



From Andalusia to Nusantara: Intellectual Transfer in the Long Journey of Islamic Civilization

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Abstract: *The long journey of Islamic civilization shows that the transmission of knowledge did not only take place in the Middle East, but also included a trajectory from Andalusia to the Islamic East, including the archipelago. Andalusia, as the intellectual center of Islam in the West, played an essential role in producing monumental works in the fields of philosophy, Sufism, and Islamic law, which later influenced the mindset and religious practices in other regions. This research aims to identify and analyze the process of intellectual transfer from Andalusia to Nusantara through the network of scholars, classical works, and Islamic educational institutions. Using a historical qualitative approach and hermeneutic analysis techniques, this research traces the intellectual traces of Andalusian figures and the transformation of their ideas in the local context of the archipelago through manuscripts, scholarly sanads, and cultural adaptations. Data were collected through a literature study, manuscript analysis, and network mapping of scholars. The results showed that the process of knowledge transfer occurred through transnational intellectual pathways involving civilization nodes, such as Cairo, Baghdad, and Delhi, before reaching scholarly centers in the archipelago, including Aceh and Java. The main ideas of thinkers such as Ibn Rushd and Ibn Arabi were expressed in various forms, including poetry, suluk, and yellow books. Islam Nusantara thus proves to be a synthesis of global intellectual traditions and local culture, confirming its strategic position in the world's Islamic civilization.*

Keywords: *intellectual transfer, andalusia, islam nusantara, network of scholars, islamic manuscripts, history of islamic thought*

1. Introduction

Islamic civilization has played a pivotal role in shaping the global scientific system, particularly through the process of intellectual exchange across geographies and cultures. A critical route in this process is from Andalusia, the center of Islamic science in Western Europe, to the archipelago, which is a strategic region in Southeast Asia (Gutas, 2001; Makdisi, 1981; Nasr, 2006). This transmission involved not just Islamic texts, but also educational methodologies, scientific structures, and cultural

cosmopolitanism, all of which contributed to shaping the social and intellectual dynamics of the destination regions (Hodgson, 1974; Hourani, 1991; Berkey, 2003).

The long journey of knowledge from Andalusia to Nusantara took place through various nodes of civilization such as Damascus, Baghdad, and Delhi, which then spread to regions such as Aceh, Malacca, and Java through networks of scholars, pilgrims, and trade (Azra, 2004; Ricklefs, 2006; Johns, 1993). These routes were not only physical but also intellectual, where Islamic scholarly values underwent unique local adaptations. This highlights that Islam in the Archipelago is not a passive outcome but a dynamic and creative process (Laffan, 2011; Feener, 2007; Voll, 1994).

The urgency of this research lies in understanding the intellectual roots of Islam in the Archipelago within the broader context of global civilization. Despite its importance, the scientific connections between the Western Islamic world (Andalusia) and the East (Nusantara) remain underexplored. The lack of studies that examine the scientific connections between the Western Islamic world (Andalusia) and the East (Nusantara) creates a gap in historical narratives (El-Rouayheb, 2015; Ali, 2018; Lapidus, 2002). Furthermore, this research aims to challenge colonial historiography, which often overlooks the contributions of the Islamic world to global civilization (Saeed, 2011; Asad, 1986; Said, 1979).

This research is based on the theory of innovation diffusion (Rogers, 2003), transnational intellectual networks (Appadurai, 1996), and the concept of Islamic cosmopolitanism (Eickelman & Piscatori, 1996). These three theories are used to explain how ideas and knowledge can move, survive, and be adapted across cultures. In this context, ulama act as agents of change and guardians of traditions that connect one center of civilization to another (Zaman, 2002; Messick, 1996; Gellner, 1981).

Table 1. Paths of Islamic Intellectual Transfer from Andalusia to Nusantara

Science Center	Period	Intellectual Pathway	Important Figures	Famous Works
Cordoba	10-13 M	Maghribi - Damascus	Ibn Rushd	<i>Bidayat al-Mujtahid</i>
Baghdad	10-13 M	Middle East	Al-Ghazali	<i>Ihya Ullumuddin</i>
Delhi	13-17 M	India - Aceh	Shah Waliullah	<i>Hujjat Allah al-Baligha</i>
Aceh	16-18 M	Aceh - Java	Hamzah Fansuri	<i>Asrar al-'Arifin</i>
Java	17-20 M	Local-National	Kyai Saleh Darat	<i>Syarah Ihya Ullumuddin</i>

(Source: Azra, 2004; Johns, 1993; Feener, 2007)

Several studies have raised the theme of Islamic scholarship in the archipelago, such as Azyumardi Azra's (2004) work on ulama networks in Southeast Asia and Martin van Bruinessen's (1990) work on the scientific tradition of pesantren.

Additionally, Ricklefs (2006) discussed the dynamics of Islamization in Java. However, the study is more focused on the local regional context without directly linking to intellectual flows from the western regions of Islam, such as Andalusia (Feener, 2007; Laffan, 2011; Johns, 1993).

The research gap lies in the lack of exploration of how intellectual concepts from Andalusia can be traced in Islamic practice and thought in the archipelago. There is no comprehensive research that examines the pathways, actors, and transformations of ideas across the entirety of Islamic civilization, both historically and conceptually (Ali, 2018; El-Rouayheb, 2015; Voll, 1994). This gap is significant because it can lead to new insights into the complexities and cross-cultural interconnections in Islamic history.

The novelty of this research lies in its approach, which connects the two geographical and intellectual poles of the Islamic world in a single, integrated narrative. No prior study has thoroughly traced the transmission of ideas from Andalusia to Javanese pesantren and analyzed the transformations that occurred along the way. This research offers a unique perspective by not only mapping intellectual pathways but also demonstrating how these ideas were localized within the Southeast Asian context, particularly in the development of Islamic educational institutions. This approach fills a crucial gap in the historiography of Islamic intellectual exchange and is a valuable contribution to the study of Islamic thought and education (Zaman, 2002; Nasr, 2006; Gutas, 2001). This research also presents a more systematic and documented mapping of actors and works that connect Andalusia and Nusantara.

The main objective of this research is to identify and analyze the process of Islamic intellectual transfer from Andalusia to Nusantara through mapping transmission paths, figures, and works. The research also aims to demonstrate how ideas from the Western Islamic world were not only transmitted but also transformed in the local context unique to Nusantara (Makdisi, 1981; Hodgson, 1974; Azra, 2004). Thus, this article aims to enrich the literature on the dynamics of cross-regional Islamic scholarship.

2. Method

Research Approach

This research uses a historical qualitative approach with an emphasis on the study of Islamic intellectual historiography. This approach enables the exploration of the process of knowledge transfer from Andalusia to Nusantara through historical traces, manuscripts, ulama biographies, and the transformation of Islamic thought in a socio cultural context. This method was chosen because it enables the holistic and interpretive reconstruction of past events, particularly in understanding the dynamics

of thought and the role of ulama as agents of intellectual transfer (Howell & Prevenier, 2001; Creswell, 2014; Ricoeur, 1976). This approach was chosen because it enables the reconstruction of past events holistically and interpretatively, particularly in examining the dynamics of thought and the ulama network as agents of intellectual transfer (Gutas, 2001; Zaman, 2002; Berkey, 2003).

Type of Research

This type of research is an explorative descriptive study. The aim is to describe and explain the process and mechanism of knowledge transfer from classical Islamic centers in Andalusia to the Nusantara region through a complex and multi-layered intellectual network (Makdisi, 1981; Azra, 2004; Lapidus, 2002).

Data Source

Primary Data

- a. Classic Islamic manuscripts from Andalusia, the Middle East, India, and the archipelago.
- b. Biographies and works of prominent scholars such as Ibn Rushd, Al-Ghazali, Shah Waliullah, Hamzah Fansuri, and Kyai Shaleh Darat.
- c. Historical documents such as travel records, Islamic boarding school manuscripts, and Islamic letters kept in Islamic manuscript libraries and institutions (e.g., Leiden, British Library, Aceh Manuscript Center).

Secondary Data

- a. Academic books and journal articles that discuss Islamic civilization, scholarly networks, and intellectual development in the classical Islamic world and the Nusantara (Azra, 2004; Ricklefs, 2006; Laffan, 2011).
- b. Theoretical literature on diffusion of knowledge and Islamic cosmopolitanism (Rogers, 2003; Appadurai, 1996; Eickelman & Piscatori, 1996).

Data Collection Technique

Data collection techniques are done through:

- a. Library research: the collection and study of relevant classical texts and modern works.
- b. Manuscript documentation: content analysis and historical interpretation of texts that represent the process of knowledge transfer.
- c. Tracing intellectual networks: genealogical and geographical mapping of the transmission of Islamic ideas.

Data Analysis Technique

The data was analyzed using content analysis and historical hermeneutics approaches. The following analysis techniques were used:

Content Analysis

- a. Used to examine the narrative structure, key terms, and ideological content in the works of scholars.
- b. Helps to identify key themes that show the interconnectedness of thought between Andalusia and Nusantara (Krippendorff, 2004; Neuendorf, 2017).

Hermeneutic Analysis

- a. Used to understand the historical context, symbolic meanings, and transformation of thought across time and space (Ricoeur, 1976; Gadamer, 1975).
- b. This technique facilitates in depth interpretation of texts, considering both the author's time horizon and the reader's context, especially in tafsir, fiqh, and Sufism studies

Intellectual Network Mapping

- a. Used to construct a flowchart of intellectual transfer based on teacher-student relationships, transmission of works, and routes of scholarly journeys.
- b. This is illustrated through the genealogy of the scientific sanad and the intellectual journey of scholars from Andalusia to the Middle East and ultimately to the archipelago (Zaman, 2002; Azra, 2004; El-Rouayheb, 2015).

Data Validation and Limitations of the Method

To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, triangulation of sources will be employed. This involves cross-referencing historical manuscripts, biographies, and academic literature to confirm the consistency of the findings. Member checks will be conducted by consulting scholars in the field of Islamic intellectual history to verify interpretations of the data. The use of primary and secondary sources will also help ensure that the research provides a balanced and comprehensive perspective.

However, there are certain limitations to this method. The availability of sources might pose a challenge, as some manuscripts and historical documents are either inaccessible or incomplete, especially in the context of Islamic intellectual transmission. Furthermore, the interpretation of historical texts is subject to the biases of both the authors and translators, which may influence the overall analysis. Despite these challenges, the combined use of content analysis, historical hermeneutics, and intellectual network mapping provides a robust framework for analyzing the intellectual transfer from Andalusia to the Nusantara region.

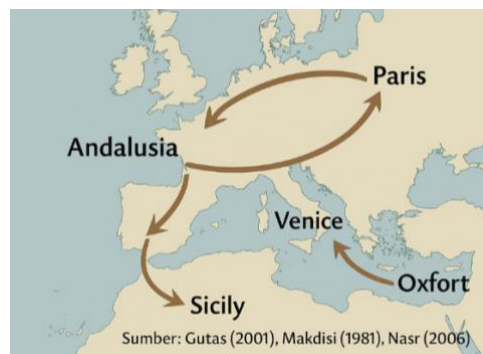
3. Result & Discussion

Historical Traces of Andalusia as a Starting Point for Knowledge Transfer

Andalusia played a pivotal role in the development of Western Islamic civilization, serving as the gateway for Islamic science to enter Europe. Cities like Córdoba, Seville, and Granada became intellectual centers, hosting the works of Greek philosophers that were translated and further developed by Muslim thinkers such as Ibn Rushd and Ibn Tufail (Gutas, 2001; Makdisi, 1981; Nasr, 2006). Andalusia was a multicultural region where Islamic science flourished alongside other fields such as medicine, astronomy, and philosophy, creating an intellectual and cultural nexus that greatly influenced subsequent developments in the Islamic world.

The spread of knowledge from Andalusia to the East continued through nodes of civilization such as Cairo and Baghdad. Scholars and students brought Andalusian works in the form of manuscripts that were copied and taught in significant madrasas throughout the Islamic world (El-Rouayheb, 2015; Berkey, 2003; Hodgson, 1974). This knowledge developed and transformed, adapting to the local context while maintaining its original epistemological framework.

In this context, Andalusia served not only as a geographical starting point but also as a conceptual one for the transfer of knowledge. Philosophy, jurisprudence, and Sufism are three pillars often found in classical manuscripts that trace their origins to Andalusia (Nasr, 2006; Zaman, 2002; Ali, 2018). The traces of Ibn Rushd's thought, for example, echoed in the tafsirs and theological works of Indian and Nusantara scholars.



Sources: Gutas (2001), Makdisi (1981), Nasr (2006)
The Spread of Islamic Science from Andalusia

Scholars' Intellectual Network as a Medium of Knowledge Transfer

The process of knowledge transfer from Andalusia to the Archipelago was not direct. However, it took place through a network of scholars formed in the trajectory of hajj, trade, and religious studies. Nusantara scholars, such as Sheikh Yusuf al-Makassari and Nuruddin ar-Raniri, are examples of figures who studied in Middle Eastern scholarly centers before returning to their homeland and disseminating the knowledge they gained (Azra, 2004; Johns, 1993; Feener, 2007).

This chain of knowledge forms what is referred to as an "intellectual sanad", which is the transmission of knowledge through a systemized teacher-student line. Scholars often mention the name of the teacher and the origin of the institution where they studied in their works as a form of scientific legitimacy (Zaman, 2002; Voll, 1994; Laffan, 2011). In this way, the intellectual sanad acted as a formal pathway for the dissemination of Andalusian thought to the Nusantara, where it was further integrated into local scholarly traditions.

Among these networks, the role of cities such as Cairo, Istanbul, and Delhi was particularly significant as connecting points between the West and the Islamic East. The Nusantara scholars who studied in these cities brought with them doctrines and methods of thought derived from the Andalusian tradition, albeit with contextual adjustments (Ricklefs, 2006; El-Rouayheb, 2015; Lapidus, 2002).

Table 2. Genealogy of Islamic Scholars and Intellectual Paths from West to East

Nusantara Ulama	Master Teacher	Study Location	Origin of Science Tradition
Sheikh Yusuf Makassar	Ibrahim al-Kurani	Mecca, Istanbul	Ottoman & Andalusian traditions
Nuruddin ar-Raniri	Qadhi Abu al-Ma'ali	Gujarat, India	The Shafi'i Tradition of Jurisprudence & Sufism
Hamzah Fansuri	Sufi scholars in Gujarat	India, Persia	Ibn Arabi's Tradition of Sufism
Kyai Shaleh Darat	Mecca	Mecca	The tradition of al-Ghazali

Source: Azra (2004), Zaman (2002), Laffan (2011)

Transformation of Andalusian Ideas in the Local Context of the Archipelago

The scientific ideas originating in Andalusia were modified when they arrived in the Archipelago. For example, Ibn Rushd's Aristotelian-based philosophical ideas did not arrive in their original form but were mystified and interpreted through hermeneutic methods by scholars like Hamzah Fansuri and Syamsuddin al-Sumatrani (Feener, 2007; Nasr, 2006; Laffan, 2011).

Concepts such as *ijtihad*, *ta'wil*, and *hikmah*, which originated from Andalusian traditions, were integrated into the local cultural framework. In this context, Nusantara scholars merged these ideas with the remaining Hindu-Buddhist influences on society (Johns, 1993; Ricklefs, 2006; Azra, 2004). This process demonstrates that there is a creative dynamic in the reception of knowledge, rather than mere repetition.

This local adaptation is also evident in the language used. Many works were written in the form of Malay poems or Javanese songs to facilitate dissemination. This

shows that the transformation of knowledge is not only in the content, but also in the medium and communication strategies (Laffan, 2011; Voll, 1994; Feener, 2007).

The Role of Manuscripts as a Medium of Intellectual Transfer

Manuscripts were the primary means of transferring knowledge from Andalusia to Nusantara. The manuscripts include works of tafsir, fiqh, akidah, and tasawwuf, which became teaching materials in traditional Islamic educational institutions such as pesantren and surau (Makdisi, 1981; Gutas, 2001; Azra, 2004). The existence of these texts proves the transregional path traveled by Islamic science.

Some texts, such as al-Ghazali's *Ihya Ulum al-Din*, although of Persian origin, entered the archipelago through channels that also contained Andalusian thought because they were filtered by scholars who studied Ibn Rushd or Ibn Arabi (Zaman, 2002; Berkey, 2003; Laffan, 2011). In Javanese Islamic boarding schools, this work was then translated and retranslated in the local language, as was done by Kyai Saleh Darat (Ricklefs, 2006; Feener, 2007; Azra, 2004).



Sources: Berkey (2003), Zaman (2002), Feener (2007)

Manuscript of *Ihya Ulumuddin* Collection of Pesantren in Java

Historical and Conceptual Implications for Islamic Identity of the Archipelago

Historical and Conceptual Implications for Islamic Identity of the Archipelago. The results of this study show that Islam in the Archipelago is not a separate entity from global dynamics; rather, it is an integral part of the broader intellectual currents of the Islamic world. Andalusian thought internalized within the local Islamic

tradition demonstrates the seamless integration of Islamic universality with cultural locality (Nasr, 2006; Appadurai, 1996; Eickelman, 1996).

This connectivity reinforces the narrative that cross cultural interactions shape Islam in the Archipelago, rather than being solely the result of local da'wah. This provides a strong argument for understanding Islam Nusantara as a form of "cosmopolitan Islam" that is open, dynamic, and intellectually based (Azra, 2004; Laffan, 2011; Feener, 2007).

With a more detailed mapping of the network of scholars and manuscripts used, a new historiographical basis can be built that is more just and inclusive, erasing the dichotomy between center and periphery in Islamic history (El-Rouayheb, 2015; Voll, 1994; Said, 1979).

4. Conclusion

This research found that the process of intellectual transfer from Andalusia to the Archipelago occurred through a complex transnational path, encompassing various nodes of Islamic civilization, including Cairo, Baghdad, Delhi, and Mecca. This pathway involved not only the physical transfer of manuscripts and scholars but also the transmission of ideas and methodologies that formed the intellectual foundation of Islamic scholarship in the Archipelago. The leading actors in this process were scholars who studied abroad and became links between classical Islamic intellectual heritage and the local community, such as Hamzah Fansuri, Nuruddin ar-Raniri, and Sheikh Yusuf al-Makassari. They brought with them the ideas of philosophy, Sufism, and Islamic law that were initially developed in Andalusia, then modified and adapted to the local context through the language, symbols, and education systems of pesantren.

A key finding of this research is that Islam in the Archipelago did not develop in isolation or as a purely local phenomenon, but rather resulted from a long process of active and selective transfer of global knowledge. Manuscripts like *Ihya Ulumuddin*, which were influenced by both Andalusian philosophy and Eastern Sufism, serve as concrete evidence of this intellectual interconnection. Thus, this research affirms the position of Islam Nusantara as an integral part of the world Islamic civilization, offering a new perspective in Islamic historiography that is inclusive, cosmopolitan, and rooted in intellectual interconnectivity. This research also fills a significant gap in the study of intellectual relations between the Western and Eastern Islamic worlds, which have historically received limited attention in global Islamic studies.

While this study offers valuable insights into the transfer of knowledge from Andalusia to the Archipelago, it is important to acknowledge certain limitations and highlight future research opportunities. The research primarily relies on manuscript sources and historical records, which may not fully capture the nuances of intellectual

exchanges, especially those that occurred outside the formal structures of scholarly institutions. Future research could explore other forms of intellectual transmission, such as oral traditions or informal networks, which may have played a significant role in the spread of ideas. Additionally, further comparative studies between different regions within the Archipelago and other parts of the Islamic world could shed light on regional variations in the adaptation of Andalusian thought.

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