

Traditional Islamic Poetry as a Form of Cultural Heritage Conservation: Cultural Preservation of Syiir

Muhamad Burhanudin, S.S. & Agus Nuryatin.,

Teguh Supriyanto & Yusro Edi Nugroho.

Universitas Negeri Semarang

Email : mburhanudin79@mail.unnes.ac.id

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Abstract

Syiir, one of traditional Islamic poetry has some functions in terms of cultural preservation and heritage and it will be discussed in this article. The less practical implementation and usefulness of Syiir in modern society of Indonesia and how to preserve it as cultural heritage have been the main concern.

A qualitative research methodology has been used in this article to explore the cultural importance, the origins, and relevance of Syiir. Moreover, the methodology is also used to investigate the main themes and patterns in Syiir as well as the explanation on why the practices has declined. In addition, this article employed participant observation, in-depth interviews, and text analysis as its approach.

The findings show the importance of Syiir, particularly on its functions as a tool to transfer the religious teachings, moral principles, as well as cultural identity from one generation to generation. Nonetheless, other contributing factors also appear as the cause of Syiir practical decline and it includes the socio-cultural dynamics shift and digital era. As a conclusion, this research shows that it appears a necessity to preserve Syiir as cultural heritage through reenactment and promotion. Furthermore, preservation and renewal actions are provided in this article. They include the programs related to educational purposes, community-based projects, and digital-based preservation. The purpose of this research is to actively participate in preserving and promoting the cultural heritage of Indonesia for the sake of future generations by acknowledging the importance of Syiir as a cultural wealth.

Keywords: Syiir; Cultural Preservation; Pesantren; Conservation Value; Islamic Education

Introduction

The existence of cultural heritage preservation has always been influenced by the main concerns of traditional arts and literature. The society ideals and cultural ethos can be reflected through the traditional poetry. It also becomes the invaluable cultural heritage of Indonesia. In this context, syiir – a form of classical Islamic poetry – provides a captivating topic in the domain of cultural heritage preservation research. However, regardless of the great historical importance and its role related to the centrality of Islam culture, there is no thorough research about the relationship of spirit and cultural heritage preservation. The absence of comprehensive understanding of syiir function in cultural conservation becomes a main

concern. As a matter of fact, syiir is a traditional Islamic poetry with its long and foremost past. It has become a significant part of Muslim communities as a dissemination medium for the indigenous culture and Islamic values as well as artistic expression. Nonetheless, the tradition of syiir has been increasingly becoming obsolete in the current globalization era. As a result, it is a crucial step for us in creating deliberate efforts to understand and preserve syiir as a cultural heritage. The term “syiir” refers to a poetic expression in Islamic traditions that are deeply embedded in the religion’s wealthy historical and cultural legacy. It indicates that Islamic poetry and oral literature are significant to the communities’ religious and cultural life (Lunn & Byl, 2017).

Syiir, taken from the Arabic word syiir, represents a poetic expression within Islamic traditions firmly ingrained in Islam's rich historical and cultural heritage. It refers to Islamic poetry and oral literature that plays a vital role in these communities' religious and cultural life (Lunn & Byl, 2017). This poetic tradition serves as a means of expressing devotion, spreading religious knowledge, and preserving {Bibliography}the history and values of Islam creatively and engagingly. In Arabic culture, syiir is considered valuable literature reflecting people’s beliefs, principles, guidance, religious conceptions, and spiritual perceptions (Hernawan, 2017; Ma'mun, 2011; Sofjan, 2021). Those values are carefully arranged in an exquisite and enticing composition of words while attending to the metrics and rhymes, resulting in an aesthetically pleasing art form. Over time, syiir became an essential part of Arabic literature and was highly regarded. The chants of syiir, particularly during the blazing wars in the Arabian Peninsula, were said to induce peacefulness and serenity in the people's hearts. Concerning the characteristics, Tohe (Tohe, 2003) note that syiir customarily consists of emotional matter (*a:thifah*), imagination (*khaya:l*), music, and artistic depiction (*at-tashwir-ul-fanni*).

In its original form of Arabic poetry, syiir is often described as a series of beautifully constructed expressions with specialized poetic and rhyme patterns (Mumtahanah, 2020). Analyzing the rhyme patterns of syiir often creates adverse standpoints to the origin of syiir that blossomed in Indonesia. Some scholars believe that the Indonesian spirit was derived from the Arabic tradition, but others believe it came from Malay culture. Steenbrink (1995) affirmed that Indonesian, more specifically Javanese syiir, emerged from Malay syair as it follows the same pattern (Syaifudin, 2020), although not as tight (Burhanudin & Nuryatin, 2020). Separate research stated that syiir has similarities with syair, which is rooted in Old Indonesian Literature, especially regarding lines, rhymes, and syllabifications (Burhanudin & Nuryatin, 2020). On the other hand, an elaborate study from Islam et al. (2020) infer that Javanese syiir is structurally closer to Arabic syair based on similar stanzas and rhymes.

This article endeavors to fill the current knowledge void by researching the nexus between syiir and cultural heritage conservation. Examining poetry's role within Islamic culture aims to offer fresh perspectives on the significance of safeguarding traditional poetic traditions as an integral component of societal cultural identity. In addition, the purpose of this article is also to encourage the creations of preservation efforts towards the cultural heritage by promoting a good understanding and appreciation to syiir.

As a consequence, it is expected that this paper will have positive impacts by providing a better understanding about the necessity of conserving cultural heritage in the context of traditional Islamic poetry, and expand the spark of interest and curiosity in more academic research in this area.

Theoretical Framework

Syiir as Literary Work

Syiir is a traditional Islamic poetry unique to the Indonesian literary repertoire. This poem is often performed or recited in religious events, such as the Mawlid of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) or the commemoration of other Islamic holidays. In a literary context, syiir has distinctive features that differ from other types of poetry, such as rhythmic stanzas, distinctive use of language, and themes that are often religious and moral.

Besides being a literary work, syiir also has a deep spiritual dimension to Islamic religious and cultural understanding. Through the delivery of religious messages and morality,

syiir plays a vital role in religious education and the character-building of Muslims. In literary studies, syiir is an exciting subject to explore further in structure, style, and religious values.

Syiir is a form of imaginative literary work with connotative (implicit) language because it often employs figurative and symbolic meanings (metaphors) (Waluyo, 1991). Therefore, the language used has the potential for multiple meanings. This results in the concentration or compression of language in poetry, both in its physical structure (external) and its emotional structure (internal). It is one of the ancient Malay poetry forms consisting of four lines with a rhyme scheme of a-a-a-a. Each line consists of four lines of 9, 10, or 12 syllables. The lines in syiir typically form a story. It is additionally mentioned that syiir encompasses diverse themes, including heroism, societal matters, historical events, and moral lessons (Pradopo, 2009). Among these themes, there is a category dedicated to romance. In romantic syiir, it is common for the narrative to be presented in prose style.

In contrast to the ongoing debate surrounding the origins of syiir, scholars have undertaken a more meticulous examination of how syiir gradually expanded its influence across the archipelago of Indonesia, focusing on its dissemination in Java. This scholarly attempt has highlighted the intriguing root of spirit as a form of art, revealing that its origin in Indonesia can be traced to a complex version of cultural interactions along the coastal areas of Java. Geographically, the Javanese coastal regions stretch from Cirebon in West Java to Surabaya in East Java (Sukardjo & Pratiwi, 2015), encapsulating the totality of the northern coastal areas of Java. This vast stretch functioned as a productively fertile ground for the distribution of syiir, as it served a strategic position and role for cultural convergence. Concerning culture, the Javanese coastal regions possessed a vital role as a place for cultural integration (Basiroen & Manuaba, 2022). It was an entrance for diverse groups of comers, dropping from diverse nations to start their cultural trips to Java. This cultural integration was influenced and accelerated by new people from various Asian nations, such as Arabic countries, China, and India (Kemp, 2010). As a result, the Javanese coastal areas developed into a dynamic center of cultural integration, in which art forms, ideas, and traditions from diverse backgrounds mingled, creating a unique and multifaceted cultural tapestry evident in syiir poetry and its subsequent development in Indonesia. (Lombard, 2008).

Wali Songo, who is pivotal to the development of Islam in Indonesia, capitalized on said cultural blending, using it as a medium to introduce and spread Islamic teachings to the local communities, specifically in Java (Kasdi, 2017). Syiir, one of the results of a cultural blending with Arabic art forms, became one of the essential tools adopted by Wali Songo to help advance their preachings of Islam. Kurniawan (Kurniawan, 2021) argued that literary and artistic works played a noteworthy role in Islamic preaching to achieve Izzul Islam wal Muslims (the glory of Islam and Muslims). One of the earliest presences of Syiir in Indonesia can be discovered from the use of Tombo Ati by its creator, Sunan Bonang (1465-1525) (Novianti, 2015), one of Wali Songo, to indirectly teach about five characteristics needed by Muslims in order to achieve spiritual serenity and peacefulness (Syumaisi et al., 2021). This syiir is ever more popular today, as it was adapted to a song by a famous Indonesian religious singer, Opick, and is often played during Islamic events across Indonesia. Lir Ilir is another evidence of the early use of syiir to spread Islamic conceptions in Indonesia (Khasanah et al., 2022). Also created by one of Wali Songo, Sunan Kalijaga (1450-1592), this syiir attempted to evoke the spirit of the people to rise from the slump and escape apathy (Riva'i & Nurdianti, 2018).

In the complex tapestry of Islamic culture and history, syiir holds a particular and revered position rooted in the early days of Islam (Mibtadin & Habib, 2022). It appears as the value continuation of poetry as an expression and communication medium. The current analysis attempts to investigate the complex meaning of syiir in the Islamic setting in addition to attempting to dissect its historical roots (Salleh, 2009). Therefore, it is expected that the analysis highlights its pivotal role in conventional Islamic learning (Ikhwan & Ma'mun, 2022), show how syiir take role as a dynamic medium for the transmission and preservation of moral principles, religious teachings, and wide range of human emotions over generations (Pusparini et al., 2021) by doing the attempts mentioned. Syiir has taught us pages of Islamic history in a captivating and educational way. The poets were inspired to set out on a poetry expedition to

chronicle the life and teachings of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) by their love of faith for their Prophet. Their lyrical verses testify to the journey (Ullah, 2016). In addition, the poetry works also served as tools of spiritual enlightenment and historical records as it they are immersed in religious devotion. They show an illustration that by providing the insights into Prophet's traits, impeccable behavioral models, and poignant teachings will preserve the Prophet's legacy (Anam, 2020).

While syiir serves as a religious discourse and instruction medium, it also serves to how human feels and experience as well. It conveys the happiness, longing, affection, and grief (Widawati, 2014). Through its essence, spirit portrays the nature of human situations and expressions, capturing vivid pictures of love for the Prophet, devotion to God, and the efforts of believers to show their love to God (Nurhayati, 2019). As a form of a poem, syiir is imbued with a strong sentiment that vibrates with listeners and readers, surpassing time and cultural limits. In regularly conventional Islamic teaching and learning forms, syiir has become a trusted partner for some schools and scholars thirsty for knowledge. Its essence has strongly inspired lectures and scholarly discourses, strengthening understanding of Islamic basic principles and core values. In addition, the melodic and rhythmic nature of syiir has turned out to be a powerful pedagogical medium, facilitating the transmission and creation of knowledge (Sutrisno, 2018). As we explore Syiir's historical and multifaceted values, we start a journey transcending the intersections of artistry, culture, and faith. The religious journey highlights the preserved heritage of current poetic tradition and its sustainable relevance in expressing the spiritual and emotional spirits of Islamic values. Therefore, it is understandable for us that syiir as indispensable element of Islamic main values continues to link, educate, and give inspiration to people around the world and beyond (Rico, 2017).

Role of Syiir in Pesantren

Historically, Syiir is always linked with the rise of Islam (Haeruddin, 2016). In the beginning of its development, it was only considered as a dissemination tool of Islam fundamentals, but it has enlarged its function into artistic form that could be representatives of human expression and feeling (Tohe, 2003). In addition, syiir has also changed into medium of a graceful expression for the facets and existence of Muslim (Hamid et al., 2019). While on the other hand, a key role has been played by syiir in terms of traditional Islamic education (Nurhayati, 2019). It was a significant teaching tool for students related to Islam, including the historical background and ethical precepts. Along with its role in imparting the theological knowledge, syiir was important for the moral values and virtues establishment, such as compassion, humility, and charity (Selviana, 2020). Another purpose of syiir is that enhancing the soul and the intellect through the beautiful poetry to explain on how important Islamic education is.

The analysis of Indonesian Islamic education is always hand in hand with the profound significance of Pesantren, the component which is fundamental for the national educational system (Roqib, 2021). Pesantren, the same as Islamic boarding schools, originates from a crucial history in Indonesia (Wati & Suriani, 2019). One of the Wali Songo saints, Maulana Malik Ibrahim or Sunan Gresik, established the groundwork for a lasting educational legacy in East Java in the fifteenth century (Usman, 2013). Despite of its preceding concept as a sanctuary for teaching its students moral behavior and Islamic knowledge, the imaginative institution became the place for Islamic study. The existence of Pesantren developed a generation taught under Sunan Gresik's guidance who disseminated the Islamic teachings through their own Pesantren enterprises (Assa'idi, 2021). In addition, the modest origins of pesantren have become a dynamic and significant part of Islamic educational fabric in Indonesia.

The historical development of Pesantren always goes along with its enormous influence in the religious, cultural, and educational environments in Indonesia. As a trailblazer, Sunan Gresik established Pesantren and it influenced the perspective of Islam education in the country (Ningsih et al., 2023). The early Pesantren functioned as the strongholds for Islamic morality, spirituality and character development in addition to being educational institution (Umam, 2023). They taught comprehensive education which strongly emphasized the religious theology

as well as the development of morally upright people. Pesantren developed along the time and it experienced changes based on the demands and goals of the society in Indonesia. It is both a developing center for religious studies and courses provider, including modern and traditional Islamic topics (Musaddad & Fawaidi, 2023). A consideration in which they changed the school due to various socioeconomic origins and geographical areas as well as cultivating the Islamic principles and knowledge across the country (Azzahra, 2020).

Aside from the teaching function, Pesantren also has an important role in creating togetherness among community, safeguarding in cultural legacy of Indonesia, and as social solidarity encouragement (Machmudi, 2015). It became the center of moral and spiritual instruction and nurturing the students a strong feeling of social duty and dedication to preserving Islamic values. In addition, its influence goes beyond the immediate surrounding. It is ingrained into the fabric of Indonesian culture and it contributes to the country's multifaceted character. The role of syiir as an instructional tool is always linked to its role in the literature of Islamic boarding schools. Therefore, it is effective to use it as a teaching tool for various subjects, including but not limited to theology, jurisprudence, and Sufism (Burhanudin, 2017).

Manshur (1995) say that five elements shaped Pesantren culture, they are: *Kyai* (expert/leader), *santri* (students), mosque, boarding house, and *kitab* (guidebook). All those five elements must synergize with one another in order to serve the best interest of the development of Islamic education. One of the most compelling methods used by the *Kyai* (the leader of a *Pesantren*) to teach their students about *Kitab* is syiir. Syiir was adopted very early, even during the days of Walisongo, to teach multifaceted conceptions of Islam in *Pesantren*. It was selected as an efficient instructional tool because it is easier to recall and does not impose the formal structures and situations typically found in conventional education (Ma'mun, 2011).

In present-day Indonesia, there has been a resurgence of syiir, especially within the context of madrasas and Islamic boarding schools. Esteemed scholars and poets have harnessed its potential to motivate and engage students in their religious instruction. Syiir educates students on various life-related topics, such as ethics, national identity, character development, history, and even linguistics (Jones, 1976). Noteworthy compositions such as "Syiir Sun Ngawiti" by K.H. Achmad Sa'dullah Majdi have evolved into compulsory memorization for students enrolled at Madrasah Al-Ittihad. Considering both its aesthetic and ethical dimensions, Sun Ngawiti's poem bears a significant imprint of the ideas of the cleric Achmad Sa'dulloh Majdi in the realms of religious teachings such as fiqh and tasawuf (Asdlori et al., 2023). The integration of syiir into religious education is part of a broader trend that includes a heightened awareness of Islamic principles, the adoption of more modest dress codes, the increased political focus on Islam, the expansion of Islamic organizations and thought within universities, and efforts to practice Islam in a more disciplined and better manner. The Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs proposes extending the weekly hours of religious education from two to four while keeping it a mandatory subject alongside mathematics, arts and crafts, physical education, Indonesian language, and civics (Rahmat & Yahya, 2022).

Pesantren Salafiyah Kapurejo, one of the oldest Islamic boarding schools in Kediri Regency, utilizes syiir to instill civic values in the students (Muna, 2021a). This includes fostering an appreciation for and devotion to one's country and adhering to governmental regulations while upholding religious ideals (Muna, 2021). In terms of linguistics, Muzakka (2006) revealed that syiir proved to be highly efficient in aiding younger students, in particular, to commit Arabic linguistic rules and patterns to memory, as each line of syiir was said to be simple to memorize and enjoyable to recite, whether individually or in a group setting. This modern adaptation of syiir in the educational setting exemplifies its enduring capacity to render complex religious ideas understandable, relatable, and etched in memory for future generations.

Syiir and Cultural Preservation

Preservation is an ongoing, systematic, and well-referenced endeavor aimed at achieving several aspirations that signify the enduring and functional nature of something (Ranjabar, 2006). It should not be overly rigid or fixed. Discussing the preservation of local culture aligns with conserving a nation's historical values, such as traditional customs. This

entails upholding the values of cultural arts and traditions by allowing them to evolve in dynamic and adaptable ways, staying in harmony with changing circumstances. In essence, preservation efforts are a set of techniques and processes used to ensure the accuracy and completeness of something, allowing it to remain intact and even more relevant by adapting to evolving conditions and situations. Preservation encompasses safeguarding or maintaining an entity, which can be closely linked with preservation management (Khan et al., 2013).

As a form of poetry and oral tradition in Islamic culture, *syiir* is a powerful tool for preserving and reinforcing cultural identity. Cultural preservation, in various systems, generally includes seven elements, namely: (a) religion and religious ceremonies; (b) community or organizations; (c) knowledge system; (d) language; (e) art; (f) economy or livelihood; and (g) technology systems. Direct preservation of a culture also includes the preservation of these seven elements. Efforts to preserve culture are part of preserving the language. Accordingly, *syiir* is commonly written and recited in local languages and dialects (Kurniawan, 2021). The practice serves on preserving the languages and preventing them from extinction or marginalized (Nurhidayati, 2011). Consequently, *syiir* gives influences to the cultural heritage preservation by carrying the linguistic diversity. This can be seen from the number of *syiir* published in Javanese, such as *syiir Paras Nabi*, *syiir Mawar Putih* written by Muhammad Nur Sanusi, *syiir Mitera Sejati* written by Bisri Rembang, *syiir Nasehat Konco Wadon*, *syiir Sekar Cempaka*, *syiir Dagang*, *syiir Siti Fatimah*, and *syiir Érang Érang Sekar Panjang* (Burhanudin & Nuryatin, 2020). Using these *syiir* materials, most Islamic boarding schools impart the values of patriotism, love for the country, and adherence to government laws and religious directives. The tradition of *syiir* is deeply ingrained in Islamic boarding schools and is not unfamiliar. Islamic boarding school leaders often use *syiir* to convey various educational messages (Muna, 2021b).

Syiir can adjust to local customs and traditions; and it makes *syiir* a flexible means for the cultural preservation while also expressing eternal moral and ethical principles (Mawardi et al., 2020). It grants the community to integrate their unique cultural factors into the poetry while preserving the main religious themes. The spoken tradition of *syiir* defines that cultural and Islamic knowledge is bequeathed from one generation to generation (Winstedt, 1953). There is a name of the integration in Javanese regions and society and it is called as Islam-Java. This is a product of the integration or acculturation of Islamic values with local cultures, producing unique musical harmonies by applying various instruments such as *gambus*, *hadrah*, *rebana*, and *qasidah*. This emphasizes the perception that Islam is not just a combination of doctrines. However, Islam is integrated, internalized, and practiced by Muslims as a cultural reality. Thus, cultural acculturation and integration between Islam and local cultures is one of the proofs of Islam as a way of life and a power of inspiration (Junaidi, 2013).

Syiir is strongly connected with the cultural traditions of Islamic societies, showing it as a relevant medium for expressing the values of morals and ethics. Its close relationship with the audience strengthens its function as an educational medium. This transmission type is essential in societies with little access to formal education systems and written records of sources for learning. It invites societies together during many different social and religious events. Collectively reciting and listening to these poems fosters a sense of belonging and unity among participants. It reinforces the idea of a shared cultural and religious identity, especially in *pesantren* as the origin of *syiir*. Reciting or listening to *syiir* often occurs in communal settings, fostering a sense of unity and shared values within the community. This communal aspect reinforces the importance of moral and ethical principles and promotes adherence.

There are three main functions of *syiir*: entertainment, education or teaching, and spiritual. The entertainment function arises because *syiir* in literature is always sung, whether with specific musical accompaniment or not. *Syiir* can inspire artistic expression, including traditional music and dance. These creative outlets contribute to the preservation of cultural aesthetics and traditions. *Syiir* is often accompanied by music and can be pretty melodious. This artistic aspect can capture the audience's attention and engage them emotionally, making the moral and ethical lessons more memorable. Besides its entertainment function, *syiir* primarily focuses on religious themes and teachings, making it an effective medium for

imparting moral and ethical values grounded in Islamic principles. It serves as a bridge between religious instruction and everyday life. The role of education and teaching comes into being because syiir shows didactic values, i.e., the education of complex Islamic knowledge and moral values. It conveys moral values, ethical principles, and religious beliefs, serving as an educational tool for imparting the core tenets of Islam. This helps maintain a solid connection to religious identity and values. The spiritual role comes into being because most of the syiir is used solely as an effort to serve God (Muzakka, 2006).

As a way to communicate ideas, historical narratives and important events as well as personalities in Islamic history are often included in syiir. It aims to challenge the moral and ethical ideas more straightforward, easier to comprehend, and easier to be practiced. In addition, syiir commonly contains thought-provoking poetry that offer the readers to contemplate about their decisions and actions. This reflective factor can help one better grasp the moral and ethical principle in life and how they apply to one's behavior. Poems are commonly utilized by the communities to transfer their historical knowledge and legacy to the next generation as a way to preserve the important narratives (Qomar, 2005). In facing the globalization and other cultural influences, syiir can be utilized as a means to resist against the cultural deterioration since it carries the importance of local customs and values as well as accommodates communities in preserving their cultural identities. Syiir is a multifaceted instrument that Islamic communities can use for their cultural heritage preservation and sense of self reinforcement. Through its language, content, and function in social gatherings, Syiir helps to preserve the local languages, transmit historical accounts, teach religious principles, and celebrate the cultural customs. Ultimately, syiir contributes to the maintenance and resilience of cultural identity in a world that is changing, especially when it comes to modern or 21st-century education.

Syiir for Heritage Conservation

Syiir, a heritage conservation form, focuses to conserve the cultural distinctiveness and individuality as well as be changes management. It is an essential factor of preserving heritage since it balances the aesthetic, historical, scientific, spiritual, and social values in a culture. Furthermore, it promotes inclusive participation that goes beyond the knowledge of heritage specialists, empowering communities to identify their cultural legacy through a community-driven strategy that elucidates values that transcend traditional conceptions, materiality, and heritage language (Avrami & Mason, 2019). Protecting, honoring, and preserving cultural and historical legacy is the purpose of the poetry collection Syiir for Legacy Conservation. It serves as a means of conveying to the following generation the importance of preserving and safeguarding both the tangible aspects of a culture or a community's history. Whenever it comes to heritage protection, Syiir usually highlights the importance of cultural heritage, which includes a variety of things like languages, folklore, architecture, customs, and more. The mentioned components are significant to community's history and identity.

Syiir, with its eloquent verses and poetic grace, profoundly emphasizes the historical value intrinsic to our cherished heritage. It shows more than acknowledge; it commemorates the heritage sites/ places, artifacts, and continuing practices that function as silent yet persuasive storytellers of old eras. These have become treasures, such as the classic manuscripts of the time that are saturated with the local wisdom of the past generations, waiting enduringly to disclose their stories and narratives that can be shared with the current generations to become priceless lessons and history. A key point in such syiir is the invitation to conserve and conserve the cultural heritage. It motivates individuals and communities to play roles in conserving their cultural and historical heritage. By underlying the essence of heritage, the syiir supports reinforcement for expressing identity and culture among society and community members. It emphasizes their unique cultural and local heritage and motivates them to participate in conserving them.

Review of literature

Research on cultural heritage preservation has been conducted by Manshur (2020), Rahman (2021), Yadegari (2021), Damopolli et al. (2022), Ibrahim (2022) and Mansur (2020). They explore the learning of typical Islamic Arabic literary works from pesantren and the role of kiai in cultural transformation regarding teachings of piety in Arabic literature. The learning patterns of Arabic literature and teachings in pesantren contain Islamic values and norms, promote tolerance, and demonstrate pesantren's uniqueness and integrative nature. The theoretical contributions of this research include specific learning methods in pesantren and the role of Arabic literature learning in cultural transformation. The three main topics of this study include (1) Learning Arabic literature, (2) Cultural transformation in pesantren, and (3) Pesantren teaching. The difference between this research and future research lies in focusing on the Islamic heritage. Although this research highlights the role of literature in pesantren in transmitting religious teachings, moral values, and cultural identity, it does not explore the role of literature, such as traditional Islamic poetry, in cultural preservation and heritage and cultural identity transmission from one generation to the next.

Secondly, Rahman (2021) examines "From A Local Legacy to the National Religious Harmony: He discusses the concepts of religious moderation that emerge from the local legacy of reflective thinking of ulama/kiai manifested in Javanese-Arabic poetry (syiir). The narrative of religious moderation in syiir demonstrates values of nationalism, tolerance, rejection of violence, and appreciation of local wisdom. These values become an integral and essential part to be conveyed and disseminated to the Indonesian generation to strengthen harmony in Indonesia.

Yadegari (2021) contributes theoretically by revealing that cultural heritage has meanings that shape internal and essential aspects. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to the "protection and transmission of meaning" in the context of cultural heritage using appropriate methods. In using oral methods, besides maintaining the integrity of meaning from possible damage by others, it is also essential to consider that the meaning remains dynamically alive. This underscores the importance of utilizing the inner capabilities of humans in receiving and transmitting meaning to renew the protection of meaning in the context of cultural heritage.

Furthermore, Damopolli et al. (2022) investigate the role of higher education institutions in preserving local Islamic culture. This study examines how effective university management, known as good university governance, contributes to preserving local culture, particularly Islamic culture. Indonesian society has the potential to participate holistically in developing scientific knowledge through establishing university administration based on traditional knowledge and guided by principles of sound policy. The concept of university governance rooted in local wisdom and its implementation can significantly impact various aspects of education, including advancing science, technology, and culture. Hopefully, this will positively influence the younger generation, who will inherit local cultural traditions and ensure their continuity.

Furthermore, more specific research on the preservation of cultural heritage, especially in the field of literature, has been conducted by Ibrahim (2022). According to him, Cultural heritage and literature play a crucial role in human life due to their significant relevance in strengthening social cohesion and supporting efforts to promote peace among human communities.

In conclusion, efforts to preserve cultural heritage in the context of Islamic heritage, especially in literature, face complex dynamics in maintaining their existence as generational shifts occur. It is hoped that developing cultural systems can significantly contribute to preserving cultural heritage for the benefit of future generations and society.

Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research methodology to explore the functions of Syiir in cultural assets conservation. The method allows the exploration of various perspective regarding Syiir's practices, produce insightful findings, and enhances the comprehension of the phenomenon. The purpose of phenomenological/field research design is to present detailed

overview of poetry as a literary work and the efforts made to preserve cultural heritage. Moreover, this research has conducted systemic data gathering, analysis, and interpreting as well.

In depth-interviews, textual analysis, and participatory observation were three techniques used in this study to collect the data. The interview involved expert and seasoned informants in Syiir, including practitioners and enthusiasts. By means of participatory observation, individuals can directly observe the practice of Syiir in a variety of cultural contexts, such as social gatherings, theatrical performances, and religious ceremonies. Moreover, trends, topics, and prevailing linguistic styles of poetry are revealed through the textual analysis of published and oral poetry works. Some subjects in the data collections involve traditional Salafiyah pesantrens, such as Al Anwar Sarang, Ponpes Leteh Gusmus Rembang (Raudlotut Thalibin), Romogung Magelang, Pesantren Darussalam Muntinan, Al Asror, and Aswaja.

Methodologically, the analysis procedure employs the thematic data analysis model (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Thematic data analysis allows for the in-depth exploration of meanings, patterns, and significance of the researched data concerning the phenomenon of Syiir preservation. Within the thematic data analysis model (Marshall & Rossman, 2006), there are six phases, including (1) organizing data, (2) generating categories or themes, (3) coding data, (4) testing understanding emerging from the data, (5) seeking alternative explanations from the data, and (6) composing data analysis. The systematic methodological scheme is presented in Figure 1 as follows.

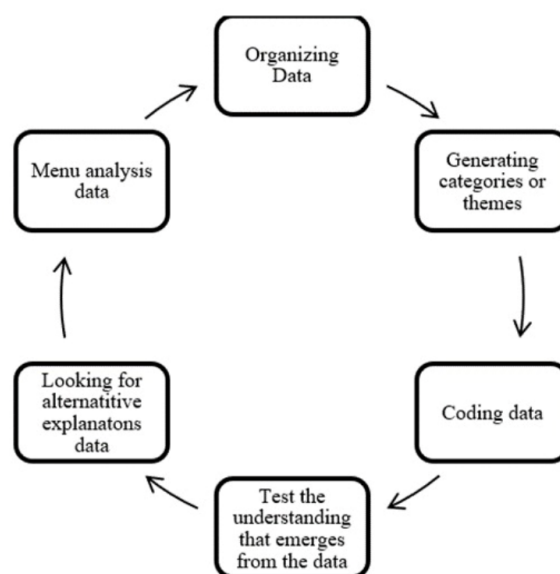


Fig 1: Thematic Data Analysis
Source: Marshall and Rossman (2006)

Findings

Challenges in Syiir Conservation in Indonesia

Preservation of syiir in Indonesia faces several challenges that need to be overcome to secure the culture sustainability. One of the main challenges is the reduction of interest and appreciation towards syiir in society, particularly the young generation. This drawback of exposure to cultural heritage and modern popular cultural dominance has led to the lack of comprehension and sense of pride in syiir as an essential part of the cultural identity of the nation. Consequently, it threatens the syiir existence as an oral tradition inherited from generation to generation.

Moreover, the modernization and globalization influence also has become another challenge. How the lifestyle changes, how the technology rapidly advances, and how the global information floods have affected on how people think and feel about culture. The digital technology adoption and entertainment preferences have shifted the role of syiir in the daily life. Hence, it reduces the interest and sustainability of syiir tradition among society. The point is supported by Wardah (2023) and Sari (2023), who disclose that the cultural products development, such as movies, television, music, literature works, and digital content into developing countries from developed countries can lead to the dominant values, philosophies, and lifestyle related to the original culture. It can be linked to cultural imperialism, which has the power to suppress or eliminate regional customs, values, and practices while imposing control and influence over less powerful cultures.

On the other hand, the lack of infrastructure in terms of support and resources has also become another challenge. The condition is worsened with the lack of formal education access of syiir, lack of financial resources, and lack of government attention towards the local culture preservation. It is confirmed by Natuna & Pratiwi (2023), who show that the modern society focuses more on the popular culture and the current technology, which can cause the lack of appreciation and awareness of local cultural heritage such as syiir. It is challenging for the government or other institutions to justify investing in the preservation of this culture in the absence of public interest and support.

Consequently, the preservation efforts of syiir need supports from several stakeholders, including the government, local communities, educational institutions, as well as individuals. Hence, the tradition can be more sustainable and develop during changes period.

Conservation Strategy of Syiir in Indonesia

Preservation Strategy of Syiir in Education in Pesantren, Community and Home

It is an obligation to keep the efforts of maintaining syiir that has noble principles as the part of the original Indonesian culture. Syiir is a poetry or song that becomes medium with deep spiritual, historical, and philosophical values for Indonesian society, particularly in terms of religion and culture. The messages inside syiir contain morality, ethics, and life principles that can guide individuals in following the teachings and social norms (Shaumiwaty, 2021; Sukmayasa, 2023). In a religious context, syiir is used to remember, worship, and contemplate the greatness of God, which helps increase faith and piety (Samsudin, 2020). One example is the frequent chanting of Syiir Tanpo Waton as a reminder to the community to always be upright in heart and mind so that worldly luxuries do not easily tempt them. Related to this, the syiir preservation strategy needs to be pursued not only to preserve culture but also so that its positive values can be implemented in people's lives.

The first strategy that can be pursued in preserving syiir can be done through the world of education. Education is one of the effective media in preserving syiir to ensure that the next generation understands, appreciates, and passes on syiir as cultural heritage. Education in Indonesia's context of syiir preservation can be detailed, starting from education in pesantren, community, and family.

First, syiir education in pesantren. As a traditional Islamic educational institution, pesantren have an essential role in maintaining and developing syiir so as not to be affected by contemporary developments and global interactions. Education in pesantren has a high urgency in maintaining syiir because syiir has a religious and spiritual context closely related to Islamic traditions (Permana, 2021; Rokhman et al., 2023). Syiir also raised themes related to Islamic identity and the togetherness of the Ummah. In addition, students are also educated to understand and appreciate the togetherness, harmony, and solidarity of Muslims through syiir.

Syiir preservation strategies need an integrated and inclusive approach. The purpose is to maintain the literary and cultural traditions as well as actualize the principles under the modern life context and problem faced by society. An integrated and inclusive approach in this case include several methods, namely: 1) integrating syiir in the pesantren curriculum; 2) utilizing a multidisiplinary approach in being conscious of positive principles in syiir; 3) investigating syiir in several media, both traditional and contemporary; 4) serving different

forms of syiur from different regions and traditions; and 5) adjusting syiir teaching and practice to local culture.

The next point will be about the syiir education in the society or community. The reason why the community education can preserve syiir is because they preserve it both in the formal environment and in society's environment or daily life. Numerous socioeconomic background and ages can be reached through community education, ensuring that syiir is known and understood by those enrolled in the formal education system or who have access to pesantren and the wider community. In addition, syiir has cultural, spiritual, and historical values that make it part of people's lives in Indonesia (Zulfa, 2011). Syiir's education in the community ensures that it remains relevant by incorporating it into daily practices and rituals and in local celebrations and festivals. Syiir education through the community can be done with several strategies, such as 1) integrating syiir in community activities, 2) collaborating syiir with various community arts, and 3) forming Syiir study groups in the community.

Third, syiir education in the family. The spread of syiir through education in the family influenced the preservation and transmission of oral literature. The family became the first filter tool in introducing cultural heritage. Syiir education in the family can be an essential part of the inheritance that must be maintained and passed on. Syiir specifies local values or principles and identity. Family members are able to identify their cultural roots by the family education and they can feel proud of their heritage (Zahrika & Andaryani, 2023). Additionally, syiir can form one's character and positive principles through moral approach. Children can develop a strong moral foundation and become responsible adults with the support of family education through syiir (Zainudin et al., 2022). A number of strategies can be carried out as the effort of syiir education through family, including 1) promoting a sense of respect for cultural heritage, 2) practicing and teaching some syiir in a family environment, and 3) thinking highly of and conveying syiir with family members.

Syiir involves in the community's life through three strategies and it includes in so many aspects such as religious ceremonies to traditional celebrations and communal events. It shows the significance of syiir in terms of preserving the identity and social matters. As a consequence, syiir preservation is important to maintain and develop the values that supports a harmonious and purposeful social life and cultural heritage. Syiir preservation and development needs an approach that involves education, media, and communal activities. The reason is because we need to make sure that the values are taught, celebrated, and integrated into community's everyday life. Therefore, it can be seen that syiir takes role as a cultural heritage and a social as well as spiritual development means for society.

Preservation Strategies of Syiir in the Digital World

Syiir, one of traditional Islamic literary heritage, plays an essential role in inheriting religious, moral, and cultural principles from one generation to the next. In contrast, the challenges of preserving syiir in the current developing digital era becoming increasingly complex. In other words, the current strategies digital era become significant to ensure the sustainability of cultural heritage.

Using social media and online platform can be one of main strategies in preserving syiir in the digital era. Syiir can be uploaded and shared widely through platforms, such as YouTube, SoundCloud and Instagram. The video of syiir readings by poets can also be shared through social media to reach wider and more various audience.

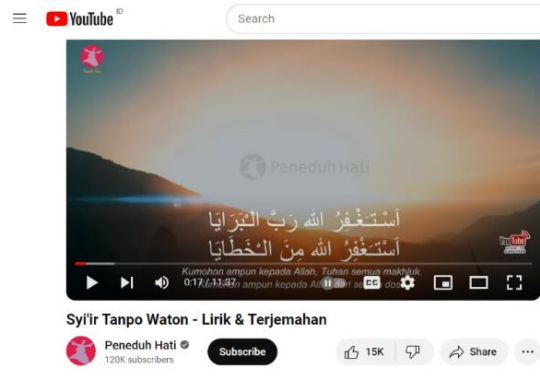


Fig. 2: Digitization of Syiir Through YouTube

Source : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jOyQnVmnWlA>



Fig. 3: Digitization of Syiir Through Instagram Social Media

Source : <https://www.instagram.com/syiirsholawat?igsh=NGY2NmN0cGdpbXRw>

Moreover, creating a mobile application for syiir is another effective strategy. The application itself allows the users to use various features such as reading texts, listening to recitations, accessing Syiir collections, and learning about the meaning or background of each Islamic syiir poetry. Hence, syiir remains accessible and relevant in the current era of massive technology.

The specialized applications or platforms for syiir can be developed based on the needs and preferences of the users through collaboration. This action can improve the user experience and promote more people to participate in syiir preservation. Therefore, the collaboration between developers of applications or other platforms and syiir community is important.

It is a main priority for preserving syiir in the current digital era through educational approach. Some strategies such as online training, webinars, and virtual seminars can be conducted in order to increase the understanding and appreciation towards syiir literary works in society. In addition, it is expected that the participation and interest of society can be increased through the awareness development of syiir as part of Islamic cultural heritage.

Therefore, it is necessary for maintaining the efforts of preserving syiir in the digital era through educational strategy, social media, dedicated mobile applications, and collaboration between syiir community and technology developers. It is expected that syiir will remain alive and sustain to be appreciated enough by current and future generations.

Conclusions

This study examines the following:

- (1) the challenges of syiir preservation in Indonesia and
- (2) the strategies used on syiir preservation as cultural heritage in Indonesia.

First, the challenge of the preservation that includes the decline in the practice and appreciation of syiir in society's daily life, family, and educational settings. This is ascribed to shifts in sociocultural norms and the impact of digital media.

Second, the preservation efforts surround the community's everyday life, education, and family settings. A significant role has been played by the conservation through digital media. It is hoped that syiir will continue to be significant and valued by the present and future generations as an important component of Indonesia's cultural legacy through a digital-based approach. We can ensure that syiir as a traditional Islamic literary heritage keeps continuing to thrive and positively impact Indonesian society in the long term by our awareness towards the importance of preserving syiir as an expression of religious, moral, and cultural values along with the real efforts to overcome the current challenges.

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