Nasida Ria and the Modernization of Kasidah Music in Indonesia, 1975–1990: From Communal Tradition to Islamic Popular Culture

Ajeng Ayu Manganti[1*], E. Roni A. Nurkiman[2]
[1,2] Sunan Gunung Djati State Islamic University Bandung
**Correspondence* : ajengayumanganti@gmail.com
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Abstract

This article analyzes Nasida Ria's contribution to the modernization of kasidah in Indonesia during 1975–1990. It examines a transition from predominantly communal religious performance toward recorded and broadcast Islamic popular music, while recognizing earlier experiments with modern kasidah. Using historical source criticism and interpretation, it reads album covers and recordings alongside contemporary publications, retrospective accounts, and scholarship; contextual publications are distinguished from direct evidence about the group. The findings identify connected changes in instrumentation, Indonesian-language lyrics, social themes, the professional work of women performers, and recording-based circulation. These changes did not displace the group's da'wah orientation. Nasida Ria is best understood as a prominent contributor to a wider process of change, rather than as modern kasidah's sole originator. The article brings musical, social, and media dimensions into one historical account while noting that sales, audience size, and the extent of imitation by other groups cannot be established from the available evidence.

Keywords: **N**asida Ria; modern kasidah; music history; da'wah; Islamic popular culture

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Introduction

Kasidah occupies an important place in the history of Islamic culture in Indonesia. The tradition originated in Arabic poetic forms and was subsequently adapted through networks of trade, Islamic education, da'wah, pesantren, and local religious practices. In the Indonesian archipelago, kasidah developed under various names and in various forms, but remained grounded in the chanting of religious verse, rebana playing, and the functions of da'wah and moral education.[1] Changes in its form show that kasidah has never been entirely static. It has continually been negotiated according to the language, ritual needs, social structures, and musical tastes of its supporting communities.

Before the mid-1970s, kasidah in many settings had a communal character. Rebana often predominated, and performances were integrated with Islamic study gatherings, commemorations of the Prophet's birthday, circumcisions, weddings, and other Muslim social occasions. Verses included Arabic praise and religious instruction, alongside local variation. Transmission took place through direct practice in pesantren, mosques, prayer rooms, and Islamic study circles. This communal pattern did not exclude named performers or early commercial experiments; it describes a prevalent setting rather than an exclusive form.[2]

The division between traditional and modern kasidah, however, cannot be placed at a single turning point. Groups such as Assabab in Semarang had emerged in the 1960s. In the 1970s, kasidah groups and gambus orchestras developed in Sumatra, Jakarta, Central Java, and East Java. Some groups began adding organ, guitar, violin, bass, flute, and drums to the rebana ensemble.[3] Nasida Ria's emergence in 1975, therefore, did not mark the absolute beginning of modernization. Its significance lay in its scale, consistency, and success in combining musical renewal with Indonesian-language lyrics, social themes, stage professionalism, the recording industry, and broadcast media.

The context of popular music in the late 1970s also opened space for these changes. Two articles *in th*e 15 July 1978 issue of Tempo reveal two relevant developments. "Ngamen Sambil Ngritik" shows the growth of music as a channel for social commentary, while "Aku Impikan Sebuah Mesjid" describes the mixing of Middle Eastern, pop, and disco rhythms in religiously inflected music production.[4] Neither article discusses Nasida Ria directly. Their value lies in their contemporary contextual evidence that social criticism, experiments in arrangement, and cassette production were already part of Indonesia's musical climate as Nasida Ria began developing its form of kasidah.

Several studies have discussed Nasida Ria from different perspectives. Umi Cholifah examines the group's existence and strategies for facing modernization.

[1] Azyumardi Azra, *Islam Nusantara: Jaringan Global dan Lokal* (Bandung: Mizan, 2002), 143-145; Tatu Siti Rohbiah, "Musik Kasidah dan Perannya dalam Dakwah Nusantara," *Jurnal Bimas Islam* 8, no. 2 (2015): 297-320.

[2] Rohbiah, "Musik Kasidah," 303-312; Bagus Susetyo, "Perubahan Musik Rebana Menjadi Kasidah Modern di Semarang sebagai Suatu Proses Dekulturasi dalam Musik Indonesia," *Harmonia: Journal of Arts Research and Education* 6, no. 2 (2005): 1-5.

[3] Rohbiah, "Musik Kasidah," 309-311; Ning-Hui Hung, "Transmission and Innovation of Kasidah (Lagu Islam) in Indonesian (1975~): Take a Case Study on Nasida Ria Kasidah Modern in Semarang," *International Journal of Creative and Arts Studies* 4, no. 1 (2017): 49-58.

[4] "Ngamen Sambil Ngritik," *Tempo*, 15 July 1978, 32; "Aku Impikan Sebuah Mesjid," *Tempo*, 15 July 1978, 65.

Ning-Hui Hung situates Nasida Ria in the transmission and innovation of kasidah from an ethnomusicological perspective. Ade Fajrul Falah, Udi Utomo, and Wadiyo study the functions of the group's internal structure. Sekar Arum Mandalia, Afif Muhammad, and Yeni Huriyani analyze the discourse of "Perdamaian" as da'wah communication. Munif Akhsan focuses on KH Ahmad Buchori Masruri's role from 1982 to 2018.

These studies provide a crucial foundation, yet they leave room for a historical synthesis focused on the 1975–1990 period. Research into the group's later years—covering its musical form, organization, individual song lyrics, and the contributions of Buchori Masruri—has successfully elucidated specific facets of its history. Integrating elements such as instrumentation, language, themes, the role of women, recordings, and media into a single, period-specific narrative allows for an analysis of the interconnections between these components. The argument presented here serves as a synthesis of documented changes, rather than evidence that any single innovation independently triggered a nationwide transformation.

This article aims to explain the condition of kasidah before 1975 and analyze Nasida Ria's contribution to its modernization during 1975–1990. The year 1975 marks the group's founding in Semarang; 1990 is an analytical endpoint rather than the end of its activity. The article asks how existing musical practices, the work of women performers and songwriters, and recording and performance networks came together in a recognizable model of modern kasidah. It does not claim that Nasida Ria was the sole source of modernization or that every later group directly copied it.

Method

This study uses the historical method in four stages: heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography. These stages are used to examine evidence of the past, connect verified facts, and organize them into a chronological and analytical narrative.[5]

The heuristic phase involved gathering press coverage from 1978 and 1983, album covers and recordings by Nasida Ria, and digital audio-visual documentation for the songs "*Perdamaian*," "*Tahun* 2000," and "Jilbab Putih." Articles from Tempo magazine published in 1978 focus more on the dynamics of the surrounding music scene than on providing direct coverage of Nasida Ria. Furthermore, this research draws upon various books and studies concerning *kasidah, rebana* (frame drums), musical organization, and *dakwah* (Islamic outreach). This analysis re-examines the documented corpus alongside selected, verified external publications, without claiming to have conducted original interviews or consulted the physical archives of record labels or broadcasting organizations.

External criticism examines titles, volume numbers, recording labels, printed dates when visible, and the relationship between digital copies and their original media. Internal criticism compares album contents, press texts, audiovisual documentation, and retrospective research. A later upload of a recording does not establish the date

[5] Louis Gottschalk, *Understanding History: A Primer of Historical Method* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), 45; Kuntowijoyo, *Metodologi Sejarah* (Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana, 2003), 84-92.

of its original production. There are inconsistencies in the dating of the works; the song "Lingkungan Hidup" is dated to both 1982 and 1983, while "Tahun 2000" is placed within the 1982–1986 period. The article therefore uses approximate periods when a release year is unverified. An album sleeve establishes a title and volume but cannot, on its own, establish release year, sales, or the reception of a song.[6]

At the interpretation stage, facts are organized through relationships of chronology, causality, actors, continuity, and change. Homi K. Bhabha's concept of hybridity is used in a limited way to read the encounter among elements of traditional kasidah, Middle Eastern musical colors, modern instruments, the national language, and the culture industry. Hybridity is not used to erase differences among these elements, but to explain how a new form emerges through cultural negotiation.[7] The historiographical stage organizes the findings chronologically and thematically. *Result*s presents changes traceable in the sources, while Discussion as*sesses the*ir significance in the history of Islamic popular culture and Nasida Ria's historiographical position.

Results

Kasidah before 1975: communal tradition and early modernization

In many documented settings before 1975, kasidah combined rebana-based rhythm, religious verses, collective performance, and Muslim social occasions. Melody was chiefly vocal, and performers learned rhythmic and vocal parts together. Arabic verses of praise and advice were important, although the broader tradition varied by place and included other languages and instruments. Da'wah and communal participation were prominent, but these features were never uniform across all Indonesian kasidah.[8]

Kasidah was transmitted informally. Santri, Islamic study circle members, and religious groups learned verses, vocal techniques, and rhythmic patterns through observation, memorization, and joint practice. This pattern preserved continuity but did not produce national standardization. Each region could develop local variants in language, melody, and name. This diversity explains why later modernization took the form of a series of local adaptations rather than uniform replacement.[9]

Modern elements were present before Nasida Ria was founded. Assabab in Semarang performed Arabic-style music and had been known since the 1960s. During the 1970s, other groups developed in Sumatra, Jakarta, Gresik, and various cities in Central Java. Some ensembles retained rebana while adding organ, electric guitar, bass, violin, flute, or drums. This shows continuity between early innovation and Nasida Ria's later changes. Nasida Ria was not the sole creator of modern kasidah, but subsequently succeeded in arranging these scattered elements into a consistent group identity.[10]

[6] Helius Sjamsuddin, *Metodologi Sejarah* (Yogyakarta: Ombak, 2007), 16-19; Gottschalk, *Understanding History*, 119-120.
[7] Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 54-56, 112-114.
[8] Rohbiah, "Musik Kasidah," 303-312; Syahrul Syah Sinaga, "Fungsi dan Ciri Khas Kesenian Rebana di Pantura Jawa Tengah," *Harmonia: Jurnal Pengetahuan dan Pemikiran Seni* 7, no. 3 (2006): 1-4.
[9] Susetyo, "Perubahan Musik Rebana," 3-4; Rohbiah, "Musik Kasidah," 304-309.
[10] Rohbiah, "Musik Kasidah," 309-310; Hung, "Transmission and Innovation of Kasidah," 51-53.

Formation of the group and its early phase, 1975–1981

Nasida Ria was founded in Semarang in 1975 at the initiative of H. Muhammad Zain, a qiraah teacher with experience in kasidah music. Its core lineup comprised nine women wearing hijab. Sources name Mudrikah Zain, Mutoharoh, Rien Jamain, Umi Kholifah, Musyarofah, Nunung, Alfiyah, Kudriyah, and Nur Ain as its initial members.[11] The all-women lineup was a defining feature because it placed Muslim women in the roles of vocalists, instrumentalists, and public performers rather than merely supporters of religious events.

Initially, Nasida Ria remained close to the rebana format. Melodic instruments were added gradually as instruments became available, members had opportunities to learn, and stage needs developed. Sources record the use of simple instruments such as harmonica or melodica and early electronic organs, followed by guitar, bass, flute, violin, mandolin, kendang, tambourine, and keyboard. The detailed order varies between sources, but both point to the same pattern. Modernization unfolded gradually from a percussion ensemble toward a fuller arrangement of rhythm, melody, and harmony.[12]

A partnership with Ira Puspita Records produced the group's early album in 1978. Its first album appears under variant spell*ings, Alab*al*adhi, Alabaladil M*akabul, *or Alabaladil Ma*hbub, in different sources. The following three albums still retained Arabic verses and Middle Eastern musical colors. This sequence shows that Nasida Ria's initial modernization first concerned group organization, instrumentation, and recording. The language shift and thematic expansion became more pronounced in the next phase.[13]

Professionalization was also evident in group discipline. Members were trained to sing, play several instruments, maintain cohesion, and alternate between vocal and instrumental roles. Umi Cholifah notes that each core member mastered three to four instruments, while the group's history explains that rotating roles gave every member a chance to be recognized as part of its collective identity.[14] This pattern preserved the communal principle of traditional kasidah while placing it in a more professional performing organization.

Language shift and thematic expansion in the 1980s

A significant change occurred as KH Ahmad Buchori Masruri encouraged Indonesian-language songs and wrote under the pen name Abu Ali Haidar. The first four volumes predominantly used Arabic; subsequent recordings made Indonesian more prominent. The sources suggest that intelligible lyrics could widen access to the message, but do not provide comparative audience or sales figures for the two language phases. The change did not erase Islamic vocabulary or orientation; it altered the language through which da'wah and social commentary were conveyed.[15]

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[11] Cholifah, "Eksistensi Grup Musik Kasidah," 134; Nurhidayah, *Nasida Ria*, 26. Member names follow the spelling most consistent across both sources.

[12] Nurhidayah, *Nasida Ria*, 26-27; Cholifah, "Eksistensi Grup Musik Kasidah," 136.

[13] Rohbiah, "Musik Kasidah," 310; Nurhidayah, *Nasida Ria*, 26; Akhsan, "Di Balik Alunan Nada-Nada Kasidah," 44.

[14] Cholifah, "Eksistensi Grup Musik Kasidah," 134; Nurhidayah, *Nasida Ria*, 27.

[15] Akhsan, "Di Balik Alunan Nada-Nada Kasidah," 60; Hung, "Transmission and Innovation of Kasidah," 52-55.

The al*bum Perdama*ian in the early 1980s marked this thematic expansion. Its title song addresses conflict and humanity, rather than individual worship alone. Mandalia, Muhammad, and Huriyani show that the lyrics of "Perdamaian" establish a tension between calls for peace and the reality of war. In this study, the change matters because kasidah began functioning as social commentary while remaining tied to Islamic ethics.[16]

Social themes developed in songs about the environment, technology, family, education, justice, gambling, and the threat of war. 'Lingkungan Hidup' links moral responsibility with care for nature. 'Tahun 2000' imagines mechanization, pressure on employment and land, and pollution. 'Keadilan' addresses social order, while 'Bom Nuklir' treats technology through the threat of destructive war. These songs offer moral commentary within a da'wah repertoire. A later song about the press, 'Wartawan Ratu Dunia,' is reported as a 1993 release and is therefore excluded from the 1975–1990 examples.[17]

Table 1 summarizes the chronology supported by research data, along with the referenced retrospective notes. Where a precise release year is disputed, the table uses a period rather than an unverified date.

Table 1. Brief chronology of Nasida Ria's development, 1975–1990

Time	Event	Historical significance
1975	Nasida Ria was formed in Semarang with nine women members	Established a women's kasidah organization oriented toward da'wah and performance
1978	Early albums were recorded and distributed by Ira Puspita Records	Moved kasidah from live performance circulation into the recording market
1978–1981	The first four volumes used predominantly Arabic	Showed continuity with kasidah and Middle Eastern music
Early 1980s	Indonesian became increasingly dominant through Buchori Masruri's role	Expanded understanding of the message and the audience
Early to late 1980s	Works appeared on peace, the environment, technology, family, and justice	Extended da'wah from ritual devotion to social issues
1980s	Instruments, costumes, stage design, recordings, radio, and television became increasingly important	Strengthened professionalization and a popular culture image

[16] Mandalia, Muhammad, and Huriyani, "Nada dan Dakwah," 1-16; Akhsan, "Di Balik Alunan Nada-Nada Kasidah," 49.
[17] Hung, "Transmission and Innovation of Kasidah," 54-55; Cholifah, "Eksistensi Grup Musik Kasidah," 134-135; album documents *Lingkungan Hidup* Vol. 6, *Tahun 2000* Vol. 12, and *Keadilan* Vol. 18.; NU Online Jawa Tengah, 'Kiai Ahmad Buchori Masruri, Pegiat NU dan Dai yang Banyak Nulis Lagu,' 15 May 2021 (dates 'Wartawan Ratu Dunia' to 1993).

1988	Performance in Malaysia during the Islamic New Year commemoration	Extended the reach of Indonesian kasidah abroad
1989–1990	The reported 1989 PWI award; 1990 is the study's analytical endpoint	Marked public recognition in modernization's formative phase



Figure 1. Album covers identified in the data inventory: from left, Vol. 1 Alabaladhi, Vol. 5 Perdamaian, Vol. 12 Tahun 2000, and Vol. 20 Surga di Telapak Kaki Ibu. The release year of Vol. 20 is not verified here; it is shown as an undated comparison and is not evidence for the 1975–1990 sequence.

Modernization of instruments, arrangements, and performance

The expanded instrumentation changed the sound structure of kasidah. Rebana was no longer the only basis of performance. Guitar and bass strengthened harmony, organ or keyboard provided different timbres, flute and violin preserved a Middle Eastern melodic quality, while tambourine, kendang, and other rhythmic instruments maintained ties to kasidah's identity. The group's history mentions adjustments to the instrumental balance, including less use of drums when the violin's character needed more prominence.[18] This shows that modernization was not simply an accumulation of instruments but a process of selecting sounds suited to the group's identity.

Fuller arrangements allowed songs to have introductions, vocal accompaniment, changes in instrumentation, and more varied tempos. Members were not confined to a rigid division between singers and instrumentalists. They changed roles according to each song's needs. This system created performance flexibility while strengthening the group's image as a women's ensemble with musical competence.[19]

Modernization of appearance accompanied changes in sound. Uniform Muslim dress was retained, but colors, styles, and stage design followed developments in performance aesthetics. Modesty maintained continuity of values, while uniformity, lighting, and stage arrangement created a professional image. The visual aspect was thus more than decoration. It communicated an identity of Muslim women who were religious, modern, and able to work in the entertainment industry.

[18] Nurhidayah, *Nasida Ria*, 27.
[19] Nurhidayah, *Nasida Ria*, 27; Cholifah, "Eksistensi Grup Musik Kasidah," 134, 136.

Recordings, mass media, and expanded reach

Nasida Ria's recording partnership from 1978 allowed performances to circulate beyond the sites of live events. Sustained album production built a repertoire that listeners could encounter repeatedly. The available sources document recorded output and label relationships, but do not provide verified print runs, sales accounts, contracts, or a quantitative map of distribution. Claims about the scale of cassette income or a national market therefore remain outside this article's evidence.[20]

Radio, television, and live stages are reported as channels through which Nasida Ria later became known beyond local events. Cholifah's retrospective study records television appearances, but does not by itself date a specific broadcast to the 1975–1990 interval. Recordings could be replayed and Indonesian-language songs heard without attending a religious gathering; the precise extent of radio and television circulation in the study period remains to be established from broadcast archives.[21]

The group's reported stage reach expanded beyond Semarang. A retrospective account based on the group's manager places a performance in Malaysia at the 1 Muharram commemoration in 1988, within the study period. The same account records a Cultural Bearer of Islam award from the central Indonesian Journalists Association (PWI) in 1989. These reports indicate regional reach and institutional recognition, although contemporary programs and award records have not been examined in this study.[22][23]

Other modern kasidah groups also developed in Semarang and neighboring areas. Some shared features visible in Nasida Ria's format, including women's ensemble performance, expanded instrumentation, matching dress, and recorded songs. The available sources do not trace a direct line of imitation for each group. Nasida Ria's prominence thus illustrates a reproducible model within a broader regional movement, while the direction and extent of its influence require further comparative evidence.[24]

Discussion

Modernization as selective hybridity

The changes documented in Nasida Ria's repertoire and performance suggest selection rather than a complete break with earlier kasidah. Da'wah, Muslim dress, ensemble discipline, percussion, and some Middle Eastern melodic features remained visible. Modern instruments, varied arrangements, Indonesian-language lyrics, social subjects, stage presentation, and cassette recordings altered how the group worked. The evidence supports coexistence and adaptation of elements, although it does not establish a single intention shared by every member or songwriter.

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[20] Nurhidayah, *Nasida Ria*, 26, 45; Cholifah, "Eksistensi Grup Musik Kasidah," 135-136.

[21] Cholifah, "Eksistensi Grup Musik Kasidah," 134-136; Nurhidayah, *Nasida Ria*, 39.

[22] Nurhidayah, *Nasida Ria*, 40-41.; Wasdiun, 'Nasida Ria, Kasidah Legendaris,' NU Online, 23 July 2008 (reporting the manager's account of Malaysia in 1988 and PWI in 1989).

[23] Cholifah, "Eksistensi Grup Musik Kasidah," 134.; Wasdiun, 'Nasida Ria, Kasidah Legendaris,' NU Online, 23 July 2008 (reporting the manager's account of Malaysia in 1988 and PWI in 1989).

[24] Nurhidayah, *Nasida Ria*, 2-5; Hung, "Transmission and Innovation of Kasidah," 55-56.

Bhabha's concept of hybridity offers a limited interpretive vocabulary for this combination of inherited and adapted elements. In Nasida Ria's case, rebana-based performance, Arabic and Indonesian lyrics, newer instruments, recording technology, and religious messages occurred together. The group's documented choices in instruments, clothing, and repertoire indicate negotiation between familiar kasidah conventions and newer performance settings. This interpretation concerns observable forms; the sources do not allow every decision to be attributed to an explicit strategy or to one person.[25]

This reading also qualifies the use of the term deculturation. Bagus Susetyo explains the change from rebana to modern kasidah as the growth of new elements to meet new performance needs. The concept is useful in showing the loss of some older features. Yet Nasida Ria's case also shows strong continuity. The process is therefore more aptly read as partial deculturation alongside hybridization. Some elements changed, while da'wah and visible markers of Islam were deliberately retained as sources of legitimacy.

From changes in form to the infrastructure of popular culture

Recordings, Indonesian-language lyrics, and social themes formed mutually reinforcing possibilities for wider circulation. Cassettes enabled replay beyond live events; accessible language made many messages intelligible to more listeners; and radio and television offered additional channels of exposure. The evidence does not quantify the contribution of each factor or establish a single causal chain. Their conjunction helps explain why musical change and distribution should be analyzed together.[26]

Nasida Ria's contribution lay in a sustained combination of musical and organizational practices: a named ensemble, trained members, a repertoire, management, recording relationships, and recurring performances. Kasidah could circulate as a recorded commodity as well as a community practice. This opened a route for da'wah beyond the immediate audience of a live event. The sources do not establish the group's revenue structure or the extent to which market pressures determined artistic decisions in 1975–1990.

Muslim women's agency in the public sphere

The nine-woman lineup was a visible part of this history. Members appeared as singers, instrumentalists, and performers in a group that recorded and traveled. Secondary accounts describe training and rotation of musical roles. This evidence shows women's work in the public presentation of kasidah, though the available sources do not document each member's experience, degree of decision-making, or reception by all audiences.[27]

The women's public work took place within a structure of guidance and management that included the founder's family and religious figures. Their agency should therefore be understood in its organizational setting. Muslim dress, religious

[25] Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 54-56.
[26] Cholifah, "Eksistensi Grup Musik Kasidah," 134-136; Hung, "Transmission and Innovation of Kasidah," 55-58.
[27] Cholifah, "Eksistensi Grup Musik Kasidah," 134-136; Falah, Utomo, and Wadiyo, "A Study of Structural Functionalism."

repertoire, and group discipline formed a recognizable public identity alongside musical competence. The sources show this combination, but do not establish how all audiences interpreted it or whether dress was adopted as a deliberate market strategy.

Position in the historiography of modern kasidah

These findings place Nasida Ria between two claims that should both be avoided. The first holds that kasidah before 1975 was entirely unchanged. Sources show a long process of acculturation and early modernization through Assabab and other groups. The second claims that Nasida Ria merely followed changes already underway. This view overlooks the group's ability to combine innovations into a sustained, productive, nationally recognized model.

Within the limits of the available sources, Nasida Ria is best described as a prominent contributor and model in the development of modern kasidah. H. Muhammad Zain organized the group; its women members performed and learned instruments; Buchori Masruri contributed songs and a shift toward Indonesian; and labels, stages, and later broadcast media widened circulation. Hung, Cholifah, Mandalia and colleagues, Falah and colleagues, and Akhsan each examine part of this history. The present account brings these documented strands together for 1975–1990 while leaving the magnitude and pathways of influence open to further research.[28]

Evidentiary limits and chronological caution

The evidence combines album sleeves and recordings, contextual newspapers, later digital transfers, and retrospective studies. These have different evidentiary value. The 1978 Tempo articles document a broader musical climate, not Nasida Ria's actions. Photographic documentation confirms the existence of a television broadcast in 1991; therefore, this evidence cannot be used as a basis for dating its television debut to any period prior to 1990. Similarly, an undated Vol. 20 sleeve is an illustrative object rather than proof that the album appeared within the study period. Retrospective accounts of the 1988 Malaysian visit and the 1989 award warrant comparison with contemporary records.

Determining the dates of albums requires similar care. Since the years can vary for certain titles, the volume sequence serves as a more reliable reference than the specific year of release—especially when the album cover does not indicate a print date. Referring to early or later 1980s in such cases prevents false certainty. Further research should examine label catalogs, broadcast schedules, dated press notices, performance programs, sales records, and interviews with participants. Those materials are needed to test the reach and influence proposed here.

Conclusion

Before 1975, kasidah was often performed collectively with rebana, religious verses, and ties to Muslim social and educational settings. Early modernization and commercial performance had already emerged through Assabab and other ensembles.

[28] Hung, "Transmission and Innovation of Kasidah," 49-58; Cholifah, "Eksistensi Grup Musik Kasidah," 131-137; Mandalia, Muhammad, and Huriyani, "Nada dan Dakwah," 1-16; Akhsan, "Di Balik Alunan Nada-Nada Kasidah."

Nasida Ria's development thus belongs to a longer process rather than marking its absolute beginning.

During 1975–1990, Nasida Ria brought together expanded instrumentation, increasing use of Indonesian, songs addressing social issues, a trained women's ensemble, and recorded circulation. These developments broadened the group's artistic form and the potential reach of its da'wah. The available documentation does not permit numerical claims about audiences, sales, or the effect on every other kasidah group.

The article's finding is that musical, linguistic, organizational, and media changes should be read together. Nasida Ria retained religious themes and collective performance while adapting instruments, language, repertoire, and circulation. Its contribution was substantial and visible within modern kasidah's wider development. The interpretation is supported by the documented works and comparative scholarship, with specific dates and claims of direct national influence remaining subject to the evidentiary limits stated above.

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