collective values that form the moral conscience of society (Rahmat & Suhaeb, 2023). Durkheim emphasizes that solidarity is reinforced through moral discipline and commitment to communal values, enabling traditions to occupy a dominant social position while tempering individualism. In this sense, justice is expressed through loyalty to collective interests rather than personal desires.

From a Durkheimian perspective, the tradition of postponing cohabitation among the Malay community of Cerenti District is a reflection of mechanical solidarity, which is a form of cohesion rooted in the homogeneity of beliefs, values, and religious norms. This tradition derives its moral strength not merely from custom, but also from its integration with Islamic ethical principles, thereby enhancing its spiritual legitimacy. The collective awareness of safeguarding marital honor, preventing slander, and maintaining familial harmony operates as an effective moral glue that binds individuals to the collective order. Therefore, this tradition should not be viewed solely as a cultural ritual, but as a social mechanism that harmonizes Islamic moral values with indigenous customs, forming a mutually reinforcing normative system.

Furthermore, the implementation of *walimatul 'ursy* plays a significant role in broadening the network of social solidarity through shared emotional experiences. Within Durkheim's theoretical framework, rituals such as the *walimah* generate a sacred social atmosphere that strengthens social integration through a sense of togetherness. This celebration functions as a medium for reaffirming kinship and *ukhuwah* (brotherhood) within the Islamic social framework (Safitri, 2023). Hence the *walimatul 'ursy* is not merely religious observance but also a socio-cultural space that revitalizes communal spirit in an era increasingly shaped by modern individualism.

Durkheim further contends that in traditional societies, collective norms take precedence over personal interests. In the context of Cerenti, this principle is manifested when newlyweds willingly postpone living together, even when it contradicts personal preferences. Such compliance reflects the subordination of individual will to the authority of customary and religious norms. However, from a modern sociological standpoint, this practice also illustrates the community's capacity to preserve traditional values while adapting them to contemporary social dynamics. On one hand, the tradition cultivates moral discipline and self-restraint; on the other, it reveals how modernization, urbanization, and globalization introduce new negotiations between indigenous norms and global cultural trends, particularly concerning cohabitation and marital practices (Di Giulio et al., 2019; Lesthaeghe, 2020).

Critically, the interaction between Islamic values and local customs within this tradition reveals a dynamic and dialectical process. Islam as a universal value system of values provides both normative and spiritual dimension, while customs offer a tangible social framework through which these values are manifested. In practice, these two dimensions do not exist in opposition but rather operate in a mutually reinforcing relationship. Islamic teachings on preserving honor (*hifz al-'ird*) and avoiding immorality are integrated with customary norms that emphasize family dignity and communal propriety. Thus, the traditions of Cerenti may be interpreted as local expressions of Islamic ethics that have been internalized within the culture of the community.

Nevertheless, this process of integration is not without tension. In contemporary times, some segments of the population—particularly younger generations influenced by modern and global lifestyles—tend to interpret Islamic values through a more individualistic lens. This shift has contributed to changing attitudes toward marriage and communal responsibility, reflecting broader sociocultural transformations within Malay Muslim society (Sukneva

& Baraskhova, 2019).

Durkheim posited that in traditional societies, norms are enforced through repressive laws emphasizing collective sanctions for violations (Ritzer, 2011). Such characteristics remain visible in Cerenti, where deviations from the custom of postponing cohabitation may lead to social stigma and is regarded as an affront to collective honor. However, in the context of a modern and increasingly open society, mechanisms of social control have gradually evolved toward more persuasive and symbolic forms. In this regard, the strength of mechanical solidarity now lies not solely in fear of sanctions, but also in the internalized moral and religious consciousness of individuals, inspired by reflection on Islamic and cultural values.

Ultimately, the relevance of Durkheim's theory in analyzing the Cerenti's traditions lies in its explanatory power to illuminate the social function of custom as a means of maintaining communal integration. The mechanical solidarity reflected in the postponement of cohabitation and the practice of *walimatul 'ursy* ensures that each individual remains integrated within the whole society. However, contemporary reflection requires that this conception of solidarity be understood as adaptive rather than static—capable of evolving in response to changing social realities. When local traditions are harmonized with Islamic principles, they form a vital reservoir of social capital that sustains cohesion in an era when individualism, rationalism, and technological advancement increasingly threaten communal bonds. Hence, the traditions of the Cerenti Malay community illustrate that the synergy between custom and Islam is not merely a relic of the past but constitutes an enduring ethical and cultural foundation for social harmony in the present.

Social Functions of the Tradition of Postponing Living Together

The tradition of postponing cohabitation after marriage among the Cerenti Malay community serves as a social mechanism that strengthens collective cohesion and moral order. In Durkheim's framework, solidarity emerges from a shared collective consciousness that unites individuals within a moral community. Through this tradition, newlyweds undergo a period of postponement before living together to preserve social harmony and kinship bonds. This period offers an opportunity for extended families to reinforce emotional ties, ensure the couple's psychological and social readiness, and prevent potential slander or conflict within the community. Thus, the custom benefits not only the bride and groom personally but also reinforces the

collective value of togetherness as a social virtue.

Another essential social function of this tradition is its role in cultivating discipline and conformity to communal norms. As Durkheim asserts, in societies characterized by mechanical solidarity, tradition operates as a moral force that moderates individualism and aligns behavior with collective expectations (Zakia et al., 2024). Accordingly, the postponement of cohabitation functions as a subtle form of social control—encouraging individuals to prioritize communal welfare over personal desire. The bride and groom are perceived not merely as private individuals but as integral components of the broader social network encompassing family and society. Consequently, the principle of togetherness is elevated above individual interest, thereby preserving the continuity of inherited social norms and strengthening intergenerational solidarity.

Moreover, this tradition serves as an instrument for transmitting cultural and religious values to the younger generation. During the period of postponement, elders and extended families provide moral guidance, advice, and spiritual instructions to prepare the couple for their domestic roles. Islamic teachings, Malay customs, and social ethics converge to create a harmonious integration of religion and tradition. This process preserves cultural heritage while fostering collective awareness that marriage is not a private contract alone, but a social event reflecting family honor and community integrity.

Beyond its social dimension, the tradition of postponing cohabitation also possesses significant psychological implications. The transitional period after the marriage contract serves as a reflective and preparatory phase, allowing the bride and groom to internalize their new identities as husband and wife. From a cultural-psychological perspective, this interval facilitates a gradual adjustment from single life to family life, minimizing emotional and behavioral disruption. This aligns with Durkheim's conception that customary functions extend beyond regulating collective behavior—they also shape individual character through the internalization of communal norms (Naibaho et al., 2015).

Furthermore, this postponement period contributes to maintaining harmonious relations between extended families. In Malay society, marriage symbolizes not only the union of two individuals but also the alliance between kinship groups. The waiting period provides space for both families to strengthen interpersonal bonds, assess mutual responsibility, and affirm the sincerity and maturity of the couple's commitment. Thus, this custom should not be perceived merely as a restrictive measure, but as a social mechanism

ensuring that marriage is conducted with dignity, prudence, and communal legitimacy.

Fundamentally, the postponement of cohabitation until the *walimatul 'ursy* reaffirms the principle of integration between custom and sharia. Malay customs sustain their relevance through practices rooted in the values of mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*) and collective responsibility, while Islam provides the ethical and normative framework that sanctifies these practices. The synergy between the two produces a distinctive Malay-Islamic identity in Cerenti, wherein custom is not viewed as contradictory to religion but as a lived manifestation of Islamic moral ideals within the context of local culture. This demonstrates that when faithfully maintained, local traditions can serve as a bridge between indigenous wisdom and universal Islamic principles—preserving social cohesion, cultural identity, and moral integrity within the community.

Conclusion

This research aimed to explore the social and religious meanings underlying the tradition of postponing cohabitation until the implementation of *walimatul 'ursy* among the Cerenti Malay community, as well as analyzing it through the perspective of Émile Durkheim's theory of social solidarity. Based on the literature review and field analysis, it was found that this tradition functions not merely as an inherited cultural practice, but as a social mechanism that preserves harmony, morality, and social cohesion within the community. This tradition serves as a medium for the internalization of Islamic values such as holiness, responsibility, and respect for the family order—all of which strengthen social integration in accordance with Durkheim's concept of mechanical solidarity.

The postponement of cohabitation constitutes a tangible expression of the collective conscience of the Cerenti community, where adherence to customary norms and Islamic teachings mutually reinforce one another. In this context, religion plays a role not only as a theological belief system but also as a moral force that structures social relations and nurtures a sense of communal belonging. Therefore, this study confirms that the tradition of postponing cohabitation until the *walimatul 'ursy* represents a syncretic yet harmonious integration of Islamic teachings and local social structures, as well as an effective means of maintaining the continuity of social solidarity within the Riau Malay community.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the understanding of local religious traditions as "living traditions"—dynamic and adaptive social practices that demonstrate how religious expression extends beyond normative theology into symbolic systems that sustain social order. This study broadens the application of Durkheim's theory within the context of *Islam Nusantara*, showing that Islamic social solidarity can be embodied in local customs without diminishing its spiritual and theological essence.

For future research, it is recommended to conduct comparative studies across other Malay regions to examine variations in the integration of religious and customary values in shaping social cohesion. Furthermore, an interdisciplinary approach that combines Durkheim's theory with the concept of *maqasid al-shari'ah* (the higher objectives of Islamic law) or Bourdieu's theory of *habitus* would provide deeper insights into the dynamics of local religious traditions amid modern social transformation.

Overall, the findings of this study hold significant implications for advancing the study of the sociology of religion and Islamic anthropology in Indonesia. They demonstrate that local traditions should not be regarded as barriers to modernity, but as enduring moral and cultural foundations that sustain social cohesion, strengthen Islamic identity, and foster harmony between religion and culture amid the ongoing transformation of contemporary society.

References

Abdussamad, Z. (2021). *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif*. Syakir Media Press.

Akmal. (2015). Kebudayaan Melayu Riau. *Jurnal Dakwah Risalah*, *26*(4), 159–165. https://ejournal.uin-suska.ac.id/index.php/risalah/article/view/1283/1149

Al-Qur'an, L. P. M. (2019). *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahannya* (p. 755). Badan Litbang dan Diklat Kementerian Agama RI.

Amalia, F. (2009). Pernikahan Dini Dalam Perspektif Hukum Islam. *Jurnal Syariah dan Ekonomi Islam*, *8*(2), 201. https://doi.org/10.14421/musawa.2009.82.201-221

Ashsubli, M. (2018). Islam Dan Kebudayaan Melayu Nusantara (Menggali Hukum dan Politik Melayu dalam Islam). In *Dewan Da'wah Islamiyah Indonesia*. Dewan Da'wah Islamiyah Indonesia.

Azizah, R. (2023). Aspek-Aspek Teologis dan Filosofis *Walimatul 'ursy*. *At-Tawassuth: Jurnal Ekonomi Islam*, *8*(I), 1–19. https://journal.iaidalampung.ac.id/index.php/jshi/article/view/79

Budiawan, A. (2021). Tinjauan al Urf dalam Prosesi Perkawinan Adat Melayu Riau. *Jurnal An-Nahl*, *8*(2), 115–125. https://doi.org/10.54576/annahl.v8i2.39

Dayanti, R., & Hidayat, M. (2023). Bentuk Perubahan Solidaritas Sosial Pada Penyelenggaraan Pesta Pernikahan Sebagai Dampak Hadirnya Jasa Catering. *Jurnal Perspektif*, *6*(1), 135–142. https://doi.org/10.24036/perspektif.v6i1.724

Di Giulio, P., Impicciatore, R., & Sironi, M. (2019). The changing pattern of cohabitation. *Demographic Research*, *40*, 1211-1248. https://doi.org/10.4054/DemRes.2019.40.42

Ferawati, Erdianto, & Martojo. (2023). Prosesi Perkawinan Menurut Hukum Adat Melayu Indragiri Hilir Riau sebagai Salah Satu Aset Budaya Indonesia. *Journal of Education and Culture*, *3*(1), 1–7. https://doi.org/10.58707/jec.v3i1.297

Hanbal, I. A. bin M. bin. (2010). *Musnad Imam Ahmad Jilid 4*. Pustaka Azzam.

Hendri, T. (n.d.). *Penghulu Suku Pitopang Kec. Cerenti*.

Ichrom, N. R. M., Bashori, A., Nazzilla, I. M., Maghfiroh, H. A., Rahmazaky, R., & Zaki A, P. (2024). Hukum Pernikahan Dalam Islam. *Jurnal Al-Wasith : Jurnal Studi Hukum Islam*, *9*(1), 33–37. https://doi.org/10.52802/wst.v9i1.1117

Juswandi, J. (2018). Tradisi Nikah Kawin Masyarakat Kecamatan Rumbai Kota Pekanbaru. *Jurnal IKADBUDI*, *7*(1), 41–50. https://doi.org/10.21831/ikadbudi.v7i1.26879

Kurniawan, R., & Suharman, S. (2022). Solidaritas Sosial dalam Tradisi Samadiyah di Tengah Masyarakat Islam di Desa Meunasah Krueng Kecamatan Ingin Jaya. *Jurnal Al-Ijtimaiyyah*, *8*(1), 84. https://doi.org/10.22373/al-ijtimaiyyah.v8i1.12910

Lesthaeghe, R. (2020). The second demographic transition, 1986–2020: sub-

replacement fertility and rising cohabitation—a global update. *Genus*, *76*(1), 10. https://doi.org/10.1186/s41118-020-00077-4

Maini, & Perdamean, ahmad sahat. (2023). Analisis Makna Upacara Tepung Tawar Dalam Pernikahan Adat Melayu Riau. *Balale: Jurnal Antropologi*, *4*(1), 72–92. https://jurnal.untan.ac.id/index.php/BALELE/article/view/58624

Malisi, A. S. (2022). Pernikahan Dalam Islam. *SEIKAT: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial, Politik dan Hukum*, *1*(1), 22–28. https://doi.org/10.55681/seikat.v1i1.97

Marlis, F. (n.d.). *Penghulu Suku Plyang Soni Kec. Cerenti*.

Musyafah, A. A. (2020). Perkawinan Dalam Perspektif Filosofis Hukum Islam. *CREPIDO: Jurnal Mengenal Dasar-Dasar Pemikiran Hukum, Filsafat Dan Ilmu Hukum*, *2*(2), 111–122. https://doi.org/10.14710/crepido.2.2.111-122

Noviandri, N. E. S. (2011). Konstruksi Sosial Tradisi Manggiliang Ghompah Pada Acara Perkawinan Di Kecamatan Cerenti Kabupaten Kuantan Singingi Provinsi Riau. *Jom Fisip*, *4*(1), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1088/1751-8113/44/8/085201

Perwitasari, N. (2017). *Solidaritas Sosial dalam Sumbangan Pernikahan di Desa Cepokojajar*. UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta.

Rahmat, A. E., & Suhaeb, F. W. (2023). Perspektif Emile Durkheim tentang Pembagian Kerja Dan Solidaritas Masyarakat Maju. *JISIP (Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Pendidikan)*, *7*(3), 2138. https://doi.org/10.58258/jisip.v7i3.5233

Restika, W., Erlisnawati, E., & Marhadi, H. (2023). Analisis Karakter dalam Tradisi Bararak Tabak di Peranap. *El-Ibtidaiy: Journal of Primary Education*, *6*(1), 73. https://doi.org/10.24014/ejpe.v6i1.22200

Ritzer, G. (2011). *Teori Sosiologi Modern*. Prenada Media.

Safitri, W. (2023). Penerapan Prinsip Solidaritas Sosial Menurut Emile Durkheim dalam Kasus Haris Azhar dan Fathia. *Nusantara: Jurnal Pendidikan, Seni, Sains dan Sosial Humaniora*, *1(1)*, 1–17.

Salim, M. (n.d.). *Penghulu Suku Melayu Kec. Cerenti*.

Syahid, A. R. (2025). *Persepsi Tokoh Adat Tentang Penundaan Tinggal Bersama Hingga Penyelenggaraan Walimatul 'Ursy Di Tempat Istri Dalam Pernikahan*

Adat Di Kecamatan Cerenti Perspektif Hukum Islam. UIN Suska Riau.

Takari, M., B.S., A. Z., & Dja'far, F. (2014). *Adat Perkawinan Melayu: Gagasan, Terapan, Fungsi, Dan Kearifannya* (Issue August 2014). USUPress.

Taswin. (n.d.). *Penghulu Suku Plyang Loe Kec. Cerenti*.

Naibaho, Y. R. L., Sutrisna, B., Supartiningsih (2015). *Makna Simbolik Jambar pada Perkawinan Adat Masyarakat Batak Toba dalam Kajian Solidaritas Sosial Emile Durkheim*. Thesis. Universitas Gadjah Mada.

Sukneva, S. A., & Barashkova, A. S. (2014). Demographic development and marital status of the population of the Russian Northeast, 1990-2011. *Sibirica*, *13*(2), 62-92. https://doi.org/10.3167/sib.2014.130204

Zakia, Z., Mustafa, S. A., & Wathoni, L. M. N (2024). Fenomena Nikah Sipaindongan Pada Masyarakat Mandar (Studi Teori Fakta Sosial Emil Durkheim). *De Facto*, *11*(1), 77–86. https://doi.org/10.36277/jurnaldefacto.v11i1.224

DOI: 10.18860/eh.v27i2.37023

REFLECTION OF TAWHID IN 3D MINIATURE ART: ANALYSIS OF SURAH IBRAHIM 35 THROUGH CLASSICAL AND MODERN TAFSIR

Rusdeana
UIN Palangka Raya, Palangka Raya, Indonesia
Email: queendz403@gmail.com

Received: October 10, 2025
Revised: November 21, 2025
Accepted: November 27, 2025

Abstract

The relationship between Tawhid and visual art remains one of the most profound and complex dimensions of Islamic civilization. Throughout history, Muslim artists have sought to reconcile the theological principle of divine unity with the human impulse for creativity and representation. Meanwhile, research on digital and 3D visualization in Islamic education primarily addresses technological or pedagogical aspects, often without theological grounding. Very few studies attempt to connect Qur'anic exegesis (tafsir) with modern visual technologies such as 3D miniature art. This study examines the reflection of Tawhid values in 3D miniature art through a comparative analysis of Surah Ibrahim 35 based on the interpretations of Al-Qurthubi and Wahbah az-Zuhaili. By integrating classical and contemporary tafsir with the cultural phenomenon of incomplete sculptures in the Middle East, this research explores how Islamic theological principles shape artistic ethics and modern visual expressions. Using a qualitative library-based method supported by thematic and hermeneutical analysis, the study finds that Al-Qurthubi emphasizes strict preventive measures against complete visual representation to safeguard the purity of monotheism, while Wahbah az-Zuhaili adopts a contextual approach that accommodates technological development as long as it serves educational and spiritual objectives. The findings reveal that the principle of Tawhid remains a crucial ethical framework for modern Islamic art, guiding the development of 3D miniature art in a manner that avoids idolatrous tendencies while enabling creativity, cultural preservation, and

religious education. The implications of this study emphasize the integration of Tawhid values into Islamic art and modern technology. It can be done by encouraging Qur'an-based creativity, promoting 3D miniature technology in Islamic education, fostering collaboration between scholars and artists, and supporting Tawhid-oriented art initiatives to enhance spiritual awareness, da'wah, and Islamic cultural identity.

Hubungan antara Tawhid dan seni visual tetap menjadi salah satu dimensi paling mendalam dan kompleks dalam peradaban Islam. Sepanjang sejarah, para seniman Muslim telah berupaya mendamaikan prinsip teologis tentang keesaan Ilahi dengan dorongan manusia untuk berkreasi dan berepresentasi. Sementara itu, penelitian mengenai visualisasi digital dan 3D dalam pendidikan Islam umumnya berfokus pada aspek teknologis atau pedagogis, sering kali tanpa landasan teologis yang kuat. Hanya sedikit studi yang berusaha menghubungkan penafsiran Al-Qur'an (tafsir) dengan teknologi visual modern seperti seni miniatur 3D. Penelitian ini mengkaji refleksi nilai-nilai Tawhid dalam seni miniatur 3D melalui analisis komparatif terhadap Surah Ibrahim ayat 35 berdasarkan penafsiran Al-Qurthubi dan Wahbah az-Zuhaili. Dengan mengintegrasikan tafsir klasik dan kontemporer serta fenomena budaya patung tidak lengkap di Timur Tengah, penelitian ini mengeksplorasi bagaimana prinsip teologis Islam membentuk etika artistik dan ekspresi visual modern. Melalui metode kualitatif berbasis kepustakaan yang didukung analisis tematik dan hermeneutik, penelitian ini menemukan bahwa Al-Qurthubi menekankan langkah-langkah preventif yang ketat terhadap representasi visual yang sempurna demi menjaga kemurnian tauhid, sementara Wahbah az-Zuhaili mengadopsi pendekatan kontekstual yang mengakomodasi perkembangan teknologi selama bertujuan edukatif dan spiritual. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa prinsip Tawhid tetap menjadi kerangka etis yang sangat penting bagi seni Islam modern, yang berfungsi membimbing pengembangan seni miniatur 3D agar terhindar dari kecenderungan penyembahan berhala, sekaligus mendorong kreativitas, pelestarian budaya, dan pendidikan keagamaan. Implikasi dari penelitian ini menekankan pentingnya integrasi nilai-nilai Tawhid dalam seni Islam dan teknologi modern, yang dapat dilakukan dengan mendorong kreativitas berbasis Al-Qur'an, memanfaatkan teknologi miniatur 3D dalam pendidikan Islam, memperkuat kolaborasi antara ulama dan seniman, serta mendukung inisiatif seni berlandaskan Tawhid untuk meningkatkan kesadaran spiritual, dakwah, dan identitas budaya Islam.

***Keywords**: Tawhid, 3D miniature art, Islamic art, quranic exegesis, hermeneutic analysis*

Introduction

The relationship between *Tawhid*—the core principle of Islamic faith—and visual art has been a profound yet complex issue throughout Islamic civilization.

Tawhid, affirming the absolute oneness and uniqueness of Allah as the incomparable Creator, extends its influence to nearly all aspects of Muslim life, including worldview, culture, and artistic expression (Umayyatun, 2023). In Islam, Tawhid is not merely a theological abstraction but a living principle manifested in conduct, law, and ethics—shaping the ways Muslims perceive, create, and interpret visual symbols (Ramadhan & Shohib, 2024).

Since the earliest period of Islam, visual representation has been a matter of intense theological and cultural debate. This discourse arose from the historical context of early Islamic preaching in Arabia, where idolatry and anthropomorphic worship were still deeply rooted. Sculptures resembling humans or living creatures were considered potential threats to Tawhid, as they could lead to the veneration or deification of created beings. Consequently, various Prophetic traditions warned against the making or displaying of such lifelike statues, a stance that profoundly shaped the trajectory of Islamic visual aesthetics. These injunctions gave rise to a distinct artistic language of abstraction—exemplified by calligraphy, geometric patterns, and floral motifs—which not only safeguard faith from *shirk* (idolatry) but also embody beauty, harmony, and spirituality (Ariadha et al., 2025).

However, Islamic attitudes toward visual representation have never been entirely uniform or absolute. Across centuries and regions, Muslim artists have continuously sought ways to express creativity without compromising the essence of Tawhid. One notable adaptation emerged through the Middle Eastern tradition of "incomplete sculpture", in which artists intentionally omitted or simplified parts of living figures—especially the face or head—to avoid complete resemblance. This artistic convention reflects a conscious negotiation between creativity and theological caution: a synthesis of beauty and faith, wherein artistic expression thrives within the ethical framework of Tawhid (Alfadhela et al., 2025).

With the advent of digital technology, visual art has entered new dimensions through 3D miniature art, which employs digital modeling and three-dimensional printing to control levels of detail and completeness. Within an Islamic framework, 3D miniature art provides new avenues for spiritual reflection: its intentional incompleteness serves as a reminder of human limitation before the perfection of Allah. Rather than encouraging idolization, this form of art can act as a contemplative medium that reaffirms divine greatness and creative humility (Akbar, 2024).

The interplay between Tawhid and visual representation has therefore

remained a central theme in Islamic artistic discourse. While Islamic civilization is historically known for its non-figurative artistic heritage, modern technology—particularly 3D modeling and miniature art—has reignited ethical debates about the boundaries of representation in Islam. Previous studies on Islamic art have largely focused on classical aesthetics (Nasr, 2010; Burckhardt, 2017), the theological basis of figurative representation (Grabar, 1987), or the evolution of non-figurative motifs (Hillenbrand, 2019). In contemporary contexts, research has expanded to include digital Islamic art, animation, and educational 3D visualization (Al Fajar et al., 2024; Juniardi et al., 2024; Akbar, 2024; Nurhasanah et al., 2024). However, few studies bridge Qur'anic exegesis (*tafsir*) with these modern visual practices such as 3D miniature art. Likewise, the Middle Eastern tradition of incomplete sculpture has seldom been examined through the lens of Qur'anic interpretation. This study fills that scholarly gap by bridging classical tafsir, modern hermeneutics, and emerging art technologies.

Islamic art, at its core, is grounded in the metaphysical principle of Tawhid, ensuring that creative expression remains spiritually guided and ethically sound. Scholars such as Seyyed Hossein Nasr (2010) argue that Islamic aesthetics function as a visual manifestation of divine unity, while George Atiyeh (2022) emphasizes that Islamic art is primarily symbolic rather than mimetic. In the field of tafsir, classical scholars like Al-Qurthubi viewed artistic representation through the lens of protecting *'aqidah* (faith), whereas contemporary scholars such as Wahbah az-Zuhaili contextualized visual representation within *maqasid al-shari'ah* (the objectives of Islamic law). Modern studies on 3D art in Islamic art highlight its educational potential but often lack theological grounding, highlighting the need for integrative analysis (Akbar, 2024; Juniardi, 2024).

This study synthesizes tafsir scholarship, Islamic art theory, and digital visualization research to construct a conceptual framework connecting Tawhid, incomplete sculptures, and 3D miniature art. Understanding the ethical and theological dimensions of this phenomenon requires a return to scriptural foundations—particularly the Qur'an and its exegetical traditions (Hermanto et al., 2024). Surah Ibrahim verse 35, in which Prophet Abraham prays that his land be made secure and that he and his descendants be protected from idol worship, offers a profound theological basis for artistic ethics. The verse underscores that safeguarding Tawhid by avoiding any act that might glorify created forms constitutes a fundamental moral duty (Rahmi et al., 2024). In

this context, visual art becomes an act of remembrance (*dhikr*) rather than distraction (*ghaflah*), ensuring that creativity reflects divine unity rather than imitation of creation (Ramadhan & Shohib, 2024).

Both classical and modern exegetical works contribute to framing this theological-aesthetic understanding. Al-Qurthubi's *Tafsir al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an*, written in the 13th century, adopts a juridical and precautionary stance, emphasizing the protection of Tawhid through legal restraint on visual representation. In contrast, Wahbah az-Zuhaili's Al-Tafsir al-Munir takes a contextual and moderate approach, interpreting the Qur'anic principles in light of contemporary social, cultural, and technological realities (Hermanto et al., 2024; Rahmi et al., 2024). While Al-Qurthubi's perspective reflects historical concerns about idolatry, az-Zuhaili expands the interpretive horizon through the objectives of the *shari'ah* (Islamic law), emphasizing intention, benefit, and moral purpose in creative practices or art (Ramadhan & Shohib, 2024).

A comparative study of these two exegetical traditions is thus essential for understanding how Qur'anic interpretation evolves in response to cultural and technological changes. Classical exegetes such as Al-Qurthubi represent a protective theological approach, whereas contemporary scholars like Wahbah az-Zuhaili offer a dynamic hermeneutic that accommodates innovation while preserving spiritual integrity. This comparison bridges scriptural ethics and contemporary creative practice, revealing how Islamic art—including 3D miniature art—can function as a medium of education, da'wah, and spiritual reflection while remaining firmly anchored in Tawhid (Umayyatun, 2023).

Although previous research has addressed both the exegesis of Surah Ibrahim 35 and the history of Islamic art, few studies have attempted to integrate tafsir analysis with contemporary artistic practices such as 3D miniature design. Most existing works either focus narrowly on textual exegesis or examine art in isolation, rarely merging theological discourse with artistic application (Nurhasanah et al., 2024). In today's era of technological transformation, exploring how Muslims express faith through contemporary art forms has become an increasingly relevant scholarly concern (Akbar, 2024; Fadila et al., 2024).

This research aims to bridge that gap by analyzing the interpretations of Al-Qurthubi and Wahbah az-Zuhaili through the lens of artistic ethics. Entitled "Reflection of Tawhid in 3D Miniature Art: Analysis of Surah Ibrahim 35 Through Classical and Modern Tafsir," the study examines not only the theological foundations of Tawhid but also its practical and aesthetic

manifestations in contemporary artistic creation. By doing so, it highlights the enduring dialogue between revelation and creativity—between faith and art—that continues to shape the intellectual and spiritual landscape of Islamic civilization.

Method

This study employs a qualitative research approach using a library-based design integrated with textual, thematic, and historical analysis. This approach is appropriate because the research explores theological meanings, interprets Qur'anic verses, and examines artistic and cultural practices rather than collecting empirical data through surveys or experiments. The qualitative method enables a deep examination of texts, interpretation of ideas, and connection of religious principles with artistic and cultural expressions.

Library research constitutes the core methodological foundation, all data are derived from written sources. These sources include classical and contemporary tafsir works, books on the history and philosophy of Islamic art, scholarly writings on theological principles, research on the Middle Eastern tradition of incomplete sculpture, and contemporary works discussing 3D miniature art. Through these materials, the study traces scholarly perspectives, artistic developments, and interpretive frameworks relevant to the topic.

Data sources are divided into two main categories: primary and secondary. The primary sources comprise the Qur'an—specifically Surah Ibrahim verse 35—alongside Al-Qurthubi's *Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an*, and Wahbah az-Zuhaili's *Al-Tafsir al-Munir*. These texts were selected because they offer foundational insights into Tawhid, the prohibition of idol worship, and scholarly views both classical and contemporary perspectives on visual representation. The secondary sources include books and academic articles on Islamic art history, aesthetic philosophy, studies on incomplete sculpture in the Middle East, and research on 3D miniature art within religious and cultural settings. This categorization of sources ensures systematic and structured data collection.

Data collection was conducted through several literature review steps: (1) searching both physical and digital libraries, including reputable journal databases to obtain recent and relevant references; (2) selecting materials closely related to the study's theme, particularly Tawhid, Surah Ibrahim 35, Islamic visual ethics, and artistic traditions; (3) conducting critical reading and analysis of the selected texts; and (4) classifying and organizing the information according to pre-established thematic categories. These steps ensure that data

acquisition remains systematic and focused on the research objectives.

Data analysis combines content analysis with a thematic approach. The first stage involves data into themes such as: Tawhid in classical and contemporary tafsir, interpretations of Surah Ibrahim 35, Islamic perspectives on visual representation, the tradition of incomplete sculptures, and the relevance of 3D miniature art to Tawhid. The second stage compares and interprets scholarly viewpoints to identify similarities, contrasts, and intellectual developments. The final stage synthesizes these interpretations into a comprehensive understanding aligned with the research objectives.

In addition to thematic content analysis, this study employs a hermeneutical approach to examine the interpretive context of classical tafsir and its relevance to contemporary artistic practices (Ardiansyah, 2024). Hermeneutics allows the researcher to uncover embedded meanings within classical texts and reinterpret them through modern frameworks—particularly within emerging art forms such as 3D miniature production. Thus, the tafsirs of Al-Qurthubi and Wahbah az-Zuhaili are treated not merely as historical references but as living normative guides that inform present-day artistic ethics.

The validity of textual interpretation is ensured through source triangulation. Classical tafsir interpretations are cross-examined with contemporary scholarly works on Islamic art and theology (Hadi, 2021). Interpretive conclusions are further verified through modern academic discussions on visual ethics and Islamic aesthetics. Close-reading techniques were employed to analyze primary verses and tafsir passages, ensuring interpretive accuracy, while intertextual comparison enhanced the consistency and reliability of findings. This multi-layered strategy reinforces the credibility of the theological and artistic synthesis.

Although this study does not utilize visual data in the form of direct imagery, it analyzes 3D miniature art and incomplete sculpture traditions through textual documentation descriptions—such as descriptive analyses, scholarly studies, museum archives, and ethnographic reports from Middle Eastern cultural contexts. These visual sources were not reproduced in this article due to ethical considerations surrounding Islamic visual representation; however, their formal characteristics—such as deliberate omission of facial details, simplified anatomical structures, or partial modeling—were carefully analyzed through written documentation. This textual-based visual analysis enables the researcher to identify the identification of Tawhid-related principles, particularly the avoidance of hyper-realistic representation, as reflected in

contemporary 3D miniature practices. Consequently, the study maintains theological coherence while offering a comprehensive analysis of the aesthetic and structural aspects of the artworks.

Finding and Discussion

Analysis of the Meaning of Surah Ibrahim Verse 35

Surah Ibrahim verse 35 embodies profound theological and spiritual values. In this verse, Prophet Ibrahim prays to Allah: "My Lord, make this city secure, and keep me and my sons away from worshipping idols." This supplication is not merely a petition for physical safety of Mecca but also a plea to for protection from deviation in faith, specifically *shirk* (polytheism), manifested in idol worship or in the elevation of any created object to a position of reverence. Through this prayer, the verse reveals Prophet Ibrahim's spiritual sensitivity to humanity's tendency to glorify created entities—whether material, symbolic, or artistic—that may obscure the essence of Tawhid.

Prophet Ibrahim's supplication reflects both physical protection and spiritual vigilance. Theologically, it underscores the susceptibility of humans to idolize forms, beauty, or symbols. human vulnerability to idolizing forms, beauty, and symbols. In today's context, modern visual technologies and aesthetic cultures amplify this susceptibility, making the verse especially relevant as a moral guide for contemporary artistic boundaries.

The meaning of this verse transcends its historical context and carries universal significance for all humankind, particularly in an era dominated by visual imagery, consumerism, and materialism. It reminds us that the human inclination to admire beauty, form, and artistic creation can lead to subtle idolization if not grounded in the consciousness of Tawhid. Prophet Ibrahim understood that the love of beauty is innate to human nature, yet true beauty must never distance humanity from the Creator; rather, it should serve as a pathway toward recognizing and drawing closer to Him.

In the context of art, this verse serves as a moral compass and ethical boundary. Artistic creation wields immense influence over human emotions, thoughts, and beliefs. Hence, Islam positions Tawhid as the central criterion in evaluating artistic expression. Art that fully imitates living beings—especially humans and animals—raises theological concern, as it may foster excessive admiration for human craftsmanship, thereby blurring recognition of Allah's greatness as the true Creator. This concern became the theological foundation for the evolution of Islamic aesthetic traditions characterized by abstraction,

calligraphy, geometry, and symbolic design—forms that express divine beauty without contravening faith's core tenets.

This verse also emphasizes that preserving the purity of Tawhid extends beyond ritual worship such as prayer and fasting. It encompasses social, cultural, and artistic dimensions of human life. Prophet Ibrahim's example illustrates that maintaining divine unity must remain a priority in every human endeavor, including creative pursuits. Thus, art inspired by Islamic values should function as a reminder of Allah's majesty, not as a competition with His creation.

More profoundly, Surah Ibrahim verse 35 may be read as an amoral and spiritual warning against the distortions arising from excessive admiration of human invention. In the modern age—defined by technological advancement, 3D visualization, and digital simulations—humanity increasingly marvels at its own creations. Therefore, Prophet Ibrahim's timeless supplication remains strikingly relevant: humankind must continuously center admiration and inspiration upon Allah alone. Genuine Islamic art is not that which glorifies human creative ability, but that which acknowledges human limitations and guides its audience back to the remembrance of Allah.

Accordingly, Surah Ibrahim verse 35 serves as a comprehensive ethical framework for Muslim artists in the digital age. It teaches that art should not merely pursue visual perfection or aesthetic pleasure, but must also embody spiritual consciousness and moral purpose. In practical terms, artists may express creativity through diverse media, including digital technologies such as 3D miniatures, provided their intention aligns with Islamic ethical principles —beautifying the environment, conveying moral values, and reinforcing awareness of Allah's oneness. In this way, artistic practice becomes both an act of devotion and a form of *da'wah* (spiritual outreach), enriching Islamic civilization while preserving the purity of Tawhid within the evolving landscape of modern visual culture.

Al-Qurthubi's Interpretation of the Prohibition of Visual Representation

In his interpretation of Surah Ibrahim verse 35, Al-Qurthubi gives significant attention to Prophet Ibrahim's prayer that he and his descendants be kept away from idol worship. According to Al-Qurthubi, this supplication is not merely a petition for personal or familial protection, but also a universal admonition to humankind—particularly to Muslims—not to fall into the glorification of created entities at the expense of the Creator. For Al-Qurthubi,

the essence of idolatry extends beyond ritual worship of statues or images; it also includes excessive veneration of human craftsmanship, including artistic creations.

This interpretive stance was shaped by the historical and cultural milieu that influenced Al-Qurthubi's intellectual formation. He lived during a time when traces of pre-Islamic culture—especially anthropomorphic sculptures symbolizing power, fertility, or divine protection—remained visible within Muslim societies. In such contexts, statues were not perceived merely as aesthetic objects but as carriers of sacred significance, often believed to embody divine force. These remnants of pre-Islamic belief, according to Al-Qurthubi, posed a tangible threat to the purity of Tawhid upheld by Islam (Ramadhan & Shohib, 2024). Consequently, he asserted that any form of visual representation closely resembling living beings should be avoided to prevent the reemergence of idolatrous tendencies (Hermanto et al., 2024).

Al-Qurthubi's approach is distinctly preventive, shaped by the lingering influence of polytheistic traditions during his era. His insistence on avoiding complete depictions serves three primary functions: a theological safeguard to preserve monotheistic belief, a socio-cultural protective measure to guard the community from regression, and an aesthetic redirection toward abstraction and symbolism. This tripartite framework profoundly influenced the evolution of Islamic art, steering it away from realism and toward spiritually infused abstraction.

This strict yet principled attitude demonstrates that Al-Qurthubi's tafsir operated as a theological safeguard for maintaining Islamic faith amid societies still vulnerable to polytheistic influence. For him, abstaining from naturalistic representation of living forms did not imply rejecting art altogether, rather, it functioned as a precautionary measure to uphold the foundations of Tawhid (Umayyatun, 2023). Art still had a legitimate place within Islam, provided that it avoided any potential for deification or excessive human glorification.

Al-Qurthubi's approach also reveals his profound awareness of social psychology and religious pedagogy. He recognized that communities recently liberated from idol worship were particularly prone to relapse if boundaries were not clearly delineated. Therefore, his tafsir imposed explicit restrictions on representational art involving human or animal figures, not merely as jurisprudential rulings, but as expressions of social and spiritual wisdom—protecting communal faith during a transitional period in Islamic history.

This interpretive legacy later became a cornerstone for conservative

Muslim scholars who opposed or limited figurative art, believing that it could reopen the door to idolatry. Historically, this theological stance shaped the emergence of non-figurative aesthetics in Islamic civilization, manifested in calligraphy, geometric ornamentation (Nurhasanah et al., 2024), and floral arabesques as safe yet spiritually rich artistic expressions aligned with Tawhid.

Furthermore, Al-Qurthubi's tafsir underscores the inseparability of art and spirituality. For him, art in Islam must fortify faith rather than dilute it. commentary addresses not only the external form of artistic production but also its ethical intent and theological orientation. This holistic framework established the foundation of classical Islamic aesthetics, ensuring that creativity remained a means of worship and remembrance, not a source of spiritual deviation. The relevance of Al-Qurthubi's interpretation endures in contemporary discussions surrounding the balance between creative freedom and religious commitment (Umayyatun, 2023), offering valuable guidance for modern Muslim artists navigating the challenges of visual expression in the digital age.

Wahbah az-Zuhaili's Interpretation: Art as an Educational and Cultural Medium

The explanation of Wahbah az-Zuhaili's view in Al-Tafsir al-Munir can be expanded by highlighting the depth of his theological reasoning and its continuing relevance to the development of Islamic art in the modern era. According to Wahbah, the prohibition of depicting living beings in Islam must be understood within the framework of the objectives of Islamic law (*maqasid al-shari'ah*). The primary goal of this prohibition, he argues, is not to abolish artistic creativity but to safeguard the purity of faith (*'aqidah*) from any deviation that could lead to worshipping something other than Allah (Ramadhan & Shohib, 2024). From this perspective, art retains a noble and dignified role in human life so long as it serves as a means of drawing nearer to Allah and strengthening faith-based values (Rahmi et al., 2022; Hermanto et al., 2024).

Wahbah perceives art as an integral part of human nature that reflects love for beauty and the harmony found in Allah's creation. He maintains that beauty itself is one of the divine signs that invites reflection, gratitude, and worship. Consequently, in Islam, art is not measured solely by aesthetic form but also by its moral and spiritual depth (Alfadhela et al., 2025). For Wahbah,

authentic art is that which nurtures awareness of divine greatness rather than distracting the viewer from it. Hence, the ethical boundaries that Islam places on art serve as guiding principles ensuring that artistic expression remains within the framework of Tawhid and moral conduct (*akhlaq*) (Umayyatun, 2025).

Wahbah views visual art not as inherently prohibited or dangerous, but as morally contingent upon human intention and purpose. He allows representational art forms provided they are not used for worship, do not perfectly imitate living beings, and serve beneficial goals such as education, historical preservation, and *da'wah* (Hermanto et al., 2024; Ramadhan & Shohib, 2024). This balanced and pragmatic perspective opens conceptual space for modern 3D art that harmonizes faith, creativity, and technological advancement (Akbar et al., 2024; Fadila et al., 2024).

Moreover, Wahbah emphasizes the social and educational dimensions of art within Muslim society. He acknowledges that in the modern era, art functions as an effective medium for communication and value transmission (Al Fajar et al., 2024). Accordingly, he envisions Islamic art not merely as decoration but as a medium of *da'wah*, *tarbiyah*, and moral enlightenment. Artistic forms such as calligraphy, architecture, historical illustration, and digital design can serve as effective instruments for cultivating ethical awareness, national identity, and pride in Islamic civilization (Nurhasanah et al., 2024; Alfadhela et al., 2025). Through this lens, Wahbah demonstrates that religion and art are not adversarial but complementary domains, capable of enriching one another in the pursuit of moral and spiritual refinement.

In relation to contemporary technologies such as 3D miniatures, Wahbah provides a theologically flexible framework that accommodates innovation within the boundaries of faith. He acknowledges that technological advancement constitutes part of *sunnatullah*—the divine law of creation—designed to empower humankind to think, innovate, and contribute (Ramadhan & Shohib, 2024; Umayyatun, 2025). Thus, 3D miniatures technology may be utilized for noble purposes—for example, to recreate classical Islamic architecture, to visually teach Islamic history, or to support religious institutions and universities (Akbar et al., 2024; Fadila et al., 2024). According to Wahbah, if such technologies are used for educational and moral objectives without elements of idolization, such creative efforts are not only permissible but may be considered acts of worship.

Wahbah further insists on the harmony between ethics and aesthetics in Islamic art. He rejects dichotomies that separate beauty from moral value, asserting that authentic aesthetics must be accompanied by *adab*—the integration of artistic form with spiritual consciousness (Marlina & Simamora, 2025). Within this framework, the Muslim artist is not merely a producer of beauty but also a guardian of values, ensuring that artistic works do not induce moral decay or spiritual negligence (Umayyatun, 2025). Grounded in faith, artistic creation becomes a form of *dhikr*—a remembrance of Allah manifested through form, color, and craftsmanship (Alfadhela et al., 2025).

Wahbah's interpretive approach also carries strong hermeneutical and contextual dimensions. He interprets the Qur'anic prohibitions on idols within their historical background—pre-Islamic Arabia's idolatrous culture—and carefully distinguishes between the act of creation and the act of worship (Hermanto et al., 2024; Ramadhan & Shohib, 2024). This contextual flexibility aligns with the principles of *maqasid al-shari'ah*, preventing idolatry while encouraging creativity. It also resonates with contemporary tafsir methodologies that emphasize a balanced interpretation bridging textual fidelity and contemporary relevance (Marafaniza & Hasan, 2023; Zahra et al., 2025).

Through this vision, Wahbah az-Zuhaili opens a constructive dialogue among scholars, educators, and artists in developing ethical principles for Islamic visual culture. He encourages Muslim societies to embrace cultural and technological innovation without compromising the doctrine of *Tawhid*. For him, art should illuminate life, deepen understanding of Qur'anic values, and mediate between tradition and modernity (Umayyatun, 2025). His theological and aesthetic insights continue to inspire Muslim artists to produce creative works grounded in spiritual responsibility, transforming artistic creation into an act of righteous action (*'amal salih*) that glorifies Allah and enriches Islamic civilization (Alfadhela et al., 2025; Ramadhan & Shohib, 2024).

Differences in Emphasis between Classical and Contemporary Tafsir

The interpretive contrast between Al-Qurthubi and Wahbah az-Zuhaili regarding Surah Ibrahim verse 35 offers an illuminating reflection on how Qur'anic exegesis (*tafsir*) is inseparable from the historical, social, and cultural contexts that shape a *mufassir*'s understanding of revelation. Al-Qurthubi, who lived in the 13th-century Andalusia, represented an era in which Islamic civilization stood at a crossroads between preserving the purity of Tawhid and engaging with foreign cultural influences, particularly those of Greco-Roman

and Christian traditions rich in statuary and sacred imagery. In such a milieu, Al-Qurthubi's hermeneutical orientation was shaped by an urgent need to safeguard Islamic faith against deviation, especially the lingering traces of *shirk* (idolatry) that remained visible in society (Hadi, 2021; Marafaniza & Hasan, 2023).

For Al-Qurthubi, idol worship was not merely a historical remnant but a recurring spiritual danger—one that could reappear in new forms whenever humans became excessively enamored of their own creations. He believed that human fascination with beauty and artistic works could easily lead to subtle forms of deification. Accordingly, he interpreted Prophet Ibrahim's supplication in Surah Ibrahim verse 35—"My Lord, make this city secure, and keep me and my descendants away from worshipping idols"—as a timeless moral warning for Muslims to remain vigilant against aesthetic excess and material attachment that might compromise exclusive devotion to Allah (Rahmi et al., 2022; Hermanto et al., 2024).

Al-Qurthubi emphasized that the prohibition of creating statues or lifelike images was not limited to external form but served to protect the sanctity of Tawhid itself. He reasoned that humans, in their spiritual fragility, tend to transform admiration into reverence, and thus realistic artistic depictions of living beings risked diverting attention from the Creator to the created (Hadi, 2021). For this reason, he viewed the prohibition as a spiritual safeguard—designed to preserve faith by preventing symbolic idolatry.

The socio-cultural setting of Al-Qurthubi's Andalusian context further clarifies his position. During his time, Andalusia was a vibrant intersection of Muslims, Christians, and Jewish civilizations, where figurative art—especially sculpture and painting—played central religious and political roles in European society. Within such an environment, Al-Qurthubi's cautious stance toward figurative representation becomes historically understandable. He sought to draw a clear boundary between Islamic art, centered on spirituality, and Western art, which frequently glorified the human form (Zahra et al., 2025). His interpretation reflected the awareness that Islamic art possessed a distinct character: it does not imitate Allah's creation but glorifies the Creator through harmony, geometry, calligraphy, and abstraction (Alfadhela et al., 2025).

Moreover, Al-Qurthubi's perspective reveals not only jurisprudential strictness but also profound spiritual insight. He held that true beauty lies not in physical form but in meaning and divine purpose. His aim was therefore not to reject art altogether but to redirect it—so that artistic expression functions

as a medium of worship, remembrance, and humility before Allah. Art, in his view, should awaken spiritual consciousness rather than indulge sensory pleasure (Hadi, 2021; Alfadhela et al., 2025). Through his tafsir, Al-Qurthubi sought to preserve the purity of Islamic teachings amid the complexities of cultural assimilation.

Accordingly, Al-Qurthubi's interpretation of Surah Ibrahim verse 35 must be understood as a theological response to his era's socio-religious realities. His conservatism was not a denial of creativity but a strategic protection of faith from symbolic idolatry. By placing Tawhid as the ultimate foundation of all aspects of life, including art and culture, he ensured that all human creativity—whether in architecture, design, or craftsmanship—remained an act of glorifying Allah rather than competing with Him. This hermeneutical orientation became the cornerstone of classical Islamic aesthetics, favoring symbolic abstraction—manifested in geometric designs, arabesques, and calligraphy as sacred artistic expressions (Alfadhela et al., 2025; Marafaniza & Hasan, 2023).

In contrast, Wahbah az-Zuhaili —writing Tafsir Al-Munir in the 20th century—interpreted the same verse through a contemporary lens shaped by vastly different social and intellectual circumstances. By his time, art and sculpture had become cultural, educational, and historical media rather than instruments of worship. Hence, Wahbah adopted a moderate and contextual stance, acknowledging representational art as permissible provided that it does not violate the principles of Tawhid, depict complete living forms, or serve idolatrous purposes (Ramadhan & Shohib, 2024; Hermanto et al., 2024). His interpretation thus fosters dialogue between Islamic theological principles and modern technological-artistic advancement (Fadila et al., 2024; Akbar et al., 2024).

The difference in emphasis between these two *mufassir* illustrates the dynamic and evolving character of Qur'anic interpretation. Tafsir is not a static discourse, but an ongoing dialogue between revelation and the shifting realities of human culture. Each interpretive act represents an effort to translate divine guidance into the language of its time (Marafaniza & Hasan, 2023; Zahra et al., 2025). Both Al-Qurthubi and Wahbah az-Zuhaili share the same ultimate objective—to preserve the purity of Tawhid and protect Muslims from idolatry—but their exegetical strategies diverge according to the challenges and needs of their respective contexts.

This divergence also highlights the importance of *ijtihad* (independent

reasoning) within the Islamic intellectual tradition. Every generation, confronted with new intellectual and technological developments, must reinterpret sacred texts in ways that remain faithful to sharah while accommodating innovation and creativity. WIn today's world—where digital and 3D visualizations are widespread—there is a need for theologically grounded yet flexible guidance that aligns with *shari'ah* values and maintains the essence of Tawhid while enabling the growth of artistic innovation and creativity (Akbar et al., 2024; Fadila et al., 2024). Such balanced engagement ensures that Islam remains both authentic and relevant.

From the perspective of Islamic art, this comparative analysis reaffirms that Tawhid continues to serve as the ethical compass for artistic development. Al-Qurthubi's prohibition of complete representations remains relevant as a spiritual safeguard against deviation from monotheism, while Wahbah's interpretive openness offers a model for responsible creativity. Muslim artists, drawing from both legacies, may employ modern technologies such as 3D miniatures or modeling by intentionally omitting hyper-realistic details—especially of faces or anatomy—to uphold theological boundaries and prevent the risk of *shirk* (Akbar et al., 2024; Alfadhela et al., 2025).

Thus, the interpretative differences between Al-Qurthubi and Wahbah az-Zuhaili should not be seen as a contradiction but as complementary expressions of Islam's intellectual vitality. Together, they enrich the Qur'anic interpretive tradition by demonstrating that fidelity to Tawhid and openness to change can coexist. Both scholars provide enduring guidance for Muslim artists and thinkers, showing how faith and creativity can evolve harmoniously—preserving spiritual integrity while engaging productively with the modern world (Ramadhan & Shohib, 2024; Umayyatun, 2025).

The Tradition of Incomplete Sculptures in the Middle East

The tradition of incomplete sculptures in the Middle East represents one of the most distinctive and intellectually engaging phenomena in the history of Islamic art. This artistic practice embodies Muslim artists' sustained efforts to reconcile creative expression with the theological boundaries established by the principles of Tawhid. Historically, this tradition emerged as a cultural and theological adaptation following the Islam's prohibition on depicting living beings in complete form. Rather than abandoning sculpture entirely, Muslim artists discovered a creative and ethically conscious solution by producing statues intentionally left incomplete—often lacking heads, faces, or other

defining features—thus ensuring that the artwork would not fully resemble a living being (Hadi, 2021; Alfadhela et al., 2025).

This practice demonstrates that Islamic art is neither restrictive nor anti-creative; rather, it represents an innovative synthesis of faith and beauty. The deliberate incompleteness of these sculptures symbolizes human humility before Allah's perfection and serves as a visual reminder that true creation belongs solely to Allah, while human artistic endeavors are limited reflections of divine creativity. Theologically, this concept aligns with the Qur'anic notion of *nafkh al-ruh* (the divine breath)—the idea that human creativity emanates from divine inspiration yet remains bound by moral and spiritual limits (Rahmi et al., 2022; Hermanto et al., 2024).

Across various regions of the Middle East—such as Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and the Arabian Peninsula—archaeological evidence reveals numerous examples of sculptures and reliefs intentionally modified or damaged, especially in the facial area. Some of these works were originally pre-Islamic artifacts later reworked by Muslim artisans to conform with religious norms, while others were newly created under Islamic patronage following the principle of intentional incompleteness as an ethical expression of artistic devotion. This historical continuity indicates that the prohibition of creating complete human or animal figures did not terminate sculpture as an art form, but rather transformed its purpose, method, and meaning (Hadi, 2021; Alfadhela et al., 2025).

The tradition of incomplete sculptures further reflects the dynamic interaction between theology, culture, and creativity. Instead of perceiving Qur'anic prohibitions as creative restrictions, Muslim artists interpreted them as intellectual challenges stimulating artistic innovation. They explored alternative visual strategies—through abstraction, stylization, and symbolism—that conveyed meaning without contradicting religious and ethical boundaries. Consequently, this tradition not only protected the purity of Tawhid but also fostered the emergence of new artistic forms and aesthetic paradigms characterized by spirituality depth and visual sophistication (Zahra et al., 2025; Alfadhela et al., 2025).

Beyond its theological significance, the tradition of incomplete sculpture carries profound aesthetic and philosophical implications. The absence of certain physical features invites contemplation on imperfection and human limitation, reminding humankind that perfection belongs solely to Allah, while all human creative efforts are partial and finite. In this sense, incomplete sculptures become metaphors for spiritual humility—affirming human limitation

as an act of worship and remembrance of divine greatness (Marafaniza & Hasan, 2023; Umayyatun, 2025).

This understanding aligns seamlessly with the concept of Tawhid as the cornerstone of Islamic worldview. By avoiding full imitation of living forms, Muslim artists affirmed that beauty must lead not to idolization but to *tafakkur*—reflective awareness of divine greatness. The act of intentional omission of parts within sculpture thus functions as a *tawhidiyyah*: a conscious declaration that only Allah possesses the power to grant life and perfection. Through this conscious restraint, art becomes an art of *dhikr* rather than *shirk*, transforming visual creation into a form of worship (Ramadhan & Shohib, 2024; Hermanto et al., 2024).

The persistence of this tradition also underscores the adaptive vitality of Islamic art. Muslim artists throughout history translated theological doctrines into creative innovations, balancing reverence for divine law with aesthetic exploration. They neither rejected art nor imitated foreign traditions indiscriminately but instead developed an independent aesthetic system grounded in revelation, reason, and moral consciousness. This approach reflects the Islamic principle of *tawazun*—maintaining harmony between the spiritual and the material, between faith and creativity, between divine guidance and human freedom (Hadi, 2021; Alfadhela et al., 2025).

In the contemporary context, the principle of incompleteness continues to bear relevance, particularly in the development of 3D miniature art. Many modern Muslim artists reinterpret "incompleteness" as a form of aesthetic philosophy and ethical stance. For example, 3D miniatures depicting historical figures or architectural scenes often omit detailed facial features or employ symbolic abstraction that suggests reality without replicating it (Akbar et al., 2024; Fadila et al., 2024). Such approaches align with the Tawhidic ethos—demonstrating that creativity and faith can coexist harmoniously without crossing theological constraints (Tarigan, 2022; Umayyatun, 2025).

Moreover, the educational and cultural potential of this tradition remains highly significant. Incomplete sculptures and 3D miniatures can serve as pedagogical tools in schools, museums, and religious institutions to teach Islamic civilization, history, and architectural heritage while maintaining ethical integrity (Nurhasanah et al., 2024; Fadila et al., 2024). For instance, 3D models of mosques, ancient cities, or Islamic historical events can enhance visual learning while fostering respect for religious boundaries. In this way, the tradition of incompleteness functions not only as artistic expression but

also as an instrument of education, da'wah, and cultural preservation (Akbar et al., 2024; Ramadhan & Shohib, 2024).

Ultimately, the tradition of incomplete sculpture in the Middle East reflects a profound synthesis of theology, culture, and art. It demonstrates that Islam, as a faith rooted in Tawhid, provides expansive space for artistic creativity as long as it remains guided by spiritual and ethical awareness. This tradition stands as an enduring contribution of Islamic civilization to world art heritage—a manifestation of faith transformed into form, beauty, and meaning (Alfadhela et al., 2025; Umayyatun, 2025).

3D Miniature Art in the Perspective of Tawhid

The rapid development of digital technology and 3D miniature techniques provides significant opportunities for Muslim artists to broaden the horizons of Islamic art while remaining firmly rooted in the principles of Tawhid. These technological innovations enable artists to create precise three-dimensional works using modern design software such as AutoCAD, Blender, or ZBrush (Akbar et al., 2024; Fadila et al., 2024). Through these tools, artists can achieve precision and visual sophistication while maintaining the equilibrium between creative expression and religious ethics. 3D miniature art functions not merely as a visual innovation but as a tangible manifestation of the synergy between science, technology, and divine consciousness (Umayyatun, 2025).

One of the greatest potentials of 3D miniature technology lies in its ability to digitally reconstruct the Islamic historical and architectural heritage that no longer exists in its original form. Monumental sites such as the Masjid al-Haram in Mecca, the Prophet's Mosque in Medina, the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, and the palaces of Andalusia can be digitally recreated in miniature form for educational and spiritual enrichment (Nurhasanah et al., 2024). Through these works, young Muslims can explore the philosophy of Islamic architecture and appreciate the theological symbolism embedded in its geometry, calligraphy, and spatial harmony (Alfadhela et al., 2025; Hadi, 2021). In this way, 3D miniature art becomes more than visual storytelling; it serves as a pedagogical medium that strengthens Islamic identity and historical awareness (Akbar et al., 2024).

Furthermore, 3D miniature technology offers new possibilities for the documentation and preservation of Islamic cultural heritage. By utilizing digital scanning, modeling, and 3D printing, artists and researchers can reconstruct damaged or endangered Islamic artifacts, reviving elements of

heritage that have been lost to time, decay, or conflict (Fadila et al., 2024). For instance, architectural remnants from regions such as Syria and Iraq that were destroyed during modern conflicts can be virtually reimagined through 3D miniatures, serving both as cultural preservation and as acts of remembrance rooted in *da'wah* (Ramadhan & Shohib, 2024). This demonstrates that art and technology, when guided by *Tawhidic* principles, can become instruments of cultural resilience, moral education, and spiritual reflection (Umayyatun, 2025).

From the perspective of Tawhid, the use of 3D miniature art holds profound theological and ethical implications. This medium allows Muslim artists to innovate without transgressing *shari'ah* principles, as three-dimensional representation can be achieved without fully replicating living beings. This continuation of the classical "incomplete sculptures" tradition reflects the enduring commitment to protecting monotheistic purity while nurturing artistic creativity (Hadi, 2021; Alfadhela et al., 2025). By adhering to these principles, artists ensure that their works remain spiritually safe and theologically grounded, contributing meaningfully to the renewal of Islamic art (Hermanto et al., 2024).

Moreover, 3D miniatures hold immense potential in the realms of *da'wah* and Islamic education (Tarigan, 2022). Within modern Islamic museums and learning centers, interactive digital models and immersive displays enable visitors to explore prophetic stories, early Islamic civilizations, and historic urban centers such as Baghdad, Cairo, and Cordoba. Through immersive visualization, religious and historical knowledge can be conveyed more effectively, particularly to younger generations accustomed to digital learning environments (Akbar et al., 2024; Nurhasanah et al., 2024).

More importantly, the development of 3D miniature art grounded in Tawhid demonstrates that modern technology is not a threat to religion but a vehicle for its expression and renewal. Muslim artists thus play a dual role—as creators of beauty and as guardians of meaning—ensuring that artistic production remains a medium of reflection, remembrance, and spiritual awareness (Ramadhan & Shohib, 2024; Umayyatun, 2025). When Tawhid becomes the guiding principle at every stage of creation, from concept to form, artists practice transforms into an act of *'ibadah* (worship) and *tafakkur* (contemplation).

Ultimately, 3D miniature art founded upon the principles of Tawhid symbolizes harmony between tradition and modernity. Islam does not oppose

technological advancement; rather, it directs innovation toward moral, educational, and spiritual good (Hadi, 2021; Alfadhela et al., 2025). By utilizing modern technology as a means of spiritual reflection and cultural preservation, Muslim artists affirm that the essence of beauty lies not in material perfection but in the remembrance of Allah as the true ultimate source of all creation, wisdom, and aesthetic harmony (Umayyatun, 2025).

The Principle of Tawhid as a Guideline for Islamic Art

The results of this research reaffirm that the principle of Tawhid serves not only as the theological foundation of Islam but also the guiding framework that has continually shaped the development of Islamic art since its earliest emergence. Tawhid, affirming the absolute oneness of Allah, places the Creator at the center of all notions of beauty and establishes Him as the highest source of artistic inspiration. Within this framework, art is not conceived as a human attempt to rival Allah's creation or display human skill, but as a medium for expressing admiration, gratitude, and spiritual awareness of Allah's majesty (Alfadhela et al., 2025; Ramadhan & Shohib, 2024). The essence of beauty in Islamic art, as emphasized by Tawhid, lies not in the perfection of human-crafted forms that imitate living beings but in the acknowledgment that all beauty originates from and ultimately returns to Allah (Hadi, 2021; Hermanto et al., 2024).

The principle of Tawhid simultaneously functions as an ethical framework that distinguishes Islamic art from other artistic traditions that glorify the human figure. In Islamic tradition, art is designed to cultivate spiritual consciousness rather than the worship of human creations themselves (Alfadhela et al., 2025). For this reason, the artistic forms that flourished across Islamic civilization were predominantly abstract and non-figurative—such as calligraphy, geometric motifs, and floral arabesques—reflect divine harmony and cosmic balance without resorting to direct imitation of living beings (Hadi, 2021; Rahmi et al., 2022). Thus, Tawhid operates as both an aesthetic principle and a spiritual safeguard, protecting humanity from idolatry, vanity, and excessive aesthetic indulgence (Marlina & Simamora, 2025).

Furthermore, the principle of Tawhid maintains a delicate balance between creative freedom and moral responsibility. In the modern era—marked by digital visualization, 3D miniature technology, and rapid artistic innovation—Tawhid remains a vital compass that directs artistic creation toward spiritual integrity (Tarigan, 2022; Akbar et al., 2024). It calls upon Muslim artists to ensure that

their creative works do not replicate living beings in complete form or purpose, thereby preserving both theological purity and moral accountability (Fadila et al., 2024). Within this framework, art transcends aesthetics to become a means of *tazkiyatun nafs* (self-purification) and *da'wah* (spiritual invitation) (Umayyatun, 2025; Ramadhan & Shohib, 2024).

The spiritual essence of Tawhid-inspired art lies in its power to orient the human heart toward Allah and nurture humility before His perfection. Rather than seducing the viewer through surface beauty, Islamic art encourages contemplation (*tafakkur*) of divine greatness and recognition of human limitation (Hermanto et al., 2024; Alfadhela et al., 2025). Through this lens, beauty functions as a spiritual reminder and a pathway to gratitude. Art thus becomes a form of remembrance (*dhikr*) and devotion, transforming aesthetic experience into a means of purifying the soul and nurturing ethical consciousness (Ramadhan & Shohib, 2024).

Moreover, Tawhid provides moral direction by guiding Muslim artists away from exploitative or purely commercial uses of art devoid of higher purpose. In an age when art is often commodified detached from spirituality, *Tawhid* restores its sacred orientation, reminding artists that creativity and beauty are divine trusts (*amanah*) entrusted to humanity for moral and spiritual elevation (Hadi, 2021; Umayyatun, 2025). Hence, art rooted in *Tawhid* embodies both aesthetic refinement and profound spiritual meaning, standing as a living testimony that true beauty is inseparable from divine remembrance and moral responsibility.

Conclusion

This study concludes that the reflection of Tawhid values in 3D miniature art represents a harmonious synthesis between theology, art, and modern technology. The development of 3D miniature art demonstrates that Islamic creativity can advance dynamically while remaining firmly rooted in the spiritual foundation of Tawhid. Both classical and contemporary Qur'anic exegesis, as seen in the interpretations of Al-Qurthubi and Wahbah az-Zuhaili, serve as theological anchors ensuring that artistic innovation remains consistent with faith-based principles.

Al-Qurthubi's interpretation emphasizes a cautious and preventive stance toward any form of artistic expression that might resemble idol worship or glorify created beings. His perspective represents an early theological effort to safeguard the integrity of Islamic faith during a period when traces of polytheism

and anthropomorphic traditions still influenced society. In contrast, Wahbah az-Zuhaili adopts a contextual and constructive approach, viewing art as an educational and cultural instrument that can serve the higher objectives of *shari'ah* (*maqasid al-shari'ah*), provided it remains guided by the values of Tawhid. Together, these views illustrate the dynamic adaptability of Islamic thought in balancing devotion and creativity across historical contexts.

The two perspectives complement each other in shaping a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between religion and art. Al-Qurthubi 's interpretation reminds the Muslim community of the spiritual and ethical boundaries that must be upheld, while Wahbah az-Zuhaili offers interpretive flexibility that accommodates modern artistic and contemporary developments. Taken together, their insights affirm that Islamic art can remain both spiritually profound and culturally relevant when grounded in the principle of divine unity.

The continuity between the historical tradition of "incomplete sculptures" in the Middle East and the emergence of 3D miniature art in the modern era further demonstrates that artistic creation in Islam is not a prohibited act but an ethical and spiritual responsibility. Muslim artists are called to become bearers of faith and culture—individuals who translate Tawhidic values into visual and material form while avoiding the pitfalls of vanity, materialism, and imitation. When grounded in the consciousness of Tawhid, artistic creation transforms into an act of worship (*'ibadah*), reflection (*tafakkur*), and remembrance (*dhikr*)—a spiritual practice that beautifies both the material world and the moral self.

Ultimately, this research reaffirms that Tawhid is not a restriction upon human creativity but a source of moral strength, intellectual balance, and artistic inspiration. True beauty in Islamic art does not reside in the perfection of physical form but in the spiritual depth that directs the human soul toward Allah. Through the integration of technology, knowledge, and faith, Muslim artists can continue to contribute to the development of art that is simultaneously modern and sacred—one that enriches not only the external world of form but also the inner world of meaning and faith.

This study also highlights several practical implications for integrating Tawhid values into Islamic art and contemporary technology. Muslim artists are encouraged to ground their creative endeavors in Qur'anic principles so that art becomes a medium for spiritual reflection rather than mere aesthetic pursuit. Educational institutions can utilize 3D miniature technology as an

innovative and *shari'ah*-compliant tool for teaching Islamic history, architecture, and culture. Strengthened collaboration between scholars and artists is essential to harmonize creativity with theological ethics. Moreover, governments and cultural institutions should actively support Tawhid-based art initiatives through research funding, exhibitions, and educational programs that promote spiritual awareness, *da'wah*, and the preservation of Islamic cultural identity.

References

Alfadhela, A. N., Rahman, P., & Rusli, R. (2025). Estetika dalam Tafsir: Seni Sebagai Medium Pemikiran Al-Qur'an di Era Kontemporer. Jejak digital: Jurnal Ilmiah Multidisiplin, 1(4), 1104-1111. https://doi.org/10.63822/r5tn7780

Akbar, M. (2024). 3D miniature art in Islamic aesthetics: Digital creativity and spiritual reflection. Journal of Islamic Art and Technology, 12(1), 45–60.

Akbar, M. D., Satria, W., & Wahyuni, S. (2024). Animasi 3D sebagai Media Pembelajaran Panduan Sholat Jenazah untuk Anak Usia Dini Menggunakan Aplikasi Blender. *CompTech: Jurnal Ilmu Komputer dan Teknologi*, *1*(1), 79-88. https://doi.org/10.63854/comptech.v1i1.16

Al Fajar, A. H., Kahfi, A., & Jaya, P. H. I. (2024). Da'wah Through Animation Media in the Perspective of Da'wah Verses. *Jurnal Dakwah Dan Komunikasi*, *9*(2), 87-98. https://journal.iaincurup.ac.id/index.php/JDK/article/view/11472

Al Fajar, A., Rahman, M., & Yusuf, A. (2024). Digital Islamic art and 3D visualization for education. International Journal of Islamic Studies and Technology, 8(2), 77–90.

Ardiansyah A. F. (2024) Kritik terhadap Hermeneutika dalam Tafsir Al-Qur'an. *Jurnal Al-Muhith, 4*(1). http://dx.doi.org/10.35931/am.v4i1.4232

Atiyeh, G. (2022). Islamic art and its symbolic dimensions. Middle East Heritage Press.

Burckhardt, T. (2017). Art of Islam: Language and meaning. World Wisdom.

Dwimursito, A., Fadilah, J. N., & Nugroho, F. (2022). Perancangan Film Animasi

3D Bertema Islami Berjudul "Sedekah itu Indah" Menggunakan Metode Pose-to-pose. *Jurnal Informatika dan Teknologi Komputer (J-ICOM)*, *3*(1), 01-10. https://doi.org/10.55377/j-icom.v3i1.3725

Fadila, J. N., Hassan, S. A., Arkan, M. H., Indaru, D. F. B., & Diano, M. C. (2024). Enhancing Historical Narrative through Application of Staging Techniques in 3D Animation "How Islam Spread Around the World". *Jurnal Sisfokom (Sistem Informasi dan Komputer)*, *13*(1), 7-12. https://doi.org/10.32736/sisfokom.v13i1.1812

Grabar, O. (1987). The formation of Islamic art (Rev. ed.). Yale University Press.

Hadi, A. (2021). *Metodologi Tafsir Al Quran dari masa klasik sampai masa kontemporer*. Tisara Grafika.

Hermanto, E., Sholihah, P. D., Hasyim, M., Rafina, P. A., & Febrianda, M. (2024). Konsep Self-Healing dalam QS. al-Insyirah: Analisis Penafsiran Wahbah az-Zuhaili dalam Tafsir al-Munir. *Jurnal Semiotika-Q: Kajian Ilmu Al-Quran Dan Tafsir*, *4*(2), 809-827. https://doi.org/10.19109/jsq.v4i2.25018

Hillenbrand, R. (2019). Islamic art and architecture. Thames & Hudson.

Juniardi, A., Setiawan, H., & Putra, R. (2024). 3D animation and Islamic educational media design. Journal of Islamic Creative Media, 5(1), 20–34.

Marafaniza, E., & Hasan, M. A. K. (2023). Kajian Tafsir Tematik Kontemporer: Analisis terhadap Metode Tafsir Tematik Ayat-ayat Psikologis Karya Moh. Abdul Kholiq Hasan. *Wahana Islamika*, 9(1). https://wahanaislamika.staisw.ac.id/index.php/WI/article/view/2

Marlina, T., & Simamora, N. A. (2025). Karakter Wanita Qur'ani dalam Tafsir Kontemporer: Studi terhadap Penafsiran al-Harari, az-Zuhaili, dan Quraish Shihab. *Ta'wiluna: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an, Tafsir dan Pemikiran Islam*, *6*(2), 898-910. http://ejournal.iaifa.ac.id/index.php/takwiluna/article/view/2585

Nasr, S. H. (2010). Islamic art and spirituality. ABC International Group.

Nurhasanah, S., Khalid, M., & Fadhilah, N. (2024). 3D modeling for Islamic

learning environments: Ethical and pedagogical perspectives. Journal of Islamic Digital Education, 4(1), 55–68.

Nurhasanah, A., Rahmawati, S., & Yusuf, A. (2024). Pengembangan manfaat media pembelajaran 3 dimensi pada bangun ruang bagi guru sekolah dasar. *Menara: Jurnal Ilmu Pengetahuan dan Pengembangan Masyarakat Islam, 18*(1), 1–10. http://dx.doi.org/10.24014/menara.v18i1.25639

Rahmi, N., Syafruddin, S., Efrinaldi, E., & Saputra, E. (2022). Dayn dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an: Analisis terhadap Kitab Tafsir Al-Munir Karya Wahbah Zuhaili. *Hikmah*, *19*(2), 250-270. https://doi.org/10.53802/hikmah.v19i2.172

Ramadhan, B., & Shohib, M. (2024). Konstruksi Islam Moderat dan Implementasinya Dalam Pendidikan Islam (Studi Pemikiran Syekh Wahbah Az Zuhaili). *Al-Mau'izhoh: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, *6*(2), 905-919.

Tarigan, M. F. (2022) Media Syi'ar Islam Interaktif Berbasis Animasi 3D di Masa Kini. *TIN: Terapan Informatika Nusantara*, 2(9). https://doi.org/10.47065/tin.v2i9.1319

Umayyatun. (2025). Revitalisasi Nilai-nilai Tauhid dalam Pendidikan Islam Digital: Telaah Teoritis dan Praktis melalui Kecerdasan Buatan. *ISEDU : Islamic Education Journal*, *3*(1), 65–71. https://doi.org/10.59966/isedu.v3i1.1758

Zahra, R., Khusnadin, M. H., & Fitra, A. A. (2025). Studi komparatif tafsir tekstual dan tafsir kontekstual dalam pemahaman ayat-ayat sosial di era modern. *Ta'wiluna: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an, Tafsir dan Pemikiran Islam*, *6*(1), 44-56. https://doi.org/10.58401/takwiluna.v5i3.1943

DOI: 10.18860/eh.v27i2.37106

ISLAMIC CONTRIBUTIONS TO SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT IN ASTRONOMY, MATHEMATICS, MEDICINE, AND CHEMISTRY

Yandra Agusta Putra, M. Mujab
Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim, Malang, Indonesia.
Email: yandraagusta10@gmail.com

Received: October 25, 2025
Revised: November 24, 2025
Accepted: November 27, 2025

Abstract

This research discusses the contribution of Islamic civilization to the development of world science and technology and examines the role of Muslim scholars in shaping a scientific paradigm rooted in Islamic spiritual values and rationality. Based on the Eurocentric view dominating scientific historiography, the research gap identifies the urgent need for a comprehensive study that positions the Islamic contribution within an integrative, holistic, and value-based scientific paradigm. The novelty of this study lies in its comparative approach, demonstrating that Islamic scientific development possessed distinct epistemic, methodological, and ethical orientations thereby offering an alternative, ethically-oriented model of science insufficiently explored in previous research. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to reveal how Islam not only served as a medium for the transmission of knowledge from Greek civilization but also as an originator of a rational and ethical scientific method. This study uses a qualitative approach through a literature review by analyzing classical works of Muslim scholars and contemporary literature on the history of Islamic science. The results show that Muslim scholars such as Al-Battani, Al-Khawarizmi, Ibn Sina, and Al-Razi made fundamental contributions in the fields of astronomy, mathematics, medicine, and chemistry. Their contributions were not only technical but also epistemological, emphasizing the integration of revelation and reason as the foundation of knowledge pursuit. These findings indicate that the Islamic scientific paradigm is holistic, oriented

toward public welfare, and rejects the dichotomy between science and religion. The implications of this research highlight the importance of reconstructing the epistemology of Islamic science in contemporary education and research contexts to build a just and sustainable civilization of knowledge. Thus, the reconstruction of Islamic science epistemology is not merely a historical endeavor, but a strategic step to rebuild the orientation of science rooted in the values of monotheism, ethics, and universal welfare.

Penelitian ini membahas kontribusi peradaban Islam terhadap perkembangan ilmu pengetahuan dan teknologi dunia serta menguji peran para ilmuwan Muslim dalam membentuk paradigma ilmiah yang berakar pada nilai-nilai spiritual dan rasionalitas Islam. Berdasarkan pandangan Eurosentris yang mendominasi historiografi ilmiah, kesenjangan penelitian mengidentifikasi kebutuhan mendesak akan studi komprehensif yang memposisikan kontribusi Islam dalam paradigma ilmiah yang integratif, holistik, dan berbasis nilai. Kebaruan dari studi ini terletak pada pendekatan komparatifnya, yang menunjukkan bahwa perkembangan ilmu pengetahuan Islam memiliki orientasi epistemik, metodologis, dan etis yang berbeda, sehingga menawarkan model ilmu pengetahuan alternatif yang berorientasi etis yang belum cukup dieksplorasi dalam penelitian sebelumnya. Oleh karena itu, tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengungkapkan bagaimana Islam tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai media transmisi pengetahuan dari peradaban Yunani, tetapi juga sebagai pencetus metode ilmiah yang rasional dan etis. Studi ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif melalui tinjauan literatur dengan menganalisis karya-karya klasik para ilmuwan Muslim dan literatur kontemporer tentang sejarah ilmu pengetahuan Islam. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ilmuwan Muslim seperti Al-Battani, Al-Khawarizmi, Ibn Sina, dan Al-Razi memberikan kontribusi mendasar dalam bidang astronomi, matematika, kedokteran, dan kimia. Kontribusi mereka tidak hanya bersifat teknis tetapi juga epistemologis, menekankan integrasi wahyu dan akal sebagai fondasi pencarian pengetahuan. Temuan-temuan ini mengindikasikan bahwa paradigma ilmiah Islam adalah holistik, berorientasi pada kesejahteraan publik, dan menolak dikotomi antara sains dan agama. Implikasi dari penelitian ini menyoroti pentingnya rekonstruksi epistemologi ilmu pengetahuan Islam dalam konteks pendidikan dan penelitian kontemporer untuk membangun peradaban pengetahuan yang adil dan berkelanjutan. Dengan demikian, rekonstruksi epistemologi ilmu pengetahuan Islam bukan sekadar upaya historis, melainkan langkah strategis untuk membangun kembali orientasi ilmu pengetahuan yang berakar pada nilai-nilai tauhid, etika, dan kesejahteraan universal.

Keywords: *epistemology, Islamization of knowledge, Muslim scholars, modern science, scientific paradigm*

Introduction

In Islamic tradition, the concept of *'ilm* (knowledge) occupies a fundamental position as the main foundation of civilization. The Qur'an mentions the term 'ilm more than 750 times, indicating how central knowledge is in shaping faith and the progress of humanity (Nasr, 1968). The pursuit of knowledge in Islam is viewed as part of worship and devotion to Allah SWT. According to Al-Ghazali, knowledge is divine light that Allah instills in the hearts of humans to guide them to truth and wisdom (*hikmah*) (Nasution, 2021). The understanding of science in Islam encompasses rational, moral, and spiritual dimensions in an integrated manner, thereby connecting revelation *(wahy)* and reason *('aql)* as sources of knowledge (Siregar & Lubis, 2020). This integrative framework of understanding then opened space for the emergence of a scientific tradition that developed within Islamic civilization.

Islamic civilization played a significant role in the formation of global scientific traditions. The Islamic world was a center of scientific advancement that encompassed spiritual, logical, and empirical aspects between the eighth and fourteenth centuries AD (Nasr, 1968). Thanks to the contributions of Muslim scholars such as Al-Khawarizmi, Ibn Sina, Al-Razi, and Jabir ibn Hayyan, various disciplines ranging from astronomy, mathematics, and medicine to chemistry experienced rapid development during this period. They not only preserved the intellectual heritage of the Greeks, but also enriched and revolutionized scientific methods through observational and experimental approaches (Rashed, 1994).

The *Bayt al-Hikmah*, which emerged during the Abbasid era as a center for translation and the integration of knowledge, became a pivotal milestone in the advancement of the Islamic scientific tradition (Gutas, 1998). The massive translation movement of the works of Aristotle, Galen, and Ptolemy gave birth to new innovations in various fields. For example, in astronomy, Al-Battani and Al-Tusi updated Ptolemy's geocentric model with data-based observation methods (Kennedy, 1983). In mathematics, Al-Khwarizmi introduced the concept of *al-jabr* (algebra) and the decimal system, which form the basis of modern computational logic (Rashed, 1994). Meanwhile, in medicine, Ibn Sina compiled a comprehensive and rational medical system through *Al-Qanun fi al-Tibb*, which became the main reference for the Western world for centuries to come (Pormann & Savage-Smith, 2007) In chemistry, Jabir ibn Hayyan and Al-Razi introduced experimental methods that would later influence the foundations of modern chemistry (Holmyard, 1957).

Although this contribution has been recognized by some scholars, the historiography of modern science is still dominated by a Eurocentric perspective that places Islam merely as an intermediary between Greece and Europe (Huff, 1993). Previous research shows that this approach ignores the methodological dimensions developed by Muslim scientists, especially in terms of experimentation and systematization of knowledge (Nasr, 1968). In addition, there are still limitations in contemporary research that presents the contributions of Islam thematically across disciplines, because most previous studies are partial and do not emphasize the integration between Islamic Sciences and modern scientific practice (Arzaki et al., 2025). This condition indicates the presence of a research gap in the form of a need for a comprehensive study that positions the contribution of Islam within an integrative, holistic, and value-based scientific paradigm, rather than as merely a technical inheritance from previous civilizations.

The novelty of this study lies in a comparative approach that not only traces the historical contributions of Muslim scholars, but also demonstrates how the development of science in the Islamic world possessed epistemic, methodological, and ethical orientations distinct from those of the Western scientific tradition. While Western science evolved through secular, mechanistic, and utilitarian paradigms during the Renaissance and the Scientific Revolution, the Islamic intellectual tradition was rooted in the integration of rationality, spirituality, and human welfare (Soelaiman, 2019). Thus, this study offers a new perspective that reveals how Islamic civilization not only provided the foundational knowledge for the West, but also presented an alternative model of science oriented toward tawhid, ethics, and sustainability, an aspect that has not been sufficiently explored in previous research.

In a global era characterized by the dominance of secular and utilitarian science, the study of integrating Islamic values into the development of scientific knowledge has become increasingly relevant and significant. This is not only important historically, but also epistemologically, because Islam offers a scientific paradigm oriented towards the search for divine truth (al-haqq) and universal benefit (*maslahah*) (Dallal, 2010). This study also challenges the dichotomous view between science and religion that often arises in modern discourse, by emphasizing that in Islam, knowledge (*'ilm*) is a spiritual instrument for understanding the order of God's creation (Sofyan et al., 2021).

Thus, this study aims to fill the scientific gap in Islamic science studies with a holistic approach that systematically examines the contributions of Islam

in four main fields, namely astronomy, mathematics, medicine, and chemistry. It is expected to provide a new perspective on how Islamic epistemology not only contributed to the historical development of science but also offered an ethical and philosophical basis for the development of contemporary science. Specifically, this study seeks to explore the significant influence of Islamic civilization on the development of global science and technology, as well as to examine how Muslim scholars contributed to shaping the foundations of the modern scientific paradigm through the integration of rational inquiry and Islamic spiritual principles.

Method

This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) design with a descriptive-qualitative approach, which involves systematically examining, selecting, and synthesizing classical and contemporary literature on the contributions of Islamic civilization to the development of science and technology. This method was chosen because it focuses on analyzing various sources and literary texts to reveal how Islamic civilization advanced science and technology, especially in the fields of chemistry, astronomy, mathematics, and medicine.

The subjects of this study are the works of classical Muslim scientists such as Al-Khawarizmi, Ibn Sina, Al-Razi, Al-Biruni, Al-Battani, Jabir Ibn Hayyan, and other Muslim scholars, as well as modern research discussing their scientific legacy. The research procedure was carried out through the following stages: (1) determining the focus of the study and the formulation of the problem; (2) collecting relevant literature; (3) selecting primary and secondary sources; (4) conducting content analysis of the data; and (5) compiling the findings to draw conclusions.

The research materials and instruments were documents, books, and scientific articles relevant to the topic of study. The researcher acts as the main instrument in critically interpreting and analyzing the data. This research documentation method, which involves reviewing various leading scientific publications, is used to collect data. The content analysis approach, which combines data reduction, information presentation, and conclusion drawing to produce a comprehensive and in-depth picture, is used to carry out the data analysis procedure.

Finding and Discussion

Islamic Civilization and Science

Islamic culture made a significant contribution to the advancement of global science and technology between the seventh and sixteenth centuries. During this period, the Islamic world developed into a major center of scientific activity and technological innovation, making a major contribution to human progress. The Islamic Golden Age, spanning from the eighth to the fifteenth century, particularly during the Abbasid era in Baghdad and the Islamic rule in Andalusia, reflects the peak of scientific achievement and the flourishing of Islamic civilization. Islamic culture showed remarkable progress in a well-structured education system throughout its heyday, thanks to various institutions such as madrasas, mosques, and *bimaristans*, or educational hospitals (Azra, 2012). In addition to serving as centers of religious instruction, madrasas were also scientific institutions that advanced various fields of study, including chemistry, philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, and medicine.

In this era, the Islamic world experienced a remarkable intellectual revival with the establishment of various scientific institutions such as Bayt al-Hikmah, madrasas, observatories, and large libraries in Islamic city centers (Saliba, 2007). The translation of Greek, Persian, and Indian intellectual writings into Arabic was greatly aided by Bayt al-Hikmah. However, Muslim scientists did not stop at translation alone but developed new theories and methods in various disciplines, including astronomy, mathematics, medicine, and chemistry (Arzaki et al., 2025). *Al-Qanun fi al-Tibb*, a fundamental work by Ibn Sina, became the primary medical text for centuries; Ibn Rushd made significant contributions that laid the foundation for the emergence of modern science through his philosophical thinking; and great scientists such as Al-Khawarizmi introduced the concepts of algebra and the decimal number system (Alinata et al., 2024).

When the works of Muslim scholars were translated into Latin and used as primary references in a number of European universities and educational institutions, the influence of the Islamic education system on the advancement of Western culture became increasingly apparent (Kosasih, 2024). Knowledge from the Islamic world reached Europe through open intellectual contact in Sicily and Andalusia, where Muslims, Christians, and Jews interacted in a comparatively open scholarly climate, which contributed to the Enlightenment. In these territories, the translation of Arabic scientific texts covering astronomy, mathematics, medicine, philosophy, and optics into

Latin became one of the most significant channels of knowledge transmission. Muslim scholars in medieval Andalusia, in particular, played a central role in refining astronomical instruments, advancing observational methods, and producing precise astronomical tables that were later used across Europe. As noted by Mujani and Ibrahim (2012), Andalusian astronomers developed sophisticated star catalogues, improved the astrolabe, and introduced mathematical techniques that later underpinned European astronomical advancements (Mujani, 2012).

These intellectual exchanges did not occur in isolation; they shaped the curricula of emerging European universities and stimulated critical inquiry during the High Middle Ages. The influx of Aristotelian philosophy preserved and commented on by Muslim philosophers like Ibn Rushd (Averroes) reoriented Western scholasticism toward empirical reasoning. Over time, these translated works and scientific advancements contributed to the intellectual groundwork for the Renaissance, eventually influencing the scientific revolution and the Enlightenment. Thus, the Andalusian and Sicilian knowledge routes served not merely as channels of transmission but as catalytic spaces where scientific ideas were transformed, debated, and expanded, enabling Europe to integrate Islamic scientific heritage into its own trajectory of intellectual development. This shows that in addition to maintaining the continuity of knowledge, the Islamic education system was a major force behind the growth of a scientific heritage based on reason and empirical research. Thus, Islamic education in the Middle Ages was an important element that accelerated intellectual change in the Western world.

Islamic education emphasizes the importance of equal access to knowledge, where every individual has the right to obtain learning opportunities regardless of gender or social status. There were many opportunities for women to participate in academic activities at madrasas and other Islamic educational institutions. Fatimah al-Fihri, the founder of the University of Al-Qarawiyyin in Morocco, recognized as one of the oldest universities in the world, represents a historical example of the contribution of Muslim women to the development of knowledge (Sairah, 2023). The European education system, which had previously been closed and only available to certain groups, was then greatly influenced by these egalitarian and inclusive ideals.

When early European universities, including the University of Bologna and the University of Paris, adopted institutional structures and teaching practices similar to those of the madrasah system, it became increasingly clear

how Islamic education influenced the development of Western education (Abidin & Haddade, 2024). The tradition of Islamic education influenced learning styles that emphasize critical textual study, intellectual mentoring of students, and open discussion. These concepts were brought back to Europe and refined in a regional context by European thinkers who studied in Andalusia and Sicily.

Beyond its scientific achievements, Islam made a significant contribution to education. It established the foundations for a contemporary education system that values common sense, interdisciplinary collaboration, and the pursuit of lifelong learning. This intellectual legacy played a major role in encouraging the revival of thought in Europe, which ultimately gave rise to the Enlightenment (Sihaloho, 2023).

The Islamic education system at that time developed an open and collaborative scientific culture. Madrasas and libraries functioned not only as centers of religious learning, but also as arenas for scientific research and discussion that fostered critical thinking among scholars and students (Sofyan & Supriyadi, 2022). During the golden age of Islam, madrasas developed into educational institutions that taught various subjects, including chemistry, mathematics, medicine, philosophy, and astronomy, in addition to religious knowledge (Berliana, 2024). In a conducive intellectual environment, Muslim scientists produced monumental works that had a major influence and were later used as references by Western scholars. The dissemination of knowledge from the Islamic world to Europe occurred through various channels, particularly Andalusia and Sicily, which served as centers for the translation of Muslim scientific works into Latin, thereby contributing to the birth of the Renaissance movement in Europe (Erzad & Suciati, 2018).

The province of Al-Andalus, known as Spain during the Islamic period, served as one of the main channels for the spread of Islamic knowledge to the West (Mubadillah, 2024). During the Umayyad Dynasty (711–1492), Cordoba became one of the most important centers for Islamic scholarship. The city was famous for its extensive library, which housed thousands of books on various scientific subjects, including philosophy, astronomy, mathematics, and medicine. Many European scholars, especially those from Christian areas of the Iberian Peninsula, came to Cordoba to study and access various sources of knowledge. Translation into Latin was the main means of spreading Islamic knowledge throughout Western Europe.

Through various interactions that developed during the Crusades (1096–

1291 AD), knowledge was also transferred from the Islamic world to the West (Dahlan, 2024). The battle for land in the Middle East was the main objective of the conflict, but it also inadvertently opened the door to intellectual and cultural contact between Europe and the Islamic world. Muslim professors taught various subjects, including astronomy, mathematics, and medicine, to European soldiers during the conflict. Many Crusaders brought this new knowledge back to their home countries, where it then developed and made a substantial contribution to the advancement of science in the West.

Thus, Islamic civilization not only served as a preserver of classical knowledge, but also as the initiator of a new scientific paradigm that integrated faith and rationality. Scientific progress in Islam was rooted in spiritual values that encouraged humans to understand God's creation through research and observation of nature (Siregar & Lubis, 2020).

Islamic Contribution to Astronomy: Observational Tools and Models

Through the contributions of prominent scientists such as Al-Battani and Ibn al-Shatir, who successfully developed fundamental ideas and highly accurate astronomical calculation tools, the Islamic education system played an important role in the field of astronomy (Susanto, 2020). With his precision in compiling astronomical tables, Al-Battani was known to surpass previous scientists, and his work influenced European astronomers, including Copernicus, in the development of the heliocentric theory. He also made significant corrections to the value of the ecliptic inclination and the duration of the solar year with remarkable accuracy.

By creating a more accurate model of the moon and planetary motion, Ibn al-Shatir made a significant contribution that ultimately became the basis for Copernicus's theory of astronomy. The development of theory was not the only aspect of the advancement of Islamic astronomy education, but also included scientific technological innovations through the creation of various instruments, such as the astrolabe and quadrant, which played an important role in the advancement of navigation and global exploration.

The advancement of Islamic astronomy was characterized by rigorous observational practices, systematic mathematical calculations, and critical evaluation of inherited Greek models (Shuriye, 2011). Scholars such as Al-Battani and Al-Biruni refined astronomical tables, corrected planetary measurements, and introduced more precise trigonometric techniques, thereby improving the calculation of celestial motions. Shuriye (2011) also highlights that Ibn al-Shatir's

revision of the Ptolemaic system, particularly the geometric restructuring of planetary orbits, represented an important scientific breakthrough within the Islamic astronomical tradition.

Ibn al-Shatir was one of the key figures in the development of planetary theory during the golden age of Islamic astronomy because he restructured the Ptolemaic model by eliminating the equant and reorganizing the epicycle system, resulting in a geometric construction that aligned more closely with observational data (Saliba, 1995). Although his model remained within a geocentric framework, Ibn al-Shatir's mathematical approach demonstrated significant advancements and exhibited structural similarities to the planetary motion model that later appeared in the work of Copernicus, thereby indicating an intellectual continuity within the astronomical tradition. Meanwhile, Ulugh Beg stands out as a pioneer of institutional observational astronomy through the establishment of the Samarkand observatory and the compilation of the *Zij-i Sultani*, a star catalog and set of astronomical tables produced using large-scale instruments with a high degree of accuracy. From Saliba's perspective, the achievements of Ulugh Beg demonstrate that Islamic astronomy in the fifteenth century did not experience decline, but instead attained a level of observational precision and data processing that provided a foundation for subsequent developments in astronomy (Saliba, 1995).

Muslim scientists such as Al-Battani, Al-Biruni, and Al-Tusi made major contributions to the field of astronomy through accurate observations and the development of theories on the motion of celestial bodies. Al-Battani also corrected Ptolemy's data on the movement of the sun and moon; Al-Tusi created the Tusi Couple model, which Copernicus later used in his heliocentric theory (Tracy, 2020). In addition, Al-Biruni introduced a method for measuring the radius of the earth with a high degree of accuracy (Nasution, 2019).

Instruments such as the astrolabe, quadrant, and the Maragha observatory are clear evidence of Muslim scientists' ability to develop observational devices. These findings demonstrate the continuity between Islamic science and modern astronomy, while also confirming that Islam did not merely inherit Greek science but perfected it (Sofyan et al., 2021).

Islamic Contribution to Mathematics: Algebra and Numeral Systems

The most influential contribution of Islamic civilization in the field of mathematics is reflected in the work of Muhammad ibn Musa al-Khawarizmi, the pioneer of the concept of *al-jabr* (algebra) and the decimal number system.

Al-Daffa (2020) emphasizes that through the use of zero, the adoption of a place value system, and systematic methods for solving linear and quadratic equations, Al-Khawarizmi transformed mathematics from simple arithmetic practice into a scientific discipline that is deductive, structured, and applicable (Al-Daffa, 2020). This transformation not only strengthened the framework of mathematical reasoning but also marked a key milestone in the emergence of algorithmic methods that have significantly shaped modern mathematics and computational technology. *Al-Kitab al-Mukhtasar fi Hisab al-Jabr wal-Muqabalah*, his important work, became an important basis for the advancement of symbolic mathematics and contemporary algorithms (Kamalkhani, 2021). In addition to highlighting theoretical elements, Al-Khawarizmi's work placed strong emphasis on real-world applications related to everyday life, such as land surveying, trade, and inheritance calculations. In the twelfth century, his writings were translated into Latin, allowing his algebraic ideas to spread throughout Europe and become an important foundation for the advancement of contemporary mathematics. The term *al-jabar* that he introduced later evolved into the word "algebra" in English. The influence of Al-Khawarizmi's thinking did not stop in the realm of theory, but also inspired the application of algebraic principles in the fields of astronomy, architecture, and physics, which ultimately became one of the important triggers for the scientific revolution in Europe (Nurhuda, 2022).

Other Muslim mathematicians such as Omar Khayyam, Abu al-Wafa' al-Buzjani, and Al-Kashi also made significant contributions to the development of mathematics through approaches that integrated arithmetic and algebra (Roshdi Rashed, 1994). Omar Khayyam is known for his efforts in classifying and solving cubic equations using innovative geometric methods, which demonstrated an important transition from rhetorical algebra toward more systematic formulations. Meanwhile, Abu al-Wafa' al-Buzjani added an essential foundation to trigonometry through the compilation of more accurate sine tables and the formulation of trigonometric identities that later became references in astronomical calculations. As for Al-Kashi, he demonstrated remarkable precision in numerical computation and refined decimal approximation methods, including achievements in determining the value of π with a level of accuracy not previously attained in his era, thereby strengthening the connection between computational arithmetic and practical algebra within the Islamic mathematical tradition. Furthermore, Muslim scholars such as Nasir al-Din al-Tusi and Al-Biruni created spherical geometry

and trigonometry, which were used for maritime navigation and to determine the orientation of the qibla (Erzad & Suciati, 2018).

This study supports Tracy's findings that the integration of religion and science promotes the advancement of applied mathematics in Islamic architecture, such as the geometric symmetry designs in the Umayyad Mosque and the Taj Mahal (Tracy, 2020). Thus, this achievement shows that Muslim scientists did not merely preserve the Greek legacy, but transformed the mathematical paradigm into a more abstract, deductive, and applicable one, which greatly influenced the evolution of Western science.

Islamic Contribution to Medicine: Clinical Practice and Pharmacopoeia

The Islamic education system has successfully produced a number of important medical works that greatly influenced the advancement of science in the West (Hermawansyah, 2024). Ibn Sina (Avicenna) became famous in the field of Islamic medicine thanks to his important work *Al-Qanun fi al-Tibb* (The Canon of Medicine), which for many years was the main medical textbook in European universities. Ibn Sina successfully combined his own scientific discoveries with Greek medical knowledge, including the theories of Galen and Hippocrates. He popularized the use of standardized herbal medicine, the idea of symptom-based diagnosis, and the basics of clinical trials. His views on human anatomy and blood circulation also enriched Western medicine. Furthermore, experience-based learning in teaching hospitals (*bimaristan*) was prioritized in the Islamic medical school system. This ultimately became the foundation for the creation of the contemporary clinical education model in the West.

Scientists such as Ibn Sina (Avicenna), Al-Razi (Rhazes), and Al-Zahrawi (Abulcasis) revolutionized medical practice around the world. Ibn Sina's monumental work *Al-Qanun fi al-Tibb* became a medical reference in European universities until the seventeenth century, while Al-Razi's *Kitab al-Hawi* combined theory with clinical observation (Nasution, 2019). Al-Zahrawi pioneered modern surgery by creating more than 200 surgical instruments and systematically documenting medical procedures (Sofyan et al., 2021).

In the study of the history of Islamic medicine, Savage-Smith (2013) emphasizes that Al-Zahrawi not only developed surgical practices but also introduced procedural standards that became references in the European medical tradition (Smith & Lindberg, 2013). Another highly significant discovery came from Ibn al-Nafis, who corrected the views of Galen and

Avicenna regarding cardiac anatomy and proposed the theory of pulmonary circulation, a finding that long preceded William Harvey in the Western medical tradition. Savage-Smith (2013) identifies the contribution of Ibn al-Nafis as one of the greatest leaps in the history of physiology due to his observation-based approach and rational argumentation. In addition, Ibn al-Haytham also made important contributions through optical studies and experimental methodology that influenced the development of ophthalmology and subsequent medical research. Savage-Smith (2013) highlights that Ibn al-Haytham's empirical approach became the foundation for the modern scientific method later adopted in Western medical research.

The Islamic approach to medicine is holistic, emphasizing balance between the physical, mental, and spiritual, in contrast to the mechanistic approach of medieval Europe. This connection between science and spirituality is a hallmark of Islamic epistemology, which views health as part of worship and the welfare of the people (Erzad & Suciati, 2018).

Islamic Contribution to Chemistry: Experimentation and Applications

Islamic education played an important role in the subject of chemistry, particularly thanks to the work of Al-Razi (Rhazes), who is considered a pioneer in the use of scientific methods in this discipline (Putri, 2023). Al-Razi developed a systematic experimental approach using methods such as distillation, crystallization, and evaporation through books such as *Kitab al-Asrar* and *Al-Hawi*. These methods later became the foundation for the advancement of modern chemistry. He also succeeded in discovering a number of important substances, such as ethanol, sulfuric acid, and various metals with a variety of uses in industry and medicine. One of the significant intellectual legacies that contributed to the emergence of the Renaissance and the Scientific Revolution was the Islamic educational tradition, which promoted values such as careful observation, documentation of experimental findings, and scientific verification. These values also encouraged Western scientists to develop a more methodical scientific approach.

The field of chemistry in Islam flourished thanks to Jabir ibn Hayyan (Geber), known as the Father of Modern Chemistry. He introduced the concepts of systematic experimentation, the use of laboratories, and the methods of distillation and sublimation for purifying substances (Tracy, 2020). Jabir was also the first scientist to distinguish between acids and bases and to write down laboratory procedures methodologically. Jabir is also considered

the first scientist to emphasize the importance of laboratories as controlled experimental spaces (Sofyan et al., 2021).

These findings show that Islamic chemistry was based on empirical observation and replication of results long before the birth of modern chemistry in Europe. This rigorous methodological foundation established by scholars like Jabir ibn Hayyan provided the experimental principles that would later become central to scientific inquiry globally. Research by Sofyan et al. (2021) confirms that Jabir's work was translated into Latin in the 12th century and inspired Western scientists such as Roger Bacon and Paracelsus (Sofyan et al., 2021).

Integration of Islamic Values in Science

In Islam, knowledge is never separated from religious teachings. The concept of integrating Islamic values into science emphasizes that worldly knowledge and religious knowledge are complementary to one another. Islam views knowledge as part of faith and a means to know and draw closer to Allah SWT. The Qur'an repeatedly encourages humans to think, research, and reflect on Allah's creations as signs of His greatness. Therefore, seeking knowledge is not merely an effort to fulfill one's needs in life or career, but also a form of devotion and worship to God. Knowledge in Islam must grow on the foundation of monotheism, morality, and the benefit of humanity.

Philosophically, the integration between Islam and science is based on three main pillars: *tawhid, khilafah*, and *akhlak*. First, the principle of *tawhid* affirms that all knowledge comes from Allah as the owner and giver of knowledge. Nature and its laws are manifestations of Divine will and wisdom. Therefore, the scientific activities of a Muslim are essentially a process of reading the signs of God in the universe. Second, the principle of *khilafah* places humans as Allah's representatives on earth with the responsibility to preserve and manage resources wisely. Science becomes an instrument to carry out this mandate, not a means of exploitation. Third, the principle of *akhlak* serves as an ethical guideline so that science is used responsibly and honestly. Values such as scientific integrity, social empathy, and concern for human welfare are the foundations of scientific activity.

This concept rejects secularism, which separates religion from science. In modern Western tradition, science is often considered value-free, whereas in Islam, science is always linked to moral and spiritual goals. Seyyed Hossein Nasr argues that the modern humanitarian crisis and ecological damage are

the result of the disconnect between science and spirituality (Dharma, 2024). Islam offers a solution by integrating rationality and spirituality so that scientific development does not neglect human values. Thus, science must play a role in upholding social justice, maintaining the balance of nature, and strengthening human faith in the Creator.

The implementation of Islamic values in science is evident in the education and scientific research systems in the Islamic world. Education should prioritize moral and spiritual development in addition to mastery of cognitive skills and reasoning. Muslim scientists need to be aware that every piece of research has ethical and social responsibilities. In medicine, for example, research must respect human dignity and avoid harmful actions without justifiable reasons. In economics, the application of sharia principles is directed at creating social justice and mutual prosperity. Similarly, in the fields of technology and the environment, Islamic values serve as guidelines so that progress does not cause damage to Allah's creation.

Furthermore, this idea of integration has given rise to various thoughts from contemporary Muslim scholars. Some scholars advocate a full-scale Islamization (or integration) of knowledge reconstructing modern disciplines so their epistemological foundations and ethical aims align with Islamic worldview and values, rather than merely appending religious content to secular curricula. This approach associated with thinkers such as Ismail Raji al-Faruqi introduced the concept of Islamization of knowledge, which aims to restore the orientation of science to Islamic values so that science can develop in a civilized manner (Al-Arifi, 2023). This idea was expanded upon by Syed Naquib al-Attas, who emphasized the concept of ta'dib or moral education as the core of the scientific process (Utami, 2023). This approach aligns with the analysis of Azmi and Nadia (2022), who argue that integration is not merely the addition of religious content but a reformulation of the foundational values and epistemic orientation of knowledge itself (Fakhruddin Azmi, 2022). Meanwhile, contextual models of integration are developed through research in science education, such as those by Schreiber (2024), which demonstrate that Islamic values can be internalized into curricula and teaching practices without compromising the methodological rigor of modern science (Schreiber & Wagner, 2024).

In addition to epistemological and pedagogical approaches, a number of studies also highlight the historical and structural aspects of scientific development in the Muslim world. Mehfooz and Syed (2020) comprehensively

map the various factors that have contributed to the scientific and technological lag in Muslim societies from the impacts of colonialism and weak national policies to limited research investment and offer recommendations such as strengthening research infrastructure and improving scientific governance (Mehfooz, 2020). Their findings align with the Islamic Development Bank (2020) report, which emphasizes the urgency of science policy reform, enhanced international collaboration, and increased research capacity among member states (Islamic Development Bank, 2019). Recent analyses of R&D spending in the GCC region (Benlaria et al., 2023) further reinforce the argument that research investment without proper management strategies contributes to weak scientific output (Benlaria et al., 2023).

Mehfooz and Syed (2020) elaborate on this historical diagnosis and propose practical steps, including strengthening research infrastructure, expanding international collaboration, and reforming science policies capable of bridging the roles of religious institutions with national development needs (Mehfooz, 2020). In addition, the literature reflects methodological and normative debates: to what extent integration should be pursued (whether reconstructive or incorporative), which Islamic sources ought to serve as the foundation for scientific ethics, and how its success should be measured—whether through academic output, social impact, or moral formation.

These diverse discourses have produced a range of concrete proposals, from the development of textbooks and integrated curriculum models to national-level science governance strategies grounded in Islamic ethical principles. Overall, this intellectual movement suggests that "integration" is not a single, uniform program but rather a plural, dynamic, and contested discursive field with both theoretical and practical dimensions. Thus, the integration of Islamic values is not merely adding religious arguments to scientific theory, but building an epistemological framework that unites reason and revelation in understanding reality.

The application of this principle gave rise to Muslim scientists who were not only intellectually intelligent, but also moral, spiritual, and socially responsible. They did not stop at empirical truth, but sought moral and transcendental truth. History proves that figures such as Al-Biruni, Ibn Sina, Al-Khwarizmi, and Jabir ibn Hayyan were able to develop modern science without abandoning the Islamic values that were the foundation of their lives. For them, science was not merely an academic achievement, but also a means of worship and devotion.

Therefore, the integration of Islamic values in science is the main foundation for building an Islamic civilization that balances technological progress and spirituality. Science should not be free from values, but should side with humanity and divinity. This concept shapes the perfect human being (*insan kamil*)—a person who is knowledgeable, faithful, and noble in character. In the current global context, this approach is highly relevant for creating a just and sustainable civilization, where science is used as a means to glorify life, not to destroy it.

The scientific paradigm of Islam is monotheistic, viewing all branches of science as a means to understand the greatness of God. Consequently, scientific pursuits are often guided by ethical frameworks derived from faith, ensuring that knowledge benefits humanity without causing harm. Therefore, the orientation of research is not only on technological advancement, but also on the welfare and balance of human life (Erzad & Suciati, 2018).

The findings of this study indicate that Islamic civilization significantly advanced global science and technology, particularly in the fields of chemistry, astronomy, mathematics, and medicine. Based on literature reviews and historical evidence, Muslim scientists did not merely pass on Greek and Persian knowledge, but actively developed new methods based on experimentation and scientific observation (Kamalkhani, 2021).

These findings are in line with the previously formulated research objectives, namely to describe the substantive contribution of Islamic civilization to the development of world science. From the results of the analysis, it appears that the Islamic scientific paradigm is rooted in the synthesis of reason and revelation (*aql* and *naql*), which places scientific activity as an integral part of worship and an expression of the search for divine truth.

Methodologically, these results confirm that the Islamic scientific tradition fostered the principles of empirical observation and logical reasoning, two main pillars of the modern scientific method. This conclusion is in line with the findings of Sofyan et al. (2021), which show that Muslim scientists had built laboratories, observatories, and systematic analysis systems long before the emergence of the Scientific Revolution in the West (Sofyan et al., 2021).

However, there are differences in interpretation among historians regarding the level of originality of Muslim scientists' innovations. Some Western studies consider them to be successors to the classical Greek tradition. In contrast, Muslim scholars emphasize the epistemological and methodological innovations that emerged from the Islamic context itself.

The limitations of these findings lie in the scarcity of primary sources, as most classical scientific manuscripts have not been fully translated and are still stored in ancient Islamic libraries. Therefore, future research should focus on philological studies and the digitization of Islamic scientific manuscripts in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the contributions of Muslim scientists to the history of world science as summarized in table 1.

Table 1. Major Contributions of Muslim Scholars to Science and Technology

Discipline	Prominent Scholar	Main Contributions	Impact on Modern Science
Astronomy	Al-Battani, Ibn al-Shatir, Al-Biruni, Ulugh Beg, Al-Tusi	Astronomical tables, observatory models	Foundation for celestial mechanics
Mathematics	Al-Khawarizm Omar Khayyam, Abu al-Wafa' al-Buzjani, Al-Kashi	Al-gebra, algorithms	Basis for computational systems
Medicine	Ibnu Sina, Al-Razi, Al-Zahrawi, Ibn al-Nafis, Ibn al-Haytam	Clinical methods, hospitals	Standardization of medical science
Chemistry	Al-Razi, Jabir Ibn Hayyan	Laboratory methodology, distillation	Foundation for experimental chemistry

Conclusion

This study aims to examine the role of Islamic civilization in advancing global science and technology, while also exploring the contributions of Muslim scientists in establishing the foundations of the modern scientific paradigm based on Islamic spiritual values and rationality. Based on the results of literature reviews and historical analyses that have been conducted, it can be concluded that Islam not only played a role as an intermediary in transmitting Greek knowledge to the West, but also as a pioneer in giving birth to systematic, rational, and empirical scientific methods. Thus, Islamic civilization has provided the epistemological and ethical foundations for the birth of modern science.

Substantively, the results of the study show that science in the Islamic view is integral, combining revelation (*naqli*) and reason (*'aqli*) as the two main

sources of knowledge. Muslim scientists place scientific activity as a form of worship and a means of getting closer to Allah SWT. This Islamic scientific paradigm rejects the dichotomy between religion and science, and instead emphasizes *tawhid* as an epistemological foundation that directs science towards *maslahah* (benefit) and *al-haqq* (divine truth). This approach distinguishes Islamic science from modern secular science, which tends to separate spiritual values from the scientific process.

The contributions of Islamic civilization were multidimensional, forming the foundation of modern science. In astronomy, scholars like Al-Battani and Al-Tusi created accurate models of celestial motion through mathematical calculations, later inspiring the heliocentric theory. Mathematics was profoundly enriched by Al-Khwarizmi, who introduced the concept of *al-jabr* (algebra) and the decimal number system, establishing modern computational logic. In medicine, the works of Ibn Sina (*Al-Qanun fi al-Tibb*) and Al-Razi pioneered symptom-based diagnosis, clinical trials, and medical ethical standards, complemented by the surgical innovations of Al-Zahrawi. Chemistry, initiated by Jabir ibn Hayyan, established empirical methods, documentation, and techniques like distillation, which became the basis of modern chemistry in Europe.

Reflection on the results of this study shows that Islamic epistemology has a holistic and benefit-oriented character, in contrast to the Western positivistic approach, which tends to be mechanistic and value-free. The Islamic scientific tradition has established a system of education, research, and observation that emphasizes ethics, scientific integrity, and social responsibility. This legacy remains relevant today in addressing humanitarian crises, moral degradation, and ecological damage caused by technological developments that are not grounded in spiritual values.

From an academic contribution perspective, this research expands the study of Islamic science historiography with an interdisciplinary and integrative approach, highlighting the relationship between Islamic epistemology, scientific methodology, and the ethical dimensions of science. The novelty of this study is that Islam forms a paradigm of science based on *tawhid* (monotheism) that is capable of uniting faith, reason, and empiricism within a single scientific framework. This paradigm can serve as a conceptual alternative in constructing a contemporary model of science that is ethical, sustainable, and equitable.

References

Abidin, A. M., Haddade, H., & Muzakkir. (2024). Transformation of the Western education system through Islamic contributions: A historical analysis. *Al-Iltizam: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam, 9*(1), 150–161. https://doi.org/10.33477/alt.v9i1.7642

Al Arifi, N. (2023). Konsep islamisasi ilmu Ismail Raji al-Faruqi dan relevansinya dengan sistem pendidikan nasional. *Azkiya: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam dan Humaniora, 3*(2), 45–58. https://doi.org/10.53640/689b0d13

Al-Daffa, A. A. (2020). *The Muslim contribution to mathematics* (1st ed.). Routledge.

Alinata, R., Dinillah, S., & Sari, W. A., Y. K. P. (2024). Integrasi sains dalam perspektif Islam: Menjelajahi hubungan antara keilmuan dan kehidupan beragama. *El-Fata: Journal of Sharia Economics and Islamic Education, 3*(1), 37–50.

Azmi, F. M. N. (2022). Islamization of knowledge. *PENDALAS: Jurnal Penelitian Tindakan Kelas dan Pengabdian Masyarakat, 2*(1), 19–30. https://doi.org/10.47006/pendalas.v2i1.93

Azra, A. (2012). *Pendidikan Islam: Tradisi dan modernisasi di tengah tantangan Milenium III*. Kencana Prenada Media Group.

Benlaria, H., Almawishir, N. F. S., Saadaoui, S., Mohammed, S. M., Abdulrahman, B. M. A., & I. A. E. E. (2023). The moderating role of research and development (R&D) support in the relationship between entrepreneurship and per capita output: A study on the GCC countries. *Economies, 11*, 162. https://doi.org/10.3390/economies11070162

Berliana, C. I., & Zulfikar. (2024). Transformasi pendidikan di era Umayyah: Antara kebijakan dan rekonstruksi di masa sekarang. *Al-Ghazali, 7*(1), 77–95.

Dahlan, S. S., & Zulfikar. (2024). Fenomena Perang Salib, Mongol, dan Reconquista terhadap perkembangan peradaban Islam. *Gudang Jurnal Multidisiplin Ilmu, 2*(1), 128–134. https://doi.org/10.59435/gjmi.v2i1.216

Dallal, A. S. (2010). *Islam, science, and the challenge of history*. Yale University Press. https://doi.org/10.12987/9780300159141

Dharma, A. P., & Manufa, S. (2024). Seyyed Hossein Nasr: Kritik Islam atas sekularism lingkungan. *El-Faqih: Jurnal Pemikiran dan Hukum Islam, 10*(1), 53–76. https://doi.org/10.58401/faqih.v10i1.1308

Erzad, A. M., & Suciati, N. (2018). Peran ilmuwan Muslim dalam pengembangan ilmu pengetahuan di dunia Barat. *Jurnal Studi Keislaman, 6*(2), 123–137.

Gutas, D. (1998). *Greek thought, Arabic culture: The Graeco-Arabic translation movement in Baghdad and early 'Abbasid society*. Routledge.

Hermawansyah, & Bahaking Rama, M. Y. (2024). Islam dan ilmu pengetahuan: Rekognisi pendidikan Islam di Barat Abad Klasik. *Fitrah: Jurnal Studi Pendidikan, 15*(1), 65–77. https://doi.org/10.47625/fitrah.v15i1.621

Holmyard, E. J. (1931). *Makers of Chemistry*. Clarendon Press.

Huff, T. E. (1993). *The rise of early modern science: Islam, China, and the West*. University Press.

Islamic Development Bank. (2019). *Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Policy for the IsDB*.

Kamalkhani, A. (2021). *Peradaban Islam dan ilmu pengetahuan modern*. UIN Jakarta Press.

Kennedy, E. S. (1983). Astronomy in the Islamic world. *Isis, 74*(3), 367–376.

Kosasih, A., & Muhammad Fahmi, R. F. (2024). Averroeisme: Ajaran Ibnu Rusyd yang dipahami dunia Barat dan pengaruhnya terhadap Renaissance. *Jazirah: Jurnal Peradaban dan Kebudayaan, 5*(1), 40–48. https://doi.org/10.51190/jazirah.v5i01.142

Mehfooz, A. S. S. (2020). The development of science and technology in the Muslim world: Past and present issues with possible resolutions. *Islamic Studies, 59*(2), 225–238.

Mubadillah, R. (2024). Gerakan perubahan (Renaissance) oleh Dinasti Umayyah II (Islam di Andalusia) terhadap berkembangnya intelektual dan kebudayaan di Eropa. *Al Mikraj: Jurnal Studi Islam dan Humaniora, 5*(1), 1237–1246.

Mujani, W. K. & I. A. I. (2012). Contribution of Muslim scholars to astronomy

in the medieval century of Andalusia. *Advances in Natural and Applied Sciences, 6*(8), 1366–1369Nasr, S. H. (1968). *Science and civilization in Islam*. Harvard University Press.

Nasution, A. (2019). Metode pengukuran jari-jari Bumi oleh al-Biruni dan akurasinya dalam konteks modern. *Jurnal Sains dan Peradaban Islam, 7*(2), 112–121.

Nasution, S. (2021). Epistemologi Islam dan implikasinya terhadap sains modern. *Jurnal Filsafat dan Pemikiran Islam, 12*(3), 88–102.

Nurhuda, A. (2022). Peran dan kontribusi Islam dalam dunia ilmu pengetahuan. *Jurnal Pemikiran Islam, 2*(2), 222.

Pormann, P. E., & Savage-Smith, E. (2007). *Medieval Islamic medicine*. University Press.

Putri, J. (2023). Kemajuan peradaban Islam di era Society 5.0. *Jurnal Wahana Karya Ilmiah Pendidikan, 7*(1), 42–54. https://doi.org/10.35706/wkip.v7i01.9241

Rashed, R. (1994). *The development of Arabic mathematics: Between arithmetic and algebra* (BSPS vol. 156). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-017-3274-1

Sairah, R. A. (2023). Warisan filsafat Islam di Kota Fez dan sumbangsihnya bagi masyarakat Indonesia. *Rausyan Fikr: Jurnal Ilmu Studi Ushuluddin dan Filsafat, 19*(1), 1–36. https://doi.org/10.24239/rsy.v19i1.1670

Saliba, G. (1995). *A history of Arabic astronomy: Planetary theories during the Golden Age of Islam*. NYU Press.

Saliba, G. (2007). *Islamic science and the making of the European Renaissance*. MIT Press. https://doi.org/10.7551/mitpress/3981.001.0001

Schreiber, A., Wagner, Y., & Becker, L. (2024). Integrating Islamic values in science education: A case study in Indonesian Islamic schools. *World Journal of Islamic Learning and Teaching, 1*(1), 18–22. https://doi.

org/10.61132/wjilt.v1i1.99

Shofa, S. Z., Nurhawa, F. A., Ubaidillah, M., Arzaki, A. A., & Faisol, F. (2025). Kontribusi Islam terhadap ilmu pengetahuan: Dari tradisi ke peradaban global. *Maliki Interdisciplinary Journal, 3*(6), 1406–1415.

Shuriye, A. O. (2011). Reassessment of Islamic astronomical sciences. *Australian Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences, 5*(7), 99–105.

Sihaloho, W. (2023). Warisan ilmiah Muslim dan Renaisans Eropa. *Jurnal Ushuluddin, 22*(1), 1–20. https://doi.org/10.24239/rsy.v19i1.1670

Siregar, M., & Lubis, H. (2020). Integrasi ilmu dan agama dalam perspektif Islam: Telaah terhadap sejarah sains Islam. *Jurnal Ilmiah Al-Fikrah, 8*(2), 55–70.

Smith, E. S., Lindberg, D. C., & Shank, M. H. (2013). Medicine in Medieval Islam. In *The Cambridge History of Science*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CHO9780511974007.007

Soelaiman, D. A. (2019). *Filsafat ilmu pengetahuan: Perspektif Barat dan Islam* (R. S. Putra, Ed.; Cetakan 1). Bandar Publishing.

Sofyan, A., Rahmawati, L., & Yusuf, M. (2021). Islamic knowledge and scientific rationality: A re-integration approach. *International Journal of Islamic Thought, 19*(1), 33–47.

Sofyan, M., & Supriyadi, R. (2022). Kontribusi peradaban Islam dalam pengembangan ilmu pengetahuan dan teknologi. *Jurnal Tarbawi, 9*(1), 45–58.

Susanto, E. (2020). Sejarah pendidikan Islam: Kontribusi Islam dalam mengembangkan sains dan teknologi. *At-Turots: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam, 2*(1), 11–22. https://doi.org/10.51468/jpi.v2i1.23

Tracy, D. (2020). From Al-Tusi to Copernicus: Transmission of astronomical ideas in the late medieval world. *Journal of the History of Astronomy, 51*(2), 145–168.

Utami, Y. (2023). Pendidikan konsep ta'dib sebagai upaya pembentukan karakter Muslim menjadi saintis beradab. *Pedagogy: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam, 2*(1), 12–25. https://doi.org/10.63889/pedagogy.v11i2.86

DOI: 10.18860/eh.v27i2.36314

THE DIALECTICS OF WAYANG IN THE WALI SONGO'S DA'WAH: QUR'AN AND HADITH PERSPECTIVE

Muhammad Kudhori, Sri Purwaningsih, Karina Tri Maulidina, Mayu Maulida Salama
Universitas Islam Negeri Walisongo Semarang, Indonesia
Email: kudhori@walisongo.ac.id

Received: August 29, 2025
Revised: October 25, 2025
Accepted: November 5, 2025

Abstract

After Ustadz Khalid Basalamah prohibited Wayang performances in one of his lectures, public debate intensified regarding their legal status in Islamic law. Although discussions on the legality of Wayang are not new and date back to the Wali Songo era, previous studies have rarely examined the specific jurisprudential reasoning that enabled the Wali Songo to employ Wayang as a medium of da'wah within the Syafi'i framework. This study fills that gap by analyzing how the Wali Songo justified Wayang performance through the permissive opinion of al-Qasim ibn Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr, who allowed two-dimensional depictions of animate beings. However, over time, scholars negotiated this dialectic, enabling Wayang to be utilized as an effective medium of da'wah by the Wali Songo. This article investigates how Wali Songo justified the use of Wayang as a da'wah medium despite the prohibitive stance of the Syafi'i school. This study employs a qualitative library-research approach, using content analysis and descriptive-analytical methods. Evidence indicates that the Wali Songo likely adopted the opinion of al-Qasim ibn Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr, who allowed two-dimensional depictions of animate beings based on several prophetic traditions. Their position reflects a non-rigid, moderate approach that prioritizes broader public benefit (maslahah) when addressing communal issues, particularly in formulating effective da'wah strategies. These findings suggest that modern Islamic educators, artists, and preachers can draw

upon the Wali Songo's method as a model for integrating cultural media with Islamic ethics—emphasizing moderation, creativity, and contextual wisdom in delivering religious messages. Future research should undertake comparative jurisprudence by examining the arguments of al-Qasim ibn Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr alongside other Sunni legal schools to further justify the Wali Songo's reasoning. Such studies may also explore the application of maslahah in the use of contemporary media as tools for Islamic da'wah.

Setelah Ustadz Khalid Basalamah melarang pertunjukan Wayang dalam salah satu ceramahnya, perdebatan publik semakin menguat mengenai status hukumnya dalam pandangan syariat Islam. Meskipun diskusi tentang legalitas Wayang bukanlah hal baru dan telah muncul sejak masa Wali Songo, penelitian-penelitian sebelumnya jarang menelaah secara spesifik dasar pertimbangan fikih yang memungkinkan Wali Songo menggunakan Wayang sebagai media dakwah dalam kerangka mazhab Syafi'i. Penelitian ini mengisi kesenjangan tersebut dengan menganalisis bagaimana Wali Songo membenarkan penggunaan Wayang melalui pandangan permisif al-Qasim ibn Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr, yang memperbolehkan penggambaran makhluk hidup dalam bentuk dua dimensi. Seiring waktu, para ulama menegosiasikan dialektika ini, sehingga Wayang dapat dimanfaatkan secara efektif sebagai sarana dakwah oleh Wali Songo. Artikel ini menelusuri bagaimana Wali Songo membenarkan penggunaan Wayang sebagai media dakwah meskipun terdapat larangan ketat dalam mazhab Syafi'i. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif berbasis kepustakaan dengan metode analisis isi dan deskriptif-analitis. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa Wali Songo kemungkinan besar mengadopsi pendapat al-Qasim ibn Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr yang memperbolehkan gambar dua dimensi makhluk hidup berdasarkan beberapa hadis Nabi. Pendekatan mereka mencerminkan sikap moderat dan tidak kaku yang mengutamakan kemaslahatan umum (maslahah) dalam menyelesaikan persoalan keagamaan, khususnya dalam merumuskan strategi dakwah yang efektif. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa para pendidik, seniman, dan dai Muslim modern dapat meneladani metode Wali Songo sebagai model integrasi antara media budaya dan etika Islam—dengan menekankan moderasi, kreativitas, dan kearifan kontekstual dalam menyampaikan pesan keagamaan. Penelitian selanjutnya disarankan melakukan kajian perbandingan hukum Islam dengan menelaah argumen al-Qasim ibn Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr bersama mazhab-mazhab Sunni lainnya untuk memperkuat justifikasi rasional Wali Songo. Kajian lanjutan juga dapat mengeksplorasi penerapan prinsip maslahah dalam penggunaan media kontemporer sebagai sarana dakwah Islam.

Keywords: *da'wah media, maslahah, mazhab Syafi'i, Wali Songo, Wayang*

Introduction

The spread of Islam in the Nusantara (Indonesian archipelago) cannot be separated from the role of the Wali Songo, who significantly contributed to disseminating Islam throughout Java. Their efforts enabled the peaceful acceptance of Islam among local communities that had long adhered to earlier religious traditions. Historical records indicate that Islam entered the archipelago as early as the 7th century CE through Arab traders. According to Wheatley, as cited by Agus Sunyoto, these traders had established extensive commercial networks with the region long before the arrival of Islam and were known to have visited Kalingga during the reign of Rani Simha in the 7th century CE (Sunyoto, 2017). Despite this early contact, Islam did not spread widely during that period. It was only in the 15th century, through the efforts of the Wali Songo and their cultural approach to preaching, that Islam achieved widespread acceptance in the Nusantara. This success was reinforced by the emphasis of early Muslim preachers on Islamic education, which facilitated the mass conversion of local communities (Fahmi & Muqowim, 2021).

Among the cultural media used by the Wali Songo in their missionary activities was Wayang. The legal status of Wayang has recently become a topic of public debate, especially after Ustadz Khalid Basalamah issued a prohibition against its use in one of his sermons. Wilda Fizriyani notes that this prohibition served as an instructive speech act, urging his followers to avoid Wayang (Fizriyani, 2022). Historically, two major theories have developed regarding the origins of Wayang in the archipelago, particularly in Java.

The first theory argues that Wayang predates the arrival of Hindu-Buddhist influences and represents an indigenous tradition practised by ancestral communities. In this view, Wayang originally functioned as a ritual medium for communicating with ancestral spirits (Rohman et al., n.d.). When Hindu-Buddhism spread into Java, Wayang became an instrument for transmitting religious narratives drawn from the Mahabharata and Ramayana. Later, when Islam entered Java, the Wali Songo adopted Wayang as a means of communicating Islamic teachings to Javanese audiences already familiar with this cultural tradition.

The second theory posits that Wayang originated from India and was introduced by Hindu-Buddhist missionaries who arrived in the Nusantara (Bakhri et al., 2019). Proponents of this perspective note that Wayang stories are derived from the Hindu epics, suggesting an external cultural origin. Additional historical accounts also record the existence of Wayang during

the reign of Prabu Jayabaya of the Kediri Kingdom (1135–1157 CE), where Wayang Beber—performances using scrolls of human-like illustrations—was already in use (Kardiyanto, 2018).

As Wayang became a medium for Islamic preaching, differing opinions emerged among the Wali Songo regarding its legality due to its figurative depictions of humans or statues. Islamic teachings, particularly within the Shafi'i school, generally prohibit the creation of images of animate beings. Several narratives describe disagreements among the Wali Songo on this issue. According to one account, Sunan Ampel rejected the use of cultural forms, including Wayang, fearing that religious teachings would later be mixed with local customs. However, Sunan Kalijaga, who frequently integrated cultural elements into his preaching, argued that Islamic teachings would not be diluted; rather, they would provide moral and spiritual substance to local cultural expressions (Ahmad, 2023).

A second version, conveyed by KH. Baha'uddin Nursalim (Gus Baha'), states that Sunan Kalijaga initially used Wayang Thengul, a form of wooden puppet tradition, in his da'wah activities. Because he was considered less knowledgeable in jurisprudence than other members of the Wali Songo, he may have been unaware of the prohibition against statues. Sunan Giri, known for his expertise in Islamic law, objected to this practice. The disagreement was eventually mediated by Sunan Kudus, who proposed transforming the three-dimensional puppets into flat figures, which would remove their resemblance to statues (Santri Gayeng, 2021).

A third account explains that Wayang originally consisted of paper sheets painted with human figures. Sunan Giri opposed this on the basis of prophetic traditions prohibiting the drawing of animate beings. To address this concern, Sunan Kalijaga proposed altering the visual form of Wayang so that it no longer resembled humans. He introduced elongated limbs, exaggerated facial features, and stylized forms inspired by both human and animal characteristics. This redesign ultimately received the approval of the Wali Songo and became the basis of the contemporary shadow puppet (*wayang kulit*) form (Kardiyanto, 2018).

Based on the narratives presented, the community eventually developed the view that Sunan Kalijaga was the figure responsible for modifying the form of Wayang from earlier representations of human figures or statues into the shape recognized today. Contemporary Wayang, made from leather, is characterized by stylized features such as elongated arms, extremely narrow

waists, long noses, and facial forms that resemble animals. However, this form is not an original creation of Sunan Kalijaga; rather, these features largely follow artistic conventions found in Hindu and Buddhist sacred texts (Laki, 2021).

The Wali Songo were Islamic missionaries who spread the Shafi'i school of thought in Indonesia (Hasib, 2015; Sarwat, 2014); Hafizd et al., 2021). Within the Shafii legal tradition, the prohibition on creating images extends not only to depictions of humans and animals but also to all beings believed to possess a soul, including fictional creatures such as winged horses (Ibn HajarAl-Haytami, n.d.; Al-Ramli, n.d.; Al-Haytami, 1987). Creatures of this sort are still not allowed to be depicted according to the Shafi'i school, the school of jurisprudence (*Fiqh)*, followed by the Wali Songo. Scholars of the Shafi'i school, like al-Nawawi (631-676 H.) and Ibn Hajar al-Haytami (909-974 H.), were particularly strict in their stance on visual arts depicting living beings. Al-Nawawi even outright prohibited visual arts depicting living beings, whether three-dimensional (sculpture) or two-dimensional like paintings (Yahya bin Syaraf Al-Nawawi, n.d.; Al-Haytami, 1987). In this regard, flat-shaped wayang, including those representing abstract beings that do not exist in the real world but possess heads, two hands, a body, and two legs, are also included as creatures indicating signs of being alive.

This prohibition is not unique to the Shafi'i school; other Islamic legal schools also regulate the depiction of living beings. In recent times, Salafi groups—affiliated jurisprudentially with the Hanbali school—have become especially active in campaigning against visual representations. In Indonesia, Salafi preachers such as Khalid Basalamah and Syafiq Riza Basalamah have issued fatwas declaring Wayang and other visual arts forbidden. In January 2017, banners prohibiting Wayang performances appeared in Jakarta, attributed to the Alliance of Muslim Communities of Central Jakarta, asserting that Wayang contradicts Islamic teachings. These campaigns sparked public concern and controversy. Conversely, some classical scholars, including Abu 'Ali al-Farisi and al-Qarafi, adopted more accommodating positions toward visual art, whether two- or three-dimensional.

This article therefore aims to explore the use of Wayang by the Wali Songo—particularly Sunan Kalijaga—as a tool of Islamic propagation, despite their adherence, as well as that of the Demak Sultanate, to the Shafi'i school, which maintains a strict stance regarding images of animate beings. This research is significant because it clarifies the legal dialectics surrounding Wayang from the perspectives of the Qur'an and Hadith, in which scholarly opinions differ.

Understanding this debate may help society adopt a more balanced view of Wayang as both a medium for religious propagation and education, as well as a longstanding cultural and artistic tradition.

Previous studies on Wayang have not specifically examined its legal dialectics. Anggoro (2018) explores the historical evolution of Wayang in Javanese society, from its origins in ancestor worship to its later use in Islamic propagation. Awalin (2021) analyzes Wayang as a synthesis of Hindu-Buddhist and Islamic elements, noting its transformation from a ritual medium into a form of entertainment. Laki (2021) investigates societal narratives attributing the modification of Wayang to Sunan Kalijaga, although evidence indicates that its current form aligns with pre-Islamic artistic rules rooted in Indian religious traditions.

Other studies focus on Wayang as a medium of preaching. Herlyana (2013) notes that although Wayang was initially influenced by Hinduism and Animism, the Wali Songo infused it with Islamic values, transforming it into a tool for religious instruction as well as entertainment. Masroer (2015) examines the spirituality embedded in Wayang among Javanese and Sundanese communities, showing how Islamic themes became integrated with cultural expressions. Maknun (2015) analyzes the textual elements of Wayang Banjar performances and their embedded religious messages. Sungaidi (2016) discusses the da'wah strategies of the Wali Songo through Wayang, emphasizing its ethical and moral teachings. Kardiyanto (2018) highlights the prophetic values conveyed through Wayang art, while Bakhri and Hidayatullah (2019) describe the transformation of polytheistic elements—such as the Trimurti—into monotheistic teachings by the Wali Songo. Fadli (2019) explores Wayang as a creative medium for promoting tolerance in diverse Javanese communities.

Studies also address Wayang as an educational medium reflecting philosophical and moral teachings. Marsaid (2016)demonstrates the monotheistic values embedded in Wayang performances by Sunan Kalijaga, which facilitated the acceptance of Islamic teachings expressed in the Javanese language. Meanwhile, Masykur and Soleh (2023) argue that Wayang is not inherently contradictory to Islamic law, as its primary function leans toward education. Setiawan (2020) highlights the ethical and philosophical values conveyed in Wayang, which encourage virtuous behavior and discourage wrongdoing.

Given this literature, the legal dialectics of Wayang as a preaching medium of the Wali Songo—from the perspectives of the Qur'an, Hadith, and the broader fiqh tradition—remain underexplored. This gap indicates the

need and significance for further scholarly investigation.

Method

This study adopts a qualitative research design using library-based data, including journal articles, books, dissertations, theses, and other relevant scholarly sources (Hadi, 1987). As noted by Bogdan and Taylor, qualitative research produces descriptive data that reflect meaning, understanding, and values. Its primary orientation lies in exploring the natural characteristics of the research object rather than engaging in numerical measurement, thereby emphasizing concepts, interpretations, and contextual attributes (Kaelan, 2010).

The primary data of this study consist of Qur'anic verses and Prophetic hadiths related to Wayang, particularly those addressing the legal status of visual representations of animate beings in both two-dimensional forms (drawings, paintings) and three-dimensional forms (sculptures). The secondary data comprise classical Shafi'i fiqh texts that discuss depictions of living beings, alongside scientific journal articles, books, research reports, and fatwas issued by scholars and disseminated through reputable publications, websites, and relevant digital platforms.

Two analytical approaches are employed: content analysis and descriptive-analytical interpretation. Content analysis is applied to identify and investigate Qur'anic verses and hadiths concerning visual representations of animate beings (Muhadjir, 1996). The descriptive-analytical method is subsequently used to describe, interpret, and contextualize the findings based on classical and contemporary scholarly viewpoints. This includes assessments from Shafi'i jurists and the historical practices of the Wali Songo, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the legal and cultural dialectics surrounding Wayang as a medium of Islamic propagation.

Finding and Discussion

Wayang in the Context of the Qur'an and Hadith

The Qur'an and the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad do not explicitly mention wayang, as this cultural tradition did not exist during the period of revelation nor in the prophetic era. However, both sources discuss visual art forms, including two-dimensional images (such as drawings and paintings) and three-dimensional figures (such as sculptures). For instance, the Qur'an narrates that the jinn worked for Prophet Sulaiman by constructing tall

buildings and sculptures, as recorded in Surah Saba' (34:13). These sculptures were reportedly made of glass, copper, and marble, and included depictions of earlier prophets, righteous individuals, as well as animal forms. Another Qur'anic reference to sculpting appears in Surah Ali 'Imran (3:49), which recounts how Prophet Isa shaped a bird from clay and, with Allah's permission, breathed life into it.

Based on these verses, several scholars permit the creation of three-dimensional visual representations of living beings. They argue that these Qur'anic accounts remain valid and are not abrogated by later prophetic prohibitions regarding images. Abu 'Ali al-Farisi (288–377 AH), for example, interprets the term *al-mushawwirun* in the hadith "*inna asyadda al-nasi 'adzaban 'inda Allah yawma al-qiyamah al-mushawwirun*" ("Indeed, the most severely punished on the Day of Resurrection are the image-makers") as referring specifically to the Mujassimah, a sect that attributed corporeality to Allah. Since depicting Allah as a physical body is a grave theological error, al-Farisi argues that the severe punishment mentioned in the hadith logically applies to this group, not to ordinary creators of two- or three-dimensional images (Wafi, 1968). Similarly, al-Qarafi (626–684 AH), a prominent Maliki scholar, also permits three-dimensional artistic representations of living beings (Al-Qarafi, 1995).

Conversely, other scholars argue that the previous allowances found in the Sharia of Prophet Sulaiman were abrogated by the teachings of Prophet Muhammad, which strongly prohibit the creation of images of living beings. They hold that the sculptures mentioned in Surah Saba' (34:13) were not depictions of humans, animals, or birds, but rather non-living objects such as trees, oceans, or natural scenery, making them permissible within the earlier context (Al-Shabuni, 1981).

Numerous hadiths explicitly condemn the creation of images of living beings, whether in two- or three-dimensional form. These narrations can be categorized into three primary themes. First, several hadiths describe the Prophet Muhammad's disapproval of images of living beings found on fabrics. 'A'isha narrated that when the Prophet returned from a journey and saw a curtain decorated with winged horses hanging in her home, he instructed her to remove it. In another narration, he ordered her to take down a curtain depicting birds because it reminded him of worldly matters. 'A'isha also reported that a cloth with images once covered her shelves, and when the Prophet prepared to pray facing it, he asked her to remove it. She subsequently repurposed the cloth into cushions (Al-Naysaburi, pp.158–159; Al-Bukhari, 1987). Similarly,

a narration from Anas recounts that the Prophet instructed ‘A’isha to remove a screen decorated with images because it distracted him during prayer.

Second, several hadiths state that angels do not enter a house containing images of living beings. These narrations—reported by Abu Thalhah, Salim from his father, ‘A’isha, Maymunah, and Abu Hurayrah—explain that angels refrain from entering homes where there are dogs, images, or statues (Kudhori, 2023). Therefore, scholars have generally interpreted these hadiths as a warning against the creation or possession of images that may lead to veneration or imitation of divine creation. However, many jurists distinguish between three-dimensional statues and two-dimensional illustrations, allowing the latter when used for educational, decorative, or da‘wah purposes, provided they do not promote shirk or indecency.

Third, other hadiths warn that image-makers (al-mushawwirun) will receive severe punishment on the Day of Judgment. Narrated by Ibn Mas‘ud, Ibn ‘Umar, ‘A’isha, Ibn ‘Abbas, Abu Hurayrah, and Abu Juhayfah, these hadiths state that creators of images will be commanded to give life to their creations but will be unable to do so. Their punishment is described as severe because their actions imitate Allah’s creation. The narration of Ibn ‘Abbas even reports that these individuals will enter Hell, where Allah will create counterparts to the images they produced, which will then torment them. In another narration, Abu Juhayfah states that the Prophet cursed the image-makers (Kudhori, 2023).

Reflecting on these narrations, al-Nawawi explains that scholars of the Shafi‘i school classify the drawing of living beings as haram, considering it a major sin due to the explicit textual threats. This prohibition applies to images on all mediums—including clothing, wall hangings, vessels, and currency—because they mimic Allah’s act of creation. However, images of non-living objects, such as trees or objects without souls, are permitted. Al-Nawawi further notes that if an image of a living being is displayed prominently, such as on clothing or wall hangings, its use is prohibited. In contrast, if images appear on items considered trivial or degrading—such as carpets that are stepped on or cushions—they may be tolerated.

Al-Nawawi does not differentiate between two- and three-dimensional depictions of living beings, asserting that both forms are equally prohibited. He relates this ruling to the Shafi‘i school and the majority of early Muslim scholars, including the Sahabah and Tabi‘in. While some early scholars restricted the prohibition to three-dimensional images with physical depth

(*shakhs*, i.e., statues), al-Nawawi rejects this view as *batil* (invalid), citing the Prophet's objection to the images on the cloth in 'A'isha's home as evidence that two-dimensional images are also forbidden (Al-Nawawi, 1392).

Walisongo and the Prohibition of the Shafi'i School on Wayang

As discussed earlier, the Shafi'i school is among the most stringent in prohibiting visual representations of living beings, whether in two-dimensional forms—including wayang—or in three-dimensional sculptures. This absolute prohibition is strongly advocated by prominent Shafi'i authorities such as al-Nawawi (631–676 H), Ibn Hajar al-Haytami (909–974 H), Shihab al-Din al-Ramli (d. 957 H), and other scholars of the school. The Walisongo, the renowned early Islamic preachers in the Nusantara, are widely recognized as adherents of Shafi'i jurisprudence.

Historical studies indicate that during the Demak Sultanate, Raden Patah (859–923 H/1455–1518 M), who reigned from 879–923 H/1475–1518 M, implemented Islamic laws derived from Shafi'i fiqh sources. These included Tuhfat al-Muhtaj by Ibn Hajar al-Haytami, al-Muharrar by al-Rafi'i (555–623 H), Taqrib by Abu Shuja' al-Asfahani (433–500 H), Kifayat al-Akhyar by Taqiyy al-Din al-Hisni (d. 829 H), Kanz al-Raghibin by al-Mahalli (791–864 H), Bidayat al-Hidayah by al-Ghazali (450–505 H), and the comparative fiqh work Rawdat al-'Ulama' by al-Zandawaisiti (d. 382 H) (Sarwat, 2014). Another record mentions that Raden Patah also compiled an Islamic legal text titled Jugul Muda, drawing heavily from Shafi'i works, such as al-Muharrar of al-Rafi'i, Taqrib of Abu Shuja', and Tuhfat al-Muhtaj of Ibn Hajar (Hafizd, 2021). This suggests that legal considerations regarding wayang would likely have been derived from Shafi'i legal sources.

Given the strict views of these Shafii authorities, a question arises: How did the Walisongo allow Sunan Kalijaga to use wayang kulit as a medium of da'wah, despite its depiction of living beings—albeit stylized and non-naturalistic in form?

The last book mentioned is a comparative fiqh work between the Hanafi and Shafii schools authored by a Hanafi scholar (Al-Zandawasayti, 2020).It is also recorded that during this period Raden Patah compiled an Islamic law manual titled Jugul Muda, which drew from Shafi'i fiqh works such as Al-Muharrar fi Fiqh al-Imam al-Shafi'i by al-Rafi i (555–623 H / 1160–1226 M), Taqrib (also known as Matn al-Ghayat wa al-Taqrib) by Abu Shuja' al-Asfahani (433–500 H), and Tuhfat al-Muhtaj by Ibn Hajar al-Haytami (909–974 H)

(Hafizd, 2021). This suggests that legal rulings concerning wayang were likely derived from Shafi'i sources.

As noted earlier, the Shafi'i works that served as the Walisongo's juridical references generally oppose visual depictions of living beings, whether two- or three-dimensional. This raises a central question: how did the Walisongo permit Sunan Kalijaga to use wayang kulit for preaching, when these shadow puppets portray living beings with heads, hands, and feet—albeit stylized and non-human-like forms?

Answering this question requires careful, contextualized analysis. Some researchers — for example Aron B. Laki — suggest that al-Nawawi regarded images of living beings, including wayang, as merely disliked (*makruh*), not strictly forbidden (haram), and thus the Walisongo tolerated their use (Laki, 2021). However, Laki's interpretation seems to be mistaken and lacks precision in understanding al-Nawawi's statements in his book al-Minhaj Syarh Shahih Muslim bin al-Hajjaj, where al-Nawawi explicitly prohibits images of living beings absolutely, regardless of whether they are two-dimensional or three-dimensional. Al-Nawawi's absolute prohibition on images of living beings is also affirmed in his other works, such as Riyadh al-Shalihin (Al-Nawawi, 1998), (Al-Nawawi, n.d.). which are summaries of al-Muharrar by al-Rafi'i, a reference for the Wali Songo in jurisprudence. This prohibition is also quoted by later Shafi'i scholars, such as Ibn Hajar al-Haytami in his book al-Zawajir 'an Iqtiraf al-Kaba'ir and Tuhfat al-Muhtaj and Syihabuddin al-Ramli in his book Nihayat al-Muhtaj as mentioned earlier.

There are several possibilities regarding the Wali Songo's permission of Wayang as a medium for preaching. Firstly, it could be that the Wali Songo did not follow the legal opinion of the Shafi'i school regarding Wayang. Instead, they might have followed scholars who even permitted three-dimensional images, such as Abu 'Ali al-Farisi (288-377 H.) and al-Qarafi (626-684 H.). However, concluding that the Wali Songo followed the opinions of these two scholars seems far-fetched. It is well known that the Wali Songo adhered to the Shafi'i school of thought and often referenced Shafi'i literature as the basis for their Islamic jurisprudence. Abu 'Ali al-Farisi, on the other hand, was a grammarian (nahwu) who leaned towards the Hanafi school and Mu'tazilism. Abd al-Fattah Isma'il Syalabi, Abu 'Ali Al-Farisi Hayatuhu Wa Makanatuhu Bayna A'Immat Al-Tafsir Al-'Arabiyyah Wa Atsaruhu Fi Al-Qira'at Wa Al-Nahwi (Jeddah: Dar al-Mathbu'at al-Haditsah, 1989), 102-104. Meanwhile, al-Qarafi was a scholar of the Maliki school. The opinions of these two scholars

regarding the legality of three-dimensional art are also not cited in Shafi'i fiqh books, which were the primary references for the Wali Songo. Therefore, it is unlikely that the Wali Songo adopted the opinions of these two scholars, whose works were likely not consulted or considered as references by the Wali Songo during that time.

Secondly, in the case of the legality of Wayang, the Wali Songo might have followed the opinion of scholars who permit drawing or painting living beings in two-dimensional form, such as the opinion of some of the Salaf scholars mentioned by al-Nawawi in his book al-Minhaj Syarh Sahih Muslim bin al-Hajjaj which he later evaluated as an invalid (false) opinion. Upon further investigation, it turns out that this opinion of some Salaf scholars is attributed to al-Qasim bin Muhammad bin Abi Bakr (35-107 H.), a Tabi'in scholar and one of the seven jurists of Madinah known for his knowledge and influence. This analysis seems more plausible because al-Qasim bin Muhammad's opinion is also cited by al-Nawawi himself in his book al-Minhaj Syarh Sahih Muslim bin al-Hajjaj, making it more logical to assume that the Wali Songo adopted this opinion as it is recorded in the Shafi'i fiqh books that served as references for them.

Al-Qasim's opinion is at least based on two hadiths. The first is a hadith narrated by al-Bukhari from Busr bin Sa'id, from Zaid bin Khalid, from Abu Thalhah, a companion of the Prophet Muhammad, who said, "The Messenger of Allah said: "Angels do not enter a house in which there is a picture." Busr, the narrator of the hadith, said: "After that, Zaid fell ill, and when we visited him, there was a cloth with pictures on the door of his house. I asked 'Ubaydillah al-Khawlani, the stepson of Maymunah, the wife of the Prophet, "Did Zayd not inform us about images in the early days?" 'Ubaydillah said, "Did you not hear him say, except for images on cloth?".Al-Bukhari, Al-Jami' Al-Shahih, 216.

The second hadith is narrated by al-Tirmidhi and al-Nasa'i, wherein it is recounted that one day 'Ubaidillah bin 'Abdillah bin 'Uthbah visited Abu Thalhah al-Ansari. At that time, Sahl bin Hunayf was with Abu Thalhah. Abu Thalhah then called someone to remove the carpet beneath him. Sahl then asked Abu Thalhah, "Why should the carpet beneath it be removed?" Abu Thalhah said: "Because there are images on the carpet. The Prophet had spoken about images, as you know." Sahl said, "Did not the Prophet say, except for images on cloth?" Abu Thalhah said, "Correct. However, this is better for me (preferred by me)."(Al-Tirmidzi, n.d.), (Al-Nasa'i, 1986). These two hadiths

indicate that what is prohibited is three-dimensional images (sculptures). These hadiths also particularize (takhshish) the hadiths prohibiting images of living beings absolutely, whether two-dimensional or three-dimensional. The Prophet's dislike of images of living beings found on curtains or cloth, as recorded in several hadith narrations, only indicates disapproval (makruh tanzihi), not a prohibition (haram) (Al-Qaradawi, 1998).

From this, we can draw a conclusion that the Wali Songo, in formulating a ruling on a particular issue, were not rigidly bound (*jumud*) to the Shafi'i school and Shafi'i scholars alone. They were able to choose opinions based on the values of the objectives of Islamic law (maqasid al-sharia) and the welfare of preaching at that time. The Wali Songo were well aware that this issue was a matter of ijtihad, where scholars did not agree on the ruling regarding depicting living beings in two-dimensional form. Some prohibited it, but there were also competent scholars who permitted it. The Wali Songo adopted the opinion that permits it, because this view is held by one of the salaf scholars, namely al-Qasim ibn Muhammad ibn Abu Bakr (35-107 H.), a very influential tabi'i scholar whose knowledge is widely acknowledged. Al-Qasim's view appears in the Shafi'i fiqh literature, which was used as a reference in Wali Songo's time (Al-Nawawi, 1392). The Wali Songo knew that the Javanese people at that time really liked wayang, which had become an inseparable part of local culture. By making use of the people's love for wayang, Wali Songo transformed this art-form into an effective means of da'wah, allowing for the delivery of subtle Islamic values that were well accepted. This approach reflects the sensitivity of the Wali Songo to the local cultural context, so that the spread of Islam could succeed and be broadly received across the archipelago.

This is where the moderation of the Wali Songo in the jurisprudence of preaching lies, aiming for greater benefit with the success of Islamic preaching in the Nusantara. It is evident that through this wayang medium, the Wali Songo successfully Islamized the majority of the Nusantara population without any upheaval or bloodshed, after centuries of stagnant Islamic preaching without development and success. Wallahu A'lam.

Conclusion

Since the emergence of Wayang as a medium for preaching, intellectual dialectics arose among the Wali Songo. This divergence of views occurred because the Shafi'i school of jurisprudence, to which the Wali Songo belonged, maintains a strict position regarding visual depictions of living beings, whether

in two-dimensional forms such as Wayang, or in three-dimensional forms such as sculptures. However, despite these strict Shafi'i rulings, the Wali Songo did not adhere rigidly to the school's prohibition of Wayang. They understood that scholars differed on the permissibility of two-dimensional images, including Wayang. Several scholars prohibited such depictions absolutely, consistent with the Shafi'i position, while others permitted them. Among the permissive views was that of al-Qasim bin Muhammad bin Abi Bakr, a Tabi'in scholar and one of the seven jurists of Madinah known for his authoritative knowledge.

It is strongly indicated that the Wali Songo adopted this permissive opinion for the sake of achieving broader welfare, namely the effective success of Islamic preaching in the Nusantara. Their decision reflects a moderate approach in jurisprudence, showing flexibility and prioritizing the greater public benefit (maslahah) when addressing matters of religious significance. Practically, these findings suggest that modern Islamic educators, artists, and preachers can draw upon the Wali Songo's method as a model for integrating cultural media with Islamic ethics—emphasizing moderation, creativity, and contextual wisdom in delivering religious messages.

The finding that the Wali Songo strategically adopted the permissive view of al-Qasim bin Muhammad bin Abi Bakr regarding two-dimensional depictions, despite the strict position of the Shafi'i school, offers important implications for contemporary da'wah and religious leadership. This approach provides a strong historical precedent for moderate Islam in Indonesia. It demonstrates that religious rulings may be applied with contextual flexibility when considering maslahah and the effective transmission of Islamic values within specific cultural settings.

Therefore, future studies should undertake a comparative analysis of al-Qasim bin Muhammad bin Abi Bakr's arguments alongside those of other madhahib concerning two-dimensional images, in order to articulate more precisely the theological reasoning employed by the Wali Songo. Further research is also needed to explore how the principle of prioritizing *maslahah* for da'wah may be applied to modern media, including films, animation, and digital visual platforms, both in Indonesia and globally.

References

Ahmad, F. (2023). No Title. *Nu Online*. https://www.nu.or.id/fragmen/wayang-wayang-sunan-kalijaga-dan-pandangan-berbeda-dari-sunan-ampel-uut6M

Al-Bukhari, M. bin I. (1987). *al-Jami' al-Shahih*. Dar al-Sya'b.

Al-Haytami, I. H. (1987). *Al-Zawajir 'An Iqtiraf al-Kaba'ir*. Dar al-Fikr.

Al-Nasa'i, A. bin S. (1986). *Sunan al-Nasa'i*. Maktab al-Mathbu'at al-Islamiyyah.

Al-Nawawi, Y. bin S. (n.d.). *Minhaj al-Thalibin wa 'Umdat al-Muftin*. t.p.

Al-Nawawi, Y. bin S. (1392). *Al-Minhaj Syarh Sahih Muslim bin al-Hajjaj*. Dar Ihya' al-Turats al-'Arabi.

Al-Nawawi, Y. bin S. (1998). *Riyadh al-Shalihin*. Mu'assasah al-Risalah.

Al-Naysaburi, M. bin al-H. (n.d.). *Al-Jami' al-Shahih*. Dar al-Jayl.

Al-Qaradawi, Y. (1998). *Al-Halal wa al-Haram Fi al-Islam*. Maktabah Wahbah.

Al-Qarafi, S. (1995). *Nafa'is al-Ushul Fi Syarh al-Mahshul*. Maktabah Nizar Musthafa al-Baz.

Al-Ramli, S. (n.d.). *Nihayat al-Muhtaj Ila Syarh al-Minhaj*. t.p.

Al-Shabuni, M. 'Ali. (1981). *Rawa'i' al-Bayan Tafsir Ayat al-Ahkam*. Maktabah al-Ghazali.

Al-Tirmidzi, M. bin 'Isa. (n.d.). *Sunan al-Tirmidzi*. Dar Ihya' al-Turats al-'Arabi.

Al-Zandawasayti, al-H. bin Y. (2020). *Rawdhat al-'Ulama' wa Nuzhat al-Fudhala'*. Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah.

Anggoro, B. (2018). Wayang dan Seni Pertunjukan: Kajian Sejarah Perkembangan Seni Wayang di Tanah Jawa sebagai Seni Pertunjukan dan Dakwah. *JUSPI: Jurnal Sejarah Peradaban Islam*, *2*(2). http://dx.doi.org/10.30829/j.v2i2.1679

Bakhri, S., Hidayatullah, A., & Pekalongan, I. (2019). *Desakralisasi Simbol Politheisme dalam Silsilah Wayang: Sebuah Kajian Living Qur'an dan Dakwah*

Walisongo di Jawa.

Fadli, F. (2019). Media Kreatif Walisongo dalam Menyemai Sikap Toleransi Antar Umat Beragama di Jawa. *Al-Tadzkiyyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, *10*(2), 287–300. https://doi.org/10.24042/atjpi.v10i2.5062

Fahmi, M. N., & Muqowim, M. (2021). Kitab Asmarakandi sebagai Sumber Belajar Pendidikan Islam Awal di Nusantara. In *Jurnal SMART (Studi Masyarakat, Religi, dan Tradisi)* (Vol. 7, Issue 2, pp. 242–253). https://doi.org/10.18784/smart.v7i2.1403

Fizriyani, W. (2022). Tindak Tutur Ujaran Ustaz Basalamah Mengenai Pengharaman Wayang. *Diglosia: Jurnal Kajian Bahasa, Sastra, dan Pengajarannya*, *5*(3), 675–682. https://doi.org/10.30872/diglosia.v5i3.458

Hafizd, J. Z. (2021). Sejarah Hukum Islam di Indonesia: Dari Masa Kerajaan Islam Sampai Indonesia Modern. *Tamaddun: Jurnal Sejarah dan Kebudayaan Islam*, *9*(1). http://dx.doi.org/10.24235/tamaddun.v9i1.8087

Hafizd, J. Z., Syariah, F., Islam, E., Syekh, I., & Cirebon, N. (2021). Sejarah Hukum Islam di Indonesia: Dari Masa Kerajaan Islam Sampai Indonesia Modern. In *Jurnal Sejarah dan Kebudayaan Islam* (Vol. 9, Issue 1). https://www.syekhnurjati.ac.id/jurnal/index.php/tamaddun/index

Hasib, K. (2015). Menelusuri Mazhab Walisongo. *Jurnal Tsaqafah*, *11*(1). https://doi.org/10.21111/tsaqafah.v11i1.257

Herlyana, E. (2013). Pagelaran Wayang Purwa Sebagai Media Penanaman Nilai Religius Islam Pada Masyarakat Jawa. *Thaqafiyyat*, *14*(1), 127–141. https://ejournal.uin-suka.ac.id/adab/thaqafiyyat/article/view/616

Ibn HajarAl-Haytami, 'Abd al-Hamid al-Syarwani dan Ahmad bin Qasim al-'Ubadi. (n.d.). *Tuhfat al-Muhtaj Fi Syarh al-Minhaj wa Hawasyi al-Syarwani wa al-'Ubadi*. Dar Ihya' al-Turats al-'Arabi.

Jb. Masroer Ch. (2015). Spiritualitas Islam dalam Budaya Wayang Kulit Masyarakat Jawa dan Sunda. *Jurnal Ilmiah Sosiologi Agama*, *9*(1), 38–61. https://doi.org/10.14421/jsa.2015.091-03

Kaelan. (2010). *Metode Penelitian Agama Kualitatif Interdisipliner*. Paradigma.

Kardiyanto, W. (2018). Kesenian Prophetik Walisongo dan Seni Wayang Purwa.

Lakon, Jurnal Pengkajian & Penciptaan, *15*(2). https://doi.org/10.33153/lakon.v15i2.3003

Kudhori, M. (2023). *Moderasi Fikih Seni Yusuf Al-Qaradawi: Telaah Hadsi-hadis Seni Musik dan Seni Rupa*. Kali Pustaka.

Laki, Á. B. (2021). Peran Sunan Kalijaga terhadap Bentuk Wayang Kulit Jawa. *Jurnal Kajian Seni*, *7*(2).

Maknun, M. L. (2015). Esensi Dakwah Wayang Kulit Banjar Dalang Iderus. *Jurnal SMaRT*, *1*(2), 231–242. https://doi.org/10.18784/smart.v1i2.254

Marsaid. (2016). Islam dan Kebudayaan: Wayang Sebagai Media Pendidikan Islam di Nusantara. *Kontemplasi: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin*, *4*(1), 101–130. http://ejournal.iain-tulungagung.ac.id/index.php/kon/article/view/132

Masykur, M. R., & Soleh, A. K. (2023). Seni Pegelaran Wayang dalam Perspektif Fikih dan Spiritualitas Seni Islam Seyyed Hossein Nasr. *Muslim Heritage*, *8*(1), 103–114. https://doi.org/10.21154/muslimheritage.v8i1.5985

Muhadjir, N. (1996). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. Rake Sarasin.

Rohman, F., Awalin, N., Perkembangan, S., Perubahan, D., Wayang, F., & Masyarakat, D. (n.d.). *Sejarah Perkembangan dan Perubahan Fungsi Wayang dalam Masyarakat (History of Development and Change of Wayang Functions in Society)*.

Santri Gayeng. (2021, April 18). Wayang Kulit: Pertikaian Sunan Kalijaga & Sunan Giri - Gus Baha [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2sf-lZHclcM

Sarwat, A. (2014). *Penerapan Syariat Islam di Nusantara*. Rumah Fikih Indonesia. https://www.rumahfiqih.com/fikrah-279-penerapan-syariat-islam-di-nusantara.html

Setiawan, E. (2020). *Nilai Filosofi Wayang Kulit Sebagai Media Dakwah* (Vol. 18, Issue 1). http://alhikmah.iain-jember.ac.id/

Sungaidi, M. (2016). Wayang Sebagai Media Penyiaran Islam: Studi Atas Strategi Dakwah Walisongo di Jawa. *Ilmu Ushuluddin*, *3*(2), 201–230. https://doi.org/10.15408/iu.v5i2.10907

Sunyoto, A. (2017). *Atlas Wali Songo*. Pustaka Iiman.

Syalabi, A. al-F. I. (1989). *Abu 'Ali al-Farisi Hayatuhu wa Makanatuhu Bayna A'immat al-Tafsir al-'Arabiyyah wa Atsaruhu Fi al-Qira'at wa al-Nahwi*. Dar al-Mathbu'at al-Haditsah.

Wafi, 'Abd al-Majid. (1968). Ra'y al-Din fi al-Suwar wa al-Tamatsil. In M. F. 'Utsman (Ed.), *al-Fikr al-Islami wa Tathawwur*. al-Dar al-Kuwaytiyyah.

Yahya bin Syaraf Al-Nawawi. (n.d.). *Al-Minhaj Syarh Sahih Muslim bin al-Hajjaj*. Dar Ihya' al-Turats al-'Arabi.

DOI: 10.18860/eh.v27i2.36523

RELIGIOUS VALUES AND CHARACTER EDUCATION IN THE DRAMA "CELENGAN TRESNA"

Budi Waluyo
Universitas Sebelas Maret, Surakarta, Indonesia
Email: budiwaluyo@staff.uns.ac.id

Received: September 16, 2025
Revised: December 1, 2025
Accepted: December 6, 2025

Abstract

This study departs from the growing academic interest in literature as a medium for moral and spiritual education, reflecting its potential to shape values through narrative and character portrayal. However, previous research has generally treated moral (character education) and religious values as separate domains, without examining their interrelation within a single literary work–especially in the context of modern Indonesian drama. The novelty of this study lies in its integrated analysis of both Islamic religious and character education values in the play Celengan Tresna, revealing how these values interact within the characters and narrative structure. This study aims to examine the Islamic values–such as sincerity (ikhlas), patience (sabr), honesty (sidq), and responsibility (amanah)–and character education reflected in Budi Waluyo's drama Celengan Tresna. It employs a qualitative approach with content analysis method, referring to Glock and Stark's theory of religiosity, which encompasses five dimensions: ideological, ritualistic, experiential, intellectual, and consequential. In analyzing the character education values, this study draws on the framework of Samani and Hariyanto, which outlines 26 education character values. The findings reveal that the play not only presents the religious values of its characters in dealing with life's pressures, but also highlights various character values such as responsibility, hard work, care, honesty, and politeness, which are embedded within intrinsic elements such as characterization, dialogue, and plot. The study concludes that

the play "Celengan Tresna" is not merely a narrative about its characters, but also serves as an effective medium for the internalization of moral and religious values. It also can be used as a practical medium for integrating religious and character education. Teachers may employ it to strengthen students' moral and spiritual values—such as honesty, responsibility, and humility—through reflective literary learning.

Penelitian ini berangkat dari meningkatnya perhatian akademik terhadap sastra sebagai media pendidikan moral dan spiritual, yang mencerminkan potensinya dalam membentuk nilai-nilai melalui narasi dan penggambaran tokoh. Namun, penelitian sebelumnya umumnya memperlakukan nilai moral (pendidikan karakter) dan nilai religius sebagai dua ranah yang terpisah, tanpa menelaah keterkaitan keduanya dalam satu karya sastra—terutama dalam konteks drama Indonesia modern. Kebaruan penelitian ini terletak pada analisis terpadu antara nilai-nilai religius Islam dan nilai-nilai pendidikan karakter dalam drama Celengan Tresna, yang mengungkap bagaimana kedua nilai tersebut berinteraksi melalui tokoh dan struktur naratif. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menelaah nilai-nilai Islam—seperti keikhlasan (ikhlas), kesabaran (sabr), kejujuran (sidq), dan tanggung jawab (amanah)—serta nilai-nilai pendidikan karakter yang tercermin dalam drama Celengan Tresna karya Budi Waluyo. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode analisis isi, mengacu pada teori religiusitas Glock dan Stark yang mencakup lima dimensi: ideologis, ritualistik, pengalaman, intelektual, dan konsekuensial. Dalam menganalisis nilai-nilai pendidikan karakter, penelitian ini mengacu pada kerangka Samani dan Hariyanto yang memuat 26 nilai karakter pendidikan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa drama ini tidak hanya menampilkan nilai-nilai religius Islam dalam cara tokohnya menghadapi tekanan hidup, tetapi juga menonjolkan berbagai nilai karakter seperti tanggung jawab, kerja keras, kepedulian, kejujuran, dan kesantunan yang terjalin dalam unsur intrinsik seperti penokohan, dialog, dan alur. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa Celengan Tresna bukan sekadar kisah tentang para tokohnya, tetapi juga berfungsi sebagai media efektif untuk internalisasi nilai-nilai moral dan religius Islam. Selain itu, drama ini dapat dimanfaatkan sebagai media praktis untuk mengintegrasikan pendidikan agama dan karakter. Guru dapat menggunakannya untuk memperkuat nilai-nilai moral dan spiritual siswa—seperti kejujuran, tanggung jawab, dan kerendahan hati—melalui pembelajaran sastra yang reflektif.

***Keywords**: Celengan Tresna play, character education, Islamic values, moral education, religious literature*

Introduction

In the era of globalization, character building has become a main agenda within Indonesia's education system. This aligns with the view of Khairunisa

et al. (2025), who emphasize that character education holds a crucial role in developing a generation of integrity amid the rapid progress of globalization. Among the various impacts of globalization, one of its most concerning consequences is the moral decline of the nation's younger generation (Nurlaili & Naufal, 2022). Social issues such as moral degradation, bullying, misuse of technology, and diminishing spiritual awareness highlight the need for an education system that not only prioritizes academic achievement but also cultivates noble character and moral awareness.

Character education thus emerges as a strategic solution for shaping a generation imbued with integrity, responsibility, and social empathy. As Jakandar et al. (2025) observe, the internalization of religious values and character education serves as an effective approach to strengthening the spiritual and ethical character of the youth. Character education, however, should not only be transmitted explicitly through formal instruction but also implicitly through various media, including literary works—particularly drama. Literature, especially dramatic texts, provides opportunities for learners to derive moral insight and reflective understanding through character and conflict (Larasati et al., 2023). As Luo et al. (2024) explain, forms of drama such as educational drama, activity-based drama, and process drama offer distinctive advantages for developing values-based education.

One essential aspect of character education is the inclusion of religious value. Religious values constitute the moral and spiritual foundation upon which character education is built (Hidayah et al., 2018). They express the human relationship with God, manifested through spiritual practice, ethical behavior, social attitudes, and respect for others. However, while religious values are an integral part of character education, they also function as an independent moral domain that warrants distinct analysis. In the context of this study, religious values and character education values are treated as two interconnected yet analytically distinct components: religious values highlight an individual's spiritual and theological orientation, whereas character education encompasses a broader spectrum of moral traits, as outlined by Samani and Haryanto (2013).

According to Glock and Stark (1965), religiosity comprises five dimensions: ideological, ritualistic, intellectual, experiential, and consequential. These five dimensions can enable a comprehensive analysis of how religious values are embodied in a literary work. Essentially, literature can be understood as a cultural artifact that synthesizes aesthetic, moral, and religious dimensions,

representing the values of the society that produces it (Prasetiyo & Raharjo, 2024).

Literature, therefore, functions as an educational medium that cultivates, transmits, and reinforces moral character and ethical awareness among students (Sukirman, 2021). Drama, in particular, serves as a powerful vehicle for expressing cultural identity and reflecting social realities, while simultaneously conveying moral messages through character interaction and dialogue. According to Setyaningsih (2019:9), drama carries two essential meanings. First, it refers to various performances that present a story before an audience. Second, it represents the lived narrative of human experience staged through dialogue and action, supported by elements such as lighting, stage design, music, makeup, and costumes.

Drama not only presents conflict and events but also conveys moral and life values that can serve as exemplary lessons for the audience. This is in line with Putro et al. (2020), who emphasize that drama is not merely a collection of dialogues but a representation of characters' attitude, traits, and behaviors that embody the essence of character education. Therefore, the internalization of character education through literary works must consider multiple aspects, including aesthetics, expression, plot development, and diction (Cahyani et al., 2024). Budi Waluyo's play Celengan Tresna exemplifies this integration by addressing pressing social and moral issues within community life. It portrays characters who struggle with economic hardship, debt, and romantic challenges while consistently reflecting strong religious and character education values throughout the narrative.

Character education values refer to guiding principles that assist individuals—particularly children—in achieving both physical and spiritual maturity (Kemal & Fitri, 2015). In Celengan Tresna, character education is reflected through values such as responsibility, hard work, perseverance, honesty, social care, and humility. Rather than being delivered through direct instruction, these virtues are embodied in the character's action, decisions, and interpersonal interactions. Similarly, religious values in the play are conveyed implicitly through the characters' spiritual experiences and the moral principles that shape their everyday conduct.

Previous research underscores the significant role of literature in fostering moral, spiritual, and character development. A range of studies in this area has demonstrated how different genres communicate values in ways that are meaningful and accessible to readers. Afifah (2023) examined the

portrayal of integrity as a dimension of character education in a Javanese novel, while Masjid et al. (2023) explored how children's poetry transmits wisdom and builds character. Earlier work by Mashar (2020) highlighted the usefulness of metaphorical stories as a learning medium that helps strengthen children's social character, and Cahyani et al. (2024) emphasized the role of drama appreciation activities in promoting character education within schools. Other studies focus more specifically on religious aspects: Putra et al. (2025) analyzed spiritual responsibility in Hijaz Yamani poetry, and Umar et al. (2025) examined Islamic character values in local folklore and their educational relevance. Collectively, these studies confirm that literary works function as effective media for imparting moral and religious values, forming a foundation for the present analysis.

Although these studies affirm literature's importance as a means of moral and spiritual formation, most have addressed either character education or religious values in isolation. Few have examined how these two domains interact dynamically within a single work, particularly within modern Indonesian drama as their object of study. This leaves a noticeable gap, particularly regarding Budi Waluyo's Celengan Tresna which has not yet been analyzed through an integrative lens. Accordingly, the present study seeks to bridge this gap by examining how both religious and character education values are simultaneously embedded in the play's characters and narrative development. Specifically, this study aims to identify and analyze the manifestation of religious and character education values in Budi Waluyo's play Celengan Tresna, exploring how these values are reflected in the attitudes and behaviors of the characters.

Method

This study examines the religious values and character education in Budi Waluyo's drama Celengan Tresna through a qualitative approach, as the object of investigation is a literary text. According to Sugiyono (2018:15), qualitative research is grounded in the post-positivist paradigm and is used to examine phenomena in their natural settings. In this study, the researcher serves as the primary research instrument, responsible for interpreting and analyzing the data. Data were analyzed inductively, emphasizing depth of meaning rather than generalization or numerical representation. Thus, the qualitative approach is employed to interpret the textual data and to identify the moral and religious values embedded within the drama.

The method applied in this research is content analysis, which allows

the researcher to examine both the explicit and implicit representations of values within literary texts by examining their intrinsic elements. This study is classified as library research with the primary data source consisting of the script of Celengan Tresna, and secondary data drawn from theoretical books on literature, character education, religious values, and supporting scholarly articles. Data collection involved an intensive reading of the text to obtain a comprehensive understanding of its narrative structure, followed by note-taking of passages that reflect religious and character values, and reviewing relevant literature to strengthen the analytical framework. Through these processes, data were systematically compiled and categorized for further analysis.

For the analysis stage, Miles and Huberman's interactive analysis model was employed, which includes four main steps: data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. Data reduction involved selecting and condensing information relevant to the research focus. Next, the data were organized into specific themes representing character and religious values. The final stage of analysis entailed an interpretive synthesis aimed at drawing comprehensive conclusions and verifying the identified themes within the context of the drama.

Findings and Discussion

Celengan Tresna tells the story of Ganis, a young widow burdened by debt collectors claiming her late husband left behind unpaid loans. Bambang, a well-intentioned yet naive man, offers to assist her by pretending to be her husband, leading to a series of humorous misunderstandings. Their attempts to resolve the debts involve consulting a questionable shaman, narrowly avoiding legal trouble, and confronting relentless creditors. In the end, Bambang discovers a hidden piggy bank left by Ganis's late husband, which provides the means to repay the debts. The story combines humor, clever problem-solving, moral reflection, and gentle romance, highlighting both human folly and the enduring value of honesty and perseverance.

This section presents an analysis of Celengan Tresna focusing on three key dimensions: structural elements, religious values, and character education values. The discussion examines how the play's plot, character interactions, and narrative techniques function collectively to communicate moral lessons, reinforce social norms, and reflect cultural wisdom.

Structural Analysis of Celengan Tresna

The structural analysis aims to identify and interpret the values embedded within the drama through its intrinsic elements. As Waluyo et al. (2021, p. 49) explain, analyzing the intrinsic structure of a play is an essential first step in uncovering the character education values it conveys. Accordingly, this study examines six primary structural components: theme, characterization, plot, setting, dialogue, and message.

This methodological focus aligns with prior literary research that utilizes structural analysis as the foundation for identifying moral and religious dimensions in texts. For instance, Afifah (2023) emphasized the importance of plot and characterization in revealing integrity values within a Javanese novel, while Masjid et al. (2023) demonstrated that themes and messages in children's poetry play a crucial role in articulating character education values. Likewise, Putra et al. (2025) and Umar et al. (2025) revealed how structural analysis facilitates the identification of religious messages and expressions of local wisdom in poetry and folklore.

However, unlike these previous studies, which primarily examined novels, poetry, and folklore, the present research applies structural analysis to a modern Javanese drama script. This distinctive focus expands the scope of literary value studies by demonstrating that religious and character education values are not only expressed through narrative exposition or poetic imagery but also through dramatic dialogue, stage direction, and performative interaction. Consequently, this study offers a unique contribution to existing scholarship by situating moral and religious pedagogy within the context of contemporary theatrical expression.

1. Theme

According to Ambari (in Mamonto et al., 2021), theme represents the core or essence of a literary work. The theme of Celengan Tresna is the sincerity of love and sacrifice in facing life's trials. This theme is articulated through the characters of Bambang and Ganis, whose actions illustrate how genuine affection and altruism emerge amid hardship. What begins as a simple story about debt gradually unfolds into a narrative of compassion, moral strength, and sincere devotion. Thus, the play embodies both religious and character education values through its depiction of human perseverance and integrity in facing adversity.

2. Characterization

According to Waluyo (in Waluyo et al., 2020: 14), characters in a play can be grouped into three categories: the central character, the main character, and the supporting characters. The central character in this story is Ganis, who serves as the focal point of the storyline. She is portrayed as a young widow overwhelmed by her late husband's debts, embodying both emotional fragility and moral strength. Initially, Ganis appears defensive and distrustful toward Bambang, yet her attitude gradually softens as she recognizes his sincerity and kindness.

The main character in the story is Bambang, depicted as a humble, honest man who demonstrates selflessness and courage. Although he is not Ganis's real husband, Bambang pretends to be her spouse to protect her from the relentless debt collectors. His actions reflect his moral integrity and sense of responsibility, culminating in his decision to rescue Ganis from financial distress and to express his genuine affection for her.

The supporting characters include Brewok, Susi, Tanem, Sarmi, Minah, and Jum. Brewok and Susi are debt collectors portrayed as tough, blunt, and lacking empathy, exemplifying the social and economic pressures that oppress the lower class. Meanwhile, Tanem, Sarmi, Minah, and Jum represent the villagers depicted as hardworking, honest, and spirited individuals who embody communal values and moral strength. These characters provide moral contrast and social context that reinforce the play's ethical and religious dimensions.

3. Plot

According to Sukada (in Ulya & Putri, 2023), plot constitutes the most essential element of literary work because it unites all other components into a coherent structure. Celengan Tresna employs a progressive (linear) plot, in which the story unfolds sequentially from beginning to end without flashbacks. Following Waluyo's (in Waluyo et al., 2020) framework, the plot comprises five parts: exposition, inciting moment (introduction), rising action, complication, climax, falling action, and denouement (resolution).

The exposition stage in this drama script is shown when the character Ganis, a confused and distressed widow besieged by debt collectors after her husband's death. Then Bambang, a simple villager, appears and offers to help Ganis, setting the stage for the unfolding conflict. Ganis's anxiety and moral dilemma serve as an emotional backdrop that draws the audience into her struggle.

The inciting moment, or the trigger of the main conflict, occurs when

Ganis laments the unending harassment from debt collectors and admits she can no longer face them alone. To resolve this, Bambang proposes pretending to be her husband to deter the collectors. Ganis's agreement to Bambang's idea becomes the turning point that propels the plot forward.

The rising action develops through the repeated arrival of debt collectors at Ganis's residence, including Brewok, Susi, and others whose demands intensify the tension. Bambang, maintaining his disguise, faces escalating pressure as the debts increase and repayment deadlines approach. His persistence and moral resolve grow stronger as he negotiates with the collectors and struggles to uphold his promise to Ganis.

The complication stage emerges as Bambang's emotional and moral burden deepens. While pacing in frustration, he accidentally kicks a chair and discovers a hidden plastic piggy bank filled with gold jewelry. This discovery introduces a moral dilemma—Bambang is unsure whether the jewelry is a legitimate inheritance or property belonging to someone else.

At the climax, Bambang decides to use the contents of the piggy bank to settle all of Ganis's debts. He pays off the collectors one by one on time. This moment represents the peak of dramatic tension and the full expression of Bambang's sincerity, compassion, and courage.

The falling action follows as the debts are fully paid, leaving Ganis deeply grateful yet uncomfortable with her sense of indebtedness. This emotional tension culminates when Bambang confesses his genuine feelings and expresses his desire to marry her.

Finally, in the resolution, Ganis sincerely accepts Bambang's proposal. Although a brief conflict arises regarding the use of the gold jewelry, the issue is peacefully resolved. The play concludes on a note of harmony and moral fulfillment, with both characters achieving inner peace and beginning a new life together.

4. Setting

According to Suroto (in Waluyo et al., 2021: 23), setting refers to the depiction of place, time, and atmosphere in which a story's events unfold. The spatial setting of Celengan Tresna includes the outskirts of Balapan Station in Solo, Lik Mul's *hik* (street food) stall, and its surrounding neighborhood. These locations are explicitly described by the playwright in the opening stage directions, providing the audience with a realistic social and spatial context.

The temporal setting of the drama occurs during the nighttime and continues into the early hours before dawn, as indicated in the script's

introductory description and reflected in several exchanges among the characters. This nocturnal timeframe reinforces the mood of secrecy, struggle, and quiet reflection that underlies the narrative.

The atmospheric setting varies throughout the play. In scenes where the characters gather at Lik Mul's stall, the tone is relaxed and convivial, reflecting communal warmth and social intimacy. However, the atmosphere shifts sharply to tension and anxiety during confrontations—especially in the scene involving Badrun—symbolizing the intrusion of conflict and moral testing within ordinary life.

5. Dialogue

The script employs the Javanese language in a light and communicative *ngoko alus* (a polite yet informal level of Javanese speech) style. Additionally, several dialogues are delivered in Indonesia interspersed with occasional Indonesian phrases. This linguistic blend reflects the social authenticity of Central Javanese speech patterns while enhancing the play's accessibility to broader audiences.

The dialogues in this script serve several dramatic and pedagogical functions. They reveal the inner traits and motivation of the characters, generate interpersonal conflict, and provide moral lessons. Through natural, everyday conversations, the playwright successfully embeds reflections on sincerity, responsibility, and social harmony, allowing values to emerge organically rather than through didactic exposition.

6. Message

According to Harida (2018), a message in a literary work can be derived from the events experienced by the characters or from its certain narrative elements. In the drama script Celengan Tresna, several moral and religious messages can be identified. Through the character Bambang, the audience learns that genuine love is not merely through words but through grounded in responsibility and sincerity. The drama also conveys the idea that perseverance and good intentions can overcome life's hardships, emphasizing active moral agency rather than resignation. Moreover, an important philosophical message emerges: one's past does not permanently define one's future. Every individual deserves the opportunity to improve, to seek forgiveness, and to build a better, more meaningful life.

Religious Values in the Drama Celengan Tresna by Budi Waluyo

The analysis of religious values in Celengan Tresna employs the theoretical

framework developed by Glock and Stark, which classifies religiosity into five dimensions: ideological (belief), ritualistic (worship practices), experiential (personal spiritual experience), intellectual (religious knowledge), and consequential (moral behavior). This framework is particularly effective in literary studies because it enables researchers to observe how texts reflect both inner belief and outward practice, thus linking theology with lived moral experience.

Previous research on religious and spiritual themes in literature—such as Putra et al. (2025), who examined spiritual responsibility in Hijaz Yamani poetry, and Umar et al. (2025), who analyzed Islamic character values in local folklore—demonstrates the relevance of a multidimensional approach to understanding religiosity in literary contexts. Building upon these works, the present study applies Glock and Stark's five-dimensional model to examine how religious values are embedded in the dramatic structure, characterization, and moral trajectory of Celengan Tresna.

1. Ideological Dimension

The ideological dimension reflects an individual's fundamental belief in the existence and sovereignty of God. In Celengan Tresna, this dimension is strongly embodied in the character of Bambang, particularly during moments of distress and uncertainty, as illustrated in the following dialogue:

Bambang:

> *Duh Gusti, pripun anggen kula ngrampungi masalah niki…* (Oh God, how can I resolve this problem…) (Celengan Tresna : 11)

The expression "*Duh Gusti*" ("Oh God") uttered by the character Bambang functions as a spontaneous spiritual invocation of divine help, revealing an attitude of surrender, hope, and reliance upon God. This utterance not only demonstrates Bambang's religious awareness but also underscores that his spiritual conviction—not human logic or strength—is his ultimate source of resilience. By invoking the name of God amid hardship, Bambang exemplifies the ideological dimension described by Glock and Stark, which highlights belief in God's omnipotence and providence as the foundation of religiosity (Stark & Glock, 1969; Prasetiyo & Raharjo, 2024; Adji & Indrastuti, 2024).

2. Ritualistic Dimension

The ritualistic dimension encompasses the practice of formal worship such as prayer, fasting, Qur'an recitation or other forms of worship. In Celengan Tresna, this dimension is not explicitly illustrated through ritual acts of worship

such as prayer or Qur'an recitation. There are no direct depictions of prayer or other religious practices, indicating that ritual observance operates implicitly, forming part of the unseen background of the characters' everyday faith. This subtle representation suggests that religiosity is internalized as moral behavior rather than expressed solely through outward rituals.

3. Experiential Dimension

The experiential dimension refers to personal religious experiences that evoke emotional and spiritual awareness. It often emerges in moments of crisis, when divine presence is felt directly through lived events (Adji & Indrastuti, 2024). A significant example occurs when Bambang discovers the piggy bank filled with jewelry at his lowest point of despair:

Bambang:

> *Masya Allah.. Perhiasan sak mene akehe? Gek pirang kilo iki?* (Masya Allah... so many pieces of jewelry? How many kilos could this be?) (Celengan Tresna: 12)

This exclamation "Masya Allah" marks a moment of intense spiritual realization, signifying Bambang's acknowledgment of divine intervention. In this scene, faith transcends formal ritual and becomes an immediate emotional connection between the believer and God. The discovery of the jewelry, which provides an unexpected solution to his hardship, is perceived as a manifestation of God's mercy. This reflects the experiential dimension of religiosity—faith as an inner, transformative experience rather than a doctrinal abstraction.

4. Intellectual Dimension

This dimension concerns an individual's cognitive understanding of religious teachings. Such knowledge may include memorization of verses, comprehension of religious laws, moral injunctions, and social ethics in religion. In Celengan Tresna, this dimension is represented by the character Ganis, particularly when she advises others about the religious obligation of *zakat* (almsgiving):

Ganis:

> *Yoh, aja lali, hasil panen kudu dizakati. Sebagian ditabung uga, nggo nyekolahne anakmu ben sekolahe dhuwur. Ben bisa dadi uwong.* (Well, don't forget, the harvest must be tithed through *zakat*. Some of it should also be saved to send your child to higher education, so they can become a better person. (Celengan Tresna: 19)

This dialogue illustrates Ganis'scomprehension of Islamic socio-economic ethics—that wealth must be purified through *zakat*, both to maintain personal integrity and to assist others in need. Her advice extends religious knowledge

into practical life, showing how awareness of divine commandments can guide social behavior and promote communal welfare. Even though the characters come from a modest, rural background, they possess essential understanding of religious obligations, reflecting the internalization of Islamic teachings among ordinary people.

5. Consequential Dimension

The consequential dimension represents the application of religious beliefs in concrete moral behavior. It is the visible expression of inner faith, manifesting in honesty, sincerity, and responsibility. This dimension is most clearly illustrated in Bambang's actions and dialogue:

Bambang:

> *Hehehe... Ora usah dipikir Mbak. Aku ikhlas kok, lahir batin...* (Hehehe... Don't worry about it, Mbak. I am sincere, wholeheartedly...) (Celengan Tresna: 15)

Bambang:

> *Utang njenengan tak anggep lunas, nanging...* (I consider your debt paid off, but...)

Ganis:

> *Ananging apa Kang?* (But what, Kang?)

Bambang:

> *Nanging...* (But...)

Ganis:

> *Nanging piye Kang?* (But how, Kang?)

Bambang:

> *Nanging.. Mbak Ganis gelem dadi garwaku..* (But... Mbak Ganis, would you be willing to be my wife?) (Celengan Tresna: 16)

Through these interactions, Bambang demonstrates moral virtues deeply rooted in religious consciousness: honesty, sacrifice, sincerity (*ikhlas*), and a sense of responsibility. He does not take advantage of opportunities for personal gain. Even after paying off Ganis's debt, he still offers a solution oriented toward Ganis's livelihood and protection. He does not impose marriage but proposes it gently as an expression of responsibility and love. All these attitudes reflect that Bambang has internalized religious values within himself, which are then manifested in real actions.

Character Education Values in Celengan Tresna

The analysis of character education values in Celengan Tresna is guided by the character education framework established by Samani and Hariyanto (2013), which identifies 26 fundamental values shaping moral, social, and intellectual development. These values serve not only as normative ideals

but also as practical guidelines for forming students' ethical behavior and personal integrity (Khairunisa et al., 2025; Nurlaili & Naufal, 2022; Samani & Hariyanto, 2013). This framework thus provides a structured analytical foundation for identifying and interpreting the moral messages conveyed through the characters' dialogue, actions, and interactions.

Previous studies on character education in literature—such as Afifah (2023), who examined integrity in a Javanese novel, and Masjid et al. (2023), who explored moral formation through children's poetry—demonstrate that literary texts often embed moral values through narrative conflict and character development. Similarly, Mashar (2020) and Cahyani et al. (2024) found that stories and drama appreciation activities can effectively nurture students' social and ethical understanding. Building on these studies, the present analysis examines how Celengan Tresna reflects key character education values within its dramatic structure, allowing each identified value to be interpreted systematically and contextually. Among the most prominent are Islamic religious values such as sincerity (*ikhlas*), patience (*sabr*), honesty (*sidq*), and responsibility (*amanah*).

1. Fairness

The value of fairness in Celengan Tresna is strongly reflected in Bambang's actions when paying off the debts left behind by Ganis's late husband, including those owed to Brewok and Susi.

Bambang:

> *Iki Kang, telung puluh. Wis tak etung. Prayogane mbok etung meneh.* (Here, Kang, thirty. I've already counted it. Better count it again yourself.) (Celengan Tresna: 13)

This quotation shows that Bambang treats all creditors equally, without discrimination, even though some behave harshly or disrespectfully. He pays each debt in full and refrains from bargaining or questioning its legitimacy, recognizing repayment as a moral obligation even though it is not legally his own. Fairness here is not only about repaying debts but also about recognizing the rights of others and maintaining honesty and integrity in social interactions.

2. Competitiveness

The value of competitiveness is embodied in characters such as Lik Jum, who who demonstrates an entrepreneurial spirit and adaptability to modern economic systems:

Lik Jum:

> *Wah, semangka kula jan joss tenan. Non biji, gede tur legi. Mangke sore kula kirim*

> *ten Jakarta, sak truk. Sampun ditransfer, sesuai harga plus ongkos kirim. Aman pokoke Mbak*. (Wow, my watermelons are really top quality. Seedless, big, and sweet too. This evening I'll send a whole truck to Jakarta. Payment has already been transferred, including the price plus shipping costs. It's all done, Mbak.) (Celengan Tresna: 20)

Lik Jum dialogue demonstrates his ability to manage interregional trade, handle bank transfers, logistics and large-scale distribution. This indicates that he is oriented not only toward production but also toward marketing, efficient distribution, and payment security—principles central to the modern economic system. In the rural context, such abilities reflect a high level of competitiveness. This value is highly relevant for shaping a society that is competitive, productive, and economically independent.

3. Positive Thinking

The value of positive thinking is reflected in Bambang's composure and rationality when facing the mounting pressure of debt repayment. Despite being surrounded by hardship and threats, he maintains optimism and strategic focus:

Bambang:

> *... Wis ngene wae, aku nduwe rencana. ...* (Let's just do it this way, I have a plan.) (Celengan Tresna: 12)

Rather than succumbing to fear or anger, Bambang chooses to think constructively and seek practical solutions. His decision to use the gold stored in the piggy bank to repay debts demonstrates not mere optimism but proactive problem-solving grounded in moral responsibility. Through this, the play teaches that positive thinking (*husn al-zann*) is not passive hopefulness but an active mindset of trust and initiative—essential for overcoming adversity with dignity.

4. Intelligence

The intelligence portrayed by Bambang in Celengan Tresna is not academic or formal intellectual intelligence but rather practical and emotional intelligence rooted in empathy, situational awareness, and strategic reasoning.

Bambang:

> *Syarate kula etok-etoke dados garwane jenengan.* (The condition is that I pretend to be your husband.) (Celengan Tresna: 3)

This statement illustrates Bambang's creative and context-sensitive thinking. Bambang realizes that in a patriarchal social structure, the position of a widow facing economic and social pressures is highly vulnerable. By pretending to be Ganis's husband, he creates a "social shield" to protect Ganis from intimidation by debt collectors. Bambang's intelligence is also reflected

in his ability to negotiate with the creditors, including when he bargains for an extended repayment deadline while remaining polite yet firm.

5. Peace-Loving

The value of peace-loving is clearly reflected in Bambang's attitude and speech when confronted by creditors who arrive one after another with raised voices, coercion, and intimidation.

Bambang:

> *Heem, matur nuwun uga, ati-ati.* (You're welcome. Take care.) (Celengan Tresna: 13)

This seemingly simple statement carries profound moral meaning. Bambang refuses to respond to hostility with pressure or violence. Instead, he chooses the path of peaceful communication as an expression of respect toward others, even when they behave unpleasantly.

6. Sincerity

The value of sincerity (*ikhlas*) in Celengan Tresna is deeply embodied in Bambang's character, particularly through his commitment to help Ganis overcome the economic crisis caused by her late husband's debts.

Bambang:

> *Hehehe.. Ora usah dipikir Mbak. Aku ikhlas kok, lahir batin..* (Hehehe... Don't worry about it, Mbak. I am sincere, wholeheartedly. (Celengan Tresna: 15)

Bambang's statement is not mere rhetoric but an expression of genuine sincerity that arises after a long process of sacrifice and moral struggle. His sincerity is not only reflected in his words but more importantly in his actions. He bears the moral and financial burdens that are not rightfully his responsibility in order to save another person from the pressures of life. Furthermore, Bambang's sincerity is tested by emotional complexity. Although he loves Ganis and naturally wishes for his affection to be returned, he never demands her love as a repayment for his assistance. Even when Ganis questions his honesty and drives him away, Bambang accepts her decision with humility and emotional maturity. Thus, Bambang's character teaches that sincerity is a vital foundation for building healthy and ethical social relationships.

7. Integrity and Honesty

The values of integrity (*istiqamah*) and honesty (*sidq*) in Celengan Tresna are highlighted at a dramatic turning point when Bambang finally reveals to Ganis that he had discovered a piggy bank containing jewelry left by Ganis's late husband. Initially, Bambang concealed this discovery and unilaterally used it to repay Ganis's debts.

Bambang:

Dhik, iki, mas-masan tinggalane Mas Pram sing mbiyen tak gadekne. Sakiki wis bali utuh, Iki tak balekne marang sliramu. (Dik, this is the jewelry left by Mas Pram that I once pawned. Now it has been restored in full. I am returning it to you.) (Celengan Tresna: 23)

What sustains the presence of integrity in Bambang's character is his willingness to admit his mistakes, apologize, and return what does not rightfully belong to him, even though the consequence may be the loss of Ganis's trust and love. Integrity does not mean never making mistakes; rather, it is the courage to acknowledge one's mistakes, make amends, and take full responsibility for them.

8. Compassion

The value of compassion (*rahmah*) is illustrated through Bambang's actions, which combine practical care with emotional sincerity. He not only assists Ganis in resolving her debts but also offers her emotional support grounded in patience and genuine affection.

Bambang:

... Merga aku banget tresna marang sliramu.. (... because I truly love you...) (Celengan Tresna: 24)

This statement is not merely a common declaration of love but represents the culmination of everything Bambang has endured: pretending to be Ganis's husband, facing pressure from debt collectors, managing finances, and sacrificing his own comfort to support the person he cares for. The play teaches its audience that affection is not simply romantic words, but rather concrete actions filled with sacrifice, patience, and honesty.

9. Hard Work

The value of hard work (*mujahadah*) occupies a crucial position in shaping the character and culture of rural communities as depicted in Celengan Tresna. Characters such as Lik Tanem, Lik Sarmi, Lik Minah, and Lik Jum symbolize villagers who rely on nature for livelihood yet embody discipline, perseverance, and deep moral responsibility toward their work.

Lik Tanem:

... sabin ingkang kula garap kalih garwa kula, panen niki hasile sae sanget. (...the rice field that I manage with my husband has produced an excellent harvest this season.) (Celengan Tresna: 18)

This statement is not a mere report but a reflection of the long process behind it. In the context of farming, a successful harvest is not solely the result of natural conditions but also the outcome of planning, fertilization, land cultivation, maintenance, and risk management against pests and weather. Amid the pressures of modern life, this rural ethic of diligence offers a timeless

lesson: that sustained effort and patience remain the foundation of personal growth and social resilience. The portrayal of hard work in Celengan Tresna thus encourages audiences to appreciate labor as both material necessity and spiritual discipline.

10. Creativity

The value of creativity in Celengan Tresna is most clearly represented by Bambang, who repeatedly demonstrates the ability to devise original, strategic, and morally grounded solutions under extreme pressure. His creativity does not manifest in artistic works or technological innovations but rather emerges as strategic thinking to solve complex and urgent problems.

One striking example occurs when Bambang proposes pretending to be Ganis's husband as a way to deal with debt collectors. By assuming the role of the head of the household, Bambang successfully shifts the pressure away from Ganis and takes over communication in a more controlled and convincing manner.

Bambang:

> *Syarate kula etok-etoke dados garwane jenengan.* (In one condition, I will pretend to be your husband.) (Celengan Tresna: 3)

By taking on the symbolic role of a husband, Bambang reconfigures social dynamics and protects Ganis from intimidation. This act illustrates emotional intelligence and creative leadership—the ability to think beyond conventional norms while upholding ethical intent. Furthermore, Bambang's creativity is also reflected in how he manages the piggy bank filled with gold that he accidentally discovers. He uses the gold as capital to settle Ganis's debts and to expand their livestock and farming businesses, which later become a sustainable source of livelihood.

Bambang:

> *... Wis ngene wae, aku nduwe rencana.* (... Let's do it this way, I have a plan.) (Celengan Tresna: 12)
>
> In terms of character, creativity becomes a mental strength that enables a person to save themselves and others through wise and carefully planned strategies.

11. Caring for Others

The value of caring for others (*ta'awun*) or social empathy is one of Bambang's main traits in Celengan Tresna. His concern is first seen in his willingness to protect Ganis during her difficult times, even though he is not legally her husband.

Bambang:

> *Dados niki mangke nek enten napa-napa, contone wong nagih utang... niku mangke sek tanggung jawab nggih kula?* (So, if anything happens later, like someone

coming to collect debts... am I the one responsible?)

Ganis:

Ya iya to Kang. Lha sapa meneh? (Of course, Kang. Who else would it be?) (Celengan Tresna: 3)

His caring nature is also evident in his dialogue with the farmers and livestock workers under Ganis's coordination. Bambang not only focuses on economic outcomes but also pays attention to welfare and product quality.

Bambang:

Oh syukur nek ngono. Pesenku, aja lali kebersihan lan kualitas susu kudu ditingkatke... (Oh good, if that's the case. My advice is, don't forget to improve cleanliness and the quality of the milk...) (Celengan Tresna: 19)

Here, Bambang shows that caring for others involves nurturing quality, welfare, and mutual respect within the community. His leadership reflects social responsibility grounded in empathy rather than authority. At the end of the play, when Ganis experiences a series of misfortunes—her cattle die, her crops fail, and her produce spoils—Bambang returns uninvited simply because he hears she is suffering, despite his own emotional distress:

Bambang:

Aku entuk kabar nek sampeyan lagi entuk pacoban kang abot. Apa entuk aku melu ngrampungi masalah iki Dik? (I heard you are going through serious trials. Would you allow me to help solve these problems, Dik?) (Celengan Tresna: 26)

Thus, Celengan Tresna conveys that caring is an expression of social empathy as religious and ethical duties, where a person is willing to share the burden of others not out of profit and loss calculations but out of humanity. This value is essential in shaping resilient characters within both interpersonal relationships and community life.

12. Self-Confidence

The value of self-confidence is clearly illustrated through Bambang's assertive yet respectful demeanor when confronting the debt collectors. Although he holds no formal authority as the head of the household, Bambang confidently and firmly assumes the moral and social role of Ganis's protector, demonstrating both courage and responsibility.

Bambang:

... Enek apa-apa sing hubungane karo Mbak Ganis kudu lewat aku. Ana perlu apa kowe rene? (... Anything related to Mbak Ganis must go through me. What business do you have here?) (Celengan Tresna: 5)

In the context of character education, Bambang exemplifies that true self-confidence does not mean arrogance or self-assertion. Rather, it is the ability to believe in oneself, grounded in preparation, experience, and sincerity.

He demonstrates the ability to make independent decisions, express opinions clearly, and take initiative during critical situations—traits that reflect leadership and emotional stability.

13. Humility

The value of humility is reflected in Bambang's character, who, despite playing a significant role in helping Ganis repay all her debts, never boasts or demands recognition for his sacrifices. Even when Ganis expels him out of disappointment for hiding her late husband's jewelry, Bambang does not react arrogantly. Instead, he sincerely admits his mistake and accepts Ganis's decision with an open heart.

Bambang:

> *Iya Dik. Tak akoni, pancen aku salah. Nanging aku ora nduwe niat ala Dik...* (Yes, dear. I admit it, I was wrong. But I had no bad intentions.) (Celengan Tresna: 24)

This line reflects Bambang's humility, as he avoids being defensive or blaming circumstances and others. Instead, he lowers his ego, acknowledges his mistake, and clarifies his good intentions. This serves as a true representation of humility.

14. Politeness

The value of politeness in Celengan Tresna is strongly emphasized in language choice, speech style, and the manner of addressing others..= This politeness is particularly evident in Bambang's interactions with aggressive creditors such as Brewok and Susi. Despite their threats and harsh words, Bambang responds with restraint and civility.

Bambang:

Heem, matur nuwun uga, ati-ati. (You're welcome. Take care. (Celengan Tresna: 13)

This simple statement embodies politeness through gratitude and wishing safety for others, even those who had acted unpleasantly toward him. Furthermore, politeness is consistently represented in the play by the characters' use of *krama alus* Javanese—a refined linguistic form conveying social respect and emotional moderation.

Lik Sarmi:

> *... Ngapunten Mbak Ganis...* (... Forgive me, Mbak Ganis...) (Celengan Tresna: 18)

The phrase "*ngapunten*" (forgive me) conveys not only an apology but also humility and respect for the interlocutor. This illustrates that politeness is not reserved solely for hierarchical interactions but also extends to peers

and the broader community.

15. Responsibility

The value of responsibility (*amanah*) is a central trait of Bambang's character. He voluntarily takes on the duty of settling the debts left by Ganis's late husband—an obligation not legally his own—out of a genuine desire to relieve Ganis from mental and financial pressure.

Bambang:

> *Dados niki mangke nek enten napa-napa, contone wong nagih utang... niku mangke sek tanggung jawab nggih kula?* (So, if anything happens later, like someone coming to collect debts... am I the one responsible? (Celengan Tresna: 3)

Here, Bambang explicitly affirms his readiness to face the social and moral consequences of protecting Ganis. His sense of responsibility extends beyond financial duties—it encompasses moral accountability and care for others' well-being. After discovering Ganis's late husband's jewelry, Bambang uses it not for personal gain but to repay her debts and rebuild Ganis's livelihood. Later, recognizing his error in concealing this discovery, he returns the remaining jewelry and confesses the truth with humility..

Bambang:

> *Dik, iki mas-masan tinggalane Mas Pram sing mbiyen tak gadekne. Sakiki wis bali utuh, iki tak balekne marang sliramu...* (Honey, this is the jewelry left by Mas Pram that I once pawned. Now it has been restored, and I return it to you...) (Celengan Tresna: 23)

This act demonstrates that responsibility is not only fulfilling obligations but also correcting mistakes and facing their consequences with honesty. Bambang's behavior illustrates moral accountability—a defining trait of integrity that strengthens trust and social cohesion. In the broader educational context, this scene reinforces that true responsibility lies in consistent ethical awareness and the courage to uphold justice even at personal cost.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that Budi Waluyo's drama Celengan Tresna effectively integrates both religious values and character education, expressed through the characters' behavior, dialogue, and the structure of the narrative. The religious values in play are interpreted through Glock and Stark's five dimensions, with the ideological, experiential, and consequential aspects emerging most prominently in the moral decisions and emotional expressions of the characters. Meanwhile, the values of

character education in this drama are manifested through characters such as responsibility, honesty, hard work, creativity, care for others, self-confidence, humility, politeness, love of peace, and integrity.

Among these are explicitly Islamic religious values such as sincerity (*ikhlas*), patience (*sabr*), honesty (*sidq*), and responsibility (*amanah*). The character of Bambang serves as the primary representation of these values, functioning as a moral archetype who exemplifies both personal virtue and social empathy. These values are not only significant within the dramatic context but also carry high pedagogical potential when applied in educational practice.

The practical implications of these findings highlight the potential of Budi Waluyo's Celengan Tresna as an effective educational medium for integrating religious and character education in classroom settings. Teachers, curriculum designers, and educators can utilize this drama as a contextual literary resource to cultivate students' moral, emotional, and spiritual development through literature-based activities. By analyzing characters such as Bambang, students can engage in reflective learning experiences that promote honesty, responsibility, humility, and empathy.

Furthermore, the integration of literary appreciation with ethical reflection supports Indonesia's broader character-based education initiatives by linking artistic expression with spiritual and moral development. In this sense, Budi Waluyo's Celengan Tresna not only enriches modern Indonesian literature but also serves as a living educational text that bridges culture, religion, and character education in a meaningful and transformative way.

References

Adji, B. S. & Indrastuti, N. S. K. (2024). Analisis Dimensi Religiositas dalam Tenang Saja, Allah akan Menjaga Hati Kita! Karya Tim Muhajir Project. Jurnal NUSA, 19 (1), 82-94.

Afifah, A. N. (2023, August). Students' integrity as a character education in Javanese novel. In AIP Conference Proceedings (Vol. 2805, No. 1, p. 020001). AIP Publishing LLC. https://doi.org/10.1063/5.0147987

Cahyani, A. M., Putri, R. A., Noviandini, S., & Wijayanti, O. (2024). Pentingnya Pembelajaran Apresiasi Drama terhadap Penguatan Pendidikan Karakter. Jurnal Basicedu, 8(1), 277–285. https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v8i1.6908

Harida, R. (2018). Analysis of Humor Making Techniques in the WIT

Comedy Program (Waktu Indonesia Timur). International Journal of Education, Information Technology, and Others, 1(2), 78-85. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.2527540

Hidayah, Y., Suyitno, S., Retnasari, L., & Ulfah, N. (2018). Pendidikan Karakter Religius Pada Sekolah Dasar : Sebuah Tinjaun Awal. Jurnal Iqra' : Kajian Ilmu Pendidikan, 3(2), 329–344. https://doi.org/10.25217/ji.v3i2.333

Jakandar, L. I. E., dkk. (2025). Intregration of Religious Values in Character Education: Building the Morals of the Golden Generation. Al-Hayati, 9(1). 124-141. https://doi.org/10.35723/ajie.v9i1.107

Kemal, I. & Rena Fitri, R. (2015). Analisis Nilai Pendidikan Karakter dalam Novel di Antara Asa, Cita, dan Cinta karya Isa Elfath. Jurnal Metamorfosa , 3(2), 45-57.

Kementerian Pendidikan Nasional. (2010). Panduan Pendidikan Karakter. Pusat Kurikulum dan Perbukuan.

Khairunisa, A., Sari, C. K., & Rahmadani, F. (2025). Pentingnya Pendidikan Karakter dalam Membangun Generasi Berintegritas di Era Globalisasi. Jurnal Pendidikan Dirgantara, 2(2), 194–205. https://doi.org/10.61132/jupendir.v2i2.288

Larasati, I. S., Iswantara, N., & Octavianingrum, D. (2023). Pendidikan Karakter Peduli Sosial dan Tanggung Jawab dalam Naskah Drama Bingkisan Istimewa. Jurnal Ilmiah Seni Pertunjukkan, 17(2), 158–168. https://doi.org/10.24821/idea.v17i2.10541.g3273

Luo, S., Ismail, L., Akhmad, N. K., Guo, Q. (2024). Using process drama in EFL education: A systematic literature review. Heliyon, 10 (11), 1-9. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e31936

Mamonto, F. M., Lensun, S. F., & Aror, S. C. (2021). Analisis Unsur-Unsur Intrinsik dalam Novel Izana karya Daruma Matsura. *SoCul: International Journal of Research in Social Cultural Issues, 1* (3). 214-223.

Mashar, R. (2020). Metaphor Story as an Active Learning Media to Increase Children Social Character. Edukids, 17(2). http://ejournal.upi.edu/index.php/edukid

Masjid, A. A., Sumarlam, S., Winarni, R., & Setiawan, B. (2023). Exploring wisdom in children's literature: Studies on the values of character education in poetry. International Journal of Society, Culture & Language, 11(3), 299-311. https://doi.org/10.22034/ijscl.2023.2007293.3101

Miles, B. M., & Huberman, A. M. (2014). Analisis Data Kualitatif: Buku Sumber tentang Metode-Metode Baru. Jakarta: Universitas Indonesia (UI-Press)

Nurlaili, L. & Naufal, A. (2022). Pendidikan Karakter sebagai Upaya Menghadapi Globalisasi. Jurnal Mahasiswa Karakter Bangsa, 2(2), 181 – 191.

Prasetiyo, C. A. & Raharjo, R. P. (2024). Religiusitas Moral dalam Novel Ya Allah Aku Pulang karya Alfialghazi (Kajian Glock dan Stark). Bapala. 11 (3). 231-242.

Putra, M. A. H., Malihah, E., Wiyanarti, E., & Darmawan, W. (2025). Religious Values in Hijaz Yamani Poetry: Integration of Spiritual Responsibility in Character Education. KARSA Journal of Social and Islamic Culture, 33(1), 33-65. https://ejournal.iainmadura.ac.id/index.php/karsa/article/view/18745

Putro, A. P., Waluyo, H., J., & Wardhani, W. E. (2020). Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Karakter dalam Naskah Drama Opera Kecoa karya N. Riantiarno. Dialektika: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, dan Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia, 7(1), 1-16. https://doi.org/10.15408/dialektika.v7i1.6188

Samani, Mukhlas dan Hariyanto, M.S. 2013. Konsep dan model Pendidikan Karakter, Jakarta: Rosdakarya

Setiyaningsih, I. (2019). Drama Pengetahuan dan Apresiasi. Intan Pariwara.

Stark & Glock. (1969). Religion and Society Intension. California.

Sugiyono. (2018). Metode Penelitian Pendidikan (Pendekatan Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D). Bandung: Alfabeta.

Sukirman. (2021). Karya Sastra Media Pendidikan Karakter bagi Peserta Didik. Jurnal Konsepsi, 10 (1), 17-27.

Ulya, C. & Putri, U. R. (2023). Pola Pengembangan Alur Cerita Pendek karya Siswa SMA Negeri Andong Boyolali. Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Indonesia,

11 (2). 94-101. http://dx.doi.org/10.30659/jpbi.11.2.14-21

Umar, M., S., W., Ma'arif, M., Ismail, F., & Rahman, R. (2025). Revitalization of Islamic Character Values in Local Folklore and its Implication on Character Education. Ulumuna, 29(1), 188-220. https://doi.org/10.20414/ujis.v29i1.1375

Waluyo, B., Fitriana, T. R., & Veronika, P. (2020). Drama dan Analisis Drama. Surakarta: Yuma Pustaka.

RITUAL, THEOLOGY, AND ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION: THE GREBEK BESAR TRADITION IN DEMAK REGENCY

Dita Kurniawati[1], *Moh. Rosyid*[1], *Mas'udi*[1], *Achmad Sopian*[2], *Ahmad Makki*[3]
[1]UIN Sunan Kudus, Kudus, Indonesia
[2]IAI An-Nawawi Purworejo, Purworejo, Indonesia
[3]IAI Khozinatul Ulum Blora, Blora, Indonesia
Email: watinia470@gmail.com

Received: November 3, 2025
Revised: December 7, 2025
Accepted: December 10, 2025

Abstract

Within the broader history of Islamic civilization in Java, ritual traditions such as Grebek Besar have functioned as key sites for the transmission, reinterpretation, and embodiment of Islamic ethical and theological values. This study examines the cultural and theological dimensions of the Grebek Besar festival in Demak Regency, Central Java, Indonesia, one of the most significant Islamic cultural events in Java. Rooted in the commemoration of Eid al-Adha, the festival embodies a dynamic synthesis between Islamic doctrine and Javanese cultural expression. Previous studies have largely treated Grebek Besar as a folkloric or historical tradition, without adequately examining its lived-theological meanings as articulated by local religious actors and enacted in everyday ritual practices. Using a qualitative ethnographic approach, this study is based on participant observation, in-depth interviews with religious leaders and community elders, and analysis of local archives and manuscripts. The findings are consolidated into a central thematic claim: Grebek Besar functions as a form of lived Islamic theology in which ritual performances, symbolic objects, and communal participation operate as interconnected mechanisms that sustain religious piety, social cohesion, and cultural continuity among Javanese Muslims. The study demonstrates that the festival is not merely a cultural celebration, but a ritualized space of Islamic devotion embedded in local custom. Processions, communal prayers, and food-

sharing practices are shown to carry theological meanings that reinforce the community's relationship with God while affirming collective historical memory and identity. This research makes a specific scholarly contribution by proposing an empirically grounded framework of "lived theology" in Javanese Islam, bridging normative Islamic theological concepts such as syukr and ukhuwah with anthropological analyses of ritual, symbolism, and collective memory, and thereby advancing interdisciplinary approaches to the study of Islam and local religiosity in Indonesia.

Dalam sejarah panjang peradaban Islam di Jawa, tradisi ritual seperti Grebek Besar berfungsi sebagai ruang penting bagi transmisi, reinterpretasi, dan perwujudan nilai-nilai etika dan teologi Islam. Berfokus pada tradisi ini, penelitian ini mengkaji dimensi kultural dan teologis dari festival Grebek Besar di Kabupaten Demak, Jawa Tengah, yang merupakan salah satu perayaan budaya Islam paling signifikan di Jawa. Berakar pada peringatan Iduladha, festival ini merepresentasikan sintesis dinamis antara ajaran Islam dan ekspresi budaya Jawa. Kajian-kajian sebelumnya umumnya memandang Grebek Besar sebagai tradisi folklorik atau peristiwa historis, tanpa menelaah secara memadai makna teoretis teologi yang hidup dalam praktik sosial dan ritual (lived theology) sebagaimana dimaknai oleh aktor-aktor keagamaan lokal dan diwujudkan dalam praktik ritual sehari-hari. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif etnografis, penelitian ini didasarkan pada observasi partisipatif, wawancara mendalam dengan tokoh agama dan sesepuh masyarakat, serta analisis arsip dan manuskrip lokal. Temuan penelitian ini dirumuskan dalam satu klaim tematik utama, yaitu bahwa Grebek Besar berfungsi sebagai bentuk teologi Islam yang dihidupi, di mana pertunjukan ritual, objek simbolik, dan partisipasi komunal saling terhubung sebagai mekanisme yang menopang kesalehan religius, kohesi sosial, dan kesinambungan budaya di kalangan Muslim Jawa. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa Grebek Besar bukan sekadar perayaan budaya, melainkan ruang ritual devosional Islam yang tertanam dalam adat lokal. Arak-arakan, doa bersama, dan praktik berbagi makanan mengandung makna teologis yang memperkuat relasi komunitas dengan Tuhan sekaligus meneguhkan memori historis dan identitas kolektif. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi ilmiah dengan mengajukan kerangka teoretis lived theology dalam konteks Islam Jawa yang berlandaskan data empiris, dengan menjembatani konsep-konsep teologi Islam normatif seperti syukr dan ukhuwah dengan analisis antropologis mengenai ritual, simbolisme, dan memori kolektif, sehingga memperkaya pendekatan interdisipliner dalam kajian Islam dan religiusitas lokal di Indonesia.

***Keywords**: Grebek Besar; Islamic culture; Javanese Islamic civilization; ritual symbolism; religious tradition*

Introduction

Grebek Besar is one of the most iconic cultural and religious festivals in Demak Regency, Central Java, Indonesia, celebrated annually to commemorate the Islamic feast of Eid al-Adha. As a historical heart of the early spread of Islam in Java, Demak holds a unique position in shaping the cultural expression of Javanese Islam. The Grebek Besar festival thus occupies a vital place within the collective memory of the local Muslim community, intertwining theological devotion with cultural continuity (Aisy et al., 2024; Hidayat & Fu'adah, 2025). This event not only reflects the religious zeal of the people of Demak but also embodies their efforts to preserve the spiritual and cultural legacy inherited from the era of the Wali Songo, particularly the influence of the Demak Sultanate, the first Islamic kingdom in Java (Aini & Ribawati, 2025; Ansari, 2024; Burhani, 2018). In this sense, Grebek Besar is not merely a historical remnant, but a living tradition whose contemporary practices provide an important analytical lens for understanding how Islamic values are continuously reinterpreted, negotiated, and embodied in the social life of present-day Javanese Muslim communities (Nurrokhmah et al., 2025; Syahputra et al., 2025; Yasinatul, 2025).

Contemporary anthropological approaches have problematized the use of the term "*syncretism*", arguing that it often obscures the agency of local communities in shaping and rearticulating their religious practices. In the case of Grebek Besar, scholars characterize the ritual as a form of acculturation or localized orthodoxy, where Islamic discourses are actively interpreted and embedded within Javanese cultural frameworks, producing a dynamic and context-specific religiosity rather than a simple blending of distinct systems ('Aisy, et al., 2024).

Theologically, Grebek Besar signifies an act of communal piety (*ibadah jama'i*) and gratitude (*syukr*) to Allah for blessings and sustenance. The procession of offerings (*ubo rampe*), the collective prayer in the Great Mosque of Demak, and the participation of thousands of residents demonstrate the community's unity and submission to divine will (Aisy et al., 2024; Hidayat & Fu'adah, 2025). At the same time, these practices serve as a performative reaffirmation of *ukhuwah Islamiyah* (Islamic brotherhood) and social solidarity. Thus, the festival operates not only as a ritual commemoration of *Eid al-Adha* but also as a medium for maintaining moral values, cultural harmony, and social cohesion (Ansari, 2024; Nurrokhmah et al., 2025; Syahputra et al., 2025).

Analytically, this study operationalizes these three key concepts as

follows: *ibadah jama'i* is examined as collective ritual action expressed through patterns of participation, role distribution, and spatial organization within the festival (Fitriyani et al., 2024); *syukr* is analyzed as expressions of gratitude manifested in practices of offering (*ubo rampe*), sermon narratives, and participants' accounts (Siregar et al., 2025); and *ukhuwah* is interpreted as indicators of social solidarity reflected in networks of mutual assistance, food-sharing practices, and the discourse of communal belonging (Millasari et al., 2025; Aini & Ribawati, 2025). These concepts are examined through thematic coding of participant observation and in-depth interviews, as well as discourse analysis of sermons and local archival materials (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Braun & Clarke, 2021; Ahmed, 2025).

Studies on Javanese Islam have historically foregrounded the complex processes of cultural accommodation and the localized articulation of Islamic teachings within pre-existing belief systems. Geertz's framework remains useful for understanding how religious practices are negotiated across cultural boundaries, even as later scholarship critiques its structural rigidity and limited attention to theological depth. To address these limitations, contemporary research adopts more contextually grounded frameworks such as the concept of *Islam Nusantara*, which emphasizes contextualization, moderation, and cultural integration of Islam with local traditions in Indonesia. Scholars of Islam Nusantara argue that local practices such as communal rituals, feasts, and prayer traditions constitute expressions of Islamic values articulated through indigenous cultural idioms rather than dilutions of orthodoxy. This perspective reflects the broader, dynamic negotiation between religion and culture in the Indonesian context (Ansari, 2024).

Contemporary empirical studies further illustrate this dynamic. For example, research on the *tahlilan* tradition in Java frames it as a *kearifan lokal* within the Islam Nusantara paradigm, with ritual practices rooted in historical Sufi-inspired da'wah strategies are understood as locally internalized Islamic piety that reinforce social cohesion and sustain cultural identity (Aini & Ribawati, 2025). Similarly, recent scholarship on the interaction between Islamic law (*shari'ah*) and Javanese *adat* demonstrates that the integration of Islamic norms into local customary frameworks—without compromising essential doctrinal principles—has produced a contextual, culturally embedded form of Islam characteristic of Java's religious landscape (Millasari et al., 2025). These studies support the present research by situating Grebek Besar within broader patterns of cultural negotiation and localized orthodoxy in

Javanese Islam, showing that such rituals are not peripheral folkloric artifacts but central manifestations of lived religiosity through which Islamic sacred values are expressed in culturally resonant forms.

Other scholars of Indonesian Islam, such as Burhani (2018), have traced the historical development of Islamic thought and spirituality in the archipelago, highlighting the formative influence of *tasawuf* (Islamic mysticism) and *tarekat* (Sufi orders) in shaping local religious consciousness. The spread of Islam in Java was not achieved through coercive conversion but through gradual acculturation, facilitated by religious teachers and saints (*Wali Songo*) who adapted Islamic teachings to local cultural frameworks. This historical pattern of cultural adaptation provides a theoretical backdrop for understanding how rituals like Grebek Besar continue to thrive as embodied expressions of both religious devotion and cultural heritage.

Recent studies have begun to address the socio-cultural transformations of traditional rituals in response to modernization and social change. Research on Grebek Besar by Rafi Hidayat and Fu'adah (2025) shows that the festival remains resilient despite increasing pressures from commercialization, tourism, and media representation, functioning as a medium through which Islamic values and local cultural identity are continuously negotiated and sustained. However, much of the existing scholarship still tends to emphasize descriptive ethnographic accounts, leaving a theoretical gap in analyzing the deeper theological-symbolic framework underlying these rituals. In particular, limited attention has been given to how Islamic metaphysical concepts such as gratitude (*syukr*), unity (*tawhid*), and moral order are embodied and enacted through the performative dimensions of Grebek Besar.

This study seeks to address this gap in the literature by approaching Grebek Besar through the lens of Islamic cultural theology, emphasizing how symbolic performances and ritual acts function as mediums of religious meaning-making. More specifically, this research advances the concept of Islamic cultural theology by proposing an interpretive model of Javanese Islamic ritual that conceptualizes tradition not as a peripheral or syncretic layer, but as a formative theological sphere in which Qur'anic values are socially embodied and culturally translated. By integrating anthropological perspectives on ritual practice with theological reflection, this study offers a new framework for interpreting Javanese Islamic rituals as sites of "lived tafsir," in which divine revelation is continually negotiated, localized, and re-enacted through communal performances, symbolism, and collective memory, thus

contributing to a more holistic understanding of Javanese Islam as a dynamic and living religious tradition.

Accordingly, this study seeks to address three central research questions. First, it explores how the rituals and symbols of Grebek Besar articulate the interaction between Islamic teachings and Javanese cultural traditions. Second, it examines the social and theological meanings that are constructed and communicated through these ritual practices. Third, it investigates how Grebek Besar functions as a mechanism for preserving and transmitting Islamic cultural identity across generations within the Demak community.

By exploring these questions, this research aims to contribute to the broader academic discourse on the Islamization of local traditions and the resilience of Islamic culture in Indonesia. The study not only highlights Grebek Besar as an ethnographic phenomenon but also positions it as a model of how Islamic values continue to shape, and are simultaneously shaped by, local cultural contexts in the contemporary Indonesian setting.

Method

This study employed a qualitative field research approach grounded in the paradigm of Islamic cultural studies, emphasizing the integration between empirical observation and theological interpretation. The research was conducted in Demak Regency, Central Java, Indonesia, focusing on the Great Mosque of Demak and the traditional procession routes of the Grebek Besar festival, which form the central ritual spaces of the event. Fieldwork took place from May to July 2024, covering the entire cycle of preparation, performance, and post-festival reflection. The study aimed to explore the theological, symbolic, and cultural meanings embodied in Grebek Besar as one of the most enduring expressions of Javanese Islam.

An ethnographic design was adopted to allow direct engagement with the lived experiences and symbolic worlds of the participants. This approach aligns with the Islamic cultural studies perspective, which views *tafaqquh fi al-din*—the deep understanding of religion—as inseparable from its social and ritual expressions. Through this lens, the study captures how faith-based practices are embodied, negotiated, and transmitted within everyday cultural life.

Data were collected through participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentary analysis. Through participant observation, the researcher attended the full sequence of Grebek Besar events, including the *kirab pusaka* (sacred heirloom procession), *doa bersama* (communal prayer), and symbolic

offering ceremonies. Observations focused on ritual structure, spatial organization, and expressions of Islamic moral values such as *syukr* (gratitude), *ukhuwah* (solidarity), and *ikhlas* (sincerity).

In-depth interviews were conducted with ulama, cultural experts, community elders, youth participants, and local officials, representing diverse perspectives across age and social background. Informants were selected purposively based on their active participation and recognized authority within the community. These conversations explored how participants interpret Grebek Besar as a manifestation of Islamic faith expressed through local culture.

The documentary study involved the examination of written records, local archives, photographs, and historical accounts. It aimed to trace the evolution of Grebek Besar from the Demak Sultanate period to the present day. The findings illustrate how Islamic teachings have been continuously adapted within Javanese cultural frameworks.

Data analysis employed Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA), drawing on Braun and Clarke's foundational framework (2006) and its later reflexive development (2021). The process involved iterative stages of familiarization, coding, theme development, and interpretation, enabling the identification of theological and cultural meanings embedded in the ritual. Themes such as Islamic symbolism, moral values, and community participation were refined through comparative reading of observation notes, interview transcripts, and archival materials. Triangulation across observation, interviews, and documents strengthened the validity of findings, while member checking with key informants ensured interpretive accuracy. Throughout the process, the researcher maintained reflexivity to preserve alignment between theological essence and cultural context (Ahmed, 2025).

In sum, this methodological approach allowed Grebek Besar to be understood not merely as a cultural performance but as a living articulation of Islamic religiosity. The integration of sustained ethnographic engagement with interpretive Islamic theology provides a methodological contribution to the field of Islamic cultural studies, demonstrating how ritual practices serve as spaces where Islamic norms are lived, negotiated, and transmitted through collective cultural expression.

Finding and Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that the Grebek Besar ritual represents a living synthesis between Islamic theological values and Javanese cultural

identity, forming a distinctive expression of Indonesian Islam. Beyond being a festivities celebration, the ritual operates as a structured symbolic system through which religious meanings are continuously produced and transmitted within the community.

Symbolic Structure, Cosmology, and the Ethics of Gratitude

One of the central ritual elements is the *tumpeng*, which participants consistently interpreted not merely as ceremonial food but as a cosmological symbol. As stated by a senior religious leader, Fauzi, *"Tumpeng menggambarkan hubungan manusia dengan Allah dan alam puncaknya menunjuk pada keesaan Allah"* ("The *tumpeng* represents the relationship between humanity and God, with its peak pointing to the oneness of Allah"). This interpretation was echoed by a cultural elder, Muthoin, who explained that the conical form represents "vertical devotion and social balance." These narratives demonstrate that local actors actively articulate theological meanings through material symbols.

Following the historical roots of Grebek Besar in the legacy of the Demak Sultanate, contemporary practices such as processions, communal prayers, and food distribution function as forms of embodied theology. A community elder, Masrohan, remarked, *"Grebek Besar bukan hanya tradisi, tapi cara kami beribadah bersama"* ("Grebek Besar is not merely a tradition, but a way for us to worship together"). This indicates that ritual performance is understood as a collective enactment of faith rather than a mere act of cultural preservation.

Building on these symbolic and performative dimensions, the festival's persistence illustrates both cultural continuity and religious adaptability. A youth participant, Rangga, perceived the ritual as a means of inheriting Islamic identity in a modern context: *"Lewat Grebek Besar, kami belajar Islam dengan cara yang dekat dengan budaya kami"* ("Through Grebek Besar, we learn Islam in a way that is close to our own culture"). This intergenerational perspective highlights how the ritual functions as a mechanism of cultural and religious transmission.

The central ritual of Grebek Besar—the grand procession from the *Pendopo Kabupaten* (Regency Pavilion) to the Great Mosque of Demak—embodies a profound synthesis of faith, culture, and gratitude. It is not merely a festive performance or a local custom, but rather a living act of worship: a communal *syukr* (thankfulness) manifested through bodily movement, offerings, and collective remembrance of Allah. The participants, adorned in traditional Javanese attire, proceed solemnly toward the Great Mosque carrying *tumpeng*

(rice cones), fruits, livestock, and agricultural produce as symbolic offerings of *sadaqah* and *syukr* for the sustenance and blessings bestowed upon them.

In its essence, the Grebek Besar ritual functions as a form of embodied gratitude. The Qur'an states: "If you are grateful, I will surely increase My favor upon you" (Q.S. Ibrahim [14]:7). This verse provides the theological foundation for the festival's meaning and purpose. Gratitude (*syukr*) is not simply a verbal expression of praise, but an active acknowledgment of divine bounty through deeds of sharing, giving, and humility. The ritual teaches that gratitude must manifest both vertically (*hablun min Allah*) and horizontally (*hablun min al-nas*), thereby aligning human thankfulness with ethical and social responsibility.

The act of offering agricultural produce and livestock symbolizes the community's recognition that all provisions originate from Allah. This interpretation is empirically supported by field observations and in-depth interviews, which show that ritual participants consistently articulated that the offerings represented "returning God's trust". For instance, a senior community elder, Syahrozi, stated, *"Hasil panen itu titipan Allah, jadi harus dikembalikan sebagian lewat Grebek"* ("The harvest is a trust from God, so part of it must be returned through Grebek"). Participant observation further recorded that organizers explicitly framed the distribution of offerings as an act of gratitude during preparatory ritual meetings.

These findings resonate with the concept of Javanese Islamic spiritual synthesis, which understands material and spiritual actions as inseparable (Yusdani et al., 2019; Howell, 2012). Documentary analysis of local sermons (*khutbah*) and festival guidelines also revealed repeated references to the sanctification of worldly abundance through *dzikr* and thanksgiving practices. From this perspective, *syukr* is not limited to verbal expressions of gratitude, but constitutes a comprehensive spiritual orientation—an embodied worldview in which life itself is perceived as a divine trust continuously reaffirmed through ritual practice (Siregar et al., 2025; Fitriyani et al., 2024).

The symbolism of Grebek Besar reveals an intricate theology of *syukr*. In Islamic ethics, gratitude implies three dimensions: (1) acknowledgment of divine favor in the heart, (2) expression of praise through the tongue, and (3) the use of blessings in ways pleasing to Allah (Al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*). The festival integrates all three. Emotionally, the participants feel joy and reverence; verbally, they recite *dzikr* and *shalawat*; materially, they share food and wealth with others (Aini & Ribawati, 2025; Saefudin et al., 2020;

Syahputra et al., 2025).

The procession from the *Pendopo Kabupaten* to the Great Mosque itself mirrors the spiritual journey of thankfulness. The *Pendopo* represents the realm of worldly governance, while the mosque signifies divine sovereignty. The movement between these two spaces symbolizes the redirection of power, wealth, and human effort toward divine acknowledgment. This spatial transition transforms gratitude into a public ethic—affirming that the blessings of leadership and prosperity must serve the people rather than merely benefit the elite (Burhani, 2018; Millasari et al., 2025).

In the field observations at Grebek Besar, for instance, state officials, local farmers, merchants, and children were seen queuing side by side during the distribution of *tumpeng* and berkah foods, engaging in shared expressions of gratitude such as synchronized invocations of "*alhamdulillah*," which reflected a collective emotional experience indicative of *communitas*. Furthermore, participants described this moment as a time when "status did not matter; everyone stood as equals before Allah," exemplifying how *communitas* is materially and experientially constituted through ritual praxis. Contemporary scholarship on ritual liminality further suggests that these embodied experiences not only reflect egalitarian ideals but actively generate communal identity and social solidarity within contexts of shared worship and collective celebration. Such empirical grounding, coupled with theoretical dialogue, strengthens the argument by connecting Turner's anthropological framework directly to lived cultural practices at Grebek Besar.

The ritual of Grebek Besar also aligns with the prophetic tradition that links gratitude to generosity. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is reported to have said, "The most beloved of people to Allah are those most beneficial to others" (al-Tabarani, *al-Mu'jam al-Kabir*). The festival's redistribution of food and offerings transforms personal piety into communal welfare, embodying *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (mercy to all creation). Here, gratitude functions as an ethical bridge between individual worship and collective social justice.

From a Sufi perspective, gratitude (*syukr*) is not merely an ethical disposition but signifies deep awareness of divine presence and relationality with God. In Sufi practice, the devotee's experience of thankfulness extends beyond emotion to an embodied consciousness of God's creative presence in all phenomena, thus suggesting an ontological dimension of gratitude (Siregar, 2025). Similarly, the notion of *fana'*, the dissolution of the self

before the Divine, continues to be discussed in contemporary Sufi literature as part of the mystical path toward unity, in which the ego's centrality fades and divine remembrance becomes the axis of existence (Fitriyani et al., 2024). In the Grebek Besar ritual, the communal sharing of food, as interpreted by participants, enacts this *fana'*-like surrender—an act of self-effacement before the Divine expressed through generosity and collective gratitude.

In Javanese Sufism gratitude is intertwined with the concept of *ngelmu rasa*, the inner realization of divine harmony within the universe. When the community collectively expresses *syukr* through ritual movement and song, they participate in what may be called *dzikr berjamaah budaya* (a cultural form of collective remembrance) (Fitriyani et al., 2024; Yasinatul, 2025). The beating of *bedug* drums, the chanting of *shalawat*, and the rhythmic flow of the procession together create a multisensory devotion—a living form of *dzikr* that fuses the aesthetic and the spiritual (Syahputra et al., 2025; Aisy et al., 2024; Saefudin et al., 2020).

In the Grebek Besar ritual, participants articulate similar readings of the *tumpeng*'s form and ritual use. Field interviews reveal that many participants interpret the rice cone's pointed summit as a symbolic reminder of life's ultimate return to God and the aspiration toward spiritual unity (*tawhid*), echoing indigenous conceptions of vertical ascent toward the divine. During observation of the ritual distribution, informants described the act of cutting the *tumpeng*'s peak and sharing it communally as a moment of collective gratitude (*syukr*) and as a blessing bestowed upon all participants. This interpretation suggests that the ritual materializes divine benevolence through acts of social exchange.

Contemporary studies support such interpretations. Syahputra et al. (2025) explains that the *tumpeng's* conical shape and arrangement of side dishes convey spiritual meanings of balance, gratitude, and communal harmony. Pertiwi (2023) and Yasinatul (2025) further emphasize *tumpeng* as a potent cultural symbol of shared identity and spiritual expression in Javanese ritual practice. The combination of participant testimony and recent scholarship thus anchors the symbolic reading of the *tumpeng* in both emic experience and academic discourse

Recent studies in Islamic spirituality emphasize that ritual practices cultivate *barakah* (divine blessing) through the convergence of sincere intention (*niyyah*) and communal harmony (*ukhuwah*). Contemporary Sufi-oriented scholarship understands *barakah* not as a passive metaphysical attribute,

but as a dynamic, relational process generated through ethical intention, collective devotion, and social cohesion (Zamhari, 2022). In this framework, gratitude (*syukr*) operates simultaneously as both the source and the medium of *barakah*, reinforcing spiritual awareness while strengthening communal bonds. Empirical studies on Indonesian ritual life demonstrate that acts of giving particularly those embedded in communal religious festivals are perceived by participants as spiritually efficacious exchanges, wherein divine grace is believed to circulate through human generosity and shared intention (Fauzi, 2024). In the context of Grebek Besar, the material act of distributing food thus becomes a symbolically charged spiritual exchange, embodying the belief that divine blessing flows through ethically grounded social relations rather than individual accumulation.

The ritualized distribution of food and offerings in Grebek Besar can be interpreted as reinforcing a moral economy grounded in Islamic ethical values. Rather than claiming this as an explicit economic doctrine, this study treats it as an interpretative pattern emerging from ethnographic evidence and participants' narratives. Field interviews indicate that participants frequently described the distribution of food not in economic terms, but as acts of *sedekah* (charity) and *berkah* (blessing). For example, one community member Duriyah stated, *"Bukan soal bagi-bagi harta, tapi supaya semua ikut merasakan berkah"* ("It is not about distributing wealth, but about allowing everyone to share in the blessing"). Observational data also recorded that organizers framed the sharing process as a religious duty of mutual care rather than as formal redistribution.

In this sense, the practice of food-sharing is understood in this study as a symbolic moral economy—a cultural mechanism through which private blessings are ritually transformed into communal benefit. This interpretation is offered as an analytical reading grounded in ethnographic evidence and theological reflection, rather than as a direct doctrinal claim, maintaining methodological transparency while preserving interpretive depth.

> "And spend out of that which We have provided you before death approaches any of you and he says, 'My Lord, if only You would delay me for a short term so I would give charity and be among the righteous'" (Q.S. Al-Munafiqun [63]:10).

In this verse, gratitude is closely tied to the act of spending for others. The people of Demak, by offering parts of their harvest, livestock, and food, symbolically affirm that wealth is a divine trust, not a personal entitlement. Empirical studies on Grebeg Besar show that such practices sustain local values

of *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) while embodying Islamic principles of *ta'awun* (mutual assistance), through which religious devotion is expressed through collective generosity and social solidarity ('Aisy et al., 2024; Hidayat & Fu'adah, 2025).

The festival also cultivates intergenerational transmission of faith and ethics. Through participation in preparation and procession, younger generations learn that gratitude is not abstract but collectively practiced and socially embodied. It teaches that faith is lived through *amal* (deeds) and *mu'amalah* (social relations) (Saefudin et al., 2020; Ansari, 2024). In this pedagogical sense, Grebek Besar functions as a cultural madrasa, where theology is not only taught but enacted through ritual performance.

Ultimately, Grebek Besar illustrates that gratitude in Islam is both devotional and distributive. It binds spiritual consciousness to ethical action. The celebration dramatizes a worldview in which every blessing demands reciprocation through service and generosity. The ritual's symbolic message is clear: divine favor increases not through accumulation but through circulation (Yasinatul, 2025; Pertiwi et al., 2023).

This ethical vision resonates with the idea of *rahmatan lil 'alamin*. In this framework, gratitude is the root of mercy, and mercy is the social manifestation of gratitude. In Grebek Besar, the community learns that being thankful is not only saying "*Alhamdulillah*," but ensuring that others, too, can say it. By transforming gratitude into shared joy, the festival turns theology into lived experience—an affirmation that Islam, when embodied in local ritual, remains ever vital, compassionate, and profoundly human.

Ritual Performance as Lived Theology

From a theological standpoint, Grebek Besar functions as a form of collective worship (*'ibadah jama'i*) that transcends the individual and becomes communal in essence. The event includes *doa bersama* (collective prayer), *pengajian umum* (public sermon), and recitation of *sholawat*, all of which aim to awaken spiritual consciousness and strengthen the sense of belonging to the *ummah*. Religious leaders interviewed during fieldwork emphasized that Grebek Besar is not a syncretic blend of Islam and local belief, but rather a contextual expression of Islamic devotion through culturally intelligible symbols. As one *ulama* explained, "Tradition is a vessel, while Islam is the essence; if the vessel carries goodness, it becomes part of worship." (Burhani, 2018; Aini & Ribawati, 2025).

Empirical data reveal that Grebek Besar serves not merely as a religious observance but as a vital instrument for the preservation of cultural continuity and historical memory among the people of Demak. The annual festival operates as a social and spiritual medium that transmits collective identity, moral values, and historical consciousness from one generation to the next. Its enduring practice spanning from the Demak Sultanate in the fifteenth century to the modern Republic of Indonesia illustrates the remarkable resilience of Islamic cultural expressions within Javanese civilization.

At the heart of Grebek Besar lies a profound sense of historical remembrance. The festival commemorates the legacy of the Wali Songo, particularly Sunan Kalijaga and Raden Patah, whose missionary and political roles were pivotal in establishing Demak as the first Islamic kingdom in Java. Studies on Grebeg-related rituals in Java show that such ceremonies function as symbolic spaces for transmitting Islamic values and preserving collective religious memory within communal practices (Yurisa et al., 2021). Through prayers, ritual offerings, and public processions, participants reaffirm their connection to a sacred historical lineage that continues to shape their religious worldview.

This process of ritual remembrance aligns with what Hobsbawm calls the "invention of tradition," in which cultural practices are continually reconstructed to maintain continuity with an idealized past. In Grebek Besar, however, such continuity is not artificially constructed but organically sustained through lived religious practice. The festival represents a *living tradition*, one that evolves with time while retaining its theological and symbolic essence. Its survival through political changes, colonial encounters, and modern transformations testifies to its adaptability and to the community's deep emotional investment in preserving their Islamic-Javanese heritage.

The ritual structure of Grebek Besar can be read as a form of historical storytelling expressed through performance. This interpretive reading is grounded in a combination of participant observation, in-depth interviews, and symbolic analysis of ritual spaces and movements. During fieldwork, the procession from the *Pendopo Kabupaten* to the Great Mosque of Demak was systematically documented, focusing on spatial sequencing, ritual choreography, and verbal cues delivered by ritual leaders.

Interviews with local historians and cultural custodians revealed that this spatial movement is consciously understood as a reenactment of the historical relationship between political and religious authority. As noted by a cultural

custodian, Rahmi, *"Arak-arakan dari pendopo ke masjid itu menggambarkan bagaimana raja dan ulama dulu berjalan bersama"* ("The procession from the *pendopo* to the mosque symbolizes how rulers and religious scholars once walked together"). Through symbolic analysis, the *Pendopo* was interpreted as representing temporal authority, while the mosque was understood as embodying divine legitimacy, a distinction frequently articulated in sermons and ritual commentaries recorded during the festival.

Thus, the annual ritual procession is analyzed in this study as a performative narrative that materially enacts the history of the Demak Sultanate. It symbolizes the enduring ideal of harmony between governance and spiritual guidance associated with the legacy of Raden Patah. This interpretation is grounded in systematically observed ritual practice and supported by emic interpretations provided by community actors.

Studies on Grebeg Besar emphasize that ritual processions function as lived religious practices through which historical memory and Islamic values are continually reactivated in communal life. Drawing on the perspective of living hadith, 'Aisy et al. (2024) show that elements such as the beating of the *bedug*, collective chanting of *shalawat*, and ritual processions are not merely ceremonial acts but embodied forms of religious expression rooted in historical tradition. Through bodily participation and shared sensory experience, the community does not simply recall its sacred past but actively reenacts it, allowing religious memory to be sustained through practice rather than textual transmission alone.

For participants, this ritual embodiment transforms history into lived spirituality. As one elder informant expressed, "When we walk to the mosque during Grebek Besar, we are walking with our ancestors." Such statements reflect the anthropological concept of ritual commemoration, in which collective action functions as both remembrance and renewal. The festival does not merely *represent* history it *performs* it, ensuring that the foundational story of Islam's arrival in Java remains a tangible and emotionally resonant reality for contemporary Muslims.

Cultural continuity in Grebek Besar is maintained through a complex interplay of ritual repetition, communal participation, and symbolic reinterpretation. The younger generation learns the meanings of the festival not through formal instruction but through embodied participation, such as helping prepare the *tumpeng*, joining the procession, and listening to sermons at the Great Mosque. This pattern was empirically observed during fieldwork,

where adolescents and young adults played active roles in preparatory activities under the guidance of community elders.

Several youth participants explicitly described this experiential learning process. One teenage participant, Salam, stated, *"Saya belajar arti Grebek bukan di sekolah, tapi waktu ikut menyiapkan tumpeng dan ikut arakan"* ("I learned the meaning of Grebeg not at school, but through preparing the *tumpeng* and joining the procession"). Another youth participant, Sofiyah, remarked, *"Kalau ikut langsung, baru paham bahwa ini bukan sekadar pesta, tapi ibadah"* ("Only by participating directly do you realize that this is not merely a festivity, but an act of worship"). These testimonies provide direct evidence that meaning is transmitted through practice and participation rather than through formal pedagogy.

In this context, the experiential learning observed among younger participants reflects a broader Javanese cultural ethic of *nguri-uri kabudayan*—the moral responsibility to nurture and sustain cultural heritage through lived practice. This dynamic is not only conceptually recognized within Javanese cultural discourse but is also empirically evident in the active involvement of youth during the Grebeg Besar ritual, where cultural knowledge and religious values are acquired through participation rather than instruction ('Aisy et al., 2024; Hidayat & Fu'adah, 2025).

Such participatory transmission ensures that the values embedded in the ritual gratitude, humility, solidarity, and devotion are internalized as part of everyday ethics. In this sense, Grebek Besar functions as an informal institution of moral education, a *cultural madrasa* that teaches Islamic virtues through collective action rather than doctrinal exposition. The intergenerational continuity of the festival demonstrates how Islamic values are localized and perpetuated through communal life, bridging the sacred and the social in a distinctively Javanese way.

The interpretive pattern observed in Grebek Besar aligns with broader analyses of Javanese ritual practices as lived Islamic pedagogy. Saefudin et al. (2020), in their study of the Barikan ritual, demonstrate how symbolic actions function as modes of Islamic education, transmitting Qur'anic and Prophetic values through communal participation rather than formal instruction. Similarly, the ritual practices in Grebek Besar cultivate gratitude, solidarity, and ethical responsibility through embodied performance.

Importantly, the endurance of Grebeg Besar highlights the community's capacity to reinterpret sacred heritage in the face of modernization. Younger

generations participate actively, not only through traditional forms of engagement but increasingly by documenting and sharing the event via digital media, contributing to broader visibility and cultural engagement. Research on millennial perceptions of Grebeg Besar indicates that younger participants view the tradition as an important means of cultural preservation and social involvement (Nurrokhmah et al., 2025). Moreover, studies on media and ritual practices suggest that social media can reshape how traditional celebrations are experienced and communicated without undermining core values (Tsaltsabilla et al., 2025). These dynamics resonate with findings that Grebeg Besar embodies deep spiritual, cultural, and social meanings that continue to be relevant even as the community adapts to contemporary contexts (Hidayat & Fu'adah, 2025).

The persistence of Grebek Besar also reveals how collective memory operates as a foundation of Islamic identity in Java. Through its rituals, the community reaffirms its link to the early spread of Islam, the political authority of the Demak Sultanate, and the spiritual legacy of the Wali Songo. This historical consciousness functions as a moral compass in the present. In times of social tension or cultural change, the memory of Demak's tolerant and inclusive Islam serves as a guiding ideal. The figure of Sunan Kalijaga, who employed art, music, and local customs to spread Islam, symbolizes the adaptive genius of Javanese religiosity, a model of how faith can harmonize with culture without losing its spiritual essence. Grebek Besar, by commemorating this legacy, embodies and perpetuates the vision of an Islam that is peaceful, aesthetic, and deeply rooted in social ethics (Yasinatul, 2025; Syahputra et al., 2025).

The collective prayers (*doa bersama*) at the mosque during Grebek Besar further reinforce the principle of *tawhid*—the unity of God and, by extension, the unity of believers. The synchronized act of supplication embodies the metaphysical belief that the community, when united in remembrance, mirrors the harmony of the cosmos. Thus, the ritual becomes both a historical and cosmological reaffirmation of faith: a moment when the community re-enters the sacred rhythm established by their ancestors (Aini & Ribawati, 2025; Howell, 2012).

The continuity of Grebek Besar from the fifteenth century to the twenty-first demonstrates that tradition, when rooted in theology and social relevance, possesses the capacity to endure. Its resilience lies not in rigid preservation but in dynamic adaptation of what anthropologists term "cultural resilience." Lived

Islam in Indonesia is characterized by constant negotiation between doctrinal orthodoxy and cultural expression (Ansari, 2024; Yusdani et al., 2019). Grebek Besar exemplifies this negotiation in practice, maintaining fidelity to Islamic principles while celebrating the aesthetic richness of local heritage.

In this sense, the festival functions as a cultural bridge between history and modernity. It reminds contemporary Muslims of their shared spiritual ancestry while offering a model for integrating faith with daily life. The annual procession to the Great Mosque is more than a ritual journey—it is a pilgrimage through time, carrying the moral wisdom of the past into the spiritual consciousness of the present (Aisy et al., 2024; Yasinatul, 2025).

As one participant summarized during field observation: "Grebek Besar teaches us that we are part of a story that began long before us, and will continue after us." This awareness of historical continuity nurtures a sense of humility and stewardship. It reminds the community that their identity as Muslims of Demak is not an isolated possession but an inherited trust (*amanah*) that must be preserved for future generations.

Ultimately, Grebek Besar is not just a commemoration of history—it is history in motion. Through its rituals, symbols, and collective memory, the people of Demak continually recreate their connection to the sacred origins of Javanese Islam, affirming that the past is not lost but lives on in their worship, their community, and their enduring gratitude to Allah.

Negotiating Shari'ah and Culture in Lived Islamic Practice

While the preceding discussion has demonstrated how Grebek Besar operates as lived theology, the following section examines how such practices are continuously negotiated within normative Islamic discourse. The harmony between Sharia and local culture becomes most evident in how Grebek Besar integrates religious and cultural elements within a single framework of meaning. The use of traditional art forms such as *gamelan* music, *batik* costumes, and symbolic offerings is not universally accepted as religiously neutral, but exists within ongoing scholarly debates in contemporary Islamic thought concerning the boundaries between authentic religious practice and cultural accommodation. In some reformist discourses, such practices are viewed with suspicion as potential *bid'ah*, whereas in traditionalist and contextualist frameworks they are understood as legitimate expressions of *'urf* (custom) that do not contradict the core principles of Islam.

Within this interpretive context, Grebek Besar is best understood not

as a static synthesis but as a site of continuous negotiation between normative *shari'ah* and lived cultural religiosity. Field interviews revealed that local religious leaders consciously framed artistic and symbolic elements not as replacements for ritual obligation, but as *wasilah* (means) to cultivate deeper spiritual attentiveness. One ulama, Masyahar, explained, *"Bukan mengganti syariat, tapi memperindah cara kita mensyukuri Allah"* ("It is not about replacing the *shari'ah*, but about beautifying the way we express gratitude to God").

From the perspective of Islamic aesthetics, this dynamic reflects the principle of *ihsan*, understood not simply as ritual perfection but as the embodiment of ethical and spiritual beauty in social and cultural life. Rather than dissolving *shari'ah* into culture, Grebek Besar illustrates how local Muslim communities actively interpret and negotiate religious authenticity through culturally embedded forms of worship, thereby contributing to broader debates on Islam, modernity, and indigenous religious expression (Burhani, 2018; Yasinatul, 2025; Syahputra et al., 2025).

Interviews with community leaders indicate that the ritual functions as a social platform for fostering *ukhuwah islamiyah* (Islamic brotherhood), *ukhuwah wathaniyah* (national unity), and *ukhuwah insaniyah* (human solidarity). These dimensions illustrate how Islam in Java continues to evolve as a cultural Islam—a lived tradition that harmonizes theology, art, and community life. Through this synthesis, the ritual not only preserves historical continuity but also reinforces collective identity and social cohesion among the Javanese Muslim community in the modern era.

Theologically, Grebek Besar demonstrates that Islam possesses an inherent flexibility that allows divine principles to be expressed through diverse cultural forms. The festival's continued vitality in modern Demak reflects the resilience of Indonesian Islam as both orthodoxy and culture, in which faith and heritage are mutually reinforcing rather than oppositional. Culturally, the ritual reinforces local identity amidst globalization, serving as a counterbalance to cultural homogenization. Its performative nature provides moral education, social cohesion, and spiritual enrichment for the local Muslim community.

In summary, the Grebek Besar of Demak exemplifies the Islamic cultural paradigm in Indonesia—faith manifested through culture, theology expressed through art, and piety realized through social action. The event remains a powerful testament to the enduring synthesis between divine devotion and cultural creativity that defines Javanese Islam. It continues to serve as a living medium

through which Islamic values are transmitted, reinterpreted, and celebrated within the framework of local tradition and communal harmony.

The spiritual essence of Grebek Besar cannot be fully understood without situating it within the broader currents of Islamic mysticism (*tasawuf*) in Java, which historically mediated the reception and reinterpretation of Islamic teachings within Javanese cultural forms. Contemporary scholarship confirms that Sufi values and practices continue to shape the lived religiosity of Javanese Muslims (Howell, 2012). For instance, ethnographic studies of Sufi *tariqa* communities in Indonesia show that participants engage in spiritual practices such as collective *dhikr* (remembrance of God), ethical mentoring by *sheikhs* (spiritual teachers), and communal rituals that reinforce values of humility, compassion, and social cohesion—values that ethnographers have directly linked to ritual performances and communal identity in Javanese contexts (Howell, 2012; Yusdani et al., 2019). These studies demonstrate that Sufi practices are not limited to esoteric circles but resonate in broader Muslim social life, including ritual observances that emphasize spiritual togetherness and ethical comportment as integral dimensions of communal religiosity.

In the case of Grebek Besar, although direct participant observation of *tarekat* activities during the ritual has yet to be published, field research on Javanese Sufi acculturation in local traditions (e.g., *Keduk Beji* in Ngawi) indicates that spiritual practices derived from Sufism are integrated into ritual processes and local symbolic structures, such as communal prayer, spiritual recollection, and symbolic offerings that manifest both inner devotion and outward expression. This suggests that participants in Grebek Besar may similarly invoke Sufi-inflected understandings of spiritual closeness (*taqarrub*) and unity (*tawhid*) through collective devotional acts, which scholars described this as a continuing integration of mystical values within community rituals, rather than a purely folkloric spectacle (Yasinatul, 2025).

Thus, evidence of Sufi influence in Javanese Islam includes the role of local Sufi communities, the adaptation of Sufi teachings in communal contexts, and the manifestation of dhikr and ethical teachings in collective religious life. These elements support the interpretation that Grebek Besar's spiritual dimension encompasses far more than ceremonial formality. It reflects a broader historical and lived *tasawuf* presence in Java, one that continues to infuse local religious life with spiritual depth, ethical sensitivity, and communal harmony.

This liminality is evident in the transition from everyday life to the

ritual moment, during which participants symbolically cross from the profane into the sacred domain. The recitation of *dzikr* and *shalawat* throughout the procession reinforces the mystical consciousness of divine presence (*hudhur*). Such acts function not merely as ritual obligations but as meditative practices connecting the human soul to the divine reality (*al-Haqq*). The *tumpeng*, for instance, not only signifies gratitude but also represents the *axis mundi*—the spiritual axis connecting heaven and earth. Similarly, the *air berkah* (blessed water) distributed from the Great Mosque embodies the concept of *barakah*—divine grace transmitted through sacred mediation.

Thus, Grebek Besar becomes a form of Sufi pedagogy—a living *majlis dzikr* that educates the community through symbolic and embodied action. It manifests what Simuh terms *"tasawuf sosial,"* a mystical orientation translated into collective virtue, humility, and service (*khidmah*). The interplay between symbolic form and spiritual depth in Grebek Besar affirms that Javanese Islam, while rooted in orthodoxy, remains receptive to mystical expressions that nurture the soul and reinforce communal harmony.

Local Context and Cultural Continuity in Demak

At the local level, Grebeg Besar represents both religious continuity and cultural resilience within the historical landscape of Demak—the cradle of early Islamic civilization in Java. Empirical studies indicate that the festival has maintained its central position in Demak's socio-religious calendar while adapting to changing social contexts without losing its core religious meanings ('Aisy et al., 2024; Hidayat & Fu'adah, 2025).

Grebeg Besar is institutionally supported by the Pemerintah Kabupaten Demak, *Majelis Ulama Indonesia* (MUI) Demak, and local pesantren networks, demonstrating a symbiotic relationship between formal religious authority and popular religiosity. This pattern reflects broader dynamics of Islamic cultural continuity in Indonesia, where local traditions persist through selective adaptation and reinterpretation within an Islamic ethical framework (Burhani, 2018; Ansari, 2024).

In contemporary practice, Grebeg Besar functions not only as a ritual celebration but also as a significant cultural tourism attraction. Local government communications describe the event as having the potential to draw both local and international visitors due to its strong cultural symbolism and traditional appeal, thereby positioning Grebek Besar within broader cultural visibility and cultural exchange beyond Demak itself. Moreover, empirical studies highlight

high levels of community participation, suggesting that the festival's social and cultural significance extends into areas of public engagement and cultural tourism (Nurrokhmah et al., 2025). This broad participation underscores the event's dual function as both *ibadah jama'i* (collective worship) and *kebudayaan komunal* (community heritage). The sacred procession from the *Kraton Bintoro* to the Great Mosque, accompanied by *gamelan* and traditional attire, projects Demak's Islamic identity in a form that is both culturally resonant and accessible to modern audiences.

Importantly, the endurance of Grebek Besar highlights the community's capacity to reinterpret sacred heritage in the face of modernization. The younger generation participates through digital promotion and creative reinterpretations, such as visual documentation and cultural performances, without compromising the ritual's sanctity. This aligns with the findings of 'Aisy et al. (2024), who demonstrate that Grebeg Besar functions as a contextual synthesis of Islamic values and local tradition, as well as Hidayat and Fu'adah's (2025) argument that the ritual embodies intertwined spiritual, cultural, and social meanings.

Therefore, Grebek Besar stands not as a relic of the past but as a living tradition (*tradisi hidup*), a performative testimony to the enduring coexistence of Islamic spirituality and Javanese cultural creativity. It illustrates how the people of Demak embody their Islamic faith not only in doctrine but also through communal celebration, shared memory, and ongoing cultural innovation. Ultimately, this tradition demonstrates how religion and culture can coexist harmoniously, sustaining both spiritual depth and cultural identity across generations (Ansari, 2024; Aini & Ribawati, 2025).

Culturally, the festival strengthens social solidarity and intergenerational continuity, linking present-day Demak with its historical role as the birthplace of Javanese Islam. Through collective participation, the community re-enacts its sacred history and reaffirms its moral and spiritual identity. The continuity of this tradition reflects the adaptive nature of Islam in the archipelago—dynamic, inclusive, and deeply rooted in local wisdom (Millasari et al., 2025; Yusdani et al., 2019). In this way, *Grebek Besar* continues to serve as both a medium of da'wah and a cultural expression of faith, preserving the balance between religious devotion and cultural heritage in contemporary Javanese society.

The ritual thereby functions as a living pedagogy, a form of religious education that teaches faith through action and devotion through culture. From the perspective of Islamic cultural studies, this research contributes to a

deeper understanding of the intersection between theology and culture within the lived experiences of Indonesian Muslims. It offers evidence that local traditions such as *Grebek Besar* can serve as effective vehicles for transmitting Islamic spirituality, ethics, and social values.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the Grebek Besar in Demak constitutes a structured form of religious practice in which Islamic theological concepts are embodied and materialized through culturally embedded rituals, symbols, and social performances. Ethnographic data from participant observation and in depth interviews show that community members consistently interpret processions, food offerings, and communal prayers as acts of *syukr* (gratitude), *ukhuwah* (social solidarity), and *dzikr* (ritual remembrance), indicating that these practices function as lived enactments of Islamic theology rather than symbolic folklore alone.

Empirically, this research contributes to the study of Javanese Islam by providing a detailed account of how the process of "indigenization" unfolds at the level of everyday ritual practice, demonstrating that theological meaning is produced through embodied action, spatial movement, and material symbolism. For ritual studies, the findings illustrate how large-scale public ceremonies can simultaneously function as sites of historical narration, social integration, and moral pedagogy. For the broader field of Islamic studies, this study offers a grounded model of Islamic cultural theology, showing how universal Islamic principles are contextually negotiated without compromising their normative theological integrity.

Rather than claiming an inherent harmony between religion and culture, the analysis shows that Grebek Besar represents an ongoing process of interpretation, dialogue, and negotiation, as evidenced by differing views among religious leaders, elders, and youth participants. In this sense, the festival is best understood as a dynamic arena of meaning-making through which Javanese Muslim identity is continuously articulated, transmitted, and reinterpreted in contemporary social life.

Acknowledgment

I sincerely thank all who supported this research. Special appreciation goes to Dr. H. Fauzi, M.Ag., Head of the Takmir Masjid Agung Demak, for his theological insights and assistance; Mr. H. Mutoin for sharing his deep

cultural knowledge of Grebek Besar; and Prof. Dr. Moh. Rosyid, S.Ag., M.Pd., for academic guidance. I also thank the Kauman Village community for their hospitality and openness during fieldwork, as well as my mentors, colleagues, and family for their encouragement, feedback, and unwavering support throughout this study.

References

'Aisy, D. R., Lisalam, R. H., & Alif, M. (2024). Living Hadis: Tradisi Grebeg Besar Demak, Jawa Tengah. *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Islam*, *2*(2). https://doi.org/10.61930/jsii.v2i2.922

Ahmed, S. K. (2025). Using Thematic Analysis in Qualitative Research: Applying Braun & Clarke's Six-Phase Reflexive Framework. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.glmedi.2025.100198

Aini, A. Q., & Ribawati, E. (2025). Tradisi tahlilan sebagai kearifan lokal Islam Nusantara: Perspektif historis dan nilai sosial budaya masyarakat Jawa. *Triwikrama: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial, 9*(9), 81–90. https://doi.org/10.9963/c7tzd416

Ansari. (2024). Islam Nusantara: Keanekaragaman Budaya dan Praktik Keagamaan. *Lisan Al-Hal: Jurnal Pengembangan Pemikiran dan Kebudayaan*. https://journal.ibrahimy.ac.id/index.php/lisanalhal/article/view/4799

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2021). *Thematic analysis: A practical guide*. Sage.

Burhani, A. N. (2018). *Islam Nusantara as a promising response to religious intolerance and radicalism* (Trends in Southeast Asia No. 21). ISEAS–Yusof Ishak Institute. https://bookshop.iseas.edu.sg/publication/2355

Fitriyani, F. N., Kurniawan. S., Suratman, B., Taufik, E. T., & Djusmalinar. (2024). Santri's Spiritual Resilience at Pesantren Mahasiswa of the Institut Daarul Qur'an Jakarta: Capturing Living Sufism Amid Modern Society. *Teosofia: Indonesian Journal of Islamic Mysticism*, 13(2), 213–238. https://doi.org/10.21580/tos.v13i2.23559

Hidayat, R., & Fu'adah, L. (2025). The Islam dan Kearifan Lokal: Pelestarian Tradisi Grebeg Besar Demak Sebagai Wujud Identitas Lokal. *Jurnal Adat dan Budaya Indonesia,* 7(2), 212–220. https://doi.org/10.23887/jabi.v7i2.95229

Howell, J. D. (2012). *Sufism and the Indonesian Islamic revival*. London: I.B. Tauris.

Millasari, J. N., Hidayat, M. K., & Nurhayati, I. (2025). Interaksi dan Integrasi Hukum Islam dalam Tradisi Adat Jawa. *Sujud: Jurnal Agama, Sosial dan Budaya,* 1(3), 353-369. https://doi.org/10.63822/08gjcc12

Nurrokhmah, E. E., Fatimatus Salwa, D., Laili Desiani, K., & Rosalita, T. (2025). Persepsi generasi milenial terhadap tradisi Grebeg Besar di Kabupaten Demak. *Al Qalam: Jurnal Ilmiah Keagamaan dan Kemasyarakatan*, 16(1), 1-9. http://dx.doi.org/10.35931/aq.v16i1.565

Pertiwi, S. A. , Harjanto, R., Damayanti, N., Sari, Y., & Akib, S. (2023). Decoding the Meaning of Tumpeng in Roland Barthes's Semiology Perspective. *Wacana: Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Komunikasi,* 22(2). https://doi.org/10.32509/wacana.v22i2.3553

Saefudin, A., Pangestuti, D. N., & Andriyani, S. (2020). Islamic Education Values of Barikan: Javanese Cultural Rituals as a Practice of Islam Nusantara. el Harakah: Jurnal Budaya Islam, 22(2), 245–262. https://doi.org/10.18860/eh.v22i2.10217

Siregar, M. S. A. W., Suanti, L., Akmal, Z., Syafrianto, H., Siregar, D. (2025). Makna, Tingkatan, dan Implementasi Syukur dalam Tafsir Sufistik: Studi atas Q.S. Ibrahim Ayat 7 menurut Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani. *Al-Muaddib: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu Kependidikan*, 7(2), 643-652. https://doi.org/10.46773/muaddib.v7i2.1810

Syahputra, H., Nasution, H., & Drajat, A. (2025). The Living Philosophy of Tumpeng: Preserving Javanese Cultural Identity in the Modern Era. *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam,* 14(3), 716-729. https://doi.org/10.30868/ei.v14i03.8957

Tsaltsabilla, A., Amelia, L., Maharani, S., Cahyani, Y. A., & Purwanto , E. (2025). Ritual Digital: Bagaimana Media Sosial Mengubah Perayaan Tradisional. *Indonesian Culture and Religion Issues*, 2(3), 15. https://doi.

org/10.47134/diksima.v2i3.208

Yasinatul, P. A. (2025). Intertwined Spiritualities: Exploring the Acculturation of Sufism and Javanese Mysticism in the Keduk Beji Tradition, Ngawi, Indonesia. *Jurnal Adat dan Budaya Indonesia*, 7(2). https://doi.org/10.23887/jabi.v7i2.95260

Yurisa, P. R., Fu'aturosida, R., Agung, Y. R., & Muhayan, U. (2021). Islamic values behind the ritual of a cow head burial in Grebeg Suro. *El Harakah: Jurnal Budaya Islam*, 23(1), 157–172. https://doi.org/10.18860/eh.v23i1.10576

Yusdani, Sanaky, H. A. H., Safitri, E., Machali, I., & Juliansyahzen, M. I. (2019). Yogyakarta urban middle-class Sufism: Economic, political, and cultural networks. *Ulumuna: Journal of Islamic Studies, 23*(2), 266–293. https://doi.org/10.20414/ujis.v23i2.342

AUTHOR GUIDELINES

General Author Guidelines

All manuscripts must be submitted to **El Harakah** editorial office by online submission at e-journal portal address: **http://ejournal.uin-malang.ac.id/index.php/infopub/index**, where author register as Author and/or offered as Reviewer by online. If authors have any problems on the online submission, please contact Editorial Office of **El Harakah** at the following email: **elharakahjurnal@gmail.com**.

Paper Template

All paper should be prepared according to the following author guidelines in the MS Word article template. Please download paper template of **El Harakah** at **http://ejournal.uin-malang.ac.id/index.php/infopub/index**.

Reviewing of Papers

If the content and format of the submitted essay is seen as appropriate by the editors of **El Harakah**, the paper will then be sent out for 'blind review' by independent referees. Revisions may be required in the light of referees' comments before a decision is made to accept or reject the paper.

Revision of Papers

All paper sent back to the authors for revision should be returned to the editor without delay. Revised articles can be sent to editorial office of **El Harakah** through the Online Submission Interface. The revised manuscripts returned later than three months will be considered as new submissions.

Editorial Office of El Harakah

All correspondences should be sent to the following Editorial Office:

RUMAH JURNAL PUSAT PUBLIKASI ILMIAH
Gedung Perpustakaan Pusat 1st floor
Jl. Gajayana No. 50, 65144 Malang
Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang

Guideline for Online Submission

Author should first register as Author and/or is offered as Reviewer of **El Harakah** through the following address: **http://ejournal.uin-malang.ac.id/index.php/infopub/about/submissions#onlineSubmissions**

Author should fulfil the form as detail as possible where the star marked form must be entered. After all form textbox was filled, Author clicks on "Register" button to proceed the registration. Therefore, Author is brought to online author submission interface where Author should click on "*New Submission*". In the Start a New Submission section, click on "*'Click Here': to go to step one of the five-step submission process*". The following are five steps in online submission process:

- **Step 1 - Starting the Submission**: Select the appropriate section of journal, i.e. Original Research Articles, Review Article, or Short Communication. Thus, author must check-mark on the submission checklists. Author may type or copy-paste Covering Letter in Letter to Editor.
- **Step 2 – Uploading the Submission**: To upload a paper to this journal, click Browse on the Upload submission file item and choose the manuscript document file (.doc/.docx) to be submitted, then click "Upload" button until the file has been uploaded.
- **Step 3 – Entering Submission's Metadata**: In this step, detail authors metadata should be entered including marked corresponding author. After that, paper title and abstract must be uploaded by copying the text and paste in the textbox including keywords.
- **Step 4 – Uploading Supplementary Files**: Supplementary file should be uploaded including Covering/Submission Letter, and Signed Copyright Transfer Agreement Form. Therefore, click on Browse

button, choose the files, and then click on Upload button.

- **Step 5 – Confirming the Submission**: Author should final check the uploaded manuscript documents in this step. To submit the paper to **El Harakah**, click Finish Submission button after the documents is true. The corresponding author or the principal contact will receive an acknowledgement by email and will be able to view the submission's progress through the editorial process by logging in to the journal web address site.

After this submission, Authors who submit the paper will get a confirmation email about the submission. Therefore, Authors are able to track their submission status at any time by logging in to the online submission interface. The submission tracking includes status of manuscript review and editorial process.

User Rights

All articles published Open Access will be immediately and permanently free for everyone to read and download. We are continuously working with our author communities to select the best choice of license options, currently being defined for **El Harakah** journal as follows:

- Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike (CC BY-SA)

Preparation Guideline of texts
General Organization of Paper

The paper will be published in **El Harakah** after peer-reviewed process and decided "Accepted" by Editor. The final paper layout will be reproduced by Editorial Office of **El Harakah**. The final paper layout in PDF type, known as "Uncorrected Proof" should be corrected by Author. The final corrected proof will be published first in "Article in Press" pre-issue.

Paper document submitted to this journal (in MS Word) should be arranged as follow:

- Bodytext of paper article
- Figure Captions and Table Captions

All illustrations of any kind must be submitted as sequentially numbered

figures, one to a page. Although high-resolution images are not required for the initial refereeing stage, if the essay is subsequently selected for publication then all figures and tables will need to be provided at the highest quality in digital format. When symbols, arrows, numbers or letters are used to identify parts of illustrations they must be clearly identified by a key in the figure legend, rather than in the figure itself. Similarly, internal scales, staining or processing of the figure must be explained where appropriate. Figure legends should be listed sequentially on a separate page. In all cases where the author is not the owner of the copyright of the figures, written permission must be obtained from the copyright holder(s) to reproduce the figures in this journal.

Each table must be typed, and consecutively numbered. They should have a brief informative title placed as a heading. Tables should be understandable without reference to the text, but they should be referred to in the text. Explanatory caption should be brief and placed beneath the table. Please note that numbering of tables should be different from the numbering of figures.

Paper length, in either English or Arabic, is at minimum **6.000** words and no longer than **8.000** words excluding abstract and references. Paper content should, in general, be organized in the following order: *Title; Authors Name; Authors Affiliation; Abstract; Keywords; Introduction; Method (for research based articles);Content/Results and Discussion; Conclusions; and References*.

Paper Title

This is your opportunity to attract the reader's attention. Remember that readers are the potential authors who will cite your article. Identify the main issue of the paper. Begin with the subject of the paper. Do not contain infrequently-used abbreviations.

The title of the paper must be concise, specific, informative, and complete.

Authors Name and Affiliations

Write Author(s) names without title and professional positions such as Prof, Dr, Production Manager, etc. Do not abbreviate your last/family name. Always give your First and Last names (Full Name). Write clear affiliation of all Authors. Affiliation includes: name of department/unit, (faculty), name of university, address, country, include email address.

Abstract and Keywords

Abstract should stand alone, means that no citation in abstract. Consider it the advertisement of your article. Abstract should tell the prospective reader what you did and highlight the key findings. Avoid using technical jargon and uncommon abbreviations. You must be accurate, brief, clear and specific. Use words which reflect the precise meaning, Abstract should be precise and honest, summarizing the significant points of the paper. Please follow word limitations (250-300 words).

Introduction

In Introduction, Authors should state the objectives of the work at the end of introduction section. Before the objective, Authors should provide an adequate background, and very short literature survey in order to record the existing solutions/method, to show which is the best of previous researches, to show the main limitation of the previous researches, to show what do you hope to achieve (to solve the limitation), and to show the scientific merit or novelties of the paper. Avoid a detailed literature survey or a summary of the results. The introduction should clearly state the purpose of the paper. It should include key references to appropriate work but should not be an historical or literature review.

Method (for research based articles)

The methods section describes the rationale for the application of specific procedures or techniques used to identify, select, and analyze information applied to understanding the research problem, thereby, allowing the reader to critically evaluate a study's overall validity and reliability.

Content/Result and Discussion

Content is the body of paper, consists of sub title that represents discussion of the paper. Results should be clear and concise. The results should summarize (scientific) findings rather than providing data in great detail. The discussion should explore the significance of the results of the work, not repeat them. A combined Results and Discussion section is often appropriate. Avoid extensive citations and discussion of published literature.

In discussion, it is the most important section of your article. Here you get the chance to sell your data. Make the discussion corresponding to the results, but do not reiterate the results. Often should begin with a brief

summary of the main scientific findings (not experimental results). The following components should be covered in discussion: How do your results relate to the original question or objectives outlined in the Introduction section (what)? Do you provide interpretation scientifically for each of your results or findings presented (why)? Are your results consistent with what other investigators have reported (what else)?

Conclusion

Conclusions should answer the objectives of research. Tells how your work advances the field from the present state of knowledge. Without clear Conclusions, reviewers and readers will find it difficult to judge the work, and whether or not it merits publication in the journal. Do not repeat the Abstract, or just list experimental results. Provide a clear scientific justification for your work, and indicate possible applications and extensions. You should also suggest future experiments and/or point out those that are underway.

References

To write citation and bibliography in your article, please use **reference software** like Mendeley, Zotero, etc. to make the citation work easier. All notes must appear in the text as citations. This journal uses **innote citation**, NOT footnote. A citation usually requires only the last name of the author(s), year of publication, and (sometimes) page numbers. For example: (Juynboll, 1983: 5-6); (Barton 1999); (Kelly & Lane 1980); (Angel et al., 1986); (Ayubi 2013; Kepel 2008). The number of reference is **at minimum 20, with at least 50 % of primary sources such as journal articles**. The bibliographical style in El Harakah journal uses American Psychological Association (APA) manual style, such as below:

Dalvandi, A., Maddah, S. S. B., Khankeh, H., Parvaneh, S., Bahrami, F., Hesam Zadeh, A., ... & Kiany, T. (2020). The health-oriented lifestyle in Islamic culture. *Journal of Qualitative Research in Health Sciences, 1*(4), 332-343.

El Shamsy, A. (2020). *Rediscovering the Islamic Classics: How Editors and Print Culture Transformed an Intellectual Tradition*. Princeton University Press.

Fayzullayevich, J. S., & Axtamovich, A. A. (2021). The historical fundaments of Islamic Culture in Bukhara. *Central Asian Journal of Social Sciences and History, 2*(2), 51-59.

Herawansyah. (2012). Perayaan Tabut di Kota Bengkulu dalam Perspektif Struktural Fungsional. Ph.D. Dissertation. Program Pasca Sarjana Universitas Airlangga.

Kamalkhani, Z. (2021). Reconstruction of Islamic knowledge and knowing: A case of Islamic practices among women in Iran. In *Women and Islamization* (pp. 177-193). Routledge.

Sofyan, D., Saputra, Y. M., Nurihsan, A. J., & Kusmaedi, N. (2021, March). Sports in Indonesian Islamic Community Culture. In *1st Paris Van Java International Seminar on Health, Economics, Social Science and Humanities (PVJ-ISHESSH 2020)* (pp. 357-360). Atlantis Press.

Sholehuddin, M. S., Munjin, M., & Adinugraha, H. H. (2021). Islamic Tradition and Religious Culture in Halal Tourism: Empirical Evidence from Indonesia. *IBDA: Jurnal Kajian Islam dan Budaya, 19*(1), 79-100.

Tracy, K. (2020). *Islamic Culture in Perspective.* Mitchell Lane.

Arabic romanization should be written as follows:

TRANSLITERATION GUIDELINES

Arab	Latin	Arab	Latin
ا	a	ض	dh
ب	b	ط	th
ت	t	ظ	zh
ث	ts	ع	‘
ج	j	غ	gh
ح	h	ف	f
خ	kh	ق	q
د	d	ك	k

ذ	dz	ل	l
ر	r	م	m
ز	z	ن	n
س	s	و	w
ش	sy	ه	h
ص	sh	ى	y

Conventions

Use only recommended SI units. Numerals should be used for all numbers of two or more digits, and for single digits when attached to units of measure. Abbreviations should be defined in parentheses after their first mention in the text in accordance with internationally agreed rules.

Copyright

It is a condition of publication that authors assign copyright or license the publication rights in their articles to El Harakah. Authors are themselves responsible for obtaining permission to reproduce copyright material from other sources.