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Analysis of Acehnese Historical and Cultural Content on YouTube Based on Islamic Marketing Ethics

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Article Info	ABSTRACT

The development of digital media has transformed patterns of representation and consumption of history and culture through video-based platforms such as YouTube. This study analyzes the production practices of Acehnese historical and cultural content on the *Nata the Kongkow* YouTube channel by employing Islamic marketing ethics as the primary evaluative framework. Using a qualitative approach with a case study design, the research draws on content analysis and interviews as a means of confirming analytical findings. The results indicate that content production involves ongoing negotiation between educational objectives, limitations of historical sources, and audience engagement demands. From the perspective of Islamic marketing ethics, content production practices have generally fulfilled the principles of sidq, amanah, bayān, and orientation toward public welfare, although the degree of fulfillment varies according to content objectives and available source constraints. These findings demonstrate that Islamic marketing ethics can function as a reflective framework for assessing digital historical and cultural content practices and provide practical implications for content creators and cultural institutions.

ABSTRAK

Perkembangan media digital telah mengubah pola representasi dan konsumsi sejarah serta budaya melalui platform berbasis video seperti YouTube. Penelitian ini menganalisis praktik produksi konten sejarah dan budaya Aceh pada kanal YouTube *Nata the Kongkow* dengan menggunakan etika marketing syariah sebagai kerangka evaluatif utama. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus melalui analisis konten dan wawancara sebagai sarana konfirmasi temuan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa produksi konten berlangsung dalam negosiasi antara tujuan edukatif, keterbatasan sumber historis, dan tuntutan keterlibatan audiens. Dari perspektif etika marketing syariah, praktik produksi konten secara umum telah memenuhi prinsip sidq, amanah, bayān, dan orientasi kemaslahatan, meskipun tingkat pemenuhannya bervariasi sesuai dengan tujuan konten dan keterbatasan sumber yang tersedia. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa etika marketing syariah dapat berfungsi sebagai kerangka reflektif dalam menilai praktik konten digital sejarah dan budaya serta memberikan implikasi praktis bagi konten kreator dan institusi budaya.

1. INTRODUCTION

The development of digital platforms has transformed how historical and cultural knowledge is disseminated and consumed by the public. In Indonesia, social media functions as a primary arena for historical and cultural narratives due to its wide accessibility and visual affordances, while traditional models such as museums and books have become less effective in engaging younger audiences. This transformation occurs within a context of content competition, measured through engagement metrics (views, shares, and comments),

which serve as the basis for platform algorithms in recommending content to users (Van Dijck et al., 2018; Poell et al., 2019).

Aceh, as a region with a complex political, social, and cultural history, possesses diverse historical narratives and cultural symbols. In recent years, content creators in Aceh have utilized digital platforms to disseminate local history, traditions, and cultural heritage to broader audiences. However, the production of such content is increasingly shaped by platform algorithms that link content performance to monetization opportunities through advertising and revenue. Studies indicate that digital content is positioned as a commercial product that prioritizes viewership and engagement metrics (Gavilanes et al., 2018; Hollebeek, 2019).

Within academic scholarships, this phenomenon can be examined through the perspectives of the creator's economy and digital marketing. The contemporary marketing literature indicates that a strong orientation toward market performance encourages intensive marketing strategies such as clickbait, emotional framing, and title manipulation in order to enhance content visibility (Gavilanes et al., 2018; Hollebeek, 2019). Other studies on digital media practices further emphasize that digital algorithms tend to amplify content that optimizes engagement metrics (Metzler & Garcia, 2024). Therefore, content creators face structural pressures to balance educational value with the performance demands of the digital economy.

In this context, Islamic marketing ethics provides a relevant evaluative framework for assessing communication practices oriented toward popularity and revenue generation. Islamic marketing ethics not only addresses marketing techniques but also integrates moral values such as honesty (*ṣidq*), responsibility (*amānah*), justice (*'adl*), transparency (*bayān*), and an emphasis on public welfare (*maṣlaḥah*), while avoiding manipulative practices that exploit audiences solely for economic gain (Alserhan, 2017; Shah, Bhutto, & Azhar, 2022). These principles become particularly significant when the strategies employed by content creators risk sacrificing historical accuracy and cultural context in pursuit of views or advertising monetization, as such practices extend beyond aesthetic considerations to broader social and epistemic implications for public understanding. Wilson and Grant (2013) argue that moral responsibility is essential in communication practices within contemporary digital marketing platforms.

Recent scholarship on digital content ethics further reinforces the urgency of this framework. Ethical digital communication requires transparency, accuracy, accountability, and respect for audiences, particularly in environments where content has the power to shape opinions and influence behaviour (Patalauskaitė, 2024). In influencer-driven ecosystems, the primary ethical concern often lies in the blurred boundary between personal opinion and paid promotion. Weak transparency standards and inconsistent regulatory definitions may allow commercial messages to be presented as authentic personal expression (González-Díaz & Quintas-Froufe, 2024). From the perspective of Islamic marketing ethics, such ambiguity risks elements of *gharar* (uncertainty or concealment) and *tadlīs* (deceptive representation),

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as audiences may not receive sufficient information to make informed and conscious decisions.

Therefore, Islamic marketing ethics in this study is not positioned as a symbolic religious label, but as a normative and analytical lens for evaluating how content visibility strategies are negotiated without compromising informational integrity. It demands explicit disclosure of commercial intent, proportionality in persuasive strategies, and prioritization of public benefit over algorithmic optimization. Based on this context, this study aims to examine how Acehnese history and cultural content creators frame narratives of the past within a digital media environment oriented toward viewership, audience engagement, and monetization. Utilizing secondary data in the form of publicly available digital content, supplemented by interviews as supporting data, this research offers an interdisciplinary approach that bridges digital historical–cultural studies, digital content marketing, and communication ethics.

2. METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative approach with a case study design to analyze the practices of producing historical and cultural content related to Aceh in digital media. This design enables a contextual analysis of content practices that are inseparable from platform logics and economic considerations (Yin, 2018). The subject of this research is a local content creator, *Nata the Kongkow* (YouTube: @natathekongkow), with the unit of analysis consisting of publicly available digital content.

Data collection was conducted using two primary techniques: digital content analysis and confirmatory interviews. The primary data consisted of Acehnese historical and cultural content uploaded by the *Nata the Kongkow* channel, which was qualitatively analyzed to identify narrative patterns. Semi-structured interviews with the research subject were conducted as a confirmatory technique to clarify, validate, and contextualize the findings derived from the content analysis, particularly regarding content production motivations, responses to audience viewership demands, and ethical considerations in content presentation (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Krippendorff, 2018; Braun & Clarke, 2019). In addition, member checking was employed by confirming the main interpretations with the research subject to ensure interpretive accuracy and enhance the credibility of the findings (Miles et al., 2014; Lincoln & Guba, 1988).

Table 1. Principles of Islamic Marketing Ethics as Analytical Indicators

Principles of Islamic Marketing Ethics	Measurement Focus in This Study
Sidq (Honesty)	Alignment between titles, narratives, and the content of historical and cultural materials
Amānah (Responsibility)	Creators' awareness of social impacts and public understanding
'Adl (Justice)	Avoidance of emotional exploitation and misleading framing
Bayān (Transparency)	Clarity of historical context, information sources, and economic interests
Maṣlaḥah (Public Welfare)	Orientation toward public benefit over popularity-driven interests
Prohibition of Gharar (Ambiguity/Manipulation)	Avoidance of ambiguity and concealment of important contextual information
Prohibition of Tadlīs (Information Deception)	Avoidance of information distortion or manipulation for click generation

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Principles of Islamic Marketing Ethics	Measurement Focus in This Study
Value Orientation	Balance between economic objectives and cultural responsibility

Source**:** Kesuma (2012); Wilson & Grant (2013); Alserhan (2017); Idris et al. (2020); Shah et al. (2022)

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The representation of Acehnese history and culture in YouTube video content produced by local creators was analyzed by highlighting how algorithmic and advertising logics encourage narrative simplification, the use of storytelling techniques, and the visualization of field experiences to attract audiences (Poell et al., 2019; Cunningham & Craig, 2019). Within the framework of digital history, this phenomenon reflects a shift from academic history to popular history (Giaccardi, 2012). Five long-form videos were purposively selected from the *Nata the Kongkow* channel, with the analysis focusing on themes, narrative strategies, and their representational implications for the understanding of Acehnese history and culture in digital spaces.

Table 2. Analysis of Video Content on the *Nata the Kongkow* YouTube Channel

Video Title (Original)	Main Theme	Presentation Strategy	Potential Marketing Orientation
Kronologi Syahidnya Cut Nyak Meutia, Part I	Historical narrative of an Acehnese heroine	The presentation of history in a comprehensive chronological manner combined with narrative visualization focused on local identity.	Emotional and narrative-driven presentation potentially increases engagement; narrative title may encourage clicks
Bunker Peninggalan Jepang di Tengah Sawah Lhoknga, Aceh Besar	Exploration of World War II historical sites in Aceh	Combination of on-site visuals and historical explanations from the field	Focus on unique locations and historical value may attract targeted viewers; exploratory framing draws attention
Museum Langsa dan Asal Usul Nama Langsa	Museum history and the origin of the city name	Educational narration supported by museum visuals and contextual colonial history	Educational approach with engagement potential due to informative content and appealing location visuals
Conditions of Traveling Towards the Tomb of Cut Nyak Meutia, Part I	Journey to a historical figure's burial site	Vlogging-style field experience combined with historical narration	Creator's presence and field experience may increase watch time and audience engagement
Kisah Korban Tsunami 2004 di Aceh Jaya II	Historical accounts of the Aceh disaster	Testimonial-based storytelling and discussion of contemporary historical events	Emotionally charged topic (tsunami) potentially attracts broad viewership

Source: Primary data derived from the *Nata the Kongkow* YouTube channel; analyzed by the authors.

Kronologi Syahidnya Cut Nyak Meutia, Part I

This video presents the historical narrative of Cut Nyak Meutia through a chronological and narrative approach. The storytelling strategy emphasizes the trajectory of struggle and sacrifice, thereby constructing a strong heroic representation of the figure. Such an approach is commonly found in popular history, as it fosters emotional engagement by

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presenting historical events in a linear and coherent narrative, making temporal relationships easier for audiences to understand (Nizham, 2025).

Bunker Peninggalan Jepang di Tengah Sawah Lhoknga, Aceh Besar

The use of physical locations in historical presentation emphasizes spatial context as a key narrative element. This approach aligns with digital public history practices that incorporate visual and field-based materials to support audience engagement with the past (Giaccardi, 2012).

Museum Langsa dan Asal Usul Nama Langsa

This video presents the museum as an institution for preserving historical memory while also explaining the origin of the city of Langsa's name. The narrative is delivered in a descriptive and informative manner, with visual representations of museum spaces serving as the primary supporting elements. This approach reflects the function of digital media as a medium for public education and the broadening of access to local historical knowledge (Giaccardi, 2012). The content is relatively closer to an educational history model, although it is still presented in a concise and easily consumable format in accordance with the characteristics of social media platforms (Nizham, 2025).

Conditions of Traveling Towards the Tomb of Cut Nyak Meutia, Part I

This video combines historical narration with a travel vlog format, positioning the creator's personal experience as an integral part of storytelling. This approach situates with the creator as a mediator of history rather than merely a transmitter of information. Studies on influencer culture suggest that the presence of the creator's persona can enhance audience intimacy and shape how knowledge is received and interpreted (Abidin, 2021).

Kisah Korban Tsunami 2004 di Aceh Jaya II

This video addresses the 2004 tsunami through victims' stories and the collective memory of Acehnese society. The disaster narrative is presented using an emotional approach, which is commonly employed in representations of contemporary history to foster empathy and audience engagement. Digital history scholarship indicates that narratives of trauma and disaster often function as points of convergence between historical documentation and emotional consumption on social media platforms (Al-Zaman, 2022).

Video Content Analysis Based on Islamic Marketing Ethics

This analysis aims to evaluate the production and presentation practices of Acehnese historical and cultural content on the YouTube platform by employing Islamic marketing ethics as an analytical framework. Within an algorithm- and advertising-driven digital media ecosystem, historical and cultural content functions not only as an educational medium but also as a communication product marketed to audiences through strategies designed to enhance visibility and engagement (Nieborg & Poell, 2018; Cunningham & Craig, 2019).

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Accordingly, the principles of Islamic marketing ethics are applied to assess the alignment between content presentation strategies and values of honesty, transparency, social responsibility, and orientation toward public welfare, without positioning religion as a normative evaluative tool for judging the research subject (Alserhan, 2017; Shah et al., 2022). The analysis focuses on five Acehnese historical and cultural videos purposively selected from the *Nata the Kongkow* channel in a long-form video format.

Table 3. Analysis of Acehnese Historical and Cultural Video Content Based on Islamic Marketing Ethics

Video Title (Original)	Content Focus	Sources Used	Findings
Kronologi Syahidnya Cut Nyak Meutia, Part I	Acehnese historical figure	General narratives and collective memory	The principles of sidq (honesty) and bayān (transparency) are clearly conveyed in the opening sections of the video; however, they are not reinforced through explicit source attribution in the description, which may cause the historical source context to be overlooked by audiences.
Bunker Peninggalan Jepang di Tengah Sawah Lhoknga	Historical site	On-site observation without archival references	The principle of amānah (responsibility) is reflected through documentation of the actual location, yet limitations in written sources reduce the level of transparency (bayān).
Museum Langsa dan Asal Usul Nama Langsa	Historical institution	Implicit institutional sources (museum)	The principles of bayān and maslaḥah are relatively strong, as the content is educationally oriented and grounded in a local cultural institution.
Conditions of Traveling Towards the Tomb of Cut Nyak Meutia, Part I	Historical burial site	Creator's personal experience	Travel vlogging content presents field conditions in an authentic manner, without historical claims or indications of manipulation, thereby reflecting the principles of sidq and amānah within Islamic marketing ethics.
Kisah Korban Tsunami 2004 di Aceh Jaya II	Collective memory of disaster	Victims' testimonies	The principle of amānah is fulfilled through direct testimony; however, sidq and bayān require careful consideration due to the emotional and subjective nature of oral memory.

Source: Primary data derived from the *Nata the Kongkow* YouTube channel; analyzed by the authors.

The results of the analysis indicate that Acehnese historical and cultural content on the *Nata the Kongkow* channel relies more heavily on oral sources, field observations, and popular narratives than on written references or academic archives. This pattern aligns with the characteristics of digital popular history, which emphasize accessibility, storytelling, and emotional proximity to audiences (Giaccardi, 2012; Al-Zaman, 2022). However, from the perspective of Islamic marketing ethics, limited source transparency emerges as a significant issue, particularly in relation to the principles of bayān and ṣidq, which emphasize clarity and honesty of information in public communication (Alserhan, 2017).

Videos based on cultural institutions, such as those featuring the Langsa Museum, demonstrate a stronger orientation toward public welfare by fostering historical literacy and local identity. In contrast, videos that emphasize personal experiences or emotional narratives reveal tensions between the need for audience engagement and representational

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responsibility. This phenomenon reinforces findings that digital platforms structurally encourage creators to prioritize narrative and emotional appeal, which may influence how broader publics understand history and culture (Nieborg & Poell, 2018; Cunningham & Craig, 2019).

Synthesis of Content Analysis and Interviews

Overall, the findings indicate that digital media content production involves an ongoing negotiation between creators' educational ideals, limitations in historical sources, and digital audience consumption logics, balancing engagement with ethical considerations (Fajri et al., 2025).

The content tends to rely on popular narratives, field observations, and oral sources that are subsequently simplified and enhanced with dramatic elements to increase accessibility and audience appeal. This pattern aligns with digital history scholarship, which suggests that representations of the past on social media often shift from academic depth toward popular history formats oriented toward broad public engagement (Nieborg & Poell, 2018; Cunningham & Craig, 2019; Al-Zaman, 2022).

The interview findings clarify that the simplification and dramatization of narratives are not intended to manipulate information but rather function as presentational strategies to make historical material derived from lengthy records or difficult-to-access texts more accessible to digital audiences. The creator explained that in several historical videos, primary sources were clearly mentioned orally at the beginning of the video but were not always reiterated in the description due to considerations of readability and platform characteristics.

This indicates that the principles of ṣidq and bayān were fulfilled at the level of oral communication but were not consistently reinforced in documentary form, which may lead audiences who do not watch the video in its entirety to overlook the source context. This pattern suggests structural challenges in the production of digital historical content rather than deliberate manipulative practices (Giaccardi, 2012).

The interviews also revealed that limitations in written sources, particularly for content based on field exploration and local narratives, constitute a tangible challenge faced by the creator. The use of local testimonies and field experiences is methodologically and ethically acceptable, provided that they are critically contextualized and not positioned as singular or definitive historical narratives (Jessee, 2011; Ahlskog, 2024). Within the framework of Islamic marketing ethics, this practice reflects the fulfillment of the principle of amanah, as the creator does not conceal informational limitations nor direct audiences toward claims that exceed the capacity of the available sources (Alserhan, 2017; Wilson & Grant, 2013).

Furthermore, the interview findings confirm that for travel vlog–based content, the primary objective is not the delivery of historical narratives, but rather the documentation of on-site conditions in an authentic and unmediated manner. In line with narrative ethics scholarship that emphasizes ethical responsibility in framing stories, the decision to exclude certain narratives from the content reflects the creator's effort to maintain alignment between

purpose, content, and audience expectations (Phelan, 2011; Meretoja, 2018; Wellman, 2020). This practice demonstrates the fulfillment of the principles of sidq and amanah through visual authenticity and clarity of content scope, while simultaneously avoiding the potential for informational misrepresentation (Shah et al., 2022).

Table 4. Synthesis of Content and Interview Analysis Based on Islamic Marketing Ethics

Principle of Islamic Marketing Ethics	Key Findings	Ethical Implications
Sidq (Honesty)	Content relies on popular narratives, field observation, and direct experience presented authentically; simplification serves accessibility rather than manipulation.	Honesty is maintained as content avoids fabrication and excessive claims beyond source capacity.
Amanah (Responsibility)	The creator acknowledges source limitations, particularly in field-based and local narrative content, and avoids definitive historical claims.	Ethical responsibility is reflected through alignment between content purpose, presentation, and audience expectations.
'Adl (Justice)	Historical representation does not privilege a single narrative when multiple versions and limited evidence exist.	Narrative justice is upheld by avoiding absolute truth claims in plural historical contexts.
Bayān (Transparency)	Sources are often mentioned orally but not consistently documented in written descriptions.	Transparency is present at the oral level but could be strengthened through written source attribution.
Maslahah (Public Welfare)	Content prioritizes expanding public access to historical and cultural knowledge through accessible formats.	Content contributes to public education and cultural literacy when public-oriented goals remain central.
Prohibition of Gharar (Ambiguity/Manipulation)	No concealment of information or unwarranted certainty was identified; limitations are acknowledged.	Content avoids ambiguity by not presenting uncertain information as definitive.
Prohibition of Tadlis (Information Deception)	No deliberate distortion or deception of information was found.	Content does not mislead audiences for popularity or commercial gain.
Value Orientation	Content production balances audience appeal, source limitations, and cultural responsibility.	Value orientation is maintained when engagement does not compromise historical integrity.

Source: Primary data from content analysis and interviews, analyzed by the authors.

Accordingly, the synthesis of content analysis and interview findings indicates that variations in the application of Islamic marketing ethics principles on the channel are primarily influenced by content objectives and structural limitations of historical sources, rather than by manipulative intent. Differences in the implementation of *ṣidq*, *bayān*, and *amānah* are largely technical in nature, particularly in documentation and presentation practices, while the substance of the information remains within the boundaries of honesty and responsibility.

From the perspective of Islamic marketing ethics, these practices reflect an effort to maintain balance between digital visibility and moral accountability. The orientation toward *maṣlaḥah* remains central, while the avoidance of *gharar* and *tadlīs* is evident in the acknowledgment of source limitations and the refusal to make exaggerated historical claims. Thus, monetization and engagement strategies do not displace the educational purpose and cultural integrity that form the foundation of the channel's content production.

4. CONCLUSION

This study affirms the alignment and continuity between the objectives articulated in the Introduction and the findings presented in the Results and Discussion sections, particularly in understanding the practices of producing Acehnese historical and cultural content in digital media on the *Nata the Kongkow* channel. The findings indicate that content production operates through an ongoing negotiation between educational objectives, limitations of historical sources, and the logics of digital platforms that prioritize audience engagement, rendering narrative simplification and adaptation unavoidable strategies within the context of digital communication. Nevertheless, content production on the channel is not solely oriented toward increasing viewership, popularity, or economic gain, but also reflects consideration of cultural responsibility and the educational values conveyed to the public. Accordingly, this study not only opens avenues for further scholarly inquiry but also provides policy-relevant insights for content creators and cultural institutions in formulating ethical guidelines and strategic frameworks for producing historical and cultural content that is engaging, accountable, and socially responsible in digital media environments.

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