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Prof. Ilyas Muhammad Ali (1908–1991): An Analysis of His Intellectual History and Contributions to Hadith Studies in the Malay World

Jannatul Husna¹, Gamal Abdul Nasir Zakaria²

¹Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, Indonesia

²University of Brunei Darussalam, Brunei Darussalam

*Correspondence Author: *jannatul@ilha.uad.ac.id, gamal.zakaria@ubd.edu.bn

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Ilyas Muhammad Ali, hadith,
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Abstract

*This article explores the intellectual history and contributions of Ilyas Muhammad Ali to hadith scholarship in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago. As an educator, mufti, and lecturer, he played pivotal roles in Islamic education, notably founding and developing IAIN Pekanbaru and IAIN Padang. However, scholarly research on his biography and academic legacy remains limited among both local and international researchers. Employing a qualitative methodology, this study utilizes documentary analysis and structured interviews. Primary data sources include his work, *Durusul-Ahadith al-Nabawiyah* (1939), as well as testimonies from family members and former students. Findings indicate that Ilyas made significant contributions to Islamic education in West Sumatra, Aceh, and Riau, particularly through his compilation of a forty-hadith collection designed as instructional material for Islamic secondary schools and the general public. The systematization of his compilation includes the hadith number, thematic title, textual transmission (matn), exegetical commentary, and pedagogical values. His *Arba'in* primarily addresses core Islamic ethical principles, spanning individual moral development to societal and civic life. Consequently, this study affirms that Ilyas's scholarly output and intellectual contributions were instrumental in fostering ethical consciousness and moral character within Muslim society, guiding adherents toward virtuous conduct across diverse spheres of life.*

Introduction

A General History of Hadith Studies in the Malay Archipelago

The development of hadith literature in the Indonesian archipelago began to attract sustained scholarly attention in the seventeenth century CE.¹ Early local compilers such as Syaikh Nur al-Din al-Raniri (d. 1658) and Syaikh ‘Abd al-Ra’uf al-Singkili (d. 1693) stand out as pioneers in the compilation of hadith works in Nusantara.² Federspiel’s survey of twentieth-century Indonesian hadith literature offers a valuable framework for contextualizing this trajectory.³ The scholarly tradition of hadith continued to flourish throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries,⁴ and further expanded into the twenty-first century with accelerated dynamics and increasingly widespread innovation, particularly in the era of digitalization and social media.⁵

The corpus produced in this field demonstrates considerable diversity, reflecting both the depth of scholarship and the evolving nature of hadith studies in the Malay world. In its early stages, hadith literature often took the form of anthologies accompanied by translations and concise commentaries in Arabic-Malay.⁶ Deraman’s study of hadith pedagogy in Nusantara examines both classical and contemporary texts, as well as the key figures who have sustained hadith literacy. It offers comparative insights into the circulation of anthologies across classrooms, pondok schools, and public preaching networks.⁷ Wendry advances the concept of regional hadith studies, emphasizing the importance of local genealogies, transmission patterns, and contextual hermeneutics—dimensions frequently overlooked in standard canonical surveys.⁸

Over time, the scope of hadith scholarship expanded significantly to include the study of *mustalah al-hadith*,⁹ Collections of sanad (thabat) and commentary works that evolved from

¹ Azyumardi Azra, *Jaringan Ulama Timur Tengah Dan Kepulauan Nusantara Abad XVII Dan XVIII* (Bandung: Mizan, 1995); Ramli Abdul Wahid, *Sejarah Pengkajian Hadis Di Indonesia* (Medan: IAIN Press, 2010); Fauzi Deraman and Faisal Ahmad Shah, *Pengkajian Hadith Di Nusantara: Indonesia, Selatan Thailand, Singapura* (Kuala Lumpur: Jabatan al-Quran dan al-Hadith Universiti Malaya, 2011).

² Oman Fathurahman, “The Roots of the Writing Tradition of Hadith Works in Nusantara: Hidāyah Al-Ḥabīb by Nūr Al-Dīn Al-Rānirī,” *Jurnal Studia Islamika: Indonesian Journal for Islamic Studies* 19, no. 1 (2012): 47–76; Mohd Muhiden bin Abd Rahman, *Kitab Al-Fawā'id Al-Bahiyah Fī Al-Aḥādīth Al-Nabawiyah Syeikh Nuruddin Al-Raniri* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 2009); Ahmad Baha' Mokhtar, “Sharh Laṭīf ‘alā Arba‘īn Ḥadīthan Li Al-Imām Al-Nawawī Karangan Shaikh ‘Abd Rauf Al-Fansuri: Satu Kajian Teks” (Universiti Malaya, 2008).

³ howard Federspiel, “Ḥadīṭ” Literature In Twentieth Century Indonesia,” *Oriente Moderno* 21, no. 82 (2002): 115–124, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25817815>.

⁴ Ramli Abdul Wahid, “Perkembangan Kajian Hadis Di Indonesia: Studi Tokoh Dan Organisasi Masyarakat Islam,” *Jurnal al-Bayan* 4, no. Mei/Rabiulawal (2006); Wahid, *Sejarah Pengkajian Hadis Di Indonesia*.

⁵ Miski Mudin, *Islam Virtual: Diskursus Hadis, Otoritas Dan Dinamika Keislaman Di Media Sosial* (Yogyakarta: Bildung, 2019); Muhammad Alfatih Suryadilaga, “Kajian Hadis Di Era Global,” *Esensia: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin* 15, no. 2 (2014): 199–212, <https://ejournal.uin-suka.ac.id/ushuluddin/esensia/article/view/152-4>; Sabilar Rosyad and Muhammad Alif, “Hadis Di Era Digital: Tantangan Dan Peluang Penggunaan Teknologi Dalam Studi Hadis,” *Jurnal Ilmu Agama* 24, no. 2 (2023): 185–197, <https://jurnal.radenfatah.ac.id/index.php/JIA/article/view/18979>.

⁶ Latifah Abdul Majid, “The Hidayat Al-Habib Fi Al-Tarhib Wa Al-Tarhib: A Pioneer Work of Hadith in Malay Archipelago by Al-Raniri,” *Jurnal al-Turath* 2, no. 1 (2017): 74–79, <http://spaj.ukm.my/jalturath>; Abd Rauf Al-Fansuri, *Syarh Laṭīf ‘alā Al-Arba‘īn Al-Nawawiyah*, ed. Ahmad Baha' bin Mokhtar (Gadong: UNISSA Press, 2015); Khadher Ahmad, *Hadis Tasawuf Dalam Kitab Hidayah Al-Salikin* (Kuala Lumpur: Penerbit Universiti Malaya, 2013).

⁷ Fauzi Deraman and Faisal Ahmad Shah, *Pengkajian Hadith Di Nusantara: Indonesia - Selatan Thailand - Singapura* (Kuala Lumpur: Jabatan al-Quran dan al-Hadith Universiti Malaya, 2011).

⁸ novizal Wendry And Ahmad Taufik Hidayat, *Studi Hadis Kawasan Minangkabau: Pemetaan Dan Penggunaan Hadis Dalam Manuskrip Keagamaan* (Klaten: Penerbit Lakeisha, 2023).

⁹ Hayati binti Hussin et al., “Al-Tarmasiy Tokoh Prolifik Dalam Bidang Hadith,” *HADIS: Jurnal Ilmiah Berimpak* 8, no. Desember (2014): 51–64; Jannatul Husna Ali Nuar, “Buya Haji Mawardi: Khidmatnya Terhadap Sunnah Nabi,” in

modest pamphlets into multi-volume treatise.¹⁰ Conceptual and theoretical explorations in hadith studies have also deepened, paving the way for research in *ma'ani al-hadith*, which elucidates the meanings and contexts of Prophetic traditions.¹¹ Entering the modern era, the corpus of hadith literature has undergone a process of computerization,¹² thereby enables broader accessibility and enhances comprehension of the discipline.

Amidst the development of the digital era,¹³ Hadith anthologies remain relevant as a form of literature that presents curated collections of Prophetic hadith, organized with specific structures and purposes. This literary model has been developed over a long period by Malay-Indonesian scholars from diverse backgrounds—including alumni of the Haramain and Egypt, graduates of *surau* (traditional prayer houses) and universities, charismatic clerics in *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools), and intellectuals active in academia—reflecting the continuation of a rich scholarly tradition.¹⁴

In the history of Islamic scholarship in this archipelago, the *Arba'in* collections have exerted significant influence, particularly through al-Nawawi's *Arba'in*, which remains the foundational reference in this genre. Numerous Nusantara scholars have contributed to this tradition, including 'Abd al-Ra'uf al-Singkili (d. 1693), Mahfuz al-Tarmasi (1868–1920), Mawardi Muhammad (1913–1994), and Yasin al-Fadani (1917–1990). However, one figure whose contributions to *Arba'in* literature have been rarely acknowledged is Ilyas Muhammad Ali. This study aims to address this gap by reconstructing his intellectual history, identifying the hadith literature he produced, and analyzing his scholarly thought in this field, particularly regarding moral formation in society from a hadith perspective.

In this study, it is essential to delineate the rationale (why) and methodology (how) underlying his compilation, including the innovations implemented in the work. He is an

Transformasi Penyelidikan Dalam Bidang Pengajian Islam, ed. Khadher Ahmad et al (Kuala Lumpur: Universiti Malaya, 2012); Munirah, “Mahmud Yunus Dan Kontribusinya Dalam Perkembangan Studi Hadis Dan Ilmu Hadis Di Indonesia,” *Millatī, Journal of Islamic Studies and Humanities* 2, no. 2 (2017): 275–294.

¹⁰ Muhammad Yasin Al-Fadani, *Al-'Iqd Al-Farid Min Jawahir Al-Asanid* (Beirut: Dar al-Salam, 1990); Khadher Ahmad et al., “Ketokohan Mahmud Yunus Dalam Bidang Tafsir Al-Quran: Kajian Terhadap Kitab Tafsir Qur'an Karim,” in *The 2nd Annual International Quranic Conference* (Kuala Lumpur: Centre of Quranic Research, 2012), 195–211; Abdul Malik Ghozali, “Transmisi Hadits Syaikh Mahfuz Dalam Kitab Kifayat Al-Mustafid,” *Islamia* X, no. 2 (2016): 49–63.

¹¹ Muhammad Syuhudi Ismail, *Hadis Nabi Tekstual Dan Kontekstual: Telaah Ma'ani Al-Hadits Tentang Ajaran Islam Yang Universal, Temporal Dan Lokal* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1994); Ali Mustafa Yaqub, *Cara Benar Memahami Hadis* (Jakarta Selatan: Pustaka Firdaus, 2015); Abdul Mustaqim, *Ilmu Ma'anil Hadis: Paradigma Interkoneksi Berbagai Teori Dan Metode Memahami Hadis Nabi* (Yogyakarta: Idea Press, 2016); Nasrullah Nurdin, “Prof. Dr. KH. Ali Mustafa Yaqub, MA. Muhaddith Nusantara Bertaraf Internasional,” in *2nd INHAD International Muzakarah & Mu'tamar on Hadith* (Selangor: INHAD, 2017), 1–18; Muh. Nasrullah, Jannatul Husna, and Waharjani, “Syuhudi Ismail Dan Pengembangan Pemikiran Hadis Di Indonesia: Studi Analisis Konsep Pemahaman Hadis,” *Risalah: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Studi Islam* 8, no. 2 (2022): 441–458.

¹² Muhammad Syuhudi Ismail, *Pengantar Ilmu Hadits*, 10th ed. (Bandung: Angkasa, 1992); Rahmatullah, “Ahmad Lutfi Fathullah Dan Digitalisasi Hadith Di Nusantara,” *Islamica: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 14, no. 2 (2020), <https://islamica.uinsa.ac.id/index.php/islamica/article/view/570>; Ar Rasyid Fajar Nasrullah, “Peran Ahmad Lutfi Fathullah Dalam Perkembangan Kajian Digitalisasi Hadist Di Indonesia,” *Ducare: Journal of Education and Learning* 1, no. 1 (2024): 31–38.

¹³ Muhammad Fatkhul Hajri, “Pendidikan Islam Di Era Digital: Tantangan Dan Peluang Pada Abad 21,” *AL-MIKRAJ: Jurnal Studi Islam dan Humaniora* 4, no. 1 (2023): 33–41; Aqdi Rofiq Asnawi, “Pendekatan Studi Islam Di Era Digital,” in *Perkembangan Studi Islam*, ed. Andi Asari (Malang: Penerbit Litnus, 2023).

¹⁴ Fauzi Deraman and Mohd Asmawi Muhammad, “Karya-Karya 'Ulum Al-Hadith Di Nusantara: Satu Sorotan,” *Jurnal al-Bayan* 8 (2010); Wahid, *Sejarah Pengkajian Hadis Di Indonesia*.

intellectual with a robust background in the Arabic language,¹⁵ He demonstrated linguistic expertise and made substantial contributions to hadith scholarship. His approach to commentary and hadith analysis reflects systematic and contextually relevant thinking, applicable both in academic settings and broader societal engagement. Moreover, his contribution to establishing a prophetic character framework for society constitutes a critical dimension in understanding the figure's intellectual legacy.

Professor Ilyas's Position Within the Tradition

Although renowned as an Arabic linguist and educator at various educational institutions in Sumatra,¹⁶ Ilyas also served as a lecturer at two primary State Islamic Institutes (IAIN) in West Sumatra and Riau,¹⁷ Grand Mufti of the Siak Sultanate,¹⁸ and inaugural Rector of IAIN Suska Pekanbaru—now UIN Suska Riau.¹⁹ Nevertheless, scholarly attention to his biography—particularly his contributions to hadith studies—remains scarce, if not virtually absent. Among the limited research specifically examining his life is Professor Sanusi Latief's (2001) work in *The Life History of West Sumatran Ulama and His Struggle*. However, this study does not comprehensively address Ilyas' engagement with or conceptual contributions to hadith. Other literature mentions this figure without substantially exploring his scholarly thoughts or disciplinary impact.

The previous scholarship has largely relegated him to marginal references within academic, *da'wah*, and political contexts without holistically illuminating his intellectual identity or scholarly contributions. In the educational domain, he is documented as a teacher at Madrasah Taufiqiah al-Hasjimiah, which was founded by Sultan Syarif Kasim II.²⁰ Furthermore, as an alumnus of al-Azhar, he actively advanced Islamic educational modernization in Minangkabau.²¹ He co-founded the Normal School (a teachers' training college) in Padang alongside Mahmud Yunus, Ibrahim Musa, and fellow members of the PGAI, the Islamic Teachers' Association.²²

In the field of religious outreach (*da'wah*), Ilyas was recognized as an influential preacher (*muballigh*) in Riau and West Sumatra.²³ He served as the Grand Mufti of the Sultanate of Siak. Additionally, he contributed to the compilation of the Tafsir Quran Karim, leading the drafting of

¹⁵ Muhammad Sanusi Latief, "Prof. H. Ilyas Muhammad Ali (1908)," in *Riwayat Hidup Ulama Sumatera Barat Dan Perjuangannya*, ed. Mestika Zed (Padang: Islamic Centre Sumbar dan Penerbit Angkasa Raya, 2001); Nurwahdi, *Interview with Prof. Ilyas' Student and His Teaching Assistant, February 8* (Payakumbuh, 2025); Syafrinal, *Interview with Prof. Ilyas' Student, February 11* (Padang, 2025).

¹⁶ Latief, "Prof. H. Ilyas Muhammad Ali (1908)"; Busyra Ilyas, *Interview with the Youngest Daughter of Prof. Ilyas, March 10* (Padang, 2025).

¹⁷ Ilyas, *Interview with the Youngest Daughter of Prof. Ilyas, March 10*; Nurwahdi, *Interview with Prof. Ilyas' Student and His Teaching Assistant, February 8*; Fithriati Armin, *Interview with the Grandchild of Prof. Ilyas, February 11* (Padang, 2025); Latief, "Prof. H. Ilyas Muhammad Ali (1908)."

¹⁸ Ilyas Muhammad Ali, *Durus Al-Ahadith Al-Nabawiyah* (Fort de Kock (Soematra): al-Matba'ah al-Islamiyah, 1939).

¹⁹ UIN Suska Riau, *Panduan Dan Informasi Akademik UIN Suska Riau T.A 2018/2019* (Pekanbaru: UIN Suska Riau, 2018).

²⁰ National History Documentation Project, *Seminar Sejarah Lokal: Pendidikan Sebagai Faktor Dinamisasi Sosial* (Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, Direktorat Sejarah dan Nilai Tradisional, 1983); Suwardi Mohammad Samin, *Sultan Syarif Kasim II: Pahlawan Nasional Dari Riau* (Pekanbaru: Yayasan Pustaka Riau, 2002); Siti Khairiah, *Pendidikan Agama Di Kesultanan Siak Sri Indrapura (1917-1945)* (Pekalongan: Penerbit NEM, 2024).

²¹ Ahmad Husen, *Sejarah Perjuangan Kemerdekaan R.I Di Minangkabau-Riau 1945-1950* (Jakarta: Badan Pemurnian Sejarah Indonesia-Minangkabau, 1991).

²² Bustanuddin Agus, *Islam Dan Pembangunan* (Yogyakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 2007).

²³ Burhanuddin Daya, *Gerakan Pembaharuan Pemikiran Islam* (Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana, 1990).

its fourth volume under the supervision of Mahmud Yunus.²⁴ In academic and institutional leadership, he was documented as an official of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Tanjung Pinang and served as the inaugural Rector of IAIN Susqa Pekanbaru, now known as UIN Suska Riau,²⁵ He was a lecturer renowned for shaping student political discourse during the 1957 PRRI (Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia) period at the university.²⁶

Although their accounts of Ilyas are brief, these sources are highly valuable as they come from prominent scholars and public intellectuals, including Ahmad Husen (1925–1998)—an independence revolutionary and PRRI ideologue; Burhanuddin Daya (1938–2014)—a comparative religion scholar at UIN Yogyakarta; Bustanuddin Agus (1948–2018)—an Islamic sociologist from Andalas University; Gusti Asnan (b. 1962)—a historian at Andalas University; and Islah Gusmian (b. 1973)—a Quranic exegesis specialist at UIN Surakarta. Despite this documentation of his multidisciplinary engagements, rigorous scholarly examination of his intellectual history, literary contributions, and conceptual work in hadith studies remains critically limited—indeed, virtually nonexistent.

The existing historiography of hadith studies in the Malay archipelago has concentrated overwhelmingly on canonical figures—al-Raniri, al-Singkili, al-Tarmasi, al-Fadani, and more recent authorities such as Hasbi, Syuhudi, etc.—leaving important lacunae in our understanding of twentieth-century regional actors. In this context, Ilyas emerges as a strategically positioned scholar—an alumnus of al-Azhar with strong linguistic and scholarly authority—whose work on the *arba'in* and broader hadith thought have been rarely examined systematically.

Method

This study employs a qualitative research design, utilizing documentary analysis and structured interviews with Ilyas's family members and students. Qualitative research is an approach that emphasizes an in-depth understanding of social phenomena through the collection of non-numerical data, such as interviews, observations, and document analysis. Its aim is to explore the meanings, processes, and contextual conditions of participants' experiences in order to produce rich, contextualized, and holistic interpretations or theoretical insights.²⁷ The primary source is his seminal work, *Durus al-Ahadith al-Nabawiyah* (first edition, Fort de Kock: al-Matba'ah al-Islamiyah, 1939), which serves as the foundational text for tracing his scholarly contributions to hadith studies. The data analysis employs a dual methodological approach: historical analysis and content analysis.²⁸

The historical approach facilitates the reconstruction of Ilyas's intellectual biography within its broader socio-academic context, enabling a deeper understanding of the relevant historical

²⁴ Islah Gusmian, *Khazanah Tafsir Indonesia: Dari Hermeneutika Hingga Ideologi* (Yogyakarta: LkiS, 2013); Halimatussa'diyah, *Karakteristik Tafsir Di Indonesia: Analisis Terhadap Tafsir Juz 'Amma Risalat Al-Qawl Al-Bayan Dan Kitab Al-Burhan*, ed. Yosi Nofa (Jakarta: Sakata Cendekia, 2020); Irsyad Al Fikri, "Kekhasan Dan Keanekaragaman Bahasa Dalam Tafsir Lokal Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Iman dan Spritualitas* 1, no. 2 (2021).

²⁵ Daya, *Gerakan Pembaharuan Pemikiran Islam*; Lalu Muhammad Nurul Wathoni, *Integrasi Pendidikan Islam Dan Sains: Rekonstruksi Paradigma Pendidikan Islam* (Ponorogo: CV. Uwais Inspirasi Indonesia, 2018).

²⁶ Gusti Asnan, *Memikir Ulang Regionalisme Sumatera Barat Tahun 1950-An* (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2007).

²⁷ Manju Vasant Ahir (Sharma) and Nakul A. Desmukhh, *Research Methodology* (Mumbai-India: Geh Press, 2025).

²⁸ Syahrin Harahap, *Metodologi Studi Tokoh & Penulisan Biografi*, 2nd ed. (Jakarta: Prenada, 2014); Arief Furchan and Agus Maimun, *Studi Tokoh: Metode Penelitian Mengenai Tokoh* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2005); Abdul Mustaqim, "Model Penelitian Tokoh (Dalam Teori Dan Aplikasi)," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu al-Quran dan Hadis* 15, no. 2 (2014): 201–218.

circumstances. Concurrently, content analysis allows for a systematic examination of his hadith literature to explore methodological frameworks, thematic emphases, and the relevance of his thought to the formation of prophetic character in society. To enhance the validity of interview data, triangulation was conducted by cross-referencing oral testimonies with archival documents—including published works, institutional records, and contemporaneous correspondence—and with the primary texts. Discrepancies were examined and reported to provide a transparent account of evidentiary strength. Through this integrated approach, the research aims to produce a comprehensive scholarly contribution aligned with contemporary developments in Islamic studies.

Results and Discussion

Professor Ilyas's Intellectual Trajectory

Ilyas Muhammad Ali, recognized as an Islamic educational reformer,²⁹ was born in Pangkalan Koto Baru in December 31, 1908 CE³⁰ (Thursday, 8 Dzu al-Hijjah 1326 AH). His father, Muhammad Ali (d. 1942), was a prominent community figure in Pangkalan Koto Baru, while his mother, Ato (d. 1979), devoted herself to domestic life.³¹ Pangkalan Koto Baru is located in Lima Puluh Kota Regency, bordering Kampar Regency in Riau Province. It is approximately 44 km from Sarilamak, the regency's administrative center; 54 km from Payakumbuh city center; and 170 km from Padang, the capital of West Sumatra.

He began his primary education at Sekolah Desa in Pangkalan Koto Baru and continued his early religious studies at the Surau of Padang Japang in Payakumbuh under Syaikh Abbas Abdullah (d. 1957) and at the Surau of Parabek in Bukittinggi under Syaikh Ibrahim Musa (d. 1963), both of whom profoundly influenced his intellectual development. In 1925, at the age of 17, he pursued advanced studies at al-Azhar University, where he obtained the Syahadah 'Alimiyyah³²—The highest credential in Al-Azhar's traditional system—conferring the titles 'Alim and Syaikh;³³ This qualification is broadly comparable to a modern master's degree.³⁴ He was recognized as one of the pioneering Minangkabau scholars to study in Egypt.

After completing his studies in Egypt, Ilyas returned to the Dutch East Indies in 1933. In response to communal demand and in collaboration with fellow al-Azhar alumnus Husein Yahya, he founded and directed al-Ma'had al-'Ilmi al-Islami in Pangkalan Koto Baru, Lima Puluh Kota. The institution was established as a center for modern Islamic education, offering a curriculum that included Arabic, theology (aqidah), Islamic law (shari'a), ethics (akhlaq), and other Islamic sciences.³⁵ As of this writing, documentation regarding the later development of the madrasah is not available in accessible sources. It is plausible that its name was influenced by Zainuddin Hamidy (1907–1957), who established al-Ma'had al-Islami in 1932 at Koto Nan Ampek, Payakumbuh.³⁶ From a sociological perspective on Islamic education, the initiative can be understood as an effort

²⁹ Husen, *Sejarah Perjuangan Kemerdekaan R.I Di Minangkabau-Riau 1945-1950*.

³⁰ Ilyas, *Interview with the Youngest Daughter of Prof. Ilyas*, March 10; Armin, *Interview with the Grandchild of Prof. Ilyas*, February 11.

³¹ Latief, "Prof. H. Ilyas Muhammad Ali (1908)."

³² Ibid.; Syafrinal, *Interview with Prof. Ilyas' Student*, February 11.

³³ Mahmud Yunus, *Riwayat Hidup Prof. Dr. H. Mahmud Yunus* (Jakarta: Hidakarya Agung, 1982).

³⁴ Saripuddin Daulay, *Biografi Dan Jejak Malim Kampung Di Asahan* (Medan: UMSU Press, 2024).

³⁵ Latief, "Prof. H. Ilyas Muhammad Ali (1908)."

³⁶ Hikmat Israr, *Angku Mudo Zainuddin Hamidy: Pejuang Agama Dan Pendiri Ma'had Islamy Payakumbuh* (Bandung: Budaya Media, 2010).

to institutionalize religious norms to cultivate social capital, strengthen communal networks, and respond to socio-economic changes through curriculum and pedagogical practices.

As an educator, Ilyas taught at numerous institutions. He served at the Payakumbuh Training College under Nashruddin Thaha (d. 1979); the Islamic College Padang, established by PERMI (Persatuan Muslimin Indonesia); the Bukittinggi Islamic College, founded by H.M.S. Sulaiman (d. 1972); and the Padang Normal School, directed by Mahmud Yunus (d. 1982). He also held positions at Kulliyatul Muallimat al-Diniyah Putri Padang Panjang, supervised by Rahmah El-Yunusiah (d. 1969), and at Ma'had Iskandar Muda (Aceh, established in 1935 by Teungku Haji Ibrahim Lamnga).³⁷ In 1940, he led Ma'had Imanil Mukhlis (M.I.M) in Lampaku, Aceh Besar—an institution founded by Teuku Daud Panglima Polem (d. 1940). Contemporary sources note that the leadership was specifically recruited from West Sumatra, naming including Haji Ilyas Muhammad Ali al-Azhari, an Egyptian graduate graduate",³⁸ This reflected broad recognition of his cross-cultural educational authority.

Beyond his teaching duties, Ilyas served as the Grand Mufti of the Siak Sultanate.³⁹ under Yang Dipertuan Besar Sultan Syarif Kasim II Abdul Jalil Saifuddin (r. 1915–1945).⁴⁰ After Indonesia's independence, he served as Head of Religious Education at the Central Sumatra Religious Affairs Office (Jawatan Agama Sumatera Tengah) from 1946 to 1957. He then lectured at IAIN Ciputat Jakarta from 1960 to 1965. According to Latief, his career advanced with his appointment as Dean of the Faculty of Tarbiyah at IAIN Pekanbaru (1965–1970) and as a Professor of Arabic Linguistics.⁴¹ He subsequently served as the inaugural Rector of IAIN Susqa Pekanbaru from 1970 to 1975. After his rectorship, he continued teaching at the same campus and at IAIN Padang,⁴² Alongside professorial duties at the Institute of Qur'anic Studies (IIQ) Padang, presently known as STAIPIQ Sumatera Barat.⁴³

As one of the pioneering Minangkabau intellectuals to study in Egypt, Ilyas stood alongside contemporaries such as Mahmud Yunus.⁴⁴ He authored Arabic-language textbooks and consistently encouraged students to master the language of the Qur'an.⁴⁵ Sanusi Latief documents his scholarly work in history, ethics (akhlak), and the Arabic language,⁴⁶ and subsequent research confirms his authorship of forty-hadith compilation that is the primary subject of this study.

³⁷ Latief, "Prof. H. Ilyas Muhammad Ali (1908)."

³⁸ Regional Cultural Documentation Project, *Sejarah Pendidikan Daerah Istimewa Aceh* (Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1984); Ibrahim Alfian, *Wajah Aceh Dalam Lintasan Sejarah* (Banda Aceh: Pusat Dokumentasi dan Informasi Aceh, 1999).

³⁹ Ali, *Durus Al-Ahadih Al-Nabawiyah*.

⁴⁰ Marhalim Zaini, *Pelajaran Penting Dari Sultan Syarif Kasim II (Pahlawan Nasional Dari Riau)*, ed. Muhammad Jaruki (Jakarta Timur: Badan Pengembangan dan Pembinaan Bahasa, Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2018).

⁴¹ Latief, "Prof. H. Ilyas Muhammad Ali (1908)."

⁴² Ibid.; Nurwahdi, *Interview with Prof. Ilyas' Student and His Teaching Assistant, February 8*; Ilyas, *Interview with the Youngest Daughter of Prof. Ilyas, March 10*.

⁴³ Nurwahdi, *Interview with Prof. Ilyas' Student and His Teaching Assistant, February 8*; Abdel Haq, *Interview with Prof. Ilyas' Student, February 22* (Dharmasraya, 2025).

⁴⁴ Yunus, *Riwayat Hidup Prof. Dr. H. Mahmud Yunus*; Nezli Harmaini and Suraya Saleh, *Riwayat Hidup Prof. Dr. H. Mahmud Yunus Dan Keluarga Serta Karirnya*, ed. Kasyunnil Kamal and Subhilhar (Jakarta: PT. Mahmud Yunus Wadzurriyyah, 2015).

⁴⁵ Nurwahdi, *Interview with Prof. Ilyas' Student and His Teaching Assistant, February 8*; Irhash Amran Samad, *Interview with Prof. Ilyas' Student, February 24* (Padang, 2025); Syafrinal, *Interview with Prof. Ilyas' Student, February 11*.

⁴⁶ Latief, "Prof. H. Ilyas Muhammad Ali (1908)."

Among his identified works, corroborated across multiple sources are *Islamic History* (1935); *Moral Lessons* (1935); *Ta'lim al-Lughah al-'Arabiyah* (4 volumes, 1936); *al-Tarbiyah wa al-Ta'lim* (1936); and *Mamadzij Mu'tadilah li al-Insya' wa al-Mutala'ah* (1940); and *Arabic Language Lessons 1-3* (1958). Later pedagogical works include *al-Qira'ah al-Rasyidah al-Hadithah* (1968, 1969, 1976) and *Arabic Textbook: for Religious Colleges* (1974).⁴⁷ Notably, *Durus al-Ahadith al-Nabawiyah* (1939) — remains a central contribution to his hadith scholarship.

After decades of service in academia, Islamic da'wah, and scholarship, Ilyas Muhammad Ali passed away in Pekanbaru on December 2, 1991 CE ⁴⁸ On Monday, 26 Jumadi al-Awwal 1412 AH, at the age of 83 years according to the Gregorian calendar (85 according to the Hijri calendar), he passed away. He was buried at Senapelan Public Cemetery (TPU) in Pekanbaru.⁴⁹ In recognition of his contributions to Islamic education, a street within the UIN Sultan Syarif Kasim complex in Panam, Riau, was named Muhammad Ali Street as a tribute to his intellectual legacy.

Affectionately known as “Babak” (a Minangkabau honorific for grandfather) among his descendants, Prof. Ilyas fathered children and grandchildren who pursued professional careers in medicine, academia, entrepreneurship, and civil service.⁵⁰ Notably, his daughter from his marriage to Maimunah Majid (d. 1987), Farida Ilyas (1938–2024), served as Chair of the Physics Department in the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences at Andalas University; Director of the Governing Board of 'Aisyiyah Hospital Padang; and Advisory Council Member for the 'Aisyiyah West Sumatra Regional Leadership. His youngest daughter, Busyra Ilyas, dedicated her career to education and served until mandatory retirement at State Senior High School 7 Padang.⁵¹

Durus al-Ahadith al-Nabawiyah: Prof. Ilyas' Contribution to Hadith Studies

Durus al-Ahadith al-Nabawiyah, authored by Prof. Ilyas, is a compact forty-hadith anthology explicitly oriented toward moral and social education (*tarbiyah al-akhlaq wa al-shakhsiyyah*). Its full Arabic title—*Durus al-Ahadith al-Nabawiyah fi al-Ahwal al-Akhlaqiyah wa al-Ijtima'iyah (Hadithan Arba'inan)*—translates as “Studies of Prophetic Traditions Concerning Moral and Social Conditions (Forty Hadith)”. The treatise employs formal Arabic (*fusha*) in a systematically structured yet accessible rhetorical style. Ilyas selects hadiths on pedagogical grounds—prioritizing narrations that are readily teachable and directly formative of everyday conduct (filial piety, fraternity, social ethics, avoidance of vices), rather than aiming for a comprehensive doctrinal synopsis.

The intellectual contribution is evident in three interrelated dimensions. First, the substantive focus on ethics and social morality reorients hadith selection and commentary toward communal character formation, making the work a targeted resource for moral education. Second, the linguistic strategy—using Arabic as the medium to convey the Prophet's message—ensures fidelity to the prophetic text while providing a model of formal expression suitable for scholarly

⁴⁷ Ibid.; Syafrinal, *Interview with Prof. Ilyas' Student*, February 11; Nurwahdi, *Interview with Prof. Ilyas' Student and His Teaching Assistant*, February 8; Armin, *Interview with the Grandchild of Prof. Ilyas*, February 11.

⁴⁸ Ilyas, *Interview with the Youngest Daughter of Prof. Ilyas*, March 10; Armin, *Interview with the Grandchild of Prof. Ilyas*, February 11.

⁴⁹ Ilyas, *Interview with the Youngest Daughter of Prof. Ilyas*, March 10.

⁵⁰ Ibid.; Latief, “Prof. H. Ilyas Muhammad Ali (1908).”

⁵¹ Armin, *Interview with the Grandchild of Prof. Ilyas*, February 11; Ilyas, *Interview with the Youngest Daughter of Prof. Ilyas*, March 10.

use. Third, the treatise was deliberately designed to support regional religious instruction, thereby strengthening hadith literacy in Nusantara through a concise, teachable anthology that teachers, preachers, and students could readily adopt.

This treatise was composed within a socio-intellectual milieu that emphasized Islamic moral education, formalized by the 1936 Congress of Sumatran Ulama in Padang Panjang.⁵² Its conception responded to societal challenges confronting contemporary Muslim communities, with its methodology shaped by four critical factors: (1) a critique of outdated pedagogical approaches (al-turuq al-ma'lūfah) deemed incongruent with modern exigencies; (2) the theory-practice dichotomy (al-fasl baina al-'ilm wa al-hayah) in religious knowledge; (3) deficient character formation (qillat al-mura'at li al-adab wa al-akhlaq) in educational institutions; and (4) corrosive social environments (al-bi'ah al-mufsidah). As a corrective measure, Ilyas championed a systematic hadith pedagogy, urging educators to utilize primary sources—particularly positioning this work as a core reference for moral instruction.⁵³ Methodologically, he departs from Imam al-Nawawi's model: he neither follows Nawawi's numbering system nor reproduces his thematic ordering, which emphasizes foundational topics such as niyyah and divine forgiveness.

This treatise was composed with the explicit objective of inculcating virtuous behavioral habits (tahdzib al-akhlaq) from early childhood, ensuring these values become deeply ingrained throughout one's life. This philosophy resonates profoundly with the Minangkabau-Malay maxim: "*Small people get carried away, big people get carried away, but old people do not change*"⁵⁴—formed in early childhood persist into adulthood and are unlikely to change later in life. This pedagogical philosophy likely constituted the foundational ethos for Prof. Ilyas, as evidenced by his declaration:

فإذا تعودت المدرسة على غرس أخلاق الإجتماعية الحسنة في التلاميذ من أول دور تعليمهم تقيت هذه العادة في نفوسهم فيشربون كارهين عن العادة السيئة في هذا المجتمع وتشمئز أنفسهم عن الأخلاق التي لا ترضي بها. هذا هو غرضنا في إخراج هذا الكتاب ولعل المعلمين يلفتون أنظارهم إلى هذه الناحية ليكون عملهم أكبر نفعاً وأحسن تأثيراً، فيدرسون الدين والأخلاق على حسب ما أتى به هذا المنهج في هذا الكتاب

"If educational institutions systematically inculcate sound social ethics (akhlaq ijtimaiyyah) from students' formative years, such values will become indelibly etched upon their psyches. These individuals will mature with an innate aversion to societal vices and a principled distance from behaviors that contravene moral norms. This is our paramount objective in compiling this work—to urge educators to prioritize this dimension of formation, thereby making their pedagogy more beneficial (naf'an) and positively influential (ta'tsiran). Thus, may they instruct in matters of religion and ethics according to the manhaj explained herein".⁵⁵

The exact date and place of this work's composition remain unknown. However, the author certifies its completion on the night of Wednesday, 25 Rabi' al-Akhir 1358 AH (June 14, 1939 CE), as stated in the manuscript's colophon.⁵⁶ That same year, it was first published by al-Matba'ah al-Islamiyyah in Fort de Kock (the colonial name for Bukittinggi, West Sumatra)—a premier publishing house established by H.M.S. Sulaiman (d. 1972). This press served as a vital

⁵² Ali, *Durus Al-Ahadith Al-Nabawiyah*, 1; Department of Information, *Propinsi Sumatera Tengah* (Jakarta: Kementerian Penerangan, 1953), 878.

⁵³ Ali, *Durus Al-Ahadith Al-Nabawiyah*, 2–4.

⁵⁴ Idrus Hakimy Dt Rajo Penghulu, *1000 Pepatah, Petitih, Mamang, Bidal, Pantun, Gurindam Minangkabau* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 1991).

⁵⁵ Ali, *Durus Al-Ahadith Al-Nabawiyah*, 4–5.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 90.

infrastructure for Islamic knowledge production, providing specialized printing services for madrasas, scholarly publication platforms for ulama authors, and curated religious texts for students.⁵⁷ Regarding the treatise's conclusion, the author attests:

تم بحمد الله وعونه هذا الكتاب ليلة الأربعاء الخامس والعشرون من شهر الربيع الثاني سنة ثمانية وخمسين وثلاثمائة بعد الألف من السنين الهجرية وذلك موافق للربيع عشر من شهر يونيه سنة 1939 ميلادية

"This book was completed—through divine grace (*'inayah*)—on Wednesday night, 25 Rabi' al-Thani 1358 AH (corresponding to June 14, 1939 CE)".⁵⁸

The political and social turbulence of the late 1930s shaped Ilyas's hadith project. After returning from al-Azhar in 1933 and founding a local Ma'had, he wrote amid intensified colonial regulations—such as the 1932 Wilde Scholen ordinance and the 1933 Huwelijksordonnantie—and growing Islamic organizational activity. These pressures, combined with his position as Mufti of Siak, created an imperative to reinforce kinship, shari'a norms, and adat, for which concise, morally oriented hadith instruction was well suited. Consequently, his emphasis on akhlaq responds to a perceived pedagogical failure: teaching that produced knowledge without corresponding ethical change (كان العلم فيهم شيء والحياة اليومية شيء آخر) — By prioritizing affective formation and everyday conduct.⁵⁹

The Arba'in functioned served an academic resource in madrasa and pesantren curricula. the curricula of madrasas was pesantrens. in institutions such as al-Ma'had al-'Ilmi al-Islami at al-Ma'had al-'Ilmi al-Islami madrasas throughout the Siak Seri Indrapura sultanate during Sri tenure as Grand Mufti, and Islamic schools across Melaka, Sumatra, and the wider Indonesian archipelago broader archipelago.

وقد قررنا تدريس هذا الكتاب في معهدنا المعهد العلمي الإسلامي بفغكالن كوتا بارو كمفر سومطرة وكذلك في المعاهد والمدارس الابتدائية الأخرى في الديار الإندونيسية وفي شبه جزيرة ملقا (سيمنجورغ تانه ملايو) كما أنه تقرر تدريس هذا الكتاب في المدارس الدينية التابعة لسلطنة سيك سري إندرا فوراً وملحقاتها

"We have incorporated this text into the curriculum of our institute, al-Ma'had al-'Ilmi al-Islami, located in Pangkalan Koto Baru, Sumatra, as well as across pesantren and Islamic schools throughout the Indonesian archipelago and Melaka (Malay Peninsula). Furthermore, this work has been mandated for instruction in religious schools under the administration of the Siak Sri Indrapura Sultanate and its affiliated institutions".⁶⁰

Moreover, this 90-page treatise serves as a normative framework for cultivating Islamic values within society. Its pedagogical structure begins with the hadith on "filial piety toward parents" and culminates with "social solidarity and brotherhood." Beyond expounding fundamental Islamic ethics, it systematically examines self-cultivation, familial ethics, interpersonal conduct (toward friends, kin, and neighbors), and socio-political morality. Two seminal conceptual frameworks enrich the discourse: the unbroken succession of faith's defenders and the primacy of scholarly authority, which establish epistemological hierarchies. These frameworks significantly deepen the work's engagement with civilizational ethics.

⁵⁷ Halimatus Sakdiah, "Mathba'ah Islamiah Di Minangkabau: Sejarah Sebuah Penerbit Islam Melintasi Tiga Zaman (1924-1972)," *Islam Transformatif: Journal of Islamic Studies* 4, no. 2 (2020): 176–188.

⁵⁸ Ali, *Durus Al-Ahadith Al-Nabawiyah*, 90.

⁵⁹ Ali, *Durus Al-Ahadith Al-Nabawiyah*.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 5.

In formulating chapter headings, Prof. Ilyas consistently employed the Arabic particle “fi” (في) as a distinctive prefix (e.g., *fi al-syafaqah wa al-ukhuwah*, etc.). This work establishes a unique structural pattern unprecedented in prior hadith anthologies. However, two exceptions warrant attention: Hadith 18 uses the direct phrase “al-bahth ‘ala tark ma la yufid” without the “fi” prefix, while hadith 22 Hadith any thematic title. The etiology of cause anomalies—authorial oversight anomalies—whether authorial editorial error—remains undetermined. Hadith 22 contains an eschatological warning concerning three groups denying divine who deny (syafa‘ah) on Judgment Day: water-withholders, pledging water withholders, those for worldly gain, and merchants swearing false oaths. Based on the author's consistent author's methodology, the philologically appropriate reconstruction for hadith 22's Hadith would be be: (في منع ابن السبيل الماء) (On the Prohibition of Denying Water to Wayfarers).

The treatise's composition adheres to a systematic five-part schema for each ḥadiths: (1) sequential enumeration [e.g., *al-hadith al-awwal*, etc.; (2) thematic heading: e.g., *fi al-birr ‘ala al-umm wa al-ab*; (3) matn presentation; exegetical commentary (*al-īdāh*); (4) moral injunctions (*al-ahkam al-mustanbatah*). Where applicable, these injunctions are categorized as actionable directives (*al-awamir al-mustanbatah*) and prohibitive mandates (*al-nawahi al-mustanbatah*). Collectively termed *al-umur al-mustafadah min al-hadith* (الأمر المستفادة من الحديث) — beneficial derivations from the hadith.

The composition of narrators (ruwat) and hadith references cited by Prof. Ilyas demonstrates diverse sourcing. Hadiths attributed to al-Bukhari constitute the largest proportion at 40% (16 hadiths), followed by Muslim at 10% (4 hadiths) and al-Tirmidhi at 5% (2 hadiths). Single narrations are cited from al-Bazzar (2.5%) and Ibn Mas‘ud (2.5%). Notably, 16 hadiths (40%) lack explicit isnad attribution. A significant methodological observation is that Prof. Ilyas deliberately avoids conventional citation formulas such as “rawahu al-Bukhari wa Muslim.” (رواه البخاري ومسلم) or “*Muttafaq ‘alaih*”, despite several cited traditions being universally authenticated (*sahihain*)—for example:

Hadith No. 2, concerning “Abusing Parents,” is authenticated in both Sahih al-Bukhari (No. 5628) and Sahih Muslim (No. 90) through the transmission chain of the Companion ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr, making it a *Muttafaq ‘alaih* tradition. Conventionally, this dual authentication warrants citation as “narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim” or *Muttafaq ‘alaih*. However, Professor Ilyas attributes it solely to al-Bukhari.⁶¹ Structurally, Ilyas innovates by presenting each item with a concise number and title, followed by the matn and mukharrij, a brief syarh (al-idah), and an explicit istinbat of legal or practical implications. This approach prioritizes pedagogical clarity over extended sanad discussion. He emphasizes the lessons derivable from the hadith (*al-umur al-mustafadah min al-hadith*), addressing both ethical formation and practical fiqh orientation. His mode of commentary is broadly similar to that of later scholars such as Buya Mawardi (1950s–1970s).⁶² The presentation of hadith within this *Arba'in* collection exhibits considerable variation in methodology, as demonstrated by the following observations:

⁶¹ Ibid., 9.

⁶² Jannatul Husna bin Ali Nuar, *Arba'in Mawardi: Khazanah Hadis Ulama Nusantara Di Minangkabau* (Bandar Baru Nilai: Penerbit USIM, 2024); Jannatul Husna bin Ali Nuar, “Kaedah Pengkaryaan Hadis Arba'in Oleh Syekh Fadani Dan Buya Mawardi” (Universiti Brunei Darussalam, 2016).

Category of Hadith Citation	Number of Hadith	Percentage	Hadith Numbers
Companion – Prophet – Text (<i>Matn</i>) – Narrator (<i>Mukharrij</i>)	3	7.5%	23, 25, 26
Companion – Prophet – Text (<i>Matn</i>)	11	27.5%	22, 24, 27, 28, 29, 33, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40
Prophet – Text (<i>Matn</i>) – Narrator (<i>Mukharrij</i>)	19	47.5%	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21
Prophet – Text (<i>Matn</i>) – Narrator (<i>Mukharrij</i>) – Companion	1	2.5%	18
Prophet – Text (<i>Matn</i>)	5	12.5%	30, 31, 32, 34, 37
Text (<i>Matn</i>) – Narrator (<i>Mukharrij</i>)	1	2.5%	1
Total	40	100%	
Category of Hadith Citation	Number of Hadith	Percentage	Hadith Numbers
Companion – Prophet – Text (<i>Matn</i>) – Narrator (<i>Mukharrij</i>)	3	7.5%	23, 25, 26
Companion – Prophet – Text (<i>Matn</i>)	11	27.5%	22, 24, 27, 28, 29, 33, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40
Prophet – Text (<i>Matn</i>) – Narrator (<i>Mukharrij</i>)	19	47.5%	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21
Prophet – Text (<i>Matn</i>) – Narrator (<i>Mukharrij</i>) – Companion	1	2.5%	18
Prophet – Text (<i>Matn</i>)	5	12.5%	30, 31, 32, 34, 37
Text (<i>Matn</i>) – Narrator (<i>Mukharrij</i>)	1	2.5%	1
Total	40	100%	

Table 1: Hadith Citation Categories

As indicated in the table above, the most dominant method of hadith presentation is the sequence: the Prophet – the text (*Matn*) – and the narrator (*Mukharrij*), accounting for 47.5% of instances, as illustrated in the following example:

قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: الْمُسْلِمُ مَنْ سَلِمَ النَّاسُ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ وَيَدِهِ، وَالْمُهَاجِرُ مَنْ هَجَرَ مَا نَهَى اللَّهُ عَنْهُ (رواه البخاري) (الحديث السادس: في منع الإيذاء عن الناس)

Furthermore, the citation method – Prophet – *Matn* is also frequently employed, accounting for 27.5% of cases, as exemplified below:

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: لَيْسَ الْمُسْكِينُ الَّذِي تَرُدُّهُ التَّمَرَةُ وَالتَّمْرَتَانِ وَلَا اللَّفْمَةُ وَلَا اللَّفْمَتَانِ إِنَّمَا الْمُسْكِينُ الَّذِي يَتَعَفَّفُ (الحديث الرابع والعشرون: في الأمر على الإحسان في محله)

Additionally, he also mentions the method of citing hadith by including the Prophet – the text (*Matn*) – the narrator (*Mukharrij*) – and the Companion, as exemplified in hadith below:

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: مَنْ حُسِّنَ إِسْلَامُ الْمَرْءِ تَرَكُّهُ مَا لَا يَنْفَعُهُ – رواه الترمذي عن أبي هريرة “The Prophet said, Among the goodness of a person’s Islam is that he leaves what does not benefit him – narrated by al-Tirmidzī from Abu Hurairah”.⁶³

An unusual example occurs when he refers to the mukharrij in an uncommon way, specifically when the Companion Ibn Mas’ud is called the mukharrij. This is found in hadith number 19, as illustrated demonstrated the following example example:

⁶³ Ali, *Durus Al-Ahadith Al-Nabawiyah*, 41.

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: لَا تَخْتَلَفُوا فَإِنَّ مَنْ قَبْلَكُمْ اخْتَلَفُوا فَهَلَكُوا – رواه ابن مسعود

“The Prophet said, Do not be divided, for indeed those before you were divided and thus perished – narrated by Ibn Mas’ud”.⁶⁴

SSWhen traced back to the primary hadith sources, this hadith is found to be narrated by al-Bukhari in his Sahih (No. 2279) and Ahmad in his Musnad (No. 3898). Both narrators transmitted the message of the "prohibition of division" from the Companion Abdullah bin Mas'ud. Ideally, the correct attribution of the mukharrij should be to HR. HR and/or Ahmad. Nevertheless, the uniqueness of the title systematics, narration patterns, and narrator attributions has enriched hadith studies in the Nusantara region. This book remains valuable to Islamic scholarship despite weaknesses in specific attribution and transmission sources.

Prof. Ilyas's Perspectives on Social Pathologies

As its title suggests, this book emphasizes the importance of ethics and social interaction in building a harmonious and just society. Its commentary is primarily ethical and practical fiqh in orientation, with linguistic notes included only as necessary. This focus makes the work particularly suitable for 1930s Sumatran educational contexts—aligned with the 1936 Padang Panjang congress—because it provides a concise, curriculum-friendly text designed to instill enduring moral habits in both children and adults. In an increasingly complex modern world, these principles are even more relevant given social challenges such as rising intolerance, horizontal conflicts, unhealthy competition, and socio-economic disparities that can trigger crises.

First, Ethics and Social Interaction

In contemporary society, the impact of hate speech, discrimination, and actions that demean an individual's dignity has become a dominant issue in the public sphere. The hadith cited by Prof. Ilyas emphasizes that proper Muslims guard their speech and actions to avoid harming others (*man' al-idza' 'an al-nas*) and to refrain from belittling others (*man' ihtiqar al-ghair*).

الْمُسْلِمُ مَنْ سَلِمَ النَّاسُ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ وَيَدِهِ وَالْمُهَاجِرُ مَنْ هَجَرَ مَا نَهَى اللَّهُ عَنْهُ

“A genuine Muslim is characterized by ensuring the security of others from both verbal and physical harm emanating from themselves, while the true *Muhājir* (emigrant) is defined by the forsaking of all that Allah has proscribed”.⁶⁵

In his commentary, Prof. Ilyas does not explicitly elaborate on the meaning of "Muslim" in the context of the tongue's influence and role in social interactions. The term "Muslim" in this hadith refers to an individual who embodies the essence of Islam (*kamal al-Islam*) without compromising the foundation of faith. Ideally, a Muslim does not harm others through speech or actions.⁶⁶ The tongue symbolizes psychological harm because of its impact on a person's mental state, while the hand represents harm that causes a direct physical effect.

In the digital era, freedom of speech is often misused to spread provocation and hoaxes, leading to social fragmentation. Cultivating attitudes of mutual respect and practicing careful

⁶⁴ Ibid., 42.

⁶⁵ Ali, *Durus Al-Ahadith Al-Nabawiyah*; Muhammad bin Isma'il Al-Bukhari, *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, ed. Muhammad Fu'ad 'Abd Al-Baqi, 15th ed. (Beirut: Dar al-Salam, 2010).

⁶⁶ Yahyā bin Sharaf Al-Nawawī, *Al-Minhāj Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim Bin Al-Ḥajjāj*, 2nd ed. (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 1972), vol. 2/10.

speech are increasingly important to prevent prolonged conflicts and to strengthen the sense of brotherhood.⁶⁷

The ability of a Muslim to control their tongue to avoid hurting others' feelings and to restrain their hand from causing harm to fellow human beings is a fundamental principle in maintaining social harmony. Failure to uphold these two aspects can lead to widespread consequences, including prolonged conflicts and enduring suffering. When an individual feels hurt, they will not remain passive but may seek to retaliate against the perceived offense. Consequently, this triggers escalating hostility, fuels hatred and envy, and ultimately leads to a loss of peace in life.⁶⁸

Prof. Ilyas emphasizes not only the prohibition against causing harm but also the importance of preserving the dignity of others, ensuring that no one is belittled. He cites the following hadith:

لَا تَحْتَوِرَنَّ مِنَ الْمَعْرُوفِ شَيْئًا وَلَوْ أَنَّ تَلَقَّى أَخَاكَ بِوَجْهِ طَلْقٍ

“Do not ever underestimate a small act of kindness, even if it is just greeting your brother with a cheerful face”.⁶⁹

Prof. Ilyas emphasizes that goodness does not always need to take a material form; it can manifest in simple acts such as friendliness and smiling.⁷⁰ In contemporary life, where individualism is increasing and empathy is often overlooked, the encouragement to present a cheerful face (thallaqah al-wajh) and a friendly attitude (insyirah al-qalb) holds significant social importance. Although simple and inexpensive, these behaviors demonstrate goodwill and generosity in nurturing social relationships. Therefore, small acts of kindness should not be underestimated (nanzhur bi al-ihtiqar), as every good deed positively impacts life.⁷¹

In hadith number 12, Prof. Ilyas cites the narration of al-Hakim (No. 435-436), which is claimed to be a hadith from Bukhari.⁷² This hadith teaches that assistance is not limited to wealth or physical strength (al-mal wa al-ma'unah bi al-quwwah al-badaniyah) but also includes sound thoughts and advice (al-afkar al-sahihah). If a person cannot provide material, physical, or intellectual help, a friendly attitude, a smiling face (wajh munbasit), and good character (khuluqan hasanan) still hold great value in alleviating others' difficulties. A friendly demeanor and a cheerful face can evoke happiness, provide comfort, and ease the hearts of grieving people.⁷³ In today's

⁶⁷ Miskha Rahma Juwita et al., “Hoaxes in the Digital Era: An Analysis of Social Media Users' Perceptions and Attitudes,” *Jurnal Lemhannas RI* 12, no. 4 (2024), <https://jurnal.lemhannas.go.id/index.php/jkl/article/view/944>; Wahidah Suryani, Andries Kango, and Andi Akifah, “Constructing Trust in Media Through Islamic Values : Countering Hoaxes and Disinformation Membangun Kepercayaan Terhadap Media Melalui Nilai-Nilai Islam : Melawan Hoaks Dan Disinformasi,” *al-Ulum* 23, no. 1 (2023): 21–39; Shugofa Dastgeer and Daxton Stewart, “Freedom of Speech and Press in Muslim-Majority Countries,” *International Journal of Communication* 15 (2021): 5004–5028.

⁶⁸ Ali, *Durus Al-Ahadith Al-Nabawiyah*, 19–20; Per-Erik Milam, Oliver Hallich, and Brandon Warmke, “Blame, Resentment, and Interpersonal Forgiveness,” in *Conflict and Resolution: The Ethics of Forgiveness, Revenge, and Punishment*, ed. Paula Satne and Krisana M. Scheiter (Switzerland: Springer, 2022), 121–188.

⁶⁹ Ali, *Durus Al-Ahadith Al-Nabawiyah*; Muslim bin al-Ḥajjāj Al-Naisābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāts al-‘Arabī, 2010); Abū ‘Īsā Al-Tirmidzī, *Sunan Al-Tirmidzī*, ed. Ahmad Muhammad Shākir and Muhammad Fu’ad ‘Abd Al-Baqī, 2nd ed. (Kaherah: Maktabah Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalbī, 1975).

⁷⁰ Ali, *Durus Al-Ahadith Al-Nabawiyah*, vol. 36.

⁷¹ Salsabya Azki Qurial Qur’ani et al., “Islamic Religiosity and Friendship Quality as a Determinant Factors of Forgiveness of Islamic Boarding School Student,” *International Journal of Social Science Humanity & Management Research* 03, no. 05 (2024): 498–506.

⁷² Ali, *Durus Al-Ahadith Al-Nabawiyah*.

⁷³ Ibid., 31.

context, a lack of social concern can lead to crimes such as theft and corruption (intisyyar al-sariqah wa al-fasad). Therefore, Islam emphasizes solidarity that transcends kinship (qarabah), marriage (musaharah), residence (maskan), profession ('amal), race (jins), and even homeland (watan).⁷⁴

From Ilyas's remarks, it is evident that he regards restraint of tongue and deed as a collective obligation to be instilled from an early age. He further asserts that simple acts—such as a smile or kindly counsel—hold significant social value; therefore, religious education should prioritize the formation of good habits rather than merely the transmission of knowledge.

Second, Fanaticism and Social Fragmentation

In the modern era, marked by intense ideological competition and conflicting interests, fanaticism—whether at the individual or group level—and the inability to accept differences often trigger social conflicts.⁷⁵ In hadith number 17, Prof. Ilyas cites a hadith reported to be from Sahih Muslim's collection:

أَبْغَضُ الرِّجَالِ إِلَى اللَّهِ الْأَلَدُّ الْخَصِيمُ

“The person most disliked by Allah is the one who is stubborn in argumentation and fond of quarrelling”.⁷⁶

Prof. Ilyas emphasizes that differences of opinion should not lead to enmity (al-khususmah bainahum). One must remain open to alternative viewpoints, especially when those opinions are correct. However, when someone rigidly clings to their own opinion (blind fanaticism) to the extent of harming others, such behavior is prohibited. Allah SWT disapproves of disputes that exceed limits and incite hatred (ya'tadi ila al-'idza'). Conversely, debates conducted to defend the rights of the oppressed and to oppose injustice through proper means are sanctioned by Islamic law. Differences of opinion in the context of justice are acceptable if they remain within legitimate boundaries and do not cause harm.⁷⁷

According to him, conflicts and divisions arising from differences of opinion and choices are unjustified, especially when they lead to refusing to greet one another for more than three days and turning away upon encountering each other. To clarify this matter, he cites a hadith reported in Bukhari's collection, as follows:

لَا يَجِلُّ لِمُسْلِمٍ أَنْ يَهْجُرَ أَخَاهُ فَوْقَ ثَلَاثٍ، يَلْتَقِيَانِ فَيَعْرِضُ هَذَا وَيَعْرِضُ هَذَا، وَخَيْرُهُمَا الَّذِي يَبْدَأُ بِالسَّلَامِ

“It is not permissible for a Muslim to isolate his brother for more than three days. When they meet, one turns away, and the other also turns away. The best among them is the one who initiates the greeting”.⁷⁸

In his commentary, Prof. Ilyas notes that previous communities were destroyed due to their failure to maintain good relationships (ikhtalafu fa halaku). In contrast, Allah SWT created humans to know one another and build brotherhood (Qur'an, al-Hujurat: 13). When harmonious relationships are established among people, significant benefits arise, such as strengthened unity (al-ittihad yuqawwi), preservation of religious teachings (ahkam al-din taqum), and the eradication of hatred and enmity (al-'adawah wa al-baghda' tan'adim). Consequently, welfare improves (nasir

⁷⁴ Ibid., 78–9.

⁷⁵ Ericka Kesya Kurniawan et al., “Sikap Fanatisme Beragama Terhadap Intoleransi Di Indonesia,” *Nusantara: Jurnal Pendidikan, Seni, Sains dan Sosial Humaniora* 1, no. 1 (2022): 78–97.

⁷⁶ Al-Bukhari, *Sahih Al-Bukhari*; Al-Naisābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*; Ali, *Durus Al-Ahadith Al-Nabawiyah*.

⁷⁷ Ali, *Durus Al-Ahadith Al-Nabawiyah*, 40–41.

⁷⁸ Ali, *Durus Al-Ahadith Al-Nabawiyah*; Al-Bukhari, *Sahih Al-Bukhari*.

aghniya' ba'd al-fuqara'), ignorance decreases ('ulama' ba'd al-jahl), and human dignity is elevated (a'izza' ba'd al-dzull). All these factors encourage cooperation across various fields, bringing benefits in both this world and the here after.⁷⁹ He adds that intentionally severing ties for more than three days is prohibited (haram), whereas doing so for a shorter period is permissible (ja'iz), since anger typically subsides after the first day.

In contemporary society, divisions frequently lead to complex, multidimensional crises. Conflicts between groups undermine the foundations of development, provoke political instability, and impede socio-economic and religious progress.⁸⁰ Prof. Ilyas asserts that when individuals prioritize only their egos and refuse to cooperate, it signifies misery ('alamah al-shaqā). To build a cohesive society, openness, respect for others, and the avoidance of fanaticism are essential. When people are divided, achieving positive outcomes or completing tasks becomes impossible. Is it conceivable for people to succeed while they continue to dispute? Certainly not! Many nations before us have faced destruction due to similar divisions.⁸¹ Ilyas emphasizes the importance of brotherhood, tolerance, and harmony in life.

Third, the Islamic Universal Brotherhood

In the concept of universal brotherhood, Prof. Ilyas emphasizes that Islam teaches the importance of communication in social interactions. He explains hadith number 33, which addresses the "ethics of spreading greetings",⁸² He stated that Muslims should not follow the custom of some people who utter unclear words upon meeting (yanthiqun bi kalimah ghair mafhumah) or merely give meaningless gestures and signs (yusyirun bi ru'usihim isyarah la ma'na lahu). Such behavior is not part of Islamic teachings. Conversely, Islam instructs that the greeting (salam) should be pronounced clearly and correctly: "Assalamu'alaikum" when meeting others.

Islam provides guidelines on how young people should behave toward their elders, how pedestrians should show respect to those who are seated, how smaller groups should interact with larger ones, and the appropriate, respectful greetings to offer non-Muslims.⁸³ In the modern social context, the term *salam* can be understood a merely as or routine salutation but a but as of prayer and respect, which can be applied in communication on social media media.⁸⁴ Furthermore, Islamic teachings on how to behave toward others of different ages, social statuses, and beliefs demonstrate a universal social ethic that can strengthen human solidarity.

Regarding the explanation of and brotherhood in Hadith number 40 as a sign of the best Islam, he stated:

The Prophet taught two primary forms of goodness in Islam. First, providing food to those in need, as humans are not equal in wealth and poverty (ghair mutasawin fi al-ghina wa al-faqr). If the wealthy do not assist the poor, they will face hardship, and social conditions will deteriorate. Feeding the hungry not only brings reward but also strengthens relationships (yashkuruk wa yuhibbuk) and protects society from the evils caused by "empty stomachs" (ya'tadi 'alaik idtiraran).

⁷⁹ Ali, *Durus Al-Ahadith Al-Nabawiyah*, 14.

⁸⁰ Baso R et al., "Ekonomi Dan Agama: Harmoni Atau Konflik Dalam Dilema Pembangunan Masyarakat Indonesia?," *Al-Mada: Jurnal Agama, Sosial, dan Budaya* 7, no. 2 (2024): 345–361.

⁸¹ Ali, *Durus Al-Ahadith Al-Nabawiyah*, 42–43.

⁸² Ibid., 72.

⁸³ Ibid., 73–74.

⁸⁴ SM Fahmi Azhar and Lukman Hakim, "Fleksibilitas Ungkapan Salam Dalam Q 24: 27 Dan Relevansinya Terhadap Konteks Keindonesiaan," *Contemporary Quran* 1, no. 2 (2021): 62–74; Rusmala Dewi, "Universalisme Islam Dan Kosmopolitanisme Peradaban," *Nurani* 13, no. 1 (2013): 49–67.

Second, greeting others with salam, whether whether are are known unknown. Salam is key serves as Salam good as a key to relations strong opening relationships and communication bab dzalik al-ta'aruf) and al-ta'aruf). Greetings help foster bonds, eliminate al-haya') in interactions, thereby facilitating interactions, and formation promote unity community community.⁸⁵

Ilyas's insistence on clear salutations and respectful conduct operationalizes the maqasid by safeguarding human dignity (hifz al-'ird) and social harmony (hifz al-nafs), as courteous communication reduces slander, provocation, and communal fragmentation. His emphasis on feeding the needy and mutual assistance advances the objectives of protecting life and wealth (hifz al-nafs and hifz al-mal) by alleviating poverty and preventing the social ills that arise from economic deprivation. Together, these ethical injunctions translate legal and ritual norms into everyday practices that preserve communal solidarity and moral order, thereby fulfilling the higher aims of the shari'a in sustaining trust, reciprocity, and public welfare.

Conclusion

Ilyas's *Durus al-Ahadith al-Nabawiyah* (1939) firmly situates itself within the long Malay Arba'in tradition, which began in the 17th century with figures such as al-Singkili and continued through 19th- and 20th-century compilers. However, unlike Tarmasi and Fadani, who emphasize the transmission of their forty hadith, Professor Ilyas foregrounds the moral and character-education dimension, curating narrations explicitly for pedagogical purposes. In this respect, his project resembles the ethical orientation found in Buya Mawardi's *Arba'in*, but with a distinct selection of hadith that prioritizes social ethics and practical reform.

Positioned as an al-Azhar-trained scholar and institutional leader—founder of al-Ma'had al-'Ilmi al-Islami, Grand Mufti of Siak, inaugural Rector of IAIN Sultan Syarif Qasim, and professor of Arabic—Ilyas translated textual choices into institutional practice, making his Arba'in both a scholarly contribution and a tool for education and communal guidance. The book's pedagogical clarity and contextual methodology enabled its adoption across madrasahs in Sumatra, Melaka, and Siak, thereby strengthening hadith literacy in the Nusantara and adapting the classical Arba'in genre to the needs of modern Islamic education in the Malay-Indonesian world.

Finally, the treatise articulates a hadith-based social ethic built on three pillars: interpersonal ethics (forbidding harm and promoting friendliness), conflict resolution (rejecting blind fanaticism and advocating reconciliation), and universal brotherhood (fostering cross-boundary solidarity). This demonstrates how Ilyas's methodological choice to emphasize akhlaq and character formation resulted in a practical, institutionally embedded program of moral reform across the Malay cultural sphere.

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⁸⁵ Ali, *Durus Al-Ahadith Al-Nabawiyah*, 89–90.

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