

Teaching Universality: Religious Education as Preventive Deradicalization in Plural Societies

Aristo Purboadji

STT Tiberias Jakarta, Ruko Roxy Mas Blok D1, No. 23-25

Jl. KH. Hasyim Ashari, Kota Jakarta Pusat 10150, Indonesia

Email: aristo78@icloud.com

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Abstract. Religious radicalism in Indonesia frequently emerges from theological objections to the universality of human rights and democratic values rather than from political or economic grievances alone. This paper argues that Religious Education (RE) can serve as an effective form of preventive deradicalization when democratic principles are taught through internal theological frameworks rather than imposed as external secular norms. Focusing on Islamic political theology, the paper advances a pedagogical framework grounded in two key concepts. First, Addamiyah affirms the inherent dignity of every human being prior to religious distinction, providing a theological basis for universal human rights. Second, Maqashid Sharia is employed to demonstrate the compatibility between Islamic objectives of law and liberal democratic principles, including human rights, pluralism, and political participation. Together, these concepts allow democratic values to be articulated as expressions of Islamic moral purpose rather than foreign ideological constructs. The paper proposes Religious Education as Human Rights Education, where democratic norms are internalized through faith-based moral formation. Such an approach reframes democracy and human rights as theological commitments to human flourishing and social justice. The study concludes that this educational model offers a viable strategy for strengthening democratic culture, enhancing social cohesion, and countering religious radicalization in Indonesia's plural context.

Keywords: Addamiyah; Maqashid Sharia; Religious Education; Human Rights; Deradicalization; Democratic Consolidation; Indonesia; Political Theology; Islamic Jurisprudence; Pluralism

INTRODUCTION

Religious radicalism in Indonesia cannot be addressed through political or economic measures alone, because its ideological legitimacy is fundamentally theological: it is sustained by a rejection of the universality of human rights, an intolerance toward religious pluralism, and a refusal to accept the legitimacy of democratic governance as compatible with Islamic obligations [1], [2]. While structural grievances—poverty, political exclusion, and historical marginalization—may create conditions of vulnerability, the radicalization process is ultimately activated and sustained by theological narratives that must be countered on their own terms. The empirical picture is sobering: a 2016 survey by the Wahid Foundation of 1,520 Indonesian adults found that 59.9% harboured intolerant attitudes toward minority groups, and 7.7% expressed willingness to engage in violent action [3]. A separate Wahid Foundation survey of 1,626 secondary students attending national Islamic retreats reported that 60% were willing to participate in religiously motivated conflict [4]. This is not a problem that security measures alone can solve. It demands an educational response.

The conventional response to religious radicalism in education has been either to impose secular civic values from outside the religious framework—a strategy that tends to antagonize devout communities and deepen the very alienation it seeks to address—or to retreat into within-religion confessional instruction that leaves the theological roots of intolerance entirely undisturbed [5], [6]. Neither approach constitutes genuine preventive deradicalization. What is required is a third path: the articulation of democratic values and universal human rights from within the theological resources of the tradition itself, so that students encounter these values not as foreign impositions but as authentic expressions of their own faith commitments.

This article argues that Religious Education (RE) can serve as an effective instrument of preventive deradicalization when it is grounded in internal Islamic theological frameworks rather than external secular norms. The paper proposes a pedagogical framework built on two key Islamic concepts. First, Addamiyah—derived from the Qur'anic affirmation that God has honoured all children of Adam (Qur'an 17:70)—affirms the inherent dignity of every human being prior to any religious distinction, providing an

authentically Islamic basis for the universality of human rights. Second, Maqashid Sharia—the higher objectives of Islamic law—demonstrates that the protection of life, intellect, religion, family, and property for all persons is not a Western liberal imposition but an internal requirement of Islamic jurisprudence, one that maps directly onto the core commitments of liberal democratic governance.

The present paper builds on two prior publications by the same author. The first [7] argued that the surest religious tolerance is grounded in universal human rights, and highlighted Mustafa Akyol's reinterpretation of Addamiyah as a promising Islamic basis for this universality, alongside Vatter's interpretation of Maritain's Christian political theology. The second paper [8] argued that Indonesia could contribute to democratic deterrence in great power rivalry by demonstrating the compatibility of Islam and democracy through Maqashid Sharia. This article synthesizes those two threads into a unified pedagogical framework and shows how their integration can transform RE from a site of theological exclusivism into a vehicle for preventive deradicalization.

The paper proposes RE-as-HRE (Religious Education as Human Rights Education), following Zembylas [9], as the operative model: an approach in which democratic norms are internalized through faith-based moral formation rather than secular instruction. When students encounter human rights as a requirement of Addamiyah and pluralism as a demand of Maqashid Sharia, they acquire not merely civic tolerance but theological conviction—a far more durable foundation for democratic culture in a plural society. This educational model, the paper concludes, offers a viable strategy for strengthening social cohesion, deepening democratic culture, and countering religious radicalization in Indonesia's plural context.

METHODS

This study employs normative theological analysis and conceptual synthesis as its primary methodology. Drawing on Islamic jurisprudence, political theology, human rights theory, and educational philosophy, it constructs a pedagogical framework for preventive deradicalization through the integration of two classical Islamic concepts: Addamiyah and Maqashid Sharia. The approach is interdisciplinary: it brings together Islamic legal theory, philosophy of education, and democratic theory to produce a normative argument about what Religious Education in Indonesia should do and how it should be structured.

This methodology is appropriate to the paper's aims. The paper does not claim to report empirical findings from fieldwork or survey research; rather, it constructs a theoretical-normative framework grounded in documented scholarship and primary Islamic sources. The analytical procedure involves three steps: (1) identifying the theological roots of religious radicalism in Indonesia through a review of existing empirical literature; (2) examining the internal resources of Islamic theology—specifically Addamiyah and Maqashid Sharia—that can ground a principled commitment to universal human rights and democratic values; and (3) synthesizing these resources into a coherent pedagogical framework for RE-as-HRE. The paper draws on a purposive selection of sources across Islamic jurisprudence, Indonesian educational studies, political science, and human rights philosophy, selected for their direct relevance to the conceptual argument being constructed.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Religious Radicalism and the Limits of Secular Counter-Narratives

The scholarly consensus on the drivers of religious radicalization increasingly points to ideology—specifically, theologically grounded worldviews that reject the legitimacy of pluralism, human rights, and democratic governance—as the primary vector through which individuals move from conservative religiosity to violent extremism [10], [11]. In the Indonesian context, this ideological radicalization is compounded by the institutional presence of hardline Islamist organizations that have successfully penetrated schools, universities, and mosques, providing a ready-made counter-narrative to Indonesia's tradition of moderate Islam [4], [1].

Counter-radicalization strategies in education have predominantly taken one of two forms. The first is the imposition of secular civic values through citizenship education, emphasizing national unity, constitutional rights, and pluralism as state-endorsed norms. While not without value, this approach suffers from a structural weakness: for students whose primary identity is religious, civic norms presented as secular carry little theological authority and may even reinforce the perception that democracy is incompatible with Islam [7]. The second form is deradicalization through dialogue—exposing students to perspectives different from their own in the hope that contact reduces prejudice, following Allport's [12] contact hypothesis as employed by Mulya and Aditomo [4]. This approach is pedagogically valuable but insufficient on its own: contact reduces prejudice but does not address the theological convictions that undergird radicalism.

What neither approach provides is what Purboadji [7] identified as the key requirement: a theological counter-narrative—one that engages the religious objections to human rights and democratic values on their own terms and defeats them from within the tradition. Preventive deradicalization, understood as building resistance to extremist ideology before it takes root, requires precisely this kind of internally credible theological argument. This is what the Addamiyah-Maqashid Sharia framework is designed to provide.

The Problem of Shallow Democratic Culture in Indonesia

Democratic consolidation—the process by which democratic institutions become stable and durable—requires what David Beetham [13] identified as political culture as one of its key pillars. A democratic political culture is one in which citizens have internalized not merely the procedural norms of elections and parliamentary competition but the substantive values of individual rights, rule of law, institutional checks and balances, and the protection of minority freedoms. Without this cultural substrate, formal democratic institutions remain fragile [14].

Survey data from Indonesia present a concerning picture. The Asian Barometer consistently shows that while Indonesians express abstract support for democracy, they hold a primarily illiberal conception of it—understanding democracy primarily as good governance and socioeconomic delivery rather than as a system of individual rights and institutional accountability [15]. Moreover, Freedom House's assessment of Indonesia has moved from 'Free' (2006–2013) back to 'Partly Free' from 2014 onwards [16], reflecting the erosion of civil liberties and growing intolerance. This shallow democratic culture is not merely a political liability; it is the very soil in which religious radicalism flourishes—when citizens do not understand or value individual rights, the claims of extremist groups that democracy is incompatible with Islamic governance find a receptive audience.

Religious Education sits at the intersection of these two problems. As Künkler and Lerner [17] demonstrate, RE in Indonesia is compulsory at all levels of schooling and is deeply embedded in the national identity. It is simultaneously the institution most responsible for transmitting religious values and the institution most capable of transforming them. Yet in many contexts, RE can reproduce exclusivist interpretations of religion when theological universality is not explicitly taught—leaving students without the theological resources to resist either radicalism or the shallow democratic culture that enables it [5], [6]. A recent qualitative study of graduate students at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta found that while participants valued religious tolerance, their understandings of it remained largely disconnected from a principled framework of human rights—confirming that tolerance without a theological grounding in human dignity remains fragile and insufficient [18]. This gap is precisely what the present paper seeks to address.

The Limits of Existing Approaches to RE and Tolerance

The literature on religious education in Indonesia reflects two prominent approaches to addressing religious intolerance through RE. The first, exemplified by Baidhawiy [6], proposes a Multiculturalist, Theology-Based Religious Education (MTBRE) framework drawing on Islamic values such as ummah (community), rahmah (mercy), tafahum (mutual understanding), and tasamuh (tolerance). This approach has genuine merits: it grounds tolerance in Islamic theological resources rather than imposing secular liberal norms from outside, and it has been influential in Indonesian RE reform discussions.

However, as Purboadji [7] argued, Baidhawiy's [6] MTBRE does not ground tolerance in the universality of human rights—it offers what might be called 'in-system' tolerance, tolerance premised on Islamic values but not necessarily extending to a principled acceptance of universal human rights as binding on all regardless of religion. In Paul Knitter's [19] typology, most Islamic tolerance approaches remain at the 'fulfilment model' level: acknowledging value in other religions while maintaining that Islam holds ultimate priority. Such tolerance is insufficient as a counter-radicalization tool precisely because it leaves intact the theological premise that extremists exploit: that non-Muslims occupy a categorically different moral status. A student who has been taught 'in-system' tolerance can be re-radicalized by a persuasive teacher or preacher who shows that Islamic texts support a more exclusivist position. A student who has been taught that every human being carries the divine honour of Addamiyah cannot be so easily moved.

The second approach, exemplified by Parker [5], advocates a non-theological and non-confessional paradigm for RE, setting aside competing theological truth claims in favour of practical coexistence. While pragmatically appealing, this approach underestimates the depth of theological commitment in Indonesian Muslim communities and provides no principled basis for the universal human rights culture that genuine preventive deradicalization requires. The contribution of this article is to propose a third way: grounding RE in an Islamic political theology of human rights through the synthesis of Addamiyah and Maqashid Sharia.

Addamiyah: The Islamic Ontology of Universal Human Dignity

The Concept and Its Classical Roots

Addamiyah (Arabic: *الأدمية*) is derived from the Qur'anic affirmation of the dignity and honour conferred by God upon all children of Adam. The locus classicus is Qur'an 17:70: 'And We have certainly honoured the children of Adam and carried them on land and sea and provided for them of the good things and preferred them over much of what We have created, with definite preference' (Sahih International). The concept affirms that divine honoring (*takrim*) is not conditional on religious identity, ethnicity, social status, or any other particular attribute—it is inherent in membership of the human species as descended from Adam.

Classical Islamic jurisprudence recognized Addamiyah as the juridical basis for extending certain basic protections to all human beings—including non-Muslims living under Islamic governance. As Mustafa Akyol [20], [21] argues, Addamiyah represents an Islamic acknowledgment of an irreducible human dignity that precedes and transcends religious difference. Every human being, by virtue of being a descendant of Adam (*Bani Adam*), carries an inherent dignity (*karamah*) that Islamic law is obligated to respect. This is distinct from the *dhimmi* system, which offered protection contingent on non-Muslim acceptance of Muslim political authority—Addamiyah is unconditional.

The theological significance of Addamiyah for human rights is immense. As Akyol [21] argues in 'Reopening Muslim Minds,' the concept provides an Islamic basis for acknowledging the inherent equal worth of every human being regardless of religion—the very foundation upon which the universality of human rights rests. This is not a concession to Western liberal ideology but a recovery of an authentically Islamic theological inheritance that was progressively overshadowed by later post-Qur'anic traditions (particularly certain Hadith-based formulations that introduced greater religious discrimination).

Addamiyah in the Context of RE

The pedagogical implications of Addamiyah for RE are significant. If RE grounds its treatment of inter-religious relations in Addamiyah, it becomes possible to teach respect for the human dignity of the non-Muslim 'other' not as a strategic concession or a second-order value, but as a primary theological obligation—an obligation grounded in the divine act of honouring Adam's descendants. This makes human rights not an alien imposition but an Islamic imperative.

Mulya and Aditomo [4] found in their discourse analysis of Indonesian RE that the 'discourse of tolerant theologies' was one of the resources students drew upon in understanding religious tolerance. Addamiyah could serve as the central theological resource within this discourse—one that is both authentically Islamic and capable of generating what Purboadji [7] calls 'solid tolerance' rather than 'decorative tolerance.' When students understand that every human being—Christian, Hindu, Buddhist, animist—carries the divine honour of Adam's descendant, tolerance becomes not a tactical policy but a theological conviction.

Furthermore, Addamiyah addresses the problem of 'litigiousness' that McIlroy [22] identifies as a theological objection to human rights language. The Islamic concept does not frame human dignity as a legal claim that individuals assert against one another or against the state, but as a divinely conferred honour that others are obligated to respect. This relational, duty-based framing of dignity aligns well with Islamic theological categories while arriving at functionally equivalent conclusions to Western human rights discourse.

Maqashid Sharia: The Teleological Framework of Islamic Law

Classical Formulation and Contemporary Relevance

Maqashid Sharia (Arabic: *مقاصد الشريعة*, the objectives or purposes of Islamic law) refers to the overarching goals that Islamic jurisprudence is designed to achieve. The classical formulation, attributed to the twelfth-century jurist Imam al-Shatibi, identifies five essential human interests (*daruriyyat*) that Islamic law must protect: (1) *hifz al-nafs* (preservation of life), (2) *hifz al-aql* (preservation of intellect/reason), (3) *hifz al-din* (preservation of religion/conscience), (4) *hifz al-nasl* (preservation of progeny/family), and (5) *hifz al-mal* (preservation of property). Some contemporary scholars, notably Jasser Auda [23], have proposed expanded formulations that include human dignity and freedom as additional objectives.

The significance of Maqashid Sharia for the democracy-Islam compatibility debate is that it frames Islamic law teleologically rather than positivistically. Rather than reducing Islamic governance to a fixed set of rules derived from scriptural texts, Maqashid Sharia insists that the legitimacy of any rule or institution must be assessed by reference to whether it serves these higher objectives. This creates considerable

flexibility for Islamic jurisprudence to engage constructively with modern institutions—including democratic governance and human rights frameworks—when they demonstrably serve these objectives.

As Purboadji [8] argued, the late Indonesian President Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur) was among the most articulate advocates for grounding universal human rights in Maqashid Sharia. Supriyanto [24] documents in detail how Gus Dur read the five classical principles of Maqashid Sharia—the protection of life, religion, family, property, and intellect—not as an exclusively Muslim legal code but as a universal humanitarian consensus, what Imam al-Shatibi called *ittifaq al-milal*: the agreed-upon foundations across all religions. In Gus Dur's humanistic education framework, these five principles directly undergird universal human rights, and their implementation in governance is precisely what Islamic law demands. In this reading, Maqashid Sharia is not a competitor to international human rights norms but their Islamic theological corroboration. This view has been further corroborated by contemporary scholars such as Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im [25], who argues that a secular democratic state that protects these objectives is precisely what Maqashid Sharia demands in the modern context.

Maqashid Sharia and Democratic Consolidation

The connection between Maqashid Sharia and democratic consolidation is not merely conceptual but structural. Each of the five classical objectives maps directly onto a cluster of fundamental human rights recognized in international law. *Hifz al-nafs* corresponds to the rights to life, physical integrity, and freedom from torture. *Hifz al-aql* corresponds to rights of thought, conscience, expression, and education. *Hifz al-din* corresponds to freedom of religion, belief, and conscience—including, controversially, the freedom to change one's religion. *Hifz al-nasl* corresponds to rights relating to family formation, education of children, and protection from exploitation. *Hifz al-mal* corresponds to property rights and economic freedoms.

If RE in Indonesia were to incorporate Maqashid Sharia as a framework for understanding the purposes of religious and civic life, students would be equipped with an internally Islamic justification for accepting a comprehensive range of human rights. Crucially, this would include the politically sensitive right to freedom of religion (*hifz al-din*), which is currently the most contested human rights norm in Indonesian Muslim public opinion [5]. When freedom of religion is understood not as a Western imposition but as a requirement of Islamic jurisprudence—necessary for the authentic exercise of the religious conscience that Islamic law is bound to protect—its theological legitimacy becomes far more persuasive.

Moreover, Maqashid Sharia provides the 'public reason' framework that Abdullahi An-Na'im [25] argues is necessary for secular democratic governance to be acceptable to devout Muslims. Islamic law, on his account, should inform democratic governance through the moral commitments of Muslim citizens in the public sphere rather than through formal legal coercion. Maqashid Sharia, with its emphasis on the common good and human welfare, provides the ethical grammar through which such civic participation can be expressed.

Synthesis: Addamiyah and Maqashid Sharia as an Integrated Islamic Political Theology of Human Rights

The Complementarity of the Two Frameworks

Addamiyah and Maqashid Sharia are complementary in a philosophically precise sense: they are distinct in their structure but convergent in their practical implications. Addamiyah is an ontological concept—it makes a claim about what human beings fundamentally are (honoured descendants of Adam, bearing inherent dignity) prior to any legal or political consideration. Maqashid Sharia is a teleological concept—it makes claims about what Islamic governance must achieve (the protection of essential human interests) and evaluates institutions by their success in doing so. Together, they constitute a complete Islamic philosophy of human rights: Addamiyah establishes why all human beings deserve protection (they bear divine honour), while Maqashid Sharia specifies what must be protected and how (through institutions that safeguard the five essential objectives).

This integration resolves a significant tension in Islamic human rights discourse. The universality of Addamiyah is sometimes questioned on the grounds that it is insufficiently specific—affirming dignity in general without specifying what practical protections this dignity requires. Maqashid Sharia resolves this by providing a detailed catalogue of the interests that any system claiming to respect human dignity must protect. Conversely, Maqashid Sharia is sometimes criticized for excessive formalism—specifying objectives without adequately grounding them in a principled account of why these objectives matter morally. Addamiyah resolves this by providing the theological foundation: these objectives matter because they protect beings who bear the honour conferred by God.

The synthesis also addresses the three theological objections to human rights that McIlroy [22] identifies. The problem of individualism is addressed by the relational character of both Addamiyah (dignity as a divinely conferred relational status, not a self-assertive property claim) and Maqashid Sharia (objectives oriented toward collective flourishing, not mere self-interest). The problem of possessiveness is addressed by framing rights not as property owned by individuals but as divine grants (amanah) held in trust. The problem of litigiousness is addressed by embedding rights within an ethic of responsibility (amanah and khalifah), consistent with the framework Purboadji [7] proposed for RE-as-HRE.

Responding to Akyol's Reformist Vision

Mustafa Akyol's [20] 'Islam Without Extremes: A Muslim Case for Liberty' provides an important bridge between the classical theological resources discussed here and the contemporary reform project. Akyol's central argument is that the liberal ideas of individual freedom, rule of law, and political pluralism are not alien to Islam but are recoverable from within Islamic theology and history. The medieval Mutazilite tradition, the Ottoman constitutional experiments, and the Islamic modernist movement of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries all attest to an Islamic liberalism that was marginalised by historical contingency but never extinguished.

Akyol's treatment of Addamiyah is particularly relevant. In 'Reopening Muslim Minds' [21], he argues that the concept represents 'the Islamic doctrine of human dignity' that grounds an Islamic commitment to universal human rights independently of any particular religious belief. Every human being is imbued by God with dignity simply by being human (descendant of Adam), and Islamic governance is therefore bound to respect this dignity. Akyol contrasts this with the dhimmi system—historically used to justify second-class status for non-Muslims—arguing that the Addamiyah framework renders such discrimination theologically indefensible.

This paper concurs with Akyol's recovery of Addamiyah but argues that it must be paired with Maqashid Sharia to achieve its full potential as a basis for RE. Addamiyah provides the moral foundation; Maqashid Sharia provides the jurisprudential architecture. Without the latter, Addamiyah risks remaining at the level of pious declaration—affirming dignity without specifying its institutional requirements. Without the former, Maqashid Sharia risks technocratic formalism—specifying objectives without grounding them in an account of why human beings matter.

The Synthesis and Its Broader Significance

While the primary argument of this paper is pedagogical—that the Addamiyah-Maqashid Sharia framework can transform RE into an effective instrument of preventive deradicalization—the synthesis also carries broader significance for Indonesia's democratic project. Purboadji [8] argued that Indonesia, as the world's third-largest democracy and the largest Muslim-majority democracy, has a unique contribution to make to the global argument for democratic governance: demonstrating convincingly that Islam and democracy are not merely compatible but theologically mutually reinforcing. The Addamiyah-Maqashid Sharia framework is the theoretical backbone of that demonstration.

When Indonesian RE teaches that human dignity is a Qur'anic imperative (Addamiyah) and that the protection of fundamental human interests is a requirement of Islamic law (Maqashid Sharia), it does not merely produce better-informed students—it produces citizens who embody the democratic advantage argument from within their own faith. This is the most durable form of democratic culture: one chosen freely on theological grounds rather than accepted reluctantly under social pressure. As Wronka [26] argues, 'only chosen values endure.' A generation of Indonesian Muslims who understand human rights as an Islamic obligation—not a Western imposition—constitutes the most powerful counter-narrative to both domestic radicalism and the global appeal of authoritarian Islamism.

Implications for Religious Education in Indonesia

Curricular Reform Directions

The integration of Addamiyah and Maqashid Sharia into Indonesia's RE curriculum would require both conceptual and pedagogical innovation. At the conceptual level, RE teachers would need to be equipped with the theological and jurisprudential knowledge necessary to present both concepts accurately and compellingly. This implies significant reform of teacher education programmes, with increased emphasis on Islamic jurisprudence (especially Maqashid Sharia), comparative theology, and human rights education.

At the pedagogical level, the approach would build on the best practices identified in Parker's [5] study of exceptional faith schools in Indonesia—particularly the emphasis on dialogue, critical thinking, and engagement with real-world ethical problems. Students could be invited to examine contemporary cases of human rights violations in Indonesia and globally, and to assess them from the perspective of both

Addamiyah (Does this respect the divine honour of Adam's descendants?) and Maqashid Sharia (Does this protect or violate the essential human interests that Islamic law mandates?). This approach transforms RE from confessional instruction into what Zembylas [9] calls 'historicized and politicized RE-as-HRE'—education that integrates religious and civic values without subordinating either to the other.

The three faith schools studied by Parker [5] in Yogyakarta and West Sumatra offer instructive models. The Islamic school whose teacher used real-world ethical problems as the basis for class discussion—asking students to assess abortion, domestic violence, and interfaith relations from within their religious commitments—embodies exactly the pedagogical approach that the Addamiyah-Maqashid Sharia framework requires: grounding ethical reasoning in Islamic resources while engaging the full complexity of contemporary moral and political life.

Addressing the Discourse of Nationalism

Mulya and Aditomo [4] found that the 'discourse of nationalism' (particularly the motto *bhinneka tunggal ika*—unity in diversity) was the most prominent framework through which Indonesian students understood religious tolerance. While nationalism-based tolerance has genuine value in the Indonesian context, it is insufficient as a basis for the principled human rights culture that democratic consolidation requires. Nationally-grounded tolerance is contingent on national identity and can be withdrawn from those perceived as outside the national community.

The Addamiyah-Maqashid Sharia framework offers a theological basis that transcends national identity without abandoning it. Addamiyah grounds human dignity not in Indonesian citizenship or in the national motto but in a universal theological fact—the divine honouring of Adam's descendants. This universality is simultaneously Islamic and cosmopolitan, capable of grounding obligations toward not only fellow Indonesian citizens but toward all human beings. In this way, the framework supports rather than undermines Indonesian national values while extending them to a more robust foundation.

RE as Counter-Radicalization

The author's previous work [7] argued for RE as a vehicle for counter-radicalization, understood as preventive education that builds resistance to extremist ideology before it takes root. The Addamiyah-Maqashid Sharia synthesis significantly strengthens this argument. Extremist interpretations of Islam typically deny the full humanity and dignity of non-Muslims and interpret Maqashid Sharia in narrowly communitarian terms that exclude non-Muslim interests from Islamic governance's protective obligations. The synthesis proposed here directly challenges both moves.

By grounding human dignity in Addamiyah—which extends to all descendants of Adam without exception—and by interpreting Maqashid Sharia as mandating the protection of essential interests for all human beings within the polity (following An-Na'im's [25] reading), the framework closes the theological door to exclusivist justifications for intolerance and violence. The causal mechanism operates at the level of moral formation: students who internalize universal human dignity as a theological obligation develop a principled resistance to exclusivist ideologies, reducing their susceptibility to radicalization narratives that depend on the theological dehumanization of the religious 'other.' When RE is built on this foundation, it provides students with internal Islamic reasons to reject extremist ideology—not merely prudential or civic reasons, but theological ones grounded in their own tradition. This is, as Purboadji [7] argued, more durable than external prohibition.

DISCUSSION

The synthesis of Addamiyah and Maqashid Sharia proposed in this article is not without its challenges. Traditionalist Islamic scholars in Indonesia—particularly those associated with hardline Salafi or Wahhabi currents—may resist the use of Addamiyah as a basis for extending unrestricted dignity to non-Muslims, and may interpret Maqashid Sharia in ways that exclude non-Muslim interests from the protective scope of Islamic law. These resistances are real and should not be underestimated.

However, the theological resources for resisting these exclusivist interpretations are also real and well-established within the Islamic tradition. The Hanafi school of jurisprudence—which historically dominated the Ottoman Empire and remains influential in Indonesian Islam through Nahdlatul Ulama—has consistently offered more flexible and inclusive interpretations of Islamic law than the Hanbali school [20]. The Maturidi school of theology, associated with Hanafi jurisprudence, places greater emphasis on human reason and moral responsibility than the Ashari school, and thus provides more hospitable soil for the rationalist ethics of human rights. The rich tradition of Indonesian Islamic modernism—from Gus Dur's Nahdlatul Ulama to the Muhammadiyah's reform projects—has consistently demonstrated that Indonesian Islam can engage creatively and constructively with modern values without abandoning its theological integrity [6], [4].

The challenge for RE reformers in Indonesia is therefore not to create a new theology from scratch but to recover and amplify theological resources that already exist within the tradition—resources that have often been marginalized by political contingency rather than theological necessity, as Akyol [20] demonstrates in his historical survey of Islamic liberalism. The Addamiyah-Maqashid Sharia synthesis is precisely such a recovery: it draws on classical Islamic concepts that have deep roots in the tradition while reinterpreting them in ways that speak to the contemporary demands of democratic citizenship and human rights.

It should also be noted that the synthesis proposed here is not exclusively relevant for Muslim students. In a pluralist RE context—which Parker [5] argues is both feasible and desirable in Indonesia—the Addamiyah-Maqashid Sharia framework can serve as the basis for inter-religious dialogue in which Muslim students articulate their tradition's resources for human rights and are invited to compare these with analogous resources from other traditions (such as the Christian 'sons of God' theology that Purboadji [7] discussed). This comparative theological approach could produce the kind of mutual understanding and principled tolerance that neither confessional instruction nor secular civic education alone can achieve.

CONCLUSION

Religious radicalism in Indonesia is a theological problem that demands a theological solution. Security measures, civic education, and dialogue programmes all have their place, but none can substitute for the work of building, within the religious tradition itself, a principled and convincing case for the universality of human dignity and the legitimacy of democratic pluralism. This paper has argued that the synthesis of Addamiyah and Maqashid Sharia provides precisely such a case—and that Religious Education is the most appropriate and powerful vehicle for delivering it.

Addamiyah establishes the ontological foundation: every human being, as a descendant of Adam, carries a divinely conferred dignity that Islamic theology is obligated to respect, prior to and independent of any religious distinction. Maqashid Sharia establishes the teleological framework: Islamic law exists to protect life, intellect, religion, family, and property for all persons within the polity—objectives that map directly onto the core commitments of universal human rights and democratic governance. Together, these two frameworks allow democratic values to be presented to Muslim students not as external secular norms imposed from outside their tradition, but as authentic expressions of Islamic moral purpose.

The proposed model of RE-as-HRE—Religious Education as Human Rights Education—operationalizes this synthesis pedagogically. When students are invited to assess real-world ethical situations through the dual lens of Addamiyah (What does respect for the divine honour of Adam's descendants require here?) and Maqashid Sharia (What do the higher objectives of Islamic law demand in this case?), they develop the theological reasoning skills needed to resist extremist narratives from within their own faith commitments. This is preventive deradicalization in its most durable form: not the prohibition of radical ideas by external authority, but the cultivation of internal theological immunity to them.

Three practical implications follow for RE reform in Indonesia. First, RE teacher education must include substantive training in Addamiyah, Maqashid Sharia, and their implications for human rights, so that teachers can present these frameworks credibly and compellingly. Second, RE curricula should incorporate real-world ethical cases—drawn from Indonesia's own plural context—that require students to reason through the demands of human dignity and the higher objectives of Islamic law. Third, the exemplary models of dialogue-based RE identified by Parker [5] and Baidhawiy [6] should be scaled and supported, with the Addamiyah-Maqashid Sharia synthesis providing their unifying theological foundation.

The broader significance of this educational model extends to Indonesia's social cohesion and democratic future. A generation of citizens who have internalized human rights as a theological conviction—not merely a civic norm—constitutes the most resilient foundation for a plural, peaceful, and democratic society. In Indonesia's context, where religion is inseparable from public life and identity, the path to human flourishing and social justice must run through the theological tradition, not around it. The Addamiyah-Maqashid Sharia framework offers that path.

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