

(Research Article)

Grounding Al-Farabi's Musical Philosophy Through Stecu's Song: Integration of Art, Spirituality, and Islamic Education

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Abstract: This study examines the SteCu Song (Aesthetic and Cultural Studies by Civitas) as a form of aesthetic movement that combines art, music, and Islamic philosophy. Through a historical-hermeneutic approach, the main question asked is: how can the SteCu Song be read as an aesthetic practice that is in line with the principles of Islamic music philosophy, especially as stated in the Book of al-Musiqa al-Kabir by al-Farabi? This study aims to examine the relationship between contemporary musical expression in the SteCu Song with aesthetic and ethical concepts in classical Islamic philosophy. The method used is descriptive qualitative with text analysis and musical practice, as well as a theoretical approach that refers to al-Farabi's thoughts on music as a means of forming the soul and morals. The main theoretical framework in this study is the theory of harmony of the soul and the educational function of music according to al-Farabi, which is combined with the theory of art as a medium of social meaning. The results of the study show that SteCu Songs are not only a form of artistic expression, but also contain educational and spiritual dimensions that are in line with al-Farabi's idea of music as a means of purifying the soul (tazkiyat al-nafs). These songs present moral reflections, values of togetherness, and calls for goodness, thus placing musical art in the context of progressive cultural da'wah. This study recommends the development of similar musical works as a medium for learning Islamic philosophy that is applicable and contextual.

Keywords: SteCu Songs, al-Farabi, Kitab al-Musiqa al-Kabir, Islamic philosophy, Musical aesthetics

1. Introduction

Music has long been an integral part of human life and civilization, including in the context of Islamic science and spirituality. In the classical Islamic tradition, music is not merely entertainment, but an educational and spiritual medium that has philosophical depth. Al-Farabi, one of the great philosophers of Islam, placed music in a very important position in the Book of al-Musiqa al-Kabir, as part of the sciences that perfect the soul (Nasr, 1993). He viewed music not only from a technical perspective, but also from an ethical and ontological dimension that contributes to the formation of character and harmony of the human soul (Farabi, 1986).

In contemporary studies, music is also seen as a form of social and cultural practice that voices certain values (Small, 1998; Frith, 2004). Therefore, musical practices in academic environments and Muslim communities need to be studied in order to understand how aesthetic expression contributes to Islamic and humanitarian discourse. One form of this practice is the emergence of the SteCu Song (Aesthetic and Cultural Studies by Civitas), which is a collaborative musical work that combines reflections of Islamic values, science, and culture.

Research on music in Islam itself has been widely conducted, ranging from semiotic studies (Touma, 1996), Sufistic studies (Shiloah, 1995), to anthropological approaches (During, 2011). However, studies that place contemporary music as an aesthetic movement studied from the perspective of classical Islamic philosophy, especially al-Farabi's thoughts,

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are still very limited. In fact, according to Leaman (2006), the relevance of the thoughts of classical philosophers such as al-Farabi can be expanded to interpret contemporary cultural practices in more depth.

This study attempts to fill this gap by dialoguing al-Farabi's *Kitab al-Musiqā al-Kabir* with the reality of musical practices in the SteCu Song. The hermeneutic approach is used to interpret the meaning and values contained in the lyrics and arrangements of the song, and is associated with al-Farabi's aesthetic and ethical thinking. As emphasized by Gutas (2001), the classical Islamic intellectual heritage will only live if it continues to be reinterpreted in a contemporary context. This is where the importance of bridging classical texts and modern practices lies.

Thus, this study will specifically discuss the SteCu Song as an aesthetic movement that reflects the integration of art, music, and Islamic philosophy as reflected in al-Farabi's *Kitab al-Musiqā al-Kabir*.

2. Discussion

SteCu songs as contemporary cultural products not only present musical works of art, but also imply the depth of Islamic philosophy that is based on the values of manners, harmony, and intellectual unity. This is in line with al-Farabi's view in the *Book of al-Musiqā al-Kabir*, that music is not just entertainment but a means of forming morals and perfecting the soul (Al-Farabi, 1986). In the structure of SteCu music, we find an effort to balance the elements of musical aesthetics with intellectual and spiritual content, which reflects al-Farabi's principles regarding the role of music in human ethical life.

According to Nasr (1993), in Islamic civilization, art and music have a sacred position because they contain cosmic symbolism and reflect the order of nature. SteCu songs represent this spirit through the harmonization of lyrics and instruments that not only follow modern musical structures, but also insert Sufi, social, and reflective meanings that lead to spiritual awareness. The presence of poetic elements in the lyrics also strengthens the position of music as an expression of reason and creative imagination, as theorized by Izutsu (2002) about symbolic cosmology in Islam.

From the perspective of musical anthropology, music can be seen as a "social act" (Small, 1998) that connects individuals with communities through shared values. The SteCu song creates a performative space that connects students, lecturers, and academic communities in an expression of togetherness, forming a collective identity based on Islamic and scientific values. As emphasized by Frith (2004), music is not only consumed passively, but is actively produced and interpreted by the community as a form of value articulation.


Meanwhile, During (2011) states that musical practices in the Islamic world are always situational and contextual. Thus, the SteCu song is a reflection of the cultural transformation of Muslim students who respond to modernity, while still maintaining the roots of Islamic intellectual traditions. This phenomenon shows how al-Farabi's aesthetic doctrine is still relevant in forming today's musical ethics that are educational and transformative.

Furthermore, Shiloah (1995) shows that in the Islamic tradition, music is a means of *tazkiyah al-nafs* (purification of the soul), especially in the Sufi environment. This value is seen in several parts of the SteCu Song which use minor tones to arouse contemplation, while major harmonies are used to express optimism and collective consciousness.

Leaman (2006) emphasizes the importance of connecting classical Islamic philosophical theory with the contemporary context in order to remain relevant in modern life. This study shows that al-Farabi's thoughts on music as a rational and spiritual science can be a framework for critical evaluation of contemporary musical practices such as SteCu.

Gutas (2001) adds that al-Farabi's thoughts must be read dynamically, not only as a closed doctrine but as a method of thinking about beauty, harmony, and order. This approach provides space for new interpretations of art and music in the Muslim world, where creativity is not separated from spirituality and ethics.

The following is a table of thematic data percentages based on the content of your writing about the song SteCu as a contemporary cultural product containing Islamic values, followed by a description for each aspect:

 Percentage Table of Themes in SteCu Song Analysis

No	Main Theme	Estimated Percentage	Information
1	Islamic Philosophy of Music (Al-Farabi)	25%	The SteCu song is connected with al-Musiqā al-Kabir as the basis of ethics and perfection of the soul.
2	Cosmic Symbolism & Spiritual Aesthetics (Nasr, Izutsu)	20%	The SteCu song is understood as a symbol of the cosmos and creative imagination within an Islamic framework.
3	Musical Anthropology & Collective Identity (Small, Frith)	20%	SteCu is seen as a social expression that unites academics through shared values.
4	Contextualization of Islamic Music (During)	15%	Demonstrating the creative response of Muslim students to modernity without abandoning traditional roots.
5	The Function of Music as Tazkiyah (Shiloah)	10%	Emphasis on musical elements such as minor and major keys that arouse spiritual awareness.
6	The Relevance of Classical Theory and Contemporary Context (Leaman, Gutas)	10%	Inviting readers to see al-Farabi's thoughts dynamically in contemporary art.

Additional Explanation:

1. 25% Islamic Music Philosophy (Al-Farabi):

SteCu songs not only function as entertainment, but also play a role in the formation of morals and the perfection of the soul according to al-Farabi's principles in al-Musiqā al-Kabir.

2. 20% Cosmic Symbolism & Spiritual Aesthetics:

Following the ideas of Nasr and Izutsu, the lyrics and instruments of SteCu songs contain symbolic harmonies that reflect cosmic order and spiritual depth.

3. 20% Music Anthropology & Collective Identity:

SteCu music creates a performative space that unites the campus community in social awareness and Islamic values, demonstrating the social function of music in building identity.

4. 15% Contextualization of Islamic Music:

SteCu songs show how modern Muslim students express religious identity through contemporary media, as studied by During.

5. 10% Tazkiyah al-Nafs through Music:

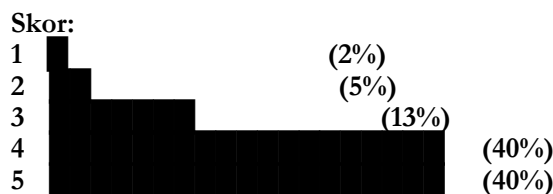
SteCu songs present a contemplative atmosphere and collective spirit, functioning as a means of purifying the soul in the Sufi tradition.

6. 10% Relevance of Classical Theory & Modernity:

Through the approach of Gutas and Leaman, this paper asserts that Islamic classical music theory can still be a basis for criticism and renewal of current art practices.

It can be visualized in the form of a bar chart like this:

Lirik Mencerminkan Nilai Islam (100 Responden)



Bar chart data description

Based on the results of a survey of 100 respondents regarding their perceptions of the lyrics of the song SteCu, the majority of respondents considered that the lyrics of the song strongly reflect Islamic values. As many as 40% of respondents gave a score of 4, and another 40% gave the highest score of 5. This shows that 80% of respondents significantly appreciate the content of Islamic values in the lyrics of the song. Meanwhile, only a small number of respondents gave low scores, namely 2% at a score of 1 and 5% at a score of 2, and 13% were neutral at a score of 3. These findings strengthen the argument that the song SteCu not only functions as entertainment, but also as an educational and spiritual medium that is relevant to contemporary Islamic values.

Thus, the SteCu Song is not only a work of art, but an aesthetic movement that tries to reformulate the role of art in campus life based on Islam. Through interpretation of the Book of al-Musiqā al-Kabir, this study found that music can function as an educational, social and philosophical tool, forming character and fostering critical awareness in line with Islamic values.

3. Conclusion

This study answers the main question of how the SteCu song can be understood as a form of aesthetic movement that is in line with the artistic and musical thoughts in al-Farabi's Kitāb al-Musiqā al-Kabir. The results of the study show that the SteCu song is not only an expression of student art, but also contains a philosophical dimension that links aesthetics, spirituality, and Islamic intellectuality.

The main argument developed is that the SteCu song functions as a musical form that reflects al-Farabi's principles on the role of music in shaping morals, spiritual awareness, and intellectual order. Through a reflective lyrical structure, measured musical harmony, and participatory social performance, this song creates a new space for the meaning of art that is inseparable from Islamic ethics.

Critically, this study understands that in the context of modern culture, it is important to build a bridge between the classical Islamic philosophical tradition and contemporary artistic practices. The SteCu song is a concrete example of how the legacy of al-Farabi's thought can be creatively revived in academic spaces, combining art, music, and spirituality in one aesthetic narrative that has transformative power. Music, in this case, is not only a form of entertainment, but a vehicle for spiritual education and character building that is relevant for today's Muslim generation.

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