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## A Cultural Analysis of Religious, Heroic, and Social Values in Ten Poems of Abdullah ibn Rawahah during the Early Islamic Period

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### ABSTRACT

*This study examines the religious, heroic, and social values reflected in ten selected poems of Abdullah ibn Rawahah, one of the most prominent poets and companions of Prophet Muhammad SAW during the early Islamic period. The poems analyzed include verses concerning faith in Allah, praise of the Prophet Muhammad, the Battle of Mu'tah, courage, jihad, truth, steadfastness, and martyrdom. Employing a cultural approach and a qualitative descriptive method, this research investigates how these poems represent the cultural identity and worldview of the early Muslim community. The findings reveal that Abdullah ibn Rawahah's poetry emphasizes four dominant cultural values: religious devotion, heroism, social solidarity, and Islamic identity. His poems portray unwavering faith in Allah, loyalty to the Prophet, courage in facing death, and commitment to defending Islamic teachings. Furthermore, the poems demonstrate the transformation of Arabic literary traditions from tribal-centered expressions into literary instruments that promoted religious and moral values. The influence of Qur'anic teachings is also evident in the themes and language of the poems. This study concludes that Abdullah ibn Rawahah's poetry played a significant role in shaping the cultural consciousness of early Islamic society and served as an effective medium for transmitting religious, ethical, and social values.*

**Keywords:** *Abdullah ibn Rawahah, Early Islamic Poetry, Cultural Approach, Islamic Literature, Heroism, Religious Values*

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## INTRODUCTION

Literature has long been recognized as an important medium for expressing human experiences, beliefs, and cultural values. In Arab society, poetry occupied a central position long before the emergence of Islam (Nicholson, 1969). During the pre-Islamic period (Jāhiliyyah), poetry functioned as a means of preserving tribal history, celebrating bravery, and strengthening social status (Hitti, 2002). Poets were highly respected because their words could influence public opinion and represent the identity of their tribes. However, the coming of Islam in the seventh century introduced significant changes to the themes, functions, and purposes of Arabic literature.

With the spread of Islam, literature became an instrument for conveying religious teachings, moral values, and social transformation. Poetry was no longer used solely to promote tribal pride or personal glory but was increasingly employed to support the mission of Islam (Allen, 2000). Early Muslim poets utilized their literary talents to defend the faith, encourage believers, and strengthen the unity of the Muslim community. As a result, Islamic literature developed distinctive characteristics that reflected the principles of faith, justice, sacrifice, and devotion to Allah (Rahman, 1979).

Among the prominent poets of the early Islamic period, Abdullah ibn Rawahah occupies a significant position. He was one of the companions of Prophet Muhammad SAW and a member of the Khazraj tribe in Medina (Guillaume, 2004). Abdullah ibn Rawahah was known not only for his loyalty to Islam but also for his ability to communicate religious messages through poetry. His literary works often addressed themes of faith, courage, jihad, sacrifice, and obedience to Allah. Through his poems, he encouraged Muslims to remain steadfast in their beliefs and to dedicate themselves to the service of Islam.

The importance of Abdullah ibn Rawahah's poetry lies in its close connection to the cultural and social realities of early Islamic society. His poems reflect the values and ideals that emerged during the formative years of Islam, including belief in Allah, respect for the Prophet Muhammad SAW, willingness to sacrifice for the faith, and commitment to the welfare of the Muslim community. These values contributed to the formation of a new cultural identity that distinguished Islamic society from the tribal culture of pre-Islamic Arabia (Donner, 2010).

From a literary perspective, poetry serves not only as an artistic expression but also as a reflection of the culture in which it is produced. Therefore, a cultural approach is particularly relevant for examining the poetry of Abdullah ibn Rawahah. This approach views literary works as cultural products that embody the beliefs, norms, and social values of a community (Williams, 1983). By analyzing literary texts within their historical and cultural contexts, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of how literature contributes to the construction and transmission of cultural identity. This study focuses on ten selected poems attributed to Abdullah ibn Rawahah: *Faith in Allah's Promise*, *Praise for the Prophet Muhammad*, *The Battle of Mu'tah*, *The Call to Paradise*, *Courage in the Face of Death*, *The Spirit of Jihad*, *Defending Islam*, *Commitment to Truth*, *Steadfast Faith*, and *Acceptance of Martyrdom*. These poems were chosen because they represent the major themes found in Abdullah ibn Rawahah's literary works and provide valuable insight into the religious, heroic, and social values of the early Muslim community. Several studies have discussed the development of Arabic literature and the influence of Islam on poetic traditions. Other studies have explored the historical role of Abdullah ibn Rawahah as a companion of the Prophet and a participant in significant events such as the Battle of Mu'tah. However, relatively few studies



have specifically examined the cultural values reflected in his poetry through a systematic literary analysis. Consequently, there remains a need for research that investigates how his poems functioned as cultural expressions of early Islamic society.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the religious, heroic, and social values reflected in ten selected poems of Abdullah ibn Rawahah. The study seeks to answer the following research questions: (1) What cultural values are reflected in the ten selected poems? (2) How are religious and heroic values represented in the poems? and (3) How do these poems contribute to the understanding of early Islamic culture and literature? By addressing these questions, the study intends to provide a deeper understanding of the relationship between literature, culture, and religion in the early Islamic world and to highlight the contribution of Abdullah ibn Rawahah to the development of Islamic literary tradition.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative descriptive method with a library research approach. Qualitative research is appropriate for this study because it focuses on interpreting meanings, themes, and cultural values contained in literary texts rather than examining numerical data. The purpose of this research is to analyze the religious, heroic, and social values reflected in ten selected poems of Abdullah ibn Rawahah and to understand their significance within the cultural context of early Islamic society.

The primary data of this study consist of ten selected poems attributed to Abdullah ibn Rawahah: *Faith in Allah's Promise, Praise for the Prophet Muhammad, The Battle of Mu'tah, The Call to Paradise, Courage in the Face of Death, The Spirit of Jihad, Defending Islam, Commitment to Truth, Steadfast Faith, and Acceptance of Martyrdom*. These poems were selected because they represent the major themes of Abdullah ibn Rawahah's poetry, including faith, devotion, courage, sacrifice, jihad, and commitment to Islamic teachings.

The secondary data were collected from scholarly books, journal articles, historical documents, and previous studies related to Arabic literature, Islamic poetry, cultural criticism, and the biography of Abdullah ibn Rawahah. These sources provide historical background and theoretical support for the interpretation of the selected poems.

This research applies a cultural approach as its theoretical framework. According to this approach, literary works are viewed as cultural products that reflect the beliefs, values, norms, and social conditions of a particular society. Therefore, the selected poems are analyzed not only as artistic expressions but also as representations of the cultural identity of the early Muslim community. The analysis focuses on four major cultural dimensions: religious values, heroic values, social values, and Islamic identity.

Data collection was conducted through documentation techniques. The researcher collected, selected, classified, and reviewed relevant literary texts and academic references concerning Abdullah ibn Rawahah and early Islamic literature. The selected data were then organized according to their thematic relevance to the objectives of the study.

The data were analyzed using descriptive-analytical techniques. The analysis involved four stages. First, the researcher identified significant themes and cultural values in each poem. Second, the findings were classified into categories such as faith, heroism, sacrifice, social solidarity, and Islamic identity. Third,



the meanings of the poems were interpreted within the historical and cultural context of early Islamic society. Finally, conclusions were drawn regarding the contribution of Abdullah ibn Rawahah's poetry to the development of Islamic literature and culture.

Through this method, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how Abdullah ibn Rawahah employed poetry as a medium of da'wah, moral education, and cultural transmission during the formative period of Islamic civilization.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Analysis of Poem 1: Faith in Allah's Promise

The first poem emphasizes the poet's unwavering faith in Allah and the certainty of divine judgment:

شَهِدْتُ بِأَنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ  
وَأَنَّ النَّارَ مَثْوَى الْكَافِرِينَ

*"I bear witness that Allah's promise is true, And that Hell is the abode of the disbelievers"*

The poem reflects the fundamental Islamic belief in the truth of Allah's promises and the existence of reward and punishment in the afterlife. Through a cultural perspective, this verse illustrates the transformation of Arab society from tribal beliefs to a worldview centered on Islamic monotheism. Abdullah ibn Rawahah uses simple yet powerful language to affirm faith as the foundation of Muslim identity. The poem also demonstrates the influence of Qur'anic teachings concerning accountability and the Hereafter.

### Analysis of Poem 2: Praise for the Prophet Muhammad

In this poem, Abdullah ibn Rawahah praises Prophet Muhammad and compares divine support for him with that granted to Prophet Musa:

فَتَثَبَّتَ اللَّهُ مَا آتَاكَ مِنْ حَسَنٍ  
تَثْبِيتَ مُوسَى وَنَصْرًا كَالَّذِي نَصَرُوا

*"May Allah strengthen the good He has granted you, As He strengthened Moses and granted victory to those before"*

This poem reflects the cultural value of reverence toward prophetic leadership. The poet portrays Muhammad as a divinely guided leader whose mission continues the tradition of earlier prophets. Such representations strengthened the legitimacy of Islamic leadership and reinforced communal loyalty to the Prophet.

### Analysis of Poem 3: The Battle of Mu'tah

The third poem was composed before the Battle of Mu'tah:



أَقْسَمْتُ يَا نَفْسٍ لَتَنْزِلَنَّهُ  
لَتَنْزِلَنَّ أَوْ لَتُكْرَهِنَّ

*“I swear, O my soul, you shall descend into battle, You shall descend, whether willingly or by compulsion”*

The poet directly addresses his own soul, encouraging courage and determination. This literary technique reveals an internal struggle between fear and duty. Culturally, the poem reflects the Islamic ideal of perseverance and willingness to sacrifice for a greater cause.

#### Analysis of Poem 4: The Call to Paradise

إِنْ أَجْلَبَ النَّاسُ وَشَدُّوا الرِّبَّةَ  
مَا لِي أَرَاكَ تَكْرَهِينَ الْجَنَّةَ

*“Though people gather and raise the cry of war, Why do I see you reluctant toward Paradise?”*

This verse connects military struggle with spiritual reward. Abdullah ibn Rawahah reminds himself that Paradise awaits those who remain steadfast in faith. The poem demonstrates how Islamic culture redefined warfare as a religious and moral responsibility rather than a means of tribal glory.

#### Analysis of Poem 5: Courage in the Face of Death

يَا نَفْسُ إِلَّا تُقْتَلِي تَمُوتِي  
هَذَا جِمَامُ الْمَوْتِ قَدْ صَلَّيْتُ

*“O soul, if you are not killed, you will still die; This is the fate of death that you must face.”*

The poem expresses acceptance of mortality and highlights the inevitability of death. Rather than fearing death, the poet views it as a natural transition ordained by Allah. This reflects a strong spiritual perspective and encourages believers to live courageously.

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#### Analysis of Poem 6: The Spirit of Jihad

وَمَا تَمَنَيْتُ الْقِتَالَ وَكَئِنِّي  
أُحِبُّ لِقَاءَ اللَّهِ إِذَا حَانَ الْمَوْعِدُ

*“I did not long for battle itself, But I love meeting Allah when the appointed time arrives.”*

Unlike poetry that glorifies warfare, this verse emphasizes spiritual devotion. Abdullah ibn Rawahah clarifies that his motivation is not violence but the desire to fulfill Allah’s command and attain divine pleasure. The poem reflects sincerity and religious commitment.



### Analysis of Poem 7: Defending Islam

نَحْنُ ضَرَبْنَاكُمْ عَلَى تَأْوِيلِهِ  
كَمَا ضَرَبْنَاكُمْ عَلَى تَنْزِيلِهِ

*“We fought you over its interpretation, Just as we fought you when it was first revealed.”*

This poem highlights the importance of defending Islamic teachings. The verse demonstrates how literature functioned as a means of strengthening religious conviction and preserving the integrity of Islamic principles within society.

### Analysis of Poem 8: Commitment to Truth

وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ أَنِّي مُؤْمِنٌ  
وَبَدِينِ أَحْمَدَ لَا أَبَالِي

*“Allah knows that I am a believer, And through the religion of Ahmad, I fear nothing.”*

The poet openly declares his faith and loyalty to Islam. Through a cultural lens, this verse reflects the emergence of a new Islamic identity that transcended tribal affiliations. Faith becomes the primary source of personal and collective identity.

### Analysis of Poem 9: Steadfast Faith

يَا رَبِّ إِنِّي مُؤْمِنٌ بِمُحَمَّدٍ  
وَبِكُلِّ مَا جَاءَ بِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ

*“O Lord, I believe in Muhammad, And in everything he brought from You”*

This poem emphasizes complete acceptance of the Prophet’s message. It reflects the cultural value of obedience and trust in divine revelation. The poem also illustrates the central position of prophethood within Islamic belief.

### Analysis of Poem 10: Acceptance of Martyrdom

يَا نَفْسُ إِنْ لَمْ تُقْتَلِي تَمُوتِي  
هَذَا جَمَامُ الْمَوْتِ قَدْ أُعْطِيتِ

*“O soul, if you are not slain, you will die anyway; The decree of death has already been given to you.”*

The final poem reinforces the theme of sacrifice and martyrdom. Abdullah ibn Rawahah encourages himself to accept Allah’s decree with courage and sincerity. The poem reflects the heroic values that characterized early Islamic culture and demonstrates how poetry inspired moral strength among Muslims.



## Discussion of Cultural Values

The analysis of the ten poems reveals four dominant cultural values: religious devotion, heroism, social commitment, and Islamic identity, these findings support the argument that early Islamic poetry functioned as a medium of moral instruction and social cohesion (Hourani, 1991). Religious devotion appears through expressions of faith in Allah, belief in the Hereafter, and loyalty to the Prophet Muhammad. Heroic values are represented through courage, sacrifice, and perseverance in the face of hardship. Social commitment is reflected in the defense of Islamic teachings and the collective welfare of the Muslim community. Finally, Islamic identity emerges as the central theme uniting all the poems, illustrating the transformation of Arab society under the influence of Islam. Therefore, Abdullah ibn Rawahah's poetry served not only as literary expression but also as a cultural instrument that contributed to the formation of early Islamic civilization (Baiza, 2018).

## CONCLUSION

### Summary

This study examined ten selected poems of Abdullah ibn Rawahah through a cultural approach to identify the religious, heroic, and social values reflected in his literary works. The analysis revealed that the poems consistently promote Islamic teachings and represent the cultural transformation that occurred during the early Islamic period. The themes of faith in Allah, devotion to Prophet Muhammad SAW, courage in battle, commitment to truth, sacrifice, and martyrdom are dominant throughout the selected poems.

The findings indicate that religious values constitute the most prominent aspect of Abdullah ibn Rawahah's poetry. Through poems such as *Faith in Allah's Promise*, *Commitment to Truth*, and *Steadfast Faith*, the poet emphasizes belief in Allah, obedience to divine guidance, and loyalty to Islamic teachings. Heroic values are reflected in poems such as *The Battle of Mu'tah*, *The Call to Paradise*, *Courage in the Face of Death*, and *Acceptance of Martyrdom*, which encourage bravery, perseverance, and self-sacrifice in the path of Allah. Meanwhile, social values are represented through themes of unity, collective responsibility, and the defense of the Muslim community.

Overall, the analysis demonstrates that Abdullah ibn Rawahah's poetry served not only as a form of literary expression but also as a medium of da'wah, moral education, and cultural transmission. His works played an important role in shaping the religious and cultural identity of early Islamic society.

### Implications

The findings of this study contribute to the understanding of early Islamic literature as a cultural product that reflects the beliefs, values, and social realities of the Muslim community. The study demonstrates that poetry functioned as an effective instrument for preserving and disseminating Islamic teachings during the formative period of Islamic civilization. Through his literary works, Abdullah ibn Rawahah helped strengthen faith, encourage moral conduct, and promote social cohesion among Muslims.

Furthermore, this research highlights the importance of examining literary texts within their historical and cultural contexts. The cultural approach reveals that Abdullah ibn Rawahah's poetry not only possesses



literary value but also provides insight into the development of Islamic identity, religious consciousness, and cultural transformation in the early Islamic world.

### Suggestions

Future studies may explore the poetry of Abdullah ibn Rawahah using different critical approaches, such as historical, biographical, stylistic, or religious approaches, to obtain a broader understanding of his literary contributions. Comparative studies between Abdullah ibn Rawahah and other early Islamic poets, such as Hassan ibn Thabit and Ka'b ibn Malik, may also provide valuable insights into the development of Islamic poetry.

In addition, researchers are encouraged to examine a larger collection of Abdullah ibn Rawahah's poems and to utilize original Arabic sources to strengthen textual analysis. Further research on early Islamic poetry can contribute to a deeper understanding of the relationship between literature, culture, and religion, as well as the role of literary works in shaping the intellectual and cultural foundations of Islamic civilization.

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*A Cultural Analysis of Religious, Heroic, and Social Values in Ten Poems of Abdullah ibn Rawahah during the Early Islamic Period*

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