

## **Nyatnyono Village: A Nexus of *Tarekat*, Religious Culture and Tourism**

**Chanif Ainun Naim**

Department of Sociology, Universitas Gadjah Mada

Email: [chanif.ainun.n@mail.ugm.ac.id](mailto:chanif.ainun.n@mail.ugm.ac.id)

### **Abstract**

*This study explores the impact of tarekat (Sufi orders) on the religious culture of Nyatnyono Village, a rural community in Semarang Regency known for its rich Islamic traditions and emerging religious tourism. The village is home to several tarekat, including Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah (TQN), Naqsyabandiyah, Syattariyyah, and Syadziliyyah, all of which are intricately woven into the community's social and spiritual fabric. Insights gathered from interviews with local followers reveal that tarekat practices cultivate personal piety through spiritual guidance while fostering social solidarity and ethical behaviour. Under the mentorship of murshids (spiritual leaders), followers participate in dhikr, wirid, fasting, and communal gatherings, activities that facilitate spiritual development and strengthen communal relations. The findings indicate that tarekat practices play a vital role in shaping the cohesive religious culture of Nyatnyono Village, enhancing its resilience in times of crisis, such as during the COVID-19 pandemic. This research underscores the enduring significance of Sufism in Indonesia's rural Muslim communities, particularly in its capacity to integrate religious tourism with spiritual and social unity.*

**Keywords:** Tarekat; Sufism; Religious Culture; Tourism; Nyatnyono Village

## Introduction

The *tarekat* (Sufi order) has long played a pivotal role in shaping the religious and social dynamics of rural Muslim communities across Indonesia. Its historical roots trace back to the 13th century, during the second wave of Islamic expansion in the archipelago, when Sufism was instrumental in spreading Islam throughout the region.<sup>1</sup> Sufism, broadly defined as the spiritual path to attaining closeness to Allah, encompasses practices that promote spiritual refinement, inner devotion, and a deep connection with the Divine, all under a spiritual teacher's or murshid's guidance.<sup>2</sup> The *tarekat*, as an institutionalized form of Sufism, offers a structured framework to guide its disciples (*murid*) on their spiritual journey, providing them with a clear path to purify their hearts and seek divine approval.

The term *tarekat* is derived from the Arabic *thariqat*, meaning “path,” “method,” or “way.” Within the Sufi tradition, it signifies a spiritual methodology or way of life through which

---

<sup>1</sup> Azyumardi Azra, *Jaringan ulama: Timur Tengah dan Kepulauan Nusantara Abad XVII & XVIII: Akar Pembaruan Islam Indonesia* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2004); Martin van Bruinessen, “The Origins and Development of Sūfī Orders (Tarekat) in Southeast Asia,” *Studia Islamika* 1, no. 1 (1994), <https://doi.org/10.15408/sdi.v1i1.864>; Martin van Bruinessen, “Studies of Sufism and the Sufi Orders in Indonesia,” *Die Welt Des Islams* 38, no. 2 (1998): 192–219, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1570744>; Mukhammad Zamzami, Fikri Mahzumi, and Abd A’la, “Tarekat and Politics in Indonesia: Contested Authority between Murshids in the Tarekat Qadiriyyah Wa Naqsyabandiyah in East Java,” *Teosofi: Jurnal Tasawuf Dan Pemikiran Islam* 12, no. 2 (December 1, 2022): 187–208, <https://doi.org/10.15642/teosofi.2022.12.2.187-208>.

<sup>2</sup> Adha Hujatulatif and Chanif Ainun Naim, “Nilai Tasawuf Pesantren dan Tradisi Syawir sebagai Strategi Cultural Protection dari Lone-Wolf Terrorism,” *Al-Banjari: Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 20, no. 2 (December 30, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.18592/al-banjari.v20i2.4759>.

practitioners pursue Allah's pleasure. Each *tarekat* is distinct, shaped by the experiential teachings of its *murshid*, whose personalized methods and spiritual insights form the hallmark of the order.<sup>3</sup> In Indonesia, 45 *tarekat* are formally recognized as *mu'tabar* (valid) by Nahdlatul Ulama's *Jam'iyah Ahlit Thariqah al-Mu'tabarah an-Nahdliyyah*, further solidifying their influence on the religious practices of Muslim communities across the country.<sup>4</sup> These *tarekat* institutions, through their networks of *murshid*, play an important role in the religious, social, and cultural life of many communities, including Nyatnyono Village, a religious tourism destination in Semarang Regency.

Many studies have examined the influence of tarekat on its followers. For instance, Suwito et al. (2022) argue that Sufism has two main dimensions: the vertical (seeking God's pleasure) and the horizontal (promoting harmony with nature, society, and local wisdom). However, some Sufi practices have been criticized for neglecting the balance between these dimensions. They conclude that hybrid Sufism, which integrates both vertical and horizontal aspects, can improve the quality of life for its practitioners, enhancing their work ethic and striving toward both material and spiritual well-being.<sup>5</sup> Ahmad et al. (2021) Similarly, as observed, followers of the Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah (TQN) tarekat, particularly those in Pondok Pesantren Futuhiyyah in Mranggen, internalize the concepts of dhikr (remembrance of Allah) and love into their daily actions. This tarekat emphasizes love for God, love for others, moderation, and tolerance toward different faiths and

<sup>3</sup> van Bruinessen, "Studies of Sufism and the Sufi Orders in Indonesia."

<sup>4</sup> Sidik, "Mengenal Thariqah Mu'tabarah Dalam NU (Nahdlatul Ulama)," Baitul Muslim, July 9, 2021, <https://www.baitulmustaqim.com/2021/07/mengenal-thariqah-mutabarah-dalam-nu.html>.

<sup>5</sup> Suwito Suwito et al., "Hybrid Sufism for Enhancing Quality of Life: Ethnographic Perspective in Indonesia," *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 78, no. 4 (March 30, 2022): 8, <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v78i4.7198>.

groups, using these principles to counter religious radicalism. Their focus on self-development rather than strict adherence to Islamic formalities has helped foster an atmosphere of tolerance and moderation.<sup>6</sup> The TQN tarekat, particularly its branch in Pondok Pesantren Futuhiyyah, is significant in the context of this research, as it includes followers from Nyatnyono Village, making the study of *tarekat* in this community increasingly relevant.

Furthermore, Novalina et al. (2021) and Setiawan (2021) found that Sufi values such as self-emptying, emotional control, piety, total surrender to Allah, acceptance of existence, and the rejection of greed and stinginess became the driving forces behind community movements responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. These teachings helped strengthen the ability of individuals and communities to cope with the crisis.<sup>7</sup> Nyatnyono Village, known for its reliance on religious tourism as a primary economic driver, faced significant challenges during the pandemic. However, the high levels of solidarity and mutual assistance within the village, supported by Sufi values, played a crucial role in helping residents navigate the health crisis and the economic downturn.

However, despite Indonesia's diverse range of tarekat traditions, the rise of various Islamic movements has often led to tensions. Van Bruinessen (1999) noted that conflicts among tarekat followers, particularly between different tarekat groups and their

---

<sup>6</sup> Maghfur Ahmad et al., "The Sufi Order Against Religious Radicalism in Indonesia," *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 77, no. 4 (August 3, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v77i4.6417>.

<sup>7</sup> Martina Novalina, Erastus Sabdono, and Indria Samego, "Sufism and Kenosis: The Basis of One's Resilience as a Zoom Politicon," *Teosofia: Indonesian Journal of Islamic Mysticism* 10, no. 2 (December 23, 2021): 267–81, <https://doi.org/10.21580/tos.v10i2.9479>; Mohamad Nur Kholis Setiawan, "Sufism and Pandemic: Lesson Learned from Sufi Teachings and Its Prominent Figures," *Teosofia: Indonesian Journal of Islamic Mysticism* 10, no. 2 (December 23, 2021): 161–76, <https://doi.org/10.21580/tos.v10i2.10054>.

leaders, have been a recurrent issue, with many disputes centred around the competition for legitimacy and authority. Few conflicts, however, have emerged between tarekat groups and the Islamic reformist movements.<sup>8</sup> In Nyatnyono Village, the presence of multiple tarekat, such as Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah, Naqsyabandiyah, Syattariyyah, and Syadziliyyah, has contributed to a vibrant religious culture. This study will also explore whether tensions or conflicts between these tarekat groups have emerged within the context of Nyatnyono Village.

## Method

This qualitative study employs a case study approach to investigate the influence of *tarekat* on the religious and cultural life of Nyatnyono Village. The case study method is appropriate for capturing the nuanced dynamics of *tarekat* practices and their impact on the community. It is suitable for exploring the complex interplay between individual and collective spiritual experiences.<sup>9</sup>

Data were collected through multiple methods to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the role of *tarekat* in Nyatnyono Village. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with two villagers who are active followers of different *tarekat* networks. These participants were selected based on their deep involvement in *tarekat* activities, providing rich insights into the practices and values upheld within these spiritual communities. Their varied perspectives enabled a broader view of the different *tarekat* traditions and their impact on the community; in addition to

---

<sup>8</sup> Martin van Bruinessen, "Controversies and Polemics Involving the Sufi Orders in Twentieth-Century Indonesia" (Brill, 1999), [https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004452725\\_039](https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004452725_039).

<sup>9</sup> J.W. Creswell and C.N. Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*, 4th ed. (SAGE Publications, 2016); Uwe Flick, *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis* (SAGE Publications Ltd, 2014), <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446282243>.

interviews, secondary sources such as village records, historical texts, and relevant academic literature were analyzed to contextualize the findings. These secondary sources helped provide a deeper understanding of the historical and cultural background of Nyatnyono Village, linking past and present social dynamics.

The study also incorporated participant observation, particularly during *wirid* (ritual) sessions and other communal religious events. This method allowed the researcher to capture the lived experiences of *tarekat* followers and observe the interactions and communal aspects of spiritual practice. Observing these sessions provided valuable insights into the practical application of *tarekat* teachings and the sense of solidarity and moral responsibility within the community.

By triangulating data from semi-structured interviews, secondary sources, and participant observation, the research aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of how *tarekat* practices contribute to the religious culture and social dynamics of Nyatnyono Village. Combining these different data sources allowed for a more nuanced analysis and validated the findings, ensuring the reliability and trustworthiness of the results.<sup>10</sup> This multi-faceted approach enabled a deeper exploration of the individual spiritual journeys and collective community practices, shedding light on how *tarekat* influences the social and religious life of Nyatnyono Village.

---

<sup>10</sup> Creswell and Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*; Flick, *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis*.

## Result and Discussion

### Religious Culture of Nyatnyono Village, Semarang Regency

Nyatnyono Village, located at the foot of Mount Ungaran in West Ungaran District, Semarang Regency, has gained recognition as a religious tourism destination. It is home to three notable spiritual landmarks: the tombs of Waliyullah Hasan Munadi and Waliyullah Hasan Dipura, the sacred spring *Sendang Keramat Kalimah Thayyibah*, and the Subulussalam Mosque. Located at approximately 500-600 meters above sea level, the village enjoys a cool and serene environment, described by locals as *seger*, *adem*, *lan ayem* (refreshing, cool, and peaceful).<sup>11</sup>

2013 the village's population was 9,873 residents, comprising 2,950 families across 1,032 households. The primary sources of income include agriculture, clove and coffee plantations, cattle and goat farming, and employment in nearby factories.<sup>12</sup> The village head, Parsunto, highlighted Nyatnyono's potential in tourism and agriculture, particularly its award-winning clove farming, which has twice earned provincial recognition in Central Java. He also noted the untapped potential of its youth organizations, such as *Karang Taruna*, whose creative contributions remain unexplored.<sup>13</sup>

Religiously, Nyatnyono is predominantly Muslim, with 98.21% of the population adhering to Islam, while the remainder follows other faiths. Although its culture shares similarities with other rural communities, Nyatnyono stands out for its deeply

---

<sup>11</sup> Parsunto, Interview with Head of Nyatnyono Village, November 20, 2022.

<sup>12</sup> Zhazha Pitaloka, "Pengaruh Obyek Wisata Religi Terhadap Kondisi Ekonomi Masyarakat Desa Nyatnyono, Kecamatan Ungaran Barat, Kabupaten Semarang" (Undergraduate Thesis, Semarang, Universitas Islam Sultan Agung Semarang, 2021), <http://repository.unissula.ac.id/24446/>.

<sup>13</sup> Parsunto, Interview with Head of Nyatnyono Village.

religious character. The village head emphasized this unique trait, stating:

“The general character of Nyatnyono residents is similar to that of other villages, but Nyatnyono is distinctly more religious. The people are polite, but one unique trait is that if visitors don’t greet them, they won’t greet back. This is a characteristic unique to our community.”<sup>14</sup>

This religious nature is reflected in the numerous activities that regularly take place in every neighbourhood (RT), such as *Yasinan*, *Tahlilan*, *Manaqiban*, *Qur’anan*, *Shalawatan Mujahadahan*, and the weekly grand recitations held every Friday night.

The presence of these three religious tourist destinations, combined with its residents' deeply ingrained spiritual culture, significantly enhances Nyatnyono Village's appeal for local and international visitors. The historical importance of the tombs of Waliyullah Hasan Munadi and Hasan Dipura, the sanctity of *Sendang Keramat Kalimah Thayyibah*, and the cultural legacy represented by the Subulussalam Mosque—once a spiritual hub for Waliyullah Hasan Munadi—imbue the village with a unique religious charm. These sites attract visitors seeking spiritual enrichment and cultural immersion and are integral to the local economy. According to village records, nearly 75% of Nyatnyono residents earn their livelihood through services related to the influx of tourists visiting these sacred locations, particularly the tombs and the sacred spring.<sup>15</sup>

Beyond its religious tourism, the culture of Nyatnyono Village is profoundly shaped by the influence of various *tarekat*

---

<sup>14</sup> Parsunto.

<sup>15</sup> Parsunto.



(Sufi orders) practiced by its community. These *tarekat* are binding forces, deeply embedding spiritual and religious practices in daily life. They play a pivotal role in forming the religious worldview of the villagers. Among the most notable *tarekat* embraced in Nyatnyono are the Naqsyabandiyah, Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah (TQN), Syattariyyah, and Syadziliyyah orders, each connected to distinct lineages of *murshids* (spiritual guides) and regional Islamic boarding schools.

The Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah (TQN) *tarekat*, one of the most influential in Nyatnyono, is closely associated with the Futuhiyyah Islamic Boarding School in Mranggen, Demak. This network provides strong spiritual guidance to its followers. Similarly, the Naqsyabandiyah *tarekat* is deeply rooted in the teachings of the Al-Mansur Islamic Boarding School in Popongan, Magelang. KH founded this institution. Mansur and later led by KH. Salman Dahlawi is now under the leadership of Gus Multazam Al-Makky, who continues to guide the community in spiritual matters.<sup>16</sup>

These *tarekat* not only enrich the spiritual lives of Nyatnyono's residents but also play a critical role in reinforcing the village's religious identity and communal bonds. Among them, the Syadziliyyah *tarekat*—a relatively new addition to the village—has established a strong connection with Habib Luthfi Bin Yahya of Pekalongan. Habib Luthfi is a prominent scholar and spiritual leader within the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) community, renowned for his numerous *sanad* (chains of transmission) across various *tarekat*. His role as *Ra'is 'Am* (supreme leader) of the *Jam'iyyah Ahlu Thariqah al-Mu'tabarah an-Nahdliyyah*, the authoritative body overseeing recognized *tarekat* within NU, further

---

<sup>16</sup> Informant 2, Interview with Followers of the Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah Order, November 19, 2022.

underscores his influence. Meanwhile, the Syattariyah *tarekat*, with historical roots in the Temanggung area, maintains a modest following in Nyatnyono Village.<sup>17</sup>

The Qadiriya wa Naqsyabandiyah (TQN) *tarekat* is the most widely practiced in the village, with an estimated 600–800 adherents. The Naqsyabandiyah *tarekat* follows, with a community of approximately 200–300 practitioners.<sup>18</sup> Both orders have strong institutional ties to prominent Islamic boarding schools, further deepening their influence. While smaller, the Syattariyah *tarekat* and the Syadziliyah *tarekat* attract around 20–30 followers. Despite their size, these groups contribute meaningfully to the village’s spiritual tapestry.<sup>19</sup>

Collectively, the number of *tarekat* adherents in Nyatnyono exceeds 1,000 people, highlighting the significant role these spiritual paths play in shaping the religious and cultural fabric of the community. The *tarekat* provides spiritual guidance and is a foundational framework for fostering solidarity, ethical values, and collective identity among the villagers. Through these networks, the residents of Nyatnyono sustain a vibrant and cohesive religious culture that continues to define their way of life.

As van Bruinessen (1999) notes in his work “*Controversies and Polemics Involving the Sufi Orders in Twentieth-Century Indonesia*”, many of the conflicts involving Sufi orders in the 20th century were driven by disputes between different *tarekat* leaders, each seeking to assert their authority and legitimacy while delegitimizing others. These conflicts were often not between

---

<sup>17</sup> Informant 1, Interview with Followers of the Syadziliyah Order, November 18, 2022.

<sup>18</sup> Informant 2, Interview with Followers of the Qadiriya wa Naqsyabandiyah Order.

<sup>19</sup> Informant 1, Interview with Followers of the Syadziliyah Order.

Sufis and anti-Sufi reformists but between competing Sufi sheikhs.<sup>20</sup> However, in Nyatnyono Village, followers of different *tarekat* groups have never been involved in such conflicts. The adherents of the Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah (TQN), Naqsyabandiyah, Syattariyyah, and Syadziliyyah *tarekats* live harmoniously alongside each other, each practicing their respective spiritual paths without discord.

### **The Role of *Tarekat* in the Nyatnyono Village Community: Resilience on Religious Tourism**

The development of *tarekat* (Sufi orders) in Indonesia is deeply intertwined with the growth of Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*). This connection stems from the fact that Islam's early arrival in Indonesia was during a period when Islam and Sufism were deeply integrated. Consequently, *tarekat* teachings found a nurturing home in *pesantren*, where the *murshid* (spiritual guides) played a pivotal role in guiding their followers.<sup>21</sup>

In the *pesantren* tradition, the influence of *tarekat* is evident in the immense respect the *murid* (disciples) have for the *kiai* (Islamic scholars), who often serve as *murshid*. According to Clifford Geertz, this respect arises from the *Kiai*'s role as a *cultural broker*. As such, the *kiai* or *murshid* filters external influences, accepting those deemed beneficial and rejecting those seen as harmful to the community they lead.<sup>22</sup>

This concept of the *kiai* or *murshid* as a cultural broker

---

<sup>20</sup> van Bruinessen, "Controversies and Polemics Involving the Sufi Orders in Twentieth-Century Indonesia."

<sup>21</sup> Azra, *Jaringan ulama*; van Bruinessen, "The Origins and Development of *Ṣūfī Orders* (Tarekat) in Southeast Asia."

<sup>22</sup> Clifford Geertz, "The Javanese Kijaji: The Changing Role of a Cultural Broker," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 2, no. 2 (1960): 228–49, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/177816>.

resonates with the experiences of *tarekat* followers in Nyatnyono Village. A devotee of the Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah and Syadziliyyah *tarekat* shared that his primary motivation for joining was to receive spiritual guidance in worship. He believed that a *murshid* would oversee his actions and provide guidance, even through extraordinary means such as dreams or other spiritual signs. For him, the *murshid* is a critical figure for ensuring salvation in worldly and spiritual dimensions.<sup>23</sup>

Similarly, a follower of the Syadziliyyah order elaborated on the transformative influence of joining the *tarekat*. He explained that being part of the Syadziliyyah teachings encouraged him to maintain exemplary moral conduct toward God's creations, including animals, plants, and the natural world. Through his *tarekat* practice, he developed a stronger faith in Allah's destiny, enabling him to navigate life's challenges with patience and gratitude. He expressed confidence that unwavering belief in Allah's power and promises—such as the assurance of paradise for those who remain patient and thankful—gave him inner peace and resilience, even in difficult times.<sup>24</sup>

These personal testimonies underscore the profound spiritual and moral influence of *tarekat* on the community of Nyatnyono Village. The *tarekat* provides a structured framework for worship, moral conduct, and a deep trust in divine will, shaping individual and communal religious practices. Within the *tarekat*, two primary dimensions emerge: theoretical and practical. The practical aspect involves specific *wirid* (recitations) that a practitioner must perform as a guideline for their relationship with Allah, the world, and themselves. The theoretical aspect focuses

---

<sup>23</sup> Informant 2, Interview with Followers of the Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah Order.

<sup>24</sup> Informant 1, Interview with Followers of the Syadziliyyah Order.

on understanding these practices and how they shape the practitioner's relationship with God, the universe, and their inner self.<sup>25</sup> Achieving a higher spiritual rank within the *tarekat* requires a practitioner to integrate these theoretical and practical elements, often through rigorous exercises (*riyadlah*) under the guidance of a *murshid*.

In the Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah *tarekat*, guidance from the *murshid* is provided during communal gatherings held every Friday after prayers at the Subulussalam Mosque. One follower explained that these meetings involve collective *dhikr* (remembrance of Allah), *wirid* recitations, and spiritual advice from the *murshid*. The order has various levels of spiritual practice, starting with the basic requirement of reciting *dhikr* 5,000 times daily, as instructed by the *murshid*.<sup>26</sup> For advanced practitioners, additional disciplines such as fasting *nyirih*—a strict fast prohibiting food and drink from dawn to dawn and consumption of animal-based foods—are undertaken. This practice is performed under the explicit guidance and permission of the *murshid*.<sup>27</sup>

In the Syadziliyyah *tarekat*, practitioners focus on daily *wirid* such as reciting *istighfar* (seeking Allah's forgiveness) and *salawat* (sending blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad) 100 times after *Maghrib* and *Fajr* prayers. If circumstances prevent the practitioner from completing the *wirid* at the designated times, they may perform them later.<sup>28</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup> Haidar Bagir, *Buku Saku Tasawuf* (Mizan, 2006).

<sup>26</sup> Informant 2, Interview with Followers of the Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah Order.

<sup>27</sup> Husnul Hidayati, "Riyadhah Puasa Sebagai Model Pendidikan Pengendalian Diri Untuk Pemenuhan Kebutuhan Fisiologis," *Millah: Journal of Religious Studies*, September 27, 2020, 111–34, <https://doi.org/10.20885/millah.vol20.iss1.art5>.

<sup>28</sup> Informant 1, Interview with Followers of the Syadziliyyah Order.

The primary goal of *tarekat* practitioners is to achieve personal piety through adherence to prescribed practices, unwavering trust in the murshid, and a deep commitment to drawing closer to Allah. This spiritual journey, often long and challenging, is not simply about following a set of rituals but an ongoing transformation of the self. It directs practitioners toward spiritual milestones, starting with moral refinement in their relationship with Allah and others. This process involves actively striving to embody divine attributes such as mercy, patience, and humility, extending to interactions with others. By nurturing these qualities, the practitioner gradually sheds negative traits such as arrogance, greed, and envy, while cultivating virtues like compassion, generosity, and gratitude. Ultimately, these efforts lead to the purification of the soul (*tazkiyatun nafs*), a transformative process that eradicates undesirable qualities and nurtures virtuous character traits, drawing one closer to the divine essence.<sup>29</sup>

Central to the discipline of the *tarekat* is the mastery of one's passions, the cultivation of self-discipline, and a commitment to rigorous spiritual practices. These elements are embodied in the recitation of *wirid*—a set of prescribed prayers or invocations—which forms a key part of the practitioner's daily life. The *wirid* serves not only as a means of continuous remembrance of Allah (*dhikr*) but also as a tool for inner transformation. For a *salik* (spiritual seeker) to attain a heightened spiritual position before Allah, they must progress through various *maqamat* (spiritual stations), each representing a step toward closeness to the divine. This ascension is achieved through dedicated worship, resolute resistance to base desires (*mujahadah*), and disciplined spiritual exercises (*riyadlah*). Each level brings the practitioner closer to divine perfection, refining

---

<sup>29</sup> Bagir, *Buku Saku Tasawuf*.

their ethical and spiritual character. The ultimate goal is the attainment of noble virtues (*adab*), such as humility, sincerity, and love, which are necessary for full spiritual ascent. These practices elevate the practitioner's entire being, aligning their actions, thoughts, and emotions with the highest moral and spiritual ideals.<sup>30</sup>

By focusing primarily on personal piety, *tarekat* practitioners work on self-improvement and strengthen their relationship with Allah. This process is not merely about individual spiritual growth; it also involves contributing to the moral and spiritual well-being of the larger community. The teachings of the *tarekat* foster a profound sense of moral responsibility, encouraging practitioners to act with integrity, empathy, and solidarity. This sense of responsibility is particularly evident within the community of Nyatnyono Village, where the influence of *tarekat* practices has fostered a strong sense of social cohesion and communal solidarity.

During the challenging COVID-19 pandemic, for example, the social care and mutual aid characteristic of the Nyatnyono community played a significant role in supporting one another. The people's commitment to *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) and their collective sense of responsibility helped them navigate challenging economic conditions and health threats. The moral principles ingrained through *tarekat* practice became a driving force behind the village's collective resilience, enabling them to overcome the pandemic and mitigate the spread of the virus.<sup>31</sup> These practices have also contributed to the village's identity as a religious tourism hub and spiritual activity. This study explores the role and influence of *tarekat* practices in shaping the religious

---

<sup>30</sup> Bagir.

<sup>31</sup> Parsunto, Interview with Head of Nyatnyono Village.

culture and social cohesion of Nyatnyono Village, particularly in the context of its identity as a religious tourism destination.<sup>32</sup>

These findings align with those of Novalina et al. (2021) and Setiawan (2021), who argue that Sufi concepts such as self-emptying in controlling emotions, piety, total submission to Allah, acceptance of existence, and rejection of greed and stinginess, among other teachings, help guide one's perspective toward eternity by releasing worldly desires and leading a pure life. In the face of life's challenges, particularly during the pandemic, dependence on God should not be seen as an obstacle but rather as an opportunity to demonstrate one's faith.<sup>33</sup> This was also true for the people of Nyatnyono. Amid difficult circumstances, they supported one another, strengthening their cultural bonds, including those within the *tarekat* community, and bravely navigated the hardships of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In summary, the practices of the *tarekat* in Nyatnyono Village offer a holistic approach to spiritual and moral development, fostering personal piety while strengthening community bonds. Through the guidance of the *murshid*, the spiritual practices, and the shared commitment to ethical living, the *tarekat* plays a profound role in shaping not only individual destinies but also the collective moral fabric of the community.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the *tarekat* in Nyatnyono Village plays a foundational role in shaping the community's individual spirituality and collective identity. Through the guidance of the

---

<sup>32</sup> Informant 2, Interview with Followers of the Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah Order.

<sup>33</sup> Novalina, Sabdono, and Samego, "Sufism and Kenosis"; Setiawan, "Sufism and Pandemic."



*murshid*, practitioners develop personal piety, which enhances their relationship with Allah and strengthens their resilience in the face of challenges. The regular gatherings of *tarekat* followers foster unity, solidarity, and shared values, particularly evident during the COVID-19 pandemic when these practices helped the community navigate difficult times. Additionally, the *tarekat* contributes to Nyatnyono's identity as a centre for religious tourism, highlighting its broader cultural significance. Ultimately, the *tarekat's* influence extends beyond individual spiritual growth and is pivotal in reinforcing the village's moral and social fabric.

### **Acknowledgement**

I want to express my sincere gratitude to the Head of Nyatnyono Village and the two informants from the Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah (TQN) and Syadziliyah congregations for their time and willingness to participate in the interview sessions. I sincerely appreciate their generosity in sharing their valuable insights and experiences.

## REFERENCES

- Ahmad, Maghfur, Abdul Aziz, Mochammad N. Afad, Siti M. Muniroh, and Husnul Qodim. "The Sufi Order Against Religious Radicalism in Indonesia." *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 77, no. 4 (August 3, 2021). <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v77i4.6417>.
- Azra, Azyumardi. *Jaringan ulama: Timur Tengah dan Kepulauan Nusantara Abad XVII & XVIII: Akar Pembaruan Islam Indonesia*. Jakarta: Kencana, 2004.
- Bagir, Haidar. *Buku Saku Tasawuf*. Mizan, 2006.
- Bruinessen, Martin van. "Controversies and Polemics Involving the Sufi Orders in Twentieth-Century Indonesia." Brill, 1999. [https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004452725\\_039](https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004452725_039).
- . "Studies of Sufism and the Sufi Orders in Indonesia." *Die Welt Des Islams* 38, no. 2 (1998): 192–219. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1570744>.
- . "The Origins and Development of Šūfī Orders (Tarekat) in Southeast Asia." *Studia Islamika* 1, no. 1 (1994). <https://doi.org/10.15408/sdi.v1i1.864>.
- Creswell, J.W., and C.N. Poth. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. 4th ed. SAGE Publications, 2016.
- Flick, Uwe. *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis*. SAGE Publications Ltd, 2014. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446282243>.
- Geertz, Clifford. "The Javanese Kijaji: The Changing Role of a

Cultural Broker.” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 2, no. 2 (1960): 228–49.  
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/177816>.

Hidayati, Husnul. “Riyadhah Puasa Sebagai Model Pendidikan Pengendalian Diri Untuk Pemenuhan Kebutuhan Fisiologis.” *Millah: Journal of Religious Studies*, September 27, 2020, 111–34.  
<https://doi.org/10.20885/millah.vol20.iss1.art5>.

Hujatulatif, Adha, and Chanif Ainun Naim. “Nilai Tasawuf Pesantren dan Tradisi Syawir sebagai Strategi Cultural Protection dari Lone-Wolf Terrorism.” *Al-Banjari : Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 20, no. 2 (December 30, 2021). <https://doi.org/10.18592/al-banjari.v20i2.4759>.

Informant 1. Interview with Followers of the Syadziliyah Order, November 18, 2022.

Informant 2. Interview with Followers of the Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah Order, November 19, 2022.

Novalina, Martina, Erastus Sabdono, and Indria Samego. “Sufism and Kenosis: The Basis of One’s Resilience as a Zoom Politicon.” *Teosofia: Indonesian Journal of Islamic Mysticism* 10, no. 2 (December 23, 2021): 267–81.  
<https://doi.org/10.21580/tos.v10i2.9479>.

Parsunto. Interview with Head of Nyatnyono Village, November 20, 2022.

Pitaloka, Zhazha. “Pengaruh Obyek Wisata Religi Terhadap Kondisi Ekonomi Masyarakat Desa Nyatnyono, Kecamatan Ungaran Barat, Kabupaten Semarang.” Undergraduate Thesis, Universitas Islam Sultan Agung

Semarang, 2021. <http://repository.unissula.ac.id/24446/>.

Setiawan, Mohamad Nur Kholis. "Sufism and Pandemic: Lesson Learned from Sufi Teachings and Its Prominent Figures." *Teosofia: Indonesian Journal of Islamic Mysticism* 10, no. 2 (December 23, 2021): 161–76. <https://doi.org/10.21580/tos.v10i2.10054>.

Sidik. "Mengenal Thariqah Mu'tabarrah Dalam NU (Nahdlatul Ulama)." Baitul Muslim, July 9, 2021. <https://www.baitulmustaqim.com/2021/07/mengenal-thariqah-mutabarrah-dalam-nu.html>.

Suwito, Suwito, Ida Novianti, Suparjo Suparjo, Corry A. Widaputri, and Muhammad 'Azmi Nuha. "Hybrid Sufism for Enhancing Quality of Life: Ethnographic Perspective in Indonesia." *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 78, no. 4 (March 30, 2022): 8. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v78i4.7198>.

Zamzami, Mukhammad, Fikri Mahzumi, and Abd A'la. "Tarekat and Politics in Indonesia: Contested Authority between Murshids in the Tarekat Qadiriyyah Wa Naqsyabandiyah in East Java." *Teosofi: Jurnal Tasawuf Dan Pemikiran Islam* 12, no. 2 (December 1, 2022): 187–208. <https://doi.org/10.15642/teosofi.2022.12.2.187-208>.