

## THE METAPHYSICS OF PAN-ISLAMISM: A PHILOSOPHICAL DECONSTRUCTION OF IRANIAN *IRFĀN-I SIYĀSĪ* AND THE EPISTEMIC VEIL OF INDONESIAN MODERATION

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**Abstract:** *This article deconstructs the contemporary crisis of Pan-Islamism, which has undergone a desacralization from the metaphysical essence of unity (waḥdah) into a pragmatic instrument of the nation-state. The research objective is to re-evaluate the spiritual foundation of Islamic political solidarity amidst global secular hegemony. Utilizing the framework of theopolitics of the absolute and neo-Sufism, this study performs a comparative-ontological analysis of two polar orientations: Iran’s ontology of resistance and Indonesia’s epistemology of moderation. This study asserts that Indonesia represents a desacralization crisis, where its moderation model acts as an epistemic hijab that reduces Islam’s transcendental energy into sociological harmony compromised by Western-liberal narratives. This decline is analyzed through the malady of al-wahn—excessive love for materiality—which erodes the ummah’s ontological courage. Conversely, Iran actualizes irfān-i siyāsī, a transformative mysticism grounded in waḥdah al-wujūd and futuwah, integrating tazkiyah al-nafs with revolutionary struggle. The primary finding affirms that authentic Pan-Islamism is a logical consequence of theological negation (lā ilāha), suggesting that true Sufism is not an escapist retreat but zuhud-activism—a manifesto of liberation against modern idols of power. This spirit resonates with Malāmattiyah-anarchism, a chivalrous courage (al-fatā) to resist structural injustice. The conclusion offers a re-orientation of Pan-Islamism rooted in ontological sovereignty, restoring politics as a sacred stage for Divine justice through a fusion of inner depth and concrete socio-political action.*

**Keywords:** *Indonesia-Iran, Metaphysics, Pan-Islamism, Philosophical Deconstruction, Theopolitics of the Absolute.*

**Abstrak:** Artikel ini mendekonstruksi krisis Pan-Islamisme kontemporer yang telah mengalami desakralisasi dari esensi metafisika kesatuan (*waḥdah*) menjadi instrumen pragmatis negara-bangsa.

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Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengevaluasi kembali fondasi spiritual solidaritas politik Islam di tengah hegemoni sekuler global. Dengan menggunakan kerangka teopolitik absolut dan neo-Sufisme, studi ini melakukan analisis komparatif-ontologis terhadap dua kutub orientasi: ontologi perlawanan Iran dan epistemologi moderasi Indonesia. Penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa Indonesia merepresentasikan krisis desakralisasi, di mana model moderasinya berperan sebagai hijab epistemik yang mereduksi energi transendental Islam menjadi harmoni sosiologis yang terkompromi oleh narasi liberal-Barat. Penurunan ini dianalisis melalui penyakit *al-wahn*—kecintaan berlebihan pada materi—yang melunturkan keberanian ontologis umat. Sebaliknya, Iran mengaktualisasikan *‘urfān-i siyāsi*, sebuah mistisisme transformatif yang berakar pada *waḥdah al-wujūd* dan *futuwwah*, dengan mengintegrasikan *tazkiyah al-nafs* ke dalam perjuangan revolusioner. Temuan utama menegaskan bahwa Pan-Islamisme autentik adalah konsekuensi logis dari negasi teologis (*lā ilāha*), yang menunjukkan bahwa Sufisme sejati bukanlah pelarian eskapis melainkan *zubud-aktivisme*—sebuah manifesto pembebasan melawan berhala-berhala kekuasaan modern. Spirit ini beresonansi dengan *Malāmatiyyah* anarkisme, sebuah keberanian ksatria (*al-fatā*) untuk melawan ketidakadilan struktural. Kesimpulan penelitian menawarkan reorientasi Pan-Islamisme yang berakar pada kedaulatan ontologis, mengembalikan politik sebagai panggung suci bagi keadilan ilahi melalui perpaduan kedalaman batin dan aksi sosio-politik nyata.

**Kata-kata Kunci:** *Dekonstruksi Filosofis, Indonesia-Iran, Metafisika, Pan-Islamisme, Teopolitik Absolut.*

## Introduction

The discourse on the Islamic world’s response to global hegemony reflects an ontological anxiety that goes beyond the reduction of state behavior in conventional political studies, as it touches on deeper layers of justice, global order, and the crisis of Western-centered neoliberal governance (Karingayi 2025, 7; Ali 2022, 15; Pochta 2024, 14). Since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Pan-Islamism has emerged as a radical project in response to European colonialism and the decline of the Ottoman Caliphate, calling for the unity of the people and an alternative order that transcends the boundaries of the nation-state (Devji 2024, 504). Within this horizon, Pan-Islamism connects the imagination of a unified *umma* with cosmopolitan visions and trans-territorial solidarity—from the Afghānī call and the *khilāfat* movement to contemporary articulations in revivalist and global Islamist discourses (Azlan 2022, 213).

Philosophically, the principle of *tawhīd* affirms absolute unity (*waḥdah*) and positions supreme sovereignty in the hands of Allah, thus reorienting the concept of human sovereignty and responsibility within the framework of the *khilāfab/istikhlāf* and the ethical community of the *ummah*. In a political-moral reading, the negation of all forms of tyrannical authority other than Allah makes *tawhīd* a source of ethics of liberation, transnational solidarity, and critique of modern global hegemony (Chande 2023, 284). This determination to deny material authority that demands human subordination is what inspired the ideal of *ittiḥād al-umma* as a moral unity that transcends ethnicity, territoriality, and the nation-state (Abbas et al. 2025, 905–16).

However, in the modern landscape, this transcendental vision has suffered a profound degradation; Pan-Islamism and the imagination of the *ummah* have

often been reduced to particular strategies operating within the framework of Westphalian sovereignty, power calculations, and state agendas, thus obscuring its emancipatory potential and placing it in an ambivalent relationship with nationalism, global governance, and Western hegemony (Yıldız and Çitak 2022, 6). In the contemporary horizon, Indonesia stands as a manifest representation of this de-sacralized crisis of Pan-Islamism, where Islamic politics is increasingly managed through state-led narratives of moderation and controlled pluralism rather than a robust transnational critique of global order (Krismono et al. 2025, 123; Inayatillah et al. 2022, 222; Qodir 2024, 299–320).

Through its epistemology of moderation (*wasatiyyah*), Indonesia seeks to synthesize Islamic values with a pluralistic democratic public sphere, institutionalizing religious moderation and Islam *wasatiyyah* in education, bureaucracy, and public discourse as a middle-path Islam compatible with Pancasila and diversity (Perdana and Abdullah 2025, 208–9; Barton et al. 2021, 397). Yet, when viewed through the lens of absolute theopolitics, this moderation reveals a decline in Islam's transcendental critical power, as moderation discourse is frequently instrumentalized by the state to curate compliant religious actors, marginalize oppositional movements, and legitimize selective repression in the name of stability and national unity (Inayatillah et al. 2022, 214).

This phenomenon resonates with a pathology *akin* to *al-wahn*—an excessive attachment to the material world (*ḥubb al-dunyā*) that, in political practice, appears as sensitivity to international image, fear of being associated with radical Islam, and anxiety over economic marginalization or loss of foreign confidence, which constrains bolder Islamic critiques of global structures. Consequently, Islamic energy is often reduced to a functional sociological harmony, framed within security and counter-extremism narratives of Western-liberal provenance, where moderation is celebrated primarily as a tool for managing polarization, identity conflict, and global terrorism fears rather than for challenging injustice (Sholeh 2023, 136–37).

At this point, moderation no longer functions as a genuine mediator (*wasat*); instead, it risks transforming into an Epistemic Veil that obscures the *ummah's* perception of global structural oppression for the sake of domestic material stability and international acceptability (Krismono et al. 2025, 124; Inayatillah et al. 2022, 213; Qodir 2024, 299–320). In sharp contrast to this stagnation, post-1979 Iran projected an ontology of resistance that drew the spiritual authority of *wilāyah al-faqīh* to the heart of political axioms, so that the sovereignty of the *faqīh* was understood as an extension of the *imām's* authority within the state space and not merely a formal juridical doctrine (Sieg 2021, 281–314; Irawan et al. 2025, 97–98). This inner dimension of *wilāyah al-faqīh* is deeply rooted in the *irfān* Shia tradition, which absorbed the legacy of Ibn 'Arabī, Suhrawardī, and especially Mullā Ṣadrā (Bazzi 2022, 115–17; Machlis 2022, 1–3).

In this horizon, resistance is not merely a geopolitical strategy, but an existential mode that is integrated with the narrative of the regime's ontological security and identity, as seen in the construction of the axis of resistance, which is interpreted

as going beyond physical security calculations to an existential and emotional justification for the Islamic Republic (Cingöz et al. 2024, 6–10; Krylov 2022, 19–23). Through *asfār* of Mulla Ṣadrā—especially the *ḥarakah jawhariyyah* and *asālat al-wujūd*—as well as the doctrine of *waḥdah al-wujūd* of Ibn ‘Arabī, which asserts that all creatures are only a *tajallī* of Divine reality (Usman 2022, 154), global injustice is read as *zulumāt* (darkness), which is ontologically fragile and invalid in the face of absolute *wujūd* (Mirzarakhimov 2025, 99–112).

From here, the ethos of *zuhd*-activism was born as asceticism that does not withdraw from history but denies the ultimate claims of superpowers, grounded in the belief that only Allah as *al-Ḥaqq* possesses true sovereignty (Mirzarakhimov 2025, 105). This philosophical tradition of *‘irfān* presents politics as a sacred stage for the actualization of Divine justice, where the purification of the soul (*tazkiyah al-nafs*) and the formation of a spiritual habitus are understood as prerequisites and fuel for the revolutionary movement (*ḥarakah*) towards a just order (Bazzi 2022, 115–16; Zaprulkhan et al. 2025, 220–24; Thibdeau 2025, 18–20).

Previous studies have extensively dissected the role of socio-religious organizations in Indonesia and the revolutionary memory of Iran in empirical foreign policy, including analyses of Islamic populism, state–Islam relations, and the choreography of revolutionary piety and war memory as a form of civil religion (Yusupova 2022, 199–203). Nevertheless, a significant literature gap remains at the level of philosophical depth: no work has dialectically confronted Iran’s theosophical ontology of resistance with Indonesia’s state-managed discourse of religious moderation within a single framework of absolute theopolitics, where questions of being (*wujūd*), sovereignty, and *ummah* unity are primary rather than merely contextual (Manan et al. 2025, 180).

Analyses of Pan-Islamism largely focus on its historical evolution, geopolitical functions, and organizational forms—whether as imperial ideology, transnational movement, or interstate society—while rarely probing the inner spiritual ontology of the *ummah* grounded in *tawhīd* and *millah* as a supra-territorial identity (Barton et al. 2021, 397; Saramifar 2022, 1208–10). Without a sustained dialogue with grand traditions of Islamic political philosophy—such as the philosopher-jurist leadership in *al-Fārābī’s al-Madīna al-Fāḍila* (Syukri et al. 2025, 489–92), and later syntheses of *tawhīd*, *umma wāḥida*, and political order—Pan-Islamism risks being read merely as a modern ideological commodity or security problem, rather than as a logical consequence of the maturity of *tawhīd* and the search for a *millah*-based unity that can challenge the nation-state paradigm (Supandi et al. 2025, 120–23; Gökçe 2024, 2–4; Alharbi 2025, 1–3).

This research seeks to reinterpret Pan-Islamism by challenging the assumption that moderation (*wasatiyyah*)—as promoted in policy and security discourses—is the sole or final answer to the crisis of the Islamic world (Es et al. 2021, 161–68). Utilizing the frameworks of absolute theopolitics and neo-Sufism, the study adopts an ontological-comparative analysis within a qualitative phenomenological approach, resonant with recent work that rereads *tawhīd* as a liberative paradigm and critiques its reduction to ritual or statist formalism (Saffari, 2023, 1–3).

Philosophical texts, state policies, and theopolitical discourses are treated as epistemic units of analysis to trace how the metaphysical idea of Unity (*tawhīd/umma wāḥida*) decays when subordinated to nation-state pragmatism—similar to critiques of Pan-Islamism’s cooptation by state interests and its inability to transcend Westphalian frames (Hassan et al. 2025, 193–94).

In this light, Indonesian epistemology moderation is read not only as a normative project of peacebuilding and pluralism, but also as a contested field where moderation functions as statecraft, soft power, and security management (Subchi et al. 2022, 6; Pahrudin et al. 2025, 16–18; Rasyid et al. 2022, 449–51). Against this, the research dialectically confronts Iran’s theosophical ontology of resistance—informed by *tawhīd* liberation thought, Shariati’s and Khomeini’s reworkings of monotheism for anti-imperial struggle, and transnational Pan-Islamist imaginaries—as a manifestation of futuwwa and Divine sovereignty in opposition to global hegemony (Saffari 2023, 10). By juxtaposing Iran’s resistance-oriented theopolitics with Indonesia’s moderation-oriented governance of piety, the study seeks to expose the epistemic and ontological stakes of how unity is framed, governed, and either desacralized or revitalized in contemporary Muslim politics (Ridha et al. 2025, 168–73; Es et al. 2021, 161–68).

This article offers a re-orientation of Pan-Islamism grounded in ontological sovereignty—where *tawhīd* reshapes notions of power, order, and responsibility—and in the ethic of *Malāmatiyyah* like spiritual chivalry (*al-fatā*) capable of resisting structural injustice by cutting attachments to hegemonic worldly systems (Yıldız and Çitak 2022, 201; Abbas et al. 2025, 910; Karingayi, 2025). Recent critiques show that much contemporary Pan-Islamism remains power and hegemony-oriented, offering only a change in rather than a change of the international, with little clarification of what Islamic justice entails (Yıldız and Çitak 2022, 249; Devji 2024, 505). In contrast, Sufi notions of *futuwwa/jawānmardī* articulate a chivalric ideal marked by self-sacrifice, generosity, justice, and radical detachment from ego and status, positioning the *fatā* as a lover of God whose virtues have profound social and ethical implications (Yunus and Ramli 2025, 10–12).

Concurrently, renewed discussions of *zuhd*, *maḥabbah*, and *tazkiyah* highlight ascetic detachment and divine love as resources for addressing moral degradation, elite corruption, and social injustice, where *zuhd* curbs domination by wealth and power while enabling ethical responsibility and community engagement (Zaprul Khan et al. 2025, 223; Wahid et al. 2023, 265). Studies of Islamic political thought and leadership further argue that *tawhīd*, *khilāfab/istikhlāf*, *‘adl*, and spiritual intelligence can reframe sovereignty as accountability before God and orient politics toward a just, humane order beyond narrow statist interests (Ruhullah and Ushama 2025, 60; Abbas et al. 2025, 914; Karingayi, 2025, 3).

In light of these currents, this study asserts that the theopolitical orientation most faithful to the spirit of *tawhīd* is a resistance rooted in mystical depth through socio-political *zuhd*—an interiorized freedom from hegemonic desires that transforms *ma‘rifah* into concrete action for the realization of absolute justice on earth, integrating spiritual purification with structured struggle for social

transformation (Ruhullah and Ushama 2025, 62; Abbas et al. 2025, 906–10; Karingayi 2025, 3–4).

## Deconstructing the Metaphysics of Pan-Islamism: From Transcendental Unity to Ideological Fragmentation

The genealogy of Pan-Islamism in the 19th century is often read merely as a sociological response to Western colonialism and the decline of Muslim polities (Irfan et al. 2024, 90; Supandi et al. 2025, 123). However, when scrutinized through the lens of absolute theopolitics, this phenomenon appears as a manifestation of an acute ontological and epistemological crisis within the Islamic *ummah*. It marks the moment where the sacred unity of *millah* began to fracture under the desacralizing logic of nationalism and the modern state. The collapse of the Ottoman Empire—stigmatized as the Sick Man of Europe—signaled not only military or administrative failure but the erosion of a civilizational project that had once articulated Islamic unity (*wahḍah*) as a trans-territorial, metaphysical paradigm (Hadziq and Muzadi 2025, 90–98; Supandi et al. 2025, 126–28).

As traditions of *ḥikmah* and classical philosophy receded under the pressure of materialism and positivism, reformers diagnosed a crisis of thought that demanded a reconstruction of *ijtihād* and Islamic rationality, rather than mere institutional adjustment (Irfan et al. 2024, 102). In this vacuum, Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī advanced Pan-Islamism and Jāmi‘ah Islāmiyyah as a religio-ontological program to reawaken the *ummah*. By insisting that only politics imbued with religion could liberate Muslims, al-Afghānī effectively sought to bridge the gap between *‘irfān* (gnosis) and *siyāsī* (politics), transforming the spiritual core of Islam into a revolutionary force (Polosin 2024, 120–40; Irfan et al. 2024, 90–91; Yusupova 2022, 199–209).

Philosophically, al-Afghānī’s Pan-Islamism functions as an Axiom of Theological Negation; a total refusal (*lā*) of colonial domination and dynastic despotism to re-center Divine sovereignty as the sole ultimate authority (Polosin 2024, 120–40). His call for Jāmi‘ah Islāmiyyah rested on the belief that unity must be grounded in an active *‘aqīdah* and a return to the transcendental roots of the Qur’an, rather than territorial nationalism (Irfan et al. 2024, 91; Polosin 2024, 120–40). Yet later trajectories, particularly in Egyptian reformism, show a shift from this explicitly political-metaphysical activism toward the institutional rationalism of Muḥammad ‘Abduh. This reconfiguration diluted the transnational project into a series of legal-theological modernizations, creating an epistemic veil that began to domesticate Islam’s revolutionary energy (Irfan et al. 2024, 97).

Contemporary analyses reinforce this sense of fragmentation. Modern Islamist Pan-Islamism often operates as a synthetic conception of the international, combining the ideal of *ummah* with conventional balance-of-power logics. It rarely questions the secular sovereignty of the nation-state, becoming power-oriented rather than truly emancipatory. This shift illustrates how Pan-Islamism has frequently remained an unfulfilled ideal, lacking clear institutional embodiment

and often being constrained by Western structures, which siphon away its original anti-imperialist and spiritual thrust (Supandi et al. 2025, 121).

This inner crisis is deepened by the malady of *al-wahn*—a debilitating attachment to material comfort (*ḥubb al-dunyā*) and political expediency that erodes the ontological courage required to resist global hegemony. Such tendencies have facilitated the rise of fragmented national Muslim identities, where nationalism and sectarianism act as idols that obstruct *millah*-based consciousness and impede Islamic unity. Pan-Islamic institutions, once conceived as vehicles of liberation, have been progressively weakened by state-centered forces and ethnic rivalries (Supandi et al. 2025, 123–27).

In the Nusantara context, the universal ideal of *waḥdah* has often been negotiated within frameworks of Islam Nusantara and national ideology (Pancasila). These offer models of harmony but can also, when over-politicized, channel Islamic aspirations into nation-state narratives, sidelining transnational concerns (Abbas et al. 2025, 906-907; Fatmal et al. 2025, 167). Here, religious moderation risks becoming a hijab (epistemic veil); while culture-friendly, its deployment often serves to domesticate spiritual projects into the security agendas of the Western-Liberal narrative, reducing the transcendental energy of Islam to mere sociological compromise (Fatmal et al. 2025, 168).

From a metaphysical perspective, this history proves that *tawḥīd* as transcendental Unity risks withering into an empty slogan when detached from anti-hegemonic praxis. Pan-Islamism is vulnerable to desacralization when recast merely as an instrument of foreign policy or reactive neo-Pan-Islamism entangled with Islamophobia discourses (Fuad 2025, 237). Re-imagining Islamic unity today requires recovering an integrated paradigm—a Neo-Sufi activism that can overcome political sectarianism and cultural fragmentation, re-anchoring solidarity in a sovereign metaphysical vision rather than in short-term material calculations (Yıldız and Çitak 2022, 256).

### **The Ontology of Resistance: Theopolitical Configuration and the Doctrine of *Wilāyah al-Faqīh* as the Unveiling of Hegemonic Hijab**

In the discourse of 21st-century Islamic renewal, Iran's position cannot be understood merely through the dry lens of political realism, but as a Resistance paradigm that fuses foreign policy, identity, and theology in a counter-hegemonic frame (Tari 2025, 359–67; Karmo 2025, 31–32). Instead, it must be viewed as the radical heir to the spirit of resistance in Pan-Islamism, which has undergone an ontological transformation into a project of regional order against Western domination and its local allies (Rāzānī and Mohammadzādeh 2021, 91–113; Adisönmez et al. 2022, 91–107). While al-Afghani constructed a narrative of resistance as a response to physical colonialism, post-1979 Iran has constructed an ontology of resistance as a total rejection of Western hegemony, recasting itself as the vanguard of *mustad'afīn* and as an anti-imperialist alternative for the *ummah* (Brew 2023, 193–94).

Under the doctrine of *wilāyah al-faqīh*, the state is no longer viewed as a secular

entity detached from celestial authority, but as a theo-political system in which the jurist-guardian embodies the unity of religion and state and claims ultimate guardianship over law and sovereignty (Wastnidge and Mabon 2023, 954–71; Arjmand et al. 2021, 98–114). Iran practically revives al-Farābī’s imagination of *al-Madīna al-Fāḍila* (the Virtuous City) insofar as legitimacy is tied to Islamic virtue and knowledge rather than technocratic competence, even as *wilāyah al-faqīh* itself is a modern, contested construction within post-revolutionary Islamist debates (Goldstein 2023, 252). In this context, the confrontation against global unipolar powers is a theopolitical negation rooted in the maturity of *tawhīd*—an ontological courage to say no to domination—articulated in Iran’s resistance-oriented foreign policy as a paradigm of dealing with domination and securing revolutionary Islamic identity and independence.

The power asymmetry within the axis of resistance (*muḥawar al-muqāwamah*), stretching from Lebanon to Yemen, philosophically reflects a kind of substantial motion in which Iran relies on a long-term, networked alliance rather than symmetric military strength (Cingöz et al. 2024, 4). Iran does not resist through a calculation of equivalent frontal material power, but through a network of collective consciousness in which the axis of resistance operates simultaneously as a strategic alliance, security community, and ideational network. This network is a manifestation of a liberation theology of *mustad’afin*, visible in Iran’s self-presentation as champion of oppressed nations and in its emotional identification with Shia communities and anti-imperialist causes (Brew 2023, 194; Karmo 2025, 32).

This dialectic of resistance is further solidified when viewed through the lens of a unifying religious vision that transcends borders, as the Axis articulates a shared normative vision of regional order (*nomos*) that cuts across national and sectarian lines (Pirsalami et al. 2023, 531–47). For this axis, the unity of the *ummah* (*waḥda*) is not a pragmatic diplomatic alliance but a transnational project that blends pan-Islamic solidarity with anti-imperialist resistance and claims to legitimate leadership of the *ummah* (Shabana 2022, 12). Since there is no true reality except Allah, any claim to ultimate sovereignty other than His—including Western hegemony and regional status quo arrangements—is discursively rendered illegitimate and must be negated through concrete acts of resistance against Israel, US presence, and their partners (Pirsalami et al. 2023, 531–47; Cingöz et al. 2024, 9). The unveiling of this hegemonic hijab thus triggers a sharp theopolitical irony: while Iran frames its path as sacrifice-centered, justice-seeking resistance, much of the Muslim world is portrayed as sliding into normalization and accommodation with hegemonic powers under the banner of stability and development.

Iran’s sharp critique of the compromise-prone tendencies of Gulf monarchies is rooted in the argument that independence (*istiklāl*) is an absolute prerequisite for the sovereignty of *tawhīd* and that reliance on Western security umbrellas erodes Islamic authenticity and regional autonomy (Fuchs 2025, 7–32). From this perspective, acts of normalization or compliance with global security narratives are manifest embodiments of modern *al-wahn*—a descent into fear-based politics

that subordinates justice and *ummah*-wide solidarity to regime survival and material prosperity (Shabana 2022, 3). Conversely, Iran positions itself within a theopolitical posture of defiance, willing to endure sanctions and isolation to sustain ontological security, revolutionary identity, and its claim to lead a counter-hegemonic camp (Karmo 2025, 48–50).

This position is fortified by narratives that sacralize resistance and martyrdom and by constitutional commitments to support the oppressed and oppose domination as central goals of the Islamic Republic's foreign policy (Brew 2023, 194). For Iran, spiritual purification (*tazkiyah al-nafs*) is not merely a private ascetic rite but an ethical foundation for just governance, as Khomeini's political thought explicitly links moral self-discipline, Islamic ethics, and the establishment of a just order under *wilāyah al-faqīh* (Arjmand et al. 2021, 99–118; Goldstein 2023, 253). Nevertheless, this ontology of resistance continues to grapple with internal tensions between mystical idealism and the reality of geopolitical survival, as shown by crises of ontological security when foreign policy choices seem to contradict the regime's anti-Western identity narrative (Thodika 2023, 4–6).

The Look to the East strategy through the Russia-China axis indicates that, in the theopolitical arena, transcendental idealism must often negotiate with the logic of multipolarity and economic necessity, sometimes sidelining other layers of Iran's identity (Rāzānī and Mohammadzādeh 2021, 91–113; Namazi 2025, 522–27). However, such negotiations are framed as metaphysical resilience; attempts to preserve the Resistance paradigm and Islamic identity while adapting to changing material constraints, rather than as simple abandonment of anti-hegemonic commitments (Karmo 2025, 48–50). Iran attempts to prove that ontological sovereignty can be maintained amidst sanctions and military pressure, as long as the *ummah* possesses the courage to reject domination and as long as coalition-building within the axis of resistance continues to be anchored in shared memories of injustice and religiously inflected solidarity (Karmo 2025, 51–52; Cingöz et al. 2024, 12).

As a synthesis, Iran's current position represents a radical transformation of the Pan-Islamic dream, reconfiguring it as a state-centered but transnational project that seeks to make politics once more a sacred stage for the realization of justice and resistance to domination (Tari 2025, 359–67). If the 19th century was about finding a cure for the *ummah*'s ailments under colonial rule, the 21st century for Iran is about proving that political mysticism—or *irfān-i siyāsī*—can function as a governing paradigm in the face of secular global power and internal disenchantment (Thodika 2023, 7–8; Goldstein 2023, 250–54). Through the integration of inner depth and concrete praxis, Iran offers a model of socio-political resistance that links national identity, foreign policy, and *mustad'afīn*-centered discourse, even as alternative Islamist and post-Islamist currents inside Iran question the concentration of power in *wilāyah al-faqīh* and propose new ways of being Islamic and modern (Khomeini 2000, 25–28).

Ultimately, this resistance is not just about changing power structures, but about unveiling the hijabs of materialism and hegemonic order to restore human

dignity under God's sovereignty—an aspiration whose realization remains constantly negotiated through sanctions, rival regional visions, and competing Islamic discourses (Thodika 2023, 4–6; Rāzānī and Mohammadzādeh 2021, 91–113).

### Re-Imagining Pan-Islamism: A Manifesto of Absolute Theopolitics in the Dialectics of Mysticism and Power

Discussions on contemporary Pan-Islamism necessitate a radical return to the fundamental question of the nature of power in Islam, particularly how metaphysical conceptions of justice and sovereignty are articulated vis-à-vis modern state structures and human-rights-oriented discourses (Syukri et al. 2025, 510–11; Machlis 2022, 1–2). Through the lens of absolute theopolitics, the comparison between the Iranian resistance model and Indonesian moderation transcends mere sociological inquiry; it constitutes a metaphysical trial of the political realities within the Muslim world, juxtaposing a resistance-centered governmental Shiism with *wasatiyyah* projects that seek equilibrium between religion, state, and plural society (Azzuhri 2022, 23–24; Didyk 2024, 86). This study identifies a radical demand for the redefinition of Sufism, shifting from an escapist-individual practice confined within *ṭarīqah* walls to a framework of *zuhud* activism, in dialogue with contemporary debates on *tasawwuf* as an ethical basis for institutional reform and peacebuilding (Mahatma 2023, 211).

Empirical evidence demonstrates that the integration of *ʿirfān* within Iran's military and symbolic command structures—such as the doctrine and culture of martyrdom within the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and broader war commemoration regimes—has successfully transformed spirituality into political momentum and civic piety, while also being contested and re-signified across generations (Azzuhri 2022, 28; Pahrudin et al. 2025, 22; Saramifar 2021, 542–50; Alagha 2023, 325). In this mystical dimension, politics functions as an instrument for purifying the public sphere from the idols of global hegemony that demand human submission over the absolute sovereignty of God, echoing projects that blend *ʿirfān*, law, and revolutionary ideology into a single horizon of *al-ḥikmah al-mutaʿāliyah* and resistance (Azzuhri 2022, 29–32; Ghobadzadeh, 2022, 8; Abrar 2025, 276).

This ontological courage is deeply rooted in the dialectics of the negation of *tawḥīd*, derived from the axiom *lā ilāha*, which in Ṣadrian and Farābīan paradigms marks the soul's ascent from multiplicity and fear-driven social contracts toward rational, ethical, and spiritual perfection (Syukri et al. 2025, 513; Ghobadzadeh 2022, 2–3; Abrar 2025, 279). Speculatively and philosophically, Pan-Islamism is not merely a product of history, but a logical consequence of the word *lā* (no)—an absolute metaphysical protest against all tyrannical authorities and unjust orders that subordinate divine justice to material power (Azzuhri 2022, 24; Baizhuma et al. 2025, 188; Didyk 2024, 88). Without the courage to negate unipolar hegemony, the stage of *illā Allāh* (except God) within a political system remains unattainable, as legal and institutional reforms risk remaining trapped within pragmatic

calculations rather than a teleology of *sa'ādah* and existential perfection (Syukri et al. 2025, 514–15).

Iran applies Mullā Ṣadra's logic of substantial motion (*al-ḥarakah al-jawhariyyah*) by reorienting its geopolitics into a collective journey of the soul (*al-safar min al-khalq ilā al-ḥaqq*), where resistance, sacrifice, and ontological security are framed as stages in a continuous process of becoming rather than static doctrinal positions (Ghobadzadeh, 2022, 3–4; Abrar 2025, 274). Consequently, support for the axis of resistance in Lebanon and Palestine is not merely an expansion of influence; it is articulated as an endeavor to liberate humanity from the shackles of global materialism, inscribing the Karbala paradigm and *mustad'afin* discourse into transnational solidarities and visual regimes of martyrdom (Baizhuma et al. 2025, 188–95).

Conversely, an analysis of Indonesia reveals an Epistemic Failure or entropy of Pan-Islamic ideals due to the pathology of *al-wahn*, visible in the way *wasatiyyah* is institutionalized as a state policy of moderation and deradicalization, privileging stability and coexistence over systemic negation of global injustices (Sya'bani 2021, 1–3; Zalnur et al. 2023, 589–602). Although moderation (*wasatiyyah*) receives international acclaim for its domestic stability and peace-building potential, it loses its negating power when measured against absolute theopolitics, as its middle-path methodology is designed to domesticate extremities within an existing order rather than to reconfigure that order ontologically (Sya'bani 2024, 1–3). Indonesia's dependence on global economic structures—evidenced by its eagerness to integrate into OECD-linked frameworks and its embrace of global governance language in economic and legal reforms—demonstrates the dominance of material pragmatism over ontological sovereignty and *maqāṣid*-based re-imagination of power (Usman 2022, 145).

Metaphysically, this condition reflects a dense accumulation of internal veils (*ḥijāb*) that obscure the telos of *al-Madīna al-Fāḍila*, as Indonesian Islamic thought often invokes classical philosophy and *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* for incremental reform while avoiding the radical ethical hierarchy and truth-orientation embedded in Farābī and Ṣadrian models (Syukri et al. 2025, 510–15). When confronted with al-Farābī's concept of *al-Madīna al-Fāḍila*, Indonesia appears trapped within the characteristics of *al-mudun al-dāllah* (the Errant Cities) because it prioritizes superficial sociological harmony and procedural democracy over substantive truth and virtue-centered leadership. The fear of losing material access (*ḥubb al-dunyā*) positions Indonesia as an object or a bridge for hegemonic interests—functioning as *dār al-'ahd wa al-shahādah* within a global capitalist order rather than as a sovereign metaphysical subject determining the course of Islamic history (Mahatma 2023, 207–10; Hefni et al. 2025, 46–47).

The future re-imagining of Pan-Islamism must therefore transcend nation-state boundaries and an uncompromising moderation that sacralizes the middle without interrogating its ontological premises. This research judges politics through the laws of metaphysics; the mysticism of resistance is utilized to strip bare the failures of modern politics that deify matter and reduce religion to symbolic capital within

secular governance (Azzuhri 2022, 28–29; Ghobadzadeh 2022, 6–17). This spirit resonates with the character of *Malāmatiyyah* anarchism, a spiritual chivalry (*al-fatā*) that disregards the comfort of the status quo for the sake of Divine truth, reactivating Sufi ethics as disciplined critique rather than quietist interiority (Pahrudin et al. 2025, 22). Indonesia must undergo an epistemic reorientation—from *wasatiyyah* as state-managed moderation towards an ontology of protest and responsibility—if it is to avoid being perpetually buried under the global tide of materialism that desacralizes transcendental values and neutralizes Pan-Islamic ideals (Hefni et al. 2025, 45).

Authentic Pan-Islamism is not about administrative mergers between states, but the unification of the frequency of resistance against all forms of oppression that obstruct the light of Divine justice, whether through imperial warfare, economic dependency, or internal authoritarianism cloaked in religious rhetoric (Azzuhri 2022, 26; Baizhuma et al. 2025, 195; Didyk 2024, 89–96). This manifesto demands the return of Divine sovereignty to the public sphere through a radical axiom of negation and a living political mysticism that aligns juridical, ethical, and spiritual horizons. Through socio-political *zuhud*, the *ummah* is called to sever its attachments to the hegemonic worldly order—to reconfigure work, law, and governance as journeys of substantial motion toward spiritual perfection—to reclaim its existential dignity as witnesses to God’s justice on earth (Ghobadzadeh 2022, 2–9).

### The Dialectics of Political Metaphysics: Deconstructing Iranian *‘Irfān-i Sīyāsī* and the Hijab of Indonesian Moderation

The effectiveness of Islamic theopolitics fundamentally depends on how mystical knowledge (*‘irfān*) is configured and enacted in the public sphere, especially when it shapes conceptions of sovereignty, justice, and resistance (Sieg 2021, 314; Bădescu 2023, 230; Bazzi 2022, 121). The divergence between Iran and Indonesia is therefore not reducible to sectarian or geographic factors, but to a deep discrepancy in the orientation of the Sufi–philosophical spirit that undergirds their respective political imaginaries and geopolitical postures (Setiawan et al. 2026, 71). In contemporary Iran, Sufi and *‘irfānī* elements—filtered through Shia theology and revolution—have been integrated with political Shiism so that mysticism becomes a constitutive force in internal and external policy, decision-making, and ideological projection (Bădescu 2023, 235; Sieg 2021, 281–314; Bazzi 2022, 123).

This configuration is deeply rooted in the Ṣadrian tradition of *al-Hikmah al-Muta‘aliyah*, whose metaphysical core—*aṣālah al-wujūd*, *tashkīk al-wujūd*, and *al-ḥarakah al-jawhariyyah*—is systematically articulated in *al-asfār al-arba‘ah* and explicitly links intellectual intuition, rational demonstration, and revelation. Within this framework, the four journeys (*al-asfār al-arba‘ah*) trace the ascent from creation to the real, the abiding in the real, and the return *min al-ḥaqq ilā al-khalq bi al-ḥaqq*, where the perfected wayfarer re-enters history as an agent mandated to orient society toward a just order grounded in divine reality rather than secular sovereignty (Effendi 2021, 333–52).

This Ṣadrian *ʿirfānī* anthropology culminates in the ideal of *insān ilāhī*, an immaterial soul that undergoes perpetual ontological perfection, thereby correcting Western humanist reductions of the human to material self-interest (Ṣadrā 1975, 180–84). On this basis, Iranian political mysticism interprets global injustice as *ẓulumāt*—ontological veils that obscure the radiance of *wujūd* and thus the manifestation of *tawḥīd* in history (Bădescu 2023, 237; Sieg 2021, 281–314). In Khomeini’s case, the doctrine of *wilāyah al-faqīh* is legitimized gnostically; the mystical wayfarer bears responsibility to establish a just order, making resistance to oppressive regimes a metaphysical obligation rather than a strategic choice. This revolutionary ethos reactivates the spirit of *futuwwah* (spiritual chivalry), where the wayfarer acts as a protector of the oppressed, translating inner *maʿrifah* into an outward struggle for justice (Khomeini 2000, 29–35).

Here, martyrdom and self-sacrifice are framed as embodiments of a metanomian Shiism in which death in struggle becomes a passage into a higher mode of participation in divine justice (Khomeini 2000, 40–45). Such a configuration can be described as *ẓuhūd* activism; detachment from material attachments functions as political power, enabling fearless confrontation with hegemony because ultimate reality and sovereignty are ascribed exclusively to God, while worldly empires are contingent and transient (Supandi et al. 2025, 126–27).

By contrast, dominant forms of Sufism in Indonesia are institutionalized within a democratic nation-state that promotes Islamic moderation (*wasatiyyah*) and *raḥmatan lil ʿālamīn* as official paradigms for national cohesion and deradicalization (Supriyadi 2023, 19). Studies show that Indonesian moderation is normatively associated with balance (*tawāzun*), middle-path attitudes (*tawassuṭ*), and accommodation of local cultures to sustain pluralistic stability (Sartika 2021, 188; Supriyadi 2023, 22).

Pesantren-based education cultivates these values through character-building and integration of nationalism with religious identity, producing cadres described as open-minded and committed to social harmony (Sartika 2021, 187–89). In public communication, *wasatiyyah* Islamic media foreground polite discourse and national unity, aligning religious messaging with the preservation of the Indonesian state (Setiawan et al. 2026, 71–72). Historically, Indonesian Islam’s spread has been interpreted as accommodative and non-revolutionary (Supriyadi 2023, 21–22).

Measured against the Ṣadrian model, these Indonesian configurations risk congealing into Sedative Sufism, where mystical symbols—*dhikr*, *adab*, and *raḥmatan lil ʿālamīn*—are primarily mobilized to support state-led agendas of order rather than to confront global structures of domination (Setiawan et al. 2026, 78). Government-backed formulations often codify *wasatiyyah* into checklists of attitudes, which may unintentionally narrow theological discourse to sociological harmony and delegitimize radical critiques of international power asymmetries (Supriyadi 2023, 30; Yıldız and Çitak 2022, 257–58).

Theologically rich concepts such as *ummah waḥidah* and *tawḥīd* are frequently bracketed within nation-state frames, whereas a *tawḥīd*-based political ontology

could serve as an antithesis to imperialism by decentering Eurocentric sovereignty (Abbas et al. 2025, 907; Yıldız and Çitak 2022, 278). In this light, the Indonesian emphasis on moderation becomes an epistemic veil (hijab) when it precludes attempts to articulate ontologies of resistance, allowing Western-liberal security narratives to set the limits of responsible Islamic politics (Yusupova 2022, 199–209).

From a dialectical perspective, the comparison between Iranian *‘irfān-i siyāsī* and Indonesian moderation reveals a tension between theopolitics of negation and epistemologies of accommodation (Yıldız and Çitak 2022, 43; Bădescu 2023, 238). Recent scholarship on Pan-Islamism shows that many Islamist projects reproduce conventional logics of power, offering merely a change in the international rather than a transformation of its ordering principles (Yıldız and Çitak 2022, 127–28).

Against this background, Şadrian–Khomeinist mysticism can be read as an attempt to ground political authority in a metaphysics where God’s undivided sovereignty renders all rival centers of loyalty—imperial or national—intrinsically unstable (Sieg 2021, 281–314; Bazzi 2022, 123). At the same time, any project of re-centering *ummah* identity must grapple with entrenched sectarianism and socio-economic inequality (Abbas et al. 2025, 914).

In this radical synthesis, the unity of the *ummah* cannot be secured through purely procedural moderation but requires an ontological courage to unmask passive forms of acquiescence that sanctify the status quo (Abbas et al. 2025, 909; Yıldız and Çitak 2022, 214). An ontology of resistance—in which active mysticism converts *ma‘rifah* into *ḥarakah*—seeks to restore Pan-Islamism as a thick, emancipatory consciousness that interrogates hegemony at its metaphysical roots (Yıldız and Çitak 2022, 145; Abbas et al. 2025, 907).

In this sense, authentic Pan-Islamism approximates a *Malamatiyah*-like spiritual anarchism embodied by the *al-fatā*; a disposition of *futuwwah* that refuses co-optation by oppressive logics and is willing to endure marginalization for the sake of uncompromised fidelity to *tawḥīd* (Sieg 2021, 281–314; Bădescu 2023, 237; Bazzi 2022, 120). Such a vision insists that any *wasatiyyah* worthy of the name must be anchored in ontological resistance, so that Sufism becomes once more a disciplined quest for nearness to the Real that entails a relentless, public negation of falsehood in all its institutional and geopolitical forms (Supandi et al. 2025, 121).

## Conclusion

This study asserts that Pan-Islamism has mutated from a mere administrative unity project into a profound field of metaphysical dialectics between transcendental unity (*waḥdah*) and the ideological fragmentation of the nation-state. Through the lens of absolute theopolitics, the comparison between Iran and Indonesia reveals a paradox of existential orientation in responding to global hegemony. Iran has successfully articulated Pan-Islamism through *‘irfān-i siyāsī*—a mysticism of resistance that consistently actualizes the axiom of the negation of *tawḥīd* (*lā ilāha*). By establishing the axis of resistance (*muḥawar al-muqāwamah*) as its primary

pivot, Iran demonstrates that ontological sovereignty can be maintained through the spirit of *zuhud*-activism. This represents an ontological courage to negate the material authority of tyrants for the sake of Divine justice—a philosophical actualization of the spiritual journey known as *al-safar min al-ḥaqq ilā al-khalq bi al-ḥaqq*, wherein the mystic returns to the heart of history to dismantle oppressive structures.

Conversely, Indonesia represents the entropy of Pan-Islamic ideals due to its entrapment within the hijab of moderation. The strategy of *wasatiyyah*, intended to preserve sociological harmony, reveals—under metaphysical scrutiny—the phenomenon of *al-wahn* or the pathology of attachment to the material world (*ḥubb al-dunyā*). The fear of losing economic stability and recognition within Western liberal security narratives has caused Indonesia to lose its transcendental critical power. At this juncture, moderation no longer functions as a just mediator (*mīzān*); instead, it becomes an instrument of desacralization that reduces Islam's liberating energy to mere personal piety, compromised by global structures of oppression. Indonesia demonstrates that without strong metaphysical roots, Islamic politics becomes a mere object tossed by the currents of global materialism.

Ultimately, both models reflect a crisis of existential orientation that demands radical re-imagining. This article asserts that the future of Pan-Islamism lies not in pragmatic formal political mergers, but in the restoration of the *ummah's* dignity as subjects independent of the idols of modern power. Unity can only be achieved through the spirit of Neo-Sufism, which integrates inner depth with concrete praxis in the form of socio-political *zuhud*. This is the manifestation of the character of theopolitical *Malāmatiyyah* anarchism—a spiritual chivalry (*al-futuwwah*) that remains undaunted by hegemony because it submits only to the one absolute authority. In closing, authentic Pan-Islamism must be restored to its essence as a manifesto of liberation that purifies the public sphere from all contemporary idols that deify matter over sacred values. Future trans-border solidarity must be driven by an ontological sovereignty that prioritizes Divine justice over pragmatic nation-state interests.

Future research should explore how intellectual networks and grassroots movements can build new frequencies of resistance by strengthening philosophical-mystical literacy. The goal is to create movements that are co-option-proof against the logic of materialism and the traps of state bureaucracy, aiming to realize a world order that truly reflects the liberating light of *tawḥīd* for both the internal and external realms of human existence.

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