



Living Turath in the Decolonial Turn: Reconfiguring Islamic Legal Knowledge in Contemporary Indonesia

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Abstract

This article examines the contemporary reconfiguration of Islamic legal knowledge in Indonesia as a form of decolonial engagement with turath (the discursive tradition of Islamic knowledge), conceptualized as a living discursive tradition. Employing qualitative discourse analysis of five prominent Indonesian academic journals specializing in Islamic law, the study conceptualizes these publications as sites of epistemic contestation, negotiation, and renewal, wherein inherited legal traditions are critically reinterpreted. Through a systematic analysis of argumentative structures, thematic focuses, and methodological approaches, the findings indicate a pronounced shift toward interpreting turath as a dynamic and dialogical tradition capable of addressing contemporary issues such as human rights, gender justice, legal pluralism, constitutional governance, and interdisciplinary legal scholarship. Rather than preserving tradition as a static intellectual legacy, the journals reconstruct it as an adaptive framework for contemporary knowledge production. The article contributes to the expanding field of decolonial epistemology by demonstrating how scholarly discourse in the Global South reconfigures Islamic legal knowledge, challenges hegemonic binaries between tradition and modernity, and advances intellectually approaches to contemporary Islamic legal thought.

Keywords

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Introduction

In the contemporary Islamic intellectual milieu, the Middle East—recognized as the epicenter of the classical tradition of Islamic law—continues to demonstrate a pronounced epistemic inclination toward textualist and scholastic methodologies.¹ Within numerous universities and religious institutions, the study of Islamic law

¹ Harald Jacob Viersen, *The Time of Turāth: Authenticity and Temporality in Contemporary Arab Thought*, 1st ed., Philosophie in Der Nahöstlichen Moderne 6 (Boston: De Gruyter, 2024); Aharon Layish, “Islamic Law in the Modern World: Nationalization, Islamization, Reinstatement,” *Islamic Law and Society* 21, no. 3 (June 2014): 276–307; M. H. Ilias, ed., *Research in the Islamic Context: Political and Methodological Reflections from South Asia, Indian Ocean and the Arab World*, Routledge Studies in Asian Religion and Philosophy (New York: Routledge, 2022); Ayesha S. Chaudhry, “Islamic Legal Studies: A Critical Historiography,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Islamic Law*, by Ayesha S. Chaudhry, ed. Anver M. Emon and Rumea Ahmed (Oxford University Press, 2018), 4–44; Muhammad Hasanul Kamil Huda, Vadym Nehodchenko, and Ahda Fitriani, “Decolonizing Islamic Studies: Rethinking Epistemology, Methodology, and Praxis in the Global South,” *ASEAN Journal of Islamic Studies and Civilization (AJISC)* 1, no. 2 (December 2024): 155–69.



predominantly emphasizes *taḥqīq al-nuṣūṣ* (the verification of classical texts) and the reproduction of established jurisprudential schools' viewpoints, an approach characterized by a pronounced adherence to traditional knowledge, which is considered definitive and immutable.² In response to the constraints of traditionalist scholarship, a reformist movement has emerged among Muslim scholars in the diaspora.³ Notable intellectuals such as Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im, Ziba Mir-Hosseini, Tariq Ramadan, and Khaled Abou El Fadl, seek to revitalize *turath* by employing human rights, gender equality, philosophical and hermeneutical frameworks that reconceptualize Islamic law as a dynamic tradition, capable of responding to contemporary social and intellectual challenges.⁴ Nevertheless, this reformist discourse frequently encounters resistance from mainstream religious institutions in the Middle East, which predominantly maintain conservative orientations.

Within Western academic discourse, the study of Islamic law has evolved according to a distinct epistemological framework. From the period of Orientalism to contemporary Islamic studies, the prevailing perspective frequently characterizes Islamic law as a static, historical normative system, often regarded as lacking relevance to modern social contexts.⁵ Scholars such as Joseph Schacht and Noel J. Coulson emphasized the origins of Islamic law during the classical period and interpreted the stagnation following the formation of the legal schools as indicative of intellectual decline.⁶ Although a newer generation of scholars, including Wael B. Hallaq,⁷ Junaid Quadri,⁸ and Kecia Ali⁹ has sought to challenge and reassess this paradigm, a substantial segment of Western scholarship remains constrained by an epistemic framework grounded in modern secular rationality. Consequently, Islamic

² Sari Hanafi, *Studying Islam in the Arab World: The Rupture Between Religion and the Social Sciences*, 1st ed. (London: Routledge, 2023); Eirik Hovden, "Understanding and Framing Change in Islamic Law: Potentials and Possible Pitfalls of the Concepts of Canonization and Codification," *Oxford Journal of Law and Religion* 12, no. 3 (October 2023): 289–313; Joseph E. B. Lumbard, "Islam, Coloniality, and the Pedagogy of Cognitive Liberation in Higher Education," *Teaching in Higher Education* 30, no. 6 (August 2025): 1409–19.

³ Shireen Hunter, *Reformist Voices of Islam: Mediating Islam and Modernity* (London: Routledge, 2015).

⁴ Kari Vogt, Lena Larsen, and Christian Moe, *New Directions in Islamic Thought: Exploring Reform and Muslim Tradition* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2008); Carool Kersten, *Contemporary Thought in the Muslim World: Trends, Themes and Issues* (London; New York, NY: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group, 2019).

⁵ Carl W. Ernst and Richard C. Martin, *Rethinking Islamic Studies: From Orientalism to Cosmopolitanism*, Studies in Comparative Religion (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2012); Léon Buskens and Baudouin Dupret, "The Invention of Islamic Law: A History of Western Studies of Islamic Normativity and Their Spread in the Orient," in *After Orientalism: Critical Perspectives on Western Agency and Eastern Re-Appropriations*, ed. François Pouillion and Jean-Claude Vatin (Leiden: BRILL, 2015); Seán McLoughlin, "Islam(s) in Context: Orientalism and the Anthropology of Muslim Societies and Cultures," *Journal of Beliefs & Values* 28, no. 3 (December 2007): 273–96.

⁶ Joseph Schacht, *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence* (Michigan: Oxford University Press, 1967); Joseph Schacht, *An Introduction to Islamic Law* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979); Noel J. Coulson, *Conflicts and Tensions in Islamic Jurisprudence*, Publications of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, no. 5 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969); Noel J. Coulson, *A History of Islamic Law*, The New Edinburgh Islamic Surveys NEIS (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2022).

⁷ Wael B. Hallaq, *Authority, Continuity, and Change in Islamic Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

⁸ Junaid Quadri, *Transformations of Tradition: Islamic Law in Colonial Modernity*, 1st ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021).

⁹ Kecia Ali, *Sexual Ethics and Islam: Feminist Reflections on Qur'an, Hadith, and Jurisprudence* (London: Oneworld Publications, 2017).



law is often examined not as a living tradition but rather as a textual object or historical phenomenon positioned in opposition to modern law. This approach engenders an epistemic asymmetry whereby the authority of knowledge concerning Islamic law is frequently established through a conceptual framework that markedly differs from the foundational principles of Islamic legal thought itself.

Building upon the scholarship of R. Michael Feener¹⁰ and Carol Kersten¹¹ concerning new Muslim intellectuals in modern Indonesia, this study aims to elucidate the dynamics that have facilitated the emergence of Islamic legal studies in Indonesia as an alternative intellectual domain, thereby contesting the epistemic dominance of both Middle Eastern and Western academic traditions. Indonesia, characterized by its pluralistic, moderate, and dialogical Islamic intellectual tradition, offers a compelling case wherein turath is not merely passively inherited but actively and creatively revitalized within the context of academic journal publications. Employing a decolonial framework, this study examines how Indonesian scholars reconstruct the interrelations among text, context, and social reality, and how it fosters a more open and context-sensitive epistemology of Islamic law. The selection of this topic is predicated on the premise that Islamic legal studies in Indonesia constitute not only a response to modernity but also an expression of epistemic reconfiguration negotiating intellectual hegemonies that constrain the scope of Islamic scholarship.

Previous Studies

In contemporary Islamic studies, the concept of turath plays a pivotal role in the critical reevaluation of the relationship between tradition and modernity.¹² Rather than serving as a static repository of premodern thought, turath constitutes a dynamic intellectual legacy that continues to shape Muslim approaches to law, ethics, and epistemology.¹³ Within the domain of Islamic legal thought, turath operates both as a methodological foundation and as a hermeneutical challenge.¹⁴ It encompasses the textual heritage of *fiqh*, *usul fiqh*, and *maqasid*, while simultaneously requiring reinterpretation in response to modern rationalities and socio-political transformations.¹⁵ The revival of turath thus entails not merely the retrieval of classical doctrines but a dynamic negotiation between inherited norms and contemporary exigencies, a process through which Islamic legal reasoning

¹⁰ R. Michael Feener, *Muslim Legal Thought in Modern Indonesia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Carol Kersten, "Indonesia's New Muslim Intellectuals," *Religion Compass* 3, no. 6 (December 2009): 971–85.

¹¹ Feener, *Muslim Legal Thought in Modern Indonesia*; Kersten, "Indonesia's New Muslim Intellectuals."

¹² Mary Elston, "Becoming Turāth: The Islamic Tradition in the Modern Period," *Die Welt Des Islams* 63, no. 4 (December 2022): 441–73.

¹³ Ridwān al-Sayyid, "The Ideological and Epistemological: Contemporary Readings in Arabo-Islamic Classical Heritage (Turāth)," in *The Heritage of Arabo-Islamic Learning*, ed. Maurice A. Pomerantz and Aram Shahin (BRILL, 2016), 599–632.

¹⁴ Soualhi Younes, "Islamic Legal Hermeneutics: The Context and Adequacy of Interpretation in Modern Islamic Discourse," *Islamic Studies* 41, no. 2 (2002): 585–615.

¹⁵ Azhar Ibrahim, "Contemporary Islamic Thought: A Critical Perspective," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 23, no. 3 (July 2012): 279–94; Kamal Hussain, "The Congruity of Islamic Modernist Legal Thought: The Case of Muslim Minority Fiqh" (School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 2023).



endeavors to sustain its continuity and relevance amid plural knowledge systems and institutional modernity.

Although the concept of turath has been extensively explored within intellectual circles throughout the Muslim world, its specific role and manifestation within Indonesian Islamic legal thought have received comparatively limited scholarly attention. Existing studies primarily focus on the historical transmission of classical texts,¹⁶ early twentieth-century reformist movements,¹⁷ or the institutional authority of ulama and fatwa councils.¹⁸ Nevertheless, a significant gap persists regarding the function of turath as an epistemic category in contemporary Indonesian academic discourse, particularly within peer-reviewed journals where Islamic law is critically examined, reinterpreted, and theorized. These journals function not only as publication venues but also as dynamic sites of epistemological negotiation, wherein classical legal reasoning is continuously engaged, contested, and reconfigured. This lacuna in the literature underscores the necessity for a comprehensive investigation into the mechanisms by which turath is revitalized and rearticulated within the discursive framework of Indonesian Islamic legal studies.

Contrary to previous studies, this research examines the revival of turath within the discursive practices of Indonesian academic journals, aiming to elucidate the intellectual strategies through which tradition is revitalized and articulated within contemporary knowledge production frameworks. It argues that living turath operates not merely as an invocation of authority but as a performative act of epistemic revival that bridges classical and modern contexts. This study contributes to a broader understanding of how Islamic legal heritage adapts within national academic infrastructures and global scholarly communication networks. Ultimately, it seeks to position Indonesian Islamic law journals such as *Ijtihad*,¹⁹ *El-Mashlahah*,²⁰ *Juris*,²¹ *Journal of Islamic Law*,²² and *Al-Ihkam*,²³ as a dynamic site of turath-based innovation, where continuity, critique, and creativity converge to redefine the parameters of modern Islamic jurisprudence. Utilizing decolonial discourse analysis, the research explores how these journals are mobilized to establish legitimacy, negotiate modern epistemologies, and uphold the moral authority of Islamic legal reasoning. These journals illustrate the diversity of Islamic legal thought in Indonesia across various methodologies, regions, and institutions,

¹⁶ Achmad Fadel Rusmadi Putra et al., *Transmission of Knowledge from Mā Warā' Al-Nahr to Nusantara: The Central Asia Ulama Network and Its Influence on Islamic Intellectual Traditions in the Malay Archipelago - 18th-19th Century*, n.d.; Mesi Rawanita, Muji Mulia, and M. Ikhwan, "Islamic Intellectual Legacy in Southeast Asia: The Dynamics of Thought and Civilization," *Ampera: A Research Journal on Politics and Islamic Civilization* 6, no. 2 (2025): 76–88.

¹⁷ Feener, *Muslim Legal Thought in Modern Indonesia*; Carool Kersten, *A History of Islam in Indonesia: Unity in Diversity*, The New Edinburgh Islamic Surveys (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017).

¹⁸ Mohamad Atho Mudzhar, "Fatwa's of the Council of Indonesian Ulama: A Study of Islamic Legal Thought in Indonesia, 1975-1988" (University of California, 1990); La Jamaa, "Fatwas of the Indonesian Council of Ulama and Its Contributions to the Development of Contemporary Islamic Law in Indonesia," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 8, no. 1 (July 2018): 29.

¹⁹ "Ijtihad," <https://ejournal.uinsalatiga.ac.id/index.php/ijtihad>.

²⁰ "El-Mashlahah," <https://e-journal.iain-palangkaraya.ac.id/index.php/maslahah>.

²¹ "Juris (Jurnal Ilmiah Syariah)," <https://ejournal.uinmybatusangkar.ac.id/ojs/index.php/Juris/index>.

²² "Journal of Islamic Law," <https://e-journal.iainptk.ac.id/index.php/jil>.

²³ "Al-Ihkam," <https://ejournal.iainmadura.ac.id/index.php/alihkam/>.



thereby demonstrating that turath remains a vital source of legal and intellectual identity within the postcolonial academic milieu.

Decoloniality, Discursive Tradition, and Living Turath

This study utilizes a decolonial framework to analyze how contemporary Indonesian Islamic law journals discursively reconstruct epistemic authority, negotiate interpretive legitimacy, and reconfigure Islamic legal knowledge through academic discourse. Rather than considering decoloniality solely as a critique of the persistent colonial legacy embedded within modern knowledge systems, this research adopts it as an analytical lens to examine how academic discourse reconstructs epistemic authority, legitimizes interpretive innovation, and repositions Islamic law within global intellectual debates.²⁴ From this vantage point, the revival of Islamic legal thought is understood not merely as the reaffirmation of Sharia as a normative order but as an act of epistemic resistance aimed at restoring autonomous and contextually grounded modes of Islamic legal reasoning.²⁵ Consequently, decoloniality facilitates the analysis of Indonesian academic journals not merely as channels of scholarly communication but as discursive arenas wherein competing epistemologies negotiate the meaning, authority, and future trajectory of Islamic legal knowledge. Contemporary themes such as *ijtihad*, constitutionalism, human rights, and legal pluralism are thus interpreted as manifestations of epistemic delinking, whereby scholars critically engage with dominant Western legal paradigms while constructing alternative frameworks rooted in the Islamic intellectual tradition.²⁶

The present study employs Talal Asad's conceptualization of the Islamic discursive tradition as the primary framework for understanding turath. Asad²⁷ contends that the Islamic tradition is maintained not through the passive preservation of inherited texts but through ongoing interpretive practices that define, contest, and renew religious authority within evolving historical contexts.²⁸ Accordingly, this study conceptualizes academic journals as sites of discursive practice wherein classical legal concepts are selectively interpreted, reframed, and legitimized through scholarly argumentation. Consequently, the analysis emphasizes not the doctrinal accuracy of specific legal positions but the discursive mechanisms by which authors construct epistemic authority. These mechanisms encompass argumentative strategies, intertextual engagement with classical sources, conceptual framing of legal issues, and methodological positioning within contemporary academic debates. Through these processes, discourse functions as the medium through which Islamic legal

²⁴ Junaid Quadri, *Transformations of Tradition: Islamic Law in Colonial Modernity*, 1st ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021).

²⁵ Sherman A. Jackson, "Ijtihād and Taqlīd: Between the Islamic Legal Tradition and Autonomous Eastern Reason," in *Routledge Handbook of Islamic Law*, 1st ed., ed. Khaled Abou El Fadl, Ahmad Atif Ahmad, and Said Fares Hassan (New York: Routledge, 2019; Routledge, 2019), 255–72.

²⁶ Mark Woodward, "Paradigms, Models, and Counterfactuals: Decolonizing the Study of Islam in Indonesia," *Studia Islamika* 32, no. 1 (April 2025): 101–35.

²⁷ Talal Asad, "The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam," *Qui Parle* 17, no. 2 (December 2009): 1–30; Ovamir Anjum, "Islam as a Discursive Tradition: Talal Asad and His Interlocutors," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 27, no. 3 (December 2007): 656–72.

²⁸ Asad, "The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam"; Anjum, "Islam as a Discursive Tradition."



knowledge is simultaneously preserved, transformed, and rendered pertinent to contemporary social realities.

In this study, turath is conceptualized not merely as a corpus of classical Islamic knowledge but as the living intellectual heritage of Islam—a dynamic discursive and epistemic tradition that is continuously reshaped through scholarly engagement.²⁹ Rather than serving as a static repository of authoritative texts, turath functions as a discursive space wherein authority, identity, legitimacy, and interpretive boundaries are perpetually negotiated.³⁰ Building upon Asad's notion of discursive tradition within a decolonial framework, this study introduces the concept of living turath to elucidate how inherited Islamic legal knowledge is reconfigured through contemporary academic discourse without disrupting its intellectual continuity. Engagement with turath in the Indonesian context thus represents neither a nostalgic return to the past nor an accommodation to external epistemic paradigms. Instead, it constitutes a process of discursive reconfiguration through which scholars reinterpret fiqh, *usul fiqh*, *maqasid sharia* and related legal traditions as intellectually and globally dialogical bodies of knowledge.³¹ Consequently, living turath serves as the central analytical concept of this study, illuminating how journals simultaneously function as sites of epistemic contestation, knowledge production, and the renewal of Islamic legal thought.

Based on this theoretical standpoint, the five selected Indonesian academic journals—Ijtihad, El-Mashlahah, Juris, Journal of Islamic Law, and Al-Ihkam—are understood not merely as platforms for publication but as institutionalized discursive arenas where Islamic legal knowledge is continuously produced, negotiated, and legitimized. As peer-reviewed scholarly forums, these journals facilitate the interaction among classical Islamic jurisprudence, contemporary socio-legal contexts, and evolving academic methodologies. Their editorial orientations, thematic emphases, and patterns of scholarly argumentation collectively contribute to the discursive reconfiguration of turath within Indonesian Islamic legal scholarship. Accordingly, this study does not consider journal articles as isolated intellectual outputs; rather, it conceptualizes the journals themselves as interconnected epistemic spaces through which competing interpretations of Islamic law are articulated, contested, and institutionalized within contemporary academic discourse.

Research Methodology

Data Sources

The corpus of this study comprises five peer-reviewed journals that collectively represent the breadth of leading Indonesian academic journals: Ijtihad, El-Mashlahah, Juris, Journal of Islamic Law, and Al-Ihkam (see Table 1). The analysis

²⁹ Lena Salaymeh, "Decolonial Translation: Destabilizing Coloniality in Secular Translations of Islamic Law," *Journal of Islamic Ethics* 5, nos. 1–2 (March 2021): 250–77.

³⁰ Sayed Sikandar Haneef, "Debate on Methodology of Renewing Muslim Law: A Search for a Synthetic Approach," *Global Jurist* 10, no. 1 (January 2010): 1–16.

³¹ Lu'ayy Şāfi, *The Foundation of Knowledge: A Comparative Study in Islamic and Western Methods of Inquiry*, Revised second edition (Washington London: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2011).



focuses on current issue of each journal from the year 2025, providing a contemporaneous perspective on the articulation of turath and related concepts within recent scholarly discourse. The selection of the 2025 issues is justified by their temporal proximity to ongoing developments in Islamic legal reasoning and the increasing institutional emphasis on epistemological renewal within Indonesian academia. By restricting the dataset to this recent publication period, the study ensures temporal coherence and captures the most current patterns of intellectual engagement with the dynamic dimension of the Islamic legal heritage.

Table 1. Bibliometric Summary of Journal Data (2025)

Journal	Publisher	Quartile	SJR	H-Index	Vol./No./Yr.
Ijtihad	Faculty of Sharia, UIN Salatiga	Q1	1.517	12	Vol. 25, No. 1, 2025
El-Mashlahah	Faculty of Sharia, UIN Palangka Raya	Q1	1.455	10	Vol. 15, No. 1, 2025
Juris	UIN Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar	Q1	1.296	12	Vol. 24, No. 1, 2025
Journal of Islamic Law	LPPM, IAIN Pontianak	Q1	1.023	8	Vol. 6, No. 2, 2025
Al-Ihkam	Faculty of Sharia, UIN Madura	Q1	1.015	12	Vol. 20, No. 1, 2025

Source: Authors' elaboration, 2026.

The selection of Ijtihad, El-Mashlahah, Juris, Journal of Islamic Law, and Al-Ihkam as the primary data sources for this study is justified by their classification within the Q1 quartile, denoting the highest standard of academic excellence and international visibility within Indonesia's scholarly landscape. These journals exhibit strong SJR impact scores, ranging from 1.02 to 1.52, alongside robust H-indices between 8 and 12, reflecting sustained scholarly influence and citation impact in the domain of Islamic legal studies. Furthermore, the 2025 issues of these journals, which encapsulate the most recent advancements in Indonesian Islamic legal thought, provide a timely perspective on the reinterpretation of turath in response to dynamic intellectual and societal developments. Consequently, the utilization of these Q1 journals ensures both the academic rigor and epistemic relevance essential for investigating the revival of turath within Indonesia's Islamic legal scholarship.

Type of Research

This study employs a qualitative research design informed by decolonial discourse to examine the revival and recontextualization of turath within contemporary Indonesian academic journals on Islamic legal thought. Utilizing this framework, the research interprets scholarly texts as sites of epistemic negotiation, spaces where Muslim intellectuals engage in acts of epistemic disobedience and disengagement from dominant Western paradigms while reconstructing alternative modes of Islamic legal reasoning. The analysis explores how Islamic legal scholars revive and reaffirm the authority of turath through specific lexical choices, argumentation patterns, and



intertextual dialogues that simultaneously resist and engage with modern epistemic frameworks. Based on the premise that academic discourse is not a neutral conduit of knowledge transmission but an arena of epistemological contestation,³² this study elucidates how Indonesian Islamic legal journals facilitate the intellectual and epistemic revival of turath, situating this process within a broader effort to decolonize knowledge and restore the autonomy of Islamic legal epistemology.

Data Collection

The data for this study were obtained through documentation methods, involving the identification and analysis of five prominent academic journals in Indonesia that specialize in Islamic legal thought. The data collection process entailed selecting articles that explicitly address the revival and recontextualization of turath within the context of contemporary Islamic law. Each chosen article was subsequently evaluated based on thematic relevance, representation of diverse intellectual perspectives, and the depth of epistemological analysis. A decolonial approach was employed during this phase to maintain critical awareness, thereby preventing the selection process from being influenced by Western epistemic biases and instead prioritizing the autonomous voice and authority of Islamic scholarship as reflected in the academic discourse on Islamic law in Indonesia.

Data Analysis

The data analysis in this study was conducted using a decolonial discourse analysis approach, applied to articles published in five prominent Indonesian journals. This approach conceptualizes academic texts not simply as linguistic artifacts but as arenas of epistemological contestation that reflect power-knowledge dynamics within contemporary Islamic legal studies. The analytical process involved tracing language patterns, key terms, and argumentative structures that shape the construction of Islamic legal discourse, while concurrently examining the social and institutional contexts underpinning the production and dissemination of these texts. Additionally, the analysis aimed to map the authors' epistemological orientations concerning the coloniality of modern knowledge and law, and to interpret manifestations of epistemic disobedience and delinking as efforts to revive the authority of turath. Through this interpretive framework, the study sought to elucidate how the five journals function as sites for articulating epistemic revival and resistance to the hegemony of Western legal epistemology within Indonesian Islamic legal thought.

Results

The first mode of epistemic renewal identified in this study is epistemic innovation through methodological pluralism, most prominently represented in Ijtihad (Vol. 25, No. 1, 2025). Across the seven articles analyzed, the journal consistently reconstructs turath not as a closed corpus of inherited legal doctrines but as a dynamic methodological resource capable of engaging contemporary legal, political, cultural,

³² Bill Cope and Angus Phillips, eds., *The Future of the Academic Journal*, Chandos Publishing Series (Oxford: Chandos Pub, 2009).



and institutional realities. Rather than privileging a single interpretive approach, the journal demonstrates that the revitalization of Islamic legal knowledge depends upon the interaction between classical jurisprudence and diverse analytical perspectives, including socio-legal inquiry, historical analysis, local custom, empirical reasoning, and public policy.

Table 2. Summary Findings of Ijtihad Journal (Vo. 25, No. 1, 2025)

Article Position	Analytical Focus	Epistemological Implication
1	Application of maqasid sharia to environmental and spatial regulation	Demonstrates how turath-maqasid reasoning can guide sustainable and just policy-making; transforming classical jurisprudence into applied ethics for modern governance
2	Identity formation and religious authenticity in business ethics	Reflects a plural epistemology where turath-based economic morality becomes a site of social negotiation, showing the adaptability of Islamic ethics within multicultural capitalism
3	Scriptural interpretation of astronomical and ritual parameters	Illustrates the reactivation of classical jurisprudential debates within modern scientific paradigms—bridging scriptural authority and empirical reasoning
4	Interaction between Islamic law, civil regulation, and bureaucratic norms	Reveals how turath-based family law is recontextualized in modern state apparatuses, reflecting a shift toward gender-conscious Islamic legal interpretation
5	Comparative study of customary law and Islamic inheritance principles	Expands turath beyond textual authority by situating it within local wisdom, indicating an epistemological move toward pluralistic and intercultural fiqh
6	Transformation of judicial roles rooted in Islamic polity	Reclaims historical Islamic judicial traditions as part of Indonesia's legal heritage, linking turath with postcolonial identity formation
7	Examination of hybrid customary-religious marriage practices	Embodies turath as lived heritage—demonstrating that local customs can sustain the ethical spirit of Islamic law while maintaining cultural distinctiveness

Source: Authors' elaboration, 2026.

This methodological pluralism is evident in the diverse forms of revival represented throughout the issue. Classical maqasid sharia is reformulated as a framework for evaluating mining governance and spatial planning, illustrating the capacity of Islamic teleological reasoning to inform contemporary public policy. At the same time, Islamic commercial ethics are reinterpreted through the lived experiences of Chinese Muslim entrepreneurs, demonstrating how turath operates within multicultural social environments. The journal further bridges classical jurisprudence with scientific knowledge by revisiting debates on the jurisprudence of



prayer times (*fiqh al-mawāqīt*) in determining the Fajr prayer time, while institutional studies concerning female Muslim civil servants and the historical authority of the Qadi reveal the continuing adaptability of Islamic legal institutions within modern state structures.

Complementing these developments, analyses of Javanese marital property customs and *Kawin Ajum* in Jambi demonstrate that local traditions constitute legitimate epistemic resources through which Islamic legal reasoning continues to evolve (see Table 2). These findings indicate that Ijtihad advances an epistemic model in which methodological diversity becomes the principal mechanism for renewing Islamic legal knowledge. Rather than treating textual fidelity and contextual adaptation as competing paradigms, the journal integrates doctrinal interpretation, empirical inquiry, historical consciousness, institutional analysis, and cultural practice into a coherent framework of legal reasoning.³³ Within this model, turath functions as a living methodological tradition whose authority derives from its capacity to generate new forms of Islamic legal knowledge while remaining anchored in the intellectual foundations of the classical Islamic tradition.

The second mode of epistemic renewal identified in this study is the pluralization of Islamic legal knowledge through social and cultural contextualization, most clearly represented in *El-Mashlahah* (Vol. 15, No. 1, 2025). Across the ten articles examined, the journal consistently demonstrates that turath acquires renewed epistemic vitality when interpreted through diverse social, cultural, technological, ecological, and institutional contexts. Rather than treating Islamic law as a universally uniform normative system, the journal emphasizes its capacity to engage heterogeneous social realities while preserving its ethical foundations. Consequently, Islamic legal knowledge is presented as a dialogical intellectual tradition that continuously evolves through interaction with contemporary Muslim experiences. This contextual pluralization is reflected in a wide spectrum of revival strategies. Classical *maslahah* reasoning is reconstructed as a regulatory framework for fintech lending and waqf governance, extending Islamic teleology into the domains of digital finance and sustainable economic administration. Simultaneously, the dissemination of fatwas through Instagram illustrates how religious authority shifts from textual transmission toward digitally mediated public engagement.

The journal further demonstrates the contextual adaptability of turath through studies of the Samin community, the *Pak Ponjen* marriage tradition in Kudus, legal pluralism in the Muslim village of Pegayaman, and Dayak Ngaju customary rehabilitation practices, each revealing how Islamic legal reasoning interacts productively with indigenous ethical systems. Complementing these developments, articles addressing ecofeminism, children's legal identity through marriage validation, and inheritance disputes in Southern Thailand expand Islamic legal discourse into environmental ethics, bureaucratic justice, and transnational legal coexistence (see Table 3). These findings indicate that *El-Mashlahah* advances an epistemic model in which contextual diversity serves as the principal mechanism for renewing Islamic legal knowledge. Rather than preserving turath through textual

³³ Elston, "Becoming Turāth."



continuity alone, the journal demonstrates that its vitality lies in its capacity to enter new social, cultural, institutional, and technological settings without relinquishing its normative commitments.³⁴ Within this model, turath functions as a living intellectual tradition whose authority is continually reconstructed through dialogue with the plurality of contemporary Muslim life.

Table 3. Summary Findings of El-Mashlahah Journal (Vo. 15, No. 1, 2025)

Article Position	Analytical Focus	Epistemological Implication
1	Application of maslahah and justice ethics in financial technology regulation	Transforms turath-based maslahah from theological concept to regulatory paradigm; redefines Islamic law as an adaptive ethics for digital economies
2	Mediation of authority and religious legitimacy through social media	Shifts turath from textual transmission to mediated discourse; authority becomes participatory and performative in the digital public sphere
3	Local reinterpretation of Sharia ethics within Samin spirituality	Expands turath into ethical vernacular; local epistemology merges with Islamic law to produce context-specific spirituality
4	Negotiation between custom and Sharia norms in marriage	Positions turath as living tradition that legitimizes cultural adaptation; Islamic law becomes socially embedded practice
5	Integration of maqasid sharia with modern asset management	Reconstructs turath's endowment philosophy into sustainable economic policy; aligns spiritual intent with financial accountability
6	Synthesis of turath ethics and feminist environmental theory	Extends Islamic epistemology toward ecological ethics; redefines turath as moral ecology sensitive to gender and environment
7	Legal validation of marriage to secure children's rights	Shows institutionalization of turath-based protection principles in modern legal procedures; merges spiritual and bureaucratic justice
8	Hybridization of Islamic and customary legal systems	Articulates turath within interreligious coexistence; presents Islamic law as dialogical rather than hegemonic epistemology
9	Ethical convergence between discretionary punishment and customary justice	Broadens turath's penal philosophy into restorative justice; reflects Islamic law's dialogical potential with local custom
10	Application of Islamic inheritance within minority context	Expands turath beyond the nation-state; transforms inheritance jurisprudence into pluralistic ethics of coexistence

Source: Authors' elaboration, 2026.

³⁴ Walter Edward Young, *The Dialectical Forge: Juridical Disputation and the Evolution of Islamic Law*, 1st ed. 2017, Logic, Argumentation & Reasoning, Interdisciplinary Perspectives from the Humanities and Social Sciences 9 (Cham: Springer International Publishing; Imprint: Springer, 2017).



Table 4. Summary Findings of Juris Journal (Vol. 24, No. 1, 2025)

Article Position	Analytical Focus	Epistemological Implication
1	Integrating indigenous ethics into Sharia marital values	Reinterprets turath-based spirituality to integrate local traditions into Islamic marital ethics
2	Applying political fiqh to public-administrative governance	Revives turath-inspired governance ethics to legitimize political authority within the framework of regional administration
3	Extending maqasid to post-human technological issues	Extends turath jurisprudence to address technological ethics, redefining intimacy and human agency in Islamic legal thought.
4	Intersection of custom, Sharia, and statutory law in gender disputes	Reengages turath hermeneutics to negotiate gender justice amid the intersection of local custom, Islamic, and state law
5	Applying maqasid to labor and economic justice	Activates turath economic ethics to articulate workers' rights through maqasid-oriented interpretations of labor justice
6	Reinterpreting fiqh curricula within Pesantren	Revitalizes turath pedagogy in Pesantren, fostering plural epistemologies through diverse madhhab literatures and fiqh practice
7	Correlating Islamic moral law and national legislation	Merges turath and local custom to construct hybrid moral frameworks within contemporary Indonesian legal consciousness
8	Socio-legal reading of shifting gender roles in Islamic family law	Reclaims turath perspectives to reinterpret familial authority, generating gender-sensitive epistemologies in Islamic law
9	Analyzing amicable settlement as reconciliation rooted in Islamic-customary symbiosis	Reinforces turath-rooted conflict mediation, affirming customary law as part of a living Islamic legal continuum
10	Comparative fiscal policy in fiscal and constitutional contexts	Institutionalizes turath-economics within the context of regional legal frameworks and the modern Islamic constitutional paradigm
11	Critical legal analysis of codified Sharia economics	Reconstructs turath reasoning to harmonize Islamic economic law with contemporary institutional and regulatory systems
12	Rereading political fiqh in child-marriage dispensation policy	Reexamines turath as a source of adaptive legal flexibility balancing divine authority and social realities
13	Applying maslahah in cross-faith marital mediation	Expands turath conceptions toward pluralist legal reconciliation in interfaith family jurisprudence
14	Archival reconstruction of early Islamic judiciary practice	Historicizes turath-based adjudication to reveal legal hybridity in early Islamic-customary judicial practice
15	Adapting Sharia to digital communication and self-presentation	Transforms turath into a digital fiqh paradigm integrating moral accountability and online behavioral governance

Sources: Authors' elaboration, 2026.



The third mode of epistemic renewal identified in this study is negotiating contemporary legality through adaptive jurisprudence, most prominently represented in *Juris* (Vol. 24, No. 1, 2025). Across the fifteen articles analyzed, the journal consistently demonstrates that turath remains intellectually productive when classical Islamic jurisprudence is mobilized to address emerging legal, technological, institutional, cultural, and ethical challenges. Rather than presenting Islamic law as a fixed legal code, the journal frames it as an adaptive jurisprudential tradition capable of responding to new forms of legality generated by contemporary Muslim societies. Consequently, legal renewal is achieved through continuous negotiation between inherited legal doctrines and evolving social realities. This adaptive orientation is reflected in the remarkable breadth of legal issues examined throughout the issue.

Classical jurisprudence is extended to emerging ethical questions surrounding artificial intimacy and sex robots, digital morality, and online narcissism, demonstrating the capacity of turath to engage technological transformations. Simultaneously, studies on industrial relations, zakat regulation, Islamic economic law, and regional governance illustrate how Islamic legal reasoning is reformulated to address contemporary institutional and constitutional challenges. The journal also devotes considerable attention to legal pluralism through analyses of Bugis marital traditions, Minangkabau gender disputes, Acehese conflict resolution, Chinese Muslim interfaith families, and the historical interaction between Islamic and customary courts, illustrating that adaptive jurisprudence is sustained through dialogue among Islamic law, local custom, and state regulation. Complementing these developments, articles on marriage dispensation, family authority, and Indonesia's new Penal Code reaffirm that classical concepts such as maqasid, fiqh, political jurisprudence, and madhhab diversity continue to function as living interpretive resources for resolving contemporary legal dilemmas (see Table 4). These findings indicate that *Juris* advances an epistemic model in which legal adaptability becomes the principal mechanism for renewing Islamic legal knowledge. Rather than preserving turath through the repetition of inherited doctrines, the journal demonstrates that its vitality lies in its capacity to negotiate new legal realities while maintaining continuity with the interpretive traditions of classical Islamic jurisprudence.³⁵ Within this model, Islamic legal knowledge is reconstructed as a living jurisprudential tradition whose authority is sustained through continuous engagement with technological innovation, institutional change, legal pluralism, and evolving conceptions of justice.

The fourth mode of epistemic renewal identified in this study is the reconfiguration of Islamic legal authority through epistemic negotiation, most prominently represented in *Journal of Islamic Law* (Vol. 6, No. 2, 2025). Across the ten articles examined, the journal consistently demonstrates that turath is revitalized through continuous negotiation with multiple epistemic authorities, including constitutional law, customary norms, scientific knowledge, digital media, human

³⁵ Meena Sharify-Funk, "From Dichotomies to Dialogues: Trends in Contemporary Islamic Hermeneutics," in *Contemporary Islam: Dynamic, Not Static*, ed. Abdul Aziz Said, Mohammed Abu-Nimer, and Meena Sharify-Funk (London; New York: Routledge, 2006), 64–80.



rights discourse, and institutional religious authority. Rather than portraying Islamic law as an autonomous normative system isolated from contemporary developments, the journal presents it as a dynamic intellectual tradition whose authority is continually reconstructed through engagement with competing legal and social epistemologies. Consequently, the renewal of Islamic legal knowledge is framed less as doctrinal revision than as an ongoing process of renegotiating the sources, legitimacy, and application of Islamic legal authority.

Table 5. Summary Findings of Journal Islamic Law (Vol. 6, No. 2, 2025)

Article Position	Analytical Focus	Epistemological Implication
1	Negotiation of customary norms with Sharia-based marital criteria	Revives turath as a dialogical system accommodating local identity and social order within fiqh
2	Reconciling Islamic legal reasoning with indigenous customary practices	Positions turath as a plural and adaptive hermeneutic, emphasizing coexistence between Islamic and local epistemes
3	Critical media discourse analysis of Islamic criminal law and global human rights	Reinterprets turath through post-secular dialogue between divine law and modern media ethics
4	Political theology and reinterpretation of sovereignty within Islamic constitutional thought	Expands Islamic political jurisprudence as a foundation for epistemic sovereignty and decolonial legal thought
5	Examining power, morality, and communal control through Islamic moral discourse	Transforms turath ethics into a sociological framework for understanding social regulation
6	Epistemic shifts in fatwa-making and contestation between religion, science, and politics	Highlights dynamic institutional reasoning as ijtihad epistemology bridging sacred text and empirical rationality
7	Construction of minority jurisprudence in multi-religious context	Reclaims turath as an inclusive moral reasoning system supporting interreligious harmony
8	Hermeneutical negotiation within Islamic family law through collective ijtihad	Demonstrates internal renewal within the Pesantren tradition while sustaining classical textual authority
9	Revisiting local ulama's juridical heritage in economic dimensions of marriage	Connects turath with regional legal consciousness, establishing a contextual Islamic economic ethic
10	Examining fatwa reasoning against virtual worship amid technological transformations	Islamic legal authority privileges scriptural fidelity and prophetic precedent, limiting technological adaptation in ritual worship under changing circumstances

Source: Authors' elaboration, 2026.



This epistemic negotiation is reflected in a broad range of contemporary legal issues. Several studies examine the interaction between Islamic law and customary traditions, including marital practices among the Aceh Singkil community, legal pluralism within the Suku Anak Dalam of Jambi, and the integration of religious and customary financial obligations in Banjarese marriage traditions. Other contributions investigate the relationship between Islamic law and broader systems of authority, including constitutionalism through Muhammad Yamin's political thought, institutional transformation within the Indonesian Ulema Council's fatwa production, and public debates surrounding the Aceh Qanun Jinayat in the context of digital media and human rights. Complementing these discussions, as demonstrated in Table 5, the journal addresses minority jurisprudence, debates over a marriage involving the waiver of certain marital rights (*misyyār*) among Nahdlatul Ulama scholars, digital Friday prayers, and the sociological construction of legal morality in Banda Aceh, collectively illustrating how Islamic legal reasoning responds to changing configurations of religious, political, scientific, and technological authority.

These findings indicate that Journal of Islamic Law advances an epistemic model in which the renewal of Islamic legal knowledge is achieved through the continuous reconfiguration of legal authority. Rather than preserving turath as a fixed repository of inherited doctrines, the journal demonstrates that its vitality lies in its capacity to negotiate legitimacy across multiple institutional and intellectual domains while maintaining continuity with the interpretive traditions of classical Islamic jurisprudence.³⁶ Within this model, turath functions as a living epistemic tradition whose authority is neither static nor monopolistic, but continually reconstructed through dialogue among revelation, constitutionalism, scientific inquiry, customary practice, and the evolving realities of contemporary Muslim societies.

The fifth mode of epistemic renewal identified in this study is the operationalization of living turath through institutional and societal transformation, most prominently represented in *Al-Ihkam* (Vol. 20, No. 1, 2025). Across the eleven articles analyzed, the journal consistently demonstrates that the renewal of Islamic legal knowledge extends beyond interpretive discourse into concrete institutional design, public governance, and social transformation. Rather than treating turath as a repository of abstract legal principles, the journal reconstructs it as an operational framework capable of informing policy innovation, institutional reform, socio-economic development, and ethical governance. Consequently, Islamic legal knowledge is presented not merely as a source of normative legitimacy but as a practical epistemology for addressing the complex challenges confronting contemporary Muslim societies.

This operational orientation is evident across a diverse range of substantive issues. Several studies reconstruct classical jurisprudential concepts to address emerging policy concerns, including digital gambling regulation, halal certification services, Islamic social finance, agricultural partnerships, and the governance of waqf institutions. Others demonstrate how maqasid sharia and prophetic traditions can be

³⁶ Lawrence Rosen, *The Justice of Islam: Comparative Perspectives on Islamic Law and Society* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).



mobilized to strengthen women's empowerment, religious moderation, child protection, and sustainable food security through evidence-based and institutionally grounded approaches. The journal further expands the practical reach of turath through analyses of Muslim responses to halal labeling policies, the ethical negotiation of gender identity in contemporary urban lifestyles, and the political dimensions of political fiqh in relation to state authority and ideological contestation. Collectively, these studies illustrate that Islamic legal reasoning increasingly functions as a framework for designing responsive institutions while maintaining continuity with the ethical objectives of the classical Islamic tradition (see Table 6).

Table 6. Summary Findings of Al-Ihkam Journal (Vol. 20, No. 1, 2025)

Article Position	Analytical Focus	Epistemological Implication
1	Comparative fiqh and regulatory adaptation	Revives turath jurisprudence for cross-border policy innovation in digital governance
2	Maqasid-based socio-economic analysis using quantitative modeling	Expands turath-maqasid logic into evidence-based socio-economic empowerment models
3	Integration of local custom with Sharia values	Recontextualizes turath ethics to sustain social solidarity within regional cultural identities
4	Hadith-based reform of Islamic legal pedagogy	Reinvigorates turath interpretive rationality through renewed engagement with prophetic traditions
5	Urban fiqh and gendered legal consciousness	Revives turath ethics within modern lifestyle debates, redefining moral agency and piety
6	Economic jurisprudence and policy design	Reclaims turath economic jurisprudence for modern state-level agricultural reform.
7	Classical fiqh reinterpretation on guardianship and consent	Reframes turath doctrines on <i>ijbār</i> through maqasid-oriented protection of vulnerable groups
8	Policy resistance and ethical compliance in halal governance	Revives turath ethical economy to balance religious authority and market pluralism
9	Archival study of waqf institutions and royal authority	Reactivates turath institutional ethics to understand continuity in Islamic philanthropy governance.
10	Bureaucratic reform and Sharia standardization	Revives turath institutional ethics to integrate piety and professional governance
11	Political fiqh discourse and national identity formation	Reclaims political jurisprudence as a dynamic resource for contemporary political legitimacy and critique

Source: Authors' elaboration, 2026.



Collectively, these findings indicate that Al-Ihkam advances an epistemic model in which the vitality of turath is measured by its capacity to generate institutional innovation and societal transformation. Rather than limiting Islamic legal renewal to doctrinal reinterpretation, the journal demonstrates that living turath acquires contemporary relevance when translated into policies, governance structures, economic institutions, and social programs that respond directly to public needs. Within this model, Islamic legal knowledge functions as an applied epistemology whose legitimacy is continuously reaffirmed through its practical contribution to justice, welfare, ethical governance, and sustainable social development.³⁷

Although each journal exhibits a distinctive orientation in engaging with turath, the comparative analysis reveals a broader pattern that extends beyond the characteristics of individual publications. Rather than representing isolated editorial trajectories, the five journals collectively demonstrate complementary processes through which Islamic legal knowledge is reconfigured in contemporary Indonesia. Cross-case comparison indicates that these processes may be synthesized into five interconnected modes of epistemic reconfiguration, each highlighting a particular dimension of how turath is reconstructed as a living intellectual tradition. Together, these modes illustrate that the reconfiguration of Islamic legal knowledge proceeds through methodological innovation, contextual pluralization, adaptive jurisprudence, epistemic negotiation, and institutional operationalization. Table 7 summarizes this conceptual synthesis derived from the comparative analysis.

The comparative synthesis presented in Table 7 demonstrates that the five journals do not represent competing paradigms but complementary dimensions of a broader epistemic transformation. Collectively, they reveal that living turath is neither confined to textual reinterpretation nor limited to institutional reform. Rather, it emerges through interconnected processes that successively reconfigure legal methodology, social context, legal adaptability, epistemic authority, and institutional practice. This multidimensional pattern suggests that the contemporary development of Islamic legal scholarship in Indonesia cannot be adequately understood through a single theoretical lens. Instead, it reflects an integrated model of epistemic reconfiguration in which classical Islamic traditions remain intellectually continuous while being systematically rearticulated in response to contemporary social, legal, technological, and political realities. These five modes therefore constitute the principal empirical contribution of this study and provide the analytical foundation for the broader discussion of living turath as a distinctive Global South model of Islamic knowledge production.

Discussion

The research findings indicate that concepts of classical Islamic legal thought, deeply rooted in the nuances of turath, are dynamically manifested in contemporary Indonesia through journals published by state universities. Within the living conceptual framework of turath, Islamic legal tradition is reinterpreted as an ongoing trans-historical dialogue, wherein early legal insights interact with the

³⁷ Kersten, "Indonesia's New Muslim Intellectuals."



challenges presented by modern interpretations.³⁸ Indonesian scholars are actively negotiating their identity, legitimacy, and intellectual orientation within the public sphere. This process transcends mere nostalgia; it reclaims the creative agency inherent in Islamic legal thought amid the pressures of global academic homogenization. By treating turath as a methodological foundation rather than a static archive, Islamic legal studies in Indonesia asserts its epistemic autonomy, integrating classical and contemporary elements into a coherent intellectual framework.³⁹ The corpus of the five leading Indonesian academic journals reflects a transformative phase in the indigenization of legal reasoning, illustrating how Islamic legal studies in Indonesia have developed into a dynamic interpretive system that actively produces, rather than simply preserves, knowledge.

Table 7. Epistemic Reconfiguration of the Five Leading Indonesian Journals of Islamic Law

Journal	Mode of Epistemic Reconfiguration	Epistemic Function
Ijtihad	Epistemic innovation through methodological pluralism	Reconfigures the methodological foundations of Islamic legal reasoning by integrating classical jurisprudence with diverse analytical approaches
El-Mashlahah	Pluralizing Islamic legal knowledge through social and cultural contextualization	Reconfigures the social and cultural horizons of Islamic legal knowledge by extending turāth into digital, ecological, local, and transnational contexts
Juris	Negotiating contemporary legality through adaptive jurisprudence	Reconfigures the adaptive capacity of turāth to address emerging legal, technological, institutional, and ethical challenges
Journal of Islamic Law	Reconfiguring Islamic legal authority through epistemic negotiation	Reconfigures the sources and legitimacy of Islamic legal authority through dialogue with constitutionalism, customary law, science, media, and human rights
Al-Ihkam	Operationalizing living turāth through institutional and societal transformation	Reconfigures Islamic legal knowledge into institutional practices and societal governance, translating epistemic principles into public policy and social transformation

Source: Authors' elaboration, 2026.

The revitalization of turath reveals a complex epistemological politics inherent within Indonesia's academic landscape. By integrating classical reasoning into contemporary peer-reviewed institutions, scholars challenge the predominance of

³⁸ Andrew F. March, "The Transformation of Islamic Law in Modernity," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Sociology of the Middle East*, 1st ed., ed. Armando Salvatore, Sari Hanafi, and Kieko Obuse (Oxford University Press, 2020), 319–35.

³⁹ Maraimbang Daulay, Idris Siregar, and Sayed Akhyar, "The Role of Scientific Integration in Contemporary Ijtihād: Researchers' Perspectives in State Islamic Universities," *Jurnal Ilmiah Mizani: Wacana Hukum, Ekonomi dan Keagamaan* 12, no. 1 (May 2025): 322.



Eurocentric frameworks that have historically shaped conceptions of “rational” or “scientific” jurisprudence.⁴⁰ Through this strategic repositioning, journals such as *Ijtihad*, *El-Mashlahah*, *Juris*, *Journal of Islamic Law*, and *Al-Ihkam* transform turath into an intellectual counter-discourse that not only critiques imported paradigms but also reconstructs the foundational principles of modern legal thought from the perspective of Islamic epistemology. This engagement does not constitute a rejection of modernity; rather, it reinterprets modernity through the lens of indigenous intellectual sovereignty. Such an epistemic realignment illustrates that knowledge production is inherently non-neutral, serving as a site of contestation wherein turath functions as a mechanism of resistance, reclamation, and redefinition. Consequently, the revival of turath constitutes an emancipatory effort aimed at establishing a decolonized epistemology that critically engages with power dynamics within university education.⁴¹

Collectively, these five journals illustrate that the revitalization of turath within Indonesian Islamic legal scholarship constitutes not a partial or incidental occurrence but rather a systemic and coordinated epistemic transformation. Turath is reinterpreted as a dynamic intellectual resource—transcending its traditional role as a mere source of normative legitimacy—through the methodological integration of classical reasoning, contemporary social theory, interdisciplinary approaches, and attentiveness to modern contexts.⁴² However, underlying this narrative of pluralism and the decolonization of knowledge is an inherent tension between the pursuit of epistemic autonomy and the institutional imperatives of global academia, which influence scholarly style, language, and analytical frameworks. While the reconceptualization of turath as a living epistemology creates opportunities for advancing substantive justice, gender equality, and social responsiveness, it concurrently poses challenges to methodological consistency and the demarcation of Islamic scholarly authority. Thus, the “living turath” articulated in these journals can be critically understood as a site of negotiation among continuity and innovation, heritage and critique, as well as decolonial aspirations and contemporary academic evaluation standards. It is precisely at this nexus that Indonesia’s contribution assumes both significance and complexity in shaping the future trajectory of global Islamic legal thought.⁴³

When examined through a decolonial lens, the institutional resurgence of turath within Indonesian Islamic legal journals is intricately linked to the broader dynamics of Scopus-oriented accreditation and global university ranking systems. These evaluative frameworks, although widely employed as indicators of scholarly quality, are influenced by specific intellectual traditions that predominantly

⁴⁰ Imranali Panjwani, “The Ignored Heritage of Western Law: The Historical and Contemporary Role of Islamic Law in Shaping Law Schools,” *The Law Teacher* 54, no. 4 (October 2020): 562–77.

⁴¹ Bunmi Isaiiah Omodan, “The Roles of Epistemology and Decoloniality in Addressing Power Dynamics in University Education,” *Globalisation, Societies and Education* 23, no. 5 (October 2025): 1226–40.

⁴² Khaled Abou El Fadl, *Reasoning with God: Reclaiming Shari’ah in the Modern Age* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2014).

⁴³ Ishom Fuadi Fikri, Husniyatus Salamah Zainiyati, and Suryani Suryani, “The Significance of Turāth Discourse in Indonesian Islamic Education in the Contemporary Era,” *Qalamuna: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial, dan Agama* 17, no. 1 (April 2025): 219–38.



emphasize Euro-American notions of legality, rational inquiry, and academic merit.⁴⁴ Within this context, turath risks being repositioned primarily as an object of academic dissemination rather than consistently upheld as a living source of normative reasoning. Furthermore, global ranking mechanisms reinforce this tendency by associating institutional reputation, resource distribution, and academic mobility with conformity to transnational performance metrics that may inadequately represent local intellectual priorities.⁴⁵ As underscored in decolonial scholarship, such configurations can inadvertently perpetuate epistemic asymmetries, whereby non-Western knowledge traditions achieve broader recognition chiefly through their adaptation to established standards of intelligibility.⁴⁶

The Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Number 44,⁴⁷ which addresses the Profession, Career, and Income of Lecturers, marks a progressive shift by the Indonesian government in recognizing internationally accredited domestic journals as valid avenues for academic career advancement. From a decolonial perspective, the prevailing emphasis on journals published by major Western publishers perpetuates epistemic hierarchies that marginalize local knowledge production. This regulatory approach challenges the assumption that scholarly legitimacy must be conferred exclusively through Western platforms and affirms that Indonesian journals can function as credible and high-quality venues for scholarly contributions. The journals under analysis provide an essential platform for lecturers to achieve their highest academic aspirations while simultaneously asserting local epistemic authority within global academic networks. A decolonial approach, therefore, does not entail the outright rejection of global academic systems but rather advocates for a critical interrogation of how their foundational evaluative logics influence the conditions under which Islamic legal knowledge is produced and legitimized.⁴⁸

The processes of textual and methodological renewal observed in the journals suggest that turath is undergoing a transformation from a static heritage to an active hermeneutical enterprise. Contemporary scholars no longer perceive classical texts as immutable repositories of rulings but rather as dialogical spaces that invite reinterpretation in response to social change.⁴⁹ This intellectual movement does not diminish the authority of tradition; instead, it sustains its vitality through reflexive

⁴⁴ Márton Demeter, *Academic Knowledge Production and the Global South: Questioning Inequality and Under-Representation* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2020).

⁴⁵ Christopher Bohlens, "How Rankings Impact Academic Freedom and Institutional Autonomy," in *Influence of University Rankings on Institutions*, ed. Mustafa Kayyali (IGI Global Scientific Publishing, 2025), 135–68.

⁴⁶ Suresh Canagarajah, "Local Knowledge When Ranking Journals: Reproductive Effects and Resistant Possibilities," in *Measuring Up in Higher Education*, ed. Anthony Welch and Jun Li (Singapore: Springer Singapore, 2021), 47–73.

⁴⁷ "Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Nomor 44 Tahun 2024," <https://peraturan.bpk.go.id/Details/303315/permendikbudriset-no-44-tahun-2024>.

⁴⁸ Muhammad Hasanul Kamil Huda, Vadym Nehodchenko, and Ahda Fitriani, "Decolonizing Islamic Studies: Rethinking Epistemology, Methodology, and Praxis in the Global South," *ASEAN Journal of Islamic Studies and Civilization (AJISC)* 1, no. 2 (December 2024): 155–69.

⁴⁹ Aharon Layish, "Islamic Law in the Modern World: Nationalization, Islamization, Reinstatement," *Islamic Law and Society* 21, no. 3 (June 2014): 276–307.



engagement.⁵⁰ Turath emerges as a living epistemology—an interpretive framework through which Islamic law engages meaningfully with modernity while preserving its spiritual and intellectual integrity. It advocates for a pluralistic and dialogical approach to legal reasoning that transcends the conventional dichotomy between traditionalism and modernism. The institutionalization of turath within academic journals not only reinforces the legitimacy of Islamic legal discourse but also positions Indonesia as a significant center in the global movement toward epistemic decolonization. By translating classical heritage into academic practice, Indonesian scholars illustrate that the vitality of Islamic law depends on its interpretive flexibility rather than on textual rigidity. Consequently, this paradigm constitutes more than a theoretical framework; it embodies a dynamic academic ethos that reflects the resilience of Islamic intellectual tradition. Within this evolving context, living turath functions both as a method of scholarly engagement and as a symbol of epistemic sovereignty, thereby ensuring the continued relevance of Islamic legal thought.

Conclusion

The existence of five journals dedicated to the advancement of Islamic legal studies in Indonesia demonstrates that the Indonesian academic publishing sector is capable of competing with prominent international publishers. This is substantiated by the high quartile rankings attained by five leading Indonesian journals. The analysis of five leading Indonesian academic journals dedicated to Islamic legal thought, *Ijtihad*, *El-Mashlahah*, *Juris*, *Journal of Islamic Law*, and *Al-Ihkam*, provides that turath has developed into a dynamic epistemic paradigm that mediates between inherited textual authority and contemporary intellectual innovation. Across the 2025 issues examined, turath is neither restricted to archival preservation nor idealized as sacred nostalgia; rather, it functions as a living source of reasoning that legitimizes renewal within the field of Islamic law. Each journal articulates a distinct mode of revival that collectively redefines the role of heritage in modern scholarship. This synthesis indicates that Indonesian Islamic legal discourse is entering a mature phase of living turath, wherein scholars reinterpret the classical legacy to construct frameworks that remain faithful to revelation while responding to contemporary realities. The vitality of turath thus resides in its capacity to generate new knowledge while maintaining continuity with its intellectual origins.

This study theoretically elucidates that the concept of living turath embodies an epistemic pluralism that challenges both rigid textualism and externally imposed secular rationalities. From a decolonial perspective, turath emerges as a dynamic discursive space wherein authority, identity, and legitimacy are continuously renegotiated. The reinterpretations of *fiqh*, *usul fiqh*, and *maqasid* presented in Indonesian academic journals thus represent not a rupture from tradition but rather an affirmation of interpretive sovereignty. By integrating classical reasoning within contemporary peer-reviewed academic frameworks, these journals reconceptualize

⁵⁰ Harald Jacob Viersen, *The Time of Turāth: Authenticity and Temporality in Contemporary Arab Thought*, 1st ed., Philosophie in Der Nahöstlichen Moderne 6 (Boston: De Gruyter, 2024).



turath as a site of decolonized knowledge production—an indigenous intellectual endeavor that engages with global thought while preserving authenticity. This epistemological repositioning not only revitalizes Islamic legal theory but also positions Indonesia as a mediating locus between classical Islamic jurisprudence and contemporary interdisciplinary methodologies.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. The analysis is limited to five Indonesian academic journals published in 2025, thereby not encompassing the broader historical development of discursive reconfigurations of turath across different time periods, institutional settings, or transnational scholarly networks. Additionally, the study primarily addresses published academic discourse, without considering the interactions among authors, editors, peer reviewers, and academic institutions that also influence knowledge production. Future research could expand this investigation through longitudinal analyses to explore how discursive constructions of turath change over time, comparative studies involving Islamic legal journals from other regions of the Global South, or multi-level approaches integrating discourse analysis with interviews, citation network analysis, or ethnographic observation of academic publishing practices. Such methodologies would offer a more comprehensive understanding of the ongoing negotiation, institutionalization, and transformation of Islamic legal knowledge within the dynamic context of global scholarly communication.

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The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest and that no external parties were involved in any way that could have influenced the objectivity or impartiality of this research.

Ethical Approval

As the study did not involve human participants or the collection of sensitive personal information, obtaining ethical approval was deemed unnecessary.

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