TAHLILAN AND YASINAN AS PHENOMENOLOGICAL EXPRESSIONS OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE IN INDONESIA

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Abstrak: *Penelitian ini menganalisis tradisi tahlilan dan yasinan di Indonesia sebagai ekspresi konkret pengalaman keagamaan Islam menggunakan kerangka fenomenologi Joachim Wach. Metode penelitian berbasis kepustakaan meliputi studi primer pada karya Wach Ilmu Perbandingan Agama dan kajian literatur sekunder dari artikel jurnal SINTA dan internasional, disertasi, serta penelitian terdahulu tentang akulturasi budaya dan ritual keagamaan. Data dianalisis secara deskriptif, kemudian dikategorikan sesuai tiga dimensi ekspresi pengalaman keagamaan menurut Wach: kognitif (refleksi doktrinal), afektif-perilaku (praktik ritual), dan asosiatif (persekutuan). Hasil menunjukkan bahwa tahlilan dan yasinan merefleksikan ketiga dimensi tersebut: landasan doktrinal bersumber dari al-Quran, Ḥadīth, ijmā', dan qiyās; pelaksanaan ritus kolektif berupa pembacaan Al-Quran, sedekah, dan doa dengan batasan waktu dan tempat tertentu; serta pembentukan komunitas religius yang memperkokoh kohesi sosial. Tradisi ini tidak hanya mempertahankan nilai Islam warisan, tetapi juga beradaptasi secara dinamis dengan konteks sosio-kultural lokal, sehingga menguatkan keimanan individu dan solidaritas komunitas. Disarankan penelitian selanjutnya menggunakan pendekatan multidisipliner untuk menangkap perubahan praksis dan persepsi terhadap ritual ini.*

Kata Kunci: *Tahlilan, Yasinan, Pengalaman Keagamaan, Fenomenologi, Islam Nusantara*

Judul: *Tradisi Tahlilan dan Yasinan Sebagai Ekspresi Pengalaman Keagamaan Islam*

Abstract: This study examines the traditions of *tahlilan* and *yasinan* in Indonesia as concrete expressions of Islamic religious experience through the phenomenological framework of Joachim Wach. Drawing upon a comprehensive library-based methodology, primary analysis focused on Wach's *Ilmu Perbandingan Agama*, while secondary sources included SINTA-indexed and international journal articles, dissertations, and prior research on cultural acculturation and religious rituals. Data were analyzed descriptively, with findings categorized into Wach's three dimensions of religious expression: cognitive (doctrinal reflection), affective-behavioral (ritual practice), and associative (communal fellowship). Results reveal that *tahlilan* and *yasinan* manifest all three dimensions: doctrinal foundations drawn from the Quran, Ḥadīth, ijmā', and qiyās; ritual enactments such as collective recitation, charity, and supplication bounded by specific temporal and spatial parameters; and the formation of enduring communal associations that reinforce social cohesion. These traditions not only preserve inherited Islamic values but also adapt dynamically to local socio-cultural contexts, thereby strengthening individual faith and community solidarity. Future research is recommended to adopt multidisciplinary approaches to capture the evolving practices and perceptions surrounding these rituals.

Keywords: Tahlilan, Yasinan, Religious Experience, Phenomenology, Islam Nusantara

INTRODUCTION

Islam, as a universal religion, encompasses not only theological and vertical values - concerning the relationship between humans and God - but also regulates horizontal dimensions that govern human interactions with one another and with the natural environment. In accordance with its dynamic character, Islamic teachings have demonstrated considerable flexibility in adapting to local socio-cultural contexts, thereby offering solutions to a wide range of human problems across the globe. The interplay of Islamic thought and religious practice has often produced diverse forms of religiosity, shaped by historical backgrounds, cultural patterns, and the specific socio-cultural conditions of local communities. Such dynamics are particularly evident in Indonesia, where the spread of Islam between the 13th and 16th centuries CE took place through peaceful proselytization and cultural acculturation, giving rise to the distinctive and moderate features of *Islam Nusantara*.[1]

The concept of *Islam Nusantara* underscores the view that local cultural values are integral to the dissemination and lived experience of Islam in Indonesia. Local culture was employed as an effective medium for da'wah, eliminating the need for a complete deconstruction of indigenous cultural practices. Muslim scholars and preachers in Indonesia strategically utilized traditional arts and local customs as instruments to bridge Islamic teachings with the existing cultural frameworks of society. As a result, a form of Islam emerged that not only adhered to textual doctrines but also respected local wisdom and practices. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that religion and culture operate within distinct domains: religion is fundamentally oriented toward dogma and creed, whereas culture is dynamic, often evolving with the passage of time. The symbiotic relationship between Islam and local culture in Indonesia has generated unique religious practices, including traditions such as *tahlilan* and *yasinan*, as products of centuries-long acculturation processes.

Indonesia is widely recognized as a multicultural society characterized by extraordinary ethnic, linguistic, customary, and social pluralism. This diversity has given rise to a broad spectrum of religious practices, many of which have become institutionalized and transmitted across generations. Within Muslim communities, such varied religious traditions serve not only as rituals of worship but also as mechanisms for strengthening social solidarity, fostering social cohesion, and maintaining intercommunal harmony. Through the continuous preservation of these practices, the collective identity of Indonesian Muslim communities is further consolidated, while simultaneously demonstrating tolerance for the diverse backgrounds of their members.[2]

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[1] Ali Mursyid Azisi, "Islam Nusantara: Corak Keislaman Indonesia dan Perannya dalam Menghadapi Kelompok Puritan," *Empirisma: Jurnal Pemikiran dan Kebudayaan*, 29.2 (2020), hal. 124.

[2] Muhamad Bisri Mustofa et al., "Islam Dan Masyarakat Pluralistik Indonesia Dalam Perspektif Dakwah," *Dakwatuna: Jurnal Dakwah dan Komunikasi Islam*, 8.2 (2022), hal. 157.

One notable manifestation of this cultural acculturation and social stability is the tradition of *tahlilan* and *yasinan*. The *tahlilan* ritual, typically involving communal prayers for the deceased, and the *yasinan*, involving the collective recitation of Surah Yā Sīn from the Quran, have become routine practices within Islamic communities, especially in Java. Beyond serving as a form of respect for the departed, these traditions also function as important means of nurturing solidarity, a sense of togetherness, and mutual assistance among community members. Through these regular communal gatherings, religious values are collectively internalized, strengthening the social cohesion of society. Consequently, these practices are carefully preserved by many Nahdliyin communities and other local Islamic groups in Indonesia.[3]

Beyond their socio-cultural dimensions, the practices of *tahlilan* and *yasinan* fundamentally reflect a phenomenological dimension of religious experience within the community. These rituals are not merely performed out of tradition, but rather emerge from a deep understanding and internalization of Islamic doctrine, which is perceived to rest on a strong normative foundation. This normative basis may be traced through the interpretive framework of sharī'a, drawing upon the Quran, the prophetic hadith, scholarly consensus *(ijmā')*, and analogical reasoning *(qiyās)* that support collective prayer and the recitation of Yā Sīn as legitimate forms of remembrance *(dhikr)* and supplication for forgiveness on behalf of the deceased.[4] Accordingly, *tahlilan* and *yasinan* are not simply cultural practices but represent structured expressions of religious experience embedded within the normative and theoretical framework of Islam.

Previous studies have investigated the *tahlilan* and *yasinan* traditions from a variety of perspectives. For instance, one study examined the values and the development of *tahlilan* practices among the Banjar community in Pahandut District, Palangka Raya City, highlighting the internalization of religious and social values through these rituals.[5] Another investigation explored how perceptions of *tahlilan* within the Muhammadiyah community in Gulurejo Village, Lendah, Kulon Progo, Yogyakarta influenced their patterns of social relationships, with particular emphasis on processes of social change and religious perception among Muhammadiyah adherents.[6] Mas'ari and Syamsuatir likewise analyzed *tahlilan* as a portrait of

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[3] Ali Mursyid Azisi, Wiwik Setiyani, dan Hotimah Novitasari, "Nahdlatul Ulama, Tradisi dan Wahabi: Penafian Pengikut Wahabi terhadap Tradisi *tahlilan* Masyarakat Nahdliyin," *Ansoruna: Journal of Islam and Youth Movement*, 1.1 (2022), hal. 2.

[4] Ahmad Mas'ari dan Syamsuatir, "Tradisi *tahlilan*: Potret Akulturasi Agama dan Budaya Khas Islam Nusantara," *KONTEKSTUALITA: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial dan Keagamaan*, 33.1 (2017), hal. 80.

[5] Husnul Hatimah, Emawati, dan Muhammad Husni, "Tradisi *tahlilan* Masyarakat Banjar di Kecamatan Pahandut Kota Palangka Raya," *Syaams: Jurnal Studi Keislaman*, 2.1 (2021).

[6] Ana Riskasari, "Pengaruh Persepsi Tradisi *tahlilan* di Kalangan Masyarakat Muhammadiyah terhadap Relasi Sosial di Desa Gulurejo Lendah Kulon Progo Yogyakarta," *Panangkaran: Jurnal Penelitian Agama dan Masyarakat*, 2.2 (2019).

religious and cultural acculturation characteristic of *Islam Nusantara*, though their study primarily focused on its historical-cultural dimension rather than the subjective experiences of its participants.[7] Furthermore, a study applying a living-hadith approach to the *tahlilan* feast tradition in Jinggotan, Jepara, demonstrated how hadith texts are contextualized in local settings, although it remained largely limited to textual and ritual dimensions alone.[8]

A review of these studies indicates that most research has tended to concentrate on cultural values, social perceptions, or religious textual approaches, while explicit analysis of *tahlilan* and *yasinan* as objects of study within a phenomenological framework of religious experience has been relatively absent. Yet a phenomenological approach, as formulated by Joachim Wach, provides a robust conceptual instrument for examining the dimension of *Erlebnis* (religious experience) in a comprehensive manner, encompassing cognitive, affective, and ritual behavioral aspects. Therefore, this study intends to fill that gap by investigating the *tahlilan* and *yasinan* traditions as structured expressions of Islamic religious experience in Indonesia through the phenomenological perspective advanced by Joachim Wach.

METHOD

This study employed a purely library-based research design, focusing on the systematic exploration and critical examination of relevant literature, including scholarly books, peer-reviewed journals, undergraduate theses, master's theses, doctoral dissertations, and other scientific works that are directly pertinent to the research variables. The primary source forming the conceptual foundation of this study was Joachim Wach's *Ilmu Perbandingan Agama: Inti dan Bentuk Pengalaman Keagamaan* (1984), which provided the essential framework for understanding the structure of religious experience from a phenomenological perspective. In addition, secondary sources were extensively reviewed, encompassing articles from SINTA-indexed and international journals, dissertations, and previous research addressing *tahlilan*, *yasinan*, cultural acculturation, and the phenomenology of religion.[9]

After gathering and thoroughly reviewing the selected literature, the data were subjected to descriptive analysis in order to present an objective depiction of the *tahlilan* and *yasinan* rituals within the broader context of religious experience. This descriptive analysis involved systematically categorizing the findings from the literature into three core experiential dimensions - cognitive, affective, and ritual behavioral - in alignment with the terminology conceptualized by Wach. Subsequently, these findings were synthesized into a comprehensive narrative that articulated the interconnections among these experiential dimensions. To

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[7] Mas'ari dan Syamsuatir, "Tradisi *tahlilan*: Potret Akulturasi Agama dan Budaya Khas Islam Nusantara," (2017).

[8] Abdul Wahab Saleem, "Tradisi Perjamuan *tahlilan* (Studi Living Hadits Tradisi Perjamuan Tahlil 'Kematian' di Jinggotan, Jepara," *JASNA : Journal For Aswaja Studies*, 1.1 (2021).

[9] Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif dan R&D* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2013), hal. 224.

maintain analytical rigor and strengthen the trustworthiness of the interpretation, this synthesis was further validated through theoretical triangulation, involving the comparison of the study's findings with other relevant secondary sources. Such triangulation ensured that the interpretation of *tahlilan* and *yasinan* as expressions of Islamic religious experience was rendered more robust and accurate.[10]

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Religion occupies a central position in human life, as human beings - unlike other living creatures - are endowed with reason, which enables them to question existence and its ultimate meaning. This faculty of reason, granted by God, empowers humans to interpret the "signs" *(āyāt)* scattered throughout the universe, so that they do not merely respond to the world instinctively but are also capable of interpreting and sacralizing every natural phenomenon as divine revelation guiding their lives.[10]According to Muhammad Syaifudin, mystical experience in Islam arises when human consciousness transcends ordinary rationality and enters a dimension in which intellect and heart are harmoniously integrated within divine awareness. Through the processes of *tafakkur* (contemplation) and *tadhakkur* (remembrance), individuals are able not only to comprehend theological doctrines but also to personally and transformatively experience the presence of God.[11]

Joachim Wach asserts that the religious potential of human beings is not something acquired later in life but is instead an innate endowment - a "permanent possibility of religion" - which motivates each individual to pursue and construct religious meaning throughout their existence. This inherent potential moves individuals to respond to ultimate reality (God) through religious experiences encompassing cognitive awareness of doctrine, affective resonance in worship, and ritual acts as the tangible manifestation of faith.[12] Dea Tara Ningtyas and Abdur Rahman Adi Saputera further argue that religious experience is not merely a fleeting emotional reaction but constitutes a dynamic process in which doctrinal understanding animates everyday actions, ranging from the habitual practice of *dhikr* to participation in religious social activities, thereby reinforcing the construction of religious identity and community cohesion.

Each person builds their religious expressions through an interplay of cognitive - affective frameworks and ritual forms, learned and internalized within their particular cultural contexts. According to Wach, such expressions are an inevitable consequence of the human

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[10] Suharsimi Arikunto, *Prosedur Penelitian: Suatu Pendekatan Praktek* (Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 2014), hal. 25.

[11] Dea Tara Ningtyas dan Abdur Rahman Adi Saputera, "Pengaruh Kegiatan Keagamaan Di Lingkungan Sekolah Dan Keluarga Dalam Membentuk Pengalaman Beragama," *Tapis: Jurnal Penelitian Ilmiah*, 2.2 (2018), hal. 197.

[12] Ningtyas dan Saputera, "Pengaruh Kegiatan Keagamaan Di Lingkungan Sekolah Dan Keluarga Dalam Membentuk Pengalaman Beragama," hal. 200.

relationship with ultimate reality, wherein theological knowledge, the experience of the sacred, and ritual practice continuously interact within a coherent experiential structure. Consequently, the traditions of *tahlilan* and *yasinan* in Indonesia cannot be reduced to inherited customs alone but should be recognized as concrete manifestations of how Islamic doctrines are deeply internalized, with local linguistic and cultural forms serving as effective media for religious meaning-making. To thoroughly understand these phenomenological nuances, it is necessary to first elaborate on the intellectual profile of Joachim Wach - including his biography, the development of his thought, and his contributions to the comparative study of religion - as the conceptual foundation for the subsequent analysis.

A Brief Profile of Joachim Wach

Joachim Ernst Adolphe Felix Wach was born on January 22, 1898, in Chemnitz, Germany, and pursued studies in philosophy, theology, and sociology at the University of Leipzig and the University of Heidelberg. Early in his academic career, he engaged deeply with phenomenological thought, seeking to understand religion not merely as a doctrinal system but as a concrete, lived experience of the subject. In 1935, amid the escalating political turmoil in Europe, Wach relocated to the United States, where he joined the faculty at the University of Chicago. There, he developed a descriptive methodology grounded in the phenomenological principles of Edmund Husserl, placing the "individual human subject" at the center of analysis for any given religious phenomenon. This approach opened the way for a more rigorous and scientific study of religion within a modern academic framework.[13]

At the same time, Wach's scholarly contributions demonstrated profound historical and philosophical depth. He actively explored the development of major world religions through the lens of the history of religions and the philosophy of religion. His methodology is often categorized as scientific-positivistic, given his emphasis on empirical data and systematic observation, while still maintaining sensitivity to the transcendent dimension of religious experience. As a learned Jewish scholar, Wach approached religion from both internal and external perspectives, making him a distinctive figure whose philosophical grounding was balanced by a genuine appreciation of religious experience. Until his passing in 1955, Wach left behind a rich intellectual legacy, most notably his monumental work *The Comparative Study of Religions* (republished in 1988), which continues to serve as a principal reference for scholars in the field of comparative religious studies.[14]

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[13] Theguh Saumantri, "Moderasi Beragama Perspektif Pengalaman Keagamaan Joachim Wach," *PATISAMBHIDA : Jurnal Pemikiran Buddha dan Filsafat Agama*, 4.2 (2023), hal. 64.

[14] Wiza Atholla Andriansyah dan Achmad Tohari, "Understanding Religion in the Era of Smart Society from the Perspective of Joachim Wach," *AURELIA: Jurnal Penelitian dan Pengabdian Masyarakat Indonesia*, 2.2 (2023), hal. 706.

The Foundational Concepts in Joachim Wach's Thought

From an epistemological standpoint, Wach's thinking is clearly distinguished from that of traditional theologians, as he placed far greater emphasis on phenomenological and comparative approaches. More than merely exploring the theological dimensions of religion, Wach paid close attention to the religious experiences encountered by both individuals and communities. In broad terms, the principal focus of Joachim Wach's religious studies scholarship concerns religious experience itself and the expression of that experience, whether on an individual or collective level.[15]

Accordingly, a comprehensive understanding of Wach's foundational ideas must center on two interrelated aspects: religious experience and the expression of religious experience. These two dimensions can be described in detail as follows:

Religious Experience

In general terms, religious experience may be understood as a dimension of feeling within the consciousness of believers - an affective experience that gives rise to concrete action.[16] According to Wach, religious experience constitutes an intimate relationship between human beings, as created beings, and ultimate reality, namely God. He explicitly defines religious experience as an inward dimension, encountered both individually and collectively, that shapes one's awareness of the divine.[17]

The indicators of such religious experience can be observed through the activities carried out by adherents of a faith, encompassing both inward and outward dimensions. These activities generate diverse patterns of feeling within systems of thought, social action, and communal life. Since every believer undergoes unique religious experiences, these experiences will inevitably vary from person to person. This variation arises from the dominant inner aspects inherent to each subject, which profoundly shape their experience of religion.[18] Put simply, religious experience is essentially a deeply personal and spiritual phenomenon for each adherent.

Furthermore, religious experience is inherently variable due to differences in the intensity of belief, culture, and an individual's worldview. It is not surprising, therefore, that many regard religious experience as highly subjective and difficult to express through ordinary language. Wach proposes two primary strategies for investigating an individual's religious experience. First, one may study religion through its historical background, sects, or schools of thought, as this historical perspective provides insight into the socio-cultural and

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[15] Theguh Hidayatulloh, Taufik; Saumantri, "Kerukunan Beragama dalam Lensa Pengalaman Keagamaan Versi Joachim Wach," *Al-Adyan: Journal of Religious Studies*, 4.1 (2023), hal. 32.

[16] Zakiah Daradjat, *Ilmu Jiwa Agama* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 2005), hal. 12–15.

[17] Joachim Wach, *Ilmu Perbandingan Agama: Inti dan Bentuk Pengalaman Keagamaan* (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 1996), hal. 25.

[18] Triyani Pujiastuti, "Konsep Pengalaman Keagamaan Joachim Wach," *Syi'ar*, 17.2 (2017), hal. 66.

doctrinal contexts that shape individual perceptions and experiences. Second, one may examine and analyze the religious experiences of individuals or communities by observing how doctrines, worship rituals, and religiously motivated practices actualize the values of a given tradition. This approach provides a deeper understanding of adherents across diverse religious settings.[19]

In order for religious experience to be meaningfully structured, Wach offers four essential criteria:

1. the experience must represent a believer's response to what is perceived as ultimate reality (God);
2. it must involve total participation, meaning that the engagement should integrate not only thought and will but the entire self in a holistic manner;
3. it should be understood as the deepest personal experience attainable by the individual, though not every expression of religious sentiment necessarily indicates this level of intensity;
4. it must be practical, expressed through action stemming from a commitment that motivates individuals to carry out what is prescribed by religious doctrine.[20]

From the preceding discussion, a clearer understanding of religious experience emerges. In definitive terms, according to Wach, religious experience is a profound spiritual relationship between human beings and ultimate reality (God), a relationship that is actualized through the implementation of religious teachings manifested in acts of worship, ethics, and other religiously motivated practices.

The Expression of Religious Experience

After establishing the conceptual essence of religious experience, an equally significant dimension in Joachim Wach's thought concerns the *expression* of religious experience. This refers to the ways in which individuals respond to and articulate their experiences of faith. Every person exhibits a unique attitude when confronted with their religious experience, a consequence of the inherently plural and subjective nature of such experiences. As a result of this subjectivity, the expression of religious experience itself likewise becomes subjective and individualized.[21]

According to Wach, the expression of religious experience may be observed through three principal forms: first, through thought (for example, doctrinal formulations); second, through action (ritual practices); and third, through communal association (religious

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[19] Saumantri, "Moderasi Beragama Perspektif Pengalaman Keagamaan Joachim Wach," hal. 65.
[20] Syaifudin, "Agama dan Pengalaman: Pengalaman Mistik dalam Islam," hal. 135–36.
[21] Wach, *Ilmu Perbandingan Agama*...hal. 61.

fellowship).[22] These three dimensions are logical consequences of religious experience, in which an individual wholly engages their rational, emotional, and spiritual faculties in responding to ultimate reality (God).[23]

1. Thought as an Expression of Religious Experience

Individuals engage in contemplation, evaluation, and formulation of religious concepts, resulting in intellectual output. This process involves reflective understanding of both personal belief and religious teachings. The expression of experience in this form is often manifested spontaneously and transmitted through tradition.[24] Naturally, the expression of religious experience through thought differs from person to person, shaped by their cultural, social, and religious backgrounds.

Within every religion, the tangible form of such an intellectual expression appears in doctrinal structures. A person's understanding and reasoning about religious doctrine is inextricably influenced by these background factors. Functionally, according to Wach, doctrine in religious life serves three key purposes: affirming belief, explaining faith, and defending teachings (*apologetics*).[25]

Moreover, Wach suggests that the expression of religious experience through thought may emerge from several motivating forces. First, there is an internal drive within an individual to express their intense personal relationship with ultimate reality. Second, there is the motivation to attract the attention of others, to have them see, hear, and understand the individual's religious experience. Third, this intellectual expression is fundamentally individual, in that it can only be articulated by the person who undergoes the experience themselves.[26]

2. Action as an Expression of Religious Experience

Individuals actualize their religious values and beliefs through concrete actions. Such acts may take the form of ritual worship, charitable deeds, or moral conduct performed by each believer. This expression emerges as the natural outflow of one's understanding of faith and its associated values. When individuals manifest their religious experience through action, it cannot be separated from the dimensions of time, place, and mode of execution. In terms of timing, these actions may be performed at night, during the day, or at specific ritual moments. Concerning place, religious

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[22] Nanang Rustandi dan Yusuf Wibisono, "Persepsi Keagamaan Masyarakat Terhadap Situs Purbakala Gunung Padang Cianjur," *Tatar Pasundan: Jurnal Diklat Keagamaan*, 14.2 (2020), hal. 179.

[23] Adi Iqbal, "Pluralitas Agama dan Budaya dalam Dinamika Masyarakat Perkotaan: Studi Kasus Sungai Nibung Kota Kuala Tungkal Jambi," *Focus*, 4.2 (2023), hal. 96.

[24] Tia Sari, "Hakikat pengalaman keagamaan dan ekspresi keberagaman dalam pandangan joachim wach," *Al-Aqidah*, 15.1 (2023), hal. 31.

[25] Faisal Muzzammil, "Pengalaman Keagamaan Masyarakat Industri: Studi pada Karyawan PT Indorama Synthetics Tbk Purwakarta," *Definisi: Jurnal Agama dan Sosial Humaniora*, 1.1 (2022), hal. 6.

[26] Saumantri, "Moderasi Beragama Perspektif Pengalaman Keagamaan Joachim Wach," hal. 67.

experiences may unfold in a variety of settings, for example, in enclosed spaces, beneath trees, upon large stones, or other designated sacred sites. In terms of process, religious acts might include practices such as meditation, pilgrimage, or other ritual forms.

Wach classifies action into two primary categories: worship *(cultus)* and service *(ministerium)*, which are inseparable in practice. Worship arises when an individual establishes intimacy with God. Wach, quoting Von Hügel, maintains that through complete devotion to God, an individual comes to recognize their own insignificance before the divine, giving rise to an attitude of humility.[27] From this form of worship, individuals perform religious acts that constitute their concrete responses to ultimate reality. In living out their religious experience, believers seek to implement what they understand as the commands and precepts of their tradition, performing ritual acts of obedience in adherence to religious obligations and prohibitions.

Service, by contrast, refers to an individual's "service" to both God and fellow human beings. This service may take the form of fulfilling religious obligations and avoiding prohibitions, sharing what brings happiness to others, and engaging in social activities inspired by religious values.[28] In understanding this dimension of religious expression through action, Wach emphasizes that these patterns of practice must always be interpreted in relation to their time, place, and manner of performance.[29]

3. Communal Association as an Expression of Religious Experience

In their efforts to internalize and realize religious values, individuals often gather to form fellowships or communities, shaping the organizational structures that best reflect their religious experiences. Members of such religious communities typically adopt specific approaches to understanding God, authoritative religious sources, and religious teachings, all of which are oriented around their shared lived experience of faith. Each community possesses its own worldview, attitudes, and religious atmosphere, which inevitably differ from those of other communities, due to their distinct socio-cultural backgrounds.[30]

Religious experience expressed through communal action plays a critical role in the formation of religious groups. The emergence of such groups is a natural phenomenon, since religion is not only the possession of individuals but also belongs to the collective body of believers who adhere to it. Religious experience may also function as an inspiration for adherents, enabling individuals and groups to perceive

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[27] Wach, *Ilmu Perbandingan Agama...*hal. 153.

[28] Wach, *Ilmu Perbandingan Agama...*hal. 148.

[29] Pujiastuti, "Konsep Pengalaman Keagamaan Joachim Wach,"hal. 69–70.

[30] Saumantri, Saumantri, "Moderasi Beragama Perspektif Pengalaman Keagamaan Joachim Wach," hal. 67.

God's presence or to imbue their everyday lives with a deeper sense of meaning and purpose.

Several factors contribute to the formation of these communal associations. Some are directly religious in nature, such as spiritual talents for worship, teaching, or service. Other factors are non-religious, including age, social status, ethics, or family background.[31]

Wach further notes that within these religious communities, differentiation naturally emerges based on a range of factors, including function, charisma, age, gender, lineage, and social status. These distinctions may be described as follows:

First, functional differentiation. A religious community consists of individuals bonded through shared religious experience, but within it, members may hold differing roles. Some serve as religious leaders *(imam)*, while others as congregants *(ma'mum)*. This diversity of function results in distinct religious experiences for each member.

Second, differentiation by charisma. While religious communities may ideally adhere to egalitarian ideals, they often recognize individuals who possess a higher spiritual prestige or charisma, believed to have been granted by God. Such charismatic individuals are regarded as chosen and spiritually gifted, and their religious expressions are often perceived as different from those of other community members.

Third, differentiation based on age, gender, and lineage. Generational differences, for example, shape the roles of elders and youth in both individual and collective religious life. Similarly, men and women typically assume different roles within religious rituals, reflecting established religious gender norms. Regarding lineage, these differences usually pertain to the social sphere, where those with respected ancestry are expected to maintain their ancestral religious legacy.

Fourth, differentiation by status. This factor is hybrid in nature, combining aspects of the previous factors. Although democratic notions of equal rights and responsibilities among believers have emerged in the history of world religions, such ideals are rarely fully realized in practice.[32]

The Traditions of *tahlilan* and *yasinan* in Indonesia

As previously discussed, religious adherents continuously actualize and develop the teachings of their faith, a process that evolves dynamically over time. From an individual's total devotion and immersion toward God, distinct attitudes, thoughts, and actions naturally emerge. Within Islam, for example, a diversity of religious schools of thought, values, and practices can be observed. In Indonesia, these range from Sunni to Shia, as well as

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[31] Pujiastuti, "Konsep Pengalaman Keagamaan Joachim Wach," hal. 70–71.
[32] Pujiastuti, "Konsep Pengalaman Keagamaan Joachim Wach," hal. 71–72.

Ahmadiyya and other traditions, all reflecting the varied perspectives that flourish even within a single religious tradition.[33]

Islam itself may be regarded as a complex and comprehensive religion, which does not negate the socio-cultural contexts present in its diverse missionary landscapes.[34] Cultural expressions and traditions embedded in society often serve as reflections of both social and spiritual experiences.[35] Rather than eradicating indigenous traditions, Islamic teachings have often embraced them as effective medium for *da'wah*. Such an approach has been particularly evident in the Indonesian context.

Historically, the process of cultural acculturation carried out by Islamic preachers in Indonesia did not seek to entirely abolish pre-existing traditions. Instead, they transformed the substantive values within those traditions, harmonizing them with Islamic principles. Within this framework of cultural adaptation, one of the most prominent religious practices that continues among many Indonesian Muslims is *tahlilan* and *yasinan*.[36] These practices are generally performed on specific days following a person's death, including the seventh day, the hundredth day, the thousandth day, and annually in what is known as *haul*.[37]

The term *tahlilan* is derived from the Arabic root *"tahlil,"* which, upon entering the Indonesian - particularly Javanese - linguistic sphere, was modified with the suffix *"–an"* in both pronunciation and writing. *Tahlil* itself is a verbal noun *(masdar)* originating from *hallala–yuhallilu–tahlilan*, meaning the utterance of the phrase *la ilaha illallah*. However, when adapted as *tahlilan* with the suffix *"–an,"* the term underwent a semantic shift. It no longer refers solely to the recitation of *la ilaha illallah*, but denotes a ritual or event that intrinsically involves the recitation of selected Quranicverses, various *kalimat thayyibah* (good phrases), and prayers.[38]

In general, *tahlilan* has become a well-established religious ritual and tradition among Indonesian Muslims, particularly in Java, and continues to be widely practiced.[39] In its implementation, *tahlilan* is carried out collectively on certain designated days, such as weekly

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[33] Sari, Tia Sari, "Hakikat pengalaman keagamaan dan ekspresi keberagamaan dalam pandangan joachim wach," hal. 34–35.

[34] Hisny Fajrussalam et al., "Eksplorasi Kebudayaan Tahlil Dalam Perspektif Agama Islam Dan Masyarakat di Indonesia," *DIROSAT: Journal of Islamic Studies*, 7.1 (2022), hal. 19.

[35] Michael Yoel Panjaitan, I Nyoman Suarsana, dan I Ketut Kaler, "Tradisi Rabo-Rabo: Sebuah Cerminan Ekspresi Identitas Komunitas Mardijkers di Kampung Tugu, Kelurahan Semper Barat, Jakarta Utara," *Sunari Penjor: Journal of Anthropology*, 8.1 (2024), hal. 29.

[36] Rido Awal Pratama, "Tradisi *yasinan* Dan *tahlilan* Dalam Meningkatkan Nilai- Nilai Pendidikan Islam Di Masjid Nur Amanah Yogyakarta," *Tarbawy: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 10.1 (2023), hal. 13.

[37] Fajrussalam et al., Hisny Fajrussalam et al., "Eksplorasi Kebudayaan Tahlil Dalam Perspektif Agama Islam Dan Masyarakat di Indonesia," hal. 19.

[38] Mas'ari dan Syamsuatir, Mas'ari dan Syamsuatir, "Tradisi *tahlilan*: Potret Akulturasi Agama dan Budaya Khas Islam Nusantara," hal. 79.

[39] Saleem, "Tradisi Perjamuan *tahlilan* (Studi Living Hadits Tradisi Perjamuan Tahlil 'Kematian' di Jinggotan, Jepara," hal. 68.

gatherings or upon the passing of a community member. After the deceased has been buried, residents in the surrounding area typically organize a *tahlilan* ritual for seven consecutive days.[40] Beyond its function as a form of Islamic devotional practice, this ritual also serves to comfort the bereaved family and acts as a vehicle for religious propagation through communal gathering.[41]

In addition to *tahlilan*, another religious ritual commonly practiced among segments of the Muslim community in Indonesia is *yasinan*. This tradition is rooted in the recitation of Surah Yā Sīn from the Quran, which consists of 83 verses. Among Indonesians - especially Javanese communities - this surah has attained widespread popularity, such that many participants are already familiar with its verses due to their frequent recitation during *yasinan* gatherings. Simply put, *yasinan* refers to the communal and routine recitation of Surah Yā Sīn..[42]

More precisely, *yasinan* constitutes a religious ritual performed by Indonesian Muslims as a means of conveying prayers for well-being, supplications on behalf of the deceased, and as an opportunity to enhance the community's spirituality.[43] In practice, *yasinan* closely resembles *tahlilan*. During a typical *tahlilan*, participants generally recite brief chapters of the Quran and send prayers for the deceased. However, in *yasinan*, these activities are performed simultaneously within a more structured ritual sequence.

The standard sequence of *yasinan* ceremonies generally unfolds as follows: first, participants recite prayers for deceased predecessors - including Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), his companions, religious scholars, *waliyullah* (saints), and their ancestors - beginning with Surah Al-Fātiḥah, followed by Surah Yā Sīn. Second, the ritual proceeds with the recitation of *tahlilan*, initiated by reading Surah Al-Fātiḥah, Surah Al-Falaq, Surah An-Nās, and selected verses from Surah Al-Baqarah (verses 1-5, 165, and 255). Third, participants collectively recite *istighfar*, *tahlil*, and *ṣalawāt*, before concluding with a final communal supplication.[44]

Tahlilan and Yasinan as Expressions of Islamic Religious Experience

Following the discussion of *tahlilan* and *yasinan* as religious traditions practiced by the majority of Indonesian Muslims, this section provides a descriptive analysis of these two

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[40] Taufik Ismail, Muhammad Umar, dan Zulfi Mubaraq, "Tahlil Kematian Sebagai Tradisi Dalam Ajaran Islam Perspektif M. Quraish Shihab," *Risalah: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Studi Islam*, 9.1 (2023), hal. 1187.

[41] Fajrussalam et al., "Eksplorasi Kebudayaan Tahlil Dalam Perspektif Agama Islam Dan Masyarakat di Indonesia," hal. 21.

[42] Ahmad Naufal Hafidh, "Tradisi Pembacaan Surat Yasin Sebelum Salat Jumat (Studi Living Qur'an Di Masjid Taaroful Muslimin)," *MASHAHIF: Journal of Qur'an and Hadits Studies*, 1.2 (2021), hal. 4.

[43] Anma Muniri, "Tradisi Slametan: *yasinan* Manifestasi Nilai Sosial-Keagamaan di Trenggalek," *Jpips: Jurnal Pendidikan Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial*, 6.2 (2020), hal. 76.

[44] Pratama, Rido Awal Pratama, "Tradisi *yasinan* Dan *tahlilan* Dalam Meningkatkan Nilai- Nilai Pendidikan Islam Di Masjid Nur Amanah Yogyakarta," hal. 14.

rituals through the lens of Joachim Wach's theoretical framework on the expression of religious experience. In essence, this analysis seeks to explain how *tahlilan* and *yasinan* function as manifestations of Islamic religious experience, interpreted through Wach's conceptual categories. As practices continuously transmitted across generations, *yasinan* and *tahlilan* can be seen in practice as enduring expressions of Islamic religious experience. Viewed through Wach's epistemological perspective, these traditions can be explained as follows:

First, *tahlilan* and *yasinan* as expressions of religious experience in the form of thought. For Wach, this form of expression refers to the reflective understanding of religious doctrine by an individual. From such reflective activity arises a stream of thought that is both spontaneous and traditional. The traditional element here signifies that religious thought becomes a form of legacy, transmitted to future generations. In the same way, the understanding of *tahlilan* and *yasinan* represents a reflective expression rooted in Islamic religious thinking. These practices would not be performed if they lacked a sound doctrinal basis grounded in the fundamental values of Islam, including references from the Quran, Hadith, *ijmā'*, and *qiyās*. Beyond these canonical sources, community traditions have also been taken into account by earlier scholars, transforming them into religious practices as they exist today.

Second, *tahlilan* and *yasinan* as expressions of religious experience in the form of action. As actualizations of deep understanding and total internalization of religious teachings, these practices give rise to practical acts performed collectively and individually by the faithful. In this context, *tahlilan* and *yasinan* can be seen as expressions of religious experience through concrete behavior. Muslim communities enact the commands of Islam in a form adapted to local settings, reciting Quranicverses, giving charity, engaging in *dhikr,* and performing communal supplication. This is fully consistent with Wach's articulation of religious experience as an embodied, enacted response. Moreover, Wach maintains that such action-oriented religious experiences cannot be separated from their temporal, spatial, and procedural dimensions.[45]

In terms of time, as mentioned previously, *tahlilan* and *yasinan* are usually performed on a routine basis - for instance, weekly, on the seventh day, the hundredth day, the thousandth day, or annually at the haul. If someone passes away, the rituals are often conducted for seven consecutive days. Regarding place, two typical patterns emerge: first, the conditional setting, for example, in the house of the bereaved family; and second, in a rotational pattern, moving among members of the *tahlilan* and *yasinan* community. Concerning the procedure, these traditions follow a specific sequence, generally starting with the recitation of Surah Al-

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[45] Pratama, Rido Awal Pratama, "Tradisi *yasinan* Dan *tahlilan* Dalam Meningkatkan Nilai- Nilai Pendidikan Islam Di Masjid Nur Amanah Yogyakarta," hal. 15.

Fātiḥah for the deceased, followed by a series of prayers, and concluding with a collective supplication.

Third, *tahlilan* and *yasinan* as expressions of religious experience in the form of communal association. According to Wach, individuals will gather to form fellowships or religious groups, and within these groups, participants collectively determine the essence and organizational form that aligns with their religious experience. They thus develop their own attitudes, worldviews, and distinct religious atmospheres.

In this sense, the practices of *tahlilan* and *yasinan* clearly possess a social and collective dimension. The values of harmony and mutual support among participants reflect the associative character inherent in these rituals.[46] These religious traditions, continuously performed among Indonesian Muslim communities, have given rise to *tahlilan* and *yasinan* groups that serve as loci of shared religious life.[47] Regional variations in these practices can be observed, reflecting the different socio-cultural backgrounds of each community.

In line with the discussion above, it becomes clear that *tahlilan* and *yasinan* represent concrete, associative expressions of Islamic religious experience as practiced by many Indonesian Muslims. From a sociological perspective, these traditions hold profound significance in the lives of the faithful. Beyond strengthening individual faith, they also contribute meaningfully to the social cohesion and solidarity of the wider community.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, Joachim Wach's theoretical contributions have significantly enriched the study of religions, including the academic exploration of Islam. Wach's concepts of religious experience and its expression offer a robust analytical framework for interpreting phenomena within religious realities. In particular, his typology of religious experience - expressed in the forms of thought, action, and communal association - deepens our understanding within the field of religious studies.

In the context of Indonesian Islam, there are religious traditions that have been continually practiced and adapted, most notably the *tahlilan* and *yasinan* rituals. These practices are the products of a long process of cultural acculturation initiated by earlier Islamic scholars and preachers. They have evolved into distinctive features of Indonesian Islam, with the details of their implementation - including timing, place, and procedural elements - carefully structured by those scholars who first propagated Islam in the archipelago.

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[46] Muniri, "Tradisi Slametan: *yasinan* Manifestasi Nilai Sosial-Keagamaan di Trenggalek," hal. 77.

[47] Hatimah, Emawati, dan Husni, "Tradisi *tahlilan* Masyarakat Banjar di Kecamatan Pahandut Kota Palangka Raya," hal. 4.

Based on the findings of this study, using the analytical lens provided by Joachim Wach's thought, *tahlilan* and *yasinan* clearly represent authentic expressions of Islamic religious experience. These traditions manifest across Wach's categories: as expressions of religious thought, religious action, and religious communal association. This demonstrates that *tahlilan* and *yasinan* constitute religious expressions rooted in a profound, inherited understanding, internalization, and actualization of Islamic values across generations.

In light of these insights, this study recommends that the topic of *tahlilan* and *yasinan* in Indonesia be further explored through multidisciplinary research. Such approaches will help to generate a more comprehensive understanding of these longstanding community practices. It is also important to anticipate that, over time, the implementation of these rituals and public perceptions toward them may shift. Therefore, future studies should address these transformations through rigorous scientific inquiry.

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