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# Scholars and Hadith Interpretation on the Phenomenon of Spirits in Indonesia

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The phenomenon of wandering spirits is often discussed in Indonesian society, which is rich in local culture and beliefs. As part of Islamic teachings, this phenomenon also receives attention from the perspective of hadith and the views of scholars. This article aims to examine the opinions of scholars and interpretations of hadith related to wandering spirits, as well as their relevance to local community beliefs. Using a qualitative approach, this article analyzes various views of scholars referring to hadith texts, both those that support and those that are skeptical of the existence of wandering spirits after death. In addition, this article also explores the influence of local culture on the interpretation of the hadith, as well as how Indonesian scholars align Islamic teachings with the spiritual practices of the community. The study results show that although the hadith related to wandering spirits have various interpretations, scholars prioritize the principles of Islamic teachings that emphasize the afterlife, and reject beliefs that are not based on authentic Islamic law. These findings provide deeper insight into the relationship between religious teachings and local culture, as well as scholars' contribution in maintaining the community's faith through a proper understanding of the related hadith.

**Keywords**: wandering spirits, scholars, hadith interpretation, phenomena, Indonesia, local beliefs.

#### ABSTRAK

Fenomena roh gentayangan seringkali menjadi perbincangan dalam masyarakat Indonesia yang kaya akan budaya dan kepercayaan lokal. Sebagai bagian dari ajaran Islam, fenomena ini juga mendapat perhatian dalam perspektif hadis dan pandangan ulama. Tulisan ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji pandangan ulama dan interpretasi hadis terkait roh gentavangan, serta relevansinya dengan kepercayaan masyarakat setempat. Dengan pendekatan kualitatif, artikel ini menganalisis berbagai pandangan ulama yang merujuk pada teks-teks hadis, baik yang mendukung maupun yang skeptis terhadap keberadaan roh yang berkeliaran setelah kematian. Selain itu, tulisan ini juga menelusuri pengaruh budaya lokal terhadap interpretasi hadis tersebut, serta bagaimana ulama Indonesia menyelaraskan ajaran Islam dengan praktik spiritual masyarakat. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa meskipun hadis-hadis terkait roh gentayangan memiliki beragam penafsiran, ulama cenderung mengedepankan prinsip-prinsip ajaran Islam yang menekankan kehidupan akhirat, serta menolak kepercayaan yang tidak didasarkan pada syariat Islam yang shahih. Temuan ini memberikan wawasan lebih dalam mengenai hubungan antara ajaran agama dan budaya lokal, serta kontribusi ulama dalam menjaga akidah umat melalui pemahaman yang tepat terhadap hadis-hadis terkait.

Kata Kunci: roh gentayangan, ulama, interpretasi hadis, fenomena, Indonesia, kepercayaan lokal.

#### ABSTRACT

## **INTRODUCTION**

In general, people view death as the end of one's life. Death is a certainty that every living being will experience, because every living thing will definitely face death (Bashori, 2020). In the course of the historical development of human thought, the discourse about the spirit has always been a hot topic of discussion. After death, the body, spirit and soul of the individual are no longer with us. But in fact, the general public does not always believe this assumption. Louis Leahy in a quote (Sadhya, 2019) assumes that a person who dies is only his body, but his soul lives on. Death is not the end of everything, but rather a process that reminds humans of their existence outside the physical world. In the teachings of *the Greek philosopher Plato*, the human soul is considered to be immortal and ever-present. Plato believed that the soul is a form of magic that transcends the physical body (Simorangkir, 2004).

Indonesia is a country with strong mystical beliefs and traditions. Basically, belief is one of the components of culture that varies among various groups of people. Beliefs can be formed through practices that are carried out repeatedly and are considered to have important meaning for the life of a community, thus building trust in that community (Asih, 2021). According to (Endraswara, 2006) belief is a form of belief that is dogmatic or follows the prevailing customs in society. Meanwhile, (Mufid, 2012) divides local beliefs into two categories, namely spirituality and locality. Spirituality refers to the belief in things that are invisible or mystical, while locality refers to the belief in things that are visible or mythical.

In general, the spirit is an entity that is included in matters that humans do not understand, because the spirit is the business of Allah SWT. Humans have very little knowledge about spirits (Darming, 2017). Therefore, some perspectives on spirits are always associated with the knowledge and majesty of God. However, many traditional cultures and tribal beliefs have concepts of spirits that involve the spirits of ancestors or nature spirits. Spirits are considered part of the human connection to the spiritual and natural world, as in animism. Spirits can be found in all objects, both animate and inanimate, such as trees, rocks, and rivers (Laudia Tysara, 2022). The purpose of believing in these spirits is to maintain a harmonious relationship with the spirits that are respected and feared. This is done by trying to please them and avoiding actions that could offend them. This is based on the belief that the anger of spirits can bring damage and destruction, which is believed to be under the control of the spirit's power (Wahyu, 2022).

The concept of spirits appears frequently in various works of fiction, especially in the horror genre, both in movies and literature that often reflect the beliefs and mythologies of various cultures. In this context, spirits are usually depicted as entities separate from the physical body that continue to exist after death. Spirits are often portrayed as entities that can be frightening, as they are thought to be capable of disturbing the living.

Mysticism and belief in spirits is one of the rich and complex aspects of Indonesian culture. On the one hand, belief in the existence of spirits can provide strength, experience and a deeper understanding of one's religious beliefs. However, on the other hand, the existence of spirits also requires a systematic, detailed and logical explanation in order to be more universally accepted by the believers (Hernawan, 2017a). A wandering spirit is a spiritual concept in traditional beliefs that describes the soul of a person who has died but cannot or has not been able to go to the afterlife due to various factors such as an unnatural death, unfinished worldly affairs, or lack of a suitable funeral ceremony, so that the spirit continues to roam the human world and is sometimes believed to influence or disturb the living.

In the 19th century, John Ferriar, a physician and public health reformer, conducted research on the phenomenon of ghosts. His research aimed to determine whether ghosts were truly supernatural or just an illusion. In his book *An Essay Towards a Theory of Apparitions*, Ferriar states that the forms of dead or missing people are often seen, and their voices heard by witnesses who are considered trustworthy (Ferriar, 1813). According to Ferriar, ghosts or apparitions are actually created by the overzealous human mind, resulting in the projection of mental images. Therefore, ghosts are viewed more as psychological phenomena than as supernatural phenomena.

Michael Faraday in 1853 also investigated "*table turning*" to understand whether table movements were caused by electricity or magnetism, rather than by spirits. Faraday secretly conducted experiments by monitoring the muscle movements of the participants during a seance session. The results of his research were published on June 30, 1853 in the Times newspaper. Faraday concluded that participants unconsciously moved the table through ideomotor effects, not due to spiritual influence (Tim detikEdu, 2023).

Actually, several writers have tried to discuss about the spirit of gentayangan. Among them is the writing of (Zulkifli, 2023) in his writing entitled "Pocong Mysticism as a Representation of Gentayangan Spirits (Clifford Geertz Typology Study)." The same thing was also done by (Limahelu, 2017) who wrote "Theological Anthropological Study of the Penfui People's Understanding of the Spirits of Traffic Accident Victims." However, from these various writings, no one has specifically highlighted the concept of Islam and hadith related to the phenomenon of the wandering spirit. Therefore, the importance of this paper is to explore how Islamic teachings can be a guideline for Muslim communities, especially in Indonesia, in responding to the phenomena of imaginary spirits.

From the formulation of the problem that has been explained, this research aims to dig deeper into how the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad Saw. explain the state of the spirit after death, as well as how the scholars view the beliefs of the community regarding the wandering spirit. Thus, it is hoped that this research can provide clarification and a deeper understanding of the concept of spirits in Islam, as well as identify the differences between Islamic teachings and people's beliefs regarding wandering spirits.

#### METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical method that relies on primary and secondary data to explore relevant information (Syamrum & Salim, 2012). Primary data were taken from books of hadith and tafsir while secondary data were taken from Islamic books, academic journals, and other relevant literature. These sources were chosen to examine the views of scholars from various books and hadiths related to the phenomenon of the wandering spirit.

Data collection was done through documentation studies, namely reading, reviewing, and analyzing the content of relevant texts. Data analysis was conducted using a thematic approach, grouping information based on themes such as spirit beliefs in Indonesia, hadith interpretations, and scholars' views on spirits. Data validity was maintained by ensuring that the literature used had scientific authority, such as major reference books and accredited journals (Surahman et al., 2016). This study is limited to the data available in the literature, but it is expected to provide an in-depth understanding of how scholars view and interpret hadith related to the phenomena of wandering spirits in Indonesia.

## DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

#### **Spirits Beliefs in Indonesia**

Historically, the development of Indonesian culture has been acculturated with various existing cultural forms. Therefore, the style and form of culture is influenced by various diverse cultural elements. Each Indonesian community has a different culture, which is caused by differences in social and cultural conditions between community groups. Culture is a way of thinking and feeling that is reflected in all aspects of the life of human groups, forming a social unit that lives in a certain space and time (Almu'tasim & Hendrajaya, 2019).

The concept of gentlemen spirits in Indonesia has strong roots in local culture and has been passed down from generation to generation in various regions. Theories about gentayangan spirits are part of local beliefs that have been preserved through oral traditions long before the advent of the internet and television (Heim, 2018). According to Sudjiman, as cited by (Maftukhan et al., 2022) this is called *folklore*, which is the belief in the customs of a nation that has existed for a long time and has been passed down from generation to generation through oral or written means. These beliefs have become part of the traditions and beliefs of the community, which carry moral wisdom from previous generations, especially among the Javanese, Sundanese, Gunungkidul, Sulawesi and Balinese communities.

Traditions contain various habits and activities carried out by parents, ancestors, or ancestors of a community, with the aim of protecting humans from unwanted things (Kasmana et al., 2016). In Javanese culture, for example, the spirit of a deceased person is believed to be able to stay around the family or a certain place until it finally reaches the afterlife. This tradition involves certain rituals that aim to honor the spirits or avoid disturbances from spirits that are considered not to have fully passed away (Kaltsum et al., 2022). Among Javanese people, there is a belief that there is a very close relationship between humans and the supernatural. Therefore, various sacred rituals need to be performed. (Geertz, 1981) states that the relationship between humans and the supernatural in the dimension of life is part of culture. These rituals reflect the belief that spirits have a connection with the physical world after death.

In one of the districts in Central Sulawesi, namely Poso, there is art in the form of Motengke songs for the dead and Mojonjoava to guard the spirits of the dead. These songs tell the history of a person's life journey, from life in the world to life in the spirit world. The beliefs held by the people in Central Sulawesi are a continuation of traditions that have developed since prehistoric times (Sutrisno & dkk, 2005). Animist beliefs in this region also involve the worship of a supernatural substance called pilogot. To bring in pilogot, a ritual is performed by the tarapuh who recites mantras first to call pilogot down to earth. Pilogot is believed to have a great influence, either good for them if a special ceremony is held for it, or bringing disaster if pilogot is angry. In addition, the Lindu people also still hold on to their traditions. They believe that the spirits of the deceased actually inhabit certain areas, and these spirits will come to the place of living relatives at certain times, such as during traditional harvest ceremonies (Kholis, 2017).

In Sundanese culture, belief in spirits is still maintained, albeit with slightly different forms and interpretations. The spirits are often regarded as entities that need to be respected or even avoided in order to maintain the balance of nature. Sundanese people also still carry out several traditions known as *talari*, which are hereditary habits passed down by ancient parents (Kasmana et al., 2016). Sundanese society has a variety of ceremonies intended to *"escort"* spirits to the next world. Good relations with ancestral spirits are maintained by making pilgrimages to graves, giving offerings at certain times in the form of food and drinks that the ancestors liked during their lifetime, and sending prayers at predetermined times.

The phenomenon of spirits in Indonesia has become part of people's lives, including in Gunungkidul. Gunungkidul people believe in the myth of rejecting bad luck by spreading rice in front of the house. This myth is carried out to reject bala, because it is believed that in rice there are spirits of supernatural beings that can protect from danger and eliminate invisible disturbances (Salma et al., 2023). In the study (Riana et al., 2021) stated that rejecting bad luck carried out by the community can use offerings, traditional ceremonies, or other heirlooms. This myth is believed by a number of people who still believe in shamans. This belief is found in many regions in Indonesia, such as in Kalimantan, Banyuwangi, Sumatra, and many other areas where people still believe in shamans.

In addition, the belief in spirits is often linked to unfulfilled moral obligations or funeral rituals. Many communities believe that if a person is not properly buried or if any religious obligations are not completed, the person's spirit cannot rest in peace. For example, in Balinese culture, the *ngaben* or cremation ceremony is a very important ritual to ensure that the spirit of the deceased can quickly reach its place in the afterlife (Saputra, 2022). If this ceremony is not performed properly, the community believes that the spirit is unsettled, miserable, wandering and disturbing the descendants or living relatives. No one can deny that Bali is the land of rituals. For some, with its diverse and historic rituals, Bali is a shining place. Therefore, rituals continue to be performed endlessly, with the belief that these actions have the theological power to reconcile nature and everything on earth, especially in Bali (Suryawan, 2012).

This mixed view of culture and Islamic teachings often results in an ambivalent attitude towards the spirits. Some communities continue to perform traditional rituals to honor ancestral spirits, while others consider them merely cultural traditions that have no religious significance. When faced with a phenomenon that is considered to be a wandering spirit, some people will seek the help of clerics or religious figures to appease the spirit. However, it is not uncommon for religious figures to be influenced by local traditions and thus not provide guidance that is truly in accordance with Islamic teachings.

#### **Spirits According to the Scholars**

The concept of spirit has long been an integral part of human life, whether in religion, philosophy, culture or spiritual life. The spirit is seen as a non-physical essence that animates humans and is connected to aspects of morality, consciousness, and life after death. According to (Al-Jauziyah, 2014) the spirit is a being created and governed by Allah Swt.

In Islamic teachings, the spirit is an entity that continues to live even after the body has died, but the concept of a wandering spirit is still debated. The history of thought about the spirit shows a variety of views influenced by the understanding of the Qur'an, hadith, and community traditions. Similarly, Ibn Taymiyyah in the book (Al-Jamal, 2010) states that the human spirit is a creature created in accordance with the agreement of the predecessors of this ummah, their Imams and all *Ahlus Sunnah*. Ibn Taymiyyah also emphasized that the spirit is a separate entity from the body and after death. The spirit enters the realm of *barzakh* a world between earthly life and the hereafter. There, all the deeds that have been done by humans during life in the world will determine their worthiness of life in the afterlife (Hanafi, 2017). The spirits of believers will enjoy happiness, while the spirits of disbelievers experience torment, depending on their deeds in the world.

Imam Al-Ghazali, who is known for his in-depth studies on spirituality, explained that the spirit undergoes a change of state after death. In his works, such as *Ihya' Ulumuddin*, he explains that after death, the spirit will continue to live in the realm of *barzakh*, and the quality of the spirit's life in that realm is largely determined by its spiritual condition while in the world (Al-Ghazali, 1963). Al-Ghazali emphasized the importance of *tazkiyatun nafs* (purification of the soul) as a preparation for life after death, so that the spirit can achieve eternal happiness. Al-Ghazali in the quote (Warsah, 2017) also argues that the most fundamental essence of man is the immaterial substance, namely the spirit. Although humans consist of bodies and spirits, the essence of both is the spirit, while the body only serves as a medium for the spirit in this world. When the body separates from the spirit (death), it is the body that dies, while the spirit will continue its existence in the realm of *barzakh*.

His Tasawwuf-influenced views also enrich the discourse on the importance of spiritual closeness to Allah in determining the fate of the spirit in the Beyond. Al-Ghazali's view is in line with the teaching that the spirit enters the *barzakh* phase, which is a bridge between the life of this world and the hereafter. This thought was continued by Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyah, who added that the spirit will feel the consequences of its deeds in the Beyond, while its existence remains separate from the physical world it left behind (Hernawan, 2017b).

In many views, the spirit is considered the true core of the human self that is invisible yet believed to be the source of spiritual power and existence (Sudi & Yama, 2017). The body may change over time, the mind may be affected by experiences, but the spirit is seen as an eternal and fixed part. According to (Sham et al., 2008) Spirit is the deepest identity that is not influenced by external circumstances, which is considered the element that gives life, moves the body, and becomes the true identity of humans.

The spirit also acts as a link between humans and God or divine power. The potential of human spirituality opens a wide window to the infinite dimensions of human existence (Pasiak, 2023). Many religious traditions see the spirit as a means to communicate with God. Including in Islam, the spirit is the part of humans that brings them closer to God, assisting in living a life in accordance with His commands. Through the spirit, humans can achieve deeper spiritual experiences and understand the higher meaning of life.

Opinions that reject the concept of a wandering spirit also appear in the views of other classical scholars, although within the tradition of Islamic mysticism there is room for different interpretations. Some mystical scholars argue that the spirit may still be spiritually connected to this world through certain means, but not in the form of wandering as it is commonly understood. In the modern era, this view is further emphasized by contemporary scholars who attribute the phenomenon of the wandering spirit to psychological aspects or even the influence of jinn. These scholars, basing their arguments on Islamic texts, argue that the belief in the spirits is closer to cultural beliefs mixed with religious teachings.

Yusuf al-Qardawi as one of the leading contemporary scholars, emphasizes that the concept of a wandering spirit does not exist in Islamic teachings. In his view, after death, the spirit is already in the beyond, in accordance with the principles of Islamic creed described in the Qur'an and hadith (al-Qardawi, 1993). The phenomenon that is often regarded as a wandering spirit actually comes from the influence of culture or myths that develop in society. A similar view is expressed by Dr. Zakir Naik, who sees that the story of a wandering spirit can be explained by science and psychological approaches, for example as a form of jinn disorder or psychological illusion (Islam Akan Menang, 2022).

In hadith studies, it is found that the beyond is a place full of spiritual experiences experienced by the human spirit. Hadiths that refer to the beyond often describe the condition of the spirits according to their deeds in the world. The spirits of the believers will experience pleasure while those of the disbelievers will experience torment. There is no information in the hadith that indicates that the spirit can return to the world in the form of wandering. Even in the tafsir of al-Qurthubi, a great scholar who studied the afterlife, it is explained that after death, humans will be in the beyond until the day of resurrection, with no possibility of returning to the physical world (Al-Qurthubi, 1993).

In understanding this phenomenon, some contemporary scholars emphasize that what appears to be a wandering spirit may actually be caused by a jin impersonating a deceased human. Islam teaches that jinn have the ability to disguise themselves and this often leads to misunderstandings among the people. Some scholars also explain the phenomena of spirits in terms of psychology, where emotions, sadness or fear can cause a person to see or feel the presence of spirits. This tends to be seen as a psychological illusion influenced by emotional factors and traditional beliefs.

Many scholars have also suggested that people should not mix the teachings of Islam with the traditions of the community that may not be in accordance with Islamic principles. This is so that Muslims have a correct view and are not influenced by beliefs that are not based on sound evidence.

#### Hadits Views on the State of the Spirit After Death

In Islamic teachings, death is the beginning of a new journey towards eternal life. The Messenger of Allah (SAW) in many traditions explains that when a person dies, his spirit moves to a different realm, called the beyond. The beyond is a transitional place between the world and the afterlife. This shows that the spirit waits until the Day of Judgment arrives. There is no such thing as a wandering spirit. These rumors often make the public afraid, even though people who have died will be in the grave. They receive favors or punishments. They cannot harm or benefit the living. This is in accordance with the concept of the Prophet's hadith:

إِنَّ الْعَبْدَ الْمُؤْمِنَ إِشْذَاكَانَ فِي انْقِطَاعٍ مِنْ الدُّنْيَا وَإِقْبَالٍ مِنْ الْآخِرَةِ نَزَلَ إِلَيْهِ مَلاَئِكَةٌ مِنْ السَّمَاءِ بِيضُ الْوُجُوهِ كَأَنَّ وُجُوهَهُمْ الشَّمْسُ مَعَهُمْ كَفَنٌ مِنْ أَكْفَانِ الجَنَّةِ وَحَنُوطٌ مِنْ حَنُوطِ الجُنَّةِ حَتَّى يَجْلِسُوا مِنْهُ مَدَّ الْبَصَرِ ثُمَّ يَجِيءُ مَلَكُ الْمَوْتِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلاَمِ حَتَّى يَجْلِسَ عِنْدَ رَأْسِهِ فَيَقُولُ أَيَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الطَّيِّبَةُ الْحُرْجِي إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِنْ اللَّهِ وَرِضُوانٍ قَالَ فَتَحْرُجُ الْمَوْتِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلاَمِ حَتَّى يَجْلِسَ عِنْدَ رَأْسِهِ فَيَقُولُ أَيَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الطَّيِّبَةُ الْحُرْجِي إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِنْ اللَّهِ وَرِضُوانٍ قَالَ فَتَحْرُجُ الْمَوْتِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلاَمِ حَتَّى يَجْلِسَ عِنْدَ رَأْسِهِ فَيَقُولُ أَيَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الطَّيِّبَةُ الحُرْجِي إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِنْ اللَّهِ وَرِضُوانٍ قَالَ فَتَحْرُجُ تَسِيلُ كَمَا تَسِيلُ الْقَطْرَةُ مِنْ فِي السِيّقَاءِ فَيَأْخُذُهَا فَإِذَا أَحَذَهَا لَمَ يَعَهُمُ الطَيِّبَةُ فِي يَدِهِ طَرْفَةَ عَيْنٍ حَتَّ الْعَبْدَةُ مَنْ فِي السِيّقَاء فَيَأْخُذُهما فَإِذَا أَحَذَهَا لَمَ يَعَوْمَ

"Seorang hamba mukmin, jika telah berpisah dengan dunia, menyongsong akhirat, maka malaikat akan mendatangkannya dari langit, dengan wajah yang putih. Rona muka mereka layaknya sinar matahari. Mereka membawa kafan dari surga, serta hanuth (wewangian) dari surga. Mereka duduk di samping sejauh mata memandang. Berikutnya, malaikat maut hadir dan duduk di dekat kepalanya sembari berkata: "wahai jiwa yang baik keluarlah menuju ampunan Allah dan keridhaannya." Ruhnya keluar bagaikan aliran cucuran air dari mulut kantong kulit. Setelah keluar ruhnya, maka setiap malaikat maut mengambilnya. Jika telah diambil, para malaikat lainnya tidak membiarkannya di tangannya (malaikat maut) sejenak saja, untuk mereka ambil dan diletakkan di kafan dan hanuth tadi. Dari jenazah, semerbak aroma misk terwangi yang ada di bumi." (HR. Ahmad).

This Hadīth explains that there is no such thing as a wandering spirit that can disturb a living person. This is because the spirit, when separated from the body, will deal with angels in the grave. For believers, they will get the pleasure of the grave until the Day of Judgment comes. As for those who disbelieve, they will experience the torment of the grave.

In various saheeh narrations, the realm of *barzakh* is described as a realm separate from the world. According to Ibn Sina, after the soul is separated from the body, the soul will get pleasure and misery on the last day. In this case Ibn Sina divides it into three categories. First, the soul is perfect because of knowledge and charity. Second, the soul is not perfect in both. Third, the soul is perfect in knowledge but imperfect in charity or vice versa (Arroisi & Ardi, 2020). For example, the spirits of the Prophets are in heaven and enjoy all its pleasures. Meanwhile, the spirits of disbelievers who oppose God are in the belly of a black bird in a place called sijjin in the seventh layer of the earth and experience terrible torment (Admin Hidcom, 2024).

Related to this, Ibn Qayyim in the book "Ar-Ruh" explains:

الأَرْوَاحُ مُتَفَاوِتَةٌ فِي مُسْتَقَرِّهَا فِي الْبَرْزَخِ أَعْظَمُ تَفَاوُتٍ فَمِنْهَا أَرْوَاحٌ فِي أَضعْلَى عِلِيِّينَ فِي الْمَلَإِ الأَعْلَى وهِيَ أَرْوَاحُ أَنْبِيَاءِ صَلَوَاتُ اللهِ وَسَلَامُهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَهُمْ مُتَفَاوِتُونَ فِي مَنَازِهِمْ كَمَا رَآهُمُ النَّبِيُّ لَيْلَةَ الإِسْرَاءِ

"The spirits differ in the places where they reside in the Hereafter, which is the greatest difference. Among them are the spirits that are in the highest place in Paradise, namely the spirits of the prophets, may Allah send peace and blessings upon them. They vary in level, as the Prophet saw on the night of 'Isra." (Al-Jauziyah, 1999).

In the book *I'anah ath-Thalibin* by (Al-Bakri, 1997) which describes that spirits are divided into five categories:

First, the spirits of the Prophets: These spirits leave their bodies and transform into their forms with fragrances similar to misik and *kafoor*. They eat, savor, and rest under lamps under thrones in heaven.

Second, the spirits of the martyrs: Allah places their bodies in the bodies of green birds swimming in the rivers. They eat from the fruits of Paradise, drink from its waters, and rest under thrones with suspended lamps. This is a statement uttered by the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him).

Third, the spirits of the devout among the believers: These spirits are in the gardens of Paradise. They do not eat or enjoy anything, only see Paradise.

Fourth, the spirits of the sinful believers: These spirits are between heaven and earth, in the air.

Fifth, the spirits of the disbelievers: Reside in the body of the black bird in prison, which is located below the seventh ground. They remain connected to their bodies, so when their spirits are tortured, their bodies feel the pain. This shows that the spirits already have their place and position.

The saheeh traditions explain that the spirits of believers will be at peace, while the spirits of disbelievers will be tormented in the Beyond. In one of the traditions narrated by al-Bukhari, the Prophet explains that when a believing servant dies, his spirit will be shown paradise and will be at peace until the Day of Judgment. Meanwhile, the spirits of the disobedient will see hell as their final place, and they will feel suffering as punishment for their bad deeds. These Hadīths make it clear that the condition of the spirit in the Hereafter depends on its deeds in this world, and it has no attachment to the physical world.

Islam has two foundations regarding the wandering spirit. In a saheeh explanation, it is said that the disbelievers will receive punishment in the grave, while the righteous will receive favor. Therefore, with the favors and punishments they receive in the grave, how could they be wandering the world for purposes such as taking revenge, helping the living, and doing other things.

The second reason is that if the dead were given the chance to come back to life, they would surely concentrate on charity and worship rather than taking revenge. Moreover, what about his record of deeds and his reckoning in the Hereafter if he kills people after he dies? This clearly contradicts the *qath'i* proofs, which state that a person's deeds cease when he dies. Abu Hurairah r.a. reported that the Prophet said:

"When a person dies, his deeds are cut off except for three: jariyah charity, useful knowledge, and righteous children who pray for him." (HR. Muslim-1631).

Even the disbelievers feel regret and wish to return to life in the world. Allah swt. says:

"And (how terrible), if you had seen when the sinners bowed their heads before their Lord, (they said), "O our Lord, we have seen and heard, so return us to the world. We will do righteous deeds. Verily we are men of conviction." (QS. Sajadah: 22).

This belief in the existence of wandering spirits or curious spirits is contrary to common sense. If the spirit of a dead person could wander around, then it could freely walk here and there, helping its family, or disturbing people who are still alive, and so on, of course no one would be afraid of death. Because we can still do good deeds and bad deeds. In fact, everyone might want to just die, because the afterlife is described as a life of leisure, freedom and wandering around.

In his book Fatwa of the Grand Imam of the Istiqlal Mosque, (Yaqub, 2008) states that a person will not return to the world after death. So, the wandering spirit is a demon who deceives by resembling a dead person, and the dead person will remain in the *barzakh* realm.

Some contemporary scholars assert that the concept of a wandering spirit is a form of deviation from Islamic teachings. They emphasize the importance of a correct understanding of the beyond, where the spirit will wait for the Day of Judgment without any chance of returning to the world. The realm of the beyond is a place of mystery, but the hadith explains that this is a phase that every spirit must undergo in preparation for the day of resurrection. Thus, the belief in a wandering spirit is not only erroneous, but also contradicts the basic principles of Islamic faith.

#### Islam's View on Spirits

In Islam, the concept of a wandering spirit is closely related to beliefs about life after death. Islamic teachings generally believe that the human spirit has its own journey after leaving its body. In his book (Rinto, 2021) explains that after the spirits are removed from their bodies, they will not roam the world but are taken to a place called Illiyin and Sijjin. This view does not provide space for the spirit to remain in the physical world as a free-roaming entity.

A wandering spirit is often described in various cultures as a spirit that has not settled down or has unfinished business in the world. In Islam, however, such a concept is inconsistent with the basic belief in the certainty of death and the end of earthly life. Human spirits do not have the ability to choose to return to the world or remain in it.

Islam sees the phenomenon of spirits often told by people as something that has more to do with psychological factors or local traditions. Many of these stories arise due to individual experiences, fear of death, or misinterpretation of certain events. In addition, traditions of ancestor veneration in Islamic societies in Indonesia show an acculturation between Islamic teachings and local values. Practices such as tahlilan and selamatan reflect the integration of Islamic values with local traditions, which may influence people's perceptions of the concept of spirits and life after death (Indah, 2023).

Philosophically, Islam teaches that life on earth is temporary and every human being will face the end of life. This view provides a framework for understanding death as something definite and not just a stage that spirits can negotiate. Life after death in Islam is highly organized and not random (Anjar, 2023). This belief makes the idea of a free-roaming spirit incompatible with the basic tenets of the faith. Islam views that every spirit has a predetermined path in accordance with divine provisions.

Spirits are often associated with mystery stories or supernatural experiences. In Islam, such phenomena are more often seen as something that can be explained through a spiritual or even scientific approach. For example, fear or emotional distress often create experiences that feel real, even if they are actually from the human mind.

Most beliefs about spirits come from the influence of local culture or traditions that develop in society. In Islam, such traditions are not used as the main reference in understanding the reality of human life after death. Instead, Muslims are invited to focus more on beliefs that lead to inner peace and certainty of life.

The concept of a wandering spirit is also often regarded as a result of people's imagination or desire to find explanations for things they do not understand. In Islam, a more rational and spiritual approach is taught to deal with this uncertainty, so as not to get caught up in ungrounded understanding. Also, the presence of stories of spirits often brings fear or anxiety to some people. However, in Islam, such fears are directed to be understood as a form of test or challenge to increase faith and courage to face the realities of life.

Therefore, the Islamic concept of wandering spirits has no logical place as it contradicts the established view of life and death. Although such stories are found in many cultures, Islam teaches its adherents to focus more on things that strengthen their faith and give them peace of mind in life here and in the hereafter.

# CONCLUSION

The phenomenon of spirits is a much-discussed issue in Indonesian society, especially in the context of local culture and beliefs. In viewing this phenomenon, various scholars have various perspectives. Some modern scholars argue that the belief in spirits is not fully in line with Islamic teachings, as the hadith does not directly discuss or validate the existence of spirits that can wander after death. They emphasize the understanding that the afterlife is a matter of the hereafter, not something that stops in the world unnaturally.

However, there are also scholars who see that the phenomenon of wandering spirits can be explained in the context of traditions that talk about the afterlife, such as traditions that explain the punishment of the grave or the questioning of angels. Some scholars try to interpret this phenomenon as the disturbance of supernatural beings or jinn that resemble the spirits of the dead, which is in accordance with Islamic teachings on the existence of jinn as beings that can influence the human world. This interpretation emphasizes the existence of a supernatural realm that can affect human life, although not all scholars agree with this interpretation.

In a more conservative view, some scholars caution the importance of safeguarding the faith and not allowing belief in spirits to lead to practices that may deviate from Islamic teachings, such as asking spirits or jinn for help. They rather emphasize the need to maintain faith by focusing on what the Qur'ān and authentic hadiths teach about the afterlife and a worldly life in accordance with Shariah. As times evolve, it is important for Muslims to have a deep and thorough understanding of religious teachings, capable of distinguishing between cultural beliefs and the pure teachings of Islam.

Overall, the scholars' interpretations of the phenomena of spirits in Indonesia show a diversity of thoughts influenced by cultural backgrounds, understanding of religious texts, and the challenge of balancing local traditions with the more universal teachings of Islam. Thus, the community is expected to be wiser in responding to this phenomenon, by adhering to valid religious principles and avoiding practices that are not in accordance with Islamic teachings.

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