

## Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito's Shadow Puppet Art in Forming Islamic Cultural Identity in Banyumas, Central Java: Holistic-Integrative Fiqh Perspective

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### Abstract

The study on integrating shadow puppet art in the Islamic cultural landscape in Banyumas, Central Java, Indonesia, highlights the role of Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito in cultural preservation and religious education. This article aims to analyze how Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito shaped Islamic culture through *wayang* art based on holistic, integrative jurisprudence. The method used in this paper is a literature study with a qualitative approach, which involves looking for written documents from books, articles, and other written documents that support the topic of discussion. The results showed that Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito shapes Islamic cultural identity through meticulous puppet performances to convey Islamic teachings. The flexibility of puppets' performances in incorporating Islamic values without losing their traditional essence reflects a successful model of cultural integration. It enriches the local cultural landscape and becomes a means of religious education, promoting the understanding and practice of Islam. Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito's dedication to preserving shadow puppet art with Islamic teachings significantly contributed to Banyumas' Islamic cultural identity. Integrating Islamic values into shadow puppet art reflects the dynamic nature of cultural heritage and its potential as a medium for religious and cultural education.

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*Studi tentang pengintegrasian seni wayang dalam lanskap budaya Islam di Banyumas, Jawa Tengah, Indonesia, menyoroti peran Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito dalam pelestarian budaya dan pendidikan agama. Tulisan ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis bagaimana Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito membentuk budaya Islam melalui seni wayang berdasarkan fikih yang holistik dan integratif. Metode yang digunakan dalam tulisan ini adalah studi literatur dengan pendekatan kualitatif, yaitu dengan mencari dokumen-dokumen tertulis baik dari buku, artikel, maupun dokumen tertulis lainnya yang mendukung topik pembahasan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito membentuk identitas budaya Islam melalui pertunjukan wayang yang cermat dalam menyampaikan ajaran-ajaran Islam. Fleksibilitas pertunjukan wayang dalam memasukkan nilai-nilai Islam tanpa kehilangan esensi tradisionalnya mencerminkan model integrasi budaya yang sukses. Hal ini memperkaya lanskap budaya lokal dan menjadi sarana pendidikan agama, mempromosikan pemahaman dan pengamalan Islam. Dedikasi Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito dalam melestarikan seni wayang kulit dengan ajaran Islam secara signifikan memberikan kontribusi terhadap identitas budaya Islam Banyumas. Pengintegrasian nilai-nilai Islam ke dalam seni wayang kulit mencerminkan sifat dinamis warisan budaya dan potensinya sebagai media pendidikan agama dan budaya.*

**Keywords:** contestation; holistic-integrative fiqh; Islamic identity; shadow puppet art

## Introduction

Shadow puppet art, a cultural heritage deeply embedded in Indonesian identity, has existed for hundreds of years and continues to evolve today (Dinihari & Wiyanti, 2022). Beyond its role as a cultural treasure, puppetry plays a significant role in shaping Islamic identity by instilling Islamic values through the stories and characters presented in performances (Sumawinata et al., 2022). This art form is crucial in maintaining religious traditions, often featured in *selamatan* events, which serve as communal expressions of gratitude or prayer for various needs such as safety, blessings, or success. Additionally, shadow puppets are utilized in *ruwatan* ceremonies, rituals designed to cleanse individuals of misfortune. The function of shadow puppet art in these contexts preserve religious traditions and serves as a tool for proselytizing Islam, thereby strengthening the connection between puppetry and Islamic practices (Güleç, 2024; Vindalia et al., 2022).

*Fiqh*, as part of Islamic law, also reflects the essence of Islamic religious teachings. In its etymological meaning, *Fiqh* is explained as an in-depth

understanding. Still, in its terminological context, *Fiqh* is a science that explains Sharia regulations related to the actions of individuals with religious responsibilities, derived from the details of its postulates (Ihasan, 2021; Nasikhah & Jamaluddin, 2021).

Islam's identity in shadow puppet art emerged due to intervention from Sunan Kalijaga (Orenstein & Cusack, 2023; Rojikin, 2022). This article discusses Islamic identity in shadow puppet art, which gives rise to the teachings of *Fiqh*; one of them is the *Fiqh* of worship. It makes the teachings of jurisprudence holistic and integrative. Integrative Holistic *Fiqh* puts forward an inclusive understanding of Islam that embraces diversity and respects different interpretations within its framework (Azami, 2022; Yunita, 2020). It encourages dialogue and collaboration between scholars from various disciplines to develop a more holistic understanding of Islamic law. The article explains the role of shadow puppet art as an Islamic identity in holistic jurisprudence. Islamic identity itself is formed from the existence of puppet performances.

One of the *dhalang* (a person who controls the shadow puppet) that can be considered to be successful because of his academic intelligence, so he succeeded in combining the excellence of *Banyumasan gagrag* styles into his style that is different from the general, namely Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito (Mudiby, 2020). It can be viewed from this that Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito has succeeded in integrating several other *dhalangs*, because usually, Banyumasan *dhalang* only adheres to one style; it is necessary to study more deeply the *dhalang* figure of Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito (Arifah et al., 2024). This article discusses how Ki Ratmiko Siswo shaped Islamic culture through wayang art based on the holistic and integrative *Fiqh*.

Various articles have widely discussed the study of shadow puppet art in shaping Islamic culture. Masykur and Soleh (2023) explore the perspective of *fiqh* and the spirituality of shadow puppet art, while Anggoro (2018) examines the history of the development of shadow puppet art in Java as a medium for *da'wah*. Andini et al. (2021) outlines the values of Islamic education in shadow puppet art, and Prasojo and Arifin (2022) examine the transformation of Islamic values in the characters of the Pandawa Lima

puppets. The main difference between these writings and this article lies in the focus of the problem. This article highlights how the art of shadow puppets through the character of Dhalang Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito shapes Islamic cultural identity in Banyumas holistically and integratively from a fiqh perspective. This holistic-integrative approach combines aspects of local culture with fiqh principles in shaping a unique Islamic cultural identity in Banyumas, in contrast to previous studies that focused more on historical aspects, da'wah, or educational values in general without examining in depth the specific role of a *dhalang* in the context of local culture and religion.

The method used in this paper is a literature review, which investigates written documents from books, articles, and other written documents supporting the discussion topic. After the written documents were collected, an analysis based on the content was carried out. Then, the conclusions were drawn. Some of the theories that the author uses as an analysis to reveal this phenomenon made it easier to study the topic of discussion.

### Shadow Puppet Art

Art is a cultural component that communicates and reflects people's feelings and reactions to environmental changes (Nurcahyo & Yulianto, 2021). *Wayang* is a puppet imitation of a person made from carved leather or wood and so on, which can be used to play characters in traditional drama performances (Balinese, Javanese, Sundanese, etc.), usually played by a person called a *dalang* (puppeteer) (KBBI, n.d.).

Shadow puppet art, or traditional shadow puppetry, is a classic art form that has captivated Southeast Asian audiences for centuries. Originating from Indonesia, the ancient theater tradition combines story, music, and intricate craftsmanship to create a mesmerizing experience. According to Ki Hadi Sutoyo 2021, the current puppet is a modification of the Hindu puppet that previously existed in Bali, which was developed by the "*Wali*" (Islamic saints), one of whom was Sunan Kalijaga, for the benefit of spreading the teachings of the Islamic religion by, including elements of da'wah by religious guidance currently (Nurcahyo & Yulianto, 2021).

### History of Puppets in Islam

In the 10th century, Jayabaya, the King of the Mamenang Kingdom or Kediri started the art of wayang to remove the impression of ancestral spirits engraved on palm leaves. In early Javanese culture, the art of wayang was closely associated with the worship of ancestral spirits, where images or stories of wayang were carved on palm leaves to honor and remember ancestors. Jayabaya attempted to change people's view of wayang art, which was originally considered a representation of ancestral spirits. This wayang image comes from a relief of the Ramayana story found at Penataran Temple in Blitar, which was of great interest to Jayabaya as he was a devout worshipper of Bhattara (Lord) Vishnu. Jayabaya was even considered an incarnation of Bhattara Vishnu by his people. The first character depicted in wayang art was Bhattara Guru or *Sang Hyang Jagadnata*, who later changed into Bhattara Vishnu until the 11th century AD (Tanudjaja, 2022).

Indonesian poets translated the Mahabharata and Ramayana into Old Javanese and changed and edited the stories by adding philosophy from Old Javanese culture. Many believe puppets originate from the acculturation of Javanese and Hindu culture, with many adaptations and influences of Hindu teachings from both regions (Liasari & Badrun, 2022). Throughout its history, puppets have developed into a performing art with many fans in Indonesian society, including elite and small societies (Warsini, 2022).

The history of puppets in Islam started in the 16th century when Islam began to enter the archipelago. In the beginning, the puppet was used by *Wali* (saints or clerics) to spread the teachings of Islam to the public. They use stories in puppet to teach the broader community about Islamic moral and ethical values. In puppet performances, the Mahabharata puppet characters are often depicted as symbols of goodness and Islam (Anggoro, 2018). This puppet show aims to educate the public about the stories found in the Holy Qur'an and teach religious values more easily. *Walisono* introduced Shadow puppet art to Indonesian society as a medium for spreading religious knowledge. During the Islamic era, the Islamic kingdom, the first kingdom to appear on the island of Sumatra, brought a new color to

the progress of Indonesian art. The art of Shadow Puppetry is one of *Walisongo's* ways of converting Javanese people to Islam (Syahputra, 2019).

One of the famous figures in Java who spread Islamic da'wah is Sunan Kalijaga, a member of *Walisongo*. Sunan Kalijaga changed puppet performances to conform to Islamic principles and teachings. He also changed the songs into *tembang* (classical Javanese songs) containing Islamic messages, which were sung by the puppeteers (Koesoemadinata, 2013; Nafisah et al., 2021; Setyaningsih, 2020)

“Before Islam, in Indonesia, the Javanese people were of the Kapitayan religion. Then, sometime later, Islam arrived in the archipelago. Sunan Kalijaga's presence through *gedang* and *tembang* with Sunan Bonang spread the message of Islam in the archipelago, especially in Java” (interview with Ki Ratmiko as the mastermind of the city of Banyumas).

Walisongo changed the Hindu-Buddhist puppet in such a way that it did not conflict with Islamic law. This modification was made to eliminate polytheism from the old teachings (Wardoyo, 2021)

“At that time, there was a debate because the form of the puppet still had Hindu Buddhist carvings, such as depicting the human form. It violated Islamic law; therefore, Sunan Kalijaga *nyoret* was made to tilt his face so that it did not resemble the shape of the human face, which was termed the *sinunging karipto condong sarwodipun anggik* which means that the puppet image is shaped at an angle” (interview with Ki Ratmiko as the puppeteer of Banyumas city)

### **Shadow Puppet Art as Islamic Identity Integrative Holistic *Fiqh* Study**

Islamic identity within a holistic jurisprudence framework, which involves religious, social, and cultural aspects, is essential to understanding Islam (Dunne et al., 2020). Holistic jurisprudence teaches that Islamic identity is not only limited to religious aspects but also includes social and cultural aspects (Hudayana, 2022). In a religious context, Islamic identity means carrying out religious teachings with full awareness and obedience. It involves the performance of acts of worship such as prayer, fasting, zakat, and pilgrimage. This identity also includes correctly understanding religious teachings (Jamaludin & Rahayu, 2023). However, Islamic identity is also closely related to cultural aspects. Islam has significantly influenced the

development of the Muslim world of fine arts, architecture, literature, and music. This identity reflects the rich culture of Muslims and the aesthetic values they uphold (Rahman et al., 2021).

The art of puppets is a cultural heritage deeply embedded in Indonesian identity. This art has existed for hundreds of years and continues to develop today. However, not only as a cultural heritage, shadow puppet art also has an essential role in shaping Islamic identity in society; in this case, it is also related to holistic, integrative jurisprudence studies. The presentation of Islamic identity in puppets can be seen by studying the jurisprudence of worship, namely the creed, prayer, fasting, and *hajj* (Yunita, 2020).

In a preamble to a puppet performance in Banyumas Regency, before starting the performance, the puppeteers, whose orientation was Mbah Gino Suwardi, said the phrase:

*“Purwaning cariyos cawewaton kandha buda purwaka. Kanda marang caritane, budha marang asala, purwaka marang kawitane. Mila samangke wonten perang budi, budi kang asale saka buda, buda wus paripurna ginanti gambar kang rineka jalma. Wayang kawinipun ringgit, tegese karipta miring sarana dipun, anggitapun sinten njeng sunan, kalebet kanjeng sunan kalijaga. Wayang wewayanganing agesang sarta gegambaraning pakarti menungsa, awon saha sae. Pakarti Awon bade pikantuk paukuman lumebet naraka jahanam, pakarti sae bade pikantuk nugraha ganjaran sekeca lumebet swarga tundha sanga”* which can be translated in English as follows: “The beginning of this story is that everything starts from the origin. It tells the story, the origin. So now there is a moral (budi) war, budi that comes from buda, buda is finished and replaced by various human images. Shadow puppet art is actually, meaning it is made obliquely with the means made by the Sunan, including Sunan Kalijaga. Shadow puppet art is a shadow of life and a picture of human deeds, both good and bad. Bad deeds will be punished by going to hell, while good deeds will be rewarded with beautiful favors, namely going to the ninth heaven” (interview with Ki Ratmiko as the mastermind of the city of Banyumas). With the pronunciation of the words, by Sunan Kalijaga, the puppets are given an Islamic identity.

According to an interview with a Banyumas resident, he claimed to have watched shadow puppet art shows, but according to him, nowadays, it is rare to find shadow puppet shows as a means of *da'wah*. Usually, *wayang* (shadow puppetry) only tells stories of life, not about Islam. Even if *wayang*

has an Islamic identity, it is because of the intervention of Sunan Kalijaga in the past.

### **Islamic Identity**

Islamic identity is a concept that includes the beliefs, values, and practices of Muslims (Salim, 2020). It is a fundamental aspect of their lives and shapes their worldview. Islamic identity is rooted in the teachings of the Koran and the example set by the Prophet Muhammad. Monotheism is a critical aspect of Islamic identity (al-Khayyat & Abu Amrieh, 2023). Muslims believe in one God, Allah, who is all-powerful and merciful. This belief forms the basis of their faith and influences every aspect of their lives. Muslims also adhere to the five pillars of Islam: *Shahada* (faith), *Ṣalah* (prayer), *Zakat* (almsgiving), *Ṣaum* (Ramadan fasting), and *Hajj* (pilgrimage to Mecca). These pillars guide Muslims to be pious (Khan, 2021).

Religious identity is an individual's right to choose a particular belief so that religious identity is unique to that person and cannot be forced on anyone. Religious identity helps establish status anywhere. By changing the moral values of piety into "Islamic symbols," the value structure of Islamic studies adopted by the millennial Muslim generation can help construct identity (Zahara et al., 2020).

### **Holistic-Integrative *Fiqh***

Integrative Holistic *Fiqh* is a concept that combines the principles of Islamic jurisprudence (*Fiqh*) with a holistic and integrative approach. It emphasizes the interconnectedness of various aspects of life, including religious, social, economic, and environmental dimensions. Holistic-integrative Islamic scholarship in the era of postmodernism is interesting. All postmodernist thinkers are trying to realize holistic and integrative Islamic education, as well as ending the distance between general science and religion. It results from postmodern researchers forming Islamic science (Yaqin et al., 2023).



### **Contestation**

Contestation is a dialogical atmosphere between two parties, groups, or more, which contains elements of controversy, debate, or even competition (Hafidhuddin, 2021). It is characterized by one party giving a backlash against the other party (Deitelhoff, 2020). The birth of contestation cannot be separated from the existence of debates about thoughts and actions that are often contradictory (Saprillah et al., 2020). Contestation can occur in three areas or arenas: individual narratives, public and state, and theoretical contestation (Ikhwan et al., 2019). In a theory of contestation, Bordieu analyzes it in two central units of analysis, arena and capital symbolism, framed in the big concept of habitus (Lutfi, 2019). Contestation can occur in three forms: First, light contestation, which shows two or more parties with different opinions but can accept and complement each other. Second, open contestation differentiates one law from another. Third, contestation seeks to influence the contestants (Pabbajah et al., 2021).

Meanwhile, religious contestation cannot be avoided in various existing religious groups with multiple themes (Pabbajah et al., 2021). For example, there are themes about religious freedom, gender justice, and sexual orientation (Tasrif, 2022), even about culture and religion (Abdurrahman, 2023). In the context of religious life, contestation can be understood as competition and conflict between religious groups to gain recognition, equality, and confirmation (legitimization) of identity, which can lead to two things, namely separation and segregation, also called integration and reconciliation (Saprillah et al., 2020). Religious contestation is a form of power relationship that brings together various parties between those who dominate and those who are subordinate. Positions of dominance and subordination are keywords for understanding contestation (Rosa et al., 2022). Religious contestation allows religion to show society that the teachings of its religious organization are the most correct (Umami & Wibowo, 2021).

## **Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito's Puppet Practice**

### **Shadow Puppet Making**

Making shadow puppets is the initial stage of Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito's Puppet performing arts practice. It involves choosing materials, such as thin buffalo leather, and manual carving to create the puppet characters. The puppeteer is often engaged in the process, adding an artistic dimension to each puppet that will become an essential part of the performance.

### **Story Selection**

Puppeteer Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito carefully selects the stories to be staged. Its selection is based on traditional Javanese epic stories and considers Islamic values that can be integrated into the story. The process involves in-depth research into classical Islamic books and dialogue with local religious figures to ensure accuracy and suitability to the context of local wisdom, such as *wayang golek* (rod puppets) in Aracawinangun Banyumas.

### **Puppeteer and Craftsman Training**

Exercise is a crucial part of puppet practice. Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito and his composers spent hours synchronizing the puppet movements with the story narrative. Rehearsals include sound, gamelan music, and dialogue to create an immersive and engaging performance experience. With It training, it is hoped that new ideas will emerge in the development of shadow puppet art, as was done by Mbah Carik in Kaliurang, Jogjakarta, by producing multi-level and conditional puppets where there is a combination of senior and junior puppeteers and taking local stories such as the story of Mount Merapi and the others.

### **Shadow Puppet Show**

Carito's performing arts practice. Its performance is usually held during religious events, commemorations of Islamic holidays, or local cultural festivals. Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito plays the puppeteer role, bringing the puppet characters to life and conveying moral messages and Islamic teachings through the dialogue and plays presented.

The steps for the Ki Ratmiko puppet show are as follows (see Table 1 - 3).

Table 1  
Rituals: Initial Stage of Shadow Puppet Arts

No.	Shadow Puppet Artist	Initial Ritual	Islamic Identity Information
1	Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito	Creed	read the shahadat when you want to watch a puppet
2	Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito	Ablution	a puppeteer performs ablution first before starting a performance

Table 2  
Use of the Five Pandawa Figures in Shadow Puppet Art

Shadow Puppet Artist	Shadow Puppet Art Figures	Islamic Identity	Islamic Identity Information
Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito	Puntadewa/ Yudhistira	<i>Kalimasada</i> Amulet	Symbolizes the Creed
	Bima/ Werkudara	<i>Aji Pancanaka</i> , Physical Strength	Symbolizes prayer
	Arjuna	Fasting a lot <i>Lelaning Jagad</i> : inner and physical clarity	Symbolizes symbolizes fasting
	Nakula and Sadewa	Hardworking, Neat, Generous, Clean inside and out	Symbolizes Zakat and Hajj

Table 3  
 Props in Puppet Performing Arts

No.	Shadow Puppet Props	Islamic Identity	Information
1	<i>Blencong</i> Javanese theatre lamp	<i>Gambaraken soroting utawa cahyaning rembulan lawan srengenge kang arsa madhangi jagad</i> (describes the comparison between moonlight and sunlight that illuminates the world)	The majesty and power of Allah, which can illuminate the universe
2	<i>Gedebog</i> banana frond	<i>Gambaraken bumi kang dipijak neng madya pada anugrah Gusti</i> (describes the earth being trodden in the midst of God's grace)	Describes the stage of life on earth as a gift from Allah.
3	Box-storage	<i>Gambaraken sukma sejati kang kondur marang kasih dan jati</i> (describes the true soul that returns to love and identity)	Describes the true spirit who will return home to Allah
4	White concubine	<i>Kelir putih iku nuduhake kesucian</i> (the color white indicates purity)	Symbolizes purity of heart

### Integration of Islamic Values

Puppet Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito's performing arts practice includes integrating Islamic values in every performance aspect. Dialogue between puppet characters is often filled with moral messages and religious advice. The harmony between Javanese epic stories and Islamic teachings is the focus of Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito's efforts to create educational and entertaining shows.

### Interaction with Audience

After the show, Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito often interacts with the audience. It involves a question-and-answer session or discussion about the

values conveyed in the performance. This interaction increases the audience's understanding and strengthens the relationship between the artist and the community.

### **Awards and Recognition**

Awards and recognition from the local and artist communities are integral to Puppet Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito's practice. This recognition is a form of appreciation for the performing arts and an effort to preserve Banyumas' local cultural heritage and Islamic identity.

The performing arts practice of Puppet Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito reflects seriousness and dedication to preserving the art of shadow puppetry while enriching local values with Islamic teachings. With a holistic and integrative approach, the practice forms a work of art that not only captivates the audience but also makes a positive contribution to shaping the identity of Islamic culture in Banyumas as in other Javanese traditions such as Janengan culture as a traditional Javanese Islamic art (Azizurahman & Santosa, 2022; Hernawan et al., 2020).

### **The Nature of Puppet**

Art expresses human creativity involving imagination, skill, and expertise to create something beautiful and meaningful. Art can include painting, sculpture, music, dance, theater, literature, and more. Art is one component of culture and human nature given by Allah with the values of goodness, truth, and beauty. Art is the most authentic expression of the human spirit. It can connect us with feelings and thoughts and help us understand the world. Art is an infinite wonder, and everyone has the potential to be an artist in their way.

Shadow puppet art is performing a story or drama using supporting media, namely an artificial puppet. Puppet comes from the word "*Ma Hyang*," which means spiritual spirit, God, or Almighty God. Shadow puppets are carved leather (*kulit* or *walulang*). The image is seen from the screen (Setiawan, 2020). Puppet, a form of traditional puppet theatre, has been an integral part of Indonesian culture for centuries and derived from the

Sanskrit word “*Wayang*,” meaning shadow or imagination; the art form combines stories, music, and elaborate puppets to captivate audiences. Puppetry is a form of entertainment and a medium for moral teaching and cultural preservation. Through their stories, puppets teach valuable life lessons about good versus evil, loyalty, courage, and compassion. It also displays Indonesian traditions, customs, and values. Puppet performances in Indonesia have a unique speaking style and are original works of Indonesian art. Because of this, UNESCO has listed it as a world heritage site (Wibawa, 2024).

According to KBBI, a puppet is a term that refers to figures or statues made from wood or other materials used to depict characters in traditional performances. The space in the puppet performance venue symbolizes the universe before God gave life. Puppet symbolizes humans and other creatures in another world; banana trees are depicted as the earth, and *blencong* or lamps are described as the sun, etc. In the same way, the audience is a representation of the spirits present in the puppet performance (Ali & Ismawati, 2021; Setiawan, 2020; Wardoyo, 2021; Whinarno & Arifin, 2019). There are several types of puppets throughout Indonesia, such as *wayang kulit*, *wayang golek*, *wayang wong*, and others.

1. *Wayang Kulit* (shadow puppets) is the most famous form of shadow puppet art. Shadow puppet performances involve screens made from thinly cut buffalo or goat skin. The puppet figures, also called “*kukut*,” are sculpted and painted by hand. Shadow puppet performances are accompanied by gamelan music and narration, which usually takes themes from the epic Ramayana or Mahabharata. Since the 1970s, shadow puppet shows in Indonesia have been broadcast on television. However, these shows could not be recorded before the advent of cheap recording devices (Priyanto, 2021).
2. *Wayang Golek* (*golek*/rod puppets) is a puppet made from wood. These dolls have movable hands and feet. *Wayang golek* performances involve freer dialogue and movement than *wayang kulit*. The stories told in *golek* puppets are often humorous and contain a moral message (Koesoemadinata, 2018; Putra, 2019).

3. *Wayang Wong* is a show that involves performances by human actors. Humans play characters from shadow puppets. The wayang wong players wear costumes depicting puppet characters and display beautiful dance movements (Herdiani et al., 2022; Kurniyawan & Utina, 2019; Ruastiti et al., 2020; Sudirga et al., 2021). The show often takes its theme from the epic Ramayana or Mahabharata (Herdiani et al., 2022; Sedana & Foley, 2020).

### **Puppet Character Stories**

In puppet performances, stories often take themes such as the Ramayana and Mahabharata (Andini et al., 2021; Wijaya, 2019). Islamic values can be conveyed to the audience excitingly and easily. Apart from that, the characters in puppet performances also often depict noble qualities such as loyalty, honesty, and steadfastness of faith, which are part of the teachings of the Islamic religion (Andini et al., 2021; Nurlensi, 2019).

Sunan Kalijaga used the Five Pandawa figures to attract the audience's attention and spread Islamic teachings to the people of that time (Mibradin & Masfiah, 2023). How the characters from the Five Pandavas live their religious lives in the Mahabharata story, a cultural heritage passed down from generation to generation, is described as a teaching of the Islamic religion that is relevant today.

The meaning of the story of the five Pandawa figures as a guide to the pillars of Islam is as follows:

#### **Puntadewa**

Puntadewa (Yudhistira), the first child of the Pandavas, symbolizes the first pillar of Islam, which requires Muslims to recite two sentences of the *shahada*. Puntadewa carried an heirloom weapon called the Kalimasada Amulet, on which the words of the *shahada* were written. The Kalimasada amulet can keep enemies at bay and maintain the stability of the Pandava Kingdom (Margiyono & Wardani, 2022). *Kalimasada* comes from two words, namely *kalima*, and *husada*, which refer to “*jajampi warni gangsal*” or five types of medicine or steps that must be taken to achieve peace and

security, both physically and spiritually, both in this world and the afterlife. It is also known as *Kawilujengan*.

*Kawilujengan*, the pinnacle of harmony, encompasses various essential aspects. These include purity, emphasizing loyalty and honesty; peace, which is intricately linked with justice and responsibility; truth, incorporating elements of humility, compassion, and patience; intelligence, requiring extensive knowledge or expertise; and decency, which upholds the principles of good manners and etiquette. Together, these facets form a comprehensive framework for achieving a harmonious existence, emphasizing integrity, justice, compassion, wisdom, and civility in all aspects of life.

*Kalimasada*, comprised of “ka,” denoting the letter, “lima,” signifying the number 5, and “sada,” representing various elements like sticks, coconut leaf bones, or *enau*, embodies a profound ethos. Its essence encapsulates five fundamental principles. *Kadonyan* pertains to worldly existence, urging restraint from excessive attachment to mundane matters with the warning, “*Aja ngaya came donya*” (do not be overly absorbed in worldly affairs). *Kakewanan* invokes the essence of animals, cautioning against behavior akin to theirs with the admonishment “*Aja tumindak kaya dene kewan*” (do not behave like animals). *Karobanan* advocates resisting the sway of carnal desires, while *Kasatanan* underscores the importance of shunning inappropriate conduct such as arrogance, ostentation, or deceit. Finally, *Katuhanan* imparts the wisdom of comprehending the incomprehensible nature of God, emphasizing that while divine form eludes imagination, contemplation of divine creation is paramount with the maxim “*Gusti Allah tan kena kinaya ngapa nanging ana*” (God cannot be described but exists). As expounded by Nugroho (2019) and Margiyono & Wardani (2022), these teachings collectively guide individuals toward a balanced and spiritually enlightened existence.

### **Bima or Werkudara**

The Bima or Werkudara figure symbolizes the second pillar of Islam, emphasizing the importance of praying as part of Islamic teachings. Bima is depicted as a puppet character who is strong, brave, and famous for his



physical strength. It is similar to prayer, which must be performed despite obstacles. Prayer is considered a pillar of the Muslim religion, and if someone does not pray, their faith will collapse. It is by the nature and physical description of Bima. Bima has five powers: Aji Pancanaka. It refers to the five daily prayers (Masykur & Soleh, 2023; Umar, 2020).

### **Arjuna or Janaka**

The puppet character Arjuna represents fasting, the third pillar of Islam. Arjuna is called *lelananging jagad*, which means the chosen man. Arjuna likes asceticism (discipleship), and his face and body radiate clarity. Arjuna has gentle and loving feelings. People who like fasting, when facing difficulties, have their souls become strong. With his handsome face and steadfast spirit, Arjuna is considered a representation of Bhattara Indra. Arjuna is described as a person who diligently observes fasting and has peace of mind when facing life's challenges and difficulties (Prasojo & Arifin, 2022; Riyadi & Mulyana, 2022).

### **Nakula and Sadewa**

Zakat and hajj, Islam's 4th and 5th pillars, are depicted by Pandawa figures in puppets. A person who works diligently will obtain material wealth that will enable him to perform the hajj, at least rationally. This person also realizes the importance of cleaning up property so that it is clean physically and mentally and fulfills his obligation to give zakat to those entitled to receive it. Nakula always looks good, always dresses neatly, and is known as a generous person. He is described as generous because he gives alms and performs the hajj because he has enough money (Sunardi, 2020a, 2020b).

## **Discussion**

Puppet performance art in Indonesia significantly conveys the message of da'wah and Islamic values (Ahmad et al., 2020). Characters such as Bima, Arjuna, Nakula, and Sadewa in shadow puppets are interpreted to represent the pillars of Islam, such as prayer, fasting, zakat, and *hajj*, illustrating how spiritual values and Islamic teachings are conveyed through this traditional

art (Hidayatullah, 2019). Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito combined the excellence of Banyumasan *gagrag* styles into his style that is different from the general. It can be said from this that Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito succeeded in integrating several other *dhalangs*, because usually Banyumasan *dhalang* only adheres to one style. Therefore, this paper highlights how Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito in Banyumas uses puppets to shape Islamic cultural identity through holistic integrative Jurisprudence (Mudiby, 2020). The history of *wayang* influenced by Hindu and Islamic culture and well's role of Walisongo in spreading Islam has integrated Islamic identity into puppet performances, making it an effective means for religious education and preservation of cultural heritage (Imam & Sunardi, 2018). Thus, puppets are entertainment and a powerful instrument for spreading Islamic teachings and enriching Indonesian culture.

Puppet performance art can effectively form Islamic cultural identity in Banyumas (Adiarti, 2019). The work of Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito shows how Islamic values and the message of da'wah are conveyed subtly but powerfully through puppet stories and characters, integrating the teachings of Jurisprudence holistically and integratively (Fatkhurrohman & Khotimah, 2023). For example, moral messages about kindness, honesty, and justice are conveyed through the inspiring journey of puppet characters. There is an urgency to preserve the local cultural heritage while adapting and spreading the teachings of Islam (Setiawan, 2020). It shows that art and religion can go hand in hand, enriching each other. It underscores the power of art in education and identity formation and the importance of understanding and appreciating local traditions in globalization and modernization (Andini et al., 2021). In conclusion, performing arts have a significant role in maintaining and spreading societal, cultural, and religious values.

Shadow puppet art can be an effective traditional medium to shape Islamic cultural identity in Banyumas (Dzikriyah & Fauji, 2022). The concept of "enculturation" explains the integration of Islamic values into local culture through puppets (Sumiati, 2020). Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito adopts Islamic teachings into the Javanese cultural context through his artwork, showing that *da'wah* can be conveyed through media that the

community accepts. The holistic-integrative approach in Jurisprudence applied by Ki Ratmiko shows that religion and culture can integrate and enrich each other (Anshori, 2020). Intercultural communication theory emphasizes the importance of cultural adaptation and integration in the spread of religious teachings (Braslauskas, 2021; R'boul, 2022) through Ki Ratmiko's approach to conveying the message of Islam through puppets art in Banyumas.

This paper offers a unique and in-depth perspective on the role of puppets performing arts in forming Islamic cultural identity in Banyumas, distinguishing it from previous studies. Focusing on the work of Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito, this paper explores how Islamic values are integrated into shadow puppet art through a holistic and integrative Jurisprudence approach, not only as a medium of da'wah but also as a means of preserving local cultural heritage. For example, puppet shows can alter traditional stories to reflect deep Islamic values, such as justice, patience, and sincerity. Unlike previous studies that emphasized shadow puppet art's historical or aesthetic aspects, this paper highlights how shadow puppet art can be an effective tool in conveying moral messages and Islamic teachings as well as forming a distinctive cultural identity in Banyumas. It shows the evolution in the understanding and application of shadow puppet art from mere entertainment to a value-rich medium of religious and social education, supporting the harmonious integration between Islam and local culture.

Cross-sectoral collaboration between Islamic preachers, the government, shadow puppeteers, Javanese cultural activists, teachers, and the community can enrich the puppet's performance arts' potential to convey Islamic messages and strengthen cultural identity. The government is essential in providing funding and a platform for puppeteers to integrate Islamic values into puppet shows. Islamic preachers, teachers, and the public can assist in developing texts that accurately and interestingly describe Islamic teachings. Javanese cultural activists also preserve and promote shadow puppet art as part of cultural heritage. With this collaboration, shadow puppet art can become an effective da'wah tool and strengthen the understanding and practice of Islam in the broader community, making it a vital medium for religious education and the preservation of cultural identity.

In the future, it is predicted that there will be an increase in integration between the traditional art of puppets and Islamic teachings in various aspects of people's lives, not only limited to Banyumas but also in other regions in Indonesia. It can give rise to innovations in puppet performance, where puppeteers and young artists are inspired to create works that combine Islamic values with local stories and characters, enriching cultural heritage while spreading positive messages. For example, puppet shows may combine the puppet story's characters with Islamic teachings about kindness, simplicity, and helpfulness. This phenomenon will encourage further discussion on the role of art and culture in religious education, encouraging collaboration between educators, artists, and religious leaders in creating relevant and exciting educational content for the younger generation. Thus, puppet performing arts have great potential as a medium of education and da'wah to shape a more inclusive and dynamic Islamic cultural identity.

## **Conclusion**

The shadow puppet art in Banyumas functions as a key in conveying Islamic identity and fiqh values in a holistic and integrative manner. As an artistic medium, shadow puppet art effectively integrates Islamic teachings with local culture, creating a dialog between old and contemporary traditions in Banyumas. The contestation of the shadow puppet art illustrates the dynamics of interaction between art and society, where wayang art is used to debate, defend, and transform knowledge about Islamic identity. For example, Ki Ratmiko Siswo Carito enriches Islamic identity through the Shadow puppet art by interpreting Islamic values in the context of Javanese culture. The holistic-integrative approach to jurisprudence applied by Ki Ratmiko shows that religion and culture can integrate harmoniously, enriching the values of the shadow puppet art without damaging the Islamic cultural identity in Banyumas, Central Java.[w]

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