

# A Case Study: The Development of Calligraphy Education in Yogyakarta Indonesia

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## **Abstract**

*This study aims to analyze the development and determine the perspective of calligraphy education in Yogyakarta. This research uses a qualitative approach with case studies to obtain a deep and comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon experienced by the research subject. The results showed that the development of calligraphy education was seen at three points of concentration; first, Islamic Higher Education (PTAI); second, in Islamic boarding schools or Islamic-based schools, as one of the learning curriculum materials for students; third; non-institutional calligraphy coaching. This study also contributes to an overview of the dynamics of the development of contemporary Islamic calligraphy in Yogyakarta. It appears a long process passed towards a work that can be enjoyed and deserves to be appreciated.*

**Keywords:** Development, Calligraphy Education, Case Studies.

## **Abstrak**

*Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis perkembangan dan mengetahui perspektif pendidikan kaligrafi di Yogyakarta. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif*

dengan studi kasus dengan tujuan untuk memperoleh pemahaman yang mendalam dan komprehensif tentang suatu fenomena yang dialami oleh subjek penelitian. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perkembangan pendidikan kaligrafi dilihat di tiga titik konsentrasi; pertama, Perguruan Tinggi Islam (PTAI); kedua, di pondok-pondok pesantren atau sekolah yang berbasis Islam, sebagai salah satu materi kurikulum pembelajaran terhadap santri; ketiga; pembinaan kaligrafi yang dilakukan secara non-institusional. Hasil penelitian ini juga memberikan kontribusi gambaran mengenai dinamika perkembangan seni kaligrafi Islam kontemporer di Yogyakarta sehingga tampak sebuah proses panjang yang dilewati menuju hasil karya yang dapat dinikmati dan patut dihargai.

**Kata Kunci:** Perkembangan, Pendidikan Kaligrafi, Studi Kasus.

## Introduction

Islamic calligraphy is one of the Islamic arts that appears in almost every Islamic area. Starting from the rule of the Umayyads in Damascus, the Abbasids in Iraq, the Fatimiyah and Seljuqs in Egypt, the Mughals in India, Central Asia, Bukhara, and even then spread to China, Kwang Tung, Malaysia, Pattani in southern Thailand, Mindanao, Sulu in the Philippines and also Indonesian.<sup>1</sup> It is an exciting event where a universal Islamic art image can be accepted absolutely by all different cultures.

The process of spreading calligraphy is not only about the spread of art, but there are normative elements in it and participation in spreading it continuously. Some hadiths are based on the Prophet Muhammad; “Confirm Knowledge with writing,” and “beautify your writings, because he is the keys to fortune” or “Whoever writes basmalah with beautiful writing, he has the right to go to heaven” and many others who inspire people always to develop and preserve the art of Islamic calligraphy<sup>2</sup>. Another hadith; “If you write Bismillah al-Rahman al-Rahim, then beautify your writing as a manifestation of the majesty of Allah SWT.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hasan Muarif Ambary, *Menemukan Peradaban, Jejak Arkeologis Dan Historis Islam Indonesia* (Jakarta: Logos Wacana Ilmu, 1998), 185.

<sup>2</sup> D. Sirojuddin AR, “Kaligrafi Klasik Islam Dan Upaya Pelestariannya Di Indonesia” (Fakultas Adab IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, March 13, 1991).

<sup>3</sup> Ali bin `Abd al-Rahman al-Kelantani, *Al-Jawahir al-Mawhub Wa Minhah al-Qulub* (Kaheerah: Dar al-Tiba`ah al-Misriyyah, 1303), 21.

In its development, Islamic calligraphy in these Islamic areas is inseparable from the cultural color of the local community, both from the results of his work and the public's interest in calligraphy. According to al-Faruqi, the diversity of calligraphy in various Islamic worlds cannot be avoided. However, this diversity is based on adaptive variations of influences from the non-Islamic world, not regional or national characteristics, as in the treasures of modern calligraphy in Indonesia, one of which is the potential of batik as an aesthetic art unique to Javanese society and gives it a philosophical-aesthetic color in Islamic and Javanese values. So, in this combination, the art of calligraphy and batik reflects local and universal aesthetic values.<sup>4</sup>

As art in today's era, Calligraphy cannot be separated from the development of modern art – namely, fine art. It grows and develops along with other modern arts such as architecture, graphic arts, and others.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, calligraphy has undergone a specific shift, which was initially a practical need, now shifts to an aesthetic-religious need.

At first, the motivation for the development of calligraphy in Islamic history was inspired by the normative spirit to write the Qur'an well or the effort to record the words of the Qur'an in the form of written letters.<sup>6</sup> According to Ilham Khoiri R, the Qur'an forms three kinds of influence. First, the normative motivation of the Qur'an, which commands humans to learn to write. In this motivation, in the beginning, people were awakened to their awareness to explore writings that were initially ignored; second, the motivation for writing the Qur'an. At the time the Qur'an was revealed, the need for writing was inevitable, and therefore the world of calligraphy found its momentum; third, Arabic as the language of the Koran. It is related to God's choice to make Arabic the language used to convey his messages.<sup>7</sup>

Then, calligraphy is not only used to write the Qur'an but also for non-normative purposes, such as the postal service "al-Barid" in the time of Umar

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<sup>4</sup> Amri Yahya, "Islamic Calligraphy in Batik Medium Contemporary of The Indonesian Islamic Fine Art," *Jurnal/Al-Jamiah/Al-Jamiah Vol. 39 No. 2 July - December 2001/ Vol.39, no. No.2 (December 1, 2001): 349.*

<sup>5</sup> D. Sirojudin AR, *Seni Kaligrafi Islam* (Bandung: Remaja Rosda Karya, 2000), 166.

<sup>6</sup> Muhammad Salim Muhsan, *Tarikh Al-Qur'an* (Kairo: Iskandariyyah, 1983), 128.

<sup>7</sup> Ilham Khoiri, *Al-Qur'an Dan Kaligrafi Arab, Peran Kitab Suci Dalam Transformasi Budaya* (Jakarta: Logos Wacana Ilmu, 1999), 129.

ibn Khattab, using calligraphy as a means of writing official government letters. It is done as an effort to avoid difficulties and misreading of the official government letters.<sup>8</sup> In its development, calligraphy became a unique artistic expression because it came from the normative impulse and the instinctive human urge to like beauty. For this reason, calligraphy is art produced by the teachings of the Tawhid of the Qur'an, which always raises intelligence and creativity in new forms.<sup>9</sup>

For centuries, calligraphy has continued to be loved as an art and a religious image as an expression of wholeness and unification between faith and beauty. As in the writing of the Mushaf, the types of letters chosen in the writing of the verses of the Qur'an are a Sufistic expression for everyone who does it. Like several Indonesian scholars, the writers of the manuscripts, namely Tuanku Syekh Nawawi al-Bantani and Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari from Banjarmasin, have written manuscripts as a vehicle for expressing their Sufistic inspiration. However, the development of calligraphy as an art in this current era cannot be separated from the development of modern art. It grows and develops along with other modern arts such as architecture, graphic arts, and others.<sup>10</sup>

The art of calligraphy in Indonesia has been known since Islam was first spread in the archipelago. However, formally, Arabic writing and language, mainly calligraphy, were used in the 11th century AD. Calligraphy was introduced by bringing tombs or graves from Cambay, Gujarat, as found in the tomb of Fatimah Bint Maimun, written in 495 H or 1092 AD. 8th century AD calligraphy has become one of artists' works from the royal palace or outside the palace.<sup>11</sup>

Yogyakarta, as a student city, where calligraphers come from various regions, gives a different nuance in the strokes of the rules of calligraphy letters. The standard of Arabic calligraphy writing techniques such as Kufi, Tsulus, Naskh, Riq'ah, Diwani, Diwani Jali, Raihani, and Pharisee scripts is not an obstacle in work. According to the philosophical view of the calligraphy

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<sup>8</sup> C. Israr, *Dari Teks Klasik Sampai Kaligrafi Arab* (Jakarta: Gunung Agung, 1985), 65.

<sup>9</sup> al-Faruqi, *Seni Tauhid Esensi Dan Ekspresi Estetika Islam*, 90.

<sup>10</sup> AR, *Seni Kaligrafi Islam*, 166.

<sup>11</sup> Ambary, *Menemukan Peradaban, Jejak Arkeologis Dan Historis Islam Indonesia*, 180.

technique in Yogyakarta, this phenomenon continues to be questioned because the form and rhythm of art always go hand in hand with the aesthetic experience of the calligrapher. Yogyakarta calligraphers often interpret standardization as the standard of the essence of the letter, not the standard of the form of the letter, or even not the standard of room decoration.<sup>12</sup> The dynamics of Contemporary Islamic calligraphy in Yogyakarta cannot be separated from the active role of the calligraphers themselves and the very intense formal institutions in preserving and developing Islamic calligraphy art, especially in Yogyakarta.

After exploring several studies and literature on the history of Arabic calligraphy, specifically in Yogyakarta, there are several relevant studies and writings on Arabic calligraphy, including Fann Al-Khath al-'Arabiyy at-Tashwiriyy (Dirasah fi al-Khat al-'Arabiyy al- Mu'ashir li Saifil Adnan), this study provides a detailed review of the characteristics of one of Islamic calligraphy combined with the rules of contemporary painting.<sup>13</sup>

Study of Visual Analysis on Arabic Calligraphy Paintings by Amang Rahman and Syaiful Adnan. This study concludes that the visualization of Arabic calligraphy in paintings by Amang Rahman and Syaiful Adnan was built from the will to cultivate the artistic and meaningful wealth of traditional Arabic calligraphy in a modern visual language. It led them to a long process of calligraphy experimentation. The initial form of Amang Rahman's calligraphy resembles the Naskhi and Kufi styles between 1970-1980, then resemble the Pharaic style between 1980-1990, and finally finds Amang's distinctive form between 1990-2001, which has letter lines formed based on a light-shadow approach that seems to arise—submerged, with the ends of the letters that are processed flexibly according to the demands of aesthetics and meaning. The visual background is surrealistic by presenting the mystical treasures of Islam-Kejawen. The initial form of Syaiful Adnan's calligraphy is similar to the ancient Egyptian Hieroglyph letters between 1979-1980, then similar to the Sudani style between 1980-1990, and finally found his distinctive style of Syaiful 1990-2005, which was painted with the influence of pen writing

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<sup>12</sup> Interview with Robert Nasrullah, a practicing calligrapher from Yogyakarta, March 5, 2006.

<sup>13</sup> Abdul Ghani, "Fann Al-Khath al-'Arabiyy at-Tashwiriyy (Dirasah Fi al-Khat al-'Arabiyy al- Mu'ashir Li Saifil Adnan)" (Skripsi, jurusan Bahasa Sastra Arab Fakultas Adab UIN Sunan Kalijaga, 2006).

that has a stem. The ends of the letters are processed flexibly with a rhythm built on the size of the letters—abstract-decorative patterned visual background with monochrome pastel colors.<sup>14</sup>

Then the article entitled Islamic Calligraphy in Batik Medium Contemporary of The Indonesian Islamic Fine Art.<sup>15</sup> This article describes the influence of Islamic calligraphy in the work process of batik artisans and designers. This paper also focuses on Islamic calligraphy in batik works. Calligraphy has been a beautiful work of writing in Arabic since the first Islamic kingdom in Java, the kingdom of Demak. Calligraphy at this time is believed to have magical content. Calligraphy in the form of a human-like Semar, a character in wayang, is an example of Islamic calligraphy with a magical effect. The acceptance of Muslims towards Arabic calligraphy led to various tools, techniques, and types of calligraphy media. However, the words used in this diversity contain spiritual beauty, wisdom, and majesty. There are two types of calligraphy, namely handwritten calligraphy, and image calligraphy. The first type of calligraphy is an expression of Arabic written art that previous generations have passed down. In this calligraphy, freedom is only in the choice of materials and writing instruments but must comply with calligraphy standards such as Naskhi, Pharisee, Diwani, Rayhani, Riq'iy, and Kufi.

Meanwhile, painting calligraphy allows the development of Arabic typefaces elastically according to the ideas and imagination of the painters. These two types of calligraphy also use different media and tools. Furthermore, the author describes the aesthetic role of batik calligraphy. Batik does not only function as clothing but also reflects social status. Certain batiks such as *Parang Baron*, *Udan Liris*, or *Parang rusak* symbolize high status so that nobles and kings can wear them.

Based on the importance of calligraphy education, the uniqueness of the city of Yogyakarta, and the analysis of previous studies, this study aims to analyze the development of knowing the perspective of calligraphy education in Yogyakarta. This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study to obtain an in-depth and comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon

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<sup>14</sup> Khairun Nisa, "Analisis Visual Pada Lukisan Kaligrafi Arab Pada Karya Amang Rahman Dan Syaiful Adnan" (Tesis, Institut Teknologi Bandung, 2002).

<sup>15</sup> Yahya, "Islamic Calligraphy in Batik Medium Contemporary of The Indonesian Islamic Fine Art."

experienced by the research subjects, for example, behavior, perception, motivation, action, etc. holistically and by way of description in the form of words and language in a particular context that is natural.<sup>16</sup> This approach was chosen because the phenomenon under study is a case that requires an in-depth qualitative descriptive study.<sup>17</sup> According to Yin (2013), the case study approach can be defined as an empirical inquiry activity that investigates phenomena in real-life contexts when the boundaries between phenomena and contexts are not visible, and multiple sources of evidence are utilized. The case study approach explores the why or how phenomenon questions.<sup>18</sup>

## **The Development of Calligraphy Education in Yogyakarta: A Case Study**

According to Ahmad Tholabi Kharlie, a calligrapher and observer of calligraphy in Indonesia, the development of calligraphy is seen in three points of concentration; first, Islamic Higher Education (PTAI); second, in Islamic boarding schools or Islamic-based schools, as one of the learning curriculum materials for students; third; non-institutional calligraphy coaching.<sup>19</sup>

1. Calligraphy in an Academic Environment
  - a. UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta

State Islamic University of Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta is one of the State Islamic Higher Education (PTAIN) located in Yogyakarta. As one of the leading PTAIN in Indonesia, UIN Sunan Kalijaga also pays great attention to Islamic culture, arts, and literature based on the Tri Dharma of Higher Education.

Formally, calligraphy is taught at the Adab (literature) faculty, which is included in one of the lecture materials with the name “khat.” Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University is one of the state universities that accommodates calligraphy in the lecture material.

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<sup>16</sup> J Lexy Moleong, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya Offset, 2008).

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> Robert K. Yin, *Studi Kasus: Desain Dan Metode* (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 2013).

<sup>19</sup> Ahmad Tholabi Kharlie, “Menggagas Peta Baru Kaligrafi Islam | Blog Pribadi Ahmad Tholabi Kharlie,” December 13, 2009, <https://ahmadtholabi.wordpress.com/2009/12/13/menggagas-peta-baru-kaligrafi-islam/>.

Especially in the Arabic Language and Literature (BSA) department, calligraphy or khat courses at the Faculty of Adab environment of UIN Sunan Kalijaga are discussed as academic studies and practical studies. Thus, the khat material that only weighs two credits and is taken in even semesters is knowledge of one of the Arab cultures and Islamic art skills that must be mastered practically by students (interview with Siti Marissa, student in student semester VIII). Activities related to calligraphy are conducted scientifically, such as research, writing scientific articles, theses, and seminars discussing Islamic culture. As for the Tarbiyah Faculty, the Arabic Education Department does not provide calligraphy courses but has held a calligraphy competition for students and SMA/MA levels throughout Java-Bali.

Other campuses, such as UGM and UAD, which have Arabic Language and Literature majors, only provide calligraphy courses. Students do not give more appreciation to calligraphy except only in need of Arabic writing in lectures. The learning system or strategy running so far is still based on pure classical and traditional calligraphy learning systems bound by applicable rules. This system may be more suitable for novice learners who are not familiar with the art of Islamic calligraphy. An appropriate and fresh curriculum is needed to develop Islamic calligraphy in Yogyakarta, combining traditional and modern calligraphy or standard rules with delicate art creations.

b. UKM JQH Al-Mizan

In addition to the academic environment as a subject, calligraphy development is implemented in a community forum for UIN Sunan Kalijaga students, known as Sangkar al-Mizan, under the auspices of the JQH (Jam'iyat al-Qurra' wa al-Huffazh) al-Mizan student activity unit. Currently, calligraphy activities are packaged in a cage program (calligraphy studio) with activities that have been designed for activities for both SME members and non-members. Among the activities carried out are routine exercises for members including basic calligraphy, tahsin, color design, calligraphy courses for non-members who have stepped on the 3rd generation and even



participants from outside the UIN campus, calligraphy exhibitions, calligraphy dialogues, and discussions, and safaris. Calligraphy art. Although it was finally abandoned, this activity continued because adequate facilities did not support the UIN development project.

This division was founded by Robeth Nasrullah, who was assisted by Suryadi, Nurul Huda, Khusnul Khotimah, Edi Supriyanto, M. Burhanudin, Misbahus Surur, Arif Rahman, and Sholikhul Hadi. Then the next period was followed by M. Irfan Ali Nasrudin, Syaiful Bahri, Arman Suryono, Chusnul Chamidah, and Ni'amillah. Even though Al Mizan's fourth child, this division is well known in the art scene, especially Arabic-related art. The noblest task in this division is to describe the greatness of Quranic values and ideas and describe everything with the flexibility of hands and hearts.

This division has several roles in developing its members to become Muslim intellectuals who like to study the Qur'an. By carrying out a routine agenda, namely: have a weekly exercise routine, hold a calligraphy exhibition, holding art camping, holding art discussions with artists, hold competitions, training and calligraphy courses, hold a study tour.

c. MI Sultan Agung Depok Sleman and SDIT Ukhuwah Islamiyah Kalasan Sleman

The Arabic calligraphy learning activities required for every child are in MI Sultan Agung Depok Sleman and SDIT Ukhuwah Islamiyah Kalasan. At MI Sultan Agung Depok Sleman, lessons are given from grade 1 to grade 6, and the final grade is included in the graduation certificate as local content taught. This activity has started in the 2004/2005 academic year until now. Meanwhile, at SDIT Ukhuwah Islamiyah Kalasan, lessons are given as a mandatory extra in grade 3 as a basis for learning Arabic and Islamic arts.

Related to the process and stages of teaching calligraphy in the early days, the author tries to convey the division of stages at the time of starting learning until the compilation of this guide is divided into three stages:

1) Equalization Stage

When they first entered the teaching process, the teacher was confused about how to deliver the material. Lucky to have studied and reviewed the initial material that beginners learning calligraphy should know. Finally, the initial activities carried out are:

- a) Conducting a writing test for each child in grades 1-6 is intended to measure the students' ability and interest to accept and learn calligraphy. By this from the school, the author offers a general module to be used by each child per class, with a note that the target of writing is different.
- b) It provides letters or calligraphy games, where it is expected that children will get meaningful interludes packaged in games and can make children not bored or bored with lessons.
- c) The author does target coloring to test the creativity in coloring calligraphy writings and pictures with basic coloring. It is done for grades 1-6. Especially for grade 6, because calligraphy will be used in the exam, the author gives additional creativity to decorate and practice making calligraphy works on paper and plywood with markers and pastel coloring.

2) Differentiation Stage

This stage provides different modules, namely class 1 with class 2, class 3 with class 4, and class 5 with 6. The creativity targets include: writing targets, coloring targets, target decorate, the target of illustration/calligraphy painting/creation, target for the exhibition – packaging – implementation

3) Guide Stage

With the dives that have been carried out, finally, the author tries to examine what tools are needed by a subject, namely the curriculum, syllabus to reporting with these guidelines. Practice for each student.

Meanwhile, some schools and madrasas provide calligraphy lessons extra-curricular options, such as at Budi Mulia Dua Seturan Elementary School. Likewise, most schools or madrasas take advantage of Arabic calligraphy activities taught to gifted children only when they are about to participate in competitions, such as at Diponegoro Middle School.

## 2. Calligraphy in Pondok Pesantren (Islamic Boarding School)

Calligraphy activities at the Wahid Hasyim Islamic boarding school, one of the Islamic boarding schools in Yogyakarta, are some of the boarding schools that always pay attention to art as one of the essential things. Awareness about art in the pesantren environment – especially in Wahid Hasyim – is organizationally accommodated in a pesantren art institution named “JAMQUASH.” This art institution oversees several artistic specifications, including the art of music (hadrah), poetry, and calligraphy.

In the field of calligraphy, it is managed by one part of the talent development division, which is next to other arts. As an organization or pesantren art institution, its organizational activities include; weekly training trained by one of the alumni of the pesantren; as well as art exhibition activities every year (memorably Akhiris Sanah or year-end celebrations).

The developments and innovations carried out are traditional calligraphy models that follow the rules of khat writing. The innovation made is by combining traditional khat writing techniques with specific ornaments in the form of decorative art. The ornaments that adorn have their peculiarities, such as relief motifs close to the nuances of Hindu culture and flowers such as Javanese batik.

The media used is quite simple; it almost exclusively uses plywood and wood paint. Sometimes he uses paper and watercolors to express his calligraphy art. Likewise, with the studio where they work and store their work. “My room is my studio” is an appropriate expression to indicate the existence of a calligraphy art studio in an Islamic boarding school because there is no particular room as a special place for work.

In the field of development; Contemporary calligraphy, such as painting calligraphy, has not been widely developed in Islamic boarding schools. Constraints on the structure of consciousness that are only glued to traditional writing rules, resulting from the limited association of artistic knowledge and infrastructure problems such as the provision of contemporary calligraphy media, which are pretty complex and capitalized, are serious obstacles. The constraints of the social-societal structure still view calligraphy as a marginal art compared to other arts such as hadrah or shalawat.

The calligraphy activities at PP Diponegoro that have been developed are making various calligraphy from materials such as glass, wood, and paper. The obstacle faced in calligraphy development activities is the limited time because students are more focused on formal lessons. In addition, students' lack of interest in Islamic calligraphy is because many students do not know much about calligraphy.

The calligraphy learning strategy is that students practice more, namely 30% theory and 70% practice. The development of calligraphy outside the Foundation has not been developed because there is no collaboration with other institutions.

It is also the case in other Islamic boarding schools (PP.), such as PP. Nurul Ummah Kota Gede, PP. Al-Munawwir Krapyak, PP. Sunan Pandanaran Sleman, PP. Al Imdad Bantul, PP. An-Nuur Bantul, PP. Luqmaniyah Yogyakarta, PP. Ibnul Qoyyim Bantul, PP. Al-Muhsinuun Bantul, namely carrying out simple calligraphy activities. Because the tight schedule of pesantren activities is more of an obstacle to the calligraphy activities of students, as well as the absence of management to support it.

The calligraphy development activities above are not like informal institutions that have specific targets and goals. Non-institutional developments are more professional, such as solo exhibitions or collective exhibitions with a broader scope. However, this development also welcomes non-regular "santri-santri" who ask about difficulties in calligraphy or encourage enthusiasm to be more active in their artistic activities. Indeed, non-institutional development is based on the arts community rather than a particular curriculum base.

### 3. Calligraphy in a non-institutional

Griya Art Calligraphy “Arabiyya” Yogyakarta is an institution that started from some people’s anxiety about developing calligraphy in Yogyakarta. This anxiety arises with the lack of human resources for students in the field of calligraphy. It can be seen during calligraphy competitions in schools and calligraphy competitions held by the Ministry of Religion, also known as MTQ. In the musabaqah/contest, very few participants in the calligraphy field were native to Jogjakarta. Besides that, no institution or community is engaged in this calligraphy education seriously. However, calligraphy training is only incidental, which is only done when competition is held.

That is why it was touched by their hearts to guide the younger generation of Jogja in the field of calligraphy. One of the easiest ways to carry out this coaching is through the world of education (schools). That resulted from their conversation, who were previously activists of the al-Mizan Calligraphy studio at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Jogjakarta. Long story short, on 20 December 2004, they agreed to establish a forum to accommodate the needs of the Jogja community in the field of calligraphy, especially coaching the younger generation. At that time, they gave the name “IKI Jogjakarta.”

In its early stages, IKI Jogjakarta held calligraphy training for the TPA at Masjid al-Fitrah Janti in collaboration with TPA Babul Ulum in 2004. The training was the first step of “IKI Jogjakarta” in nurturing the younger generation of Jogjakarta. After a few months after that, IKI Jogjakarta experienced movement barriers in the form of individual problems from IKI Jogjakarta personnel, namely personal activities that could not be disturbed so that activities did not run. Then in December 2005, the personnel of IKI Jogjakarta held another meeting. This meeting resulted in an agreement to change the name of IKI Jogjakarta to Griya Art Calligraphy “Arabiyya.” Besides the name, they also formulate the Vision and Mission and the activities to be carried out.

The vision of the “Arabiyya” Calligraphy Art Griya is “Creating a generation that can write Arabic calligraphy. While the mission is “Embracing the art of Arabic calligraphy in the world of education.”

The calligraphy art house “Arabiya” Yogyakarta is a joint development effort engaged in Arabic calligraphy art. This container accommodates all aspects related to calligraphy activities in education, economy, social, and public services related to calligraphy. In the initial development period, this forum started with calligraphy activities related to the world of education, namely meeting the demands of student activities, both in the form of compulsory extras - including local content - and extra options. In addition, he started in calligraphy book publishing and Arabic script writing services with manual writing.

At this time, Arabiya has been run by several competent personnel in calligraphy with several agendas for developing Arabic calligraphy divided into the Education Division, including personnel as teachers, trainers, and calligraphy judges. At the same time, the development division is by making decorative calligraphy both for work and for orders in the service division, namely serving Arabic script writing services for institutions, printing and publishing, and individuals.

### **The Perspective of Calligraphy Education in Yogyakarta: Calligraphy as Art or Identity?**

Appreciation of calligraphy in this form has a unique content meaning. On the one hand, to label or sign the existence of an institution, but on the other hand, its existence is also a sign of the existence of Islam. The trademark of calligraphy as an Islamic art will continue to be attached, conveying a hidden message in every appearance. Namely, strengthen the existence of an “I” that ignites the spirit to know Islam more deeply.

Therefore, to see the perspective of the development of calligraphy in Yogyakarta, taking into account the state of the development of calligraphy above, this view will be mapped into two, namely calligraphy as art and calligraphy as identity;

#### **1. Calligraphy as Art**

The existence of calligraphy, as in Yogyakarta, has absorbed many art enthusiasts. Art associations and communities are often used to learn and seek inspiration to create new artistic creativity. The pouring of this artistic creativity is often interpreted as just pouring out beauty.

In the world of calligraphy, there are indeed some significant shifts. Along with the times, which were initially used for practical purposes, such as writing manuscripts or as a medium to facilitate reading government letters in Umar ibn Khatthab, now calligraphy is required to narrow its role in society the beauty of art.

Since Ibn Muqlah, a calligrapher in the classical century, made the standard rules in writing khat, calligraphy itself was in a dilemmatic situation. On the one hand, calligraphy is used for practical purposes. On the other hand, Arabic letters have other colors with the beauty of dots and elastic curved lines. Perhaps this is the starting point of calligraphy as an art, “a form of beauty that is composed only in a series of letterforms.

In today’s era, calligraphy as an art has had many forms and varieties. As with contemporary calligraphy, which is a new development in calligraphy, there are many styles here. According to al-Faruqi, the calligraphy style between one region and another contains differences, but this is not due to regional assumptions, such as Java, Bali, Oseng (Blambangan), or others, but instead due to adaptive variations from non-Muslim influences. Islam.

In outline, contemporary calligraphy can be categorized into five categories;

- a. Traditional Calligraphy, namely, calligraphy works that can be seen from Muslim calligraphy works that devote their writings as set out in the rules of previous generations.
- b. Figural Calligraphy, namely, contemporary calligraphy that combines or combines the addition of figurative motifs with calligraphic elements in various styles, such as leaves, trees, flowers, or the like.
- c. Expressionist calligraphy, namely, this category can be associated with aesthetic art in the west. This calligraphy work displays emotional or emotive elements, which are usually expressed by distortion or wild exaggeration.
- d. Symbolic Calligraphy, namely, Symbolic calligraphy uses Arabic letters as certain symbols or an arranged sentence that resembles a particular image or shape to convey a specific message.

- e. Pseudo-calligraphy or pure abstract is calligraphy that uses the flexibility of Arabic letters to be manipulated in delivering a dialogical message.

Meanwhile, the latest calligraphy art in Indonesia is linked to painting, according to D Sirojuddin. AR can be mapped into two, namely;

- a. "Pure" calligraphy is calligraphy that "rely" on standard rules codified by Ibn Muqlah (272-328 H). Ibn Muqlah's system consists of a rhombus, standard alif, and a circle which is the starting point for each letter.
- b. Painting or painting calligraphy is a form of painting made freely without being bound by the formulas or standard rules mentioned above. Painting calligraphy displays a form that prioritizes the artistic aspect. This style was pioneered by A.D. Pirous, a physical form or letter character with visual elements consisting of lines, color fields, lines, and the impression of space.

It is what the researchers mean about calligraphy as being to describe beauty with various forms and patterns. So that, with changing circumstances, moods, or beauty paradigms, calligraphy also changes according to human desires.

## 2. Calligraphy as Identity

In an interview with Sirajuddin AR on the theme of sharpening Heaven's pen in Hikmah magazine, in a statement he said:

The khattat are often not intellectual, especially in Islamic boarding schools, they only dwell on how the pen is written on black and white paper, so they are not wise in the cultural and historical background of calligraphy.<sup>20</sup>

This statement can be considered normal if it does not state Sirajuddin AR, a national calligrapher, in a magazine. On the one hand, the existence of calligraphy is closely related to religious normativity, which is then intertwined with art. However, when it is in one area, calligraphy does not come and is taken for granted as a work of art and sich, without seeing that calligraphy has a lengthy background about a

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<sup>20</sup> Interview with Sirajuddin AR, national calligrapher, March 5, 2006.



civilization. in short, calligraphy requirements carry the nuances of identity as an A or a B.

The technique is a matter of skill, but the effect is the image of a shared community. Calligraphy is part of Islamic culture. When someone displays a calligraphy writing with one hadith or several verses circular on the wall of his guest room, or a BI Yogyakarta bank manager who puts painted calligraphy next to the entrance of his office, or a board with beautiful Arabic writing at the entrance of a housing complex, it does not mean they only display a work of exotic art. However, more than that, intentionally or not, they display a long story about Islamic culture.

Calligraphy now is not for himself alone, but calligraphy is an art with a historical background that the community determines or determines. As in Sirajuddin's statement above, a calligrapher must understand Islamic history, which means understanding Islamic identity.

## Conclusion

The study results provide an overview of the dynamics of the development of contemporary Islamic calligraphy in Yogyakarta so that it appears a long process that is passed to produce works that can be enjoyed and deserved to be appreciated. Identification of forms of development of Islamic Calligraphy art in Yogyakarta is one form of response to calligraphy art related to various works so that with this field, one will find something unique, which is an essential identity for an artist. Some of the things that are in the spotlight in the development of this calligraphy include the world of education and teaching. Good calligraphy learning management can provide the basics in the process towards a portrait of an ideal calligraphy person or institution.

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