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CONTACT

Correspondence Email:
2288210051@untirta.ac.id

Address: Jalan M Yunus
Lubuk Lintah, Kota
Padang, Kode Pos: 25153

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MANUSCRIPT DIGITIZATION EFFORTS AS CULTURAL HERITAGE PRESERVATION IN SERANG REGENCY (A CASE STUDY OF THE REGION VIII CULTURAL PRESERVATION OFFICE, BANTEN)

¹ MUHAMMAD FIKRI AZKA HAIKAL, ² TUBAGUS UMAR SYARIF
HADI WIBOWO, ³ AGUS RUSTAMANA

¹²³ Universitas Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa, Banten, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

This research aims to describe the history and role of the Cultural Preservation Center Region VIII in preserving cultural heritage in Serang Regency, analyze the manuscript digitalization process as a cultural heritage preservation effort, and identify the impact of manuscript digitalization for the community, pupils, and students in Serang Regency. This research uses a qualitative method with a case study approach. Data collection was conducted through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies involving eight informants consisting of three staff members of the Cultural Preservation Center Region VIII/Cultural Experts, the Acting Head of the Library and Archives Office of Serang Regency, two practitioners and academics, and one member of the Cilegon City Cultural Council. Data validity was ensured through source triangulation, including key informant interviews, field observations, and document studies. The research results show that the digitalization of manuscripts in Serang Regency is a crucial step in safeguarding cultural heritage, yet it faces challenges such as the damaged and fragile physical condition of the manuscripts, limited digitalization equipment, and a lack of competent human resources in the field of manuscript conservation. This research concludes that manuscript digitalization is able to minimize the risk of physical damage while ensuring the accessibility of cultural information for future generations; therefore, strengthening human resource capacity and synergy between institutions is required to support the sustainability of regional cultural heritage preservation.

I. INTRODUCTION

Cultural heritage is a cultural legacy passed down from generation to generation. Cultural heritage can be tangible or intangible, and it holds important value in shaping the identity and character of a nation. One of the legacies of human civilization that is highly valuable and holds high knowledge value is the manuscript (ancient text). The term "manuscript" comes from the Latin words *manu* and *scriptus*, which mean handwritten. A manuscript is a text along with all the information contained within it, possessing historical and cultural value, such as holy books, chronicles (*serat* and *babad*), and other local records.

The history of manuscript development has existed since ancient times, with media such as papyrus, parchment, and palm leaves used for writing. In Southeast Asia, palm leaves became a popular medium for writing various texts. Before the invention of the printing press in the 15th century, all documents and books were written manually, making manuscripts the primary medium for spreading knowledge, religion, law, and culture. In Islam, manuscripts played a major role in preserving the continuity of the intellectual tradition that developed vastly in the Nusantara region, making manuscripts an important part of local cultural heritage. With the advancement of information technology development and the flow of globalization, cultural heritage preservation can no longer rely on physical forms alone for its information (Sawirman, 2022).

Indonesia, there is a very diverse wealth of manuscripts scattered across various regions. Manuscripts are not just historical documents, but they reflect the thoughts, traditions, and values of society in the past. The writing of manuscripts consists of various languages and writing system, namely Arabic, Jawi, and Pegon (Pudjiastuti, 2017). They cover a wide range of contents, starting from Islamic exegesis (*tafsir*), tales (*hikayat*), jurisprudence (*fikih*), royal genealogies, and traditional medicine. This diversity of content and form is an invaluable heritage that reflects the historical journey of a society in the past. Unfortunately, the existence of current manuscripts faces various threats, primarily due to factors of age, a tropical climate, as well as a lack of maintenance and documentation, which causes many manuscripts to be damaged, lost, or unrecognized in their existence.

Digitalization is a part of preservation that seeks to save ancient manuscripts by utilizing digital technology such as soft files and digital photos, as well as making efforts so that both the manuscripts and their duplicates can last for a relatively long period (Rahayua et al., 2021). According to the KBBI (Bahasa Kamus Besar Indonesia), digitalization is the process of using digital systems and the transition to using print, video, audio media, and archived documents in digital form as an interpreted medium. It shifts the focus from print forms or similar formats to digital media (Hafidz, 2022).

Serang Regency, as part of the Banten region, has a long history in the spread of Islam and local culture. Covering an area of 170,341.25 hectares, it is spread across 34 districts, 353 villages, and 20 sub-districts. In this regency, many material cultural remains (fabric culture) are found, ranging from the prehistoric era to the colonial period. Around the 16th to 19th centuries, Banten was one of the spice trade centers, and in addition, it also became a center for Islamic religion in Indonesia. This makes the place hold historical traces and produce various existing manuscripts. The condition of these manuscripts is quite concerning, with the paper having many dirt spots, tears, being eaten by bookworms, moldy, and damaged due to natural disasters such as floods.

Based on the results of pre-research observations that have been conducted by interviewing one of the cultural experts, namely Mr. Fajar Satya Burnama, S.S., it shows that there is a lot of information obtained by the Cultural Preservation Center Region VIII regarding manuscripts that are experiencing damage due to environmental factors, age, and a lack of maintenance, thereby threatening the sustainability of the information contained within them, especially in Serang Regency. With the community often experiencing difficulties in accessing manuscripts, both due to remote locations and a lack of digitalization. In addition, the lack of awareness among the younger generation and the public regarding the importance of preserving manuscripts and local culture has the potential to cause the loss of cultural knowledge and values. The indifference of owners toward old texts, natural disasters, as well as the limited human resources who understand digital technology, the lack of supporting facilities, and the low utilization of digitalization results by the community and so forth that still frequently occur in the field. This condition shows a gap between expectations and the reality of implementing digitalization in the field.

Based on the research title, this study is based on previous research showing that the preservation of ancient manuscripts is not only about maintaining the physical form of the text, but also involves preserving the meaning and values contained within it. Such as the research conducted by (Handayani, 2023), titled *Local Wisdom dalam Hakikat Preservasi Naskah Kuno sebagai Pelestarian Warisan Budaya Bangsa*. This research was backed by several objectives, namely efforts for physical and chemical preservation of the writing media, and the preservation of the text or its information content, which are conservation, restoration, digitalization, and cataloging. The research results aim to elevate local wisdom, namely ancient manuscripts as the nation's cultural heritage. Therefore, the preservation of this cultural heritage is needed by collecting, storing, and safeguarding it as one of the wealth of the nation's treasures. Furthermore, the research conducted by (Prastiani & Subekti, 2019), titled *Digitalisasi Manuskrip Sebagai Upaya Pelestarian Dan Penyelamatan Informasi (Studi Kasus Pada Museum Radya Pustaka Surakarta)*. The background of this research is several important factors related to the need to preserve cultural and historical heritage. This research aims to explain the efforts to preserve and rescue manuscript information and the obstacles faced in the manuscript digitalization process.

The results of this study show that digitalization can have a significant impact on saving cultural heritage.

The uniqueness of this research lies in the focus of the study on the manuscript digitalization process carried out by a government institution, namely the Cultural Preservation Center Region VIII, which until now has not been widely researched academically. This research presents novelty through two main aspects, namely, first, in the research object which emphasizes manuscript digitalization as an instrument for preserving local culture, not just as an archival technology process. Then secondly, there is the research subject focused on the Cultural Preservation Center Region VIII, which has not been widely discussed in the context of manuscript digitalization studies, particularly in the Serang Regency area. A region that is rich in Islamic manuscript heritage and the history of the Banten Sultanate, yet is still lacking in documentation within the context of digital-based preservation.

II. METHODS

This research uses a qualitative method design with a case study approach to analyze socio-cultural change phenomena related to the adaptation of individuals or groups to the environment (Sugiyono, 2017), which is supported by data triangulation to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings. This research was conducted at the Cultural Preservation Center Region VIII, Jl. Letnan Jidun No.2 Blok J, Lontarbaru, Serang District, Serang City, Banten 42115, which was selected because it has the primary duty in preserving cultural heritage and objects of cultural advancement. Activities focused on the digitalization of ancient manuscripts in Pontang, Tanara, and Kramatwatu Districts, Serang Regency, which are historically important areas. The research lasted for a duration of 6 months, starting after licensing on August 25, 2025, and the main implementation on September 4, 2025, based on a permit letter from the Center.

Data represents all facts and numbers that can be processed into information for specific purposes (Anita Sari Dkk, 2023). This research collects primary data through interviews with respondents as data sources who answer the researcher's questions either in writing or orally, as well as direct observation to obtain individual experience and knowledge that are difficult to express verbally, making it more interesting than written forms (Hafni Sahir, 2022). In addition, secondary data is obtained through documentation, namely the tracking of historical data in the form of letters, diaries, photo archives, meeting results, souvenirs, activity journals, etc (Nazar Naamy, 2019).

Data collection techniques include direct observation in the field for careful examination of the phenomena being studied, in-depth interviews (structured with a systematic list of questions and spontaneous unstructured ones) with informants such as manuscript management staff, the Serang Regency Archives Office, practitioners and academics, and the Cilegon City Cultural Council, as well as digitalization technicians to explore obstacles, strategies, objectives, and

expectations, along with documentation studies through the tracking of historical data such as archives, letters, diaries, photos, ancient manuscripts, and activity reports to complement findings, as well as a literature review.

The purposive sampling technique is a technique for selecting research subjects based on specific characteristics determined by the researcher. Subjects in this research were not taken irregularly or randomly but were determined by the researcher based on those specific characteristics (Ria Kumara, 2018). Snowball is a data source sampling technique where the initial small number gradually increases (Hellaludin & Wijaya, 2019), wherein a single source, the deeper one goes, the more sources will be found. In this research, the Snowball Sampling technique uses informant data to find additional relevant informants, especially within the context of local communities that possess ancient manuscripts.

Data Analysis According to Miles and Huberman, this interactive model of data analysis has 4 components, namely (1) Data Collection, (2) data reduction, (3) data display, and (4) drawing conclusions/verification. These three main components found in qualitative data analysis must exist in qualitative data analysis. This is because the interconnected relationship among the three must be continuously compared to determining the direction of the conclusion content as the final result of the research. Supported by data triangulation from various sources, approaches, and perspectives to increase validity, reduce bias, and provide a comprehensive overview.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This research aims to analyze manuscript digitalization activities as a cultural heritage preservation strategy in Serang Regency, with a focus on the role of the Cultural Preservation Center Region VIII Banten. Research data were obtained through in-depth interviews with informants, observations of the interactions between informants and their environment to obtain relevant data, as well as documentation studies. The research results are presented in the form of a narrative as well as tables arranged based on information from key informants and supporting informants.

1. History and Role of the Cultural Preservation Center Region VIII in Cultural Heritage Preservation

The Cultural Preservation Center Region VIII was established as part of the Indonesian government's efforts to preserve and develop the cultural heritage existing in various areas, particularly in Banten and its surroundings. According to Law No. 5 of 2017 concerning the Advancement of Culture, cultural preservation becomes a shared responsibility among the government, the public, and the business sector to maintain the sustainability of cultural values (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2017). This center was formed to address the urgent need to protect and care for various cultural assets, including ancient manuscripts that

are vulnerable to physical damage due to age and environmental factors. The working area of BPK Region VIII covers Banten Province and DKI Jakarta.

Since its initial establishment, the Cultural Preservation Center Region VIII has undergone significant development and nomenclature changes. In 1989, this institution was established under the name SPSP (*Suaka Peninggalan Sejarah dan Purbakala* / Sanctuary of Historical and Archaeological Heritage) as the forerunner of the cultural heritage preservation unit. Then in 2002, its nomenclature changed to BP3 (*Balai Pelestarian Peninggalan Purbakala* / Center for the Preservation of Archaeological Heritage) Serang based on the Decree of the Head of the Culture and Tourism Development Agency. Furthermore, in 2012, the institution's name changed again to BPCB (*Balai Pelestarian Cagar Budaya* / Cultural Heritage Preservation Center) Serang, marking a focus on cultural heritage, and in 2015 became BPCB Banten to reflect a more specific work focus. Finally, in 2022, this institution transformed into BPK (*Balai Pelestarian Kebudayaan* / Cultural Preservation Center) Region VIII Banten and DKI Jakarta in accordance with the latest policy, with a broader working area coverage.

Based on the Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Number 33 of 2022 concerning the Organization and Work Procedures of the Cultural Preservation Center, the primary duty of BPK Region VIII is to carry out cultural heritage preservation efforts and Objects of Cultural Advancement in the provinces of Banten and DKI Jakarta. This duty includes strategic activities such as protection, development, utilization, and management of Cultural Heritage and Objects of Cultural Advancement, to ensure that cultural heritage remains preserved and can be utilized sustainably. Functionally, this center carries out the implementation of protecting Cultural Heritage and Objects of Cultural Advancement, facilitating their utilization, implementing partnerships in the field of preservation, data collection and documentation, monitoring and evaluation, as well as administrative affairs.

Along with the changing times and increasingly complex preservation needs, the functions and duties of the Cultural Preservation Center Region VIII have undergone significant changes. Initially, the primary focus of the center was the physical conservation of cultural objects and documents, but now this function has expanded to include the digitalization of archives and manuscripts as part of a modern preservation strategy. This is in line with the development of information technology, which allows cultural preservation not only physically but also in a digital form that is more durable and easily accessible (Rahman, 2020)

In addition, the Cultural Preservation Center Region VIII establishes close relationships with various government agencies, educational institutions, as well as indigenous and cultural communities. This cooperation is important to strengthen cultural

preservation comprehensively and sustainably. According to Sari and Nugroho (2019), collaboration between the center, local governments, and local communities is the key to success in safeguarding and developing cultural heritage, because cultural preservation cannot be done partially but must involve various parties synergistically. The socio-cultural conditions in Serang Regency and the surrounding areas show a highly diverse richness of traditions and cultural heritage, yet they have not been fully documented and preserved optimally. This poses a risk of losing the cultural values contained in manuscripts and other artifacts. Therefore, the establishment of the Cultural Preservation Center Region VIII serves as a strategic step to organize cultural preservation systematically and in an integrated manner (Sari, 2019).

2. The Manuscript Digitalization Process Carried Out by the Cultural Preservation Center Region VIII as a Cultural Heritage Preservation

Manuscript digitalization activities are the process of converting manuscripts from physical form (written or printed) into digital form for the purposes of preservation, conservation, and ease of access, involving image capture (documentation) using tools such as scanners or digital cameras to save manuscripts from physical damage or loss. This activity is held to enrich the database of the Cultural Preservation Center Region VIII office regarding Cultural Heritage and Objects of Cultural Advancement as part of its preservation duty to the community, especially the younger generation, so that they will eventually develop a sense of love and participate in the preservation of cultural values around them.

The workflow stages of the ancient manuscript digitalization process by the Cultural Preservation Center Region VIII consist of 8 stages carried out during the manuscript digitalization process.

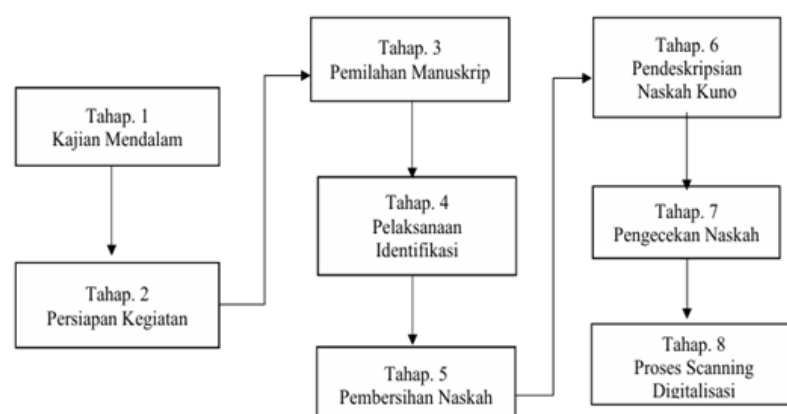


Figure 1.
The workflow stages of the ancient manuscript digitalization

The first stage is an in-depth study to identify the locations of manuscripts whose conditions are vulnerable to damage and hold significant influence over national cultural heritage, prioritizing manuscripts threatened by moisture, theft, or natural decay. The second stage is activity preparation, which includes forming the work team, distributing tasks, collecting library data, as well as coordinating with related parties such as Bantenology and the Regional Library Office. The third stage is manuscript sorting, where the expert team selects the ancient manuscript collection based on criteria of historical value, physical condition, and cultural relevance, to ensure that only manuscripts deemed worthy of digitalization are selected.

The fourth stage is the execution of activities, where the team performs identification, data collection, and digitalization of ancient manuscripts in the field through direct visits to the manuscript storage locations. The fifth stage is the careful cleaning of ancient manuscripts using specialized tools to remove dust, dirt, or minor damage without damaging the original material. The sixth stage is the description of ancient manuscripts by measuring physical parameters such as thickness, weight, and height, which are recorded in the metadata by the documentation team within the digital database. The seventh stage is checking the manuscripts through visual and physical inspection for damage, moisture, or other issues that could affect the quality of the digital output. The eighth and final stage is the manuscript digitalization process through scanning using a Fujitsu ScanSnap SV600 scanner, which is an advanced, non-contact tool specifically designed to capture images of valuable documents like ancient manuscripts without the risk of physical damage, thereby ensuring the authenticity and integrity of the original material remain preserved during the media conversion process from physical to digital form.

Manuscript documentation in Serang Regency covers various categories of knowledge that reflect the intellectual richness and culture of Islam Nusantara. These categories include Fiqh, which contains Islamic legal rules; Arabic Language Studies, covering Arabic grammar and literature; Tasawuf (Sufism), which focuses on spiritual teachings; a Magic category that reflecting the blend of local beliefs with Islamic teachings; Algebra as an Islamic intellectual contribution to science; Tafsir Al-Quran (Exegesis); Mushaf Al-Quran in the form of handwritten physical copies of the Quran; as well as Ilmu Kalam, which discusses Islamic theology. The diversity of these categories demonstrates just how rich and varied the Islamic intellectual heritage stored within the ancient manuscripts of Serang Regency is. As stated, "Fiqh is the primary foundation in the life of Muslims, regulating the procedures for worship and social interaction based on Sharia law (Syah, A. D. M., Sholikhudin, M. A., & Yusuf, A., 2023)." This diversity of categories illustrates how rich and diverse the Islamic intellectual heritage is that remains preserved in the ancient manuscripts in Serang Regency.

In brief, the total number of manuscripts in Banten Province is undetermined, but it is estimated to be significant and scattered across various locations, both in formal institutions and in public hands. Data collection and digitalization efforts are continuously carried out by relevant parties, such as the National Library (Perpusnas) and local governments, to preserve this cultural heritage. The ancient manuscript digitalization program at the Cultural Preservation Center Region VIII has achieved encouraging results, successfully digitalizing more than 100 historical manuscripts in Serang Regency through thorough inventory and collaboration with expert teams. This initiative not only preserves cultural heritage that is vulnerable to damage but also opens wider access for the public to study the historical values and local traditions contained within. The following are the results of the manuscript digitalization activities carried out in three locations by the Cultural Preservation Center Region VIII.

a. Pontang

The initial stage of the ancient manuscript digitalization activities was carried out in Pontang Village, precisely in Pontang Hamlet, Pontang District, Serang Regency, where the team visited the residence of KH. M. Sulaiman, a prominent religious figure in the region. He holds a large collection of ancient manuscripts and printed books, several of which are his own personal written works. From this collection, the team then carried out a selection process by sorting and determining which manuscripts fell into the ancient manuscript category, resulting in around 50 manuscripts being selected for digitalization out of the hundreds of items available.

Table 1.
Results of the Pontang Activity

No	Title	Period/Year	Language	Writing System	Pages
1.	Risalah Hidayah Muhibin	1930	Javanese	Arabic	23
2.	Kitab Rosnul Qashar Fi Khoshosis Hizh Al Nasr	1968	Javanese	Arabic	26
3.	Kitab Rerukunan (Serang Javanese Language)	1970	Javanese	Arabic	66
4.	Kitab Risalah Ziarah Sultan Maulana Hassanudin	20th Century	Javanese	Arabic	12
5.	Kitab Riyadul Jannah	1930	Javanese	Arabic Pegon	20

6.	A'qo'idull Islamiyah	20th Century	Javanese Dan Arabic	Arabic Pegon	16
7.	Riyadul Ba'diah	1970	Arabic	Arabic Pegon	33
8.	Al Afaq (Kumpulan Ilmi goib)	1970	Javanese	Arabic	30
9.	Catatan Sifat Rongpuluh	20th Century	Javanese	Arabic Pegon	20
10.	Fiqih Sunah	1970	Javanese	Arabic	20
11.	Anonim (Salinan Kitab Pembelajaran Ilmu Syariah Dan Toriqoh)	20th Century	Javanese	Arabic Pegon	46
12.	Al Mantiq	1970	Javanese	Arabic	44
13.	Kitab Nadhom Hidayatul Adzkiyah	1970	Javanese	Pegon	70
14.	Naskah Qomiat Tugyan (Cabang Iman)	1970	Arabic	Pegon	28
15.	Ata'firat	20th Century	Arabic	Pegon	143
16.	Tafsir Jamiah	1970	Arabic	Pegon	271
17.	Kumpulan Doa – Doa	1978	Arabic	Arabic	39
18.	Ajaran Thoriqoh Satariyah	19th Century	Arabic Pegon	Arabic Pegon	225
19.	Hasil Keputusan Penting Mukhtar Alim Ulama Mubaliq Islam	20th Century	Arabic Pegon	Sundanese Pegon	2
20.	Khutbah Lebaran Hari Raya Idul Adha	1953	Sundanese	Arabic Pegon	7
21.	Undangan Panitia Perajaan Ikatan Peladjar Madrasah Mabdail Falah	1953	Indonesia	Indonesia	1
22.	Mujarrobat	1970	Javanese	Arabic Pegon	84
23.	Ushul Fiqih	1974	Arabic	Arabic	74
24.	Huquqi Al uslim Min Ihye Ulumudin	20th Century	Arabic	Arabic Pegon	20

25.	Tukillan Kitab Tafsiran Jalalain	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic Pegon	9
26.	Undangan Tjeramah Umum Panitia Pelatihan Kader Dakwah Mahasiswa Islam	1965	Indonesia	Indonesia	1
27.	Khutbah Lebaran Hari Raya Idul Adha	1965	Javanese Banten	Indonesia	1
28.	Tukilan Rukun Sholat Nadhom Javanese	1979	Javanese	Arabic	9
29.	Qishosul Anbiya	18th Century	Javanese	Arabic Pegon	278
30.	Khutbah Idul Fitri	18th Century	Javanese	Arabic Pegon	5
31.	Sebab Perbedaaan Orang-Orang Muslim	18th Century	Arabic	Arabic	56
32.	Tafsir Surat Yasin	-	Javanese Serang	Arabic	9
33.	Kitab Nikah	1960	Arabic Pegon	Arabic	9
34.	Jurumiyah	1965	Arabic	Arabic	40
35.	Khutbah Jumat	20th Century	Javanese Dan Arabic	Arabic	112
36.	Annadul Islamiyah	1937	Malay Dan Arabic	Arabic	40
37.	Kumpulan Rukun Dan Niat Ibadah	1960	Javanese	Arabic	18
38.	Kumpulan Pelajaran Rukun Iman	20th Century	Javanese	Arabic	5
39.	Javanesehirul Maknum	20th Century	Arabic	Unvocalized Arabic script	31
40.	Dardir	20th Century	Arabic	Arabic	24
41.	Ushuli Tauhid	20th Century	Arabic	Unvocalized Arabic script	106

42.	Syariah (Ringkasan Ilmu Syariah)	20th Century	Arabic	Unvocalized Arabic script	192
43.	Risalah Aqoidul Islamiyah	20th Century	Javanese	Arabic	104
44.	Risalah Islamiyah	20th Century	Javanese	Arabic	110
45.	Sarah Dalail Khoirot	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	18
46.	Dardir	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	144
47.	Kitab Al – Inayah Rabbaniyah	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	90
48.	Kitab Jurmiyah Dan Taarib	18th Century	Arabic	Arabic	230
49.	Mushab Al Quran	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	-
50.	Mushab Al Quran	16th-17th Century	Arabic	Arabic	-

Source: Database of Reports on Manuscript Digitalization Activities, Cultural Preservation Center Region VIII Banten)

Each digitized manuscript is recorded in detail within a registration data form. The following is an example of the registry entry for the ancient *Fiqh Sunnah* manuscript digitized in Pontang.

Table 2: Description of Ancient Manuscript
 2024 Data Inventory Registration for Manuscripts / Oral Traditions and Expressions / Ancient Manuscripts

1.	Manuscript Title	FIQIH SUNAH
2.	Language/Script Used	Javanese/Arabic Writing
3.	Original Author	SAYYID SHABIQ
4.	Manuscript Material	Paper
5.	Unit of Description	20 pages
6.	Work/Scribe	Muhammad Syarbini Anasy
7.	Place of Origin	Singarajan Pontang
8.	Period	1970
9.	Quantity	1 Bundle
10.	Locality of Origin	Singarajan Pontang
11.	Length	22 Cm
12.	Width	16,1 Cm
13.	Thickness	1,84 Mm
14.	Weight	53,9 Gr
15.	Color	
16.	Description/Abstract	This book explains the requirements for both obligatory (<i>wajib</i>) and voluntary (<i>sunnah</i>) prayers, along with their respective virtues (<i>fadilah</i>).

17	Storing Address	Desa Sigarajan, Kecamatan Pontang Kabupaten Serang
18	Physical Condition	Good; features blue ink-spill staining on portions of the text
19	Method of Acquisition	Inheritance
20	Images/figure	

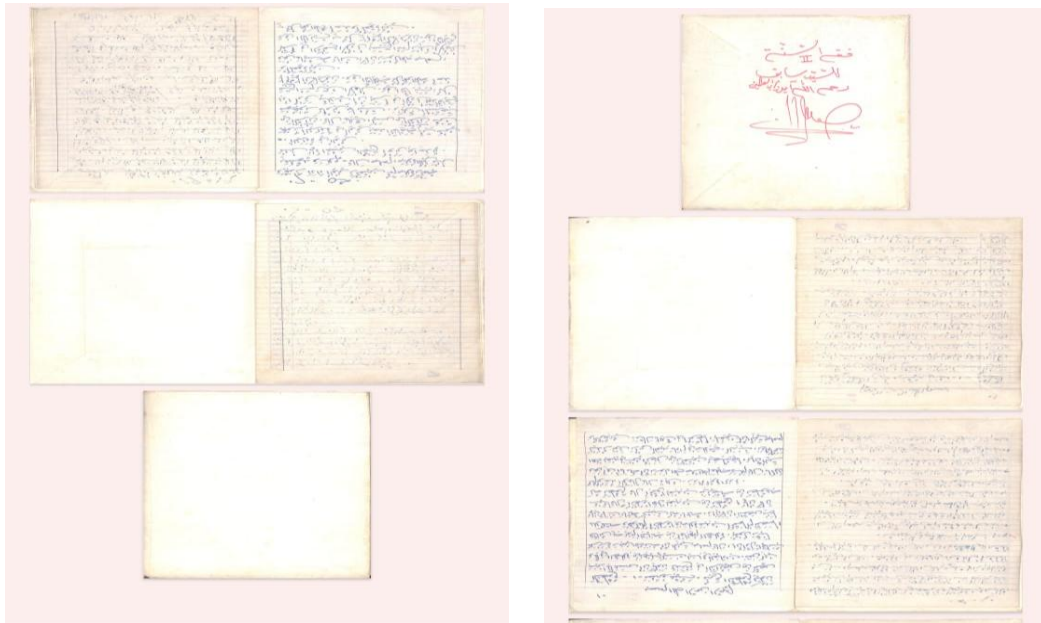


Image of an Ancient Fiqh al-Sunnah Manuscript
 (Source: Manuscript Digitization Activity Database, May 21, 2024)

The ancient manuscript is Fiqh Sunah (also known as *Fiqh as-Sunnah* or *Fiqh Sunnah* by Sayyid Sabiq). The Fiqh Sunah manuscript is a Javanese-language text in Arabic script dating back to 1970 with its physical condition still in good shape, making it worthy of documentation as part of the Islamic cultural heritage in Serang Regency.

b. Tanara

The second stage of the ancient manuscript digitalization activities was carried out in Tanara District, where the team visited the residence of KH. Kholid Ma'sum, located at RT 12 RW 04, Sebindeng Village, Lempuyang Hamlet, Tanara District, Serang Regency. As a prominent religious figure in the region, he holds a large collection of ancient manuscripts, several of which are his own personal written works. From the existing collection, the team then carried out a selection process by sorting and determining which manuscripts fell into the ancient manuscript category, resulting in around 49 manuscripts being selected for digitalization (data attached), while the remaining collection was classified as books and archives.

Tabel. 3

Results of the Tanara Activity

No	Title	Period/Year	Language	Writing System	Pages
1.	Primbon Kekedutan	20th Century	Javanese	Pegon	12
2.	Kitab Qasiful Ashor (Hisab)	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic Pegon	44
3.	Sharah Tuhfatul Wardiyah	18th Century	Arabic	Arabic	56
4.	Mantra (Jang Jawongan)	20th Century	Javanese	Pegon	52
5.	Managib Syekh Abdul Qadir Al Jaelani	20th Century	Arabic	Arabic Pegon	64
6.	Managib Syekh Abdul Qodir Al Jaelani	20th Century	Arabic	Arabic Pegon	164
7.	Kumpulan Doa Sholat Ashar	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	18
8.	Haza Nazmu Awamil At Durjani Kifayatus Sibyan	18th Century	Javanese	Arabic	24
9.	Diyain Qulub Tasrahi Diba Jail Maksud	18th Century	Arabic	Arabic	16
10.	Tukilan Ilmu Falak	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	162
11.	Fayaisu Hadis Lusbul Akbar	1868	Javanese	Arabic	142
12.	Muhtasar Tasrif	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	24
13.	Tanpa Judul	-	Arabic	Arabic	13
14.	Buku Panduan Haji	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	52
15.	Qola Aslahu Qoala Ala Wazni Fa'ala	19th Century	Arabic	Javanese Pegon	108
16.	Tuhfatul Wardiyah Fi Ulumi Wardiyah	20th Century	Arabic	Arabic Pegon	28
17.	Hasyiah Addasuri Al Bahiyah' ala Al Samarqandiyah	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	63
18.	Buku Catatan	20th Century	Arabic	Pegon	28
19.	Hasyiah Kafrawi	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	24
20.	Kitab Kautsainy	19th Century	Arabic	Pegon	10

21.	Tanpa Judul	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	16
22.	Al Thormuji	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	30
23.	Tanpa Judul	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	39
24.	Jurumiyah (Ma, na)	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	-
25.	Al Ajwibah Al Mardliyah An Al Asilah Al Nahwiyah	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	14
26.	Nadhom Sifat 20	20th Century	Arabic	Arabic	16
27.	Nukilan Ilmu Nahwu	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	14
28.	Hilyatu Shobiyyah'ala Durratul Saniyah	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	84
29.	Tukilam- Tukilan Ilmu Nahwu	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	8
30.	Tukilan Ilmu Nahwu	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	18
31.	Tidak Ada Judul	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	14
32.	Risalah Sabilul Ijaz Fi Aqsam Al Isti'arah	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	13
33.	Syarah Lil'alamat Al Bahr Al Fahamat Katsiro Riyadoh Wa Syajarah	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	5
34.	Catatan Pengambilan Barang	20th Century	Arabic	Pegon	22
35.	Nadhom Nahwu	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	46
36.	Tanpa Judul	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	20
37.	Catatan Belajar	20th Century	Arabic	Arabic	79
38.	Fawaidassaniyah	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	16
39.	Kitab Fathul Aqfal Fi Syaroh Ibniyah Af,al Ilmi Shorof Wa Nadhom	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	30
40.	Suluk Al Jadah	Abad- 19	Arabic	Arabic	64
41.	Manaqib Syekh Abdul Al Jaelani	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	48
42.	Muhtasor Al Iqni	19th Century	Arabic	Pegon	259
43.	Misykat al Mashobih	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	914
44.	Pagawean Haji	1960	Javanese	Pegon	14
45.	Fathul Mubin	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	60
46.	Taqrib Al Muqshid Fi al'	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	24

	amal Bi Al- rabi'al Mujib				
47.	Awamil	1960	Arabic	Arabic	82
48.	Kitab Al Faraidl (Fathul Wahab)	19th Century	Arabic	Arabic	74
49.	Uqud Al Juman	1960	Arabic	Arabic	24

(Sumber : Database of Reports on the Results of Manuscript Digitization Activities by the Regional Cultural Preservation Center VIII, Banten)

Just like the data collection in Pontang, each manuscript in Tanara was also recorded in a register form. The following presents an example of the register for the ancient manuscript *Kasyf Al-Asrar 'An Ilmi Huruf Al-Ghabar* which was digitalized in Tanara.

Table 4. Description of Ancient Manuscript

2024 Data Inventory Registration for Manuscripts / Oral Traditions and Expressions / Ancient Manuscripts

1.	Manuscript Title	KASYF AL – ASRAR ‘AN ILMI HURUF AL- GHABAR
2.	Language/Script Used	Arabic/Arabic
3.	Original Author	Abu Al-Hasan Ali bin Muhammad Al-Qurasyi Al – Qalashadi
4.	Manuscript Material	paper
5.	Unit of Description	44 pages
6.	Work/Scribe	Anonymous
7.	Place of Origin	kampung Sebindeng, desa Lempuyang, kecamatan Tanara , Kabupaten Serang
8	Period	19 th century
9	Quantity	1 manuscript
10	Locality of Origin	kampung Sebindeng, desa Lempuyang, kecamatan Tanara , Kabupaten Serang
11	Length	24,9 cm
12	Width	17,6 cm
13	Thickness	4,45 mm
14	Weight	181,15 gr
15	Color	Brownish yellow
16	Description/Abstract	This book explains the science of arithmetic written by a mathematician from Andalusia named Muhammad Ali al-Qalashadi. Al-Qalashadi's full name was Abu Al-Hasan Ibnu Al-Qalasadi. He was born in 1412 in Bastah, Andalusia, a region that is now part of Spain.

17	Storing Address	rt 12 . rw 4 kampung Sebindeng ,desa Lempuyang, Tanara (private collection)
18	Physical Condition	The paper is in good condition as it was restored by the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia in 2023.
19	Method of Acquisition	Inheritance
20	Images/figure	

In the ancient book titled *Kasyf al-Asrar 'an Ilmi Huruf al-Ghabar*, the *Kasyf Al-Asrar* manuscript is a 19th-century Arabic text containing the science of arithmetic written by the Andalusian mathematician Al-Qalashadi, and its condition is recorded as good.

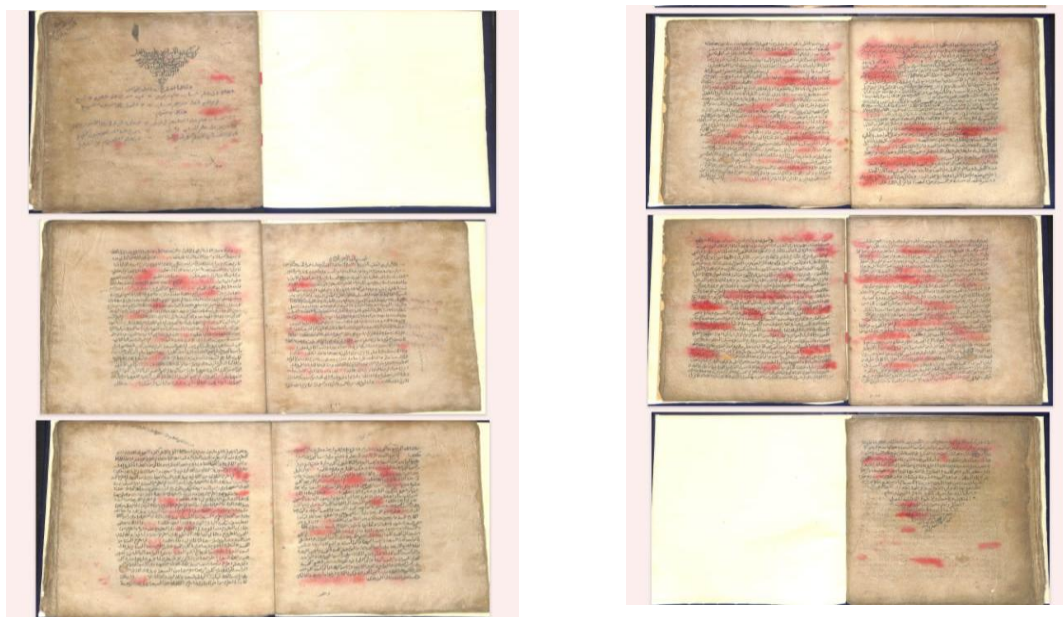


Figure of ancient manuscript *KASYF AL – ASRAR ‘ AN ILMI HURUF AL- GHABAR*
 (Source : Database of Manuscript Digitization Results, May 21, 2024)

c. Kramatwatu

During the second stage of the ancient manuscript digitalization activities, the team also took the time to observe an ancient manuscript in the form of a Quran located in Gulacir Village, Kramatwatu District, Serang Regency. Based on the information obtained, the Quran is estimated to have been made in the 19th century and was used by KH. Ismail, one of the key figures in the Geger Cilegon peasant rebellion of 1888. As stated, "direct observation of historical manuscripts such as the ancient Quran provides deep insight into local cultural and historical values."

Overall, the implementation of digitalization across these three locations emphasizes the principle of sustainability by involving training for local staff as well as utilizing digital

technology to preserve cultural heritage without compromising the original integrity of the manuscripts. This aligns with the perspective of the manuscript owners acting as informants, who stated that digitalization is a highly crucial step to take, considering that manuscripts have a limited lifespan and are highly vulnerable to damage, particularly due to the tropical climate that accelerates the material degradation process. The informant emphasized that digitalization aims not only to rescue the contents of the manuscripts but also to ensure that the texts remain accessible in the future, given that paper as a physical medium is far more susceptible to damage compared to digital formats (Interview with Pak Helmy, October 10, 2025).

evertheless, the manuscript digitalization activities carried out by the Cultural Preservation Center Region VIII face various significant challenges and obstacles. The primary obstacle is the lack of skilled human resources in the fields of philology, digital technology, and manuscript conservation, which often causes the digitalization process to be delayed or less than optimal. In addition, weather conditions within the center's working region, such as high humidity and heavy rainfall in the coastal areas of Banten, worsen the condition of the manuscripts that are already vulnerable to damage. Another challenge is the existence of manuscripts that cannot be opened or digitalized due to their extremely fragile physical condition, such as pages sticking together or faded ink, which require specialized conservation techniques before the scanning process can be conducted.

3. The Impact of Manuscript Digitalization Carried Out by the Cultural Preservation Center Region VIII

The manuscript digitalization activities by the Cultural Preservation Center Region VIII aim to strengthen the institution's database regarding Cultural Heritage and Objects of Cultural Advancement, while simultaneously fostering a sense of love and active participation among the younger generation in preserving local cultural values. Through digitalization, manuscripts that were previously only accessible physically at specific locations are now more widely accessible in accordance with applicable procedures. This allows users to consult the collection remotely at any time, supporting flexibility in research and learning, while at the same time protecting the original manuscripts from damage caused by frequent direct handling.

Based on the interview with Pak Fajar on September 4th, 2025, the benefits of manuscript digitalization have started to become evident for the public and students, even though data access still follows official procedures to maintain information security and integrity, considering the database is still owned by the Cultural Preservation Center Region VIII. Public enthusiasm is quite high, as evidenced by cooperation with the Banten Province Library and Archives Office for copying, as well as the interest of artists in adapting the

manuscripts into performance pieces. Nevertheless, for university students, utilization is still hindered because the manuscripts have not yet been translated and are still in the form of general overviews, thus requiring further steps in the digitalization process. A similar impact is felt by school students, who still require a fairly long process before they can utilize the digitalized results optimally.

In an effort to increase public awareness regarding the digitalization of ancient manuscripts at the Cultural Preservation Center Region VIII, various educational and promotional strategies have been implemented, such as organizing Focus Group Discussions and seminars involving local government agencies, students, and communities to explain the digitalization process, the benefits of preserving cultural heritage, and the risk of manuscript degradation if not digitalized. The Cultural Preservation Center Region VIII has achieved significant progress in its ancient manuscript digitalization initiatives, successfully inventorying and digitalizing over 100 documents in Serang Regency through collaboration with the teams. These documents were collected from religious figures in the region, including 49 items from Lempuyang, 49 items from Pontang, and 2 items from Gulacir. The data obtained was then shared in a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) involving representatives from Banten cultural interest groups, academia, local government agencies (Pemda), Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), document holders, and other stakeholders; the event took place at the PPG Building and Training Center of UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten-Campus 2, Serang, on August 26, 2024. For context, manuscripts or texts are written reading materials that store important data regarding traditions and history, such as *serat*, *babad*, *kitab*, and local records and are recognized as one of the 10 Objects of Cultural Advancement (OPK) under the Law on the Advancement of Culture Number 5 of 2017.

Manuscript digitalization by the Cultural Preservation Center Region VIII provides a broad positive impact. For the public, this initiative increases the accessibility of cultural heritage without the risk of physical damage, enabling independent research and strengthening local cultural identity. The phenomena revealed in these research findings occur because manuscript digitalization functionally transforms how historical and cultural heritage preservation is conducted, primarily because this process allows for long-term storage that is resistant to damaging factors such as the natural aging of materials, humidity, pest infestations, or even natural disasters like floods and fires, which often permanently damage physical manuscripts. These efforts require sustained investment and long-term commitment to achieve maximum preservation. Meanwhile, public history through digital platforms encourages community participation by providing space for personal and collective interpretation, which in turn strengthens cultural awareness and prevents the marginalization of such heritage in the modern era

IV. CONCLUSION

This research concludes that the manuscript digitalization activities carried out by the Cultural Preservation Center Region VIII Banten represent a strategic and crucial effort in preserving cultural heritage in Serang Regency. The systematic digitalization process is proven to minimize the risk of physical damage to ancient manuscripts while simultaneously ensuring the accessibility of cultural information for the wider public. Nevertheless, limitations in digital infrastructure and competent human resources remain primary obstacles that need to be addressed immediately. Overall, manuscript digitalization serves not only as an effort to rescue physical heritage but also plays a role in strengthening the identity and continuity of Banten culture for future generations. This study has several limitations that need to be acknowledged, including the scope of research being limited to only one institution so that the findings cannot be widely generalized, the relatively limited number of informants potentially affecting the depth of the data obtained, and the qualitative approach used being unable to measure the impact of digitalization quantitatively. Theoretically, these findings enrich the literature on digital cultural preservation, particularly in the context of ancient manuscript management in regions, by demonstrating the relevance of digitalization technology as an instrument for preserving local cultural heritage. Practically, this research provides empirical evidence that manuscript digitalization can increase the accessibility of cultural heritage for the public, the younger generation, and academics, while also serving as a learning resource that supports the understanding of Banten's history and culture. In terms of policy, these findings can serve as a foundation for local and central governments in formulating regulations that support sustainable cultural heritage digitalization programs. Based on the findings and limitations of this research, several suggestions are proposed for future development. For the Cultural Preservation Center Region VIII Banten, it is recommended to strengthen collaboration with universities and local cultural communities to expand digitalization capacity and enhance the competence of human resources in the fields of ancient manuscript conservation and management. For the Serang Regency local government, stronger commitment is needed in providing digital infrastructure and adequate regulatory support as a form of responsibility toward the preservation of regional cultural heritage. For future researchers, it is suggested to conduct studies using a quantitative approach or inter-regional comparative studies in Indonesia to produce a more comprehensive understanding regarding the effectiveness of manuscript digitalization as a strategy for cultural heritage preservation.

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