

Relevance of Nusantara Philosophy in Integrating Religious Doctrines for Social Harmony

Muhammad Aldi¹, Retisfa Khairanis²,

¹²Maulana Malik Ibrahim State Islamic University

¹Email: 1914010089.muhammadaldi@gmail.com



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ABSTRACT

This research aims to explore the relevance of Nusantara philosophy in integrating religious doctrines as a basis for achieving social harmony in Indonesia. Nusantara philosophy, which is rich in local values and traditional wisdom, has the potential to become a bridge in uniting the diversity of existing religious doctrines. Using a qualitative-descriptive approach, this research examines literature, historical documents, and interviews with religious and philosophical figures to explore the relationship between local philosophy and religious principles in the Archipelago context. The results show that Nusantara philosophies, such as the concepts of harmony, deliberation, and local wisdom, are in harmony with religious doctrines that prioritize the values of justice, compassion, and tolerance. The research also reveals how these values can be applied in people's lives to create social cohesion and overcome the challenges of diversity in the modern era. The implication of this research is the strengthening of interdisciplinary studies between Nusantara philosophy and religious doctrine, which can contribute to formulating educational strategies, social policies, and a more inclusive approach to da'wah. This research confirms the importance of revitalizing local wisdom in facing the challenges of globalization and maintaining national identity.

I. INTRODUCTION

The archipelago is a region rich in tradition, culture and local wisdom that has developed over centuries. In this context, Nusantara philosophy emerges as one of the manifestations of thought that reflects the local values and worldview of its people (Irfan & Suryani, 2017). The connection between this philosophy and religious doctrine is an interesting topic to research, given the importance of religion as a spiritual and moral guide in the lives of the Nusantara people (Farhan & Anwar, 2016).

Research into Nusantara philosophy linked to religious doctrine provides new insights into how local wisdom can synergize with religious teachings to create social harmony (Aldi, 2025). In their daily lives, Nusantara communities have shown practices that combine traditional values and religious doctrines in building relationships between individuals and communities (Meliono, 2011).

Studies on Nusantara philosophy often focus on cultural and historical aspects, while those that relate it to religious doctrine are limited (Aldi & Khairanis, 2025). This research is important to investigate how Nusantara philosophical values, such as gotong royong, deliberation and balance, can be integrated with religious teachings to create a more harmonious society (Setiawan & Stevanus, 2023).

Previous research has shown that Nusantara philosophy has strong roots in local traditions and serves as a moral foundation for society. However, these studies often focus on one dimension, such as aspects of customs or social structure, without delving further into the interaction between these philosophies and religious doctrines. Most studies on religious doctrines in the archipelago highlight the theological aspects or ritual practices, but pay less attention to the interaction between religious teachings and local philosophies. This creates a gap that requires further exploration, especially in the modern context where societies face the challenges of globalization and changing cultural values (Tjahjandari et al., 2017).

This research aims to address this gap by exploring the integration between Nusantara philosophy and religious doctrine, and how they can support each other to create social harmony. The main focus of this research is to explore the relevant elements of Nusantara philosophy and see how these elements are applied in religious teachings to build an inclusive society (Kaçer, 2024).

The main objective of this research is to identify the values of Nusantara philosophy that are aligned with religious doctrine and analyze how they can be applied in the current social and cultural context. As such, it contributes to the development of theoretical and practical frameworks in understanding the synergy between local traditions and religion (Aldi, 2024).

In the literature, Nusantara philosophy is often defined as a worldview rooted in local wisdom and the collective experience of the people. The concept encompasses various dimensions, such as spirituality, ethics and social, all of which have relevance in the context of religious diversity in the archipelago. Religious doctrine, on the other hand, is defined as a set of teachings and principles that guide people in living their lives in accordance with God's will. In the context of the archipelago, religious doctrines are often adapted to local traditions, creating unique and distinctive forms of religious practice (Barora et al., 2022).

The theoretical approach in this research refers to the theory of social harmony and cultural integration, which emphasizes the importance of local values as the basis for building an inclusive and tolerant society. This theory is relevant to analyze how Nusantara philosophy and religious doctrine can complement each other in creating social balance (Fitriyah, 2024).

Previous relevant research includes studies on the integration of local values with religion in community life. The study shows that the adaptation of local values in religious teachings can create a deeper understanding of the religion itself, while strengthening the cultural identity of the community. However, some studies have also shown that there is controversy over such adaptations, especially in the context of modernization and the influence of globalization. Some argue that the amalgamation of local philosophy and religion can reduce the purity of religious teachings, while others see it as a form of religious flexibility and relevance in the face of changing times.

This research offers a contribution by bridging the controversy through a holistic approach that combines philosophical, theological and social studies. Thus, this research provides a new perspective on the importance of integrating local values and religion in creating a harmonious and civilized society. Overall, this research is expected to provide a more comprehensive insight into the relationship between Nusantara philosophy and

religious doctrine, as well as open up new discussions on how the two can support each other to face social and cultural challenges in the modern era.

II. METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with an explorative design to explore the relationship between Nusantara philosophy and religious doctrine. This approach was chosen due to the nature of the research, which requires an in-depth understanding of local values and the religious context in Nusantara society. This research aims to understand the interaction between local philosophy and religious doctrine, so a qualitative design was deemed most appropriate to capture the complexity of the issue under study (Hollstein, 2011).

The research participants consisted of community leaders, religious leaders and cultural practitioners in several regions in the archipelago, who were selected through a purposive sampling technique. The selection of these participants was based on their involvement in the practice of integrating local values and religion in daily life. The research sample includes regions with representative cultural and religious diversity, such as West Sumatra, Java and Sulawesi, so that the data obtained can reflect the diversity of socio-cultural contexts in the archipelago.

Data collection techniques included in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document study. In-depth interviews were used to obtain direct views from participants on how Nusantara philosophy is applied in religious life. Participatory observation was conducted by following customary activities and religious rituals to directly understand the integration practices. Document study involved analyzing literature, religious texts, and local manuscripts relevant to the research topic.

The data was analyzed through the thematic analysis method to identify key patterns in the interaction between Nusantara philosophy and religious doctrine. The analysis process involved steps such as data transcription, coding, categorization and thematic interpretation. Data validity is ensured through method triangulation, by comparing the results of interviews, observations and document studies. With this approach, the research is expected to produce credible findings and make a significant contribution to the development of philosophy and religion studies in the archipelago.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 The Historical Relationship between Nusantara Philosophy and Religious Doctrine

Nusantara philosophy has close roots with the history of the entry of major religions into the archipelago, such as Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Christianity. History shows that the process of religious propagation was often accompanied by cultural acculturation, in which the local values of the archipelago were adapted to the religious teachings brought by the migrants. For example, the concept of harmony in Hindu-Buddhist teachings is widely adopted in the Nusantara's traditional traditions such as religious ceremonies and the social structure of society (Humaidi, 2019).

The process of acculturation of local culture with religious doctrine in the archipelago is unique and interesting. Since the beginning of the entry of major religions into the archipelago, such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Christianity, the religious propagators have respected local traditions. For example, the spread of Islam by the Walisongo was closely related to the use of local arts, such as wayang and gamelan. They did not force drastic changes but tried to incorporate religious teachings into the existing culture, thus creating harmony. Of course, there were challenges. One of the main challenges is when local values are

considered contrary to religious teachings. For example, in some local traditions, there are certain rituals that are considered inconsistent with certain religious doctrines. This often leads to debates among the community. However, on the other hand, if there is good dialog between religious and traditional leaders, harmony can be achieved. An inclusive and respectful approach is essential to maintain this balance. The relevance of Nusantara philosophy in the modern era can be maintained through education and preservation of traditions. Formal education can include a curriculum that teaches the values of Nusantara philosophy as part of character building. In addition, religious leaders and cultural experts should work together to preserve local traditions that are relevant to religious teachings (Interview, Hidayatullah 2025).

From the interview above, we can draw a red thread that Nusantara philosophy has a significant role in building harmony between local traditions and religious doctrine. The acculturation approach taken by religious propagators in the past, such as Walisongo, shows the importance of respecting local culture without neglecting religious values. Although there are challenges in maintaining a balance between the two, inclusive dialog between religious and cultural leaders is key in creating harmony. In addition, the relevance of Nusantara philosophy in the modern era can be maintained through education and the preservation of traditions that are in accordance with religious values, so that they can serve as a guide for building an inclusive and characterful society.

This process not only enriches local traditions but also strengthens the acceptance of religion among the people. Islam, for example, when it entered the archipelago, used a cultural approach by maintaining local symbols such as wayang and music. This made the teachings of Islam more easily accepted by communities that already had strong traditions. In some cases, however, there are challenges in harmonizing local philosophies with religious teachings. For example, some religious doctrines have strict views against certain local practices that are considered contrary to religious beliefs. This difference is often debated among the public and academics.

This research found that harmony between Nusantara philosophy and religion can be achieved when there is a deep understanding of both aspects. Religious leaders play an important role in bridging local values with religious doctrine, thus creating harmony without losing cultural identity. Ultimately, this historical connection shows that Nusantara philosophy has the flexibility to adapt to various religious doctrines. This makes Nusantara philosophy an intellectual asset that can support cultural and religious diversity in Indonesia.

3.2 Manifestation of Nusantara Philosophy Values in Religious Life

Nusantara philosophy teaches values such as harmony, mutual cooperation, and respect for nature, which are in line with many religious teachings. In practice, these values are reflected in the religious life of the archipelago, such as in the traditions of *selamatan*, pilgrimage, or mutual cooperation in the construction of houses of worship (Mursyidi, 2024).

Nusantara philosophy has a wealth of values derived from local wisdom and cultural traditions that are deeply rooted in society. These values not only reflect culture, but also often go hand in hand with religious doctrines, especially Islam, which has been an important part of our nation's history. The relationship between the two is very close, as religious teachings are often delivered with a familiar cultural approach. This creates strong integration and is the basis for the formation of a harmonious national identity. The main challenge is the view that separates or even contradicts local wisdom and religious

teachings. In fact, if we refer to history, the two often support each other. For example, in the spread of Islam in the archipelago, scholars used cultural approaches, such as art and customs, to convey religious messages. Another challenge is rapid social change, where the younger generation lacks understanding of the importance of this harmony. Therefore, a creative approach is needed to reintroduce the values of Nusantara philosophy that are in line with religious teachings. Education plays a key role in preserving these values. Through education, the younger generation can be taught the importance of harmony between culture and religion. The curriculum should integrate local values that are relevant to religious doctrines, so that students can understand their identity as a whole (Interview, Siti 2025).

From the interview above, we can draw a red thread that the relationship between Nusantara philosophy and religious doctrine has an important role in shaping a harmonious national identity. The integration of the two is seen in the history of the spread of religion in Indonesia, which utilizes local wisdom to strengthen religious messages. However, challenges arise in the form of views that contradict local culture with religion and the lack of awareness of the younger generation of the importance of this harmony. Education, both formal and informal, is key to maintaining the relevance of Nusantara philosophical values and religious doctrines, not only at the national level but also as Indonesia's global contribution in promoting harmony and inclusiveness.

The *selamatan* tradition, for example, is a form of integration of local values with religious teachings. *Selamatan*, which was originally based on animist culture, was then adapted to Islamic values, so that it became a widely accepted religious tradition. This shows how Nusantara philosophy can enrich religious practices. In addition, *gotong royong* in the construction of houses of worship such as mosques and churches also reflects the value of collectivity in Nusantara philosophy. This value not only strengthens social relations but also strengthens faith through harmonious cooperation.

However, there are challenges in maintaining these values in the modern era. Globalization and modernization often lead to the erosion of local traditions, including Nusantara philosophical values related to religion. This research highlights the importance of revitalizing local traditions through education and cultural campaigns. Strengthening local values in religious life can also help create a more inclusive and harmonious society. By making Nusantara philosophy the foundation of religious life, people can face modern challenges without losing their cultural and spiritual identity.

3.3 The Role of Religious Leaders and Culturists in Bridging Nusantara Philosophy and Religious Doctrine

Religious leaders and culturists have a strategic role in maintaining the balance between local philosophy and religious teachings. They act as mediators who can explain how local values are in line with religious doctrine, thus creating harmony in society. For example, scholars in the archipelago often used a cultural approach in their *da'wah*. They utilized local arts such as *wayang*, music and dance to convey religious messages. This approach was not only effective but also strengthened the relationship between religion and local culture (Istikomah, 2024).

Nusantara philosophy has a very distinctive value because it was born from local wisdom that is very close to people's lives. Its influence on religious doctrine can be seen in the way religions in Indonesia adapt their messages to local culture, such as the use of language, art and tradition. For example, in Islam, the Islamization process in the archipelago made use of wayang and traditional poetry to convey religious teachings more effectively. The main

challenge is globalization, which tends to blur local identities. Many young people no longer understand local values and consider them old-fashioned. There is also the challenge of religious extremism that often rejects the existence of local culture as part of religious practice. In fact, the Nusantara philosophy is actually a tool to bridge differences and build harmony between people. One of the best ways is through education. Our education curriculum must contain the values of Nusantara philosophy that are linked to religious doctrine. In addition, there needs to be a revitalization of local traditions and culture that can be done through collaboration between the government, religious leaders, and community leaders. Technology can also be utilized to bring the younger generation closer to local wisdom, such as creating interesting and relevant digital content (Interview, Ahmad 2025).

From the interview above, we can draw a common thread that Nusantara philosophy plays an important role in strengthening religious doctrine in Indonesia, especially in the modern context. The influence of this philosophy is seen in the way religion adapts to local culture through art, tradition and language. The main challenges faced are globalization that blurs local identities and religious extremism that rejects traditional culture. To overcome this, education that integrates the values of Nusantara philosophy with religious teachings is key, followed by revitalization of traditions through collaboration between the government, religious leaders and the community. Concrete examples such as the slametan tradition and the use of gamelan in religious events show that this integration can work. Prof. Ahmad hopes that this kind of research can demonstrate the relevance of Nusantara philosophy for the future, strengthen social and spiritual harmony, and preserve cultural heritage.

Culturists also play an important role in safeguarding the Nusantara's philosophical heritage (Natonis et al., 2024). They often collaborate with religious leaders to document and promote local values that are relevant to religious teachings. This can be seen in various cultural festivals that blend religious elements and local traditions (Manik et al., 2024).

However, there are challenges faced by religious and cultural leaders, namely pressure from groups that tend to adopt a more rigid view of religion. In some cases, local values are considered to be in conflict with religious teachings, leading to conflict. This research shows that dialogue between various parties, including religious leaders, cultural figures and the government, is essential to create a common understanding. With constructive dialogue, conflicts can be minimized and harmony between Nusantara philosophy and religious doctrine can be maintained.

3.4 Implications of Nusantara Philosophy for Religious Life in the Modern Era

In the modern era, Nusantara philosophy remains relevant in responding to the increasingly complex challenges of religious life. Values such as tolerance, harmony, and respect for diversity are key in dealing with social issues, such as intolerance and religious conflict. This research found that Nusantara philosophy can be a guide in building an inclusive and harmonious society. For example, the value of harmony can be applied in resolving inter-religious conflicts, while the value of gotong royong can strengthen social solidarity (Sukabawa et al., 2023).

Nusantara Philosophy remains highly relevant in the context of our current religious life, even though we face various social challenges and globalization. The main values in this philosophy such as tolerance, harmony, and respect for diversity are very important to deal with issues such as intolerance and increasingly complex inter-religious conflicts. One concrete example is the value of harmony that runs deep in Nusantara philosophy. This value

can be applied to resolve interfaith conflicts in a more peaceful and inclusive way. In addition, the strong concept of gotong royong in Nusantara culture can strengthen social solidarity and strengthen relationships between individuals, not only in religious contexts but also in social life as a whole. The biggest challenges are rapid social changes, technological developments and globalization that often lead to the neglect of traditional values. Modern society tends to be influenced by global trends, while Nusantara philosophy is often considered old-fashioned or less relevant to the younger generation. Therefore, we need real efforts to revitalize these values, one of which is through education and media. The government plays a very important role. One way is to make Nusantara philosophy a part of cultural and educational policies (Interview, Siti 2025).

From the interview above, we can draw a red thread that Nusantara philosophy has great relevance in facing the challenges of religious life in the modern era, especially in creating an inclusive, tolerant and harmonious society. Values such as harmony and gotong royong contained in this philosophy can be a guide in resolving inter-religious conflicts and strengthening social solidarity. Although challenges from social change and globalization threaten its sustainability, revitalization of Nusantara philosophy through education and government policies is necessary to keep these local values alive and relevant. Nusantara philosophy can be an important solution, not only for Indonesia, but also as a model for multicultural societies in the world.

However, the relevance of Nusantara philosophy in the modern era is not free from challenges (Anam, 2024). Social change, technology, and globalization often cause people to ignore traditional values (Rachmat, 2023). Therefore, efforts are needed to revitalize Nusantara philosophy through education and media (Annur et al., 2024).

The government can also play an important role by making Nusantara philosophy part of its cultural and educational policies. By supporting research and documentation of local values, the government can ensure that Nusantara philosophy remains alive and relevant in the modern era. Ultimately, Nusantara philosophy has great potential to be a solution in creating a more inclusive, tolerant and harmonious religious life. This is not only important for Indonesia but can also be a model for multicultural societies around the world.

IV. CONCLUSION

This research shows that Nusantara philosophy has a close relationship with the history of the entry of major religions into the archipelago, such as Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Christianity. The process of cultural acculturation that occurs between local values and religious teachings helps strengthen the acceptance of religion in society. Although there are challenges in harmonizing local philosophies with religious doctrines, deep understanding and the role of religious leaders in bridging the two are key to achieving harmony between the two. Nusantara philosophy has the flexibility to adapt to religious doctrine, making it an asset that supports Indonesia's cultural and religious diversity.

This research highlights how the values of Nusantara philosophy, such as harmony, gotong royong, and respect for nature, are reflected in the religious life of the Nusantara people. Traditions such as selamatan and gotong royong in the construction of houses of worship reflect the integration of local values with religious teachings. Although globalization and modernization pose challenges in maintaining these values, revitalizing local traditions through education and cultural campaigns is essential. Nusantara philosophy can help create an inclusive and harmonious society by maintaining cultural and spiritual identity amidst the challenges of the modern era.

The research also underscores the important role of religious leaders and culturists in maintaining the balance between Nusantara philosophy and religious teachings. They act as mediators who explain the harmony between local values and religious doctrine, and strengthen the relationship between religion and culture through cultural approaches, such as art and music. Despite pressure from groups that are more rigid towards religion, constructive dialog between religious leaders, culturalists and the government is needed to maintain harmony and strengthen a common understanding of Nusantara philosophy in religious life.

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***Muhammad Aldi (Corresponding Author)**

Magister Pendidikan Agama Islam, Pascasarjana UIN Malang
 Jl. Dadaprejo Malang
 Email: 1914010089.muhammadaldi@gmail.com

Retisfa Khairanis (Second B. Author)

Magister Pendidikan Agama Islam, Pascasarjana UIN Malang
 Jl. Dadaprejo Malang
 Email: retisfakhairanis182001@gmail.com
