Young Muslim Clicktivism and Religious Local Tradition Discourse in Banten and Yogyakarta

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the discourse of local religious traditions and its implication for the shifting religious authority among young Muslims in Banten and Yogyakarta dealing with their activity in social media (clicktivism). The existence of freedom of opinion and expression since the fall of the New Order and the widespread use of new media has had a significant influence on youth's Muslimness, including the local Islamic tradition issues. In collecting data, this study utilized visual ethnography, observation, interview, and focus group discussion. While analyzing the collected data, we use Talal Asad's Discursive Tradition. The research finds that the dissemination of information through social media was able to have a significant influence on the change in religious practices, especially in dealing with local religious (Islamic) traditions. This change is inseparable from the dynamic process of the discursive tradition of young Muslims on social media. Another implication of the process is a shift in religious authority from personal to impersonal.

Keywords: *Clicktivism; Local Tradition; Religious Discourse; Social Media; Young Muslim*

INTRODUCTION

The fall of the New Order regime in 1998 paved a way for the democratic system in Indonesia. This new democratic system depicts an open space for the emergence of freedom of opinion and expression. In this condition, in which Indonesia is experiencing modernization and globalization, Islam becomes publicly visible and symbolically actualized. Some people consider that the growth and development of Islam in the public sphere is one of the most extraordinary developments that occurred in this country (Azra, 2004, pp. 133–149). The existence of religious awareness in the Indonesian Muslim community and their desire to demonstrate personal piety in the public sphere has made Islam increasingly move to the center and become part of political expression, legal transactions, economic activities, and socio-cultural practices. The development of Islamic influence in the public sphere is in line with the emphasis on Islamic symbols, the proliferation of Islamic institutions, and a new lifestyle—especially among middle-class Muslims (Hasan, 2013, p. 1). The phenomenon of the *hijab syar'i*, *hijrah*, *NKRI Bersyariah* has become new sediment from the expression of some Indonesian Muslim communities towards Muslimness identity.

This identity emerges in the public and turn, forms a new polarization of Islamic discourse in Indonesia in the form of social movements, new lifestyles, economics, and politics. This polarization is even more massive when it is supported by new media in its distribution.

Media, especially virtual media, is the most effective and massive means for Islamic proliferation.[1] Not only conventional

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[1] During the last ten years after the fall of the New Order, the number of licensed media has more than doubled, from 289 to more than 1000. The number of private television

da'wa through lectures, but the proliferation of Islamic values is also carried out through modern tools such as cyber da'wa, cellular da'wa, instant religious messages via SMS and web-based services,[2] and the most influential today is through social media such as *YouTube*, *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *Instagram*, and others, all of which bring Islam personally in everyday life and can be accessed directly.

This proliferation of Islamic identity involves many young people in the discourse. The involvement of the youth has a significant contribution and influence on the Islamic movement in Indonesia. This combination of Islamic activism and online media is what we mean by "Muslim Clicktivism". This term was adapted from the writings of Micah White who said that the term "clicktivism" is an acronym of the words "click" as a virtual activity and "activism" as a political identity movement. This term began to be used widely after being popularized by Micah White when he created the Occupy Wall Street (OWS) protest movement in mid-2011 in the United States. This movement is increasingly being carried out by the community due to the ease of accessing technology.(Konieczny, 2014; Reynolds & Mayweather, 2017; White, 2016)

In Indonesia, this clicktivism model is also used by several Islamic movements in voicing religious identity. This discourse often voices the ideology of Islamism which makes Islam not only a way of life but also a political attitude. However, the ideology of Islamism in

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stations has also increased dramatically from five to more than ten in the same period. There are about 150 local television networks operating across the country. In 2013, the number increased significantly to 415. See (Anderson, 2000; Heryanto, 2015, p. 15; Khamis, 2021)

[2] According to *We are Social* report in March 2015—a social media marketing agency—stated that the use of social networking media in Indonesia is very high, i.e more than 72.7 million active internet users, and more than 74 million active social media users of which 64 million users access social media using mobile devices, and 808.2 handphones. See (Gusindra, 2015)

Indonesia seems to have changed to post-Islamism. Post-Islamism depicted Islamism that adapts to the style of modernity and culture. The trend phenomenon of Islamism towards Post-Islamism has occurred in various Muslim worlds—including Indonesia—in the form of political parties, mass organizations, interest groups, and even social movements (Bayat, 2013). Even so, this movement does not directly lead to a practical political movement but also targets the discourse on local Islamic traditions. This discourse leads to re-questioning the legitimacy or authenticity of Islam, especially related to local traditions which are still often held by Muslim communities.

This study focuses on analyzing the role of young Muslim clicktivism in a religious discourse that, to a certain extent, can shift religious authority in the Banten Province and D.I. Yogyakarta. For this reason, several research questions need to be formulated, What do young people think about local Islamic rituals and traditions? How are they involved in local Islamic discourse and the process of forming Islamic identity through social media? and what is the push and pull factors that influence their opinion and what are the implications of this discourse in society?

To sharpen the analysis in this study, we utilize Talal Asad's "discursive tradition" (Asad, 1986, p. 15). According to Asad, a tradition is not as defined by orientalists, anthropologists, and Muslim scholars who see it as a "legacy of the past" as opposed to an expression of modernity, or the opposite of a rational system (Abenante & Cantini, 2014, p. 6; Asad, 1986, p. 16). Tradition is a set of discourses that grows, develops dynamically, or is eliminated according to the surrounding social, political, and economic forces.

METHOD

This study was conducted in two locations, i.e. Banten and D.I. Yogyakarta. We selected these two locations based on the online

activism of young people and their different religious tendencies. To obtain valid data, we conducted observation, distributed questionnaires, interviews, and Focus Group Discussions. In the observation, we conducted either online observations—where youth activism in social media took place very vigorously—or field observations, especially to deal with the issue of discourse on local religious traditions. At the same time, we also collected data by distributing online questionnaires using a google form to young people in both regions. To strengthen the data from observations and questionnaires, we conducted interviews with several young people in both regions. Finally, to confirm the data we utilize the FGD method. After all, we analyze comprehensively the data collected using the framework of the discursive tradition theory.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Young Muslim, Internet, and Religion

Changes after changes that occur in the global society and Indonesia can certainly involve young people as the main actors. Discussing youth can be divided into three perspectives; youth as generations, youth as transitions, and youth as creators and consumers of culture (Azca et al., 2012). *First*, youth in the generational approach reminds us that every generation of youth has its historical side and context. Parker and Nilan stated that the construction of youth is not the same from time to time, this condition makes the meaning of young people change. For example, youth in the colonial period had political meanings as agents of change because most of them were involved in the independence movement, but during the new order and reformation, the meaning of youth was more defined as agents of consumption because they

were more consumers of capitalism (Parker & Nilan, 2013; Widyharto, 2014).

Second, youth as a term of transition. This approach is considered a deterministic approach with the assumption that everyone will experience the same "youth" period as their predecessors (Azca et al., 2012). This view is in line with the concept of functionalism which emphasizes sharing roles to achieve balance. This view has created the argument that the transition of youth to emphasize biological and psychosocial assumptions about development results in a dependence on legitimacy and adult intervention to ensure that young people follow a path that conforms to the constructs and definitions that have been surpassed previously by adults. For example, the struggle for political activism between the 45th, 66th, and 98th batches.

Third, young people as creators and consumers of culture explain the internalization of youth to globalization, for example, the phenomenon of *Do-It-Yourself* culture among young people which gave rise to distro, indie music, hip-hop, hybrid culture, and others. In addition, it also illustrates the intersection between local and global cultures. Youth and new media influence each other in the production and consumption of culture (Blank, 2013; Sefton-Green, 2006). In this digital era, we recognize that the media provide many benefits in human life, including as a tool to overcome various problems from communication to democracy access that is wide and unlimited for humans around the world (AE. Priyono & U. Hamid, 2014).

The term "new media" emerged in the late 20th century, which was used to refer to the latest media using that combines conventional media with the Internet. Marshall McLuhan, one of the first figures to popularize the term, introduced the term new media in 1969. According to McLuhan, new media is a development of

communication technology that plays a role in expanding the reach of human communication, so it can be concluded that the term new media does not only refer to a specific technology (McLuhan, 1964, p. 7). The development of technology and information has presented a different form of media than before. According to McQuail, "new media" is a set of communication technologies that are widely used by individuals as a means of communication, with which individuals can share features made possible by digitization (McQuail, 2010, p. 43).

The existence of new media allows humans to get information quickly and widely with various developed sites such as *Wikipedia*, *Google*, *YouTube*, and other websites. In fact, in addition to sites that provide information and knowledge, new media also provides information facilities that allow humans to interact virtually with each other with the presence of social networks, such as *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *Instagram*, *Telegram*, and other similar sites.

The interaction of young people with new media in Islamic identity proliferation activities has an impact on social change that creates new patterns in new social movements. It also makes discourse and debate among social activists and academics in viewing the phenomenon of a movement.

Social movements that occur in society are a response to various conditions such as social, economic, political, and religious issues. In the theory of social movements, a movement requires the mobilization of resources and structures-money, communication technology, meeting places, social networks, and others where a set of elements is used to collect individual complaints, organize, lead and mobilize resistance (Wiktorowicz, 2004). For those who focus on overseeing the development of socio-culture in society, social movements are seen as an activism option that is relevant to be carried out in the context of changes that are so complex in life.

The success of the Islamic activism movement in Egypt has become a light for Islamic movements in other parts of the world, including Indonesia. Islamists frame activism as a moral obligation that requires self-sacrifice and a continuous commitment to the struggle for religious transformation so that movements in religious symbols are always considered religious obligations (Addini, 2019).

The human civilization that is increasingly developing has contributed to shifting patterns of religious da'wa and making adjustments from conventional methods to more modern ways. In the past, we knew da'wa or methods of spreading religious values only in exclusive spaces, in Islamic boarding schools, in Islamic academic groups, and so on. The approach also used traditional methods, such as face-to-face. Even if we look at the past trajectories in Islamic history, the way the Prophet preached was carried out secretly (Addini, 2019, p. 110).

But now there are many ways to do da'wa, one of which is by utilizing social media, such as *Facebook, Twitter, Instagram,* and so on, which is called virtual da'wa. Therefore, nowadays, this virtual da'wa has become an important variable in packaging religious movements to be easily accepted by the younger generation. This is of course because the method always follows and adapts to the spirit of the era (*zeitgeist*) (Addini, 2019, p. 111).

In its development, the use of virtual media is not only used as a medium for Islamic da'wa but is also used as a medium to articulate Islamic identity and piety among young people. This proliferation of Islamic identity involves many young people in the discourse. Their involvement gave a very real contribution and influence to the Islamic movement in Indonesia. With the amalgamation of the potential for igniting the spirit of youth, adaptation to modernism and globalism, as well as the spread of social media, the Islamic movement has become activism that has

innovations in various colors and forms in demonstrating piety and a broader collective identity, although sometimes it has a polemical tone and provokes friction between Islamic groups. This combination of Islamic activism and online media is what we mean by "Muslim Clicktivism".

Muslim Clicktivism in Banten and Yogyakarta

In Banten and Yogyakarta, young people have an important role in proliferating religious identity through social media channels. In fact, at this time, they are consumers as well as producers of religious content. Their active role can influence the spread of religious messages, including the processes of religious discourse. In Yogyakarta, the role of social media is very important in influencing the proliferation of Islamic teachings among young people. This can be seen, for example, in the role of Teras Da'wah (TD) in providing religious education among young people. Teras Da'wah (TD) is a socio-religious community located in Nitikan Village, Yogyakarta. Akhid Subiyanto and his colleagues were the pioneers of this community in 2011. As the name suggests, TD carries out its da'wa activities on the terrace of the house. By concentrating their activities on the terraces of their homes, they want Islamic da'wa to be delivered in a relaxed, flexible, simple, and open-minded manner. With the concept and method of da'wa like this, according to Akhid, anyone can follow the da'wa activity without feeling ashamed or shy (Triantoro, 2018, p. 274).

Figure 1
Youth social media activity in Banten and Yogyakarta
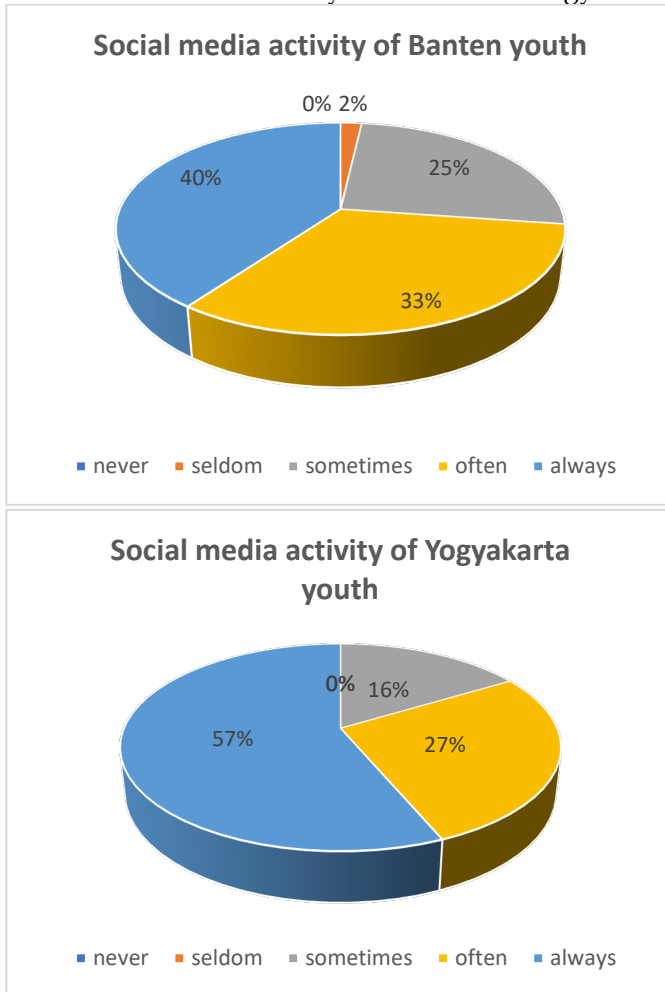
Source: Primary data.

Figure 1 is an illustration of the results of a survey that we conducted on 112 respondents from Banten (54 women and 58 men) and 74 respondents from Yogyakarta (36 women and 38 men) regarding how active young people in these two areas are in social media. The results show that the highest percentage (40%) of young people in Banten stated that they used social media always or very often, followed by 33% who said often, while 25% said sometimes,

2% said seldom, and none (0%) who stated that they had never used social media. Meanwhile, the percentage of youth in Yogyakarta who stated very often was higher (57%), followed by 27% who said often, 16% said sometimes, and 0% of them said seldom and never. These data show that social media is an instrument for disseminating information that cannot be separated from the daily activities of young people. In other words, they cannot be separated from their devices to access social media in their daily life. Indeed, they are not specifically active in religious issues on social media. There are various reasons they access social media, including to communicate with family, friends, and community, do business online, play, learn, and express themselves, and others.

Intensive accessibility to media illustrates the ability of new media to make a significant influence on the patterns of interaction and social changes. Information can be easily, quickly, and massively disseminated, including religious information and issues.

Regarding virtual youth activism related to Islamic or religious issues, from our survey results, we found that 53% of the 112 respondents (young people from Banten) stated that they actively participated in studies, discussions, and shared content on religious/Islamic issues on social media. While the rest (47%) said they were passive in following Islamic/religious issues. This condition is different from the young people in Yogyakarta. Of the 74 young respondents from Yogyakarta, only 41% of them stated that they were active in studies, discussions, and sharing content on religious/Islamic issues, while 59% of them said they were passive.

What we mean by "active" here are those who actively seek and follow religious studies on social media and are also active in producing or redistributing religious content. While "passive" means those who passively receive religious messages on social media but do not redistribute the messages. Even if they only distribute it

occasionally and even then, only certain religious content which according to him is very important. For this second model of the respondent (passive), the religious content they get from social media is only their personal consumption.[3]

Regarding the active and passive groups of young people in these two areas, the survey results describe them with different percentages. In Banten, there are more active respondent groups than in the Yogyakarta area. Although they differ in percentage, they both have the same background. After being traced, the active groups that follow and redistribute religious content on social media are young people who mostly follow certain religious studies or communities (*halaqah/klub kajian*), usually in the form of certain religious groups on social media or those who are active in online religious learning.

To get more in-depth information about the survey results, we conducted in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGD). Regarding the groups and the active and passive characters of these young people, based on the results of interviews and FGDs, we found at least two interesting pieces of information to note. *First*, young people who are active in obtaining and disseminating religious content, consider that what they are doing is part of worship (*ibadah*). Redistributing religious content is part of "finger alms" (*sedekah jari*). Ahmad (23 years old), a young man from Kota Serang, Banten, stated "Finger alms or spreading religious content through social media is part of worship because it helps spread goodness to others. This is also part of *'watawashou bil haq*

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[3] The interaction of actors, both active and passive, in the process of interplay between social media users has a significant impact on the process of social change. See (Parekh et al., 2018; Smidi & Shahin, 2017)

watawasouw bis shobr'[4] or advised each other to truth and advised each other to patience."[5]

The opinion was conveyed by Yeni (22 years old), "More than giving charity with a smile, spreading religious content to others has a greater reward (*pahala*). It is because not only do we get the reward for spreading it but also if other people do according to the message that is being spread, we will get a double reward too. Moreover, if he or she continues to spread it again then he or she will get a triple reward. In other words, we will get multi-level rewards."[6] In this case, according to Yeni, the reward that will be achieved is similar to a multi-level marketing (MLM) scheme, or a reward that never ends when someone distributes content to others again and again. In addition, some say that spreading religious content to others is part of the *sunnah* based on the hadith: "convey from me even an *ayah* (one sentence)".[7]

Second, even though it is relatively passive, in this case, it still has a significant influence on the individual's influence on the information he receives. Information obtained by someone passively or the condition of someone who often (or even routinely) receives religious messages on social media also has an influence on him, both dealing with attitude as well as way of thinking. Is experienced by Nurul (25 years old)[8] from Pandeglang district, Banten province, who admits that she has gradually changed her fashion because she often receives religious messages from *Whatsapp* sent to her or reads from the *Whatsapp* Group she joins. According to her, although it is

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[4] Q.S. Al-'Ashr (103): 3

[5] *Focus Group Discussion* (FGD) with stricly COVID-19 protocol, 6 September 2021, in Serang, Banten

[6] Interview weith Yeni (22 years old), 8 March, 2021, in Yogyakarta

[7] H.R. Al-Bukhari Hadith no. 2838

[8] *Focus Group Discussion* (FGD) with stricly COVID-19 protocol, 6 September 2020, in Serang, Banten

very rare for her to share these messages again, some of them have given her a lot of religious knowledge and influenced her to be more "Islamic".

The same thing happened to Rohmat (32 years old)[9] from Serang Regency, Banten Province, who has now quit his job at a private bank because he often receives religious messages about usury (*riba*). The religious messages then influenced him and convinced him that his work was included in the category of usury and therefore he was a sinner at the time. Since then, he has been regularly attending *kajian* (religious studies). Although before making up his mind to quit his job, he first attended a study by one of the Usatdz in Serang City on the recommendation of a friend. After discussing with the ustadz, his heart was increasingly convinced to do "hijra" and quit his previous job which he believed was related to usury.

The Discourse of Local Tradition and Shifting Religious Authority

Islam, as a religion, has a worldview originating from its authoritative texts (Al-Qur'an and Hadith) and the history of its intellectual struggle which is based on authoritative texts. Therefore, Islam as a discursive tradition must be understood as a "*historically evolving set of discourses, embodied in the practices and institutions of Islamic societies and hence deeply imbricated in the material life of those inhabiting them*" (Anjum, 2007, p. 662).

Drawing on Talal Asad's theory of the discursive tradition, the discourse of the Islamic tradition that forms the fragmentation of certain Islamic identities in society, as it is today, will be easily understood. Because it will not only refer to the text and context, but also to the slices of the development of religious discourse that

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[9] Interview with Rohmat (32 yeras old), 13 September, 2021, in Serang, Banten

occurs in society at a certain time trajectory. Therefore, it is important to understand that "tradition and modernity" exist because of different historical aspects and it is important to emphasize these rather than say that they are not related to culture or society (Asad, 1996). This means that the Islamic discursive tradition has its own characteristics, both rationality and a way of thinking, which is written in its texts, history, and institutions.

Tradition is a habit that is handed down from generation to generation. This includes various cultural values such as customs, belief systems, local wisdom, and so on. In other words, the most basic of traditions is the existence of information that is passed on from generation to generation, both written and (often) oral. Without it, a tradition can become extinct. In addition, tradition can also be interpreted as a shared habit in society that will automatically affect the actions and reactions in the daily lives of community members (Syam, 2005, pp. 16–18).

Concerning the Islamic tradition, Asad reminds researchers, especially anthropologists, that Islam is a discursive tradition and Muslims have Islamic reasoning, namely reasoning based on the Qur'an and Hadith. Muslims, whenever and wherever, always do reasoning to legitimize their religious practices by referring to authoritative references. As a discursive tradition, Islam instructs practitioners regarding the correct form and purpose of a given practice (Asad, 1986). Therefore, Muslims will always seek the authenticity and authority of their religion by trying to find *ittisaliyya* (connection) with the authority in the past. This search process then becomes the basis for them to determine which traditions are said to be Islamic or not. In other words, Muslims will consider religious practices as authoritative and authentic if these traditions have been accepted by society from generation to generation and have links to religious practices or intellectual traditions in the past.

Apart from having links to the past, Islamic traditions also have links to the future. As a tradition, Islam always could adapt and transform according to the times (present) without losing its authenticity and continuity with the past. This is because Islam has special reasoning that gives Muslims the opportunity to carry out cultural negotiations between past practices as references and adjustments for the present and the future. This is certainly different from the Western tradition, especially after the Enlightenment period, which interprets tradition as a set of unchangeable doctrines or ready-made cultural facts and tends to regard tradition as something completely negative (Asad, 1986, p. 211). In addition, for the West, tradition is the opposite of reason.

Therefore, according to Asad's theory, the Islamic tradition is a dynamic tradition depending on its distinctive reasoning (Islamic reasoning). The continuity and discontinuity of a local Islamic tradition certainly refer to the discursive process. This discursive process is increasingly massive because it is currently supported by social media which can disseminate information and religious discussions massively and tends to be uncontrollable. Many changes in tradition occur because of a surplus of information that is shared with anyone and finally, anyone can determine his opinion on the continuity of local traditions.

Even so, before the popularity of the use of new media, there were debates and lawsuits against local traditions which were considered heretical practices. However, the changes in tradition resulting from these discourses have not been massive and are still concentrated on the fragmentation of discussions of certain mass organizations (Muhammadiyah-NU, for example) and sometimes only occur in certain areas. However, by utilizing new media instruments and social media, a religious discourse that questions local Islamic traditions is getting stronger and penetrating the

boundaries of mass organizations and regions, especially since strengthening the transnational Islamic movement which indeed uses social media as a means of their da'wa. Lawsuits against local Islamic traditions such as *tahlilan, slametan, rebo wekasan, barjanzi, manakiban, muludan* and others are getting stronger on social media. Questioning the authenticity and challenging local Islamic traditions that have been going on for a long time in Indonesia often provokes friction and unconsciously divides the Indonesian Muslim community into certain groups. It often happens that certain Islamic groups give theological labels (such as *bid'a* and *shirk*) to other groups who still practice local traditions. This later became the trigger for fierce debates, arguing with each other on social media to the point of friction in society.

From the results of the survey, we conducted in Banten, 96% of the 112 respondents stated that in their place of residence people still carry out local Islamic traditions such as *tahlilan, slametan, rebo wekasan, muludan,* and others while 4% stated that there were no more such traditions. Meanwhile, in Yogyakarta, 89% of 74 respondents stated that in their place of residence people still held local Islamic traditions and 11% stated that people no longer held those practices. What is interesting from the data is that although 96% of respondents from Banten stated that the local tradition was still carried out by people in their place of residence, only 80% of the respondents argued that the local tradition was following Islamic teachings, 9% argued that the tradition was not following Islamic teachings and another 11% said they did not know. The same thing happened in Yogyakarta. Although 89% stated that the local Islamic tradition was still held in their neighborhood, only 59% of them argued that the tradition was following Islamic teachings, 19% of them argued that the tradition was not following Islamic teachings, and another 22% stated that they did not know.

This shows that although in the neighborhood where they live or even their families still carry out the local Islamic tradition, many have their own opinion that it is not following Islamic teachings. From the results of interviews and FGDs, it was found that for those who stated that the local Islamic tradition was un-Islamic, it was because there was no evidence or basis for the text and its context at the time of the Prophet or the Companions (*sahabat*), so that it was categorized as heresy and there was even an element of shirk in it.

However, for those who claim that it can be categorized as Islamic, they have also their own reasons. According to them, local tradition is only a da'wa strategy carried out by cooperating with the local culture which is slowly being Islamized. The cultural strategy in this da'wa, according to them, is reinterpreted following Islamic teachings so that it contains Islamic teachings such as alms (*sedekah*), maintaining *ukhuwwah Islamiyyah*, praying for each other, doing good, and reading good Islamic sentences (*kalima thayyiba*), and the names of Allah (*Asma' al-Husna*). Therefore, according to them, there is no deviant element in the practices of the local tradition. Meanwhile, those who stated that they did not know had their own reasons, such as they did not care about the issue, they did not understand, and most of them were still confused because as long as the information they got from social media, the two groups had equally rational reasons.

Ardi (19 years old) said that in the neighborhood where he currently lives, the community still often holds local Islamic traditions such as *mitoni* and *tahlilan*. At first, he did not care about the law of carrying out the tradition, but after he often received information about the heretical law dealing with those traditions from social media, he began to question the validity of the tradition. He said:

> "I am often convinced about the heretical law of *mitonan* (seven months of pregnancy rituals) and *tahlilan* by friends who often share posts from their ustadz. The reasons and arguments about the heresy of the tradition are very convincing. But I also once asked another friend who said that the tradition did not deviate from Islamic teachings (it was also 'Islamic') because it read good prayer sentences taught by religion, invitations to charity, and other good things. In addition, this friend of mine also often shares convincing posts accompanied by book references. Of the two, I feel confused because both have equally convincing reasons."[10]

Ardi is not an alumnus of *pesantren*, so he never knew about the fragmentation of Islamic groups. He will only take one of these opinions as a guide for his religious practices, although at this time he is still uncertain about the choice of argument. In this case, many other young people have experienced the same thing as Ardi. They often receive posts of Islamic content on their social media. The more often these contents are received, it will certainly affect their way of thinking and can determine their religious practices. This is what Asad calls the discursive tradition. The existing traditions from the previous generation then get a counter-discourse so that the Islamic community will try to adapt them, to borrow Michel Foucault's term, to the *episteme* of today's Islamic society. This process of adaptation and discourse has made the Islamic tradition a dynamic tradition and may change according to contemporary reasoning.

This kind of discourse is not new in Islamic society. This discursive tradition has been running since the death of the Prophet Muhammad and the expansion of Islam to a wider area. But what makes the difference today is the existence of a new instrument, namely new media, which makes this discourse massive and can be accessed quickly by anyone and anywhere. In other words, the existence of new media makes the proliferation of Islam and

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[10] Interview with Ardi (19 years old), 23 August, 2021, in Tangerang, Banten

discourse on local traditions more aggressive and massive. The phenomenon of Indonesian society's aggressiveness in the process of proliferating Islamic identity through social media often causes friction among other Muslims. This is because the spread of Islamic content through social media, which was originally a da'wah of Islamic values, has turned into a new lifestyle to become actively involved in power politics and affirmation of the identity of certain Muslim groups. The sediment from strengthening this identity is then "used" by certain groups in mass mobilization for political support.

Social movements become an interesting theory to analyze how an action works for a particular purpose. Social movements are one of the discourses in political studies. In contemporary discussions, social movements show how people ask for change by mobilizing the masses. Social movements often emerge massively outside of established political channels or institutions in a country (Johnston, 2014). In a movement, mobilization becomes a way to add strength, at least in terms of mass. The development of a social movement is also largely determined by how big and strong its resources are and whether these resources are properly mobilized (Lee, 2016; Leenders, 2013). Tarrow explains that for the mobilization process and the object of mobilization to be utilized properly, three important elements must be carried out symbiotically in a social movement, namely formal organization, mobilization structure, and collective action organization. Tarrow says the actors of the mobilization structure in a movement must be internalized in two other ways controlled by elite leaders, in other terms, those with the legitimacy of power, or charismatic leaders who have authority. Authority is the right to act and make rules, while power is understood as the ability to compel obedience to rules. In essence, authority has elements of

rights, values, and norms that underlie a person to do what he must do (Cheater, 2003).

The existence of a massive Islamic proliferation among young people can have a very significant influence on the strengthening of Islamic identity in society. Religious symbols have become very common to be shown openly in social spaces and even the strengthening of this identity is often used as an instrument for politically grouping Muslim communities. Apart from using it politically, young people in this case are not only consumers but also producers of Islamic content on social media. Although they do not have authority in Islamic knowledge, many of them position themselves as social agents of the proliferation of Islamic teachings. In this case, we can say that young Muslims continue to experience the agency process and often experience hybridity related to their identity. Their hybridity is part of the process of adapting to the present. Hybridity in this case is to adapt the proliferation process of Islamic teachings to the lifestyle tendencies of young people, as illustrated by the jargon of "faith and fun" or being pious but still having a cool youthfulness style. As stated by Nilan and Feixa that young people continue to form their identity through self-conscious invention and reinvention (Nilan & Feixa, 2006, pp. 2–3).

The existence of a process of agency and hybridity among young people has other impacts, one of which is a shift in religious authority. In the past, religious authority was in the hands of experts in the field of religion who had indeed received certain religious education, namely *ulama*. In the hands of *ulama*, religious matters are usually asked. However, since the widespread use of new media or social media, everyone can find answers to religious problems easily, quickly, and cheaply on the internet. Therefore, there is a shift in religious authority in this new media era from personal to impersonal. The results of our survey seem to confirm this. Of the

112 respondents in Banten, 86% stated that if there was a religious problem, they asked questions on the internet, while 14% of them looked for answers by asking the *kyai*, *ulama,* or ustadz directly. Meanwhile, out of 74 respondents in Yogyakarta, 91% of them asked about religious issues from the internet and 9% still directly asked ustadz or ulama around their place of residence. The reason is that the internet can provide answers to these problems quickly and easily. A young ustadz in Yogyakarta (he didn't want to be mentioned his name here) who used to give religious lectures at a mosque often had to look for the content or reference from the internet.

Social media also provides opportunities for anyone to appear as a religious figure even though he has never received a religious education like *ulama* as a common. Even so, many young people are not bothered by the educational background of an ustadz who gives sermons on social media. Ahmad (18 years old) from Yogyakarta, for example, never questioned which ustadz he received religious lectures from which he often participates on social media "…after all, in Islam, knowledge can come from anyone", he said.[11]

CONCLUSION

Paving the way for democracy in Indonesia since the fall of the New Order and the widespread use of new media provide ample opportunities for access to information and freedom of opinion and expression in the public sphere, including voicing religious ideology. In this case, the use of new media and social media among young people has a significant impact on the proliferation of Islam, Muslimness identity as a form of individual and collective piety in the public sphere, as well as the freedom to voice and express Islam.

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[11] Interview with Ahmad (18 years old), 30 August, 2021, in Yogyakarta

This condition is an opportunity as well as a challenge for Muslims. It is a great opportunity to spread Islamic values massively, quickly, and cheaply, thereby increasing quantitatively the symbol and identity of Muslims in the public sphere. it is also a challenge because it provides opportunities for friction among Muslims themselves. This is due to the opening of discourse channels regarding local Islamic traditions whose authenticity is increasingly being questioned. This discourse process certainly gives excess to the friction between those who criticize or even blame the practice of local Islamic traditions with those who still practice the local tradition. These discourses are often carried out by young people.

In Banten and Yogyakarta, young people become consumers as well as social agents of the discourse. Many of them are active agents of Islamic proliferation on social media. Their activities are also involved in debates about local traditions. From the results of searches in Banten and Yogyakarta, although many of them claim that in their area they still carry out local Islamic traditions, they also question the authenticity of these traditions. Those who challenge the authenticity of local Islamic traditions argue that these traditions have no basis in Islamic authoritative texts (Al-Qur'an and Hadith). Meanwhile, those who maintain the tradition argue that the basis of tradition is *qiyas*.

The discussion process took place fiercely on social media. Muslim youths share information and attend religious lectures virtually. Likewise, debates about local traditions often occur fiercely on social media. This condition also has implications for the shift in religious authority in society. The religious authority that used to be in the hands of ulama who had received a certain religious education shifted to an anonymous area on the internet. Many young people instantly learn about religion on the internet which gives them the confidence to answer religious questions by searching for them on

the internet. Few of today's young people in Banten and Yogyakarta would directly ask the ulama in their neighborhood about religion if they were faced with religious issues. Instead, most of them will look it up themselves on the internet. In this case, the impersonal authority shifts the personal authority in the religious area.

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Interviews and FGDs

The result of *Focus Group Discussion* (FGD) conducted with strickly COVID-19 protocol, 6 September, 2021, in Serang, Banten

Interview with Yeni (22 years old), 8 March, 2021, in Yogyakarta

Interview with Rohmat (32 years old), 13 September, 2021, in Serang, Banten

Interview with Ardi (19 years old), 23 August, 2021, in Tangerang, Banten

Interview with Ahmad (18 years old), 30 August, 2021, in Yogyakarta