

A Peace Tourism Model for Conflict Resolution between Religious Organizations in Indonesia

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Abstract

Indonesia, with its majority Muslim population, is home to two major Islamic organizations: Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). Although both are rooted in the same faith, they often face tensions due to differing interpretations and religious practices. Most previous research has focused on their conflicts and rhetorical approaches to resolution, while practical strategies—such as tourism—have received little attention. This conceptual study explores how peace tourism can serve as a new way to foster reconciliation between Muhammadiyah and NU. Peace tourism refers to travel that facilitates dialogue and understanding between groups in conflict. This study introduces a simple, practical model of peace tourism that uses shared historical narratives and visits to significant sites of both organizations to bring the two groups closer and promote *Ukhuwwah Islāmiyyah* (Islamic brotherhood). By participating in these joint trips, both groups can strengthen two key aspects of Islamic brotherhood: *ta'āruf* (getting to know one another) and *tafāhum* (mutual understanding). The study draws on existing literature in conflict resolution and peace tourism, offering a theoretical exploration of how tourism can improve inter-group relations in Indonesia. It concludes with suggestions for tourism initiatives that could create space for meaningful dialogue and greater harmony between Muhammadiyah and NU.

Indonesia, sebagai negara dengan mayoritas penduduk Muslim, merupakan rumah bagi dua organisasi Islam besar: Muhammadiyah dan Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). Meskipun keduanya berakar pada ajaran

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agama yang sama, sering kali muncul ketegangan akibat perbedaan dalam penafsiran dan praktik keagamaan. Sebagian besar penelitian sebelumnya lebih banyak berfokus pada konflik dan pendekatan retorik untuk menyelesaikannya, sementara strategi praktis—seperti pariwisata—masih jarang mendapat perhatian. Studi konseptual ini mengeksplorasi bagaimana peace tourism (pariwisata perdamaian) dapat menjadi pendekatan baru dalam membangun rekonsiliasi antara Muhammadiyah dan NU. Peace tourism merujuk pada kegiatan perjalanan yang mendorong dialog dan pemahaman antara kelompok-kelompok yang sedang atau pernah mengalami konflik. Studi ini memperkenalkan model pariwisata perdamaian yang sederhana dan praktis dengan memanfaatkan narasi sejarah bersama dan kunjungan ke situs-situs bersejarah milik kedua organisasi untuk memperkuat hubungan serta menumbuhkan Ukhuwwah Islāmiyyah (persaudaraan Islam). Melalui partisipasi dalam perjalanan bersama ini, kedua kelompok dapat memperkuat dua dimensi penting dalam Ukhuwwah Islāmiyyah: ta'aruf (saling mengenal) dan tafahum (saling memahami). Studi ini mengkaji literatur yang ada tentang resolusi konflik dan pariwisata perdamaian, serta menawarkan tinjauan teoretis mengenai bagaimana pariwisata dapat memperbaiki hubungan antarkelompok di Indonesia. Studi ini ditutup dengan usulan inisiatif pariwisata yang dapat menjadi wadah bagi dialog yang bermakna dan keharmonisan antara Muhammadiyah dan NU.

Keywords: conflict resolution; Muhammadiyah; Nahdlatul Ulama; peace tourism; *ukhuwwah*

Introduction

Peace tourism, a form of special interest tourism, aims to foster reconciliation and unity among communities affected by conflict or violence, with a strong emphasis on peacebuilding (Reychler & Paffenholz, 2001). Also referred to as reconciliation tourism (Belhassen, 2023; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2003), this tourism model has emerged as a response to global crises (Guo et al., 2006), offering platforms for healing, reflection, and mutual understanding. While peace tourism remains underexplored in Indonesia, it presents a compelling opportunity to address tensions arising from the nation's complex cultural, religious, and ideological landscape.

Indonesia, home to over 240 million Muslims (about 87% of its population), continues to grapple with the challenge of maintaining unity within its pluralistic society. Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the country's two largest Islamic organizations, have played key roles in promoting social harmony (Azca et al., 2020). Both are rooted in moderate

Islamic values—*wasatīyyah* (moderation) and *tasāmuḥ* (tolerance) (Qodir, 2019)—and have made significant contributions to the development of education, health care, and civil society. Despite this shared commitment, tensions between Muhammadiyah and NU have persisted, particularly in the post-Reform era. These tensions are often exacerbated by political interests that exploit theological and cultural differences (Darajat, 2017).

Incidents such as the rejection of NU’s anniversary celebration in Yogyakarta (Chairunnisa, 2020) and the removal of the Muhammadiyah school signage in Banyuwangi (Fanani, 2022) underscore the urgency of fostering stronger bonds between these organizations to preserve national unity. Friction is often rooted in differing Islamic practices—such as *qunut*, Friday prayer procedures, grave pilgrimages, and varying Eid observances (Halili, 2018)—and extends to organizational structures across gender and age lines, including youth and student wings (Rofiah, 2017).

Given the historical legacies of Muhammadiyah and NU —particularly in Yogyakarta, which holds significant meaning for both— this study proposes peace tourism as a novel means of fostering inter-group understanding and reconciliation. By designing educational tourism that highlights their shared histories, values, and contributions, especially in Yogyakarta, this study seeks to offer a concrete model for promoting Islamic brotherhood (*ukhuwwah*) among diverse Muslim communities.

Existing literature on the Muhammadiyah-NU relationship typically focuses on two themes: conflict and reconciliation. Early studies, particularly those examining the pre-1998 era, highlight disputes rooted in ritual practices—such as *tahlilan*, *yasinan*, and differing Ramadan calendars (Halili, 2018)—often intertwined with political disagreements. However, Rofiah (2017) suggests that these differences can serve constructive purposes, fostering pluralism and competition for good deeds (*fastabiq al-khairāt*), provided there is space for social and intellectual engagement.

Recent research has shifted toward collaborative efforts and conflict resolution. In Paciran, Lamongan, for instance, the youth wings of Muhammadiyah and NU have united to combat radicalism and promote peaceful

religious expression (Huda, 2020). Similarly, Azca et al. (2021) document how both organizations work together to advance positive peace through education, healthcare, and economic initiatives. Collaborative efforts have also extended into national discourses on democracy, human rights, and anti-corruption (Toyibah and Farida 2020).

Despite these encouraging developments, practical models for strengthening inter-organizational harmony remain limited. This study seeks to fill that gap by introducing a historically grounded peace tourism model aimed at fostering *Ukhuwwah Islāmiyyah*—Islamic brotherhood rooted in empathy, mutual respect, and solidarity. Drawing from Hamidah's (2015) five stages of *ukhuwwah*—*ta'āruf* (acquaintance), *tafāhum* (understanding), *ta'āwun* (cooperation), *takāful* (mutual support), and *ithār* (selflessness)—this model offers a practical framework for reconciliation through cultural engagement and education.

Yogyakarta, Indonesia's second most-visited destination after Bali (Nurazizah & Marhanah, 2020), presents a promising context for this initiative. Despite the sharp decline in tourism caused by the COVID-19 pandemic—an 81.87% drop in foreign visitors and 61.73% in domestic tourists (Dinas Pariwisata Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta, 2021)—Yogyakarta remains rich in cultural, natural, and historical resources (Hadi, 2020; Handayani & Priyono, 2016; Hasan, 2017; Putra, 2019; Rif'an, 2018; Satyawati, 2016; Wijaya & Faida, 2018; Wijayanti, 2020). The rise of special interest tourism, including surfing, architectural tours, and heritage tourism (Makhasi & Fakhurrirfqi, 2020; Permana, 2017; Sulistyanto, 2018), offers further potential for a historical tour package centered on the legacies of Muhammadiyah and NU.

Although peace tourism in Indonesia remains underdeveloped, efforts like the “Creative Peace Tourism Village” in Srumbung Gunung, Semarang (Supratikno et al., 2020), show the potential of leveraging local traditions to foster intercommunal harmony. This study builds upon such initiatives by offering a more targeted approach: one that addresses the nuanced relationship between Muhammadiyah and NU through curated historical experiences and educational engagement.

The novelty of this study lies in its development of a concrete and applicable model of peace tourism designed to cultivate *ukhuwwah* (Islamic solidarity) between members of Muhammadiyah and NU. Accordingly, the study endeavors to address the following three research questions: 1) Which historical sites of Muhammadiyah and NU in Yogyakarta can be identified as peace tourism destinations? 2) What is the design of a peace tourism itinerary featuring Muhammadiyah and NU in Yogyakarta? 3) How can the concept of this Muhammadiyah and NU peace tourism journey in Yogyakarta foster *ukhuwwah* (brotherhood) between the two organizations, based on the stages of *ukhuwwah* proposed by Hamidah (2015), namely *ta'aruf* (getting to know each other), *tafāhum* (mutual understanding), *ta'āwun* (cooperation), *takāful* (mutual support), and *ithār* (selflessness or prioritizing others)?

This study is narrative conceptual research based on a literature review and observations conducted in Yogyakarta, the birthplace of Muhammadiyah, particularly in Kauman Village and several historical Muhammadiyah educational and social service buildings located in Patangpuluhan, Suronatan, Notoprajan, and Ngabean. Additionally, Yogyakarta is home to several Islamic boarding schools that have flourished since the Sultanate era around the Pathok Negoro Mosques, including those in Mlangi, Plosokuning, Banguntapan, Dongkelan, and Wonokromo, which later developed under the influence of NU traditions.

The literature review was conducted by consulting research materials from various libraries, private collections, and accessing scientific journals online. Additionally, field observations were carried out by visiting historical institutions that document the contributions of Muhammadiyah and NU in promoting peaceful Islam in Yogyakarta. Key sites identified during this research include Kauman Village, Krapyak Village, Madrasah Muallimin Muhammadiyah, Karangkajen Cemetery, Al Munawwir Islamic Boarding School, Dongkelan Cemetery, and the Pathok Negoro Mlangi Mosque.

The data for this study consists of both primary and secondary sources. Primary data includes the history of the development of Muhammadiyah and NU in Yogyakarta, their educational, social, and health service institutions,

Islamic boarding schools, and the historical relations between the Muhammadiyah and NU. It also covers the principles and concepts of balanced Islamic values and brotherhood promoted by both organizations. Secondary data includes the general perceptions of the Muhammadiyah community regarding NU, and vice versa, particularly where their views often conflict. Additionally, secondary data includes potential tourist routes that could be developed by travel agencies in Yogyakarta.

This study employs descriptive analysis, following the framework outlined by Moleong (2014), which identifies four stages in qualitative research analysis: data reduction, data presentation, drawing conclusions, and verification. According to Miles et al (2014), data reduction involves filtering out irrelevant data and adding missing information. Data presentation entails organizing information into categories or groups. After presenting the data, the researcher interprets the findings, making sense of the compiled information. Finally, conclusions are drawn, summarizing the research findings in clear and concise terms. The researcher will also conduct repeated reviews to ensure the accuracy and validity of these conclusions.

Identification of Peace Tourism Destinations

Designing a peace tour that fosters mutual understanding between members of Muhammadiyah and NU requires careful selection of destinations that not only represent the religious and social traditions of these two influential Islamic organizations but also act as living cultural and historical bridges. These destinations must reflect the core values, practices, and shared history that have shaped the identities of Muhammadiyah and NU over the years.

Key destinations for such a peace tour include villages, Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), madrasah, mosques, and cemeteries. Each of these locations offers unique insights into the socio-religious life of both Muhammadiyah and NU, which have coexisted for over a century. Villages, particularly those in Yogyakarta like Kauman and Krapyak, are central to understanding the grassroots level of the organizations' social and religious

influence. Islamic boarding schools and madrasas serve as educational hubs where the intellectual traditions of Muhammadiyah and NU are deeply rooted. These institutions embody different educational models: Muhammadiyah schools tend to follow a more modern approach, while NU's pesantren maintain traditional Islamic teachings. Mosques, such as the Great Mosque in Kauman and Pathok Negoro Mlangi Mosque, offer architectural insights into the practices and beliefs of the two groups. Finally, cemeteries like Karangjajen and Dongkelan hold the graves of key religious figures from both organizations, symbolizing their intertwined legacies.

Through extensive literature research and on-the-ground observations, we have identified a variety of potential sites for Muhammadiyah and NU peace tourism in Yogyakarta. These sites offer an invaluable opportunity to explore the shared history and practices of these two organizations while promoting dialogue and reconciliation. The full list of destinations is outlined in Table 1.

Table 1
Muhammadiyah and NU Peace Tour Destinations in Yogyakarta

Destination Type	Destination Name	Potential
Village	Kauman Village	Kauman is a historic kampung (village) that has played a central role in the development of Islam in Yogyakarta, particularly as the residence of religious servants to the Yogyakarta Sultanate, known as the <i>pamethakan</i> (Darban, 2010). Since the 18th century, Kauman has been a hub of Islamic intellectual and religious life in the region. In 1912, it became the birthplace of Muhammadiyah, one of Indonesia's largest Islamic organizations. The founding of Muhammadiyah is closely tied to the efforts of K.H. Ahmad Dahlan, a prominent figure and preacher at the Yogyakarta Sultanate Grand Mosque, which is located in Kauman (Setiawati, 2018). His leadership and vision for modernizing Islamic practice in Indonesia were instrumental in shaping the organization's early growth and impact.

Krapyak Village		Krapyak kampung, situated within the Yogyakarta philosophical axis, holds significant historical and cultural value (Agathis et al., 2021). Recently recognized as part of the World Heritage, Krapyak is home to the Krapyak Stage, or <i>Kandang Menjangan</i> , a site where the Mataram and Yogyakarta sultans once engaged in deer hunting. Not far from Krapyak lies Mijen kampung, named after the word <i>miji</i> , meaning seed—symbolizing the origins of life. The Krapyak Stage is philosophically linked to this idea of life's seed, symbolized by the yoni. Since the early 20th century, Krapyak has evolved into a center for religious education, particularly Islamic boarding schools, which transformed the once symbolic hunting ground for deer into a space where the pursuit is now the search for knowledge (Rasyid & Al-Masjid, 2022).
<i>Pesantren</i> (Islamic Boarding School)	Pondok Pesantren Al Munawwir (Al Munawwir Islamic (Boarding School)	Al-Munawwir Islamic Boarding School was established in 1911 by KH. Muhammad Munawwir bin Abdullah Rosyad. Initially known as the Krapyak Islamic Boarding School, it was named after its location in Krapyak kampung. In 1976, the name was changed to Al-Munawwir to honor its founder. From its inception, the school focused primarily on Qur'anic studies, a tradition that continues to be upheld to this day (Indriati, 2017). In 1989, Al-Munawwir was chosen as the venue for the 28th NU Congress, which resulted in significant developments in the jurisprudence of Nahdlatul Ulama (Ulum & Wahid, 2019).
	Madrasah Muallimin Muhammadiyah	Madrasah Mu'allimin Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta was founded by K.H. Ahmad Dahlan in 1918 as a teacher training institution. By then, Muhammadiyah had already established several schools across Yogyakarta (Siradz, 2019). K.H. Ahmad Dahlan served as the first director of the madrasah. This institution holds historical significance as the site of a pivotal meeting on November 7-8, 1945, where the foundation of the Masyumi Party was initiated (Sumanto & Zulkarnain, 2016).
Mosque	Pathok Negoro Mlangi Mosque	Pathok Negoro Mlangi Mosque, located on the eastern side of Yogyakarta, was built in 1724, prior to the establishment of the Yogyakarta Palace after the Giyanti Agreement. As one of the

		<p>Pathok Negoro mosques—landmarks marking the boundaries of the Yogyakarta Sultanate—this mosque holds significant historical value. It was founded by Kyai Mursodo, the son of Kyai Nur Iman. The design of the mosque is distinctive, with its roof and <i>mustaka</i> (the crown or head of the structure) featuring two overlapping layers, or snails, a unique feature that sets it apart from the Great Mosque of the Yogyakarta Sultanate, which has three layers (Meliana & Caroline, 2020).</p>
	Great Mosque of Yogyakarta Sultanate	<p>The establishment of Kampung Kauman is closely tied to the construction of the Yogyakarta Sultanate's Great Mosque by Sultan Hamengku Buwono I in 1773, located just west of the north square. This mosque became the central hub for religious activities and ceremonies within the Sultanate. To support its operations, religious servants and ulama were assigned nearby land on which to live. These individuals were organized into the Kawedanan Pengulon, an institution tasked with overseeing religious ceremonies, managing mosques, and maintaining tombs across the entire Yogyakarta Sultanate (Darban, 2010).</p>
Graveyard	Dongkelan Graveyard	<p>KH. M. Munawwir, the founder of the Krapyak Islamic Boarding School, passed away on July 6, 1942, and was laid to rest in Dongkelan Cemetery, located in Dongkelan Hamlet, Panggungharjo Village, Bantul Regency, Yogyakarta. Born in Kauman, Yogyakarta, he was the son of KH. Abdullah Rosyad bin KH. Hasan Bashari and Khadijah. KH. M. Munawwir is widely recognized as the first teacher to bring the intellectual lineage of Qur'anic scholarship that traces back to the Prophet Muhammad. Many students of the Krapyak Islamic Boarding School continue the tradition of memorizing the Qur'an near his grave, as he believed this practice would strengthen their memorization (Al-Ayyubi, 2020).</p>
	Karangkajen Graveyard	<p>The Karangkajen Cemetery is another important burial site in Yogyakarta, associated with the Yogyakarta Sultanate. KH. Ahmad Dahlan, the founder of Muhammadiyah, had expressed his wish to be buried there due to his strong connection with the Karangkajen community. Following his death in 1923, several other prominent Muhammadiyah leaders also chose to</p>

be buried at this site. The Karangkajen Cemetery is known for its distinctive burial practices, including the specific regulations for tombstones and pilgrimage procedures, which adhere to Muhammadiyah guidelines. This unique *ittibaul janazah* (funeral rites) tradition is also upheld in other Muhammadiyah-affiliated villages (Asrul et al., 2022).

Peace Tourism Itinerary Plan

The Muhammadiyah and NU peace tourism, as proposed in this study, focuses on visiting destinations that reflect the socio-religious life of these two Islamic organizations. These destinations include villages, Islamic boarding schools, mosques, and historical cemeteries in Yogyakarta. Peace tourism, with its historical approach, is categorized as special interest tourism. This theme aligns with similar forms of special interest tourism that explore historical sites, such as the architectural heritage of buildings in Yogyakarta (Sulistyanto, 2018) and Bali (Widhiarini et al., 2024). Special interest tourism with a historical focus has also been implemented in Kauman, Yogyakarta, specifically centered on Muhammadiyah's history (Makhasi & Fakhurrifqi, 2020).

Figure 1
Kauman Village



Source: dolandolen.com

Figure 2
Krapyak Village



Source: Personal Document

When selecting destinations for Muhammadiyah and NU peace tourism, two villages —Kauman and Krapyak— are highlighted. These villages were chosen because they embody the social and religious lives of both organizations. Kauman is known as the birthplace of Muhammadiyah (Setiawati, 2018; Subana & Sudrajat, 2011), while Krapyak is home to several NU Islamic boarding schools and served as the site of the NU Congress (Ulum & Wahid, 2019). Both villages offer tourists the opportunity to experience the distinctive “*Kampung Santri*” atmosphere, which is deeply influenced by the traditions of Muhammadiyah and NU.

Figure 3

Pondok Pesantren Al Munawwir (a) and Madrasah Muallimin Muhammadiyah (b)



Source: Personal Document

The Islamic boarding schools included in this peace tourism proposal are Madrasah Muallimin Muhammadiyah and Pondok Pesantren Al Munawwir. Madrasah Muallimin Muhammadiyah is a religious school founded by KH. Ahmad Dahlan (Siradz, 2019), which introduced modern educational practices, such as formal classrooms, curriculums, and uniforms. In contrast, Al Munawwir follows a more traditional approach, focusing primarily on Qur'anic studies without a formal academic curriculum. These institutions offer a space for tourists to exchange ideas about the educational systems of Muhammadiyah and NU, reflecting the sacred traditions of NU-style Kiai (Islamic scholars) and Islamic boarding schools (Bruinessen, 1994), alongside the modern educational model in Muhammadiyah schools (Kuswandi, 2020).

Regarding mosque destinations, the peace tour includes the Great Mosque of the Yogyakarta Sultanate and the Pathok Negoro Mlangi Mosque. The Great Mosque in Kauman is historically significant as a site where KH. Ahmad Dahlan introduced modern Islamic teachings, including the correct alignment of the *qiblat* (Dahlan, 2014). Currently, the mosque is managed according to the teachings of the surrounding Muhammadiyah community. On the other hand, the Pathok Negoro Mlangi Mosque is a landmark of the Yogyakarta Sultanate (Imawan, 2020) and follows the NU tradition in its religious practices. Both mosques showcase distinctive architectural styles and offer unique insights into the Islamic educational traditions of their respective communities. See Figure 4.

Finally, the peace tour includes visits to two cemeteries: Karangkajen Cemetery and Dongkelan Cemetery. Karangkajen is the burial site of Muhammadiyah's founder, KH. Ahmad Dahlan, as well as other prominent leaders such as KH. Ahmad Badawi, KH. AR Fachruddin, and KH. Ahmad Azhar Basyir. In contrast, Dongkelan Cemetery is the final resting place of KH. M. Munawwir, the founder of the Krapyak Islamic boarding school. The funeral rituals and pilgrimage practices at these two sites differ, reflecting the respective beliefs and traditions of Muhammadiyah and NU, making them valuable spaces for dialogue and discussion among tourists. See Figure 5.

Figure 4

Great Mosque of Yogyakarta Sultanate (a) and the Pathok Ngoro Mlangi Mosque (b)



(a)



(b)

Source: Personal Document

Figure 5

Karangkajen Graveyard (a) and Dongkelan Graveyard (b)



(a)



(b)

Source: Personal Document

From these destinations, this research suggests an itinerary for a two-day-tour below:

Day 1: Exploring Muhammadiyah in Yogyakarta

Morning

Heading to Kauman Village

Time: 8.00 AM – 9.30 AM

Begin the day in Kauman, the birthplace of Muhammadiyah. Visit the Kauman Mosque to explore its modern interpretation of Islamic teachings and the life of KH. Ahmad Dahlan.

Visit the Great Mosque of Yogyakarta Sultanate

Time: 9.45 AM – 10.00 AM

Visit the Great Mosque of the Yogyakarta Sultanate, which follows Muhammadiyah traditions, while its architecture reflects Javanese style. Take time to explore the mosque's distinctive design and cultural significance.

Midday:

Visit Madrasah Muallimin Muhammadiyah

Time: 10.30 AM – 12.00 AM

Tour the Madrasah Muallimin Muhammadiyah and learn about its modern curriculum and educational approach, reflecting the Muhammadiyah movement's emphasis on modernity.

Lunch Break

Time: 12.00 AM – 1.00 PM

Enjoy a lunch in Madrasah Muallimin Muhammadiyah.

Afternoon:

Visit Karangkajen Cemetery

Time: 1.30 PM – 2.30 PM

Visit Karangkajen Cemetery, the resting place of KH. Ahmad Dahlan and several prominent Muhammadiyah leaders. Reflect on the shared history of both organizations and the importance of these leaders.

Evening:

Reflection and Discussion at Karangkajen Jami Mosque

Time: 2.30 PM – 3.30 PM

Host a discussion session at a local venue, where tourists can reflect on the day's experiences and exchange perspectives on Muhammadiyah traditions compared by NU.

Day 2: Exploring NU in Yogyakarta

Morning:

Visit Dongkelan Cemetery

Time: 8:00 AM - 9:30 AM

Start the second day by visiting Dongkelan Cemetery, where KH. M. Munawwir is buried. This cemetery reflects NU traditions, offering a deeper understanding of NU funeral rites.

Explore Krapyak Village & Pondok Pesantren Al Munawwir

Time: 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Visit Krapyak Village, the heart of NU in Yogyakarta. Visit Pondok Pesantren Al Munawwir, a traditional Islamic boarding school, and learn about the more traditional NU approach to education.

Midday:

Lunch Break

Time: 12:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Enjoy lunch in Pondok Pesantren Al Munawwir.

Afternoon:

Visit Pathok Negoro Mlangi Mosque

Time: 2:00 AM - 3:00 AM

Proceed to the Jami' Mlangi Mosque, an important historical mosque in the Sultanate's complex that follows NU traditions. Learn about its role in the NU community and its architectural significance.

Evening:

Final Reflexion Discussion at Pathok Negoro Mlangi Mosque

Time: 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Final discussions regarding the future of peace tourism and its potential for reconciliation and it's the end of the tour with a reflective visit to other historical sites connected to Muhammadiyah and NU.

Reconciliation in Motion: Peace Tourism as an Instrument of *Ukhuwwah*

The concept of Muhammadiyah and NU peace tourism, as a form of special interest tourism, closely aligns with the reconciliation tourism model explored by Belhassen in the context of Israeli and Palestinian communities in the West Bank (Belhassen, 2023), as well as by Saunders (1999) in the context of post-civil war Tajikistan. While Saunders advocate for sustain and meaningful dialogue initiatives as a peacebuilding method using “deciding to

engage”, “mapping and naming problems and relations”, “probing problems and relationships to choose a direction”, “scenario building”, and “acting together to make change happen”, Belhassen’s study emphasizes the importance of initiating peace tourism to foster reconciliation in conflict-affected regions. The central aim of such tourism is not merely to visit historical or cultural landmarks but to create an environment conducive to building a balanced and mutually acknowledged narrative between conflicting parties. This approach seeks to establish a platform where inclusivity is prioritized, allowing the stories of victims to be heard and understood, while also ensuring a commitment to transformative actions that pave the way for long-term peacebuilding.

Belhassen’s framework on reconciliation tourism focuses on creating spaces where opposing groups can come together to understand each other’s perspectives, share experiences, and ultimately work toward conflict resolution. In this regard, Muhammadiyah and NU peace tourism share a similar objective. By engaging with the historical sites of both organizations—such as villages (*kampung*), Islamic boarding schools, mosques, and cemeteries—tourists are encouraged to learn about the rich religious and social history of these two groups. The peace tourism model seeks to break down long-standing prejudices by presenting a narrative of Islamic brotherhood, mutual respect, and common values that transcends doctrinal differences.

At the heart of Muhammadiyah and NU peace tourism is the effort to create an equal and unbiased narrative during the initial stages of the tour. The goal is to move away from sectarian views and promote inclusivity, where both Muhammadiyah and NU are given an equal voice in their shared history and contributions to Indonesia’s religious and social landscape. By focusing on the commonalities between the two organizations, this peace tourism model can serve as a neutral space for dialogue. It is expected that over time, this exchange of knowledge and experiences will build a foundation of mutual respect and understanding, which can then be expanded into more profound forms of collaboration and cooperation.

This approach also draws on Islamic principles, particularly those outlined in the concept of *ukhuwwah* or brotherhood, which plays a central role in the teachings of both Muhammadiyah and NU. To support this, the peace tourism model can be designed in a way that aligns with the five stages of Islamic brotherhood as conceptualized by Hamidah (2015). These stages include: 1) *Ta'aruf* (getting to know each other), 2) *Tafāhum* (understanding each other), 3) *Ta'āwun* (helping each other), 4) *Takāful* (mutual support), and 5) *Īthār* (putting others first).

The first two stages—*ta'aruf* and *tafāhum*—are crucial starting points for bridging the gaps between Muhammadiyah and NU members. The peace tour aims to reach these initial stages, where participants can begin by understanding the historical and cultural roots of each organization. By visiting places of significance to both Muhammadiyah and NU, such as Kauman Village, Krapyak Village, Madrasah Muallimin Muhammadiyah, and Pathok Negero Mlangi Mosque, tourists will have the opportunity to engage with the local history of both organizations and gain insight into their shared values and practices. The hope is that this understanding will lay the groundwork for future cooperation and help dispel misconceptions that have arisen due to sectarian divides.

In practical terms, implementing such a peace tour requires careful planning, particularly when it comes to the selection of a tour guide. A tour guide plays a pivotal role in ensuring that the narrative presented is accurate, unbiased, and conducive to peacebuilding. As Brin (2010) and Schep, van Boxtel, & Noordegraaf (2018) argue, the role of a guide is not simply to escort tourists from one site to another but to serve as a mediator of knowledge, helping visitors understand the significance of the sites they visit and the historical context behind them. For peace tourism to succeed, guides must be equipped with the right tools and training to present a balanced, fair, and empathetic narrative that encourages dialogue and understanding between participants.

Moreover, guides must possess an in-depth knowledge of the Islamic and social history of the Muhammadiyah and NU communities in Yogyakarta.

They should be familiar with the historical struggles, mutual contributions, and shared experiences of these organizations, ensuring that their explanations do not favor one side over the other. The ability of the guide to act as a neutral narrator is crucial for fostering an environment of peace and reconciliation.

The importance of skilled guides in peace tourism is underscored by the research of Masyhari Makhasi, who highlighted the central role of guides in presenting the multicultural and multi-religious heritage of Yogyakarta, particularly with reference to the city's food heritage (Makhasi, 2023). Makhasi's study in Patuk village explored the transformation of bakpia—a traditional Chinese pastry—from a food item once considered haram due to its pork content into a halal delicacy after the recipe was changed to use green beans. The guide's role in this context was vital in conveying the historical and cultural transformation of this food, which symbolizes the region's pluralistic history. The guide's ability to provide context and promote understanding played a key role in helping tourists appreciate the cultural integration that had taken place, which mirrored the broader societal reconciliation in Yogyakarta.

Similarly, in the case of Muhammadiyah and NU peace tourism, the role of the tour guide extends beyond merely conveying facts about sites. The guide must facilitate understanding and empathy between the visitors, providing a context that allows for meaningful dialogue and engagement. They must ensure that the narrative being presented is one of reconciliation, not division, and that the visitors leave with a deeper appreciation for the importance of inter-organizational cooperation and peaceful coexistence.

By crafting a tour based on the stages of Islamic brotherhood, with skilled guides facilitating the experience, Muhammadiyah and NU peace tourism can contribute significantly to healing historical divides, fostering mutual respect, and promoting peace. As a model of special interest tourism, it has the potential to serve as a bridge between different religious communities, ultimately creating a stronger, more harmonious society.

This study offers a conceptual framework with strong potential, it is not without limitations. The model is theoretical and has yet to be tested in a real-

world setting with actual participants from Muhammadiyah and NU communities. Additionally, the cultural and theological nuances that shape inter-organizational relationships are complex and may not be fully addressed through a single tourism experience. The role of guides, institutional support, and community readiness are also critical factors that could influence the success or failure of such initiatives and merit further investigation.

Nevertheless, the findings of this study have significant implications for peace studies in both national and global contexts. At the national level, it offers a culturally grounded, faith-based model for reconciliation that speaks directly to Indonesia's pluralistic society and its ongoing efforts to maintain unity amidst diversity. It also provides an alternative approach to conflict resolution—one rooted not in top-down policy or dialogue forums alone, but in experiential, grassroots engagement.

Globally, this study contributes to the expanding field of peace tourism by introducing a Muslim-majority case rooted in intra-faith reconciliation rather than interfaith or post-war contexts. It highlights how historical and religious narratives can be mobilized for peacebuilding, particularly in societies where religion plays a central role in identity formation. As such, this model can inform similar efforts in other countries facing intra-religious divisions, offering an adaptable framework that bridges heritage, memory, and reconciliation.

The Muhammadiyah and NU peace tourism model presents a promising and practical approach to conflict resolution, emphasizing the importance of shared understanding, empathy, and respect. Through thoughtful design and skilled guidance, it can play a key role in achieving the goals of peacebuilding and fostering long-term reconciliation between these two important Islamic organizations in Indonesia.

Conclusion

The persistent friction between Muhammadiyah and NU members—despite both organizations having existed for over a century—remains a pressing concern for Indonesia's social and religious cohesion. While prior

studies have largely advocated for the strengthening of *ukhuwwah* (Islamic brotherhood) between these two groups from a normative standpoint, this study introduces an innovative and practical approach: peace tourism. By facilitating visits to historically significant sites—such as villages, Islamic boarding schools, mosques, and cemeteries—linked to both Muhammadiyah and NU, the proposed peace tourism model offers a “dialogue for peace” platform, aligning with the reconciliation tourism approaches.

This tourism-based approach encourages mutual acquaintance (*ta'āruf*) and deeper understanding (*tafāhum*) by engaging participants with the lived histories and cultural contexts of both organizations. These early stages lay the groundwork for progressing toward mutual cooperation (*ta'āwun*), solidarity (*takāful*), and ultimately, altruistic commitment (*ithār*)—core components of Islamic brotherhood.

Muhammadiyah and NU peace tourism represent a promising and context-sensitive innovation in peacebuilding. By linking Islamic values, historical awareness, and participatory experience, this model has the potential to promote long-term harmony not only between Indonesia's two largest Islamic organizations but also within broader efforts toward peaceful coexistence in diverse societies.[]

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