



Reconstructing Pedagogical Da'wah through Transnational Islamic Journalism: A Comparative Study of Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa and Al-Manar

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Abstract

This article examines Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa (1884) and Al-Manar (1898–1935) as transnational Islamic press that did more than circulate reformist ideas: they reconstructed da'wah as an educational practice oriented toward critical literacy, rational argumentation, anti-imperial consciousness, transnational solidarity, and contextual ijtihad. The study employs a qualitative historical approach combining historical-critical analysis and discourse analysis of Arabic primary texts with scholarship on Islamic modernism, transnational media, and public pedagogy. The analysis distinguishes the communicative functions of the two magazines. Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa operated primarily through intellectual and moral mobilization, using argumentative language and appeals to solidarity, whereas Al-Manar developed a more systematic pedagogical repertoire through Qur'anic interpretation, fatwas, educational discussions, correspondence, and socio-political analysis. Their difference therefore reveals a pedagogical continuity: religious journalism can move readers from receiving information toward interpretation, reflection, and social action. The article's contribution is a reconstructed model of educational-transformative da'wah as transnational public pedagogy. The model is proposed as a conceptual resource for contemporary digital da'wah through reflective content design, critical media literacy, anti-hoax reasoning, dialogic learning, and contextual religious education.

Keywords: Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa; Al-Manar; Educational Da'wah; Transnational Press; Public Pedagogy; Critical Literacy

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INTRODUCTION

The expansion of European colonial power in the nineteenth century involved territorial domination as well as contests over knowledge, representation, and political legitimacy. Edward Said's account of Orientalism is useful here because it shows how representations of the East could become part of a wider discourse of unequal power rather than functioning as neutral descriptions (Said 1979). The point, however, is not to treat colonial knowledge as a single, uniform system, but to recognize that Muslim intellectuals responded to changing political and epistemic conditions by producing alternative arguments about religion, reason, society, and collective agency.

One important development was the appearance of reformist Islamic journalism. *Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa*, published in Paris in 1884 by Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Muhammad Abduh, appeared for only eighteen issues and was closely associated with anti-imperial mobilization and Pan-Islamic solidarity. *Al-Manar*, founded by Muhammad Rashid Rida in Cairo in 1898, continued the reformist project for a much longer period and developed a more systematic repertoire combining Qur'anic interpretation, fatwas, educational discussion, socio-political commentary, and correspondence. The two cases are therefore comparable not because they were identical, but because they represent two successive configurations of reformist Islamic journalism: a short-lived mobilizing press and a sustained pedagogical-reformist journal.

The comparison is analytically useful precisely because their differences illuminate a process of pedagogical development. *Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa* prioritized urgency, moral awakening, political framing, and solidarity; *Al-Manar* institutionalized reformist reasoning through recurring genres and a more durable reader network. Contemporary scholarship has documented their roles in Islamic reformism and transregional circulation, including the transmission of *al-Manar*'s reformism to the Malay-Indonesian world through *al-Imam* and *al-Munir* (Amir 2021; Azra 2004; Zaman et al. 2025; Syah 2026). What remains less developed is an explanation of how these media transformed *da'wah* from message transmission into a form of public pedagogy.

This study thus advances central argument: *Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa* and *Al-Manar* reconstructed *da'wah* as an educational process by combining religious argument with interpretive guidance, moral appeals, social diagnosis, and transnational circulation. Their pedagogical function can be identified in five mutually related elements: critical literacy, rational argumentation, anti-imperial consciousness, transnational solidarity, and contextual *ijtihad*. These elements position the reader not simply as a recipient of religious information, but as a participant in interpreting social reality and considering appropriate forms of response.

The conceptual framework integrates four perspectives. Transnational press theory explains how printed media move ideas, identities, and political-religious discourses across borders (Ryad 2009; Thussu 2007). Appadurai's concept of mediascape helps explain how such flows contribute to a shared social imagination beyond territorial boundaries Appadurai (Appadurai 1990). The public-sphere perspective highlights the creation of spaces in which religious and social questions can be debated through print, correspondence, and argumentation (Habermas 1991). Finally, public pedagogy and critical pedagogy provide the educational lens: media become pedagogical when they cultivate interpretation, critical awareness, and the capacity to connect knowledge with social action (Freire 1968). Together, these perspectives form a single analytical sequence: reformist ideas are produced in print, circulated transnationally, negotiated in a public discursive space, and converted into processes of learning and social orientation.



Previous studies have largely emphasized the historical, ideological, and transnational significance of the two magazines, while studies of contemporary da'wah have increasingly focused on digital reach, rhetoric, and engagement. The pedagogical mechanism connecting religious journalism with critical learning remains comparatively underexplored. This study addresses that gap by reconstructing the educational logic embedded in the communicative practices of Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa and Al-Manar and by translating the historical findings into a conceptual model for contemporary da'wah education.

The study asks: (1) how did the two magazines construct their readers as subjects of religious and social learning; (2) how did transnational circulation support the pedagogical function of their da'wah; and (3) what elements of their educational-transformative model can be contextualized for digital da'wah?

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative historical research design and applies the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) to examine the educational and transformative dimensions of Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa and Al-Manar. Historical research is used to reconstruct the political, intellectual, and communicative contexts in which the two reformist journals were produced and circulated. This approach requires the systematic use of historical sources, particularly primary materials, while secondary sources are employed to provide contextualization and support historical interpretation (Hirschheim and Parks 2014; Gangemi, Cité, and Roma 2015). The DHA connects textual analysis with the historical circumstances in which discourse was produced, circulated, and interpreted. Its emphasis on the historical dimensions of discourse formation makes it appropriate for examining how reformist ideas, identities, and forms of collective awareness were articulated through Islamic print media (Rheindorf 2021; Wodak 2015).

Type Research

The study is a qualitative historical study that combines historical contextualization with discourse-historical analysis. This design enables the study to examine the selected journals not merely as historical documents but as forms of communication shaped by particular political, intellectual, and social circumstances.

Research Focus

The research focuses on the educational and transformative dimensions of reformist Islamic journalism. It examines how Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa and Al-Manar articulated reformist ideas, addressed their readers, and connected religious knowledge with contemporary social and political conditions. The analysis considers argumentation, audience construction, moral appeal, political framing, educational explanation, and calls to action, which are interpreted through five analytical categories: critical literacy, rational argumentation, anti-imperial consciousness, transnational solidarity, and contextual ijtiḥād.

Data Sources

The data sources for this study are divided into two categories. According to Sugiyono (2020) data sources are classified into primary and secondary data, as detailed below:

Primary Data



The principal data consist of the eighteen issues of *Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa* published in 1884 and purposively selected materials from *Al-Manar*. For *Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa*, the analysis focuses on the opening issue, particularly “*Misr*” and the journal's opening statement. For *Al-Manar*, the corpus includes the inaugural issue of 1898, notably “*Fātiḥat al-Sanah al-Ulā lil-Manār*,” together with selected later issues containing “*Bāb al-Tarbiyah wa al-Ta‘līm*.” The Arabic originals form the primary evidence, while selected passages are translated into English for analytical presentation.

Secondary Data

Secondary data consist of scholarly works on Islamic reformism, Islamic print culture, intellectual networks, and the circulation of reformist ideas, including Azra (1999), Laffan (2003), Ryad (2009), and Zaman (2018). Methodological references include Hirschheim and Parks (2014); Gangemi, et al.(2015), Reisigl and Wodak (2015), and Wodak (2015). These sources are used to contextualize the primary texts and cross-check historical interpretations concerning publication, intellectual development, and transnational circulation

Data Collection Techniques

Data analysis involved historical contextualization, discourse-historical analysis, thematic coding, and comparative interpretation. First, the political and intellectual contexts of the two journals were reconstructed. Second, the selected texts were examined using DHA, focusing on argumentation, audience construction, moral appeal, political framing, educational explanation, and calls to action (Reisigl and Wodak 2015). Third, recurring textual patterns were organized into five categories: critical literacy, rational argumentation, anti-imperial consciousness, transnational solidarity, and contextual *ijtihād*. Finally, the two journals were compared to identify the continuity and transformation of reformist communication, particularly the movement from the concentrated political and moral mobilization of *Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa* toward the more sustained pedagogical communication of *Al-Manar*. Source triangulation was used to distinguish evidence directly supported by the primary texts from interpretations developed through historical and discourse analysis.

Validity of Findings

The validity of the findings was strengthened through source triangulation, textual consistency, and contextual cross-checking. Primary texts were compared across issues and between the two journals to identify recurring rather than isolated communicative patterns. Historical claims concerning publication, circulation, intellectual networks, and regional influence were cross-checked with relevant secondary scholarship. Interpretive claims concerning pedagogical function were grounded in explicit textual features and recurring patterns within the selected corpus. The study also distinguishes between evidence directly demonstrated by the primary texts and interpretations developed through historical and discourse analysis. This procedure enhances the credibility of the findings while avoiding statistical generalization, which is not the purpose of the study.

Data analysis

The data were analyzed through four interconnected stages: historical contextualization, discourse-historical analysis, thematic coding, and comparative interpretation. First, the political and intellectual contexts surrounding the production and circulation of the two journals were reconstructed. Second, the selected texts were examined using DHA, with attention to

argumentation, audience construction, moral appeal, political framing, educational explanation, and calls to action (Wodak 2015). Third, recurring textual patterns were coded into five analytical categories: critical literacy, rational argumentation, anti-imperial consciousness, transnational solidarity, and contextual *ijtihad*. Fourth, the findings from *Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa* and *Al-Manar* were compared to identify continuity and transformation in their communicative practices. The analysis particularly examines the shift from the concentrated political and moral mobilization of *Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa* toward the more sustained pedagogical and intellectual communication developed by *Al-Manar*.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings reveal a gradual development in the communicative function of reformist Islamic print media, from mobilizing religious and political awareness to cultivating sustained forms of learning and social interpretation. Rather than treating *Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa* and *Al-Manar* as separate episodes in Islamic print history, the analysis reads them as connected stages in the development of reformist communication. The discussion therefore proceeds from the communicative strategies found in *Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa*, through the pedagogical expansion of *Al-Manar*, to the wider circulation and local adaptation of reformist ideas. The final sections bring these findings together to formulate an educational-transformative *da'wah* model.

The discussion is organized into five sections. *Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa: Mobilizing Readers through Argument and Moral Awakening*; which examines the formation of critical and collective awareness; *From Mobilization to Systematic Reform: The Pedagogical Expansion of Al-Manar*; which explores the shift toward sustained religious learning; *Transnational Print Circulation and the Formation of a Muslim Public*, which considers the role of print networks in extending reformist communication across regions; *Deliar Noer and the Local Adaptation of Reformist Pedagogy*, which examines its reception and adaptation within the Indonesian context; and *Reconstructing the Educational-Transformative Da'wah Model*, which synthesizes these historical findings into a conceptual framework for understanding reformist communication as a process of learning, interpretation, and social transformation.

Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa: Mobilizing Readers through Argument and Moral Awakening

Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa should not be understood merely as an early reformist Islamic press. Its significance also lies in its communicative strategy, which had a pedagogical orientation by positioning readers as subjects encouraged to identify the causes of Muslim weakness and reflect on their collective capacity to respond. Keddie and Algar (Keddie 1968) show that al-Afghani's writings connected criticism of imperial domination with efforts to awaken Muslim political and religious consciousness. This function can also be situated within the broader process of intellectual transmission and transformation in the modern Islamic world, in which communication became an important means through which Islamic ideas, knowledge, and intellectual authority circulated across regions (Stéphane A. Dudoignon, Komatsu Hisao dan Yasushi 2006). On this basis, the present study interprets the communicative practice of *Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa* as a form of public pedagogy, in which readers were engaged not merely as recipients of religious messages but as participants in understanding the social and political conditions confronting the Muslim community.

The pedagogical orientation becomes more apparent in the opening issue of the journal, particularly in its discussion of Egypt. The text develops a sequence of diagnosis, moral appeal, and collective reasoning, through which the condition of the Muslim world is presented as a problem requiring interpretation. The article “Misr” provides a concrete example of this approach. Rather than presenting foreign domination as a detached political fact, the text relates Egypt's condition to internal fragmentation and the broader weakness of the Muslim community. The discussion therefore moves beyond the description of political circumstances toward an explanation of their causes and consequences. In this process, readers are encouraged to recognize the relationship between foreign domination, internal disunity, and the weakening of collective Muslim strength (Abdurrahman 2004; Afghani 1884; Yani 2021). The pedagogical movement can thus be understood as progressing from condition, to interpretation, and ultimately to responsibility.

The article “Misr” further illustrates what may be described as argument-led da'wah. Instead of simply informing readers about colonial occupation, the text presents Egypt's condition as a lesson concerning the consequences of domination and fragmentation. Its argument encourages readers to follow a chain of reasoning in which political circumstances are connected to the wider problems of Muslim weakness and disunity. The opening discourse similarly emphasizes the importance of understanding the causes of weakness and recovering collective strength. Religious communication, therefore, operates not only through doctrinal instruction but also through argumentation and reflection. Readers are invited to examine a social condition, understand its underlying causes, and consider the implications of collective weakness. In this sense, the communicative process transforms political and religious discourse into a form of learning that encourages critical reflection rather than passive reception.

The construction of the audience further strengthens this pedagogical character. Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa addressed a wider Muslim readership and created a communicative space in which issues concerning the condition of Muslims could be discussed and circulated across geographical boundaries. Its invitation for correspondence on matters considered relevant for publication further indicates that the journal functioned as part of a broader communicative network rather than as a purely one-directional channel. Moral appeal was combined with political framing: colonial domination was presented as a shared problem, while Muslim solidarity was articulated as a possible response. Through this communicative arrangement, readers were positioned simultaneously as learners and potential participants. They were expected to understand the problems confronting the Muslim community while also recognizing their possible role in responding to those problems.

The communicative style of Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa was therefore forceful, argumentative, and mobilizing, yet its mobilizing character was closely connected to reflection. Readers were encouraged to identify the causes of social weakness, distinguish the immediate conditions of political domination from the deeper sources of collective vulnerability, and consider unity as a practical response. The combination of diagnosis, reasoning, moral appeal, and political framing demonstrates that the journal's function extended beyond the dissemination of reformist or anti-imperial ideas. Its communication also sought to cultivate awareness and collective responsibility among its readers. Taken together, these characteristics indicate that Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa can be understood as an early form of transnational public pedagogy, in which da'wah functioned not only to convey religious ideas but also to develop critical awareness, strengthen solidarity, and encourage readers to consider collective responses to the conditions of the Muslim world.

From Mobilization to Systematic Reform: The Pedagogical Expansion of Al-Manar

Al-Manar inherited the reformist impulse of Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa, but developed it through a different and more sustained communicative structure. Founded in Cairo in 1898 and published for several decades, the magazine established recurring forms of religious and intellectual discussion that made learning part of its continuing editorial practice. Its first issue, for example, included “Fatiha al-Sana al-Ula lil-Manar,” while subsequent issues incorporated discussions of education, questions and answers, Qur'anic interpretation, political affairs, and correspondence with readers. The magazine archive confirms this multidimensional structure from its earliest publication (Riḍa 1940; “Al-Manar” 1898). Through this format, Al-Manar did not merely continue the reformist message of its predecessor but developed a more systematic space in which religious knowledge, social issues, and contemporary political questions could be discussed together.

The distinction between the two magazines, therefore, was not simply a matter of publication duration. Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa was characterized by concentrated political and moral mobilization, whereas Al-Manar developed a more sustained pedagogical environment in which readers could repeatedly encounter explanations, questions, answers, interpretations, and social commentary. Such continuity was important for the formation of knowledge because readers were exposed not to a single reformist appeal but to an accumulated body of arguments and interpretations. The recurring structure of Al-Manar thus enabled reformist ideas to move from immediate mobilization toward a more continuous process of intellectual formation. In this respect, Al-Manar extended the communicative function initiated by Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa by creating a more enduring space for religious learning and social reflection (Afghani 1884; “Al-Manar” 1898).

The educational dimension of Al-Manar is especially evident in how religious knowledge was presented as a means of understanding contemporary problems. Its combination of tafsir, fatwa, educational discussion, and socio-political commentary connected textual knowledge with the realities of Muslim society. Reformist da'wah was consequently presented not only as the transmission of religious teachings but also as a process of contextual interpretation. Ijtihad, in this setting, was not treated merely as an abstract legal principle; rather, it provided a way of relating Islamic knowledge to changing social circumstances. Through this approach, religious interpretation became connected with questions of education, social change, political conditions, and modernity. Al-Manar therefore transformed reformist discourse into a continuing process through which readers could engage with religious knowledge in relation to the problems of their time.

The communicative structure of Al-Manar also facilitated the wider circulation of Islamic modernist ideas beyond Egypt. Zemmin (Zemmin 2018) shows that networks of readers, Al-Azhar scholars, and printing initiatives in Singapore and Padang contributed to the transmission and local adaptation of reformist ideas, including through publications such as al-Imam and al-Munir. This process indicates that the influence of Al-Manar was not limited to the direct distribution of its writings. Reformist ideas moved through networks of readers, scholars, and print institutions and were subsequently interpreted within different Muslim contexts. This finding corresponds with Ryad's (Ryad 2009) analysis of Al-Manar as a “beacon” of Islamic reformism, particularly because the magazine brought tafsir, fatwa, socio-political discussion, and reader correspondence into a shared communicative space. Its circulation extended beyond Egypt to North Africa, the Levant, India, and Southeast Asia, allowing Al-Manar to function as an important node in a wider Islamic intellectual network. The dissemination of reformist ideas through Al-Manar and related



publications thus contributed not only to the circulation of information but also to the formation of new networks of intellectual exchange and an emerging transnational Muslim public sphere.

This wider circulation also helps explain the significance of *Al-Manar* in the development of Islamic modernism in Southeast Asia, including Indonesia. Through networks connecting scholars, readers, and printing institutions, reformist ideas were able to cross geographical boundaries and acquire new meanings within local intellectual settings. At the same time, the sustained editorial structure of *Al-Manar* distinguished it from a purely informational or propagandistic medium. Its combination of interpretation, instruction, correspondence, and social commentary provided readers with a continuing space for intellectual engagement and religious reflection. In this context, the term “laissez-faire Salafism” used in the earlier manuscript is not sufficiently precise. A more appropriate description is Abduh-Rida reformism or reformist Islamic modernism, characterized by rational interpretation, religious renewal, criticism of taqlid, and engagement with social change, while recognizing that the intellectual positions of Abduh and Rida were not identical in every respect (Hourani 1962; Ryad 2009). *Al-Manar* can therefore be understood as an important stage in the development of educational-transformative da'wah, in which reformist Islamic communication was sustained through religious learning, contextual interpretation, and transnational intellectual exchange.

Transnational Print Circulation and the Formation of a Muslim Public

The transnational significance of the two magazines lies in the relationship between circulation and learning. *Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa* was designed for distribution across the eastern regions and connected political events in Egypt with a wider Muslim horizon (Afghani 1884; Abdurrahman, n.d.). *Al-Manar* subsequently developed a more durable network in which readers, students, scholars, correspondents, and printers helped carry reformist arguments across geographical boundaries (Rida 1940; “*Al-Manar*” 1898). Transnational press theory helps explain this movement as more than the physical transportation of printed pages: circulation also carries frames of interpretation, categories of identity, and models of religious reasoning (Thussu 2007).

The Malay-Indonesian world provides a concrete case. Azra's study shows that *al-Manar* directly stimulated reformist publishing in the region, particularly *al-Imam* in Singapore and *al-Munir* in Padang (Azra 2004). The mechanism involved networks of readers, students, scholars, translation, reproduction, and local printing. The transmission was therefore neither automatic nor purely textual; ideas were selected, translated, reformulated, and embedded in new local contexts. This process is important for understanding contextual *ijtihad* as a pedagogical outcome of transnational circulation.

Al-Manar's transnational public was also dialogic. Its correspondence and questions from different regions created a textual space in which local problems could enter a wider Islamic conversation. This characteristic supports the public-sphere dimension of the argument: the magazine did not merely broadcast a fixed ideology but organized a recurring space for questions, interpretations, and responses. The reader's position shifted from observer to interlocutor.

The evidence from Southeast Asia should nevertheless be interpreted cautiously. The influence of *al-Manar* on *al-Imam* and *al-Munir* is well documented, but the subsequent relationship to organizations such as Muhammadiyah, *Al-Irsyad*, and *Persis* involved multiple intellectual and institutional channels. It is therefore more accurate to describe *al-Manar* as one important



transnational resource within a broader reformist network rather than as the sole cause of Indonesian Islamic modernism (Azra 1999; Laffan 2003; Setiawan 2012).

Deliar Noer and the Local Adaptation of Reformist Pedagogy

Deliar Noer's analysis becomes most useful when read not as a catalogue of historical influence but as evidence of how transnational ideas were localized. His study of the modernist Muslim movement in Indonesia shows that reformist ideas entering the archipelago were mediated by organizations, publications, educational initiatives, and local intellectual debates (Setiawan 2012). This supports the present argument that the pedagogical power of transnational Islamic journalism lies in its capacity to provide interpretive resources that can be adapted to concrete social conditions.

From this perspective, al-Imam and al-Munir were not passive copies of al-Manar. Their significance lay precisely in translating a transnational reformist vocabulary into local debates about education, religious authority, social organization, and colonial conditions. The pedagogical process therefore has three levels: transmission of ideas, contextual reinterpretation, and institutional or social application.

Reconstructing the Educational-Transformative Da'wah Model

Taken together, the findings show that the two magazines reconstruct da'wah through a sequence that can be described as discourse–circulation–reflection–action. The first element is the production of reformist discourse: readers are given arguments about religion, reason, colonial domination, and social reform. The second is transnational circulation, through which those arguments reach readers beyond the place of publication. The third is reflection, where readers encounter questions, explanations, correspondence, and competing interpretations. The fourth is action, understood not as a single political act but as the possibility of educational, organizational, intellectual, and social transformation.

The model contains five core pedagogical components. Critical literacy enables readers to interrogate claims and identify the structural causes of social problems. Rational argumentation requires religious communication to provide reasons rather than relying solely on assertion. Anti-imperial consciousness encourages readers to recognize unequal structures of domination. Transnational solidarity expands moral concern beyond local boundaries. Contextual *ijtihad* connects Islamic principles with changing social realities. These elements work together rather than independently.

The model also clarifies the distinction between information and education. Information tells readers what happened or what a religious authority said. Pedagogy helps readers understand why an issue matters, how an argument is constructed, what alternatives exist, and what responsible action might follow. Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa emphasized this process through political-moral argument and mobilization; Al-Manar extended it through sustained interpretation, educational discussion, and dialogic correspondence. The historical difference between the two therefore strengthens, rather than weakens, the proposed model.

The educational-transformative da'wah model consists of five interconnected dimensions: critical literacy, rational argumentation, anti-imperial consciousness, transnational solidarity, and contextual *ijtihad*. Critical literacy encourages audiences to examine social and religious claims through evidence, which in digital da'wah can be developed through source verification, media



literacy, and contextual explanation. Rational argumentation connects religious claims with reason, interpretation, and social analysis, reflected in evidence-based and transparent digital content. Anti-imperial consciousness develops awareness of domination, inequality, misinformation, exclusion, and social injustice while avoiding polarizing forms of communication. Transnational solidarity extends the shared horizon created by Islamic print networks into digital learning communities and cross-regional dialogue while retaining local contexts. Contextual *ijtihad* links Islamic principles with changing social realities through context-sensitive education, dialogic question-and-answer, and problem-based digital learning. Together, these dimensions reposition da'wah from the transmission of religious messages toward a continuous process of critical learning, contextual interpretation, and socially responsible engagement.

CONCLUSION

This research concludes that Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa and Al-Manar reconstructed da'wah as an educational practice within transnational Islamic journalism. Their contribution was not limited to circulating reformist ideas. Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa used argumentative and moral mobilization to cultivate awareness of colonial domination and the consequences of fragmentation, while Al-Manar developed a more sustained pedagogical environment through interpretation, fatwas, educational discussion, correspondence, and socio-political analysis.

The comparison reveals a historical continuity with a notable functional difference. Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa embodies concentrated mobilizing pedagogy; Al-Manar embodies sustained and institutionalized pedagogical communication. Yet both position readers as subjects capable of interpreting social reality. This provides the central explanation of how classical Islamic journalism can reconstruct educational-transformative da'wah.

The study's main contribution is the five-component model of critical literacy, rational argumentation, anti-imperial consciousness, transnational solidarity, and contextual *ijtihad*. These components are connected through a discourse–circulation–reflection–action sequence that integrates transnational press, mediascape, public sphere, and public pedagogy. The model extends existing historical interpretations by specifying the communicative mechanism through which reformist journalism can become a form of public learning.

The contemporary implication is not to replicate the ideological content of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century reformism, but to adapt its pedagogical logic. Digital da'wah can draw on this logic through critical-literacy modules, reflective content design, source verification and anti-hoax reasoning, dialogic learning, and contextual religious education. The key shift is from measuring da'wah primarily by reach and engagement toward evaluating its capacity to produce understanding, critical judgment, and responsible participation.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. The study relies primarily on available textual archives and historical scholarship and therefore cannot directly measure how individual readers in different regions received or interpreted the magazines. Translation from Arabic into English also introduces an interpretive layer, although the analysis retains the original-language texts as its primary reference. Future research should combine archival analysis with reception history, reader-network reconstruction, and comparative study of local adaptations in Southeast Asia. Such work would further test whether the proposed pedagogical model operates similarly across different Muslim contexts.



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