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RUMI CONCEPT OF LOVE:
The Path to Interfaith Harmony and Peace

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ABSTRACT

Building mutual understanding among people of different religions is crucial in anticipating issues arising from individual religious identities. The concept of love, as viewed by Jalaluddin Rumi, can serve as a medium for nurturing interfaith peace. Rumi believed that love is at the core of human existence and emphasized its power in achieving tranquility. Through Rumi's teachings, we gain an understanding of the significance of compassionate love in fostering mutual understanding and respect among different faiths. This article delves into Rumi's life and works, highlighting his contributions to Sufism and his unique perspective on love. Furthermore, it delves deeper into Rumi's concept of love. The aim of this paper is to contribute to the field of interfaith studies by exploring the potential of Rumi's concept of love to promote mutual understanding and respect among religions through poetry and Rumi's teachings. The research employs a qualitative method, specifically a literature review, drawing data from various references, books, and articles related to Rumi's works and thoughts, particularly those discussing the concept of love. The findings reveal that Rumi's concept of love can serve as a medium for addressing religious conflicts and building a more peaceful world. By embracing Rumi's teachings on love, we learn to see beyond our differences and connect with each other at a deeper level.

Keywords: *Rumi; Love; Interfaith Harmony; Peace*

INTRODUCTION

In the present time where globalization has brought various cultures and religions closer, the need for mutual understanding, respect, and harmony among different religions is very important. This article will explore the teachings of Jalaluddin Rumi, a poet, Islamic jurist, and Persian theologian of the 13th century, whose profound insight on love offers a way to harmony and peace among religions (Maola, 2018; Saddam & Abbas, 2020). Rumi, born in 1207 in Balkh (which is now part of Afghanistan), was a central figure in the world of Sufism, a spiritual branch of Islam that emphasizes personal experience and love as the path to spiritual enlightenment. His poetry and prose, written in Persian and widely translated, have been embraced by people from various religions and cultures, making him one of the most famous poets in the world. His works, which are full of themes of love, tolerance, and unity, transcend the boundaries of religion, culture, and nation, making him very relevant in the diverse and interconnected world of today (Chittick, 1993; Gamard, 2018).

The core of Rumi's teachings is the concept of love. For Rumi, love is not just an emotion, but the essence of human existence. He believes that love is the Divine force that permeates the universe, connecting all beings in a deep bond of shared being (Golkarian, 2018; Kahteran, 2009). Rumi's concept of love in Sufism is more popularly known as *mahabbah*, which is the way to spiritual growth and enlightenment. Through *mahabbah* we can transcend our ego, connect with God (Octaviani, 2021). Rumi's concept of love has many aspects, including love for God, love for oneself, and love for others. Each dimension of love, according to him, is interrelated and important for spiritual growth. Rumi's teachings on love are not just philosophical reflections but practical guides in living life. He emphasizes the importance of expressing love in our daily lives, in our interactions with others, and in our relationship with God. His poetry and prose are full of metaphors and allegories of life that illustrate the transformative power of love. Love in Rumi's view serves as a reminder that love is not just a feeling but a way of living in the world about ethics and morality (Abid, 2021; Iriyanto, 2024).

Previous research has documented several studies on this great figure through their works in various contexts, such as their concept of love (Chittick, 1993) or their analysis of their works (Esteʿlami, 2012), and the correlation of Rumi's ideas with contemporary life (Khan & Rashid, 2023). Sufism is not limited to discussing spiritual dimensions but also extends to social and moral dimensions (Prayogi et al., 2022). Rumi's Sufi teachings expressed through his poetry reflect his closeness to the people around him. Despite being a Sufi, he

always engaged with society, listened to their issues, and provided advice (Gray, 2019; Klicheva, 2022). Love, as the essence of life, is a universal philosophy that connects all humankind (Shafak, 2007). In addition to the concept of love (*mahabbah*), Rumi also contemplates death. According to Rumi, death is a reality that humans need not fear because it is a reunion with God, signifying happiness and unwavering faith (Majeed Abdurrahman & Diyar Tayeb, 2023).

Unlike some previous works, this article will explore the role of love in fostering mutual understanding and respect among different religions. It can be assumed that with its emphasis on love and universal unity, love provides valuable insights for interfaith dialogue. Love can transcend religious differences and highlight the spiritual heritage of humankind, offering a strong framework for harmony and peace among religions. By examining Rumi's perspective on love, we create space to learn to see beyond religious disparities and recognize shared spiritual values that unite us. We can explore how love can function as a bridge between different faiths, nurturing mutual respect and understanding. This acknowledgment can help us address religious conflicts and build a more peaceful and harmonious world.

This article falls within the realm of qualitative research; thus, data analysis refers to raw data in the form of historical documents, transcripts, field notes, and images that are arranged in such a way and ready for analysis (Creswell & Poth, 2018). All of these data go through a thorough re-reading process so that they can be categorized into themes and descriptions. The analysis process has at least three main characteristics, namely: interest in the past, empirical (based on primary and secondary data), and leading to synthesis (Baker et al., 2018). This study is also directed to explore Rumi's concept of love with harmony and interfaith peace in the present.

RUMI: LIFE, WORKS, AND HIS CONTRIBUTION TO SUFISM

Jalāl al-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī, commonly known as Rumi, is estimated to have been born on September 30, 1207, in the ancient city of Balkh, which is now located in northern Afghanistan (Rumi, 2000b).His father, Bahāʾ al-Dīn Walad, was a highly respected Islamic jurist and theologian who played a significant role in shaping Rumi's early education and spiritual outlook. The period of Rumi's birth was marked by political turmoil, with the threat of Mongol invasions forcing Rumi's family, like many others, to leave their hometown (Arasteh, 1974; Nasr, 1993). This departure marked the beginning of a long and difficult journey that took them through Baghdad, Mecca, and Damascus, introducing Rumi to a variety of cultures, languages, and religious traditions. Eventually, the family settled in Konya, which is now part of

modern-day Turkey (Zarrabi-Zadeh & Asbury, 2016).

Konya was a major center of learning and culture at the time, providing a conducive environment for Rumi's intellectual and spiritual growth. Here, Rumi was introduced to the works of some of the greatest thinkers of the Islamic world, further enriching his understanding and perspective. This journey, filled with diverse cultural and linguistic experiences, greatly influenced Rumi's later works. Themes of love, tolerance, and unity that pervade his poetry can be traced back to these early experiences. His exposure to different cultures and languages not only broadened his worldview but also enriched his poetic expression, allowing him to speak to a diverse audience and touch the hearts of people from various cultures and religions (Gamard, 2010).

At a relatively young age, Rumi had already studied various Islamic sciences such as *nahwu* (grammar), the art of poetry, the Qur'an, Hadith, Ushul Fiqh (principles of Islamic jurisprudence), Tafsir (Qur'anic exegesis), history, philosophy, theology, logic, mathematics, and astronomy. After his father's death, at the age of 24, Rumi succeeded his father's position as a spiritual leader and Islamic jurist in the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum. At that time, he was widely admired by Islamic legal scholars for his expertise in law, yet he continued to lead a spiritual life as a Sufi (Jihad, 2015).

Rumi's literary contribution is vast and diverse, reflecting his deep understanding of human nature and his ability to express complex spiritual concepts in a way that is accessible to people from various cultures and religions. His works were primarily written in Persian, his native language, but he also occasionally used Turkish, Arabic, and Greek in his verses, reflecting the multicultural environment in which he lived and worked (Elmarsafy, 2013). His most important work is the Masnavi (Mathnawi), a six-volume poem composed in Konya, considered one of the greatest works of Persian poetry (Esteʿlami, 2012).

The Masnavi is often referred to as the "Quran in Persian" because of its profound spiritual insights and exploration of various themes such as theology, cosmology, and human behavior (Rumi, 2013). It is a rich tapestry of stories and fables intertwined with spiritual teachings and philosophical reflections. Another significant work is the *Diwan-e Shams-e Tabriz,* or "The Collected Poems of Shams," a collection of odes dedicated to Shams Tabrizi, Rumi's spiritual mentor. These poems, partly written in Shams' voice, reflect Rumi's deep love and admiration for his mentor and his longing for spiritual unity. They are characterized by intense emotions and the exploration of themes of love, loss, and longing. Other works by Rumi include *Diwan-i Shamsi Tabriz*

(Poems of Praise to Shamsi Tabriz), *Mathnawî-i Manawi* (Rhymed Prose about Meanings), *Rubâ'iyat* (Collection of Four-Line Poems), *Fihi ma Fihi* (In It What Is in It), *Makâtib* (Collection of Rumi's Letters to His Friends), and *Majâlis-i Sabah* (Arasteh, 1974).

In addition to his poetry, Rumi also produced various prose works, including *Fihi ma Fihi*, or "Discourses," a collection of his lectures and sermons. These lectures provide valuable insights into Rumi's thoughts and teachings on various topics, from spirituality and ethics to social issues and everyday life. He also composed sermons for specific occasions, collected in Majlis as-Sab'a, and wrote many letters, known as *Maktubat*, offering a more personal glimpse into his life and thoughts. Rumi's works have had a significant influence on literature, philosophy, and spirituality, not only in the Islamic world but also in the West. His poetry and prose continue to inspire and resonate with people from various cultures and backgrounds, making him one of the most widely read and beloved poets in the world.

Rumi became a central figure in the Sufi tradition. His teachings had a significant impact on Sufism, shaping its development and contributing to its spread across different cultures and regions. Rumi's teachings on love are not merely philosophical reflections but practical guides for living life. He believed that love is the essence of human existence and the key to spiritual growth and enlightenment. For Rumi, love is not just an emotion but a divine force that permeates the universe, connecting all beings in a profound bond of shared existence (Kartanegara, 2016). This love, he argued, is the primary path to spiritual growth and enlightenment. Through love, we can transcend our egos, connect with God, and realize our true nature. Rumi emphasized the importance of expressing love in our daily lives, in our interactions with others, and in our relationship with God. He taught that love should be the guiding principle in our actions and interactions, shaping our attitudes and behaviors towards others. He also encouraged his followers to cultivate love in their hearts and express it in their actions, thereby transforming their lives and the lives of those around them.

Rumi's poetry and prose are filled with vivid metaphors and allegories that illustrate the transformative power of love. His works serve as mirrors reflecting various aspects of love and its impact on our lives. They depict love as a journey, a transformative process that leads to spiritual growth and enlightenment (Zarrabi-Zadeh, 2014). Through his works, Rumi invites us to embark on this journey of love, guiding us along the way with his profound insights and wisdom. Rumi's contribution to Sufism goes beyond his teachings on love. He also made significant contributions to the development of Sufi

music and dance, particularly the practice of Sama, or whirling dervishes. This practice, involving spinning in precise rhythms, is seen as a form of meditation and a path to spiritual enlightenment. Rumi's poetry, often recited during these ceremonies, adds depth and meaning to the practice, making it a powerful spiritual experience.

Rumi's influence transcends national borders and ethnic divisions. His poetry resonates among people of various religions and cultures, making him one of the most famous poets in the world. His work, filled with themes of love, tolerance, and unity, transcends religious, cultural, and national boundaries, making it highly relevant in today's diverse and interconnected world. Rumi's teachings, with their emphasis on love and universal unity, provide valuable insights for interfaith dialogue (Zarrabi-Zadeh, 2024). His concept of love transcends religious differences and highlights the shared spiritual heritage of humanity. Rumi's life and works have left an indelible mark on the world, making him one of the most beloved and widely read poets in history. His teachings on love offer a path to harmony and peace among religions. His influence continues to inspire and resonate with people of various cultures and backgrounds around the world.

Jalāl al-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī passed away on 5 *Jumadil Akhir* 672 H, corresponding to December 16, 1273 AD, surrounded by his spiritual disciples, including close family members, at the end of his life. Sadr al-Din Qunawi, another great Sufi figure in Konya at the time, offered the death prayer before the remains of Persia's greatest Sufi poet were laid to rest in Konya. Among Sufis, his tomb is one of several important shrines visited, akin to a second Kaaba, and has become a spiritual center in Turkey (Nasr, 1993).

JALALUDDIN RUMI'S CONCEPT OF LOVE: A NOVEL MAPPING

Jalaluddin Rumi posits that love is the quintessence of all existence, with everything emanating from God, the wellspring of love. The term "The Beloved" within his oeuvre signifies God and reveals his yearning for "The Beloved" in his poetry. "The Beloved" manifests within every individual and entity, celebrating the diversity and splendor of creation. Rumi appraises love as a transformative force capable of altering the human soul and elevating it to heightened levels of consciousness and awareness (Hajriansyah, 2016). He differentiates among various forms of love—physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual—acknowledging their value and significance, yet also their limitations and imperfections. For Rumi, the supreme form of love is that directed towards The Beloved, transcending all other forms and leading to genuine happiness and the fulfillment of the human soul. True love, according

to him, is pure, unconditional, and selfless, independent of any external factors or expectations (Golkhosravi, 2004; Mushtafa, 2007).

Rumi delves into the challenges and impediments encountered on the path of love, such as ego, the world, and the self. To surmount these barriers, a lover must surrender to the will of The Beloved, heeding the inner voice's guidance (J. Rumi, 2000a). The lover must persistently seek the fellowship of other devotees of The Beloved, who can inspire and support them on this journey. Herein lies the importance of the support and role of a spiritual guide, or "friend," who can assist seekers in discovering and connecting with The Beloved.

In depicting Love, Rumi consistently employs a plethora of metaphors and symbols, such as wine, moths, reeds, flutes, and whirling dances (Ambrosio, 2020; Selkani, 2018). These images are crafted to convey the intensity, joy, pain, and ecstasy of love, as well as to articulate the paradoxes and contradictions of love, including its sweetness and bitterness, allure and rejection, union and separation, and life and death. Love is a complex and enigmatic phenomenon that eludes full comprehension by the rational mind and can only be experienced by the heart. It is universal and timeless, thus resonating with individuals from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds (Wilcox, 2018).

His poetry serves as a wellspring of inspiration and wisdom for those seeking to comprehend and feel the true essence and purpose of love. He seemingly invites his readers to join him in his quest for The Beloved, and to unearth the secrets and treasures of love within their own souls. Rumi situates love in various guises: Divine love, self-love, and love for others. Among these manifestations, love remains interconnected.

Rumi's conception of love towards God is profound and transformative. He believes that our souls are inherently drawn to God, akin to a lover to their beloved. This love is not about seeking approval or fearing judgment but about a profound and intimate connection with the Divine (Kahteran, 2009; Mutlag, 2022; Rumi, 2000a). To truly experience this divine love, one must relinquish fear and self-imposed barriers, surrendering wholly to this divine love, allowing it to dominate and guide one's actions. This surrender is not indicative of weakness but rather a testament to the potency of divine love.

Conversely, the relationship with God is not unidirectional but reciprocal. As one yearns for the Divine, so too does the Divine yearn for them. This mutual longing fuels the spiritual journey (Iqbal, 2010). Rumi's teachings urge us to perceive divinity not as a distant and impersonal entity but as a loving presence intimately involved in our lives. He instructs that the divine is not

merely the object of our love but also the source of all love. By connecting with this divine love, we can experience a sense of wholeness and satisfaction that surpasses our ordinary experiences. Rumi's concept of love towards God offers a transformative perspective on spirituality, inviting us to view love not merely as an emotion but as a divine force that can guide us.

Rumi's teachings on love also encourage the recognition and embrace of the love that resides within us. Each person possesses a love that has been present from the outset, forming the core of our existence. If one fails to find this love, they will never find any other love. In this context, Rumi underscores the importance of self-love and self-acceptance (Bilen, 2018; McGrady & Moss, 2018). He asserts that what one seeks is, in essence, seeking them. This suggests that one's longing for love and fulfillment will be reciprocated by the love within them. Thus, the love within us beckons us, inviting us to recognize and accept it. Therefore, self-love extends beyond mere self-acceptance; it encourages the cultivation of a deep and intimate relationship with oneself, to truly know and understand oneself. This is the key to personal growth and spiritual enlightenment.

Rumi also contends that love for others is more than mere words; it is a spiritual bond and shared experience that draws one person to another. This perspective transcends the conventional understanding of love as an emotion or feeling, instead elevating love to a spiritual plane, positioning it as a fundamental connection that binds us to one another. Therefore, one must risk everything for love, as that is the hallmark of true humanity. The transformative power of love is not just about acceptance but also about giving. It's about opening our hearts to others, sharing joys and sorrows, and always being there for one another when needed.

The grandeur of love can only be achieved with wholehearted commitment and sincerity. This necessitates our full commitment, as love cannot be approached casually. Only through sincere and selfless love can one truly connect with others and attain spiritual grandeur. This state of grandeur, according to Rumi, is not about power or status but about spiritual fulfillment and enlightenment. It's about experiencing divinity in human relationships. This view offers a transformative perspective on human relationships (Mutlag, 2022). Thus, love is not merely an emotion but a spiritual journey, where by living it, humans can experience a deeper connection with others, fostering mutual understanding and respect, and contributing to a more peaceful and harmonious world.

In many of his verses, Rumi places love as the greatest force in the universe and even the key to spiritual enlightenment. Love is not just a feeling but a way

of life, a consciousness where humans are fully open to all of life, including its joys and sorrows. His poetry and prose are filled with vivid metaphors and allegories that illustrate the transformative power of love. Through his works, Rumi always invites and guides humanity to a path full of profound insights and wisdom. His teachings on love continue to inspire and guide people around the world, making him one of the most influential figures in the history of Sufism.

LOVE AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN RELIGIONS

The perspective of love, as elucidated above, indirectly offers a transformative outlook in interfaith dialogue. Love, viewed as a Divine force, possesses the power to transcend the boundaries of religion, culture, and nation-states. This perspective positions love as a universal language capable of bridging the gaps between religions. It suggests that the diversity of beliefs and religious practices can be connected through the common thread of love. Thus, love serves as a bridge between adherents of one faith to those of another, encompassing love for God, self-love, and love for others as interconnected (Jannah, 2020). This interconnectedness of love fosters a sense of unity and mutual respect among people of different faiths. It also reflects the fundamental unity of all existence and reinforces the notion that although individuals may follow different religions, they are part of the same Divine reality.

Rumi's teachings encourage individuals to recognize and embrace the love within themselves. He believes that this inner love has been with humanity since time immemorial, forming the core of existence, and underscores the importance of self-love and self-acceptance (Chuliyeva, 2018). This indicates that by recognizing and accepting inner love, one will feel a sense of wholeness and satisfaction. Here, Rumi teaches that if one does not find love within, they will never find it outside. This challenges the common notion of seeking love and fulfillment externally by asserting that love and satisfaction cannot be found in the outside world but within one's own heart. The search for love within is not a one-way process. Rumi teaches that what we seek is also seeking us. An individual's longing for love and fulfillment is reciprocated by the love within them. Thus, the love within also calls out, inviting recognition and acceptance. This teaching offers a profound perspective on the nature of desire and fulfillment, stating that they are not separate but two aspects of the same process.

In this regard, Rumi's teachings on love provide a robust framework for interfaith dialogue. He contends that love, as a Divine force, can foster mutual understanding and respect between different religions. By adopting

Rumi's teachings on love, we can cultivate a sense of unity and mutual respect among people of different faiths, thereby contributing to a more peaceful and harmonious world. Rumi once said:

> *In the house of lovers,*
> *the music never stops,*
> *the walls are made of songs,*
> *and the floor dances* (Schimmel, 2008)

Here, he is depicting his concept of love. This quote paints a picture of a world filled with love, where every aspect of life is a celebration of this divine emotion. It suggests that in the world of love, there is a constant celebration of life, a continuous flow of joy and harmony. The portrayal of love as an eternal celebration underscores the joyful and uplifting nature of love. In another of his poems, it is expressed:

> *Since I heard the world,*
> *I have given my life,*
> *my heart, and my eyes to this path.*
> *At first, I believed that love and the beloved were different.*
> *Now, I understand they are the same.*
> *I see both in unity* (Frager, 2014).

He emphasizes the transformative power of love. This quote depicts love as a bold and fearless force, capable of breaking through fears and barriers. It indicates that love is not a passive emotion but an active force that challenges us, pushing us out of our comfort zones and leading us towards spiritual growth and enlightenment. Here, Rumi illustrates how love can be a bridge between religions. By emphasizing the universal nature of love, a sense of mutual understanding and appreciation can grow among people of different faiths (Este'lami, 2003). They highlight the shared experience of love, and show that although individuals may differ in beliefs and religious practices, they are all connected through the same emotion. Thus, Rumi offers a strong framework for interfaith dialogue. His teachings emphasize the universal nature of love and its potential to foster mutual understanding and respect among people of different faiths (Masroori, 2010).

> Who am I?
> What do You love and what do You hate?
> When You hide, I am an infidel;
> *when You appear, I am a believer* (Reynold, 2002).

In addressing questions about evil, sorrow, and sin, Rumi states in the Mathnawi, "If you do not know the devil (evil), then look within yourself" (Rumi, 2013). Considering that Rumi was also a scholar, this shows how he treated it in a practical and comprehensible form. Evil is not something that opposes the "existence" of God, and when humans realize that everything truly has no relation to God, they understand that in reality, everything returns to humanity.

LOVE AND THE IMPETUS FOR INTERFAITH HARMONY

As previously elucidated, Rumi's concept of love transcends the confines of religion, culture, and nationality, rendering it a universal language that touches the hearts of all, regardless of their beliefs or backgrounds. He posits that love is the essence of human existence, a fundamental force that unites us all. This love, according to Rumi, has the power to connect humans, overcome differences, and illuminate the path toward spiritual awakening. It is through this universal language of love that we can bridge the gaps between different religions and cultures, fostering mutual understanding and respect.

Rumi's teachings underscore the importance of love in building bridges between religions. He instructs that love is the common thread flowing through all religious traditions, a core value that unites us all. By focusing on these shared values, we can look beyond our differences and recognize the common humanity that binds us together. This perspective cultivates mutual understanding and respect, which are essential elements for interfaith harmony (Bond, 2020). Rumi also teaches that love is the bridge between us and everything else. This profound doctrine encompasses love for God, self-love, and love for others. Each of these dimensions of love, he believes, is interconnected and plays a vital role in our spiritual growth and development.

Love for God, according to Rumi, is about recognizing and acknowledging God's presence in all of creation. It is about seeing the divine within ourselves and others, and treating everyone with the dignity and respect inherent in this recognition (Arikhah, 2022). Self-love, in Rumi's view, is about self-acceptance and self-esteem. It is about recognizing our own worth and treating ourselves with kindness and compassion. This self-love, according to Rumi, is the foundation upon which all other forms of love are built. Love for others, in Rumi's teachings, is about empathy and compassion. It is about recognizing the divine in others and treating them with the same kindness and respect we desire for ourselves. This love for others, according to Rumi, is a reflection of our love for God and ourselves (Saddam & Abbas, 2020).

Rumi encourages us to recognize and embrace the love that exists within us. He believes that this inner love has been with us from the beginning, forming the core of our existence. If we do not find this love within ourselves, we will never find it outside. This teaching highlights the importance of self-love and self-acceptance, as well as their role in our relationships with others and with God. Rumi teaches that what we seek is also seeking us. This indicates that our longing for love and fulfillment is reciprocated by the love within us. As if the love within us is calling out to us, inviting us to recognize and accept it. This teaching offers a profound perspective on the nature of desire and fulfillment, stating that they are not separate but two aspects of the same process.

Thus, Rumi's concept of love provides a robust framework for interfaith dialogue. His teachings emphasize the universal nature of love and its potential to foster mutual understanding and respect among people of different faiths. By embracing Rumi's teachings on love, we can contribute to a more peaceful and harmonious world, where people of different religions coexist in mutual respect and understanding (Gondos, 2021). His teachings serve as a reminder that although we may differ, we are all connected through the common thread of love. It is this love that can bridge the gaps between religions, fostering mutual understanding and appreciation, and paving the way for religious harmony (Sahri, 2021).

With such a perspective, Rumi's teachings on love have inspired numerous interfaith initiatives worldwide. These initiatives aim to cultivate mutual understanding and respect among people of different faiths, thus contributing to a more peaceful and harmonious world. They utilize Rumi's wisdom to bridge the gaps between different religious traditions and promote a culture of peace and mutual understanding. One such initiative is the "Rumi Forum for Interfaith Dialogue and Peace," an organization based in Washington DC. This organization is dedicated to promoting interfaith dialogue and peace through Rumi's teachings. The forum organizes various events, including seminars, conferences, and cultural exchange programs, to foster mutual understanding and respect among people of different faiths. These events provide a platform for individuals from various religious backgrounds to come together, share perspectives, and learn from one another. By facilitating these dialogues, the Rumi Forum aims to break down barriers, eliminate misunderstandings, and foster a sense of unity and respect among people of different beliefs.

Another initiative inspired by Rumi's teachings is the "Interfaith Youth Core," a nonprofit organization based in Chicago. Recognizing the crucial role of youth in shaping the future, this organization uses Rumi's poetry and teachings to engage young people in interfaith dialogue and service. Through

its programs, the organization aims to build a movement of young people capable of promoting interfaith cooperation in their communities. These programs provide young people with the tools and resources they need to lead interfaith initiatives in their own communities, nurturing a new generation of leaders committed to advancing peace and mutual understanding. In addition to these initiatives, Rumi's teachings have also inspired countless individuals worldwide to engage in their personal interfaith efforts. From organizing local interfaith dialogues to volunteering for interfaith service projects, these individuals use Rumi's teachings as a guide to promote peace and understanding in their own communities.

Rumi's concept of love offers a strong framework for interfaith dialogue. His teachings emphasize the universal nature of love and its potential to foster mutual understanding and respect among people of different faiths. By adopting Rumi's teachings on love, we can contribute to a more peaceful and harmonious world, where people of different religions live side by side in mutual respect and understanding (Körs et al., 2020; Maola, 2018). His teachings remind us that despite our differences, we are all connected through the common thread of love. It is this love that can bridge the gaps between religions, fostering mutual understanding and appreciation, and opening the way for religious harmony. Through these initiatives and the countless individual efforts inspired by Rumi's teachings, we can witness the transformative power of love in action, uniting people of different faiths and contributing to a more peaceful and harmonious world.

CONCLUSION

The foregoing discussion has delved into Jalaluddin Rumi's teachings on love and its potential as a pathway to interfaith harmony and peace. Rumi's concept of love, transcending the boundaries of religion, culture, and nationality, establishes it as a universal language that resonates with all hearts, irrespective of belief or background. His teachings underscore the significance of love in fostering mutual understanding and respect across diverse religions. Rumi advocates viewing love not merely as an emotion but as a Divine force that can guide actions, transform, and lead humanity towards spiritual enlightenment. Rumi has inspired many religious adherents to cultivate mutual understanding and respect among people of different faiths. This is a testament to the transformative power of love. Love can serve as a bridge between religions, nurturing mutual comprehension and respect, and paving the way for interfaith harmony. He emphasizes the universal nature of love, wherein despite human differences, we are indeed all connected through

the common thread of love. It is this love that can bridge the gaps between religions, fostering mutual understanding and appreciation, and opening the way for religious harmony.

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WAR STORIES IN POST-CONFLICT SOCIETY:
The Experience of The Kayeli Christian Refugees in Ambon

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ABSTRACT

Conflict narratives that develop in post-conflict societies are always considered dangerous as conflict triggers that lead to new conflicts. In communities where oral tradition is the primary source of knowledge, storytelling about past contests becomes a central means of transmitting both violent and peaceful cultures. Post-conflict society cannot be separated from the role of war stories in forming individuals and constructing dynamics of communal relations. This study aims to observe and analyze the extent of the role and influence of conflict-telling in post-conflict societies, particularly in conflict-vulnerable communities that were victims of the 1999 conflict in Maluku. This qualitative research was conducted in 2023. The data was collected through in-depth interviews with 15 Kayeli Refugee respondents, who were selected as a sample of vulnerable people based on objective scientific considerations. The results of this study indicate that conflict-vulnerable communities still maintain war stories up to 20 years after the conflict, both with nuances of violence and peace in the limited public and domestic space of religious segregation that is not reached by peacebuilders in efforts to peacebuilding in Ambon. Interestingly, conflict experiences, especially violent stories, become a tool to maintain segregation and present the continuation of structural and cultural violence. On the other hand, there are stories of peace and reflection on the conflict that can be used as a new way to support simple peacebuilding in Ambon as the Multicultural Capital of Maluku.

Keywords: *War Stories; Post-Conflict Society; Kayeli Christian Refugees*

INTRODUCTION

"At that time, people were running, hiding, seeing houses burning, crying, and we even celebrated Christmas at the police station and in the middle of the ocean. We sang the hymn of the congregation (Kidung Jemaat), whose title is in the middle of the waves (di tengah ombak), with tears in our eyes." This statement was a small part of my parent›s story from when I was about six to twenty. This story is often told with a sad expression and a very low intonation. The fairy tale made the young listeners fall asleep, but the listeners, from teenagers to adults, cried. This phenomenon reflects how conflict experiences are told like a fairy tale, which is very interesting and entertaining but influences behaviour and perceptions. At the end of the story, they advised: *"Never believe in Muslims. They will always be different from us"*. The storytelling carried out by the victims of the 1999 conflict, like the previous simple stories, is usually maintained by the next generation of simple things like storytelling.

Conflict 1999 to 2004 in Maluku left a bad experience for every victim who experienced the conflict directly. The impact of conflict storytelling is especially prominent in urban areas where people have mixed religions. People believed that the conflict happened because of a strong religious identity. That is why, after the conflict, people tend to live in segregation and regard people of different religions as threats (Satya Wacana et al., 2018). Conflict stories (conflict experiences) replace fairy tales, such as fables, legends, local oral histories, etc., with children being told in family rooms in daily life and activities even before bed. These stories are also told in the spaces of segregated society and are considered normal for the victims, maintaining and remembering the conflict is a right and good thing for them.

The war stories and collective memories as conflict legacies are still big problems in the post-conflict community dynamics in Ambon. These legacies are tucked away through narratives conveyed through stories in the family (Tapotubun, 2019) and symbols of religious customs transmitted through stories, songs, and other customs types (Lattu, 2019). Besides that, several researchers stated that telling stories orally in daily life of people is the best cultural way that people choose from ancient times until the present day (Foley, 2012; Palombini, 2017; Wellfelt 2020; Chancellor and Lee 2018; Tamboukou, 2020; Moon & Bahn, 2022). Referring to conflict resolution for post-conflict communities in Ambon, many approaches try to restore peace by touching on several aspects, such as traditional aspects like *Panas Pela* tradition in several schools (Hasudungan, 2021) and *Pela Gandong* tradition as local wisdom in Maluku (Hasudungan, et al., 2020) et al. Second, economic aspects like economic rehabilitation (Rieuwpassa, 2010). Third, the political aspect

prevents identity politics (Ernas, 2018). These reconciliation efforts are not sufficient if they are carried out temporarily. Because recovery, inter-communal trust takes a long time, and this sustains a sense of threat from other groups. As a result, most communities prefer to develop a defensive mechanism that strengthens segregation and causes peace discourses to be replaced by conflicting narratives of experiences and traumas that are difficult to remove. Therefore, the government has to play a big role in keeping the peace efforts still going on continuously (Randazzo & Torrent, 2021; Love, 2020), and peace should promote democracy, economics, and peace (Bräuchler, 2018)security and peace. It emerged as a critique of the liberal peace paradigm that promotes a happy alliance of democracy, economic development and peace. However, an epistemological turn towards culture has not yet taken place due to long-standing solutionist and quantitative traditions, but also due to the difficulties dominant peace and conflict studies disciplines have in conceptualising the local and culture. Drawing on lessons learned from previous cultural turns in conflict and peace theory such as ADR, traditional justice and HTS, the article argues for a twofold cultural turn in peace studies, with regard to (1.

This paper focuses on the storytelling of violence and peaceful stories of war as a part of the oral tradition carried out by vulnerable communities like refugees, based on small Christian refugee community (Kayeli) stories in Ambon. The data of this paper is based on the answers of 15 respondents who were interviewed in depth because they were victims directly. This research analyzed the data using qualitative methods with two methods, such as a narrative and an ethnographic approach based on what John W. Creswell (2015) suggests. I decided on the Kayeli refugee community as the representative because they moved out from a small village established with local people in Buru Utara, Maluku, because of the conflict in 1999 with numerous experience varieties. They survived their lives from zero as refugees in Ambon City. They spread to several Christian places in Ambon, such as Amahusu, Airlouw, Latuhalat, Gunung Nona, Passo, and Ambon City. However, interestingly, they still provide their original congregation in Ambon because they defend their community as the first GPM congregation in Buru Utara. But the problem is they still preserve the conflict and collective memories in their daily, going along with structural and cultural violence that they also receive in their new context as refugees in Ambon. This problem is rarely reached by peacebuilders in Ambon as a peacebuilding dynamic.

In some cases, refugee people will not agree if people in the big sphere city of Ambon stated that Ambon has 100% achieved a peaceful context because there are still conflict memories preserved in the small groups like the conflict

refuges community. Before people assemble a fresh way for peacebuilding in Ambon society, it is essential to look at how people express violent stories because of conflict and peaceful stories when the conflict occurs. Those stories will be a window to opening peacebuilding perspectives in Ambon. Meanwhile, they yet preserve conflict through violent stories; at the same time, they also maintain peacebuilding through peaceful stories regarding the segregation condition. Post-conflict segregation, like in Ambon, has been a key issue in the studies on post-conflict society and communal violence. This research dramatically contributes to peacebuilding because efforts to make peace are not only done temporarily but must be done sustainably. By making people aware of the history of violence during the conflict and post-conflict eras, they will be more alert in efforts to prevent conflict in the future.

THE WAY OF CONFLICT NARRATIVE TRANSMISSION

Conflict narratives transmitted to the next generation have an excellent opportunity to affect people's lives in general. The ways to transmit conflict narratives vary widely. However, one of the methods used by the Christian refugee community, which was victims of the 1999 conflict, was storytelling. As suggested by Victoria Biggs (2021), the transmission of conflict narratives to the next generation through storytelling has implications for character-building and individual perspectives that directly impact the dynamics of the social life of refugee communities who are victims of conflict. Based on data in the field, the respondents explained that transmitting conflict narratives through storytelling is considered an effective method, and it is always carried out regularly in limited public and domestic spaces.

Storytelling in the Public Sphere

How to transmit conflict narratives in public space is an effective way that is always done in the general public. The Kayeli Christian refugees have always used public space to transmit narratives of the 1999 conflict within their community. Conflict narratives are often transmitted through storytelling, which is carried out in four public settings within the Christian community of conflict victim refugees in Ambon during the post-conflict period, namely *Gatris,* church, school, and workplace. *First, Gatris* is an abbreviation of *garis tiris-tiris rumah* (or literally the house line in English, but in a different meaning). This term is often addressed to small groups in society, consisting of several heads of families or the closest neighbour group. Within this group, there are usually 3 to 4 adjacent houses. People in Ambon know this term in the Christian community because this small group refers to some people in

a congregation doing some religious activity like worshipping together. This term was so popular during the COVID-19 pandemic happens. In this case, the respondent confesses that this term is suitable to describe the transmission process of conflict stories.

Second, the church is also the place to transmit the conflict narratives. Some respondents confess that as a religious place, the church plays a role in continuing the social dynamic, including war stories—the way to transmit the stories coming from religious leaders and congregation members in Sunday worship. Sometimes, the conflict narrative is described by the pastor's sermons. Pastors in Kayeli, such as the leader or even the ex-leader and guest pastor who comes and leads the Sunday service in the Kayeli congregation, usually use this topic of conflict to make their sermons more actual and contextual. During the congregation members, conflict narratives are transmitted through discussions of in several moments like after Sunday worship, and even it might happen in other moments like small communal worship on other days like Unit Worship, Pelpri (*Pelayan Pria*) (Man communion), Pelpem (*Pelayanan Perempuan*) (Woman communion), AMGPM (*Angkatan Muda Gereja Protestan Maluku*) (Youngest generation communion of Maluku), etc.

Third, In the young generation ecosystem, it turns out that conflict narratives are transmitted through teaching or advice conveyed by teachers who are victims of conflict to their students who are children of victims of the conflict. So, in the public limited segregation sphere, sometimes, conflict narratives are transmitted in educational institutions. Even though it is rare, it is conveyed by the conflict victim teacher. Nevertheless, the teacher conveys the conflict narrative just like a reflection conflict. It is not too comprehensive, but it has a small amount of conflicting descriptions.

Fourth, The workplace is a more prominent and potential place to transmit conflict narratives. Many workplaces connect people who were victims of the 1999 conflict, especially if in that workplace, people who are the victims meet and work together. They spend much time together to build teamwork goals. So they can share their own experiences about the conflict in 1999 in Maluku. For the Kayeli refugees who started living in Ambon as part of a post-conflict society, they certainly have a dominant workplace, such as rough work and odd jobs. In such a workplace, it is evident that conflict narratives are still well-channelled among the victims of the conflict and even toward them. The four places described as the public sphere above affirm that the public sphere in this research is not pure tend as public where to reach the wider public. However, it is limited to religious segregation in the public sphere, in this case, the Christian community.

Storytelling in the Domestic Sphere

In addition to storytelling about conflict narratives that develop in the public environment, the domestic sphere is also the most important. It has tremendous potential for maintaining conflict narratives in the Christian community of refugee victims of the 1999 conflict in Ambon. We all know the domestic sphere is more important than the public sphere. Because all social dynamics come from the entire group, namely family, this vital group shapes the individual to go out to the big group as well as society. The conflict narratives in the memory of the victims of the 1999 conflict in Ambon were transmitted to the next generation through two types of domestic spheres. Those are a small and big family.

First, Small families are seen in family activities such as storytelling before sleep, storytelling while eating at the dinner table, and relaxing moments in the living room and other moments. These activities are the most effective means of imparting lessons to children through advice from parents. This phenomenon makes the conflict narratives that are transmitted to children very powerful. Second, Extended family is seen in family gatherings or friendly gatherings when there are family events, namely birthdays, graduations, baptisms, Sidi, and religious holidays such as Christmas and Easter, and at the end of the year and the new year. Both small and big families potentially transmit conflict narratives and maintain conflict stories that are benevolent based on peace stories and malevolent based on violent stories. Post-conflict society keeps on the psychology and social shaping through conflict narrative. Sometimes, it makes people consider peacebuilding, but on the other hand, it considers trauma memories that may create cultural and structural violence in their context.

VIOLENCE AND PEACE STORIES OF WAR

Kayeli Refugees are a community that initially lived alongside the Muslim community in Kayeli Village, an area adjacent to the District Capital in North Buru, Namlea. When the conflict occurred, they were forced to flee from Kayeli to a safer place in Ambon City. They prefer to live in Ambon and never return to Kayeli again, in the post-conflict period, until today. This choice was based on prolonged and unfinished trauma from the conflict and the convenience adapted to life in urban Ambon for approximately 25 years—those reasons described in their storytelling about the conflict maintained in their daily relational society dynamic. The types of stories are divided into violent and piece stories.

Violent Stories of War

Stories about events and experiences during the conflict era associated with *liyan* or the reality of vulnerable people (in this case, the Kayeli refugees) who still maintain stories of war are characterized by several violent behaviours or characteristics embedded in each of the stories. Some of the narrator's experiences imply that there were several forms of violence felt by the refugee community and post-conflict communities in Ambon and around Maluku in general who experienced a direct conflict that could be identified as below:

Theme of Violent Stories	Initial Name	Age	Piece of Stories
Association of Islamic Clothing Types with Violence	NN.9	38 yo	Outside the church, there were already a lot of people **wearing white turbans singing "Allah hu Akbar"** outside the church. At that time, I and several adult men were ordered to guard the neighborhood. When all the children and women were evacuated to the police station in Namlea, - What I remember, is it was very tense, sad, and very gripping..
	NN.3	60 yo	When we evacuated from the police station, **we heard "Allah hu Akbar" outside the place.** Furthermore, we know that we were under siege **by Jihad.** hat is the most harmonious intra-religious moment I have ever seen. The incredible moment was immediate..
	NN.5	45 yo	When we were in our evacuation site, we saw from afar people in **white turbans chasing us.** We ran and hid behind the bushes in the mountain refuge silently..
Glorification of Violence Perpetrators	NN.3	60 yo	**Our husbands and all of them protect us with guns.** Meanwhile, as women, children, and adults, we stay inside the police station to pray together..
	NN. 5	45 yo	Even though my husband went to help people fighting in another village..
Hostile Identity Vocabulary	NN. 14,	13 yo	Mama often said that during the conflict, Mom and Dad were having a hard time. Living in a refuge with tears. They often cry, even to the point where they have to climb mountains, go down mountains, run away from attacks by *orang sabala*..
	NN. 10	24 yo	The thing that is most often told to me is when the conflict occurred, I was one year old. At that time, our family tried to avoid conflict. My father said that during conflicts, we see people being killed in front of us very easily. Even *orang katong,* especially my father was almost killed by *orang sabala* when we wanted to evacuate..
Armaments with Violent Nuances	NN. 13	12 yo	I heard a story about the conflict from my teacher at my elementary school. The teacher said that conflict is difficult. Our parents fight with **weapon, knife, etc.** They are run and cry every time. No peace. So, we have to learn so that parents have a struggle that is not in vain..
	NN. 1	67 yo	But at that time, as men, we were ready to fight. Even though we didn't learn to **use weapons,** at that time we were forced to survive. We struggled to flee from Kayeli to Namlea City..
	NN.9	38 yo	I've only ever **held a gun** in my life when I was only in my teens. At that time, everyone was already scared. Don't know what to do and what to do. The women took refuge in the church, while we men had to be ready to go to war..
The Sore Evacuation Plots	NN. 2	66 yo	until the time on the ship, we all asked "Where are we going? Where is our destination? Some say to Manado, to Southeast Maluku, to NTT. **Because of the confusion, on the ship, everyone could only be silent and ponder with tears.** Thinking of the next life. Until finally we were dropped off at the port of Ambon and taken to an evacuation center that was willing to accept us..
	NN. 7	28 yo	The war happened when I was already in grade 1 of elementary school. And as an elementary school kid, I was really scared. **I could only take shelter from my parents because I was afraid.** – The atmosphere is very tense. **What I witnessed as a small child crying and tears falling in the evacuation area to church and then to the police station and the move to Ambon using the ship..**
	NN. 4	53 yo	**We fled for five days to a mountain far away from the city where there were no supplies of medicine, food, or even blankets for us to sleep on. Until finally on the fifth day, help came from the city of Namlea** and took us to the city to evacuate with the Kayeli and Namlea refugees to move to the city of Ambon..

Table 1. Piece of violent stories by the source people

a. Association of Islamic Clothing Types with Violence

War stories certainly build the reality of society close to violence. The story themes described experiences when witnessing the perpetrators of violence commit acts of violence by voicing Islamic religious identity. This depiction of violence is repeatedly recounted in several story themes by the narrators, namely the perpetrator (*Jihad*) wearing a white turban and voicing takbir (*Allah hu Akbar*).

Confessions about the perpetrators wearing white turbans and voicing *takbir* are found in several stories. These images are indirectly from the reality of the Kayeli refugee community, who always remember that people wearing white turbans and voicing takbir remind them of the 1999 conflict. This association of Islamic clothing and Takbir singing will always be associated with violence because it refreshes the collective memory of the conflict that is hard to lose in the Kayeli refugee community. The violence formed from these stories is cultural violence, such as fear, hatred, and racism.

b. Glorification of Violence Perpetrators

The glorification of the perpetrators of violence is depicted in the war stories. One of the most famous forms of violence was the pride of the perpetrators of violence on the part of the victims. The violence depicted in the story is positive violence from the point of view of the victims of the conflict. According to the narrators, the violence committed was aimed at self-defense, saving oneself, and helping others who have also experienced violence elsewhere. This act of violence is narrated as an act of heroism which is then considered a good thing from the side of the victims of the conflict and is even recounted repeatedly in several themes of war stories.

The glorification of perpetrators of violence is a form of cultural violence that is applied in the form of racism and hatred. Suppose this collective memory is left unchecked, and the value of violence continues to grow and develop. In that case, acts of violence are preserved in every dynamic of the lives of conflict-affected communities. This value of violence forms the victims' perspective to survive in war by defeating violence with violence.

c. Hostile Identity Vocabulary

The themes of violence formed in the reality of conflict victims are also reflected in the vocabulary chosen to describe the identity of opposing communities and their communities. Some of the identities conveyed by the victims implied inter-communal hostility. This identity was mentioned by several narrators when telling several themes of the story, such as *Orang Sabala*[1] (next-door people), who interpret the Muslim community as another community that is very different and refers to the enemy community. If the narrator uses this call, they consider the Islamic community to be a community with very different views. Vice versa, *Orang Katong*[2] is a term for the Christian community. The word *Katong* means us in English, which refers to the members of their own community. If the word *Orang Katong* is used in the story, the narrator is trying to separate the two sides of the community.

Apart from *Orang Katong and Orang Sabala*, two identity designations are used in storytelling, namely *acang and obey*. The word can is addressed to the Islamic community. The word *acang* is not known for certain, but Djatmiko (2006) explains that the word *acang* comes from the nickname of a Muslim

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[1] *Orang sabala* is people who are Muslims. *Orang sabala* is addressed to people who are not of the same religion. This call is usually known and used in general in Christian communities and even in Muslim communities in Ambon and as a whole in Maluku.

[2] *Orang Katong* is a term for their religious identity as a community. If those who say are Christians, the term *Orang Katong* is addressed to the Christian community. If those who say are Muslim, the term *Orang Katong* refers to the Islamic community.

boy named Hasan. This word then changes its function as a description of the identity of the Islamic community in Ambon. Vice versa, to describe Christian groups, usually use the word *obet,* which comes from a boy named *Abednego*. Suppose these two words continue to be used in the post-conflict society in Ambon. In that case, they will continue to perpetuate hostilities because these words were very popular during and after the war.

One identity that prioritizes hostilities is the Jihad word. For the victims of the conflict who are Christians, this word refers to the toughest enemy during the conflict. The Jihad used is always depicted with terrible figures who have committed many acts of violence during the 1999 conflict for refugees. They burned houses, tortured, besieged, and even killed. So, whenever they tell stories using the word Jihad, the victims agree that the group is criminals.

d. Armaments with Violent Nuances

One form of a story that shows violence is illustrated by how the narrator tells a story about the conflict through the context of war using war tools. Several weapons of war are described in two themes. Some forms of war ornaments used in conflict and conveyed by the narrators are bullets and weapons used in war, even in contexts where the victims have never used these war tools. Stories about the means of war by the narrators describe the context of violence, which has implications for cultural violence, such as fear and racism. Some related objects affect the victims' psychology and the relationship dynamics.

e. The Sore Evacuation Plots

The flow evacuation process for refugees took place sadly. The flow of the evacuation process experienced by the refugees is one of the patterns of stories with nuances of violence that occur in the dynamics of post-conflict society when the conflict occurs. The evacuation of the victims went through a sad process. This evacuation process started from the evacuation when the dispute first occurred. In several story themes, the evacuation process is carried out in a state of panic. Stories from sources narrated the evacuation path they went through as a low evaluation flow. Starting from the first time they heard about the war that had occurred in several contexts (when they were at the market, at work, at a neighbour's house, and so forth) then, they tried to save themselves by going through various challenges such as witnessing a murder, almost losing a child due to panic, and trying to find an accessible place for evacuation.

The evacuation process took place in a precarious situation; they had to try

to survive at several evacuation points; some survived on the mountain, in the forest, at the church, and in the houses of Muslim neighbours. During the evacuation process, at several points, they had to accept the fact that they did not have adequate clothing and food and even had to endure pressure overshadowed by death and hardship. In the following process, they were evacuated to a safer place, such as the police station, and even celebrated Christmas there in silence and solitude. The evacuation process occurred when they were rushed to other areas using ships in confusion, sadness, loss, and even hopelessness for the future. The evacuation process experienced by the victims proved that they (the victims) were living under pressure, stress, and emptiness during the evacuation process. The violence depicted in the evacuation process is a part of cultural violence, likewise, Galtung theory.

Peaceful Stories of War

The war stories that coloured the lives of the Christian community of refugee victims of the 1999 conflict were not only violent stories of war nuance but also peace stories of war nuance. The peaceful stories of war tucked in are not recognized as peaceful stories because only a few takes place in a tense conflict. Through experiences that are often recounted by the sources, there are several forms of peace stories of war that could be identified as below:

Theme of Peace Stories	Initial Name	Age	Piece of Stories
Rescue by Muslims During War	NN.3	60 yo	"I remember that during the conflict **there was a young Muslim who helped me return home**. Because the situation was already chaotic, people were panicking, he immediately came up to me and took me home on his motorcycle. He also advised me to be careful."
Helped by Muslims in The Exile	NN. 2	66 yo	"When we fled, from the church building to the police station on the 22nd of December, we were escorted by large trucks. At that time, **we were escorted by our Muslim neighbors**. They are also trying to find cars for our family members who haven't gotten a ride yet. One of our neighbors who is a Muslim also gives us food. They are also the ones who always inform the situation and conditions at that time…"
Friendship Identity Vocabulary	NN. 6	53 yo	"I live and grow in the multicultural society in Namlea. I have many **Muslim friends**. Even, I consider them as my family. My friends from I was in kinder garden until I being an adult are Muslim."
	NN. 6	53 yo	Even we hear from **my Muslim neighbor** that safe us is there is one house burning with the family in there
Ornaments with Peaceful Nuances	NN. 2	66 yo	Our Muslim neighbor even gave us **meals and drink** when we were in the refugee camp for Muslims in the police station. However, we never felt hungry and thirsty at the time.
Grateful for Safety and New Reality	NN. 15	24 yo	"Mama and Papa often told me about the conflict in 1999; I was just over a year old. However, our struggle is incredible to stay alive. As small children who were there during the conflict, we learned to live like soldiers. They say it is very miserable when we have to try to live in the middle of the forest, there is no food, no milk, and we even have to eat whatever food is in the forest. When the bomb goes off, all we can do is stay still, look down, and not move. One day, there was help from the military, who came to the forest and found us and took us to an evacuation site..
	NN. 12	16 yo	"The conflict situation was so severe that they needed clarification about what to do and how to face life in a new area. **Nevertheless, they can get through it all**. Besides that, they have to survive after the conflict by working odd jobs and struggling so that we, as children, can eat. Because of that, **Papa often said that we must learn to be strong so that we can make our parents proud and live better through difficult times during conflicts..**
	NN. 11	24 yo	"My friends who are native Amahusu residents always say that my place is a refuge. But how can I show that **we can survive as successful refugees..**
	NN. 6	53 yo	"When I arrived in Ambon, in my mind what kind of work was important, I got money. For example, I have to carry rice to the rice warehouse; I go to the port to transport goods to the port to become a port hunter; I also go farming in other people's gardens; I also go sea fishing using a lent boat. My native person has also worked in construction in various places until now I am a builder. My wife sells fish and goes to wash other people's clothes. Apart from that, we also have to live in evacuation areas with our young children. When my children attend school, I also work harder to earn money. In essence, surviving during the conflict in the refugee area is very difficult. **But enjoy it**.

Table 2. Piece of peace stories by the source people

a. Rescue by Muslims During the War

The precarious situation faced during the 1999 war was embellished with a narrative of peace in the form of heroism by some Muslims. This narrative of Muslim heroism appears several times in several moments. Actions of

heroism refer to four forms, namely providing information and updating the dynamics of the conflict from before the conflict until the conflict occurred, hiding when the war occurred, and giving a ride when the war broke out, like the story when some of them were at the market and were confused about going home.

The heroic actions carried out by Muslims prove that war stories do not only leave scars that have implications for bad individual psychology. However, on the other hand, conflict stories also remind us of the heroic actions of opposing religious communities (Islam) that were carried out to save the victims. The heroism of these Muslims is another form of heroism performed by opposing communities as opposed to narratives of violence in the form of heroism carried out by refugee community members as described in the Glorification of Violence Perpetrators. These narratives of peace can be re-edified to recall the collective memory of harmony during the war.

b. Helped by Muslims in The Exile

The narratives of violence that were present during the evacuation process were embellished with sadness, which resulted in deep trauma, instead inserting peaceful narratives that were recorded in several moments. These peaceful narratives are narrated by depicting assistance from Muslims in the context of refugees. Some of this assistance is reflected in actions of material support (providing food, money, and other necessities at the evacuation site even when they want to flee to another area) and spiritual support (in the form of encouragement with words). Another form of action is evidenced by the description of the provision of transportation when it is urgent to look for family members who are left behind and other rescue actions in the form of assistance to cross the river to the evacuation site.

The assistance Muslims provide in refugee camps has indirectly replaced narratives of violence with acts of kindness carried out by Muslims. The forms of assistance these Muslims provide illustrate that a good relationship exists between the victims and some Muslims who help them. The Muslims who helped them were Muslims with whom they had close ties. These aids show that there are images of Muslims contrary to the images of evil Muslims, narrated in stories that have nuances of violence in the previous sub-chapter.

c. Friendship Identity Vocabulary

The conflict narratives told by the narrators also include the vocabulary of brotherhood and friendship. Some of the narrators still refer to some people

who are Muslim as their friends and relatives. The use of a well-known and recurring pronoun tucked in the stories of the victims is like brothers-sisters which describes the context of the brotherhood between them. Even though they are not siblings or have a close sibling relationship, the word brothers and sisters depicts a strong brotherly relationship. The brothers in each narrative refer to neighbours with whom they have lived for a long time.

Apart from brothers and sisters, several narrators also use the word neighbour as a pronoun to describe the harmonious relationship between them and the Muslims when the conflict occurred. Neighbour is a term for people who live in a common area and have a close relationship with them. The neighbours in each conflict narrative refer to the good and close relations between the victims and the Muslims. Some context of the story can be seen when the victims described their neighbours as saviours when they were attacked by hiding them. However, in another context, neighbours are also referred to as people they consider to be relatives. In this discussion, neighbours can be seen as a positive call for people who help victims of war.

d. Ornaments with Peaceful Nuances

The conflict narratives conveyed by the narrators present several tools used for peace in the process of helping. Some of the tools in question include food and drink, clothes, blankets, and even other assistance in the form of medicines during evacuation during the conflict. The items given are tools used to support peace. Unfortunately, these tools were provided by Muslims who knew the victims well, which they called brothers and sisters and neighbours.

Items used as tools for peace are told in the context of conflict without consciously reminding the stories of peace behind the sad stories experienced by the victims. Some of the tools used in these contexts are a sign that there is still concern and harmony that occurred during the conflict. Refugee victims of conflict admit that the tools described are an essential part of their survival efforts. The assistance provided through peace-supporting goods implicitly illustrates that stories of conflict also contain nuances of peace.

e. Grateful for Safety and New Reality

In dealing with conflict, conflict victims stated that they were grateful because even though they were under solid conflict pressure, they were still alive and could defend their lives. Their grateful narrative drawn in the several themes of war stories, that could be identified as follows: (1) Religious preparations are ahead of the conflict because they do an excellent prayer with the people

who are experiencing the conflict so that they can survive the conflict. (2) When they nearly lose a family member, they are grateful that through God's help, their family can still be saved. (3) When they talk about murder in which, in this condition, the victim feels that he is saved from being killed. (4) When they talk about evacuation, where in this story, the victims feel that they were evacuated to the right place, namely in the city of Ambon, which makes them grateful; they can feel the dynamics of urban life. (5) When they talk about hunger, in the theme of this story, the victims explain that they are learning to deal with stressful conditions but can get through even without food. They are hungry, but they have no desire to eat. (6) When they talk about their survival ways in conflict and post-conflict contexts, on the theme of this narrative, the victims explained that even though they worked hard, they were very grateful because they could go through all of this until they could educate the next generation to a high level, both S-1 and S-2. Even their children can enjoy a better education than they did when they were in the area of origin, which can be said to be a hinterland.

The six tunes of the war stories above indirectly explain that religious post-conflict people often cover up violent themes in conflict by reflecting on the bad events they have experienced. These reflections become conflict narrative material inseparable from the storytelling carried out by conflict victims who lived in the 20s after the conflict in the domestic and public spheres. Reflection on the conflict is a form of peaceful narrative tune that develops in religious communities in Ambon. In religious spaces, conflict narratives that smell of violence are presented as an effort to support religious reflections on the conflicts that occur. Therefore, conflict reflection narratives can be categorized as peace narrative that develops in grassroots communities that experience direct conflict and live in post-conflict times in Ambon.

CONFLICT NARRATIVE STORYTELLING AMONG YOUNG GENERATION

The generation that lived and was born during the conflict and grew up during the conflict to post-conflict are active speakers of conflict narratives. Conflict narratives with nuances of violence and peace are still neatly stored in post-conflict society's individual and collective memory. Efforts to eliminate conflict narratives that have nuances of violence are no longer possible to achieve optimally because all of these narratives are attached to the memory of each individual and cannot be separated.

Figure 1 Conflict narrative intensity across generations
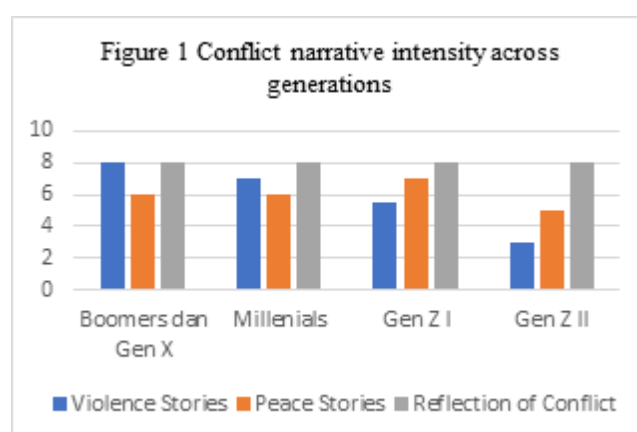
Figure 1 shows that in the Gen Z II generation, narratives of violence are not too strong. The main factor is the storytelling of conflict narratives inherited from parents, which tend to be more reflective. Children aged 12-19 years today receive more lessons from conflicts in the form of reflections and advice. Reflection on conflict is a conflict narrative popular in post-conflict religious societies. The description of the intensity of cross-generational conflict narratives in Figure 1 shows that the boomers, Gen X, millennials, Gen Z I, and Gen Z II have the same intensity of reflection, which is more prominent than narratives with violent and peaceful nuances.

Each narrator tells a conflicting narrative based on different experiences. However, all the narrators ended their storytelling with a brief reflection stating that they were grateful that they were still alive because of God's grace. They are also thankful because they can live in Ambon and feel the urban environment. They are also grateful because even though they suffered hard, they survived the post-conflict period with higher education, housing, and land, even though they still experience many psychological disorders. These reflections become learning material for the younger generation who grow and develop in a post-conflict society. These reflections also motivate the younger generation to remember the history of their parents and the generation before they managed to go through conflict so that they can strive to rise and become better.

The narrators from Generation X and millennials who have children from Generation Z I and Generation Z II explained that they should spread conflict narratives in the form of reflections rather than recall conflict narratives that refresh trauma and are likely to present new psychological disturbances for this young generation. In other words, conflict reflection becomes learning material for the next generation so they can maintain social security and comfort in post-conflict times and avoid new conflicts created because of previous generations' grudges. It is possible that the latest generation still

accepts conflict narratives with nuances of violence in domestic spheres, so this still needs to be considered and taken into consideration for conflict resolution and peacebuilding in post-conflict communities in Ambon.

CULTURAL AND STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE IN POST-CONFLICT SOCIETY

Cultural and structural violence is an ever-growing impact of implicit communal conflict. Galtung stated that structural violence hurts basic human needs. Still, no direct actor must be held responsible, such as violence that occurs within the scope of inter-institutional as well as violence that includes conflicts of justice in conflict areas. Meanwhile, cultural violence is the legitimacy of structural violence that usually occurs within the scope of individuals and groups of perpetrators and victims of violence. What is explained by Galtung is illustrated in Figure 2.
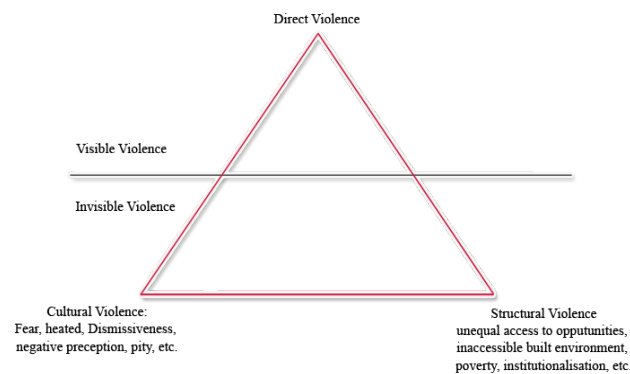
Figure 2 Triangle of violence adapted from Galtung, 1990

The cultural and structural violence explained by Galtung is proven by the availability of violence in the context of vulnerable conflict communities such as the Kayeli refugees during the post-conflict period in Ambon. Based on the themes of the war story explained in the previous chapter and repeated broadly in the sub-chapter, it turns out that it implies a context of structural violence that significantly impacted the lives of refugee communities. Some of the contexts of structural violence are still embedded in the pattern of relations between the refugees and the native people where they live now (Pattiserlihun et al., 2024). Cultural violence is described in several forms of mental illness that refugees consciously or unconsciously still have, making it difficult for them to form an environment full of trust and peace in differences.

Meanwhile, some of the structural violence that still occurred was identified

as follows:

1. Limited access to land certificates that have been granted since the move from the conflict period to the post-conflict period. Refugees have the same title as immigrants. The requirement to get a certificate is self-conversion as a resident of the village (in which it is occupied), including as a member of the village congregation even though their original congregation and Kayeli congregation should not be disbanded according to the GPM Synod because it is the oldest congregation on the island of Buru with a long and unique story.

2. Discrimination as a foreigner is closely related to troublemakers. If even the slightest mistake is made in the area where the Kayeli Refugees live, the native people will turn on the refugees. Because immigrants need to understand the new reality in the pristine condition of the new location, the character in the old area (Kayeli, North Buru) might differ from the site's context, which is close to the provincial capital like Ambon.

3. Stigmatization of the title of refugees as a group that pity needs to be pitied, even the areas where they live are referred to as areas of compassion, underdeveloped areas, and areas of deprivation.

To this day, cultural and structural violence has become a new reality that is considered a risk for the Kayeli refugee community's live dynamics in Ambon, so they take all of that for granted as well as usual.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF WAR STORIES IN THE POST-CONFLICT SOCIETY

After comprehending the magnification of violence and peaceful stories that developed in vulnerable societies, such as refugees, in the previous sub-chapter, the subsequent meaningful discussion is the implications of storytelling of war stories on the dynamics of the post-conflict society in Ambon. Two essential roles of storytelling war stories in the post-conflict society are to strengthen the psychological formation of each individual and the social dynamics dimension of a post-conflict society.

Individual Psychology

The most crucial role of violence and peaceful stories is to shape the lifestyle of a post-conflict society, from the individual to the community. Individuals, as the smallest part of society, also feel the impact of conflict. Victims of the conflict stated that they always remember the experience of the conflict and tell the next generation as a form of appreciation for remembering it as living

history through difficult events and surviving until the 20s years after the conflict. They live in other areas, they live as migrants or refugees, and they try to survive in extreme ways because all aspects of life have to start from scratch with adjustments to a new environment.

Individual memories of conflict experiences also provide loans for the formation of the psychology of each individual. Some narrators explained, based on the data, especially violent stories by the source people, they elaborate that the conflict narratives maintained by each individual became a tool that always made them feel some of the psychosocial aspects that remained embedded in each individual. The formation of individual psychology is seen from their perspective when they are in the area of the Islamic community, such as (1)Anxiety is a mental disorder that leads to excessive anxiety and fear because it is influenced by many factors, namely the individual and the environment (Agustin, 2022). (2) Paranoid is a form of individual psychology that leads to psychological problems characterized by the emergence of a sense of suspicion about something and results in excessive fear Agustin, 2022b). (3) Anger is one form of impact of conflict that occurs in post-conflict societies. Anger due to conflict is also a part of expressing emotions toward the conflict that occurs in addition to conflict trauma (Scheff, 2014)an approach that has been mistakenly cast aside. The last aspect considers the pride-shame axis as a key part of a major social system, my current work. Theories by C. H. Cooley and Erving Goffman imply that shame, particularly, is all but ubiquitous in modern societies, yet usually invisible. My current ideas suggest that this conjecture may be somewhat overstated, if only slightly. However, empirical studies by Norbert Elias and by Helen Lewis imply support for both ubiquity and invisibility. Both the Elias/Lewis conjecture on hiding shame and Billig's theory of repression are supported by my Ngram study of historical changes in frequency of shame terms in five languages. Like other emotions, such as fear, shame can be recursive, acting back on itself (shame about shame. (4) Insecure is a mental and psychological condition that causes a person to feel insecure about many things (Fadli, 2022). (5) Hypervigilance is excessive alertness accompanied by a tendency to be alert to prevent danger. This attitude makes people who experience it feel and act as if there is a threat, so they are categorized as very sensitive to the people and the environment around them (Pramana, 2023). That individual disorder still maintains in the victims' reality in the post-conflict society, especially 20 years after the conflict.

Social Dynamic Post-Conflict Society

The role of conflict narratives that are transmitted through storytelling

in society will help social dynamics that occur in post-conflict societies. Previously, the role of conflict narratives in shaping individual psychology has been explained. These forms of individual psychology also influence the social dynamics of a post-conflict society. Individual trauma preserved in conflict narratives remains a guideline for unique post-conflict social interactions. In this case, two essential points describe the social dynamics of the post-conflict community in Ambon. Those are residential segregation and public area desegregation.

> "Segregation based on home region is very difficult nowadays. Especially for the victims of the conflict directly. Because people feel more secure living in a space of regional segregation based on religion rather than being mixed up like before. For example, in 2019 the conflict that occurred between Muslims in Batu Merah and Christians in Kudamati caused tension in the city of Ambon, so that if we wanted to go towards Passo, we were afraid to go through Islamic areas such as Batu Merah. Because the conflict narratives still shape our ideology of conflict." (NN. 8, 40 y.o.)

Segregation of residence based on religion is a step that is appropriate to continue living in the plural city of Ambon during the post-conflict period. Religion is one of the causes of conflict, according to the victims of the conflict. Based on the developing conflict narratives, religion is cultural violence (Galtung, 1990) which also occurred in 1999 in Maluku. That is why it is necessary to separate residents to minimize conflict. Strong segregation among conflict-affected refugees indicates that society does not want a conflict to happen again. The reasons why the community personally implemented separate living quarters were strengthened by their desire not to cause a recurrence of conflict in Ambon City due to inter-religious misunderstandings (Pattiserlihun, 2023). Difficulties for mixed living may be possible if the government intervenes in regulating urban planning. However, it will be difficult if carried out in post-conflict communities that experience conflict directly. From a different point of view, residential area segregation will be harmful if it escalates to the segregation of public spaces. However, in this post-conflict period, there is no need to worry about the segregation of public space. Conflict victims who experienced the effects of the conflict stated that segregation was not too high in the dynamics of social relations in public spaces such as educational institutions, workplaces, and other public rooms (malls, markets, public transportation, et al.).

Disaggregation is the opposite of segregation which is the impact of post-conflict society's positive narratives and perspectives. Desegregation is

synonymous with standard forms of relational patterns in society in general. This pattern of social life has the potential to occur in a non-conflict society that has never experienced conflict because of differences. This social dynamic is also the goal of many post-conflict societies that have experienced conflict because of differences. Desegregation in a post-conflict inter-religious society is a peace-building step motivated by a belief in a pluralist community, both religious and ethnic. A mix of ethnic, religious, and socio-cultural elements characterizes the pattern of relations in a dis- segregated pluralist society. Desegregation of residents is one of the wishes of the peace fighters in Ambon, which also exists in a small number of victims of the conflict. Desegregation is a good step for the post-conflict community to form a society that understands each other's differences and lives in harmony again within differences. Desegregation of residents is also seen as an effort to create a post-conflict society that can slowly eliminate conflict narratives for future generations. Suppose the next generation lives in dis-segregated residents and tries to create a good community. In that case, this indirectly supports the breaking up of collective memories about conflict and is replaced with memories of harmony in religious differences.

CONCLUSION

Over twenty years after communal violence, post-conflict society in Ambon found themselves with memories of conflict transmitted from generation to generation in the oral stories on war. Storytelling activity is a straightforward choice of oral traditions for all people worldwide, including post-conflict communities in Ambon. Narrating conflict narratives is one of the patent activities for vulnerable conflict groups; in this case, they are those who experience conflict directly, according to the research presented by Biggs. Based on this research, vulnerable groups in post-conflict societies can be categorized into two forms, namely victims' groups and perpetrators' groups. However, in this study, vulnerable groups focused more on victim groups who left their original place and continued their new life in a new location. This group is known as the refugee community. This research focuses on a Kayeli Christian community.

The nature of storytelling war stories such as violence and peaceful, has implications for personal life and the dynamics of social relations in society. Both violent and peaceful, these nuances seriously affect today's society. Indeed, there are still many implications that could arise from other people in different contexts. However, this research shows that conflict narratives transmitted in the form of stories in the domestic and limited public spheres greatly

affect post-conflict societal relations, especially in the negative implications. Interestingly, these negative implications do not take up much space because even though narratives of violence colour a lot of social dynamics, there are still many narratives of peace tucked into narratives of community conflict.

The trauma of the 1999 religious conflict cannot be left entirely in the memory of the victims. One colour of the impact that appears is residential Segregation based on religion. On one side, segregation will be a challenge to peacebuilding because it makes people live in collective memories and maintain the ego of their community (truth claim). So, their segregated and limited society depletes the storytelling about violence and peaceful stories of war properly. Therefore, suspicion, hate, and prejudice against other religious communities are still happening based on the implication they got from war stories.

This research contributes to conflict management studies. People should be aware of how to manage the community to be more peaceful through storytelling. The vulnerable people, such as the refugee community, should be focused on. Their story should be finished and transformed to be more peaceful. This research still needs to improve, especially the sample, because it is too narrow for the Kayeli community, which is one religion. However, if there are researchers who want to look into these same topics, they can be aware of the need to take more samples with different contexts.

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RELIGIOUS SPIRITUALITY:
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ABSTRACT

Sufi Healing therapy is a spiritual or non-medical therapy which is conducted through Sufi practices during the suluk process. The purpose of this paper is to discuss the manner in which Sufi Healing model is applied in the process of reforming juvenile delinquents. In this study, the description of the data is qualitative which has been collected through observations, interviews and documentation. This study has shown that there is a Sufi Healing model in rehabilitating the juvenile delinquents at the Rehab Center employing Sufi tradition through rituals. According to the Sufi Healing model, the following are the factors; Doctrine of tariqa teachings, Murshid [mentor] and Coach. The prescriptions for the juvenile delinquents in Sufi Healing aim to improve self-awareness and personal self-control. The Sufi Healing ritual is also capable of making the pious individually and socially positive of adolescents who have such personalities, as well as enhance human consciousness and self-governance to perform positive actions. This paper established that Sufi Healing is an example of an alternative model of therapy for rehabilitation of juvenile delinquency based on spirituality. From this research, it is recommended that mental health remains a central control and command point in people's lives.

Keyword: *Religious Spirituality; Sufi Healing; Rehabilitation of Juvenile Delinquency,*

INTRODUCTION

Sufi Healing is among the Islamic healing system with spiritual practice as a concept (Fahriannor, 2022). Sufi Healing treatment method is a kind of non medical treatment that affect physical and spiritual wellbeing of humans. Sufi Healing in Treatment is somewhat related to the tradition of the Sufi in the use of ritual process. Spiritual healing rituals have the advantage of treating not by medical means through drugs rather the religious rituals as a basis of performing a therapeutic treatment and has impact to human psychology (Subandi, 2014). Therefore, Sufi Healing is an example of an alternative complementary therapy using Sufi practices in the human body to improve physical and soul well-being (Aqib, 2009).

As the creations of God, humans in their simplest sense have features not only outside but also inside them (Sutoyo, 2016). God has given human nature as the asset and ability to communicate not only with God but also with His creation. It is a guideline that humans should live happily and in unison because this capital of intelligence, and faith. God also assigns the name leader to humans in a way that serves as an authority over the contents of the earth in advance. Therefore, the human inner aspect plays a role in human conduct in daily life (Syatori, 2020). In more detail, the process of human inner development according to Sufism starts from puberty or adolescence.

While there has been a lot of theoretical research done on Sufi healing, there remains a lack of research on the actual practice of Sufi healing. Early issue, future and social illness (social pathology) of juvenile delinquency has relation with diversity of the nation in the future (Resdati & Rizka Hasanah, 2021). The starting point of diversity is the unity and preparedness that Indonesian youths displayed in the Youth Pledge of 1928. It turned into a historic event because the birth of diversity brought by youths from different areas of Indonesia to decide the future of the Indonesian nation (Naviah, 2022). These teenage mischiefs have greatly detracted the growth of the teenager's positive attitude to be productive for the future of the nation. Juvenile delinquency is by behaviour as presented in the mass media, high school brawls, case of child assault by Mario Dandi et al in 2023, drug abuse by youth in East java in 2021, and alcohol consumption by youth leading to death in Central Java in 2020. According to Mutiara Jasmisari, (2021), there were 8750 cases of juvenile delinquency. These cases define a condition that requires a solution and the development of prevention measures. Therefore, cases of juvenile delinquency have been occasioned by psychological disorders where they are in the process of establishing their identity and are susceptible to a social diseases (Cheng & Li, 2021).

Therefore, it is the intention of this research to build on the existing literature with regards to Sufi healing. Up to the present time, Sufi healing has only been linked with Sufi ceremonies and Sufi therapy in the mental treatment by adopting an Islamic method. Furthermore, the research on Sufi healing has only been linked with drug addicts that have been conducted at the Suryalaya Islamic Boarding School. Sufi healing technique practiced at the Rehab center can cure drug addicts through the Sufi ritual process. *Inabah* [repentance or turning back to Allah] method has favorable effects on the mental health of drug victims. However, this paper is about how Sufi healing is employed in psychotherapy for the juvenile delinquency offenders in the process of enhancing self-esteem and self-identity. Therefore, the investigation of the Sufi healing model for the reintegration of juvenile offenders increases and enriches prior findings.

The offenders of juvenile delinquency are in two areas, first; he is punished for violating the relevant criminal law and second; he is in a rehabilitation center as a process of healing from character transformation (Sartika, 2022). The punishment given for juvenile delinquency is not yet said to be a pure juvenile delinquents, but they are still in developmental stage that need social and psychological help in order to know who they are. Some of the juvenile delinquency offenders are products of mental and psychological backgrounds and are least expressive when it comes to communication. As such they require help through a spiritual way, to ensure that there is development of understanding that helps one realize who they are. Therefore, the Sufi healing model is not only Sufi treatment to get closer to Allah S.W.T, but also as a form of psychotherapy for offenders of juvenile delinquency to regain the original nature of man in order to become a healthy human being. The Sufi healing model once again supports that Sufi method is more beneficial than abstract teachings for adolescents.

CONCEPT OF SPIRITUAL REHABILITATION FOR JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

Rehabilitation is a place to treat patients with mental and psychological disorders (Hidayataun & Widowaty, 2020). Public perception of rehabilitation is not only a place to camp but on how best to change such behaviors and attitudes which are deemed wrong or do not fit the society's standard norms, beliefs and practices. Discipline and assignments are based on character education in rehabilitation centers; role models, assignments, and interactive help between patients and teachers (Ibipurbo et al., 2022). The instructor or officer in the rehabilitation process plays a central role in influencing changes

in the behavior of patients in order to follow the stages that apply during the rehabilitation process (Kamaludin, I. & Ula, 2019). Therefore, rehabilitation is a place and process to promote awareness according to the stages defined to alter patient's attitude and actions (Suryaman et al., 2018).

Rehabilitation is one of the place that is used for purpose of changing oneself and reflecting on the mistakes committed (Hidayataun & Widowaty, 2020). Teenagers also undergo developmental changes that are psychological and physical during a transitional period. These changes need the right receptacle and direction in which they can progress physically and mentally in a proper manner. When the child cannot control his/her emotions or physicality or the emotions and physicality are not applicable to the child's interests and talents, there will be conflict within the child and stress. Stressful conditions in children will have an impact on the mental conditions of the child and lead to mental disorder (Suryaman et al., 2018). Thus, that adolescents require help in how and when to share their interests and skills with others and to the better advantage. Therefore, rehabilitation has in fact provided a vessel and floor to demonstrate the interests and potential of the adolescent so as to form a healthy and strong next generation (Aris, 2023).

Sartono (1998) argues that juvenile delinquency that happens in society is a social pathological disease among young people due to social abandon. Delinquency is a way of asserting that is unlawful (Spruit et al., 2016). Delinquency among youths is as a result of internal and external factors. External stimuli are social situations where there is distortion by immediate family, teachers, friends who offer input into their thinking and behaviors. Whereas internal factors refer to the psychological or mental state of children who are still incoherent, due to such conditions they find it hard to make a decision on every event that happens to them. Of course, an unstable psychological condition significantly affects behavior in choosing or deciding something (Hidayah, 2020). They require care and direction to discover who they are, what they can do and what they are good at so that those attributes can be used positively. Consequently, juvenile delinquency has both endogenous and exogenous factors that compel children to think and act (Ketut et al., 2022).

Juvenile delinquency cases are the most important matters that must be addressed in detail. Delinquency is a form of rebellion of youths against social transformation that is contrary to their wish. Juvenile delinquents are known to be more or less simplistic in their thinking and approach to life issues. The issues which come to them pose need for intervention by adults, parents, teachers, community, and religious leaders to engage in addressing teenage issues. The challenge faced by adolescents is that they are not well suited to

the environment and they have poor individual and group accommodation. This leads them to condemn their own style of how they react and perform on the issues they encounter. So juvenile delinquency is not only caused by psychology that is still developing and hard to settle, and environment that is not conducive or provides little direction so that they act practically and pompously when it comes to problems.

This work is hearkened as qualitative which is normally done through field research. The field study selected is to gather extensive information on preventing juvenile delinquency with the aid of Sufi Healing as an alternative treatment. The data under consideration in this study are of the following types: characteristics of information, values and practices of Sufi Healing applied to juvenile offenders. While primary data were obtained from interviews, secondary data include documents, letters, videos, photos, and the guidebooks observed during Sufi Healing rituals. The research data were analyzed according to the stages postulated by Hubermas and Milles (2000) which included data reduction, data display and lastly data verification. Data reduction was performed by going back to the themes of the interview findings. On the same note, research questions were used as the framework for data organization. Data display was done by way of tabulation and restatement of interview findings. Interpretation was used as a method of conclusion in the process of data verification. Interview data were then interpreted by restating the findings of the study in the following manner.

SUFI HEALING MODEL AS ISLAMIC THERAPY

Frager (2014) pointed out that these are not only religious rituals but also strengthening of the human psychological and mental functions in everyday life. According to Mulyati & Nihayah (2020), Sufi Healing is a healing process to bring human being back to the proper status as social and spiritual beings. Sufi Healing is a kind of therapy that is non medical and spiritual in nature that is practiced by Sufi groups (Syukur, 2012). Spiritual therapy is well grounded and is among the forms of therapy for Muslims and is derived from the Qur'an. Sufi Healing is popular among Sufi groups as a method of enhancing the moral standards of students by performing only Allah's orders and abstaining from His prohibitions (Hayat, 2023). The activities performed in Sufi Healing therapy are part of activities performed by *tariqa* practitioners as an attempt to regain human essence as divinely and socially endowed beings. Sufi Healing seeks to prepare pious individuals in the society (Sbullah Daud et al., 2020). Thus, Sufi Healing therapy as a non-medical alternative treatment has become a solution to build human awareness to maintain good relationships vertically with God and with horizontally humans (Saari et al., 2020).

Sufi Healing as a form of spiritual therapy that is religion-focused on the improvement of faith, Islam, and *ihsan* [excellence or perfection in faith]. Based on the three significant postulations of religion as the foundation for attaining the physical and spiritual well-being of a human being (Zhirra, 2022), Sufi therapy was developed. Sufism is the inner or emotional aspect that is in humans. Sufis have it in them that the worst enemy of human beings is their own selves. It is much harder to manage, self-reflect and correct oneself than it is to correct someone else. In humans there are lusts that drive and enslave humans to act and feel inferior. Hence they can be dissatisfied with the possessions, and gifts that have been provided by God. In the end, they do things that are beyond the limit. Especially at a young age who still have difficulty controlling themselves and doing things beyond the limit. Therefore, Sufi Healing as a therapy for juvenile delinquents who practice Sufi rituals to develop self-identity and self-discipline.

Sufi Healing Therapy is the use of Sufi practices performed by the *salik* in observing the rules of the *tariqa*. In *Tariqa* discipline, the aspect of ubudiyah is seen to be dominant in the operationalization of the *Tariqa*. *Tariqa* teachings indicate that the most significant practice of rituals is dhikr. *Dhikr* as the main practice in the Qodiriyah Naqsabandiyah *tariqa* at the Suryalaya Islamic Boarding School. *Dhikr* is of two kinds, *Dhikr Jahar* which is recited aloud and *Dhikr khofi* which is recited silently. *Dhikr Jahar* is performed by those who commit juvenile delinquency after five compulsory prayers of the day namely *Fajr* (early morning), *Dzuhur* (noon), *Asar* (afternoon), *Maghrib* (sunset) and *Isha* (evening). There are 165 individual or congregational *Dhikr* readings. The *Dhikr* ritual is the central aspect of the practice of Sufi Healing therapy treatment at the *Inabah* rehabilitation center. Therefore, the implementation of *Dhikr* is the main work to reduce juvenile delinquency so that the perpetrators are expected to always remember Allah in all situations and at every place.

Dhikr method is one of the aspects of the Quran and Hadith. *Dhikr* can be a virtue in increasing faith as the hadith of the prophet [p.b.u.h] that said, "*jaddidu imanakum bi khasroti khouli la ilaha illallah*" (keep your faith strong by saying *la ilaha illallah*). For each *salik* [spiritual seeker or one who studies Sufism] this hadith is the main doctrine. This doctrine is part of the treatment that is administered to the Sufi groups in the treatment of juvenile delinquents. Turuq in congregation, apart from making faith strong, is also a cure for the soul by the process of isti'za and istishnaa with the sentence of tauhid. Thus, *Dhikr* is a ritual process to enable a person have faith through the remembrance of God in *Jahar* (Loud) and *Khofi* (Soft).

Figure 1.
Congregational dhikr

Figure 2.
Congregational Prayer

The ceremony of *Dhikr Jahar* is done after the congregational prayer as in pictures 1 and 2. This makes *Dhikr* to have an effect on the aspect of peace of mind as the Quran says in surah Ar-Radu verse 28, "Surely in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find comfort." Therefore, *Dhikr* can also benefit juvenile delinquents to improve their souls to be steady and not hasty. The night bathing is one of the practices of the sakil carried out at the Rehab center of Suryalaya boarding school. Bath in the night is very effective for physical and mental health of a person. Night bathing is done at 02.00 in the morning after a prayer is recited. That is why the night bathing has been implemented in the morning to take care of the water condition at 02.00, which is neutral. Also, water also has positive attributes that counteract with blood flow. Blood will circulate better and heal tissues and cells that were affected by the disease. It is thought that night bathing is capable of repairing damaged nerves of those who are engaged in juvenile delinquency related to doctrine and dependency on goods or games. Therefore, night bath is a Sufi Healing therapy which is helpful for repairing the juvenile delinquent's damaged nerves.

Sunnah prayer is included into the Sufi Healing ritual to enhance the servant's disposition before the Creator. Prayer has an impact on a person physically and spiritually. In the physical sense, prayer movements are a number of healthy movements for the work of organs of the body to be better and healthy, whereas inwardly or spiritually prayer may hinder negative character attributes (Dewi, 2021). In a personal interview with *Inabah* Supervisor Mr. Dudin (31) it was revealed as follows;

> "Sunnah prayer is very important in the rehabilitation of juvenile delinquency. *Inabah* students need to be discipline to the schedule set by the Murshid in accordance to the rules and regulation. However, the Quran says that prayer negates bad and false attitudes. It, therefore, means that by conducting the prayer service, the students will be

dressed with good attitudes and leave out the bad ones. [Interview with the respondent, 23 October 2023].

Data show that prayer is a sequence of Sufi Healing therapy for enhancing self-identity. Prayer builds a disciplined personality as a result of constant, rhythmic actions (Hariyanto, 2003). The sunnah prayer ritual is performed according to the regulation provided by the Murshid of TQN [*Tariqa Qodiriyah wa Naqsyabandiyah*] as a guidelines to practice the teachings. It is done on a daily basis and it is done under the supervision of the mentors for religious practices. Therefore, the sunnah prayers, which are the main teaching in practicing TQN, are also another therapy conducted with the aim of teaching discipline and patience of the juvenile delinquents in the formation of good character.

TARIQA TEACHINGS AS A BASIS FOR SUFI HEALING

Tariqa is a religious institution that concentrates on the religious-based ceremonies. *Tariqa* teaches a sequence of rituals that are derived from the Quran as well as the Hadith of the Prophet [p.b.u.h]. TQN teachings are traced with clear linkages to the Prophet [p.b.u.h] thus an unbroken sanad. TQN Suryalaya seeks to rehabilitate the human instinct physically and spiritually through performing dhikr, khataman and manaqib. TQN teachings doctrine is in Tanbih (will) which has information and direction on how to implement the teachings. Tanbih is the opinion or advice given by the teacher, Murshid Abah Sepuh, to his disciples. Tanbih is derived from the Quran and Hadith of the Prophet [p.b.u.h] and acts as a guide for the TQN Suryalaya. The doctrine of tanbih is always read at every ritual event of the Manaqib Study once a month and general activities. When reading Tanbih is done repeatedly, it will be assumed to be an externalization of the values of the TQN teachings to become humans with perfect morality and physical appearance. As a result, tanbih becomes a foundation and minimal code of conduct for every student not only in practicing TQN teachings, but also in performing daily activities.

The doctrine of Tanbih as a reminder of life is read in every formal and informal rite and has a great impact on the juvenile delinquents as a life orientation in daily life. The importance of reciting tanbih for *tariqa* practitioners was explained by the Inabah 4 Trustee, Ustadz Dudin who is 31 years old;

> "In my opinion, *Tanbih* is the work of a *murshid* teacher that is recited every time during the *manaqib* ritual, and every formal event at the Suryalaya Islamic Boarding School which has a very positive impact. We are always alerted by the teacher's message. To my mind, Tanbih is

not only read but we also try to act upon the message from Abah Sepuh. Besides, we always seem to be reminded when listening to the will in Tanbih" (Interview held on 14 January 2024).

Data further reveal that Tanbih is core in TQN teachings which holds idealistic values in behavior. Tanbih also narrates a witness from teachers to their students where there is affection between the teacher and the learner concerning implementation of religious directives. TQN congregations always say Tanbih in formal and informal functions to affirm and strengthen the affective bonds with teachers as well as to obey and obey the teacher's orders. Therefore, each TQN congregation is presented with a guidebook in the form of Tanbih's testament to be practiced at all times to be happy in this world and the afterlife.

Riyadah is a *tariqa* ritual connected with the practice to be performed by a mentor teacher or his students who have been granted a diploma to perform religious practices. The intention of *riyadah* is to encourage more worship and fight the inclination towards lust in oneself. Group and individual practical assignments performed by *Inabah* students. The performance of *riyadah* starts with night bath, *dhikr*, *sunnah* prayer, fasting and other acts of devotion. Consequently, *riyadah* is a ritual that is intended to decrease lust and purify the worship in its effort to become closer as well as more obedient to the command of Allah.

Tariqa is a kind of religion organization which explains how to reach Allah. *Tariqa* teachings are Sufism ritual activities that emphasize elements of spiritual values (Feriyanto, 2020). All of the juvenile delinquents have to obey the ritual teachings of the TQN Suryalaya Islamic Boarding School. Hence, the foundation of Sufi Healing in *Inabah* rehab center derives from the principles engraved by TQN. TQN Suryalaya has a Sufi Healing model used in the rehabilitation of drug victims at the Rehab Center founded in 1972 by Abah Anom. The figure of Abah Anom as a *murshid* (mentor) who is a kamil mukammil has a solution formula for handling drug victims who continue to rise every year. This anxiety led to the development of rehabilitation facility for the treatment of drug victims which is called *Inabah* by Abah Anom. The *Inabah* implementation guidelines has to be followed by the juvenile delinquency performers. It will be important to note that the *murshid* plays an important role in leading the congregation that is learning *tariqa*. The *murshid* is also accountable for the students who have been under him. That is why the role of the *murshid* is crucial for the success of his students to be obedient and conscious of the Creator and His creation (Pratama, 2018).

RELIGIOUS SPIRITUALITY FOR JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

The Sufi Healing Model is an attempt to strive towards God. It is demonstrated by self-regulation activities to listen and evade restraints from the teacher. Another of the goals of the Sufi Healing ritual is the development of the ability to control one's self. Religiously, spiritual practice is one of the *riyadah* or spiritual practice. Thus, *Riyadah* is not only performing worship rituals, but even more so doing good and refraining from the bad. The disposition to do good and bad is a form of self control strength to act. Juvenile delinquents, the ones who commit juvenile delinquency, implement the TQN teachings in accordance with the guidebook. They do it with full sincerity for a purpose of altering their behavior for the better. They obey the *Inabah* mentor in performing worship and *Dhikr* ceremonies. They are also engage in social activities like doing community service and not engaging in behavior that fights others and respecting diversity. As shown by *Inabah* student Ridho (22) who described the process when they did community service;

> "I joined in community service at the Kejembaran Rahmaniah Boarding School to clean the bathroom and the backyard." It's not just that we were working on our tasks but we always assist each other on how to do the tasks. We assisted each other to try and help each other to be on reminder to ensure that we accomplish the tasks" (Interview on 5 January 2024)

Data show that the activities at Inabah 4 are very disciplined by providing tasks and assignments for doing community service individually and in groups. They are supposed to clear the room and sweep the bathroom floor. The task is a component of training of juveniles that are in a delinquent category to be more sensitive and be concerned with the tidiness of their environment. This effort has a huge influence to the degree of students' freedom and self-management to grasp on their roles and responsibilities of the tasks assigned. Moreover, this task is also the reinforcement of self-control so that they concerned the environment and cooperate in goodness.

The TQN ritual that has been practiced in this study has a soothing effect on the soul as stated by one of the former resident of Inabah 4, Dimas (29) who did *inabah* for 3 years at Inabah 4 Pagerageung. He reported as follows;

> "This change after doing riyadah, I can concentrate more in memorizing the Uqudul Jumaah book because this is one of the rewards of taking bath at night. Next are the effects of the rest of the *Inabah* practices including fasting and sunnah prayers assist me to focus faster because I used to feel that I had a slow brain, this being as a result of excessive alcohol

and illicit drug consumption. I think that's what made my mind dull. I believed that when I perform *riyadah* accompanied by a sheikh, changes would occur to me" (Interview conducted on 23 February 2024).

Data reveal that there were perceived changes in Dimas after taking a night bath, praying sunnah and dhikr. He had serenity of mind in order that he could attend to and concentrate on the issues that befell him. He got to think more about doing better things in his life which made him have peace of mind. After passing through the Sufi Healing rite, Dimas went to university and was able to complete a bachelors course. Therefore, the *riyadah* ritual as a form of Sufi Healing model that is successful and effective in handling juvenile delinquency in controlling emotions and reactivating lost focus.

Figure 3. Activities of teenagers reciting the Qur'an in rehabilitation

One aspect of humans is self-consciousness, in which the person knows who he really is. Human beings are not only given the bodily components and rationality but also the heart as the primary source of human consciousness (Mulyati, 2010). The juvenile delinquents, learners at the rehab center, not only learned how to perform the night bath ritual and sunnah prayers, but also reciting Quran as part of their self-awareness in reading and practicing the Quran as a shown in figure 1. The performance of this ritual is a duty that has to be done each morning at 2 am. The 2 am repentance bath is followed by prayer and the guidance of the *Inabah* Instructor. The purpose of the night bath as expressed by Ustad Dudin (32) one of the *Inabah* Instructors who explained the importance of the ritual:

"I am expected to coach *Inabah* students for 7 years to do the TQN *amaliah* [religious practice] ritual each day. From the moment when the repentance bath is taken at 2 in the morning. This bath first is intended to wash the body. Second, repentance bath serves to wash the mind so

that thinking is inclined towards optimism. The third bath of repentance serves to purify the soul or the mind from the sins performed The third bath of repentance serves to wash the soul or the mind of the sins committed" (Interview on 24 December 2023).

According to the collected data, the function of the ritual of bathing repentance has three very significant implications for juvenile delinquents. One of the interesting features of behavior in acting is that juvenile delinquents tend to think very short term. At times they also like to be practical in handling individual issues, which results in new issues affecting them. Other uses of bath repentance include also affecting the mental health so that thinking becomes more of an optimistic nature. Optimism is an attitude and in life is an act of self awareness to better oneself on how to position oneself in social space in society. Hence, bathing repentance can develop self-consciousness in the course of positive and optimistic thinking in everyday activities.

IMPLICTIONS OF SUFI HEALING ON MENTAL HEALTH

Unlike other aspects of Sufi teachings and practices, the application of Sufi healing involves the use of a guide or a mentor who always leads and who always accompanies during the period of rehabilitation. Mentorship plays a significant role in speaking to the healing mental health of juveniles who are delinquent. Ridho described how it is crucial to have a role model to help me through healing in mental health;

> "At first I was asking myself what to do and I wanted to live a better life. Then I met Ustad Asep who guided me at the rehabilitation centre. He taught *riyadah* [spiritual pracitices or exercises that aims to purify the heart] and *ngaji* [reciting the Qur'an] from Iqro book to the Qur'an to all students. Also, he also asked me to go around to attend to dhikr, khataman and keliling events. Sometimes he advised and directed me not to stop *riyadah* even though I had recovered. He never raised his voice and always listened to my friends' grievances. And that was done every day so we felt like he was our second parent. " (Interview on 23 November 2023).

Data illustrate that the position of the mentor in the process of mental health healing is not only to accompany and assist in performing the Sufi healing rite but also as a psychologist and as an example in everyday practice. Guiding students in the rehabilitation process is a sensitive task as well as time consuming. The main aspect of the work done in the framework of coaching, the mentor is capable of giving a lasting help. Therefore, in the process of

integrating Sufi healing into the prevention of recidivism, the mentor is not only a friend, but also a psychologist in building up the client's mental health and as a positive role model for perpetrators of juvenile crime.

Sufi Healing as one of the Sufi practices that is directed to improve the relational aspect of the human being and God (Ivanishkina *et al.*, 2020; Syukur, 2012). It was indicated in the case of Sufi Healing ritual that the healing is not only for the body but also the mind and spirit. The interaction between man and God is demonstrated by responding to directives and refraining from forbidden acts. This attitude is as much a faith as it is a way that creatures relate to their God. The Sufi Healing process is not only a relation-building process with God but also a desensitization process towards His creations. In my opinion, the beginning of a good relation with God will affect the relation with humans and other creatures through love and affection. Therefore, the orientation of Sufi Healing is not only a ritual to enhance faith but also has an orientation to do with physical and mental health. (Mulyati, 2010).

According to Frager (2014), Sufi rituals are about physical and mental health. The Sufi Healing ritual as an intervention that may enhance human character or soul not as a medical treatment (Subandi, 2022). This ritual has a strong backing from the Quran and the Hadith of the Prophet [p.b.u.h]. The Sufi Healing model that has been created at the Rehab Center is an attempt to become accustomed to always being obedient and subservient to God's will. The foundation of applying Sufi Healing is built based on some aspects of sharia and nature and does not go beyond the principles of Islamic monotheism. The Sufi healing ritual model has been helpful to drug addicts as practiced at the Inabah of Suryalaya Pesantren rehabilitation for the juvenile delinquents' emotional and mental aspects. Moreover, the Sufi Healing ritual also plays a role in teaching the juvenile delinquents how to get close to Allah. Therefore, the Sufi Healing ritual is an attempt to bring back humans to always listen to their God and being kind to other beings (Mahmudah & Muhammad, 2022).

Sufi Healing is among the options in non-allopathic complementary and alternative medicine CAM option (Saifullah *et al.*, 2018). The fact that juvenile delinquents can change their attitude and behaviour make Sufi Healing as a non-medical approach to be more reinforced. They also experience better psychic and spiritual transformation characterized by heeding to word of God and being kind to others. Their obedience is in congregational prayers and fasting and learning how to read the Qur'an. This change is an act of individual religiosity. On the other hand, the converted attitude of helping each other, respecting and working together demonstrated by juvenile delinquents is a form of social piety (Laely & Ningsih, 2021). Therefore, Sufi Healing practice

involves a manner of building a pious person spiritually and corporately.

Subandi (2014) said that the Sufi Healing ritual can shape individual and social piousness which are not separate from the TQN Suryalaya teachings that seek to shape a human being who is has a perfect physicality and spirituality. It is stated in the Tanbih Abah Sepuh which is recited during the TQN religious ritual. In addition, the TQN teaching also has *riyadah* in the sunan prayer rituals, night baths, *Dhikr* and fasting also shape the personality and character of juvenile delinquency offenders. This *riyadah* is performed for forty days continuously and it is beneficial for human character. Therefore, healing ritual performed at the Inabah 4 (rehab center) of the boarding school involve the teaching ritual called TQN that consists of doctrine and *riyadah* that embraced Sufi principles (Wahyuningsih & Mukari, 2023).

For example, Alba (2014); Jalaludin (2022) said that Sufi Healing in Sufism teachings is aimed at making *salik* prepared to get closer to God. Sufi healing is the Sufi practice in a ritual that is expected to enhance the quality of self (Ivanishkina et al., 2020). Salik's efforts are a process of how a person wishes to transform himself to be better in prayer and in treating his fellow beings. Sufi Healing influences the state of mind of the juvenile offenders and contributes to higher level of self- regulation and personal insight. Juvenile delinquents' self control is brought out by their ability to be accommodative and are not quick to anger over issues of difference. They also say that they are easily able to coordinate in collaborative tasks such as cleaning the bedroom, or bathing and the environment. The positive effects of Sufi Healing in building self identity are represented in the way they perceive the words of God in the Quran to pray and perform the five times daily prayers and Dhikr. They also have a better understanding of teachings of Islam and it is not only the sharia which means the rules of worship but also the spirit of life to follow the word of Allah. Thus, Sufi Healing affects the processes of improving self-discipline and consciousness, which is created by means of rituals and practices to address God, as practiced by a *salik* (one who studies Sufism) (Saefulloh, 2023).

The results of Sufi Healing are not limited to mental and psychological disorders but also in terms of look (Chakravorty, 2023). TQN teachings are focused on aspects of the main character and perfect body that is evidenced by the appearance which is permitted under Islamic sharia law. Looks are an embodiment of character. Clothing also explains how we handle our bodies through the kind of clothes we wear and how clean, neat and polite we should be. This proves that there is an effect of Sufi Healing on the manner in which the juvenile delinquents respect themselves through neat and polite looks. Therefore, the benefits of Sufi Healing do not only reflect in the mental health,

but also in the physical well being which is evidenced by the presentable appearance of juvenile delinquents who are neat, clean and polite.

Indeed, the study shows that implementation of Sufi Healing at Inabah 4 has a positive effect on the psychological well-being of the juvenile delinquents, though, in the process, it still needs good monitoring for the diet and nutrition provided to the juvenile delinquents. They are teenagers who are growing and developing, so they require nutrition for the body's balance. However, the administrative payments at the Kejembaran Rahmaniah Rehabilitation Boarding School are still voluntary, which hampers the nutrition services to the students. Therefore, rehabilitation of juvenile delinquency has to be contingent on supervision from the government to ensure that appropriate nutrition and facilities are provided to ensure the proper functioning of rehabilitation.

The Islamic model focuses on some parts of the Islamic practice with Sufi processes. Implementation often incorporates elements of role models and assignments derived from a mentor in the process constantly. This still appears very conventional and organic. Mentors as keywords in the process of applying Sufi healing therapy for juvenile delinquency. Meanwhile, the therapy model in Indonesia needs a technology and professional human resources in handling juvenile delinquents. The technological approach also has the effect of ensuring that implementation is backed by appropriate and sufficient facilities. However, food and nutrition services must also be provided to ensure mental as well as physical health of the juvenile delinquent patients. Enhancing the knowledge of mentors as human resources is required to deliver the strengthening insight in the coaching process of juvenile delinquent performers. Therefore, modern Sufi healing needs reinforcement in terms of facilities and human resources that manage not only religious knowledge, but also the general knowledge about the mental health.

CONCLUSION

Sufi Healing is not only the Sufi practice but also as the non-pharmacological treatment and to promote well-being for the juvenile delinquents. Sufi Healing has influence on mental and physical health and is expressed in the willingness to have a polite, respectful and tolerant attitude towards others, and be clean in appearance. The Sufi Healing model is the non-medical therapy with an Islamic concept for overcoming juvenile delinquency, which has natural effects on mental health. Therefore, Sufi Healing is one of the possible ways to prevent and minimize juvenile delinquency as the early solution for juvenile delinquency cases in Indonesia. In addition, there are issues of professionalism

that must also be addressed when applying the Sufi healing model and these includes the following: There is a therapy curriculum that should be followed; the therapy requires adequate facilities, and last but not least there are well qualified human resources.

Juvenile delinquency has become a threat to the sustainability of the future of adolescents towards Golden Indonesia 2045. Each year it becomes alarming to find that cases of juvenile delinquency are on the rise. The government seeks to address this issue through the holistic model, one of which is Sufi Healing – a non-medical spiritual intervention. The Sufi Healing religious approach is quite effective as an alternative to reduce and handle cases of juvenile delinquency which interferes with the condition of mental health for adolescents. Therefore, the Sufi Healing model is adopted as a recommendation for the treatment and prevention of juvenile delinquency cases in institutions of formal and non-formal learning. However, for the application of Sufi healing, it is also necessary to consider the aspect of nutrition and public facilities as well as cooperation with the government authorities, especially the Office of Health and Social Affairs.

The Sufi Healing model is viewed as an attempt to address preventive effort of juvenile delinquency cases that typically happen in educational and community setting. The use of the Sufi Healing model is still controversial in terms of formal educational institutions, which are more prevalent than religious teachings in general. This will make it hard for the instructors to use the Sufi Healing ritual in schools. This study calls for further review on how efficient for public schools to implement the Sufi Healing model as an effort to minimize juvenile delinquency. Therefore, more profound further research is required for the application of the Sufi Healing model for juvenile delinquents in formal and informal contexts.

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CONTRADICTION OF POWER WITHIN MUSLIM WOMEN IN MINANGKABAU MATRILINEAL SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT

This research explores the relationship between power and gender, focusing mainly on Minangkabau Muslim women. The study integrates a literature review with ethnographic methods to understand how these women navigate societal structures that prioritize male authority, commonly referred to as 'patriarchal frameworks', while adhering to cultural traditions. Data were collected from academic sources, community reports, and fieldwork, highlighting women's lived experiences in key lineage and household leadership positions. The findings indicate that while Minangkabau Muslim women are empowered by their roles as lineage bearers and heads of households, they encounter significant challenges due to the intersection of gender and Islamic norms. Tensions emerge between their matrilineal heritage and the patriarchal structures reinforced by specific interpretations of Islam, which restrict their economic participation, decision-making power, and access to resources. Despite these constraints, women utilize strategies such as pursuing financial independence, engaging in education, and reinterpreting Islamic teachings to align with their cultural and gender identities. This research emphasizes the complexities of gender dynamics in matrilineal societies, especially where Islamic norms intersect with local traditions. It highlights the importance of evolving cultural practices in fostering more inclusive and equitable social structures, offering a potential pathway for positive change within the Minangkabau community.

Keywords: *Contradiction of Power; Muslim Women; Minangkabau Matrilineal Society*

INTRODUCTION

The Minangkabau society, renowned for its distinctive matrilineal framework, offers an intriguing case for exploring the interplay between gender and

power dynamics. Situated predominantly in West Sumatra, Indonesia, this community has long been lauded for its cultural traditions that elevate women as central figures within familial and societal structures. In addition, the Minang have been known as devout followers of Islam (Simon, 2014). Matrilineality within this context allows women to inherit property and assume leadership positions within the family, thereby establishing them as pivotal stakeholders in community life. This unique social structure bestows women significant cultural authority, enabling their participation in decision-making processes at both the household and community levels. However, beneath the surface of matrilineality lies a complex web of patriarchal influences that challenge women's autonomy and authority (Goswami, 2024). This paradox presents a fertile ground for exploration, as societal norms traditionally empower women to coexist with structures that constrict their roles and diminish their agency. Despite matrilineality being often regarded as a progressive framework fostering female empowerment, it is imperative to acknowledge the enduring patriarchal norms that undermine such empowerment (Matlock, 1995). These norms manifest in various forms, encompassing societal expectations regarding gender roles and the influence of male relatives who may exert control over women's decisions and liberties. Within the Minangkabau culture, men are frequently perceived as custodians of tradition and family honour, perpetuating patriarchal attitudes that can curtail women's agency, even within a system ostensibly supportive of them (Syahrizal & Meiyenti, 2022).

Consequently, women in the Minangkabau community find themselves delicately balancing their identity as matrilineal heirs with the pressures imposed by traditional patriarchal structures. This duality evokes critical questions about how Minangkabau women perceive their positions within these conflicting frameworks, thus highlighting the intricacies of their lived experiences as they endeavour to assert their rights and agency in a world that often seeks to confine them (Stark, 2013). Comprehending Minangkabau women's strategies to negotiate their identities and assert their independence is paramount for a nuanced analysis of gender dynamics within this matrilineal society. Many women employ a range of tactics to counteract patriarchal pressures and claim their rightful space within both familial and social contexts (Nasir & Halim, 2022). By leveraging community support networks, engaging in economic activities, and reshaping cultural narratives, these women actively resist the constraints imposed by traditional norms. For instance, some women participate in local economic initiatives, bolstering their financial independence and challenging conventional gender roles. This participation empowers individual women and fosters a collective

consciousness aimed at redefining the cultural narratives surrounding gender in Minangkabau society, enabling women to reclaim their identities as both matrilineal heirs and active participants in the socio-economic landscape (Elfira, 2023).

The interplay between matrilineality and patriarchal influences in Minangkabau society presents significant inquiries regarding the intergenerational transmission of values and practices related to gender (Zenth et al., 2023). As mothers transmit cultural norms and expectations to their daughters, the amalgamation of matrilineal heritage and patriarchal constraints becomes intrinsic to family life. This phenomenon engenders a unique paradox wherein women are empowered by their matrilineal rights yet concurrently encumbered by ingrained patriarchal beliefs that govern acceptable behaviours and roles (Rimoldi, 2011). Comprehending how these dual influences shape the identities and aspirations of Minangkabau women is imperative to comprehend the complexities of gender relations in this society. By examining how women navigate their roles in light of these conflicting teachings, we can discern the subtle ways in which cultural narratives evolve and adapt to the realities of contemporary life (Fithri & Ulfah, 2022).

The investigation into the role of education and socialization in transforming gender norms within Minangkabau society has emerged as a significant area of scholarly inquiry. However, a notable deficiency exists in understanding the active role of educational institutions play in facilitating this transformation. While the existing literature underscores women's empowerment through education (Bahauddin et al., 2013; Chowdhury, 2021), a paucity of research focuses on the specific mechanisms by which education challenges patriarchal and matrilineal structures. Much of the academic discourse has concentrated on general empowerment or rights within a matrilineal context, neglecting to examine how educational practices within schools, universities, and community organizations contribute to the redefinition of gender roles in Minangkabau society. This void presents a distinct opportunity to investigate how educational environments equip women with the necessary tools to engage with and critique patriarchal systems while navigating the interplay with cultural traditions. In this regard, the originality of the proposed research resides in its focus on the intersection between educational practices and the distinctive matrilineal framework of the Minangkabau. This research, with its potential to reveal how women in Minangkabau are not only exposed to teachings of gender equality but also actively engage with the complexities of their cultural and educational identities, could significantly impact our understanding of gender dynamics. By emphasizing the influence

of educational spaces in providing women with critical perspectives on patriarchal structures and matrilineal rights, this study aspires to present a more nuanced understanding of how women's agency is cultivated within the contemporary Minangkabau context. This methodological approach contributes to a deeper comprehension of gender transformation in a society where traditional structures coexist with progressive educational reforms. Recent scholarly studies have uncovered similar themes, offering insights into the evolving role of education in gender dynamics. Parkin's (2020) research examines how school curricula in Indonesia address gender stereotypes, while Bhutia & Liarakou (2018) emphasize educational policies to promote gender equality in rural regions.

Additionally, Vicente (2024) analyses the impact of community-based education programs on women's empowerment throughout Southeast Asia. Concurrently, Goswami (2024) investigated the socialization of gender roles through extracurricular activities in educational settings. Hurtado & Franco (2021) explore the role of higher education institutions in fostering feminist leadership. While these studies are informative, they do not specifically examine the intersection of education with the matrilineal culture of the Minangkabau, a gap in the literature that this research aims to address and potentially contribute to.

Lastly, the impact of globalization and modernization on Minangkabau women's identities and agency warrants attention, as these forces introduce new dynamics into the traditional framework (Indra et al., 2022). The influx of global ideas and practices often creates opportunities for women to engage with external economic and cultural spheres, broadening their horizons and challenging local norms. Through exposure to diverse perspectives on gender equality and empowerment, Minangkabau women can draw inspiration from international movements while navigating the complexities of their cultural identity (Du et al., 2023). This engagement with globalization allows women to leverage their unique position within a matrilineal society to redefine what empowerment means in their context. As they synthesize traditional values with modern aspirations, these women contribute to a richer understanding of agency that reflects their heritage and ambitions, ultimately shaping a more equitable future for themselves and future generations (Rink & Barros, 2021).

This research investigates the intricate dynamics between matrilineality and patriarchal influences within Minangkabau society, with a specific focus on how these dual forces shape women's identities, aspirations, and agency. By examining the intergenerational transmission of gender-related values, particularly the pivotal role of mothers in conveying cultural norms within

the constraints of patriarchy, the study aims to illuminate how Minangkabau women navigate their societal roles and assert their autonomy in a context where traditional structures coexist with progressive educational reforms. Notably, it seeks to explore the influence of academic institutions in transforming gender norms and empowering women to engage with and critique patriarchal systems while negotiating their cultural identities. Through this exploration, the research intends to elucidate the evolving roles of Minangkabau women as they reconcile their matrilineal heritage with contemporary global influences. This examination offers critical insights into the intersection of tradition and modernity. Ultimately, the study aspires to enhance the understanding of gender dynamics, revealing how women's agency is cultivated within a sociocultural context affected by patriarchal constraints and matrilineal empowerment. Furthermore, it aims to contribute to broader discourses concerning gender, power, and societal transformation.

This research employs a qualitative and ethnographic methodology to explore the complex dynamics of power and gender within the Minangkabau community. It specifically focuses on the lived experiences of Minangkabau women and investigates how they navigate the dual influences of matrilineal traditions and patriarchal systems. The data collection process included in-depth interviews, participant observation, and focus group discussions, all designed to ensure a diverse representation of women from various socio-economic backgrounds in the Minangkabau region. Participants were selected through purposive sampling, providing insights from different generations and life stages. This approach facilitates a comprehensive understanding of the evolving experiences of these women, a depth of study that is essential for advancing the academic discourse on gender and power dynamics in matrilineal societies.

This method provided an understanding of how cultural norms, family dynamics, and societal expectations shape women's roles and identities. The data analysis utilized a thematic coding process that identified key themes related to empowerment, autonomy, generational shifts, and strategies for navigating gender roles. The findings were then triangulated with existing literature on gender, matrilineality, and patriarchy to place the results within broader theoretical frameworks. The methodological design emphasizes an intersectional perspective, acknowledging the complex interplay between cultural traditions, socio-economic factors, and gender in shaping women's experiences. This study, with its thorough exploration, sheds light on how Minangkabau women assert their agency and challenge traditional norms while preserving their cultural identity. The immersive nature of the fieldwork

allows the audience to feel respected and acknowledged when interpreting the research process, thereby enhancing their engagement with the findings.

MINANGKABAU MUSLIM WOMEN

The Minangkabau people, an ethnic group native to West Sumatra, Indonesia, are renowned for their matrilineal society, where inheritance and family lineage are passed down through the female line. This unique cultural structure has long captured interest, particularly regarding gender roles within the Minangkabau Muslim community. Minangkabau Muslim women, often regarded as symbols of tradition and modernity, navigate a complex space where Islamic teachings intersect with a rich cultural heritage. Islamic influence in Minangkabau society dates back to the 16th century(Stark, 2013). Since then, Minangkabau Muslim women have experienced the intersection of two powerful forces—Islam and matrilineal customs. Islamic teachings, which promote modesty, piety, and the role of women within the family, have shaped how women navigate their societal roles. Minangkabau women wear the kerudung (headscarf) according to Islamic dress codes while retaining control over familial and economic matters. This fusion of Islamic values with matrilineal practices has led to the development of a unique and intriguing religious and cultural identity for Minangkabau Muslim women.

In Minangkabau society, women traditionally hold significant roles within the family and the broader community. This is mainly due to a matrilineal system that emphasizes maternal descent and the authority of women in both domestic and economic spheres. However, the rise of conservative Islamic interpretations, particularly in recent decades, has created tension between these cultural practices and evolving religious discourse. Islamic frameworks that emphasize gender segregation, modesty, and women's domestic roles often conflict with Minangkabau traditions, where women historically enjoyed greater public autonomy and decision-making power. Conservative Islamic teachings assert that women should primarily occupy the private sphere. This contradicts the Minangkabau matrilineal system, wherein women have long been central figures in property ownership and family governance. While the Quran emphasizes the complementary roles of men and women, it also presents a vision of modesty and privacy for women (Quran 33:59, 24:31). Some interpretations of these verses advocate for a more restricted role for women in public life. As a result, these religious norms can challenge the traditionally more egalitarian roles that Minangkabau women once enjoyed.

Furthermore, some Islamic scholars and movements advocating for conservative gender roles argue that the ideal Muslim woman should prioritize family

life and modesty (Asmaniar, 2018; Iska et al., 2023; Siregar et al., 2022). This is reflected in the Hadith and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad regarding the importance of women's roles within the household (Sahih Bukhari, Hadith 6039). Such teachings reinforce the notion that a woman's primary role is in the home, contrasting sharply with the historically more public roles of Minangkabau women (Dendi et al., 2005; Hartati et al., 2021). Consequently, many women in the region find themselves navigating a challenging path between honouring their cultural heritage, which affords them a broader scope of economic and familial participation and adhering to the evolving expectations set by more conservative Islamic authorities (Dermanto, 2023; Dewi, 2021). This creates a complex dynamic where cultural identity, religious belief, and gender roles intersect, forcing women to negotiate between their ancestral autonomy and the spiritual framework that increasingly seeks to confine them to traditional, domestic roles.

Minangkabau Muslim women, with their increasing presence in public life, embody a unique blend of cultural resilience and modern empowerment. The traditional Minangkabau society has long granted women significant autonomy, particularly in familial and economic matters (Blackwood, 2001). This matrilineal system, which strongly emphasizes maternal lineage and women's roles in property ownership, has laid a robust foundation for women's authority within the community. With the advent of educational and professional opportunities, Minangkabau women are not just embracing their cultural heritage but also navigating modern societal roles with resilience. Their active involvement in education, business, and politics mirrors the principles of Islamic egalitarianism, which acknowledges the equal intellectual and spiritual capacities of men and women (Cipta, 2019). Verses such as 49:13 in the Quran reinforce the equality of men and women in the eyes of God, stressing that individual worth is determined by faith, piety, and good deeds, not gender. This Quranic perspective empowers Minangkabau women to assert themselves in public spheres while staying rooted in their religious and cultural identity. Furthermore, Islamic teachings emphasize women's empowerment in various spheres of life, particularly in pursuing knowledge (Nasir et al., 2021).

The Prophet Muhammad said, "Seeking knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim, male and female" (Sunan Ibn Majah). This teaching has been central to the drive for education among Minangkabau women, who now excel in diverse fields ranging from law to business to social activism. While conservative interpretations of Islam often encourage women to limit their public roles, many Minangkabau Muslim women find ways to engage in

public life that are consistent with their religious beliefs (Eficandra, 2022). For instance, they balance their professional ambitions with their responsibilities as caregivers, adhering to the Islamic emphasis on family while pursuing careers and leadership roles. This delicate balancing act between faith, family, and professional growth is an example of how Islamic principles can be interpreted and applied to support gender equality and the active participation of women in modern society.

Minangkabau women today are not just reacting to external changes but actively reshaping the cultural and religious landscape in which they live. Their advocacy for social justice, gender equality, and reforms in education and healthcare represents a broader movement that seeks to integrate Islamic values with progressive societal goals (N. Y. Dewi, 2023). The Quran supports such reformative actions, emphasizing the importance of justice and social equity, as seen in verse 4:32, which calls for equitable treatment between men and women. Islamic history also offers numerous examples of women who were leaders, scholars, and activists, including figures like Aisha bint Abi Bakr, who played a significant role in early Islamic politics and scholarship. Minangkabau women today, drawing on these historical precedents, are redefining their roles within society and demonstrating that Islam and modernity need not be at odds (Stark & Yahaya, 2021). Instead, their ability to navigate and adapt to the evolving dynamics of religion, culture, and gender highlights the potential for a harmonious coexistence of Islamic faith and progressive social change, offering hope for a future where cultural heritage and modern aspirations can thrive (Knorr, 2022).

MATRILINEAL STRENGTH: MINANGKABAU WOMEN UNVEILED

The Minangkabau culture is known for its matrilineal family structure, which is a fundamental aspect of their cultural identity. However, it can also feel burdensome at times. This system is supported by a comprehensive set of rules, traditions, and beliefs known as *adat*, reflected in numerous proverbs and sayings. The *adat* of the Minangkabau mainly revolves around the matrilineal family system and its impact on behavioural norms and socio-political organization (Marbaniang & Rajput, 2023). The social structure can be summarized as follows: the most significant social units are the *suku* or matrilineal clans. Their cohesion is primarily based on a shared name; a child belongs to its mother's *suku* at birth. The *suku* is not strictly exogamous, which means that a member can marry someone from the same clan as long as they are not from the same village. However, a special ceremony is needed for such unions (Games & Sari, 2023). At the village level, the *suku* function as natural

groups that are exogamous and led by a male chief known as the *penghulu*. Ideally, each village comprises four *suku* residing in distinct quarters. The *penghulu* of the various *suku* previously formed a council that governed the village. Historically, villages enjoyed a high degree of autonomy, with minimal central authority, allowing each village to cultivate its unique style within the shared *adat* tradition. Since the early 20th century, the Minangkabau have become integrated into larger organizational frameworks, leading to a significant loss of village autonomy and a reduction in the power of the *penghulu* (Nurdin & Tegnan, 2019). The roles of the *penghulu* now primarily revolve around family matters, marriages, and issues related to inheritance and communal property.

Within the village, *suku* are further divided into smaller units called "extended families," which typically include one or more women, their married and unmarried daughters, and the young children of those daughters (Stark & Yahaya, 2021). Traditionally, members of an "extended family" resided together in a longhouse, the iconic Minangkabau house characterized by its distinctive "horns". The head of the family is usually one of the eldest brothers of the mother or grandmother (Elfira, 2023). The term *mamak* refers to the mother's brother, and one of them is designated as the head of the household. His sister's children are his *kemanakan* (Hartati et al., 2021). Boys are expected to leave their mother's house around 7 or 8 and transition to the *surau*, a men's house used for religious instruction until they marry and move into their wife's home. Even after marriage, men have ongoing responsibilities towards their mothers, sisters, and their sisters' children, requiring regular visits to their maternal household(Mutolib et al., 2016). If a man returns home too early in the evening, he may face ridicule. In old age or illness, he is taken back to his sister's house to pass away and be interred in the ancestral burial grounds. This ambiguity regarding the notion of home is often believed to be connected to the *merantau* pattern, which refers to the traditional practice of young men migrating (Murad, 1980). While the idea of *merantau* exists in other regions of Indonesia without being associated with matrilocal residence, the uncertain status of men likely reinforces this practice.

In Minangkabau society, women assume a stabilizing role by commonly residing in their natal homes alongside their families. Upon significant expansion of the extended family, the household may undergo division, leading to the construction of a new residence nearby (Hurtado & Franco, 2021). The traditional Minangkabau dwelling is longitudinally structured, featuring a spacious rectangular front room serving as a communal living and reception area. Adjacent to this central space are multiple smaller rooms, each

designated for a daughter and her respective family, while a kitchen serves as a shared facility for female household members (Schrijvers & Coster, 1977). The residence is on collectively owned land, encompassing communal assets such as rice fields and esteemed heirlooms. The sale of these shared properties is strictly prohibited, except under specific circumstances, as they are considered sacred assets of the extended family, denoted as "harto pusako." Conversely, individually owned property, known as "harto pencarian" (literally signifying "acquired property"), comprises personal earnings from trade or wages and land utilized for cash cropping. A man retains the prerogative to bequeath his "harto pencarian" to his offspring, while the "harto pusako" remains the collective property of his "kemanakan" (Schrijvers & Coster, 1977).

The Minangkabau, known as the largest matrilineal society globally, has long captivated social scientists with its gender roles and the interactions between men and women. Surprisingly, a significant knowledge gap persists on these subjects: most anthropological studies and indigenous analyses of *adat* predominantly centre on men's perspectives (Hartati et al., 2021). While considerable attention has been paid to exploring a man's role within his mother's or wife's household, minimal emphasis has been placed on women's positions and their influence in decision-making processes.

In the context of *adat*, an examination of the life cycle of a woman's role reveals that Minangkabau girls are revered and cherished as infants, symbolizing the perpetuation of the matrilineal lineage, with the belief that a more significant number of daughters fortifies the family unit. Gender differentiation is minimal until the age of seven, during which both boys and girls are nurtured within an environment characterized by warmth and affection (Stark & Yahaya, 2021). However, a discernible shift occurs as they surpass this age, with girls increasingly subjected to the vigilant guidance of their families and encountering greater regulation compared to their male counterparts. The focal point for girl's transitions towards preparing them for their prospective roles as mothers and homemakers, as they are instructed in essential skills such as culinary expertise and sewing, ensuring their adeptness in domestic duties. This transition underscores societal expectations that women will adhere to familial customs and contribute to the stability of their households (Knorr, 2022). Consequently, while girls are initially embraced as equal constituents of the family entity, societal norms gradually steer them towards more defined roles that align with the matrilineal values inherent in Minangkabau culture.

Traditionally, marriage arrangements were primarily orchestrated by the older generation. The mamak's consent was crucial, and both parents, mainly the girl's mother, were actively involved. Marriages were ideally arranged

with cross cousins, particularly favouring the son of the father's sister. While such unions were highly regarded, they are now rare in contemporary society. Another important stipulation was that both partners should come from the same village, a standard still strongly upheld today (Quisumbing & Otsuka, 2001). In many areas, councils of Penghulu continue to advocate for such marriages, reflecting the cultural preference for this arrangement. Many informants expressed that these unions represent the ideal marriage. However, they also acknowledged that they would not impose this choice on their children if they wished to pursue different options. Historically, Minangkabau girls were married off at a young age, partially to mitigate the risk of premarital intimacy (Mutolib et al., 2016). In this cultural context, remaining unmarried as an adult is relatively uncommon for women, usually occurring due to the dissolution of a marriage or the death of a spouse. As proposed by Lévi-Strauss, this social structure highlights the significance of kinship and marriage alliances in maintaining social cohesion and the continuity of familial ties within matrilineal societies (Zerkowski, 2019).

The examination of Minangkabau society has predominantly centered on *adat* thus far. However, it is essential to acknowledge the historical introduction of Islam to the region over four centuries ago, which brought with it a solid patriarchal tradition (Halimatussa'diyah et al., 2024). Presently, nearly all Minangkabau people identify as Muslims, albeit with varying degrees of adherence. Since the early 19th century, West Sumatra has become a stronghold of Islam characterized by a strict and fundamentalist interpretation. The fusion of *adat* and Islam has led to a synthesis that often blurs the distinctions between their respective traditions. Nevertheless, there are significant areas of tension where the two systems conflict. Neither has completely supplanted the other; instead, they coexist, each maintaining its unique influence. The disparities became particularly pronounced in the early 20th century with the emergence of Islamic reform movements from the Middle East in West Sumatra (Dermanto, 2023).

These movements encompassed both fundamentalist and modernist elements, seeking to purify Islam by discarding local customs and returning to its foundational principles—the Quran and the Sunnah (Holy Tradition). The aim was to redefine Islam in a manner that aligns with contemporary values, free from superstitions and outdated rituals, and compatible with the modern spiritual landscape (Dendi et al., 2005). Organizations such as Muhammadiyah and its female counterpart, Aisyiyah, founded in Java in 1912 and 1917, respectively, have played a pivotal role in promoting these new religious trends. The integration of reformist ideologies can be comprehended

through social change theories, which suggest that tensions often arise between traditional practices and modern influences as societies evolve (Azaria & Aristiawati, 2022). The Minangkabau case illustrates this dynamic, demonstrating how cultural and religious identities are continually negotiated within a framework of evolving social expectations and global influences. This ongoing dialogue between *adat* and Islam shapes individual lives and reflects broader societal transformations in response to the modern world (Wanto, 2017).

Rationalism and individualism have emerged as pivotal elements of the new Islamic movement in West Sumatra, leading to discord with the region's traditional collectivism rooted in *adat* and Islam has led to a synthesis that often blurs the distinctions between their respective tradition. Within Islam, an individual's accountability is exclusively tied to Allah rather than the community (Stark, 2013). This perspective fundamentally reshapes the concept of property; Islam recognizes only individual ownership and disregards communal rights linked to the family. According to Islamic law, the accepted family structure is patriarchal, potentially allowing for polygynous arrangements, with the father serving as the primary authority figure. Consequently, a woman's dependence on her brother for protection and support for herself and her children becomes unattainable. While both *adat* and Islam has led to a synthesis that often blurs the distinctions between their respective traditionand Islam confine women to domestic roles within the family structure, the level of reliance experienced by women is significantly greater under Islamic principles (Nurdin & Tegnan, 2019). In the Islamic context, women are often perceived as part of their father's or husband's property, thereby diminishing their autonomy.

Conversely, under *adat* and Islam has led to a synthesis that often blurs the distinctions between their respective tradition, women are esteemed as essential custodians of the matrilineal family, entrusted with managing family property and assets. This contrast exemplifies a fundamental divergence in the perception and valuation of women's roles within each system. The tension between the individualism advocated by Islamic teachings and the collectivist ethos of *adat* and Islam has led to a synthesis that often blurs the distinctions between their respective tradition underscores the complexities of gender relations in Minangkabau society. As posited by social change theories, cultural value shifts often lead to reassessing roles and identities (Elfira & Wibawarta, 2019). The introduction of individualism challenges traditional communal bonds, necessitating a re-evaluation of women's placement within these evolving structures. This intersection of ideologies presents a rich tapestry

for comprehending the dynamics at play within Minangkabau society. The conflict between the ideals of rationalism and the deeply ingrained communal values of *adat* and Islam has led to a synthesis that often blurs the distinctions between their respective tradition not only influences individual lives but also reflects broader societal transformations (Silk, 1994). As the Minangkabau navigate these competing frameworks, they engage in an ongoing discourse concerning identity, authority, and the role of women within their culture, illustrating the complexity and adaptability of social norms in a changing world (Rink & Barros, 2021).

The negotiation between *adat* and Islam within Minangkabau society represents a unique and ongoing balancing act that allows both traditions to coexist and influence one another. This balance, although not without its tensions, has created a cultural space where both systems of thought shape social practices, gender roles, and family dynamics (Halimatussa'diyah et al., 2024). Historically, the matrilineal structure of *adat* has granted women significant power and authority within the family, particularly in terms of property rights and decision-making. As custodians of family property, women have enjoyed a level of autonomy that stands in contrast to the patriarchal norms prevalent in many other Islamic societies (Fatimah, 2012). Simultaneously, Islam has introduced a new framework for gender roles, emphasizing patriarchal family structures and personal accountability before Allah. This shift has changed some of the power dynamics within Minangkabau society. However, rather than eradicating matrilineal customs, the interaction between *adat* and Islam has led to a synthesis where both systems adapt, creating a hybrid social structure (Aziz et al., 2020). For example, while the *adat* system continues to emphasize women's roles as property custodians, Islamic teachings have influenced how these roles are expressed, emphasizing the moral and spiritual aspects of women's responsibilities within the family. This synthesis has not remained static; over time, it has resulted in new forms of gender relations in Minangkabau society. Women, in their resilience, have navigated the intersection of *adat* and Islam, often negotiating their roles within the family and community, inspiring us with their strength and determination (Siregar et al., 2022).

In many cases, the maternal family continues to play a central role in a woman's life, giving her significant influence over property and inheritance matters despite the increasing prominence of patriarchal norms in other life aspects. However, the introduction of reformist Islamic ideas has also presented new challenges. The influence of Islamic reform movements, particularly those advocating for individualism and the primacy of patriarchal authority, has

prompted a re-evaluation of traditional roles (Dermanto, 2023; Nasution et al., 2023). This re-evaluation has led some women to reconsider their positions within the matrilineal structure and the broader Islamic framework, seeking ways to reconcile these sometimes-conflicting demands. It's important to respect their agency in this process. Therefore, the relationship between *adat* and Islam has allowed for a fluidity that enables women to embrace both cultural traditions, drawing strength from each in ways tailored to their unique social contexts. Looking to the future, the continued negotiation between Adat and Islam will likely evolve in response to both internal and external pressures (Wanto, 2017). As globalization and modernity continue to shape social and cultural norms, the balance between the collectivist values of *adat* and the individualistic tendencies within Islamic thought may shift again. The rising influence of education, economic mobility, and the increasing participation of women in the workforce will likely advocate for a reconfiguration of traditional gender roles. Simultaneously, the strong cultural ties to adapt, particularly in rural areas, suggest that women will continue to play a pivotal role in preserving and passing down these traditions. The future dynamics of this negotiation will likely result in a more inclusive interpretation of Islam that respects the cultural uniqueness of Minangkabau matriliny while also addressing the evolving needs and aspirations of women in contemporary society, offering hope for a more equitable future (Lindayanti, 2019). The ongoing dialogue between *adat* and Islam will continue to shape the identities, roles, and status of Minangkabau women, offering a model for other matrilineal societies grappling with similar challenges.

DECODING PATRIARCHY: THE COMPLEXITIES OF GENDER

The concept of patriarchy has been extensively scrutinized in the context of gender dynamics, serving as a framework for comprehending the systemic power structures that privilege masculinity over femininity. As a social system where men predominantly wield authority, patriarchy manifests in diverse forms across cultures, influencing various aspects, ranging from familial configurations to institutional hierarchies (Idriss, 2022). This intricacy necessitates a comprehensive analysis of the formation, perpetuation, and contestation of gender roles within different socio-cultural milieus. Recent anthropological research underscores the fluidity of gender identities, underscoring the imperative of recognizing the intersections of gender, race, class, and sexuality in understanding patriarchy (Mudgway, 2021).

The discourse has evolved toward a more intersectional perspective, acknowledging that gender is not uniformly experienced. For instance, Eileen

Barker's (2022) research accentuates how women's encounters in patriarchal societies are markedly influenced by their ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. This perspective aligns with R.W. Connell's concept of "multiple masculinities," positing the existence of varied forms of masculinity, often in competition within patriarchal frameworks (Connell, 2005). By scrutinizing these distinctions, researchers can glean profound insights into the localized manifestations of patriarchy and the resultant gender dynamics.

Furthermore, the complexities of patriarchy are compounded by cultural narratives that shape conceptions of gender roles. Lila Abu-Lughod (Browers, 2014) contends that these narratives are pivotal in upholding patriarchal norms by delineating women's agency within predetermined roles. This underscores the necessity of delving into the cultural and historical contexts that shape gender dynamics. Anthropological studies can illuminate the genesis, dissemination, and resistance of these narratives across different societies, furnishing a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges confronted by individuals navigating patriarchal environments. The advent of global feminism has engendered critical dialogues concerning the concept of patriarchy, particularly about transnational issues. Arlie Russell Hochschild (2013)observes that globalization has transformed gender roles, facilitating greater female participation in the workforce and challenging traditional patriarchal structures. However, this transition is full of contradictions; while women attain economic independence, they may concurrently encounter new forms of exploitation and discrimination in the labour market. Hence, investigating the nexus between globalization and patriarchy is pivotal in grasping contemporary gender dynamics. Unravelling patriarchy necessitates a comprehensive approach that considers the intricate interplay between cultural narratives, social structures, and personal experiences. By integrating insights from contemporary anthropological theories, scholars can adeptly navigate the nuances of gender within patriarchal societies. Subsequent research should prioritize the evolving nature of these dynamics, particularly in light of globalizing influences, ensuring that the perspectives of those affected by patriarchy remain central to the ongoing discourse(du Plessis & Sørensen, 2017).

In Indonesia, patriarchal norms exert significant influence over both rural and urban settings, delineating gender roles. Despite strides toward gender equality, entrenched traditional expectations often curtail women's prospects (Shahriar, 2018). Notably, in numerous rural communities, women are predominantly relegated to the roles of caregivers and homemakers, while men wield authority in decision-making processes. Such cultural patterns perpetuate gender

disparities, impeding women's educational and professional advancement (Ganguly & Singh, 2021). Addressing these challenges necessitates targeted interventions to reshape societal perceptions of gender roles and dismantle patriarchal frameworks.

Furthermore, Indonesia's political landscape underscores the intersection of patriarchy with power dynamics. Women's representation in governance remains markedly low, with prevailing cultural attitudes framing leadership as a male prerogative. As of 2023, women occupy a mere 20% of legislative seats, emblematic of systemic impediments thwarting women's political engagement (Díaz et al., 2023). Mitigating these disparities demands comprehensive policies championing female leadership and empowering women to actively participate in the political arena, thereby challenging deeply rooted patriarchal norms. Patriarchal attitudes also significantly influence girls' educational access. While Indonesia has made notable headway in achieving gender parity in primary education, girls encounter hurdles in pursuing higher education and vocational training. Societal expectations frequently pressure girls to prioritize familial obligations over their educational aspirations, perpetuating a cycle of dependency and constraining their professional potential(Schwab, 2019). Initiatives promoting gender equity and encouraging girls to pursue academic interests are imperative in dismantling these patriarchal barriers.

The rise of digital activism has made social media a vital tool for women's resistance against patriarchal norms in West Sumatra. The courage of these women, who are using these platforms to challenge traditional gender roles and advocate for more equitable social dynamics in a region where cultural conservatism and patriarchal values are deeply entrenched, is truly inspiring. Social media has become an empowering space for women to express their dissent (Salliyanti et al., 2023). Activists and ordinary women share personal stories of resistance on platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook, calling attention to the marginalization women face in various aspects of life. These platforms foster solidarity and raise awareness of local issues, sparking essential discussions on topics such as child marriage, domestic abuse, and gender equality in the workplace. Grassroots campaigns, such as #PerempuanMinangkabau (Minangkabau Women), have successfully highlighted how gender-based violence intersects with cultural practices and religious doctrines, challenging the notion that tradition justifies the subjugation of women.

Additionally, women in West Sumatra are using social media to advocate for their rights and reshape societal perceptions of femininity and empowerment. The power of storytelling through digital media, often enhanced by hashtags

and viral content, has led to new narratives that prioritize women's voices and shift public discourse. Women have shared their experiences with educational barriers, social expectations, and religious constraints, using these platforms to resist the normalization of these injustices collectively (Dendi et al., 2005). These online movements function as individual and collective acts of resistance, allowing women to engage in transnational feminist discourses while asserting their local identities (Pierik, 2022). However, challenges persist, including backlash from conservative sectors and the digital divide, which may limit access for some women. Therefore, although social media offers a transformative avenue for resistance, it must be supported by offline efforts to address structural inequalities. This comprehensive approach ensures that women from all backgrounds can equally participate in these empowering conversations, highlighting the necessity of both online and offline support in activism.

VALOR VOICES: EMPOWERING MINANGKABAU WOMEN

The contradictions of power within the Minangkabau context, stemming from the tension between the matrilineal cultural structure and the socio-cultural, economic, and political barriers, are of significant importance. Traditionally, Minangkabau women play significant roles in preserving cultural heritage and maintaining familial lineage. However, their influence often does not extend to the economic and political realms. Despite their central position in family and social dynamics, these women frequently face significant obstacles in accessing resources, education, and opportunities for advancement. This paradox reveals how cultural norms, while seemingly supportive of women's roles, actually uphold traditional patriarchal values that restrict their participation in decision-making and economic activities, thereby reinforcing gender inequalities. Furthermore, the growing tension between preserving traditional Minangkabau values and pursuing modern gender equality complicates this power contradiction, underscoring the importance of understanding these dynamics.

The Minangkabau matrilineal system, which grants women authority over property and lineage, is often seen as a progressive model in a traditional cultural context. However, the rise of contemporary gender movements and the integration of global empowerment frameworks have created a conflict between cultural preservation and the need to challenge gender-based discrimination. As women strive for expanded roles in the economy, politics, and society, pursuing greater gender equality often clashes with deeply ingrained customs that still restrict their potential. This contradiction reflects

a broader global struggle where cultural heritage and modern aspirations for women's rights must be negotiated, resulting in tensions between tradition and the drive for transformative empowerment. This part seeks to identify the underlying factors contributing to these obstacles, including entrenched socio-cultural norms, economic inequalities, and restricted access to educational opportunities. The "Valor Voices" initiative, a beacon of hope, aims to establish a platform where Minangkabau women can articulate their experiences, aspirations, and challenges.

This initiative transcends mere empowerment, constituting a transformative effort to redefine the narratives surrounding women's roles in Minangkabau culture. Prioritizing storytelling as a powerful self-expression can cultivate a deeper appreciation for the complexities these women navigate daily (Schrijvers & Coster, 1977). This approach resonates with modern empowerment theories that underscore the critical need for voice and representation in pursuing gender equity. Incorporating cultural relativism, this article advocates for understanding the Minangkabau women's experiences within their cultural context. Cultural relativism emphasizes that beliefs, practices, and values must be understood within the framework of the culture in which they exist, thereby acknowledging the diverse experiences of women in different societies. This theoretical lens allows for a more nuanced analysis of the intersection between tradition and modern empowerment, highlighting how cultural narratives can both constrain and enable women's agency (Sismarni, 2011). By recognizing the cultural dynamics at play, we can better appreciate the significance of the "Valor Voices" initiative as a means of fostering empowerment while respecting the rich cultural heritage of the Minangkabau community.

It posits that the active involvement of stakeholders—from local leaders and national figures—is vital for establishing a supportive environment for Minangkabau women. By encouraging collaboration among these actors, we can devise comprehensive strategies that dismantle systemic barriers and celebrate the rich cultural legacy of the Minangkabau people. Such an integrative approach is crucial to ensure that empowerment initiatives are sustainable and culturally relevant (Muchlian, 2019). The relationship between cultural identity and empowerment is a significant theme in the Minangkabau context.

Preserving cultural practices must not infringe upon women's rights and opportunities. This perspective advocates for a balanced perspective that honours cultural traditions while simultaneously championing the advancement of women's rights. It calls for a critical reassessment of traditional practices that may inadvertently perpetuate gender inequalities, thereby fostering a

more inclusive cultural narrative that recognizes and values the contributions of Minangkabau women. The "Valor Voices" initiative symbolizes a critical advancement in the quest to empower Minangkabau women by amplifying their voices and promoting their active engagement in societal progress. This argument also aspires to enrich our understanding of women's empowerment within culturally diverse settings by addressing their diverse challenges (Bahauddin et al., 2013). By celebrating their stories and experiences, we can cultivate a more equitable society that acknowledges and honours the contributions of all its members, particularly those who have historically been marginalized. In this manner, we pave the way for a future where women's voices are heard and celebrated, reinforcing the notion that true empowerment stems from recognition, respect, and opportunity.

In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of women's vital contributions in Indonesia, particularly those from the Minangkabau ethnic group. The intersection of traditional values and modern aspirations presents opportunities and challenges for these women as they navigate their societal roles. As they strive to maintain their cultural identity while pursuing personal and professional goals, Minangkabau women are redefining the boundaries of women's empowerment. Noteworthy figures such as Nurhayati Subakat, acknowledged as an expert in the cosmetics industry over the years, revolutionized the Indonesian cosmetics industry through her beauty empire, exemplifying the potential of Minangkabau women to break barriers in various sectors (Nurhyansa, 2022).

Their stories highlight individual successes and serve as a catalyst for a collective movement advocating for women's rights and empowerment within their communities. Nurhayati Subakat is a prominent Indonesian entrepreneur renowned for her significant contributions to the beauty industry as the founder of Wardah Cosmetics. With a solid commitment to empowering women and promoting beauty products that cater to the needs of Indonesian consumers, she has established Wardah as one of the leading cosmetic brands in the country. Her journey from humble beginnings to becoming a successful businesswoman inspires many aspiring female entrepreneurs (Sulaiman, 2019).

Born and raised in a traditional Minangkabau family, Nurhayati's entrepreneurial spirit was evident early. She pursued her education in pharmacy, which laid the foundation for her future career in the cosmetics industry. In 1995, she founded Wardah Cosmetics, focusing on creating high-quality, halal-certified beauty products that reflect Indonesian women's values and cultural identity. Under her leadership, Wardah has grown exponentially, offering a wide range

of skincare and makeup products that cater to diverse beauty needs.

Nurhayati Subakat's vision extends beyond business success; she is dedicated to empowering women through her brand. Wardah has become synonymous with promoting positive beauty standards, encouraging women to embrace their natural beauty while enhancing their self-confidence. Her commitment to social responsibility is reflected in various initiatives that support women's empowerment, education, and entrepreneurship, reinforcing the brand's values and mission.

In recognition of her outstanding achievements, Nurhayati has received numerous awards and accolades, including being named one of the most influential women in Indonesia. Her leadership style, characterized by compassion and a focus on community, has earned her respect and admiration in business. She is often invited to share her insights on entrepreneurship, women's empowerment, and the importance of ethical business practices, making her a sought-after speaker at various conferences and seminars(Simanjuntak & Prihatini, 2020). Through her work with Wardah Cosmetics, Nurhayati Subakat has impacted the beauty industry in Indonesia and beyond. She continues to inspire countless women to pursue their dreams and challenge societal norms, proving that with determination and a strong vision, women can lead in any field. As a trailblazer in the beauty sector, her legacy will undoubtedly influence future generations of female entrepreneurs, encouraging them to carve their paths and contribute to women's empowerment in society.

Another woman's profile, Asri Astianingsih, is a dedicated activist and entrepreneur known for pioneering work in promoting waste management and environmental sustainability through the "*bank sampah*" (waste bank) in Indonesia. With a solid commitment to her community and a passion for ecological conservation, Asri has played a pivotal role in raising awareness about the importance of waste segregation and recycling. Her journey began in her hometown, where she recognized the pressing issue of waste management and its detrimental impact on the environment. Determined to make a difference, Asri established a waste bank initiative that empowers residents to collect, sort, and recycle waste materials. This innovative approach reduces waste in landfills and provides economic benefits to participants, who can earn money from their recyclables. Under Asri's leadership, the waste bank has become a model for community-based waste management, showcasing how collective action can lead to significant environmental improvements.

Asri's work extends beyond the waste bank itself. She actively engages in educational campaigns, workshops, and community events to educate people about the significance of proper waste management practices. By collaborating

with schools, local governments, and environmental organizations, she strives to instil a sense of responsibility towards the environment in the younger generation. Her efforts have transformed waste management practices in her community and inspired many to adopt sustainable habits in their daily lives.

Asri Astianingsih's dedication to environmental activism has earned her recognition and respect within her community and beyond. She advocates for sustainable practices and policies prioritizing environmental conservation, empowering others to act for a cleaner and healthier planet. Through her work with the waste bank initiative, Asri exemplifies how grassroots efforts can lead to meaningful change. She is crucial in the movement towards a more sustainable future in Indonesia.

In the maritime industry, Lisa Yulia is a distinguished entrepreneur renowned for her innovative approach to shipping and logistics. With a maritime studies and business management background, she has successfully carved a niche for herself in a historically male-dominated industry. Lisa's journey in the maritime field began with her passion for the ocean and a desire to contribute to Indonesia's thriving shipping industry.

As the founder and CEO of a shipping company, Lisa has made significant strides in modernizing operations and improving efficiency within the sector. Her company provides reliable and sustainable shipping solutions, focusing on domestic and international routes. Under her leadership, the organization has embraced technological advancements, utilizing digital platforms to streamline logistics and enhance customer service. Lisa's commitment to sustainability is evident in her efforts to implement eco-friendly practices, ensuring that her company contributes positively to the marine environment.

In addition to her business acumen, Lisa is a vocal advocate for women's empowerment in the maritime industry. She actively participates in various initiatives to promote gender diversity and inclusion, encouraging more women to pursue careers in shipping and logistics. Lisa believes women's perspectives and contributions are invaluable in driving innovation and fostering a more inclusive industry. Her mentorship programs aim to inspire young women to explore opportunities in maritime fields, helping them develop the skills and confidence needed to succeed. Lisa has received numerous accolades throughout her career for her contributions to the maritime sector and her efforts to empower women. She is a role model for aspiring female entrepreneurs, demonstrating that women can thrive in any industry with determination and vision. Lisa Yulia's story is a testament to the potential of women in the maritime industry, inspiring future generations to follow in her footsteps and contribute to the growth and development of this vital sector.

Besides Lisa, Yusneti is a prominent figure in the jewellery industry, recognized for her innovative designs and commitment to sustainable practices. Hailing from the Minangkabau culture of Indonesia, she has successfully blended traditional craftsmanship with modern aesthetics, creating a unique brand that resonates with local and international markets. Her passion for jewellery design began at a young age, inspired by the rich cultural heritage of her community, where intricate craftsmanship and artistry are highly valued.

As the founder of her jewellery line, Yusneti has carved a niche in a competitive market. Her pieces are characterized by their elegance and attention to detail, often incorporating traditional Minangkabau motifs that celebrate her cultural roots. By utilizing locally sourced materials and collaborating with artisans from her community, Yusneti supports the local economy and promotes the preservation of traditional crafting techniques. This commitment to sustainability and ethical production has garnered her a loyal customer base that values quality and cultural significance.

In addition to her business success, Yusneti advocates for women's empowerment in the entrepreneurial landscape. She actively engages in mentorship programs to inspire young women to pursue careers in business and entrepreneurship. Through workshops and community outreach initiatives, she shares her knowledge and experiences, empowering the next generation of women to break barriers and achieve their aspirations. Yusneti's journey is a powerful example of how women can thrive in business while remaining true to their cultural identities and values.

Yusneti's contributions extend beyond her jewellery business; she is also involved in various charitable endeavours focusing on education and community development. She aims to create a lasting impact and foster positive change within her community by reinvesting some of her profits into local initiatives. Through her multifaceted approach to entrepreneurship, Yusneti exemplifies the potential of Minangkabau women to lead, inspire, and drive economic growth while honouring their heritage. Her success story continues to motivate aspiring entrepreneurs, proving that with determination and creativity, women can excel in any industry.

The empowerment of Minangkabau women is not merely a narrative of individual achievements; it reflects a broader societal shift towards gender equality and community development. The Minangkabau community fosters an environment where women can thrive and contribute meaningfully to societal progress by amplifying their voices and celebrating their successes (Pangulu et al., 2022). This paper aims to delve into the unique cultural dynamics that shape the lives of Minangkabau women and explore how their collective

achievements can inform policy frameworks and community initiatives to enhance women's empowerment. Ultimately, the study seeks to underscore the significance of cultural context in shaping women's empowerment narratives, advocating for practices that honor and elevate women's voices in all spheres of life.

CONCLUSION

This study explores the complex relationship between Minangkabau's matrilineal traditions and the patriarchal frameworks that shape women's roles in West Sumatra. The matrilineal system, with its unique feature of women holding authority over property and lineage, is juxtaposed with patriarchal interpretations of Islamic norms that impose limitations on their autonomy, particularly in economic and decision-making areas. The findings reveal the tensions that arise as Minangkabau women navigate their identities within these dual systems, balancing their cultural heritage with changing societal expectations. Their experiences highlight the urgent need for strategies that preserve cultural traditions while promoting gender equality.

The resilience of Minangkabau women, evident in their adaptive strategies such as pursuing education, achieving financial independence, and reinterpreting Islamic teachings in a way that aligns with egalitarian values, is a testament to their strength. These efforts are further supported by globalization and educational reforms, which create opportunities to redefine traditional narratives and challenge restrictive norms. By leveraging these resources, Minangkabau women are preserving their cultural identity and actively contributing to the broader conversation on gender equality. Their experiences showcase the transformative potential of combining local traditions with progressive frameworks to foster inclusivity and empowerment, offering hope for the future of gender equality.

This research enhances our understanding of gender dynamics in matrilineal societies by emphasizing the significance of cultural context in shaping women's agency. It highlights the potential for intergenerational change through education and social reform, urging stakeholders to address systemic barriers restricting women's participation in public and economic spheres. The Minangkabau case is a compelling example of how tradition can be reconciled with modernity, providing valuable insights for developing equitable social structures and inspiring global efforts toward achieving gender equality.

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RETROSPECTION OF CULTURE IN RELIGION IN THE ISLANDS OF NIAS, BANYAK AND SIMEULEU

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses and emphasizes on the religious activities of islanders in Banyak Island, Simeulue and Nias. This research aims to find religious models and coexistence strategies in interfaith between island communities. These three islands are geographically close and inhabited by people with different religious identities. This research uses qualitative research with an ethnographic approach, data collection is done through in-depth interviews with informants who live on the three islands. The results showed that island communities have a collective ability to manage diversity to avoid conflict in the name of religion. Identity as an "island community" becomes social capital in interpreting collective identity. The open character of island communities is also a cultural capital that can suppress suspicion of different groups. However, the three island communities also have different characteristics in the religious moderation policy space. Nias Islands with a majority Christian population composition shows a fairly strong attitude of tolerance. The principle of kinship adopted by the Nias community serves to strengthen relations between religious communities. Simeulue Islands,

whose majority population is Muslim, also shows a high level of tolerance by giving permission to build houses of worship for Christians who have just arrived in Simeulue in the last two decades. In the context of Pulau Banyak, where the majority of the population is Muslim, tolerance is only seen in the economic, market and fishing industry aspects. On the other hand, tolerance does not apply to permits to build houses of worship. This study also discusses the importance of the role of religious and social actors in strengthening community harmony on the three islands under study.

Keywords: Retrospection of Culture; Muslim Islands; Christian Islands; The Islands of Nias; Banyak and Simeuleu

INTRODUCTION

The policy of strengthening religious moderation leads the Ministry of Religious Affairs and its apparatus to work more rigorously in order to strengthen the value of moderation in society. The demand to be the main agent and pioneer in stimulating the discourse of religious moderation echoes in every work agenda of this ministry (*Minister of Religious Affairs Asked Islamic Higher Educational Institutions to Become Centers for Development of Religious Moderation*, n.d.). The campaign of moderation values is deemed necessary in order to strengthen pluralism, while at the same time suppressing the number of intolerance and the potential for radicalism that can erupt in the midst of Indonesian society with plural identities in religious beliefs. The concept of moderation like this is also called the term modern moderation which advocates efforts to maintain inter-belief relations (Hakim et al., 2023).

The existence and function of religion can be seen as a system of action, a value system, and an ideological system. Religion in many cases that have been studied in various places has played its role as an ideological system that gives a pattern to the formation of values and group behavior (Morris, 1989).Pluralistic societies such as in Indonesia, it is important to understand moderation and pluralism. Although, on the one hand, pluralism serves as a shaper of a high spirit of tolerance. However, on the other hand, it is not uncommon to cause friction in a society with multiple identities such as Indonesia. Moreover, in some situations, identity politics that often carry race and religion become a very sensitive condition in social life (Buchari & Astuti, 2014; Kambo, 2009; Kuntowijoyo, 2018). Here, the space and value of religious moderation are considered important as a state policy, as well as a middle way to strengthen pluralism for pluralistic societies (Ministry of Religious Affairs Policy Planning Team, 2019).

The Setara Institute report states that the index of religious harmony and

tolerance in Indonesia is still red (Azhari & Halili, 2020). This means that it takes extra work to see leakage points of intolerance in society. Data from the last three years proves that there are still several regions in Indonesia that have not reached the target of religious harmony as set nationally, namely 73.83. This condition leads the Ministry of Religious Affairs to move faster in knitting the curtain of nationality, especially in the context of the religious life of Indonesian society.

In social religious studies, it seems that the issue of religious harmony can be seen from the character of society. Irwan Abdullah elaborates that religion and culture influence each other in society (Abdullah, 2010). The character of the region is also an influence as the basis of the anthropological community environment (Koentjaraningrat, 1985). Religious endurance as the main indicator of maintaining tolerance relations is strongly influenced by the quality of interactions, reactions, and communication between citizens with different backgrounds from various aspects of life, including the most important aspects of religion (Rosyid M., 2017). This study will focus on how coastal communities build social relations in a religious context.

Nur Syam explains that the social integration of coastal communities is supported by a *culture share* that comes from their daily rites. Coastal communities have a hard and open attitude (Simanjuntak & Antonious, 2010; Syam, 2005). *National Geographic* notes explain the openness of coastal people (*Why Do Coastal Communities Tend to be Hard and Open-Minded? - National Geographic*, n.d.). Some previous studies explain that the identity of island communities has the ability to build harmonious religious relations compared to mainland communities (Simanjuntak & Antonious, 2010). Even so in the context of this study, the people of Banyak and Nias Islands tend to show stable conditions in religion (Al-Fairusy, 2019; Al Fairusy, 2020; Anatona, 2000). This condition also answers why Islam can be accepted first by the character of coastal communities with liquid without conflict (Nuriz & Awang, 2018).

In light of the above description, this research will use a qualitative method with an ethnographic approach. The selection of island and coastal communities as the locus of this study was chosen based on the assumptions; *first, the* study of coastal communities living on islands needs to be done as a form of enrichment of information about religious attitudes. *Second, the* study of the identity and religious moderation model of island communities can be part of *social development* in the context of socio-religious studies and the development of religious moderation values by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, including Islamic Religious Higher Education. This study also departs from the lack of socio-religious studies of island communities which are very limited and not

as encouraging as in mainland communities.

RELIGIOUS MODERATION AND COASTAL RELIGIOUS IDENTITY

Oman Fathurrahman through one of the youtube content with the theme of strengthening religious moderation explains the importance and strategic importance of the Ministry of Religion's policies for the color of nationality. Oman explains in detail the view of religious moderation as a policy. Conceptually, this policy seeks to avoid an exclusive attitude in religion that has the potential to create friction and conflict between religious communities, and can have an impact on national issues. However, religious moderation is also part of reducing the incidents of intolerance that still often occur in Indonesian society.

In general, religious moderation can be understood as an effort to maintain togetherness by having a tolerant attitude, an effort to understand each other and feel each other who are different from humans (Prologue; Lukman Hakim Saifuddin, 2019). In some studies, religious moderation can be decomposed into three trends; *first, the* model or form of religious moderation. *Second, the*process of religious moderation, and *third, the* implementation of religious moderation (Fernando & Jubba, 2023). As a policy, religious moderation can be understood as a perspective, attitude, and behavior that always takes a position in the middle, always acts fairly, and is not extreme in religion. Extreme itself is the opposite of the policy of religious moderation, which is something that goes beyond and exaggerates.

From the preliminary observation of the people who live in the three islands in this study, at first glance, they show their own model and form of moderation, generally they have tolerance for differences in beliefs. This condition is very different from the mainland and border communities of Aceh (Al-Fairusy et al., 2024; Al Fairusy, 2016; Aritonang, 2020). The character of the three kepuluan communities in the context of religion can be called part of the way of religion of coastal communities. In Nur Syam's study, the religious character of Islam adherents on the coast can be referred to as "Coastal Islam". The identity of coastal Islam has its own character that is different from the character of mountain communities. Local culture on the coast influences the way of religion, this condition is what Nur Syam calls "colloborative Islam" which describes the relationship between religion and local culture (Syam, 2005).

There are three islands that are used as data sources in this study, Two Islands in Aceh; Banyak Islands and Simeulue Islands, the majority of the population

are Muslims, the rest are inhabited by Christian communities affiliated with the Indonesian Gospel Mission Church (GMII). Furthermore, the Nias Islands which are part of North Sumatra, the majority of the people are Christian, and the rest are Muslim communities which are generally scattered in the two major cities on Nias; Gunung Sitoli and Teluk Dalam. These two areas are the easiest to find Muslims.

In Aceh's historical records, these three islands were once under Aceh's control as a spice trading port on the West Coast of Aceh, long before the Dutch entered and annexed the region under Dutch control before attacking Aceh (Al Fairusy MA, 2024). Aceh's footprints on Nias can still be found today (Al-Fairusy, 2019). Simeulue itself is known as the largest clove-producing area in Aceh, according to one clove trader, one of the most excellent types of cloves is sikotok cloves. Likewise, the Banyak Islands were once famous for the production and agriculture of cloves and copra. Plantation practices were initially dominant in these two areas, and then there was a transformation in livelihoods, with most residents choosing to work in the marine and fisheries sectors (Al-Fairusy, 2020).

The Nias Islands are the best example of building religious tolerance and moderation. In the Gunung Sitoli area as the center of the city in the Nias islands, although it is known for its Christian identity and majority, it has the ability to coexist with Muslims. Mosques and Muslim houses of worship can be built anywhere and anytime, without the need for permission. The power of moderation there is forged by kinship networks and local family wisdom termed *talifuse* (Al-Fairusy, 2019). The expression *talifuse* is not just a local term, an expression that shows the strong family values of fellow Nias people is the main social capital for building moderation values on Nias.

As for the Banyak Islands, Aceh Singkil as a sub-district that has experienced religious conflict, the dynamics of religious moderation are a social phenomenon in itself. At first glance, it seems that the community is reconciled with differences, there is almost no conflict like in mainland Singkel. Even so, there are problems regarding the permit for the establishment of houses of worship. When in the Banyak Islands, one of the places to visit is Mata Air Hamlet. This hamlet is young, inhabited by almost fifty households. The majority are Christian. Even so, they are not given access to build a house of prayer or a church by the Pulau Banyak sub-district. Every Sunday, using a boat, the residents take two hours to go to West Pulau Banyak Sub-district, where there is Ujung Sialit village. There, the GMII Church was established, and all Christians living in Pulau Banyak are only allowed to worship there.

However, on the other hand, social relations work quite well between the

Christian and Muslim populations of the Banyak Islands. There is no problem of conflict over beliefs. In the fishing industry, relations between tauke and fishermen of different faiths are common. Even so, in other contexts, in the market, the relationship between the people of Kepulauan Banyak melts. Similar conditions can also be seen in Simeulue, where a house of prayer, a church substitute, can be established in the midst of Muslim houses. This means that in terms of identity and religious moderation models, the people of the three islands have the power and value of tolerance, driven by feelings of compatibility as island people.

The following table compares the model of religious moderation of the coastal communities of the three islands

No	Islands	Religion		Pattern and Dynamics of Moderation
		Islam	Christianity	
1	Nias	Minority	Minority	Family values are strong as the identity of the "Nias people," and there are no obstacles to the construction of houses of worship. There are no signs of conflict in the name of religion.
2	Kepulauan Banyak	Minority	Minority	Family values are strong as "urang pulo" from Nias descent and the same clan. However, there are rules and obstacles for the construction of houses of worship. There are no signs of conflict in the name of religion.
3	Simeulue	Minority	Minority	Identity as the Simeulue community, there are no obstacles to the construction of houses of worship, only they cannot be named churches, just "houses of prayer." There are no signs of conflict in the name of religion.

LOCAL WISDOM IN THE DIVERSITY

As a large chain of islands in North Sumatra Province with an area of 5,625 km² and inhabited by nearly one million people, the Nias Islands consist of four districts and one municipality (Simeulue Regency Central Statistics Agency, 2024). The name Nias is not unfamiliar in Aceh's history, the Nias people in many Acehnese historical records are known for their loyalty and hard work (Anatona, 2000). Visiting Nias can be reached by two routes; sea and land. Sea travel starts from the ports of Sibolga and Singkil. As for air travel, you can use an airplane from Kuala Namu airport to Binaka airport, Nias.

In Mestika Zed's notes published in his book *Saudagar Pariaman Menerjang Ombak Membangun Maskapai* , Muhammad Saleh's journey as a merchant who took the sea route from Pariaman once crossed the Nias Islands. Muhammad Saleh through his autobiography explained the economic activities of the Nias population that had developed, especially Tello Island, which is the oldest tsunami trail in Sumatra (Zed, 2017).

Several studies on Nias suggest that the islanders are a plural society. They call themselves *"Ono Niha '* and their islands are called *'Tano Niha"*. In Nias, customary law is still upheld, known as *fondrakö,* which regulates the circle of human life, from birth to death (Suwartiningsih & Samiyono, 2017). Not only plural in the ethnic context, Nias society is also plural in the dimension of belief (religion). Although, the majority of Nias people adhere to Protestant Christianity. Even so, there has never been violence in the name of religion in Nias society throughout the history of its society.

There are two cities that developed on Nias, namely Gunung Sitoli City and Teluk Dalam. These two cities are the easiest to find mosques and Muslim residents. Although, the majority of the population of Nias is Christian. Even so, the distance between the two cities requires a road trip of almost four hours. The road is flanked by forests and beaches. Gunung Sitoli City itself is the main gateway to the social life and diversity of the Nias population. Here, the Nias Heritage Museum serves as a space for Nias culture and a center of information about the Nias tribe, which is famous for stone carving. Furthermore, there is a bustling economy here. There are also two houses of worship (Church and Mosque) side by side.

Anthropologically, the physique of the Nias people is very easy to mark, generally they have slanted eyes and light yellow skin. In addition, Nias people often use clans behind their names. One of the characteristics and uniqueness of the Nias people is the habit of eating betel, almost every Nias resident met was chewing betel. Betel becomes an important cultural symbol for the Nias people. Not only betel nut, in the context of cultural heritage, Nias people are also closely related to stones. The tradition of carving stones as worship for the King of Nias and the tradition of stone jumping have become one of the national cultural heritages.

In the context of diversity and maintaining the brotherhood of fellow Nias people, they use a principle that is often echoed in the local Nias language, "*...Hulô La'ewa Nidanô, ifuli Fahalô-halô.*" This means that the brotherhood of Nias people is like a river that continues to flow, difficult to separate and break. The meaning of being a Nias person is to be one family in the principle of local wisdom. One informant named RAZ who was met on Nias shared a

picture of moderation on Nias. RAZ himself is an employee at the Ministry of Religious Affairs Office in Nias Regency and is a Christian. For RAZ, religious differences do not necessarily separate Nias people, because family identity as Nias people is above religious identity according to RAZ.

> "...The phrase "we are like a flowing river" is a building of kinship and kinship among Nias people. Not just an adage, this Nias adage has a strong meaning in the family ties of fellow Nias people who are likened to flowing river water. If there are attempts by others to cut down the flowing river water, it is a futile job, because the water will continue to flow, and will never be cut off."
> *(Interview with RAZ, March 21, 2024, Gunung Sitoli City)*

Nias people have long been accustomed to coexisting with different beliefs. In Gunung Sitoli and Teluk Dalam, and several areas, houses of worship are often found; churches are located close to and side by side with Surau and Mosques. In fact, Mosques can grow without the need for permits as in Aceh in the majority Christian and Catholic environment on Nias. In Aceh, permits for the construction of houses of worship, especially churches, have indeed reaped dynamics and controversy, especially in Singkil, which is the parent district of Kepulaun Banyak (Aritonang, 2020; TEMPO, 2015).

Diversity and tolerance can be found in every corner of the Nias region. One day, while this study and research was being conducted, a middle-aged woman sat in front of St. Francis Laverna Church in Gunung Sitoli City. She was a devout churchgoer who had just finished a service. She appeared to be waiting for a pick-up not far from the church grounds. From her description, she was over sixty years old. Not long after, a man who was her brother came to pick her up. He explained that his brother is a Muslim, and picks him up at Laverna Church almost every day.

Living in a family of different faiths is common and normal on Nias. There are many families on Nias where family members have different faith identities, but they still uphold family values. The role of the family as a social institution seems to be not limited to supplying values and reinforcing the value of moderation, not only limited to strengthening physical, social and psychological resilience (Suhardiman et al., 2023).

Moreover, when visiting Nias, there is a deep impression of how residents treat visitors. At the Port of Gunung Sitoli City, some first-time visitors to Nias will easily find information regarding identity. Muslims are advised by some non-Muslim residents not to visit any food stalls, with some markers indicating which Muslim food stalls to stop at.

One of the heads of the Islamic religious authority on Nias in the members of the Nias Ulema Consultative Assembly, Abdul Hadi, recounts the history of how moderation and tolerance work on Nias.

> "...Since long ago, when migrants from Aceh and Minang who were Muslims traveled to Nias to spread their religion and settled as part of the Nias people, the ancestors of Nias have pledged to protect each other and the people living in the Nias Islands. This pledge became a culture and heritage in the expression *"talifuse,"* where the blood of kinship and kinship as Nias people is more important than the identity that is subsequently attached to the Nias people."
> *(Interview with Abdul Hadi, March 23, 2024, Gunung Sitoli City)*

The value of kinship based on this ancestral agreement then becomes part of the local wisdom of tolerance on Nias according to the informants. The presence of local wisdom as a culture of strengthening tolerance by upholding identity and family values can be seen as one of the models of culture-based moderation on Nias, and the way "coastal religions" such as the Nias islands display their own diverse identity.

HOUSE OF PRAYER AS AN EXPRESSION OF MODERATION

Data and descriptions of the religious life of the Simeulue community in the context of moderation began with initial information at the Ministry of Religious Affairs. In this state agency that takes care of the religious field, some initial data was collected. FZ and MD, employees of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Simeulue Regency, gave an overview of community life there. In the context of religion, the majority of Simeulue's population is Muslim, and is claimed by some religious leaders to be affiliated with the Muhammadiyah identity. However, the practice of Islam there tends to be open. From the information of Simeulue community leaders, even though they seem to be Muhammadiyah-affiliated, the people of Simeulue are open to all groups. In fact, some residents who claim to be Muhammadiyah but do not really understand how to distinguish themselves from the Nahdiyin style of Islam, for example.

As for the Christians who started coming to Simeuleu since the early 2000s, they are generally traders from North Sumatra who then chose to settle in Simeulue. In the past, there were traders of Chinese descent, but the population is now getting smaller, most of them have chosen to become converts. In terms of Islam adherents, the Muhammadiyah style is stronger here. Although, there are also traditional patterns, but the number is very small. Even so, from the

recognition of some residents, in the context of worship tends to be fluid, indistinguishable between the two (Muhammadiyah and Traditionalist, ed).

Non-Muslim residents also exist in Simeulue, even so their numbers are very small. Although the number is very limited, Christians in Simeulue have two houses of prayer instead of churches. Permission to build houses of worship was granted by the Simeulue community as a form of tolerance according to one of the Religious Harmony Forum administrators in Simeulue. The location of the two houses of prayer are far apart. One stands in Sinabang City, and the other is separated on Siumat Island.

From the information of several informants interviewed, the Simeulue community does not object to the existence of a house of prayer located in the middle of a Muslim settlement. However, they refuse if the status of the house of prayer is changed to a church. From the information of Simeulue residents, there used to be a ship from the Navy from Sibolga that stopped at Sinabang. Then, some Navy soldiers who are Christians tried to put church pamphlets in the prayer house. This incident had drawn controversy and criticism. The community refused, then it was taken down after negotiations with the community. According to the Religious Harmony Forum chairman, this incident was quickly handled, so that the potential for social conflict did not occur. So far, there have been no friction issues with the minority population. Moreover, according to the Religious Harmony Forum, Simeulue's non-Muslim population only arrived around the year 2000 to the island in order to trade. So, the provision of two houses of prayer is considered a form of high tolerance from the people of Simeulue.

The house of worship in Simeulue as a substitute for the church is a diakonia of the Indonesian Gospel Mission Church (GMII), just like in Ujung Sialit in the Banyak Islands, and Meulaboh City in West Aceh. When visited, it is located in the middle of the Simeulue Muslim settlement. The prayer house is built of planks, elongated in shape like a typical church. Inside is also equipped with complete facilities.

It was a little difficult to find the House of Prayer because there was no signboard. Moreover, it is located in the middle of several Muslim houses. At the time of this study, the House of Prayer and its congregation were led by Pastor Lukas, a 56-year-old native of Central Java. Lukas has served at the House of Prayer for four years as the head of the congregation or pastor. The House of Prayer is a church replacement house of worship affiliated with the diakonia of the Indonesian Gospel Mission Church. According to Lukas, the house of prayer is used by almost fifty congregations who live in Simeulue, and has been used for worship since 2001. Not only Protestant Christians, the

house of prayer is also used by Catholic Christians in Simeulue.

The diakonia of the GMII House of Prayer is the same as the only church in the West Banyak Islands, precisely in Ujung Sialit, which is used by Christians in Pulau Banyak. However, Simeulue has two houses of prayer compared to only one on Pulau Banyak. Although, if calculated, the number of congregations on Banyak Island is more crowded than Simeulue. Apart from Sinabang, on Siumat Island there is also another house of prayer that was given permission by the community to be established. Sinabang City and Siumat Island are separated by the ocean in the Simeulue islands.

When interviewed, Lukas did not give much information about why the status of the house of prayer still survived and was not renamed as a church, and with a written legal status. Indeed, there was an impression from Lukas that he wished to be converted from the look on his face as he gave an account of the history of the house of prayer. Lukas also understands that the permit to build a house of worship must follow the Qanun in Aceh. Even so, as a migrant and head of a minority congregation, he only follows the wishes of the local community. From Lukas' information, the status of use of the House of Prayer is only given by community consensus to be used as a place of worship. The name may not be changed as a church and a name bar in front of this elongated building. He did not specify the status of the prayer house. Lukas admitted that he was only carrying out his duties as the head of the congregation who was sent. Moreover, his status as head of the congregation can be transferred at any time. Interestingly, Lukas is also part of the Simeulue Regency Religious Harmony Forum in maintaining tolerance on the islands.

On the other hand, the Simelueu Religious Harmony Forum and the Ministry of Religious Affairs only explained that the existence of the status of a prayer house was enough to show the high tolerance attitude of the Simeulue community, so there was no need to change it to a church because it was feared that it could trigger public affection and suspicion.

> "...the identity and majority of Simeulue's population is Muslim, and the presence of migrants has never been restricted. Moreover, the house of prayer does not stand apart from the homes of Muslim residents, even so far it has been flanked and surrounded by the homes of Muslim Simeulue residents. This condition shows the high value of tolerance possessed by the people of Simeulue." *(Interview Rahmanuddin, Simeulue Religious Harmony Forum, March 25, 2024, Sinabang City)*

In fact, when compared to the Banyak Islands, the attitude of tolerance and the people of Simeulue towards the existence of non-Muslims who began arriving since the beginning of 2000 is much better. Moreover, the number of non-Muslims is not as many as the people of Pulau Banyak, which only has one house of worship. On the other hand, inter-religious friction has also never occurred in Simeulue, this condition shows the inclusive coastal religious style of the Simeulue community and has its own moderation model in managing interfaith religion.

TOLERANCE AND PERMITS FOR HOUSES OF WORSHIP

The Banyak Islands is part of Aceh Singkil, which is flanked by Nias and Simeulue Islands. There are two sub-districts in Kepulauan Banyak; Pulau Banyak and Pulau Banyak Barat, which are almost two hours apart by sea crossing (Singkil, 2024). Ethnically, the people of Kepulauan Banyak are mostly descendants of Nias with Malay-Minang culture. Not surprisingly, the use of these two languages, Malay-Minang and Nias, is often found in the community of the Banyak Islands. The majority of the population of the Banyak Islands is Muslim, except in Mata Air Hamlet, Pulau Banyak, and Ujung Sialit Village, Pulau Banyak Barat Sub-district, which are inhabited by Christians with the diakonia of the Indonesian Gospel Mission Church congregation, just like the Christians who inhabit Simeulue.

Muslim and Christian settlements in the Banyak Islands sub-district are not united, separated by the sea which has now been built a connecting bridge. However, the road to get to Mata Air Hamlet is not easy, apart from the road being damaged and filled with wild vines that partially cover the path to get there. Some Mata Air residents choose to use the sea route to reach the sub-district center. Their relationship is only bound by the economic industry of fishing and administrative and educational issues.

The distance from the kecamatan center to Mata Air is only 1 kilometer. This hamlet is also adjacent to Teluk Nibung Village, one of the villages in Pulau Banyak Sub-district with Muhammadiyah Islamic identity. According to the people who live in Mata Air, in the 1980s there were only three houses in the hamlet. They came from North Nias as laborers and guardians of clove plantations owned by several Pulau Banyak people. The residents here all have Nias clans, such as one of the residents who settled here for the first time named Sekhizatule'u Zai, a Nias name. Subsequently, the arrival and development of the community here continued to grow. There are now 32 families living in this seaside hamlet. Indeed, the houses here are not as many as the heads of families, because some houses are inhabited by two heads of

families. However, there are no pig farms or pets here, as there are on Nias. Only a few dogs are used for gardening.

The livelihood of the people of Pulau Banyak is fishing. Although, some of them also farm. In Mata Air Hamlet, which is flanked by beaches and community plantations, working as a fisherman is preferred by residents. Daily communication in this hamlet uses the Nias language. This is different from the people of Pulau Banyak in the sub-district center who often use Malay. As is the tradition on Nias, residents of Mata Air also often chew betel. For them, betel is an ancestral tradition and an identity as Nias people. The teeth of older residents who chew betel appear reddish-black, as they have been chewing betel for years.

Although demographically, the hamlet is growing in population. However, they were not given permission by the village and sub-district authorities to build a house of worship or house of prayer like in Simeulue. So, every Sunday they have to cross up to two hours to Ujung Sialit Village in Pulau Banyak Barat for weekly prayer and worship. Only there, the GMII Church is allowed to stand. Not every Sunday they can visit Ujung Sialit. When their finances are tight, they are forced not to go to worship in Ujung Sialit. Crossing the ocean to arrive at Ujung Sialit requires a considerable amount of gasoline.

The head of the hamlet said that he had asked permission from the sub-district head and village officials in Pulau Banyak several times to establish a house of worship, but was always refused and not given permission on the grounds that there must be a permit from the Aceh Province regarding permission to establish a house of worship. This condition does not necessarily make the people in Mata Air Hamlet complain and protest. For them, this is seen as an act of injustice. When asked, the villagers just sighed, while issuing the words "suck" and "difficult."

From the information of a resident of Mata Air, the church in Ujung Sialit is also getting narrower, and no expansion permit has been granted. In fact, the population is increasing. In the context of the sacred ritual of marriage, Mata Air residents will hold it in the church in Ujung Sialit Village, except for parties, which they can hold in their respective homes in Mata Air Hamlet. At the time of data collection for this study, a family was in mourning; one of the villagers had just died from an illness that had lasted for almost two weeks. He was very young, the younger brother of the Head of Mata Air Hamlet. According to Arianto, they had taken his younger brother to Nias for medical and non-medical treatment, but the long-standing fever could not be saved. Health facilities are only available in the sub-district center.

In Mata Air Hamlet, there are no schools or the most basic education units such as kindergartens. The children of Mata Air Hamlet have to take their education to Pulau Balai - the sub-district center, where they have to walk or take a boat to cross. Paradoxically, according to a teacher on Pulau Banyak, there is no special religious teacher for Christians at the school. So, they are forced to follow the Islamic religious education taught to other students in schools. Many non-Muslim children are able to memorize Muslim prayers and holy verses.

When compared to the mainland Singkil community, the condition of the Banyak island community is much more harmonious in a religious context. There is no friction and conflict that leads to disharmony. Although it must be admitted, suspicion of the Non-Muslim community could be heard everywhere during this study. However, economic relations such as patronage in the world of fisheries, ethnic unity as Nias people, and social relations in one archipelago make religious moderation in the community of Pulau Banyak provide its own model, compared to the mainland community of Singkil, which often has the potential for conflict due to the unsolved issues of permits for houses of worship.

CONCLUSION

It is impossible not to take a closer look at how religious moderation functions in coastal and island communities in Aceh and North Sumatra, given the strict permits for the construction of houses of worship that lead to frictional conflicts on the Aceh mainland-border. Thus, the ability of island communities to live side by a side with differences in beliefs also evidence their capability to foresee the emergent issues of religious radicalism and violence. This paper demonstrates how the identity and strength of island societies that are associated with the idea of life and indigenous culture is a kind of religious tolerance in itself. Local values and wisdoms as well as the meaning of family is considered as the main identity compared to the identity of community beliefs in the context of the Nias Islands. Besides, while dynamics of permits for the establishment of houses of worship are so noisy on the Aceh border, the Banyak Island community could at least minimize the turmoil of religious conflict due to socio-economic relation and solidarity feelings as islanders.

Religious moderation as a policy cannot be viewed as one directional and a homogeneous approach. There are forms and models that evolve within society that are greatly impacted by the environment and culture of the society they live in. The three islands examined; the Nias Islands, the Banyak Islands and Simeulue Islands each offer an example of religious moderation policies. On

the one hand, identity as coastal and island people also reveals similarities in the approach to community groups with different beliefs. On the other hand, other political policies are a conflict for the sustainability of inter-religious relations, including in the Islands. The weakness of moderation is true in the Banyak and Simeulue Islands because of the permits for the construction of places of worship. This condition is different from the Nias Islands, which do not have any vulnerability in tolerance, the freedom to establish houses of worship and see other Nias people with different religions as the same identity as one family becomes a buffer for tolerance and moderation in the Nias Islands better than the people in the other two islands in Aceh. However, both are Nias ethnicities though ethnically they are similar to the Banyak Islands. And as Island people who live in one archipelago and are distinct from the mainland, they do consider themselves one nation. Hence, "making peace" and building "tolerance" for the sake of the sustainability of economic and social relations is reasonable. This is the state that makes religious moderation function. However, the local culture in religion is also a factor that contributes to the formation of the face of tolerance of island communities.

Structurally, religious, cultural and Religious Harmony Forum has a very significant role of nurturing local communities so that religious tension and conflict do not develop. In general, this study provides meaning to the policy of religious moderation in the islands and coasts that seem to be better than in the mainland communities particularly on the border of Aceh. In general, the feeling of the unity of the islanders' fate has granted the right to freedom to practice religious worship and rituals and not to discriminate. However, there are other policies (permits to build houses of worship) that have restrained the mobility of religious moderation amid the island societies, particularly Banyak Island.

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RELIGIOUS HARMONY BASED ON SPIRITUAL AND INTELLECTUAL JOURNEY OF RENÉ GUÉNON

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the intellectual and spiritual journey of René Guénon, who traversed the spiritual experiences of various religions in the world such as Catholicism, Hinduism, Taoism, and ended up in Islam. It seems that Guénon did not see the conversion of religion as a contradictory process, but rather as a continuous stage that enriched his search for the true truth. The position of this research is one of the testimonies of René Guénon's important role in developing religious harmony. Although many writings talk about religious harmony, the presence of René Guénon emphasizes ideas and works about the life of religious harmony. This article seeks to answer the question of the urgency of René Guénon's spiritual and intellectual journey in crossing and upholding the essential values of the religion studied. This type of qualitative research focuses on library research, with a biographical approach. Furthermore, the sources in this study refer to direct works written by René Guénon and other authors who discuss René Guénon. The results of this study show that the essential values of each religion supported by spiritual and intellectual maturity are an important foundation for living a harmonious life between religious people.

Keywords*: Religious Harmony; Spiritual and Intellectual Journey; René Guénon*

INTRODUCTION

Spiritual journeys are often triggered by dissatisfaction with worldly problems that drive people to seek answers to fundamental questions about their existence and purpose in life. Religious conversion is often part of this

process. However, in the social context, religious conversion has always been seen as a contradictory act that causes pros and cons debate among religious believers. René Guénon, as one of the figures and undergoing conversion from one religion to another, displays an attractive charm to be used as a model in the process of peaceful religious conversion. In fact, the René Guénon phenomenon gives the impression that every meeting of one religion to another becomes stages in building the maturity of the spiritual journey. So far, the essence of human spiritual journey is understood to contain a deep meaning about the existence of life in the spirit of religion (Mustaqim, 2023). The spiritual journey will go through the process of finding answers to the big questions about the nature of life's meaning. This process will lead individuals to conduct a deep exploration of various traditions in order to find new spiritual paths that suit their inner search and understanding (Bagir, 2017).

René Guénon, hereinafter called Guénon, is one of the figures who took a spiritual journey that crossed various religions, namely: born as a Catholic, then deepened Hinduism, and finally established Islam as its estuary (Taj, 2023). Dickson explained that Guénon's presence as an important figure in the revival of Islamic spirituality in the modern world is still not widely known (Dickson, 2021). Guénon's spiritual and intellectual travels made important contributions to modern religious thought and shaped the idea of interreligious harmony. This is revealed in his works such as The Crisis of the Modern World (Guénon, 2001d), Introduction to the Study of Hindu Doctrines (Guénon, 2001a), The Reign of Quantity and the Signs of the Times (Guénon, 2001e), and Man and His Becoming According to the Vedanta (Guénon, 2001b). Through this series of works, Guénon conveyed profound ideas about the universal spiritual tradition. These works provide a keen and critical view of the relationship between modernity and spirituality, and emphasize the importance of understanding the essence of tradition as a path to religious harmony (Guénon, 2009).

Guénon did not treat conversion as a process of "ascension" or "descent", but rather as a continuous journey in a whole. This phenomenon is interesting to study because Guénon shows a unique pattern of religious transition, which is not to contradict the religious teachings that were previously adhered to, but to consider them as steps that enrich his spiritual journey. In fact, in a social context, religious conversion is often colored by a critical view of the religious teachings that are abandoned or even the justification of the religion they embrace (Abidin, 2005; Bielefeldt & Wiener, 2022). However, Guénon took a different approach by still glorifying these religions as part of his spiritual journey.

Articles and writings related to spiritual journeys, especially Guénon, have not been revealed much in the study of Islamic thought in Indonesia. In fact, studying the spiritual journey and thoughts of great figures in Islam, especially from Muslim intellectuals, is an important task for a Muslim (Fauzan, 2019). This understanding is inseparable from the lives of Muslims from time to time. In addition, other sources explain that Islam explicitly encourages its followers to study spiritual and historical journeys as key in understanding the future. By studying the spiritual and historical journeys of previous figures precisely and deeply, we can take valuable lessons and lessons from the values of goodness left behind, which can be a guideline in achieving glory both in this world and in the hereafter (Amiruddin et al., 2021; As-Sirjani, 2011; Belhaj, 2023; Laude, 2020). It is therefore crucial to uncover Guénon's spiritual and intellectual journey as the cornerstone of his thought on religious harmony, which connects the world's great traditions to build a deeper understanding of universal truth. This is qualitative research focuses on library research, with a biographical approach (Khilmiyah, 2016; Saefullah, 2024) which focuses on Guénon's personal life. The steps in this research are to explore the background of life, the spiritual transformation he experienced through his encounters with various religions such as Catholicism, Hinduism, and Islam.

RENÉ GUÉNON'S EARLY LIFE: CATHOLIC TRADITION

René Jean Marie Joseph Guénon, better known as René Guénon, was born in Blois, France, on November 15, 1886. Guénon grew up in a very strict Catholic family environment and Guénon received his early education under the guidance of the Jesuits. This traditional Catholic education provided a solid intellectual and spiritual foundation, which later became the foundation for Guénon's future thought. Growing up, Guénon moved to Paris to pursue his undergraduate studies in philosophy and mathematics at Collège Rollin (Chacornac, 2005; Karimov & Bekbaev, 2022). However, in 1905 Guénon decided to abandon his studies and began exploring the world of occultism that was then thriving in Paris. During this time Guénon was also an active member of a number of secret organizations, including theosophists, spiritualists, Freemasonry, and gnostics. In June 1909, Guénon founded a journal called La Gnose, which became the main forum for most of his writings during that period. This journal has been operating for approximately two years. However, in the later days Guénon criticized the occult movement that he had studied (Arnold, 2018, p. 279; Hatina, 2022).

Born and raised in the Catholic tradition, Guénon did not only delve into the teachings of the Catholic tradition, but also expanded his journey to

various Eastern traditions, including Hindu philosophy, Taoism, and Islam (Guénon, 2009). This trip led Guénon to view Western and Eastern traditions as complementary elements in his quest to seek and reveal universal truth. This view is reflected in his life and works, which build bridges between the two worlds and make him a key figure in cross-cultural and religious dialogue (Guénon, 2004). In the end, this shaped Guénon's identity as a global, traditionalist figure.

As a traditionalist, Guénon had emphasized in his early writings the need for the restoration of the Roman Catholic-based intellectual tradition in the Western world. Despite embarking on his spiritual journey in a disciplined Catholic tradition, Guénon nonetheless criticized some aspects of modern Catholicism, such as rationalism and the loss of esoteric elements. Even Guénon envisioned a form of Catholic religion that could be renewed, enriched, and strengthened through the restoration of its esoteric tradition (Oldmeadow, 2024). However, in the midst of his criticism, Guénon still respected the symbolic and spiritual dimensions of the Catholic tradition, which Guénon saw as part of the core of primordial truth (Belhaj, 2023).

Guénon launched his criticism because he considered that the philosophical and historical foundations used by certain teachings were wrong. Guénon called these teachings false spirituality and compared them to true traditional esotericism. In addition, Guénon strongly opposed the direction of the development of European civilization in his time, because according to him, the civilization had lost its deep spiritual values, more oriented towards materialism and rationalism (Quisay, 2023). Guénon believed that these two aspects not only damaged the human soul but also disturbed the balance of the order of the universe. Based on this view, Guénon consistently opposed the development of European civilization. This rejection was likely influenced by his experience of receiving initiation in the tradition of Taoism, Islam, or even both. Whitall Perry in his writings argues that Guénon's critical attitude can also be attributed to his contact with the representatives of the Advaita tradition in Vedānta philosophy (Guénon, 2009: 275; Oldmeadow, 2024; Perry, 1991: 7–8).

It should be underlined that for Guénon the great traditions of the world, including Catholicism, share the same spiritual core that connects them on a transcendental level. The Catholic education that Guénon received not only built his spirituality but also formed the basis of his universal thinking. The Catholic tradition prepared him to explore the esoteric teachings of various traditions, including Hinduism, Taoism, and Islam. Guénon's reverence for Catholic symbolism and esoteric elements remained an integral part of his

thinking, even after Guénon converted and devoted his life to the Islamic tradition.

HINDU TRADITION: STRUGGLING WITH VEDĀNTA IDEAS

With his critical thinking, Guénon finally began to take a break in the Hindu tradition. Guénon's interest in the Hindu tradition emerged when Guénon began to explore more universal metaphysical teachings. In his book Introduction to the Study of the Hindu Doctrines, Guénon explores the Vedānta philosophy and the principles of Hindu metaphysics, which he says is one of the most complete systems of thought (Dickson, 2021; Waterfield, 2005). Guénon considers Hinduism as a tradition that has managed to maintain spiritual continuity despite the challenges of modern times. The teachings of absolute unity (Brahman) and symbolism in Hindu rituals became an inspiration for him to understand the esoteric core of the spiritual tradition. Guénon used the concept of cosmic cycles from the Hindu tradition to interpret the course of human history. Guénon describes the transition from the Golden Age, which symbolizes spiritual splendor to the Dark Age (Kali Yuga), a period marked by moral and spiritual degradation (Guénon, 2001a; Laude, 2020). For Guénon, the modern idea of historical evolution that has always led to progress is an illusion of a materialistic nature.

In his work Introduction to the Study of the Hindu Doctrines, Guénon argued that the Hindu tradition is one of the most authentic sources of eternal wisdom historically. Guénon viewed the Hindu tradition as something more comprehensive and pure than other traditions, and sought to restore civilization to traditional values (Guénon, 2001a). Guénon believed that this tradition was indispensable to the West, which he thought had suffered significant deviations. This book also shows Guénon's skill as a sharp critic of modern civilization (Arnold, 2018; Taj, 2023).

Guénon also views modernity as a phase of decline from the true spiritual essence of man (Piraino, 2021). Guénon in some of his works shows the complexity and complexity of defining religion, especially when trying to find a single universal definition that covers all religious traditions. Guénon acknowledged that the commonly accepted definition of religion in the Western world is more suitable for Abrahamic religions, such as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, which have relatively uniform belief structures, ritual practices, and institutions. However, this approach faces major challenges when applied to traditions such as Hinduism, which has tremendous diversity in both its doctrines, rituals, and social structures, including its strong links to the caste system (Taj, 2023).

In René Guénon's book The Essential: Metaphysics, Tradition, and the Crisis of Modernity, it is explained that after his brief interaction with the Hindu community, who most likely returned to India, René Guénon did not continue further contact with them. On the other hand, Guénon had been initiated into the Sufi Order, which became his spiritual path throughout his life. Guénon was very concerned about the phenomena that occurred around him, especially the anti-religious prejudice that was growing rapidly among French intellectuals at the time. Guénon believed that despite this attitude becoming more widespread, most intellectuals still had the ability to accept the truth (Guénon, 2009). According to Guénon, this anti-religious prejudice arose because many religious leaders, especially in the Catholic tradition, increasingly lost intellectual intelligence and focused more on a sentimental approach.

RENÉ GUÉNON'S WORKS BEFORE CONVERTING TO ISLAM

Guénon's efforts to unravel the principles of the primordial tradition occurred in his early writings, namely in 1909. Guénon focused his work on uncovering and applying the timeless principles that underlie all traditional doctrines. Guénon explores various traditions such as Vedānta, Taoist tradition, Christianity, Islam, gnosticism, and Kabbalah. Guénon sought to excavate and reveal the fundamental principles of these traditions, which he said were formal manifestations of a primordial tradition (Dickson, 2021). In his work, Guénon puts forward consistent key themes, such as the view of metaphysics as a principle that transcends all doctrines. Guénon also made a sharp distinction between exoterism as the external dimension of religious tradition and esoterism as the inner dimension, emphasizing that esotericism is the path to a deep understanding of spiritual truth (Guénon, 2009).

René Guénon emphasized the importance of intellectual knowledge rooted in metaphysical principles as a way to understand deeper realities. In his criticism of modern civilization, especially Europe, Guénon stated that the Western world has suffered a spiritual decline due to the loss of connection with traditional values. He saw the dominance of materialism as the main feature of modern civilization, which was in sharp contrast to the traditional Eastern civilization which, according to him, still maintained primordial wisdom (Guénon, 2009).

EARLY CONTRIBUTIONS AT LA GNOSE

In the early period of his career (1909–1912), Guénon founded and edited the journal La Gnose, which became the medium for his articles on esoterism,

symbolism, and metaphysical philosophy (Arnold, 2018, p. 9; Sedgwick, 2020). As early as 1909 before embracing Islam, Guénon had written about the concept of primordial tradition. According to Guénon, primordial tradition is relevant to all humans. Guénon believes that primordial tradition can be continued and applied by mankind from the present to the future. Guénon is not focused on the specific details of a particular tradition or a particular historical event, but rather on the core of the tradition itself, that is, the sacred and eternal knowledge that can be accessed by man through the channels still available in traditional doctrines (Eaton, 1995: 188–189; Sedgwick, 2021a, 2023).

The articles that Guénon wrote in La Gnose reflected his early interest in various esoteric traditions before eventually directing his thinking entirely to traditional doctrine (Dickson, 2021). Some important articles published in La Gnose such as Symbolism and Esoteric Tradition. Guénon's articles in the La Gnose era deal extensively with the universal symbolism found in various esoteric traditions (Sedgwick, 2020), including the Kabbalah and the esoteric Christian tradition. Related to the relationship between freemasonry and gnostic tradition. René Guénon's writings in La Gnose became an important foundation in the formation of his intellectual and spiritual thought. In the journal, Guénon began to develop his early ideas that later became the basis for his later works (Guénon, 2009).

Through La Gnose, he explores symbolism, metaphysics, and criticism of modernity, which are central themes in books such as The Symbolism of the Cross and The Crisis of the Modern World. In The Symbolism of the Cross, Guénon deepens the idea of universal symbolism, while in The Crisis of the Modern World, he criticizes the shift in spiritual values in the modern era. Both works reflect the profound influence of the early ideas he formulated in La Gnose, demonstrating Guénon's consistency in exploring the metaphysical tradition and universal symbolism. Through his writings in La Gnose, Guénon laid down the philosophical framework that became the basis of his intellectual journey later (Guénon, 2009).

RENÉ GUÉNON'S MEETING WITH SUFI FIGURES

After experiencing a struggle of thought related to his spiritual quest, René Guénon met Ivan Aguéli in 1912. René Guénon's meeting with Ivan Aguéli was a pivotal moment in Guénon's spiritual and intellectual journey. Ivan Aguéli was an artist, philosopher, and central figure in the world of Western Sufism, known as Sufi ʿAbdul Hādī al-Maghribī. Aguéli became one of the main intermediaries who introduced the esoteric tradition of Islam to Guénon.

Aguéli was born in Sweden in 1869 and showed a deep interest in Eastern art, philosophy, and spirituality (Beglerović & Sedgwick, 2020; Efendi et al., 2022). Aguéli also had a spiritual journey to the Middle East, in Egypt, and began to join the Syadziliyah Sufi Order under the guidance of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Rahmān ʿIllaysh al-Kabīr, a great scholar and leader of the Syadziliyah Order in Egypt. Aguéli played an important role in introducing Sufism doctrines, especially the metaphysical teachings of Ibn ʿArabī (1165-1240) to Europe through his writings (Hatina, 2022; Hulya, 2008: 298).

As an artist, Aguéli creates works inspired by Eastern and Western mystical traditions. However, its main focus is on the study of philosophy, religion, and mysticism. Ivan Aguéli is known to be critical of modernity and colonialism, as well as calling for the importance of spiritual liberation through the esoteric tradition. His articles on Sufism, art, and Eastern culture emphasize the need to restore human connection with authentic spirituality (Efendi et al., 2022).

Ivan Aguéli became a great inspiration for René Guénon, especially through Aguéli's role as a spiritual teacher and guide. Through their discussions and interactions, Aguéli introduced the idea that Sufism is an esoteric form of Islam that is in harmony with other metaphysical traditions, such as Hinduism and Taoism. After going through a long intellectual and spiritual journey, Guénon decided to embrace Islam in 1912 and took the name ʿAbd al-Wāḥid Yaḥyā. His decision to become a Muslim was not because Guénon considered Islam superior to other religions, but because Islam, through Sufism, offered a spiritual and metaphysical framework that included many elements of other traditions that Guénon had studied (Efendi, 2020, p. 168).

Guénon further explored Sufism by joining the Syadziliyyah Order and spending his time writing down his ideas and thoughts. One result of his critical thinking is to criticize modernity and offer Islam as a solution to the spiritual crisis of humanity. According to him, Islam provides a perfect synthesis between the esoteric and exoteric dimensions, allowing one to live an authentic spiritual life in the context of the real world. This view reinforces Guénon's belief in the importance of tradition as a path to metaphysical truth. After Aguéli's death in 1917, René Guénon continued his work in introducing Sufism in the West (Efendi et al., 2022: 167–168).

Guénon not only expanded his understanding of Sufism in European countries such as France, Spain, Belgium, and Italy, but also deepened his spiritual knowledge through his involvement in the Syadziliyyah Order. Through his works and contributions, René Guénon became a central figure in the traditionalism movement (Dickson, 2021: 593). Guénon introduced many people in Europe to the Sufism tradition, expanded the reach of Islamic

esoteric teachings, and encouraged cross-cultural and religious dialogue rooted in primordial wisdom. His influence extended beyond the Western esoteric community, encompassing intellectuals and spirituals from a wide range of backgrounds, making Guénon one of the most important figures in the bridge between East and West (Efendi et al., 2022; Marino, 2022). Guénon was also an important figure in introducing Sufism to the Western world, especially through its relationship with traditional Muslim communities, namely the Tarekah Syadziliyyah Order in various parts of the world.

RENÉ GUÉNON'S CONVERSION PEAK

The process of René Guénon's conversion to Islam is inseparable from the influence of Ivan Aguéli (Abdul Hādī al-Maghribī), an artist, philosopher, and important figure in the world of Western Sufism. This choice is not just a personal decision but the culmination of a long spiritual quest through an in-depth study of various religious traditions. For him, Islam, especially through Sufism, offers a perfect balance between esoterism and exoterism, which Guénon did not find in its entirety in other religions or traditions. For Guénon, Islam is not only a religion but also a traditional framework for understanding and actualizing the principles of universal metaphysics. Guénon views Sufism as an esoteric path that can be applied universally, although it is still rooted in the Islamic tradition. In Guénon's view, Islam uniquely unites metaphysical doctrines, spirituality, and divine law coherently (Efendi, 2020: 168).

Guénon's initiation into the Syadziliyyah Order provided a spiritual foundation that strengthened his beliefs. In this institute, Guénon found a practice that was not only spiritually profound but also emphasized the critique of modernity, which was considered a deviation from the traditional principles that had long been the spiritual foundation of mankind. In his work, Guénon asserts that modernity has forgotten the esoteric dimension, thus creating a spiritual void that can only be filled by returning to its traditional roots, as offered by Islam. Although Guénon acknowledged the metaphysical superiority of the Hindu tradition, especially Advaita Vedānta, Guénon argued that Hinduism was difficult for Westerners to access due to the limitations of the caste system and cultural distance. In contrast, Guénon sees Islam as the last form of the primordial tradition that has doctrinal completeness and flexibility to be applied in the modern world (Taj, 2023).

Through his works, Guénon became one of the main figures in the Traditionalism movement, which carried the idea that all the world's major religions originated from the same metaphysical source. His critique of modernity and materialism became an important foundation for his followers,

such as Frithjof Schuon (Behvand et al., 2022; Schuon, 1985; Sedgwick, 2021b), Martin Lings (Fitzgerald, 2005; Nisok & Resa, 2023), and Seyyed Hossein Nasr (Fauhatun, 2020; Hidayatullah, 2023; Nasr, 2002), who then expanded the teachings of Sufism to the Western world (Bano & Ahmed, 2020). Guénon's influence was also seen in the establishment of Sufi branches in Europe and North America. His students succeeded in introducing the teachings of Sufism in the Western context, making it a relevant and profound spiritual path for modern society.

The period of 1927-1930 was an important transitional period in Guénon's life, marked by his move to Cairo in 1930 and his deepening dedication to openness to Islam (Oldmeadow, 2024). In January 1928, Guénon experienced deep grief due to the sudden death of his wife. In 1930, he decided to move to Cairo, where he was accepted as a member of the Syadziliyyah Order and adopted a new name, Abdul Wahid Yahya, as a form of his spiritual identity. According to Ibrahim Kalin in his article entitled "René Guénon," published on the website of the Center for Islam and Science, after settling in Cairo, Guénon remarried in 1934 to Fatima, the daughter of Sheikh Muhammad Ibrahim, a prominent Sufi (Kalin, n.d., : 8).

Guénon lived in a house located near Al-Azhar University, where he was often associated with 'Abd al-Halim Mahmud, the great cleric and president of Al-Azhar who was also known as a Sufi figure. After settling in Cairo, Guénon began to receive visits from several prominent intellectuals, such as Titus Burckhardt, Frithjof Schuon (Bano & Ahmed, 2020; Schuon, 1984; Sedgwick, 2005), and Martin Lings (Ghanbariahmadabad, 2024; Hakiki & Idrus, 2018; Minnaar, 2007) During his stay in Cairo, he spent much of his time in solitude, which he used to write major works in the form of books and articles. However, towards the end of his life, Guénon's health condition deteriorated until he finally died on January 7, 1951(Arnold, 2018, p. 9; Kalin, n.d.; Nasr, 2002, p. 8).

One important aspect of Guénon's thought was his inclusive view of various religious traditions. Guénon never disparaged the religions he had left behind, such as Catholicism or Hinduism, but saw them as an important stage on the road to universal truth. For him, every religion has an esoteric dimension that connects humans with metaphysical reality. Guénon emphasized that differences between religions are more exotrial, while the esoteric core of each tradition shows the same unity. Thus, he proposed the concept of perennialism (Sotillos, 2020), the idea that all the world's major religions have the same spiritual core, although they differ in their formal form (Astutik & Khojir, 2023; Olyaee, 2021).

Mark Sedgwick writes that Guénon developed a traditional approach to perennialism with distinctive characteristics, namely through the combination of perennial thinking with a sharp criticism of modernity. In Guénon's view, the concept of primordial tradition is the root of all religious traditions of humankind as well as the key to understanding metaphysics and metahistory. On the one hand, this primordial tradition serves to formulate the universal principles that exist in each religion, while on the other hand, this concept is also the basis for tracing the process of spiritual decline in the modern world (Sedgwick, 2021c: 3).

René Guénon's conversion to Islam marked the culmination of his spiritual and intellectual journey, in which he found the path that best suited his belief in the importance of tradition and esoterism. Islam, particularly in the form of Sufism, gave Guénon a framework that not only answered his spiritual needs but also became a means of critiquing modernity and reviving traditional principles in the Western world. Through the thought of perennialism and traditionalism (Karimov & Bekbaev, 2022), Guénon offered a critique of modernity and proposed a harmonious model for understanding the relationship between religious traditions, making him one of the most influential thinkers in modern spiritual discourse.

RENÉ GUÉNON'S POST-CONVERSION WORKS

René Guénon was a very prolific writer, with seventeen works published throughout his life and eight others published posthumously. His works are centered on the concept of "tradition," which is at the heart of his thought and reflects the results of his spiritual journey. All of his works are intertwined, forming a deep framework of thought about traditionalism and metaphysics (Oldmeadow, 2024). Here are some of René Guénon's works:

Introduction to the Study of the Hindu Doctrines

In the Introduction to the Study of the Hindu Doctrines, Guénon presents an in-depth analysis of the Hindu tradition as one of the purest and most comprehensive systems of metaphysics. Guénon identified the Vedas as divine revelation and the supreme source of knowledge, as well as the Vedānta, particularly the Advaita Vedānta, as the apex expression of non-dualistic metaphysics. According to Guénon, Hinduism goes beyond the categories of modern religion, philosophy, or science, with the core of its teachings resting on the principle of absolute unity (Brahman). Guénon's main goal in writing this book is to introduce readers in the Western world to the concepts of Eastern

metaphysics and spirituality as understood and experienced by Eastern peoples themselves. In addition, he also tries to correct various misconceptions that he thinks often appear in the study of Western Orientalism (Guénon, 2001a).

The Symbolism of the Cross

In his work The Symbolism of the Cross, Guénon expresses a deep appreciation for the symbolism of the cross. Guénon interpreted the cross not only as a symbol of a particular religion but also as a metaphysical representation of the cosmos and the principle of transcendence. For Guénon, the cross reflects the relationship between the horizontal (the material world) and the vertical (the divine dimension). This approach makes the cross a universal idea that reflects the unity, duality, and relationship between the divine and the earthly. As one of the most universal symbols, the cross is found in various spiritual traditions around the world, transcending the boundaries of Christianity. In this work, Guénon uses the symbol of the cross to explain metaphysical concepts such as unity, cosmic structure, and the principle of transcendence. This symbolism is a tool for a deep understanding of the universal metaphysical doctrine (Guénon, 2001f).

The Crisis of the Modern World

In The Crisis of the Modern World by René Guénon, he discusses how the modern world has experienced a serious spiritual crisis due to a shift in values. Guénon highlighted that modern civilization focuses too much on the material aspect to forget the spiritual dimension on which human life is based. Guénon criticized the contemporary view that tended to reject tradition and replace it with individualism and superficial rationalism. In his view, modernity has brought humans to a spiritual void, which leads to an imbalance in life (Guénon, 2001d). Guénon offers a solution by inviting humanity back to the values of the universal tradition, which respects metaphysical wisdom and esoterism as an essential part of life. Guénon presented a sharp analysis of the causes of the spiritual crisis facing the modern world, namely the shift of attention of the Western world to materialism and rationalism. The spiritual wisdom underlying the great tradition has been marginalized.

According to him, this crisis affects not only individuals but also the entire social and cultural order. Therefore, Guénon called for the importance of returning to traditional teachings derived from eternal metaphysical knowledge to overcome this crisis. In his view, a tradition that maintains deep esoteric teachings is the answer to overcoming the spiritual and intellectual

problems the world is facing. This book provides an in-depth perspective on how modernity needs to be balanced with spirituality to create harmony in human life.

Insights into Islamic Esoterism and Taoism

In his work, Guénon produced several important works that dealt with Islam, particularly through its esoteric dimension, namely Sufism (Sufism), as well as his criticism of modernity. In Insights into Islamic Esoterism and Taoism, Guénon describes the relationship between Islamic Esoterism and Taoism, two traditions that he sees as having spiritual harmony. Guénon described the idea of Tawhid (the oneness of God) as the core of the Sufi spiritual journey, which reflects the universal path to understanding metaphysical truth (Markwith, n.d.,).

The Reign of Quantity and the Signs of the Times

In The Reign of Quantity and the Signs of the Times, Guénon outlines the decline of modernity through an esoteric view of various traditions, including Islam. Guénon identified the dominance of materialism as the main cause of the spiritual crisis, which reduced traditional values to mere quantity. Guénon views Sufism as an esoteric path of Islam that is relevant to answering the challenges of modernity, offering an alternative rooted in spiritual wisdom to address the existential void in the modern world (Guénon, 2001e).

East and West

In his book, Guénon criticizes the rational and materialistic Western way of thinking, which he considers to have neglected life's spiritual and metaphysical dimensions. Guénon explained the fundamental difference between the Western approach, which adheres to rationalism and materialism and the Eastern approach, which prioritizes spiritual unity and esoteric principles. For Guénon, Western civilization has been cut off from its spiritual source, and this is the root of the existential crisis that has plagued the modern world. Meanwhile, the East, with its rich traditions, such as Hinduism, Taoism, and Islam, maintained a closer relationship with deeper metaphysical principles, which Guénon said could help the Western world to overcome spiritual decline (Guénon, 2004).

Man and His Becoming According to the Vedānta

In his work, Guénon used Advaita Vedānta to describe a metaphysical view of the origins and purpose of man. In this view, man is essentially part of a larger unity, which is Brahman (absolute power or principle). The concept of Atman (true self) in Vedānta is a reflection of Brahman, which shows that each individual has the potential to achieve unity with higher principles. Through deep spiritual knowledge, humans can understand that everything that appears as an individual is a mere illusion (Maya), and the attainment of this wisdom allows one to break free from the cycle of birth and death. This book shows how the teachings of Vedānta, although derived from the Hindu tradition, contain universal truths that are relevant to understanding the human condition as a whole (Guénon, 2001b).

The Esoterism of Dante

Guénon discusses the work The Esoterism of Dante from an esoteric point of view. Guénon interprets Dante's journey through Inferno (hell), Purgatorio (purgatory), and Paradiso (heaven) as a symbol of man's inner journey to oneness with God. Here, Guénon sees that this work is more than just a religious journey; It is a metaphysical quest that describes the stages of spiritual transformation. Using initiative symbolism, Dante describes the process of soul purification, self-purification, and spiritual enlightenment. Guénon argues that the symbolism in this work reflects the traditional principles that exist in various spiritual traditions, such as Sufism and Hinduism, that connect humans with the divine dimension (Guénon et al., 2005).

Studies in Hinduism

In this work, Studies in Hinduism, Guénon presents his view of Hinduism as one of the purest and most profound spiritual traditions. He criticized the misconceptions that often arise in the West about Hinduism, which is often seen as a polytheistic religion without metaphysical depth. In contrast, Guénon points out that the essence of Hinduism lies in the doctrine of Vedānta and other esoteric teachings, which contain profound metaphysical insights. Through this book, Guénon also emphasizes the relevance of Hinduism as a source of spiritual wisdom that can provide enlightenment to a world that is being hit by a crisis of modernity (Guénon, 2001c). Overall, René Guénon's works make a major contribution to highlighting the spiritual crisis of the modern world by offering solutions rooted in more profound and universal traditional teachings. Guénon invites us to return to authentic metaphysical

knowledge, which exists in various spiritual traditions, in order to address increasingly complex existential and social problems.

THE MEANING OF RENÉ GUÉNON'S DECISION TO CROSS VARIOUS RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS

René Guénon's decision to cross the various religious traditions reflects a profound and unique spiritual journey in which each religion he studied became an important stage in the search for truth. Guénon did not treat conversion as an act of rejection of his previous beliefs but as a process that enriched his spiritual understanding. This approach shows that for Guénon, the essence of every religion lies in essential values that transcend formal differences.

Through his exploration of Catholicism, Hinduism, Taoism, and ultimately Islam, Guénon highlights the metaphysical unity that underlies all spiritual traditions. His choice to switch from one religion to another was not a sign of dissatisfaction with his previous religion but rather an expression of his desire to dive into the deepest essence of universal spirituality. It also expresses its commitment to perennial philosophy, which asserts that true truth is one, even though it is expressed through various forms of religious tradition. In addition, René Guénon did not give an assessment of the shortcomings and humility of the religions he previously adhered to but instead used them as a foothold in maximizing his spiritual experience. Although René Guénon has set his heart on Islam, not a few academics in the world from various religious backgrounds make René Guénon an inspiration and reference for their work on the themes of perennial philosophy and religious harmony.

Based on the description above, it is known that Guénon's peaceful approach to his spiritual journey provides an important lesson about interreligious harmony. He does not see religious differences as a source of conflict but as a window to understanding the greater truth. This attitude is especially relevant in the modern era, where interreligious tensions often arise due to a lack of deep understanding of the core of religious teachings. Guénon pointed out that respecting and studying other traditions allows coexistence and enriches one's spiritual experience.

In a social and intellectual context, Guénon's travels are an example of how individuals can bridge Eastern and Western spiritual traditions. His decision to embrace Islam was ultimately not just a religious change but the culmination of his long spiritual exploration. This choice affirms Guénon's commitment to teaching, which he believes can answer his spiritual needs while harmonizing the world's great traditions into one overarching spiritual framework.

CONCLUSION

Guénon's spiritual journey shows that he sees each religion as part of a complementary whole, not as a contradictory entity. Guénon's spiritual and intellectual unrest did not cause him to denounce or denigrate the religions he had professed. Instead, Guénon placed the values of kindness and wisdom of each religion in a deep perspective and respected the spiritual path it offered. Guénon understood that every religion contains an esoteric dimension, a spiritual depth that goes beyond formal or ritualistic aspects. Therefore, he does not only look at religion from an external point of view but also seeks to explore the deepest essence of each tradition. This is what prompted him to delve into symbolism, metaphysical doctrine, and esotericism in the various religions he studied. His works reflect Guénon's respect for the spiritual path of the great religions, and his views on religious diversity become so inclusive, even transcendent, that they transcend formal differences.

By finally choosing Islam, Guénon realized that he had found the spiritual integrity he had been looking for. Islam, with its concept of monotheism (the oneness of God) and the teachings of Sufism, provides answers to its spiritual anxieties and unites its search in a system that he considers the most comprehensive. However, the choice of Islam does not make his claim that other religions are less correct or irrelevant; Rather, he considers that every religion he adheres to is part of a long journey toward an understanding of universal truth. Guénon's attitude can be a lesson for today's spiritual seekers who may experience indecision or anxiety in their search. Through Guénon's approach, we learn that a spiritual journey can be a way to understand religious plurality more deeply and appreciate each tradition as a valid path to God. It provides a new perspective on interreligious tolerance and respect, as well as how religious differences can enrich one's spiritual pursuit without having to favor or demean one path over another.

Research on René Guénon, particularly regarding his spiritual journey and relevance in the Indonesian context, still faces a number of limitations. One of the main obstacles is the lack of primary sources in Indonesian, which causes the understanding of his thought to tend to rely on secondary interpretations or limited translations. In addition, the focus of research is often only on the intellectual aspects without exploring the spiritual dimension in depth. With these recommendations, it is hoped that future research related to René Guénon can develop further, broadening intellectual horizons and encouraging harmony across cultures and religions. Guenon's involvement in the Syadziliyyah Order is an opportunity for researchers to explore more broadly the relationship between the development of the Syadziliyyah Order

in Egypt, Europe and Indonesia in the Classical and Modern Eras.

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RELIGION AND PHILANTHROPY:
Islamic Teaching During the Israel-Palestine Conflict

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ABSTRACT

Religious teachings are essential to note in seeing the phenomenon of massive Islamic social movements that occur around the world and awareness of a humanitarian movement based on dogmatic values and moral foundations. Previous studies have not explored the aspect of religious teachings on Islamic social movements in the context of armed conflict, so this research must be carried out. Previous studies have focused more on antitheses to misinterpretations of Islamic teachings and less on accommodating philanthropic perspectives in war analysis and macro implications in the digital age. This study covers the interpretation of Islamic teachings that encourage philanthropy, Islamic social movements, and morality-based solidarity in response to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The desk research method is used to collect data through the Quran, Hadith, social media, and library research. The stages of analysis include the interpretation of the postulates that encourage philanthropy, the perspective of social movements, and fundamental moral theories to provide a holistic picture of the phenomenon of Islamic philanthropy in the digital era. The findings of this study include the conclusions of Islamic religious teachings that invite Muslims to do philanthropy, the internalization of religious teachings as a driver of Islamic social movements, and moral encouragement that influences an actor's action in doing philanthropy. The resulting recommendations involve the collaboration of state institutions

with all levels of society to ensure security and increase legitimacy in conducting fundraising and providing assistance to victims of armed conflict in Palestine.

Keywords*: Islamic Teaching; Philanthropy; Israel-Palestine Conflict*

INTRODUCTION

The teachings of Islam are often negatively stigmatized by the global community. The negative stigma attached to Islam is in the form of a religion that promotes theism, violence, and domination of women's groups (Ali, 2015). The prolonged negative stigma against Islam can shape an unfavorable global character for Muslims in the long run. Islam has become a scapegoat in every international conflict. Muslim communities experience discrimination to this day due to terror events in the name of Islam. Hatred against Muslims in the United States still occurs today (Amrullah, 2023). As many as 3.35 million Muslims in the United States experience discrimination by groups outside Islam, 74% of the US Muslim population said President Donald Trump was unfriendly towards Muslim groups (BBC, 2017). The negative stigma against Islam has led to polarization in the global community and acts of violence by Islamophobic groups (Narasi, 2023). The re-promotion of Islamic teachings that encourage philanthropy should emphasize the internal solidarity of Muslims, highlighting how philanthropy fosters a sense of unity among the Muslim community itself. Rather than solely framing philanthropy as a means to support non-Muslims, such as in Palestine, this approach strengthens the narrative against the stigmatization of Islam. It makes the connection between Islamic values and common welfare more concrete.

So far, studies have paid less attention to Islamic teachings that encourage philanthropy. There are very few studies that examine the position of Islamic teachings in promoting human welfare amidst conflict in the digital era (Kadri, 2022; Muzayyin et al., 2021; Safei, 2021). The existing studies do not accommodate the perspective of digital society in showing the implications of Islamic teachings in ensuring social welfare. Firstly, studies emphasize the antithesis of misinterpretations of Islamic teachings that encourage violence (Abdillah & Innayah, 2022; Abdullah Alamshani & Abdulrazaq Aljoufi, 2022; Sadiq & Ahmad, 2020). Second, existing studies do not accommodate philanthropic perspectives in war analysis; philanthropy is given less attention in an armed conflict (Austin, 2018; Horowitz-Rozen & Gilboa, 2018; Tamanoi, 2023). Third, studies on the reinterpretation of Islamic teachings do not show the macro implications that concern the global community system in the digital era. Instead, many studies map the issue of reinterpreting Islamic

teachings to clarify misperceptions of Islamic teachings (Afifah & Hakiemah, 2022; Osborne, 2020; Rady & Verheijde, 2015a).

Based on the three trends above, the study of promoting Islamic teachings to encourage philanthropy during the Israeli and Palestinian conflicts in the digital era has not been studied thoroughly. Additionally, findings from law enforcement suggest that philanthropy and fundraising in conflict areas are sometimes exploited to finance terrorism movements (Bauer & Levitt, 2020). Research indicates that in conflict zones, funds raised for humanitarian purposes can be diverted to support terrorist activities, as highlighted in several case studies by law enforcement agencies (Jofre et al., 2024). This study aims to fill the gap of previous studies in looking at the reinterpretation of Islamic teachings that has been done so far. The implicative question for this study is that the lack of a globalized understanding in the digital era has not been thoroughly examined.

Three questions were formulated to provide an overview of the global Muslim movement. Firstly, what is the form of Islamic teachings that encourage philanthropy? Second, how is the implementation of these teachings in the context of defending the welfare of the Palestinian people in armed conflict in the digital era? Third, what are the implications of the philanthropic actions of the Muslim community in the digital era for war victims? The answers to these three questions provide a map of understanding of Islamic teachings in the Islamic community movement in the digital era that can be used as a model for the formulation of action plans to ensure the welfare of war victims. This paper is based on an argument that the existence of Islamic teachings on philanthropy encourages Islamic social movements in defense of Palestine in armed conflict. The narratives and arguments in Islamic teachings cannot be separated from the behavioral patterns of the global Muslim community in providing support to Palestine. At the same time, the international Muslim movement occurs through digital media platforms as a form of modernization in interpreting religious teachings.

Islamic teachings that encourage philanthropy are able to give rise to a global Islamic social movement in the form of philanthropic action. This is a collective awareness that arises towards a value. The massive philanthropic movement by Muslims carried out through social media platforms is a response to the moral basis between people structured by dogmatic forces in the teachings of a religion. From this description, it can be seen that the teachings of Islam are a precondition for the philanthropic movement of a community group. Islamic teachings are a set of values that guide the lives of Muslims. Studies show that Muslims view Islamic teachings as a guide to life based on beliefs and noble

life goals (Rady & Verheijde, 2015b). In line with that, there are two primary sources of Islamic teachings: the Qur'an and the Hadith (Wildani & Nahriyah, 2022). The Qur'an, the holy book of Islam, is believed to be the revelation of God received by the Prophet Muhammad SAW, it contains values in the form of aqidah, worship, morals, law, history, and science (Masitah & Rosana, 2019; Nurhadi, 2020). On the other hand, hadiths are all the words, actions, and agreements of the Prophet Muhammad (Umayah, 2023).

Furthermore, the teachings of Islam as a whole include arrangements regarding human relationships with the creator and fellow humans (Arif, 2021). Based on the belief in the values contained in the Qur'an and Hadith, Islamic teachings are not only a comprehensive guide in aspects of Muslim life but also lead to the regulation of spiritual and social relationships that are lived in an effort to achieve noble life goals. There are characteristics that describe the teachings of Islam. The study found five trends. Firstly, *tauhid* is a concept in Islam that teaches about belief in God; this includes the idea that only God is worshipped and nothing else is equal (Siradj, 2014). Second, the message as a concept refers to the prophet as God's messenger to deliver revelation to humanity; the message includes guidance and teachings of God (Echevarria, 2023). Third, the afterlife in Islamic teachings refers to the afterlife that comes after the Day of Judgment. Islam teaches the existence of life after death and the day of judgment for mankind (Turan et al., 2020). Fourth, sharia is an instruction on the rules of Islamic law, which contains commands and prohibitions taken from the Qur'an and Hadith to regulate Muslims' religious and social life (Hasanah et al., 2021). Fifth, worship in Islam refers to a form of worship that includes prayer, zakat, fasting, hajj, and dhikr, through worship, one can get closer to Allah (Begum et al., 2021). The above description is the main principle in Islamic teachings.

Existing studies see philanthropy as the practice of volunteering resources to improve well-being. The study by Powell (2019) shows the importance of philanthropy as a solution to social problems. In line with that, philanthropy is key to community development due to moral motivation for humanitarian purposes (Liu, 2020). Philanthropy plays a role in improving the quality of people's lives not only through material support but also through community empowerment (Sabar et al., 2022). In line with that, philanthropy is able to create equal access to public facilities in a community group by building and procuring infrastructure (Tang et al., 2022). Philanthropy stimulates innovation to stimulate economic growth (Azhar et al., 2022). Overall, philanthropy is not just about providing material assistance but also a driving force for positive social and economic change, playing a key role in realizing

community welfare and creating long-term impact.

There is a wide range of philanthropic practices that can be used to improve well-being. Studies have found three trends. First, the most common form of philanthropy is making cash donations to groups in need or through foundations or institutions engaged in the humanitarian field (Ferguson et al., 2018; Jia & Zhang, 2014; Takashina et al., 2023). Second, in addition to material philanthropy, it can be done by mobilizing time by volunteering to participate in a charity activity (Tupper et al., 2020; Wiepking et al., 2023). Third, on the other hand, community empowerment by conducting training and mentoring is also a form of philanthropy that can be useful for the welfare of a community in the long term (Bahjatulloh, 2016; Roli. A & Anis, 2021). So, it can be understood that philanthropy can be in the form of providing material and non-material assistance.

The conflict between Israel and Palestine is a political and territorial issue that has been going on for decades (Eliandy et al., 2023). The study by Atanasiu (2021) shows the complexity of the roots of the conflict, which include historical, religious, political, and social factors. The conflict is rooted in territorial claims between Israel and Palestine on Jerusalem, which is considered holy by Islam, Christianity, and Judaism (Atshan & Galor, 2020). The religious aspect plays a role in this conflict, adding to the complexity of the conflict and tensions between groups (Wuraafi, 2020). The absence of intervention from external parties, such as the UN, has an impact that maintains the conflict (Louwerse, 2020). In line with that, the socio-economic disparity between Israelis and Palestinians creates dissatisfaction on the Israeli side (Kreitem, 2020). The conflict between Israel and Palestine is a complex issue that encompasses history, religion, politics, and social issues, with territorial claims in Jerusalem considered holy by the three major religions. Religious factors and economic inequality complicate the resolution of the conflict, while external involvement and international policies contribute to the continuation of tensions. The conflict continues to be a political and territorial challenge that requires a holistic approach to achieve a peaceful and sustainable solution.

The primary sources for this study are the Qur'an, Hadith, social media platforms, and secondary data, including journal articles. The search for Qur'anic verses that discuss philanthropy was conducted using the "Al-Qur'an Indonesia" application by entering keywords such as "alms, infaq, and helping." Data sources derived from Hadith were collected by entering keywords on the Google search engine with the keywords "hadith about infaq and the virtue of alms." Data related to digital philanthropy and the response of Palestinians were taken through social media platforms such as TikTok, YouTube, and

Instagram. After all the data was collected, content analysis was conducted on the postulates and content of social media posts.

THE DRIVERS OF PHILANTHROPY

The Qur'anic command provides a moral and spiritual foundation for Muslims to respond to the phenomena that occur around us. In this case, the phenomenon of the humanitarian crisis that occurred between Israel and Palestine. By referring to the Qur'anic guidance, Muslims are given clear direction to engage in positive actions in the form of solidarity to support welfare and justice worldwide. Solidarity actions carried out by Muslims, especially in Indonesia, in helping victims in Palestine have a strong basis. The following are proofs that encourage Muslims to donate some of their wealth.

Table 1

Verse	Meaning	Orientation	Source
Wa Yurbiṣ-ṣadaqāt(i)	Allah nourishes charity	Inner peace and tranquility of life	Qur'an 2: 276 Q
Innallâha yajzil muta-shaddiqîn	Indeed, Allah rewards those who give in charity	Indeed, Allah rewards those who give in charity	Qur'an 12: 88
walladzîna yu'tûna mâ âtaw wa qulûbuhum wajilatun annahum ilâ rabbihim râji'ûn	And those who give what they give (knowing) that they will indeed return to their Lord.	The wealth that is given in charity will return to the person who gave the charity	Qur'an 23: 60
innal-mushshaddiqîna wal-mushshaddiqâti wa aqradlullâha qardlan ḥasanay yudlâ'afu lahum wa lahum ajrung karîm	Indeed, those who give in charity, both men and women, and lend to Allah with a good loan, will have their reward multiplied for them, and they will have an honourable reward.	The reward for the one who gives alms is a reward and a multiplied return.	Qur'an 57: 18
a asyfaqtum an tuqad-dimû baina yadai najwâ-kum shadaqât	Are you afraid of becoming poor because you give alms?	A reminder that charity will not make one poor	Qur'an 58: 13
wa anfiqû mimmâ razaqnâkum ming qabli ay ya'tiya aḥadaku-mul-mautu	And spend some of what We have given you before death comes to any of you.	Encouragement to give alms to those around us who are in need	Qur'an 63: 10

Mā min yaumin yuṣbiḥu al-'ibādu fīhi illā mal-akāni yanzilāni fayaqūlu aḥaduhumā: Allāhumma a'ṭi munfiqan khalafā. Wayaqūlu al-ākharu: Allāhumma a'ṭi mum-sikan talafā.	There is no day when a servant passes his morning unless two angels descend. One of them will say, 'O Allah, give a substi-tute for those who spend their wealth',	The virtue of charity	HR. Al-Bukhari dan Muslim
Ittaqunnāra thumma a'raḍa wa asyāka	Guard yourself from hellfire even with a single date.	The virtue of giving charity (even if it's just a date) in the hereafter	HR. Al-Bukhari
As-shadaqātu tasuddu sab'īna bāban mina as-sū'.	Almsgiving closes 70 doors of evil	The virtue of charity to ward off bad luck	HR. Thabrani
Kullu imri'in fī ẓilli ṣadaqatihi ḥattā yufṣala bayna an-nās.	Every person will be under the shade of his charity (on the Day of Judgement) until it is decided between people	The virtue of giving charity on the Day of Judgement	HR. Al-Baihqi, Al-Hakim dan Ibnu Khu-zaimah

Source: Author Compilation (2024)

The mentioned arguments encourage Muslims to give some of their wealth to anyone in need. In his book entitled "*Tafsir al-Mishbah: Pesan, Kesan, dan Keserasian al-Qur'an*," Quraish Shihab explains that the arguments that advocate for alms highlight the importance of the universality aspect in helping, which implies that any differences between individuals should not limit this associative interaction. The concept of "whoever is in need" means that solidarity and mutual assistance demonstrate the unity of humanity regardless of religious differences or backgrounds. At the same time, the above arguments can represent the way Muslims express their solidarity with the victims in Palestine. Muslims are not only committed to helping fellow Muslims but also carry the responsibility to help all communities facing difficulties in the region, including non-Muslims. If we look at the other countries, Islamic centers in Colombia provide welfare services such as food distributions to both Muslims and non-Muslims, demonstrating the inclusive nature of Islamic philanthropy (Brodard, 2023). This inclusivity is fundamental to Islamic charitable practices, which aim to promote human welfare regardless of religious affiliation.

The specific admonition in the above proposition serves as a reminder to

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Muslims of their moral and social responsibility to help their neighbors. This creates a spiritual and moral impetus for Muslims to actively participate to the best of their ability to help those in need, in accordance with Islamic teachings that emphasize solidarity, justice, and kindness. This includes being actively involved in efforts to help victims in Palestine, reflecting the care and justice taught by Islamic teachings. Based on the results of observations, the forms of solidarity actions shown by the Indonesian people are very varied, especially in the virtual realm. Starting with open donations, sharing the latest news about Palestine, enlivening the #StandForPalestine hashtag, and making filters whose profits will be channeled to Palestine.
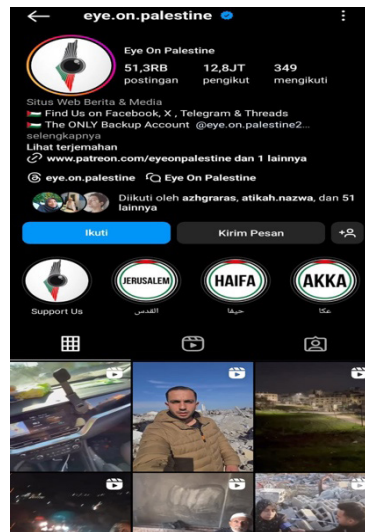
DIGITAL PHILANTHROPY FOR PALESTINE

In the growing digital age, forms of philanthropy have undergone a significant transformation, especially in the context of supporting Palestine. Digital philanthropy has become an innovative channel for individuals and groups around the world to provide support and humanity in addressing the challenges faced by the Palestinian people. Digital philanthropy for Palestine also reflects the evolution of how people participate in humanitarian action. By harnessing the power of global connectivity through the internet, individuals can contribute quickly and efficiently, rally support through online campaigns, and voice messages of solidarity through social media. In this introduction, we will explore the various forms of digital philanthropy that are evolving to support the Palestinian people, creating a picture of how technology and kindness can work together to bring positive change amidst humanitarian challenges.

Table 2

No	Coding	Figures	Sources
1	Raising funds through live streaming on the Tiktok platform.		https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSN3TEADQ/

2	Posts about the Palestinian conflict on the Instagram platform.		https://www.instagram.com/eye.on.palestine?igsh=MXFwZm-drMHd1NTA4Zw
3	Online Donation Campaign on Tiktok platform.		https://www.tiktok.com/@dompetdhuafaorg?_t=8izS2OVTUbC&_r=1
4	Create a filter for Palestinian donations through the Tiktok platform.		https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.jawapos.com/komunitas/amp/013295767/terkumpul-rp-192-juta- kenali-filter-game-semangka-di-tiktok-yang- digunakan-untuk- membantu-palestina

Source: Author Compilation (2024)

In Table 1, Khaled, a TikTok account owner, acts as a live-streaming host who enthusiastically distributes foodstuffs to the people of Gaza, Palestine. During his live session, Khaled embedded a message in the comment section, "Come on, you who love kindness, I offer the price of the food for 1000 coins," offering his viewers to donate through gifts sent during the live session. The profits generated from this live stream will be allocated to help victims in Palestine, especially in the form of foodstuffs. Khaled's donation method is unique in that viewers who want to give a gift must first have coins. The coins can be purchased for a certain amount of money. For example, 13 coins are sold for Rp. 3200, while 70 coins are sold for Rp. 17000, and the highest is 17,500 coins for Rp. 4,121,000.

The variety of gift shapes and prices also depends on the options that viewers choose to give to live hosts. The gifts provided by TikTok itself have varying values, ranging from 1 coin to simple gifts such as roses, *nasi uduk*, football, coffee, ice cream cones, and others. Each coin has a conversion value of Rp. 250 (when converted to rupiah). It is important to note that the highest form of gift in this livestream is TikTok Universe, which has a coin value of 34,999. When converted, the value of TikTok Universe reaches Rp. 8,749,750. This live session created a new way to donate, combining digital platforms, creativity, and direct audience participation to make a real contribution to the victims in Palestine.

In Table 2, the @eyeonpalestine account to this day consistently updates the latest conditions in Palestine. Both about the attacks launched by Israel, the condition of the victims after the launch of the attack, the damage in Gaza, and many more. The content uploaded by the @eyeonpalestine account is often reposted by other charity-based accounts, such as *dompetdhuafa, kitabisa, semangatbantu*, and many more. Not only the @eyeonpalestine account, religious figures who are in favor of Palestine also make broadcast messages and upload videos that they get about the current conditions in Gaza, Palestine. The posts that are widely circulated on social media are also affixed with the hashtags #freepalestine #standwithpalestine as a form of support for Palestine.

With posts mediated by social media platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube, the global community can quickly gain access to the latest information in Palestine, including the urgent needs faced by the local community. Activists, influencers, and ordinary individuals use social media as a tool to convey messages of solidarity, raise awareness, and raise financial support to help victims in Palestine. The existence of social media has played a crucial role in delivering up-to-date information on the conditions in Palestine, influencing the accuracy of the type of aid being

channeled to local communities. As a result, the global community can quickly respond to developments in the situation, allowing aid organizers to adjust the type of assistance that is more targeted and in accordance with the current conditions on the ground. This shows that social media is not only a source of information but also an effective tool in directing philanthropic efforts to provide maximum impact for those in need.

In Table 3, in an effort to campaign and invite the public to donate, charity-based institutions and crowdfunding platforms have effectively utilized content that is widely spread on social media. They combine creativity and message accuracy with up-to-date information on the situation in Palestine. As the content evolves, these institutions not only highlight the urgent need but also embed arguments that have a motivational impact on social media users. These arguments, which may be rooted in humanitarian values or a moral calling, effectively strengthen the intention and motivation of social media users to donate and share a portion of their wealth. By aligning messages with the context and values believed by the community, charities and crowdfunding-based institutions can create more impactful and profound campaigns amidst social media dynamics.

Table 4 shows a new initiative that combines augmented reality (AR) technology and awareness of the problematic situation in Palestine. An AR effects designer named Jourdan Johnson created a special filter on the TikTok platform. The filter, called "Filter for Good I," was designed as a virtual reality experience depicting a watermelon as a symbol of resistance and solidarity with Palestine. Jourdan Johnson then campaigned for this filter on 6 November 2023 through his personal TikTok account, stating that any profits generated would be donated to help the brothers and sisters in Palestine. The filter's achievements were impressive, reaching over 6.3 million uses by 15 November 2023. The filter has not only received attention from the general public but has also been used by a number of international celebrities and influencers. The success of this filter is not only limited to its popularity aspect but also to its significant financial impact.
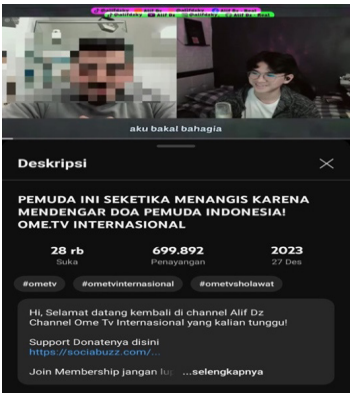
Filter for Good: I raised USD 12,442, or around Rp 192,726,580. This amount reflects the widespread support of TikTok users and shows the great potential of utilizing digital platforms for humanitarian fundraising. Furthermore, Jourdan Johnson wisely chose humanitarian organizations as recipients of the donations, ensuring that the contributions would reach those in need and have a meaningful impact on improving lives and addressing critical issues such as poverty and healthcare. Doctors Without Borders, Palestine Children's Relief Fund, and Human Appeal were thoughtful and carefully considered

choices. This decision was made by considering the speed and accuracy of the target in distributing aid, especially considering the involvement of volunteers and medical professionals in Gaza. Thus, Jourdan Johnson's initiative is not only an example of creativity in fundraising but also has a real positive impact on our brothers and sisters who need help in Palestine.
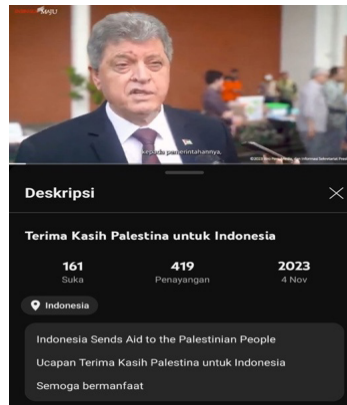
IMPLICATIONS FOR SURVIVOR

The content above provides a concrete illustration of how the solidarity actions of Indonesian citizens significantly impact the Palestinians. The action not only focuses on improving physical conditions but also positively affects the psychological aspects of the Palestinians. The solidarity actions mobilized by Indonesian netizens involve various forms of participation, including fundraising through various digital platforms, awareness campaigns through social media, and the creation of creative content to attract the attention of the wider community. In this picture, it appears that netizens are not just spectators but are actively involved in shaping public opinion and producing positive change.

Table 3

No	Coding	Figures	Sources
1	Reaction of Palestinian Civilians when Indonesian Muslims read a prayer for Palestine (January, 2024).		https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0KzOd-Ckr_Yo
2	Palestinian lecturer's response to Indonesia's #StandWithPalestine solidarity rally on the road (December, 2023).		https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WaFOr-0vO4RM

3	Thank Palestine for Indonesia (November, 2023)		https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rdzNjp-P5gx4
4	Palestinian response when given clean water aid by Indonesian Volunteers (November, 2023)		https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W6c-QvgFd1xo
5	Gratitude to Indonesia for the Establishment of the Indonesian Hospital from the Children of Gaza (2021)		https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p-WY-jFZO_3U
6	Palestinians Refuse to Burn the Indonesian Flag (2021)		https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KRl-7H5efmT4
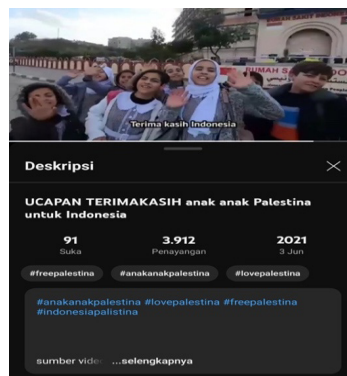
Source: Author Compilation (2024)

Table 1 reflects an emotional moment among Palestinian civilians when they were prayed for by an Indonesian netizen who is also the owner of a particular YouTube channel. In the video, the Palestinians' expressions of grief are clearly depicted while recounting their life experiences, who managed to escape from Israeli oppression, currently living as fugitives from the Israeli army. The prayers uttered contain hopes and wishes for safety and success for the Muslims in Palestine. The prayer, with words full of meaning, describes the desire to glorify Islam and Muslims, asking for help for Muslims and Mujahideen fighters in Palestine. The prayer also invites Allah to strengthen their faith, send tranquility to their hearts, and unite their ranks. Furthermore, the supplication also contains a request to Allah to destroy the disbelievers and polytheists, as well as asking for victory for the Mujahideen fighters against the enemies of Islam. The prayer reflects the solidarity and sympathy of Indonesian citizens towards the suffering of the Palestinians. The expression of sincere prayers demonstrates the concern and hope that justice and peace can be realized soon in the conflict-ridden land of Palestine. This shows that support through social media is not only limited to the material dimension but also includes a deep spiritual and moral dimension.

Table 2 illustrates the moment of admiration and emotion of two Gazans who witnessed the massive solidarity rally of the Madurese people to support Palestinian independence on Sunday, 26 November 2023. The two figures highlighted in this table are Dr. Ahmad Muhammed Omar al-Madany, an Extraordinary Lecturer who teaches Islamic Political History at Universitas Airlangga (UNAIR) and comes from Palestine, and Sheikh Dr. Ahmed Abu al-Atta, Head of the Foundation for Friendship and Civilization Studies from Gaza. Both figures shared stories about the alarming conditions in Palestine, where Palestinians face difficulties and shortages in various aspects of life. Dr. Ahmad Muhammed Omar al-Madany emphasized that the outstanding contribution made by Indonesia through its solidarity actions has a significant impact on Palestinian civil society struggling in the midst of challenging conditions. This point is a reflection of how crucial international support, including from Indonesia, is for the Palestinian people. Seeing such a high level of solidarity, both Dr. Ahmad Muhammed Omar al-Madany and Sheikh Dr. Ahmed Abu al-Atta feel proud to have brothers in Indonesia who not only support symbolically but also with concrete actions that are able to provide hope and strength for Palestinians. This reflects how global solidarity actions can create strong emotional and moral bonds among the world community, especially in the face of humanitarian crisis situations such as those experienced by Palestinians.

Table 3 shows the expression of gratitude by Zubair al-Shun, Palestinian Ambassador to Indonesia. He expressed his highest appreciation to the President of the Republic of Indonesia, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Defense, and all the people of Indonesia without exception. Zubair al-Shun also expressed Palestinian pride at the level of solidarity shown by the people of Indonesia, a country that is considered beautiful in their eyes. In his words of thanks, the Palestinian Ambassador also highlighted the commitment held by the Indonesian Government. He was touched by a commitment that includes active support, taking a frontline position for Palestine, and a promise not to let Palestine struggle alone to gain its independence. Zubair al-Shun emphasized that in the future, Palestine will become an independent and prosperous country like Indonesia, with its status as the country with the largest Muslim population. This statement reflects the hope and trust in Indonesia's strategic role in the Palestinian struggle for independence and sustainability in the future.

Table 4 is a video content uploaded by *Al-Ummahat Peduli* that shows the distribution of clean water in Palestine. This video also illustrates the condition of Palestine, which is now devastated by the attacks launched by Israel. The impact is felt not only in the shortage of foodstuffs, damage to public facilities, and loss of life but also in the lack of clean water supply. In this situation, *Al-Ummahat Peduli*, as a distributor of donations, managed to distribute the first batch of aid in the form of 100,000 liters of clean water in Gaza, especially Jabalia. The clean water aid that arrived for Palestinian civilians became a significant moment. It can be seen that they happily and gratefully rushed to the aid trucks carrying clean water by carrying a large amount of water containers for each person. The enthusiasm shown by the Palestinians reflects an intense expression of gratitude for the donation. This incident illustrates how valuable the contribution of the aid given in alleviating the burden of their lives in the midst of difficult conditions faced by Palestinian civilians.

Slightly different from the previous tables, table 5 shows children smiling cheerfully and thanking Indonesia for the assistance provided by Indonesia in the form of the establishment of a hospital in Gaza named "Rumah Sakit Indonesia." This project received financial support from various levels of society as a form of humanitarian contribution. The name "Rumah Sakit Indonesia" was given as a sign of appreciation for the outstanding contribution of the people of Indonesia. In the design process, the hospital involved volunteers from Indonesia, including members of the *Merah-Putih* volunteers. The establishment of the Indonesian Hospital in Gaza is responsive to the health emergency caused by the war in the region. With the presence of

this hospital, it is hoped that it can provide fast and efficient medical services amid the challenges faced due to conflict. The words of gratitude uttered by the Gazan children were not in English or Arabic but in the local languages of the provinces in Indonesia. They expressed their appreciation in Sundanese (*Hatur Nuhun*), Minang (*Tarimo Kasi*), Papuan (*Amanai*), Kutai (*Makaseh*), Balinese (*Suksema*), Madurese (*Sakalangkong*), Acehnese (T*eurimong Gaseh Beh*), Batak (*Mauliate*), Jawab (*Maturnuwun*), and Toraja (*Kurrusumanga*).

Table 6 shows the positive reaction of Palestinians towards Indonesia despite the current conflict with Israel. A video shows how Palestinians deeply respect Indonesia. In one, the content creator offers USD 100 to a Palestinian on the condition that he burns the Indonesian flag. Interestingly, the Palestinian flatly refused the offer, stating that he would rather receive the money without burning the Indonesian flag. This reflects the strong emotional ties between Indonesia and Palestine. The reaction of the Palestinians who refused to burn the Indonesian flag shows that the emotional bond is not only superficial but has been embedded in the hearts and minds of the Palestinian people. The Palestinians' willingness to accept financial aid without damaging Indonesian symbols indicates a deep and respectful relationship with Indonesia. This emotional bond is not new, but the result is the support and solidarity that Indonesia has long given to the Palestinian people in various contexts.

PHILANTHROPY STUDIES IN ISLAM

This study shows that Islamic teachings strongly encourage the practice of philanthropy. Invitations and orders to do philanthropy are present in the Qur'an and Hadith. Islamic teachings have a substantial value in fostering solidarity and care among human beings (Fahm, 2020). This solidarity is not limited to fellow Muslims but includes all communities in difficult situations. The emphasis on the inclusiveness of Islamic solidarity means that the values of humanity and peace advocated by Islam are universal and apply to all humankind. This representation reflects that Islam views solidarity as a principle that involves all of humanity and not just the confines of a particular religious community. Therefore, providing aid and support to victims in Palestine, including non-Muslims, is a concrete implementation of the universal values and peace advocated by Islamic teachings. These proofs also describe how Allah judges the behavior of Muslims, especially with regard to helping and responding to their brothers and sisters who are in difficult situations (Shihab, 2016).

The Islamic dogma in fostering awareness of philanthropy comes from the Qur'an and Hadith, giving Muslims legitimacy to the authenticity of Islamic

teachings. Allah judges the attitudes and actions of His people with wisdom and justice. In this context, reluctance to provide assistance according to one's ability to brothers and sisters who are experiencing difficulties is not in line with the values of solidarity and justice emphasized in Islamic teachings. Allah loves positive actions and condemns immoral or inhumane behavior. Therefore, Muslims' unresponsiveness in providing assistance to others can be considered a violation of Islamic moral and ethical values. When Muslims show reluctance or unresponsiveness in offering assistance to those in need, it is classified as behavior that disobeys His command to do good and help each other (Maulana & Syam, 2019). Furthermore, Muslims' unresponsiveness to this call may result in Allah's dissatisfaction (Shihab, 2016). Islamic dogma encourages Muslims to be philanthropic as an integral part of religious teachings, and unresponsiveness to that call is considered a violation of Islamic moral and ethical values.

PHILANTHROPY AS ISLAMIC SOCIAL MOVEMENT IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Islamic social movements in the context of empowering victims of war in Palestine occur in various forms. Technological advances offer new ways to connect the global community in helping Palestine. Through social media, crowdfunding campaigns, and other digital platforms, digital philanthropy creates an international bridge that enables more involvement in efforts to defend Palestine, not only from a financial point of view but also through information dissemination, digital solidarity, and collaborative actions that can have a direct positive impact (Binsaeed et al., 2023). The ongoing philanthropic movement is inseparable from the digital society's collective awareness of the importance of defending human rights (Stammers, 2016). The use of technology and social media by utilizing social media platforms makes it easier for actors to seek global support. The international community can participate without geographical restriction (Miller et al., 2021).

Digital philanthropy allows a rapid response to the crisis that occurred in Palestine so that it can quickly raise funds to help victims. Netizens widely carry out content related to fundraising through social media platforms. In line with that, the emergence of innovation to make donations through the use of a filter from the TikTok platform, which every use can be converted into money used to help Palestine, the development of digital technology transforms the form of social movements (Pavan & Felicetti, 2019). The Islamic social movement for the empowerment of war victims in Palestine has transformed through digital philanthropy, where technological advances

provide broader access support not only financially but also through digital solidarity, information dissemination, and collaborative innovation, creating a rapid and global response to the crisis and demonstrating the collective awareness of the digital community of the importance of defending human rights.

PHILANTHROPY AS SOLIDARITY BASED ON MORALITY

The impact of this solidarity action is not only limited to the results of fundraising that help improve physical conditions in Palestine. The global community and humanitarian agencies play a role in humanitarian activities in Palestine (Al-Modallal et al., 2023). Through moral support and social media awareness, Indonesian netizens contribute to the psychological well-being of Palestinians. They receive material assistance, emotional support, and concern from the international community, including Indonesian netizens. In line with this, it can be seen that the solidarity actions of netizens have a broader and more complex dimension. It is not just an effort to raise funds but also a social movement that is able to embrace and give hope to Palestinians, proving that solidarity through cyberspace has excellent potential to create positive changes on a larger scale (Haugbolle & Olsen, 2023). Thus, it can be concluded that Indonesian citizens' solidarity actions towards Palestine not only provide material assistance but also have a positive impact on the psychological well-being of Palestinians, showing that solidarity through social media has a transformative power that can create broader changes and provide hope for a better future (Cervi & Marín-Lladó, 2022).

Islamic social movements on digital platforms that are happening are inseparable from responses to the moral basis between people structured by dogmatic forces (Airlangga PH et al., 2024). Islamic philanthropy towards Palestine is inseparable from moral obligations based on the Qur'an and Hadith, and philanthropic actions are oriented towards the fulfillment of Islamic religious teachings (Makhrus, 2018). This action is also inseparable from the aspect of benefit, namely for the achievement of community welfare both from the economic, health, and education dimensions (Anwar & Muniruddin, 2023; Hidayah et al., 2022). Moral considerations are a precondition for the implementation of the Islamic philanthropy movement on social media, and the high connection between moral emotions and public interest encourages philanthropy (Haidt, 2003). In this case, the human rights perspective plays a vital role in Islamic social movements; apart from being a teaching that promotes the concept of human relations, there is a value in upholding the right to life and the right to fulfill basic needs (Stewart, 2014).

So, it can be understood that the moral basis encourages the Islamic social movement to defend Palestine.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that Islamic teachings consistently encourage the practice of philanthropy, with the Qur'an and Hadith providing a strong moral basis for acts of solidarity and care for others, particularly in the context of helping Palestine. Philanthropy in Islam is not limited to fellow Muslims but encompasses all humanity in distress situations, reflecting the inclusiveness of Islamic solidarity, which is universal and involves all communities. The implementation of Islamic teachings in social movements and philanthropy is seen through digital philanthropy, which utilizes technological advances to connect global communities, create global bridges, and have a direct positive impact. Islamic social movements in the context of empowering war victims in Palestine illustrate transformation through digital philanthropy, which not only supports financially but also involves digital solidarity, information dissemination, and collaborative innovation. The impact of Indonesian netizens' solidarity actions towards Palestine is not only seen in fundraising results but also includes aspects of the psychological well-being of Palestinians, showing that solidarity through social media has the potential to create broader positive change and provide hope for a better future.

This study suggests further, more in-depth research. The methodological limitations in this study have not been able to reveal more deeply whether there is a causal relationship between Islamic religious teachings and the Islamic philanthropic movement in supporting the Palestinian people who are victims of war. The findings of this study recommend collaboration between the community and state institutions to ensure security and provide legitimacy in the distribution of humanitarian aid.

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SOCIO-RELIGIOUS TRANSFORMATION AND RESILIENCE OF ISLAMIC IDENTITY IN KAUMAN VILLAGE OF YOGYAKARTA

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to study and describe the changes occurring in Kauman Village. The targeted transformation involves converting Kampung Islam into a tourist village. This study aims to examine how Kauman's sacred religious space changed into a profane tourist area, from Kampung Islam (Islamic Village) to Kampung Pariwisata (Tourist Village). This research aims to explore how the religious and sacred Kauman neighborhood transformed into a profane tourist space. This study employed qualitative methods that involved observation, in-depth interviews, and a review of relevant literature to collect data. The research findings are presented as an account of direct observations of ongoing religious events and interview findings from respondents. This research shows that Muhammadiyah's entry as a modern movement in religious affairs represents a socio-religious transformation in response to unstoppable global flows of information and globalization. Despite various challenges to their values this study found that Islamic values have grown stronger and continue to exist. The Kauman community shows strong determination and actively works to maintain its identity. While adapting Islamic identity materials to represent Islam and Muhammadiyah, the community ensures that fundamental religious values remain intact.

Keywords: Socio-Religious Transformation; Resilience of Islamic Identity; Tourist Village

INTRODUCTION

During the Ngayogyakarta Hadiningrat Kingdom period, *Kampung Kauman* became the first village established when the Kraton and the Great Mosque of Kauman opened on May 29, 1773 AD (Darban, 2010). During different time periods, Kauman Village transitioned from being known as the official religious neighborhood to the royal servant neighborhood, then to an Islamic

learning hub, and finally, a batik production center (Prasodjo, 2020). It earned the titles *Islamic Village* and *Muhammadiyah Village* because it served as the starting point for Muhammadiyah's religious social work (Zarro, M, et al., 2020) and the growth of religious-based businesses (Oktavianto, S.W & Azaki Khoirudin, 2023). During its initial years, the village stood as a key indicator of changes that shaped Java's Islamic development in the early 1900s (Woodward, 1999).

The name likely developed because most residents follow Islam and daily life adheres to Islamic law (Arifin, 2020; Junara et al., 2019). The village functions both as a center for learning and studying Islam (Darban 2010; Triadmodjo 2010). The branding *'Welcome to Islamic Village'* reinforces this development pattern. Visitors entering Kauman Street through the North Alun-Alun gate see this slogan at the entrance to Kauman. This inscription shows more than just the religious background of this village community which connects to Islamic Mataram history and Muhammadiyah growth. It also marks the start of transforming this village into a tourist attraction in Yogyakarta.

Kauman was selected for this status for several important reasons. The heritage tourism industry keeps growing, while cultural heritage tourism has become increasingly popular (Setiawati, 2018). The Yogyakarta provincial government has supported multiple villages in gaining tourism status, including Kauman Village, which became a destination for religious tourism in Yogyakarta City. To formalize this initiative, the Yogyakarta Special Region enacted Regulation No. 40 of 2020, which established Tourism Awareness Groups and Tourist Villages. The provincial government supports tourism development through its Tourism Awareness Groups program.[1]

The residents of Kauman Village formed tourism awareness groups "Saka Wisata" and "Blusukan Kampoeng Jogja Community" in response to this regulation. Governor Regulation No. 2 of 2024 established the Great Mosque of Kauman as a World Heritage Site through Article 24, along with other heritage locations in Yogyakarta.[2]

The Gedhe Keraton Mosque at Kauman Village functions as a religious tourism site, while the neighborhood retains its broader Islamic cultural features, including prayer rooms (*langgar*), small mosques (*musholla*), mosques, the royal religious leader's residence, Nyi Ahmad Dahlan's grave, and an Aisyiah Kindergarten that serves the local community. These buildings are spread across several neighborhood units (RT) within the Kauman settlement area, as illustrated by Aryanti (2015) in the following sketch map:

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[1] https://www.panggungharjo.desa.id/2021/03/Pergub-DIY-No-40-Tahun-2020.pdf
[2] https://jdih.jogjaprov.go.id/tahun-2024-tentang-pengelolaan-warisan-dunia.

Figure 1.
Map of the historical relics of the development of Islam in Kauman Village[3]

Their daily religious practices support this physical heritage through prayer and Quran recitation alongside religious studies and annual rituals such as the Grebeg ritual (Pratisara, 2020; Nursalam & Syahputra, 2023). The village's deep Islamic roots, combined with its many sacred buildings—including *langgar* (prayer rooms) *musholla* (small mosques) and Muhammadiyah schools—help create the image of Kauman as an Islamic Village representing Muhammadiyah (Arifin et al., 2019). Tourism development now affects many villages in Yogyakarta, but Kauman Village stands out as a distinct tourist destination. It has led to multiple transformations in community life through physical changes to the village design and infrastructure, alterations in land use and building functions, and shifts in social connections and the local economy. Despite these changes, the community continues to live with and adapt to the ongoing religious and social transformations in Kauman Village.

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[3] Source: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Tutin-Aryanti/publication/

THE EXISTENCE OF KAUMAN VILLAGE AS AN URBAN VILLAGE

A village represents more than just a place where people live; it also functions as a social tool to separate communities based on physical space requirements. In some cases, the term *village* refers to a settlement associated with traditional life within a specific environment (see Sumintarsih and Adrianto, 2014: 3-4). When such a settlement exists within an urban setting, it referred to as an "urban village" *(kampung kota).* According to Funo Yamamoto & Silas (2002), this term in Indonesia denotes a distinct form of informal urban settlement, which emerges as people migrate from rural areas to cities in search of employment opportunities.

Particularly in Yogyakarta, the term "kampung" [village] conveys an idea for most city dwellers, often referred to as *wong cilik,* or those who identify as village people (Sullivan, 1986: 70). The village people who live in urban areas maintain distinct traditions and economic lifestyles that differentiate them from other social groups. Different social groups coexist in urban settings, which form separate communities that keep their identity while navigating both social and physical spaces for survival, as shown by Kauman Village in Yogyakarta. This study is structured around three key concepts: urban village, touristic space, and social transformation.

Urban Village

Urban villages play a crucial role in reproducing specific work methods and labor systems while reflecting the social dynamics of these settlements (Newberry, 2008:25). According to Song et al. (2016:187), urban villages exist within the boundaries of urban development areas. Additionally, Hidayah and Shigemura (2005) argue that urban villages have become integral to the urban system by providing low-cost rentals that accommodate migrant housing needs. These villages function as essential components of urban development, both spatially and socially. Wu Hong et al. (2017: 2026) explain that urban villages emerge as a result of both rapid urban development and informal housing markets. This finding aligns with Kumar, Bipasha, and Bhaduri (2018:1309-1311), who studied Delhi, India, to show how development planning created urban villages that later became trapped within metropolitan urbanization. Similarly, Lai et al. (2014) argue that China's rapid urbanization over recent decades has contributed to the emergence and expansion of urban villages.

Urban villages are often perceived as urban problems due to the persistence of slum areas and squatter settlements. According to Wu Hong et al. (2017:2026), the mismatch between urban village planning and city planning results in unhealthy living conditions, characterized by overcrowded housing,

poor lighting, and inadequate ventilation. The problems of urban villages are also highlighted by Kumar, Bipasha, and Bhaduri (2018) in Delhi. They discovered that their irregular building designs make these neighborhoods more dangerous. Supporting these findings, Lai and Tang (2016:482) argue that urban villages lack basic infrastructure, suffer from disorganized land divisions, and are marked by extreme population density. Taken together, these studies shows that slum areas are seen as problematic because they suffer from poor public space planning, inadequate infrastructure, disorganized private spaces, and difficult living conditions.

The issue of slum areas, as noted by Kumar, Bipasha, and Bhaduri (2018:1324), arises when development fails to follow approved procedures. Similarly, Lai and Tang (2016:482) found that many urban village residents do not have full legal ownership of their buildings. Additionally, Wu Hong et al. (2017:2026) show that illegal urban village settlements tend to be constructed within specific zones of these communities, which create a mix of official neighborhoods and unauthorized settlements within urban village spaces. The basic purpose of settlements as living areas is often shaped by external influences that make them complex to analyze. According to Hidayah and Shigemura (2005:137-138), many urban village homeowners convert their private spaces into rental units to provide affordable housing solutions for urban communities. As a result, urban village buildings can shift from family living spaces to adaptable rental properties that help communities adjust to new conditions. They experience significant changes in space use because owners and renters share common areas while losing between 10% and 50% of their private spaces (Hidayah & Shigemura, 2005). These formal and informal housing transformations do not necessarily have negative associations with legal regulations, as urban village buildings did not exceed the residential space limits defined by provincial authorities (Hidayah and Shigemura, 2005:142).

Urban village communities must adapt to the effects of urbanization, but not all are equally successful in adjusting to these changes. According to Kumar, Bipasha, and Bhaduri (2018:1311), Delhi's rapid urbanization has created new economic opportunities, yet many former agricultural workers struggle to transition into urban labor markets. This is also supported by Song et al. (2016:187), that urban village communities have largely abandoned their traditional agricultural economy to become landlords for migrants. These new urban village economic systems demonstrate how different communities vary in their ability to adapt to changing market conditions.

Touristic Space

Heritage now serves as a tool for development rather than as a shield against it (Long, in Laukkanen, 2018:199). Earlier societies viewed traditional practices as backward but now recognize them as assets for regional growth (see Laukkanen, 2018). This shift, however, has led to conflicts that some developing nations struggling to balance heritage protection with tourism growth (Li et al., 2016:30). The rise of cultural tourism stems from its ability to offer visitors authentic local cultures despite ongoing disputes. Cultural tourism objects appear authentic to tourists because they believe modern society lost these cultural elements (Culler in Wei et al., 2018:91). Tourism and space interact not only as tourist attractions but also as tools to reshape regional identities. Digitalization and social media drive this transformation, which influence how tourists engage with cultural spaces (Stepchenkova & Zhan in Pauli, 2018:103).

The World Travel & Tourism Council (in Wearing, Stephen, and Carmel Foley, 2017:99), emphasizes that tourism operates as an economic business that adds substantially to global GDP. However, economic interests remain deeply intertwined with community intervention, as the desire to profit from local economies in historical heritage tourism areas often dictates how tourism spaces are regulated (Li et al., 2016:30). Urban tourism requires a series of processes that mediate between movement spaces, destinations, memory experiences, and representations (Hayllar et al., in Wearing, Stephen, and Carmel Foley, 2017:102). Similarly, Warszyńska & Jackowski (in Hącia, 2014:61) explain that tourism spaces combine both physical environments and economic functions, which highlight the growth of local commercial areas as a key factor in connecting tourism spaces to the global markets. James and McDonald (2013) further support this by noting that commercial spaces serve as middle spaces, linking tourists to their travel destinations.

While tourism development brings economic benefits, it also raises concerns about sustainability, particularly in heritage sites where rapid commercialization can threaten cultural integrity. Discussions on sustainable tourism development often begin with government ideas. Laukkanen (2018) argues that governments must address challenges related to local growth and cultural heritage, which often stem from conflicting perspectives among different stakeholders. In the case of cultural heritage tourism, Laukkanen (2018:214) shows how local communities and the Chinese government view heritage differently from Western perspectives, which often separate culture from nature. Li et al. (2016:30) suggest that effective tourism development requires recognizing the natural features and behavioral patterns of specific

spaces, as this helps explain how social and cultural systems shape tourism environments. Lastly, planning for tourism areas should prioritize holistic solutions that support sustainable regional development (Hącia, 2014:67).

Social Transformation

Hettige et al. (2018: 387) argue that social transformation represents fundamental changes in how society functions through adjustments or resistance to new influences across social, economic, cultural, and political domains. When society transforms, its members expand the meaning of symbols beyond their original definitions. In line with this, Calhoun (in Zbarauskaitė, 2015:121-122) defines social transformation as the process through which a society alters its core traits, such as social values and cultural products. Religious faith systems, for example, use sacred symbols in their spiritual practices, while profane values exist within activities associated with religious practice. In their analysis of the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage, Bona Kim et al. (2016, 151-152) demonstrate that participants blend sacred and profane values in their spiritual journey, with motivations that include both religious devotion and personal achievement.

Shifting social dynamics manifest both in individual behavior and in collective transformations within communities. People with specific values influence how they interact with others, which shape broader group-level changes that drive societal transformation. Social change occurs in every social interaction where individuals work toward shared goals. Maira and Maulsharif (2013:638) found that families in Kazakhstan are transitioning from traditional male-led relationships to modern, equal partnerships. Over time, both spouses have come to share their roles more freely, which lead to a less rigid division of family labor. As men and women increasingly work in the same environments, families become more adaptable to shared responsibilities.

Both the economic and social systems undergo transformation over time. Economic shifts can be observed through changes in how people manage their financial resources within their local communities. The way actors work together in economic networks determines how a society's economy functions. Lim and Endo (2016:493) illustrate this by demonstrating how political forces shape economic systems. The network of actors and entities create power chains that transform government-controlled economies into profit-driven economies. However, while these national-scale economic transformations occur, they often result in a slower rate of development.

The global environment extends these changes beyond economic actors and

entities, shaping local industries, land use, and labor markets. As foreign investment in land acquisition increases, manufacturing and service industries expand. This is of then at the expense of agricultural land and rural livelihoods. This shift forces farmers and local communities to adapt to new economic realities. According to Jia et al. (2018:411), farmers navigate these economic pressures more effectively when they possess strong personal skills and receive institutional support from authorities. In this context, globalization not only restructures economies but also alters traditional ways of life, requiring local communities to balance economic opportunity with cultural values.

KAUMAN VILLAGE AS A CENTER FOR ISLAMIC LEARNING

In the past, Kauman Village served as a religious learning center for *Santri* students and *Kyai* scholars, as it hosted around 30 *Kyai*s. These *Kyai*s scholars taught *Santri* students from different areas across Indonesia. According to local accounts, the *Kyai*s of Kauman gained deep religious knowledge by studying at Islamic boarding schools *(pesantren)* and abroad, particularly in Arab countries such as Egypt. The *Kyai*s transformed their prayer houses into educational spaces, by accepting students and teaching them about Islam. Over time, Kauman earned its name as *Kampung Santri* (student village) because its small *Kyai*-led mosques featured numerous students engaged in religious studies. As explained by Mr. BG in an interview:

> "Before the arrival of foreign students, Kauman had numerous *Kyai*s who achieved complete religious understanding by studying Islam at religious schools such as the *pesantren* or directly under Arab teachers. When they returned home, they educated students from Kauman and other regions, including Sumatra, Kalimantan, and Sulawesi, who traveled to Kauman to study religion. Students learned directly from *Kyai*s at their homes or prayer houses through *sorogan* sessions, where students took turns reciting Quranic verses while sitting cross-legged. *Santri* from all over Java and other islands came to Kauman to study at both prayer houses and prayer rooms." (Interview, October 27, 2022)

Today, Kauman Village retains its Islamic educational heritage, evident in its prayer rooms, small mosques, and historical Muhammadiyah buildings. Among these is the Aisyiah Kindergarten, which used to teach children of Kauman. Several other historical buildings reflecting the village's rich religious and educational legacy can also be found, as shown in the following Figure 2:

Figure 2.
Kindergarten and Aisyiyah Islamic Boarding School in Kauman

EXPRESSING ISLAMIC IDENTITY: SYMBOLS AND TRADITIONS IN KAUMAN

Kauman Village expresses its Islamic identity through both tangible and intangible religious elements. The Gedhe Keraton Mosque stands as a central religious landmark, accompanied by prayer rooms (*musholla*) and small prayer houses (*langgar*), such as Langgar KHA Dahlan, which serve as spaces for worship and religious education. These architectural and spiritual elements collectively reinforce the village's Islamic character, as seen in the following Figure 3:

Figure 3.
Gedhe Keraton Mosque and Langgar KHA Dahlan[4]

Beyond its physical structures, Islam is also represented through rules that control religious practices including *tadarrusan* (Qur'an recitation) and Qur'anic study sessions. The traditional practices in Kampung Kauman Yogyakarta can be categorized into two distinct groups. The first group consists of customs rooted in the traditions of the Yogyakarta Palace, which originate from Islamic court heritage. These include the *garebeg* celebration. The second

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[4] Source: https://www.maioloo.com/legendary-points-in-the-kauman-tourism- illage/

group comprises religious practices observed independently by Kauman residents, which reflect Muhammadiyah teachings and their commitment to uphold Islamic principles. People practice mandatory and Sunnah prayers, regular Qur'an recitation, and religious discussion, all of which align with the Five Pillars of Islam. As illustrated in the figure below, these religious practices continue to shape Kauman's Islamic identity through communal rituals:

Figure 4.
Routine Recitation Activities and *Tadarrusan* Schedule for Kauman Residents

The Kauman community actively upholds Islamic traditions through various religious practices. Many residents do voluntary fasting on Mondays and Thursdays as well as regularly performing *Dhuha* [morning] and *Tahajjud* [night] prayers. They also participate in religious gatherings, which are held separately for men and women. The Kauman Mosque serves as a center for collective worship, hosting collective eclipse prayers and other congregational religious activities. Throughout the day, residents dedicate themselves to religious observance, with daily Quran recitation and religious education sessions taking place at the Gedhe Mosque. The Kauman community remains deeply committed to preserving and passing down Islamic traditions to future generations. Beyond religious practices, Islamic symbols—particularly those associated with Muhammadiyah—are embedded in the visual culture of Kauman. These symbols are prominently displayed on household decorations, front porches, and walls, while even tablecloths feature Muhammadiyah motifs and religious messages, such as the following:

Figure 5.
Symbols and Religious Messages in Households Kauman

Transformation of Kauman: From Private Spaces to Public Spaces

The rapid growth of Yogyakarta's tourism sector has brought significant transformations to Kauman Village. These changes are evident in both the village's physical landscape and its social and economic dynamics. The transformation of Kauman Village, Yogyakarta, is marked by modifications to its spatial layout, repurposing of buildings, and shifts in community activities, particularly following the village's inclusion in the DIY Province Tourism Development Program. During our field observations, we identified four houses in Kauman Village that now operate as homestays, while dozens of other homes have been converted into long-term rental properties, available for monthly or yearly leases. This trend reflects a broader shift in housing functions within the village, as noted by Mr. BG, the head of RT. 13 in Kauman Village, as follows:

> "Many Kauman residents now rent their homes as rental houses or boarding houses to both male and female tenants. Most renters include students and workers who trade alongside other individuals. Daily rental houses, known as homestays, primarily serve tourists and trader family members. I can remember there are four rental houses in this area."

The buildings in Kauman now serve both residential and commercial purposes, with grocery stalls, food stands, beverage shops, and hair salons integrated into the neighborhood. The Gedhe Mosque, which was originally a religious space, has also been repurposed to accommodate tourists. Today, the mosque serves a dual function—it remains a place of worship while also acting as a rest area for visitors and a filming location for the soap opera *Tukang Bubur Naik Haji* (Porridge Vendor Performs the Hajj).

Tourism development in Kauman Village, Yogyakarta, has led to the transformation of private spaces into public areas. These changes can be categorized into two types of space conversion. First, residents now share their private spaces with visitors. For example, batik artisans in Kauman have opened their homes to tourists as historical attractions, rather than using them solely as family living spaces. Second, the government has taken control over formerly private areas associated with the Sultanate, converting them into publicly managed spaces. Cultural heritage sites, including the Gedhe Mosque, various prayer halls, Muhammadiyah school buildings, and the Joglo house of the Royal Religious Leader, now functioned as regulated tourism sites. However, the state's intervention in Kauman's spatial transformation has sparked concerns. The government's legal framework, particularly Laws No. 24 of 1992 and No. 5 of 1992, has played a role in redefining Kauman's spaces,

often stripping them of their original functions and meanings. The central government's push to establish Yogyakarta as a major tourism destination has been a driving force behind these policy decisions.

These transformations have had profound effects on Kauman's social structure and exclusivity. Historically, Kauman was an exclusive neighborhood, primarily inhabited by religious servants of the palace who upheld strict Islamic customs. This exclusivity was reinforced not only by its unique religious traditions but also by its physical layout, which was intentionally designed to maintain privacy and separation from outsiders. The narrow streets, controlled access points, and closely built houses facing inward created a walled-in effect, which limit external influences. Additionally, strict vehicle restrictions and spatial planning ensured that Kauman remained a protected religious space, where spiritual values were passed down through generations.

Despite these historical boundaries, Kauman has gradually opened to outsiders, particularly as tourism and urbanization have reshaped its social fabric. Visitors are welcome, provided they adhere to local rules, such as wearing modest clothing, turning off vehicle engines, and obtaining special permission for street performances. However, social integration did not begin solely with tourism. By the 1970s and 1980s, intermarriage with outsiders increased, and public schools introduced students from beyond the community, which led to greater interaction between Kauman residents and the broader Yogyakarta population. As explained by Mr. HW:

> "By 1970 several Kauman residents had chosen partners from outside their neighborhood. Most men from the Kauman community chose partners from outside their neighborhood. During the 1980s, numerous young men left Kauman to pursue employment opportunities. They left for two reasons: they needed work, and they wanted to escape the bad reputation that made residents appear tough and ready to fight." (Interview, October 29, 2022).

The desire to seek economic and social opportunities beyond Kauman remains a common theme among its residents. As Mr. BG expressed:

> "*If you want to progress, you must leave Kauman*. According to Kauman residents, they need to go beyond their neighborhood because accepting outside connections helps them advance. The expression pushes many residents to move away. Despite their deep connection to Kauman, they still want to progress and develop, which does not force them to stay in their hometown." (Interview with Mr. BG October 2022).

Tourism and the Renewal of Islamic Identity in Kauman

Tourism has played a significant role in revitalizing Islamic symbols and heritage in Kauman. Historic Islamic architecture, once overlooked, is now being preserved and promoted as a major tourist attraction. The Muhammadiyah Heritage Trail Tours have incorporated visits to historic buildings, which enhances Kauman's role as a center of Islamic heritage tourism. Beyond tourism, academic institutions have also contributed to Kauman's conservation efforts. The Architecture Department of Indonesia Islamic University (known locally as UII) in Yogyakarta, in collaboration with the National University of Singapore (NUS) and University of Malaya (UM), launched the Kauman UM-NUS-UII Architectural Conservation Field School. This program, which took place from July 9 to August 2, 2018, brought architecture students from the three universities to study and engage in conservation efforts in Kauman. Through this initiative, tourism and academic learning have merged to support historical preservation.

Tourism-driven revitalization efforts have restored Islamic traditions that had previously declined. Many Islamic identity markers have been reintroduced through modern adaptations, which ensure that Kauman's heritage remains relevant. One such revival is the return of collective prayer practices, where residents once pray together and take turns reciting the Qur'an from house to house. This congregational prayer movement, which was reintroduced in 2018, reflects a renewed commitment to communal religious practices. Similarly, Kauman's culinary heritage has also been revived. The temporary Ramadan market has reintroduced traditional dishes such as goat curry and *kicak,* which are known as Kauman's legendary takjil. These culinary offerings not only strengthen Kauman's cultural identity but also attract tourists interested in experiencing local Islamic traditions.

The revival of Kauman's Islamic traditions is deeply connected to its historical relationship with Muhammadiyah, which emerged as a reformist Islamic movement in 1912 in this village. Kauman's residents express their deep Islamic devotion to Muhammadiyah through the saying *"Kauman is Muhammadiyah and Muhammadiyah is Kauman."* As tourism continues to grown in Yogyakarta, Kauman's residents aim to position their village as an open, globally connected Islamic destination. Rather than being perceived as strict and isolated, they seek to highlight Kauman's inclusivity by emphasizing Islamic cultural tourism as a key feature of the village's identity.

TRANSFORMATION FROM AN ISLAMIC VILLAGE TO A TOURIST VILLAGE

The introduction of state schools and Muhammadiyah private schools has contributed to a decline in the number of Islamic students and a reduction in the influence of Islamic scholars in Kauman. The presence of public schools led to the gradual disappearance of the *santri* learning tradition, which had long been a defining characteristic of the village. Today, it is rare to hear children or *santri* reciting Quranic verses in mosques, prayer rooms, *langar*, or *kyai* homes, as they once did. Instead, students now spend their time on academic coursework and extracurricular activities that are unrelated to religious learning, both within and beyond the school environment. Public schools prioritize secular education, focusing on subjects such as science, mathematics, biology, chemistry, and social studies, while religious education is given minimal time in the curriculum.

Muhammadiyah's educational philosophy emphasizes rational thinking as a key component of learning. The movement encourages individuals to embrace truth, accept constructive feedback, and pursue progress as part of their intellectual and spiritual development. However, religious education alone is not considered sufficient to cultivate rational thinking; it must be combined with general education to achieved a balanced perspective. As a result, Muhammadiyah has expanded its network of public schools across different educational levels and continuously improving their quality. Despite the existence of Muhammadiyah's religious schools such as *Muallimin* and *Muallimat,* many Kauman residents now attend public schools as well.

The shift from a religious education model to a broader public education system has played a significant role in reshaping Kauman's identity. Previously recognized as a *santri* and *Kyai* village, Kauman gradually transformed into an Islamic Village during the 2000s, driven by its deep historical ties to Muhammadiyah. While Muhammadiyah was founded in 1912, it was the Kauman community itself that reinforced the village's Islamic character and association with the movement. Today, with tourism programs expanding in Yogyakarta, Kauman has undergone another transformation: emerging as one of the city's recognized tourist attractions. Branded as *Kampung Wisata Kauman* (Kauman Tourist Village), the area now offers various tourism packages, as seen below:
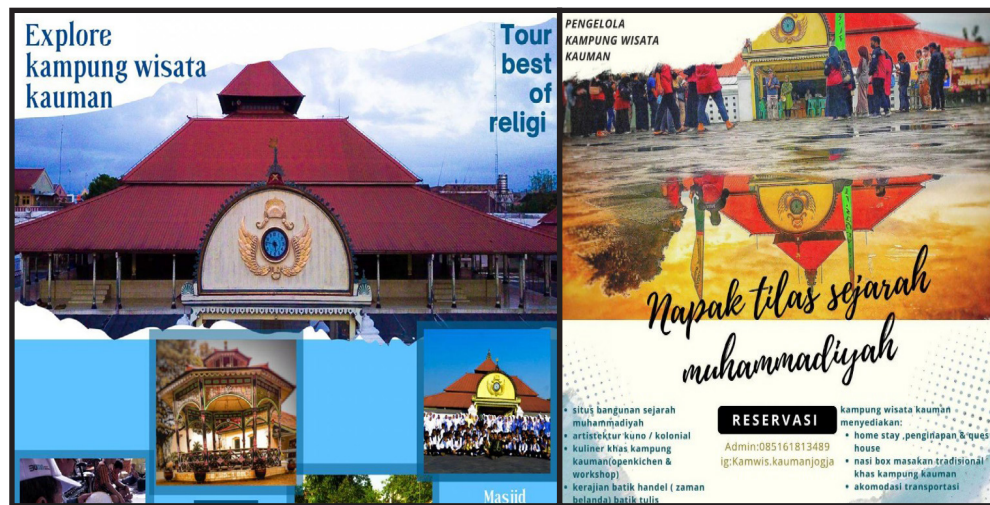
Figure 6.
Kauman Village Tourism Promotion and Tour Packages[5]

Figure 7.
Kauman Village Tour Package Classification[6]

Figure 8.
Tourist Visits to Kauman Village, Yogyakarta[7]

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[5] Source: https://diy.jadesta.com/paket/jejak_peradaban_mataram_islam

[6] Source: https://kampungwisata.jogjakota.go.id/Customer/DetailPaket/82

[7] Source: https://pwmjateng.com/napak-tilas-di-kampung-wisata-kauman-keju-tan-sejarah-di-tengah-kota-yogyakarta/

Students gain greater intellectual independence through through general education, which encourages critical thinking and diverse perspectives. In contrast, religious education often operates under strict leadership control, where students are expected to accept religious teachers' interpretations as absolute truth. By integrating general education, students develop new values that extend beyond individual spiritual growth to influence their social, financial, and political engagement. Although Muhammadiyah actively promotes general education, continued intellectual development remains essential for enhancing all aspects of life within the community.

The intellectual movement within Muhammadiyah is guided by rational principles, which emphasizes reasoning and critical evaluation in all areas of life. This approach is deeply embedded in the daily lives of Muhammadiyah members in Kauman, who evaluate social, economic, and religious issues through a rational lens. However, Muhammadiyah's intellectual framework is not confined to theoretical discussions—it also prioritizes practical action that leads to community progress and prosperity.

Economic development, as advocated by K.H. Ahmad Dahlan, is a core pillar of Muhammadiyah's mission. The growth of local economies is viewed as essential to broader community development, which provides individuals with financial stability and opportunities for advancement. In Kauman, tourism has become a central driver of economic activity. However, while residents recognize the economic benefits of tourism, they emphasize the need for religiously aligned tourism initiatives that reinforce Islamic identity and values rather than compromise them.

Changes in Tourism and the Resilience of Islamic Identity

As part of the Yogyakarta palace administration, Kauman Village has long been engaged in state and palace policies, contributing to their development and implementation. However, the growth of tourism in Yogyakarta has brought an increasing number of outsiders to the palace's surrounding areas, which affects Kauman's community. Despite this, the arrival of outsiders has not altered how Kauman residents practice their Islamic faith.

For over a century, the *Sekaten* and *Garebeg* ceremonies, held at the Great Mosque of Kauman, have reinforced the community's commitment to Islamic traditions. Kauman residents actively preserve their religious identity, to adhere strictly to Muhammadiyah principles while maintaining a selective openness to external influences. While they reject outside traditions that conflict with their Islamic values, they welcome ideas and practices that align

with Muhammadiyah teachings, including those introduced through tourism.

Tourism in Kauman is not passively accepted but evaluated and adapted to ensure its alignment with Islamic principles. Under this Islamization approach, Kauman's Islamic values are expected to shape both tourism activities and tourist behavior. Maintaining modest dress codes is seen as essential for preserving religious norms, while Islamic symbols and heritage sites remain central to the tourist experience.

Located between the Yogyakarta palace area and the city's economic hub, Kauman Village is regularly exposed to diverse cultural influences. They embrace new information technology without hesitation because mobile phones and television have become familiar parts of their daily life. However, rather than diluting Islamic values, technological advancements have instead strengthened the community's religious identity. Kauman residents actively utilize information technology tools to spread Islamic teachings and strengthen brotherhood. Through Radio Saka, they disseminate Muhammadiyah teachings, while WhatsApp groups, email, and Facebook facilitate religious discussions and community engagement. While they engage with various cultural and technological developments, their primary focus remains on religious education and community strengthening, as the *Tarjih* (a section that make judgments or decisions on Islamic jurisprudential matters) of the Muhammadiyah organization sets rules for how its members should use information technology.

Kauman's Islamic identity is not merely a set of practices but a deeply ingrained way of life. Residents continuously assert their religious identity through their daily actions, maintaining adherence to Muhammadiyah teachings across various settings and circumstances. Their Islamic identity becomes part of who they are. This commitment to religious principles ensures that their Islamic identity remains integral, regardless of external influences or the expansion of tourism. Residents of Kauman Village do not feel threatened by tourism programs in their community. Instead, they see it as an opportunity to display their Islamic heritage to visitors. Through historical buildings, religious narratives, and rituals, they showcase the revival of their Islamic traditions.

The Intersection of Islamic Identity, Social Transformation, and Tourism

Kauman has long maintained a strong Islamic heritage, where Islamic values define both the identity if its residents and their daily actions. Situated in the heart of Yogyakarta, within the royal tourism area, Kauman is exposed to diverse social and cultural interactions. Over time, its residents have become

increasingly open to welcoming visitors from outside their community. The long history of social connections between Kauman residents have contributed to both physical and socio-economic developments in the village (Arifin, 2019).

Although tourism has not substantially altered Kauman's physical landscape, it has influenced cultural values and symbols (Zbarauskaitė, 2015). Mosques and other Muhammadiyah heritage sites, once dedicated solely to religious activities, now function as religious tourism attractions that have been commercialized. Despite these adaptations, the village continues to preserve its authentic history and cultural identity, utilizing digital and social media platforms to promote tourism programs and contribute to regional economic growth. The community of Kauman has undergone various modifications in response to social transformation, including building renovations, shifts in social relationships, transformations in work structures, and political realignments. Additionally, private spaces within Kauman have increasingly transitioned into public areas, which allow for greater accessibility to outsiders. However, despite these modern shifts, Kauman's religious identity remains firmly intact, as Islam continues to serve as the community's foundational belief system and guiding principle (Arifin, 2020).

Kauman residents remain deeply committed to practicing Islam while upholding the teachings of K.H. Ahmad Dahlan. Even in the face of shifting social dynamics and external influences, they continue to strengthen their Islamic identity through religious values and practices. At the core of this commitment lies the Gedhe Kauman Mosque, which serves as both a religious symbol and a center for Muhammadiyah preaching. Institutionally, this movement is reinforced by the Three Pillars (*Tiga Saka*), which provide spiritual and administrative guidance to Kauman residents. These pillars consist of the Neighborhood Associations (*Rukun Warga*/RW), representing the royal presence and the state's role in Kauman; the Mosque Management Board (*Takmir Masjid*), serving as Muhammadiyah's religious and preaching institution; and the Muhammadiyah Organization, acting as the overarching Islamic authority guiding religious and social life in Kauman (Interview with BG, October 30, 2022). According to Kauman residents, these Three Pillars integrate Muhammadiyah teachings, mosque leadership, and royal administration to create an inclusive and adaptable Islamic framework. This accepting mindset has shaped Kauman's open and merciful Islamic character, allowing it to remain a peaceful and resilient community (Interview with BG, October 30, 2022).

Tourism has also played a role in shaping new types of community organizations

in Kauman. These organizations increasingly combine religious and economic objectives which reflect a shift toward a more integrated socio-religious economy (Hettige et al., 2018). By blending Islamic principles with economic initiatives, Kauman residents continue to engage with modern tourism while preserving their religious heritage.

CONCLUSION

Kauman Village has undergone significant transformations since the arrival of Muhammadiyah, which introduced modern religious practices to the community. Over time, as Kauman transitioned into a tourist village, it adapted to global trends and expanding information flows that could no longer be ignored. The community has strategically incorporated tourism into its identity and ensuring that Islamic heritage remains central. This transformation follows Kauman's historical evolution from a Batik Village to a Santri Village, later becoming an Islamic Village (Muhammadiyah's influence), and now, a tourist destination that promotes Muhammadiyah heritage-based tourism.

Despite external influences, Kauman's residents have successfully preserved their Islamic principles while adapting to changing socio-economic landscapes. The community remains deeply committed to its religious values, even as it modernizes its methods of expression. Rather than compromising their identity, they have found ways to commercialize their Islamic heritage through tourism, marketing their Islamic and Muhammadiyah products while maintaining their religious integrity. This demonstrates their strategic ability to manage societal changes while ensuring Islamic continuity.

This research challenges common assumptions that Islam and tourism are incompatible, particularly the notion that tourism inherently aligns with Western capitalist ideals. The findings reveal that Islam—especially in Kauman, a village deeply associated with Muhammadiyah—does not hinder tourism development. Instead, the community actively supports tourism initiatives introduced by the Special Region of Yogyakarta provincial government, integrating religious and cultural heritage into tourism. To facilitate this, Kauman's residents have established *blusukan* (engagement and communication with government officials) communities and tourism awareness groups. These initiatives promote Islamic cultural heritage (Muhammadiyah Heritage) as a tourism package, overseen by the Kauman Mosque Management Board.

However, this study is not without its shortcomings. *First*, the absence of a

specific time frame limits the ability to assess long-term trends and historical depth. *Second*, the scope of the study is broad, covering multiple aspects of transformation, which may have reduced the focus on specific socio-cultural changes. Future research could benefit from a more defined temporal framework and a narrower thematic focus to allow for a deeper analysis of Kauman's ongoing transformation.

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