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THE ACCULTURATION OF SUFISM AND JAVA CULTURE IN THE AL-KHIDMAH DZIKIR *SUROAN AND BANYU MANAQIB* LOCAL TRADITIONS

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Abstract

The acculturation between Sufism and local culture is one manifestation of the dynamic diversity of Indonesian society, particularly within the context of Javanese culture. The Majelis Dzikir Al-Khidmah serves as a space where Sufi teachings and local traditions intersect, as reflected in the Suroan and Banyu Manaqib traditions. This study aims to examine the forms of acculturation between Sufism and Javanese culture, the process by which this acculturation occurs, and its significance for Sufi practices within the Majelis Dzikir Al-Khidmah. This study employs a qualitative method, specifically a literature review (library research). Data were obtained from books, scientific journal articles, and various other relevant academic sources, and were then analyzed using descriptive analytical methods. The results indicate that acculturation is evident in the preservation of local cultural elements, which are subsequently given new orientation and meaning through Islamic and Sufi values. The Suroan tradition preserves the “Satu Suro” observance, which is integrated with prayers, memorial ceremonies (haul), dhikr, and the spiritual practices of the Qadiriyyah wa Naqshbandiyyah Sufi order. Meanwhile, the Banyu Manaqib tradition retains the use of water which bears similarities to the suwuk tradition but channels it through the recitation of the manaqib of Sheikh Abdul Qadir al-Jilani, prayers, dhikr, tawasul, and blessings. Thus, acculturation within the Majelis Dzikir Al-Khidmah takes place through the integration and reconstruction of meaning without erasing cultural and local identities, allowing Sufism to be present contextually in daily life.

Keywords: *Acculturation, Sufism, Al-Khidmah Dhikr Assembly, Suroan, Banyu Manaqib*

Abstrak

Akulturası antara tasawuf dan budaya lokal merupakan salah satu bentuk dinamika keberagaman masyarakat Indonesia, khususnya dalam konteks budaya Jawa. Majelis Dzikir Al-Khidmah menjadi salah satu ruang pertemuan antara ajaran tasawuf dan tradisi lokal yang tercermin dalam tradisi Suroan dan Banyu Manaqib. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji bentuk akulturası tasawuf dan budaya Jawa, proses terjadinya akulturası, serta maknanya bagi praktik tasawuf

dalam Majelis Dzikir Al-Khidmah. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan jenis penelitian studi pustaka (*library research*). Data diperoleh dari buku, artikel jurnal ilmiah dan berbagai sumber akademik lainnya yang relevan, kemudian dianalisis secara deskriptif analitis. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa akulturasi tampak pada pemertahanan unsur budaya lokal yang kemudian diberi orientasi dan makna baru melalui nilai-nilai Islam dan tasawuf. Tradisi Suroan mempertahankan momentum Satu Suro yang dipadukan dengan doa, haul, dzikir, dan amalan Tarekat Qodiriyah wa Naqsyabandiyah. Sementara itu, Banyu Manaqib mempertahankan penggunaan air yang memiliki kemiripan dengan tradisi suwuk, tetapi diarahkan melalui pembacaan manaqib Syekh Abdul Qodir Al-Jailani, doa, dzikir, tawasul, dan keberkahan. Dengan demikian, akulturasi dalam Majelis Dzikir Al-Khidmah berlangsung melalui integrasi dan rekonstruksi makna tanpa menghilangkan identitas budaya, lokal, sehingga tasawuf dapat hadir secara kontekstual dalam kehidupan masyarakat.

Kata kunci: Akulturasi, Tasawuf, Majelis Dzikir Al-Khidmah, Suroan, Banyu Manaqib

INTRODUCTION

As a country rich in cultural and religious diversity, Indonesia serves as a setting for dynamic interaction between Islamic principles and local traditions. One fascinating phenomenon in this regard is the fusion of Sufism as the spiritual aspect of Islam with Javanese culture, including its symbols and mystical practices. The Majelis Dzikir Al-Khidmah, as one of the thriving Sufi communities in Java, serves as a concrete example of how Sufism is not only viewed as a transcendental teaching but is also adapted within the framework of local culture. The process of acculturation between Sufism and Javanese culture within the Majelis Dzikir Al-Khidmah not only demonstrates Islam's flexibility in responding to its sociocultural environment but also reveals how Islamic spirituality can be embodied through Javanese traditions without compromising the essence of its teachings. Rituals such as communal dhikr, the use of Javanese terms in Sufi teachings, and the integration of Sufi values with Javanese concepts of inner spirituality demonstrate a unique reciprocal relationship between religion and culture.

This study aims to analyze the form of acculturation between Sufi values and Javanese culture, identify the process by which this acculturation took place, and understand its significance in Sufi practices at the Majelis Dzikir Al-Khidmah. This study is expected not only to contribute to a broader understanding of the relationship between Islam and local culture, but also to expand our understanding of the dynamics of religious practices among communities in Indonesia.

Research similar to this study includes: first, a journal article titled "Sufism and Cultural Acculturation (An Analysis of Sufism from the Perspective of Culture and Education)" by Akhiyat, State Islamic Institute of Jember, 2016. This study also examines acculturation but focuses on the relationship between the need for Islamic spirituality (particularly Sufism) and changes in the sociocultural life of society in the contemporary

era.¹ Second, a journal article titled “The Relationship Between Sufism and Cultural Acculturation: An Integrative Study of Spirituality and Cultural Education.” By Akhiyat, Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq State Islamic University, Jember, 2024.² This study also examines acculturation but focuses on how Sufism interacts with local culture through the process of acculturation, as well as how this fusion shapes Islamic spiritual practices and expressions in community life amid social change and contemporary challenges. Third, a journal article titled “The Dynamics of the Tijaniyah Order at the Darussalam Islamic Boarding School: Acculturation of the Order and Da’wah in Brebes.” By Rosyidah, Siti Rohmah Soekarba, and Widodo, University of Indonesia and Semarang State University, 2025.³ This study also examines acculturation but focuses on how the Tijaniyah Order adapts and undergoes acculturation within the local context at the Darussalam Islamic Boarding School in Jatibarang, Brebes. Fourth, a journal article titled “Symbols of Sufi Society: A Study of the Role of the Al-Khidmah Dhikr Assembly” by Muhammad Nur Hakim, Akhmad Sirojuddin, and Ari Kartiko, KH. Abdul Chalim University, Mojokerto, 2023.⁴ This study also examines the Al-Khidmah Dhikr Assembly but focuses on how Sufi symbols are manifested and interpreted in the practices of the Al-Khidmah Dhikr Assembly within the Talang Hamlet community in Prigen, Pasuruan. Fifth, a thesis titled “The Perceptions of the Al-Khidmah Congregation Regarding the Recitation of Qur’anic Verses in the Pitulasan Ritual (A Study of the Living Qur’an at the Miftahul Huda Mosque in Ngeroto Village, Gubug Subdistrict, Grobogan Regency)” by Noviana Dwi Aryani, IAIN Kudus 2023.⁵ This study also examines the Majelis Dzikir Al-Khidmah but focuses on the Pitulasan ritual within the Majelis Dzikir Al-Khidmah, specifically in terms of the ritual’s execution and the congregation’s interpretation of Qur’anic verses.

Sixth, the journal article titled “Cultural Acculturation in the Da’wah of Maulana Malik Ibrahim” by Novita Siswayanti and Ahmad Yunani, 2021.⁶ This study also examines acculturation but focuses on how it integrates Islamic values and traditions with the local culture of the Javanese people without eliminating cultural elements that had developed previously. Seventh, the journal article titled “Sufism and Healing: A Study of Manaqib

¹ Akhiyat, “Tasawuf dan Akulturasi Budaya (Telaah Tasawuf dalam Perspektif Culture and Education)” 1, no. 1 (2016).

² Akhiyat, “Relasi Tasawuf dan Akulturasi Budaya: Kajian Integratif antara Spiritualitas dan Pendidikan Budaya”, *Pedagogika : Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Kependidikan*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 2024.

³ Siti Rohmah Soekarba, “Dinamika Tarekat Tijaniyah Di Pesantren Darussalam : Akulturasi Tarekat Dan Dakwah Di Brebes,” n.d.

⁴ Muhammad Nur Hakim et al., “Simbol Masyarakat Sufistik : Studi Peran Majelis Dzikir Al-Khidmah” 4, no. 3 (2023).

⁵ Noviani Dwi Aryani, “Persepsi Jama’ah Al-Khidmah Terhadap Pembacaan Ayat-Ayat Al-Qur’an dalam Ritual Pitulsan (Studi Living Qur’an di Mushola Miftahul Huda Desa Ngeroto Kecamatan Gubug Kabupaten Grobogan)”, Skripsi 2023.

⁶ Novita Siswayanti, Ahmad Yunani, “Akulturasi Budaya Dalam Dakwah Maulana Malik Ibrahim”, *Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan dan Keislaman (JIPKIS)*, Vol. 1, No. 03, Desember, 2021.

Water and the Healing Traditions of the Aolia Community, Panggang, Gunung Kidul, Yogyakarta” by Ida Noviati and Arif Hidayat, State Islamic Institute of Purwokerto, 2020.⁷ This study also examines Banyu Manaqib but focuses on the meaning, value, and practice of Banyu Manaqib as part of the Sufi tradition and as a healing medium among the Aolia Panggang congregation in Yogyakarta. Eighth, a journal article titled “The Suroan Tradition as a Tracing of the Walisongo’s Footsteps (A Study in Jatirejo Village, Suruh Subdistrict, Semarang Regency),” by Damar Safera and Muhammad Chairul Huda, State Islamic Institute of Salatiga, 2020.⁸ This study also examines the Suroan tradition but focuses on how economic and religious motivations influence the practice of the Suroan tradition in Jatirejo Village, Suruh Subdistrict, Semarang Regency.

The difference between this study and previous research is that earlier studies on the Majelis Dzikir Al-Khidmah tended to focus on the practice of banyu manaqib, particularly its meaning and sacredness. Meanwhile, studies on the Suroan tradition and its connection to banyu manaqib in the context of the acculturation of Sufism and Javanese culture remain limited. The novelty of this study lies in its integrative analysis of the Suroan and Banyu Manaqib traditions as two practices that represent the process of acculturation between Sufi values and Javanese culture within the Majelis Dzikir Al-Khidmah.

According to Koentjaraningrat, acculturation is a process that occurs when a social group is exposed to cultural elements from another culture. These cultural elements are then gradually accepted and integrated into the local culture, without erasing the identity and original characteristics of the existing culture.⁹ Acculturation can also be understood as the process of blending two or more cultures that takes place harmoniously without causing conflict among the interacting cultures. In line with this, Suyono defines acculturation as the process of accepting or adopting one or more cultural elements that occurs as a result of interaction and encounter between different cultures.¹⁰ The acculturation between Islam and local cultures in Indonesia has given rise to a distinctive

⁷ Pengobatan Jamaah et al., “Tasawuf Dan Penyembuhan : Studi Atas Air Manaqib,” n.d., 151–70.

⁸ Damar Safera, Muhammad Chairul Huda, “Tradisi Suroan Sebagai Tapak Tilas Walisongo (Studi di Desa Jatirejo Kecamatan Suruh Kabupaten Semarang),” *Al-Mada; Jurnal Agama, Sosial dan Budaya*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (2020).

⁹ Sovie Kresnadayanti Puspita, Wadiyono, Wandah Wibawanto, “Kajian Interdisiplin: Telaah Seni Rupa dan Tari melalui Teori Akulturasi dan Teori Motivasi pada Tari Ronggeng Warak Karya Tari Sekar Kemuning,” *Jurnal of Islamic Art and Architecture (JIAA)*, Vol. 1 No. 2, October 2023. Hal. 2

¹⁰ Endah Maryamah, Etty Ratnawati, “Akulturasi Islam dan Budaya Lokal pada Tradisi Bongkar Bumi di Desa Cupang Kecamatan Gempol Kabupaten Cirebon,” *Jurnal Eduksos Volume VII* No 2, Desember 2018, hal. 5

form of religious practice, through a harmonious fusion of Islamic values with traditions that have developed within society.¹¹

Cultural acculturation occurs when different cultures are closely intertwined over a long period of time, causing each culture to change in order to adapt to the other. These values gradually began to permeate Javanese society. The relationship between Islamic culture and Javanese traditions is a moral imperative, which means it shapes the overarching character of those traditions.¹² Thus, it can be understood that acculturation is a process of encounter and fusion between two or more cultures that results in a new cultural form, while still retaining elements of the original cultures. The process of acculturation can occur when interactions between different cultures take place continuously and with a sufficiently high degree of intensity. Acculturation, as a result of these interactions, can influence one of the cultures involved or both cultures simultaneously.

This study employs a qualitative method in the form of a literature review. A literature review is a research method that involves collecting and analyzing various sources of literature relevant to the subject and focus of the study.¹³ This method was used to gain an in-depth understanding of the acculturation of Sufi values within the Majelis Dzikir Al-Khidmah, particularly through the practices of Suroan and banyu manaqib in the Javanese cultural context. The data sources for this study were secondary sources, including books, scientific journal articles, theses, and various other academic sources that support the research discussion.

Data collection was conducted through a review and documentation of various sources of literature relevant to the research focus. The literature was then critically analyzed, classified by theme, and compared across different sources. The collected data was subsequently analyzed using a descriptive-analytical approach by identifying concepts, forms of practice, Sufi values, and the relationship between the Suroan and Banyu Manaqib traditions within the Majelis Dzikir Al-Khidmah community. The analysis involved interpreting findings from various sources to gain an understanding of the process by which Sufi teachings and Javanese culture intersect. Through this analysis, this study seeks to reveal how the practices of Suroan and Banyu Manaqib can serve as expressions of Sufi values while also demonstrating a process of acculturation with local Javanese culture. Thus, this study focuses on the nature of the acculturation

¹¹ Reghifa Khalimatus Syadiyah, Siti Sholikhati, and Siti Prihatiningtyas, "Akulturasi Islam Dan Budaya Lokal Dalam Fesyen Hijab Di Indonesia Pendahuluan" 1, no. 2 (2024): 116–26.

¹² Adisty Nurrahmah Laili et al., "Akulturasi Islam Dengan Budaya Di Pulau Jawa," n.d. Volume4, No. 2, Tahun, 2021, hal.5

¹³ Muannif Ridwan, Suhar AM, Bahrul Ulum, Fauzi Muhammad, "Pentingnya Penerapan Literature Review Pada Penelitian Ilmiah", Vol. 2, No.1, 2021. Hal. 3

between Sufism and Javanese culture, the process by which this acculturation occurs, and its significance for Sufi practices within the Majelis Dzikir Al-Khidmah.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

KH. Achmad Asrori Al-Ishaqy and the Genealogy of Al-Khidmah

The story of KH. Achmad Asrori Al-Ishaqy's life begins in the village where he was born Jati Purwo, Semampir District, Surabaya on August 17, 1951. He was the fifth of ten children. His father's name was KH. Muhammad Usman Al-Ishaqi. His full name is Achmad Asrori bin Utsman al-Ishaqi. He is the son of KH. Utsman al-Ishaqi and Nyai Hj. Siti Qomariyah. Unlike his siblings, who still live near the Roudlotul Muta'allimin Islamic boarding school, he chose the village of Kedinding Lor in Kenjeran District, Surabaya, as his place of residence. In this village, located near the Kali Kedinding River, Kyai Asrori later founded an Islamic boarding school named Al-Fithrah, which means "purity." The Al-Fithrah Islamic Boarding School complex occupies a very large area of land by Surabaya standards.¹⁴ The Assalafi Al-Fithrah Islamic Boarding School is an Islamic educational institution that was founded, has grown, and continues to develop within the community; one of its goals is to preserve and promote akhlaqul karimah and the practical values of the salafush shalih.¹⁵

Even in his youth, signs of Kyai Asrori's leadership were already evident. After studying at several Islamic boarding schools across the archipelago namely in East Java, West Java, and Central Java The young Kyai Asrori carried out his da'wah among children and street youth. Although on a smaller scale, at first glance this method of da'wah is quite unique because it resembles the approach once used by the Wali Songo namely, acculturating Islamic culture with local traditions that were already deeply rooted in society. They did not immediately eradicate local cultures that at the time could be considered "un-Islamic," such as wayang performances, traditional music, and folk dances. Instead, these local cultures were utilized as a means to introduce Islam to the indigenous population. As a result, Islam subsequently spread widely throughout the archipelago.

It has become common knowledge that the young Kyai Asrori is a charismatic, courteous, and neutral religious leader, known for his nonpartisan stance toward specific religious groups or political parties. It is precisely this moderate stance that has earned Kyai Asrori the respect of people from diverse social strata and backgrounds. The assemblies

¹⁴ Fatchur Rozi, "Internalisasi Konseling Metode Sufi KH. Ahmad Asrori Al-Ishaqi dalam Membangun Karakter Sufi Pada Santri PP. Al-Fithrah Kedinding Lor Surabaya", Skripsi UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, 2019, Hal. 47-49.

¹⁵ Ali Mastur and Al Fithrah Surabaya, "PESANTREN ASSALAFI AL FITHRAH PERSPEKTIF EDUCATIONAL MARKETING" **ف.ف. 13**, no. 30 (2023), hal. 4.

he founded are inclusive and open to anyone and any group. Because there is no sense of exclusivity, it is not surprising that in the assemblies he leads, civil servants and government officials who, by and large, hold diverse religious or political views often appear to get along harmoniously and are willing to sit together in the same assembly.

In 1989, Kyai Asrori married Moethia Setjawati. From this marriage, he was blessed with two sons and three daughters. In order from the eldest, they are Siera an-Nadia, Saviera Es-Salafia, Mohammad Ayn el-Yaqin, Mohammad Nur el-Yaqin, and Sheila Ash-Shabarina. Kyai Asrori passed away at the age of 58. He died in 2009, specifically on Tuesday, August 18, 2009, which coincided with the 26th of Sha'ban 1430 AH. He was 58 years old at the time, having suffered from an illness for at least three years. He was buried at the al-Salafi al-Fithrah Islamic Boarding School complex at 10:30 a.m. WIB, as reported by the online media outlet detik.com on Tuesday, August 18, 2009. He died from complications of his illness. Before his death, he had also undergone surgery and medical checkups in Singapore.

That month, Kyai Asrori still managed to lead the Haul Akbar at the al-Salafi al-Fithrah Islamic Boarding School, using an oxygen tank provided by his personal doctor and placed beside him as a breathing aid. Throughout his prolonged illness, Kyai Asrori remained steadfast in attending the zikr gatherings he had been organizing for decades in various regions. This demonstrated Kyai Asrori's tenacity in spreading the practices of the al-Salaf al-Shalih scholars. It was also a tangible expression of his love for his congregation. The Haul held in 2009 at the al-Salafi al-Fithrah Islamic Boarding School marked his final gathering with hundreds of thousands of his students and congregants.

The passing of Kyai Asrori is a source of profound grief for the disciples of the Qadiriyyah wa Naqshbandiyyah Sufi Order, which he led and which has spread throughout nearly all of Indonesia and several countries in Southeast Asia. The passing of this kind-hearted spiritual guide has also left an immeasurable sense of sorrow among his devotees and admirers who are members of the Jamaah al-Khidmah organization, which he founded back in 2005.¹⁶

History and Characteristics of the Al-Khidmah Zikr Assembly

The Al-Khidmah Community is a group of people whose principles have been established and practiced by the Sufi Order's teachers, the Salafu Sholih scholars, and the elders. KH. Achmad Asrori Al-Ishaqy pioneered and developed the Al-Khidmah study circles and gatherings beginning in 1987 in Surabaya and Gresik. At that time, the gatherings were still called "orong-orong." He then gathered a group of followers to

¹⁶ *Ibid*, Hal. 52-54.

hold dzikr gatherings or gatherings of knowledge, which began by going from house to house, village to village, and town to town.¹⁷

Kyai Asrori engages with the hobbies of street children such as playing music, hanging out, and so on and it is through these activities that he subtly imparts his knowledge during casual conversations when they gather. It is clear that in his da'wah, Kyai Asrori tries to connect with street youth on a psychological level. Thus, once their interest is piqued, they will naturally be more psychologically prepared to accept new and more beneficial ideas.¹⁸ At every event, KH. Achmad Asrori Al-Ishaqy always encourages and invites the attendees to come to the next event in another area near the current venue. In addition, KH. Achmad Asrori Al-Ishaqy also always urges the attendees to invite relatives, neighbors, and friends who have not yet attended to come to the upcoming event.¹⁹

As time went on, more and more young people became interested in the methods and concepts taught by Kyai Asrori, until eventually, Kyai Asrori invited them to hold manaqib gatherings and religious study sessions in Gresik, East Java. The first such gathering was held in the village of Bedilan, and later became a regular monthly event at that location. These gatherings featured readings from the manaqib of Sheikh Abdul Qadir al-Jilani, recitations of the maulid, and question-and-answer sessions on religious matters.

In his role as a spiritual guide (murshid) of the Sufi order, who constantly guides students or seekers (salik) on their journey to draw closer to Allah SWT, KH. Achmad Asrori Al-Ishaqy considers it necessary to organize gatherings and spiritual practices as a means of guidance. These devotional gatherings need to be organized and prepared by dedicated individuals, rather than being handled concurrently by the Kyai and the Imam Khususy, so that the Kyai (leaders of the gatherings) can focus on the devotional practices and remain free from other matters that may not necessarily benefit everyone. Thus, a religious organization named "Perkumpulan Jamaah Al-Khidmah" was established. This organization was officially declared on Sunday, Legi, the 23rd of Dhu al-Q'dah in the year 1426 AH, or December 25, 2005 CE, at the As-Salafi Al-Fitrah Islamic Boarding School in Meteseh, Semarang, Central Java.

The Al-Khidmah congregation is open to the general public not only to students who have pledged allegiance to KH. Achmad Asrori Al-Ishaqy, but also to the mu'taqidin,

¹⁷ Anita Kusumawati, "PERAN MAJLIS DZIKIR AL-KHIDMAH DALAM MEMBENTUK AKHLAK DAN UKHUWAH ISLAMIAH MASYARAKAT DESA TRISONO BABADAN PONOROGO, 2021, Skripsi IAIN PONOROGO, Hal. 38.

¹⁸ Fatchur Rozi, "Internalisasi Konseling Metode Sufi KH. Ahmad Asrori Al-Ishaqy dalam Membangun Karakter Sufi Pada Santri PP. Al-Fithrah Kedinding Lor Surabaya", Hal.51.

¹⁹ Anita Kusumawati, SKRIPSI "PERAN MAJLIS DZIKIR AL-KHIDMAH DALAM MEMBENTUK AKHLAK DAN UKHUWAH ISLAMIAH MASYARAKAT DESA TRISONO BABADAN PONOROGO, Hal.39.

that is, those who possess strong faith. They are people who love, gather together, and follow the spiritual practices, moral conduct, and behavior of the Sufi masters or the Salafus Shaleh scholars.²⁰ Al-Khidmah is a jam'iyah, or zikr assembly, founded by KH. Achmad Asrori bin Oetsman Al-Ishaqy in 1987. The assembly is based at the Al-Salafi Al-Fithrah Islamic Boarding School, located at 99 Kedinding Lor Street, Tanah Kali Kedinding Village, Kenjeran District, Surabaya. The Al-Khidmah Zikr Assembly officially established its leadership following the national conference and halal bi halal event in Semarang in 2005, specifically on December 23, 2005.

The term "Al-Khidmah" first appeared when the students sent out invitation letters addressed to the local community; in the corner of each invitation was written the word "Al-Khidmah," which means "servant" or "to serve." Gradually, the local community began referring to the dzikir gathering organized by the congregation at the Al-Fithrah Islamic Boarding School as the Al-Khidmah Dzikir Gathering. And that name is still in use today.

The Al-Khidmah congregation has the following vision: "To foster a generation of righteous men and women who are prosperous both physically and spiritually, who are grateful, and who can bring joy to their families, parents, teachers, and even the Great Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), in accordance with the guidance of the Quran and the hadith, as well as the moral teachings of the Salafuna as-Shalih." This vision is carried out through Al-Khidmah's mission as follows: first, to foster righteous families who are prosperous both physically and spiritually, who enjoy gathering for zikr, maulid, and manaqib gatherings, and who send prayers to their parents. Second, to foster a righteous community that is prosperous both physically and spiritually, one that enjoys gathering in gatherings of dhikr, maulid, and manaqib, and sending prayers to their parents. Third, to foster righteous public officials who are prosperous both physically and spiritually, who enjoy gathering in gatherings of dhikr, maulid, and manaqib, and sending prayers to their parents. Fourth, to foster a congregation of righteous men and women who are prosperous in both this world and the hereafter, who enjoy gathering in gatherings of dhikr, maulid, and manaqib, and who send prayers to their parents. Fifth, to foster righteous leaders who are prosperous both physically and spiritually, who enjoy gathering in dzikr, maulid, and manaqib gatherings, and who send prayers to their parents. Sixth, to foster initiatives that can improve the community's well-being, so that they may be more steadfast in their worship. Below is the emblem of the Al-Khidmah Dzikir Council:

²⁰ Anita Kusumawati, SKRIPSI "PERAN MAJLIS DZIKIR AL-KHIDMAH DALAM MEMBENTUK AKHLAK DAN UKHUWAH ISLAMIAH MASYARAKAT DESA TRISONO BABADAN PONOROGO, 2021, H. 38-39.



Figure 1: Emblem/symbol of the Al-Khidmah Zikir Council

The image above has the following meanings: First, the pen symbolizes continuous learning. Second, the pen pointing downward signifies the pursuit of knowledge from birth until death. Third, the four books represent that all decisions are based on the Quran, hadith, *ijma'*, and *qiyas*. Fourth, the three stars symbolize faith, Islam, and *ihsan*. Fifth, the prayer beads symbolize following the example of the righteous predecessors (*salafuna as-shalih*). Sixth, the bead at the end of the string pointing inward signifies sincerity and devotion in serving Allah SWT. Seventh, the long bead at the end of the string pointing upward symbolizes humility, self-reflection, and wisdom in seeking the mercy of Allah SWT.

Over time, the Al-Khidmah Zikr Assembly has experienced rapid growth, not only in Indonesia but also in various parts of the world, including Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, Saudi Arabia, Brunei Darussalam, and others. The Al-Khidmah Zikr Assembly is not only organized by civil society but has also penetrated government institutions, such as during the anniversary celebrations of major cities or regencies in Indonesia. In its development, Al-Khidmah has also expanded into major universities under the name "Al-Khidmah Students." Al-Khidmah Student Groups are now present at approximately ninety-three universities in Indonesia, such as UI, UII, UIN, UNPAD, UNNES, ITS, ITB, and others. In addition to universities in Indonesia, there are also several universities in Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei Darussalam, and others.²¹

TQN Al-Oesmaniyah as the Spiritual Foundation of Al-Khidmah

Sufi orders are important institutions in the development of Sufism in Indonesia. Sufi orders also play a role in the spiritual development of the community, the strengthening of moral character, and the fostering of social solidarity. Some Sufi orders in Indonesia have been able to build networks of solidarity that transcend geographical boundaries. Sufi

²¹ Sedyo Pangasih, Luthfi Rahman, "RITUAL AGAMA DAN HARMONI SOSIAL KAUM URBAN: KAJIAN SOSIOLOGIS TERHADAP MUJAHADAH WARGA DI PERUM PANDANA MERDEKA NGALIYAN SEMARANG", *Fikri: Jurnal Kajian Agama, Sosial dan Budaya*, Volume 5 Nomor 2, Desember 2020, H. 261-262.

orders are not merely groups that practice zikr; rather, they are non-formal educational institutions with a clear leadership structure, starting with the Mursyid (local teacher).²² In the Al-Khidmah Zikr Assembly, the Qadiriyyah wa Naqshbandiyyah Order plays a major role in the teachings of the assembly. TQN is an order that combines the teachings of the Qadiriyyah and Naqshbandiyyah orders, with an emphasis on the practice of zikr, moral cultivation, and efforts to draw closer to Allah. This synthesis demonstrates that the practice of Sufism is not only oriented toward spiritual experience but also toward the cultivation of behavior and a religious life in accordance with Sharia.

In the Al-Khidmah Zikr Assembly, an understanding of TQN helps explain why various spiritual practices such as congregational zikr, tawasul, manaqiban, and the recitation of wirid are an integral part of the assembly's activities. These practices can be understood as manifestations of Sufi values that emphasize zikr, respect for teachers and scholars, and the cultivation of a spiritual relationship between human beings and Allah. Thus, TQN is not only important as the historical backdrop for the development of Sufi orders in the Indonesian archipelago but also as a framework for understanding the spiritual meaning and purpose of the practices carried out in Al-Khidmah.²³

The Qadiriyyah wa Naqshbandiyyah Order (TQN) became one of the best-known and most widespread Sufi orders in the Indonesian archipelago from the late 19th century through the early 20th century. Its growth was closely tied to the role of Sheikh Khatib Sambas, an Indonesian scholar who founded and developed the TQN through his students in Mecca. These students subsequently brought and spread the teachings of the TQN to various regions of Indonesia; one of them was Sheikh Abdul Karim of Banten. Furthermore, the scholarly lineage of the TQN from Sheikh Khatib Sambas was passed down through Sheikh Ahmad Hasbullah and eventually reached KH Ahmad Asrori al-Ishaqy via his father, Sheikh Muhammad Utsman al-Ishaqy. Thus, the development of TQN in Indonesia is closely linked to the network of Nusantara scholars and serves as a crucial foundation for understanding the Sufi tradition that later flourished within the Majelis Al-Khidmah.

Forms of Acculturation Between Sufism and Javanese Culture

In the Nusantara, particularly on the island of Java, the people generally held deeply rooted beliefs even before the arrival of Islam. Therefore, the various activities they engaged in were inseparable from the influences and values stemming from their belief systems. Furthermore, the activities and traditions that emerged in the societies of the Indonesian

²² Hasan, *Ilmu Tasawuf Konsep, Sejarah, dan Implementasinya dalam Pendidikan Agama Islam*, PT Global Teras Fana : Jawa Tengah, 2026

²³ Rosidi, "TRANSFORMASI RITUAL TAREKAT URBAN AL-QADIRIYAH WA AL-NAQSHABANDIYAH AL-OESMANIYAH", Disertasi UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, 2020, H. 110-115.

archipelago continued to evolve and diversify, adapting to local cultures and customs. This demonstrates that belief systems, religions, and the cultural elements influencing them gave rise to the diverse forms and styles of traditions found today.

In Javanese society, Islam occupies a central position. From a sociological perspective, Islam is not merely a religious doctrine but also an integral part of civilization, culture, and social reality in human life. In practice, Islam encompasses not only universal doctrines but is also manifested in various social institutions shaped by the circumstances, conditions, and dynamics of space and time at a given period. This demonstrates that Islamic teachings, although universal in nature, cannot be entirely divorced from change when they interact with social reality. Therefore, change within Islam is often regarded as the decree of Allah (sunnatullah) that applies to humanity and the universe, encompassing all social groups and environments, and occurring continuously.²⁴

Acculturation is the process of blending or interaction between two or more cultures that influence one another, resulting in changes to the original culture without erasing each culture's distinct identity. One example is acculturation within Javanese local culture. Meanwhile, Sufism possesses several principles that intrinsically make it highly adaptable to diverse cultural contexts. First, its orientation toward the inner dimension and universal values such as love for Allah. Second, the gradualist and wise approach to da'wah (proselytizing) adopted by the great Sufis generally does not involve coercion, but rather invitation. The concept of *urf* (social customs) in *usul al-fiqh* and the wisdom-based approach to da'wah serve as the methodological foundation for Sufis in their interaction with local cultures. They distinguish between the core tenets of faith and worship which cannot be compromised and cultural expressions, which can be infused with Islamic values without altering their form.²⁵

From this perspective, not all of the various traditions currently found in Indonesian society which are the result of acculturation are rejected as being contrary to the principles of Islam as outlined in the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Some traditions can be adopted without compromising Islamic values, while others are incompatible. Therefore, certain cultural practices are still preserved, even though they are no longer practiced exactly as they were before the arrival of Islam. The cultural practices and traditions carried out by society today have undergone acculturation with Islamic values and doctrines. Nevertheless, these cultural practices still reflect the influence of pre-Islamic belief systems, including animism, dynamism, and similar traditional beliefs.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 143-144.

²⁵ Badrudin Kamil dan Acep Nurullah, *Buku Ajar Studi Akhlak Tasawuf*, Bumi Narasi Publishing: 21 Mei 2026, hal. 7

The *Suroan* Assembly as a Form of Acculturation

In the work titled “Ma Huwa al-Manaqib,” every gathering organized by Al-Khidmah or held under the guidance of the order of KH. Achmad Asrori al-Ishaqi always includes three main elements. These three elements are the dzikir gathering, the recitation of the maulid of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), and the recitation of the manaqib of Sheikh Abdul Qadir al-Jilani. Thus, every Al-Khidmah congregation gathering in various regions even throughout Indonesia has a distinctive characteristic that is firmly upheld by its members or followers: the recitation of the manaqib and the dzikir gathering.

Not far from there, the residents of Ngroto hold an annual Suroan gathering, which is characterized by its foundation in the teachings of TQN Utsmaniyyah. They often refer to this event as the “Satu Suro or 1 Muharram” commemoration. In addition to marking the start of the Hijri New Year, this gathering also serves to offer prayers for the elders and respected figures of Ngroto village who have passed away, including Simbah Abdurrahman Ganjur and Syekh Sirojuddin. The “Satu Suro” commemoration tradition has been passed down from generation to generation for decades, but recently the event has begun to be enlivened by a series of activities organized by the Al-Khidmah congregation. This development is closely tied to the blessings and success of the spread of TQN brought to the village of Ngroto by KH. Muhammad Utsman al-Ishaqi.

The Suroan ceremony is a traditional Javanese custom held to commemorate the month of Muharram in the Hijri calendar, specifically on the 1st of Muharram.²⁶ The Javanese people view the month of Suro as a month full of danger, so there are various taboos or prohibitions against certain activities during the month of Suro for example, it is forbidden to travel long distances, as doing so will have dire consequences if the prohibition is violated.²⁷ Regardless of the myths and sacredness of the month of Suro, this Suroan ceremony is an important celebration for the people of Ngroto, with the primary purpose of serving as a means to offer prayers to Allah for the elders and role models in the village of Ngroto. Nevertheless, a small portion of the community who still believe in the sacredness of the month of Suro hold that this Suroan gathering is an effort to draw closer to Allah in order to avoid the dangers and misfortunes believed to be the “malevolence” of the month of Suro. In reality, however, this commemoration is purely intended as a means of offering prayers for the elders of Ngroto village and exemplary figures who have made significant contributions to the propagation of Islam,

²⁶ Desa Sidorejo, “Filosofi Tradisi Suroan (Culture Of Java) Di Desa Sidoerejo Kabupaten Langkat Sumatera Utara” 4, no. 3 (2023): 2939–45.

²⁷ Dusun Bantan, Kabupaten Labuhanbatu Selatan, and Endang Ekowati, “Tradisi Suroan Dan Pengaruhnya Terhadap Keberagamaan Masyarakat The Suroan Tradition and Its Influence on the Religious Society of Bantan Hamlet , Torgamba , South Labuhanbatu Regency” 2, no. 2 (2022): 678–83.

such as Syekh Sirojuddin and Simbah Abdurrahman Ganjur. Indeed, the stories of these two figures are not widely documented in history, but for the people of Ngroto and charismatic figures like Kiai Munir, they are revered figures. Therefore, the graves of these two figures are maintained and honored through the holding of this Suroan gathering. In general, the Suroan tradition also serves as a prayer to ward off various calamities that befall the village, to strengthen the bonds of friendship among the community, to enliven the night of the Hijri New Year, and to instill good moral character.²⁸

In the study of hadith, the Suroan commemoration ceremony in Ngroto Village is a concrete example of a “living hadith” (a hadith that is alive in community practice). The people of Ngroto believe that this tradition is in line with the teachings of the *salaf shalih* (pious predecessors), as it was passed down by KH. Muhammad Utsman al-Ishaqi and KH. Achmad Asrori al-Ishaqi two charismatic figures widely recognized for their scholarly expertise. However, the congregation attending this gathering is not limited to scholars or those who understand the Sharia-based justifications behind the ritual. The followers of KH. Utsman and his successor, KH. Achmad Asrori, come from diverse backgrounds, ranging from street children to academics. In fact, according to accounts, KH. Asrori was active in preaching among street youth during his younger days. Since the era of KH. Utsman’s leadership, the majority of Ngroto’s residents have adhered to the teachings of the Utsmaniyyah branch of the Qadiriyyah Naqshbandiyyah Order (TQN). Therefore, gatherings such as the Satu Suro commemoration despite their unique ritual sequences have taken deep root and become a time-honored tradition in the village of Ngroto.²⁹

The Suroan tradition reflects a process of negotiation between local Javanese traditions and Islamic religious practices. The local cultural element of the Satu Suro celebration is preserved, but it is reinterpreted through a more Islamic religious orientation. This is evident in the performance of various religious practices, such as prayers, memorial ceremonies (haul), devotional recitations (dzikir), and the recitation of devotional texts based on the teachings of the Qadiriyyah wa Naqshbandiyyah Sufi order. Thus, in this context, the Suroan tradition is not merely a form of Javanese cultural preservation but also serves as a space where local cultural values intersect with Sufi teachings.

²⁸ Usman Mudyono, “Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Islam Dalam Tradisi Suroan Pada Masyarakat Jawa” 07, no. 02 (2024): 92–106.

²⁹ Ainul Yaqin, “LIVING HADIS PADA TRADISI MAJELIS SUROAN DI DESA NGROTO GUBUG GROBOGAN”, Jurnal KACA Jurusan Ushuluddin STAI AL FITHRAH, Volume 11, Nomor 1 (Februari 2021), Hal. 56-58.

Banyu Manaqib as a Form of Acculturation

Initially, Javanese society was already familiar with a similar practice through the tradition of suwuk, namely the use of water accompanied by specific recitations or mantras for purposes such as healing. When this practice of providing water entered the Islamic religious context, its basic form was retained, but the recitations, source of legitimacy, and spiritual orientation underwent changes. This change is evident in the recitation of the manaqib of Sheikh Abdul Qadir al-Jailani as the text accompanying the water. In its practice, the recitation of the manaqib serves as a bridge connecting the values of classical Sufism with the spiritual needs of modern society. The stories of Sheikh Abdul Qadir al-Jailani's miracles and struggles, as conveyed in the recitation of the manaqib, are not merely understood as literal narratives but are also interpreted as exemplars of virtue, sincerity, and courage in facing life's various challenges. The recitation of the manaqib itself holds a number of educational values, one of which is love for Allah and His beloved.³⁰

Thus, water is no longer understood merely as a medium that derives its power from incantations or the abilities of a shaman, but is placed within the framework of prayer, dhikr, tawasul, and the blessings of a wali. In the Al-Khidmah assembly, banyu manaqib becomes part of a religious practice believed to bring blessings to those who drink it. Thus, the local element the use of water as a means of blessing or healing is preserved, while its meaning is reconstructed through Islamic values and Sufi teachings. This process demonstrates acculturation, in which local cultural practices are not eliminated but rather integrated and given new legitimacy and meaning in accordance with the Islamic values that have developed within the TQN and Al-Khidmah communities.³¹

Academic Development

The acculturation of Sufism and local culture within the Al-Khidmah Dzikir Assembly can be observed through the practices of the Suroan and Banyu Manaqib traditions. Theoretically, Koentjaraningrat explains that acculturation occurs when a social group encounters elements of another culture, which are then gradually accepted and integrated without erasing the group's existing cultural identity. This view aligns with Suyono's understanding of acculturation as a process of accepting or adopting cultural elements that occurs through interaction and encounters between different

30 Saiful Bahri, Sukron Fahmi, "Pendampingan Revitalisasi Tradisi Manaqiban sebagai Penguatan Spiritualitas dan Sosial Keagamaan di Desa Mangaran", Vol. 01 No. 01 Juni (2025). Hal. 5

31 Abd. Basyid, M. Yusuf, "Konstruksi Pemahaman Jamaah Majelis Zikir Al-Khidmah Terhadap Sakralitas Banyu Manaqib", *UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya*, Hal. 340.

cultures. Based on these two perspectives, acculturation in this study is understood as a process of encounter between Sufi values and practices and local culture, resulting in new forms of religious practice while retaining certain elements of the traditions that have developed within the community.

This form of acculturation is evident in the Suroan tradition, which blends the Satu Suro celebration a part of Javanese cultural tradition with various Islamic practices, such as prayer, memorial ceremonies, dhikr, and practices rooted in the teachings of the Qadiriyyah and Naqshbandiyyah Sufi orders. This fusion demonstrates that local cultural elements are not automatically eliminated when interacting with Sufi values. On the contrary, local elements that are already known and accepted by the community are preserved and then integrated into Islamic religious practices. This aligns with Koentjaraningrat's concept of acculturation, which holds that the introduction of new cultural elements does not necessarily erase existing culture but can instead merge with it to form a new cultural pattern without losing its original identity.

A similar phenomenon is also evident in the Banyu Manaqib practice. The use of water in Javanese tradition known through the suwuk practice intersects with Sufi practices such as the recitation of the manaqib of Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jailani. In practice, the water used is not merely understood as part of local tradition but takes on a new significance through the recitation of manaqib, prayers, dhikr, tawasul, and the hope for blessings. Thus, local cultural elements are incorporated into religious practices with a Sufi orientation. This situation is consistent with Suyono's view that acculturation occurs through the process of adopting certain cultural elements as a result of encounters and interactions between cultures.

From a process-oriented perspective, acculturation in both of these practices does not occur through the eradication of local culture, but rather through integration and a shift in the orientation of meaning. In the Suroan tradition, the Satu Suro occasion which holds specific significance in the eyes of Javanese society is channeled into a means of prayer, dhikr, and paying respect to elders and figures who have contributed to the spread of Islamic teachings. This occasion is then integrated with the devotional practices of the Qadiriyyah wa Naqshbandiyyah Sufi order, thereby becoming part of the community's religious practices. Meanwhile, in the Banyu Manaqib tradition, the use of water previously known in the suwuk tradition has undergone changes in terms of the recitations and spiritual orientation. Water over which manaqib are recited is then interpreted within the framework of prayer, dhikr, tawasul, and blessings. This process demonstrates that the interaction between culture and Sufism continues through the acceptance, adaptation, and re-interpretation of local cultural elements.

These findings show that acculturation, as described by Koentjaraningrat and Suyono, can be understood not only as a fusion of cultural forms but also as a process of accepting and adapting meanings when two cultural elements interact with one another. In the context of the Majelis Dzikir Al-Khidmah, local culture continues to have a place in religious practices, while Sufi elements provide a spiritual orientation to these practices. Thus, Suroan and Banyu Manaqib can be understood as forms of religious practice that emerged from the convergence of local traditions and Sufi values.

Within the Al-Khidmah Zikr Assembly, this process of acculturation holds significant meaning because it brings Sufi teachings closer to the social and cultural life of the community. Sufism is not only manifested through zikr and the practices of the tariqa but is also present through traditions that are already known and accepted by the community. Conversely, local traditions gain new religious orientation and meaning through Islamic and Sufi values. This demonstrates that acculturation serves as one of the ways Sufism develops within the context of community life without having to eliminate the local cultural elements that are deeply ingrained within it. Thus, the Suroan and Banyu Manaqib traditions within the Majelis Dzikir Al-Khidmah demonstrate a process of encounter, acceptance, adaptation, and reinterpretation between Sufism and local culture, as explained in acculturation theory.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, the acculturation of Sufism and Javanese culture within the Majelis Dzikir Al-Khidmah can be observed through the Suroan and Banyu Manaqib traditions. The Suroan tradition demonstrates a fusion between the Satu Suro celebration a part of Javanese cultural tradition and Islamic practices such as prayer, the annual commemoration (haul), dhikr, and devotional acts rooted in the teachings of the Qadiriyyah wa Naqshbandiyyah Sufi order. Meanwhile, the Banyu Manaqib tradition reflects the convergence of the use of water a practice known in suwuk rituals with the recitation of the manaqib of Sheikh Abdul Qadir al-Jailani, accompanied by prayers, dhikr, and tawasul. Both practices demonstrate that local cultural elements are preserved but integrated with Sufi values, thereby forming religious practices that align with the context of community life.

This process of acculturation takes place through encounter, acceptance, adaptation, and the attribution of new meanings to elements of local culture. In the Suroan tradition, the significance of Satu Suro is preserved, but its focus is directed toward religious activities such as prayer, dhikr, haul ceremonies, and paying respects to elders and figures who have contributed to the spread of Islam. As for Banyu Manaqib, the use of water previously known in suwuk practices has undergone changes in terms of recitations and spiritual orientation, specifically by being placed within the framework of manaqib,

prayer, dhikr, tawasul, and blessings. This process demonstrates that acculturation is not achieved by eliminating local culture, but rather through the integration and reconstruction of meaning in accordance with Islamic and Sufi values. In the Majelis Dzikir Al-Khidmah, this acculturation brings Sufi teachings closer to the social and cultural life of the community, while local traditions acquire a new religious orientation and meaning. This aligns with Koentjaraningrat and Suyono's theory of acculturation as a process of acceptance, fusion, and adaptation of cultural elements through interaction without eliminating the original cultural identity.

This study has limitations because it relies on a literature review using secondary data sources; thus, it has not directly explored the experiences, interpretations, and dynamics of the congregants involved in the Suroan and Banyu Manaqib traditions. Therefore, future research is recommended to employ a qualitative field study approach to obtain empirical data regarding the congregants' experiences, the process of transmitting these traditions, and the shifts in meaning that occur within these practices. For the administrators of the Majelis Dzikir Al-Khidmah and the community, the results of this study can serve as a basis for reflection to ensure the continuity of the traditions while also understanding the Sufi values embedded within them. For researchers and stakeholders in the study of Islam and local culture, further research is also needed to examine similar acculturation practices in other Al-Khidmah regions or communities, thereby providing a broader picture of the relationship between Sufism, local traditions, and the development of religious life in the community.

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