

# LOCAL INTERPRETATION OF THE ARCHIPELAGO AND PRESERVATION OF CULTURAL IDENTITY: EPISTEMOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL ANALYSIS AND REVITALIZATION STRATEGIES IN THE ERA OF GLOBALIZATION

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## ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the role of local interpretations in the preservation of cultural identity and the urgency of their revitalization amid the currents of globalization and homogenization of religious interpretations. Using a descriptive qualitative approach based on literature review, this study examines Javanese, Sundanese, and Bugis interpretations; scientific articles related to vernacularization; and manuscripts and supporting documents on the development of local interpretations. The results show that local interpretations have distinctive epistemological and methodological characteristics through the integration of the Qur'anic text with cultural values, linguistic idioms, and the social structure of the local community. This tradition not only functions as a medium for religious understanding, but also as a vehicle for preserving regional languages, local scripts, and the formation of a grounded Islamic identity. However, the dominance of Middle Eastern interpretations, limited access to manuscripts, and a lack of regeneration of Islamic scholars pose serious challenges to the sustainability of local interpretations. This study offers revitalization strategies through manuscript digitization, curriculum integration, production of new works in regional languages, and collaboration in research and cultural activities. Thus, local interpretations are positioned as an important pillar of Islamic plurality in the archipelago as well as a foundation for the preservation of the nation's intellectual and cultural heritage.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Globalization in the last two decades has had a significant influence on the patterns of religious diversity among Muslim communities in various parts of the world, including Indonesia. The increasingly uniform flow of religious information and the dominance of Arabic and standard Malay tafsir products have marginalized local tafsir models based on regional languages in intellectual and religious practice. In fact, the history of interpretation in the archipelago shows that the tradition of interpreting the Qur'an using local languages and cultures has been a hallmark of Islam in this archipelago from the 17th century to the early 20th century (Akbar et al., 2025; Ys, 2021). This tradition affirms the ability of Nusantara scholars to contextualize the message of the Qur'an based on the cultural framework of the local community, so that interpretation is not only a medium for religious understanding, but also a means of preserving Islamic identity and regional culture.

Local interpretations in Javanese, Sundanese, Bugis, and various other regional languages are historical evidence that the spread of Islam in the archipelago was adaptive and dialogical, not coercive. Works such as Faidh ar-Rahman, the Javanese Pegon tafsir, Marah Labid in the Sundanese context, and the Bugis tafsir in Lontarak script are concrete examples of how the mother tongue serves as a bridge for communities in understanding the messages of the Qur'an (Faidh et al., 2024; Kurniawan, 2023; Mursalim et al., 2024; Haris & Nurfaika, 2025). These interpretations absorb local idioms, symbols, and cultural values, resulting in interpretations that are down-to-earth, contextual, and close to the social reality of the community.

However, the modernization of Islamic education, changes in religious preferences among the community, and the penetration of interpretations from the Middle East that are considered more "authoritative" have led to a decline in the use and production of local interpretations based on regional languages. This condition raises

epistemological, cultural, and pedagogical problems. Epistemologically, the loss of the local interpretation tradition means the loss of the unique perspective of the Indonesian people in understanding the Qur'an, an epistemic wealth not found in other regions (Mursalim et al., 2024; Rojab et al., 2025). Culturally, the decline in the use of regional languages in interpretation has weakened local Islamic identities tied to languages, scripts, and cultural expressions such as Pegon, Jawi, and Lontarak (Mahaly, 2024; Al-Badri & Nurfitriyana, 2022). From a pedagogical perspective, the disappearance of mother-tongue-based interpretations reduces the accessibility of understanding the Qur'an for grassroots communities, especially the older generation or indigenous communities who still rely on regional languages in their daily interactions (Indrakasih & Amaliah, 2023; Jamaluddin et al., 2022).

In the context of globalization and the homogenization of interpretation, revitalizing local interpretation traditions is an important agenda for preserving the plurality of Islam in the Archipelago. This effort needs to be carried out through a multidimensional approach, ranging from the digitization of manuscripts, the integration of local interpretations into the Islamic education curriculum, to the strengthening of academic research on this intellectual heritage (Al-Badri & Nurfitriyana, 2022; Musaffa, 2025). Based on this framework, this study was designed to analyze the role of local interpretations in the Nusantara in preserving cultural identity and to formulate strategies for their revitalization in the era of globalization.

This article specifically aims to: Describe the epistemological, methodological, and cultural characteristics of local interpretations in the archipelago. Explain the contribution of local interpretations to the preservation of cultural identity and regional languages. Offer strategies for revitalizing regional language interpretations as part of strengthening the Islamic identity of the archipelago.

This article not only contributes to the development of the study of Nusantara

interpretation, but also opens up a space for discussion on the importance of diversity of interpretation in building an inclusive, contextual, and harmonious pluralism that is in line with local cultural identity.

## 2. METHODS

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a library research method. All data were obtained from local Indonesian interpretations, scientific articles, manuscripts, and various relevant previous studies as listed in the reference list of source documents. This approach was chosen because the main objective of the research was to understand the epistemological, methodological, and cultural characteristics of local interpretations, as well as to analyze how these traditions contribute to the preservation of the cultural identity of Muslim communities in the archipelago.

The main data sources come from regional language tafsir works such as Faidh ar-Rahman and Al-Ibriz in the Javanese tradition, Marah Labid and Qur'an Sunda in the Sundanese tradition, as well as Bugis tafsir such as Tafsir al-Munir and a number of tafsir written in Lontarak script. Through these texts, the study examines the methodological patterns used by local exegetes, the styles of language that developed in the socio-cultural contexts of each region, and the integration of elements of local wisdom in the interpretation process (Faidh et al., 2024; Kurniawan, 2023; Haris & Nurfaika, 2025). In addition, this study also refers to academic studies on the vernacularization of interpretation (Mursalim et al., 2024), the history of the development of interpretation in the archipelago (Akbar et al., 2025; Mahaly, 2024), and public perceptions of the existence of local interpretations (Indrakasih & Amaliah, 2023). Additional literature on language politics (Musaffa, 2025) and the translation of the Qur'an into regional languages (Al-Badri & Nurfitriyana, 2022; Jamaluddin et al., 2022) was also used to enrich the context of the analysis.

The data collection process was carried out through an inventory of literature from various journals, digital manuscripts,

and research works related to local interpretations in the archipelago. Each text was then read in depth to identify the methods of interpretation, references used, use of local terms, and the structure of the interpretation. After that, a comparison process was carried out between interpretation traditions, especially Javanese, Sundanese, and Bugis interpretations, using comparison tables available in the source documents.

Data analysis was carried out in three stages. The first stage is data reduction, which involves filtering and selecting information relevant to the research focus, particularly related to epistemological aspects, cultural identity, and strategies for revitalizing local interpretations. The second stage is thematic classification, in which data is grouped into main themes such as interpretation methodology, cultural function, contribution to identity, and challenges faced in preserving local interpretations. The third stage is critical-interpretative analysis, which links the research findings with the theory of Al-Qur'an vernacularization, cultural studies, and Nusantara interpretation literature, thereby producing a comprehensive understanding of the position and role of local interpretations in the modern context.

This qualitative approach allows the research to explore in depth how local interpretations function not only as a medium of religious meaning, but also as an instrument of cultural preservation that has important relevance in facing the tide of religious homogenization in the era of globalization.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Epistemological and Methodological Characteristics of Local Nusantara Exegesis

This study found that local interpretations in the archipelago have an epistemological foundation that is strongly influenced by the social, cultural, and linguistic context of the local community. The integration of the local context is strongly evident in the Javanese, Sundanese, and Bugis interpretations that were the subject of this

study. In the Javanese tradition, for example, interpretations show Sufi, philosophical, and contextual nuances rooted in the pesantren tradition and Javanese wirid (prayers) that blend Islamic teachings with local wisdom (Faidh et al., 2024). Meanwhile, Sundanese interpretations emphasize the integration of Qur'anic interpretation with regional literary aesthetics such as dangding and guguritan, resulting in a more communicative, poetic form of interpretation that is closer to the literary traditions of the Sundanese people (Kurniawan, 2023). The Bugis interpretation shows a strong epistemological character through the use of the Lontarak script, the utilization of Bugis moral concepts such as bettuang, and an emphasis on social values that are alive in the local community (Haris & Nurfaika, 2025; Mursalim et al., 2024). All three show that the local interpretation tradition does not merely translate, but contextualizes the meaning of the Qur'an through the lens of each region's culture.

From a methodological perspective, this study finds a diversity of interpretive approaches that reflect the flexibility and creativity of the scholars of the archipelago in responding to the needs of da'wah in their communities. Javanese tafsir generally uses the tahlili method, analyzing verses in detail with a touch of Sufi and philosophical interpretation. The Sundanese tafsir tradition shows a combination of the ijimali and tahlili methods, namely concise interpretation which is then supplemented with literary elaboration that enriches the moral and theological messages to be conveyed. Unlike the other two, Bugis tafsir leans more towards the contextual ijimali method with an emphasis on the social structure and local moral values that are at the heart of Bugis society. These methodological variations show that local interpretations in the archipelago are not static, but evolve in accordance with cultural dynamics, learning needs, and local communication patterns.

#### **Contribution of Local Exegesis to the Preservation of Cultural Identity**

The results of the study show that local interpretations in the archipelago play a

significant role in maintaining the cultural identity of Muslim communities in various regions. This role is not only linguistic, but also encompasses social, cultural, and ideological dimensions, making local interpretations an important instrument in preserving the diversity of Islamic traditions in Indonesia.

First, from a preservative perspective, local interpretations play a role in preserving regional languages and scripts that are increasingly marginalized in the tide of linguistic modernization. The traditions of Pegan Javanese, Jawi Malay, and Lontarak Bugis interpretations show how regional languages remain the main medium for conveying religious teachings and the Islamic understanding of local communities (Akbar et al., 2025; Ys, 2021). The use of traditional scripts such as Pegan, Jawi, and Lontarak not only strengthens local literacy identity but also functions as a form of cultural archive that records language structures, idioms, religious diction, and local narratives that have developed over centuries (Mahaly, 2024). Thus, the existence of local interpretations becomes a repository of cultural knowledge that preserves the continuity of regional intellectual heritage from generation to generation.

Second, from an adaptive perspective, local interpretations serve as a bridge connecting the universal teachings of Islam with local wisdom that is deeply rooted in society. This integration can be seen, for example, in the Javanese tradition of interpretation, which links the concept of monotheism with the philosophy of sangkan paraning dumadi, a Javanese cosmological concept that interprets the origin and purpose of human creation. In the Bugis tradition, the interpretation of moral verses is often linked to the value of siri' na pacce, namely self-respect and social solidarity, which are the pillars of Bugis society's ethics (Mursalim et al., 2024). This adaptation process shows that local interpretations do not merely transmit Islamic doctrine, but are also deeply rooted in the value systems of society, creating a distinctive Islamic identity in the archipelago

that is not disconnected from the universality of Islam, yet still reflects the richness of local culture.

Third, from a resistive perspective, the existence of local interpretations can be understood as a form of resistance to the homogenization of global interpretations driven by the dominance of Middle Eastern religious discourse. The trend toward standardization of interpretation and the tendency to narrow the space for diversity in modern Islamic traditions have created an epistemological hegemony that often ignores the local context (Musaffa, 2025). In such a situation, local interpretations appear as an affirmation of the plurality of understandings of the Qur'an and as a form of intellectual resistance to a single dominance in interpretation. It not only maintains the diversity of Islamic scientific traditions but also protects the cultural autonomy of the Indonesian people in interpreting sacred texts in accordance with their socio-cultural environment.

Thus, the contribution of local interpretation to the preservation of cultural identity includes preservative, adaptive, and resistive functions that strengthen the continuity of the Islamic identity of the archipelago while maintaining the plurality of interpretations in the global Islamic landscape.

### **Challenges of Revitalizing Local Interpretation in the Era of Globalization**

This study reveals that efforts to revitalize local interpretations in the archipelago face a number of significant structural and cultural challenges. The first challenge relates to the lack of regeneration of local scholars and interpreters. Many young scholars, especially those who have received formal education at Islamic universities, are more inclined to study contemporary Arabic-language interpretations than to explore local interpretation traditions. This stronger orientation towards Middle Eastern literature has caused the regeneration process of local interpreters to be discontinuous, thereby weakening the potential for the development of regional interpretation traditions

(Mursalim et al., 2024). This condition indicates a shift in the orientation of scientific authority, which has resulted in a decline in interest in the study of local manuscripts.

The second challenge relates to limited access to local interpretation manuscripts. Most manuscripts written in Pegan, Jawi, and Lontarak scripts are still stored in Islamic boarding schools, family libraries, or private collections that are not easily accessible to researchers. The uneven digitization process makes these manuscripts prone to loss or damage before they can be studied academically (Al-Badri & Nurfitriyana, 2022). This limited access not only hinders research but also obstructs efforts to integrate local interpretations into the modern Islamic education curriculum.

The third challenge arises from the intense competition between modern religious narratives in the digital space and popular media. Young Muslims tend to be more familiar with standard interpretations in modern Indonesian, especially those that are concise, systematic, and easily found on digital platforms. As a result, local interpretations are often perceived as less scientific, less practical, or irrelevant to today's religious needs. This perception further narrows the space for appreciation of regional interpretive traditions and reinforces the dominance of a uniform model of interpretation in the Indonesian Islamic landscape.

Overall, these three challenges indicate that the revitalization of local interpretations requires systematic intervention through education, digitization, and the strengthening of academic discourse so that the distinctive interpretive traditions of the archipelago remain alive and able to contribute meaningfully in the era of globalization.

### **Revitalization Strategies Identified**

Efforts to revitalize local interpretation in Indonesia show that the revival of the Nusantara interpretation tradition cannot be separated from simultaneous support from academic, technological, and cultural aspects.

Digitization is often referred to as the main foundation, especially through the creation of online repositories that allow local interpretation manuscripts to be accessed more widely by researchers and the public (Indrakasih & Amaliah, 2023). This digital transformation is not merely a matter of transferring texts to electronic format, but also opens up opportunities for preservation, improved readability, and expanded cross-institutional collaboration networks.

In addition, the integration of local interpretations into the curriculum of Islamic boarding schools and universities is considered important to ensure the sustainability of scientific transmission. By including Nusantara interpretation manuscripts as teaching materials, educational institutions not only affirm the position of local intellectual heritage in the realm of Islamic studies, but also foster critical awareness among students and university students regarding the richness of Indonesian Islamic epistemology. This step is then reinforced by the development of digital platforms such as applications, e-learning, or modern translated editions that allow local interpretations to appear more relevant to the younger generation who are accustomed to the digital ecosystem.

Revitalization also moves through cultural approaches, for example through the organization of festivals, seminars, vernacularization workshops, and collaborative research involving academics, cultural communities, and religious institutions. Such activities not only restore public interest in the existence of local interpretations, but also re- ly place them as an integral part of the scientific identity of the archipelago. On the other hand, training in interpretation writing for santri and young academics plays a strategic role in ensuring the regeneration of interpreters who understand the local context and are able to engage in dialogue with global dynamics. These strategies show that the revitalization of local interpretations is a multidimensional project that requires synergy between technological innovation, the

recontextualization of education, and the strengthening of the cultural ecosystem.

### **The Epistemological Relevance of Local Interpretation in the Archipelago's Scientific Tradition**

The epistemology of local interpretation in the archipelago is built through a process of integration between the text of the Qur'an and the socio-cultural reality of the local community. This process is not merely an activity of translation or simplification of meaning, but rather a construction of Islamic knowledge based on the local context (local knowledge construction). The concept of vernacularization as proposed by Mursalim et al. (2024) explains that the adaptation of the message of the Qur'an into local language and culture functions as an epistemological bridge, allowing the values of the Qur'an to take root in the daily lives of the community.

#### **1. Local Tafsir as a Space for Knowledge Production**

Javanese interpretations such as Faidh ar-Rahman and Al-Ibriz are important examples of how Nusantara scholars combine the tahlili method with Sufi and philosophical nuances. Local idioms such as sangkan paraning dumadi indicate a dialogue between Javanese cosmology and the concept of monotheism, confirming that local interpretation operates as a unique space for knowledge production, rooted in the intellectual traditions of Islamic boarding schools and Javanese culture (Faidh et al., 2024).

In the Sundanese region, the compilation of interpretations through literary mediums such as dangding and guguritan indicates that the epistemology of interpretation is not only based on linguistic analysis but also utilizes cultural aesthetics as a tool for meaning (Kurniawan, 2023). Meanwhile, Bugis interpretation presents a dimension of local morality through the concept of siri' na pacce, showing that Bugis ethical values and cultural structures serve as an epistemological lens for understanding verses (Haris & Nurfaika, 2025). This

diversity confirms that local interpretations are not merely translations, but creative expressions of the dialogue between sacred texts and the cultural horizons of local Muslim communities.

2. Methodological Diversity as a Characteristic of Nusantara Scholarship

Methodological diversity in Nusantara interpretations, ranging from ijimali, tahlili, to Sufi approaches, demonstrates the flexibility of local scholars in responding to the needs of society. Historically, this flexibility reflects the ability of Nusantara scholars to adapt methodological tools to social conditions and the literacy level of their communities. The differences in structure, terminology, and style of interpretation in the three main traditions of Java, Sunda, and Bugis illustrate the pluralistic and non-monolithic dynamics of scholarship. This diversity confirms that Nusantara interpretation has an independent and rich epistemological character, not merely a derivative of Middle Eastern interpretation traditions, but has developed as an intellectual treasure trove with its own distinctive features.

**Local Interpretation as a Medium for Preserving Cultural Identity**

The role of local interpretation in preserving cultural identity is one of the important findings in this study. The tradition of interpretation in regional languages not only records linguistic and scriptural heritage, but also shows how Islam interacts with local cultures. Thus, local interpretation functions as a cultural space where Islamic identity and cultural identity meet and reinforce each other.

1. Preservation of Language and Script

Language and script are the main markers of a community's identity. The tradition of interpreting the Qur'an in the Pegan, Lontarak, and Jawi scripts shows the significant contribution of local interpretations in preserving regional languages (Akbar et al., 2025; Ys, 2021).

The existence of Pegan interpretation, which is still taught in a number of Islamic boarding schools, or Lontarak interpretation, which is studied in the Bugis community, shows that regional languages still have a place in religious activities.

In addition to preserving the structure of the language, the use of local scripts, which are now rarely taught in formal education, confirms the preservative function of local interpretations as cultural archives. In line with Mahaly's (2024) findings, the writing of interpretations in traditional scripts serves as authentic documentation of the idioms, speech styles, and ways of thinking of the people of the archipelago at the time of the interpretation's compilation. Thus, local interpretations play an important role in ensuring the continuity of regional literary heritage.

2. Islam that is Grounded: The Islamic Identity of the Archipelago

Local interpretations not only preserve language, but also shape patterns of Islam that are grounded in the community. Islamic teachings are translated into local idioms that are familiar to the community, making religious understanding more accessible and relevant. The value of social harmony, for example, is a strong feature in Javanese interpretations; literary aesthetics color Sundanese interpretations; while morality such as siri' na pacce forms the ethical framework in Bugis interpretations. These three traditions emphasize that Islam in the archipelago did not develop as an imitation of Middle Eastern culture, but as an expression of Islam that is in harmony with local cultural values and structures.

This process also serves as a form of cultural resistance to the homogenization of religious interpretation. When local interpretations are preserved and produced, communities have the space to maintain diversity in religious expression amid the tide of globalization, which

tends to standardize practices and thinking.

3. Pedagogical Function for Grassroots Communities

Beyond its cultural function, local interpretation plays an important role in Islamic education at the grassroots level. Religious learning through the mother tongue is easier for the community to understand, especially the older generation and rural communities (Indrakasih & Amaliah, 2023; Jamaluddin et al., 2022). Delivering the teachings of the Qur'an in the language they use daily allows for a more profound internalization of values.

Local interpretations also provide an inclusive learning space, as they do not depend on the ability to read Arabic or modern Latin script. Thus, local interpretations fulfill a pedagogical function that reinforces the role of scholars and traditional educational institutions in strengthening the community's religious literacy in a sustainable manner.

### **Challenges of Revitalizing Local Interpretation in the Global Era**

The position of local interpretation in the contemporary Islamic landscape faces various structural and epistemological challenges rooted in changes in religious authority patterns in the era of globalization. The currents of modernization, digitalization, and the increasing penetration of Middle Eastern literature have shifted the attention of the community, especially the younger generation, away from local interpretations, which are considered traditional. These challenges reveal a tension between the need to preserve the tradition of Indonesian interpretation and the dynamics of modern religious preferences.

1. The Dominance of Standard Interpretations and Middle Eastern Hegemony

One of the main challenges is the dominance of Middle Eastern interpretations, which are widely available in print and digital formats.

Their accessibility and uniformity make these standard interpretations more acceptable to modern readers. Musaffa (2025) explains this phenomenon through the concept of "language politics," which is the shift in religious authority that occurs when modern Arabic is prioritized as the medium of Islamic knowledge. As a result, local interpretations that combine regional languages and cultural idioms are often considered less representative than mainstream interpretations. In this context, the public's preference for standard interpretations indirectly narrows the space for local interpretations, especially for communities that are increasingly exposed to global religious discourse.

2. Lack of Regeneration and Access to Manuscripts

Another crucial challenge is the lack of regeneration of local interpreters. Many young scholars prefer to study the works of Middle Eastern scholars, which are considered more authoritative and modern, thereby reducing attention to local interpretation manuscripts and traditions. This condition hinders the continuity of the interpretation tradition rooted in the culture of the archipelago. In addition, limited access to manuscripts further exacerbates this problem. Most Pegon, Lontarak, or Jawi interpretation manuscripts are still stored in family collections, traditional institutions, and Islamic boarding schools, and have not been adequately digitized (Al-Badri & Nurfitriyana, 2022). These limitations make research on local interpretations difficult and hinder their exposure in academic discourse.

3. Misperceptions about the Scientific Quality of Local Tafsir

The next challenge arises from a mistaken epistemological perception of local interpretations. Some people believe that the use of regional languages, cultural idioms, and aesthetic approaches makes local interpretations insufficiently "scientific." This perception reveals a bias

toward modernity that equates scientific with Arabistic rationality or Arabic-based academic approaches. In fact, as shown by various contemporary studies, local interpretations actually possess methodological and epistemological richness that reflects the depth of society's interaction with sacred texts. However, this stigma continues to marginalize local interpretations from academic study and makes them less valued in official scientific discourse.

#### **Strategies for Strengthening and Revitalizing Local Exegesis**

Efforts to revitalize local interpretations require a comprehensive approach that involves technology, education, knowledge production, and cultural strengthening. The challenges faced by the tradition of local interpretation cannot be overcome solely through the preservation of manuscripts, but require strategies that are able to place local interpretations within the contemporary scientific and cultural ecosystem. Based on a synthesis of the literature, there are several strategic steps that can be taken to revive the tradition of Nusantara interpretation.

##### **1. Manuscript Digitization and Online Repository Development**

Digitization is the most urgent step to open wide access to local interpretation manuscripts. Through digitization, Pegon, Lontarak, or Jawi works are not only saved from physical damage, but can also be accessed by academics, santri, and the general public without geographical boundaries. Indrakasih & Amaliah (2023) show that digital-based preservation can strengthen the sustainability of religious literacy and facilitate interdisciplinary research. In addition, online repositories enable the integration of manuscript documentation, transliteration, and academic studies, thereby accelerating the regeneration of local tafsir researchers.

##### **2. Integration into the Curriculum of Islamic Boarding Schools and Universities**

Local tafsir needs to be given a more formal place in the pesantren and university curricula. The introduction of Javanese, Sundanese, Bugis, and other regional traditions of tafsir as courses or teaching materials can foster young

people's appreciation of the intellectual heritage of the archipelago. This step not only strengthens local scientific identity, but also broadens the understanding of santri and students regarding the diversity of methods and epistemology in the tradition of interpretation. Thus, local interpretation can once again become an integral part of Islamic education in Indonesia.

##### **3. Production of New Works Based on Local Languages**

Revitalization does not stop at preserving old works, but also requires the production of new interpretations in regional languages. Writing contemporary works based on the mother tongue allows local interpretation traditions to develop according to the needs of the times, while ensuring their continuity. These new works can combine modern methods with local cultural values, creating a productive dialogue between tradition and modernity. The writing of new interpretations can also be a means of regenerating regional scholars and academics, which in turn enriches the intellectual dynamics of Islam in the archipelago.

##### **4. Research Collaboration and Strengthening Through Cultural Festivals**

Cross-institutional research collaboration and cultural activities can expand the influence of local interpretations in the public sphere. Holding vernacularization seminars, regional script workshops, and local interpretation festivals can create a space for dialogue between academics, cultural figures, and the community. Such activities revive interest in traditional manuscripts, strengthen cultural identity, and position local interpretations as part of a cultural heritage that is relevant to modern life. In the long term, this kind of collaboration will strengthen the intellectual ecosystem that supports the preservation of the Nusantara tradition of interpretation.

#### **Local Interpretation as a Pillar of Nusantara Islamic Plurality**

The overall analysis of epistemology, cultural function, challenges, and revitalization strategies shows that local interpretations hold a strategic position in maintaining the plurality of Islam in the archipelago. Local interpretations not only serve as a medium for explaining sacred texts, but also as a forum for cultural articulation, a means of education, and a symbol of collective identity for Muslims in various regions. In the Nusantara tradition, the interpretation of the Qur'an has always moved within the space of dialogue between the universal teachings of Islam and the local experiences of the community. Therefore, the existence of Pegon, Lontarak, Jawi, and various other regional traditions of interpretation shows that plurality of interpretation is not an anomaly, but rather an inherent characteristic of the development of Islam in this archipelago.

The revitalization of local interpretations means keeping this diversity alive amid the tide of global religious homogenization. In this context, local interpretations serve to reinforce a grounded Islamic identity that is able to adapt to cultural dynamics without losing the substance of its teachings. It presents an inclusive, dialogical, and adaptive model of religiosity that has long been a hallmark of Islam in the archipelago. Thus, efforts to revive the tradition of local interpretations are not merely academic or cultural projects, but also

part of preserving the plurality of Islam that has long been a major strength of Indonesian Muslim society.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This study shows that local interpretations in the archipelago play a fundamental role in shaping and preserving the cultural identity of Indonesian society. Through the integration of language, script, idioms, and local values, Javanese, Sundanese, and Bugis interpretations present a model of understanding the Qur'an that is down-to-earth, contextual, and close to the social life of the community. Epistemologically, local interpretations demonstrate the creativity of Nusantara scholars in combining tahlili, ijmalī, and Sufi approaches with local cultural structures. Culturally, local interpretations serve as instruments for preserving regional languages, adapting to local wisdom, and resisting the homogenization of global interpretations.

However, this study also identified a number of challenges, such as the lack of regeneration of local interpreters, limited access to manuscripts, and the dominance of standard Arabic interpretations that shift public attention. Therefore, the revitalization of local interpretations requires a holistic approach that touches on aspects of technology, education, research, and culture.

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