INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL
IHYA' 'ULUM AL-DIN

International Journal Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din
Vol 28, No 1 (2026): 1–19
DOI: https://doi.org/10.21580/ihya.28.1.32443

Paron: The Indigenous Practice of Islamic Agricultural Cooperation in Kajoran, Magelang

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Citation (APA):
Mustofa, A., Samsurrohman (2026). Paron: The Indigenous Practice of Islamic Agricultural Cooperation in Kajoran, Magelang. *International Journal Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, 28(1), 1-19. https://doi.org/10.21580/ihya.28.1.32443

Submitted: 03 Jun 2026
Revised: 27 Oct 2026
Accepted: 10 Nov 2026
Published: 17 Nov 2026

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Abstract: This study examines paron, a traditional agricultural sharecropping practice in Kajoran, Magelang, Central Java, through the perspectives of Islamic jurisprudence and the discursive tradition of Islam. It addresses three interconnected questions: how paron operates as a form of agricultural cooperation, to what extent its contractual arrangements correspond to the concepts of muzâra'ah and mukhâbarah in classical Islamic jurisprudence, and how Islamic legal knowledge may have interacted with local agrarian practices through historical and institutional processes. Employing a qualitative approach, the study draws on in-depth interviews with landowners and sharecroppers, field observations, documentation, and historical literature on Javanese agrarian institutions. The findings demonstrate substantial structural and normative affinities between paron and the classical Islamic sharecropping contracts, although the classification of particular arrangements depends on their financing structures and contractual conditions. The study further identifies pesantren-based Islamic learning, cultural preaching, and agrarian policies of the Islamic Javanese sultanates as possible institutional contexts through which Islamic jurisprudential knowledge interacted with local agricultural practices. Drawing on Talal Asad's concept of discursive tradition, this study argues that the relationship between Islamic jurisprudence and local agrarian customs should be understood through the processes of interpretation, transmission, and social reproduction rather than through formal similarities alone. Nevertheless, the available evidence does not establish an unbroken historical lineage connecting the Prophetic precedent of muzâra'ah with the contemporary practice of paron. Rather, it points to historical connections through the transmission of Islamic legal knowledge and its engagement with local agrarian practices. This distinction contributes to a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between Islamic legal knowledge and indigenous agrarian traditions.

Keywords: Paron; Discursive Tradition; *Muzâra'ah*; *Mukhâbara*; Javanese Agrarian Practices Ethics

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Abstrak: Studi ini mengkaji *paron*, sebuah praktik bagi hasil pertanian tradisional di Kajoran, Magelang, Jawa Tengah, melalui perspektif yurisprudensi Islam dan tradisi diskursif Islam. Penelitian ini menjawab tiga pertanyaan yang saling berkaitan: bagaimana *paron* beroperasi sebagai bentuk kerja sama pertanian; sejauh mana pengaturan kontraktualnya selaras dengan konsep *muzâra'ah* dan *mukhâbarah* dalam fikih Islam klasik; serta bagaimana pengetahuan hukum Islam berinteraksi dengan praktik agraria lokal melalui proses sejarah dan kelembagaan. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, studi ini mengandalkan wawancara mendalam dengan pemilik lahan dan penggarap, observasi lapangan, dokumentasi, serta literatur sejarah mengenai institusi agraria Jawa. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan adanya kesamaan struktural dan normatif yang substansial antara *paron* dan kontrak bagi hasil dalam Islam klasik, meskipun klasifikasi dari pengaturan tertentu bergantung pada struktur pembiayaan dan ketentuan kontraknya. Studi ini juga mengidentifikasi pembelajaran Islam berbasis pesantren, dakwah kultural, dan kebijakan agraria dari kesultanan-kesultanan Islam di Jawa sebagai konteks kelembagaan yang memungkinkan interaksi antara pengetahuan yurisprudensi Islam dengan praktik pertanian lokal. Dengan merujuk pada konsep tradisi diskursif dari Talal Asad, studi ini berargumen bahwa hubungan antara hukum Islam dan tradisi pertanian lokal sebaiknya dipahami melalui proses interpretasi, transmisi, dan reproduksi sosial, bukan sekadar melalui kemiripan formal. Kendati demikian, bukti yang tersedia belum dapat memastikan adanya silsilah sejarah yang tidak terputus antara preseden kenabian mengenai muzâra'ah dan praktik paron kontemporer. Sebaliknya, bukti tersebut menunjukkan adanya keterhubungan historis melalui transmisi pengetahuan hukum Islam dan interaksinya dengan praktik agraria lokal. Perbedaan ini memberikan kontribusi bagi pemahaman yang lebih bernuansa mengenai hubungan antara pengetahuan hukum Islam dan tradisi agraria pribumi.

Kata Kunci: *Paron; Muzâra'ah; Mukhâbarah*; Tradisi Diskursif; Praktik Kerjasama Pertanian Jawa

Introduction

Agricultural cooperation between landowners and sharecroppers has long been practiced in various regions of the Indonesian archipelago, particularly in Java. One form of this arrangement is locally known as *paron*, a system in which agricultural land is cultivated through an agreement between a landowner and a farmer, with the harvest shared according to arrangements agreed upon by both parties. In terms of its basic contractual structure, *paron* bears similarities to the agricultural cooperation contracts discussed in Islamic jurisprudence, particularly *muzâra'ah* and *mukhâbarah*. These similarities can be identified in several aspects, including the parties involved, the distribution of agricultural responsibilities, the allocation of production costs, and the sharing of harvest yields. Such similarities provide an important starting point for examining the relationship between Islamic jurisprudential principles and local agricultural practices. However, identifying structural similarities alone is insufficient to establish the historical relationship between the two.

The central problem concerns the distinction between normative compatibility and historical transmission. A local agricultural practice may correspond to the contractual principles of Islamic

jurisprudence without necessarily originating from, or being directly transmitted through, those principles. Conversely, the possibility that Islamic legal knowledge has influenced the formation and development of local agricultural customs should not be dismissed merely because the available evidence does not demonstrate a direct historical connection. Previous studies comparing agricultural cooperation practices with the concept of *muzâra'ah* have generally emphasized the similarities between their contractual elements. This approach is useful for assessing the extent to which local practices conform to Islamic legal principles. Nevertheless, it leaves a further question insufficiently explored: through what social, institutional, and intellectual processes might Islamic jurisprudential knowledge have interacted with local agricultural practices and become part of everyday social life?

Research on this subject can broadly be grouped into two strands. The first examines the relationship between Islamic agricultural contracts and local sharecropping practices. Studies by Arwini (Arwini, 2014), Wahyuni (Wahyuni, 2019), Hasdir (Hasdir, 2020), and Serli (Serli, 2020), for example, discuss agricultural cooperation arrangements in different Indonesian contexts by comparing their contractual elements with the principles of *muzâra'ah*. These studies provide a basis for identifying similarities in the roles of landowners and cultivators, the distribution of responsibilities, and the sharing of agricultural yields. The second strand investigates the historical development of agricultural systems in Java and their relationship with wider social and cultural structures. Studies by Subroto (SUbroto, 1985), Taqyuddin (Taqyuddin, 2017), and Prabowo (Prabowo, 2019), for instance, offer insights into the organization of agricultural production and the socio-cultural institutions surrounding land cultivation in Java. Although these two strands contribute to understanding the normative and historical dimensions of agricultural cooperation, their findings do not, by themselves, establish whether the similarities between *paron* and Islamic agricultural contracts resulted from historical transmission, interaction between different knowledge traditions, or the independent development of comparable arrangements in response to similar agrarian needs.

This distinction is particularly important when examining the historical development of agricultural practices in Java. The absence of explicit references to a particular form of sharecropping in surviving historical sources cannot automatically be interpreted as evidence that the practice did not exist in earlier periods. Historical records are selective and uneven; they do not necessarily document every dimension of everyday economic and social life. Accordingly, the emergence or development of *paron* should not be explained through an assumed historical gap between pre-Islamic and Islamic Javanese society. Nor should its resemblance to *muzâra'ah* be treated as sufficient proof that the practice was deliberately introduced through a process of copying or social engineering. Rather, the historical relationship between the two requires an examination of the available evidence concerning the circulation of Islamic legal knowledge, the role of religious institutions and authorities, and the ways in which local communities interpret and reproduce agricultural practices.

Against this background, this study examines the *paron* tradition among agricultural communities in Kajoran, Magelang, Central Java. It addresses three interconnected questions. First, how is *paron* organized and practiced, particularly in terms of the roles, responsibilities, financing arrangements, and distribution of harvest yields between landowners and sharecroppers? Second, to what extent do these arrangements correspond to the concepts of *muzâra'ah* (and *mukhâbarah)* in classical Islamic jurisprudence, particularly when differences in the allocation of agricultural costs are taken into account? Third, what historical, institutional, and discursive processes may explain the interaction between Islamic jurisprudential knowledge and the development or reproduction of *paron* in the local community? By addressing these questions, the study seeks to move beyond a simple comparison between Islamic legal

concepts and local agricultural customs. It aims instead to provide a more nuanced account of how normative principles, religious authority, and local agrarian practices may intersect in the everyday economic life of Javanese Muslim communities.

This study employed a qualitative case study approach conducted in Kajoran and its surrounding areas, Magelang. Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews with key informants, particularly agricultural landowners and sharecroppers, complemented by observation and documentation. Secondary data were gathered from relevant scholarly literature, especially studies on the history of agriculture in Java and Islamic agricultural cooperation. Data were analyzed inductively through three interconnected stages: describing the actual practices and mechanisms of *paron*; examining their contractual arrangements in relation to the principles of *muzâra'ah* (and *mukhâbarah*) in Islamic jurisprudence; and interpreting these practices within their broader social, historical, and religious contexts. This analytical process was intended not only to identify similarities between paron and Islamic agricultural contracts but also to distinguish normative compatibility from claims of historical transmission.

To further examine the relationship between paron and Islamic jurisprudential traditions, this study draws on Talal Asad's concept of *discursive tradition*. Asad understands Islam as a discursive tradition constituted through historically situated processes of argument, interpretation, and the transmission of authoritative knowledge concerning appropriate Muslim practices (Asad, 1986). This perspective makes it possible to examine the relationship between Islamic jurisprudence and local customs without reducing it either to formal legal conformity or to an assumption of direct historical borrowing. In the context of *paron*, the concept is used to investigate whether, and in what ways, Islamic legal knowledge has been communicated, interpreted, invoked, or legitimized in the social practices of landowners and sharecroppers. Relevant questions include who transmits knowledge about agricultural cooperation, what forms of religious or customary authority are involved, whether the actors themselves understand their agreements through Islamic legal concepts, and how such understandings are maintained or transformed across generations. In this way, the analysis focuses not merely on the similarity of contractual structures but also on the social processes through which religious knowledge may become meaningful in local economic practices.

The contribution of this study lies in bringing together the normative analysis of Islamic agricultural contracts, the historical study of Javanese agrarian practices, and the anthropological perspective of *discursive tradition*. Rather than presupposing that *paron* is a direct historical continuation of the agricultural cooperation practiced in the Prophetic period, this study distinguishes between the contractual similarities that can be examined through Islamic jurisprudence and the historical processes of transmission that require independent evidence. Such a distinction allows the relationship between Islamic legal knowledge and local agrarian traditions to be examined more critically. It also provides a framework for understanding how Islamic teachings may be interpreted, negotiated, and reproduced within local economic practices, while recognizing the possibility that local arrangements have their own historical and social trajectories.

Results and Discussion

Muzâra'ah; History and Application

Muzâra'ah contract in the view of some *fuqâha*, among them Imam Nawawi (Bin Umar Ba'alawy, 2004) and Wahbah Zuhaili, is the same contract as *mukhâbarah* contract[1], namely a cooperation contract in agricultural management starting from planting seeds, maintenance to harvest involving two parties, namely the land owner and the farmer, therefore both contracts are permitted by sharia. The two are only distinguished by which party incurs the costs for agricultural management, thus affecting the amount of profit sharing for both parties. If the costs of agricultural management such as the cost of seeding, fertilization and similar costs are incurred by the land owner, then the agricultural cooperation contract is called *muzâra'ah*. Conversely, if the costs of agricultural management are borne by the farmer, then the cooperation is called *mukhâbarah* (Zuhaili, 1985). In contrast to the *muzâra'ah* contract, several scholars, including Imam Syafi'i, are of the opinion that the *mukhâbarah* contract is prohibited based on the narration of Jabir bin Abdillah that according to him the Prophet prohibited the *mukhâbarah* contract as he also prohibited the practice of *muhâqalah* and also *muzâbanah* (An-Naisabury, n.d.). For them, the *mukhâbarah* contract is considered a land rental contract that is paid based on the harvest produced (or the *kirâ` al-ardh* contract), a contract that is strictly prohibited by the Prophet because the uncertainty of the rental payment is caused by the uncertainty of the harvest results, thus harming one of the parties, while the rental contract itself requires a fixed price and therefore payment must be made using money.

Meanwhile, for scholars who allow *mukhâbarah* contracts, it is based on two factors, namely (1) consideration of public needs (*hâjat 'âm*) for contracts with the *mukhâbarah* model, and (2) in principle, *mukhâbarah* contracts are different from land rental contracts (*kirâ` al-ardh*) which were prohibited by the Prophet. The principle of the practice of sharing the harvest applied in this contract is based on the concept of *syirkah* when the land is owned by the landowner and the costs of seeds and fertilizer incurred by the farmer are recognized as capital from both parties. Or it is also identical to the practice of *qirâdh* where the land owned by the owner is analogous to capital (*ra`su al mâl*) (Mana' al-Qathan, 2001), while the costs of seeds and other maintenance incurred by the sharecropper are claimed as operational costs before the process of calculating the profit sharing from net profit, or in other words, the harvest results that are divided between the two parties are carried out after first calculating the operational costs incurred by the sharecropper.

The *muzâra'ah* contract was formally prescribed in the seventh year of Hijrah, precisely after the conquest of Khaibar, an oasis area about 160 km north of the city of Medina. Supported by very fertile geographical conditions, Khaibar is an agricultural area with very large areas of date palms, making it the largest date producing center in the Medina region. Usually, the law that applied at that time, after the conquest of an area, the law of *ghanîmah* (war booty) was applied by the party that won the battle, as

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[1] It should be noted that the term *mukhâbarah* as one of the contracts related to agricultural management cooperation (as with the contracts *muzâra'ah*, *muhâqalah* and also *muzâbanah*) emerged after the Prophet. The term used at that time which was recorded in various hadith editions *was 'âmala ahlu Khaibâr*, not *mukhâbarah or muzâra'ah*. Therefore, the term *mukhâbarah* mentioned by Jabir bin Abdillah as a contract prohibited by the Prophet could be Jabir's personal opinion which equates the practice of *mukhâbarah* with the meaning of a land lease contract (kirâ` al-ardh) which was once prohibited by the Prophet.

should be the case with the conquest of the Muslim troops of Medina against the Khaibar region inhabited by the Jewish community. However, specifically the handling of the agricultural sector in Khaibar in the form of very large and very productive date palm gardens; the Prophet had a different policy regarding ownership and management, namely that legally the ownership of agricultural land and the date palm plants on it belonged to the Medina government, while the task of management and maintenance until harvesting was handed over to the residents of Khaibar (Al-Qaṭān, n.d.). The harvest produced from the date palm garden will be divided between two parties (*'alâ syathri mâ yakhruju minhâ*), namely the government of Medina as the land owner and the residents of Khaibar as the cultivators, according to the agreed division. In classical Islamic jurisprudence studies, the cooperation contract between the government of Medina represented by the Prophet and the Jewish residents in the Khaibar region is referred to as (1) a *musâqah* contract when viewed from the aspect of caring for existing trees or plants in the form of irrigation management, as the obligation of the residents of Khaibar as the managers, or called (2) a *muzâra'ah* contract when viewed from the aspect of the authority held by the residents of Khaibar to plant new date palms or plant other plants between existing date palms (Asy-Syairozy, 2014). The narrative of the hadith that records this event is as follows,

> *It is narrated from Ibn 'Umar that the Prophet had indeed employed ('âmala) the people of Khaibar with an agreement in the form of (sharing the results) of half (syathr) of the harvest produced, whether in the form of fruit or plants*

The word of syathr in the hadith is the amount of the harvest (as business profit) divided between the two parties, besides this word also shows that the profit from the cooperation is not in the form of tsaman (thus differentiating it from the ijârah contract), but is obtained from the harvest produced which of course varies in each harvest season. Lexically, the word syathr is not only understood to refer to half (or 50% in percentage) as the word nisfu in Arabic. Therefore, based on this word, the harvest produced can be divided not necessarily in a 50:50 portion, but can be divided according to the agreement of both parties based on several agreed considerations, such as 60:40, 75:25 and so on. While the word 'âmala refers to the involvement of two parties who entered into a cooperation contract, namely the Prophet as (representative) of the land owner, namely the city government of Medina with the Jewish population of Khaibar as the cultivator. In another version, Imam Muslim does not use the word 'âmala but rather ya'tamilu which indicates the function of iftiâl min al-'amali or the burden of work given by the Prophet to the Jewish residents of Khaibar related to the duties and obligations of caring for and managing the agricultural land of Khaibar (Al-Maliki, 2018). Based on the version of the hadith, the foundation for the structure of the concept of the muzâra'ah contract has been built by the fuqâha until it became a concept of a cooperation contract in the field of agricultural management that has been established until today.

Paron; Concept of Work and Implementation in Kajoran Magelang

Geographically, Kajoran is one of the sub-districts located in the highlands of Magelang Regency, bordering Kaliangkrik, Tempuran and Salaman Districts, even in certain corners of the Kajoran area it borders directly with Wonosobo Regency. With a population of 61,830 people with a very wide and fertile agricultural area and the majority of the population working as farmers, supported by the typology of fertile volcanic soil types and a very wide agricultural landscape, sufficient rainfall and water sources throughout the year have made the Kajoran Magelang area have abundant agricultural products like other areas on the slopes of Mount Sumbing.

On the other hand, if viewed from the landscape of Islamic tradition, the name Kajoran itself is taken from the name of Sunan Kajoran (*Panembahan Romo*), a charismatic cleric and nobleman in the era of the Mataram Sultanate. [2] A cleric who was directly involved in conflict with the ruler of Mataram at that time, namely Sunan Amangkurat II, until he chose to isolate himself until his death in the Sumbing slopes, precisely in the area that is currently under the Kajoran District government. In addition, there is also the figure of another charismatic cleric, namely *mBah* Hamid Kajoran, who is known as a cleric and *awliyā`* in the Magelang Regency area and its surroundings, where his tomb in Kajoran is currently one of the pilgrimage destinations for Muslims both from within and outside Magelang. Compared to several other areas in Magelang which are also very familiar with the paron tradition, two solid characteristics that stand out in Kajoran, namely a region with an agrarian subculture combined with a strong Islamic tradition, are sufficient to confirm why this research was conducted in the Kajoran region and not in other regions.

In principle, the *paron* tradition in Kajoran can be applied to any agricultural commodity, although what is often practiced is a rice plant management cooperation contract. In this area, the *paron* contract usually begins with a request from the landowner to the sharecropper to manage his agricultural land with an agreed work contract. Or vice versa, often the sharecropper offers himself to the landowner to work on his agricultural land. The contract agreement between the two parties is carried out simply, because apart from this *paron* contract being carried out verbally, there are not many points of understanding that must be agreed upon between the landowner and the sharecropper. The ease of the work contract agreement process is due to the commitment of each party in carrying out their respective duties and roles, so that both parties can trust each other. The growth of mutual trust between the two parties certainly does not grow by itself but rather as a result of the implementation of social sanctions against parties (both landowners and sharecroppers) who are considered by consensus to be incompetent in carrying out the *paron* contract.[3]

The *paron* contract that is practiced has various forms, both in terms of who the parties are involved and in terms of their rights and obligations. In general, only two parties are involved in the paron contract, namely the landowner and the farmer who works the rice field. However, in some contracts, the cultivator can involve more than one person and there is no definite limit on the number of people as in the traditional rice planting process (*tandur*) where the landowner usually involves many people (between 5-10 people) during the planting process, and this contract will be valid until the harvest and the distribution of the harvest. Operationally, this cooperation scheme is identical to the cooperation contract in the Khaibar incident where the cultivators consist of the residents of Khaibar (in large

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[2] This Kajoran figure in the Dutch version, as written in the book *Het Kadjoran Vraagstruk* (Kajoran Problem) by de Graaf, ended up being killed in an ambush carried out by a joint VOC and Mataram army in Melambang, an area in Wonogiri near Gunung Kidul Regency (DR.H.J.de Graaf 1988; 63-5), then he was buried in the family tomb complex in Kajoran Wedi Klaten with a headless body. Meanwhile, according to the history of the Babad Jawa version, this Kajoran figure managed to escape during the ambush (W.L. Olthof 2014; 501-2) and according to the beliefs of the Kajoran Magelang community, he settled in the Kajoran area until the end of his life and was buried in Kajoran with the name Panembahan Kajoran tomb.

[3] Interview with Mr. Muhsin (65 years as a land owner)

numbers). Meanwhile, in terms of rights and obligations, the working principle of the *paron* contract is also very flexible where (1) sometimes the landowner provides the seeds and all the maintenance costs needed until the harvest season arrives, while the sharecropper is only obliged to manage it by relying on his farming skills without spending any money, but (2) sometimes it is the sharecropper who chooses to spend all the costs needed during farming. This first practice is identical to the *muzâra'ah* contract while the second practice model is identical to the *mukhâbarah* contract. The two paron models with different financing schemes as exemplified above of course have implications for the amount of the harvest portion, where the party that spends the money usually gets a larger portion of the harvest according to the agreement of both parties.[4]

The profit sharing in the form of harvest in the *paron* contract is in principle divided based on the agreement of both parties, however there is a standard portion that is generally agreed upon by the community. In the distribution of rice harvest results using the tandur system involving many farmers (during the planting season and during the harvest season) the distribution of the harvest is carried out using the *bawon* principle.[5] The *bawon* received by these farm laborers is uncertain because it is calculated based on the total amount of rice harvest produced in one plot of rice field. Meanwhile, the harvest sharing system in the *paron* contract in a different version is calculated based on the net harvest amount, which is the amount generated from the overall harvest (one plot or several plots of rice fields) then reduced by the amount of costs that have been incurred starting from the planting season, maintenance to the harvest season. The size of the portion of each party is determined by the cost of processing the rice fields incurred by one party (either the owner of the rice field or the farmer), where usually the party that incurs the costs is agreed to be the party that receives the larger portion. In addition, sometimes the profit sharing is done using cash from the sale of the harvest, which of course is agreed upon by both parties.

In Kajoran and other areas of Magelang, paron is practiced through two distinct arrangements regarding the allocation of agricultural production costs. Under the first arrangement, the landowner bears all production costs, while the cultivator contributes labor and agricultural expertise. Under the second, the cultivator assumes all production costs, while the landowner provides the farmland. These arrangements also tend to differ according to the types of crops cultivated. The first is commonly applied to rice cultivation, whereas the second is more frequently found in the cultivation of non-rice crops, such as chili peppers, legumes, and various vegetables. In terms of their contractual characteristics, the first arrangement bears similarities to the *muzâra'ah* contract, while the second shares certain features with the *mukhâbarah* contract. Nevertheless, these associations should be understood as points of normative comparison rather than definitive legal classifications.

Despite these differences, both arrangements follow a harvest-sharing system in which the proportion allocated to each party is mutually agreed upon before cultivation begins. The primary distinction between them therefore concerns the allocation of production costs, rather than the

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[4] Interview with Mr. Asnawi (62 years as a sharecropper)

[5] *Bawon* is a wage system for farm laborers who are asked to be involved in the rice planting process (*tandur*) until the harvest process, usually using a tool made of coconut shells that are shaped in such a way that they can be used to measure rice grains (rice grains that have been separated from their stalks).

fundamental mechanism of sharing the harvest. Generally, the party who bears the production costs receives a larger share of the harvest, although the precise proportion remains subject to the agreement between the landowner and the cultivator.[6]

Table 1. Variations in Paron Arrangements Based on the Allocation of Production Costs and Harvest Sharing

	Paron	***Paron***
Land Provider	Land Owner	Land Owner
Labor Provider	Sharecropper	Sharecropper
Production Cost Bearer	Land Owner	Sharecropper
Profit Sharing System	Percentage Based on Agreement	Percentage Based on Agreement
Basic for Alocation	Agreement Between the Parties and Financing Contributions	Agreement Between the Parties and Financing Contributions
Plant Type	Rice Plants	Beside Rice Plants

The comparison above indicates that *paron* shares several substantive characteristics with the Islamic agricultural cooperation contracts of *muzâra'ah* and *mukhâbarah*. These similarities can be observed particularly in the involvement of two parties (the landowner and the cultivator) the distribution of agricultural responsibilities, and the sharing of harvests according to a mutually agreed proportion. Nevertheless, *paron* cannot be categorically classified as either *muzâra'ah* or *mukhâbarah* solely on the basis of these general similarities. Its precise classification depends on the specific contractual elements found in each arrangement, including the provision of seeds, the allocation of production costs, the responsibilities of each party, and the agreed mechanism for distributing the harvest. Accordingly, paron may be understood as a local agricultural cooperation practice that exhibits substantive affinities with these Islamic legal contracts, while its precise juristic classification requires further examination of the terms and conditions governing each agreement. This normative correspondence, however, should not be taken as conclusive evidence that paron historically originated from the direct transmission of either contract into Kajoran's agrarian society.

Paron and Muzâra'ah: Between Normative Convergence and Historical Transmission

The identification of similarities between the *paron* tradition and the Islamic agricultural contract of *muzâra'ah* raises a further question concerning the nature of the relationship between these two practices. As discussed above, paron shares several substantive characteristics with *muzâra'ah* and, in certain arrangements, with *mukhâbarah*, particularly in terms of the distribution of responsibilities and the sharing of agricultural produce. However, such similarities alone cannot establish whether *paron* emerged independently from local agrarian needs, developed through the influence of Islamic legal

[6] However, this study will focus primarily on the agricultural cooperation practices among the community in Kajoran (and its surrounding areas) that bear a resemblance to the concept of *muzāra'ah*.

knowledge, or resulted from an interaction between these two processes. Therefore, the relationship between paron and *muzâra'ah* needs to be examined not only in terms of their normative correspondence but also through the historical and social contexts in which agricultural cooperation developed in Kajoran.

Exploring this relationship requires careful consideration of the historical context of agricultural cooperation in Java. The available historical records do not yet provide a sufficiently comprehensive account of the forms, mechanisms, and legal understandings of agricultural cooperation practiced in pre-Islamic Javanese society. Nevertheless, the limited availability of such records should not be interpreted as evidence that cooperative agricultural arrangements did not exist before the arrival of Islam. Rather, it indicates a limitation in the historical evidence currently available to reconstruct these practices. Consequently, it would be premature to establish a sharp historical distinction between pre-Islamic agrarian practices and Islamic agricultural contracts solely on the basis of the surviving written sources.

At the same time, the development of Islam in Java provides an important context for examining the possible historical relationship between paron and Islamic agricultural jurisprudence. The spread of Islamic teachings through religious scholars, pesantren networks, and the tradition of studying classical Islamic texts created avenues through which knowledge of Islamic jurisprudence could become part of local social and economic life. The circulation and teaching of fiqh works, including texts that discuss agricultural cooperation, indicate the presence of an intellectual environment in which concepts such as *muzâra'ah* and *mukhâbarah* could be learned, interpreted, and adapted. These historical and intellectual contexts make the possibility of a connection between Islamic legal knowledge and local agricultural practices worth considering. However, the existence of pesantren, fiqh manuscripts, and scholarly networks should be understood as contextual evidence of the circulation of Islamic knowledge, rather than as direct proof that the paron tradition in Kajoran originated from the transmission of a particular agricultural contract.

Within this historical context, the relationship between Islamic jurisprudence and local agricultural practices need not be understood as a process of simple adoption in which a formal legal contract was directly transferred into an existing social system. The encounter may instead have involved a gradual process of interaction, interpretation, and adaptation, through which Islamic legal principles became meaningful within local agrarian arrangements. In this regard, the development of paron may be examined in relation to the broader processes of Islamization and the circulation of Islamic legal knowledge in Java. Such a perspective allows for the possibility that local agricultural practices were influenced by Islamic jurisprudential ideas while retaining their own customary forms and social functions. Nevertheless, establishing whether such an interaction actually occurred in Kajoran requires evidence concerning the actors, channels, and forms of knowledge through which the practice was transmitted and reproduced.

Accordingly, the relationship between paron and *muzâra'ah* should be approached through two interconnected but analytically distinct dimensions. The first concerns normative convergence, namely the substantive similarities between local agricultural practices and the principles of agricultural cooperation recognized in Islamic jurisprudence. This approach is similar to the concept of parallelism[7]

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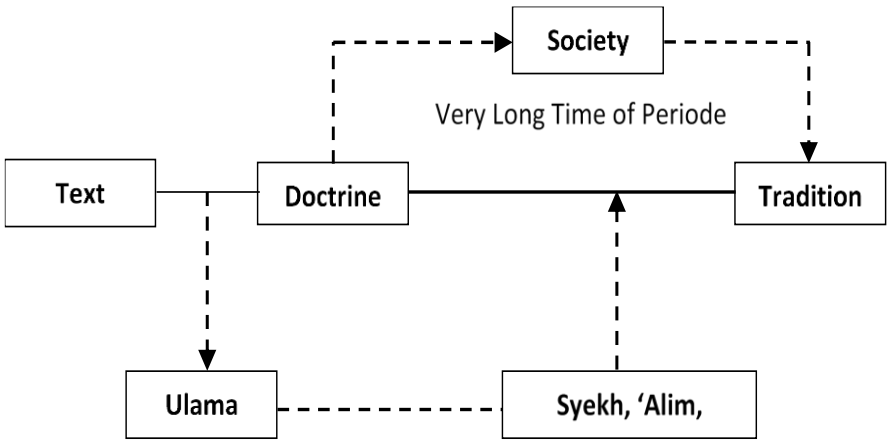
[7] In essence, this theory identifies two phenomena that have the same model and character, are in line and similar but have different intentions, directions and contexts. So that the problems raised in many ways have similarities, but of course these similarities should be placed in their respective contexts and

or the theory of similarity (Kuntowijoyo, 2008). However, this kind of approach model has fundamental weaknesses, especially related to the structure of the logical basis which seems to justify the phenomenon of 'coincidence' as something scientific, due to the inadequacy of the theory offered to mediate between one event and another event, each of which has similarities The second concerns historical transmission, which involves examining whether and how Islamic legal knowledge was communicated, interpreted, and incorporated into local agrarian practices over time. While the former can be explored through a comparison of contractual characteristics, the latter requires attention to the actors, institutions, intellectual networks, and processes through which religious knowledge may have circulated. Distinguishing these two dimensions makes it possible to acknowledge the normative affinity between paron and Islamic agricultural contracts without prematurely determining the historical origins of the local practice.

To investigate this relationship, this study draws on Talal Asad's concept of discursive tradition, which views Islamic tradition as a historically situated process through which practices and understandings are transmitted, interpreted, and transformed. This perspective is particularly relevant because it directs attention not only to the presence of similarities between paron and *muzâra'ah*, but also to the ways in which Islamic legal knowledge may have been conveyed, understood, and given meaning within local social contexts. He further explains that a set of discourses and values that have become the habits of a community are called Islam because they are permitted by Islamic discursive traditions and taught (approved and supervised) by Muslims, whether by an '*âlim*, khatib, sheikh, sufi or even by uneducated parents (Asad, 1986).Through this framework, the analysis examines the available historical and ethnographic evidence concerning the circulation of Islamic knowledge, the intergenerational transmission of paron practices, and the ways in which the practice is understood and justified by its participants. The concept therefore provides an analytical lens for exploring the possible relationship between Islamic jurisprudential discourse and local agrarian practices without presupposing a direct or uninterrupted line of historical transmission.

intentions which were different from the start. Therefore, the study must be carried out separately without mixing one context with another, then aligning the two developments of the formulation of thought or doctrine in one topic of analysis (Aditya 2021; 32-3).

Figure 1. Flow of Knowledge Transmission in the Discursive Islamic Tradition



Operationally, Asad's idea of the discursive Islamic tradition includes three things as illustrated in Figure 1, namely (1) a set of norms and teachings that are believed to be true (doctrine) (2) which are conveyed to society through the process of transmitting knowledge between generations (in the form of tradition), and (3) in each generation the practice is approved by scholars as the correct practice according to Islam. Thus, in Asad's view, the Islamic tradition is not a random act that is coincidental, but rather tradition is a planned social engineering effort, carried out systematically and massively.

Asad's idea of the continuity of an Islamic tradition through the transmission process has actually been affirmed by farmers, especially in Magelang and its surroundings. In general, farmers (both landowners and tenant farmers) gain knowledge in managing agriculture in a *paron* manner from the previous generation, either from their parents or from other more senior farmers. In the researcher's investigation, the transmission of this knowledge can only be traced up to the third generation (grandfather) if calculated from today's paron farmers, namely the child's generation, [8] although of course the process of transmitting this knowledge is not absolute through the chain of family relationships (son-father-grandfather) but can also be through other people in the same profession who are more senior. After the grandfather's generation and above, the process of transmitting this knowledge is no longer confirmed because the grandfather's generation has died, however, in theory this cycle repeats itself until it continues upwards until it reaches the earliest source. One method that can be considered to emphasize the connection between these generations is to conduct reverse tracing, namely starting from the highest *tabaqah*[9] as explained in the following discussion.

Transmission-Transformation; From Text (Hadith) to Implementation

The *muzâra'ah* contract, together with the values and practices associated with it, provides an important point of reference for examining the development of the *paron* tradition in Kajoran, Magelang, and its

[8] The average age of this generation is around 40 – 60 years.

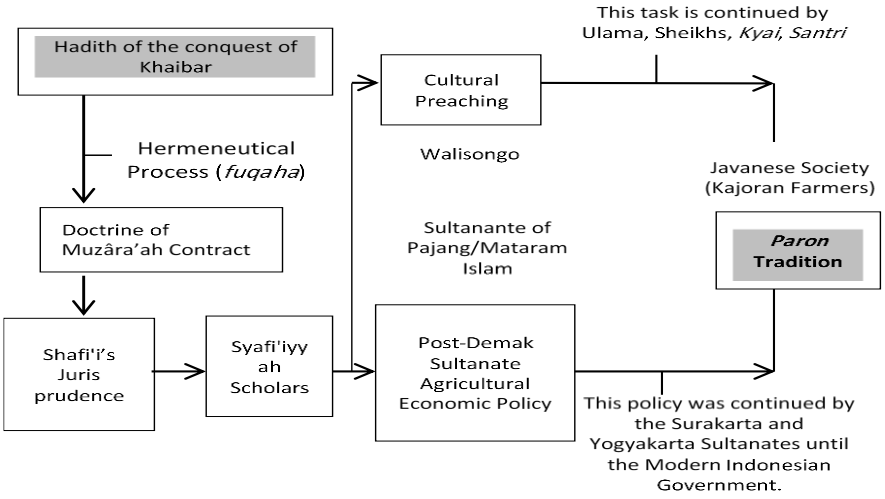
[9] The word *tabaqah* is actually a term from the study of hadith which can be understood as a generation of one era, such as the tabaqah of the companions which means the generation that was the same era as the Prophet Muhammad SAW including parents, adults and children.

surrounding areas. The relationship between these two practices may be explored through the historical processes of transmission, interaction, and transformation. In this regard, Java should not be viewed as an empty historical and cultural space in which Islamic agricultural jurisprudence was simply introduced and adopted. Rather, it was a dynamic social landscape shaped by pre-existing agrarian practices, cultural traditions, and successive encounters with different civilizations. As is common in other regions in the pre-Islamic Nusantara, Java became a stopover for various civilizations ranging from Ancient Java to Hindu-Buddhist civilization. The existence of this pre-Islamic Javanese civilization is what has the potential to be misunderstood as the root of the paron tradition, because if seen from the transmission path, this tradition is in the same geographical area and civilization, namely Java.

However, based on the results of Taqyuddin's research (Taqyuddin, 2017) dan PH Subroto (Subroto 1985), two researchers who have an interest in the agricultural civilization of the Ancient Javanese people, it can be concluded that the system and model of agricultural management cooperation between land owners and farmers working the land (as in the *paron* tradition) were not yet known to the Javanese agricultural civilization at that time. The agricultural management model of the Ancient Javanese people at that time was still based on ownership, meaning that the manager of the agricultural land was the owner of the land itself. If ownership is private, the land will be managed alone, if ownership is collective, agricultural management will be carried out collectively. For land owners who do not have time to manage their rice fields or farmers who do not have rice fields, these two parties can meet in a work contract between the owner and the rice field worker who has the status of a laborer. While the owner of the rice field has the status of an employer with the obligation to pay salaries to farmers who have managed the rice fields they own (Taqyuddin, 2017).

The historical context of Javanese agrarian society, together with the limitations in tracing the transmission of *paron* knowledge from contemporary practitioners, calls for a broader historical inquiry into the possible connections between Islamic agricultural jurisprudence and local agrarian practices. Such an inquiry may begin with the earliest textual foundation of the *muzâra'ah* contract, particularly the Prophetic hadith concerning agricultural cooperation, and proceed by examining the historical contexts through which Islamic legal knowledge may have circulated and interacted with Javanese agrarian society. Based on the available historical literature, two possible contexts deserve particular attention: (1) the spread of Islam through cultural preaching associated with religious scholars, including the Walisongo; and (2) the development of agrarian policies under the Pajang and Islamic Mataram Sultanates. These two contexts provide important historical settings for investigating the possible interaction between Islamic agricultural jurisprudence and local agricultural practices. Nevertheless, they should not be regarded as conclusive evidence of a direct transmission of the *muzâra'ah* contract into the *paron* tradition in Kajoran.

Figure 2. The Trajectory of Islamic Knowledge Transmission in the Context of the Paron Tradition



The first path of knowledge transmission, based on the scheme in Figure 2 above, occurs through Islamic teaching (*da'wah*) which is carried out culturally.[10] This cultural da'wah has actually been carried out since the first contact between Islam and Javanese civilization and society around the seventh century until the period before the fifteenth century, but this da'wah only had a significant impact after the systematization of the da'wah method was carried out in the era of the Walisongo with the political support of the Demak Sultanate around the middle of the fifteenth century (SUnyoto, 2012). Along with the Islamization project that began to target the interior, an area where the majority of the population worked as farmers, the media for cultural preaching other than in the fields of art and tradition that were utilized by Walisongo were the economic sector, especially the agricultural sector. It was recorded that several religious figures preached through this sector, including Susuhunan (Sunan) Majagung (Sunyoto 2012; 160), Sunan Kalijaga (Sudjak, 2017) and his student, Kyai Makukuhan, a cleric who specifically utilized the agricultural sector as a medium for Islamic preaching in the Kedu area of Central Java (Smolo & Musa, 2020). In particular, Islamic preaching through the agrarian economic sector brought by Sunan Kalijaga was sequentially passed on to one of his students, namely Ki Ageng Selo, continued by his students, namely Ki Ageng Pemanahan and Ki Mandaraka or Ki Juru Martani (son and student of Ki Ageng Selo), until finally it became the agrarian-based political economic policy of the Islamic Mataram Sultanate (Sudjak, 2017).

Within this historical context, Islamic teaching and scholarly activities in Java may have provided important channels through which knowledge of agricultural cooperation was introduced, discussed, and potentially incorporated into local agrarian practices. Such processes may have taken place through both formal and informal modes of religious instruction. The informal mode, for instance, can be seen in the activities attributed to Kyai Makukuhan and other religious scholars, who reportedly engaged directly in agricultural activities as part of their Islamic preaching. By becoming involved in farming and cultivating agricultural land themselves, these

[10] Loosely speaking, the cultural preaching carried out by the Walisongo is the process of spreading Islamic teachings through an approach to the culture, traditions and arts of Javanese society.

scholars sought to convey Islamic teachings through practical engagement with the everyday economic activities of the community, including work in rice fields and dry agricultural fields. While what is meant formally is the transmission of knowledge carried out through the Islamic teaching system or a process involving interaction between teachers and students. Around the 16th century to the 19th century (or even starting before the 15th century) it is mentioned that this Islamic teaching process was usually carried out in mosques, in palaces or even in certain places that were considered sacred such as hermitages, and this process was carried out in a structured and systematic manner (Van Bruinesen, 2015).

This process of teaching Islam was then continued in a relay through the pesantren institution, which was marked by the establishment of the Karang 'Pesantren' around Mount Karang Pandeglang Banten, an orthodox Islamic educational institution mentioned in the *Serat Centhini*, until the existence of this institution began to be established massively in the centuries that followed (Van Bruinesen, 2015). Based on Bruinesen's research, through these Islamic study forums various orthodox Islamic sciences were taught to the public, starting from interpretation, hadith, tauhid, sharia (especially fiqh) and tasawuf-tarekat. Related to the teaching of fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) which contains themes and discussions that specifically study the concept of *muzâra'ah*, in this period a fiqh book manuscript was found from Java which was brought to Europe around 1600. It is stated that in addition to the anonymous fiqh book manuscript entitled *al-Îdhâh fî al-Fiqh*, another fiqh book manuscript was also found in the form of an Arabic script with a Javanese translation per line, namely the book *at-Taqrîb fi al-Fiqh by Abu Suja'*, a fiqh book which to this day is still studied in many Islamic boarding schools in Java (Van Bruinesen, 2015). The discovery of these two fiqh manuscripts automatically confirms that the study of *muzâra'ah* has become a familiar study theme for the general public of Javanesse.

In contrast to the first phase, the second phase of knowledge transmission surrounding the *paron* tradition coincided with a significant political transition in Java, marked by the transfer of political power from the Demak Sultanate to the Pajang Sultanate, and subsequently culminating in the consolidation of Islamic Mataram under the reign of Sultan Agung.The shift in political power from the Demak Sultanate which was located in the coastal area along the north coast of Java shifted to Pajang which geographically included in the hinterland of Java not only changed the constellation in the political area, but also influenced the change in the economic orientation of the government. If the economic politics built by Demak were based on the maritime economy (Ridwan, 2021), So the political economic policy built by Pajang is an agrarian-based economy. This agrarian-based economic policy reached its peak during the Mataram Islamic Sultanate (Geertz, 1982) the era of Sultan Agung's reign, even continuing into the reign of the sultanates after him, namely the Surakarta Sultanate and the Yogyakarta Sultanate. Descriptively, Geertz describes the existence of agrarian traditions as a support and identity of Javanese culture:

> *The intensive and highly productive rice cultivation method has laid the main economic foundations of its culture since its recorded history, and its national archetype is not the restless, aggressive and extroverted sheikh, who manages his wealth, cultivates his reputation and waits for profitable opportunities, but the established, hardworking and introverted ploughman who for twenty years tends his fields, gets along with his neighbors and produces food for his superiors. Therefore, if Morocco is built on courage, Indonesia (Java) is built on the tradition of perseverance, namely agriculture.*

As an outsider, Geertz's strong impression of the Islamic pattern of Javanese society which is based on the agricultural tradition as mentioned above, is none other than an affirmation that agriculture for Javanese society

is not only a means of livelihood. Moreover, agriculture has become one with the philosophy of life of the Javanese people in the hinterland, even in certain doses agriculture is used as the basis for designing the ideology of a country. The ideology referred to here is depicted in the perspective of Sultan Agung as the king of Mataram at that time regarding the concept of farmer-knights. According to him, a feudalistic agrarian society is seen as more capable of producing tough knights compared to a society that relies on a trading economic system because it is very mercantile. Unlike coastal communities that are programmed *tuno sanak waton bathi sathak* (it doesn't matter if you lose a sibling, what's important is getting material benefits), the Javanese people in the hinterland have the opposite philosophy where brotherhood must be prioritized compared to material benefits. Therefore, the regents in coastal areas who also work as traders must be conquered because they are considered to have been carried away by a selfish-hedonistic lifestyle, typical of the lifestyle of coastal traders (Sudjak, 2017).

Along this second trajectory, evidence of the transmission of knowledge concerning the *muzâra'ah* contract, as well as its historical connection with the *paron* tradition, can be traced in Javanese documents issued in the form of laws and regulations by both the Surakarta Sunanate (*Kasunanan*) and the Yogyakarta Sultanate. These regulations are mainly related to agrarian issues, such as an agrarian regulation stated in document number 14a which contains regulations for the priyayi who are given *lungguh* (*patuh*) known as *Pranatan Patuh*. In this regulation document, several amounts are clearly stated regarding the division of the harvest, either by *maro* (from the word *separo-paron* which means half) or *mertelu* (from the word *pertelu* which means one third). The following is a complete excerpt (Margana, 2010):

> *The rights of the priyayi are to ask for separo (half) or seprotelu (one third) of what is usually planted on the land. If the crops are divided using the maro method (division for both parties, each half or 50:50), then half is handed over. If the merteleu method is used (division of one third for the owner and two thirds for the cultivator), then one third is handed over.*

Similar clues also occurred in one of the areas of the Kasunanan Surakarta government, namely the Mangkunegaran Palace government under King Mangkunegoro IV. Not much different from the contents of the documents found in the Yogyakarta Sultanate government regarding the rules or order, one of which was about the distribution of harvests between the *priyayi* and the farmers who worked on them, what happened in the Mangkunegaran area was also related to Mangkunegoro IV's strategy and policies regarding plantations. Against the backdrop of the economic crisis of the *priyayi* in the Mangkunegaran Palace environment, one of the causes of which was mismanagement mixed with the consequences of renting out *lungguh* land, King Mangkunegoro IV made a policy related to improving the management mechanism of plantations which during the colonial period were rented by Europeans for their business interests in Europe. In this regard, King Mangkunegoro IV took the initiative to restore the status of the *lungguh* land as before, namely not with a full rental system but managed with a system of sharing agricultural products as in the previous policy so that the *priyayi* as owners still had power over the management of the *lungguh* land, besides also getting the right to greater profits than renting it out as had been done by European businessmen (Daryono, 2007). Although this proposal was rejected by the Governor of VOC, the efforts to change the policy made by King Mangkunegoro IV were proof that the concept of the *paron* had become the general policy of the kingdom at that time before finally being replaced by land lease contracts made by European businessmen for their trade interests.

The two trajectories of knowledge transmission concerning the *muzâra'ah* contract, and their historical connections with the *paron* tradition, can also be traced in the Kajoran area of Magelang, namely: (1) In the form

of an Islamic teaching landscape, where in this area there are dozens of Islamic boarding schools (*Pesantren*) which in terms of scientific genealogy are a continuation of the Islamic boarding schools that existed earlier, proven by the existence of the *tûrâth* studied in the Islamic boarding school institution which is not much different from the orthodox Islamic curriculum that was taught by previous scholars during the process of Islamization of Java, and (2) In the form of an agrarian landscape as evidence of the economic policy of the sultanate government at that time which focused on the agricultural sector. In addition, in this area there are several historical sites in the form of tombs and hermitages of figures affiliated with the Demak, Mataram, and Yogyakarta Sultanates. Some that can be mentioned are the tomb of Panembahan Romo or also known as Sunan Kajoran (a scholar-noble figure during the Mataram Sultanate era who was involved in a conflict with Amangkurat II), the tomb of Kyai Abu Dardak (cleric-noble from the Yogyakarta Sultanate), and also the tomb of Lokajaya (a figure who based on oral tradition came from the Demak Sultanate). The Kajoran area and its surroundings as an area where the *paron* practice is still a tradition along with the existence of these historical sites have confirmed that the existence of Kajoran and its surroundings with the *paron* tradition in it has a common thread with the concept and practice of *muzâra'ah* which was initiated after the conquest of Khaibar through a series of knowledge transmission-transformation processes.

Conclusion

The most fundamental things tha can be concluded from the lengthly discussion in thie research is the perspective of a tradition and how to place it in the context of its relationship with Islam. There are at least three important things that must be included in any discussion of a tradition (especially the Javanese Islamic tradition), namely:

First, a tradition in society that is then continuosly preserved by the next generation is not a random and unintentional act, on the contrary it is a deliberate effort (by design) resulting from interpretation of sacred text and dialectic of the structure and social system that surrounds it. There are *ulama* or *syeikh* that always carry out of supervision over the practice of this tradition in each generation who accept and emulate it before passing it to the next generation.

Second, tradition is an intentional act (by design) that is systemic and structured, so of course its origins can be traced. On the other hand, Islam as religion with a discursive-based teaching model means the cource of tradition is none other than sacred text. However (as in the first point) considering that tradition is nothing more than respons (reception) to a teaching in Islam, there is often a gap between traditional forms and rituals and the sounds contained in sacred text. This is the task of the *ulama* or *syeikh* who act as supervisors in each generation where the tradition lives in society to ensure that the tradition where they live in is still anchored in the sacred text.

Third, the result of tracking the tradition of agricultural cooperation in Kajoran Magelang (and its surrounding) are expected to be able to used an alternative solution to the deadlock in the relationship between tradition and sacred text that has been estabilshed giving rise a polemic among Muslim, especially in positioning traditions when confronted with Islam (text). Various cornering questions that end in accusations, such as whether a tradition (Islamic Javanese) is still part of Islamic teachings or whether it has left the larger framework of Islamic teachings becouse of accusations of *bid'ah, khurâfat, tahayyul* and even accusation of syirk, should no longer be relevant to continue to be brought up becouse academic theories and scientific methods are available as a means to trace the connection between Islam and this tradition (Islamic Javanese).

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