Integrating Rationality and Mysticism in Religious Education: An Educational Perspective on Islamic and Indigenous Java-Sundanese Traditions in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the educational perspectives within Islam and the Java-Sundanese Indigenous Religion (Agama Djawa Sunda/ADS), focusing on the interplay between rationality and mysticism. Employing a qualitative approach, this study involves literature reviews on the core beliefs of both religions and in-depth interviews with key figures of ADS. The findings of this study reveal that both Islam and ADS incorporate elements of rationality and mysticism. In ADS, mysticism is reflected in traditional practices such as weddings and circumcisions, while in Islam, mysticism is found among groups such as Salafis and Puritanists, who rely on strict textual interpretations, often leading to radicalism. Conversely, the rational aspect of Islam is reflected in progressive interpretations by Islamic scholars, while ADS rationality is demonstrated through its teachings on nationalism and multiculturalism. The distinction between rationality and mysticism is not clear-cut but rather complementary. This study aims to strengthen the religious education curriculum by introducing different religions and incorporating both rational and mystical aspects a balanced proportion.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji perspektif pendidikan dalam Islam dan Agama Djawa Sunda (ADS), dengan fokus pada interaksi antara rasionalitas dan mistisisme. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, penelitian ini melibatkan tinjauan literatur tentang keyakinan inti kedua agama dan wawancara mendalam dengan tokoh-tokoh kunci ADS. Temuan penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa baik Islam maupun ADS sama-sama menggabungkan elemen rasionalitas dan mistisisme. Dalam ADS, mistisisme tercermin dalam praktik tradisional seperti pernikahan dan sunatan, sementara dalam Islam, mistisisme ditemukan di antara kelompok seperti Salafi dan Puritanis, yang mengandalkan interpretasi tekstual yang kaku, sering kali mengarah pada radikalisme. Sedangkan aspek rasional Islam tercermin dalam interpretasi progresif oleh para cendekiawan Islam, sementara rasionalitas ADS ditunjukkan melalui ajarannya tentang nasionalisme dan multikulturalisme. Perbedaan antara rasionalitas dan mistisisme tidaklah jelas, melainkan saling melengkapi. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memperkuat kurikulum pendidikan agama dengan memperkenalkan berbagai agama dan menggabungkan aspek rasional dan mistis dalam proporsi yang seimbang.

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Introduction

This study seeks to explore the educational concepts in Islam as the majority religion in Indonesia, and the local religion Agama Djawa Soenda (ADS) as a minority religion, particularly in relation to the aspects of rationality and mysticism. The categorization of rational and mystical education refers to the educational concept by M. Amin Abdullah as (in Hamim 2014) who posits that Islamic character education (*pendidikan akhlak*) generally has two paradigms: rational and mysticism (Hamim, 2014).

Studies comparing Islamic education to local religions on the aspects of rationality and mysticism are still rare, if not non-existent. While there have been many studies on the relationship between Islam and Javanese culture (Erzad & Suciati, 2018, p. 40; Susanto, 2019, p. 21)., they do not specifically compare the educational aspects that lead to rationality and mysticism in detail. Generally, various studies on the relationship between Islam and Javanese culture often lead to the discourse on syncretism and acculturation. According to the syncretic view, the relationship between Islam and Java is syncretic, with Islam adhered to by the Javanese people being superficial and unable to change the mystical traditions of the Javanese people (Beatty, 1996, p. 271; Brakel, 2004, p. 5; Mulder, 1970). In contrast, the acculturative school posits that Islamic values sufficiently color Javanese traditions, such as clothing, religious rituals, musical styles, and arts, indicating a mutual influence or acculturation (Mitsuo, 1990).

Another approach to the discussion can be found in the work Masdar Hilmy. While others analyzed the relation between Islam and Java using a cultural approach (i.e., an approach to values and culture in understanding a religion, classified in the Weberian category) (Collins, 1986), Hilmy attempted to provide an analysis using structural approach (i.e., an approach that believes economic and political aspects are the main considerations for actors in understanding religion, classified into the Marxian category). While others emphasize norms and values, Hilmy analysed the relationship based on politics, ecomonics and institution (Hilmy, 2018).

Unlike previous studies in the debate between syncretism and acculturation paradigms, or between structuralism and culturalism views, this study focuses more on the rational and mystical aspects of both the majority religion (Islam) and minority beliefs (ADS) in Indonesia. As a multicultural country with more than 300 ethnic cultural groups and over 250 local languages, Indonesia requires more attention than just discussing Java and Islam. More studies are needed to examine the encounter between Islam and traditional religions which is inspired by Javanese tradition. Research aimed at understanding each other would certainly promote tolerance (Jurova, 2016). In addition to reducing the lack of appreciation and increasing misunderstanding of other religions, such research can also serve to self-criticize one's own faith. Needless to say, the long history of religious violence, discrimination, and persecution towards local religions or religious minorities (Steenbrink, 2014) could be avoided.

Within the context of religious education, Symour (as cited by Nuryanto) classifies religious education model into *In, At,* dan *Beyond the wall* categories. *In the wall* refers to a religious education model focusing on their own faith without any attempts to establish dialogue with other faith. The purpose of this teaching is to increase compliancy on its followers. *In the wall* usually occurs between parents and children, within formal educational institution or the *Pesantren* (traditional Islamic boarding school). *At the wall* on the other hand refers to a religious education model which is not focusing only on teaching students their own faith, but also other faith. This education model can be

conducted in the university, seminar, or other academic forums. The last education model is *beyond the wall.* In this model, students are encouraged to cooperate with other students from other religious faith, under the name of humanity, peace, justice and harmony (Nuryanto, 2011). According to Nuryanto, religious education in Indonesia is more closely to the *in the wall* model, instead of *at,* or *beyond the wall* (Nuryanto, 2011). Therefore, it can be understood that the level intolerance towards local religions remain high in Indonesia (Wahid Institute, 2014)

One of the indigenous religions to be the focus of this study is *Agama Djawa Sunda* (ADS). This local religion has experienced much discrimination or persecution from the public, similar to other indigenous religions (Tendi, 2016). Discrimination towards indigenous religions in Indonesia is ironic when considering the Article 29 verse 22 of the National Constitution of 1945, which mentions the freedom of religious practices. Moreover, the indigenous believer community (*komunitas penghayat*) believes that their religious values are associated with the preservation of culture and national identity (Kanti, 2018). Additionally, Kartawinata (as cited by Basyari) states that in the concept of anthropology, local wisdom forms the basis for cultural identity in the community (Basyari, 2013).

Islamic education referred to here is a process carried out in various ways, emphasizing the formation of the morals of students according the Qur'an and Hadith. Thus, what will be studied in the discussion here are various teachings in Islam, which originate from the Qur'an and Hadith, as guidelines for Muslim behavior (morals), in carrying out daily life. Thus, what will be studied in the discussion here are various teachings in Islam, which originate from the Qur'an and Hadith, as guidelines for Muslim behavior (morals) in daily life. The Djawa Soenda religion referred to here is a local religion, originating from Madrais' teachings centered in Cigugur Kuningan Village, West Java. Rational education referred to here is an educational model that focuses more on the utilization of reason in understanding religious teachings. The source of religion itself remains a foundation, but in understanding it, reason is used to contextualize and relate it to the development of time and age. Mystical education, on the other hand, focuses more on normative and verbal teaching texts, with little involvement of reason, and emphasizes the sacredness of a teaching.

Method

This study employs a qualitative approach, allowing researchers to be more flexible in exploring deep meanings related to the phenomena and social facts collected. A phenomenological design is used to deeply explore the lived experiences and perceptions of individuals regarding the integration of rational and mystical elements in religious education. Data collection and analysis are conducted simultaneously, using comparative methods that are inductive in nature, characteristic of qualitative studies (Patton, 2015). Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observations and document analysis. An interview guide was developed based on the research objectives to ensure consistency and depth in the data collected.

The population of this study includes religious educators and community leaders from Islamic and Agama Djawa Sunda traditions. A purposive sampling method was used to select key informants who have in-depth knowledge and experience in these religious contexts. The main document sources for this study are the the teachings of the scriptures, interpretations of these teachings, and observations of religious practices. For Islam, given its status as a world religion with extensive scholarly analysis, sources were drawn from various scholarly works. For ADS, the primary source is the key actor who is currently the community leader.

The research stages included collecting data from various sources, making reductions, sorting the data to align with the research focus, conducting analysis and drawing conclusions. Interview data were coded to categorize the issues that arose during the interviews and dialogues (Creswell, 2012; Saldana, 2013). The analysis employed thematic analysis, focusing on identifying patterns (themes) within the data. The concrete steps included familiarizing oneself with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and writing the report.

This study seeks to compare Islam, the majority religion, with minority religions in Indonesia, focusing on the aspects of rational and mystical teachings. ADS (Aliran Kepercayaan terhadap Tuhan Yang Maha Esa) was chosen as a minority religion for several reasons: First, ADS is a local religion, and local religions are still marginalized by most Indonesians. Second, ADS frequently faces discrimination from the majority group, including ostracization, bullying, and even persecution (Kanti, 2018). Third, ADS is one of the local religions actively advocating for state recognition, achieving a significant milestone with the issuance of the Constitutional Court Decision No. 97/PUU-XIV/2016, which allows the inclusion of the "Believer" column on the National Identity Card (KTP).

Results and Discussion

The history and development of ADS

ADS is located in Cigugur village, Paseban district, Kuningan regency, West Java. This village is located in the slope of Mount Ciremai about 35 KM south of Cirebon, or approximately 168 KM from Bandung. In this village, there are three major religions: Islam, Catholic and indigenous religion (*Agama Djawa Sunda*/ ADS) with the number of adherents: 4,756 for Islam, 3,067 for Catholic, and 215 for indigenous religion (ADS). In addition to these three major religions, 89 people are of Protestant adherents and 3 are Hindus (Royyani, 2017)

The existence of ADS can be traced back to its founder Pangeran Madrais Alibasa Widjaya Ningrat, or popularly called *Madrais.* ADS followers are also called *Madraism.* According to various source, Madrais is a descendant from noble family in Cirebon, the descendent of Sultan Gebang Pangeran Alibasa 1 (Mutaqin, 2017)

A folklore narrates that one member of the noble families of Sultan in Cirebon had a concubine in a village of Losari District of Cirebon. She gave birth to a little baby boy Muhammad Rais, named by the grandfather from the mother's side. This baby then grew up and known as Muhammad Rais or Madrais. He lived with and was raised by his grandfather. Madrais wanted to find his biological father. He only had a little information about his father and decided to accept an offer from a Prince to stay in this place in Cirebon. In that place, Madrais received lessons such as *Ngelmu Cirebon* or *Ngelmu Sejati* or *Ngelmu Hakikat* (similar to *tassawuf*). Madrais was then married to a women Cigugur village. He stayed and lived in that village while spreading his teaching, which was then known as *Agama Djawa Sunda (ADS)*. Based on several historical accounts, he allegedly left his grandfather's place and took his venture to several hermitages *(paguron)* to learn about "truest self" or *kesejatian* (Kanti, 2018)

Due to his dedication to *kesejatian,* Madrais has stable spiritual foundation and used it as the basis for his own way of teaching in *Agama Djawa Sunda,* which also has the core sublime values of Javanese tradition (Cirebon), Sunda Wiwitan tradition, and Islamic sufism. The naming of *Agama Djawa Sunda* seemed to be inspired by its geographical location of the Cigugur village which is on the border between the southern West Java

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(with its Sundanese tradition) and Central Java (with its Javanese tradition). ADS was then spread to several regions in West Jawa Indramayu, Majalengka, Ciamis, Tasikmalaya, Garut, Bandung, Padalarang, Bogor, Purwakarta, and even to Jakarta. It is recorded that the ADS followers may have reached 10.000 people (Kanti, 2018)

The most well-known teaching from Madrais is about nationalism, defending national self-identity, loving own homeland which sparked confrontation with the colonizers. This community received oppressions form colonizers either the Dutch or the Japanese (*Kanti,* 2018). Additionally, they have had received challenges from other religions as their belief has been regarded as an astray to Islamic values. One of examples is the incident occurred on 21 Desember 1954, where the group members of Islamic right winger (DI/TII: *Darul Islam/Tentara Islam Indonesia*) burned their religious centre. This incident has led Tedjabuana, Madrais's son, to move to Cirebon (Mutaqin, 2017)

At the beginning of Indonesia Independence, the first and former president Soekarno accommodated the local indigenous religions. In 1955, ADS was chosen as one of the members of BKKI (Badan Kongres Kebatinan Indonesia/*The Indonesian Board of Mysticicms)*. Their activities could be undertaken freely (Mutaqin, 2017). However, this practice did not last long, as the pressure from conservative Islamic group was too strong to hold and the president seemed to support this movement to maintain his presidential popularity.

As a result, on 21 September 1964, ADS leader at the time, Tedjabuana was forced to sign the dismissal of ADS. For safety reasons, he and his family declared to embrace Catholicism, following the State's rule that only acknowledged 5 formal religions at that time. The decree for this formal religion was issued by the Indonesian Ministry for Religion in 1946. This decree required a religion to have 1 only God, prophet, holy book/scripture and universal values. This decree had suppressed the wealth of archipelago's genuine spiritual lives (Daniel, 2014; Steenbrink, 2014).

Even worse, Tedjabuana was forced to instruct his members of ADS to not practice their rituals. This decision was based on the Letter of Decision of *Panitia Aliran Kepercayaan Masyarakat* (PAKEM) dated 18 June 1964 set by the government of Kuningan district. This letter states that any traditional/custom marriages are not acknowledged by the states thus illegitimate. Consequently, it lead to the denial of civil right such as inability getting birth certificate for their children, the absence of father's name on their children's birth certificate, issues on inheritance entitlement and difficulties in enrolling the children into formal schooling (Mutaqin, 2017). The revocation of their civil rights has impacted the community not only sociologically but psychologically given that they have been marginalised from the rest of the citizens.

The discrimination towards traditional indigenous community continued to be found during the New Order era under the president of Soeharto. During this period, approximately 167 sects were dismantled. The peak of this ban was the creation of Religious Blasphemy Act (*UU Penistaan Agama*) in 1965, which states that whoever committed defamation towards formal religions could be imprisoned between two (2) and five (5) years of jail time (Makin, 2017). The oppression towards indigenous faiths and religion have been legitimized by this act (Makin, 2017). Their fight for reignition was only effective when the state acknowledged them on 7 November 2017, when the Indonesian Constitutional Courth (MK) accepted their lawsuit to put on their belief as "Penghayat" on the National Identity Card or *KTP* (Saputra, 2019).

Even though some scholars would think that the decision from the constitutional court has marked a new era for equality for all religions in Indonesia (Dahlan & Liemanto, 2017), the discrimination towards indigenous religion followers is still persistence to date, including limited access to health care, education and civil rights (Renaldi, 2017).

The wording of "penghayat" (*the believers*) on the KTP for every indigenous faith implied discrimination as it does not cover the uniqueness of each belief. Ideally, it should be written as "*Agama Djawa Sunda*" in Kuningan Jawa Barat, "Marapu" in Nusa Tenggara Timur, "Parmalin" in Sumatera Utara, or "Sapto Darmo" in Central Java. Given the diverse range of indigenous faiths within the community, using the term "believers" or "Penghayat" as a single label for all indigenous faiths can reflect a lack of awareness of their distinct identities in Indonesia (Kanti, 2018).

The core teaching of Agama Djawa Sunda (ADS)

The core teaching of ADS was inspired by *Sunda Wiwitan* tradition, which is the concept of *Pikukuh Tilu*. *Pikukuh* means bustles/principles, while *tilu* means three. *Pikukuh tilu* means "three principles as foundations for reaching perfection as human beings". (Trimulya Yayasan, 2000). In simple way, three principles are classified as to reach the highest awareness (*cara-ciri manusa*), development of national awareness (cara-ciri bangsa), and devotion to the creator (*madep ka ratu raja*) (Trimulya Yayasan, 2000). In daily societal life, *pikukuh tilu* also means to maintain the unit of three dimensions, which are good personality as an individual, as a member of community or good citizen, and being a good member of global citizen.

As do the rest of the mainstream religions, ADS also believes God who's deserved to be worshipped is one God, who's the Most Powerful, the Most Just, the Most Merciful and the Most Wise. God's power is unlimited. His power is embedded in his attributes and is very closed to his creatures, especially with human being as the most perfect creatures (Trimulya Yayasan, 2000). The concept of His closeness with human being is similar to Islamic concept (Q.S. Al-Qaf [50]: 16, Q.S. Al-Waqi'ah [56]: 85). This concept of closeness leads to the belief that God and human being is oneness (*manunggal*). This oneness means there is no separation between transcendental God (the absolute) and immanent God (all of His creature) (Trimulya Yayasan, 2000).

The core teachings of ADS are also summarised the following: *Percaya ka Gusti Sikang Sawiji-wiji* (believe in One God), *Ngaji Badan* (personal relfection/introspection/retrospection), *Akur Rukun Jeung Sasama Bangsa* (peaceful living with others), *Hirup Ulah Pisah ti Mufakat* (discussion for concencus) *Hirup Kudu Silih Tulungan* (helping each other). In the context of selfness, *Sunda Wiwitan* believe that this life consists of "*Tri Daya Eka Karsa*" which is three stages of life *nabati* (passive life), *hewani* (active life based on instinct), and *insani* (life with mind, sense and character) (Djatikusumah, 1995).

The concept of Islamic Education between rational and mysticism

Character education in Islam generally has two paradigm: rational and mysticism (Abdullah in Hamim, 2014). The difference between both have implication on way of life, attitude and daily social life. These differences are due to different approach that both paradigms use. The rational character education place religion not only as an absolute religious tenet. Rather, it also sees religion as having humanity, in additional to transcendental principles. Religion is regarded as medium to reach welfare and prosperity. On the other hand, the mysticism side places religious teaching as absolute values (divinity approach, not humanity). Humanity approach has indication of autonomous human being, whereas divinity approach places human being as heteronomy (Nasution, 1987). The difference between rational and mystical approaches also correlates with the differences between moderates and fundamentalists. Rational

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approaches tend to lead to moderate attitudes, mystical approaches tend to lead to fundamental attitudes (Islamism) (Muhsin dkk., 2019)

Michael Grimmits as cited in Nuryanto classifies religious teaching into *learning religion, learning about religion* dan *learning from religion* (Nuryanto, 2011)*.* In *learning religion,* studying religion is to increase the devotion to God according the religion they follow. This type of education is between parents and children, or from the teacher in the school or Islamic Boarding School (*Pesantren*). This type of education is usually missionally-motivated to continue certain religious tradition in the community. Different from *learning religion, learning about religion* places religion as the object of research and study. This type of education occurs in the educational institution such as universities and academy forums. Meanwhile *learning from religion* is studying religion by understanding the wisdom and teaching of the religion. Religions has to be able to give benefit to society and human life in general (Nuryanto, 2011).

The *learning from religion* type of education ideally does not only focus on the benefits of the religion, but also its dangerous potentials. This is due to the fact that religion has two contradictory sides. On the sone hand, religion can be used a a force for its follower to be more obedient and act according to high morality standard. On the other hand, religion can be dangerous as this can be a source of conflicts and even a war. The rigid and dogmatic teaching hinder its follower to exercise critical thinking (Susanto, 2017).

Classification of religious teaching from Nasution apparently has connection with the ones from Grimmit's. Religious education *learning religion* model has eroded critical thinking abilities towards own religion. Religious tenets are strongly upheld and seen as an absolute truth. Therefore, this model of education tends to lead to the attitude of mysticism. The role of reasoning as the basic human character is replaced by the divine power. There is no place to critically evaluate religion for humanity, or even to solve human life issues.

Other hand, *learning about religion* and *learning from religion* can encourage critical thinking among students as they utilise logical reasoning when approaching religious tenets. Using *learning about religion,* students could learn other religions to find similarities and common grounds to promote religious tolerance. In the *learning from religion,* the use of reasoning encourages students to undergo progressive understanding of religious teaching. Students could comprehend the core values of religions teaching and its role to solve social problems and to promote human welfare and well-being. Thereofore, these two models of learning can be classified as rational education model.

The use of reasoning in religion can be traced back by looking at the emergence of Islamic scholars such as Fazlur Rahman with his Islamic Neo-Modernism (*Islam and Modernity*), Hassan Hanafi with Islamic Left-Wing (*al-Yasar alIslâmi*), Mohammed Arkoun with *Re- Thinking Islam*, Nashr Hamid Abû Zayd with "Textual *al- Qur'ân*: criticism towards ´Ulûmul Qur'ân (*Mahfûm an Nash Dirâsah fî ´Ilmil al- Qur'ân*)", Abdullah Ahmed An- Naim with his "Syari'ah Deconstruction" (*Toward and Islamic Reformation Civil Liberties, Human Right and International Law*). In Indonesia, we know similar Islamic schoalrs such as Harun Nasution with his concept of Rational Islam, Nurcholis Madjid with Inclusive Islam, Moeslim Abdurrahman with transformation of theology, Abdurrahman Wahid with localised Islam, etc (Susanto, 2017)

The use of reasoning to understand religion by the previous scholars was to implement the religious values in daily life. Wahid, for example, states that Islamic revelation is to solve human life issues like poverty, education and injustice, law assurance and social gap (Wahid, 1981). Abdurrahman asserts that the purpose of Islam is to bring about changes collectively in social order with justice and values of piety (Abdurrahman, 2005). Abdurrahman continued to say that universal challenges for

human being have to be faced together by all religion such as poverty to prevent believers from leaving their religion. According to Abdurrahman, Islamic theology is empowerment to alleviate poverty (Abdurrahman, 2005). In line with these, Susanto notes that the core values of Islam to is to promote peaceful social order, justice and productive, tolerance and respect to each other (Susanto, 2018).

Added to this, Rahman mentions that empowerment of the poor is the main principle of Islam. Rahman views that the prophetic mission of Muhammad is to free up human from anything that endanger human dignity such as idolatry, laziness, fear, ignorance, and else. Islam came to exploitative, pyramidal, and pathological Arabic culture hence it was successful to become just, respectful and liberative society. Qur'an mentions that justice is the core of strong society (Q.S. al-A´râf: [7]:29, Q.S. al-Mâ´idah [5]: 8), defending the powerless (Q.S. an-Nisa´ [4]:75), and condemning people who collect wealth and ignore the surroundings (Q.S. an-Nashr: [104]; 1-4)

Islamic education which only focusses on the religious teaching (*learning religion*), tends not to trust their reasoning in interpreting their religions. Ayubi, as cited in Ahyar, categorises Muslim into 6 categories: 1) Simplistic Muslim (Muslimness as a formal identity); 2) *Mutadayyin Muslim* (devoted Muslim); 3). Islamic Modernist (Muslim who promotes Islamic reform such as Jamaludin Al-Afghani and Muhammad Abduh; 4). Salafism (Muslims who refer to the earliest period of Islam including clothes and social life, such as Wahabiyah, Sanusiyah, etc); 5). Fundamentalism (similar to Salafism, hence not trusting in Fiqh/Islamic law, and sometimes being radical), such as Takfiri in Suriah (Ahyar, 2017). Based on this Muslim typology, education model of learning religion has potential to produce Simplistic Muslim and Mutadayyin Muslim. In extreme scale, it can produce *Salafism*, and *Fundamentalism.*

Similar to Ayyubi's classification, Abdullah Saeed proposed 6 classification of Islamic thoughts: traditional, puritan, political, hard-line, secular and progressive (Busyro, 2017). Based on Saeed's classification, educational model of learning religion can potentially produce traditional and puritanism. At this point, this group could potentially produce political and hard-line.

Religious education model of *learning religion*, understands religious tenets textually, without taking into account the social cultural context of its revelation. Furthermore, according to Wahib, the member of *Salaf* movement as religious sect has similarities with the *learning religion* model, which actually experiences puritanism and Arabism. They would think that becoming a pious person means to become like Arabic people and to become a puritan Muslim to purify the Islamic teaching from any misconducts. They would urge people to return to Al Qur'an and As-Sunnah. For example, male need to grow beard, wear turban and angkle-length trousers. For women, they have to wear jilbab, or burqa. Added to this, they also use Arabic names like *abi, umi, ami and ama, akhi, ukhti* among themselves. This has replaced original Javanese names(Wahib, 2017). Nowadays, the Salafi movement which is based upon understanding of fundamentalist religion is currently being discussed by various groups (Mustofa dkk., 2019)

If we relate to the increase of conservatism in Indonesia after the fall of the New Order (Bruinessen, 2013; Fealy, 2004; Hefner, 2010; Makin, 2009, 2015), religious understanding is inclined towards *puritanism and salafism.* The next step, this group developed to become political movement under the name of religion (religionized politic*).* Tibi mentioned this movement as Islamism with objectives to change profane socio-political order to become *sacral.* The dream to uphold Islamic State (*al-Dawlahal-*

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Islāmīyah OR *ḥakīmiyātullāh),* often uses military power to take over legitimate government as occurred in Middle-East (Tibi, 2012).

Related to Grimmit's classification, religious education model such as p*uritanism, salafism, fundamentalism* and hard line as classified as Ayubi and Saeed, are potentially the product of certain groups who emphasize the aspect of *learning religion. Learning religion* can be classified as mysticism education model if related to Harun Nasution and Amin Abdullah's propositions. Religious doctrine is regarded as static doctrine, without taking into account the social and cultural context and purposes of its revelation. On the contrary, education model of *learning about religion* and *learning from religion* could be categorised as rational education as they develop creativity and innovation in understanding the doctrine to adjust the social context and solve human life problems.

Concept of Education for Sunda Wiwitan; Between Rational and Mysticism

While Islam has various ways of understanding the religion, ADS community does not. This is not only due to small number of its followers, but also due to the strong belief in their leader as the owner of inherited power from Madrais. To date, the leader of community is Ramadjati, or Djatikusuma. Ramadjati is the son of Tedjabuana who is the son of Madrais. The leadership of this community stays within the original throne, Madrais descendent. These leaders have the ability to translate the manuscripts as holy book from Madrais (D. Kanti, 14 Juli 2018).

Manuscript, the holy book and a refence for ethics and attitude in community, and as a citizen (from generations to generations) is quite unique. The uniqueness of this manuscript is that this is the original handwriting of Madrais as the founding father, when he was teaching his ideas of ADS to his followers, or when he claimed to have received the revelation from God almighty. A study reported that the manuscript was allegedly produced between 1800 and 1939's. This manuscript records important incidents occurred to the ADS community which occurred long after the manuscript was first written (Kanti 2018). One of the examples is the occurrence of the first acknowledgement of local/indigenous faith in the national ID card (KTP), and when they sought protection by embracing the mainstream Christianity, as a result of oppressive and coercive discrimination from larger community. Another example is the information exist within the manuscript about the timing to publish the manuscript. The transliteration process is somewhat unique as well as this process is believed to bridge the communication with the author (Prince Madrais). Added to this, the manuscript has over 30.000 pages. The thickness of this manuscript is as a result of translation into Indonesian language has not been completed. This uniqueness according to Dewi Kanti has attracted *British Library* to offer assistance in digitalising the manuscript (D. Kanti, 14 July 2018).

Pangeran Ramajati (current leader of ADS community/ the grandson of ADS founding father Pangeran Madrais) has been known to have undertaken significant transliteration process. According to Dewi Kanti, there is no limit to people willing to undertake transliteration, therefore anyone can carry out the process. The letters in the manuscript are unique as well, with the basic of Javanese letters of *Cacarakan Honocoroko*, hence they have various variant. For instance, letter "H" has 7 variants, and those variants originate from letters in archipelago, from Tapanuli, Batakaro, etc which was combined together by Madrais. Whoever wishing to undertake transliteration must study those variants (D. Kanti, 14 July 2018).

From the aspect of devotion to this manuscript, we can see that the teaching of Sunda Wiwitan contain mysticism. This can be understood from its belief of any significant past, current and future incidents towards the community have already been recorded in the manuscripts. Added to this, transliteration process of manuscript which is believed to

build the direct connection with the founding father of Madrais is also a supernatural/mysticism activity.

The mysticism aspect ot ADS can also be seen from the prohibition of undertaking circumcision. *Khitan* (circumsion), according to Madrais means removing part of the body. According to Madrais, God has created human on perfect condition, therefore there is no need to add or reduce His creation. Thus, circumcision is prohibited as it is believed to be an act of denying God gift. The prohibition of circumcision is regarded as practices of mysticism, as it also denies the health factor of circumcision as discussed here (Habibi, 2024) which also inspires non-believers to have circumcision.

Another mysticism of Sunda Wiwitan can be seen in wedding tradition. According to ADS, wedding or marriage is based on the teaching of *awal tunggal akhir jadi sawiji* (One at the beginning and the end). It means human as God's creator initially lives solitary (*tunggal hirup*) and then will unite with their partner through wedding/marriage (Kanti, 2018)

As found in Islam, ADS also believe that marriage is not only ritual obligation, but to maintain the generations and keep the universe to reach the ultimate perfection of life. Therefore, marriage must be based on love from the couple. Marriage is not motivated by sexual pleasure, wealth, or to hurt their partners. After receiving guidance on rightful commitment for marriage, the couple need to acquire blessing from their parents. They have to go through tradition called *masar*, which is getting to know each other for 100 days. This *masar* tradition is hoped that the couple would not change their mind (*jimah*). This *masar* is better to be undertaken during *Syawal, Kapit (Zulqaidah), Rayagung (Zulhijjah), Syuro (Muharram) and Sapar*. If Masar was conducted in those months, the wedding would occur in the month of *Mulud (Rabiul Awal)*, as the best month to hold wedding party as suggested by the ADS (Alam 2015).

Interestingly, when they got married these ADS members have to be taking the oath under special *penggawa* (officers) chosen by the leader of ADS. They are not permitted to get married in front of state-appointed official (State Constitution No. 26 of 1946). In the ADS community, married couples are bound by a commitment to remain together for their entire lives, regardless of circumstances, making separation or divorce impossible (Indrawardana, N.Y).

The doctrine of not getting divorce from wives for whatever reasons till death is considered as the teaching of mysticism. This is due to the large human aspects on social, culture and psychologyin marriage. Ignoring those aspects can be regarded as fatalist that could revoke human right and freedom with their own rationale.

Although there are many mysticism aspects within ADS, there are few rational teachings as well, such as: to not regard the manuscript as the holy book, so followers are not trapped to use it as amulet. Using manuscript as an amulet would distort the substance of religious teaching and would be trapped in excessive devotion. In this respect, the teaching on Sunda Wiwitan is more rational than Islam.

The rational aspect of ADS can be seen from the context of nationalism, where the members must defend their homeland and sovereignty as stated in *mikukuh kana tanah.* This doctrine can be understood as a loyalty to their homeland and own people (Indrawardana, N.Y). Ramadjati mantions that every children of nation must love their homeland (Djatikusumah, 1995).

Further, the concept of *Mikukuh Kana Tanah* can encourage ADS members to not only love their homeland, but also to have responsibility to use, utilise and protect their land. Therefore, the concept of *mikukuh kana tanah* can be useful for the nation and to increase

people welfare. Within the context of work ethics, ADS have similarities with Weber's protestant ethics by Calvin, to increase work ethics in the society **(Weber, 2013)**.

In addition to this, ADS teaching also has multiculturalism. The doctrine *cara-ciri manusia* and *cara-ciri bangsa,* state that it is imperative to respect all God's creatures as permanent natural law. Ramadjati states that human being must respect each other and between groups, and between nations. The existence of *cara-ciri manusia* and *cara-ciri bangsa* is the God own willingness. Therefore, to show the remembrance or *eling* (awareness) to the God almighty being upholding the *cara-ciri manusia* and *cara-ciri bangsa* (Djatikusumah, 1995).

Rational teaching of ADS can be seen in the concept of *madep ka ratu raja.* This teaching cannot be verbally understood, which is to worship the powerful individual. This concept has symbolic meaning referring to the meaning of *ratu* nu *ngararata* and *raja* nu *ngajagat rata*. Both refer to something perfect (Djatikusumah, 1995). In more details, human being can overrule the world if they could become themselves. Becoming one self means returning to the perfectness and kindness within oneself, thinking and doing according to their internal positive drive. According to Suhandi, *madep ka ratu raja* means that human being is the center of the universe and human is the ruler of the world. The word *ngaratakeun* (ratu-rata) and *ngarajah* (raja-raja) mean that human being can become the ruler/king who can rule their will, mind and feeling within themselves (Kanti, 2018). Based on the discussion, the differences in the mystical and rational aspects of teachings in ADS are as follows table 1.

Table 1. Rational and Mystical Aspects in Islam and ADS

Educational Aspect.	Islam	Javanese-Sundanese Religion (ADS).
Rational	- The dynamism of religious discourse, - The emergence of progressive Islamic thought	- The use of logic in rituals - The ideology of nationalism in the teachings of "mikuku kana tanah" - The concept of multiculturalism in the teachings of "cara-ciri Bangsa"
Mysticism.	- Holy scripture as a amulet - Textualism - The belief that a good life can only be achieved by fully emulating the early generations of Islam	- Mystical rituals - Traditional beliefs (anti-circumcision, anti-divorce)

Based on the table above, it can be inferred that both Islam and local religions contain rational and mystical elements. While these two religions share these aspects, the ways in which they are expressed differ. This variation may be attributed to distinct environmental and socio-cultural contexts. These observations support Völker's claim that the rational and mystical dimensions of religion can be investigated using various methodological approaches. Völker suggests that a holistic and interdisciplinary approach can uncover multiple facets of religion, including its rational and mystical components (Völker, 2022). Additionally, Smith and colleagues emphasize that different traditions can shape the understanding of agency and personhood. Consequently, the rational and mystical dimensions of religion are influenced by the social constructs that surround them (Smith et al., 2013).

This study resulted in the finding that both Islam and the local ADS religion have several aspects of teachings that can be categorized as rational or mystical. The aspect of rationality in Islam is shown by Muslim scholars who interpret religion progressively. For example, the belief that religion is the inspiration for social transformation, defending the oppressed, and realizing justice and peace on earth. While rationality in ADS is shown in an attitude that does not want to make teaching manuscripts as "holy bible" talismans, it is also shown in the spirit of nationalism, through the doctrine of *mikuku kana land* (loving and respecting and being ready to sacrifice for the motherland), as well as the view of multiculturalism through the doctrine of ways national characteristics.

The mystical teachings in ADS can be seen from the belief that all important events have been recorded, both those that have not been done, are being carried out or will be carried out by the ADS community, in the manuscripts written by Madrais as the founder. Mysticism can also be seen from the belief that the process of transliterating manuscripts connects the communication between the transliterator and Madrais. The doctrines regarding marriage and circumcision also have the potential to contain mystical teachings, because they ignore the role of reason in understanding teachings. In Islam, mystical teachings are mainly practiced by Salafists, Fundamentalists, Puritans, and hard-lines who interpret teachings as dead doctrines, so they are unable to dialogue with the times. In the current context, this group sometimes morphs into a radical group, to create *Dawlah Islamiyah*.

These findings justify Völker's assertion that the rational and mystical aspects of religion can be explored through different methodological approaches. According to Völker, a holistic and interdisciplinary approach can reveal various dimensions of religion, including the mystical and rational aspects (Völker, 2022). Furthermore, Smith et al. argue that different traditions can influence the concepts of agency and personhood. Ultimately, the mystical and rational aspects of religion are shaped by the social constructions that underlie them (Smith, et al., 2013).

In the perspective of education, the findings above highlight the need for a religious education curriculum that encourages individuals to become familiar with different religions. Borrowing Jackson's term, an inclusive religious education is needed that extends to foster a more peaceful life. Beyond that, there is a need for interfaith collaboration in conducting research, teaching, and developing various policies that support universal truth (Jackson, 2018). Additionally, the existence of both rational and mystical aspects in religion may be something inevitable in all religions. One common feature of all religions is the mystical aspect, such as belief in the unseen. Nevertheless, the rational aspect must also balance this mystical aspect, so that the main goals of religion, namely peace, welfare, and humanity, can be maintained. Conversely, relying solely on rationality in understanding religion is also impossible, as the nature of religion lies in the transcendent realm, and not all life phenomena can be rationalized. Religious education that is carried out by balancing the rational and mystical aspects is expected to contribute to a better life.

Criticizing the meaning of Rational and Mysticism

The aspect of rational and mysticism in discussion the Islamic education and indigenous religion of ADS in this paper is not the standard of right or wrong. The use of rational and mysticism cannot be separated from the construction by the user of those languages. Habermas as cited Forchtener openly acknowledge that language is an interest (Forchtner, 2010). Forchtner simply agree that language has strong association with power. Language can be utilized by authorities to label others as subversive, anti-development, illegitimate, and so on. Conversely, it can also be employed to enhance the positive image of the authorities themselves.

Using the above logical explanation, we can say that the use of wording rational and mysticism cannot be separated from the power relations of the authority. The current

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western rational way of thinking that is *super-ordinate* is often understood as the superior, great and prime. On the other hand, mysticism in the Eastern countries (*sub-ordinate*) is often regarded as backward and ancient. Hence, rational and mysticism cannot be simplified as black and white or as simple as right or wrong. Both have same potential to become the right and the wrong therefore both are actually complementary to each other.

Despite Nasution's critique that the education of mystical character can lead to fatalism, backward thinking, and anti-progressive attitudes (Nasution, 1987), mysticism still holds an essential place in life. For instance, Waston explained that mysticism aims to harmonize will and emotion through the love of God. Additionally, Waston clarified that mysticism is distinct from magic. If mysticism orientates to giving, piety and devotion to God, magic is more orientated to taking, ruling and knowledge (Waston, 2018). According to Underhill, mysticism has at least 5 characters: 1) *Active and Practical*; 2) *Transcendental and Spiritual;* 3) *The mystic is a lover;* 4) *Mysticism entails definite psychological experience;* 5) *Mysticism is self-surrender, pure love, and never self-seeking* (Evelyn, 1911)*.*

The concise descriptions of mysticism by Waston and Underhill highlight its significance in today's chaotic and uncertain world. On the other hand, although rational aspect is very important and has promoted knowledge and technology, the excessive use of rational could potentially create new problems. The rational education which is introduced by the west to the Islamic world, including Indonesia, carried an individualist, naturalist, and therefore materialistic character (Shabir & Susilo, 2018). Critics to this have been presented by few scholars such as Reuter who criticize the Western cosmology that is biased due to the excessive use of reasoning which has created liberalist and individualist (Reuter, 2014). Another scholar Ratzinger as cited by Nadelea states that the extortion of transcendental aspect from mysticism can cause chaotic and social problems as people will lose their faith and purposes in their life (Nadelea & Nadelea, 2018). Similar critics presented by Bektenova et al. who stated that the development of knowledge in the West has caused "the absence of God", and less spiritual and disintegration (Bektenova, 2017)

The above critics show the shared concern among scholars toward current trend. Rational is important as we know it has helped human to achieve the knowledge development. However, ignoring the aspect of mysticism could lead to *materialism*, being greedy, and losing their life orientation. On the other hand, mysticism can become a hindrance in development although leaving it behind totally would not be recommended. Both has to be used in balance and as a support to each other.

Conclusion

This study concludes that both Islam and the local indigenous religion (ADS), incorporates elements of rationality and mysticism in their teachings. While Islam exhibits notable debates among its followers, as classified by Ayubi and Saeed, such debates are less apparent in ADS. This absence of disagreement in ADS may be attributed to compliance with traditional leaders as interpreters of Madrais' teachings, the small size of the community, and perceived discrimination and persecution.

Mysticism in ADS is evident from the documentation of significant events—past, present, or future—in manuscripts written by its founding father, Madrais. The process of transliterating these manuscripts aims to establish a connection between the translator and Madrais. Mysticism is also present in wedding and circumcision practices, which often disregard rational reasoning. In Islam, mysticism is practiced among Salafis, Fundamentalists, Puritans and hard-liners who interpret teachings textually and resist

contextual adaptation. In today's world, some of these groups may become radicalized in their pursuit of establishing a caliphate or *dawlah Islamiyah*.

The rational aspect of Islam is demonstrated by scholars who interpret the religion in more progressive ways. Similarly, the rational aspect of ADS is shown by followers who do not regard the manuscript as a holy book or amulet, but rather through ideologies such as nationalism (*mikuku kana tanah*) and multiculturalism (*cara-ciri Bangsa*). It is important to note that the poles of rationality and mysticism should not be seen as mutually exclusive or as concepts of right or wrong; instead, they complement each other.

This study makes a significant contribution to academic discourse and Indonesian society by demonstrating that rationality and mysticism are not confined to certain religions. Local religions, often looked down upon, actually embody strong values of nationalism, such as the preservation of traditions and customs, love for the homeland, and resistance to foreign cultural influences. Furthermore, this study proposes strengthening the religious education curriculum to introduce diverse religious teachings, fostering mutual understanding and reducing prejudice. This approach can enrich the multicultural discourse, which is crucial in Indonesia's diverse society.

Based on these findings, the religious education curriculum should ideally integrate both rational and mystical aspects, rather than focusing on just one. While the mystical aspect is an integral part of religion, the rational aspect must serve as a balance to ensure that the primary goals of religion—goodness, life, and humanity—are upheld. However, this study has limitations, as it focuses solely on the rational and mystical aspects of the teachings of two religions. Future research could explore the implications of these teachings for the sustainability of state life.

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