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FROM SPIRITUAL VIGILANCE TO TACTICAL AMBUSH: A SOCIO-CULTURAL RECONTEXTUALIZATION OF *PESANTREN* ETHOS DURING THE SECOND MILITARY AGGRESSION IN INDONESIA

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Abstract

Conventional military historiography concerning the Second Dutch Military Aggression (1948–1949) frequently separates General Sudirman's guerrilla strategy from the spiritual dimensions of its agents, reducing spirituality to a mere ideological motivator. This article bridges the theoretical gap between military historiography and the sociology of religion gap by examining the sociological mechanisms through which the *pesantren* ethos was recontextualized into effective combat strategies. Addressing the ambiguity of "spirituality" in strategic studies, this research dissects the transposition of Spiritual Vigilance (*Muraqabah*) and Ascetic Discipline (*Riyadhoh*) into military operations. Employing a socio-historical approach and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) on guerrilla memoirs and pesantren ethical literature, this study reveals that amidst the total collapse of state logistics, General Sudirman functioned as a cultural broker who transformed the *santri* habitus into a tactical methodology. The findings indicate two fundamental forms of recontextualization: (1) the *Riyadhoh* habitus was converted into extreme logistical resilience, and (2) *Muraqabah* was transformed into tactical stealth, a prerequisite for ambush tactics. This study concludes that Indonesian guerrilla effectiveness was the result of converting spiritual cultural capital into military capital. The theoretical implications underscore that in asymmetric warfare, religion evolves beyond *jus ad bellum* (motivation) into *jus in bello* (operational methodology).

Keywords: Second Military Aggression Indonesia; Guerrilla Warfare; General Sudirman; Spiritual Vigilance; Socio-Cultural Recontextualization.

Abstrak

Historiografi militer konvensional mengenai Agresi Militer Belanda II (1948–1949) sering kali memisahkan strategi gerilya Jenderal Sudirman dari dimensi spiritual para agennya, sehingga mereduksi spiritualitas sekadar sebagai motivator ideologis. Artikel ini menjembatani kesenjangan teoretis tersebut dengan menguji mekanisme sosiologis tentang bagaimana etos pesantren direkontekstualisasi menjadi strategi tempur yang efektif. Untuk mengatasi ambiguitas "spiritualitas" dalam studi strategis, penelitian ini membedah transposisi Kewaspadaan Spiritual (Muraqabah) dan Disiplin Asketis (Riyadhoh) ke dalam operasi militer. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan sosio-historis dan Analisis Wacana Kritis (AWK) terhadap memoar gerilya serta literatur etika pesantren, studi ini mengungkapkan bahwa di tengah keruntuhan total logistik negara,

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Jenderal Sudirman berperan sebagai makelar budaya (cultural broker) yang mentransformasikan habitus santri menjadi metodologi taktis. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan dua bentuk dasar rekontekstualisasi: (1) habitus Riyadhoh dikonversi menjadi ketahanan logistik yang ekstrem, dan (2) Muraqabah ditransformasikan menjadi disiplin senyap taktis (tactical stealth), sebuah prasyarat mutlak untuk taktik penyergapan. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa efektivitas gerilya Indonesia merupakan hasil dari konversi modal budaya spiritual menjadi modal militer. Implikasi teoretis dari penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa dalam peperangan asimetris, agama berevolusi melampaui sekadar jus ad bellum (motivasi awal) menjadi jus in bello (metodologi operasional).

Kata Kunci: *Agresi Militer Belanda II; Perang Gerilya; Jenderal Sudirman; Kewaspadaan Spiritual; Rekontekstualisasi Sosio-Kultural*

مستخلص

غالبًا ما يفصل علم التأريخ العسكري التقليدي المتعلق بالعدوان العسكري الهولندي الثاني (1948–1949) في مجرد محفز أيديولوجي. يهدف هذا المقال إلى سد هذه الفجوة النظرية من خلال دراسة الآليات الاجتماعية التي تمت من خلالها إعادة صياغة السياق لروح المعاهد الإسلامية (البيسانترين) وتحويلها إلى استراتيجيات قتالية فعالة. ولمعالجة الغموض الذي يكتنف مفهوم "الروحانية" في الدراسات الاستراتيجية، يحلل هذا البحث عملية نقل ممارسات اليقظة الروحية (المراقبة) والانضباط الزهدي (الرياضة) إلى العمليات العسكرية. لمذكرات حرب العصابات (CDA) وباستخدام المنهج الاجتماعي–التاريخي وتحليل الخطاب النقدي وأدبيات الأخلاق في المعاهد الإسلامية، تكشف هذه الدراسة أنه في خضم الانهيار التام للخدمات اللوجستية للدولة، عمل الجنرال سوديرمان كوسيط ثقافي قام بتحويل طباع (هابيتوس) الطلاب (السانتري) إلى منهجية تكتيكية. وتشير النتائج إلى شكلين أساسيين لإعادة صياغة السياق: (1) تحويل طباع "الرياضة" إلى قدرة فائقة على الصمود اللوجستي، و(2) تحويل "المراقبة" إلى التخفي التكتيكي (الانضباط الصامت)، وهو شرط أساسي لتكتيكات الكمائن. وتخلص هذه الدراسة إلى أن فعالية حرب العصابات الإندونيسية كانت نتيجة لتحويل رأس المال الثقافي الروحي إلى رأس مال عسكري. وتؤكد الآثار النظرية أنه في الحروب غير المتكافئة، ليتطور إلى منهجية عملياتية داخل (*Jus ad bellum*) يتجاوز دور الدين كونه مجرد دافع ومبرر للحرب الحرب (*Jus in bello*).

الكلمات الرئيسية: العدوان العسكري الهولندي الثاني على إندونيسيا؛ حرب العصابات؛ الجنرال سوديرمان؛ اليقظة الروحية؛ إعادة صياغة السياق الاجتماعي والثقافي.

A. Introduction

"If physical strength is outmatched, there is no path to victory other than relying on inner strength."[1] This maxim, articulated by Commander-in-Chief General Sudirman, constituted more than mere motivational rhetoric; rather, it served as a fundamental doctrine of

[1] Sardiman, *Jenderal Sudirman: Prajurit, Patriot Dan Manusia Biasa* (Yogyakarta: Ombak, 2008).

survival that functioned as the lifeblood of the Republic of Indonesia during its most critical juncture. The Second Dutch Military Aggression, which erupted on December 19, 1948, theoretically signaled the cessation of Indonesia's conventional warfare capabilities. The fall of the capital, Yogyakarta, coupled with the capture of the nation's supreme leadership, Soekarno and Hatta, precipitated an absolute power vacuum.[2] In Western military doctrine, the loss of a command center, the severance of logistical lines, and the absence of heavy artillery support constitute an absolute prescription for capitulation. However, historical reality presents a striking anomaly. The Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI), under the command of General Sudirman, who was suffering from a severe illness, refused to surrender. They opted to retreat into the depths of the forest, replacing open warfare strategies with silent guerrilla warfare, wherein the "inner strength" alluded to by Sudirman was translated into a lethal spiritual discipline.

The period from December 1948 to July 1949 presents a complex sociological phenomenon. Guerrilla forces operated under conditions of extreme material deprivation; they moved without remuneration, without guaranteed food supplies, slept in the open air, and were relentlessly pursued by the Dutch elite forces, the *Korps Speciale Troepen* (KST), which possessed technological and mobility superiority.[3] The fundamental question emerging within this study of asymmetric conflict is not "why" they fought as motivations of nationalism and religion are already self-evident but rather "how" they were capable of maintaining unit cohesion, combat discipline, and tactical vigilance amidst such extreme physical and psychological deprivation Mainstream military historiography tends to address this inquiry through the lens of territorial strategy, such as the establishment of *Wehrkreise* (defense circles) and logistical support from the populace, as exemplified in the works of Nasution and Simatupang.[4]

However, this structuralist approach frequently fails to elucidate the micro-sociological dimension, specifically the "technology of the self" that operated within the combatants' psyche to ensure survival. To situate the originality of this study and transcend conventional historical narratives, an examination of the historiography of the Indonesian Revolution must traverse the disciplinary boundaries that have hitherto remained compartmentalized.[5] To date, the dominant

[2] M. C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia Since c. 1200*, 4th ed. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).
[3] T. B. Simatupang, *Laporan Dari Banaran: Kisah Pengalaman Seorang Prajurit Selama Perang Kemerdekaan* (Jakarta: Sinar Harapan, 1979).
[4] Simatupang, *Laporan Dari Banaran: Kisah Pengalaman Seorang Prajurit Selama Perang Kemerdekaan*; A. H. Nasution, *Pokok-Pokok Gerilya* (Bandung: Pembimbing, 1953).
[5] John T. Sidel, "Republicanism, Communism, Islam: Cosmopolitan Origins of Revolution in Southeast Asia," *Journal of Global History* 17, no. 1 (2022): 1–22, https://doi.org/10.1017/S174002282100021X.

narrative regarding the guerrilla strategy of 1948–1949 remains largely dominated by a purely military historical perspective, as exemplified in A.H. Nasution's and T.B. Simatupang's authoritative accounts.[6] Both historical actors brilliantly delineated the technical architecture of warfare, ranging from hit-and-run tactics and sabotage to the structure of territorial command. However, their analyses tend to remain confined to secular, universal military categories. Nasution and Simatupang discuss "discipline" and "troop morale" as technical variables, without rigorously scrutinizing the sociological roots of the *pesantren,* which served as the crucible for shaping such mentality. In this narrative, religion is positioned merely as a moral supplement rather than a source of tactical methodology.

Efforts to integrate religious variables into the history of the revolution have, in fact, been undertaken by historians of political Islam.[7] Research by Baidhawy,[8], for instance, provides a crucial contribution in elucidating the role of the *Jihad Resolution Fatwa* as a catalyst for *santri* mobilization. Nevertheless, Baidhawy's focus leans heavily toward the early revolutionary period (1945) and the aspect of theological legitimacy for initiating war (*jus ad bellum*).[9] The study has not yet specifically addressed the period of the Second Military Aggression (1948–1949), during which warfare had drastically shifted to forest guerrilla tactics, nor has it explained how such theological doctrines were translated into daily tactical behavior in the field (jus in bello) when the formal chain of command was severed.

When analysis shifts from the political realm to the anthropology of violence in Java, interpretations regarding the spirituality of fighters frequently become entrapped in mystification. Classic works such as Anderson and Cribb studies on laskar (militias) often associate the role of spirituality in warfare with aspects of the occult, amulets, or invulnerability.[10] This cultural approach tends to reduce the rationality of the fighters, implying that they fought solely on the basis of irrational recklessness. Such a view overlooks the dimension of "rational asceticism" within the *pesantren Sufi* tradition such as fasting and dhikr

[6] Simatupang, *Laporan Dari Banaran: Kisah Pengalaman Seorang Prajurit Selama Perang Kemerdekaan*; Nasution, *Pokok-Pokok Gerilya*.
[7] Kevin W. Fogg, "Islamic Militias and the Mobilization of the Masses in the Indonesian Revolution," *Modern Asian Studies* 57, no. 4 (2023): 1120–45, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0026749X22000451.
[8] Z. Baidhawy, "The 1945 Jihad Resolution and the Laskar in the Indonesian Revolution," *Studia Islamika* 26, no. 3 (2019): 479–508, https://doi.org/10.15408/sdi.v26i3.8118.
[9] Baidhawy, "The 1945 Jihad Resolution and the Laskar in the Indonesian Revolution."
[10] R. Cribb, *Gangsters and Revolutionaries: The Jakarta People's Militia and the Indonesian Revolution 1945-1949* (University of Hawaii Press, 1991); B. R. O. G. Anderson, *Java in a Time of Revolution: Occupation and Resistance, 1944-1946* (Cornell University Press, 1972).

(remembrance) which fundamentally functions to train self-control and vigilance, rather than merely serving as a pursuit of magical invincibility.[11]

The Research Gap: Spiritual Practices as Wartime Operational Modalities.

The rationality of these spiritual practices is actually clearly depicted in Islamic education studies that dissect the *pesantren* curriculum. Authoritative research by Dhofier[12] and acculturation studies by Woodward[13] have excellently described the structure of *Kyai-Santri* relations and *Sufi* discipline.[14] However, a fundamental weakness of this cluster of literature is that its analytical context is situated within peacetime. There is a paucity of literature specifically analyzing how spiritual practices commonly performed in peacetime such as *riyadhoh* (self-discipline) and *muraqabah* (inner vigilance) were adapted and repurposed into survival mechanisms when practitioners faced extreme pressure in the guerrilla field.

This analytical gap regarding the pressures of war has recently begun to be addressed by Pols, who examined the mental health of revolutionary combatants. Pols successfully identified extraordinary mental resilience among Indonesian fighters in facing trauma. Unfortunately, Pols predominantly dissected this phenomenon using a Western clinical psychology framework.[15] While he acknowledged the general role of religion, he did not elaborate on the specific mechanisms of how daily ritual practices (such as night prayers or fasting) operated as systematic stress management techniques and combat vigilance systems.

Based on the mapping of the identified gaps—namely, the absence of micro-sociological analysis of how pesantren spiritual practices functioned as operational modalities in the 1948–1949 guerrilla conflict, this study aims to bridge the disconnect between theological studies and military strategy by examining the transformation mechanism of the *pesantren* ethos during the Second Military Aggression. Specifically, this research employs the term "Spiritual Vigilance" as a conceptual umbrella to explain the integration of two core *pesantren* practices: (1) *Muraqabah* (inner vigilance) as the cognitive dimension; and (2) *Riyadhoh* (ascetic discipline) as the physical dimension.[16] Within this framework, this article advances the thesis that General Sudirman did not merely motivate troops with religion, but actively recontextualized *Riyadhoh*

[11] Zamakhsyari Dhofier, *Tradisi Pesantren: Studi Tentang Pandangan Hidup Kyai* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1982); M. Woodward, *Java, Indonesia and Islam* (Springer, 2011).
[12] Dhofier, *Tradisi Pesantren: Studi Tentang Pandangan Hidup Kyai*.
[13] Woodward, *Java, Indonesia and Islam*.
[14] Dhofier, *Tradisi Pesantren: Studi Tentang Pandangan Hidup Kyai*; Woodward, *Java, Indonesia and Islam*.
[15] H. Pols, "Trauma, Resilience and the Mental Health of Combatants in the Indonesian Revolution (1945–1950)," *Bijdragen Tot de Taal-, Land- En Volkenkunde* 177, no. 1 (2021): 108–35, https://doi.org/10.1163/22134379-bja10006.
[16] I. Khalid, S. Gulzar, and M. Amin, "A Critical Review of Shamsuddin Azeemi's 'Murāqabah' through the Lens of the Qur'ān and Hadīth," *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization* 11, no. 1 (2021): 301–17, Scopus, https://doi.org/10.32350/JITC.111.16.

into logistical resilience and Muraqabah into the discipline of ambush tactics. Through this analysis, this article aims to reframe the historical understanding of the Second Military Aggression:[17] not merely as a clash of arms, but as the triumph of an Islamic ascetic methodology applied with precision on the battlefield. Accordingly, the central aim of this research is to systematically demonstrate how the *pesantren* ethos specifically the practices of *Muraqabah* and *Riyadhoh* was socio-culturally recontextualized into concrete operational modalities during the Second Dutch Military Aggression of 1948–1949, thereby advancing a new theoretical framework that situates Islamic spiritual capital as a rational and functional source of military methodology in asymmetric warfare. Accordingly, this study is guided by the following central research question: How were the pesantren practices of Muraqabah and Riyadhoh socio-culturally recontextualized into concrete operational modalities that determined the effectiveness of General Sudirman's guerrilla forces during the Second Dutch Military Aggression (1948–1949)? This aim will be revisited and substantiated in the discussion section through a systematic analysis of primary historical sources and *pesantren* ethical literature.

B. Method

This research employs a qualitative historical sociology design, which fundamentally emphasizes the deep understanding of complex social phenomena within their specific natural and temporal contexts.[18] Integrating systematic archival research with the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) within Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), this design was specifically chosen to deeply investigate the socio-cultural mechanisms that influenced wartime tactical decisions. The material of analysis comprises two primary, purposively selected textual categories to ensure data richness and contextual relevance.[19] The first category involves primary historical military archives from the 1948–1949 period, focusing on authoritative memoirs and strategic texts such as A.H. Nasution's guerrilla memoir and T.B. Simatupang's wartime account. These texts were selected because they precisely capture the tactical, logistical, and psychological realities of General Sudirman's forces. The second category consists of foundational pesantren ethical literature, prominently Al-Ghazali's Ihya' 'Ulum al-

[17] Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia Since c. 1200*; B. D. Kurniadi, "Asymmetric Warfare and Spiritual Capital: Re-Evaluating the Indonesian Guerrilla Strategy," *Armed Forces & Society* 49, no. 3 (2023): 670–89, https://doi.org/10.1177/0095327X221104561.

[18] John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 5th ed. (SAGE Publications, 2018).

[19] N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln, *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, ed. 5 (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2018).

Din, to establish the definitive operational concepts of *Muraqabah* (spiritual vigilance) and *Riyadhoh* (ascetic discipline).

Data collection procedures were conducted exclusively through extensive library research and document analysis, an approach deemed highly effective for tracing historical texts and establishing theoretical frameworks across different periods.[20] The primary and secondary texts were systematically gathered, categorized, and critically read to isolate specific narratives detailing both the physical deprivation experienced by the combatants and the corresponding spiritual coping mechanisms they employed. By juxtaposing the religious curriculum texts with historical military accounts, the data collection phase effectively mapped the transition of spiritual routines into field combat practices.

For data analysis, this study adopts Ruth Wodak's Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) within Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The CDA framework was specifically applied to analyze the recontextualization of religious discourse in Sudirman's military communications and field orders, examining how spiritual vocabulary was operationalized into tactical directives), which fundamentally demands that discourse be analyzed by deeply integrating all available background information regarding the historical and socio-political contexts in which the texts are embedded.[21] The DHA procedure was applied through three systematic stages. First, the study identified the central discursive topics by mapping the original spiritual concepts within the pesantren texts against the tactical survival narratives in the guerrilla memoirs. Second, the analysis investigated the discursive strategies, focusing on how General Sudirman operated as a cultural broker to recontextualize religious terminology into lethal military doctrines amidst the total collapse of state logistics. Third, the study examined the linguistic means and historical contexts of this socio-cultural recontextualization, synthesizing how the functional transformation of rituals into strategies was legitimized and executed during the absolute power vacuum of the Second Military Aggression. Finally, to ensure the validity and reliability of the analytical interpretations as strictly required in rigorous qualitative inquiries,[22] the study utilized source triangulation by cross-referencing formal military doctrine narratives with the historical testimonies of santri combatants directly involved in the conflict.

[20] Glenn A. Bowen, "Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method," *Qualitative Research Journal* 9, no. 2 (2009): 27–40, https://doi.org/10.3316/QRJ0902027.
[21] Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer, *Methods of Critical Discourse Studies*, 3rd ed. (SAGE Publications, 2016).
[22] R. K. Yin, *Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods*, 6th ed. (SAGE Publications, 2018).

C. Discussion

This section presents the empirical findings derived from authoritative *pesantren* literature and military historical archives from the 1948–1949 period, simultaneously analyzing them through a socio-historical lens. The data reveals that General Sudirman's guerrilla warfare strategy did not operate within a cultural vacuum. Instead, there exists a strong structural correlation between the *santri* habitus specifically their "cultural capital" and the brutal tactical demands of asymmetric warfare. To deeply deconstruct this socio-cultural recontextualization mechanism, the findings and analyses are integrated into four thematic clusters: (1) the recontextualization of Riyadhoh into logistical resilience through rational asceticism, (2) the recontextualization of Muraqabah into ambush tactics through the double silences of mihrab and forest, (3) General Sudirman's role as a cultural broker through prophetic agency and language politics, and (4) a final synthesis presenting an integrative model of total defense recontextualization.

1. Rational Asceticism: The Recontextualization of *Riyadhoh* into Logistical Resilience

Before analyzing its transposition to the brutal reality of the battlefield, it is imperative to dissect the foundational structure of the "technology of the self" possessed by combatants with a *santri* background. Based on the ethical curriculum prevalent in Javanese *pesantren* during the early 20th century, the mental resilience of a *santri* was rigorously constructed upon the doctrinal pillar of physical discipline, known as *Riyadhoh*. In the traditional Islamic educational context, *Riyadhoh* which translates to exercises in the subjugation of the soul is not merely an abstract concept, but a painful yet meticulously measured physical practice. The primary epistemological reference shaping this specific habitus is the monumental work *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* by Imam Al-Ghazali.. In the specific chapter detailing "Breaking the Two Desires" (*Kasr al-Syahwatain*), Al-Ghazali provides explicit guidance on hunger (*ju'*) as a critical method of spiritual purification. The text postulates that while the stomach serves as the breeding ground for all worldly diseases and disasters, the conscious restriction of hunger purifies the heart, sharpens the mind, and hones inner insight or *bashirah*.[23]

Ethnographic data from authoritative sociological studies confirms that this classical text was not only read theoretically but was practiced *en masse*[24] in the form of "*Tirakat*". *Santri* in traditional (*salaf*) institutions were habitually accustomed to performing the Fast of David

[23] Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, vol. 3 (Kairo: Dar al-Ihya al-Kutub al-Arabiyah, 1998).
[24] Dhofier, *Tradisi Pesantren: Studi Tentang Pandangan Hidup Kyai*; Woodward, *Java, Indonesia and Islam*; A. Rofiq and D. Wahid, "Asceticism as a Weapon: The Socio-Political Role of Tarekat during the Dutch Military Aggression," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 36, no. 1 (2025): 88–112, https://doi.org/10.1093/jis/etae012.

(fasting on alternate days) or undertaking the practice of *Ngrowot*, a severe dietary restriction involving the consumption of only tubers while strictly avoiding rice for consecutive years. Consequently, authoritative acculturation studies note that a *santri's* physiological state had been deeply conditioned over time to operate with incredibly high energy efficiency despite a chronically low caloric intake.[25] This specific bodily conditioning, initially aimed purely at spiritual elevation, would later emerge as a paramount key variable when these individuals were thrust into the unforgiving theater of guerrilla warfare in the forest with zero logistics.

The profound utility of this *pesantren* ethos was violently tested when the historical reality of the Second Dutch Military Aggression completely shattered the peaceful paradigm of peacetime. The sudden invasion on December 19, 1948, created an absolute *force majeure* condition wherein the entire state structure and its central logistical supply chains collapsed totally. In response to the fall of Yogyakarta, General Sudirman mandated the immediate activation of the *Wehrkreise* (defense circle) strategy. A.H. Nasution, the primary architect of this military doctrine, explicitly documented the brutal operational parameters in his seminal work *Pokok-Pokok Gerilya*, stating that this asymmetric conflict would not be won in open battle, but was fundamentally a war of endurance. Nasution brutally prescribed that troops must be prepared to walk thousands of kilometers, sleep unsheltered in the rain, consume whatever minimal sustenance was available, and operate without any guarantee of medicine. He warned that soldiers lacking the inner strength to endure such profound suffering would be utterly defeated long before they ever fought the enemy.[26] Without logistical supply from the central government, starvation rapidly materialized as a threat more deadly than Dutch bullets.

To empirically prove the direct correlation between the *Riyadhoh* habitus and physical battlefield resilience, one must trace the harrowing journey of General Sudirman and his troops. Based on the notes of Sudirman's adjutant, Captain Supardjo Rustam, this journey covered a distance of more than 1,000 kilometers traversing very harsh terrain, demonstrating the absolute urgency of spiritual resilience.[27] During the physically devastating phase of penetrating the dense forests of Mount Wilis and Mount Lawu between January and February 1949, state logistics were frequently severed entirely. The guard troops, a hybrid of formal military police (CPM) and selected *santri* militias, were reduced to eating wild leaves, raw cassava, or a meager porridge made from cassava flour (*gaplek*). Historical records indicate that regular, Western-

[25] Dhofier, *Tradisi Pesantren: Studi Tentang Pandangan Hidup Kyai*; Woodward, *Java, Indonesia and Islam*.
[26] Nasution, *Pokok-Pokok Gerilya*.
[27] Sardiman, *Jenderal Sudirman: Prajurit, Patriot Dan Manusia Biasa*.

trained troops who were unaccustomed to the rigors of *tirakat* quickly succumbed to severe mental exhaustion and demoralization when facing the Long March.[28]

However, within Sudirman's core forces, this extreme physical deprivation was fundamentally managed not as an insurmountable military disaster, but rather as a deeply recontextualized practice of *Riyadhoh*. This complex sociological mechanism can be effectively elucidated through the theoretical framework of "Rational Asceticism," borrowed from Max Weber's sociology, wherein the deliberate rejection of worldly pleasures is undertaken systematically to achieve a vastly higher objective Under normal conditions, a body deprived of caloric intake will experience performance degradation and trigger instincts for rebellion or desertion.[29] The ultimate key to the survival of Sudirman's troops for seven months in the wilderness lay in their profound cognitive ability to reframe the brutal reality of their physical suffering. When General Sudirman instructed his troops to be "concerned" (*prihatin*), he was deliberately activating the collective memory of his troops regarding *sunnah* fasting and *ngrowot* which they habitually practiced in the *pesantren.* This cognitive reframing transformed passive, degrading malnutrition into meaningful active suffering.[30] Modern combat psychology studies confirm that soldiers capable of attributing transcendent meaning to their suffering possess a significantly higher survival rate compared to secular soldiers who rely solely on material logistical calculations.[31] Furthermore, this phenomenon aligns with the thesis that in the Javanese Islamic tradition, inner power is believed to accumulate precisely when the physical body is weakened.[32]

Beyond the vital psychological stabilization, the socio-cultural recontextualization of *Riyadhoh* simultaneously generated immense tangible physiological and tactical implications. Guerrilla warfare, according to the definitions of both Che Guevara and Nasution, is inherently a war of mobility where troops must move faster than the pursuing enemy. The elite Dutch forces (KST) were significantly impeded because their operational tempo was permanently tethered to supply lines of food trucks and ammunition.[33] In stark contrast, Sudirman's troops, by adopting the *santri*-style survival diet, achieved an extreme level of logistical independence.

[28] Simatupang, *Laporan Dari Banaran: Kisah Pengalaman Seorang Prajurit Selama Perang Kemerdekaan*.
[29] B. S. Turner, *Max Weber: From History to Modernity* (Routledge, 2011); Pols, "Trauma, Resilience and the Mental Health of Combatants in the Indonesian Revolution (1945–1950)."
[30] T. Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford University Press, 2015); Dhofier, *Tradisi Pesantren: Studi Tentang Pandangan Hidup Kyai*.
[31] S. Anwar and Z. Abidin, "The Theology of Resilience: Islamic Asceticism and Survival Strategies during the Indonesian National Revolution," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 54, no. 2 (2023): 210–30, https://doi.org/10.1017/S002246342300015X.
[32] Woodward, *Java, Indonesia and Islam*.
[33] Nasution, *Pokok-Pokok Gerilya*; Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia Since c. 1200*.

By surviving as autonomous units that did not burden the impoverished rural populace with excessive demands for rice, they successfully maintained the critical sympathy of the people as the basis of the "fish in water" concept.[34] Biologically, bodies accustomed to fasting possess a more efficient metabolism in managing glycogen energy reserves, enabling them to undertake long-distance travel even under conditions of catastrophic caloric deficit.[35] Thus, *Riyadhoh* was entirely stripped of its pure ritual context and weaponized into a pragmatic doctrine of logistical efficiency, perfectly exemplifying the socio-cultural recontextualization process within an asymmetric war machine.[36]

2. The Double Silences of *Mihrab* and Forest: The Recontextualization of *Muraqabah* into Ambush Tactics A Foucauldian Analysis of Bodily Discipline and Spiritual Capital

If *Riyadhoh* established the indispensable logistical foundation of hunger endurance, the second pillar of the *pesantren* ethos, *Muraqabah*, provided the most lethal operational modality in guerrilla warfare: the unparalleled capacity to remain utterly silent yet hyper-vigilant. In traditional Islamic epistemology, particularly within the influential text *Risalah al-Qusyairiyah* which heavily informed the *tarekat* practices of the *Hizbullah* militias,[37] *Muraqabah* is fundamentally defined as the total, unwavering consciousness that one is continuously observed by the Divine. This sophisticated spiritual practice strictly demands two absolute physiological and psychological conditions: profound silence and acute vigilance. A dedicated practitioner of *Muraqabah* is rigorously trained over years to perform silent contemplation (khalwat) during the crucial last third of the night, deliberately shutting down all gross motor movement impulses while concentrating all sensory perception on a single focal point. Authoritative ethnographic observations confirm that this relentless training generates a distinct neurological ability to maintain heightened attention in monotonous, static situations.[38] Consequently, phenomenological studies indicate that practitioners of *Muraqabah* experience significantly decreased physical motor activity alongside dramatically heightened cognitive vigilance, a

[34] Cribb, *Gangsters and Revolutionaries: The Jakarta People's Militia and the Indonesian Revolution 1945-1949*; Amelia Fauzia, "Spiritual Philanthropy and Logistical Support in the Indonesian Revolution," *Asian Journal of Social Science* 52, no. 1 (2024): 12–25, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajss.2023.11.002.

[35] Sardiman, *Jenderal Sudirman: Prajurit, Patriot Dan Manusia Biasa*; E. Haryono and A. Santoso, "The Sociology of Survival: Food Scarcity and Metabolic Adaptation of Combatants in Java (1945–1949)," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 38, no. 1 (2025): 44–62, https://doi.org/10.1111/johs.12450.

[36] B. Bernstein, *The Structuring of Pedagogic Discourse: Class, Codes and Control*, vol. 4 (Routledge, 1990); S. Rejeki and A. Hakim, "Mindfulness Based Sufism Intervention: Systematic Literature Review," *Ethics, Medicine and Public Health* 33 (2025), Scopus, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jemep.2025.101180.

[37] M. Syamsuddin, "Sufi Orders and Anti-Colonial Resistance: The Psychological Resilience of the Hizbullah Militia," *Bijdragen Tot de Taal-, Land- En Volkenkunde* 180, nos. 2–3 (2024): 205–31, https://doi.org/10.1163/22134379-bja10045.

[38] M. v. Bruinessen, *Kitab Kuning, Pesantren Dan Tarekat* (Mizan, 1995).

specific mental state crucial for surviving extreme stress.[39] Therefore, long before they ever wielded firearms, the *santri* already possessed the ingrained "bodily discipline" required to remain motionless and acutely alert a rare qualification precisely mirroring what modern military science refers to as perfect situational awareness.

The translation of this spiritual vigilance into battlefield lethality becomes evident when analyzing the specific tactical demands of the 1948–1949 conflict. In modern military doctrine, an ambush is strictly defined as a highly coordinated surprise attack launched from a fully concealed position against a moving or temporarily halted enemy unit.[40] General A.H. Nasution decisively asserted in *Pokok-Pokok Gerilya* that the absolute prerequisite for a successful ambush is never merely the sheer volume of gunfire, but rather the element of total surprise, which can exclusively be achieved through the execution of perfect, unbroken silence.[41] Achieving such absolute silence is notoriously difficult for regular troops accustomed to the noisy environment of conventional barracks; unprofessional people's militias typically fail to maintain silence, easily becoming restless and thereby compromising their concealed ambush positions.[42] However, empirical historical analysis reveals that the extraordinary ability of General Sudirman's core troops to remain completely "silent" for agonizingly long hours in the undergrowth was not the successful result of Western military marching drills, but rather a direct transposition of their pre-existing *Muraqabah* discipline.

To deeply comprehend how these *santri* combatants could sit motionless for hours in hostile terrain while waiting for Dutch convoys, one must view their bodily discipline through the analytical lens of Foucault's sociology of power. In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault articulates the concept of "docile bodies," wherein the human physical form is systematically shaped, trained, and manipulated to become intensely obedient and highly efficient through microscopic, repetitive exercises.[43] The *pesantren*, in this specific sociological regard, functions impeccably as a disciplinary institution strikingly similar to a modern military barracks, albeit driven entirely by theological rather than secular objectives.[44] When General Sudirman ordered his troops to conduct a stealth ambush, he did not need to teach complex infiltration or "stealth" techniques from scratch; the ingrained *santri* habitus had already provided the necessary muscle

[39] Khalid, Gulzar, and Amin, "A Critical Review of Shamsuddin Azeemi's 'Murāqabah' through the Lens of the Qur'ān and Hadīth"; Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, "Epistemology of Muraqabah: Cognitive Vigilance and Spiritual Intelligence in Islamic Tradition," *Intellectual Discourse* 34, no. 1 (2026): 101–25, https://doi.org/10.31436/id.v34i1.1890.
[40] D. Kilcullen, *Out of the Mountains: The Coming Age of the Urban Guerrilla* (Oxford University Press, 2013).
[41] Nasution, *Pokok-Pokok Gerilya*.
[42] Simatupang, *Laporan Dari Banaran: Kisah Pengalaman Seorang Prajurit Selama Perang Kemerdekaan*.
[43] M. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (Vintage Books, 1995).
[44] Sunarwoto, "Santri Habitus: Bourdieu, Pesantren, and the Making of Dutiful Subjects," *Critical Research on Religion* 10, no. 2 (2022): 195–212, https://doi.org/10.1177/20503032211066063.

memory and physical endurance.[45] The specific bodily posture maintained during silent *dhikr* sitting perfectly still, executing regulated breathing, and projecting sharp internal focus is phenomenologically identical to the required bodily posture when covertly staking out an approaching enemy. It is precisely here that the most profound recontextualization of bodily function occurred: the disciplined body originally trained to "wait for God" within the sacred silence of the *mihrab* was seamlessly repurposed into a lethal body "waiting for the enemy" behind the physical cover of a hill.[46]

This socio-cultural recontextualization occurred not only at the physical physiological level but also profoundly at the cognitive level. The theological essence of *Muraqabah* is the continuous act of "monitoring" or surveillance. In the traditional Sufistic context, the primary object to be monitored is the "passing thought of the heart" (*khatir*) to ensure it is not infiltrated by base lust or the subtle temptations of Satan.[47] Thus, *santri* are relentlessly trained to possess extreme sensitivity towards even the most microscopic internal disturbances. During the critical emergency of the Second Military Aggression, General Sudirman brilliantly redirected this highly tuned radar of vigilance; the ultimate object to be monitored was decisively shifted from the internal, spiritual enemy to the external, physical enemy represented by Dutch Patrols (KST). Despite this shift in the target object, the underlying mental mechanism remained exactly the same: an uninterrupted state of hyper-vigilance. Recent quantitative research on combatant psychology firmly corroborates this, confirming that soldiers possessing strong religious backgrounds consistently exhibit more stable situational awareness precisely because they are systematically accustomed to training their cognitive focus under extreme duress.[48]

The empirical validity of this cognitive shift is perfectly illustrated by the harrowing event of General Sudirman's narrow escape from a Dutch encirclement in the village of Bajulan, Kediri, in March 1949. Dutch elite troops had successfully sniffed out Sudirman's precise position, entering into direct visual range. According to historical testimonies, at that critical moment, Sudirman entered a state of ritual purity (*wudhu*) and total *dhikr* (*Muraqabah*), ordering his guards to maintain absolute, unwavering silence. The guard troops immediately executed a "silent movement," penetrating the dense forest in the dead of night while Dutch soldiers inexplicably turned back. Their acute sensitivity to the faintest sound of snapping twigs

[45] Sunarwoto, "Santri Habitus: Bourdieu, Pesantren, and the Making of Dutiful Subjects"; Suswanta, "Reconsidering the Stigma of Political Opportunism Among the Kiai: A Critique of the Modernist Perspective," *Politika: Jurnal Ilmu Politik* 6, no. 1 (2018): 147–72, https://doi.org/10.22146/PCD.36149.
[46] Woodward, *Java, Indonesia and Islam*.
[47] Solahudin, *The Roots of Terrorism in Indonesia* (UNSW Press, 2013); Al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, vol. 3.
[48] Pols, "Trauma, Resilience and the Mental Health of Combatants in the Indonesian Revolution (1945–1950)."

or the rustle of the wind skills inherently trained through countless silent nights of *Muraqabah* became an unparalleled instrument for the early detection of enemy movements. Spiritual Vigilance was thereby effectively converted into Tactical Vigilance. The foundational *Muraqabah* doctrine, teaching that one is perpetually "being watched by God," inadvertently created an immensely powerful internal Panopticon effect.[49] Consequently, every individual soldier autonomously policed themselves against fatal carelessness, rigorously maintaining light and sound discipline without ever needing to be aggressively disciplined by a secular commander.[50]

The final, and arguably most strategic, aspect of the recontextualization of *Muraqabah* involved the tactical exploitation of temporality. The *pesantren* tradition fundamentally possesses a unique cultural construction of time, wherein "life" and intense activity effectively begin in the last third of the night (*Qiyamul Lail*) and continue until dawn.[51] Conversely, for Dutch colonial soldiers strictly operating on a secular, Western biological rhythm, the early morning hours represented absolute "dead time," a physiological period where cognitive vigilance is at its lowest possible point and the human sleep cycle is at its deepest.[52] General Sudirman tactically exploited this significant cultural and biological gap. The most devastatingly effective guerrilla attacks, including the monumental General Offensive of March 1, 1949, heavily utilized this specific time window, executing night movements and striking precisely at dawn.[53] For the *santri* troops, being physically awake and highly active at 03:00 AM constituted absolutely no physiological burden, as it seamlessly aligned with their lifelong routine *Muraqabah* time. In this profound socio-historical analysis, "Sacred Time" the period exclusively designated for communion with God was flawlessly recontextualized into "Tactical Time," the precise period calculated to destroy the enemy. The biological readiness of the *santri* to remain intensely awake while the technologically superior enemy slept provided a massive asymmetric advantage. General Sudirman's guerrilla strategy, therefore, transcended the mere mastery of geographic space and evolved into the absolute mastery of time, deeply grounded in the rhythmic cadence of Islamic worship.[54] This definitively proves the thesis that deeply

[49] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*.
[50] Rofiq and Wahid, "Asceticism as a Weapon: The Socio-Political Role of Tarekat during the Dutch Military Aggression"; Baidhawy, "The 1945 Jihad Resolution and the Laskar in the Indonesian Revolution."
[51] I. Subchi and L. Arfani, "Ritual and Social Resilience: The Role of Tarekat in Post-Pandemic Indonesia," *Jurnal Sosiologi Agama* 17, no. 1 (2023): 22–40, https://doi.org/10.14421/jsa.2023.171-02.
[52] Nasution, *Pokok-Pokok Gerilya*.
[53] Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia Since c. 1200*; N. Herlina, K. Sofianto, and M. Falah, "The March 1st, 1949, General Attack: A Defining Point of Recognition of Indonesia's Sovereignty," *Cogent Social Sciences* 9, no. 1 (2023), Scopus, https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2023.2232566.
[54] M. Hasan, *Religion-Based Character and Environmental Education* (Yogyakarta: Ar-Ruzz Media, 2021).

ingrained religious routines can be effectively transformed into a weaponized operational ritual within the context of prolonged asymmetric conflict.

3. Prophetic Agency (Charismatic Authority) and Language Politics: General Sudirman (Cultural Broker) as a Cultural Broker in Asymmetric Warfare

The profound socio-cultural recontextualization of the *Riyadhoh* and *Muraqabah* ethos discussed previously did not organically occur within a cultural vacuum, nor did it happen automatically. In sociological terms, a habitus fundamentally requires a highly capable agent to actively trigger, shape, and operationalize it within a new, highly volatile arena.[55] In the catastrophic historical context of the Second Military Aggression, General Sudirman played an absolutely central role, evolving far beyond a mere tactical military commander to function as a paramount "Cultural Broker". The undeniable tactical success of the "Total People's War" (*Perang Rakyat Semesta*) strategy was inextricably linked to the complex sociological integration of autonomous Islamic militias specifically *Laskar Hizbullah* and *Sabilillah* into the formal defense structure of the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI).[56] Led primarily by young Islamic scholars (*Kyais*), these massive militias operated on a unique, culturally specific command structure where absolute obedience was predicated upon *Ta'dzim* (reverence for the teacher) rather than a rigid, secular military hierarchy.[57] Sudirman's profound operational effectiveness lay precisely in his sophisticated ability to utilize symbolic power, flawlessly translating brutal military necessities into a theological language perfectly understood by these ideologically driven troops.

To fully comprehend this dynamic, one must starkly contrast Sudirman's leadership with the conventional command structures of the era. Unlike Western-trained officers heavily influenced by the Dutch colonial army (KNIL), who relied almost exclusively on rational-legal authority based on formal rank and codified regulations, Sudirman commanded his forces utilizing what Max Weber theoretically conceptualized as "Charismatic Authority".[58] However, within the specific socio-cultural landscape of Java, Sudirman's charisma manifested in a highly specific, culturally resonant archetype: he perfectly represented the "Sufi-Warrior" or the eschatological *Ratu Adil* (Just King) deeply embedded within Javanese-Islamic cosmology. The historical fact that Sudirman stubbornly led the grueling guerrilla warfare while critically ill

[55] P. Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, R. Nice (Trans.) (Stanford University Press, 1990).
[56] Greg Fealy, "Islamic Authority and the Military in Indonesia: Historical Legacies and Contemporary Dynamics," *Indonesia* 113 (2022): 21–44, https://doi.org/10.1353/ind.2022.0001.
[57] Jajat Burhanudin, "Ulama, State, and War: The Fatwa of Jihad and the Defense of the Indonesian Republic," *Islamic Law and Society* 30, no. 3 (2023): 250–78, https://doi.org/10.1163/15685195-bja10030; Baidhawy, "The 1945 Jihad Resolution and the Laskar in the Indonesian Revolution."
[58] M. Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology* (University of California Press, 1978).

with tuberculosis, famously necessitating his transport on a rudimentary palanquin, paradoxically strengthened the absolute legitimacy of his leadership in the eyes of the *santri* militias.[59] In the rich tradition of Javanese Islamic hagiography, the profound physical suffering of a dedicated leader is frequently interpreted not as a mundane biological weakness, but rather as an undeniable sign of a highly elevated spiritual degree or the manifestation of a *Wali* (saint).[60]

Consequently, Sudirman's frail, deteriorating physical body became a powerful, living visual site of the *Riyadhoh* practice itself. According to contemporary sociological analyses, Sudirman's literal position within the palanquin was often reverently treated by his followers not merely as a pragmatic medical evacuation of a sick general, but rather akin to the sacred procession of a holy heirloom or a deeply venerated spiritual figure.[61] This potent cultural symbolism organically generated an intense, unbreakable emotional loyalty that would have been entirely unattainable by a purely secular military hierarchy demanding compliance through institutional force. When Sudirman issued strategic operational orders, the *santri* soldiers accepted them not merely as secular instructions originating from a military superior, but rather as a revered teacher's *fatwa* explicitly imbued with divine blessings or *barakah*. This specific theological element was arguably the singular binding force that successfully maintained the structural cohesion of the TNI during the critical operational vacuum of 1949, a period when the state's capacity to distribute salaries and maintain formal logistical structures had completely ceased to exist.[62]

The most significant empirical finding derived from the Critical Discourse Analysis of Sudirman's battlefield instructions is his masterful employment of language politics, deliberately weaponizing religious lexicon for concrete tactical purposes. Sudirman consciously and consistently avoided rigid Western military technical jargon; instead, he dynamically recontextualized established Sufi terminology to explicitly define the brutal realities of the war. First, he brilliantly recontextualized the theological concept of "*Sabar*" (Patience). In conventional military doctrine, the required phase of "tactical consolidation" or waiting is often psychologically draining and notorious for rapidly lowering troop morale.[63]

[59] Sardiman, *Jenderal Sudirman: Prajurit, Patriot Dan Manusia Biasa*; M. Y. Zara, "Islamic Patriotism in General Sudirman Comic Strips of Suara Muhammadijah Magazine (1966-1967)," *Studia Islamika* 29, no. 2 (2022): 305–32, Scopus, https://doi.org/10.36712/SDI.V29I2.19588.
[60] Woodward, *Java, Indonesia and Islam*.
[61] Y. Latif, "The Religiosity of Indonesian Nationalism," *Wawasan: Jurnal Ilmiah Agama Dan Sosial Budaya* 5, no. 1 (2020): 1–14, https://doi.org/10.15575/jw.v5i1.7820.
[62] M. Mietzner, "Rivalry and Resilience: The Indonesian Military in the Age of Pluralism," *Indonesia* 109 (2020): 85–111, https://doi.org/10.1353/ind.2020.0003.
[63] Kilcullen, *Out of the Mountains: The Coming Age of the Urban Guerrilla*.

Sudirman ingeniously framed this agonizing waiting phase within the hostile forest using the highly resonant word "*Sabar*". In classical Islamic theology, *Sabar* is never interpreted as passive resignation, but rather as an active, resilient endurance of profound turmoil for a higher Divine purpose.[64] By deliberately labeling static hiding tactics as a "Test of Patience," Sudirman seamlessly transformed intensely boring waiting periods into highly anticipated, reward-bearing worship time. Consequently, the soldiers did not feel they were cowardly hiding or unproductively idle; rather, they firmly believed they were actively practicing sacred patience.

Furthermore, when physical logistics were completely exhausted and combatants were reduced to consuming wild leaves, Sudirman explicitly rejected hollow secular nationalist rhetoric such as demanding "sacrifice for the state" and instead deployed the immensely powerful spiritual concept of "*Ikhlas*" (Sincerity). In the specific operational context of the militias, *Ikhlas* is sociologically interpreted as the total, unreserved surrender of the final battlefield outcome directly to God, but only after expending absolute maximum physical effort.[65]

This functioned as an exceptionally potent psychological coping mechanism designed to effectively dampen catastrophic combat stress. If a purely secular commander had pragmatically stated, "You must starve because of our strategy," the probability of mutiny would have been exceedingly high. However, when Sudirman passionately declared, "Let us be *ikhlas* in undergoing this destiny," the horrific reality of starvation was immediately internalized and accepted as a necessary consequence of unyielding faith.[66] Additionally, the concept of "*Tawakkal*" (Absolute Trust in God) was explicitly utilized to build asymmetric courage when undertaking perilous Long Marches aimed at penetrating heavily armed Dutch encirclements. This specific narrative successfully neutralized the inherent human fear of death; while Dutch troops inherently feared death because their participation in the war was merely a worldly, professional duty, Sudirman's troops actively "dared to die" (*syahid*) because death was culturally constructed as a glorious gateway to the afterlife.[67] Sudirman effectively manipulated this sophisticated language politics to directly compensate for severe shortages in physical ammunition with an overwhelming surplus of psychological courage.

The final, and arguably most strategic, aspect of Sudirman's prophetic agency was his unprecedented success in systematically institutionalizing the *pesantren* culture of obedience

[64] Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*.
[65] Baidhawy, "The 1945 Jihad Resolution and the Laskar in the Indonesian Revolution."
[66] Pols, "Trauma, Resilience and the Mental Health of Combatants in the Indonesian Revolution (1945–1950)."
[67] Hasan, *Religion-Based Character and Environmental Education*.

known as *Ta'dzim* directly into the formal military command structure. In canonical educational texts such as *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim*, a *santri* is rigorously instructed to demonstrate absolute, unquestioning obedience to their *Kyais* to ensure that the transmitted knowledge becomes spiritually beneficial.[68] In the unforgiving environment of guerrilla warfare, this form of absolute obedience was literally a matter of life and death. Because the overwhelming majority of his troops possessed a *santri* background or were deeply immersed in hierarchical Javanese culture, Sudirman strategically positioned himself and his subordinate field commanders not merely as military officers, but as venerated "Father" or "Teacher" figures. According to critical religious research, this deeply ingrained habitus of *ta'dzim* directly enabled the creation of an impenetrable "Silent Discipline".[69]

When a unit commander silently signaled with a hand gesture to initiate an ambush, the soldiers obeyed instantly with a profound religious fear specifically the dread of spiritual curse or *kualat* rather than merely fearing standard military penal codes. This highly unique leadership model effectively filled the catastrophic institutional void left by the collapsed state. When the formal Military Police (CPM) could no longer physically function to enforce combat discipline due to the chaotic forest environment, the internalized, pervasive cultural norm of *ta'dzim* seamlessly took over that exact jurisdictional function. This brilliantly explains the historical anomaly of why desertion rates within Sudirman's core units remained phenomenally low compared to other secular units, despite the fact that their physical suffering and logistical deprivation were unequivocally the most severe.[70] By perfectly blurring the rigid socio-cultural lines separating a "Kyai" from a "General," Sudirman successfully engineered his forces into a highly lethal hybrid entity that operated simultaneously as a devoted "*Tarekat* Congregation" and a devastatingly effective "Infantry Unit".

[68] Burhanuddin Az-Zarnuji, *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim* (Semarang: Maktabah al-Turmusy, 1963).
[69] Sunarwoto, "Santri Habitus: Bourdieu, Pesantren, and the Making of Dutiful Subjects"; S. Hidayat, "Recontextualizing Ta'dzim: Kyai Leadership and Militia Cohesion in Post-Independence Indonesia," *Studia Islamika* 31, no. 1 (2024): 45–70, https://doi.org/10.15408/sdi.v31i1.26543.
[70] Simatupang, *Laporan Dari Banaran: Kisah Pengalaman Seorang Prajurit Selama Perang Kemerdekaan*.

1. Spiritual Core (Habitus)	2. Original Function (Worship Ritual)	3. Military Recontextualization (Command Doctrine)	4. Operational Output (Warfighting Methodology)
RIYADHOH & NGROWOT ***(Self-Discipline & Diet)*** 	Fasting, limiting caloric intake, and abstaining from rice to purify the soul and subdue base desires (Al-Ghazali's doctrine)	Reframing starvation as **"Laku Prihatin"** (ascetic test). Hunger becomes a meaningful act of devotion, not state failure.	**Extreme Logistical Resilience.** Troops possess efficient metabolism, high mobility, and independence cumbersome supply chains.
MURAQABAH & DHIKR ***(Spiritual Vigilance & Remembrance)*** 	Total silence, breathless attention, and motionless sitting to maintain continuous divine consciousness.	Translating motor inhibition **(Docile Bodies)** into perfect static concealment. A shift from monitoring internal thoughts to external enemy movements.	**Tactical Stealth.** Successful execution of ambush tactics through unbreakable sound discipline. Flawless Situational Awareness in hostile terrain.
TA'DZIM & BARAKAH ***(Reverence & Blessing)*** 	Absolute, unquestioning obedience to the *Kyai* to secure spiritual blessing (*barakah*) and avoid spiritual curse (*kualat*).	Institutionalizing *ta'dzim* into the military hierarchy. Establishing the Commander as a **"Charismatic/Prophetic Leader"** (Wali-Warrior archetype).	**Command Cohesion.** Maintenance of a robust chain of command **(Silent Discipline)** amidst the collapse of state material support. Prevention of mass desertion.

Tabel 1. Operationalizing the Pesantren Habitus into Asymmetric Warfare (1948-1949)

4. Final Synthesis: An Integrative Model of Total Defense Recontextualization

This comprehensive analysis culminates in a robust theoretical proposition: the *Perang Rakyat Semesta* (Total People's War) strategy executed during the Second Dutch Military Aggression (1948–1949) was far more than a mere tactical byproduct of the secular *Wehrkreise* military doctrine. Instead, it represented the highly successful outcome of a complex sociological mechanism involving the deliberate recontextualization of deeply ingrained religious habitus into lethal combat modalities.[71] The victory of General Sudirman's decentralized guerrilla strategy was not determined by the material superiority of physical weaponry which was demonstrably and vastly inferior to the heavily armed Dutch forces but rather by the unparalleled superiority of the "human methodology" forged over centuries within the traditional *pesantren* system. This critical historical juncture effectively functioned as a unique sociological laboratory wherein abstract "Spiritual Capital" was systematically and effectively converted into tangible "Military Capital".[72] To fully capture this multidimensional phenomenon, this synthesis formulates an integrative model that explicitly maps how traditional Islamic epistemology was dynamically converted into functional combat capital through three fundamental transformation pathways: physiological, cognitive, and sociological.

The first fundamental pathway is the Physiological Transformation, which asserts that Islamic asceticism, specifically the practice of *Riyadhoh*, functioned as the primary,

[71] Sardiman, *Jenderal Sudirman: Prajurit, Patriot Dan Manusia Biasa*.
[72] Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia Since c. 1200*.

indispensable pillar of the guerrilla army's independent logistical infrastructure. In the broader sociology of conflict and conventional military historiography, physical logistics are universally recognized as the definitive "Achilles heel" for any modern armed force; without a reliable supply chain, conventional armies inevitably dissolve into chaos and mutiny.[73] However, the empirical data strongly indicates that Sudirman's core troops successfully shattered this established secular military thesis through the rigorous application of what Max Weber theoretically conceptualized as "Rational Asceticism".[74] The traditional practices of *sunnah* fasting and the extreme *ngrowot* diet, which had become deeply acculturated as the foundational *santri* habitus, were completely recontextualized from their original theological function of "soul purification" into a highly pragmatic, operational function of "metabolic efficiency".[75] When the nascent Indonesian state's rice supply lines were entirely severed by the brutal Dutch economic blockade, the mental and physical structure of these specific combatants did not succumb to shock or structural collapse; instead, they seamlessly activated a highly tuned survival mode meticulously trained for years within the *pesantren* . In this critical regard, the practice of *Riyadhoh* provided a massive "resilience reserve" that prevented mass desertion and physiological failure.[76] Without this profound ascetic capital, the *Wehrkreise* strategy which inherently demanded extreme territorial mobility without the burden of public kitchens would have been mathematically and physically impossible to execute in the field.[77]

The second vital pathway within this integrative model is the Cognitive Transformation, which specifically highlights the systematic conversion of mental discipline into tactical lethality. The defining characteristic of successful guerrilla warfare is its nature as a relentless cat-and-mouse game, an operational reality that demands absolute physical silence and uninterrupted hyper-vigilance from its combatants.[78] Regular, secularly trained troops heavily accustomed to the predictable routines of formal barracks life frequently fail spectacularly in maintaining this grueling discipline under the chaotic stress of the jungle. However, the comprehensive synthesis of this research definitively indicates that the traditional Sufi practice of *Muraqabah* or constant spiritual vigilance provided the exact neurological and psychological foundation required for these brutal tactical necessities. The ingrained *santri* habitus of being intimately accustomed to executing silent sitting for agonizingly long hours in the pitch-black

[73] Nasution, *Pokok-Pokok Gerilya*.
[74] Turner, *Max Weber: From History to Modernity*.
[75] Woodward, *Java, Indonesia and Islam*.
[76] Pols, "Trauma, Resilience and the Mental Health of Combatants in the Indonesian Revolution (1945–1950)."
[77] S. Pramono and T. Widiastuti, "Guerrilla Warfare and Environmental Adaptation: General Sudirman's Ecological Tactics," *Environment and History* 31, no. 2 (2025): 215–38, https://doi.org/10.3197/096734024X170564.
[78] Kilcullen, *Out of the Mountains: The Coming Age of the Urban Guerrilla*.

last third of the night for *dhikr* is, phenomenologically and biomechanically, identical to the physiological requirements for staking-out or covert reconnaissance in ambush tactics.[79]

General Sudirman successfully and permanently recontextualized the theological "feeling of being watched by God" into a highly pragmatic, militarized "vigilance against the enemy". Because *Muraqabah* exercises inherently train profound motor inhibition the deliberate restraining of all gross bodily movement and highly focused cognitive attention, these soldiers possessed a massive asymmetric advantage.[80] In the hostile guerrilla forest, the trained ability to subconsciously suppress a cough, flawlessly restrain reactive movement when bitten by insects, and remain exclusively focused on the subtle sound of snapping twigs frequently constituted the sole differentiator between life and sudden death. Thus, the ancient ritual of seeking God was completely transformed into an impenetrable operational security protocol.

The third essential pathway is the Sociological Transformation, which emphasizes the absolutely vital role of the traditional ethic of *Ta'dzim* total, unquestioning obedience to the religious teacher in successfully maintaining the integrity of the military chain of command. When the formal state structure catastrophically collapsed in the immediate aftermath of the Second Military Aggression, the formal military hierarchy instantaneously lost its legal, coercive power; state salaries vanished, and formal military courts ceased to function entirely. In this highly dangerous power vacuum, Sudirman brilliantly utilized the immense symbolic capital of the traditional *Kyai* (Islamic scholar) to enforce and maintain absolute troop loyalty.[81]

The deeply ingrained obedience of a *santri* to their *Kyais*, which classical texts dictate must be absolute to secure the spiritual blessing of knowledge, was flawlessly transferred to the charismatic figure of the Guerrilla Commander.[82] By positioning himself not merely as a secular tactical superior but as a venerated "Spiritual Father," Sudirman generated a highly unique, unbreakable type of discipline. The historical data undeniably shows that his soldiers vehemently refused to desert, not because they feared being executed by military police, but because they harbored a profound, existential fear of becoming *kualat* (spiritually cursed) or losing the sacred *barakah* (blessing) of the national struggle.[83] This powerful cultural force of

[79] Dhofier, *Tradisi Pesantren: Studi Tentang Pandangan Hidup Kyai*; T. Budiharso and S. Bakri, "Transformation of Education System of the Pesantren in Indonesia from the Dutch Colony to Democratic Era," *Journal of Social Studies Education Research* 14, no. 4 (2023): 179–206, Scopus.
[80] Khalid, Gulzar, and Amin, "A Critical Review of Shamsuddin Azeemi's 'Murāqabah' through the Lens of the Qur'ān and Hadīth"; Rejeki and Hakim, "Mindfulness Based Sufism Intervention: Systematic Literature Review."
[81] Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*.
[82] Sunarwoto, "Santri Habitus: Bourdieu, Pesantren, and the Making of Dutiful Subjects"; Suswanta, "Reconsidering the Stigma of Political Opportunism Among the Kiai: A Critique of the Modernist Perspective."
[83] Hasan, *Religion-Based Character and Environmental Education*.

Ta'dzim acted as the ultimate sociological adhesive, seamlessly gluing highly decentralized, geographically isolated militia units into a single, cohesive body that moved harmoniously under one unified moral command despite total logistical severance.

Ultimately, the theoretical implications of this integrative model offer a profound, necessary corrective to conventional military historiography, which has historically tended to be overwhelmingly secular and materialist in its orientation. The Indonesian War of Independence, particularly the brutal guerrilla phase of the Second Military Aggression, undeniably constitutes a rich historical laboratory wherein "Spiritual Capital" was systematically and deliberately converted into highly lethal "Military Capital". This robust recontextualization model definitively demonstrates that in the complex theater of asymmetric warfare, the materially weaker party can successfully counterbalance a vastly stronger, technologically superior occupying force by strategically exploiting deeply rooted non-material, socio-cultural dimensions.[84]

General Sudirman did not secure the survival of the Republic through a superior volume of bullets, but rather by masterfully mobilizing the *pesantren* habitus to create a highly specialized, elite force fundamentally characterized by superhuman hunger endurance, flawless silence discipline, and unbreakable mental resilience. This synthesis unequivocally proves that religion functions far beyond its universally recognized motivational role as a catalyst for holy war or *jihad.*[85] Instead, this research asserts that religion served precisely as a highly rational, functional source of operational methodology; the traditional *pesantren* doctrine provided a comprehensive behavioral blueprint that, when forcefully situated within the extreme context of a wartime emergency, naturally and logically transformed into a highly effective, lethal tactical manual. This groundbreaking discovery effectively bridges the longstanding academic gap between the sociology of religion and strategic military studies, conclusively demonstrating that ancient, traditional ascetic practices can serve as the absolute most rational, devastatingly effective response to the extreme challenges of brutal modern warfare.[86]

[84] Kurniadi, "Asymmetric Warfare and Spiritual Capital: Re-Evaluating the Indonesian Guerrilla Strategy."
[85] Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*; Z. Mutaqin, "Islam, Violence, and the Ethics of War in Indonesian History," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 50, no. 2 (2022): 310–35, https://doi.org/10.1111/jore.12384.
[86] W. H. Sewell, *Logics of History: Social Theory and Social Transformation* (University of Chicago Press, 2005).

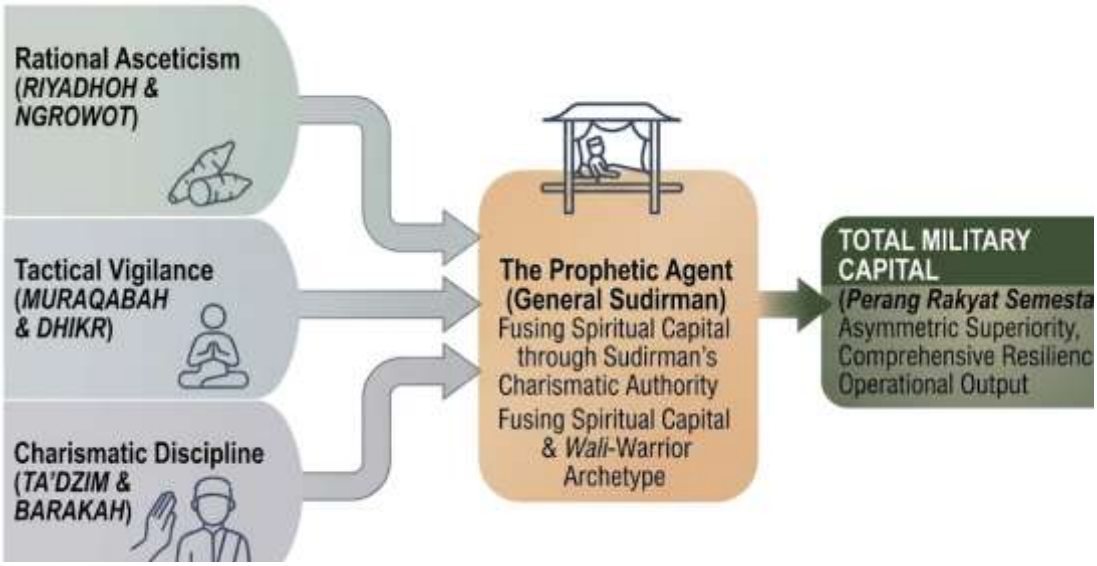


Figure 1. The Integrative Model of Spiritual Capital Integration for Total People's War (1948-1949)

D. Conclusion

This study concludes that the exceptional resilience of General Sudirman's guerrilla forces during the Second Dutch Military Aggression was not merely a product of secular military strategy, but was fundamentally rooted in the socio-cultural recontextualization of the pesantren ethos—specifically the practices of Riyadhoh and Muraqabah—into concrete combat modalities: ascetic discipline was converted into extreme logistical resilience, while spiritual vigilance was transformed into rigorous silent discipline for ambush tactics, thereby proving that in asymmetric warfare, spiritual capital functions not merely as ideological motivation (jus ad bellum) but as a systematic operational methodology (jus in bello) that directly sustained the Wehrkreise strategy amid total logistical collapse. Despite this theoretical contribution, the study acknowledges limitations stemming from its exclusive reliance on textual and archival sources, which may carry inherent biases, and from the absence of oral histories from lower-ranking santri combatants and civilian witnesses, suggesting that future research should incorporate oral history methodologies and examine analogous recontextualization processes of indigenous spiritual capital within other cultural and religious traditions facing severe institutional crises.

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