

The Philosophy of Rihlah in Ibn Battutah and Generation Z Self-Actualization: From Travel Experience to Knowledge, *Adab*, *'Ibrah*, and *Tazkiyah*

Abdul Basith¹, Mia Nurhalimah²
Paramadina University, Jakarta

Corresponding E-mail: Abdul.basith@students.paramadina.ac.id



Aqlania: Jurnal Filsafat dan Teologi Islam is licensed under a [CC BY](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

Abstract: This research article investigates the concept of the journey in Ibn Battutah's *Rihlah* and its relevance to generation z self-actualization. it uses qualitative library research, thematic content analysis as well as source criticism method in the article it presents selected scenes from the texts while also dialoguing with Maslow, Rogers, Kolb, and Urry. The study identifies four dimensions of Islamic *rihlah*: *ṭalab al-ʿilm* as epistemic movement, *adab* as relational ethics, *'ibrah* as reflective interpretation, and *tazkiyah* as transcendent self-purification. Together, these dimensions constitute the Islamic Travel Self-Actualization (ITSA) model, which comprises orientation, experience, *adab*, *'ibrah*, and *tazkiyah*. This model is critical of travel reduced in form to mere seeing and getting validation and it puts a personal developmental factor within the scope of knowledge, moral responsibility, reflection, and orientation toward God. The article presents a philosophical account of the "*rihlah*" concept without being confined to merely adopting the tenets of humanistic psychology by way of application to a travel text of islamic nature.

Keywords: *Adab*; Generation Z; Ibn Battutah; Islamic self-actualization; *Rihlah*

Abstrak: Artikel ini mengkaji filsafat *rihlah* dalam *Rihlah Ibn Battutah* dan relevansinya terhadap aktualisasi diri Generasi Z. Melalui studi kepustakaan kualitatif, analisis isi tematik, dan kritik sumber, episode tekstual terpilih ditafsirkan dalam dialog dengan Maslow, Rogers, Kolb, dan Urry. Penelitian menemukan empat dimensi filosofis *rihlah* Islam: *ṭalab al-ʿilm* sebagai gerak epistemik, *adab* sebagai etika relasional, *'ibrah* sebagai interpretasi reflektif, dan *tazkiyah* sebagai pemurnian diri transenden. Keempatnya membentuk model Islamic Travel Self-Actualization (ITSA): orientasi, pengalaman, *adab*, *'ibrah*, dan *tazkiyah*. Model ini mengkritik perjalanan yang direduksi menjadi konsumsi visual dan validasi eksternal dengan menempatkan pertumbuhan diri dalam horizon ilmu, tanggung jawab moral, refleksi, dan orientasi kepada Allah. Kontribusi artikel terletak pada rekonstruksi filosofis *rihlah*, bukan sekadar penerapan psikologi humanistik pada teks perjalanan Islam.

Kata kunci: *Adab*; Aktualisasi diri Islami; Generasi Z; Ibn Battutah; *Rihlah*

INTRODUCTION

Travel, as a primary way of human engagement with the world, opens up new views of space, society and ourselves. Geographic change of location is a much richer act than bodily displacement from one spot to another. It is an interface of the self with different languages, social norms, customs, social frameworks, systems and forms of knowledge, natural and mental environments, religious faiths and experiences. One reason to interpret travel as an epistemological incident is that humans are always learning about the world when they are interacting with reality. On the other hand, travel is also ethical for it demands that one has different approaches to one's seeing, judging and acting in every encounter.

In current tourism studies, John Urry has shown that the tourist experience cannot be totally neutral. The introduction of the *tourist gaze* concept shows how the tourists' way of seeing destinations is shaped by social representations, the tourism industry, and the media. Nowadays, in the realm of digital platforms, this issue becomes more and more complex: one destination may be chosen because of its representational appeal, another one because the experience can be reproduced as content and yet the third one only because of the chance of becoming part of one's virtual identity through travel. Rocking the boat of visual culture does not mean that social media always undermines the meaning of a journey. The question is philosophical: does a journey bring one closer to the knowledge or does one simply get stuck in a world of images and external recognition through the journey?¹

Modern research on Generation Z reveals that digital technology is a crucial environment where people get information, get inspirations for their travel destinations, document their experiences and take decisions on travelling, respectively. Research on Generation Z tourists also reveals diverse motivations, including enjoyment, safety, economic value, inspiration, interaction with local communities, social media engagement, and self-actualization. Because this study does not employ surveys or interviews, it does not generalize that all members of Generation Z travel for the sake of digital validation. Generation Z is treated as a contemporary context in which the argument may be applied, not as an empirical population claimed to have been directly observed.²

The research problem emerges when travel is treated as though it automatically produces personal growth. Visiting numerous destinations, developing the courage to travel, and accumulating experiences may indeed expand individual capacities, yet they do not necessarily generate depth of knowledge, moral maturity, or spiritual awareness. In fact, mobility and transformation are not the same thing. To make sense of how traveling is able to change a person, we need a theoretical scheme or something.

The Islamic intellectual tradition provides an important point of view through the concepts of '*rihlah*' and '*safar*'. In the Indonesian edition of *Rihlah Ibnu Bathutah* which

¹ John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze*, 2nd ed. (London: Sage, 2002), 1–15.

² Jorge Marques et al., "Generation Z and Travel Motivations: The Impact of Age, Gender, and Residence," *Tourism and Hospitality* 6, no. 2 (2025): article 82, 1–4, 12–16.

is taken as the main document for this article, *riḥlah* has been explained as a movement from a place to another in order to carry out a *saḥar*. This definition follows a series of verses from the Qur'an regarding earth, footsteps of human beings, and the appeal to the readers to reflect upon the stories of those who had lived earlier. The manner of presenting the verses is hermeneutically rich. Travel is not depicted simply as purposeless motion but as a means of motion which enables us to observe, take lessons, and develop conscious.³

Physical movement is associated with gaining knowledge through physical journeying and observing in the Qur'an on several occasions. The Qur'an verse 3:137 (Q. Āl 'Imrān) advises human beings to reflect over the destiny of those who denied the truth; verses 6:11 (Q. al-An'ām) and 30:42 (Q. al-Rūm) call for people to walk about the earth and to witness the outcomes of history. Also in verse 29:20 (Q. al-'Ankabūt) is travel connected to a contemplation on the beginning of creation. From this viewpoint, a person's physical movements gain an epistemic function (acquiring knowledge). Humans travel to see, but the end goal is understanding and extracting *'ibrah* (wisdom and lessons).

The tradition of *riḥlah fī ṭalab al-'ilm* supports the epistemic angle further. The travels of hadith seekers and scholars to teachers, learning centers, and knowledge transmission networks show that one must be willing to get out of his/her comfort zone to gain knowledge. In *Al-Riḥlah fī Ṭalab al-Ḥadīth*, al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī describes the spirit of a journey for the sake of obtaining knowledge. Riḥlah is not just a glorification of adventure; it is a form of knowledge that requires diligence and honesty, thorough checking, perseverance, and good manners toward the sources of knowledge.⁴

This framework finds a particularly rich field of interpretation in Ibn Battutah's *Riḥlah*. The travel narrative records cities, rulers, scholars, Sufi communities, customs, social institutions, and the broader landscape of the medieval Islamic world. The Indonesian edition identifies the work's original title as *Tuḥfah al-Nuẓẓār fī Gharā'ib al-Amṣār wa 'Ajā'ib al-Asfār*. Ibn Battutah's travel experiences were dictated to Ibn Juzayy al-Kalbī. The work therefore cannot be naively treated as a transparent diary.⁵

Source criticism instead opens the way to a more productive reading. The translator's introduction to the Indonesian edition explains that the work resembles a diary that reconstructs travel experiences and was dictated to Ibn Juzayy for literary composition. Its narrative sequence sometimes shifts abruptly, and Ibn Juzayy may insert comments marked by particular indicators. Accordingly, the object of this study is not the complete verification of every itinerary detail, but the structure of meaning constructed by the text around travel, knowledge, *adab*, observation, and spirituality.

Previous studies of Ibn Battutah have largely treated the *Riḥlah* as a source for history, geography, mobility, and the documentation of medieval societies. Ross E. Dunn

³ Muhammad bin Abdullah bin Bathuthah, *Riḥlah Ibnu Bathuthah: Memoar Perjalanan Keliling Dunia di Abad Pertengahan*, trans. Muhammad Muchson Anasy and Khalifurrahman Fath (Jakarta: Pustaka Al-Kautsar, 2012), xv–xvi.

⁴ Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Al-Riḥlah fī Ṭalab al-Ḥadīth* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1975), 9–18.

⁵ Bathuthah, *Riḥlah Ibnu Bathuthah*, xi–xiv.

reads Ibn Battutah’s journeys within the social and political networks of the fourteenth-century Islamic world. The Gibb and Beckingham edition remains a major reference for English-language scholarship on Ibn Battutah’s travels. More recent studies have begun to emphasize the educational, cultural, and experiential-learning values contained in the travel narrative.⁶

By contrast, studies of Generation Z travel more commonly focus on tourism motivation, marketing, social media, destination choice, and sustainability. Recent research indicates that Generation Z travel motivations are not uniform but vary according to demographic factors, experience, and digital context. There remains considerable room for a more critical dialogue between the Islamic philosophy of travel and theories of personal growth.

This article addresses three research gaps. First, it reads *riḥlah* as a philosophical paradigm of self-formation rather than merely as a source of historical information. Second, the theories of Maslow and Rogers are not allowed to dominate the Islamic text as unquestioned foundations; instead, they are treated as dialogue partners that must themselves be critically examined. Third, the article formulates Islamic Travel Self-Actualization as an analytical construct derived from four thematic dimensions: *ṭalab al-‘ilm*, *adab*, *‘ibrah*, and *tazkiyah*.

On this basis, the study addresses two questions. First, what philosophical structure of *riḥlah* can be derived from Ibn Battutah’s *Riḥlah* and the paratexts of the edition used? Second, how can this structure critique and enrich the concept of self-actualization in the context of Generation Z travel? The article argues that travel becomes transformative when experience is processed through the pursuit of knowledge, the *adab* of encounter, reflection grounded in *‘ibrah*, and the purification of orientation.

Previous Research and the Position of This Study

Previous scholarship shows that Generation Z travel, digital culture, and Ibn Battutah’s narrative have been examined from different perspectives, but they have not yet been fully brought together within a philosophy of *riḥlah*. Suci Sandi Wachyuni, Nenny Wahyuni, and Kadek Wiweka identify novelty, escape, relationships, and self-actualization among the motivations for Generation Z solo travel; their preliminary findings position self-actualization as one motive that must be read alongside other travel motivations.⁷

Jorge Marques, Sofia Gomes, Mónica Ferreira, Marina Rebuá, and Hugo Marques argue that Generation Z travel motivations are not homogeneous. Based on a survey of 303 respondents aged eighteen to twenty-eight, they find that age, gender, and place of residence are associated with variations in travel motivation. This finding is important for

⁶ Ross E. Dunn, *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta: A Muslim Traveler of the Fourteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 1–12.

⁷ Suci Sandi Wachyuni, Nenny Wahyuni, and Kadek Wiweka, “What Motivates Generation Z to Travel Independently? Preliminary Research of Solo Travellers,” *Journal of Tourism and Economic* 6, no. 1 (2023): 41–52, esp. 46–50.

the present article because it guards against the generalization that all members of Generation Z travel solely for digital validation.⁸

Ali Alruthaya, Thanh-Thuy Nguyen, and Sachithra Lokuge contend that Generation Z learning characteristics are shaped by the generation's close relationship with digital technology. Their review of eighty studies shows that digital technology has become an important part of Generation Z routines and has influenced their learning characteristics. The study helps clarify Generation Z's digital context, but it does not discuss *riḥlah* as an Islamic philosophical category.⁹

Ana-Paula Pricope Vancia, Alina-Ioana Băltescu, Delia Popescu, and Gabriela Puiu argue that Generation Z tourists' dependence on social media has the potential to transform tourism behavior and their relationships with destinations. Their study strengthens the relevance of critiques of the *tourist gaze* and visual culture, yet its analytical focus remains on tourist behavior and destination sustainability.¹⁰

Gamal Adawi, meanwhile, reads Ibn Battutah's journey analytically in order to extract the values and customs recorded in the travel narrative. His study affirms the educational and social richness of the *Rihlah* but does not develop a systematic dialogue with Maslow's and Rogers's theories of self-actualization or with the context of Generation Z travelers.¹¹

In contrast to these studies, the present article places the philosophy of *riḥlah* at the center of analysis and treats Generation Z as its contemporary context. The study's novelty lies in constructing Islamic Travel Self-Actualization (ITSA) through four dimensions—*ṭalab al-‘ilm*, *adab*, *‘ibrah*, and *tazkiyah*—and in criticizing forms of self-actualization overly centered on individual expansion. It therefore asks not only what motivates travel, but also how travel experience is processed into intellectual, ethical, reflective, and spiritual formation.

Method

This study employs a qualitative approach through library research and thematic content analysis. Its material object is Ibn Battutah's travel narrative, while its formal object is the philosophy of *riḥlah* as a process of self-formation. The main primary source is *Rihlah Ibnu Bathuthah: Memoar Perjalanan Keliling Dunia di Abad Pertengahan*, the Indonesian 2012 edition published by Pustaka Al-Kautsar, translated by Muhammad

⁸ Jorge Marques et al., "Generation Z and Travel Motivations: The Impact of Age, Gender, and Residence," *Tourism and Hospitality* 6, no. 2 (2025): article 82, 1–4, 12–16.

⁹ Ali Alruthaya, Thanh-Thuy Nguyen, and Sachithra Lokuge, "The Application of Digital Technology and the Learning Characteristics of Generation Z in Higher Education," *ACIS 2021 Proceedings* (2021): 1–7, esp. 1–3. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2111.05991>.

¹⁰ Ana-Paula Pricope Vancia et al., "Examining the Disruptive Potential of Generation Z Tourists on the Travel Industry in the Digital Age," *Sustainability* 15, no. 11 (2023): 8756, 1–4, 14–17. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15118756>.

¹¹ Gamal Adawi, "Ibn Battuta's Journey—Analytical Study: Eliciting Values and Curious Customs from Ibn Battuta's Journey," *Religions* 16, no. 12 (2025): 1566. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel16121566>.

Muchson Anasy and Khalifurrahman Fath and critically edited by Muhammad Abdurrahim.¹²

The reason why the Indonesian version was made a choice is because the researchers who carried out the study were the ones who used the actual text in the study and therefore in order to have a consistent referral of the text, the analysis was also referred to the researchers' version. Besides, the Publisher's Introduction, Translator's Introduction, and Critical Editor's Introduction have been taken as paratexts for the analysis. These paratexts are not equated with Ibn Battutah's own direct statements. Rather, they are used for source criticism, for mapping the interpretive horizon of the edition, and for identifying how the work is introduced to Indonesian readers. This distinction prevents the erroneous attribution of paratextual claims to Ibn Battutah.

The units of analysis consist of textual passages that present travel orientation, the pursuit of knowledge, socio-religious encounters, observations of society, reflections on human traces, and spiritual orientation. The analysis proceeds through five stages: reading the source; identifying textual episodes or propositions; coding values; grouping themes; and philosophical interpretation. The initial codes include knowledge, teachers, worship, observation, customs, difference, danger, patience, reflection, and spiritual orientation.

The initial codes were subsequently consolidated into four analytical themes. *Ṭalab al-'ilm* encompasses the pursuit of knowledge and epistemic intentionality. *Adab* concerns the ethics of encounter and the traveler's position toward local communities. *'Ibrah* describes the movement from experience to reflection and self-evaluation. *Tazkiyah* encompasses the purification of orientation, awareness of limitation, and the transcendent relationship.

Interpretive validity is maintained through source criticism and theoretical dialogue. The study distinguishes among Ibn Battutah's experiences, Ibn Juzayy's editorial work, and the paratexts of the Indonesian edition. The thematic findings are placed in dialogue with Abraham Maslow's theory of self-actualization, Carl Rogers's *actualizing tendency*, David Kolb's experiential learning, and John Urry's *tourist gaze*. Claims concerning Generation Z are explicitly limited to contextual interpretations based on the literature.

Philosophical Dimensions of *Riḥlah* in the Islamic Tradition

Riḥlah in Islam begins with the view that human beings acquire knowledge through the signs of God, both the revealed signs (āyāt qawliyyah) and the cosmic signs (āyāt kawniyyah). The commands to travel through the earth in Q. Āl 'Imrān [3]:137, al-An'ām [6]:11, al-'Ankabūt [29]:20, and al-Rūm [30]:42 do not end with mobility itself. Bodily movement opens a field of observation, while reason and the heart process observation into knowledge and *'ibrah*. Safar therefore possesses an epistemological structure.

Within the horizon of Islamic epistemology, knowledge is not neutral in relation to the formation of the subject. Knowledge has to be *adab* & responsibility. *Riḥlah Fī Ṭalāb al-'ilm* shows that the way of seeking knowledge is not easy. One has to undergo

¹² Bathuthah, *Rihlah Ibnu Bathuthah*, vi–xvi.

mujāhadah: giving up one's comforts traveling long distances and confirming information. *Riḥlah* is an intellectual training process that is opposed to instant learning.

The anthropological perspective of *riḥlah* sees the human being as more than an atom, a subject that transforms the world merely for a material self-explosion. A person becomes the human only through a multiplicity of identities: slave and master, dependent and responsible, in a web of relations towards God and others, history and nature. Thus, fulfillment without a sense of trust (*amānah*), discipline (*adab*) and a spirit of service is impossible.

The hermeneutic dimension of *riḥlah* is rooted in *'ibrah*; that is, the ability to draw conclusions and lessons by moving beyond what is seen. In order to reach an interpretative conclusion, a hermeneutic reading or analysis of what is outwardly visible is needed. A city, ruins, a custom, prosperity, and decay must be deciphered. The traveler does not limit himself merely to *ru'yah*, i.e. seeing, but keeps on moving toward deeper thought, reflection and meditation (i.e. *tafakkur* and *tadabbur*). Here, *riḥlah* differs substantially from the *tourist gaze*. It is clear that *riḥlah* involves deeper and more profound thinking.

According to the philosophy behind *tazkiyah*, experience is the means which fulfills teleology, the purification of intention, correction of the ego and the acquisition of moral-spiritual qualities. Hence the *riḥlah* comprises, on the one level, a world that speaks of God; second level: travel that is seeking for knowledge; third level: encounters being carried out in *adab*; and at the end: a change, the direction of which is determined by *tazkiyah* and God. These four aspects form the basic philosophical grounding of ITSA.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Al-Riḥlah as a Travel Text and the Problem of Source Criticism

In a literal sense, *Al-Riḥlah* presents multiple layers of meaning. In it, although the travel experiences are attributed to Ibn Battutah, the form the readers encounter was actually the work of Ibn Juzayy. When Ibn Battutah came back to Morocco, it was he who narrated his travels, but at the stage of compilation and editing, Ibn Juzayy took up the task. The fact that the text is a result of looking back means that the act of recalling and choosing what to narrate are essential in shaping the final work.

Therefore the term 'primary source' here does not denote that the *Al-Riḥlah* is a direct daily journal unfiltered or unmediated. A primary source also might be reflective, selective, follow a literary convention and even have an editorial intervention. This awareness is important because psychologically oriented readings of Ibn Battutah risk treating every narrative statement as direct access to the traveler's inner state.

This study does not seek direct access to Ibn Battutah's "psychological facts." Its focus is how the text represents travel, the traveler's actions, the relationship to knowledge, responses to difference, and spiritual orientation. This approach is more appropriate to philosophical content analysis because the object of interpretation is the structure of meaning constructed by the narrative.

The Publisher’s Introduction to the 2012 edition explicitly states that the memoir contains both the objectivity and the subjectivity of its informant. This statement offers a methodological indication that Ibn Battutah’s observations must not be equated with the objectivity claimed by modern anthropology. He was a Mālikī *faqīh*, a fourteenth-century Muslim, and a traveler who carried a particular normative horizon.¹³

Nevertheless, the limitations of the source do not diminish its value. On the contrary, the tension among experience, memory, editing, and religious horizon makes *Ar-Riḥlah* significant for a philosophy of travel. The text shows that travelers always see from a particular position. The issue is not whether human beings can see without perspective, but whether they recognize their perspective, subject it to examination, and learn through encounter.

Mapping the Textual Data and the Four Philosophical Dimensions of Riḥlah

Table 1. Mapping the Textual Data and the Four Philosophical Dimensions of Riḥlah

Textual Data/Indication	Reference in the 2012 Edition	Initial Code	Dimension	Conceptual Meaning
Definition of <i>riḥlah</i> as movement undertaken for <i>safar</i> , following a Qur’anic discussion of the earth and history.	Critical Editor’s Introduction, xv–xvi	<i>safar</i> , orientation, seeing	‘Ibrah	Mobility acquires meaning through purpose and reflection.
Social observations of Egypt: water, Nile vessels, and local customs.	Publisher’s Introduction, vi–vii	observation, social detail	Ṭalab al-‘ilm/ ‘ibrah	The destination is read as a social reality, not merely as a visual backdrop.
The story of Ibrāhīm ibn Adham seeking the rightful owner after eating an apple.	Publisher’s Introduction, vii	responsibility, self-correction	Tazkiyah	Physical movement follows moral unease.
The Umayyad Mosque and criticism of the claimed number of architects.	Publisher’s Introduction, vii–viii	architecture, verification	Ṭalab al-‘ilm	Knowledge acquired through travel requires <i>tabayyun</i> .
Mount Qāsyūn and traditions concerning the sanctity of space.	Publisher’s Introduction, viii	religious memory, space	Adab/ ‘ibrah	The traveler reads local layers of meaning.

¹³ Bathuthah, *Rihlah Ibnu Bathuthah*, vi–x.

Textual Data/Indication	Reference in the 2012 Edition	Initial Code	Dimension	Conceptual Meaning
Ibn Battutah's closeness to the Sufi world.	Publisher's Introduction, viii	teachers, <i>karāmāt</i> , religiosity	Tazkiyah	The narrator carries a particular spiritual horizon.
References to figures, rulers, places, conditions, and communities.	Publisher's Introduction, ix	documentation, observation	Ṭalab al-‘ilm	Travel functions as the production of knowledge.
The <i>Rihlah</i> as a mosaic of Islamic cultures across regions.	Publisher's Introduction, x	difference, culture	Adab	Encounter requires cross-cultural literacy.

The table shows that the values of *riḥlah* are not treated as a list of character traits imposed upon the text. The analytical process goes through the material from words, phrases to first level meanings and finally to the philosophical meaning or dimensions. All four dimensions are connected to each other; knowledge entails *adab*; encounter necessitates reflection; reflection gets its direction through spiritual orientation; and *tazkiyah* is put into practice through action.

1. *Ṭalab al-‘Ilm*: Travel as Epistemological Movement

The first level comes to the surface in travel as an inquiry, and space is not only the environment but it is the arena of knowledge. Knowledge is obtained not only with the help of one's senses but also with the help of one's spirit, which can understand, compare, and remember. *Al-Riḥlah* has repeatedly listed various persons, rulers, places, societal practices, and state of society. It is worthy of note that the editor's preface highlights Ibn Battuta's proficiency in recognizing and describing individuals, kings or sultans, locations, societally history, and the life condition in the Muslim world in his time.

Philosophy of knowledge perspective: this pattern is indicating that an epistemology of embodied experience. The knowledge of travel is a result not only of abstraction, but also of the participation of body and mind in space. Nevertheless direct experience is not the same as pure objectivity. Those who travel are choosing what they observe, retaining some aspects and forgetting others, and describing the experience by the language and categories familiar to them.

The tradition of *riḥlah fī ṭalab al-‘ilm* confirms this interpretation. Going on a journey to acquire knowledge illustrates that one must be willing to abandon comfort, face scholars experts, question chains of transmission, and expand one's horizon. In medieval Islamic society different cities were linked together through the networks of scholars, *qāḍīs* medieval Islamic cities, madrasas, mosques, and religious communities.

The philosophy of travel they get from this idea is very different from the one which assumes that just by seeing different spots, you will become knowledgeable. *Riḥlah* means that a travel for the purpose of learning requires a deliberate effort to get

knowledge (epistemic intentionality). A new space is a source of knowledge only when the traveler observes it, asks questions, joins the conversation with the locals and sees one's experience, and through this process, expands knowledge gained beforehand. According to that, the main thing is not how many places a person has traveled to but how the person's understanding horizon is transformed or widened.

Gen Z finds this aspect significant since it is a criticism of fast and disorganized information consumption. Digital connectivity does not necessarily mean deeper knowledge. The concept of *riḥlah* transforms the activity of going on a physical journey into an intellectual one of a traveler-student. Museums, mosques, local communities, historical landscapes, and conversations with residents can all become places for learning and discovery if you travel in order to ask questions.

The Egyptian Episode: From Social Detail to Epistemic 'Ibrah

In the Publisher's Introduction, the Indonesian edition gives an indication of how the *Riḥlah* narrative relates, or links together, social observation with judgment. For instance, in a passage which discusses Egypt, a very brief enumeration of the population of workers at a well, ships on the River Nile, as well as a local tradition to mark the return of Sultan al-Malik al-Nāṣir is given. The depiction of this setting is then followed up with an evaluation of a very large public entertainment population and also a supposed huge number of vessels found on the Nile.¹⁴

Although the passage studied is located within the publisher's paratext, which is merely a summary of the plot, the story actually shows an epistemic style that is characteristic for a *Riḥlah*. Physical descriptions are given, social behaviors are observed, and experience is finally made into a judgement. In this case, the tourist is looking more than just at beautiful scenery. By means of water, boats, and masses of people as well as social customs he or she gets an insight into how a society is organized through different features.

This pattern transitions from a visual stage *riyāh* towards *tafakkur*, contemplating, and *'ibarāh*, taking lesson(s) from it. Viewing is an entrance point, not a finishing aim. In the Qur'anic context, commands for travels are frequently coupled with those to see, reflect, or think. This wording puts the sense organs in a correlation with the mind.

The traveler's judgment, however, must remain subject to questioning. A comment about a popular film, for instance, expresses the standard of the critic. Therefore, knowledge gained via traveling entails self-reflection: the traveler must inquire, in addition to "What am I seeing?" also "From where and why do I judge what I am seeing?" Awareness of one's standpoint is what sets a thoughtful critique apart from an unfounded declaration of neutrality.

Among a Generation Z who travel, this matter is expressed as a change from photographing landscapes to understanding societies. Travel content may offer a glimpse of local history, economic ways of life, environmental conditions, or customary practices.

¹⁴ Bathuthah, *Riḥlah Ibnu Bathuthah*, vi–vii.

Yet, a deeper level of documentation should avoid making generalizations and reducing things to stereotypes. *Ṭalab al-'ilm* implies getting well-informed beforehand in case one is going to narrate their experience to others.

The Umayyad Mosque: Architecture, Narrative, and Tabayyun

In its discussion of the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus, the narrative summarized in the introduction to the 2012 edition includes information about the building's beauty, Caliph al-Walīd ibn 'Abd al-Malik, assistance from Roman architects, and the claim that twelve thousand architects were involved. The publisher's introduction does not accept this figure uncritically. It suggests that the number may be exaggerated and distinguishes between architects and construction workers (Bathuthah 2012, vii–viii).¹⁵

This episode is important because it demonstrates the necessity of source criticism in the study of *riḥlah*. A travel narrative may contain data, impressions, numerical claims, oral traditions, and hyperbole. Academic readers must not assign the same degree of certainty to all these elements. *Riḥlah* as a pursuit of knowledge therefore entails the demand for epistemic *tabayyun*.

In this context, *tabayyun* may be understood as the discipline of verifying information before using it as the basis of a conclusion. Contemporary travelers face a more complex problem because information about destinations circulates through short videos, viral posts, user reviews, influencers, and algorithmic recommendation systems. The speed of circulation may generate repeated claims that have never been examined.

The philosophy of *riḥlah* offers a corrective by returning travel to the work of observation and verification. Historical documents from time to time can be verified, and one can refer to them as one goes comparing the materials available at the museum, archives, guides, etc., besides referring to the academic literature. Local stories should be regarded as a part of the community's historical memory, but it should not be understood automatically that a tradition has the status of historical fact verified through an official or scholarly process.

Within Islamic Travel Self-Actualization, the capacity to verify information forms part of intellectual growth. Actualization does not merely mean having the courage to try something new; it also means becoming more mature in distinguishing fact, interpretation, tradition, and opinion. Travel that expands knowledge should simultaneously refine the manner in which one knows.

2. Adab and Cross-Cultural Encounters

The second dimension is *adab* in encounter. *Ar-Riḥlah* presents the world as a plural space: societies differ in custom, social organization, political structure, religious expression, food, clothing, and social relations. The publisher's introduction describes

¹⁵ Bathuthah, *Riḥlah Ibnu Bathuthah*, vii–viii.

Ibn Battutah's work as a kind of "mosaic of Islamic cultures" and emphasizes the vast geographical area it covers.¹⁶

Encounter with difference tests the ego. Travel may produce two possibilities. First, the subject may impose local categories upon all reality and turn difference into an object of ridicule. Second, the subject may learn to perceive difference before judging it, understand its context, and recognize the limits of one's own horizon.

Adab is not identical with a relativism that abolishes moral judgment. It is a discipline of positionality: knowing when to observe, how to respect the people one encounters, and how to judge without reducing an entire culture to a stereotype. In this framework, encounter is both an epistemic and an ethical exercise.

Not all of Ibn Battutah's judgments can simply be accepted as objective by the standards of contemporary anthropology. This is precisely where the text becomes important. It also shows the conflict between the ethical expectations of an ideal *Mālikī faqīh*, on one hand, and the many actual life situations on the other hand. The method of critical examination of the sources allows readers to analyze the interaction without necessarily agreeing with the opinions or decisions of the narrator.

Through our travels these days, *adab* is essentially a check for us in the way we can become so immersed in building our identities as we enjoy a trip that we completely forget the communities around us and just regard them as stages for our show. Places shouldn't serve as sets and people can't be viewed as scenery in our pictures. Travelers should have an idea about what is acceptable (e.g. consent for photographing someone), about boundaries like privacy and how much personal space we take when we do travel, the religious taboos one needs to avoid, and the local customs. Cross-cultural literacy is more than just a nice to have while getting away: it's also about what kind of person you develop in your travels.

Mount Qāsyūn: Religious Memory and the Ethics of Reading Space

In its description of Mount Qāsyūn north of Damascus, the Indonesian edition summarizes various accounts of sites associated with prophets, caves, and the "Cave of Hunger." The cave narrative is about the tradition of prophets seeking shelter in the place and making the distribution of food to their comrades first. As is the case with these types of narratives, they should be subject to scrutiny. We cannot just automatically assume these are facts.¹⁷

As travel literature, however, this passage reflects the author's perception, through Islamic religious memory and the tradition of the community, of space in *riḥlah* that is more than simply geographical/material. For example, a mountain, cave, tomb, mosque or a road can all have several levels of meaning which are not noticed when the traveler is only interested in visually representing the scene.

¹⁶ Bathuthah, *Rihlah Ibnu Bathuthah*, x.

¹⁷ Bathuthah, *Rihlah Ibnu Bathuthah*, viii.

The philosophy of travel that the author develops here is a hermeneutic awareness that tourist places are also sites where meanings are continuously produced and interpreted. It is not only the landscapes to enjoy but the communities to listen. Communities name a landscape, remember a significant event, create a ritual and carry a story. A *adab*-trained traveler does not automatically believe a tradition but recognizes the reasons behind the fact that the community still keeps a certain place alive for them.

This position escapes two extremes; one is blind acceptance of all stories, the other is a cynical attitude viewing a local tradition as something worthless purely because it does not conform to the standards of modern history verification. Critical approach enables one to acknowledge the different epistemic status of a claim but still honors memory's social and religious purposes.

When it comes to the ethics of reading space, the issue becomes really relevant for Generation Z when the religious sites become viral online. Digital popularity might boost the number of visitors, however, it is not uncommon to find tourists who show a complete disrespect to a holy place just because they can take pictures or film there. One of the *adab* of *rihlah* is that the travelers have to adjust themselves to the function of the place. The dress code, the talk, the manner of photographing the place and the content uploading need to be decided keeping in mind the meaning of that place for the people of the place.

3. '*Ibrah* and Reflection: From Seeing to Understanding

If we look at the third layer closely, it is related to the topic of '*ibrah* (lessons) and thought. The Critical Editor's Preface is basically a travelogue and a journey which begins to be introduced through a series of poetic lines describing the earth, mountains, rivers, cities, and human traces. Once it highlights the human ability to construct structures and farm lands, the book gradually shifts focus of discussion to the idea of these very marks being lessons for those who pay heed. In this context, a paragraph later, it refers to the verses of the Holy Quran which encourage people to travel the world and observe what happened to the peoples before them.¹⁸

Sightseeing mainly implies visiting a place and looking for a good view. Insight-seeking on the other hand goes beyond a view it is more of deep exploration of things. Seeing is limited to what you experience with your senses whereas '*ibrah* is an intellectual and moral process through which you learn about human beings, your environment, your place in life by moving from things you observe to understanding them. Ruins, cities, mosques, markets, and social customs, instead of being just things to see, become questions to be asked about things like prosperity, decline, power, humanity, and responsibility.

To reflect is the second of Kolb's experiential learning stages following concrete experience. Reflection plays an important role in experiential learning as it is a process which turns a learning experience into a learning experience through processing and making sense of it. Reflection is a way of making the experience more personal through

¹⁸ Bathuthah, *Rihlah Ibnu Bathuthah*, xv–xvi.

relating to oneself and others, the context and even the outcome. Reflective observers get insight through watching and imagining what one has just experienced.¹⁹

Not every experience leads to wisdom. Experience can be forgotten, turned into entertainment, or used to support prejudices. Ibrah needs the interpreter, as it involves moving away from personal views by looking closely at one's biases, while also linking observed actions to broader considerations of good and evil, purpose, limitations, and accountability of each individual.

Within digital culture, the concept of *ibrah*, which literally means the "footprint," can be interpreted as highlighting the fact that one does not understand what one leaves behind. *'Ibah* is used metaphorically and even metaphysically as pointing out the spiritual value of the travel or rather, the journey. Hence, the critique offered here is on the speed with which the digital age consumes our experiences. Images are uploaded quickly by platforms in one corner of the world while reflection on the matter, even at a very personal level, requires time. It is very different as one is a digital representation while the other is a deep and soulful experience.

Travel that is meaningful should be supported by notes, reading, dialogues, and a thorough evaluation after the travelers are back home. It is only through reflection that one can come to grips with the change the experience might have prompted in one's understanding of the world. If, on the contrary, one doesn't reflect, he or she can produce lots of images that capture the moment but do little to change the way one views the world.

Ibrāhīm ibn Adham: Travel as Moral Correction

The 2012 edition summarizes the story of Ibrāhīm ibn Adham, who found an apple in a river, ate it, and then regretted doing so because he did not know its owner. He undertook a journey to obtain clarification and seek the rightful owner's consent. Whatever the story's historical difficulties and possible hagiographical elements, its moral structure is significant for the philosophy of *riḥlah*.²⁰

Physical movement in the story is not directed toward the consumption of experience. Travel becomes the externalization of moral unease. Aware of the fact that wrongdoing is a possibility, the person understands this and such a realization is compelling one to act. Therefore, the reflection does not end in feelings of guilt alone; it is a means towards correction.

The show demonstrates that *'ibrah* and *tazkiyah* are different things. *'Ibrah* is how the person understands what someone's doing means whereas *tazkiyah* leads a radical spiritual and behavioral change. In the case of a self-fashioned individual, the experience can be truly inspiring when a choice made based on that experience results in a different course of action.

¹⁹ David A. Kolb, *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1984), 21–38.

²⁰ Bathuthah, *Rihlah Ibnu Bathuthah*, vii.

At this stage, *riḥlah* refutes the ways to identify one's self through only the increase of capabilities. One might travel far and change for the better becoming braver and more independent and skillful but, at the same time, one can remain insensitive to others' rights. In the scope of *riḥlah*, a person's capacity growing must be in line with his/her character improving too.

For the generation Z travelers, the issue of environmental footprint is very relevant. It can be seen in different aspects in which they travel such as the use of resources, creation of waste, the treatment of local personnel, and the production of travelers' reports. Thus, in a moment of reflection, one can question not only, "How beneficial was the trip for me?" but also, "How far have my presence on the trip affected the people and the area visited?"

4. Tazkiyah and Transcendent Orientation

The fourth layer rests on *tazkiyah* and transcendent orientation. Ibn Battutah's *Rihlah* emerged from an Islamic intellectual world that did not absolutely separate knowledge, morality, and religion. The publisher's introduction states that Ibn Battutah was closely acquainted with the Sufi world and frequently recounted stories of teachers, *karāmāt*, prophets' tombs, Companions, and scholars (Bathuthah 2012, viii).²¹

This statement is not used to authenticate every miraculous account. Rather, it identifies the narrator's subjective horizon. Ibn Battutah does not function as a neutral camera. He views the world through a particular religious background, Sufi inclination, and normative framework.

The spiritual dimension is important because it distinguishes humanistic self-actualization from self-actualization within the horizon of *riḥlah*. Maslow understands self-actualization as the realization of human potential. Rogers emphasizes the *actualizing tendency* and the process of becoming a more authentic self. Both make major contributions to the understanding of personal growth, but the center of gravity in their theories remains the development of the individual subject.²²²³

Riḥlah shifts that center. The self does indeed develop, but growth does not end with the expansion of personal capacity. Knowledge must form *adab*; experience must generate *'ibrah*; and travel must awaken an awareness of human limitation and orientation toward God.

Tazkiyah is not used in this article in the narrow sense of a particular ritual. It denotes the purification of orientation: from display to meaning, from pride in experience to epistemic humility, and from the accumulation of destinations to depth of consciousness. Long-distance travel does not automatically produce *tazkiyah*. Its real transformative potential is unlocked when our experience is filtered through the intention, *adab*, reflection and self-correction.

²¹ Bathuthah, *Rihlah Ibnu Bathuthah*, viii.

²² Abraham H. Maslow, *Motivation and Personality* (New York: Harper & Row, 1954), 91–92, 150–176.

²³ Carl R. Rogers, *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961), 115–119, 183–196.

***Riḥlah* as Oriented Safar**

The section "What Is the Meaning of Riḥlah?" explains riḥlah as "the act of going from one to another for the purpose of *safar* (journey)". Although it seems straight forward, the position of the concept in the text plays a very important role in determining its meaning. It comes after the discussion on the ground, civilization, human footprints, as well as Quranic verses dealing with travel.²⁴

Hermeneutically, *riḥlah* in this edition does not stand as neutral mobility. Movement acquires meaning through orientation. Two people may follow the same route yet undergo differing journeys because their purposes, ways of seeing, quality of encounter, and reflective processes differ.

Orientation is the foundational point of Islam Travel Self-Actualization. Travel does not automatically actualize the human person. Transformation depends on why one departs, how one treats the realities encountered, what one learns, and whether the experience changes one's way of life.

The Islamic understanding of intention offers a moral guide to conduct and attitude. This research does not limit the concept of intention to a mere verbal announcement before a journey. The authors of the paper interpret intention as the fundamental motivation directing the whole action which should be regularly checked and verified as the action is being carried out and after the act has been completed. Thus a person can set out a journey with an educational purpose and then get caught in socializing; on the other hand, a person can go on a trip for leisure and come across experiences that provoke deep introspection.

Thus, we should recognize orientation dynamically. At the beginning of a journey, the character identifies his goals and acquires basic knowledge. While on the route the hero is tested through encounter, comfort, conflict, and temptation. After he has traversed the landscape of the journey he evaluates through reflection his newly formed orientation of the world, others, and himself. Such a framework of a pilgrimage makes *riḥlah* a suitable vehicle or processual model of the self-formation.

A Close Reading of *Al-Riḥlah*: From Description to Structures of Meaning

A more thorough study of *al-Riḥlah* requires differentiating the content and the textual arrangement behind the narration to a significant degree. When describing different aspects of Egypt, mentioning water carriers, boats on the Nile, and customs etc., is just geographical knowledge but the narrator goes far beyond that. From the structure of the enumeration, it is clear that he has an interest in the documentary genre. In his mind, detailed description is the only possible way to render a world accessible to the minds of readers or viewers. However, a change in the narrative technique from description to evaluation of popular entertainments shows a normative shift in the author. So the Egyptian episode contains a dual structure: the one based on the author's factual observation and the other on his moral appraisal.

²⁴ Bathuthah, *Riḥlah Ibnu Bathuthah*, xvi.

In the tale of Ibrāhīm ibn Adham and the apple, the storyline progresses through physical action, discomfort with an action that raises a moral question, and the resolution that prompts the character to get back on the right track by traveling. What is essential here is not physical mileage, but a complete realignment of one's perspective after the point has been realized that someone else's legitimate rights might have been infringed. Thus it is that the literal movement becomes the outward expression of the inner journey. What takes place in this story underlines the idea that *tazkiyah* is essentially the desire to change one's behavior if morality brings to light that one has gone astray.

By describing the Umayyad Mosque the speaker is drawing attention to the fundamental issue in epistemology of testimony. Aesthetic value of the structure, the contribution of Al-Walid ibn' Abd al-Malik, the support of Roman citizens, and the presence of twelve thousand craftsmen are all mentioned in one single narrative flow. After a certain figure is challenged in the edition's paratext, the readers are given a hint that travel accounts might contain elements of firsthand witnessing, hearsay, and exaggeration together. Therefore *Riḥlah* should be verified through *tabayyun*, i.e., investigation that would confirm its truthfulness to the extent possible.

The land of Mount Qāsyūn was reinterpreted in the framework of religious memory and thus geographical space was a product of religious memory. In this way, the community's tales transformed the meaning of the caves and the mountains. A literary reading need not be a factual one, that is to say, each and every tale does not have to be history but the reader shall recognize that humans live and inhabit space through the vehicle of meanings. This interpretation underlies or is the basis for the traveler's *adab*.

There are various sources of knowledge in Battuta's case and thus he is closely tied with scholars and also a Sufi master, indicating that even a wandering subject always carries or rather is never without a horizon. The fact that Battuta is a Maliki *faqih*, who has an interest in exemplary men and is a great admirer of Sufism, has led him to believe that what is worth recording would not only be the events themselves but the characters and their behavior, their spiritual life. Source criticism can never make *al-Riḥlah* false; instead, it shows how the narrator with his personal history (or horizon) has changed or been influenced with the introduction of the new experience.

If we really go inside of these pieces, you'll get the impression that not only do the four aspects of ITSA get to know each other but they actually are an organic part of the text. *Ṭalab al-'ilm* (*Seeking knowledge*) is basically the result of observation, the keeping of records and the resolution of the problem of authenticity (*taṣāddub*). *Adāb* is the way that this subject engages in social and religious circles. *'Ibrāh* (Lessons) is how you can interpret through phenomena to reach a lesson. Finally, *tazkiyah* (purification) is the straightening of orientation and action. The way episode, code, dimension and model relate to each other builds the textual foundation of ITSA.

THEORETICAL ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS

A Critique of Individually Centered Self-Actualization

This discovery demonstrates the relationship between *riḥlah* and personal growth. The study also finds that a person's need for personal growth and travel (i.e., the experience associated with changing places physically, emotionally, intellectually or through culture overlap in a single theme of change for the person through experience. According to Maslow, a person achieving self-actualization (one of the levels of motivation identified in his theory of the hierarchy of needs) is the person who has reached his or her maximum potential, in other words, has achieved his or her potential. On the other hand, Rogers perceives the human being as a natural organism that has a built-in drive to grow and develop. A person is a developing being and travel is but one of the avenues available for growth and development. In fact, through travel people may discover and challenge their own limits, increase their degrees of autonomy, and also enrich their lives with experiences.

This overlap, it is true, brings about great similarities so much that one might be tempted to say that the *riḥlah* and humanistic self-actualization are one and the same, but in fact, it is not the case. In fact, it is mainly the difference in philosophical anthropology and final orientation that is the reason. Whereas humanistic self-actualization tends to focus on individual development at the center, the *riḥlah*, as this author presents it, holds that the individual comes about a whole development by knowledge other human beings, history, and relationship with a divine being (God).

The self is definitely not something to end at, being locked up in oneself. Development is the result of transformations in knowledge level, *adab*, inner contemplation and spiritual direction. That is to say, Maslow and Rogers' contribution is very important and they must be regarded as dialogue partners instead of having one's religious writings judged solely by their work.

Maslow helps to understand that people want to realize their full potential. Rogers shows how human development is based on openness to experience and personal growth. The philosophy of *riḥlah* brings up yet another set of questions: Why is development of potential pursued? To whom is the self primarily responsible? And, what guiding values influence the process of growth?

The problem of "Am I becoming the best version of myself?" is deepened as one asks instead, "Does travel make me more informed, more oriented in *adab*, more contemplative, and more aware of a transcendent orientation?" This is not only expansion but also reinterpretation of the former notion in the light of the philosophical traditions which consider human being as a moral, socio-political, and religious creature.

Islamic Travel Self-Actualization as a Conceptual Model

This study presents Islamic Travel Self-Actualization (ITSA) as a conceptual model based on the four dimensions identified in the analysis. According to the study, the process of self-formation through travel encompasses the pursuit of knowledge, *adab* in encounter reflection based on *'ibrah*, and spiritual purification or the reorientation of the self in line with one's spiritual aspirations.

The work is quite clear on the fact that Ibn Battutah did not himself mention the term "Islamic self-actualization." ITSA is an analytical concept of the present, formulated from

an interplay of themes of *riḥlah* and concepts of human development. This explanation is very important to avoid using terminology in the wrong time context.

As an approach, ITSA works through five levels. First, orientation finds out how a person makes a journey. Second, concrete experience leads the person to different realities. Third, observation and encounter are guided by *adab* so that experience does not turn into visual exploitation. Fourth *'ibrah* transforms experience into comprehension and personal development. Finally, *tazkiyah* checks whether the transformation cleanses the initial motivation and builds character.

The model is cyclical. A thought on what you experienced in your previous journey gives you a more profound orientation for the next journey. Knowledge you newly acquire opens up to new ways of seeing things; practicing ' *adab* ' leads the way of contact to become more genuine; experiencing life in its full sense may help you be more spiritual.

ITSA also sets outputs and outcomes apart, a very important point. For example, travel photographs, notes, videos, and destination lists all together are travel outputs. On the other hand, an outcome of one's self-formation is when a person comes up with changes in his or her knowledge, judgemental capabilities, ethical habits, and orientation as well. When one separates outputs from outcomes, it means travel is judged or appreciated not by how much one shows off his/her experience but by the extent or quality of one's transformation.

Table 2. Stages of Islamic Travel Self-Actualization (ITSA)

ITSA Stage	Reflective Question	Risk If Neglected
Orientation	Why am I departing, and what do I intend to learn?	Travel becomes directionless consumption.
Experience	What did I actually encounter?	Reality is replaced by expectation and imagery.
Adab	How does my presence affect people and places?	Visual exploitation and stereotyping.
'Ibrah	What changed in my understanding?	Experience remains merely a memory.
Tazkiyah	What must I correct after returning?	Growth becomes an expansion of the ego.

Comparing Humanistic Self-Actualization and ITSA

Table 3. Comparison of Humanistic Self-Actualization, the Philosophy of Riḥlah, and ITSA

Aspect	Maslow/Rogers	Philosophy of Riḥlah	ITSA
Center of orientation	Individual development and authenticity	Knowledge, <i>adab</i> , <i>'ibrah</i> , and God	Relational and transcendent self-development
Motivation	Realization of potential and the <i>actualizing tendency</i>	Meaningful <i>safar</i> , knowledge, and worship	Intrinsic motivation subjected to moral examination

Aspect	Maslow/Rogers	Philosophy of Riḥlah	ITSA
Mode of learning	Experience and openness	Observation, teachers, encounter, and reflection	Experience → <i>adab</i> → <i>'ibrah</i> → <i>tazkiyah</i>
Relationship with others	An environment that supports development	The other as a subject of encounter	Cross-cultural literacy and responsibility
Measure of outcome	Autonomy, creativity, and realization of potential	Knowledge, wisdom, akhlāq, and awareness	A knowledgeable, reflective, <i>adab</i> -oriented, and spiritual person
Theoretical risk	Individualism	Romanticization of tradition	Anachronism when sources are not critically examined

It becomes evident from the analysis that ITSA is not merely a result of Western concepts being translated into Arabic language, but rather it has much more to it. What sets it apart is the orientation of the construct of self-actualization. The idea of travel as a means to gather experience has only made sense if one is to view self-actualization solely as the development of one's individual potential. On the contrary, ITSA emphasizes that personal potential is judged, essentially, by the manner in which it has been put to use.

The relational is another important distinction. Locals are not just tools for the growth of tourists. They are people, with rights, stories and ways of living. Spiritual growth through humiliation or exploitation of others is therefore in contradiction to the *adab* (good behavior) of *riḥlah* (literally a journey), which refers to the act of taking leave and making an escape from a place and people for the sake of spiritual self-transformation by means of travel, especially to distant lands or holy places.

Transcendent orientation does not mean an absence of happiness, creativity, or autonomy. Rather, these are placed in a setting where one's responsibility becomes clear and one is challenged. A traveler can enjoy beauty, make visual art, and grow independent, but the underlying journey has to leave room for morality and spirituality.

The article mainly contributes by presenting a conceptual integration of four aspects that have usually been discussed alone. Ṭalab al-'ilm is related to the direction of acquisition of knowledge; *adab* is related to interpersonal ethics; *'ibrah* is associated with the reflective process; and *tazkiyah* points the direction towards change. Altogether, this framework can provide a richer way of interpreting travel as self-formation.

From the *Tourist Gaze* to Reflective *Riḥlah*

John Urry's theory of the *tourist gaze* gives us insight into the way that tourist experiences are filtered through the lens of social structures and representations of places. The emergence of digital tools means that the tourist gaze can be shaped not only by human factors but also quite significantly by algorithmic recommendations, popular movements, and visual styles specific to platforms. The phenomenon of a person going

to the same place, making the same photo, and even repeating a story that has become a meme on the internet is a sign of this trend.

With these new circumstances, tourism becomes almost a process of reusing images. A traveler might actually think they've been to a place simply because they've got a picture that meets digital standards. The unphotogenic truths of life, social unrest, intricate backgrounds, and genuine people could become absent from the traveler's experiences altogether.

Philosophy of the *riḥlah* does not dismiss the concept of vision; it justifies the vision in a more profound way. The act of seeing is followed by one of noticing which, in its turn, generates a series of questions leading one to the concept *'ibrah*, and finally the experience of self-transformation. Therefore, the article suggests using the term *reflective riḥlah* to describe a travel practice that has a clear purpose of reflecting on the experience.

Viscerally oriented travel and reflective *riḥlah* are not necessarily distinguished by the use of a camera. One might argue, even, that reflective travelers can still capture photographs, and share experiences on social media. Nonetheless, the fundamental difference remains the nature of their attention is it merely a means to create new media content or does one really engage with the subject and understand the setting before even turning the recording device on?

Generation Z finds this framework more truthful than calls to ditch technology. They can still document experiences, look up information, and share knowledge via digital media. The main criticism is about getting too much of our worth from others. When travel becomes a competition of likes and views or status images, our ability to evaluate ourselves becomes tied to others.

ITSA brings the focus of evaluating to center on intellectual, moral and spiritual growth aspects. In contrast to asking "How many people have seen my story?" after the travel, the main question now is "What have I understood? Which prejudices did I change? What responsibilities did I recognize? And what habits do I need to correct?"

Relevance to Generation Z: A Pedagogy of Travel

The romantic idea of medieval life is not how the *riḥlah* speaks to Generation Z. Transportation, technology, economics, and geography changed dramatically between Ibn Battuta's time and today. The value in it lies more in philosophizing a process through movement that enables one's self-constructing through new encounters, acquiring knowledge, introspection, and transcendent outlook.

First, travel can be viewed as a method based on experience through which the learner acquires knowledge. Prior to traveling, one should get familiar with the history, culture and problems related to the destination of the journey. The stage of traveling before going out is the one that raises the most questions. Without questions, people are easily taken in by lists of the most popular attractions.

Second, on the trip, tourists see things and are actively discussing them. Through simple means of diary keeping, one can write down one's observations on unexpected

events, the differences between expectation and actual situation, the meanings of local terms, and the questions one has not been able to resolve yet. This sort of activity will ultimately turn traveling into a hands-on learning process, as one gets to do all the learning by one's own experience.

Third, a post-journey reflection is needed. The travelers may write a one to two pages about the new learnings, the change of prejudices, the ethical encounters and what kind of improvements they could think of. A reflection done after the journey is the link to transformation that experience offers.

Fourth, travel can be a practice of digital *adab*. Travelers request permission before capturing people in photos, do not make the local rituals an audience, are careful with publicly sharing locations, and make stories which are different from stereotypes. The basic premise is that even when a place turns into a tourist spot, the local people's rights are not taken away.

This framework guards against exaggerated claims that travel automatically heals, matures, or actualizes a person. Travel is merely a potential condition. Any change would then necessitate that one engages in a process of interpretation and a questioning of moral aspects. It is entirely possible that one may travel countless miles only to return still harboring the same biases; meanwhile, deeply reflective experiences could lead to major transformations.

An Operational Matrix of Reflective Riḥlah for Generation Z Travelers

Table 4. Operational Matrix of Reflective Riḥlah for Generation Z Travelers

Phase	Practice	Riḥlah Dimension	Reflective Indicator
Pre-travel	Study the destination's history and culture; formulate learning questions.	Ṭalab al-‘ilm	A clear knowledge-oriented purpose is established.
Pre-travel	Verify information sources and viral claims.	Ṭalab al-‘ilm	The traveler can distinguish fact, opinion, and promotion.
During travel	Observe before recording; engage in respectful dialogue.	Adab	Local communities are treated as subjects.
During travel	Request permission and respect sacred spaces.	Adab	Content does not violate privacy or sanctity.
During travel	Record surprises, value conflicts, and changes in assumptions.	‘Ibrah	Experience generates new questions.
Post-travel	Write a reflection and compare expectations with reality.	‘Ibrah	A change in understanding can be articulated.

Phase	Practice	Riḥlah Dimension	Reflective Indicator
Post-travel	Evaluate consumption, ego, and the impact of one's presence.	Tazkiyah	Behavior or orientation is corrected.
Digital sharing	Prioritize context and knowledge rather than sensation.	Adab/Tazkiyah	Content is informative, proportionate, and responsible.

The operational matrix above is a conceptual implication not a validated psychometric instrument. Therefore, more research is needed to establish good indicators, run expert judgments, check the validity of the construct, and gather empirical data among Muslim Generation Z travelers.

In spite of these limitations, the matrix offers a connection between philosophy and application. The notion of *riḥlah* does not stay just a matter for the historians but it gets translated into clear questions and actions for observing and doing. This is one of the roles of applied philosophy: to explore the fundamental principles of life in the form of clear conceptual categories. *Riḥlah* -based approach model can also be adapted outside formal education for use in travel communities, study-tour programs, and religious tourism.

At universities, instructors may want participants to think of questions before the travel takes off, record the things they noticed and learned throughout the journey, write a description of the things they saw right at the end of the journey, and also critically examine the ethics of making their travel a source of public documentation. By doing all of these, travel is no longer just a passive activity but becomes the source of reflective learning which is the combination of experience and reflection.

Theoretical Contributions, Limitations, and Research Agenda

This is an article's first theoretical contribution in that it provides a new reading of *Ar-Riḥlah* as a philosophical structure from a list of values. The paper argues that traits (such as resilience, openness, leadership, and spirituality) could be still described in a very detailed way without giving them a conceptual relationship. The proposed four dimensions, however, show how these relate: knowledge as an intellectual guide, *adab* as relational regulations (*'ibrah*) as *experience digestion* and *tazkiah* as a transformative guide.

The second main contribution is a critical assessment of the prevailing reliance on Maslow and Rogers when studying Islamic traditions. The article by no means is adverse to humanistic theory; rather it highlights its shortcomings with respect to viewing an individual's development as a terminal goal. Whereas *Riḥlah* introduces dimensions of relational, moral, and transcendent self-actualization.

The third contribution is the idea of Islamic Journey Self-Actualization. Its uniqueness goes far beyond the coining of a new term but mainly rests on the fact that it presents in a process-model manner concepts of orientation, experience *adab*, *'ibrah* and *tazkiyah* are being tied together through the model. The article, therefore, provides a conceptual basis that may guide an empirical investigation in the future.

The article contains several deficiencies. Initially, the investigation is conducted through library research without the participation of surveys, interviews, or observation of Generation Z travelers. Therefore, it cannot determine to what extent particular behaviors have become a norm for Generation Z generally. Secondly, the main source is limited to the Indonesian Version and to the selected thematic episodes. The Arabic text has still not been subjected to comprehensive philological study. The article identifies paratext and Ibn Battutah's direct speech in different ways, but in subsequent research it would be beneficial to examine the main narrative by also referring to the Arabic version and the Gibb-Beckingham translation. Fourth, the psychological construct or measurement ITSA has not been validated at this stage.

Future research may proceed in four directions: a philological-comparative study of *Ar-Riḥlah*; in-depth interviews with Muslim Generation Z travelers; development and validation of an ITSA scale; and comparative study with other works of *riḥlah*. Research may also examine the relationship between *reflective riḥlah*, subjective well-being, cultural literacy, and digital behavior.

The reading proposed here begins from a simple objection: travel is too readily called transformative merely because someone has moved from one place to another. *Ar-Riḥlah* instead shows that distance does not necessarily produce depth. More decisive are how one observes, verifies information, positions oneself before others, and carries the experience home as material for self-correction. ITSA is therefore used as an analytical language for explaining this process of self-formation, not as a term claimed to originate directly with Ibn Battutah.

CONCLUSION

The principal novelty of this study is its reconstruction of the philosophy of *riḥlah* through four dimensions—epistemic (*ṭalab al-‘ilm*), relational-axiological (*adab*), hermeneutical (*‘ibrah*), and teleological-transcendent (*tazkiyah*)—which are organized into the Islamic Travel Self-Actualization model. The model is derived from a textual reading of *Ar-Riḥlah* and used to critique conceptions of self-actualization that end with individual expansion.

The findings show that the philosophy of *riḥlah*, as read through Ibn Battutah's *Riḥlah*, may be formulated as a paradigm of self-formation integrating four dimensions: *ṭalab al-‘ilm*, *adab* in cross-cultural encounters, *‘ibrah*-reflection, and *tazkiyah* with a transcendent orientation. These dimensions demonstrate that travel within the Islamic intellectual horizon cannot be adequately understood as geographical mobility or the consumption of experience. *Riḥlah* is an epistemological, ethical, reflective, and spiritual movement.

Textual analysis of the social observations of Egypt, the story of Ibrāhīm ibn Adham, the description of the Umayyad Mosque, the traditions of Mount Qāsyūn, Ibn Battutah's closeness to the Sufi world, and the definition of *riḥlah* as *safar* shows that travel is constructed through relationships among seeing, knowing, judging, and ordering one's orientation. Source criticism nevertheless confirms that *Ar-Riḥlah* is not a transparent

record. Memory, Ibn Juzayy's editorial work, the narrator's normative horizon, and the edition's paratexts must be distinguished.

The conversation with Maslow and Rogers shows agreement in the concept of development through experience, but also exposes major dissimilarities. If humanistic self-actualization mainly focuses on achieving one's potential, the *riḥlah* emphasizes the expansion of oneself towards learning, *adab* literature, *'ibrah* wisdom, interpersonal relationship, and realization of the Divine. Grounded in such a combination, this paper introduces Islamic Travel Self-Actualization as a theoretical concept.

ITSA identifies self-development primarily as five stages or movements: getting started, gaining experience, *adab*, *'ibrah*, and *tazkiyah*. These are not said to have originated with Ibn Battutah, even though it is clear from their nature that it was him they were meant for in one form or another; rather, these terms arise from a combination of thoughts and views on travel culture and personal development theories. Its real freshness lies in bringing together cognitive, moral, spiritual, and reflective aspects as part of the one framework and model.

With regard to generation Z, it's worth mentioning that the model points out the problem of reducing travel to just looking and getting digital likes while not sweeping everything under one category of a whole generation or turning away from technology. Indeed, the media online can be handy for recording and sharing what we know but, travel should really go back to being about paying attention, talking, thinking deeply, and getting changed by it.

The philosophical question of travel therefore shifts from "Where does a person go?" to "How does that person know the world, how are the people encountered treated, what lessons are drawn, and what kind of human being returns?" It should be noted that the concept of journey (*riḥlah*) is still relevant as part of the Islamic intellectual in interpreting human mobility nowadays.

Critically, *riḥlah*, by means of reminding, shows that the real depth of traveling is not measured by how far you go only, but by how much you transform and through which ways human beings understand, meet one another, learn, and align their orientations. This approach puts Islamic intellectual heritage as a conceptual source that is both able to and willing to confront contemporary digital mobility without, however, losing its character of knowledge, ethics, and transcendence.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adawi, Gamal. "Ibn Battuta's Journey—Analytical Study: Eliciting Values and Curious Customs from Ibn Battuta's Journey." *Religions* 16, no. 12 (2025): 1566. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel16121566>.
- Al-Baghdādī, al-Khaṭīb. *Al-Riḥlah fī Ṭalab al-Ḥadīth*. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1975.
- Alruthaya, Ali, Thanh-Thuy Nguyen, and Sachithra Lokuge. "The Application of Digital Technology and the Learning Characteristics of Generation Z in Higher Education." *ACIS 2021 Proceedings* (2021): 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2111.05991>.

- Bathuthah, Muhammad bin Abdullah bin. *Rihlah Ibnu Bathuthah: Memoar Perjalanan Keliling Dunia di Abad Pertengahan*. Translated by Muhammad Muchson Anasy and Khalifurrahman Fath. Jakarta: Pustaka Al-Kautsar, 2012.
- Bhardwaj, Ash. *Why Travel? Understanding Our Need to Move and How It Shapes Our Lives*. Bristol: Bristol University Press, 2024.
- Creswell, John W., and J. David Creswell. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. 5th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2018.
- Dunn, Ross E. *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta: A Muslim Traveler of the Fourteenth Century*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986.
- Gibb, H. A. R., and C. F. Beckingham, trans. *The Travels of Ibn Battuta, A.D. 1325–1354*. Cambridge: Hakluyt Society, 1958–2000.
- Kolb, David A. *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1984.
- Krippendorff, Klaus. *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*. 4th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2018.
- Marques, Jorge, Sofia Gomes, Mónica Ferreira, Marina Rebuá, and Hugo Marques. “Generation Z and Travel Motivations: The Impact of Age, Gender, and Residence.” *Tourism and Hospitality* 6, no. 2 (2025): article 82. <https://doi.org/10.3390/tourhosp6020082>.
- Maslow, Abraham H. *Motivation and Personality*. New York: Harper & Row, 1954.
- Prensky, Marc. “Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants.” *On the Horizon* 9, no. 5 (2001): 1–6.
- Pricope Vancia, Ana-Paula, Alina-Ioana Băltescu, Delia Popescu, and Gabriela Puiu. “Examining the Disruptive Potential of Generation Z Tourists on the Travel Industry in the Digital Age.” *Sustainability* 15, no. 11 (2023): 8756. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15118756>.
- Rogers, Carl R. *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961.
- Urry, John. *The Tourist Gaze*. 2nd ed. London: Sage Publications, 2002.
- Wachyuni, Suci Sandi, Nenny Wahyuni, and Kadek Wiweka. “What Motivates Generation Z to Travel Independently? Preliminary Research of Solo Travellers.” *Journal of Tourism and Economic* 6, no. 1 (2023): 41–52. <https://doi.org/10.36594/jtec.v6i1.186>.