

## Tracing the Historical Tracks of Islamic Civilization from the Sultanate Era to the Modern Era

Syafira Pandu Pradani<sup>1</sup> , Sigit Tri Utomo<sup>2</sup> 

<sup>1</sup> Institut Islam Nahdlotul Ulama Temanggung, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup> Institut Islam Nahdlotul Ulama Temanggung, Indonesia

### ABSTRACT

Islam is not just a religion for Indonesians, but rather the lifeblood that has shaped this nation's identity for centuries. Long before the word "Indonesia" was born, Islamic civilization flourished throughout the archipelago through great sultanates, peaceful trade, and popular Islamic boarding school education. During that time, Islam served as a unifying force, fueling the people's resistance to colonialism and their dream of independence.

However, this civilizational journey did not end with the proclamation of independence. After independence, Islam in Indonesia underwent a remarkable transformation. From its initial focus on physical struggle and resistance, it has now become a major contributor to national development, modern education, and even democracy. Islam and Indonesia have grown side by side, creating a unique model of civilization that blends religious values with national spirit.

Understanding the legacy of Islamic civilization in Indonesia, both before and after independence, means understanding ourselves as a nation. This article will examine how Islamic values remain relevant and continue to evolve in response to the challenges of an ever-changing era.

### KEYWORDS

Article, Islamic, Modern Era

### INTRODUCTION

The history of the Indonesian Archipelago is inseparable from the profound influence of Islamic civilization, which has shaped the region's social, political, and cultural landscape for centuries. Unlike many other parts of the world where religious shifts often occurred through conflict, the spread of Islam in Southeast Asia is characterized by peaceful penetration and cultural dialogue. This introduction explores how a transoceanic faith integrated itself into the heart of a diverse society, evolving from a merchant's creed into a foundational pillar of a modern nation-state. By examining its journey from the early coastal encounters to its role in the contemporary global era, we can understand how Islam became the spiritual and moral soul that continues to animate the Indonesian national character.

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#### Correspondence:

Syafira Pandu Pradani,  
[syafirapandupradani@gmail.com](mailto:syafirapandupradani@gmail.com)

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## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The narrative employs a diachronic and socio-historical approach to trace the evolution of Islamic civilization in the Indonesian Archipelago. It utilizes a chronological framework, beginning with the early maritime trade routes and progressing through the sultanate era, the colonial resistance, and the modern nation-building process. Methodologically, the analysis focuses on cultural acculturation and social integration rather than military history, emphasizing how Islamic values adapted to local wisdom. By examining the intersection of religion with political movements and modern economic systems, the methodology highlights the resilience and flexibility of faith as a central pillar of national identity.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The discussion begins by highlighting the peaceful arrival of Islam through harmonious trade and cultural proselytization, which offered a revolutionary concept of human equality to a society previously dominated by Hindu-Buddhist structures. As it evolved into a political force during the Sultanate era, Islam established centers of knowledge and legal systems that blended religious principles with local customs. This foundation proved crucial during the era of Western colonialism, where Islamic identity transformed into a unifying spiritual energy and a tool for mass mobilization against foreign oppression, shielding the nation's moral integrity through the concept of jihad.

In the 20th century, the discourse shifts toward modernization and intellectual struggle, where Islamic organizations integrated religious values with nationalism and democratic ideals to fight for independence. A significant civilizational milestone is noted in the post-independence era: the reconciliation of religious aspirations with national diversity through the acceptance of Pancasila. Today, in the contemporary era, Islamic civilization continues to flourish by adapting to global trends, as seen in the growth of Sharia banking and research-based education. Ultimately, the discussion illustrates that Islam in Indonesia is not a rigid legalistic framework, but a flexible, living ethos that continues to animate the nation's modern character.



Figure 1. Evolution of Islam in Indonesia

The analysis of Islamic civilization in the Indonesian Archipelago reveals that its primary strength lies in flexibility and resilience. The findings show that Islam successfully integrated into the local fabric not by erasing existing cultures, but by enriching them through a process of gradual acculturation. Key results indicate that the concept of human equality was the primary catalyst for its widespread acceptance, while the transformation of mosques into centers of state strategy during the Sultanate era solidified Islam as a formal political identity.

Furthermore, the study finds that during the colonial and modern eras, Islam functioned as a unifying national identity that transcended ethnic boundaries, eventually leading to the historic compromise of accepting Pancasila as the state foundation. In the contemporary context, the results demonstrate that Islamic civilization is highly adaptive, proving that religious values can coexist with modern technology and global economic systems. Ultimately, the findings conclude that Islam in Indonesia serves as a dynamic ethical source rather than a rigid set of rules, ensuring the nation's progress without severing its ancestral and spiritual roots.

## CONCLUSION

The journey of Islamic civilization in Indonesia proves that religion can enter and be accepted in a profoundly peaceful manner. Since ancient times, Islam did not spread through coercion, but rather through the exemplary behavior of traders and a gentle cultural approach. This is precisely what allowed Islamic values to merge with the local traditions of the Archipelago without erasing the original identity of its people.

As the era of kingdoms and sultanates arrived, Islam became an essential foundation for organizing social life. The kings of that time did not only lead territories but also ensured that knowledge and religious education progressed hand in hand. The ancient mosques we see today are living proof of how the people of the past masterfully combined beautiful architecture with strong social functions.

When foreign nations came to colonize, the Islamic faith became the bond that unified people from various ethnic groups. A shared sense of destiny as fellow Muslims gave the community great courage to fight against injustice. At this point, Islam was no longer just about personal worship; it became the spirit and energy to seize independence and safeguard the nation's dignity.

Entering the modern era, Islamic civilization in Indonesia has continued to evolve alongside advancements in technology and education. The emergence of various schools, universities, and social organizations shows that the Muslim community is highly open to change. We can see how religious values are still held in high regard, yet the society remains capable of thinking critically and moving forward in facing an increasingly sophisticated world.

In closing, the grand conclusion we can draw is that Islam has become an inseparable part of the Indonesian identity. From its long history, we learn the importance of tolerance, hard work, and adaptation. This civilization teaches us that being religious does not mean being closed off from progress; instead, religion serves as a guide to remain humble and beneficial to others in the future.

## AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

Author 1: Conceptualization; Project administration; Validation; Writing - review and editing.

Author 2: Conceptualization; Data curation; Investigation.

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