

# Rediscovering the way of Islamic propagation by continuing the tradition of religion-based agriculture



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This study examines farming communities in Muslim villages that carry out one of the religious rituals in their agricultural cycle, namely *tandur* [planting rice seeds]. The study was then analysed with a theological analysis, namely Islamic theology, as the religion embraced by the community. The research method was carried out as follows: the researcher observed the research object in the Tanggulun Village of Subang Regency of West Java of Indonesia, where the case study was located. Researchers stayed at the research location and conducted interviews, supported by a voice recorder. The findings revealed that religious rituals performed by the farming community in the Muslim village, particularly during the agricultural cycle of planting rice seeds, gave rise to two types of *tandur* mantra. Such a religion-based culture does not conflict with the teachings of Islam as the religion of the farmers. The ritual represents local wisdom that the farming community can maintain and preserve theological and humanitarian elements inherited by Islamic *da'wah* [propagation] in the area. This study can show contemporary farmers the meaning of the mantra their parents used to chant. They can adapt whilst still honouring their religious heritage, even though the existing agricultural tools are relatively new.

**Contribution:** This dissecting study of cultural narratives with theological studies can show that society still has traditions that can be maintained even in current conditions. Also, it opens the possibility of revealing local values in modern languages, so that there is a connection between past and present traditions. Disclosure of these values can be seen in the remaining culture, which is still practiced now, to enrich the study of ethnography, especially Sundanese ethnography. This is part of cultural science, which in this case is religious culture.

**Keywords:** religious rites; farmer culture; Muslim village; Islamic *da'wah*; religious spell.

## Introduction

Religion's existence cannot be separated from the influence of life's reality around it (Homan & Burdette 2021). The study of society would be incomplete if religion was not included as one of the factors (Schnabel 2020). Religious practice in a community is frequently derived from doctrines of spiritual teachings and then adapted to the cultural environment of the community (Jensen 2021). Religious rites demonstrate a clear meeting of religious ideology and cultural reality (Handler 2020). Religion and cultural reality can be linked because religion does not exist in a cultural vacuum but always exists and is part of a culture (Timol 2020). Denying the relationship between religion and cultural reality is equivalent to denying the existence of religion, which is always related to humans and surrounded by culture (DiBianca Fasoli 2020). Religion and culture are inherent in people and they play a role in their minds (Paloutzian & Park 2021). Religious beliefs and practices will always coexist and even interact with culture (Casais & Sousa 2020). Culture is critical in shaping a person's or society's spiritual path (Nurnazar & Atabek 2021). Culture also contributes to the formation of different religious traditions (Astor & Mayrl 2020). Two or more people of the same religion may not share the same religious practices, particularly religious rituals and rites (Webber 2020). A variety of worship procedures in one religious community can be found in every community, forming various religious groups (Rizzo et al. 2020).

For Eliade (1996), every culture has a sense of sacredness, which is reflected in its rites and symbols. Culture is the essence of religion (Feuerbach 2018). Farmers frequently hold post-harvest ceremonies and offerings or pay homage to ancestral spirits who are thought to return from the afterlife to protect their offspring (Amin & Nasir 2021). The land is indeed the primary source of human livelihoods (Benessaiah 2021). As a result, according to the farming community's belief, for any land-related activity, particularly agriculture, a sacred ceremony must be held to seek

permission from the land custodian (Ögmundardóttir & Pétursson 2021; Sinthumule, Mugwena & Rabumbulu 2021). This holy ceremony aims to protect farmers' lives and the success or increase of agricultural production (He & Guo 2021). As a result, every land or agricultural activity begins and ends with a religious ceremony (Carnegie et al. 2020).

Even when they live with and cultivate nature, humans cannot be separated from God (Ware 2021). Nature is often a blessing and a disaster for humans (Borsekova & Nijkamp 2019; Rozario 2019), and it cannot be avoided by them, so they often ask for protection and help from those outside themselves who are more powerful, namely God or the gods. Agriculture is a human effort to subjugate nature to suit human needs, especially the need for staple food. For this need, humans then perform religious rituals by praying and hoping for God to support their wishes in their successful farming. Such rituals differ in each nation and ethnicity.

Ritual activities and offerings to God vary because of the mixing of cultures, for example, between world religions and local religions. Especially for agricultural activities, there are rituals before and after harvest, as happened in Europe (Myrdal & Morell 2011; Roncken 2011), Africa (Gumo 2017), America (Murimbika 2006; Zaro & Lohse 2005) and Asia (Acabado & Martin 2016; Fox 1991; Samaddar 2006; Sunarti et al. 2022). There are even particular gods who are asked for blessings because it is considered that they are gods for agriculture, such as Shri Devi (meaning goddess of prosperity) in India (Jayashree, Khaleel & Karippai 2005). Belief in the agricultural gods continued, even after the people changed their religion. This is what happened to the Sundanese ethnic community in West Java. A Sundanese subethnicity to the west called the Baduy people has a ritual dryland farming tradition (Iskandar & Iskandar 2017), whilst in West Java, almost uniformly, the ritual tradition is for wetland agriculture, namely rice fields that produce rice. *Nyi Sri Pohaci* (*Dewi Sri* in Javanese), culturally coming from India (Jayashree et al. 2005), represents God who creates and protects the rice for the Sundanese people (Holil 2020). Here, Shri Devi is often given offerings as a prayer for the smooth running of agriculture and an offering of gratitude (Sutisna, Suganda & Dienaputra 2021).

The people discussed in this article are from farming communities in rural West Java, whose ethnic groups are Sundanese. Most Sundanese people in rural areas have always worked as farmers. It mirrors the Sundanese people's view of life, which is always close to nature. The Sundanese perceive their living environment, both the community and the natural environment, not as something that must be subdued but rather respected, familiarised, nurtured and cared for. For the Sundanese, the natural environment consists of the real and the unreal. Both are influential in human life. Sundanese people believe in mystical and occult things in addition to the concrete realities of life, which can be seen in the farming tradition of the Tanggulun Village community, Kalijati District, Subang Regency, which is coloured by certain rituals. The ritual intended to honour the

rice is called *Dewi Sri* or *Nyi Pohaci*. The respect for rice cannot be separated from the public's belief in the story of origin of *Dewi Sri* as the goddess of fertility or prosperity in Indian culture (Jayashree et al. 2005). Rice farming activities in the village consist of several stages of action, known as *tandur*. It is 'an activity to plant rice with rice-planting techniques accompanied by a step back' (Darpan 2013). Before carrying out these activities, certain mantras related to activities carried out *tandur* are spoken or chanted by a ritual leader. A mantra is something magical and plays an important role. The use of spells in modern times has begun to be abandoned by the community. The mantra is a mirror of the oral culture of the community that has been passed down from one generation to the next, and it has wisdom values that need to be explored. Limitations regarding current oral traditions can be said to include all the dimensions that exist in cultured society. The oral tradition in this mantra can be a product of local wisdom and community culture; some are ideas or ideas about something. The concept can relate to divinity or humanity.

*Tandur* mantra is local wisdom owned by Sundanese people as part of their culture. Mantras can provide a broad picture of the patterns and types of life of the people who support it. This local wisdom, of course, combines the existing culture with Islam dominated by the Sundanese people. The relationship between mantras as local wisdom and Islamic values is interesting to study to produce new knowledge. This knowledge can be a unique insight in uncovering the phenomenon of acculturation of Hindu-Buddhist and Islamic cultures (Boogert 2017). In the end, this knowledge can produce a wise attitude in responding to religious diversity with all interactions therein. Local wisdom is a characteristic of a local group or community culture that develops and resides in a particular area (Qomaruzzaman & Rahman 2020). The local culture is the past culture that plays an important role and becomes the guide of today's life for the supporting community. Local culture can grow in harmony with religious diversity by exploring the crystallisation of values in it.

This article discloses the ritual text of the opening of rice planting, which is usually a secret passed down from generation to generation by traditional elders. The disclosure of this text is even translated into English as described in this article so that it is more international in nature. Another new thing is the study of the relationship between Islamic *da'wah* and rituals carried out by the community, which are still characterised by local beliefs. Thus it is additional evidence that religion is attached to various things, even worldly activities such as farming. Religious attachment to agriculture becomes interesting when it is carried out by people who have relatively adapted to modern ways of life.

This study is important from the point of view that for the community, religion is something that is inherent, so anyone who wants to approach the community must first understand their religion. In other words, community support for a development programme, for example, can be obtained through a religious approach. Therefore, this study

is functional in terms of how religion plays a role in everyday life (Parsons 2017; Schutz 2012).

Internationally, this study can bring awareness that for many religious communities, the earth is sacred and must be respected, so that in terms of processing it, humans must respect nature, which is the creation of God or gods. This can be in line with the view that we must preserve nature so that it can be enjoyed by our children and grandchildren. Religious views can thus be compatible with ecological views.

Analysis of the suitability of Islamic values in a local community ritual through oral tradition (*tandur* mantra) becomes necessary. It is in line with the fact that the local cultural oral tradition functions as a communication tool for the supportive community, with nature and mantras used as developers and introductions to local culture. This research is expected to reveal Islamic teachings mixed with mantras (usually taken from prayers and the Qur'an). Thus, this research will comprehensively discuss Islamic values in the *tandur* mantra because of the interaction of Hindu and Islamic oral cultures. The belief in performing religious rituals before going down to the rice fields to plant rice today is unique to study, considering that now people are very confident in the efficacy of modern sciences. This study will thus focus on how the religious beliefs and practices of rice cultivation occur in a society besieged by modernity.

In terms of studying the views of a religious leader, Sufi or philosopher, annotative translations are often carried out, such as *The Admonitions of Seh Bari* (Drewes 1969) and *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* (FitzGerald 2009), among others. Something likely similar on how Islamic-based mantras translated and annotated is in a study on Qur'anic mantra maintained in a religious community of Java (Muhammad et al. 2021). However, there are very few annotations to this agricultural spell's text. Indeed, there are manuals on religious rituals, but this agricultural mantra is not included in the manuals. The maintenance of knowledge carried out by the farmers is more of a hereditary nature, being transmitted by word of mouth.

Along with this, a study to find out what is said in prayers before going down to the fields to plant rice seeds is also an essential part of this article. These texts can also be witnesses of traces of Islamic *da'wah* activities in the community, when the prayers contain Islamic teachings. These prayers become tangible products in the form of culture from Islamic *da'wah* activities that have been going on for a long time and slowly in this research location.

## Methodology

This study used a qualitative approach with descriptive analysis techniques. A qualitative policy describes a limited phenomenon objectively (Eakin & Gladstone 2020). This study utilises data from observations without manipulating the research subject's environment (Harrison, Reilly &

Creswell 2020). The researchers here acted as bricoleurs in qualitative research, that is, versatile or independent and professional human beings (Denzin & Lincoln 2009). This research corresponds to a research procedure that produces descriptive data in written or spoken words from people and observable behaviour (Taylor, Bogdan & DeVault 2015). Through this method, the research data were described in the form of mantra texts and ritual traditions of *tandur*, along with their meanings.

This study reveals the phenomenon of the interaction of religious elements (al-Qur'an) in the form of a survey of the living Qur'an with interpretation using a linguistic approach. Based on this, there needs to be a process in translating the nuances, so that in this study word-for-word translation and free translation were used. The word-for-word translation is to show the linguistic meaning of the question words, whilst the translation is free in order to determine the meaning of the word in the sentence or to explain the symbolic meaning of the text in question (Levý, Corness & Jettmarová 2011).

The data of this research were found in Tanggulun Timur Village, Kalijati District, Subang Regency. The primary data source of this research is the text of the *tandur* mantra obtained from two sources (the leader of the ritual and another source) orally. The data of this research were obtained by utilising observation and interview guidelines. The data were analysed using the transcription technique of the *tandur* mantra oral recording and then described and interpreted by using relevant literature sources.

So far, there has not been any discussion by other researchers about the text of the mantra discussed here. These texts, including the introduction of the mantras commonly read by the Sundanese (Adimihardja 1991) are mentioned, but they do not enter into the contents of these mantras. Therefore, the full textual disclosure of the *tandur* spell before cultivating rice is very new, especially in the English translation.

## Research findings

### Description of the *tandur* mantra

The meaning of the mantra (a Sanskrit word) in the first part of the given statement implies that the mantra is a person's thoughts, fantasies or hopes when he is praising or worshipping something. In the second sense, the mantra is defined as a performance usually performed by the collective community, in worship songs as in certain scriptures. In the third sense, the mantra can include a prayer or amulet. In the fourth sense, spells can be said to contain magical elements. The term 'mantra' is very familiar in Hindu and Buddhist circles. These two religions make mantras a means of worship; spells are considered sacred texts. In the tantric tradition, mantra means the result of contemplation (*manana*), and then repeated the recitation whenever needed (*trāyate*) (Yelle 2012). An Indonesian dictionary describes mantras as: (1) words or speech that bring supernatural powers (e.g., can heal, bring harm and so on); (2) the composition of words

with elements of poetry (such as rhyme, rhythm), which is considered to contain supernatural powers and is usually spoken by a shaman or handler to compete with other supernatural powers (*Kamus besar bahasa Indonesia* [KBBI] 2019). Mantra in English has the following meanings (Williams 1872): (1) thoughts, especially thought as uttered in formal address, prayer or song of praise or pious text, (2) usual designation of the hymns and texts of the Vedas, (3) later (when these Vedic texts came to be used as magic formulas) as spell, charm, (4) a mystical verse or magical formula (sometimes personified), incantation, charm, spell (especially in modern times employed by the *saktas* to acquire superhuman powers).

*Tandur* is a term in the agriculture of the Subang community of West Java, which is an abbreviation of the Sundanese language 'planting back' (*tanam* = planting, and *mundur* = moving backward; *tandur*) (See Figure 1). In Danadibrata's Sundanese dictionary (Danadibrata 2006:676), *tandur* means sowing rice seeds from seeding in paddy fields, cultivating the fields. *Tandur* is a method of growing rice in wetlands or irrigated areas. The mantra *tandur* is thus one of the spells used in a series of rice-farming activities. The village community implementing *tandur* (planting backward) rice therefore uses a mantra as a ritual request for blessings in farming.

In terms of method, a traditional elder said that the right time to perform the *tandur* ritual is in the morning. His statement follows:

'Ritual ini biasanya dilakukan pada pagi hari sekitar pukul 06.00–12.00 WIB [*Waktu Indonesia Bagian Barat*]. Pertama, seluruh perlengkapan ritual di kumpulkan dalam satu wadah (*nyiru*). Kemudian pemimpin adat mengucapkan ucapan permissi/memohon izin (*ngijabkeun*) kepada leluhur dan Dewi Sri bahwa pemilik lahan akan melakukan kegiatan ritual. Selanjutnya, pemimpin adat membacakan mantra.'

['This ritual is usually done in the morning around 6:00 AM to 12:00 PM [*Indonesian Western Time*]. First, all ritual equipment is collected in one container (*nyiru*). Then the traditional leader said excused/asked for permission (*ngijabkeun*) to the ancestors and Dewi Sri that the landowner would carry out ritual activities. Next, the traditional leader recites a spell.'] (Interview with Sadam, 62 years old, farmer, male; Subang, 2021) (See Figure 2)



Source: Photograph taken by the authors on 21 July 2021, in Tanggulun Village, Kalijati District, Subang Regency, West Java, Indonesia

**FIGURE 1:** A female farmer is planting rice seeds in wet paddy fields, an activity known as *tandur*.

The general goal is to gain prosperity for rice growers as one practitioner of the *tandur* ritual said:

'Makna pada mantra *tandur* tersebut berisi mengenai doa dan permohonan manusia untuk memperoleh kesejahteraan dalam hidup. Permohonan untuk memperoleh keberkahan dalam menanam padi, agar sisa-sisa padi yang telah selesai dipanen yang berwarna kuning kemerahan, dapat segera diperbaharui lagi.'

['The meaning of the *tandur* mantra contains prayers and human requests for prosperity in life. A request to obtain blessings in planting rice so that the remnants of rice that have been harvested, which are reddish yellow, can be immediately renewed.'](Interview with Asdi, 57 years old, farmer, male, Subang, 2021)

The following is a *tandur* mantra from the results of a search on two sources. This mantra is the result of transcription from the form of oral speech into a written document, which could be translated into English as follows:

Text of the mantra *tandur* uttered by source 1 means asking for help from the Almighty so that the rice planted will produce abundant harvests and the leaves of the rice plant will thrive. Not much different is the text of the mantra *tandur* spoken by source 2, which asks for permission from the Creator to cultivate crops and entrusting rice plants to him so that they always get blessings at the end of harvest.

Thus, the two texts of the mantra *tandur* contain prayers and human requests for prosperity in life. In this case, the proposal is to obtain blessings in planting rice so that the rice plants will thrive. In the mantra *tandur*, it is hoped that the remnants of rice that have been harvested, which are reddish yellow, can be immediately renewed, namely by replanting the land so that the rice will grow green again.

### Analysis of the meaning of the *tandur* mantra and Islamic values

The *tandur* mantra has several similarities with the concept of value similar to prayer in Islam. Based on the results of data analysis, it was found that there are Islamic values in mantras that use parts of the Qur'an.



Source: Photograph taken by the authors on 21 July 2021, in Tanggulun Village, Kalijati District, Subang Regency, West Java, Indonesia

**FIGURE 2:** An elder member of the community performing a ritual before planting rice seeds in the wet paddy fields.

TABLE 1: *Tandur* mantra with English translation.

<b>Tandur mantra (Resource Person 1)</b>	<b>Tandur mantra (Resource Person 2)</b>
<i>Ashadu ana ini sahadat Sri</i> [I testify by saying the shahada for Dewi Sri]	<i>Audubillahiminassaitonirojim</i> [I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed devil]
<i>Gedong cahaya kudratuloh</i> [By the house that shines by the power of Allah]	<i>Bismillahirohmanirrohim</i> [In the name of Allah, the most gracious and the most merciful]
<i>Percandra berkatuloh hukum patut bangsa tunggal</i> [By the moon and the laws of the universe in which there is a relationship between creatures by the power of Allah]	<i>Sun Den Sri sahadat nu jadi rasa</i> [([We] ask permission [to] Raden Sri [through] the creed that has been united in me)]
<i>Sabangsa tunggal kersa</i> [Like a single being willing to [help achieve our goal]]	<i>Mas kawin ku sari ipekah ku cahaya</i> [([By offering] a dowry in the form of offerings as precious as light)]
<i>Assalamualaikum waalaikum salam</i> [May safety be with you, may peace be with you too]	<i>Diwalian ku sawiah disaksian ku mutmainah</i> [Represented by the guardian with enthusiasm and with peace of mind]
<i>Iring-iring manik liring nu riring maning rasa</i> [The light shines together]	<i>Disiraman ku sipat manusa</i> [Influenced by human nature [kindness]]
<i>Ulah geder ulah reuwas</i> [([To the Lord of Rice] do not be surprised)]	<i>Ya tunggal sanyawa sakabeh</i> [All single beings unite]
<i>Mah sing tetep, mah sing langgeng salalawasna</i> [May [the harvest] remain abundant forever]	<i>Nini kantayani aki kantayani</i> [([To] Kantayani's grandmother [and] Kantayani's grandfather)]
<i>Sang bumi ingsun</i> [([To] the [ruler] of my earth)]	<i>Kaula bade nitipkeun Nyi Pohaci</i> [I intend to entrust [rice plant] Nyi Pohaci]
<i>Titip tatanduran kaula</i> [I left this rice plant]	<i>Ka ibu, ka rama, ka pancilarang</i> [To mother, father, to ancestors]
<i>Sri Rara Dewi Tresna</i> [Sri Rara Dewi Tresna/Dewi yang penyayang]	<i>Ka iman galuran ka ratu wekasan</i> [To [the owner] righteous faith in the last queen]
<i>Tunggal kersa jeung ingsun</i> [A single being who is willing and including me]	<i>Ashadu ala Ilahailleloh</i> [I bear witness that there is no god but Allah]
<i>Jangkar sia jangkar ning ingsun</i> [The roots of the rice plant are the same as my locomotion]	<i>Waashaduanna Muhammadarosululoh</i> [And Prophet Muhammad is the messenger of Allah]
<i>Daun-daun hurip</i> [The leaves [of rice plants] must live [thriving]]	<i>Bulu kukus tunjung sakargana</i> [The scent of flowers]
<i>Gagang nyawa panon polang pangawasa</i> [([Always the rice plant must grow] alive as the will of the Almighty)]	<i>Caraning iman</i> [Like faith]
<i>Anu calik di nu sakeling</i> [([To the Lord of Nature] who is in a glorious place)]	<i>Menyan putih bawa ti kadim</i> [White frankincense brought from the origin]
<i>Tetep langgeng jejel kandel</i> [([Hopefully our harvest will be in the form of rice] that will be fertile forever)]	<i>Menyan bodas bawa ti kudrat</i> [White frankincense brought [based on] nature]
<i>Ayeuna kaula sala hurip</i> [Now I [ask for this rice plant] to live [thriving]]	<i>Ka aci kulit, ka aci rasa</i> [([Like] subtlety of heart and feeling)]
<i>Baju beureum geura piceun</i> [Dry rice plants will soon disappear]	<i>Ka sang ratu mayukmuk putih</i> [To the queen of kindness]
<i>Diganti ku baju hejo</i> [Replaced by green and fertile rice plants]	<i>Ka sang ratu lenggang buana</i> [To the queen of the earth]
<i>Kasorot ku panon poe</i> [Sunshine]	<i>Pang nepikeun ka nu saktina</i> [Please convey our goals and desires to the owner of magic]
<i>Tetep langgeng jejel kandel</i> [([Our rice crop] remains [thriving] dense and full)]	<i>Pang dongkapkeun ka nu kawasana</i> [To the almighty, please grant our wish]
<i>Ayeuna kaula hurip ning sapu ning sahadat kaula</i> [Now the rice plant is alive with the creed that I sing]	<i>Sirna rasa paneja kaula</i> [There is nothing else but my goal]
<i>Ashaduala ila hailleloh</i> [There is no God but Allah]	<i>Ashadu ala Ilahailleloh</i> [I bear witness that there is no god but Allah]
<i>Muhammadarosululoh</i> [Prophet Muhammad is Allah's Apostle]	<i>Waashaduanna Muhammadarosululoh</i> [And Prophet Muhammad is the messenger of Allah]

TABLE 2: Analysis of *tandur* mantra by Resource Person 1 on the *shahada* [testimony].

Data corpus	Analysis of meaning		Influence of Islamic values
	English translation	Interpretation	
<i>Ashadana ini sahadat Sri</i>	In the name of the Almighty, the creed of Sri	I testify by saying the shahada for Dewi Sri	<i>Shahada</i>
<i>Ayeuna kaula hurip ning sa pu ning sahadat kaula</i>	Now I live to broom my creed	Now the rice plant is alive with the creed that I sing	

A fragment of text spells *grants* on the meaningful testimony of man to the Almighty with the shahadat prayer to obtain life in planting a paddy. From this fragment, the word obtained, *shahada*, is the creed in Islam, the first pillar of Islam (see Table 1). According to the followers of the Prophet's tradition (*Ahlu Sunnah wal Jamaat*), the *Shahadah* is the belief that there is no God other than Allah and that the Prophet Muhammad is the last messenger of Allah. The reading is

recited orally, emphasised in the heart and practised with deeds because it is included in monotheism, taken from the verses of *al-Ikhlās* verse 1 and *as-Shura* verse 13.

Meaning: 'Say: He is Allah, the One and Only' (Surah al-Ikhlās: 1).

Meaning: 'Allah draws to religion those whom He wills and guides (to Him) those who return (to Him)' (Surat as-Shura: 13).

So, the fragment of the mantra text *tandur* that contains the word creed or *shahada* means to believe in Allah with all your heart; surely blessings will come at every uttered request (see Table 2). Thus, the text of the mantra *tandur* is a form of adaptation that is affected by the influence of Islam.

'*Gedong cahaya kudratullah tandur*' (in the spell) means, 'the house of the light of Allah's power' (see Table 3). The fragment in the *tandur* mantra means, 'for the sake of a

**TABLE 3:** Analysis of *tandur* mantra by Resource Person 1 on the *baraka* [blessing].

Data corpus	Analysis of meaning		Influence of Islamic values
	English translation	Interpretation	
<i>Gedong cahaya kudratuloh; Percandra berkatuloh hukum patut bangsa tunggal</i>	The house of the light of God's power; the month of Allah's blessing, the law of single human group	By the house that shines by the power of Allah; by the moon and the laws of the universe in which there is a relationship between creatures by the power of Allah	God's <i>qadrat</i> and <i>baraka</i>

house that shines by the power of Allah'. In other words, God's power is incomparable. The meaning is that the universe, the sky, the earth and everything in it can thrive and from there, light shines; how beautiful is the power of Allah. The light in question is a symbol of blessing for humans.

Furthermore, 'Percandra blessed the law of a single nation' (in the *tandur* spell), meaning the month of God's blessing, the law of the form of a single group of humans or animals. The fragment in the *tandur* mantra means by the moon and the laws of the universe in which there is a relationship between creatures by the power of Allah. That is, God created all creatures on earth. The relationship with the Creator can be lived through worship, prayers, obeying all the rules and avoiding prohibitions. From the mantra, the words are obtained 'kudratuloh' and 'blessing', which in Islam mean God's decision or will and God's blessing. The sentence '*Gedong cahaya kudratuloh; Percandra berkatuloh hukum patut bangsa tunggal*' in the text of the mantra is therefore under the influence of Islamic values.

The fragment of the sentence '*Assalamualaikum wa alaikum salam*' in the mantra *tandur* means 'may safety be with you and peace' (see Table 4). '*Assalamualaikum wa alaikum salam*' in the *tandur* mantra, according to Resource Person 1, belongs to the mantra's opening component, which aims to get blessings from God in farming. In Islam, *Assalamualaikum* is a greeting that means 'may Allah bestow safety on you'. The meaning of the greeting is a request to be given protection in starting life's matters, as stated in a hadith:

Meaning: 'If a person of the scriptures (Jews and Christians) greets you, then reply with the words "wa'alaikum"' (Narrated by Bukhari no. 6258 and Muslim no. 2163).

'*Ashaduala ila hailleloh, Muhammadarosululohtandur*' (in the spell) means there is no god but Allah, and the Prophet Muhammad is the messenger of Allah. This sentence is known as the shahada (see Table 5). This sentence is known as the shahada, meaning that there is no God but Allah, and that the Prophet Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah '*Ashadu alla ilaha illallah*' means 'I testify that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah'. In Islam, this creed contains the denial (rejection) of worship of beings other than Allah and the stipulation that the only true God is Allah. This sentence is a mandatory sentence for Muslims because this sentence is included in the first pillar of Islam, namely the obligation to pronounce the shahada. Allah says in the Qur'an Surah (QS) Al-Hajj verse 62, meaning: 'That is

**TABLE 4:** Analysis of *tandur* mantra by Resource Person 1 on the *salam* [greeting].

Data corpus	Analysis of meaning		Influence of Islamic values
	English translation	Interpretation	
<i>Assalamualaikum waalaikum salam</i>	May safety be with you, may peace be with you too	May safety be with you, may peace be with you too	<i>Assalamualaikum</i> [greetings in Islam]

**TABLE 5:** Analysis of *tandur* mantra by Resource Person 1 on the complete *shahada* [confession].

Data corpus	Analysis of meaning		Influence of Islamic values
	English translation	Interpretation	
<i>Ashaduala ila hailleloh, Muhammadarosululoh</i>	There is no god but Allah; the Prophet Muhammad is the messenger of Allah	There is no god but Allah; the Prophet Muhammad is the messenger of Allah	<i>Ashaduala ila hailleloh, Muhammadarosululoh</i>

because Allah is the true (God) and indeed everything that they call on besides Allah is falsehood. And verily Allah, He is Most High, Most Great' (Surat al-Hajj: 62).

'*Audubillahiminassaitonirojimtandur*' in the fragment of the *tandur* mantra means, 'I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed devil'. This piece of the mantra is a reading in Islam. This sentence is known as the *ta'awuz* reading, which is submission to Allah and asking for protection from the temptations of Satan. In the Qur'an, Allah always reminds you that when you start reading the Qur'an, you should read *ta'awuz*, as stated in the following verse:

Meaning: 'When you read the Qur'an, you should ask Allah for protection from the accursed devil' (Surah Al-Nahl: 98).

'*Bismillahirohmanirrohim*' in the *tandur* mantra mentions the name of Allah, the most gracious, the most merciful. In Islam, *bismillah* is included in the *tayyibah* sentence, a saying or *lafz* spoken by a Muslim to start all activities or everything good to remember Allah. Bismillah itself is the opening of every recitation of the verses of the Qur'an.

The use of foreign words (in Arabic) in the fragment of the mantra of *tandur* Source 2 is used in the opening component of the spell; '*Audubillahiminassaitonirojim; Bismillahirohmanirrohim*' is a form of asking permission from God (see Table 6). The use of Arabic in the mantra is only a form of influence of Islam at the time of the spread of the mantra so that there is an Islamic value in it.

'*Diwalian ku sawiah*', witnessed by '*ku mutmainnah tandur*' in the mantra, means, 'Diwalian by the guardian by lust detected by the peace of mind' (see Table 7). The fragment in the *tandur* mantra means representing the guardian with enthusiasm and peace of mind. In Arabic, '*Mutmainnah*' means something soothing or silence. From this understanding, it is very appropriate with the word *Mutmainnah*, which is found in the Qur'an such as QS Ar-Ra'd (13:28), QS Al-Isra' (17:95) and the like.

Meaning: '(namely) those who believe and their hearts find peace in the remembrance of Allah. Remember, only in the remembrance of Allah does the heart find peace' (Surah Ar-Ra'd:28).

**TABLE 6:** Analysis of *tandur* mantra by Resource Person 2 on the *ta'awudh* [protection].

Data corpus	Analysis of meaning		Influence of Islamic values
	English translation	Interpretation	
<i>Audubillahiminassaitonirojim; Bismillahirohmanirrohim</i>	I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed devil; in the name of Allah, the most gracious and the most merciful	I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed devil; in the name of Allah, the most gracious and the most merciful	<i>Audubillahiminassaitonirojim; Bismillahirohmanirrohim</i>

**TABLE 7:** Analysis of *tandur* mantra by Resource Person 2 on the *mut'mainnah* [peace of mind].

Data corpus	Analysis of meaning		Influence of Islamic values
	English translation	Interpretation	
<i>Diwalian ku sawiah disaksian ku mutmainnah</i>	Guardian by the guardian by lust witnessed by the peace of mind	Represented by the guardian with enthusiasm and with peace of mind	<i>Mutmainnah</i>

Values contained in the spells are as follows:

1. Religious values, namely belief in the Creator's grace related to the sustainability and success of agricultural activities.
2. The value of harmony with nature, which is in the form of implied suggestions to protect and preserve nature. This is as contained in the following excerpt of the *Tandur* mantra: '*disiraman ku sipat manusa ya tunggal sanyawa sakabeh.*' [Influenced by human nature, all single beings unite.]
3. Value of politeness, which is associated with the utterance 'permission' (*ngamitkeun*) in the spell. When you want to do something related to other things, you must first excuse yourself.

## Cultural propagation

The mantras of *tandur*, the generational heritage of the Islamic community in Kalijati Subang, contains a strategy of Islamic *da'wah*. This also shows that the belief of the farming community towards their religion makes them always carry their religion in any field, including agricultural culture. It may differ from other professions in the same society. Propagation (*da'wah*) strategy with a cultural approach has proved to be more effective and durable; most profound religious messages can be elegantly communicated to the general public. This is distinct from propaganda, which employs authorities such as politics, economics, mass media and the like. There are various types of propagation strategies for Ummah transformation: (1) priorities must be prioritised; (2) begin propagation by aligning understanding and increasing public awareness of reality; (3) propagation through a holistic, synergistic and balanced understanding and application; (4) the goal should be God's pleasure; (5) comprehend and apply social law; (6) be calm, patient and steadfast. Cultural propaganda is generally understood as propaganda that develops through cultural and informal channels, such as community development, culture, social and other commonplace forms of expression. Cultural *da'wah* is a type of propagation that focuses on Islamic culture. One approach to rethinking the formal doctrinal relationship between Islam and politics or Islam and the state is cultural Islam (Rahman & Mimbar 2018). Or, to put it another way, propagation is unstoppable.

A culture-based propagation strategy considers the tendency of listeners to be cultural beings when propagating

(Holt, Ustad Figenschou & Frischlich 2019). The delivery of Islamic propagation messages will be greatly aided by propagation that considers the direction of listeners as a target (Ghahraman, Sadeghi & Khosroshahi 2021). The form of culture can be abstract idioms (customs, behaviours) that exist in people's minds. The second type is a patterned social behaviour system developed by humans (Veissière et al. 2020). Culture and most tangible physical objects that can be touched and seen make up the third form (Boroch 2018). In the reality of people's lives, the three forms of culture mentioned here are inextricably linked.

Muslims refer to several hadith narrations when discussing the culture-based propagation strategy, which explain that Islam allows some habits of the Arab community prior to Islam that do not conflict with Islamic law. As a result, the Prophet did not abolish all of the Arab community's pre-Islamic customs and culture, such as *tawaf*, *qurban*, thanksgiving, including *aqiqah* by slaughtering goats, marriage customs and the like (Denny 2015). Therefore, as long as traditions and culture do not contradict Islamic teachings, the community (in this case, Islamic preachers) are free to employ approaches, strategies and culturally based educational and propagation media. Assume, however, that these traditions and cultures are incompatible with Islamic teachings, such as the display of genitalia in some traditional local customs. If the culture contains *shirk* or has its origins in *shirk* rituals and worship of gods or gods other than God, it must be abandoned because it violates Islamic law. As a result, propagation must be delivered in a smarter, wiser manner that allows people to accept it rather than avoid it.

As a result, propagation must consider the situation and conditions. Allah sent the Apostles to preach in his people's language (*lisaani qaumihi*), implying that the propagation was tailored to the state of listeners. Being aware of this enables Islamic preachers in Indonesia to choose a cultural approach as a means of propagation. Islam is more likely to spread religious attitudes towards local culture in its adaptation to Indonesian society, which is geographically remote from the emergence of other religions. The expression 'the people's language' is interpreted as the local culture of the community or local customs, including their habits, by carriers of cultural propagation.

Historically, there were three attitudes of the local population when Islam came: these were acceptance and recognition, change and adaptation and rejection. Culture, in all of its forms, can be used to pass on information and experience. Preachers use culture as a tool to turn their observations into creative forms and principles in their sermons. Culture in its many manifestations can act as a medium of propagation.

Indeed, there is always a sense of sacredness in every culture (Eliade 1996), so it can be said that culture is the essence of religion (Feuerbach 2018). Meanwhile, the land is the primary source of livelihood (Benessaiah 2021). As a result, according to the farming community's belief, a sacred ceremony must be held to ask permission from the landowner, namely God, for any land-related activity, particularly in agriculture (Amin & Nasir 2021; Ögmundardóttir & Pétursson 2021; Sinthumule et al. 2021). It attempts to resist evil and bring fortune (Carnegie et al. 2020; He & Guo 2021). Therefore, the ritual of chanting the *tandur* mantra is something that needs to be done by farmers.

In its history, Islam's accepted and rooted teachings appeared when most of the people's work in ancient times was performed by farmers. Even the tradition of singing and praying whilst planting rice is carried out by people who are influenced by Hindu culture (Sangma 2020), because Hinduism is the religion that first entered Indonesia (Rahman 2013). However, with the arrival of Islam, the reading of mantras became influenced by Islam. Today, the *tandur* mantra is only known and implemented by farmers who are part of the community. Therefore, for the current conditions with different professions in society, Islamic propagation faces new challenges. The answer is probably being done and still being planned by the preachers. However, one thing is sure from the results of this study, namely that cultural *da'wah* is more attached to the hearts and works of the community than other propagation.

The existence of a ritual before farming that includes reading content based on Islamic teachings has shown that there is an acculturation of world religious culture (Islam) with local religion (Sundanese). This is recognised as a culture-based *da'wah*, namely *da'wah* that is not coercive to the local population. Thus, *da'wah* to local residents, especially farmers, is a type of cultural *da'wah* mixed with local culture. This is done from generation to generation, which remains until now, a form of acculturation of world religion (Islam) with local beliefs, as manifested in ritual ceremonies before going down to the fields.

Mantras such as the *tandur* spell are indeed widely spread in Indonesia, especially in Java. The *tandur* mantra discussed here is a type of mantra performed by its makers in a localised form, namely in a standardised formula, without quoting directly from the Qur'an. Sometimes it is a song (Agung, Wibowo & Wilujeng 2016). Here, the spell was more straightforward and spread only amongst the peasants. Meanwhile, in studies with cases amongst those who are close to Islamic teaching, namely the *santri* [Muslim religious groups], the mantra is taken more directly from the Qur'an (Muhammad et al. 2021).

*Da'wah* through culture did not only occur in the Sunda region. Among the Javanese tribes, it is said that there was a carrier of Islamic teachings, Sunan Kalijaga, who taught Islam to non-religious people through the art of *wayang*

[shadow puppet], prayer songs (Agung et al. 2016) and educational admonitions (Mulawarman et al. 2021). Sunan Kalijaga, with other saints known as the nine saints (*walisongo*), had built Islam in Indonesia, creating a localised civilisation (Kasdi 2017).

## Conclusion

The text of the *tandur* mantra in Tanggulun Village of Subang Regency of West Java of Indonesia has Islamic values. It shows that the mantra has the influence or touch of Islamic theology. The mantra contains a prayer for the Almighty so that farmers can get good agricultural products. The existence of the *tandur* mantra in the Tanggulun Village community can be seen as a local cultural heritage. Traditional leaders usually perform *tandur* rituals that adapt to Islamic elements because of assimilation and acculturation. This study is still limited to a semantic analysis of religious behaviour, namely prayer when planting seeds. This study shows the essence of the *tandur* mantra, so that people can come up with new ways of farming whilst still adhering to their religion. Studies from other sciences can also learn about the behaviour of these traditional people to the extent that their beliefs could be satisfied and progress in farming is also achieved.

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## Authors' contributions

D.M. researched the field and established the research format. A.K. helped D.M. in the area and in conducting data analysis. S.M. helped to formulate the research, conduct interviews, analyse and write down the data.

## Ethical considerations

This article followed all ethical standards of research.

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## Data availability

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