

Hizib and Wafaq: Magical Symbols that Bring to Life the Tariqa Tradition in West Java

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Abstract:

This study explores the use of magical symbols within the Tariqa community in West Java, which faces accusations of deviation and conflict with the Takfiri group. Understanding this issue is crucial for mediating conflicts and promoting religious moderation in Indonesia. The research employs a qualitative descriptive approach, focusing on the Idrisiyyah-Tasikmalaya, Tijaniah-Garut, and Shadziliyyah tariqas. Data is analyzed using a semiotic model, examining magical symbols, their meanings, and practitioners' spiritual experiences. Data collection involves purposive sampling through interviews and field observations. Overall, the use of magical symbols is deemed legitimate within Islamic law and does not signify deviation or impurity.

Keywords: congregation; Islamic law; magism; religious order; Sufism.

INTRODUCTION

Involvement in the tariqa has a significant position in the study of Sufism. Individuals who join the tariqa not only practice the lessons of Sufism but also apply principles that indicate a level of spiritual attainment. Etymologically, the word "tariqa" comes from Arabic, road (tariqah) which means way, condition, or flow (Muhaini et al., 2024). This term developed into a spiritual concept that includes a technique or framework to draw closer to Allah (Karim et al., 2022). Initially, the tariqa was spiritual training (*riyadloh*) carried out by Sufistic individuals under the guidance of an expert (*murshid*) (Munjin, 2022). This training includes the practice of dhikr, muraqabah (self-monitoring), and the processes of *takhalli*, *tahalli*, and *tajalli*, which aim to get closer to Allah. In its development, this practice was managed in an organized manner with certain rules, including time, procedures and *riyadloh* materials. This institutional structure became known as tariqa in Sufism discourse.

Broadly speaking, the tariqa encompasses the spiritual principles and strategies taught by a sheik to his followers. This includes all parts of Islamic teachings, such as prayer, fasting, zakat, and hajj, all of which are directed at getting closer to Allah (Saliyo, 2023). In practice, organized tariqa incorporates these elements under the direction of a sheik with the aim of spiritual service (Chasanah, 2022). The ritual management of this tariqa is carried out by a murshid or sheik, while the followers are called santri, and the training place is called ribat, zawiyah, taqiyah, or in Persian it is called khanaqah. The development of the tariqa in Indonesia began with the

introduction of Sufism teachings combined with local traditions and Indian Sufism lessons (Islamy et al., 2022). This process took place gradually so that the tariqa gained an important position in Indonesian society, especially in the 18th century AD when various tariqa began to have many followers (Chandrika, 2023). This assimilation process produces a new phenomenon in the religious practices of tariqa followers, which combines religious teachings with ancestral traditions. This gave birth to distinctive religious practices, combining mystical and magical elements with Islamic values.

According to Van Bruinessen, the pattern of acceptance of new teachings combined with local culture reflects the community's ability to modify teachings according to the context of the times (Van Bruinessen, 1999). One of the traditional elements that still survive among followers of the order is the belief in magical objects or symbols such as *hizib* and *wafaq* (Ayatullah et al., 2024). The use of these symbols often gives rise to pros and cons. On the one hand, followers of the order consider these symbols as an integral part of the ritual practice that brings them closer to God. However, on the other hand, some groups see it as a form of deviance or polytheism. *Hizib* and *wafaq* are believed to have magical powers and are used in everyday life and religious rituals. For example, in the Al-Shadziliyah order, *hizib* is seen as a collection of prayers taken from verses of the Koran and has magical powers as a result of the spiritual experience of Sheikh Abu Hasan al-Shadzili. These prayers are believed to speed up the fulfillment of requests to Allah, as long as they are performed with permission from the murshid teacher (Daner, 2003). In the view of the followers of the tariqa, these magical symbols are not a form of polytheism, but rather a manifestation of Sufism values.

However, other groups, such as the Wahhabi movement and As-Sunnah, strongly oppose the use of these symbols. They consider it a form of *khurafat* which is contrary to the pure teachings of Islam (Romadlan, 2022). This view creates a paradox: on the one hand, the tariqa aims to purify the soul through spiritual practices, but on the other hand, the use of magical symbols is considered by some groups to be a form of deviation. This paradox further fueled conflict when differences in views developed into *takfir* and *tashrik* movements, which accused other parties of being infidels or polytheists. This conflict can damage community harmony, as can be seen in the phenomena of radicalism and group fanaticism. As a solution, a moderation, *tawasut* and *tasamuh* approach is needed to build a more inclusive understanding. This concept is in accordance with the words of Allah in Al-Baqarah (2:143), which emphasizes the importance of being a balanced and just people (*ummatan wasatan*) (Radiani, 2021).

In the context of semiotics, magical symbols in the order can be analyzed as signs that have a certain meaning for the user. Ferdinand de Saussure argued that a sign consists of a signifier (signifier) and a signified (which is signified), while Charles Sanders Peirce added that a sign has three components: representamen, object, and interpretant (Nuarca, 2017). With this approach, magical symbols can be understood as part of cultural practices that reflect the spiritual values of their users. The study of magical symbols among religious congregations using a semiotic approach not only aims to identify visible symbols, but also uncovers the meaning behind them. This research is important to place the phenomenon of the use of magical symbols in a scientific perspective and to answer accusations that it is counter-productive to religious moderation (Ayatullah et al., 2024). This moderation is not only necessary to fight external radicalism, but also to analyze internal phenomena fairly. In this context, research on the use of magical symbols among congregations in West Java becomes relevant. This research can answer two main problems: first, placing this phenomenon in the perspective of scientific epistemology, and second, answering accusations that the takfir movement is often counter-productive to the spirit of *rahmatan lil 'alamin*. This study also contributes to building a moderate religious paradigm, which emphasizes the values of progress and balance (Ismail, 2022).

The recent moderation movement needs to focus on understanding and analyzing religious phenomena in an inclusive manner. With a semiotic approach, magical symbols can be interpreted as part of specific cultural practices and spiritual values, without having to be opposed to extremes. Semiotics allows us to understand the meaning intended by tariqa practitioners and its relevance to contemporary religious practice (Habibi, 2019). This is important to create harmony and diversity that remains rooted in peaceful and inclusive Islamic values.

METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with field research which aims to describe phenomena in depth and naturally (Mertens, 2023). In understanding the magical symbols used by the Idrisiyyah, Tijaniyyah and Shadziliyyah Tariqa communities in West Java, an interpretive approach is the main framework. This approach allows researchers to interpret the meaning of these symbols based on the experience and views of the practitioner. Data sources consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained directly from in-

depth interviews with mashaikh or murshid and practitioners of the related tariqa. Meanwhile, secondary data is in the form of literature such as books, journals or documents that are relevant to this research. To select informants, purposive and snowball sampling techniques were used to ensure that data was obtained from sources who truly understood the phenomenon being studied.

Data collection methods include observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were carried out to directly observe magical symbols (*hizib* and *wafaq*) as well as the daily practices of the tariqa community. Unstructured interviews were used to explore the spiritual views and experiences of practitioners regarding the use of these symbols. Documentation complements data by tracing books, guidelines, or other symbolic artifacts (Banakar & Travers, 2005). The data collected was analyzed using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic model, which includes three elements: sign (representamen), object, and interpretant. This research examines the meaning of magical symbols, both from a religious perspective and their impact on the social life of practitioners. The analysis process is carried out simultaneously starting from data reduction, data presentation, to drawing conclusions. To ensure the validity of the data, triangulation, extended research time in the field, and continuous observation were applied. This step was taken so that the research results were not only accurate, but could also represent the reality in the field in a comprehensive and reliable manner.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

General Description of Research Locations

The Idrisiyyah Tariqa is one of the dynamic spiritual centers in West Java, with its headquarters located on Jalan Ciawi KM 8, Pagendingan, Jatihurip Village, Cisayong District, Tasikmalaya Regency. The presence of this congregation began in 1932 when Sheikh Akbar Abdul Fatah, a son of the seventh descendant of Sunan Gunung Djati, brought his teachings to Tasikmalaya. Since then, the leadership of this congregation has continued from generation to generation until it is now under Sheikh Muhammad Fathurrahman, M.Ag. During his leadership, the Idrisiyyah Tariqa has become a symbol of transformation and openness. Major changes can be seen in the development of *da'wah*, education and infrastructure, including a magnificent mosque with Middle Eastern nuances that provide spiritual comfort for the congregation. Extensive partnerships with national figures such as Sandiaga Uno and international institutions from Hong Kong and Malaysia further strengthen this congregation's position as an inclusive movement that is responsive to changing times (Fitriati, 2021).

Meanwhile, the Tijaniyah Order, which is located in Garut Regency, also has a long history since it was founded by K.H. Badruzzaman in 1935. As one of the muqaddams of the Tijaniyah order in Indonesia, he built a solid foundation at the Al-Falah Biru Islamic Boarding School, Samarang. The leadership of this congregation was then continued by his son, K.H. Ikyan Badruzzaman, who continued spiritual traditions while expanding the scope of *da'wah* through innovation in the field of education. Under the auspices of the Badruzzaman Foundation, this congregation manages various formal institutions such as SMPIT (Islamic High School) and STAI (Islamic University College), as well as non-formal education such as taklim councils and job training. This transformation shows the Tijaniyah congregation's commitment to responding to the challenges of the times while maintaining the spiritual essence (Adnan et al., 2024; Rofii, 2023).

The Shadziliyyah congregation in West Java, which is based at the Al-Istighotsah Islamic Boarding School, Bekasi, is a reflection of the balance between worldly and everyday life. Founded by K.H. Mahfudz Syafi'i in 1993, this congregation combines spiritual formation through *dhikr* and education based on Islamic boarding school traditions. Modern facilities such as computer laboratories, libraries and student cooperatives are a means of developing the potential of students. In addition, various extracurricular activities, ranging from *tahfizh* Al-Qur'an to traditional arts such as *marawis* and *qasidah*, provide space for students to explore their talents and skills. Through this combination, the Shadziliyyah Tariqa shows how the values of Sufism can be implemented relevantly in a modern context (Muhammad, 2008).

These three congregations, although they have different characteristics and approaches, both play a strategic role in integrating spiritual, social and educational values to meet the needs of the people in the contemporary era. They are not only religious pillars but also the driving force of social transformation in their respective communities.

Magical Experience Felt by Practitioners

The study of this magical experience really needs to be researched in order to find a picture of the truth of epistemology as well as the pragmatic value (benefit) that is felt from this science in the context of the philosophy of science. Every scientific discipline that is practiced, apart from having boundaries and methods for the birth of

science, also has utility. This usefulness is sometimes the motive for everyone to study, including this magical science (wisdom science).

According to K.H. Syamsul Ma'arif, (follower of the Shadziliyyah order and expert in wisdom), he explained that the interest of the followers of the order in the practice of Hizib and Wafaq is because it is based on information from valid sources (both the Koran, Hadith, Atsar Sohata, and Aqul *aulia* and ulama) has extraordinary virtues (*fadilah*). As humans, tariqa followers also need worldly matters such as eating, drinking, wealth, intelligence, convenience, happiness, safety and success. These needs are sometimes very difficult to resolve by science and social science (along with the limitations of that scientific experience). For this reason, one of the paths taken and taught in the tariqa is to take the spiritual path, namely *mujahadah* and *taqarrub* to Allah by carrying out shar'i rituals such as *aurad* and dhikr with Hizib, as well as using several Wafaq (Fathul, 2023).

Regarding the spiritual experience felt from the practice of magical symbols, he added that this is greatly influenced by understanding, belief and gentleness of heart (Wulantina, 2021). This means that a person who understands the greatness of this knowledge, believes that the way it is done is respected, and he has a soft heart in feeling the effects of this practice, then he will feel the positivity of this knowledge. However, on the contrary, if he does not understand the knowledge, then he will practice it in a careless manner and full of doubts, and being hasty (impatient) wanting to immediately feel the effects of the experience, may end up feeling disappointed because he does not feel the positive effects of the knowledge. For this reason, the discourse on spiritual experiences from the practice of magical symbols cannot be felt, except by those who gradually pursue and practice them (Wibowo, 2022). This statement is also in line with what was conveyed by Murshid 'Am of the Idrisiyyah tariqa (Shekh Muhammad Fathurrahman, M.Ag) that not all knowledge can be directly put into practice, as is the case with the Sufism tariqa. There is a methodology that must be known first and obtained directly from the teacher. This is so that, in practice, it does not deviate from the recipes/methods that have been experienced by previous teachers. With the same methods and recipes and guidance from the teacher, it is hoped that the results will be the same, namely getting a good and useful experience. He quoted Imam Malik's opinion: "Whoever does not feel will not know." This proverb can also be interpreted to recognize the greatness of the science of wisdom, which must be pursued first using appropriate methods from the guidance of the teacher (Fathurrahman et al., 2020). Some of the spiritual experiences that have been experienced by practitioners of magical symbols (Hizib dan Wafaq) among the tariqa community are as depicted in the following interviews:

Sheik Muhammad Fathurrahman, M.Ag. (Murshid Tariqa Idrisiyyah), related to the spiritual experience/magical effects of magical practice felt by the practitioners of the tariqa, the discussion has basically been answered when examining the issue of *mawahib* and divine *waridat*. Linguistically, "*mawahib*" comes from the word "wa-ha-ba" which means, give, bestow, donate, bestow, bequeath (Solehudin, 2024). From this root word, the word "grant" was born, namely giving something without expecting anything in return. In Sufism terminology, the term *mawahib* is a gift or gift from God that comes to the heart. That is why *mawahib* is sometimes interpreted as the wealth of the heart (Fathurrahman et al., 2020). Tasawwuf scholars define the term *mawahib* with the terms:

مَا يَرُدُّ عَلَى الْقَلْبِ مِنْ غَيْرِ كَسْبٍ وَلَا أَكْتِسَابٍ

"That is something that Allah brings to the heart, without any effort from His servants."

What is meant by "without effort" in this case is an effort to present the *mawahib*. However, the presence of *mawahib* is correlated with human efforts, namely in matters involving pious deeds, self-cleaning (Solehudin, 2024). Humans are only required to carry out all of Allah's provisions and maintain their purity, while the issue of *mawahib* is entirely within the realm of Allah's (*mashiahtullah*) power and will. For tariqa experts, magical experiences/matters of *karomah* and *maunah* are not the target of worship, but merely a motivating factor. When they receive a gift from Allah (*mawahib*), they are reluctant to admit that the gift (*mawahib*) is the result of their hard work, this is because they realize that there are limitations in their deeds and an imbalance between the good deeds they do and the gifts they receive from Allah (Islamiyati, 2022). Sometimes humans only have a few good deeds, while the grace from Allah is too many and great. So it is appropriate that any gift (in the form of success, happiness, convenience, spaciousness) is essentially the will of Allah SWT (not human effort). The forms of *mawahib* (wealth of the heart) can be in the form of devotion, calm, vibration of the heart, interest in God and other divine beliefs. When humans perform magical rituals (*riyadloh*, *aurad Hizib*, *sawm*) in essence they are

going through the stage of effort (*makasib*), and at some point they will reach the point of eligibility to obtain *mawahib* from Allah (Arsyul, 2024). Because *makab* in essence will only be given by Allah to those who have met the qualifications.

Thus, a person's greatness, whether in the form of glory, position, spaciousness and so on, all comes from God, not from the greatness of magic itself. The presence of *mawahib* for humans is essentially not a reward for their hard work but rather a gift from Allah to prove their efforts, therefore the size of *mawahib* will certainly not be directly proportional to the level of a person's hard work. Likewise, the loss of a *mawahib* is not determined by a person's efforts but rather by the will of Allah Himself (Arsyul, 2024).

The same is true of divine virtue (God's will) given to someone who has fulfilled the qualifications. This is also part of the *mawahib* (gift from God), because our position is worthy of getting it. The term *waridah ilahiyah* is essentially the same as *mawahib*, that is, it comes and goes by God's will, without human effort (in bringing or removing it). Among the forms of divine inspiration are the vibrations of the heart that come from angels (*al-ilham*) and come from God as a form of truth (*al-haq*), divine guidance (*al-Hidayah*), help (*al-maunah*) and light Allah (*nur Allah*). From some of his explanations about Idrisiyyah's view of spiritual experience, the researcher can draw a conclusion that the aspect of spiritual experience from the use of magical symbols (*aurad* chanting and *Hizib* prayer or the use of *Wafaq*) is basically not far from what has been explained by the teaching sources namely the Qur'an and the messengers and the instructions of the previous *murshids* (McGuire, 2021). What is conveyed in *Hizib*'s virtue is what is felt. It's just that to feel this experience you have to go through it first patiently.

According to K. Lukmanul Hakim (Ketua Dewan 'Ulum Shufiyyah Majelis Ketareaktan Idrisiyyah) when interviewed regarding the magical power felt from the practice of *Hizib* or *Wafaq*, he said things that were not much different from what his teacher/*murshid* had said (Shekh Akbar Muhamamd Fahurrahman, M.Ag.), that magical experiences are personal experiences and reside in the inner realm. This perceived power or experience is a form of *mawahib* from Allah and will from Allah (*waridah dewayyah*) (Bird et al., 2023). Each person will certainly experience a different experience, the higher the belief and sensitivity of the heart towards Allah, the more magical the experience will be felt. The high or low of this experience is greatly influenced by the level/stoma of oneself in the religious relationship. *Aulia* and *sheiks* certainly experience various extraordinary spiritual experiences.

Therefore, it is not surprising if you have read about *manakib aulia*, which is a collection of spiritual experiences experienced by *aulia* after making *mujahadah* to Allah SWT. This is also very possible for followers of the *tariqa* who practice this magic. Then regarding his personal experience, he said that the form of magical power that was felt was essentially what had been promised by Allah and his apostle, and the advice of his teachers was very true that when we pray to Allah with certain auras (*Hizib*), then the psychological effects and the material effects will be increasingly felt in the form of ease in fulfilling one's desires. By being bound by religious teachings and being guided by spiritual aspects, spiritual/magical experiences become more open and real. And, of course, this experience can only be felt by someone who lives it. Meanwhile, in relation to humans' ability to obtain magical powers, he explained that the issue of magical powers from practicing an object or reading is all based on God's will. Humans cannot bring it immediately or reject it, humans can only make themselves as individuals who are (approximately) worthy before Allah to receive this power (*maunah*) (Muradi, 2018).

The leader of the *Mawahib* publication (publishing of the Idrisiyyah order), during the discussion/interview related to magical experiences, expressed that the phenomenon is felt by many as a gift from God, even though they do not know that the gift is present for which good deed? What is clear in the attachment in Idrisiyyah, even though the *murshid* gives magical practices such as *Hizib*, basically the practice is not to claim favor or magical power from God. Carrying out *Hizib aurad-aurads* is basically for worship only and a personal approach to God. The question of Allah wanting to give *mawahib* or other strength from the *Hizib* is all surrendered to Allah SWT. and the thing he stressed that the question of magism, both its practice and the power felt from that practice, is not something to be very proud of in an attachment. His *murshid* (Shkeh Muhammad Fathurrahman, M.A) strongly forbids that in worship we only brag about magical results/powers. In fact, in his view, boasting about charity alone has become part of the damage to Sufism. related to the belief in the strength felt from the practice of *hizib-hizib* and *aurad*, he affirmed the existence of even the effects of magic there in the form of conveniences, happiness to the point that things beyond intellectual reason also occur. However, everything that has been felt is certainly believed to be a gift from God and not because of the practice of *Hizib*. That day he told many stories and testimonies of order followers who experienced strange things in their lives after joining the order council.

The strangeness is in the form of increasingly extraordinary success in life, both in the field of economics, career, position, and happier psychologically. These various stories and testimonies strengthen his view that, basically, the power of magic is there and felt by everyone; it is just that it is not certain that the power comes from the practice of magical symbols. They believe that all that strength is a gift from God.

Practitioner of the Tijaniah order and expert in the science of wisdom (K.H. Mohammad Yahya) said that it was related to spiritual experience which was seen as the power of the magic that was practiced. In this case, he said there were many magical experiences (in Sundanese, he said "*kaanehan*"/strangeness), ranging from inner and outer to worldly problems.

Regarding inner issues, for example, the impact of practicing magical symbols (*hizib* and *wafaq*) is to become more calm and confident in facing various life problems. Do not feel afraid or worried, and always be optimistic in looking at everything. The inner aspect is an important aspect of dealing with life. The emergence of various physical illnesses such as stroke, heart disease, stomach disease and so on sometimes starts from an unkempt mind and inner self. By practicing *hizib* (special *dhikr*), this inner aspect becomes awake and cared for, so that when our lives are presented with new problems, this inner mind can adjust appropriately, and in the end, the fear, anxiety and worries disappear. *Hizib's dhikr* and *aurad* are basically just efforts (in his language *nyare'at*) while matters of inner experience that are felt are essentially from Allah SWT (Salehudin et al., 2021).

Another thing that often happens is that several guests come to him just to ask for prayers for various illnesses; it turns out that if you look at them, they are basically mental problems that have been damaged. So, with guidance in the form of *Hizib* prayers, which must be practiced at certain times and in certain amounts, in the end, they found their own source of healing. Another thing, the strangeness that the inner self feels when they are used to the aura of *Hizib*, is the ability to perceive divine signals (in his language "inspiration"), both good and bad signals. With this signal, we can adapt. For example, suddenly, you have a certain dream, and when you follow the signs from that dream, suddenly, a miracle (strangeness) comes into life, and you get this and that. Or when there is a high desire (although he did not mention an example), he then recites a certain prayer, suddenly a signal comes (generally through a dream), and not long afterward the solution to that need comes. Likewise, there are also signs of evil, such as when there is a person who is evil, whether on the way or at home in the form of magic, then these signals appear whether through the presence of animals, the sound of animals or falling objects and so on. But with this signal, we can read and interpret it so we can immediately take rescue action. One time, he was traveling, and a vehicle was hit; someone came and got so angry that they wanted to fight; immediately, he prayed to a certain *Hizib* (did not mention the *Hizib*), and then they suddenly felt scared and apologized. All this is a secret from Allah.

As for external matters, this experience is often felt, especially when carrying out healing rituals to help people who have been affected by magic or jinn interference. Often when you have helped people, suddenly something unexpected comes at night (as if the witch is getting revenge). If there are signs that come, such as the sound of birds, the sound of bears, sound of bees and so on, he immediately takes care of himself by not sleeping and doing *dhikr*, so that in the end things that would be dangerous do not happen. He told of a very extraordinary incident, when one day he had finished treating someone who was suspected of being sick with witchcraft (being made a victim by someone who did not like him), suddenly at night the sound of a bear came roaring behind his house and he could not get in his house (even though the neighbors around him had never heard of it, including his students), then when he woke up he saw 4 big bears surrounding his house. Then, after the *aurad* and *tabeh* he was holding were shaken off, the bear immediately ran away from his house. As practitioners of the congregation and experts in wisdom, these oddities are certainly numerous (researchers cannot include them all). However, he still emphasized that this strangeness (magical power) was not from the object or prayer or from the Jinn but from Allah Swt.

Including worldly matters (in his language "matters of sustenance and wealth"), through the improvement of *Hizib's aurad* morals and habits, God has provided enough for him. He said that if sustenance was determined by work then he would be included as a poor person because he is not a person who has a fixed income like civil servants and employees. He is just a *kiyai* who every day serves *santri* and the community for *ngaji* matters. From 24 hours, it is as if the time is spent only on household affairs, mosques and educational events. When he is not teaching, he spends his time in *dhikr* and practicing his *sunnatullah* at home to earn a living. Sometimes in between his business he also wrote *Wafaq-wafaq* and used it for himself and his guests. Nevertheless, by God's will all the practices he did (in his language "nyareat") became the reason for the arrival of sustenance/property that could be used to fulfill the life of himself and his family. He said that when we have enlightened ourselves to Allah by carrying out His *Shari'ah*, then all our needs regarding sustenance, sustenance, health and personal

protection will be provided by Allah. What is the problem of people today (modern people) is often this problem is considered trivial and it is thought that everything will be solved with science and technology (in his language "modern science").

According to Kang Aji (a familiar nickname for the youth leader of the Tijaniyyah tariqa and son of the Muqoddam of the Tijaniyyah tariqa), when he was interviewed/chatted about the magical experiences he had experienced, he did not mention much about the oddities apart from the fact that the problem could not be linked with certainty to anything. Amala is also one of those people who does not magnify the problem of this experience. However, regarding his point of view regarding magical powers, he truly believes that every good practice (especially if the source is clear) will certainly bring goodness to the practitioner. For the Tijaniah congregation, the issue of karomah given by God is not the core that is sought in worship, however, when we receive all the gifts from God we believe that this is God's will (Bustomi & Umar, 2021). We can only interpret that this gift is due to our good deeds such as the aurads of Hizib that are enshrined. In the congregation this matter is not the main goal. Regarding personal experiences in the form of oddities beyond intellectual reasoning, Elaiu also shared the experience that many of the experiences experienced regarding oddities were related to health, sustenance and personal safety. Even though we never delve into saving ourselves with visible movements (such as invulnerability, silat and other martial arts), we often feel that self-salvation is the reason for the Hizib that we read. Likewise, fortune often comes from unexpected doors (in his language, *min haithu laa yahtasib*), which sometimes has great value; all of this is also a gift from Allah that is obtained after cherishing certain auras. In short, in his view, there must be magical experiences (if they have to be termed). It is just that tariqa practitioners do not magnify the issue.

Likewise, K.H. Rasyid (from the Shadziliyyah congregation), that however the use of Shadziliyyah hizib aurads as well as some uses of *wafaq*, have a big influence on our lives both psychologically, especially self-confidence in Allah. There were many things that he felt when he studied religious beliefs and practiced several magical symbols (especially Hizib), such as the influence on his mental state which became calmer and less restless, as well as the encouragement to continue to protect himself from bad things. Through Hizib's aurad-aurad which indirectly provides good moral messages such as patience, laughter, self-acknowledgment (*i'tiraf bi nafsi*) and a sense of acceptance (*qanaah*), then when faced with difficult problems or life needs, then That's when we can still feel how happy, calm and easy the solution to life is. Including when reciting prayers about abundant sustenance or using *wafaq-wafaq* which are related to withdrawing sustenance, the sense of *tawakkal* (dependence on Allah) increases so that worries about failure in life and narrowness of sustenance are greatly minimized.

Likewise, when responding to and dealing with various life tests such as the Covid-19 outbreak, then when you have abiding aurad-aurad (hizib), Sholawat Shifa, *talak bal'a* (rejecting bad tests) and trying to write down some *wafaq* from the Al-Quran (as a form of rejection), then inwardly he feels more secure and calm, because he has taken efforts (according to his belief) to protect Allah. Still, according to him, this spiritual experience is essentially a gift from Allah for our efforts in the form of training ourselves to do dhikr, reading hizib taught by previous aulia and murshids, which can only be felt by the person who undergoes it (while others may not feel it). Regarding the benefits of each Hizib and *wafaq* that are practiced, he explained that basically it cannot be guaranteed that success, happiness, ease, prosperity, personal safety are caused by the Hizib-Hizib and *Wafaq* that are practiced, which is clear to all circles. order, all the pleasures felt are gifts from Allah, not from our deeds. It could be that our deeds are the cause of various conveniences from Allah or it could be that Allah gives them because Rahman Rahman has nothing to do with our good deeds. The practitioners of the tariqa are never taught to calculate good deeds in relation to their acquisition from Allah, but are taught to continue to give thanks to Allah in achieving all forms of our life's needs.

Testimony of K. H. Syamsul Ma'Arif (still a practitioner of the Shadziliyyah order and an expert in the science of wisdom) that according to him there are many miracles that we feel when we have immersed ourselves in spiritual things such as spaciousness and ease in life as well as extraordinary happiness compared to when before plunging into this religious and spiritual world. The miracles of life, of course, do not come from our good deeds, but rather come from God. And one thing, he emphasized, is that when you are immersed in the practice of Hizib and *Wafaq*, it does not mean that you are free from the problems and needs of worldly life (because in life there must be problems and needs), but that our hearts are given calm and happiness in facing life's problems. This. In other words, when life is faced with problems and needs that cannot be resolved by world knowledge (science and humanities), it is through this spiritual/magical practice that our souls are nurtured so that Allah provides calm, comfort and solutions to problems (Pramono, 2017). So far, it is common for humans to

complete their lives based only on knowledge and experience of science/logic and mathematics. They never reconcile life's problems with God, so that when logical and mathematical calculations fail (fail) life stress and anxiety occur. This is the source of failure and bankruptcy in life in the Order, namely when the world has taken control of the heart and feelings. For this reason, before implementing Hizib and Wafaq aurad-aurad in a tarekat, what must be addressed is the matter of proper management first. Explanation by the murshid 'Am of the Shadziliyyah order and elder of the al-Istighostah Islamic boarding school (K.H. Uci Sanusi), regarding magical experiences felt by Hizib and Wafaq practitioners (aurad and Hizib Shadziliyyah).

According to researchers, he is broader and has more experience. However, in general there are 3 very important things to convey, namely first, experiences that are Hisiyyah (sensory experiences); second, ma'nawiyah experience (experience that cannot be sensed but can be felt by oneself); third, other experiences of an I'tibary nature (moral messages for oneself).

First, experiences that are *Hisiyyah* (sensory experiences), meaning various oddities that occur but can be sensed and felt by other people, for example related to martial arts sciences. There are several experiences, for example, when one day on a journey someone suddenly wanted to hasud (obstruct the journey), then when they took refuge in Allah by reciting a certain hizib, the person immediately fell and apologized. Then there are people who are sick and ask for help in the form of prayers, after asking Allah for healing, the pain immediately disappears. These experiences are very sensory because several of his students can and have seen them (at the same time). However, this oddity of hissiyah (in his language: *maunah/help*) all comes from Allah and only happens at that time (allahu a'lam). This experience has basically been shown by Allah to the prophets and Aulia with the terms miracles and karomah. Prophet David could soften iron, Prophet Isa could bring dead birds back to life, Prophet Musa turned his staff into a snake, Prophet Muhammad SAW could split the moon, all of these miracles are hisiiyyah (can be seen and sensed by humans), but in essence they are a help from Allah to save the prophets and the teachings they preached (Jabar, 2017). So miracles are not created by prophets but come from Allah and their function is to save the prophets (Syahfrizal et al., 2024). Likewise with the *karomahs* that were revealed to the aulia, that the karomahs that are Hisiyyah in nature, such as being able to stand on water, split rocks, penetrate mountains, stop strong winds (and other *aulia manakib*) are essentially instantaneous to save the aulia and his preaching teachings (Hidayat, 2024). In the current context, the term maunah hisiiyyah (material help from Allah) can occur when Allah wishes to save His servants from bad threats.

Experiences that can be sensed, such as miracles or karomah, are markers (*signifier*) which shows a meaning (*signified*) spiritual or God's help. This sign is formed through observations that can be received by the human senses, such as events that occur in the real world which are considered as manifestations of greater powers (Habibi, 2019). For example, when someone who is traveling is suddenly protected from interference thanks to certain prayers or hizib, this experience becomes a visual sign that can be sensed by people around them. According to Saussure, this is an experience that is physical and can be directly understood by the human senses (Saussure, 2006). However, the meaning of this incident is much deeper, namely as divine help, which can only be understood in a religious context. In this case, miracles and miracles are icons according to Peirce, because these events have a very clear similarity to the manifestation of divine power, which is demonstrated by the behavior or phenomena seen by the observer (Peirce, 1991).

Second, ma'nawiyah experience, namely experiences that cannot be sensed but can be felt by the practitioner himself, such as the emergence of a sense of courage, receiving inspiration/signals from Allah, being given calm and peace and making various matters of life easier and more spacious. For tariqa members, all of these experiences are part of God's grace obtained through hard work (*mujahadah*). Even though this experience is a spiritual area and is ma'nawiyah in nature (cannot be sensed), basically it can be understood rationally. The essence of knowledge is convenience, so when the knowledge has been mastered (understood and put into practice), the fruits of that knowledge will be felt, depending on the nature of the knowledge itself (Wati et al., 2023). People who study linguistics will find it easier to use language, and it will be easy for them to solve problems related to language. People who understand technology will find life easier when faced with problems related to technology. Likewise, tariqa as a study of science will provide benefits for the ease of life.

In this case, the experiences felt by practitioners of magical symbols at the religious assembly are basically not difficult and complicated but are in line and in line with sunatulloh. Whoever studies will find it. And it turns out that after trying to pursue this knowledge in the Shadziliyyah order, what the teachers said was true, all of them provided great benefits for life. So the experience of Hizib, *aurad* or *wafaq* (which is in accordance with the teachings) is not to leave world problems behind, but instead to face world problems so that it is easier and happier. Sometimes many people think that the tariqa are people who are indifferent to world problems, so they

do not bother with them. This view is wrong, language as a tariqa practitioner also needs language with world affairs, it is just that to fulfill this need it is not only achieved by logical and rational sciences, but also spiritual sciences such as *aurad*, *dhikr* and prayer. *Hizib* sometimes uses *wafaq* (Rizal, 2010).

This experience is more related to inner perception and reflection, such as a sense of courage or calm, which cannot be sensed directly. In this case, visible signs are markers that arise from an individual's spiritual condition, for example when someone feels inspired or calm after praying. This is an index in Peirce's semiotics because although this sign is not physically visible, it points to something deeper and more abstract: the relationship between the individual and God. The courage or calm that appears cannot be measured or seen but can be felt, and is a real sign that the person is experiencing inner peace, the result of the spiritual efforts made (Peirce, 1991). In line with Saussure's view, this experience is part of the semiotic system of religion, where experiences that cannot be sensed still form meaning that can be understood in the context of spiritual relationships and religious beliefs (Saussure, 2006). By understanding spiritual knowledge, such as tariqa, a person will feel at ease in life, which ultimately leads to inner peace and tranquility, even though it cannot be seen physically.

Third, another experience that is *l'tibary* in nature, meaning the benefits felt are in the form of advice for yourself. Sometimes there are people who do not like being advised by other people, of course for various reasons, whether because they lack knowledge, or there are organizational differences and so on (Hadi Ihsan, 2022). By being attached to a tariqa assembly, in which you are required to uphold the *Hizib's aurad* and carry out other provisions, these provisions automatically become advice to yourself to continue to take better care of yourself. For example, when you are trying to achieve your goals, you are guided by a teacher with a number of requirements that must be met so that your goals can be achieved. Then we will focus more on paying attention to ourselves so that we do not violate things that are not ordered by the teacher. A patient who is seriously ill is trying to recover and is given a prescription by the doctor to eat and drink this or that, and is prohibited from eating this or that. So the person is usually more willing to pay attention to himself and not be careless in his life. Thus, more or less the experience felt by magical practitioners who are in prisons of attachment, we will get more good effects from the practice of this knowledge on ourselves.

This experience contains meaning as a moral and spiritual message for oneself. According to Peirce, symbols are signs that are more abstract and based on social conventions or habits. In this context, advice or instructions given by tariqa teachers to their students, for example about how to face life's tests, can be understood as symbols that carry deeper meaning (Peirce, 1991). This advice is not only a practical guide but also a life guide that can shape an individual's character and behavior. In this case, the signs in question are not just words, but also actions that lead to a better understanding of spiritual life (Andersen et al., 2024). The system of instructions given by the tariqa teacher becomes religious symbols that guide practitioners to stay away from worldly mistakes and get closer to Allah, which in turn forms higher spiritual behavior. Although these are not experiences that can be directly sensed, these messages influence the life of the practitioner in profound ways.

In the end, this text also discusses how tariqa practitioners are different from people who practice magic without a strong spiritual foundation. As mentioned, many people experience magical powers such as wealth or career success and then tend to flaunt them or even engage in magical practices for worldly purposes. In the context of semiotics, this shows that the signs that appear (for example success or wealth) are interpreted more in terms of material indications without realizing that the real meaning is a greater divine help, which should still be appreciated as worship and an approach to Allah (Habibi, 2019). For tariqa practitioners, they are more careful and not interested in showing magical signs, because they understand that all power comes from Allah. This shows an awareness of deeper spiritual symbols and that all worldly achievements are simply part of God's grace, not something to be proud of or flaunted. As stated in the text, they prefer to say "*hadha min fadli rabby*" (this is part of the glory of Allah), which shows a humble attitude and awareness that the signs that appear in their lives are only manifestations of divine power, not the result of personal efforts alone.

In connection with several testimonies and explanations from the informants above, researchers see that this is the difference between practitioners of the congregation and practitioners outside the congregation in terms of responding to perceived magical powers. People in general (especially ordinary people) when they feel magical power in their lives, whether in the form of abundant wealth, a successful career or a high position, always want to show and tell the public that their greatness is due to this or that magical practice. Even with their experience, quite a few people who love magic try to open magical service practices for world orientation (an easy way to achieve positions, abundant fortune or to be respected by people), while the scientific aspects and spiritual development are not developed. This is different from religious congregations (whatever the religious

congregation) researchers see that they are very reluctant to reveal these powers, fearing that there is a tendency towards this object and ignoring Allah as a source of strength. So it is not surprising that the issue of magic, both the motive, the method of practice and the results/power felt from the practice, is interpreted as worship only, namely approaching oneself to Allah, and when Allah gives any power, it is enough for them to say "hadha min fadli rabby" (this is part of the glory of God).

CONCLUSION

The magical experience experienced by the practitioners of symbols such as *hizib* and *wafaq* offers a deep appeal to the spiritual world. This experience is divided into three main categories, namely *isharah qalbiyyah* which involves the ability to catch God's signs, both bringing happiness and as a warning of danger; *maunah hisiyyah*, which includes sensory assistance such as the ability to paralyze the enemy from a distance; and *maunah sa'adah*, which gives peace and happiness and strengthens self-reliance. Through these experiences, practitioners not only gain inner strength but also form a more resilient and positive personality.

Based on these findings, several strategic recommendations can be proposed. For the government, it is important to develop religious moderation and the concept of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* with a deeper Sufistic approach. The Sufism perspective can be a bridge to explain the phenomenon of magical traditions in a moderate way and support the preservation of local wisdom without conflicting with Islamic teachings. Dialogue and revision of textbooks must be accompanied by the application of a Sufi approach to resolving debates related to polytheism and local traditions. For the tariqa assembly, the use of magical symbols such as *hizib* and *wafaq*, accompanied by the development of sophistry, has proven to have a positive impact on forming a better personality. This tradition should be maintained and even introduced more widely as part of a spiritual solution to overcoming life's problems, which are sometimes difficult to answer by logic alone. A Sufism-based approach—through allegiance, spiritual guidance, and *ta'lim*—can be an effective method in building more holistic morals, *aqidah*, and sharia. By utilizing magic media, this approach is expected to form a deeper thinking paradigm and make a significant contribution to the development of students' character.

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