

Preserving Islamic Cultural Heritage: The Aesthetic, Linguistic, and Spiritual Significance of Dikir Burdah Lyrics in the Malay Community of Sri Aman, Sarawak, Malaysia

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Abstract

This study examines the aesthetic, linguistic, and spiritual significance of Dikir Burdah (DB)) lyrics within the Malay community of Sri Aman, Sarawak, Malaysia (SASM), through the translation of the original Arabic lyrics into English. The translation process seeks to uncover the profound Islamic cultural heritage embedded in the poetic expression, highlighting the spiritual insights and moral teachings conveyed through the lyrics. Adopting a qualitative methodology, data were collected via in-depth interviews with cultural practitioners, direct observation of Dikir Burdah (DB) performances, and an analysis of the translated text. The findings illustrate that Dikir Burdah (DB) functions not only as a cultural artifact but also as a vital conduit for the inter-generation transmission of Islamic values, spiritual contemplation, and the preservation of cultural identity. Despite challenges posed by modernization, community-led initiatives are instrumental in

sustaining this art performance, ensuring the continuity of Islamic cultural heritage for future generations.

Keywords: *Dikir Burdah (Dikir Burdah (DB)); Islamic cultural heritage; Linguistic; Aesthetic; Spiritual reflection*

Introduction

Introduced through trade routes and the efforts of Islamic missionaries, Dikir Burdah (DB) is a deeply rooted Islamic performance art within the Malay community of Sri Aman, Sarawak, Malaysia (SASM), with historical origins in the Arabian Peninsula through the spread of Islam by Arab traders and missionaries (Hamali et al., 2009; Saharan, 1988). As a significant Islamic performance tradition, Dikir Burdah (DB) preserves cultural identity while strengthening religious values and social cohesion within the Malay community (Jaafar, 2002; Osman, 1979). The practice was gradually introduced into Sarawak through Islamic missionary

activities and subsequently adapted into the local Malay cultural tradition (Ismail et al., 2018; Saharan, 1988). Dikir Burdah (DB) seamlessly blends spiritual devotion with poetic recitation, honoring the Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu 'Alaihi Wasallam (S.A.W., an Islamic benediction that means "Peace be upon him"), through melodic chanting, a practice that reflects profound reverence and devotion.

Over time, Dikir Burdah (DB) has evolved into an integral part of Sarawak's cultural heritage, adapting to contemporary themes while preserving its religious and aesthetic core. New lyrical compositions addressing love, respect, and national pride have emerged, yet the fundamental spiritual messages remain intact. The performance is complemented by the rhythmic sounds of traditional Malay drums, which enhance the intensity of the poetic recitations, emphasizing the interconnection between music, rhythm, and poetry in the Malay tradition. These drumming techniques not only add musicality, but also elevate the emotional and spiritual experience for both performers and audiences.

In Sri Aman, Sarawak, Dikir Burdah (DB) serves not only as an artistic expression but as a symbol of cultural identity, reinforcing unity and continuity within the community. Sarawak's rich ethnic diversity and vast geographical expanse provide the ideal context for the preservation and adaptation of Dikir Burdah (DB), ensuring its relevance in the region's cultural landscape. As part of Sarawak's diverse heritage, Dikir Burdah (DB) reflects the fusion of Islamic and Malay cultural traditions, illustrating the influence of local arts in the spread of Islamic values.

The performance of Dikir Burdah (DB), with its lyrical content often in Arabic, serves as a

powerful medium for conveying Islamic teachings, particularly through the praise of Prophet Muhammad S.A.W. The ethical and spiritual principles embedded within Dikir Burdah (DB) exemplify its role in promoting aesthetic values that align with Islamic teachings, serving as a cornerstone for both religious and cultural practices in Sarawak.

This research seeks to explore the aesthetic, linguistic, and spiritual significance of Dikir Burdah (DB), focusing on the translation of its original Arabic lyrics into English. By documenting and translating these lyrics, the study aims to expand the accessibility of Dikir Burdah (DB) while preserving its linguistic and cultural integrity. The analysis will delve into the aesthetic values inherent in the lyrics, examining the poetic structures, linguistic artistry, and melodic expressions that contribute to Dikir Burdah (DB)'s cultural and spiritual impact. Finally, the study will propose strategies for sustaining Dikir Burdah (DB) as a key element of cultural heritage, emphasizing its role in promoting social and moral values within the community. With these objectives, this research contributes to the broader discourse on cultural preservation, underscoring Dikir Burdah (DB)'s enduring influence on the cultural identity and values of the Malay community in Sri Aman, Sarawak.

Dikir Burdah (DB) has attracted scholarly attention from various perspectives, including Malay traditional music, Islamic literature, cultural heritage, and performance studies. Osman (1979) identified Dikir Burdah as a traditional Malay Islamic performance that combines poetic recitation, drumming, and devotional praise of Prophet Muhammad S.A.W. Harun Mat Piah (1989) further emphasized its literary characteristics, describing Dikir Burdah as a form of religious oral poetry that conveys Islamic

teachings through rhythmic performance. Saharan, R. (1988) documented the historical development of Dikir Burdah in Sarawak, linking its emergence to the spread of Islam and the activities of early Muslim scholars. Similarly, Harun Jaafar (2002, 2009) discussed the role of Dikir Burdah in strengthening Islamic values and preserving Malay cultural traditions. More recent research by Ismail, N. (2018) highlighted the transmission of Dikir Burdah through generations and its contribution to sustaining local cultural identity. Collectively, these studies demonstrate that Dikir Burdah is not merely a performing art but also a medium for religious education, cultural continuity, and community cohesion.

The historical origins of Dikir Burdah (DB) in Sarawak can be traced to the influence of Islamic missionaries who introduced the art form as a medium for religious propagation and cultural integration. As noted by Hj. Abd Samad, founder of the Persatuan Warisan Budaya Kampung Hulu, Sri Aman, Dikir Burdah (DB) emerged as a syncretic expression, blending Islamic teachings with indigenous Malay customs. This syncretism is further affirmed by Hamali et al. (2009), who assert that the introduction of Islam to Sarawak as early as the 7th century A.D. played a pivotal role in shaping the local arts, including Dikir Burdah (DB). This interaction between religion and culture has rendered Dikir Burdah (DB) not only a form of religious devotion but also a conduit for fostering community cohesion and cultural preservation in Sarawak. This syncretic relationship is also echoed by Solihin (2017), who explores how Malay Islamic art forms, including Dikir Burdah (DB), serve as a living testament to the cultural and religious amalgamation that defines the region's heritage.

The theoretical foundation for this research is grounded in Gazalba's (1977) conceptualization of art as a cultural instrument that satisfies humanity's need for both aesthetic and spiritual fulfillment. Gazalba posits that art serves as a source of sensory gratification while simultaneously contributing to emotional well-being and cultural enrichment. This view is particularly applicable to Dikir Burdah (DB), where the melodic recitations and the traditional Malay drumming techniques coalesce to create a spiritually resonant performance. As Osman (1979) further observes, the interplay between lyrical content and rhythmic sound in Dikir Burdah (DB) strengthens its role as a performative tradition that upholds and transmits Islamic cultural values. The use of percussion instruments, such as the Malay drum, enhances the emotive and spiritual impact of the performance, underscoring the interrelation of music, rhythm, and poetry within the Islamic cultural landscape of Sarawak. In a similar vein, Kukkonen (2015) argues that the integration of indigenous musical elements with Islamic motifs not only enhances the aesthetic experience of Dikir Burdah (DB) but also reinforces its role in community bonding and the transmission of Islamic values.

Building upon these foundational studies, this research seeks to bridge existing gaps by documenting and translating the original Arabic lyrics of Dikir Burdah (DB), thereby expanding their accessibility and ensuring the preservation of their linguistic and cultural significance. By examining the aesthetic and spiritual values embedded within these lyrics, this study aims to highlight Dikir Burdah (DB)'s enduring contribution to cultural sustainability in the Malay community of Sri Aman, Sarawak. Additionally, the research will explore strategies for preserving and promoting Dikir Burdah (DB) as an integral

component of the region's cultural heritage. The preservation of Dikir Burdah (DB), along with other traditional Malay performance arts, has become a critical area of study in the context of globalization and cultural homogenization. Goldberg (2004) highlights how performance art serves as a powerful medium for provocation and social transformation, a concept that resonates with the role of Dikir Burdah (DB) in preserving Islamic cultural heritage and reinforcing spiritual values within the Malay community of Sri Aman, Sarawak. The outcomes of this study will serve as an important reference for stakeholders engaged in the efforts to safeguard and revitalize this cherished tradition for future generations.

The Significance of Dikir Burdah (DB) in Islam and the Socio-Cultural Context of the Malay Community in Sri Aman, Sarawak

Dikir Burdah (DB) holds a distinctive place where Islamic spirituality and the socio-cultural practices of the Malay community converge, particularly within the context of Sri Aman, Sarawak. As an Islamic performance art, Dikir Burdah (DB) transcends mere ritualistic expression, embodying profound devotion and reverence, where participants spiritually submit themselves to Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala (S.W.T.), which stands for the Arabic words meaning "Glory be to Him, the Exalted". Beyond its aesthetic beauty, Dikir Burdah (DB) reflects the cultural identity and heritage of the Malay community. Despite facing challenges due to modernization, Dikir Burdah (DB) remains a resilient practice in Malay communities across Malaysia, including Sarawak.

Rooted in the Arabic poem Qasidah Burdah by Imam al-Busiri, which praises the Prophet Muhammad S.A.W., Dikir Burdah (DB)

serves as a medium for the Malay community to express their love, respect, and devotion to Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) (Lubis, 1994; Saharan, R. 1988). It is a central feature in religious celebrations such as Maulidul Rasul (the Prophet's birthday), circumcision ceremonies, Quran completion events, and other significant religious occasions (Harun Mat Piah, 1989; Harun Jaafar, 2002). The lyrical content of Dikir Burdah (DB) carries deep theological and spiritual meaning, conveying Islamic values such as humility, piety, and love for the Prophet (Harun Jaafar, 2009; Saharan, R. 1988).

At its core, Dikir Burdah (DB) is intertwined with the practice of dhikr (the rhythmic recitation of dhikr), which is central to Islamic spirituality. The repetitive recitations serve as a form of spiritual therapy, offering emotional healing and fostering a sense of tranquility among both performers and listeners. Accompanied by traditional Malay instruments, such as the drum, Dikir Burdah (DB) becomes a vibrant expression of worship that strengthens both individual piety and communal bonds.

In Sarawak, particularly in Sri Aman, Sarawak, Dikir Burdah (DB) has evolved beyond its religious roots to become a significant socio-cultural symbol for the Malay community. It plays an integral role in preserving the cultural identity of the Malay people by harmonizing Islamic traditions with local customs. Within Sri Aman, Sarawak, Dikir Burdah (DB) performances are frequently conducted during weddings and other community events, cultivating unity and solidarity. These performances are not only religious acts but also represent expressions of cultural pride. The synthesis of Islamic elements and local traditions within Dikir Burdah (DB) creates a unique

form of cultural art that contributes to the preservation and promotion of local heritage.

Additionally, Dikir Burdah (DB) fosters inter-generation continuity, with older generations passing down performance techniques, as well as the spiritual and cultural meanings embedded within the lyrics and music, to younger generations. This knowledge transfer ensures that Dikir Burdah (DB) remains vibrant and relevant despite the pressures of modernization.

Dikir Burdah (DB) is not merely an artistic expression but a profound embodiment of the spiritual and cultural identity of the Malay community in Sri Aman, Sarawak. It serves as a conduit for preserving Islamic teachings while maintaining the community's unique heritage. As a traditional performing art, Dikir Burdah (DB) fosters unity and instills Islamic values, functioning as both a religious and cultural safeguard. Moreover, it acts as an inter-generational bridge, ensuring the continuity of Islamic heritage and local customs amidst societal transformations.

Sharaning, K. (2016) highlights how Islamic influences have shaped Middle Eastern art aesthetics, emphasizing adherence to Sharia principles, abstract forms, and balanced compositions. This framework aligns with the artistic values inherent in Dikir Burdah (DB), where aesthetic principles are deeply interwoven with Islamic teachings. The structured poetic verses, rhythmic recitations, and disciplined performance style of Dikir Burdah (DB) reflect a similar emphasis on harmony, spirituality, and cultural identity, reinforcing its dual role as an artistic tradition and a medium of religious devotion.

Furthermore, Dikir Burdah (DB) integrates literary and musical elements, which are fundamental to human life, offering

emotional solace and spiritual connection. Islam permits the enjoyment of music that aligns with its teachings, with evidence from the Prophet Muhammad S.A.W. affirming the positive role of music in uplifting the spirit, provided it adheres to Islamic principles. Dikir Burdah (DB), thus, embodies both the cultural and spiritual essence of the Malay community in Sarawak. Clear evidence from Islamic traditions indicates that Prophet Muhammad S.A.W. permitted Muslims to partake in joyful experiences, as narrated in Sahih Bukhari (Volume 2, Book 15, Hadith 70) by Sayyidatina Aisyah Radeyallahu 'Anha (R.A.), which means "May Allah be pleased with her". It is used to refer to female companions of the Prophet Muhammad, such as Sayyidatina Aisyah R.A. who was a companion of the Prophet.

"Allah's Messenger S.A.W came to my house while two girls were singing beside me the songs of Bu'ath (a story about the war between the two tribes of the Ansar, i.e. Khazraj and Aus, before Islam.) The prophet S.A.W reclined on the bed and turned his face to the other side. Abu Bakr came and scolded me and said protestingly, "Instrument of Satan in the presence of Allah's Messenger?" Allah's Messenger S.A.W turned his face towards him and said, "Leave them." When Abu Bakr became inattentive, I waved the two girls to go away and they left. It was the day of Eid when negroes used to play with leather shields and spears. Either I requested Allah's Messenger S.A.W or he himself asked me whether I would like to see the display. I replied in the affirmative. Then he let me stand behind him and my cheek was touching his cheek and he was saying, "Carry on, O Bani Arfida (i.e., negroes)!" When I got tired, he

asked me if that was enough. I replied in the affirmative and he told me to leave.”

Sahih al-Bukhari (2906, 2907)

Eid is an Arabic word meaning "feast" or "festival. It refers to an Islamic festival marking the end of Ramadan and celebrated during the first three days of Shawwal.

This hadith, which signifies a statement or communication, provides compelling evidence that Islamic law has adapted, particularly to the art of music. The socio-cultural context of the Muslim community at the time required avenues for entertainment and joy, especially during significant occasions such as Eid. Moreover, this hadith highlights the customs and traditions of the Ansar, the people of Medina who supported the Prophet Muhammad S.A.W. and his companions, illustrating their enjoyment through vocal arts. The Prophet Muhammad S.A.W. demonstrated the flexibility of Islamic jurisprudence, underscoring its capacity to evolve and guide the lives of Muslims within the framework of Islamic law (Abdul Ghani Samsudin & Engku Ibrahim Ismail, 2001).

Islam, while fundamentally a religion centered on spirituality, allows its followers to seek recreation and entertainment within the boundaries set by Sharia (the Islamic legal system). Human balance is achieved through a harmonious combination of physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual, and personal dimensions, and this equilibrium can only be attained through a profound understanding and appreciation of spiritual practices. Spirituality, as a core element, shapes an individual's character, and when practiced with clarity and purpose, can foster positive personal development, particularly in forming a Muslim's character (Abdul Ghani Samsudin & Engku Ibrahim

Ismail, 2001). Consequently, spirituality is integral to every aspect of daily life (Gazalba, 1977).

The human propensity for entertainment and an appreciation for beauty and aesthetics are innate qualities granted by Allah S.W.T. Illustrative hadith recounts the experience of Hanzalah R.A., a companion of the Prophet Muhammad S.A.W., who was distressed and feared hypocrisy. His anxiety stemmed from his belief that he had neglected the remembrance of Allah S.W.T. while engaging in leisure activities with his family, after attending a session with the Prophet Muhammad S.A.W. In response, the Prophet reassured him by affirming:

"If your state of mind remains the same as it is in my presence and you are always busy in remembrance (of Allah), the angels will shake hands with you in your beds and your roads; but Hanzalah, time should be devoted (to the worldly affairs) and time should be devoted (to prayer)"

Sahih Muslim (2750)

In contrast, Imam al-Zahabi expands this definition to encompass all musical instruments or playful activities associated with songs or poetry, as elaborated in al-Siyar (21/158) and al-Tazkirah (2/1337). According to the Cambridge Dictionary (2024), music is defined as “a pattern of sounds made by musical instruments, voices, or computers, or a combination of these, intended to give pleasure to people listening to it”, signifying a manifestation of sound produced through various means—whether musical instruments, vocal expressions, to offer a sense of tranquility and enjoyment to the audience. Similarly, the Dewan Dictionary defines music as the arrangement of sounds that produces harmonious and

pleasing rhythms, or as sounds generated by musical instruments.

Shokouhi (2013) and Yusof (1985) investigate the relationship between Islam and various forms of entertainment, specifically music and the vocal arts. He posits that these art forms, as expressions of human emotions, thoughts, and creativity, can align with Islamic principles provided they respect Islamic ethical boundaries. His perspective underscores that art, including music, has the potential to elevate the soul and refine human instincts when approached with moderation and without promoting immorality. This view resonates with Yusof's broader stance on the permissibility of artistic expressions that foster emotional well-being and social harmony while adhering to Islamic values. These principles encompass essential elements within human recreational activities, including the arts, cultural expressions, entertainment, linguistic artistry, and intellectual dialogue. These topics contribute to a vital discourse on human history, culture, and civilization. Dikir Burdah (DB) incorporates nine original songs: Maal Li, Astaghfir, Muhamadun, Fassrif, Wakshaad, Munazahun, Dua Illa, Fainn Pa, and Zaalam. Two prominent Dikir Burdah (DB) associations have been established within the Malay community of Sri Aman, Sarawak: Persatuan Sinar Budaya and Persatuan Warisan Budaya Melayu.

According to Razak and Tugang (2023), Dikir Burdah (DB) is widely acknowledged as a significant cultural heritage and has made substantial progress in the field of arts and culture, with potential recognition from both governmental and non-governmental entities. The innovative initiatives surrounding Dikir Burdah (DB) have garnered positive responses from the Sarawak Department of Culture and Arts

(Jabatan Kebudayaan dan Kesenian Negara, Sarawak, JKKNS), which seek to elevate Dikir Burdah (DB) as a performing art alongside other artistic traditions, thus contributing to the preservation of global artistic and cultural heritage (Ab Razak, 2025). This initiative has afforded Dikir Burdah (DB) practitioners' opportunities to showcase their talents at the state level through various events organized by JKKNS, aligning with its objectives. Furthermore, JKKNS has undertaken the responsibility of mentoring these associations, providing regular training sessions to ensure the ongoing preservation of this artistic heritage.

Methodology

This research adopts a qualitative approach to achieve its objectives. The study primarily utilizes three methodological techniques: interviews, content analysis, and observation. These methods are specifically designed to explore and document the original lyrics of Dikir Burdah (DB) within the context of the Sri Aman, Sarawak. The qualitative nature of this research allows for an in-depth examination of the cultural and artistic significance of Dikir Burdah (DB), providing valuable insights into the preservation strategies employed by practitioners. Additionally, these methods facilitate the exploration of how such strategies contribute to the sustainability of this traditional art form in contemporary practice.

Interview Method

The interview method plays a pivotal role in this research, enabling direct engagement with practitioners of Dikir Burdah (DB) and other key individuals involved in the preservation of this cultural tradition. Specifically, the key interview participants purposively selected for this study included

the founders and lead instructors of two active DB associations in Sri Aman (Persatuan Sinar Budaya and Persatuan Warisan Budaya), seasoned practitioners with over five years of direct involvement, and authoritative figures from the Sarawak Department of Culture and Arts (JKKNS). These participants were chosen for their inherited knowledge, practical expertise, and direct roles in cultural management, ensuring the reliability of data regarding the aesthetic, spiritual, and cultural significance of DB. This method is employed for the following purposes:

- i. To document and examine the original lyrics of Dikir Burdah (DB), with particular emphasis on their aesthetic and cultural significance.
- ii. To investigate the backgrounds and contributions of practitioners and organizations dedicated to promoting Dikir Burdah (DB), including their achievements and ongoing initiatives.
- iii. To analyze the performance and delivery of Dikir Burdah (DB) songs and poetry, offering a comprehensive understanding of how the art form is executed and its effects on both performers and audiences.

To ensure the reliability and accuracy of the data, the interview process includes strategies for recording and transcribing conversations. By utilizing this approach, the research provides valuable insights into how practitioners preserve the traditional aspects of Dikir Burdah (DB) while highlighting their views on the importance of spirituality and community cohesion as reflected in the lyrics.

Content Analysis

Content analysis is employed as a systematic method for examining and interpreting the original lyrics of Dikir Burdah (DB), with a focus on uncovering the deeper meanings embedded within the verses of the poetry. This analytical approach is essential for understanding the aesthetic, cultural, and spiritual dimensions of Dikir Burdah (DB). The primary objectives of content analysis in this study are as follows:

- i. To explore the meaning of the lyrics: This objective involves a detailed analysis of the messages and themes embedded within the verses of the original Dikir Burdah (DB) songs, particularly how they reflect the cultural values and beliefs of the community.
- ii. To examine the structure and style of the lyrics: This aspect focuses on the linguistic and stylistic features of the lyrics, providing insights into the artistic expression and literary qualities inherent in the poetry.
- iii. To analyze instructional or guiding elements: Here, the research explores how the lyrics convey Islamic principles, values, and teachings, positioning Dikir Burdah (DB) as a medium for moral and spiritual guidance within the community.
- iv. To interpret aesthetic values: This objective examines the aesthetic dimensions of the poetry, including the use of metaphors, narrative techniques, and structural elements, which contribute to the artistic and cultural significance of Dikir Burdah (DB).

Through these objectives, content analysis serves as a vital tool for uncovering the multifaceted layers of meaning within Dikir Burdah (DB), thereby enhancing its appreciation and supporting efforts to preserve this cultural tradition.

Observation

This study employs two types of observation: direct and participant. Direct observation involves observing Dikir Burdah (DB) performances without interaction, focusing on the delivery of songs and poetry, and identifying the aesthetic values and impact on the audience. Participant observation immerses the researcher in the community and Dikir Burdah (DB) activities, allowing for a firsthand understanding of how Dikir Burdah (DB) promotes unity and emotional well-being. Together with interviews and content analysis, these methods provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of Dikir Burdah (DB) in shaping cultural identity and its ongoing significance within the local Malay community of Sri Aman, Sarawak.

Results and Discussion

Analysis of the Study and New Findings

The uniqueness of Dikir Burdah (DB) among the Malay community across various states, including Sarawak, underscores the cultural significance of this art form. The introduction of Dikir Burdah (DB) in Sarawak can be traced back to the missionaries who came to spread Islamic teachings and engage in trade, particularly in Sri Aman, Sarawak, where this art form evolved alongside Islamic principles.

In Islamic aesthetics, the distinction between absolute beauty and phenomena is often conveyed through poetic language. The aesthetic value of poetry in Dikir Burdah (DB) lies in the intricate use of language and form, essential elements that enhance its appeal. As noted by Mansor (2012), "form is key to the appeal of a work", and this is particularly relevant in Dikir Burdah (DB),

where structured verses and rhythmic patterns create a harmonious experience. The beauty of the lyrics is further enhanced by evocative imagery and refined expressions, embodying a profound aesthetic. Salleh (1997) exemplifies the use of beautiful language in the Sulatus Salatin, with poetic lines that depict "a tree trunk rising high like floating clouds: a canopy for all kings." Such language not only serves a decorative purpose but also offers spiritual and cultural depth, resonating with the Malay community's appreciation for traditional values and spirituality. Similarly, the lyrics of Dikir Burdah (DB) hold significant aesthetic value, inviting the listener to experience both the beauty of expression and the spiritual solace embedded in each verse.

The lyrics of Dikir Burdah (DB) have been translated into English to enhance the understanding and appreciation of the local community. According to the chairperson of the Sinar Budaya Sri Aman Association, Dikir Burdah (DB) in Sri Aman, Sarawak encompasses a variety of songs with different thematic elements, interpreted to reflect contemporary relevance. These themes provide comprehensive guidance and understanding. The translation of Dikir Burdah (DB) lyrics into English aims to ensure alignment with Islamic teachings. This research has compiled nine original Dikir Burdah (DB) songs introduced from the Arabian Peninsula. The original Arabic texts are rooted in the traditional Qasidah Burdah authored by Imam al-Busiri and are meticulously preserved in the manuscripts of local DB associations. The translation and interpretation of these lyrics were independently conducted by the researchers, with cross-reference validation provided by local DB practitioners and language specialists from Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Ab Razak, 2025). Below is the list of these

nine songs, translated from Arabic to English.

List of Original Dikir Burdah (DB) Songs with Lyrics and Translations

i. Maal Li

مَوْلَايَ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ دَائِمًا أَبَدًا

عَلَى حَبِيبِكَ خَيْرِ الْخَلْقِ كُلِّهِمْ

O our Allah (Allah S.W.T.), bestow upon us an eternal and everlasting invocation and salutation to Your beloved (Muhammad), who is the best among all creatures.

مَنْ لِي بِرِدِّ جَنَاحٍ مِّنْ غَوَائِهَا كَمَا يُرَدُّ جَنَاحُ الْخَيْلِ
بِاللَّحْمِ

فَلَا تُزِمُّ بِالْمَعَاصِي كَسْرَ شَهْوَتِهَا إِنَّ الطَّعَامَ يُقْوِي
شَهْوَةَ النَّهْمِ

وَالنَّفْسُ كَالطِّفْلِ إِنْ تُهْمِلَهُ شَبَّ عَلَى حُبِّ الرِّضَاعِ
وَإِنْ تَقْطَعَهُ يَنْقَطِعِ

Who can bring back my soul from misguidance?

Like a wild horse controlled by a rein.

Do not let your desires be broken by sins.

For food is strengthened by the gluttonous appetite.

Desire is like a baby, if you let it, it will continue nursing.

But if you stop nursing, it will leave the habit of nursing.

ii. Fassrif

مَوْلَايَ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ دَائِمًا أَبَدًا

عَلَى حَبِيبِكَ خَيْرِ الْخَلْقِ كُلِّهِمْ

O our Allah (Allah S.W.T.), bestow upon us an eternal and everlasting invocation and salutation to Your beloved (Muhammad), who is the best among all creatures.

فَاصْرِفْ هَوَاهَا وَحَازِرْ أَنْ تُؤَلِّيَهُ إِنَّ الْهَوَى مَا تَوَلَّى
يُصْنَعُ أَوْ يَصْنَعُ

وَرَاغِبًا وَهِيَ فِي الْأَعْمَالِ سَائِمَةٌ وَإِنْ هِيَ اسْتَحْلَلَتْ

الْمَرْغَى فَلَا تُبْسِمُ

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ مِنْ قَوْلٍ بِالْأَعْمَالِ لَقَدْ نَسَبْتُ بِهِ نَسْلًا

لِذِي عُقْمٍ

Therefore, keep your desires away from the pleasures of lust.

Do not let them have control over you.

If they gain control, they will kill you, or at the very least, they will torment you.

Tend to your desires properly in the field of righteous deeds, for if they cannot be controlled, you will no longer be able to tend to them.

I seek forgiveness from Allah for mere words without actions.

Indeed, it is the same as being barren without offspring.

iii. Wakshaad

مَوْلَايَ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ دَائِمًا أَبَدًا

عَلَى حَبِيبِكَ خَيْرِ الْخَلْقِ كُلِّهِمْ

O our Allah (Allah S.W.T.), bestow upon us an eternal and everlasting invocation and salutation to Your beloved (Muhammad), who is the best among all creatures.

وَإِخْشَ الدَّسَائِسَ مِنَ الْجُوعِ وَمِنْ شَبَعِ فَرْبِ مَخْمَصَةٍ

شَرٌّ مِنَ التَّخَمِ

وَاسْتَفْرِغِ الدَّمَعَ مِنْ عَيْنٍ قَدْ امْتَلَأَتْ مِنَ الْمَحَارِمِ

وَالزَّمْ جُمُيَةَ الدِّمِ

وَخَالِفِ النَّفْسَ وَالشَّيْطَانَ وَاعْصِهِمَا وَإِنْ هُمَا تَحَضَّاكَ

النُّصْحَ فَأَنْهَمِ

وَلَا تُطْعِ مِنْهُمَا حَصْمًا وَلَا حَكَمًا فَأَنْتَ تَعْرِفُ كَيْدَ

الْحَصْمِ وَالْحَكَمِ

Fear the hidden calamities that
 come from hunger and satiety.
 At times, hunger is more dangerous
 than excess.

Let your tears flow, from eyes
 stained with the sins of the past.
 Preserve the feelings of regret and
 sorrow for your sins.

Resist your desires and the
 rebellious devil, and remain
 vigilant against them both.
 If they sincerely offer advice, you
 must still be cautious.

Do not obey your desires or the
 devil, whether they act as enemies
 or as judges.

For you already know well the
 deception of both an enemy and a
 judge.

iv. Astaghfirr

مَوْلَايَ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ دَائِمًا أَبَدًا
 عَلَى حَبِيبِكَ خَيْرِ الْخَلْقِ كُلِّهِمْ

O our Allah (Allah S.W.T.), bestow
 upon us an eternal and everlasting
 invocation and salutation to Your
 beloved (Muhammad), who is the
 best among all creatures.

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ مِنْ قَوْلٍ بِلاَعْمَلٍ لَقَدْ نَسَبْتُ بِهِ نَسْلًا
 لِذِي عَظَمٍ

أَمْرُكَ الْخَيْرُ لَكِنْ مَا أَتَمَرْتُ بِهِ وَمَا اسْتَقَمْتُ فَمَا
 قَوْلِي لَكَ اسْتَقِم

وَلَا تَزُوْدْتُ قَبْلَ الْمَوْتِ نَافِلَةً وَمَ أَصْلَ سِوَى فَرْضِي وَمَ
 أَصُم

I seek forgiveness from Allah for
 words without deeds,

For indeed, I have attributed
 offspring to one who is barren.

I have commanded you to do good,
 yet I have not done so myself,
 Nor have I remained steadfast, so
 how can my words to you be 'Stay
 steadfast'?

I have not prepared voluntary acts
 before death,

Nor have I prayed beyond the
 obligatory, nor have I fasted.

v. Muhammadun

مَوْلَايَ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ دَائِمًا أَبَدًا
 عَلَى حَبِيبِكَ خَيْرِ الْخَلْقِ كُلِّهِمْ

O our Allah (Allah S.W.T.), bestow
 upon us an eternal and everlasting
 invocation and salutation to Your
 beloved (Muhammad), who is the
 best among all creatures.

مُحَمَّدٌ سَيِّدُ الْكَوْنَيْنِ وَالْثَّقَلَيْنِ وَالْفَرِيقَيْنِ مِنْ غُرَبٍ وَمِنْ
 عَجَمٍ

نَبِينَا الْأَمْرُ النَّاهِي فَلَا أَحَدٌ أَبَرُّ فِي قَوْلٍ لَمْ مِنْهُ وَلَا
 نَعَم

هُوَ الْحَبِيبُ الَّذِي تُرْجَى شَفَاعَتُهُ لِكُلِّ هَوَلٍ مِنْ
 الْأَهْوَالِ مُفْتَنِمٍ

Muhammad, peace be upon him, is
 the leader of the world and the
 hereafter,

the leader of jinn and mankind, as
 well as the leader of both Arabs
 and non-Arabs.

Our Prophet, peace be upon him, is
 a caller to goodness and a forbinder
 of evil.

No one's words are better than his
 when he rejects someone by saying
 "no" or when he is asked, and he
 says "yes."

He is the beloved of Allah, whose
 intercession is sought by every
 terrifying matter that approaches.

vi. Munazahun

مَوْلَايَ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ دَائِمًا أَبَدًا
 عَلَى حَبِيبِكَ خَيْرِ الْخَلْقِ كُلِّهِمْ

O our Allah (Allah S.W.T.), bestow
 upon us an eternal and everlasting
 invocation and salutation to Your
 beloved (Muhammad), who is the
 best among all creatures.

مُنَزَّةٌ عَنْ شَرِّكَ فِي تَحَاسِبِهِ فَجَوْهَرُ الْحُسْنِ فِيهِ غَيْرُ
 مُنْقَسِمٍ

دَعِ مَا دَاعَتْهُ النَّصَارَى فِي نَبِيِّهِمْ وَاحْكُمْ بِمَا شِئْتَ
 مَدْحًا فِيهِ وَاحْتَكِمِ

وَأَنْسُبُ إِلَى ذَاتِهِ مَا شِئْتُ مِنْ شَرَفٍ وَأَنْسُبُ إِلَى
 قَدْرُهُ مَا شِئْتُ مِنْ عِظَمٍ

He is exalted above having any
 partner in His perfections,
 For the essence of beauty in Him is
 indivisible.

Leave what the Christians claim
 about their Prophet,
 And praise him as you wish, with
 full conviction.

Attribute to his essence whatever
 honor you will,
 And to his stature whatever
 greatness you desire.

vii. Daa Illa

مَوْلَايَ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ دَائِمًا أَبَدًا
 عَلَى حَبِيبِكَ خَيْرِ الْخَلْقِ كُلِّهِمْ

O our Allah (Allah S.W.T.), bestow
 upon us an eternal and everlasting
 invocation and salutation to Your
 beloved (Muhammad), who is the
 best among all creatures.

دَعَا إِلَى اللَّهِ فَالْمُسْتَمْسِكُونَ بِهِ مُسْتَمْسِكُونَ بِحَبْلِ
 عَزِيزٍ مُتَّقِصِمٍ

فَاقَ النَّبِيِّينَ فِي خَلْقِهِ وَفِي خَلْقِهِ وَمِمَّا يَدَّأُوهُ فِي عِلْمٍ وَلَا
 كَرَمٍ

كُلُّهُمْ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ مُلْتَمِسِينَ غُرْفًا مِنَ الْبَحْرِ أَوْ رَشْفًا
 مِنَ الدَّيَمِ

وَوَاقِفُونَ لَدَيْهِ عِنْدَ خَدِّهِمْ مِنْ نُقْطَةِ الْعِلْمِ أَوْ مِنْ
 شَكْلَةِ الْحِكْمِ

He (Prophet Muhammad) called to
 Allah, and those who hold firmly to
 him,

Hold onto a rope that will never
 break.

He surpassed all the prophets in
 both form and character,
 And none could match him in
 knowledge or generosity.

All of them sought from the
 Messenger of Allah,

Either a scoop from the ocean or a
 drop from the rain.

And they stood before him at their
 limits,

From a mere point of knowledge or
 a fraction of wisdom.

viii. Faiina Pa

مَوْلَايَ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ دَائِمًا أَبَدًا
 عَلَى حَبِيبِكَ خَيْرِ الْخَلْقِ كُلِّهِمْ

O our Allah (Allah S.W.T.), bestow
 upon us an eternal and everlasting
 invocation and salutation to Your
 beloved (Muhammad), who is the
 best among all creatures.

فَإِنَّ فَضْلَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ لَيْسَ لَهُ حَدٌّ فَيُغْرِبُ عَنْهُ نَاطِقٌ
 بِقَمٍ

لَوْ نَاسَبَتْ قَدْرَهُ أَيْسَانُهُ عِظَمًا أَخْيَا أُمَّهُ حَيٌّ يُدْعَى
 دَارِسَ الرِّثَمِ

لَمْ يَمْتَحِنَا بِمَا تَغْيَا الْغُثُّوْلُ بِهِ جِرْصًا عَلَيْنَا فَلَمْ تَزْتَبْ
 وَلَمْ تَهْمِ

Due to the extraordinary qualities
 of the Prophet Muhammad (peace
 be upon him), they are boundless.
 Hence, every expression becomes
 effortless for the tongue that
 speaks.

If only the magnificence of his
 miracles could match the height of
 his status,

Then by uttering his name, one
 could revive those whose bones
 have turned to dust. The Prophet
 did not test us with what is beyond
 human comprehension.

This is because he loves us dearly,
 desiring that we all receive
 guidance, eliminating any doubt or
 uncertainty in everything he brings
 forth.

ix. Zaalam

مَوْلَايَ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ دَائِمًا أَبَدًا
 عَلَى حَبِيبِكَ خَيْرِ الْخَلْقِ كُلِّهِمْ

O our Allah (Allah S.W.T.), bestow
 upon us an eternal and everlasting
 invocation and salutation to Your
 beloved (Muhammad), who is the
 best among all creatures.

ظَلَمْتُ سُنَّةَ مَنْ أَحْيَا الظُّلَامَ إِلَى أَنْ اسْتَكْتَفَمَاهُ
 الضُّرُومَ وَرَمَ
 وَشَدَّ مِنْ سَعْبٍ أَحْشَاءَهُ وَطَوَى تَحْتَ الْحِجَارَةِ
 كَشْحًا مُتْرَفَ الدَّمِ
 وَزَادَتْهُ الْجِبَالُ الشُّمَّ مِنْ دَهَبٍ عَنْ نَفْسِهِ فَأَرَاهَا أَنَّمَا
 شَمَمَ
 وَأَكْدَتْ زُهْدَهُ فِيهَا ضُرُورُهُ إِنَّ الضُّرُورَةَ لَا تَعْدُو
 عَلَى الْعِصَمِ

I leave the Prophet's Sunnah, which
 diligently worships, illuminating
 the darkness of the night.
 Until the soles of the feet ache,
 swollen from the worship of that
 night.
 A Prophet so great, restraining
 desires and hunger.
 Tying a fine stone to the stomach,
 due to asceticism towards worldly
 life.
 The mighty mountains of gold
 offered themselves to Him, but He
 showed them the highest form of
 detachment.
 Indeed, increasing the Prophet's
 asceticism requires wealth but does
 not seek recompense (in wealth).
 Even when in need of wealth, it
 does not diminish its purity.

The integration of the Sunnah into daily life becomes more meaningful when individuals take responsibility and commit to applying its teachings beyond just obligatory acts. However, some segments of society limit their practice to the obligatory, neglecting the broader ethical principles of the Sunnah, which brings blessings and virtue when embraced fully. The art of Dikir Burdah (DB) in Sri Aman, Sarawak has gained recognition from both governmental and non-governmental organizations for its role in preserving Islamic values. This art form conveys important messages through its lyrics, promoting goodness, unity, and appreciation for Prophet Muhammad S.A.W. The continued support from local institutions and communities ensures Dikir Burdah

(DB)'s preservation. Below, the researcher summarizes the implied meanings of the nine original Dikir Burdah (DB) songs, linking them to the cultural and aesthetic values of the local Malay community.

Summary of the Aesthetic, Linguistic, and Spiritual Significance of Original Dikir Burdah (DB) Lyrics

- i. Maal Li:
 The lyrics "Maal Li," the opening piece in Dikir Burdah (DB), is performed with decorum. According to Cik Radiah Binti Tahir's communication, on December 15, 2021, it precedes the other eight songs and is sung in Arabic with a Malay translation for analysis. Its lyrics, which include metaphors, start with a salutation to Prophet Muhammad S.A.W., symbolizing our ongoing remembrance of him.
- ii. Fassrif:
 The lyrics of "Fassrif" emphasize the need to control our desires to prevent them from taking over and ruining our lives. Unchecked desires can corrupt our morals and beliefs. In Sufi teachings, desires are categorized into stages, including the instigating desire related to lust. For instance, in the Quran, the Prophet Yusuf says, "And I do not acquit myself. Indeed, the soul is a persistent enjoiner of evil," highlighting the need to combat such desires. Prophet Muhammad S.A.W also referred to this struggle as "the greater jihad." Animal analogies, like a wild horse or donkey, are often used to illustrate the challenge of controlling desires, symbolizing the effort needed to guide them toward a positive goal.

- iii. **Wakshaad:**
 "Wakshaad" highlights how seemingly trivial actions can lead to serious sins that become difficult to avoid. What starts as a minor infraction can turn into a harmful habit, ultimately leading to significant sin. Satan often tempts people with minor sins, which can accumulate and become major issues.

For example, a Sufi scholar once used a visual metaphor to teach his child about the impact of small sins. He advised the child not to commit any sins, no matter how minor. Ignoring this advice, the child continued to sin. Each sin was represented by hammering a nail into a piece of wood. After many nails were driven in, the scholar instructed the child to remove them. The scholar then explained that just like the imprints left by the nails, even after sins are repented, their effects remain. This story underscores the importance of avoiding repeated transgressions to prevent them from ruining one's life.

- iv. **Astaghfirr:**
 The song "Astaghfirr" centers on seeking forgiveness from Allah S.W.T. The lyrics reflect a devotee's plea for forgiveness for failing to act on good intentions and neglecting obligatory prayers and fasting. As highlighted in Surah al-Hadid (21), "Race toward forgiveness from your Lord and a Garden whose width encompasses the heavens and the earth. It has been prepared for the righteous," Allah S.W.T encourages believers to pursue good deeds and strive for His forgiveness. Additionally, Prophet Muhammad S.A.W emphasized the importance of

striving for goodness, noting that true envy is only permissible in two cases: for someone endowed with wealth who spends it well, and for someone granted knowledge.

- v. **Muhammadun:**
 The song "Muhammadun" vividly illustrates the remarkable leadership and unwavering dedication of the Prophet Muhammad to the teachings of Islam. As the final Prophet and Messenger, He was sent to guide all of humanity. In the lyrics, Prophet Muhammad is portrayed as a supreme leader for both this world and the hereafter, encompassing jinn, humankind, and all nations. He is depicted as a herald of virtue, cherished by Allah S.W.T, whose intercession is sought. His leadership surpasses that of any other revered figure, extending across family, society, and governance, embodying unparalleled excellence. Surah al-Anbiya (21:107) highlights that Prophet Muhammad's mission transcends specific communities, offering mercy to the entire world. His pre-prophethood integrity and honesty earned him deep respect from the Quraysh tribe of Makkah. This integrity underscores the importance of following the Quranic guidance and the Prophet's Sunnah for personal development. Moreover, Surah al-Ahzab (33:21) underscores his exemplary moral character and decisive leadership. His strategic acumen, evident in his meticulous planning before the Battle of Badr, exemplifies the value of accurate intelligence and thoughtful decision-making. Prophet Muhammad S.A.W.'s leadership, therefore, stands

as a profound model for both the temporal and spiritual aspects of life.

vi. Munazahun:

The song "Munazahun" emphasizes honoring the Prophet Muhammad S.A.W. with sincere respect and avoiding exaggeration or false claims. It highlights His pure virtue and encourages deep admiration. Rabiul Awal, the month of the Prophet's birth, is a time for Muslims to reflect on and emulate His noble qualities. The Quran provides a profound basis for this reverence. Surah at-Tawbah (9:128) praises the Prophet's deep compassion: "A Messenger has come to you from among yourselves, distressed by your suffering, concerned for you, and kind and merciful to the believers." This verse underscores His empathy and pure goodness. Thus, honoring and praising the Prophet Muhammad is essential, reflecting His exemplary character.

vii. Daa Illa:

The song "Daa Illa" is a didactic piece urging people to seek Allah's favor with sincere effort and unwavering obedience. It highlights that the Prophet Muhammad S.A.W. surpasses previous Prophets in physical and moral excellence, with each prophet holding a unique position. The pursuit of Allah's pleasure should be the highest goal, promising both worldly and eternal happiness when aligned with His teachings. Allah recognizes all efforts made toward this end, determining a believer's status based on His satisfaction and that of His Messenger. As stated in Surah at-

Tawbah (9:62), "They swear by Allah to you [Muslims] to satisfy you. But it is more fitting that they should satisfy Allah and His Messenger if they are [truly] believers." In essence, seeking Allah's pleasure is essential for a life blessed by His grace.

viii. Faiina Pa:

The song highlights the Prophet Muhammad S.A.W.'s immense virtues, including his ability to revive hope and his understanding that Allah (S.W.T.) will never burden us beyond our capacity. His teachings guide us to face challenges with patience and acceptance. Regardless of our status—worker, employer, or entrepreneur—Muslims must believe in 'qada' and 'qadar' (divine decree). In Malaysia, Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaah (the people who rightfully followed the methodology of Prophet Muhammad S.A.W.) teaches that success aligns with Allah's will, so we should accept trials as they come. Virtue or 'budi', is central to Malay identity, involving piety, knowledge, and fair conduct. It shapes us into noble and wise individuals and guides our interactions with God, family, and society.

ix. Zaalam:

From a lyrical analysis perspective, the song "Zaalam" begins with a salutation to Prophet Muhammad S.A.W., acknowledging Him as the greatest of all creation. The lyrics discuss the dedication to the Prophet's Sunnah, describing the Prophet's devotion through constant worship, even to the point of sore feet. However, the song emphasizes that true devotion is not dependent on

wealth. The Sunnah is a crucial secondary source of guidance in Islam, complementing the Quran. A hadith explains that practicing the Sunnah brings rewards not only for oneself but also for others who follow the example, without diminishing one's rewards. Conversely, those who practice sin must bear the sins of their actions as well as the sins of those who follow them.

Conclusion

Dikir Burdah (DB) in Sri Aman, Sarawak exemplifies the profound fusion of Islamic cultural heritage, artistic expression, and spiritual devotion. This study provides an invaluable contribution to the academic discourse surrounding Dikir Burdah (DB) by meticulously examining its linguistic, aesthetic, and spiritual dimensions. Through the detailed documentation of its original lyrics and translations, this research uncovers a cultural gem that has been largely neglected in both scholarly and cultural narratives. The findings underscore Dikir Burdah (DB)'s vital role in fostering communal unity, strengthening spiritual connections, and preserving Malay and Islamic cultural identity. This research not only fills a significant gap in the existing literature but also offers essential resources for policymakers, cultural institutions, and future researchers aiming to safeguard this art form. In light of these findings, future research should explore innovative approaches to integrate Dikir Burdah (DB) within modern educational systems and digital platforms, ensuring its continued relevance and accessibility to younger generations while preserving its intrinsic spiritual and cultural values. This will ensure Dikir Burdah (DB)'s sustained legacy, enriching the broader cultural landscape for future generations.

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