

Original Research

The Essence of Intentions in Constructing Agency in the Indonesian Muslim Intellectual Community

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ABSTRACT

Background

The Institute for the Study of Islamic Thought and Civilization (INSISTS) is an Indonesian Muslim intellectual organization with agents envisioning the future through writing. From 2003 to 2023, INSISTS agents conducted various activities such as studies, lectures, and writing about various topics continually associated with the Islamic worldview. Despite the fact that each agent's capacity is different, they act under a shared vision, specifically spreading Islamic ideas and forming Islamic civilization. Each agent has the intention to change the world around him through writing.

Objective

This paper seeks to examine the intention to imagine whether the future is the main component that forms its agency or it is a component that complements other agency's components, such as cultural construction and power relations.

Methodology

This paper is an ethnographic study of the Jakarta INSISTS community, including participants' observation, in-depth interviews, and researchers' involvement in joined discussions. As a qualitative research method, this paper also uses a literature study on books written by INSISTS agents.

Conclusion

This paper shows the capacity of intention to envision that the future is important and has a significant impact on the behavior of everyday agents in spreading Islamic thought. The intention is formed from religious memory, cultural memory, causality, cause and the effect affecting the agent and the agent's focus on intellectual work such as writing books and organizing in the spirit of *ukhuwah Islamiyah* or Islamic brotherhood. They also shape this intentional ability with innovation to produce new knowledge through exploratory studies. The writings of INSISTS agents are motivated to carry out synergy between agents in the form of spreading Islamic thought as the basic foundation of the formation of Islamic civilization. Writing books is an example of how agents synergize for the INSISTS community.

Keywords

Intention; Agency; Muslim intellectual; INSISTS.

INTRODUCTION

Before the emergence of INSISTS in 2003, various prominent Islamic organizations such as Nahdlatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah, etc. had been consistently involved in spreading Islamic teachings in Indonesia since the early 20th century. However, with the development of liberal Islamic thought, especially the Liberal Islam Network or Jaringan Islam Liberal (JIL) which was formed on March 9, 2001, there is a shortage of young intellectual organizations that focus academically and criticize Islamic liberalism. Driven by the spirit of intellectual proselytizing against liberal thought, a group of

young Indonesian intellectuals studying at the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC) in Malaysia took the initiative to get involved in criticizing the thought of Islamic liberalism especially that brought about by the JIL group.

The writings and lectures of INSISTS agents countering liberal Islamic thought have had varying degrees of influence in Indonesia. While there may not be a direct correlation, the decision of the Indonesian Ulema Council (Majelis Ulama Indonesia or MUI) to issue a fatwa declaring pluralism, liberalism, and secularism—as forbidden in 2005—cannot be detached from the thoughts and ac-

tions of INSISTS agents. Even though INSISTS has criticized JIL in its various writings, so far there has been no visible counter criticism from the JIL group towards INSISTS in the form of writing in the mass media or publishing books.

Since its establishment in March 2003 in Segambut, Malaysia, the intellectual community of the Institute for the Study of Islamic Thought and Civilization (INSISTS) has been motivated in the future to conduct various activities to spread Islamic thought through the publication of books.¹ The books they write are generally related to harsh criticism of liberalism by several Muslim intellectuals influenced by Western thought. The synergy between agents against liberalism is caused by the cognitive and emotional capacities of intention within each agent. This capacity is in the form of the ability to imagine a future manifested in inter-agency synergies in various community activities, including what is the focus of this paper's study in publishing books.

This means that the capacity of intention in the form of imagining the future is a cognitive and emotional capacity, which directs the agent toward a goal mutually agreed upon by the intellectual community. What do agents guess? The agents imagine the construction of Islamic civilization again as it once existed in the past, which was formed by the presence of Muslim individuals who have an Islamic view of life or use an Islamic worldview. This image has been present since the beginning of these actors coming together to form INSISTS and has been maintained until this day. The vision of the Islamic civilization shapes how they think, feel, and consider things. On social media, the vision of Islamic civilization also guides how they post content, comment, or share things with the public.

Studies related to intentions until now have discussed whether intentions are the central component in constructing an agency. According to Ortner, intentional capacity is one of the three components of agency formation: intention, cultural construction, and power relations. These three things are interrelated and cannot be separated; however, some are dominant over others. Experts such as Ortner, Ahaern, Duranti, and Giddens believe that intention is not a central component of agency formation. The intention is not the most critical component that forms the agent's capacity to change the world around the agents. For example, Anthony Giddens believes that agency never occurs by itself but it is part of a routine process in human behavior. The group of words called 'routine process' is related to the things outside of human beings, namely how the cultural construction and power relations are connected with these agents.

Other experts see that intention as a critical, central, or main component in agency formation. Taylor and Sewell are two theorists who see that the definition of agency is always related to the future or "*always project forward*" in actively motivated ways, not from routine practices as meant by Giddens. The essence of intention is understood because the agent's struggle in changing the world around the agents and the various 'transactions' into it can only occur if there is an ability directed forward cognitively or emotionally. These abilities include desiring, acting creatively, understanding, finding, judging, or imagining something. Because of that, these intentional abilities, influence the agent's behaviour

to conduct collective projects with other agents.

In this paper, the author examines the 'collective project' conducted by INSISTS agents in the form of writing, then looking at the intentions, which are formed so that these actions can be emerged. Furthermore, the author wanted to see whether the intention is to envision the future and he found that this ethnographic research is a central component that influences so that there would be a synergistic interaction between these agents. Practically, the ability to imagine the future that Islamic civilization will be realized again by Muslim individuals with an Islamic worldview. The vision of the future is the deepest motivation that makes agents want to come together, strive together, act creatively, coordinate actions, and in short, conduct collective projects since INSISTS was founded in 2003 until early 2023, when this article was written.

The ethnographic research data was obtained through participant observation and in-depth interviews with intellectual subjects. According to Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995), ethnographic research looks at the daily life of the people or groups studied.² As an ethnographer, the author enters research settings, and meetings, attends various events, and writes notes and impressions experienced during the immersions. While writing, he writes some of the keywords and phrases in the field. All field findings are in the field notes. As an anthropologist, writing field notes is an essential part of the research, as it is the tradition in anthropological ethnographic research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are two spectrum views of how intention is a central component for constructing agencies. That is the continuation of the theoretical practice debate. Briefly, theory of practice emerged in social theory as a response to the theoretical landscape of the 1970s, which was dominated by three main paradigms, namely interpretive or symbolic or "subjectivist" anthropology represented by Clifford Geertz; Marxist or "objectivist" political economy represented by Eric Wolf; and French structuralism or "structuralist" represented by Claude Levi-Strauss.^{3(p. 1)} The debate subsequently developed in the 1970s and 1980s by raising various terms such as praxis, action, interaction, activity, experience, performance, and a collection of words that focused on actors such as agent, actor, person, self, individual, and subject.^{3(p. 1)} Afterward, these terms then manifested themselves in the emergence of agency in practice theory.

The three significant paradigms above are generally included in theories of constraints which see that human behavior is shaped, molded, regulated, and defined by social and cultural forces and formations formed by culture, mental structure, and capitalism. However, paying attention to human behavior by using only constraint theory without regard to the human agency is problematic. To overcome this gap, three main areas related to the power shifting emerged, such as Williams, Foucault, and Scott; historical turns, such as the Wolf, Geertz, and Cohn studies; as well as the field of reinterpretation of culture as seen in the studies of Sahlins, Ortner, and Sewell.^{3(p. 4-18)} The emergence of various studies was then conceptualized by multiple experts, one of which was Ortner, who defined agency as formed from three components: intention, cultural con-

struction, and power relations.^{3(p.134)} The author uses the agency construction on these three components to see how far the central role of intention can be considered as a main component in the agencies.

As a hypothesis, the intention to imagine the future is something major to the capacity of an agent, which is then supported by other components and shapes the actions of agents within the INSISTS intellectual community.

According to Ortner,³ the intention component is related to highly conscious plots, plans, and schemes; some of the more indefinite goals, objectives, ideals, desires, wants, and needs that are still profoundly buried or quite basic. Intention includes all ways or states (cognitive and emotional) directed toward a goal.^{3(p.134-136)} Cognitively, intention can have intellectual processes such as perception, attention, knowledge formation, memory, understanding, and how existing knowledge is used to discover new knowledge. Meanwhile, emotionally, intention can include psychological states related to thoughts, feelings, pleasure or displeasure, mood, personality, disposition, creativity, and motivation. Based on other theorists such as Sewell, Ahaern, and Giddens, Ortner has the following view: the agency is not only built by intention but also built culturally in specific and varied forms and is closely related to power and inequality.^{3(p.136)}

The question to be answered in this paper is whether the intention to envision the future is a central component in forming agency or is it a component that complements other elements such as cultural construction or power relations. In this regard, we will discuss the capacity of the four intellectual agents and founders of INSISTS^a namely Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, Adian Husaini, Ugi Suharto, as well as Syamsuddin Arif.¹ The four of them are the founders of INSISTS and are individuals who, since their inception in 2003, have remained active in INSISTS. The selection of these four names is purely purposive as a sample to see how intention works within the agency.

In this paper, intentions has been discussed in two domains: cognitive and emotional. In the cognitive domain, the three important things: religious, cultural memory, and causality memory. Causality memory is defined as ‘memory that is causal in nature which influences the agent himself which in turn influences the agent’s actions.’ Second, the focus of attention consists of focusing on the academic realm, non-academic domains, and books written by agents. Third, the formation of knowledge includes knowledge innovation and future ideas. Meanwhile, in the emotional realm, we will discuss three things: individual personality, personal desires, and the meaning of life. An explanation of the cognitive and emotional side is to determine how the agent directs these various conditions toward the goal of a change intended by the agent.

DISCUSSION

Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi’s Intention

The religious and cultural memory of Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi’s

agent was formed as a Muslim who grew up in a modern pesantren (Islamic boarding school) which intends to breakthroughs through Islamic education and *da’wah* in Indonesia. Hamid Fahmy is the 9th child of KH. Imam Zarkasyi is a cleric and the founder of Pondok Modern Gontor, a famous Islamic boarding school in Indonesia. Hamid is also an alumnus and teacher at Gontor. He is also a Sunni modernist Muslim with experience studying in Indonesia (PM. Gontor and ISID, Ponorogo), Pakistan (The University of Punjab, Lahore), the UK (University of Birmingham, UK), and Malaysia (ISTAC, Kuala Lumpur). One of Hamid’s causal memories, ‘cause-and-effect memories’, is the memory of his father.⁴ When Hamid was in the process of completing his thesis in Pakistan on the ‘Theory of Education of Imam Al Ghazali’, he felt as if his late father was leading him through dreams or memories of conversations between him and his father. Religious, cultural memory and causality memory are part of forming his cognition and emotions, which affect how he acts.

As an intellectual, Hamid Fahmy focuses on studying the thoughts of Al Ghazali, Ibn Taimiyyah, and Al Attas. He conducted intensive studies in Pakistan and Malaysia for master’s and doctoral programs. As for Al Attas’s thoughts, he developed while in Malaysia and after returning to Indonesia. In that area, Hamid is also active as the person in charge of the Gontor Ulama Training Program (Program Kaderisasi Ulama or PKU), which is a ‘bridge’ for the education of prospective intellectuals and scholars. The influence of the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilizations (ISTAC) campus made him establish Center For Islamic And Occidental Studies (CIOS) at Darussalam Gontor University (formerly named ‘ISID’, Darussalam Islamic Studies Institute). After serving as Deputy Chancellor for academics, Hamid became Professor and Chancellor of Darussalam Gontor University (Universitas Darussalam or Unida). Academically, attention to his specialization of study runs personally and communally, in the sense that Hamid does not only write on his behalf but also writes collaboratively with his colleagues and students. For instance, the article “*Understanding ‘God as Reality’: Analysis of the Ontological Approach in the Tradition of Islamic Philosophy and Sufism*”.⁵

In the non-academic realm, Hamid has focused his attention as Director of INSISTS since 2003 and Chairman of the Indonesian Young Intellectual and Ulama Council (MIUMI) since 2012. As director of INSISTS, Hamid drives the wheels of the organization in the realm of principles and management by the executive director and his team. Since its inception until now, Hamid has not attended every day at the INSISTS office but has coordinated online and been present as a speaker at certain events. His work as a lecturer and vice-chancellor and now as Unida’s chancellor is very busy. Sometimes he comes from Ponorogo to Jakarta simultaneously for several activities, but sometimes it’s only for the INSISTS event, and he returns home to Ponorogo. As chairman of MIUMI, Hamid oversees young intellectuals and scholars from various Islamic organizations and affiliations. He is assisted by several of his colleagues at INSISTS and a fellow Gontor alumnus and famous preacher, Bachtiar Nasir, who is the general secretary of

a. Apart from these four names, other young figures involved in the founding of INSISTS are Adnin Armas, Anis Malik Thoha, Nirwan Syafrin Manurung, Henri Salahuddin, and Muhammad Arifin Ismail.

MIUMI. Since its inception, MIUMI has conducted research activities and seminars, and not infrequently; its activists have also been involved in resistance movements against government policies that are considered wrong.

Hamid is concerned with various problems of Islamic thought, which are influenced by Western thought. Because of this, he has written multiple articles in the mass media and published them entitled *Misykat* (2012).⁶ The book consists of two chapters, namely, de-westernization and deliberalization. In the first chapter, Hamid discusses various themes such as West, East, God, Religion, intelligence and faith, religious philosophy, iconoclasm, positioning orientalist, humanism, atheism, as well as deprivatization, dualism, and Averroism. Whereas in the deliberalization chapter, he discusses various themes such as liberal ideology and theology, from the World Trade Center (WTC) to liberalization, the evil of liberalism, truth, moderate problems, pluralism and Islam, pluralism and the church, regarding tolerance, tolerance without pluralism, exclusive and inclusive, moderate, radical and liberals. He also discusses secularism and liberalism, freedom to insult, blasphemy, the desacralization of texts, and the Qur'an honoring mistakes and burning the Qur'an, suing the shari'a, shari'a, and public reason, equality, "fe-minus" ("criticism for feminism"), and clash of worldviews. Hamid is also obsessed with worldview issues, motivating him to discuss various topics starting from worldview.

Hamid formed his knowledge through various intensive studies, especially the thoughts of Imam Al Ghazali, concerning causality in the views of the high priest. These findings are rare and novel in the study of Al Ghazali's thought. He can envision the future of the formation of Islamic civilization based on an Islamic worldview as Islam once triumphed in past cultures. As for the CIOS institute, Darussalam Gontor University, he envisions it as a think tank for studies on Islam and the West. Even so, INSISTS is expected to become a prominent and influential think tank in Indonesia. Meanwhile, he envisions MIUMI as a forum for the struggle of Indonesian Muslim scholars and intellectuals who are critical and constructive.

The ability to imagine the future as an intention can also be seen in the emotional realm. Emotion, as explained above, is a part of intention other than cognition. In the emotional sphere, which is the second realm of intention, Hamid is seen as a person who is charismatic, calm, organized, initiative, motivated, critical and dares to be different. The character of 'dare to be different' is even 'proclaimed' on the cover of *Misykat* (2012),⁶ "...*Since 2003 he has been actively conducting workshops on Islamic thought which seeks to be critical of the liberalization program of Islamic thought...He criticizes things people appreciate and appreciates concepts of traditional Islam that people have forgotten*".⁶ He explained many were angry and protested at his writing, but those who liked it more. Hamid has a high desire for the Islamic worldview to spread more widely; he also wanted his writing to be appreciated and developed into a more in-depth and serious study. His choice to write scientifically popularly is so that his writing can help readers behave and look at people's problems

more easily. Regarding the meaning of life, Hamid realizes that all the good that comes to him is expected to make him more grateful to Allah (SWT). Hamid stated in *Misykat* that all good comments about his writings are expected to increase his gratitude and become goodness that is rewarded.^{6(p.18)}

Adian Husaini's Intention

Adian Husaini was widely known as a journalist and became an Islamic thinker. In *Wajah Peradaban Barat* [Faces of Western Civilization] written by Husaini,⁷ Wan Mohd Nor Wan Daud wrote a preface and called Adian a 'young Muslim scholar' while Indonesian scholar Yudi Latif called Adian a few of the young Islamic thinkers who understand occidentalism broadly.⁷ Adian was born in Bojonegoro, East Java, on December 17, 1965. His religious and cultural memory is as a DDII activist (currently the Chairman), having served as the Central Executive of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) and Deputy Chair of the Indonesian Young Intellectual and Ulema Council (MIUMI). Adian had been a journalist for the 'Muslim newspaper' *Republika* and had been active in the Indonesian Committee for World Islamic Solidarity (KISDI), a Muslim organization founded by an Islamic figure, Mohammad Natsir. KISDI, which was critical of the West and called for concern for the plight of Muslims in various countries, participated in raising money to help them. Adian's interest in KISDI is because he likes "*practical movements that are beneficial to the ummah*".^{8(p.209)} Adian was also active as a member of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) while studying at the Bogor Agricultural Institute (IPB), but left due to differences of opinion in the development of *da'wah* in Indonesia.^{8(p.136-137)} When he continued his studies at ISTAC^b, Adian was asked by Wan Daud to 'reduce activism and increase intellectualism'^c; however, according to Adian, activism still needed to be maintained for specific reasons. This memory is closely related to how he can imagine the future of Islam, which moves from the caliphate movement to intellectualism.

Adian causality memory can be explained as follows. At first, Adian was known as a journalist who, at the invitation of Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, then continued his doctoral studies at ISTAC Malaysia. Initially, Adian planned to continue his PhD in Judaism in the United States on the recommendation of a professor in Indonesia. Still, several Islamic figures, colleagues, and his younger brother (Nuim Hidayat) did not agree with this plan, citing concerns that there would be a change of mind after returning to Indonesia.⁸ The dream then failed. Zarkasyi⁶ finally invited Adian to study at ISTAC. After graduating with his doctoral degree at ISTAC, Adian developed his school into a pesantren with an ISTAC-style curriculum focused on producing young Muslim thinkers and writers. Some of the teachers are also taken from INSISTS. According to him, the manuscript of Adian's book, *Mewujudkan Indonesia Adil dan Beradab* [Realizing a Just and Civilized Indonesia] (2015), was written long ago. It was only completed during his visit to Sudan (September 2015). At that time, Adian accompanied his son to study at the African International University. That moment of causality influenced him to 'develop and finalize the script'.

b. At that time Al Attas and Wan Daud were no longer active as lecturers at ISTAC Malaysia.

c. I once heard this word from Adian Husaini while attending a seminar session held at a zoom meeting session.

Adian's focus on the academic realm is zigzag. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in veterinary medicine at Institut Pertanian Bogor (IPB), then a master's degree in international relations at Jayabaya University, and a doctorate in Islamic civilization at ISTAC Malaysia. Currently, Adian is active as Chair of the UIKA Bogor Doctoral Study Program writes more about Islamic thought and society, and writes popular articles daily. Previously, Adian had taught 'Islamic worldview' courses at the Master Program of the Islam and Middle East Program at the University of Indonesia. However, he makes heavy themes such as thought and civilization into light reading to be enjoyed.

Adian's position, who dared to adopt unwanted thoughts among mainstream Muslim intellectuals, made him unpopular, especially among so-called 'moderates', especially liberals. Adian's concern after graduating from ISTAC was to develop Al Attas' thoughts on various themes. The results of his research for three months (August-October 2014) at the Center for Advanced Studies on Islam, Science, and Civilization, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (CASIS-UTM) were developed into a book, *Mewujudkan Indonesia Adil dan Beradab*.⁹ The book discusses the concept of *adab* and *ta'dib* Al Attas. The *ta'dib* idea presented by Al Attas at an international seminar in Mecca (1977) resulted in a global movement of 'Islamization of contemporary science' in various Islamic worlds, including at Universitas Ibn Khaldun (UIKA) Bogor (1983) by UIKA Chancellor Prof. A.M. Saefuddin. The concept of *ta'dib* is based on the relationship of three key words: *adab*, justice, and wisdom; wisdom gives birth to *adab*, and if *adab* is upheld, *al-'adalah* (justice) will be realized, namely a condition where everything is in its proper place according to the dignity determined by Allah.^{9(p. 7)}

Adian has a particular interest and makes Al Attas' thoughts a 'solid frame' for understanding the challenges of contemporary thinking in the Islamic world and Indonesia.^{8(p. 13)} According to Adian, Al Attas' thoughts are like providing a 'systematic summary' of the Islamic ideas of Islamic figures and thinkers in Indonesia, such as Haji Agus Salim, KH. Hasyim Asy'ari, KH. Wahid Hasyim, Mohammad Natsir, Hamka, and Ki Bagus Hadikoemo. Al Attas's thoughts on *adab* are also considered 'very important and strategic' to be applied in state life and Indonesian education. On the one hand, it is being hit by extreme thoughts that view the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia, NKRI) as a disbelieving country, and on the other hand, extremes following secularism and liberalism.^{9(p. 8-9)} In the non-academic realm, Adian Husaini, familiar as the Founder of INSISTS, is the 'midwife' for the birth of INSISTS, said Syamsuddin Arif.^d He is also the Chairman of DDII. Adian was studying the thoughts of M. Natsir and Muslim leaders from Masyumi political party. In addition, he is also a regular speaker at various Islamic forums.

Adian's attention to Islamic thoughts and movements has kept him passionate about writing. While studying at ISTAC, Adian took the time to collect data and facts related to the 'bad face' of Western civilization and then wrote them down in a thick book entitled *Wajah Peradaban Barat* (2005).⁷ The book consists of three parts. The first part, 'From confusion to death,' consists

of several articles, namely confusion about liberalism, why did the West become Secular-Liberal? Affair with Zionism, The End of History, or 'The End of The West?' The second part discusses The Clash of Civilizations: Between Facts and Political Scenarios; what's wrong with Bernard Lewis? Some mythologies about Islam, trauma, and Islamophobia, paradoxes about 'terrorism' and 'fundamentalism,' Islam-West: A Permanent Confrontation. At the same time, the third part discusses several topics: the invasion of the West in Islamic thought (secularism, hermeneutics and the study of the Qur'an, and religious pluralism) and lessons from cases of Muslim-Christian conflict in Indonesia.

Opening the first chapter, Adian cites Al Attas' opinion that the biggest problem for humanity today is the hegemony and domination of Western secular scholarship, which leads to the destruction of society. According to the West, the fundamental truths of religion are seen as merely theoretical, absolute truths are negated, and relative values are accepted. The consequence is the negation of God and the hereafter and the placing of humans as the only ones who have the right to rule the world; man is finally holy, and God is humanized; Various humanitarian problems arise as a result of the confusion of values.^{7(p. 3)} According to GIP publishers, this book describes Western civilization as 'peeling an onion,' one by one; the cloves are peeled from the outside but go to the deepest core and turn out to be nothing. This book gives guidance on which layer of skin the onion will hurt the eyes and at which layer the peeling should be stopped.^{9(p. 9)}

Wan Mohd Nor Wan Daud gave Adian his appreciation, input, and 'subtle criticism.' He writes that Adian's books, like his other books, are "full of interesting facts" and are quoted more carefully from sources that reflect the history of Western thought and culture. Most of these sources are the treasures of the ISTAC library, most of which were selected by Al Attas and Wan Daud. This 'young scholar' book was written with a deep sense of concern for the various challenges faced by Indonesian Muslims. However, Wan Daud suggested that Adian make a deeper analysis of the facts, "... it would not be wrong for a somewhat mature reader to ask the author for a deeper analysis of the meaning of the facts about Western thought and civilization at that time. And with current developments in the West and Islamic countries".^{9(p. 17)} Wan Daud also suggested that "Muslim scholars and leaders should not only view Western plans and actions towards Islam negatively; but positively. I mean, we have to study how the West has succeeded in building hundreds of higher learning institutions that excel in fields unrelated to their religion, language, and culture. In contrast, during these two centuries, Muslims still have not attempted to build any institutions that stand with those in the West, even in fields closely related to their religion, history, and culture".^{9(p. 17)}

In the formation of knowledge, knowledge innovation appears quite a lot, especially in writing. Adian is prolific in writing scientific-popular articles and books. He sometimes makes up a 'new term' for something he doesn't like. Adian tends to explain the object of his writing at length, after which he provides a 'touch' and conclusion. In terms of future ideas, Adian has a statement regarding the Islamic campus as the campus of the future. He doesn't hesitate to say that the Islamic education system he manag-

d. The author's interview with Syamsuddin Arif in Ciputat, South Tangerang, Banten. 2022.

es now is the best, and he invites many people to become students or support him. He also views Indonesia as fair and civilized using the perspective of Al Attas. As an activist with solid Islamic aspirations, Adian Husaini has strong beliefs about the future of the Islamization of the archipelago. He then chose to write, educate, and preach as his way of fighting. The Islamization of the Archipelago must be continued continuously without stopping from the past until now and in the future.^{9(p. 12)} Adian believes Indonesia will become a great nation if Muslims are not forced to abandon the Islamic worldview and embrace a secular one. History proves that the massive secularization efforts by the New Order government in the 1960s-1980s produced incomplete results. There has been an enormous revival in some aspects of life, such as education.^{9(p. 11-12)}

In the emotional realm, Adian has a personality as a charismatic person who likes to tell stories, appreciate others, and share knowledge in writing. He has a strong desire for Islamic worldview thought to spread more widely. He also wants to make Attaqwa College an Indonesian campus based on the thoughts of Al Ghazali and Al Attas. His way of life was extended in journalism, and there was a tendency to shift to an Islamic thinker. However, his influence as a journalist still seems dominant over that of a thinker. He also wants to produce superior intellectuals who master Islam and the West. Indeed, Adian's book focuses more on the negative side of the West because enough people have written about the positive side of the West. Adian Husaini is currently a Muslim thinker with a journalistic style. Regarding the meaning of life, he hopes that his book will be helpful to 'those who want to benefit from it'. 'Author's Introduction' to the book *Mewujudkan Indonesia Adil dan Beradab* (2015) was completed in Khartoum on 6 October 2015.

Ugi Suharto's Intention

Ugi Suharto has a unique religious and cultural memory from other INSISTS agents. If other agents are graduates of Islamic boarding schools, Ugi is only a graduate of SMA Negeri 8 Jakarta. Still, since he was young, he has been active in Spiritual Islam, abbreviated 'Rohis'. One thing that Ugi remembers until now is when he was actively involved in a protest against the government, which banned female students from wearing headscarves (jilbab). Since then, he decided to continue his studies at a religious campus to deepen his Islam.^e Ugi also studied Islam on his own, especially while studying at IIUM and ISTAC Malaysia, and later became a student of Al Attas and taught at ISTAC. Like other INSISTS agents, Ugi is a modernist Muslim who is close to Muhammadiyah. For more than 24 years living in Malaysia and 'traveling teaching' at various universities such as University College Bahrain (UCB) and UK's Markfield Institute of Higher Education (MIHE), then returned to Bahrain and taught at Experta University and Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance (BIBF). Currently, Ugi teaches at the University of Buraimi, Sultanate of Oman.

His memory of influential matters or her causal memory related to resistance to government policy banning female students from wearing the headscarf made her interested in studying Islam more deeply in Malaysia. This resistance is indeed brave for

a high school student, let alone deciding to 'move' to neighboring Malaysia because he disagrees with the government's tendency to ban the use of headscarves for female students. Regarding books, Ugi recalled how the mutual influence between his colleagues and himself impacted writing prefaces, adding new papers before the Malaysian version of his book was printed in Indonesia. The initial plan was for the book *Nafi, Isbat, dan Kalam* to be published in an Indonesian translation in Malay. However, PIMPIM Bandung suggests that the book be added with other papers with similar themes, as well as ideas from Ismail Al 'Alam from Bentala Tamaddun Nusantara, Yogyakarta, for Ugi Suharto to provide an introduction regarding the relevance of these old writings to the current situation after two decades.^{10(p. 5-8)}

The focus of Ugi Suharto's attention on the academic field is to develop Islamic economic thought. In addition, he also teaches at various campuses in Bahrain, England, and the Sultanate of Oman. Non-academically, Ugi Suharto is the founder of INSISTS. At that time, he was the only ISTAC lecturer from Indonesia, while the other founders were postgraduate students and lecturers at IIUM (Anis Malik Thoah). He is also active as a speaker at various Sharia and Islamic economic forums. To strengthen understanding of Al Attas's thoughts, Ugi led a 'regular study' of the book *Al Attas Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam*, with most participants being the INSISTS network or those in contact with INSISTS.

Ugi Suharto's book *Nafi, Isbat, dan Kalam* (2022) is a collection of writings on heavy themes that readers hope to understand. Many are interested in reading, even making it as a reference. Structurally, the book's first part on 'Nafi' contains four chapters. The first chapter of 'Al Attas and Al Qaradawi on Islam and Secularism: A Firm Answer from the World of Contemporary Islamic Scientists' explains the etymology of secularism, the nature of secularism, the philosophy of secularism, the impact of secularism, the face of secularism, and conclusions. The second chapter, 'Central Issues in liberal Islamic Thought: The Case of Indonesia and Lessons Learned for Malaysia', contains an explanation of the roots of liberal Islamic thought, liberal Islamic thought in Indonesia, secularization, and secularism, pluralism, critical editions of the Qur'an, hermeneutics, feminism, and cover. In the third chapter, entitled 'Does the Qur'an need hermeneutics?' he explains etymology and terminology. Also, issues of 'understanding' and authenticity, interpretation, and *takwil*; Ugi rejects hermeneutics. In chapter four, he explains, 'Efforts to undermine the authority of the 'Usmani Mushaf from the past until now' describes the 'Usmani Manuscripts'.

In the second part of '*Isbat*' he explains in chapter five, 'Knowing the Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam' Chapter six, 'Islam as Din (religion) and Tamaddun (civilization): efforts to revive Islamic civilization,' explains Islam as Din, from Din to Medina, Islam as Tamaddun, and Islamic Tamaddun in Indonesia. In the seventh chapter of 'Islamic Epistemology,' he explains the definition of knowledge, sources of knowledge (sensory, reason, Al Khabar Ash Sadiq), the division of knowledge, the problem of sophism, and 'practicing' Islamic epistemology. In the eighth

e. Author interview with Ugi Suharto via email, 2022.

chapter, 'The role of writing in the transmission of hadith', Ugi explains the tradition of transmission in the *isnad*, the rule of writing hadith, the practice of student-teacher permission and references, correcting misunderstandings, the role of writing, and conclusions. The third part of 'Kalam' contains two chapters, namely chapter nine, which includes 'Discussion with Taufik Adnan Amal' and chapter ten, related to 'There are serious epistemological errors among Muslims'.¹⁰

The formation of Ugi's knowledge in terms of knowledge innovation is finding the concept of Islamic economics from Islamic figures. He is also a defender of Islamic banking, although only partially ideal. Regarding the future, he has the same idea as other INSISTS agents, namely the formation of an Islamic civilization based on an Islamic worldview. The difference is that Ugi focuses on how Islamic economics can be applied as a contemporary economic solution.

Emotionally, Ugi Suharto's¹⁰ personality is charismatic, calm, organized, initiative, motivated, and critical. He has a personal desire for the Islamic worldview to spread more widely. Ugi also wants that, along with the awareness of the JIL group that their thoughts are wrong and want to return to the right views, 'public repentance' is needed to show that they have returned to straight ideas and will not repeat such thoughts.^{10(p. 9)} According to Ugi, the book *Nafi, Isbat, dan Kalam* (2022) presents several aspects Islam emphasizes and firmly upholds by Muslim scholars and their followers. It also expresses what Islam denies from several issues that arise in the minds of some Muslims who come from views of life outside of Islam and features several discussions and debates. Again, interviews with opponents and interlocutors of the author. In the meaning of life, Ugi is grateful for publishing the books *Nafi, Isbat, and Kalam*. He hopes that his book will be helpful to readers.^{10(p. 16)}

Syamsuddin Arif's Intention

Regarding religious and cultural memory, Syamsuddin Arif has memories as an alumnus of Pondok Modern Gontor, a 'Betawi intellectual' and active as *Mustasyar* of the most prominent Muslim organization Nahdlatul Ulama or N.U. in South Jakarta. In memory of causality Syamsuddin often remembers how he initially planned to continue his education in Iran but switched to the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) until he earned a BHSc (1996). At that time, he made frequent visits to Lutfi Asyaukanie's boarding house, where was an ISTAC master's student. Syamsuddin finally read Lutfi's lecture assignments and became interested in Al Attas' figure and thoughts.⁴ Previously, Syamsuddin thought Al Attas was a 'scholar of the past' who had died because his photo had been displayed with Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jailani in a bookstore in Central Jakarta.

The relationship between Syamsuddin and Lutfi—one of the founders of the Liberal Islam Network (JIL), the 'opponent' of INSISTS—is more friendly than conflict. They don't argue direct-

ly, but if there are things that are debated, the two tend to argue indirectly in the sense of not attacking now or not being opposing thoughts. Syamsuddin likened his friendship with Lutfi to someone playing badminton, sometimes defending and sometimes smashing. Syamsuddin also planned to continue his Master's studies at Harvard University but didn't make it and chose to go to ISTAC until he passed his MA (1999) and PhD (2004). Syamsuddin has taught at IIUM and UTM Malaysia. He remembered a friend's advice for Syamsuddin to write a book for a broad audience, not just coursework papers, student discussion forums, or scientific journals.¹¹ This book was initially titled *Orientalis dan Diabolisme Pemikiran* [Orientalist and Diabolism of Thought] (GIP, 2008), which has become rare in the market, and many of his friends wanted to read the book. Finally, Syamsuddin corrected, added, and changed the title. INSISTS and PIMPIN Bandung later published the book.

The focus of Syamsuddin's attention academically is on the study of Ibn Sina, a well-known philosopher who in Indonesia has become a reference regarding the progress of Muslim intellectuals. He also developed the Al Attas concept. Syamsuddin also teaches at Darussalam Gontor University and UIKA Bogor.^f Meanwhile, in the non-academic realm, Syamsuddin is the Founder of INSISTS, and also *Mustasyar* (expert board) of the largest Islamic mass organization in Indonesia, Nahdlatul Ulama for the South Jakarta area, as well as a speaker at various Islamic forums. He was also the Executive Director of INSISTS, which Ismail Al 'Alam said opened INSISTS' extensive network with different international colleagues.^g

Many people have appreciated his book *Islam and Intellectual Diabolism* (2017). The book contains a collection of writings with the following titles: intellectuals and scholars, intellectual Diabolism, the liberalism of thought, religious authority, legitimacy of spiritual teachings, epistemological cancer, Islam and politics, non-Muslim leaders, religion and secularization, religious pluralism, interfaith dialogue, Ahmadiyya solution, the phenomenon of the False Prophet, the discourse of renewal (*tajdid*), feminism and gender, manifestations of racism, tyranny behind the art, the concept of jihad, the problem of terrorism, the three meanings of freedom, family resilience, the problem of corruption, modern science, the rise and fall of the nation, and Averroism and the Renaissance. The book can be called a shadow of an ideal future based on Islamic thought.

In forming knowledge, Syamsuddin is a knowledge innovator. According to him, finding Ibn Sina's position on some issues differs from Al Attas' views; however, Al Attas still respects Syamsuddin's opinion. Apart from that, Syamsuddin also discovered Muslim's position towards Shiites; according to him, "*The best attitude towards Shiites is to understand before judging and return all those bad accusations to them. By remaining positive, it is enough to say that ideologically (aqidah) Shiites are 'Shi'ah; and diplomatically, Shi'a is 'Muslims'. As for social (in mu'amalah), Shia are humans, neighbors, our friends, both Indonesian citizens, and so on. And above all, ontologically, Shia are God's creatures*

f. At the Darunnajah Islamic Boarding School, Jakarta, for example, Ibnu Sina is one of the school buildings, as well as Ibn Khaldun, a philosopher and historian from Tunisia.

g. Author interview with Ismail Al'Alam in Yogyakarta, 2020.

*that we must treat well and fairly (bil'adl wal ihsan)*¹². This explanation is quite logical because in Indonesia, Shia has a long history, and in some areas, they have integrated into the local culture.

Emotionally, Syamsuddin is charismatic, calm, organized, initiative, motivated, critical, broad-minded, shows novelty, and open-minded. One of the INSISTS researchers, who is also the founder of PIMPIN Bandung, expressed his pleasure when attending the material presented by Syamsuddin because he could find various references through Syamsuddin Arif's lectures.^h Syamsuddin Arif also has foreign language skills which can be seen from his tendency to quote or spread foreign languages on his social media, not only in English but also in Arabic, German, French, and Lati. He desires to want the Islamic worldview to spread more widely. Here, Syamsuddin imagines, like other INSISTS researchers, a future led by Islamic thought. Intentionally, Syamsuddin wished to establish an Institute of Rational Science inspired by the figure and thought of Ibn Sina.⁴ In the meaning of life, Syamsuddin is grateful for all who helped him until his book was published, about the positive side of the West. Adian Husaini is currently a Muslim thinker with a journalistic style. Regarding the meaning of life, he hopes that his book will be helpful to 'those who want to benefit from it.' 'Author's Introduction' to the book *Mewujudkan Indonesia Adil dan Beradab* (2015) was completed in Khartoum on 6 October 2015.

CONCLUSION

This paper shows the capacity of intention to envision that the future is important and has a significant impact on the behavior of everyday agents in spreading Islamic thought. The intention is formed from religious memory, cultural memory, causality, cause and the effect affecting the agent, and the agent's focus on intellectual work such as writing books and organizing in the spirit of ukhuwah Islamiyah or Islamic brotherhood.

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CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The author declare that he has no conflicts of interest.

h. Author interview with Wendi Zarman via zoom, 2022.

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