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## REVITALIZATION THE PEGON ARABIC SCRIPT IN THE MIDST OF GLOBALIZATION: PRESERVING THE TRACES OF ARABIC CIVILIZATION IN THE LOCAL WRITING CULTURE OF NUSANTARA

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### ABSTRACT

Pegon Arabic script is an important part of the local cultural heritage of the Nusantara. In the era of globalization and technological advancement, the existence of this script has begun to be marginalized. This study aims to examine the history, role, and strategy of preserving Pegon Arabic script as a local cultural identity. Using the library study method, data was collected from various literatures to obtain information. The results show that Pegon has an important function in the spread of Islamic teachings, education, especially Arabic, and cultural preservation. However, modern challenges require new strategies to maintain its sustainability. The strategies highlighted include hold training, create learning media, and preserving manuscripts. This study emphasizes the importance of the role of educational institutions, Islamic boarding schools, and the government in maintaining the existence of Pegon Arabic script amidst the dynamics of the times.

*Keyword: Arabic learning, Cultural heritage, Written tradition*

### مستخلص البحث

يُعدّ خط بيجون العربي جزءًا مهمًا من التراث الثقافي المحلي للأرخبيل. في عصر العولمة والتقدم التكنولوجي، بدأ وجود هذا الخط يُهمّش. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى دراسة تاريخ ودور واستراتيجية الحفاظ على خط بيجون العربي كهوية ثقافية محلية. باستخدام أسلوب الدراسة المكتبية، جُمعت البيانات من مختلف المراجع للحصول على المعلومات. تُظهر النتائج أن خط بيجون له وظيفة مهمة في نشر التعاليم الإسلامية والتعليم، وخاصة اللغة العربية، والحفاظ على التراث الثقافي. ومع ذلك، تتطلب التحديات الحديثة استراتيجيات جديدة للحفاظ على استدامته. تشمل الاستراتيجيات التي تم تسليط الضوء عليها عقد التدريب، وإنشاء وسائل تعليمية، والحفاظ على المخطوطات. تؤكد هذه الدراسة على أهمية دور المؤسسات التعليمية والمدارس الداخلية الإسلامية والحكومة في الحفاظ على وجود خط بيجون العربي وسط ديناميكيات العصر.

كلمات أساسية: تعليم اللغة العربية، التراث الثقافي، التقاليد المكتوبة

In the era of globalization that continues to develop, of course many changes are taking place, including in the cultural realm. There are impacts from the influence of globalization on world society, both positive and negative impacts. The positive impact is that it makes it easier for people to access information from various parts of the world, but this can also lead to negative impacts if someone cannot filter the information they obtain easily. Currently, the younger generation, in particular, is still unable to filter the effects of globalization so they are easily eroded into following western culture, and on the other hand, local values are starting to be marginalized (Hafizah, 2023). Including the increasing rarity of the younger generation to know local writing culture. There are many written cultural heritages that are full of history and culture in the Nusantara, one of which is the Pegon Arabic script. The existence of the Pegon Arabic script is closely related to the spread of Islam because this script is a creative adaptation of the Arabic script that is adapted to regional languages, including Javanese. The Pegon Arabic script plays a very important role in the means of preaching, education, and literature. One example that we can find to this day is the classic book of Islamic boarding schools. Classical books are known for their Arabic writings that do not have harakat or are often referred to as *kitab gundul*. The use of the Pegon Arabic script is considered quite effective in understanding the classical books being studied (Afifah & Sirojudin, 2022).

Although the Pegon Arabic script has high historical and cultural value, its existence certainly has its own challenges. The results of research by Mawaddah (2022) stated that several students at the Ma'haduttholabah Tegal Islamic boarding school had difficulty using the Arabic Pegon method in learning due to the changing times and increasingly modern culture. This is related to the development of educational technology which has given rise to various innovations in other learning methods. Another research by Sa'adah (2019) concluded that the use of Arabic pegon at the beginner level is a problem in learning Arabic because it is considered difficult to read. However, despite the problems in using the Pegon Arabic script in learning Arabic, it does not mean that this method should be abolished. As a cultural heritage, there must be a form of revitalization so that the Pegon Arabic script continues to exist and remains a local identity amidst the current of globalization. There are various forms of strategies that can be carried out in an effort to preserve this written culture, both integrating it into the education curriculum to digitalizing learning that is more creative and interesting in order to arouse the interest of all groups to learn it. With these strategies, it is hoped that the Pegon Arabic script can continue to develop and adapt according to developments over time.

Based on this background, this research was designed to review the origins of the Pegon Arabic script and the role of the Pegon Arabic script as a local cultural heritage of the Nusantara, as well as to raise awareness of the importance of revitalizing this written tradition in the midst of the rapid flow of globalization. Therefore, the focus of this study includes (1) revealing the history of the Pegon Arabic script in Indonesia, (2) explaining the role of the Pegon Arabic script as a local cultural identity of the Nusantara, and (3) exploring forms of revitalization that can be carried out so that the existence of the Pegon Arabic script remains sustainable in this modern era. This research also aims to contribute to efforts to preserve local culture through a literary approach, as well as motivating the community, especially the younger generation, to care more about this Islamic literary heritage which is rich in meaning.

Apart from that, this research is expected to be a starting point in designing strategies for revitalizing the Pegon Arabic script that are relevant to the needs of the times.

## METHODS (منهج البحث)

The research method used is Library Research to study the origins of the existence, role, and efforts to revitalize the Pegon Arabic script in the Nusantara. It is called library research because the data or materials required to complete the research come from the library in the form of books, encyclopedias, dictionaries, journals, documents, magazines and so on (Sutrisno, 1990). The literature study was carried out by collecting, analyzing and synthesizing various written sources as mentioned which are related to the Pegon Arabic script.

Data collection is focused on the following points:

1. Historical sources that explain the origins of the Pegon Arabic script,
2. Studies that review the development and role of the Pegon Arabic script as a local cultural identity of the Nusantara, and
3. Literature that discusses strategies for preserving the use of the Pegon Arabic script.

The data obtained were then analyzed qualitatively using a descriptive approach. The analysis is carried out by comparing findings from various literature, identifying emerging patterns, and drawing relevant conclusions to answer the problem formulation that has been determined.

## RESULTS (نتائج البحث)

### A. The History of Pegon Arabic Script in Indonesia

Script /skript/ *noun*, is the special set of letters used in writing a language. Meanwhile, **aksara**/ak.sa.ra/n according to the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI) means **1** a system of graphic signs used by humans to communicate and to a greater or lesser extent represents speech; **2** certain types of graphic sign systems, for example the Pallawa script, the Inca script; **3** letters. Script is a way of recording written language. Script is also called a collection or set of letters which means it can be used more widely than the term "alphabet", because script only symbolizes "a collection of letter sets" neutrally without further categorization, unlike the alphabet and abjad which have more specific definitions (Maulana, 2020).

There are many scripts that have entered Indonesia, one of which is the Arabic script. Arabic script has long been known in Indonesia, around the middle of the 13th century AD Arabic script was used by limited groups in Indonesia (Rohman et al., 2022). In the beginning, Arabic script was taught only for the purpose of studying and understanding Islamic teachings and writing religious texts in Arabic. However, over time it was developed by Islamic boarding school students by modifying and adapting the Arabic script to the sounds of the Javanese tongue so that it was used as a tool for writing Javanese texts. The result of this modification is known as Pegon (Pudjiastuti, 2009).

Talking about the Pegon Arabic script, its presence cannot be separated from the history of the entry of Islam into the Nusantara. According to Koentjaningrat, Arabic Pegon entered the Nusantara starting in 1200 AD or 1300 AD along with the entry of Islam replacing animism, Hinduism and Buddhism (Koentjaraningrat, 1994). In other notes, the Pegon script appeared around 1400 which was initiated by Raden Rahmat or better known as Sunan Ampel at the Ampel Denta Islamic Boarding School in Surabaya. Meanwhile, according to another opinion,

the initiator of the Pegon script was Syarif Hidayatullah or Sunan Gunung Jati Cirebon. There are also those who say that Imam Nawawi Al-Bantani was the pioneer of the existence of the Pegon Arabic script (Fikri, 2014).

مُقَدِّمَةٌ  
 قَلَاغِبْرَانِي عَرَبِي فَيَكُونُ  
 عَرَبِي فَيَكُونُ هِيَا اِيكُو حُرْفِ عَرَبِي كَخِ كَاغِبْرَانِي فَيَكُونُ اَكْسَارَا  
 جَاوَا اوتَاوَا يَاسَا جَاوَا ، اُنَاغِيغِ اِغْدَا لَمْ فُرُكْمَاغَاغْفِ ، عَرَبِي  
 فَيَكُونُ اوكَا كَاغِبْرَانِي فَيَكُونُ يَاسَا اِنْدُو نَيْسِيغَا .  
 تَمْبُوغِ « فَيَكُونُ » اِيكُو سَاغْمَا يَاسَا جَاوَا هِيَا اِيكُو سَاغْمَا  
 تَمْبُوغِ « فَيَكُونُ » لَنْ قَانَا مَبَاغِ « اَنْ » دَادِي « فَيَكُونُ » اَرْتِيغِي  
 كَا كَا فِ ، غُوْمُوغِ اَوْرَا لَاجِيغَارِ ، اَوْرَا قَاسِ سَوَارَانِي . دِي اَرَانِي  
 عَرَبِي فَيَكُونُ ، جَلَارَانِ يَاسَا جَاوَا دِي تَوَلِيغِ كَلَاوَانِ حُرْفِ  
 عَرَبِي اِيكُو اَوْرَا قَاسِ سَبَابِ اَوْرَا كَابِيغِ حُرْفِ عَرَبِي قَابَاوَاتَاغِي  
 كَاوَا اَكْسَارَا جَاوَا ، مَوْلَا فَرَلُو اَنَانِي حُرْفِ عَرَبِي رِيكَانِ .

Figure 1. Writing about the Pegon Arabic script

Source : <https://alif.id/read/nhn/sejarah-arab-pegon-simbol-perlawanan-para-ulama-menghadapi-kolonialisme-b247914p/>

The Pegon Arabic script is one example of a script that has high historical value. According to Kromoprawirto (1867) in his writing entitled *Kawruh Akrasa Pegon*, he explained that the word "pegon" comes from the Javanese language, namely *pego*, which means '*ora lumrah anggone ngucapake*', that is, it is not common to say it. *Pego* means deviant, because the Pegon script deviates from both Arabic and Javanese literature. Arabic Pegon is also called Arabic Jawi, which is a writing that uses Arabic letters but is practiced for Javanese or other regions (Elmubarok & Qutni, 2020).

The form of the Pegon script is Arabic script but its sound follows the Javanese writing system, namely *hanacaraka*. Likewise, the number of Pegon letters is not twenty-eight like the hijaiyyah letters (Arabic letters) but is twenty, the same as the number of Javanese letters (Pudjiastuti, 2009). There are letters that do not come from the original Arabic letters but are modified. To find out the Pegon Arabic script, you can pay attention to the following table.

#### Pegon Arabic script

No.	Javanese	Latin	Pegon
1.	Ha	H/A	ه/أ
2.	Na	N	ن
3.	Ca	C	چ
4.	Ra	R	ر
5.	Ka	K	ك
6.	Da	D	د
7.	Ta	T	ت
8.	Sa	S	س
9.	Wa	W	و
10.	La	L	ل
11.	Pa	P	ف

12.	Dha	Dh	ذ
13.	Ja	J	ج
14.	Ya	Y	ي
15.	Nya	Ny	ي
16.	Ma	M	م
17.	Ga	G	ك
18.	Bha	B	ب
19.	Tha	Th	ط
20.	Nga	Ng	غ

Table 1. Pegon Arabic script

There are several Javanese scholars who popularized this Pegon script, including: KH. Ahmad Rifa'i Kalisasak (1786-1878), KH. Sholeh Darat Semarang (1820-1903), KH. Hasyim Asy'ari Jombang (1875-1947), Haji Hasan Mustafa Garut (1852-1930), KH. Bisri Mustofa Rembang (1915-1977), and so on. Where almost all of his books use Pegon letters, starting from discussions of philosophy, hadith, fiqh, nahwu-sharaf, tasawwuf, tafsir, and theology. In this way, these works can be evidence of the establishment of an Islamic consensus in the field of culture and local wisdom (Fikri, 2014).

### **B. The Role of The Pegon Arabic Script as A Local Cultural Identity of The Nusantara**

Scripts have the function of facilitating written communication between individuals. Scripts are important because they allow us to share knowledge, express ourselves, and communicate with others. Various scripts were born in the world which of course function for written communication in a region, with the language used daily.

The Pegon Arabic script is already familiar among Islamic boarding schools. This is because this script is used to translate or what is known as the meaning of Arabic books into Javanese/Indonesian. The choice of this script is certainly not without reason, but because Arabic writing starts from right to left as well as Arabic Pegon writing, making it easier to write. Unlike the Latin script which is usually written from left to right (Elmubarok & Qutni, 2020).

Initially, the writing of Arabic Pegon was a strategy of struggle. In the midst of the power and authoritarianism of the colonial regime, one thing that was closely monitored by the authorities was indigenous thought, including the level of indigenous understanding of their religion. Religious teachings can be understood through language. A person can understand their religion with a language that has been understood previously, namely Javanese which encapsulates religious teachings. Apart from that, it also adapts to the conditions of Javanese people who cannot speak Arabic. With the pegon medium, it is intended that the Javanese people, most of whom do not understand Fusha Arabic, can understand various Islamic knowledge through the books he composed. Kiai Sholeh Darat has a special term to refer to the Pegon term, namely *Bilisanil Jawi al Mirikiyah*, which means Javanese language that is used daily and is easily understood by the people in the northern coastal area of Java Island (Zutas, 2017).

Apart from functioning as a means of written communication, the Pegon Arabic script certainly has an important role in learning Arabic, especially in the field of Nahwu. Among Islamic boarding schools, this local writing culture is known for translating the Yellow Book

which contains bald Arabic. There are certain symbols used in the translation of the Yellow Book which function to understand the *qawaid* (grammar), including:

Symbols	Meaning	I'rob (Structure)
م	Utawi	Mubtada'
خ	Iku	Khabar
ف	Apa	Fa'il (tak berakal)
فا	Sapa	Fa'il (berakal)
مف	Ing	Maf'ul bih
ح	Hale	Hal
تم	Apane	Tamyiz
ج	Mangka	Jawab Syartiyah
مط	Kelawan	Maf'ul mutlak
ن/ن	Kang	Sifat/Na'at
ظ	Ing ndalem	Dzaraf
جم	Pira-pira	Jamak
بد	Rupane	Badal

Table 2. Symbols in the Pegon Arabic script

There is also a version written by Ahmad Hafna Razzaq Al-Manduri, entitled *Kaifiyatul ma'ani bil ikhtishar*. Which is suitable for beginners to use in memorizing the symbols of the Pegon Arabic script because it is complete with examples and is practical.

٦	٥	٤	٣	٢	١
١٩	ج	جواب	ماثكا - ماكا	ان سجاه محرمه سجاه اخذ	١٩
٢٠	س	سبائبة	سبابت	كل منسوس بها كسبت	٢٠
٢١	ع	تعديل	كربنا	... لا لهم يؤمنون	٢١
٢٢	ع	غاية	سبحان	أوبت العالم كواضنا	٢٢
٢٣	ل	ملك	كدي - كويان	الكتاب للويان	٢٣
٢٤	ما	اختصاص	ماريغ - كندا	انظرت الكتاب لزيد	٢٤
٢٥	مظ	ضرورية	سلكيني	قام اخذتلك بكل منزه فاني	٢٥
٢٦	م	تميز	افان - افا	كلاب زينة ففنا	٢٦
٢٧	مع	مفضل عليه	تيمسكغ	الكتاب منسوس لزيد	٢٧
٢٨	ج	جمع	فويك - يرفا	رايتك للسليمان	٢٨
٢٩	نف	نعى	اوي - تيدالك	حاجه ان اخذك	٢٩
٣٠	نه	نهي	اجا - جافان	ولا يهمل لك اوف	٣٠
٣١	مخ	خبر مطلق	ايكو مويج	فلا ارشتمه بكم	٣١
٣٢	ب	غير مطلق	سارغ	... ما بين السكاه	٣٢
٣٣	ه	ضمير الشأن	كلوكوان - انو	فانما اذنه لا لواله الا الله	٣٣
٣٤	ي	لا رابتداء	يكي - تننو	كلذنتك زينة قائم	٣٤
٣٥	سف	لعل تأكيد	سوفيا - سافتي	لهم يرحمهم	٣٥
٣٦	سا	شرعية	سيفضان - كنيكا	فكنا اناهم	٣٦
٣٧	مص	مصدر	اوليهي	واذنه يرحمهم	٣٧

الانتماء	المساكن	التأويل	الأمثلة
١	٢	٣	٤
١	م	مبتداء	انوي - اداون
٢	خ	خبر	ايكو - اواله
٣	ف	فاعل عاقل	سفا - سيفا
٤	ف	فاعل غير	اوا
٥	نفا	ناظر العاقل	سفا - سيفا
٦	نف	ناظر الغير	اوا
٧	مف	مفعول به	ايغ - كندا
٨	مع	مفعول معه	سرتان - سيرتا
٩	مل	مفعول لاجله	كرنا اراهي
١٠	مط	مفعول مطلق	كلوان - دغان
١١	ظن	ظرف زمان	اشالم - فلا
١٢	ظفر	ظرف مكان	اشالم - دي
١٣	ن	نعت	كاغ - سايغ
١٤	ص	صلة	كاغ - سايغ
١٥	با	بيان	يتافن - يتايا
١٦	بد	بدل	روفان - روفايا
١٧	حا	حال	حال - دلام كلان
١٨	ش	شرطية	لامون - جيكا



Figure 2. Kaifiyatul ma'ani bil iktishar

Classical books or yellow books are taught to students so that they understand the grammatical structure and meaning simultaneously. This Arabic Pegon method teaches *qawaid* (grammar) and content (content in the book) simultaneously. The grammatical content taught using the Pegon method is conveyed by writing hijaiyah letter symbols written above the words or below the comments. Another characteristic of the Arabic Pegon method in traditional Islamic boarding schools is the writing of references or returns of *dhamir* (pronouns). Each *damir* is given two identical signs freely. The first sign is placed under the *damir* (pronoun), while the other sign is placed under the sentence of the *dhamir* in question (Aziz et al., 2022).

Using Javanese because it has a richer vocabulary than Indonesian. Many words in Javanese do not have an equivalent meaning when translated into Indonesian. Books with Pegon Arabic script have contributed to Islamic studies in Java. This role increased when kyai in Islamic boarding schools were supported by book publishing companies and bookstores which reached its peak in the 1950s to 1980s (Budiyanti & Nugraha, 2020).

At the 2nd Nusantara Ulama Ijtima Congress in Malaysia in 2007, there was a cleric from Indonesia, namely KH. Maimeon Zubair, said that the preservation of the Salaf tradition is in a critical stage. Several Salaf teachings are starting to be forgotten, one of which is Arabic Pegon. In society, Arabic Pegon is slowly being abandoned. KH. Maimeon Zubair on several occasions has continuously motivated several parties to always make the Salaf tradition a tradition, including reviving Arabic Pegon as an icon of the Salaf that needs to be preserved. If this Arabic Pegon tradition is forgotten, then Muslims in Indonesia have forgotten the history of the entry of Islam in Indonesia (Apologia, 2023). For this reason, let's explore and preserve Arabic Pegon so that it doesn't get lost over time. There are so many previous scholars or kiai's knowledge that is written in Arabic Pegon. It would be a shame if the current generation's basic teachings in Islam were unable to read and understand them because it is feared that the message of Islam passed down from their ancestors would be meaningless.

### **C. Efforts in The Revitalization of Pegon Arabic Script**

It was found that a form of revitalization of the Pegon Arabic script was carried out by several parties, especially in the Islamic boarding school environment, through various strategies to maintain the existence of the Pegon Arabic script. This is a form of awareness of the importance of preserving local writing culture which has been a tradition since ancient times. Moreover, in the current era of globalization, the flow of western culture has the potential to replace our local culture.

In research Rosyid (2019) it is stated that the Pegon Arabic script was basically an attempt by the ulama to fight the Latin language used by the Dutch colonialists. There are efforts to preserve the Pegon Arabic script in the form of traditional books such as the Yellow Book and the Pegon Book written by ulama at that time. One of them is the book of tarjumah with 67 book titles written by KH. Ahmad Rifa'i, a scholar and national hero from Central Java and he is also a writer of books on the spirit of the struggle for independence.

Research carried out by Tika et al. (2023) provided training in reading and writing Pegon Arabic at the Bustanu Usyaqil Qur'an Islamic boarding school, which aims to provide basic knowledge and skills to become skilled at reading and writing the yellow books in Pegon Arabic. The training provided includes an explanation of the material first about the brief history of the Pegon Arabic script, writing formulas, and examples of use in sentences, followed by a question and answer session. Then the participants practiced reading and writing sentences individually. It was found that this activity was able to arouse participants' enthusiasm and improve their skills in reading and writing Pegon Arabic script.

Similar to the research conducted by Rahmawati & Negara (2021). where new students at the Darul Huda Putri Islamic boarding school had minimal knowledge of the Pegon Arabic script, so that Arabic Pegon writing training was held to understand and understand the yellow book. There are 3 stages in this activity, namely pre-activity assessment, core training activities, and post-activity evaluation activities. The results showed that this training could improve the quality of reading the Yellow Book well and quite effectively.

Research by Firdaus et al., (2022) developed learning media in the form of the Pegon Flip Chart which contains the rules of Arabic Pegon writing. This media is in the form of teaching aids in the form of sheets of paper that are put together like a calendar so that they can be seen together. The use of this media can be conveyed by gradually turning over the images one by one, where each image is placed on a different sheet. The results of this research indicate that the use of pegon flip chart media can improve students' pegon writing skills at TPQ Roudlotul Hikmah.

A similar thing was done by (Munir & Fauzi, 2023) who developed a media for teaching Arabic Pegon, namely the Arabic Pegon Formula media. This media contains a set of symbols that formulate tarkib (position of words) in Arabic. It was found that the results of using the Arabic Pegon formula media were very useful for improving skills in reading Arabic texts that were in accordance with rules such as nahwu and sharaf.

The digitalization efforts were carried out by students from the Computer Science Faculty of the University of Indonesia. Research students develop an application for digitizing Pegon manuscripts. This application is called Pegonizer which contains book catalog features such as optical character recognition (OCR) and transliteration. It is hoped that the digital storage of books by scholars and stories by writers will prevent their knowledge from disappearing and rotting physically because they are stored properly. Apart from that, it is hoped that this digital application can make Pegon global so that it is more widely known and even more studied (Wulandari, 2022).

Likewise, efforts have been made by the Digital Repository of Endangered and Affected Manuscripts in Southeast Asia (DREAMSEA), which has digitized 15 manuscripts from the KH Abdul Wahib Hasyim Tebuireng library collection, Jombang Regency. The aim is to protect the information in the manuscripts, so that they are not eroded by time or potentially damaged. Various manuscripts ranging from Arabic, Javanese and Malay as well as Arabic, pegon and Jawi Malay script. The study covers the Al-Quran manuscript, interpretation, fiqh, tauhid, tasawuf, science of tools, to the science of wisdom. This digitalization is an effort to maintain diversity, and with this effort it is hoped that anyone will be able to read it or even do research on it (Rahma, 2022).

## DISCUSSIONS (المناقشة)

### A. The History of Pegon Arabic Script in Indonesia

- Cultural acculturation occurred

History states that the presence of the Pegon Arabic script was accompanied by the entry of Islam into Indonesia. Islam itself is a religion that is closely related to Arabic, such as holy books that use Arabic and several studies that state that Arabic is the language of heaven, because the first human on earth was the Prophet Adam AS with the language that was pronounced was Arabic so that the descendants of the Prophet Adam used Arabic. However, after Adam's children reproduced, millions of diverse languages were born, all originating from Arabic (Baso, 2019). *Wallahu a'lam,*

The strong relationship between Islam and Arabic creates its own identity. Arabic has a special position in the Islamic scientific and religious tradition. The arrival of Islam in the Nusantara brought with it a variety of cultures, one of which was a written culture based on Arabic script which was previously not widely known by the local community. Not only teaching religious aspects, but the ulama also introduced the Arabic writing system to support da'wah efforts even in the realm of education.

A new culture cannot be separated from an adaptation. If previously the community was not familiar with the culture of writing using Arabic script, then approaches were sought so that it could be accepted by the community. Initially, Arabic script was used for religious studies and book recitation. However, not everyone has a good understanding of reading and writing Arabic script. An adaptation process took place so that Arabic script was easy to learn so that it was in accordance with the linguistic context of the local community. A cultural contact emerged, namely the process of acculturation of Arabic culture with local culture. Finally, a new variant emerged which was the result of modifications that had been adapted to the local language, called the Pegon Arabic script (Jahuri & Fauji, 2022).

As stated in the results, pegon itself means deviating from both Arabic literature and Javanese literature. In principle, the Pegon script adopts the Arabic alphabet as well as the hijaiyah letters. It's just that there are a few additional letters due to the habits of the Javanese people in using the previous language (*hanacaraka*). Several additional reading and writing rules are based on modifications. Pay attention to the following table!

No	Arabic letters		Pegon letters	
	Form of Letter	Sound	Form of Letter	Sound
1	ج	Jim	چ	Ca
2	ف	Fa	ڦ	Pa
3	ك	Kaf	ڪ	Ga
4	ي	Ya	ڀ	Nya
5	ع	'Ain	غ	Nga
6	د	Da	ڏ	Dha

Table 3. Modifications in the Pegon Arabic script

From the table above, you can see the differences between the original Arabic letters and those after modification. The letter "Ca" comes from the Arabic letter "jim" which then has three dots in the middle. Then "Pa" is written with the letter "Fa" which has three dots. Likewise, the letter "Ga" which uses the letter "Kaf" is given three dots below it. The letter "Nya" uses the letter "Ya" given three dots and the letter "Nga" uses the letter "'Ain" which also has three dots. And also the letter "Dha" which comes from the letter "Da" which is also given three dots.

- Development of the Pegon Arabic script

Islamic boarding schools, as the oldest center for the spread of Islam and education in the Nusantara, have an important role in the history of the development of the Pegon Arabic script. The development of the Pegon Arabic script cannot be separated from the role of the students who study at Islamic boarding schools. In addition to studying and deepening Islamic religious knowledge, they also study Arabic script. Initially the Arabic script was used by religious teachers to study and understand the Islamic religion, but later the Arabic script was modified according to the sound of the Javanese tongue which is known as the Pegon Arabic script, so that those who are not good at Arabic can understand and comprehend Islamic teachings well through the Pegon Arabic script (Behrend, 1996).

The use of Pegon script as a characteristic of traditional Islamic boarding schools must continue to be preserved and even become a reference for the form of character-based education that is expected to be introduced in the general school curriculum in an effort to develop it.

## B. The Role of The Pegon Arabic Script as A Local Cultural Identity of The Nusantara

The Pegon Arabic script was born with a purpose. Like other scripts, of course the main function of the Pegon Arabic script is as a means of written communication. However, it is not just that, the existence of this script is not only as a medium of communication that is separated

by distance but also conveys messages or information from generation to generation that is separated by time. There are various scripts that have developed in the Nusantara, which are inseparable from the cultural history that occurred on Mother Earth.

Initially, the purpose of creating the Pegon Arabic script was for written communication during the colonial era, who thought that this Arabic script would not be a threat to the colonialists because the natives could not understand its meaning. In fact, this was a strategy so that the movement of the Indonesian people at that time was not predicted by them. Kiai Muhammad Shaleh bin Umar or known as KH. Shaleh Darat wrote a book entitled *Faidh al-Rahman fi Tarjamah Tafsir Kalam Malik ad-Dayyan* which is the first book of interpretation of the Qur'an written in Javanese using the Pegon Arabic script. The use of the Pegon Arabic script was intended to deceive the Dutch who at that time prohibited the translation of the Qur'an (Muhamad Farhan Subhi, 2024).

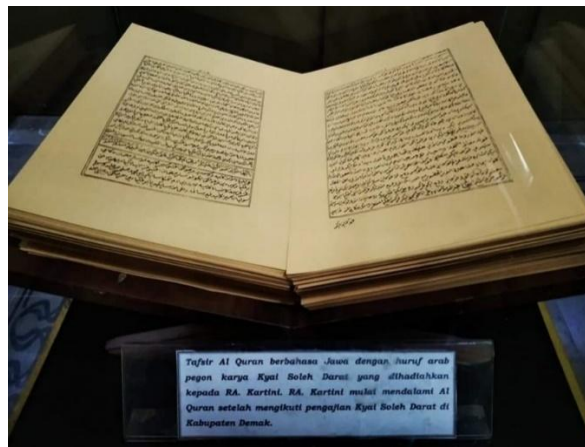


Figure 3. *Faidh ar-Rahman*, Kitab Tafsir Pertama Berbahasa Jawa

Source : <https://bincangsyariah.com/kolom/faidh-ar-rahman-kitab-tafsir-pertama-berbahasa-jawa/>

Studying yellow books in Islamic boarding schools with a traditional approach using a hanging translation system, because the target language (in this case using Javanese) used is placed hanging on the source language (Arabic) and the translation process takes place for each word, phrase and various grammatical elements that exist. Just like Arabic letters in general, the writing of the Pegon Arabic script also starts from right to left. The function of this writing method is to facilitate the translation of words and provide fluency in learning to write Arabic as well as strengthening Islamic values.



stories that are susceptible to change, then writing allows for a more permanent cultural inheritance because it can be proven through real written relics.

### **C. Efforts in The Revitalization of Pegon Arabic Script**

As a written cultural heritage that has historical value for the community, revitalization is an important effort to maintain the Pegon Arabic script so that it remains sustainable. Various efforts are made as a form of awareness of the existence of a good heritage to be preserved. It doesn't just rely on one step, but includes various initiatives ranging from the scope carried out by Islamic boarding schools to digitalization to make it known to the wider community. From the results of the research obtained, the form of revitalization of the Pegon Arabic script can be pointed out as follows:

#### **1. Hold training**

A training program is a step taken with the aim of increasing a person's or target student's knowledge and skills in a particular field. Not only the transfer of knowledge, the importance of training also lies in creating a space for discussion and collaboration that can give rise to innovation. Training can have a significant impact if carried out sustainably and on target. In addition, training can form a more responsive mental attitude to make it an important strategy in building adaptive human resources in the modern era (Kamil, 2003)

Training is one form of strategy in an effort to preserve a cultural tradition, including the Pegon Arabic script. Through the implementation of training, knowledge that was initially only known to a limited extent can be expanded and passed down from generation to generation systematically. In the context of the Pegon Arabic script, training is highly recommended to overcome the gap in cultural literacy which is currently dominated by Latin script and the declining interest of the younger generation in local heritage. Training can be designed with an interesting approach and in accordance with the context of the times so as to create curiosity and interest in learning it.

The strategies needed for training to achieve maximum results can be designed and prepared in a planned and measurable manner. In learning training such as reading and writing Pegon Arabic script, it can be done with the steps implemented by Rahmawati & Negara (2021) in their research,

- a) Preparing pre-activities, namely being able to identify needs in advance, such as conducting an assessment. This step can help understand the gaps in skills and knowledge of the target. After that, you can systematically compile materials according to field needs. The material can be in the form of an introduction to the basics of the Pegon Arabic script such as the history of its origins, it can also explain the urgency of the Pegon Arabic script, and so on. In this step, you can also prepare the right method, either direct practice, group discussion forums, and so on.
- b) In the core activity, the facilitator must deliver the material that has been prepared using the best method. It is also recommended to use relevant media to support effective training. After delivering the material, the target students can be directed to practice the theory they have learned. Practice can be done individually with the guidance of the facilitator.

c) Post-activities, namely periodic evaluations and feedback that can be given to the target students or training participants. This step aims to determine the effectiveness of the training and can also provide suggestions for future improvements.

Training can be held anywhere, either Islamic boarding schools or schools or even not tied to an agency. With the right strategy, this training will not only be a forum for transferring knowledge, but also a process to encourage sustainable human empowerment.

## 2. Create Learning Media

Another important strategy in preserving the Pegon Arabic script is to develop creative and innovative learning media. Media is an intermediary that can convey messages, stimulate students' thoughts, feelings, and desires so that the learning process is encouraged in them (Sidharta, 2005). Media as a tool that facilitates the teaching and learning process to make it more interesting. In today's era, media can be developed both digitally and non-digitally. Both certainly have their own advantages and disadvantages.

In learning the Pegon Arabic script, media can be used as a supporting factor to make it more interesting to learn. In an effort to revitalize it, the use of learning media can be digital or non-digital. Digital media is also a good strategic suggestion in today's technological era, one of which is by developing applications. An application is a software unit that is created to serve the needs of several activities such as games, community services, advertising, commerce, and others (Pramana, 2012).

Application development is also a strategic step in responding to the challenges of preserving the Pegon Arabic script in the digital era. With a fun and educational approach, and the practicality of being used by anyone, anywhere, anytime, this kind of application will be able to reach the younger generation who are more familiar with digital devices. One of the applications regarding the Pegon Arabic script that can be found on the PlayStore is Pegon-Glyph. This application was developed with the aim of accommodating users to learn the Pegon Arabic script. The Pegon-Glyph contains materials, exercises, games, and writing Pegon.



*Figure 5. Pegon-Glyph Application*

In addition, this application can also be an alternative learning tool in schools, Islamic boarding schools, and the community, thus supporting the integration of Pegon script in formal and non-formal education systems. Application development not only encourages preservation, but also creates an adaptive and sustainable learning ecosystem. Other examples of digital media are as follows:

- Interactive animated videos, can utilize YouTube or create individuals that can contain interesting material about Pegon Arabic script.
- Interactive PowerPoint, can be used so that the material is delivered more freshly because it is not monotonous.
- Utilization of online websites such as Quizizz, Wordwall, Kahoot, etc., can be used for interactive quizzes to make them more exciting and not boring.
- Digital modules (e-Books/flipbooks), can be in the form of Pegon Arabic script material which is packaged more practically and can be shared with anyone, anytime and anywhere, thus supporting efforts to revitalize the Pegon Arabic script.
- And others

While simple non-digital media can be:

- Pegon Arabic script posters or Pegon symbols, can be used for learning demonstrations.
- Flashcards or memory cards, can be in the form of 2-sided cards, one containing Pegon Arabic script and the other side containing examples in word form, can be given pictures to make it more interesting.
- Pegon Flip Chart, which is a media
- Illustrated story books or comics, can contain local stories with Pegon Arabic script narratives so as to foster interest in reading.
- And others

Revitalization efforts in the form of presenting this learning media can make the process of preserving Pegon Arabic script not only easy to access, but also more interesting and adaptive to the development of the times. Thus, creating creative and contextual media is one of the strategic steps to preserve Pegon Arabic script in the midst of globalization.

### 3. Manuscript Preservation

Ancient manuscripts and classical books are examples of manuscripts of the Islamic intellectual heritage of the Nusantara. Ancient manuscripts are identity, pride and a very valuable cultural heritage. Socio-culturally, manuscripts contain values that are still relevant to today's life, so it is a shared responsibility to reveal the 'pearls' contained in them (Rodin, 2020).

Preserving texts in Pegon Arabic script manuscripts is one effort to maintain what is in them by copying (backing up) to other media, so that at least the contents of the manuscript's treasures can still be maintained even though the physical manuscript is destroyed due to

damage or disaster. In research (Amin, 2011) preservation of ancient manuscripts can be done in several ways:

- First, digitization. Namely by using a camera or scanner to digitize a manuscript or document. Digitization efforts also open up wider access for researchers, students, and the general public.
- Second, recopying. This is an effort made so that the information contained in an item can be stored and the information contained therein can be accessed even though its physical condition has been damaged or lost.
- Third, translated. By translating a manuscript, it is hoped that people who cannot read Arabic or Javanese script can still access and read a manuscript. Translation of a text is needed so that people or information seekers can study a text even though they cannot read the script and literary works written.

Thus, these various efforts are considered very important to be carried out because the manuscript itself can be used as a guideline for society both now and in the future and so that the existence of this manuscript is maintained and not lost in time. Thus, this manuscript can be utilized in the long term and as an effort to advance Indonesian culture.

## CONCLUSIONS (الاستنتاج)

The Pegon Arabic script is a local cultural heritage that not only functions as a means of communication, but also as a symbol of identity and intellectual resistance in the history of the spread of Islam and is also a trace of Arab civilization in the Nusantara. From the results of the study, it can be concluded that Pegon has an important role in education, preaching, and the heritage of Arab and Javanese cultural acculturation. However, in the midst of globalization and modernization, the existence of this script faces serious challenges in the form of minimal regeneration and minimal space for utilization.

Therefore, various forms of revitalization are needed so that the Pegon script remains sustainable and relevant. The strategies found include Pegon script training, especially for the younger generation, the creation of innovative learning media, both digital and non-digital, the digitization of classical manuscripts, and the development of interactive technology-based applications. These steps are expected to not only be able to maintain the sustainability of the Pegon script, but also strengthen cultural awareness in modern society.

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