

ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION IN THE DIGITAL ERA: THE DIVERSITY OF MUSLIM RELIGIOUS EXPRESSION IN SOCIAL MEDIA

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Abstract

This article studied the development of Islamic civilization in the digital sphere. The discussion aims to portray the diversity of religious expressions in social media. The researchers employed Bourdieu's concept of religion as a symbol system, this study tried to reveal the historical background and the patterns of religious expression. This research aims to study and understand the phenomenon of Muslim religious expression in internet-based social media. The discussion resulted in the findings that Muslim religious expression in social media develops from traditional, modern, liberal, radical, and recently becomes moderate religious expression. This research is quasi-qualitative research using an ethnographic approach. The basis of the analysis is interpretive on the phenomenon of the diversity of religious expressions of the ummah on social media. The result of this research shows that the emergence of religious websites mostly represents these various expressions. These religious websites and the existence of celebrity preachers then lead to the shifting in the pattern from the traditional to the moderate one.

Keywords: Religious expression; Digital; Celebrity preachers.

INTRODUCTION

The discourse of Islamic studies in communication and information technology is increasingly interesting to study. It relates not only to the opportunities and challenges and the future of Islamic studies but also to the religious expressions of Muslims in cyberspace, especially in their social media networks. This phenomenon is more than just a sign of changes in social behavior and public communication platforms since it also touches the level of social, organizational structure, and even religious values.

The emergence of Android-based programs and social media applications has also accelerated the process of cultural transformation in society, including religious expressions that were previously only done conventionally. Such as classical religious studies typical of traditional pesantren, which are now widely carried out online. This process also actively involved female religious leaders who previously did not get enough attention from the community. Some of them have transformed faster than the male religious leaders who, in Geertz's view, only act as cultural brokers (Clifford Geertz, 1960, p. 233) or entrepreneurs in Horikoshi's view (Horikoshi, 1987, p. 232). Besides carrying out the two roles above, some female religious leaders also take a step further by acting as "Cultural Investors."

In addition to the expression of Islam that coincides with a shift in social structure in traditional communities, the presence of information technology with increasingly sophisticated software has also fostered an instant and revolutionary digital religious "tradition." Scientific and clerical authorities have also experienced changes. At least a very prominent symptom is the inflation of the concepts of ulama, ustad/ustadzah, and habib. Not to mention the emergence of various religious sites that contain non-mainstream fatwas that are easily accessible to the public and are often used as references in their religious practices. The entry of the public 'domain' into the private sphere through the internet and android-based information media has created a gap

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that shallows the meaning of religion and moves and expands formalistic views that are the root of intolerant behavior of the ummah.

In this context, research on digital Islamic civilization is exciting, considering that this phenomenon has strengthened in the past year, especially since the emergence of the COVID-19 outbreak, which forced people to be more active in cyberspace activities.

Several studies related to this phenomenon state that the opening of educational opportunities for pesantren graduates, political, social, and cultural dynamics, especially the presence of electronic and internet-based information media, such as radio, television, smartphones, or androids with borderless internet connection able to open up public spaces for all groups, including women. The emergence of female religious figures in the digital space was initially driven by the expectations of the media/television market, which hoped to get support from housewives. However, this phenomenon expanded and made these female religious leaders into cross-gender public figures. This symptom can be the basis for the assumption that the dynamics of Islamic civilization will occur in the future. Moreover, other symptoms that have received more attention from social observers, such as radicalism on social media, are also getting stronger and so rapidly affecting the religious expression of the ummah in the real world. It means that the reality of cyberspace, especially social media, is often believed to be the truth that must be realized in social, political, economic, and cultural actions in the real world. This digital information media further strengthens the position of religious elites who have previously been very active in providing recitations in the community through conventional recitation stages at home, in prayer rooms, or in mosques in the taklim assembly community.

There are still not many studies that specifically discuss the phenomenon of religious expression in the digital world, especially from the historical perspective and its cultural dynamics. That is why this research targets new findings related to the phenomenon of religious expression of the ummah in the digital world (social media) in the community of social media users. This study explores the diversity of religious expressions in the digital public sphere from cultural history. It seeks how the historical background of the digital community grows and develops, and how the patterns of religious expression that appear on social media reflect the sociocultural dynamics.

One of the studies on the expression of Muslims in the media is Eva F. Nisa's writing entitled the internet subculture of Indonesian face-veiled women (2013). The article explains how veiled women use the internet to communicate with each other and discuss their religious issues. In her view, the internet has become a subculture, which is also used by veiled Muslim women on mailing lists and also in doing business. Economic motivation and the demand to maintain a strict Islamic ideology in this group make them reduce direct contact but are very intense in communicating and transacting economics using the internet media. Eva's research proves that even in a highly dominated space, women as subjects can still carry out agency processes to confirm their existence as Muslim women by utilizing the internet network (Nisa, 2013). Once again, this confirms that the media occupies a very strategic position in determining new views on gender issues attached to the community's religious and cultural orientation.

The dynamics of religious piety in the media can be seen in religious and social media activities such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, WA group, etc. Besides, it can also be found in religious programs on television, radio, and other electronic media in Islamic countries. The increasing sophistication of information technology, which can overcome space and time distances, has given birth to new forms of community structure, including changes in authority (Eickelman & Anderson, 2003). So that the phenomenon of the development of information technology-based social media increasingly emphasizes that the role of the media in encouraging change in religious society is very strategic. This thesis will be beneficial for analysis in revealing how the ummah uses the media, either TV, radio, or internet-based social media, to strengthen their existence or group in society and explain how their understanding relates to the mission of supporting their ideological awareness.

This research attempts to study and understand the phenomenon of Muslim religious expression in internet-based social media. The digital realm that provides limitless freedom has

presented various religious expressions that were previously unknown, even in the online world. This study also tries to critically examine the pattern of relationships between subjects who are active in social media networks. This research focuses on the phenomenon of the diverse religious expressions in cyberspace as a public stage that is not limited by space and time. The subjects of the expressions are involved in direct or indirect interaction with other subjects, which sometimes have different backgrounds and interests, mainly in the context of their history and cultural background.

Bourdieu states that, in principle, religion is a symbol system formed by and forms a common agreement for the meaning of symbols and the meaning of this world. Religion is often associated with a symbol system that refers to supernatural powers, whether personified or not (Sudarmanto, 1987). In *The Social Reality of Religion* (1969), Peter Berger describes religion as a basic human need and is a means to protect and survive from all crises that occur in human life, especially those related to suffering and death (Berger, 1969). Religion is a means that guarantees the certainty of human life in the face of historical and existential crises. In simple terms, the conception of religious relations as an aspect that affects the reality of social and spiritual behavior can be described in the following theoretical schematic chart.

As a model of reality, religion occupies a dualism position between the concept of a model of reality and a model for reality. The model of reality is concerned with the presentation of objects as contained in natural phenomena. At the same time, the model for reality applies to behavioral concepts, such as those imposed on human activity. Therefore, the model of reality is concrete and depicts structural congruence with the object described. While the model for reality is abstract – in the form of theories, dogmas, and religious doctrines – for reality, these theories, dogmas, and doctrines do not represent structural congruence. On the other hand, either metaphysically or rationally, religion's theory, dogma, and doctrine are related to human perception of reality and its characterization. So that theory, dogma, and doctrine cannot be penetrated experimentally but can only be interpreted interpretively (C. Geertz, 1992).

In understanding religious values, the conception of reality is not based on knowledge but on belief in an authority, which differs between (groups of) religions. In the context of Islam, this authority rests with God with all revelations sent down through the prophet Muhammad, including the sunnah of the prophet himself. It is in this context that propositions emerge in the form of questions. How do they place and interpret their religious authority in the context of the dynamics of social life? Likewise, the position of religion as a system of symbols is used to understand and respond to reality. It also raises the question; How can the different religious patterns represented in the system of religious symbols between Kiai and nyai be accepted by the people?

The use of religion as a symbol or part of a cultural system is intended to reduce the weakness of religious research oriented towards the sociology of religion, which tends to reduce it by rejecting the partial autonomy of religion. Even in the "sociology of religion" approach, the phenomenon of religion as a cultural system is often placed in causality with the process of change and social development of the community alone. Meanwhile, religion as a cultural pattern has become a tool for interpreting reality, which is useful for interpreting or giving meaning to social or psychological reality for its adherents. The adherents get an objective picture of reality (objective conception). Although religious teachings are constructed from reality, the other hand, religious teachings also shape and influence reality according to the limits of their ideals (C. Geertz, 1992).

Religious symbols form part of reality but are not just a reflection of reality because cultural symbols also affect reality. At this level, positioning certain aspects of an idea or religious teaching is inseparable from other ideas or teachings. Because every part of religious teachings is, in principle, an integral part (continuity) of religion as a whole (which is autonomous), research that places religion as a partial part of the social structure, or based on the conventional superstructure, cannot provide an optimal description. It can even confuse the reduction imposed on religious ideas and teachings. This assumption is used to describe the existence of the ummah in the digital world with its diversity of expressions.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is quasi-qualitative research using an ethnographic approach. The basis of the analysis is interpretive on the phenomenon of the diversity of religious expressions of the ummah on social media. The researcher uses the basic theory of the evolution of society from Ibn Khaldun, which is influenced by the relational dynamics between aspects of the material, social, intellectual, and spiritual environment. On the other hand, researchers also need to explain the phenomenon of power relations in the community of social media users in expressing their religious attitudes on social media, using the theory of power relations from Michel Foucault. Power relation theory is based on cross-disciplinary methods between the social sciences and the humanities. This concept is beneficial in explaining the phenomenon of domination and representation, especially in explaining the social phenomena surrounding the relationship between subjects involved in social, economic, or political contestation. Foucault argues that discourse cannot be understood linguistically alone but must also consider the representative system that underlies it (Hall, 2001).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Variety of Religious Expressions of The People on Social Media

Since 2012, the development of the digital media world has shown a significant increase in Indonesia, including the forms of religious expression of its people on social media. Merlyna Lim argues that two main characteristics marked the post-1998 media industry: the return of freedom of expression in Indonesia and the faster market infiltration of the industrial world (Lim, 2011, p. 1).

In its development, several aspects that underlie the emergence of human religious expressions on social media are related to the da'wah method of the preachers. First, there is a content of wisdom in it. The da'wah delivered does not only include soft speech or just targhib advice and motivation. However, it becomes complex that da'wah has been used as a method that consists of all approach activities, either through deep knowledge, dialogue, or providing examples of a good life (Badi'ati, Rokhmiyati, Hasan, Widodo, & Ali, 2020). Various motivations and advice wrapped in images, articles, and videos and then shared on social media have given a new form for the Indonesian people to consume and enjoy the digital world. It also has a reasonably complex impact on accepting the content. Thus, today's social media has become a primary need where everyone can get access to information and disseminate it without going through critical informants.

Second, there is education about mau'izhah hasanah (good teaching). On the other hand, the mau'izhah hasanah contains expressions directed to the conscience and are focused on reason, whether readers and listeners can easily understand them. It means that there is a conscience's satisfaction and a clear conviction to believe in a proposition conveyed in the da'wah. This da'wah method can be said to be the most common. Its contents must include knowing the types of munkar (evil deeds) that develop according to a certain time and place, knowing the priority scale of munkar that takes precedence to be anticipated or handled, and thinking about its further effects in terms of psychological and social, health, and economical. Then the last thing is to have a solid and definite basis of religious argumentation both from the sources of the verses of the Qur'an, hadith, sirah (tales of prophet's life), and qaul (legal decisions) of the ulama (Muslim scholar) related to specific problems.

Third, if there are differences of opinion with others, choose the best way with opinions conveyed in a good way, or jadhilhum billati hiya ahsan (refute them in a good way). The demands on intellectuals or preachers are visible to continue to uphold religious values in digital spaces. Among other things is explaining to the public the crises that have arisen due to socio-political factors that accompany the development process towards the modernization process. They also must be able to explain to the people about pluralism. The community must understand pluralism both from the aspect of fiqh (formal rules in religion) and morals (related to ethics and social life in society). Then the next challenge is to encourage the formation of a learning society to respond to developments and progress due to globalization (Yasril & Alhidayatillah, 2017, p. 41). The variety of religious expressions makes its classification in the digital space, including: Traditional

Religious Expressions, Modern Religious Expression, Liberal Religious Expression, Radical Formalist Expressions, Moderate Religious Expression.

Traditional religious expressions. One of the traditional religious expressions in Indonesia manifests through the various cultures of its people. Cultural diversity is also inseparable from the values firmly held by the community. Such as the concept of *berkah* (blessing) and *barokah* (being blessed), *ijazah* (spiritual provisions), clothing tradition, *boyong* or *boyongan* (coming back home from boarding school) after education, *kenduri* or *selamatan* (having feast or ritual meal) at sacred events, imposing oneself in front of noble people, bowing to honor teachers or knowledgeable people, kissing hands as a sign of respect, arranging sandals for a guru, *sowan* (visiting the spiritual teacher), *tirakatan* (performing asceticism), *riyadho* (asking for teacher's blessings), *ngrowot* (a strict diet from any grains), and *mutihan* (having only rice and water for breakfasting) to improve the quality of spirituality (Irawan, 2018, pp. 84–85).

Traditional religious expressions manifest in the habits of an institution in teaching the students, including a boarding school (*pesantren*). In a *pesantren*, a *santri* (the boarding student) is trained to perform *tirakat* (asceticism) in studying. These rituals are not only accomplished through discipline, seriousness in learning, and devotion to the teacher but also the ability to withstand hunger by performing voluntary fasting to relieve the *santri*'s lust and laziness (Zakki, 2021b). This religious expression was then manifested through writing and currently adorns the spaces of social media websites (Zakki, 2021a).

Another expression is shown by the students standing, bowing, and kissing the teacher's hand at the Islamic boarding school, especially the Salaf Islamic Boarding School (Khadafi, 2017). These ethical values have already existed since the Hindu-Buddha era in Nusantara (Irawan, 2018). Another traditional religious expression is usually shown by one's clothing. In the past, someone with high religious knowledge was identical to the *sarung* (male sarong), *kopyah* (Muslim cap), and *sorban* (turban) wore to interact with the community. This clothing symbolizes honor, nobility, holiness, and a manifestation of the cultural values of the Indonesian archipelago during the Hindu-Buddhist heyday (Irawan, 2018).

The following religious expression is the tradition of *tahlilan* (reciting prayers for the deceased), *selamatan* (salvation feast), commemorating the Prophet's birthday, and public preaching in rural areas. This tradition still exists today and continues to be the expression for cultural preservation that has taken root. This condition encourages religious enthusiasm expressed in the digital world, commonly echoed with online *tahlilan*, online public preaching, and commemorating the Prophet's birthday.

Modern religious expression. Social media has advantages in providing services and its target market, including Youtube. Youtube has become a means to massively spread Islam and attract viewers through videos of various durations. If it is in the form of a religious lecture, the duration can be up to 2-3 hours. However, if it is about motivation and advice about Islam, it can last 15-30 minutes. This media is used by several modernist groups in disseminating intense ideas and information and using thematic studies. By the religious expressions, the modernist groups can be mapped into three types.

First, modern Islamic groups in which they create video content about life and problems that Muslims often experience. This content usually includes several strategies regarding the problems of *ummah*'s everyday lives. Those strategies include being a good Muslim, avoiding hurtful thoughts and speeches towards others, improving the quality of faith, repenting and forswear after committing a sin, and tips and *dhikr* to quickly find a life partner. The last strategy is usually found in every short video of any preacher. Because the target mass on Youtube is youth, this theme may be able to attract the attention of young people. Some of the preachers who young people love are Gus Baha', Ustad Adi Hidayat, Ustad Yusuf Mansur, Ustad Abdul Somad, Ustad Khalid Basalamah, Ustad Hanan Attaki, Buya Yahya, Aa Gym, and several other clerics.

The second type is the modern group that spiritually migrated. This group is those of celebrities or artists who left the entertainment world for life following Islamic teachings. Many have changed professions, from being artists to becoming Youtubers, such as Teuku Wisnu, Arie Untung, Ricky Harun, and others. Those artists then formed a group named “*Musawwaroh*.” This phenomenon is interesting and important to discuss because their hijrah was accompanied by religious studies on one famous religious figure in the digital world. The central figure on Youtube used as a reference is Ustad Adi Hidayat, who is straightforward and intelligent when explaining the history of the Quranic verses revelation (*asbabun nuzul*) and the history of the Prophet’s companions (*shahabat*).

The last type is the modern urban group. In terms of content and the highest rating in the digital world, there are several excelled Youtubers, Atta Halilintar, Ria Ricis, Rans Entertainment, Baim Wong-Paula, and Leslar (Lesti Billar). Those artists are all Muslim and provide examples of modern religious expressions in the digital world while still showing their existence as Muslims when creating the videos. Some examples are content about invitations to pray and share customary rituals in marriage, and some daily life. However, the third type is quite massive because the creators tend to be young people, affecting the Indonesian audience currently dominated by the millennial generation.

Liberal religious expressions. The Liberal Islamic Thought Movement has two important agendas: The renewal of Islamic understanding to harmonize religious experience with current developments. For this reason, they realize that a “new fiqh” formulation is needed to answer today’s humanitarian problems. Muslims are required to develop fiqh that can address the issues of democracy (democratic fiqh), pluralism (fiqh of tolerance and interfaith fiqh), liberalism (political fiqh and gender fiqh), and so on. These fiqh studies will prove Islam’s relevance in a more plural and global world. It will show that Islamic thinkers can provide an alternative for the people in disseminating correct information about Islam (L. Hakim & Omar, 2012).

The second agenda is to disseminate correct information about Islam. To straighten out the image of Islam that has been voiced by the term “fundamental and radical Islam,” Liberal Islamic thinkers try to present the face of progressive Islam, which is peaceful, tolerant, moderate, liberal, and civilized. However, the thinkers and intellectuals of said movement still find it challenging to incorporate this critical approach into the social and cultural areas. The domination of fundamentalist Islamic groups related to militant ideologies to reject liberal Islam or progressive Islam is still very strong.

The purpose of liberal Islamic thought is to create a critical and deconstructive tradition of shared understanding in society. In this case, Islam must be understood contextually and progressively with two main objectives: breaking away from traditional values and seeking future-oriented ones. Several groups echo the premise of peace wrapped in Islamic concepts in the digital world, and representative figures become role models.

Liberal Islam refers to understanding the importance of a movement that thinks about and interprets Islam contextually, critically, dynamically, progressively, and modernly. In this understanding, Islam is not given a textual meaning. Still, in the context of Liberal Islam, Islam performs *ijtihad* freely because it no longer wants to be trapped in a system of Islamic understanding inherited from classical Islam. The essence of Radical Islam is to present Islam based on the reality and conditions by providing a reinterpretation following the conditions of the era so that it departs from a new reality to the text. Still, the text is not used as legitimacy but as a more actual and progressive understanding so that religion becomes broad, dynamic, and progressing. Religion is no longer seen as the reason to marginalize women or a barrier to pluralism. Instead of being a hindrance to democracy, religion can become a means to express the adherents’ beliefs and worships in society.

In this millennium era, several figures emerged in society voicing how people should be free to express and think, even though they are women. Women also show their existence by expressing religion and commenting on digital spaces with various opinions, like Kalis Mardiasih, who vigorously voiced that women are capable and can become independent in writing or their

opinions. She is an opinion writer and young activist from Nahdlatul Ulama who graduated from Sebelas Maret University, Surakarta. She is also a member of the National secretariat of the Gusdurian National Network, a militant group for Gusdur's views. Mardiasih, who was born in 1992, is also active in writing books, including *Hijrah jangan jauh-jauh*, *Nanti Nyasar!* (Hanina, 2020) and *Berislam seperti Kanak-Kanak* ("Kalis Mardiasih : Suarakan Hak Perempuan Lewat Medsos," 2022).

Radical formalist expressions. In the sociological aspect, radical Islam is characterized by three tendencies. First, radicalism responds to ongoing conditions. The response appears in the form of an evaluation of rejection or even resistance. Problems rejected also vary in ideas, assumptions, institutions, or values seen as responsible for the rejected conditions. Second, radicalism seeks to replace new orders. In this process, radicalism tries hard to replace the existing order. Third, the radicals strongly believe in the truth they bring. At the same time, this attitude is coupled with other systems that will be replaced. In social movements, beliefs about the correctness of programs or philosophies are often combined with ways of achieving them in the name of ideal values, such as democracy or humanity. However, the strong beliefs of this group will result in the emergence of emotional attitudes that lead to violence (Fahrurrozi, 2016). In its development in social media, various expressions of radicalism can be seen on several websites developed in the community, among them: Arrahmah.id/, arrahmah.com, Almanhaj.or.id, Eramuslim.com.

Arrahmah.id/ arrahmah.com is a websites that provide information related to Islam in the world context. An article explains that this website only pretends to be an Islamic site but is a Zionist supporter. Ustad Rizal Mumazziq also said that in 2007, this site provided services to its members on how to assemble a bomb. Group members who enter this website will be given a tools book if they want to become expert terrorists. This website presents a video of the allegiance of a terrorist member who wants to carry out jihad in more detail (Mumazziq, 2021). This site was founded by Jibril Abdur Rohman, son of Abu Jibril, who is a Jemaah Islamiah (JI) member ("Jibril Juga Buron," 2009). We can see how conducive this group is to coordinating its teachings through the website.

This Almanhaj.or.id is a website does not display any images on its homepage. It only focuses on delivering the article's content, sources, authors, and editors. This website is not oriented towards political Islam or commercial matters such as fundraising or dating agency sites. However, it only highlights Islamic textual studies without highlighting Islamic culture and local wisdom in a country.

According to Savic Ali, the founder of Islami.co and an observer of several largest websites in Indonesia, this website is one of the sites that fall into the category of those that tend to exploit religion. However, a disclaimer from eramuslim.com, namely Nur Ahmad, explains that this website is not like that. The primary purpose of this website is for Muslims' needs and interests.

Moderate religious expression. The development of the religious dimension, especially Islam, used in social life, is often referred to as liberation theology. The religious dimension that underlies liberation theology shows an inseparable relationship in terms of understanding based on considerations of life from a psychological, sociological, and political perspective. This embodiment places the divine presence of God in every development and demand of human life. In this dimension, there is a belief that religion, whether it is a revealed religion or not, is created because complex situations or origins influence it (M. L. Hakim, 2021, p. 5).

In examining the expression of moderate diversity in the community, many figures show the tolerant side of their da'wah method on social media. The preacher who conveys the Islamic side and other religious content is packaged in a relaxed manner or a funny story in everyday life via YouTube, short TikTok videos, or videos edited for a few minutes on Instagram reels. The strategy of the da'wah method succeeded in utilizing internet media as a means of da'wah media and attracting the audience's interest to express their diversity through routine activities to see da'wah spectacles with digital media. Da'wah activities with the renewal of the concept of da'wah in this new media have provided significant changes for the progress of the people and the nation. In this case, the da'wah method has experienced a new paradigm and media (Asmar, 2020, p. 58).

First, the reform of the packaging concept of da'wah, which refers to the Qur'an, can be identified as a call or actualization of faith, religious enlightenment, and community processes towards the quality of khairu ummah. Examples of popular and well-known preachers are Ustad Yusuf Mansur, Ustad Abdul Somad, Ustad Adi Hidayat, and Gus Baha' (Yasril & Alhidayatillah, 2017). Ustad Yusuf Mansur, a guerrilla, provides knowledge through his unique style of interacting on Twitter and Instagram social media. Likewise, Ustad Abdul Somad, Ustad Adi Hidayat, and Gus Baha prioritize their da'wah movement on YouTube media.

Second, expanding and strengthening networks or collaboration with institutions engaged in da'wah. In this case, apply a new paradigm that emphasizes renewal in it. The partnership from other institutions is expected to provide a fresh nuance in the model of social media da'wah. The massive network and solid team also have adequate capabilities in utilizing social media, which is one of the factors for spreading digital da'wah and its various contents.

Third, strengthening primary and secondary funds for the continuation of quality da'wah. This goes back to the 'ideology' of the mass media industry, which provides high profits from products or events with a high selling value, including da'wah. Da'wah today must be packaged in an appropriate, appropriate, and interesting way and method. Da'wah is required to appear actual, factual, and contextual. Actual is intended to solve problems that are currently hot in the community.

Then factual is a concrete and real situation. Furthermore, contextual means relevant and concerns the problems being faced by the community. Thus, da'wah with actual, factual, and contextual data is a strategic part of da'wah itself, with an attractive and evocative model and actualized in a new packaging that is also moderate without taking sides with it any affiliation. Fourth, improving the quality and quantity of preachers morally, intellectually, spiritually, and socially (Asmar, 2020).

According to Savic Ali, there are four categories of Islamic-themed websites. The first category is ultra-conservatives that follow Salafi-Wahabi notions that seek the purification of Islam. This group is neither political nor provocative. There are also no pictures of women on the website. The second is political Islam, which tends to be provocative and often exploits religious sentiments. The views of this group follow Islamic supremacy. The third is commercial websites that give money using the name of Islam. Then fourth, Multicultural, which focuses on proclaiming the importance of religious harmony.

In terms of websites that are productive in expressing the diversity of moderate Islam in Indonesia, among others: NU Online, Islami.co, Alif.id, Bincangsyariah.com, and Muhammadiyah.or.id. Besides low costs, flexible accessibility and time efficiency are obtained in the increasingly widespread use of social media. Still, it will also be easier for social media users to get the desired target information (Rofahan, 2014, p. 41). The percentage level of social media use is 92.40%, with chat media at 62.80% and websites at 34.90% (Simarmata, Iqbal, Hasibuan, Limbong, & Albra, 2019, p. 37).

In maximizing information, especially community media, several stages need to be considered, including using official account names, disseminating information via links or rewriting, grouping information to be shared, creating or joining the social media community group, making friends with editors or other contributors who match their social media choices, and mark related accounts, whether it's according to what they want to learn or about general information (Simarmata et al., 2019). Here are some online websites that proclaim the importance of religious harmony, among them: NU Online or nu.or.id, Islami.co, Alif.id, Bincangsyariah.com, Rumaysho.com.

Savic Ali initiated NU Online as a website platform that refers to moderate Islamic content. In compiling the content of da'wah, it is required to be intelligent and to be able to attract people to participate in it. Public delivery, including the editorial of the sentence, must also be considered with distant observation. Is the site's content profane, or defamatory, or provide information about the correct arguments and fatwas related to human life, or is it only used as a tool to outperform other websites? The largest Islamic organization manages this website in Indonesia, NU (Nahdlatul

Ulama). Referring to Alexa Amazon's website analytics and statistics service--This website is in the 579th position in Indonesia.

It means that Nu.or.id has a media category with the specificity of the topic of Islam with the highest rating in Indonesia. According to SimilarWeb, a service similar to Alexa, 4.48 million visitors have visited this website, with 95.68 percent coming from Indonesia.

Islami.co was also founded and edited by Savic Ali. Savic explained that one of the advantages of a website as a means of da'wah is the search footprint factor. A website is more lasting than content distributed through social media (Zaenudin, 2018). This website contains no more complete content than nu.or.id because it does not specify contributors or content globally. But in general, the content of this website prioritizes cultural, religious, social studies and other popular news.

Hamzah Sahal and several other friends, Susi Ivvaty and Achmad Ubaydillah initiated Alif.id. His real name is Hamzah, while Sahal is his father's name. Hamzah Sahal was born in Cirebon March 22, 1979 to Kyai Sahal Irsyad and Nyai Jamroh Nadi. Hamzah once stayed at the al-Falah Islamic Boarding School, Ploso, Mojo, Kediri. However, only two months after his father's death, he continued his stay at the Krapyak Islamic boarding school, in Yogyakarta. He continued his studies at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta and became an activist for PMII, also active in LKiS Yogyakarta, Pesantren Nurul Ummah. Alif.id's old page is growing faster than expected. The website, founded in 2007, was able to enter the ranks of the most popular websites in the Islamic field in Indonesia within two years, together with NU Online and islami.co. Alif.id also organizes offline programs such as a photo exhibition of the Nusantara mosque in the Netherlands in June 2019 (Ridwan, 2020).

This website includes categories of issues about Islam and culture. There are several columns of arts and traditions whose content consists of some Islamic knowledge and literacy, both traditional and modern. In addition, what's interesting about the website is that the rubric of each content is continuous to episodes so that readers don't feel bored because they have to read long articles but are more relaxed because they are made in serial episodes.

Bincangsyariah.com is an Islamic website developed by the el-Bukhori Hadith Study Foundation. El-Bukhori Institute (abbreviated as eBI) was established on November 30, 2013, with the background of the fragile condition of hadith studies. To meet the needs of most of the religious activities of the Muslim community described in the hadith, a lot of hadith studies need to be done. In addition, the number of false hadiths has developed, and there is a misunderstanding of hadith in da'wah and scientific meetings. The activities carried out by eBI are conducting studies and publications related to hadith and conducting training and research on it.

This website was launched to respond to the growing Islamic discourse in the community, especially on social media. In addition, syiar through writings and this website is also so that Islamic studies always develop and become more dynamic. The issues discussed on this website are always based on scientific principles and follow the logic of Islamic science in analyzing a problem, guidelines or references to the Koran, hadith, and authoritative opinions of scholars (Bincang Syariah, 2021).

The contributors to the website, located in South Tangerang, are alumni of Islamic boarding schools and universities from undergraduate, master's, and even doctoral levels so that the quality of writing can be accounted for academically and religiously. Submission of information is also displayed in infographics and quotes to make it easier for readers to understand and digest the information conveyed. It can be seen from the profile of this website that most of the generations are accessible, so some of the language presented in the article is also not rigid and formal. The managers of this website include Abdul Karim Munthe, Hengki Ferdiansyah, Ibn Kharis, Muhammad Masrur Irsyadi, Ibn Hayyan, Alfian Mushafi Abdullah, Moh Juriyanto, Neneng Maghfiroh, and Annisa Nurul Khasanah.

Rumaysho.com was founded by Muhammad Abduh Tuasikal. He is a Wahhabi-Salafi adherent but tends to be moderate (Mumazziq, 2021). This website focuses on several aspects, including learning about Islam, morality, qolbu management, Muslim-ness, and the interpretation of the Koran. In addition, there is a particular column on Islamic law and the texts of holiday sermons, Friday sermons, and general sermons. Even more unique, this website has an exceptional service dealing with paid matchmaking agencies.

From this condition, it can be seen that a new Islamic revival movement is developing to animate the digital world. Religion is present and contextualized following the times, and its existence on earth is required to adapt to the needs of its people. An advanced society is a society that can adapt to its times. Several online websites in the digital spaces above show a change in the media for science transformation that is getting faster and wider. The community's response to social media is fast and responsive as a tool for synergizing knowledge and developing the quality of the human person to respond to the digital world. Thus, the expressions displayed by various groups in the digital space have become a special reference that religion can create and move a motivational spirit for humans.

Social-Cultural Dynamics and Patterns of Religious Expression of People in Social Media

Shifting Traditional Religious Expression to Modern. Community interactions on social media have shaped their religious character and identity. Massive and continuous interaction will quickly influence how the audience/citizens think and behave. People can effortlessly and promptly imitate and work on what is in the content or quotes on social media. The characteristics of social media always display an isolated face but can provide interaction space for everyone in it. People feel comfortable interacting on social media because they feel secure in their privacy without worrying about their social media activities being exposed to the public. This factor is used by many social media users in interacting and establishing communication.

In the context of social media interaction, there are at least three effects caused by the media. First, the cognitive effect occurs when the audience knows, understands, or perceives a change. Second is the affective effect, which arises when a change is felt, liked, and hated by the audience. Third, behavioral effects, which refer to the observed behavior, can be in activities and habits. This change can be seen from the change in actions after the audience receives the information (Rahmat, 2005, p. 219).

The changes that occur after people interact actively on social media are a sign that the work of social media is very effective in influencing one's thoughts and ways of behaving. There are many people who, when they see one ustadz on social media, are moved to imitate the ustadz, either in the way he dresses or the content of his lecture.

This phenomenon is widespread in today's era. People quickly get preferences in behavior and easily get sources of religious knowledge, even though they do not know the depth of spiritual wisdom from the ustadz. The most important thing for them is that they get an applicative or implementable way of Islam.



The more people interact in cyberspace, the more people listen to da'wah on Youtube, and the more active people play on IG. The more people share content on WhatsApp, the inevitable change in a person. People who do not know the ustadz being watched will follow him based on his taste.

From this problem, people who initially have a traditional understanding of religion, such as still being strong in maintaining the amaliyah of sunnah experts, experience a shift in their perspective on the way of Islam. Traditionalists, who initially prioritized aspects of tradition, became more modernists. This expression of the diversity of modern society is usually more attached to celebrity clerics and the phenomenon of celebrity migration. The public loves this celebrity ustadz because he displays Islam in modern and urban communities. The phenomenon of hijrah is also a fascinating study in the context of religion on social media. The presence of people who have migrated or celebrities who have migrated emphasizes that the modern human way of religion is more toward practical things. It's just that the phenomenon of celebrity hijrah is a lot of wrong views about Islam.

The picture above confirms that the hijrah among artists has been massive. Many artists migrated by wearing the hijab after their hijrah. Of course, that's not bad because, after the hijrah, many artists wear the hijab to show their identity that they have migrated. Meanwhile, many people migrated who made religious statements that did not calm them and provoked debate among netizens. Some artists migrate. Religious expressions point towards radicals and intolerance.

From the images above, it can be seen that the way of learning religion that the hijrah salespeople live is among themselves. They studied religion in their hijrah circle, and after the hijrah, they felt they had the right to speak up about religious issues. So it is not surprising, then, that prominent artists such as Five Vi, after moving, actually forbid mortgages and credit because they are considered usury. And, it is unsurprising that an artist like Arie K. Untung can talk about religious issues. Arie K. Untung was once a fairly lively public conversation on Twitter when he commented on King Salman, who wore a carpet and was associated with the issue of usury.



The emergence of celebrity figures who migrated and carry a radical religious identity indicates that learning religious knowledge is no longer centered on Kiai and ulama or pesantren and madrasas. The phenomenon of “Muslims without mosques” has become so natural in front of our eyes today.

The idiom “Muslim without a mosque” signifies how social media has become a progressive propaganda medium in the digital era. Society no longer involves conventional symbols such as mosques, Islamic boarding schools, madrasas, Kiai, and ulama to study religion. Their appearance seems to signify that religious passion in modern society does not originate from traditional religious authority (Jinan, 2012, p. 200).

Shifting Modern Religious Expression to Liberal. The phenomenon of artists migrating as part of the religious expression of modern society can be interpreted as religion being the center of human life. Ultimately, everyone will find peace in his life by finding the essence of his religious teachings.

The religious expressions displayed by modern humans signify that many religious authorities can be used as references to study religion. Modern society no longer relies on mosques or Kiai of Islamic boarding schools to learn religion. Still, they run to the virtual world and look for sources of knowledge by downloading religious materials or hearing and reading da'wah from ustadz.

People who are trapped in social media networks no longer need a single authority. Because they move on social media networks that are all easy to go viral, moving quickly from one place to another. In the end, religious experience is more personal, religious fatwas are unfounded, and religious knowledge has no clear scientific chain (Hefni, 2020, p. 12).

People are easily led to the flow of religious expression, which can shift a moderate understanding into a religious understanding that is extreme, exclusive, rigid, and easy to blame other groups. The digital space has led people towards a religious narrative based on a single narrative, which can cause tension and trigger identity politics.

This phenomenon can lead to liberal expression in society. The modern society of the city who migrated will easily label the figures and celebrity figures as preachers (ustadz). So it is not surprising that if many migrated, they quickly and easily issued statements that could trigger controversy in the community.

The emergence of celebrity preachers does not come from people who have studied religion for years in Islamic boarding schools and do not have an excellent religious education background. They are only figures who are deliberately raised to attract audiences thanks to the appearance or iconization of one character. They only cater to the desires of young people who want to study religion but are not out of date regarding appearance and fashion. In that way, the younger generation will continue to learn the religion from the ustadz or impromptu lecturer without losing their identity as fashionable young people.

Shifting Modern Religious Expression to Radical. The urban Muslim community and the millennial generation are groups greatly affected by the flow of social media in this digital era. Several reasons characterize the phenomenon of hijrah, first, the popularity of various Islamic books (Salafi, Tarbawi, Tahriri, etc.); second, Islamic studies based on campuses, mosques, and the Tablighi congregation; third, Internet access and social media regarding popular Islamic literature; fourth, the emergence of ustadz and celebrities; fifth, the emergence of hijrah communities; sixth, the topic of a light lecture that discusses the association of young people; and seventh, non-da'wah activities (photography, design, marketing, etc.) that are associated with Islam (Zahara, Wildan, Kunci, Hijrah, & Sosial, 2020, p. 60).

From the description above, one of the factors regarding migration is via the internet and the celebrity ustadz. These two points are interesting to draw a straight line, where they become one of the most crucial domains in the phenomenon of the youth hijrah movement and the urban Muslim community. Internet access on social media and the proliferation of clerics and artists who migrated have influenced the religious perspective and understanding of the younger generation and the city's Muslim community.

This phenomenon has become a new social movement developing among the younger generation. The hijrah movement that is packaged through social media platforms makes it easy for this movement to spread quickly. Social media efficiently disseminates, distributes, and mobilizes the masses rapidly too.

In a study of the younger generation, when asked which ustadz was most frequently followed, most respondents (45.45%) chose Ustadz Hanan Attaki. After Hanan Attaki, the next ustadz chosen or preferred by the respondents was Qurais Syihab as much as 14.54%, Khalid Basalamah 9.09%, Felix Saw 8.18%, Abdul Somad (UAS) 6.36%, Yusuf Mansyur, Adi Hidayat, and

Rizieq Syihab 2.72% each, Gus Miftah, KH. Said Aqil Siradj and Cak Nun, each 0.90%. Meanwhile, respondents who stated they did not know were 5.45% (Rosharlianti & Farchan, 2021, p. 20).

This trend indicates that the younger generation and urban Muslim communities no longer pay attention to the content of da'wah. They follow the trends and lifestyles brought by the ustadz they follow. When the preference of the Muslim community leads to an ustadz who is stylish and in line with the trend, it has become unimportant how the content of the da'wah itself is. The Islam adopted is more directed to "ready-to-use Islam."

The phenomenon of celebrity ustadz and the phenomenon of hijrah have significantly impacted how Islam is represented. With many artists who have migrated and statements of preaching from celebrity clerics that are controversial but are in high demand among teenagers, it proves that Islam no longer prioritizes the substance of teachings.

The phenomenon of ustadz giving controversial fatwas or da'wah indicates that many clerics are affiliated with radical religious beliefs. In historical records, the hijrah movement, which has penetrated Indonesian cities since the 1980s, cannot be separated from the expansion of various transnational Islamism movements (Hijrah, Konstruksi, & Fuad, 2020, pp. 45-51).

This movement originated from the migration movement on campus. After Suharto's fall, the movement affiliated with Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia, Tarbiyah, and Salafi grew bigger and targeted the younger generation and urban communities. Social media platforms share photos, quotes, videos, and other da'wah content.

Their appearance affects the religious expression of the community. Thanks to their massive video postings and da'wah content being shared and consumed by the public, many sympathizers also have a radical perspective and religious expression. Today, not a few urban communities join in forbidding Muslim converts. Or not a few people who ask about the argument of celebrating Maulid.

The core values of the da'wah principle, namely the invitation to goodness, are often violated by the da'wah interpreters themselves, so da'wah often creates new social problems. Without defining who is doing da'wah like this, the public would have been easier to feel and measure, which da'wah invites to goodness and which da'wah only spreads hatred and enmity (Al-Jaza'iri, 2003, p. 35). Today, it is effortless for us to find any prominent preachers and hijrah salespeople who spread statements that spark controversy among the public.

As a free media, social media has a lot of da'wah content that spreads hatred and hostility. Not a few ustadz or celebrities spread content and public opinion that trigger excessive fanaticism and truth claims, assuming that other groups are wrong. This religious understanding will give birth to radical religious expressions.

Their appearance is usually easy to comment on everything. Issues that should not be made viral are raised by preachers or salespeople who have migrated. We can't imagine, for example, that there are ustadz who forbid this without studying religion in-depth. Still, their statements are accepted by their followers, spread by their followers, and practiced by their followers.

When an ustadz comment on things that are not substantially worthy, this can trigger new problems in the community. A true preacher must issue a statement that can provide enlightenment in people's lives. Not by provoking further fanfare.

Preachers who do not have a deep understanding of religion and deep religious education background but are easy to spread information and are followed by their sympathizers will cause division and strengthen a rigid Islamic identity. Radical and extreme expressions will maintain in society.



The two posts above indicate that those who do hijrah do not have strong religious roots and understanding. They only present Islam artificially by claiming to have migrated. Statements that come out of the figure of an artist with a lot of followers, if it continues to be spread and there is no control, will affect the wider community. They will quickly follow their idol.

The two photos above are just one of the many appearances of salespeople who made statements that sparked controversy in the community. The figure of an artist who has a very different background from when he moved suddenly held a press conference and declared that they had migrated. After that, suddenly, they made a statement that did not make the situation cool.

Hijrah is indeed a good thing. Artists who migrate usually change their appearance, from initially not wearing a hijab, then evolving to wearing a hijab. Also, with male artists, those who initially looked rocky and fashionable turned more Islamic, wearing Koko, skullcap, and some even have beards.

At that level, there is nothing wrong with the hijrah process. However, it becomes a problem when, on the way, they become figures who comment on everything; for example, forbidding music, forbidding smoking, and forbidding birthdays. Statements like this from the point of view of moderate Muslims indicate that they are studying the wrong religion. In their migration, they learn religious knowledge, not from the right person, namely the Kiai of the pesantren.

According to Sahlul Fuad, the fast-growing hijrah movement in various cities has symptoms of increasing transnational movements that lead to fundamentalism and religious radicalism (Hijrah et al., 2020). This phenomenon raises the concern of many circles because it can cause tension and division in the community. Islamic sentiments also can divide and cause hatred towards other groups. This is increasingly spreading across various social media platforms; youtube, IG, FB, and Twitter.

For ordinary people, the content they share is difficult to distinguish, whether it is Salafi, Wahabi, or moderate Islamic movements. In this context, introducing the figure of a preacher who brings peace and unity must be raised in the community to understand who they will watch and what kind of da'wah content they will receive. So, netizens no longer care or take information based on an artist's or cleric's character or appearance but do not understand that the ustadz is affiliated to a transnational stream or Wahabi Salafism.

Shifting Radical Religious Expression to Moderate. Human contact with the digital world has brought a broad perspective because the digital world no longer views authority as coming from individuals. It means that everyone in the digital world has the right and is free to make their own choices. Someone will be considered to have legitimacy no longer in terms of his personality and knowledge but on the tastes of the intelligence itself.

In a digital world with social media platforms, netizens are the masters of everything. Netizens or audiences have the right to choose what content to read/listen to and what kind of cleric will become an idol. When many people have millennial clerics as young clerics who are followed, it has to do with the tastes of netizens who view characters based on their stature and appearance.

Netizens feel that following the ustadz represents his anxiety and desire. Perhaps, everyone will feel represented by an ustadz whose appearance is easy-going, trendy, and presenting himself as a figure who is good at religion. What's more, his lectures or da'wah are still targeted with the problems faced by the audience.

These patterns continue to be reproduced in the media according to the times. In the past, through television, preachers appeared with trendy styles and good looks. Now, they package it through social media platforms in the form of short videos, quotes, and personal vlogs that record the daily activities/activities of the preacher.

Reproduction of religious content and narratives by ustadz like this will quickly influence the audience or congregation. We have often seen the phenomenon of attacking each other on social media through comments. They carry out attacks against mainstream religious sects that have long developed in Indonesia. Meanwhile, their group uses the younger generation as an agency to attack other groups while spreading hatred, incitement, and even hoaxes. In the same way, they also deconstruct the teachings of Islam that have long developed in Indonesia with the doctrine of the "true religion" and the purer teachings of Islam.

This kind of movement's massiveness has impacted how people are influenced to become Muslims by radical movements. There are many people who, consciously or not, their religious expressions are affiliated with the Wahabi Pamah Salafism and radicalism movements. They are quickly recruited into groups of Salafi and extremist movements, such as HTI, JAT, and so on.

One of the figures affiliated with the JAT movement is Haris Amir Falah. He is a Jamaah Ansharut Tauhid and was arrested by Special Force (Densus) 88 Anti-Terror for his active involvement in armed military training conducted by civilians in the Republic of Indonesia, Gunung jurisdiction Jalin Jantho Aceh. He was arrested with a sentence of 4 years and six months in prison. After being released from prison, Haris began to change his religious perspective to become more moderate and spread enlightenment to the public eye.



Haris finally wrote a book as a form of his experience, "Hijrah from Radical to Moderate." Haris explained that there had been many sad and embarrassing events due to radicalism that gave birth to acts of terror. According to Haris, the hijrah must reflect the shift from negative to positive things. If the hijrah actually leads to a negative direction and even leads to radicalism, then there must be a moderate understanding as a catalyst and balancer for the movement.

From Haris' explanation, as a former convict who has changed his religious understanding from radical to moderate, it is increasingly clear that the hijrah process adopted by many groups was in the wrong direction. They want to move from something negative to something positive. Still, the statements and contents of the disseminated da'wah display a violent Islamic character, face sedition, and cause unrest in the eyes of the public. Lecturers and religious clerics who issue many statements that provoke the scent of incitement and hatred must be countered with moderate narratives so that the narrative on social media is not co-opted and monopolized by transnational and radicalism.

From Haris' explanation, it is interesting what was said by Tarmizi Taher that indications of radicalism have three tendencies: *first*, radicalism is a response to ongoing conditions. Usually, the response appears in the form of evaluation, rejection, and even resistance. Problems that are rejected can be in the form of assumptions of identity, institutions, or values that are considered responsible for the continuation of the rejected conditions. *Second*, radicalism does not stop at resisting efforts but continues to try to replace the order with other forms. In this context, radicalism has a view that is embodied in its program. Radicals try to make this order a substitute for the existing order. *Third*, the radicalism's strong belief in the correctness of the program or ideology they carry. This attitude is accompanied by denial or negation of the truth of other systems that will be replaced in social movements, beliefs about the correctness of programs or philosophies are often combined with achievements in the name of ideal values, such as humanity. However, the strength of this belief resulted in the emergence of an emotional attitude among the radicals.

From the description above, it is clear that the radicals who have been influenced will quickly spread their incitement and beliefs to influence other groups while ignoring the truth of other groups. The emergence of extremists cannot be separated from the belief in the existence of a wrong system, and they must change the system with a new, better value order.

Therefore, it is interesting what Haris, as a former convict affiliated to JAT and has converted to moderate, said that strengthening the radicals must be accompanied or balanced by the strength of moderate religious understanding. If they use social media as a medium to spread their religious knowledge, then moderates must also use technology as a medium to compensate.

From this, it is important that today, moderate Muslims must be able to balance the spread of radical content by bringing up moderate icons. This moderate icon or figure must also spread da'wah content and religious fatwas on social media as a counterweight to the radical movement. Figures like Gus Baha' should often appear on social media with wasathiyah Islamic content and narratives. And even moderates must package their content in an interesting way that suits the tastes of the audience (Mumazziq, 2021).

CONCLUSION

The phenomenon of the rise of religious expression on social media today is a process that is still connected to the processes of "Islamization" that occurred previously in the real world. Different and contradictory expressions result from their different patterns of religious thought. Groups with solid ideological ties to local socio-religious organizations such as NU and Muhammadiyah tend to express more moderate views, ideas, attitudes, and behavior. Meanwhile, groups with strong ideological ties to transnational movements or organizations tend to express extreme, radical religious ideas, attitudes, and behaviors and reject all forms of local religious symbols. Likewise, with groups whose birth is closely related to political interests, their religious expression in the digital space tends to have a political nuance by prioritizing anti-ulama and anti-Islam issues. They identify themselves more as the amar mar'ruf and nahi munkar movement. That's why they sometimes commit acts of violence in society, with the excuse of eradicating immorality.

The diversity of religious expressions in this digital space also impacts the broader and more significant number of parties involved in ideological conflicts and contestations in cyberspace, with the means of smartphones and computers and effortless and cheap access to the internet network. It has opened a space for public involvement in enlivening the debate on issues that are developing and being viral on social media. This phenomenon

has both positive and negative potential because apart from raising awareness of the importance of reading culture, on the other hand, instant information often makes religious issues partially accepted and causes misunderstandings between groups or within the group itself.

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