

Qur'anic Tafsir Surat al-Ahzab 56: Variety, Meaning and Practice of Shalawat in The Archipelago

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Abstract

This study examines the practice of *Shalawat* within the cultural context of the Nusantara through an analysis of Surah al-Ahzab verse 56. *Shalawat*, as a form of praise for Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), is deeply embedded in the religious life of Muslim communities worldwide, including in the Nusantara region. The interpretation of Surah al-Ahzab verse 56 serves as a fundamental reference in understanding the significance of *Shalawat* in Islam. Employing a methodological approach that combines literature analysis, cultural context understanding, and a review of both classical and contemporary interpretations, this study explores the Quranic interpretation of *Shalawat* from theological (*aqidah*), jurisprudential (*fiqh*), and Sufi (*tasawuf*) perspectives. Furthermore, this research investigates the operationalization and implications of *Shalawat* practices in Indonesia, considering their ideological, traditional, and spiritual dimensions. The findings reveal that *Shalawat* in the Nusantara manifests in diverse forms, both theoretically and pragmatically, in alignment with the Quranic command. By analyzing Surah al-Ahzab verse 56 through three distinct scholarly perspectives, this study provides a comprehensive understanding of *Shalawat* in Nusantara culture. Ultimately, this research highlights the role of Quranic interpretation in shaping the perception and practice of *Shalawat*, reinforcing its relevance within the Indonesian cultural and religious landscape.

Contribution: This study contributes to the understanding of *Shalawat* in Nusantara culture by demonstrating how Quranic interpretation, through theological, jurisprudential, and Sufi perspectives, shapes its practice and significance within the Indonesian religious landscape.

Keywords: *Tafsir Surat al-Ahzab 56, Meaning of Shalawat, Implementation of Shalawat Practices, Indonesian Culture.*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji praktik *Shalawat* dalam konteks budaya Nusantara melalui analisis Surah al-Ahzab ayat 56. *Shalawat* sebagai bentuk pujiannya kepada Nabi Muhammad ﷺ telah menjadi bagian tak terpisahkan dari kehidupan keagamaan umat Muslim di seluruh dunia, termasuk di wilayah Nusantara. Penafsiran Surah al-Ahzab ayat 56 berperan sebagai rujukan utama dalam memahami makna *Shalawat* dalam Islam. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan metodologis yang mencakup analisis literatur, pemahaman konteks budaya, serta kajian atas tafsir klasik dan kontemporer, penelitian ini mengeksplorasi penafsiran Al-Qur'an tentang *Shalawat* dari perspektif teologi (*aqidah*), yurisprudensi (*fiqh*), dan tasawuf (*Sufisme*). Selain itu, penelitian ini menelusuri operasionalisasi dan implikasi praktik *Shalawat* di Indonesia dengan mempertimbangkan aspek ideologi, tradisi, dan spiritualitas. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa *Shalawat* di Nusantara terwujud dalam berbagai bentuk, baik secara





teoritis maupun praktis, sesuai dengan perintah Al-Qur'an. Dengan menganalisis Surah al-Ahzab ayat 56 melalui tiga perspektif keilmuan yang berbeda, penelitian ini memberikan pemahaman yang komprehensif tentang praktik *Shalawat* dalam budaya Nusantara. Pada akhirnya, penelitian ini menyoroti peran tafsir Al-Qur'an dalam membentuk persepsi dan praktik *Shalawat*, serta menegaskan relevansinya dalam lanskap keagamaan dan budaya di Indonesia.

Kontribusi: Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pemahaman *Shalawat* dalam budaya Nusantara dengan menunjukkan bagaimana tafsir Al-Qur'an melalui perspektif teologi, yurisprudensi, dan tasawuf membentuk praktik dan signifikansinya dalam lanskap keagamaan di Indonesia.

Kata Kunci: *Tafsir Surat al-Ahzab 56, Makna Shalawat, Penerapan Praktik Shalawat, Budaya Indonesia*

Introduction

Shalawat is one of the worship deeds that has become a growing tradition in Indonesia.¹ In the cultural context of the Muslim community, shalawat is an order of religious teachings as stated in the Qur'an letter al-Ahzab: 56.² Along with the conditions of cultural diversity, ethnicity, language, and art that exist and develop in Indonesia, this situation will affect the community's expression.³ A multicultural society consists of different cultural communities with all the advantages and slight differences in their concepts of the world, meaning systems, values, forms of organization, history, customs, and habits. A *multicultural society* is a term used to describe a person's view or opinion regarding various lives on earth or a policy that emphasizes acceptance of cultural diversity and the cultural diversity of community values, systems, cultures, and customs. Differences in community conditions regarding values, social, ethnicity, religion, and culture will likely affect expression activities.⁴

Shalawat in Islam is not just an expression of words or an empty ritual; it reflects deep values in the Muslim faith.⁵ One of the central values expressed through Shalawat is the sincere love for the Prophet Muhammad. Followers of Islam believe that through Shalawat, they can express their affection and respect for the Prophet Muhammad and affirm their

¹ Rubaidi Rubaidi, "Dynamics of Contemporary Indonesian Sufism: Actors, Scientific Genealogy, Educational Patterns, and Doctrines of the Majelis Shalawat in East Java," *Kawanua International Journal of Multicultural Studies* 1, no. 1 (June 30, 2020): 18–29, <https://doi.org/10.30984/kijms.v1i1.7>.

² Muadilah Hs Bunganegara, "Pemaknaan Shalawat: Pandangan Majelis Dzikir Haqqul Yaqin," *Tahdis: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu Al-Hadis* 9, no. 2 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.24252/tahdis.v9i2.12478>.

³ Kholid Mawardi, "Shalawatan: Pembelajaran Akhlak Kalangan Tradisionalis," *INSANIA : Jurnal Pemikiran Alternatif Kependidikan* 14, no. 3 (May 15, 2018): 500–511.

⁴ Luthfi Bin Yahya, Moh. Muttaqin, and Ibnu Amar Muchsin, "Musical Expression of Sholawat Art in Multicultural Societies: A Study of Composition Forms," *Harmonia: Journal of Arts Research and Education* 20, no. 2 (December 27, 2020): 242–51, <https://doi.org/10.15294/harmonia.v20i2.27776>.

⁵ Sekar Ayu Aryani, "Healthy-Minded Religious Phenomenon in Shalawatan: A Study on the Three Majelis Shalawat in Java," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 7, no. 1 (June 1, 2017): 1–30, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v7i1.1-30>.





commitment and loyalty to the teachings of Islam that he preached.⁶ Through this practice, Muslims hope to gain blessings and rewards from Allah SWT and expect help and protection from Allah in their daily lives. Therefore, the practice of Shalawat is not only an expression of love and respect but also a form of worship that enriches the spiritual life of Muslims.

Over time, the practice of Shalawat has evolved into various forms and styles throughout the Islamic world, reflecting the diversity of cultures and traditions in Muslim societies. In the archipelago context, the practice of Shalawat also incorporates local and cultural elements that give a distinctive color to its implementation. Therefore, research on the practice of Shalawat in the Archipelago through the interpretation of Surah al-Ahzab verse 56 will help better understand how this practice of Shalawat has developed and permeated the culture and religious life of the region.

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The research underlying the study in this article is "Shalawat in the Perspective of Sufi Tafsir: A Comparative Study of Tafsir Al-Jailani and Tafsir Lathaif Al-Isyarat" written by Suryana Alfathah.⁸ This article examines two Sufi interpretations, specifically those of Syekh Abdul Qadir al Jailani and al Qusyairi, on the interpretation of QS. Al-Ahzab: 56 regarding blessings. The findings of this study reveal both similarities and differences in the interpretations of al Jailani and al Qusyairi regarding QS. Al-Ahzab: 56. Similarities exist in

⁶ Sasadara and Badrun Badrun, "Integration of Islam And Local Culture In The Art of Shalawat Ngelik In The Village of Mlangi Yogyakarta," *Heritage* 3, no. 1 (June 30, 2022): 63–78, <https://doi.org/10.35719/hrtg.v3i1.78>.

⁷ Sardjana Orba Manullang et al., "Celebration Of The Mawlid Of Prophet Muhammad Saw: Ritual And Share Islam Value In Indonesian," *Fikri : Jurnal Kajian Agama, Sosial Dan Budaya* 6, no. 1 (June 30, 2021): 36–49, <https://doi.org/10.25217/jf.v6i1.1324>.

⁸ Suryana Alfathah, "Shalawat Perspektif Tafsir Sufi: Studi Komparasi Tafsir Al-Jailani Dan Tafsir Lathaif Al-Isyarat," *TAFAKKUR : Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 3, no. 2 (May 31, 2023): 153–69.





the structure of their interpretations, encompassing sources, methods, and *ittijah* (direction). However, distinctions emerge in their underlying objectives, the interpretation of signs, and their linguistic styles. In addition, there is research conducted by Muhammad Nurdin Zuhdi and Sawaun, "Dialog Al-Quran With Local Culture of the Archipelago: Reception of Al-Quran in Sekaten Culture in Yogyakarta Palace".⁹ This article delves into the cultural significance of Sekaten in the Yogyakarta palace. Derived from the term "Syahadatain," Sekaten represents a religious and social phenomenon originally established by Sunan Kalijaga as a means to propagate Islam in the Java region. Through the analysis conducted, it becomes evident that Sekaten constitutes a religious and social phenomenon strategically designed for *da'wah* (Islamic propagation) purposes, aimed at instilling the values of the Qur'an in the community. To effectively convey the teachings of the Qur'an, Sekaten amalgamates three pivotal elements: religion, culture, and economy.

Therefore, this study aims to fill this knowledge gap by examining the practice of Shalawat in the Archipelago by analyzing the *tafsir* of Surat al-Ahzab verse 56. This verse specifically refers to the command to send Shalawat to the Prophet Muhammad. It can provide an in-depth view of Shalawat's meaning and practice in the Archipelago's culture. In addition, this research will deepen the understanding of how Qur'anic *tafsir* influences religious practices in the Indonesian cultural context and how the practice of Shalawat incorporates elements of local culture and Islamic values. As such, this research will contribute to understanding the role of Qur'anic *tafsir* in shaping religious and cultural practices in the Nusantara region.

This descriptive study adopts the *tafsir tahlil* (analysis) methodology with a social science interconnection approach.¹⁰ The main focus of this study is to investigate the practice of Shalawat (shalawat) in a multicultural society based on the study of Qur'anic *tafsir*. The *tafsir tahlil* methodology used in this study allows the researcher to conduct an in-depth analysis of the Qur'anic texts and explore their meaning in different cultural and social

⁹ Muhammad Nurdin Zuhdi and Sawaun Sawaun, "Dialog Al-Quran Dengan Budaya Lokal Nusantara: Resepsi Al-Quran Dalam Budaya Sekaten Di Keraton Yogyakarta," *MAGHZA: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 2, no. 1 (May 14, 2017): 125–46, <https://doi.org/10.24090/maghza.v2i1.1548>.

¹⁰ Syaeful Rokim, "Mengenal Metode Tafsir Tahlili," *Al-Tadabbur: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 2, no. 03 (2017), <http://jurnal.staialhidayahbogor.ac.id/index.php/alt/article/viewFile/194/192>.





contexts.¹¹ The social science interconnection approach links aspects of social and cultural life with the practice of Shalawat in a multicultural society.

The target of this research is the practice of Shalawat in a geographically diverse and multicultural society. This study uses data from the source text of the Qur'anic tafsir texts that have been written, and this data is then connected to the facts of Shalawat practice that can be observed in the field.¹² This approach allows the researcher to bridge the theoretical understanding of al-Qur'anic tafsir with the reality of religious practice in a multicultural society. Through this approach, this research aims to provide a deeper understanding of how the practice of Shalawat is interpreted and practiced in a society with diverse cultures and social backgrounds. In addition, this research also has the potential to reveal the role of Shalawat practices in enriching cultural and social diversity in a multicultural society.

Interpretation of the Commandment to Shalawat

Shalawat is a prayer and praise to the Prophet Muhammad. In addition, shalawat is used as a prayer and remembrance, which is a tradition in a particular group of people, and one of the highly recommended sunnah practices shalawat taught by the Prophet Muhammad directly is the ibrahimiyyah prayer, which is performed during prayer.¹³ Shalawat, already known, comes from Arabic (صلوات) *Jama'* from the word prayer, which means prayer that invites us to get closer to Allah. However, the phrase shalawat is more synonymous with shalawat to the Prophet Muhammad, in the sense of praying and asking for blessings for the Prophet Muhammad through sentences, words, and hopes that the Prophet Muhammad will always prosper.¹⁴ Prophet Muhammad is a prophet and messenger of God, the Seal and Perfecter of the Prophets; he is a prophet and a good creature of God whose everything in him is an example for the world's people.¹⁵

¹¹ Faizal Amin, "Metode Tafsir Tahlili: Cara Menjelaskan al-Qur'an Dari Berbagai Segi Berdasarkan Susunan Ayat-Ayatnya," *KALAM* 11, no. 1 (June 30, 2017): 235–66, <https://doi.org/10.24042/klm.v11i1.979>.

¹² Ummi Kalsum Hasibuan, Risqo Faridatul Ulya, and Jendri Jendri, "Tipologi Kajian Tafsir: Metode, Pendekatan Dan Corak Dalam Mitra Penafsiran al-Qur'an," *Ishlah: Jurnal Ilmu Ushuluddin, Adab Dan Dakwah* 2, no. 2 (October 5, 2020): 224–48, <https://doi.org/10.32939/ishlah.v2i2.9>.

¹³ Achmad Fachrur Rozi, "Genealogi Tradisi Shalawat Nariyah Di Desa Kroya," *SANGKéP: Jurnal Kajian Sosial Keagamaan* 3, no. 1 (March 4, 2020): 69–84, <https://doi.org/10.20414/sangkep.v3i1.1802>.

¹⁴ Fajry Sub'haan Syah Sinaga, Shobrun Jamil, and Suwito Ns, "Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Tradisi Shalawat Jawa," *Tonika: Jurnal Penelitian Dan Pengkajian Seni* 6, no. 1 (May 27, 2023): 40–50, <https://doi.org/10.37368/tonika.v6i1.487>.

¹⁵ Siddik Firmansyah and Marisa Rizki, "Shalawat Nariyah in the Perspective of Hadith: A Study of the Ma'ani Al-Hadith Approach" 06, no. 01 (2022).





The Prophet Muhammad is the noblest and most exalted human figure, the leader of all creatures; his majesty is perfect when viewed from the point of view of religion, science, sociology, or any aspect of any, even if history raises the majesty and glory of his life, be it from Muslim and non-Muslim scientists; indeed they will conclude: The Prophet Muhammad is the most incredible human being in the history of human life, it may be impossible for anyone who studies the life of the Prophet Muhammad to be able to reveal all the majesty and glory in him both morals and personality.¹⁶

The glory of the Prophet Muhammad Saw is like the majesty of the Holy Qur'an; if the Qur'an is holy, then the Prophet Muhammad Saw is also holy; if the Qur'an is noble, then the Prophet Muhammad Saw is also noble; if the Qur'an is perfect and complete, then the Prophet Muhammad Saw is also perfect and complete discussing the majesty of the Prophet Muhammad Saw of course there will be no end, any written work and until whenever it will not be able to write in detail and entirely about his greatness.¹⁷ Therefore, when Allah has glorified him, then Muslims are obliged to glorify him; how is it possible that Allah alone glorifies the Prophet Muhammad Saw while otherwise fortunate are those who have glorified the Prophet Muhammad and loss for those who do not want to glorify the Prophet Muhammad Saw this is also prescribed in Islam.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلِكُكُلِّهِ يُصَلِّوْنَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُوْرَا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمُوا سَلِيْمَانَا

“Verily Allah and His angels make peace upon the Prophet. O you who believe! Make peace upon the Prophet and greet him with reverence.” (QS. Al-Ahzab 56).

1. Tafsir with an Akidah Paradigm

Shalawat to the Prophet Muhammad Saw. It contains the meaning of glorifying him with the belief and faith that shalawat is a command of Allah that is highly emphasized; shalawat is fulfilling the rights of the Prophet Muhammad Saw. against creatures because he is the cause of all the great blessings with the salvation of the world and the threat that reaches his people but do not say that when shalawat is the right of the Prophet Muhammad Saw. However, do not say that when shalawat is the right of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and

¹⁶ Dian Erwanto, *Kita Harus Bershalawat* (Yogyakarta: Deepublish, 2021). 3

¹⁷ Samsuddin Kade and St Johariah, “Kedahsyatan Sholawat Kepada Nabi Muhammad Saw,” *Jurnal Ilmiah Islamic Resources* 19, no. 1 (June 10, 2022): 61–74, <https://doi.org/10.33096/jiir.v19i1.173>.





blessings of Allaah be upon him), he needs the Shalawat of the creatures of Allah; instead, all creatures need to shalawat him in order to get glory from him.¹⁸

It is known that the Shalawat chanted by creatures to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is a prayer to Allah, asking Him to bestow His mercy upon him. Allah is the only one with total power in giving Shalawat because creatures cannot fully fulfill the rights of the Prophet Muhammad.¹⁹ Therefore, the creatures ask Allah, the Almighty, to grant this Shalawat, believing that only Allah has the absolute power to fulfill it. There is no doubt in this understanding that the Shalawat that reaches the Messenger of Allah comes from Allah directly and absolutely. When Allah, as the Giver of Shalawat to the Prophet Muhammad, gives His Shalawat, it will continue forever as an eternal form of mercy and blessing.²⁰

Therefore, the explanation in this verse is that Allah informs his servants and people that the Prophet Muhammad Saw. is a servant and a prophet of the highest degree in *Mala' al-A'la*; therefore, the Angels send blessings to him by conveying to Allah as the one who deserves to give blessings to the Prophet Muhammad Saw. Then Allah also commands the believers: O you who believe, uphold the honor of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. with salutations and greetings.²¹

As a reminder that Allah commands his servants to recite shalawat to the Prophet Muhammad Saw. this does not mean that he needs shalawat from his people. However, shalawat is a command of Allah which is established as the majesty and glory of the Prophet Muhammad Saw and provides blessings for his people who pray in order to get the rewards of the world and threat, the Prophet Saw. once said: Whoever recites shalawat to me once, Allah will recite shalawat to him ten times.²²

It is said that shalawat is the culmination of praise; there is nothing broader, and there is no excellent praise to fellow creatures than shalawat therefore shalawat does not have a global and narrow meaning, but there is much meaning in it, and there is also no greatness of praise except praise from Allah, because of the greatness of this praise in the dzahiryah verse that

¹⁸ Adrika Fithrotul Aini, "Living Hadis Dalam Tradisi Malam Kamis Majelis Shalawat Diba' Bil-Mustofa," *Ar-Raniry: International Journal of Islamic Studies* 2, no. 1 (July 28, 2020): 221–35, <https://doi.org/10.22373/jar.v2i1.7423>.

¹⁹ M. Ramli Husein Khalil, *Mengungkap Rahasia 33 Shalawat Kepada Nabi SAW* (Mizan Pustaka, 2009).

²⁰ Ahmad bin Muhammad al-Sawi, *Hasyiah Al-Sawi 'ala Tafsir al-Jalallain* (Surabaya: Darul Ilmi, tth).

²¹ Ahmad al-Mustafa Maragi, *Tafsir Al-Maragi*, 22nd ed. (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, 2015).

²² Fakhrurrozin bin Dliya' ad-Din bin Umar Muhammad Ar-Razi, *Tafsir Al-Kabir Wa Mafatih al-Ghoib* (Nasir wa at-Tauzih: Darr al-Fikr, 1401).





Allah praises the Prophet Muhammad Saw. the best of praise and the culmination of praise is called shalawat; therefore Allah also ordered his people to praise the Prophet Muhammad SAW.²³ As exemplified by his god, logically Allah as the creator of all creatures praises him, how great his degree is, so how can we as his people not praise him.

2. Fiqh-Based Tafsir

This verse illustrates that Allah and the angels who read shalawat on the Prophet Muhammad Saw. by using the lead يصُلُّون (fi'il mudlari'), which indicates that this work is done repeatedly and continuously, implicitly that the meaning here seems to say that this command is highly recommended to do or even required to read shalawat to the Prophet Muhammad Saw repeatedly or continuously, because this verse is exemplified by Allah and the angels who always read shalawat to the Prophet Muhammad Saw.²⁴ Therefore, make it a habit to read Shalawat to the Prophet Muhammad because it is the best reading; read at least the shortest Shalawat:

مُحَمَّدٌ أَلَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَىٰ

“O Allah, bestow blessings, and peace upon the Prophet Muhammad SAW.”

This verse (Surah al-Ahzab 56) shows the obligation of the people to send peace and greetings to their prophet globally; it is permissible to send peace and greetings to others as long as the wording must be preceded by sending peace and greetings to the previous prophet, the scholars have agreed that sending peace and greetings to the prophet is fardhu 'ain for every Muslim, at least once in a lifetime.²⁵ In dzahir shigat command in the verse of the obligation to send blessings to the prophet Muhammad Saw. It is explained that the obligation is Corinth depending on the situation and conditions; other than that, it is only highly recommended. Regardless, the scholars agree that the law of reciting shalawat is obligatory and increasing the recitation of shalawat is sunnah.²⁶

²³ Abu Mansur Al-Maturidi, *Tafsir Al-Maturidi: Tawilat Ahlissunnah* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 2005).

²⁴ Ibnu Asyur, *At-Tahrir Wa at-Tanwir*, (Tunisia: Ad-Dar Tunisiyyah, 1984).

²⁵ Wahbah Az-Zuhaili, *Tafsir Munir Fi Al-Aqidah Wa as-Syariah Wa al-Manhaj*, vol. 11 (Beirut: Darr al-Fikr, 1435).

²⁶ Suhaidi Ghazali and Shabri Shaleh Anwar, *Shalawat Populer: Esensi Shalawat Bagi Ummat Nabi Muhammad SAW* (Qudwah Pres, 2017).





Indeed, Allah emphasizes strongly to his servants to send blessings to the Prophet Muhammad Saw. not to the other Prophets; this command indicates that the blessing is fardu or obligatory at least once in a lifetime and has the sunnah muakkadah to read the blessing at all times, because the wording of the verse Allah and the Angels always send blessings continuously, so those who leave the blessing of the Prophet Muhammad Saw. There is no good in him. Among the obligations of a person when reciting Shalawat is that when the name of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is mentioned, he is reluctant to say shalawat based on the proof that Allah has commanded two angels that when the name of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is mentioned, and Muslims say shalawat, the two angels will pray: May Allah forgive your sins, then the other Angels of Allah will answer: Amen, on the other hand, if the name of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is mentioned and a Muslim does not offer salutations, then the two Angels pray: May Allah not forgive your sins, then the other Angels of Allah answer: Amen.²⁷ Concerning the recitation of shalawat, according to the verse in the Qur'an, which is better, reciting the short shalawat or the long Shalawat? The scholars replied: Based on the apparent meaning of the verse, the best form of Shalawat is the combination of Shalawat and salam, whether short or long.²⁸

3. Sufi-influenced Tafsir

In the mention of النبی, not the name of the prophet Muhammad Saw. Directly as when Allah mentions the names of other prophets only using his name, this lafad contains wisdom and secrets behind that Allah shows his people how great the degree and nobility of the Prophet Muhammad Saw. To the point that it is very privileged by Allah with the addition of ال (ta'rif) to the word نبی. Because the meaning of ال here is to have a unique nature and implies that the Prophet Muhammad Saw, it is very famous for the prophetic predicate.

While lafad consists of an idlafah arrangement between lafad, which is mudlafkan on dlamir (ال), which refers to the word Allah, then actually the meaning of the lafad contained in this idlafah has a signal that the angels have a high position and have

²⁷ Muhammad bin Ahmad Al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jami'li Ahkam al-Qur'an*, 11th ed., vol. 1428 (Beirut: Muassasah al-Risalah, 2006).

²⁸ Abdu al-'Aziz At-Tharifi, *Tafsir Wa Al-Bayan Li Ahkam al-Qur'an*, vol. 4 (Riyadh al-Arabi: Maktabah Darr al-Minhaj, 1997).





majesty because they pray to the Prophet Muhammad Saw Saw, By referring to Allah, who is the most majestic, who will assign the majesty of the mudlaf to the angels because indeed the majesty will be attributed to the majestic as well. Therefore, Allah reminds us that the Shalawat that is always recited by the angels continuously is the most majestic and perfect adoration, namely to the Prophet Muhammad SAW.²⁹ With that, someone who salutes the Prophet will get the majesty and glory of the most majestic Essence.

It is said that no worship is more important than the worship of Shalawat to the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him); because of the majesty and privilege of this worship, Allah did it and was followed by the angels of Allah, and then Allah ordered his servants to Shalawat to the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him). So whoever does the deed of worship, Allah Himself will reward the servant who wants to say goodbye. So it can be understood that a servant who salutes the Prophet Muhammad Saw. It is a chosen servant from among the Mu'min people because remarkable people must do something unique and vice versa. Someone who is not a choice or not from among special people will not do the practice.

A Study of the Variety of Shalawat Practices in the Archipelago

The tradition of reading shalawat is always carried out by Muslims with various recitations of shalawat, which have their respective purposes and hidden meanings hidden behind them. Understanding these meanings is influenced by the level of understanding of religious teachings and sociology, culture, and educational factors. One of the meanings of this shalawat reading tradition is as a form of worship because worship has a significant meaning, namely as an effective means of establishing communication with the Creator through praise to His beloved. Therefore, they actively follow the tradition of reading shalawat because it can strengthen faith and increase the intensity of worship.³⁰

Shalawat activities can be interpreted as encouraging worship rituals and goals carried out by humans. Indonesia is a country whose majority population is Muslim because of the

²⁹ Syihabuddin Sayyid Mahmud Al-Alusi, *Ruh Al-Ma'ani Fi Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Adzim Wa al-Sab'i al-Mastani*, vol. 16 (Beirut: Darr al-Fikr, n.d.).

³⁰ Ismail Ismail, Muhammad Hilmi Musyafa, and Faizah Choslan, "Systematic Literature Review, The Impact Of The Sholawat Nariyah Tradition In Indonesia On Changes In Community Social Behavior," *Ulumuddin: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 13, no. 2 (August 19, 2023): 221–36, <https://doi.org/10.47200/ulumuddin.v13i2.1836>.





role of Wali Songo in spreading the teachings of Islam in particular. That is the hallmark of the Javanese region that once existed. It is visited as a place of da'wah with a Javanese syi'ir message and also contains shalawat to the Prophet Muhammad Saw. The transition at that time began to change due to the times, formerly using Javanese gamelan and using musical instruments that were identical to kejawen nuances, many are adapting to using Arabic nuanced musical instruments such as tambourines, usually on the island of Java, often called Shalawatan or Hadrah, in other places it may have a different name.³¹

Shalawat refers to an act done by a people to their prophet, i.e., in the sense of: 1) Shalawat is a ritual of worship carried out by containing a spiritual inner bond that becomes a guide to life for its adherents. 2) Shalawat is a practice Allah commanded in the Qur'an and Hadith text. 3) Shalawat is a practice entrusted to the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Shalawat has meaning as a prayer always to remember Allah, shalawat to the followers of the Prophet Muhammad Saw. The recitation of shalawat has started since the previous generation of the Prophet's Companions; they did this tradition because of their love for their prophet.³²

Talking about shalawat, of course, many kyai, ustaz, habib, and shalawat groups popularize it, whether using music or not; this is education to instill a sense of love for the prophet Muhammad Saw. Seeing the phenomenon in society like this aligns with the meaning of the Qur'anic verse, namely Allah's Shalawat to the Messenger of Allah. The shalawat of the angels then continued, namely those who believe seriously Shalawat to the Prophet Muhammad Saw. In the treasures of Islamic scholarship, there are different views regarding the law and procedures for saying, reading, or reciting shalawat.³³ Sebagian ulama berpendapat bahwa shalat wajib dilakukan sekali seumur hidup, dan sebagian lagi sepakat bahwa kata amr dalam surat al-Ahzab berarti anjuran, kecuali telah dianjurkan sebagai doa dalam shalat lima waktu. Perbedaan keputusan para ulama mengenai pembacaan shalawat tidak menimbulkan konflik, karena hanya berbeda tingkat kebutuhannya.

³¹ Darmawan Edi Winoto et al., "Religion Traditions in Kampung Jawa Community of Minahasa" (Unima International Conference on Social Sciences and Humanities (UNICSSH 2022), Atlantis Press, 2023), 1994–2003, https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-494069-35-0_239.

³² Akhmad Arif Junaidi, "Janengan Sebagai Seni Tradisional Islam-Jawa," *Walisongo: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan* 21, no. 2 (December 15, 2013): 469–90, <https://doi.org/10.21580/ws.21.2.254>.

³³ Zunly Nadia, "Tradisi Maulid Pada Masyarakat Mlangi Yogyakarta," *ESENSIA: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin* 12, no. 2 (July 22, 2011): 367–84, <https://doi.org/10.14421/esensia.v12i2.718>.





The debate about the law of shalawat in Islam is more specifically applied to the procedures for reciting shalawat. Nowadays, people tend to integrate certain cultural elements, such as art, belief systems, and systems of thought, in reciting shalawat. Their acceptance of cultural elements in the recitation of shalawat can be seen in the ritual of celebrating the Prophet's birthday (mauled) and selamatian events. These rituals are held not only to recite shalawat but also to commemorate the birth of a child and other salvations. The strongest opposition comes from groups like Wahhabism, which generally do not accept cultural inventions regarding worship. Reciting shalawat in various cultural activities is considered bid'ah, strictly forbidden in Islam. This attitude is easily found in some Wahhabi works.³⁴

The community has a tradition of doing whatever is considered good; they chant shalawat when one of the kiai is present at a recitation event; in a recitation assembly, the committee usually deliberately makes the shalawat tradition because they believe that the majlis is not recited shalawat will not get any benefit. Usually, the tradition of shalawat that is often chanted at the majlis is shalawat maulid diba', barzanji or welcoming guests of honour is shalawat badar. However, the practice itself is usually shalawat Jibril or *dalail khairat*.³⁵

Majelis Shalawat is a gathering place for people who mention the name of the Prophet Muhammad, and a gathering place for people who pray to the Prophet to get the grace of Allah and the Prophet, modified with the culture of the past and the present, this activity is one form of conversion strategy and learning the character of the younger generation to behave politely as the right example for the next generation.³⁶ The Shalawat group received a warm welcome calling itself "Lovers of the Messenger of Allah", gathered in one group despite coming from different social backgrounds, the poems delivered were able to make Shalawat lovers feel entertained.³⁷ It means that humans always hope that they love the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Present in their daily lives, there are also Friday night activities carried out in the mosque; the reading of maulid diba' is also carried out istiqamah, the tradition of

³⁴ Nurul Huda, "Mohammad in Archipelago: Spatializing Sprituality in Majlis Shalawat Syubbanul Muslimin In Probolinggo," *Islamic Studies Journal For Social Transformasi*, 02, 01 (2021). 118

³⁵ Rubaidi Rubaidi, "Java Islam: Relationship of Javanese Culture and Islamic Mystism in The Post-Colonial Study Perspective," *el Harakah: Jurnal Budaya Islam* 21, no. 1 (June 12, 2019): 19–36, <https://doi.org/10.18860/el.v21i1.6066>.

³⁶ Nur Rosyid, "The Hadrami Diaspora and the Network Expansion of Majelis Shalawat in Contemporary Indonesia," *Shahih: Journal of Islamicate Multidisciplinary*, 01, 06 (2021).

³⁷ Diya' Annisaul Fauziah Bobby Rachman Santoso, "The Contestation of Da'wa on Youtube: Comparative Study of Syubbanul Muslimin and At-Taufiq Salawat Group," *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah: UIN Wali Songo*, 02, 41 (2021). 154





reading shalawat also motivates the community to follow its activities because this shalawat tradition is also a barometer of the formation of a friendly climate in a village.

There are two kinds of traditions circulating in the community regarding shalawat performed together: first, among Nahdliyin it is widely known as Barzanji, a book containing poems expressing love for the Prophet Muhammad SAW, the book of Barzanji is usually read when it has an intention, for example, the commemoration of the Prophet's Maulid, baby naming ceremonies, weddings, ceremonies, and tantrums. Second, the Diba' tradition is reading books in Arabic poetry containing praise to the Prophet Muhammad SAW. So, when they perform a ritual called Diba'an, this activity is carried out by reading shalawat together.³⁸

The tradition is built in the community using the Popular Culture Trends approach, where every display of the art of reading shalawat is: 1) accompanied by traditional music such as ketipung, tambourine, violin, bass, keyboard, flute, etc. 2) Various lyrics of a collection of Javanese, Indonesian and Arabic shalawat songs modified with hadrah songs and Middle Eastern melodies, interspersed with pop songs that are not boring, like a world-renowned band equipped with a sound system in a public space. Which is usually wide in square shape. 3) Sufi dances are filled with concentration in dhikr by rotating the limbs 180 degrees continuously, lasting between 10 to 30 minutes.³⁹

One that forms a spiritual bond with shalawat is the Kanzus Shalawat Assembly, founded by Habib Muhammad Luthfi Ali bin Yahya, a murshid (great Sufism priest); Habib Luthfi is known as the leader of the Syadziliyah Order. At the same time, he is also the murshid for many other tariqahs such as Naqsabandiyah al-Khalidiyah, al-'Alawiya, al-Idrusyah, al-'Atha'iyah, al-Hadadiah, Yahyawiyah, Qadiriyah wa Naqsabandiyah, and Tijaniyah. As such, he had the privilege of approving the talking zikr (oral bai'at) of new tariqah members. Given his integrity and leadership, he was nominated to be the rais idaroh (national chairman) of Jam'iyyah Ahlith Tariqoh al-Muktabaran an-Nahdliyyah (Association of Nahdlatul Ulama Congregations), commonly abbreviated as JATMAN.⁴⁰

³⁸ Ayu Febriani and Agus Mahfud Fauzi, "Analisis Konflik Perubahan Tradisi Pra-Pernikahan 'Diba'an' dalam Kelompok Masyarakat Islam Nahdlatul Ulama Desa Gading," *NUANSA: Jurnal Penelitian Ilmu Sosial dan Keagamaan Islam* 19, no. 1 (June 14, 2022): 106–26, <https://doi.org/10.19105/nuansa.v19i2.6174>.

³⁹ Roro Sri Rejeki Waluyajati and Afghoni Syahuri, "Budaya Pop Dalam Tradisi Shalawatan Pada Masyarakat Pedesaan," *Religious: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama Dan Lintas Budaya* 3, no. 2 (2019): 133–38.

⁴⁰ Aryani, "Healthy-Minded Religious Phenomenon in Shalawatan."





The practice of shalawat in Javanese tradition is believed to instil spiritual values to cure physical and spiritual illnesses. This new style of spirituality is much in demand among the youth and the marginalized, or Geertz calls it Brother Islam. From this, it can be underlined that holiness is built on a blend of spirituality between humanistic, mystical and esoteric traditions in Eastern religions to attain well-being, personal development and individual internal experience. In order to achieve an affirming and reassuring spiritual experience, one must observe the prescribed rules or shari'a and perform various ceremonies or rituals. Religious expertise will bring about a compassionate heart characterized by gentleness and sensitivity. Loving someone will give birth to "mutual love" regardless of race, colour, ethnicity and religion. The esotericism of religions is essentially the same. The difference lies in the application of esotericism that emphasizes exoteric religion. This exoteric aspect gives rise to religious plurality. Every religion has the same goal: to achieve a degree of closeness to God.⁴¹

So, according to the traditions that exist in the community, the meaning of the Qur'anic verse surah al-Ahzab 56 is the sentence Shollu Alaihi, which is praying; they carry it out according to tradition in recitation events; for example, for, Wirid they spell it one by one, not together. While the sentence Wasallimu Taslima is to say greetings to the Prophet Muhammad Saw. they make it a tradition to welcome honoured guests such as kyai and the birthday of Diba', so the editorial used is Assalamu'alaika ya Rasulallah. Based on the recent studies above, all of them agree that shalawatan developed in Indonesia is based on the interpretation of the Qur'an and Hadith, or as Woodward said, as a "product of interpretation of Islamic texts", so that people are moved to do it. keep doing shalawatan to get "mahabbah", "barakah", and "intercession". These three values, as well as the interpretation of the Qur'an and Hadith, keep alive the maulid commemoration or shalawatan that has been done for centuries in the archipelago.⁴²

Conclusion

⁴¹ Mambaul Ngadimah, "The Spirituality of Mafia Shalawat; A Crisis Solution of Modern Society," *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science* 175, no. 1 (July 2018): 012181, <https://doi.org/10.1088/1755-1315/175/1/012181>.

⁴² "The Hadrami Diaspora and the Network Expansion of Majelis Shalawat in Contemporary Indonesia." 114-115.





The conclusion that can be drawn from the analysis in this study is that the practice of Shalawat has deep values that cover aspects of aqidah (belief), sharia (worship), and tasawuf (spirituality) in Islam adopted by the people of the archipelago. Moreover, the analysis of al-Qur'an Surah al-Ahzab verse 56 reveals two important points related to the practice of Shalawat by the people of the archipelago. First, there is a diversity of Shalawat traditions reflected in the Maulid tradition and various other practices that vary in various regions in Indonesia. Second, there is an element of education in the practice of Shalawat, where Allah and the Angels provide a direct example in prayer to the Prophet Muhammad SAW. It indicates that education through Shalawat is valuable in spreading Islamic teachings and values. This study provides a deeper understanding of how Qur'anic interpretation influences the understanding and implementation of Shalawat in Indonesia's diverse culture. In addition, it also highlights the role of Shalawat practices in enriching cultural and social diversity in the Nusantara society. This study has the potential to contribute to the cross-cultural understanding of religious practices in Islam and their relevance in Indonesia's rich and multicultural culture.

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