NURTURING PIETY: THE INTERPLAY OF NEW MEDIA, YOUTH MUSLIM AND COMMODIFICATION (HANAN ATTAKI'S SHARING TIME STUDY CASE)

Asya Dwina Luthfia*[1], Yusuf Rohmat Yanuri[2]

[1]*University of Edinburgh,* United Kingdom, *E-mail : a.d.luthfia@sms.ed.ac.uk*
[2]*University of Edinburgh,* United Kingdom, *E-mail y.r.yanuri@sms.ed.ac.uk*
**Corresponding Authors*

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Abstract

This study investigates the ways in which the contemporary viral public sermons, Hanan Attaki's Sharing Time, represented in the contemporary viral public sermons, intertwine the roles of social media, the youth movement, and piety included within the religious commodification. The author also examines how, in this disruptive age, the piety of young people could be addressed with the given religious teachings or da'wah he offers. This research also explores the complex relationship between young Muslim ide in Indonesia, and social media. It can be examined as to how social media platforms and digital technology influence the phenomena of viral public sermons. It observes the shift in Islamic traditions, the emergence of skepticism, and the dynamics of Islam and the modern world especially in the technological world. Religious populism, together with the new authority that has emerged due to the changes in religious expression and participation due to social media have altered the dynamics of religious discourses. This paper pays further attention to the urbanization process, the 'Pop Islam' phenomena, and the hijrah movement as a critical development in the emerging forms of Muslim religiosity in contemporary Indonesia. Discussing the relation of identity and piety together, it focuses on the commercialization of religion and the entwinement of tradition and modernity in Islamic popular culture. This essay highlights the fluidity of cultural change in Indonesian Muslims' youth identity through the Hijrah movement that metaphorically represents change in identity, and furthermore underscores the daily struggle between tradition and modernity within the Indonesian Muslim community.

Keywords: Commodification, Hanan Attaki Sharing Time, New Media, Piety, Youth Muslim.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini menyelidiki bagaimana khotbah-khotbah kontemporer yang viral, Sharing Time karya Hanan Attaki, merepresentasikan peran media sosial, gerakan anak muda, dan kesalehan yang termasuk dalam komodifikasi agama. Penulis juga meneliti bagaimana, di zaman yang penuh dengan disrupsi ini, kesalehan anak muda dapat diatasi dengan ajaran agama yang diberikan atau dakwah yang ia tawarkan. Penelitian ini juga mengeksplorasi hubungan yang kompleks antara ideologi anak muda Muslim di Indonesia dan media sosial. Penelitian ini melihat bagaimana platform media sosial dan teknologi digital mempengaruhi fenomena khotbah yang viral. Penelitian ini mengamati pergeseran tradisi Islam, munculnya skeptisisme, dan dinamika Islam dan dunia modern terutama di dunia teknologi. Populisme agama, bersama dengan otoritas baru yang muncul karena perubahan ekspresi dan partisipasi keagamaan akibat media sosial telah mengubah dinamika wacana keagamaan. Tulisan ini memberikan perhatian lebih jauh pada proses urbanisasi, fenomena 'Islam Pop', dan gerakan hijrah sebagai perkembangan kritis dalam bentuk-bentuk religiusitas Muslim yang sedang berkembang di Indonesia kontemporer. Membahas hubungan antara identitas dan kesalehan secara bersamaan, tulisan ini berfokus pada komersialisasi agama dan perpaduan antara tradisi dan modernitas dalam budaya populer Islam. Esai ini menyoroti fluiditas perubahan budaya dalam identitas kaum muda Muslim Indonesia melalui gerakan Hijrah yang secara metaforis merepresentasikan perubahan identitas, dan selanjutnya menggarisbawahi pergulatan sehari-hari antara tradisi dan modernitas di dalam komunitas Muslim Indonesia.

Kata Kunci : *Komodifikasi, Hanan Attaki Berbagi Waktu, Media Baru, Kesalehan, Pemuda Muslim*

Background

The impact of modern digital culture on religious practices is undeniable, as highlighted by Zaid and colleagues, who emphasize the profound alterations in the way religion is conveyed,

consumed, shared, and engaged within contemporary society[1]. This influence extends beyond mere consumption, affecting various aspects of on Muslims' religious practises such as preaching, issuing fatwas (religious rulings), and creating online communities[2]. According to Sorgenfrei, furthers this perspective, asserting that Islam, as a dynamic social and cultural construct, continuously adapts to the evolving landscape of digital culture, encompassing both traditional settings like mosques and modern platforms like mobile devices. He comes to the conclusion that even Salafism, a fundamentalist interpretation of Islam, is willing to embrace and adjust to new developments in technology and social media[3].

In this context, the emergence of social media becomes a powerful tool for the dissemination of religious beliefs and teachings. As noted by Trysnes and Synnes (2022), social media provides a space for debates, the sharing of opinions, and private conversations among like-minded individuals [4]. Importantly, this platform allows Muslims from diverse backgrounds to express their views openly, free from the constraints of editorial interference or censorship[5]. The preacher's effectiveness in this digital age is no longer solely contingent on religious knowledge; media and communication skills, along with a captivating presence, play crucial roles in navigating the expanding Islamic preaching industry in Indonesia[6]. Interestingly, the prevalence of media-savvy and visually appealing preachers, often lacking extensive traditional religious education, underscores the evolving dynamics where appearance and presentation become integral components of religious influence in the digital sphere[7].

The field of digital religion studies investigates the relationship between newly developed digital technology, actualized and tangible religious practices in modern society, and the influence of network social structures on conceptions of spirituality and religiosity. In particular, it looks into how religious groups and practitioners have tried to incorporate their use of technology into various facets of digital culture, resulting in the bridging, blending, and blurring of online and offline religious places and rituals [8].

The attention of millennial generation has been drawn to the development of internet-based information and communication technologies that offer simple access to knowledge, particularly about Islam[9]. Muslim youth are using the internet more frequently to learn about Islam as a result of the move from print to online media[10]. In the end, young Muslims' identities are being shaped and constructed in part by how simple it is to use the internet. People's lives are greatly impacted by internet accessibility, especially those of millennial young. Young people are members of social groupings that are still processing their identity and frequently experience an identity crisis[11].

In addition to being an invaluable source of knowledge, the internet may have a detrimental

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[1] B Zaid and others, 'Digital Islam and Muslim Millennials: How Social Media Influencers Reimagine Religious Authority and Islamic Practices', *Religions*, 13.4 (2022), 335 <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13040335>.

[2] M Ibahrine, 'Islam and Social Media BT - Encyclopedia of Social Media and Politics' (SAGE Publications, Inc., 2014) <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452244723.n299>.

[3] Simon Sorgenfrei, 'Branding Salafism: Salafi Missionaries as Social Media Influencers', *Method \& Theory in the Study of Religion*, 34.3 (2021), 211–37 <https://doi.org/10.1163/15700682-12341515>.

[4] I Trysnes and R M Synnes, 'The Role of Religion in Young Muslims' and Christians' Self-Presentation on Social Media', *YOUNG*, 30.3 (2022), 281–96 <https://doi.org/10.1177/11033088211063368>.

[5] H W Weng, 'THE ART OF DAKWAH: Social Media, Visual Persuasion and the Islamist Propagation of Felix Siauw', *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 46.134 (2018), 61–79 <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639811.2018.1416757>.

[6] Weng.

[7] Weng.

[8] H A Campbell and G Evolvi, 'Contextualizing Current Digital Religion Research on Emerging Technologies', *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies*, 2.1 (2020), 5–17 <https://doi.org/10.1002/hbe2.149>.

[9] S Abdullah, *Internet and Religiousness: The Examination of Indonesian Muslim*, 2022.

[10] *Literatur Keislaman Generasi Milenial: Transmisi, Apropriasi, Dan Kontestasi*, ed. by N Hasan, Cetakan I (Pascasarjana UIN Sunan Kalijaga Press, 2018).

[11] N Hasan, 'Violent Activism, Islamist Ideology, and the Conquest of Public Space among Youth in Indonesia', in *Youth Identities and Social Transformations in Modern Indonesia* (Brill, 2016), pp. 200–213 <https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004307445_011>.

impact on the attitudes, conduct, and religious thinking of youth. The intellectual expression of people's perspectives and responses to different concrete and abstract facets of life and issues they encounter on a daily basis is known as religious thinking[12]. Religious thinking is a psycho-social phenomenon that is intricate and dynamic, transforming from childhood into adolescence, adulthood, and old age. Adolescence is when it first manifests, causing unstable mental states as well as the growth of critical, rational, and abstract thought processes. In reaction to changes and dynamics in society, religious thinking has also changed. Particularly in the age of information globalization and the internet, religious knowledge must endure in the process of transmission and renewal[13]. Because of the ease of access to the Internet, which provides a vast array of information and exposures, it is claimed that millennial youngsters hold distinctive and unique religious ideas[14].

This study examines how the popular sermons of Hanan Attaki have influenced young Indonesian Muslims' devotion in light of the growing *hijrah* movement trend on social media. Using a qualitative research methodology, guided by John Creswell's approach, this study aims to address identified issues and achieve a detailed understanding of a central phenomenon by conducting the literature review that justify the problem and collecting data through an in-depth exploration of the perspectives of a selected group of participants [15]. In this vein, primary sources used include literature, consisting of books and articles that specifically focus on the intersection of youth, social media and religious piety. Additionally, this study utilized an explanatory analysis method to interpret the primary data collected. Then, interviews were conducted with five Muslim women aged 22-24 who attended the event, with one participant attending the event in Jakarta on January 20, 2024, themed "*Gwenchanayo*", and four others attending the event on December 24, 2023, themed "*Rabbi,* Don't Let Me Down".

These five young Muslim women represent the purposeful sampling in qualitative methodology, who are selected to understand the phenomenon and develop detailed understanding[16]. To gather their insights, two interviews were conducted online through Gmeet application, while the remaining three interviews were carried out through text and oral communication via WhatsApp application.

Social Media: New Media and Authority

To begin with, Lawrence provides a comprehensive classification of Islamic authority, delineating three key categories: scriptural, referring to the Quran as the primary religious text; charismatic, tied to the Prophet Muhammad's persona as a role model derived from hadith or sunnah; and juridical, rooted in the law as the foundation for religious rituals [17]. However, it is essential to recognize that religious authority is not solely confined to these categories; it can manifest as both institutional and individual, resembling a form of *kultus* (the cult of the individual) [18]. Obviously, in recent time, these diverse forms of authority frequently coexist on social media and various online platforms. The coexistence of these authorities on digital platforms raises questions about the traditional structures of Islamic education and religious discourse. Online conversations with ulama through religious counseling services exemplify the intersection

[12] R Goldman, *Religious Thinking from Childhood to Adolescence* (Humanities Press, 1965).

[13] Abdullah.

[14] Abdullah.

[15] J W Creswell, *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research*, 4th edn (Pearson, 2012).

[16] Creswell.

[17] B B Lawrence, '11. Allah On-Line: The Practice of Global Islam in the Information Age BT - Columbia University Press', 2002, pp. 237–53 <https://doi.org/10.7312/hoov12088-012>.

[18] D Solahudin, *The Workshop for Morality: The Islamic Creativity of Pesantren Daarut Tauhid in Bandung, Java*, 1st edn (ANU Press, 2008) <https://doi.org/10.22459/WM.08.2008>.

between established authorities and emerging ones, potentially indicating a conflict between the two [19].

Traditionally, Islamic religious concepts and meanings have been disseminated by recognized authorities in formalized settings and ritualized ways. The privilege of teaching religious subjects has historically been reserved for a select few ulama, or "scholars of religion," who underwent rigorous education in traditional Islamic schools [20]. However, the digital age has ushered in a transformative shift where individuals, regardless of their background or knowledge, can freely engage in religious discourse online. Hence, religious authority is no longer a given but rather a subject of contention [21].

Undoubtedly, the emergence of social media has ushered in a new wave of influencers, redefining the dynamics of authority and religious discourse. This shift is notably highlighted by the advent of social media influencers, a term coined to describe individuals or groups gaining prominence and authority through digital platforms. [22] The transformative nature of digital platforms provides people and groups with the unprecedented ability to challenge established ideas about religion and authority. Rozehnal investigates diverse religious manifestations within the realm of cyber-Muslims, revealing a spectrum of perspectives among emerging communities. These communities, ranging from religious clergy and sufis to feminists, fashionistas, artists, and activists, exemplify the multifaceted nature of religious expression in the digital age[23].

In the virtual space of the internet, individual freedom, inclusivity, equality, and complex relationships thrive, enabling the establishment of structure and authority by individuals or specific groups. Since individuals start appearing on unauthorized websites and social media, providing alternative sources for certain religious leaders or organizations, this virtual world calls into question conventional ideas of legitimacy and authority in the spread of religious knowledge. The adaptability of religion in cyberspace has been linked to "populism," which is characterized by the dispersal of religious leaders and the transformation of traditional religious information sources[24]. Thus, the digital landscape not only facilitates the renegotiation of religious ideas and authority but also gives rise to a dynamic and dispersed religious leadership within the virtual sphere.

In this vein, scholars seek to comprehend the impact of digital media on religion in the context of digital culture. Social media, one of the instances, has become a catalyst for the emergence of religious populism, marked by diverse and popular patterns of Islamic learning[25]. This approach encompasses three broad study areas: religious identity, community, and authority, which collectively characterize the ways in which religion is encountered and understood in digitally mediated [26]. Referred to as digital religion, this field explores the relationship and interaction between online and offline religious contexts, investigating how these contexts merge, blur, and bridge over time [27].

In the theoretical landscape of digital religion studies, scholars employ various methods, among which mediation and mediatization are prominent[28]. The evolution of research in this field indicates that religion is not confined to the internet merely as material; rather, it has given rise to dynamic and ever-changing religious patterns in cyberspace. Online communication platforms

[19] D Solahudin and M Fakhruroji, 'Internet and Islamic Learning Practices in Indonesia: Social Media, Religious Populism, and Religious Authority', *Religions*, 11.1 (2019), 19 <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel11010019>.

[20] Ibahrine.

[21] Ibahrine.

[22] Zaid and others.

[23] R Rozehnal, *Cyber Muslims: Mapping Islamic Digital Media in the Internet Age* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2022).

[24] Solahudin and Fakhruroji.

[25] Solahudin and Fakhruroji.

[26] Campbell and Evolvi.

[27] H A Campbell, 'Religion and the Internet: A Microcosm for Studying Internet Trends and Implications', *New Media & Society*, 15.5 (2013), 680–94 <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444812462848>.

[28] C Hirschkind, 'Media, Mediation, Religion', *Social Anthropology*, 19.1 (2011), 90–97 <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-8676.2010.00140_1.x>.

provide a unique space for religious practices to evolve, emphasizing the fluid and effervescent nature of religiosity in the digital age. In keeping with Zygmunt Bauman's (2000) research, Possamai and Turner create a new term to characterise this effervescent and fluid religiosity as "liquid religion" [29].

This concept encapsulates the dynamic nature of religious practices in the digital realm, highlighting the continuous evolution and adaptation of religion in response to online communication platforms and the ever-changing digital cultural landscape.

Islamic Resurgence: Urbanites and Pop Islam within Youth Muslim

Since the Soeharto dictatorship fell in the 1998s, these phenomena have been expanding quickly in the Indonesian environment. Fealy saw these issues as having an impact on how Indonesian politics and religion are developing. He also talked about how Indonesian Muslims practiced their faith through things like dressing in Islamic clothing, purchasing halal goods, putting money in a sharia bank, watching well-known preachers, going on pilgrimages, eating Islamic herbal tea, dating in sharia cafes and hotels, and above all sharing these practices on social media[30]. This young Indonesian age is one in which religious displays and actions are increasingly becoming matters of public concern.

Concurrently, the rise of urbanization within the Muslim community coincides with the emergence of new media channels, marking a period of rapid social transformation across various fields. This transformative phase, driven by urbanization, modernization, and industrialization, has engendered feelings of alienation and disillusionment within certain segments of society. Particularly, young people, the petty bourgeoisie, and other middle-class individuals, who are fed up with social mobility and ready to rebel against the modernity. As a result, a large number of young Islamic activists arise. Uniquely, they come from middle-class, recently urbanised homes, and many have not had any official religious education[31].

Amidst these dynamics, Ernest Gellner's social models of Islam provide insights into the evolving landscape. Gellner proposes two distinct models: High Islam, prevalent among Muslims in cities, and Low Islam, predominant among those in rural areas. While the latter is extremely euphoric and meets the demands of the rural populace, the former is based on Islamic teachings and favours a strict life, fitting the metropolitan character. High Islam gained prominence and Low Islam waned as urbanisation increased. This shift is attributed to the adaptability of High Islam, which effectively taps into the aspirations of the urban strata, emphasizing knowledge acquisition and facilitating greater mobility[32]. The interplay between urbanization and these social models underscores the multifaceted nature of Islam's adaptation to changing societal structures.

Simultaneously, the emergence of 'Pop Islam,' characterized by the fusion of Muslim faith and popular culture, introduces two notable features: religious commercialization and community piety. According to James Bourk Hoesterey, the consumption and public display of Islamic commodities become significant expressions of piety and a quest for meaning, particularly among the dynamic urban middle classes worldwide [33]. This phenomenon highlights the evolving religious landscape, where the traditional distinctions between High and Low Islam intersect with the contemporary manifestation of 'Pop Islam.'

[29] A Possamai and B S Turner, 'Authority and Liquid Religion in Cyber-space: The New Territories of Religious Communication', *International Social Science Journal*, 63.209–210 (2012), 197–206 <https://doi.org/10.1111/issj.12021>.

[30] G Fealy, 'Consuming Islam: Commodified Religion and Aspirational Pietism in Contemporary Indonesia', in *ISEAS Publishing*, 2008, pp. 15–39 <https://doi.org/10.1355/9789812308528-006>.

[31] Y Pribadi, 'The Commodification of Islam in the Market Economy: Urban Muslim Studies in Banten', *Afkaruna*, 15.1 (2019) <https://doi.org/10.18196/AIIJIS.2019.0096.82-112>.

[32] Pribadi.

[33] Pribadi.

In Indonesia, the impact of media industrialization on mediated religious expression is noteworthy. The narrative of applying Islamic principles to address social issues among middle-class Muslims reflects the convergence of commerce and Islamic expression [34]. This implies that Islamic popular culture is part of the post-Islamism process, indicating the emergence of a new wave of middle-class Muslims amidst modernization. Consequently, Muslim urbanites now prominently represent the evolving expression of Islamic religiosity in Indonesia[35]. The interconnectedness of these developments illustrates a complex interplay between religious, cultural, and economic forces shaping the contemporary Islamic landscape in Indonesia.

Lifestyle: Between Identity and Piety

New lifestyles and the spread of religious symbols have been hallmarks of the emergence of Islamic identity in Indonesian public spaces. Many expressions of Islam are currently increasingly prevalent in the media and public domains[36]. This transformation is intertwined with Saba Mahmood's concept of piety, as 'being close to God', namely a manner of being and acting that suffused all of one's acts, both religious and worldly in character[37]. The manifestations of piety in daily acts are intricately linked to the practice of Ṣalāt that should be functioned as a site of self-formation rather than just as a ritual obligation.

However, in the age of globalization, the influence of social media in modern life has led to the inevitable commodification of religion. Piety and other religious symbols that had historically been associated with the private sphere a man's hidden connection with God have shifted to the public sphere, where they may be associated with a wide range of interests [38]. This shift marks a wave of Islamic revival in Indonesia, evident in the emphasis of religious symbols, the growth of Islamic institutions, and the adoption of new lifestyles [39]. For instance, the changing perception of the hijab, which was once thought to be an outdated and confined to lower-class Muslims but now embraced by the middle-class and modern individuals.

Additionally, religious symbols that were formerly exclusive to houses of worship, like mosques, are becoming more prevalent in public areas. Illustrating that Islam has therefore influenced Indonesian popular culture today[40]. Despite this evolution, the development of Islamic consciousness in Indonesia does not necessarily eliminate the class or level of society. High-level societal trends, such as pilgrimage to Mecca, the construction of fancy mosques, increased Muslim attire, attending religious sermons on TV, and stays in luxury hotels, underscoring the multifaceted nature of Islamic consciousness[41].

Thus, it is feasible to classify the rise of middle-class Muslims, the flourishing of Islamic popular culture, and the adoption of several modern symbols as symbolic piety[42]. In other words, we could call it as Islamic popular piety culture, that also characterised by consumerism and the commodification of Islam[43]. The choice of clothing serves a dual purpose, meeting both ethical and symbolic needs, with attire nuances dictated by specific contexts. Take, for example, the act of attending religious sermons at luxurious venues it transcends mere religious obligation, extending into the realm of aesthetics. Attendees are not just expected to fulfill religious duties but also to present themselves with elegance and

[34] Pribadi.

[35] M Wildan and W Witriani, 'Popular Piety in Indonesia: "Aestheticization" and Reproduction of Islam', *Ilahiyat Studies*, 12.2 (2021), 213–36 <https://doi.org/10.12730/13091719.2021.122.227>.

[36] Wildan and Witriani.

[37] S Mahmood, *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*, Paperback reissue (Princeton University Press, 2012).

[38] Wildan and Witriani.

[39] N Hasan, 'The Making of Public Islam: Piety, Agency, and Commodification on the Landscape of the Indonesian Public Sphere', *Contemporary Islam*, 3.3 (2009), 229–50 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11562-009-0096-9>.

[40] Wildan and Witriani.

[41] Wildan and Witriani.

[42] Wildan and Witriani.

[43] Wildan and Witriani.

appropriateness[44]. This intricate interplay between traditional and contemporary practices reflects the dynamic nature of Islamic identity in the Indonesian context.

Furthermore, this form of lifestyle – led by consumerism and commodification – could be analyse with one of critical concept so-called "aestheticization". George Simmel – in this context – has previously pointed out how reality is becoming more and more "aestheticized," and how style is being increasingly significant. Moreover, he stated that in modern times, the essence of life is no longer meaningful outside of a piece of art, and that the image of life itself is what matters most[45].

Building on this, Giordan and Swatos contend that aestheticization goes beyond preserving form and style; it generates new experiences and religious emotions[46]. This process is evident among individuals adopting new lifestyles while striving to maintain their original beliefs. Some seek recognition and validation from their faiths for their distinctive lifestyles, navigating a negotiation between religion and modern ways[47].

In this context, Muslim youth turn to social media, where popular preachers legitimize piety and showcase how to express oneself as a Muslim through fashion and thought. The emergence of these identity possibilities challenges conventional notions of lifestyle, introducing two distinct types: one rooted in practical imitation and participation, and the other encompassing values and beliefs on a cognitive-value dimension (cognitive-value dimension) [48]. It can be said that, this phenomenon is not merely an ideological belief for young Muslims but is seamlessly integrated into their daily lives.

Hijrah Movement (Hanan Attaki): Sacred Canopy, Secularization, Commodification?

Hijrah digitally constructs the narrative of having a trendy, stylish, and pious appearance. Hijrah activities, which draw inspiration from Birgit Meyer and Bayat's work on visualization and post-Islamism[49], are effective in involving young people through youth-focused events including book reviews, festivals, gatherings, sharing sessions, and preaching. Numerous celebrities have also adopted the hijrah lifestyle trend and significantly altered their appearance. Examples include growing a long beard for males and dressing in a long syar'i attire. They have also started attending religious sermons and seeming more devout than before. It's interesting to note that rural areas are now experiencing an increase in this type of urban Islamic representation thanks to communication technologies. To highlight the exchange interaction through technology that also mediated the massive exchange of political and cultural discourses, Appadurai dubbed this "technoscapes"[50].

This mixture of spirituality and modernity need not inherently result in the secularization of Islam, as religions have demonstrated resilience in various parts of the contemporary world [51]. Berger goes further to assert that modernity does not inevitably usher in the decline of religion[52]. This perspective is particularly pertinent to the emerging identity of moderate Muslims, who not only express their religiosity on a personal level but also

[44] Wildan and Witriani.

[45] G Simmel, 'The Problem of Style', *Theory, Culture & Society*, 8.3 (1991), 63–71 <https://doi.org/10.1177/026327691008003004>.

[46] G Giordan and W H Swatos, *Religion, Spirituality and Everyday Practice* (Springer Netherlands, 2012) <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-1819-7>.

[47] Giordan and Swatos.

[48] Giordan and Swatos.

[49] A Ja'far, 'Digital Piety and the Transformation of Political Activism of Youth Hijrah Movement', *Al-Tahrir: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam*, 20.2 (2020), 329–50 <https://doi.org/10.21154/altahrir.v20i2.2172>.

[50] A Appadurai, 'Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy', *Theory, Culture & Society*, 1990 <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/026327690007002017>.

[51] M Masud, A Salvatore, and M Van Bruinessen, *Islam and Modernity: Key Issues and Debates* (Edinburgh University Press, 2009) <https://doi.org/10.1515/9780748637942>.

[52] P L Berger, 'Further Thoughts on Religion and Modernity', *Society*, 49.4 (2012), 313–16 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12115-012-9551-y>.

in the public domain. In this context, religious symbols in public spaces signify not only elements of Islamic popular culture and Muslim consumerism but also manifestations of popular piety. Observable instances of popular piety include the increasing adoption of the hijab among the middle class, engagement in ʿumrah pilgrimage alongside celebrities, and participation in religious sermons featured on television programs[53].

These phenomena share common threads such as the ascent of the middle-class Muslim demographic, the growth of Muslim consumerism, and the commodification of Islam, all contributing to the observable facets of public Islam. In this environment, popular piety becomes increasingly conspicuous within society. It is characterized by various Islamic practices predominantly shaped by circumstances rather than purely by belief[54]. As a result, Islamic popular piety emerges as diverse expressions of religious practice rooted more in situational contexts than doctrinal convictions.

Thus, the religious commodification is more than commercialization, involving both the ideologization of commodities and the commodification of religion. In the case of Islam, this process not only markets tangible products but also promotes ideological principles, which contribute to a framework of moral order in society. Furthermore, the commodification of religion, particularly in Islam, has changed the nature of da'wah, making it more impressive, modern, progressive and inclusive. This intertwining of religious ideology with consumerism attracts a wider audience, shaping the perception of Islamic values in contemporary discourse. The increasing involvement of the urban upper-middle class in da'wah activities has expanded to include a large portion of Indonesia's diverse Muslim community. This shift in interest has created market opportunities for commercial products related to these activities.

Social media serves as a mediator between the interests of producers and consumers since commodification and consumption are inextricably intertwined. Paid sermons are an important media in this setting. Preachers utilize social media to make da'wah a highly sought-after product because they understand how widely people use it to learn about religion. Using Ustadz Hanan Attaki as a case study, he not only produces paid podcasts on his YouTube channel (such as "Failure to Move On") but also works with @ayah_amanah, an event organizer with 962k Instagram followers (real time when this article is written). In collaboration, they construct contemporary and captivating offline sermons, called "Sharing Time," that aim to captivate the mostly youthful.

This popular public sermon is initially and identically come from Youth Hijrah Movement that Hanan Attaki builds in Bandung, so-called 'Pemuda Hijrah'. Basically, the intertwining of symbolic religion and modernization has given rise to the "hijrah" movement, as discussed by Wildan and Witriani. The word "hijrah" refers to a journey that a person takes in an effort to become a more pious Muslim [55].

This movement, inspired by Prophet Muhammad's journey from Mecca to Medina, aims to redefine Islam among Muslim youth today. Through the adoption of Islamic customs, religious practices, and Arabic ways of life in dress and speech patterns, the movement signifies a profound transformation in their identity. To illustrate, the participants in the hijrah movement exhibit changes in attire, embracing Arabic fashion with kaftans, broad ḥijāb, burqah or niqāb for women, and traditional Muslim attire (baju koko) for men, including above-the-knee pants (cingkrang). Concurrently, alterations in speech patterns are observed, with the integration of Arabic words becoming increasingly common in daily interactions over the last decade. Expressions like ukhtī, akhī, ʿafwan, fī amān Allāh, shafāka'llāh, jazākum Allāh khayran, and shukran are now part of their linguistic repertoire[56]. These changes extend beyond external appearances and linguistic choices, impacting their behavior, self-perception, and future expectations.

Rather this is black or white, the emergence of Islamic popular culture as well the new movements

[53] Wildan and Witriani.

[54] Wildan and Witriani.

[55] Y Sunesti and N Hasan, 'Young Salafi-Niqabi and Hijrah: Agency and Identity Negotiation', *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies*, 8.2 (2018).

[56] Wildan and Witriani.

and identities, cannot be seen as transient, secular, or even non-Islamic. Talal Asad claims that Islam does not fit into a "fixed stage of an Islamic theatre," portraying Islam as a drama of religiosity [57]. In this context, Islam's ability to change is underscored, aligning with global growth and societal shifts. Weintraub's viewpoint complements Asad's, emphasizing that Muslim popular culture is a nuanced amalgamation of global consciousness often localized; influenced by Islamic orthodoxy and resurgences from the Middle East and other Islamic regions; and shaped by Western consumer culture [58]. The way these elements are related to one another implies that Islamic cultural changes are intricate and represent a constant balancing act between tradition and modernity.

The idea of 'the sacred canopy,' which is derived from Berger [59], illuminates the various religious activities and beliefs that exist in modern Asia. This phrase describes a world that has been influenced by religion and offers people and their society a place of spiritual refuge in addition to moral order. Berger contends that people are unable to leave this canopy. According to him, the sacred represents a mysterious and powerful force, distinct from humans yet connected to them, which is believed to reside in a particular experience or object. Most importantly, the sacred is not detached from everyday life; rather, it emerges from everyday activities. To be precise, an activity, experience or object becomes sacred when people ascribe to it a special and sacred power [60].

Yet, there are two main problems regarding to this sacred notion. First of all, in a society that is growing increasingly secular, the canopy metaphor conveys the idea of religious people and civilizations. Both private and public facets of contemporary life are still influenced by religion. Moreover, what is the fate of these hallowed canopy coverings in the face of the forces of contemporary secular transformations and the capitalist economy? Will the forces of the global economy affect the sacred's ability to influence ideas and behavior? It has been debated by many scholars such as, Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, George Simmel, Max Weber to Peter Berger himself, that their answer to this problem is the 'secularization model'[61].

However, the writer believes that popular preaching along these lines, which turns religion into a commodity as part of secularization[62], is not always associated with the desacralization of the faith. In the contemporary era, the search for identity among Muslim youth manifests through engagement with such public sermons, both online and offline. Desiring to align with prevailing social media trends, they simultaneously seek to remain within the 'sacred canopy' by accessing the commodified religious knowledge disseminated through such sermons. As an illustration, AN, a 24-year-old participant from Bandung with a santri educational background, who currently serves in a pesantren, reflected on her engagement.

Having a strong religious background, AN admits that her initial motivation came from curiosity and the opportunity to "recharge her faith," thus strengthening her spiritual beliefs. AN candidly states, "At first, I was curious about what made it interesting, like that, until finally the young people started coming." Her curiosity was further piqued by the viral Q&A sessions, prompting her to explore more about the sermons and underscoring the obvious allure of such events.

Since it concentrates more on entertainment packages than the actual content of da'wah, the rise of da'wah on the internet has come under fire for being called artificial preaching. However, I believe that modernity may further exacerbate Muslims' religious fervor. Furthermore, their selection of religious style is in line with their logical decision-making, and it boosts their desire to delve into their

[57] T Asad, *The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam* (Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, 1986).

[58] A N Weintraub, *Islam and Popular Culture in Indonesia and Malaysia* (Routledge, 2011).

[59] P L Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion*, Reprint (Anchor, 1990).

[60] *Religious Commodifications in Asia: Marketing Gods*, ed. by P Kitiarsa (Routledge, 2008).

[61] Kitiarsa.

[62] Kitiarsa.

faith. Consequently, the advancement of preaching brought forth by technology advancements need not inevitably translate into secularization. Rather, it demonstrates that Islam can endure and be verified in the modern day[63]. Simultaneously, Bowen stated that Islam shouldn't inevitably become secularized due to its blend of spirituality and modernity because faiths have flourished in many contemporary societies rather than just being there[64].

According to RH of the informants I spoke with, posting about Islamic events on social media in this example, her attendance at the sermon does not constitute riya'. She said, to be more exact, "Yes, I share it not to be riya' or anything, but people who date and do other things feel comfortable uploading it." Why are we trying to invite others, and why are we hesitant to do so? "Because this sermon seems so compelling". With that moment shared, it should ideally pique people's curiosity as well because it was very visually appealing and Instagrammable."

This relates to the study that Fatimah Hussein presented, which examined "how contemporary social media use for religious purposes has gained new relevance in the context of riyā, an established term in Islamic theology which implies showing one's piety" [65]. In the same vein, Campbell states that the existence of "digital religion," which can be seen in a range of online media, "not only refers to religion performed and articulated online, but also shows how digital media and spaces shape and are shaped by religious practice"[66]. Muslims can pick from a wide variety of Islamic teachings and da'wah that are appropriate for their degree of religious belief, which are widely available, especially on social media. Indonesian Islam will surely become more moderate than literalist or scripturalist as a result of all the dynamic sociocultural interaction. The overall post-Islamism phase in Indonesian Islam might be considered to include Islamic popular culture[67].s

Uniquely, contrary to the author's initial assumptions before writing this article, the five young Muslim women (DN, RH, ES, AN, SF) have a solid religious education background. They have attended Islamic boarding schools from middle school to undergraduate studies. They also profess to be well-acquainted with Ustadz Hanan Attaki, with one of the popular preachers featured in their daily lives. This underscores the considerable influence he holds on social media. He can mobilize the youth, as evidenced by the fact that the latest schedule for "Sharing Time" has been sold out to the public until April.

DN, a 24-year-old from Ciamis, states that her primary reason for attending is not necessarily a deep desire for comprehensive religious knowledge. Similar to AN, she admits curiosity about why young people attend such events. While asserting that she didn't come just because it was viral, echoing ES (22 years old), they attended because they were invited by peers and admired Ustadz Hanan. However, considering the @ayah_amanah account frequently shares testimonials and the appealing ambiance of "Sharing Time" – well-structured, fancy, Instagram-worthy, comfortable – this becomes another reason for them to experience Ustadz Hanan's offline sermon firsthand. As ES mentioned in her interview, "First of all, because I really like Ust Hanan's way of speaking, he's one of my favorite preachers. Then the venue, I knew the study would be comfortable because it might be somewhat exclusive and since it's a paid event. The last one, yes, just wanted to recharge my faith."

Regarding the paid public sermon, these five girls have no objections. In fact, they express that the ticket prices are quite affordable. SF (23 years old) even prefers attending paid sermons for the

[63] P L Berger, *The Many Altars of Modernity: Toward a Paradigm for Religion in a Pluralist Age* (Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co KG, 2014).

[64] J R Bowen, *A New Anthropology of Islam* (Cambridge University Press, 2012) <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139045988>.

[65] F Husein and M Slama, 'Online Piety and Its Discontent: Revisiting Islamic Anxieties on Indonesian Social Media', *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 46.134 (2018), 80–93 <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639811.2018.1415056>.

[66] Campbell.

[67] Wildan and Witriani.

comfortable facilities. SF states, "Better to pay but with comfortable facilities, like yesterday in the ballroom, even though there were many people, it wasn't cramped, and sitting was comfortable." In line with AN, she says that with an affordable price, she can participate in popular religious studies in a comfortable setting. Typically, "religious studies" are associated with older individuals, but AN notes that the innovative study in a mall, eye-catching and appealing to the youth, is a breakthrough in conveying religious teachings. AN hopes that this can be a starting point – the youth attending sermon events, gradually developing a love for knowledge.

Concerning their spiritual well-being, they admit that attending such events prompts profound reflection on their faith. Particularly, the theme addressing coping mechanisms in times beyond their control resonates with them. Despite the event being packaged with fun and humor, the knowledge acquired remains substantial and is well-received by the audience. They find Ustadz Hanan's messages relatable, with SF expressing a more positive outlook on the future. She claims to be more content with accepting fate, often not aligning with expectations and prayers. Regarding prayers, AN conveys that the most memorable lesson from the past event is related to prayer, saying, "People say they want something, but their prayers are rushed." DN also notes that their gathering with those seeking forgiveness and returning to the right path (sacred canopy) is something she was looking for. She feels a sense of solidarity, not alone in stress and frustration, not alone in seeking Allah's guidance.

ES admits that she was struck by Ustadz Hanan's reminder to reduce complaints and be more content with what happens. She emphasizes prioritizing essential aspects in our lives, "Allah, the Prophet Muhammad, and then others. So, for example, at 3 a.m., we might feel very sleepy, and we don't feel like performing the night prayer. But we know the value of night prayer is extraordinary. Therefore, with our awareness, we must fight the sleepiness, insignificant compared to the priceless value of night prayer." In closing, they enthusiastically affirmed experiencing positive changes after attending the event. ES expresses a desire to continue being a better person. Similarly, RH feels more confident in obedience and believes she's not alone in striving to become better. DN boldly states that she has become more eager to learn again. AN acknowledges being more aware of sincere prayer, coupled with positive assumptions toward Allah, as highlighted by SF.

Conclusion

Altogether, the understanding of the viral public sermon of Ustadz Hanan Attaki 'Sharing Time' fits into the notion of religious commodification that garners the attention of young Muslims in Indonesia. This occasion also endorsed the fact that luxury sermons are equally effective in developing the spiritual incline of youth audiences in this prevailing age. This shows that commodification is not just securalization but it also has tools through which the public appoint their preferences to obtain religious knowledge according to levels and desire. This paper can also offer a qualitative analysis about new media both as a representation and construction of youthful Muslim subjectivity in Indonesia and as an expression of an ongoing process of religious change that redraws the boundaries between tradition and modernity. Scholars have mentioned that current culture which is the outcome of digital breakthrough contributes to changes in religious practice and in religious tradition, at the same time creating new religious authorities and religious populism. The appearance of 'Pop Islam' and the Hijrah movement become another form of the youth Muslim practicing Islamic religiosity in response to the urbanization and globalization process. This essay demonstrates that the essence of lifestyle, identity, and forms of piety examined here reveal a synergy between cosmopolitanism and groundedness. This paper reveals that there exists a complex interplay between new media and Islam in the modern world, and the growing religious in Indonesia calls for a comprehensive study of this phenomenon.

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