

# Media, Islamic Religious Authority and The Imagination of *Ummat* in Indonesia

## Abstract

This article investigates the history of Islamic religious authority in Indonesia and the role of the media in the development of religious authority and the imagination of Islamic community. The article argues that the contestation of Islamic religious authority has contributed to the process of re-imagination and re-conceptualisation of the concept of global Muslim *ummat* by Muslim groups in Indonesia. The article also argues that the media play a significant role in the current understanding of *ummat* and Islamic religious authority in the global and local contexts. The old traditional authority of local imam or Islamic clerics is now being challenged by transnational interpreters of Islam with the availability of direct connection with Islamic clerics and religious learning resources from the Middle East, the United States, the United Kingdom or anywhere else in the world facilitated by the internet.

Keyword : Islam religious; *ummat*; internet; new media; muslim

## Abstrak

Artikel ini melakukan investigasi sejarah keagamaan Islam di Indonesia dan peran media

*dalam pengembangan otoritas keagamaan dan imajinasi masyarakat Islam. Artikel ini berpendapat bahwa kontestasi kekuasaan Islam telah memberikan kontribusi terhadap proses re-imajinasi dan re-konseptualisasi dari konsep umat Muslim global dengan kelompok Muslim di Indonesia. Artikel tersebut juga berpendapat bahwa media memainkan peran penting dalam pemahaman saat umat dan otoritas keagamaan Islam dalam konteks global dan lokal. Otoritas tradisional imam lokal atau ulama Islam setempat sekarang sedang ditantang oleh transnasional Islam dengan ketersediaan koneksi langsung dengan ulama Islam dan sumber agama yang belajar dari Timur Tengah, Amerika Serikat, Inggris atau di tempat lain di dunia dengan difasilitasi oleh internet.*

*Kata kunci : Islam religious; ummat; internet; new media; muslim*

## INTRODUCTION

The term *ummat* is central in the imagination of the ideal form of Islamic community. The article argues that the media play a significant role in the current understanding of *ummat* and Islamic religious authority in the global and local context. This article also argues that the contestation of Islamic religious authority has contributed to the process of re-imagination and re-conceptualisation of the idea of global Muslim *ummat* by Muslim groups in Indonesia. The old traditional authority of local *imam* or Islamic clerics is now being challenged by transnational interpreters of Islam with the availability of direct connection with Islamic clerics and religious learning resources from the Middle East, the United States, the United Kingdom or anywhere else in the world facilitated by the internet. I start the article by outlining specific contribution of the media in the transformation of religious authority in Islam globally and more specifically in Indonesia. I then go on to outline two important implications of the transformation of Islamic religious authority in Indonesia, namely the proliferation of the centres of authority and the change in the holders of authority and how these changes

have contributed to different imaginations of the Islamic *ummat* in Indonesia.

## METHOD

This article employs critical discourse analysis as the research method. The socio-cognitive approach of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) developed by Teun van Dijk (2001) is utilised in this research. This approach focuses on the role of socio-cognitive structures in mediating texts and society, and the complexities of the relationship between discourse structure and social structures. Several elements of discourse are analysed including semantic macrostructures and schematic structures of the text (topics, propositional structures), local meaning (choice of vocabulary, specific arguments), context and event models (the context and facts represented in the text) and the relationship between the text and its broader social context.

## CONTENT

### Media and religious authority in Islam

The term religious authority has various meanings. Gaborieau (2010) offers a general definition of religious authority as ‘the right to impose rules which are deemed to be in consonance with the will of God’ (p. 1). Furthermore, Kramer and Schmidtke (2006) argue that religious authority can be implemented in many forms and functions which include:

the ability (chance, power, or right) to define correct belief and practice, or orthodoxy and orthopraxy, respectively; to shape and influence the views and conduct of others accordingly; to identify, marginalize, punish or exclude deviance, heresy and apostasy and their agents and advocates (p. 1).

The ultimate source of authority in Islam is the revelation received by the Prophet Muhammad. Therefore, ‘any claim on religious authority in the following periods

had to prove its link with this source’ (Mir-Kasimov, 2013, p. 2). Mir-Kasimov further argues that despite this single source of authority, various approaches have been used by scholars in Islam to preserve or interpret ‘the original impulse of the prophetic revelation’ (Mir-Kasimov, 2013, p 2).

The competition for creating Muslim identities goes hand in hand with the competition of Islamic religious authority. Several studies suggest that media play an important role in the construction of the competing authorities, because religious authority in contemporary Muslim society is achieved more by popular recognition rather than a hierarchical system of authority (see for instance Anderson, 1999; Mandaville, 2001; and Turner, 2007). The important role of media can be seen in the way the source of Islamic authority has shifted from oral sources to print sources and then to the internet. Therefore, different media can be understood to endow the possibility of a different conception of Islamic authority and also facilitate various conceptualisations of Islamic community.

During the early years of Islamic propagation, the sources of Islamic teaching came from the prophet Muhammad and his companions mainly in the form of oral authority (see for instance Nasr, 1992 and Robinson 1993). Therefore, the authority to interpret the teaching of Islam was limited in the hand of the prophet Muhammad and scholars who had direct contact with him or his companions. In Indonesia, this Middle Eastern style of authority was mainly introduced by Arab traders from the Hadhramaut region, many of whom were believed to be the descendants of the prophet Muhammad, who finally settled in some parts of the archipelago and also by returning Indonesian pilgrims who spent their time in the holy city Mecca to learn Islam (van Bruinessen, 1999). This Middle Eastern style of Islam was an exception to the dominant

'syncretistic' type of Islam which represents 'the early wave of Islamisation' in Indonesia in the 13<sup>th</sup> century to the 15<sup>th</sup> century (van Bruinessen, 1999, p. 3). Therefore, the tension between the perceived 'global' version of Islam and the culturally adaptable 'local' version of Islam in Indonesia has existed long before the arrival of print Islam. The oral tradition in Islamic teaching was still very dominant until the adoption of printing technology in the Muslim world in the nineteenth century (Robinson, 1993).

In the era of print technology, written authority replaced the oral authority of Muslim scholars. The printing press started to be used widely in the Muslim world in the beginning of nineteenth century. Muslim reformist leaders in the Indian sub-continent started to establish printing presses in 1820s and Muslim rulers in the Ottoman empire started to print Islamic books in 1870s (Robinson, 1993). By the end of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of twentieth century several global figures of Islamic reform such as Muhammed Abduh (1849-1905) and Mowlana Mawdudi (1903-1979) were journalists (Anderson, 1999). In Indonesia, the first printed Islamic publication was a 1853 printing of a text recited to celebrate the birth of the prophet Muhammad (Proudfoot, 1995).

This print based authority was then rapidly reproduced in the era of tape and digital recording technology by the massive reproduction of Islamic speeches and books into audio and video cassettes and also compact discs, especially after the introduction of optical media in 1980s (Mandaville, 2001). Audio and video recording technology might have facilitated the partial return of the power of oral authority. However, this recording technology can not resemble the intimate connection which can be established between the teacher and the students in the era of oral authority.

The use of printing technology and digital recording technology in the global Muslim world had reduced the dominant role of

oral authority of Muslim scholars and made Islamic books and other references more accessible to ordinary Muslims. Although a printing press has been established by Jewish refugee in Istanbul to print Bibles and secular books since 1493, the Muslim rulers were initially reluctant to adopt printing technology for the purpose of Islamic teaching (Robinson, 1993). According to Robinson, the reason behind this rejection was mainly because rulers feared that printing technology would threaten the oral tradition which had become 'the very heart of Islamic systems for the transmission of knowledge' (Robinson, 1993, p. 234). Robinson further argues that:

By printing the Islamic classics, and the print run for a major text could be as many as ten thousand copies, and by translating them into the vernaculars they undermined their authority; they [Islamic clerics] were no longer necessarily around when the book was read to make up for the absence of the author in the text; their precious *ijazas* (certificates), which brought the authority of the past to their learning in the present, were made less significant; their monopoly of the transmission of knowledge was broken (Robinson, 1993, p. 245).

Robinson's statement about the absence of author in the era of print industry echoes McLuhan's idea in his book 'The Gutenberg Galaxy' that the arrival of print technology has created the 'autonomous survival of knowledge'. In a review of 'The Gutenberg Galaxy' Mizrach argues that:

The spoken word is intimate, tied to the very breath and health of the speaker. The written word makes possible the autonomous survival of knowledge - with an oral tradition, it disappears when the oralists have all been killed; but, as people have noted for a long time, writing is impersonal, does not carry emotional intonations as well as speech, and lacks the identifying characteristics (pitch, tone, timbre, rate, etc.) that links speech to a speaker (Mizrach, n.d.).

Proudfoot further argues that the use of printing technology in the dissemination of Islamic teaching has democratised the access to Islamic texts but at the same time has also facilitated the rise of standardised 'orthodox Muslim learning'. The rise of this 'orthodox understanding' was mainly influenced by the easier access of ordinary Muslims to many classic 'authoritative texts', they were 'less reliant on mediation by *ulama*' (Proudfoot, 1995, p. 220).

The internet has enabled further proliferation of sources of authority. The convivial characteristics, especially the user friendliness and the power of multimodality offered by the internet have facilitated the existence of new interpreters of Islam and new ways of imagining the concept of *ummat* (see for instance Eickelman and Anderson, 1999; Saunders, 2008; Sands, 2010). These new interpreters come from diasporic Muslim communities which geographically reside in many different parts of the world with various social and political situations. As Turner argues:

For Islam and many other cultures, globalization has meant migration followed by the creation of diasporic communities. The internet provides an obvious method for dialogue within and between such diasporic groups, but the unintended consequence is often that diasporic politics and their intellectual elites come to depart radically from tradition, building up their own internal notions of authority, authenticity and continuity. The Internet holds the diasporic community together across space and then challenges traditional authority, which is characteristically an oral and print authority (Turner, 2007, p. 127).

The transmission of Islamic teaching which initially relied on the oral and personal authority of Muslim scholars who have direct contact with the prophet Muhammad and his companions has been challenged by the impersonal authority of print media and has

also been increasingly disjointed from the traditional authorities by the global use of the internet by Muslim communities all over the world (Mandaville, 2001; Turner, 2007).

### Local implications in Indonesia

As discussed above, the nature of Islamic religious authority has changed over time, in part corresponding to the changing media technologies. Here I turn specifically to analysing two aspects of Islamic authority in Indonesia, namely geopolitical spaces from which authority emanates and persons in whom authority is vested.

#### *Proliferation of centres of authority*

The development of Muslim religious authority can particularly be seen in the tradition of *fatwa* (*Fatwa* is the delivery religious opinion on specific issues related to everyday life of Muslim. The authoritative person in giving the fatwa is called a *Mufti*). Since the introduction of Islam in Indonesia until the end of nineteenth century, Indonesian Muslims relied on the religious opinion of the Muslim scholars in the holy city Mecca such as the great Meccan *mufti* Ahmad Dahlan (d. 1886) (Kaptein, 2004). Until the beginning of the twentieth century, the holy cities Mecca and also Medina were still regarded as the centre for the development of Islam by Indonesian (Bruinessen, 1999). Bruinessen further argues that the connection to the holy cities Mecca and Medina was mainly introduced by many Arab traders and the returning Indonesian pilgrims (*hajji*) and students from the holy cities Mecca and Medina back to the Islamic 'periphery' of Indonesia (1999, p. 6).

Since the end of the nineteenth century, the central position of Mecca has been challenged by the rise of several modernist Muslim scholars from Cairo followed by the expansion of the brotherhood movement from Egypt. Several other centres also started to bring their influence to Indonesia such

as the *Ahmadiyya* movement from Pakistan and also significant influence from Iran after the Islamic revolution (van Bruinessen, 1999). The emergence of the *Salafi Jihadi* movement in Afghanistan since the early 1980s introduced jihad battlefields in many countries as a new centre of influence. Van Bruinessen further argues that the centre-periphery model was no longer adequate to describe the development of Islam in Indonesia at the end of twentieth century. He instead describes the new formation as a network model.

By the 1970s, however, there were not only more centres, but the influences had also become more diffuse, and a network model represents the flow of influences more adequately. One did not have to go to Mecca or Cairo to find stimulating Islamic ideas. Students of medicine or political science at an American university were as likely to emphasise their Muslim identities and to encounter fascinating new Islamic thought. Journals and books, in such international languages as English and Arabic or in Indonesian translations, became the major vehicles of Islamic dissemination (van Bruinessen, 1999, p. 11).

The use of the internet in the representation of Islam and Islamic teaching propagation in Indonesia has clearly made the flow of influences even more complex. Many independent interpreters of Islam have started to emerge and these new interpreters have contributed to the change of the way Islamic religious authority operates.

### ***Holders of religious authority***

Traditionally, a *fatwa* is given by an individual *mufti*. However, since the beginning of twentieth century, Muslim organisations in Indonesia have started to introduce 'collective religious opinions' in response to the particular problems of Indonesian Muslims (Hosen, 2008; Kaptein 2004). Many Islamic print media with various forms such as newspapers, bulletins and magazines have

also provided a special section to answer the questions about any religious issues from the readers in the Indonesian context. Within this framework, the authoritative power of an individual mufti is usually achieved more by the charismatic authority of the individual mufti based on the description of the three types of authority introduced by Max Weber (Max Weber introduces three different types of authority; namely traditional authority, charismatic authority and legal-rational authority. Traditional authority is maintained by constant reference to customs, traditions and conventions; Charismatic authority is maintained by strong personality of the leaders; And legal-rational authority is empowered by a formalistic belief in the content of the law or rationality (see for instance Best, 2002 and Williams, 2003). On the other hand, the collective authority of Muslim groups and organisations has been developed mainly in the form of traditional and legal-rational types of authority. The significant role of charismatic authority was threatened by the impersonal authority of print media but potentially re-emerged in the competition of Islamic religious authority in various audio-visual media outlets, especially the internet, because the internet provides the possibility of the use of multimodal communication by combining written, audio and visual messages in one place. In her research on the use of multimodal communication by Muslims on the internet, Sands argues,

...although some Muslims speak the "language" of older forms of media, transferred to the Web, many are "linguistically" adept in exploiting the multiple linkages of online spaces and the particular vernacular spoken in this new medium, a mix of written text, imagery and sound (Sands, 2010, p. 154).

There has been also a change in the background of the holders of religious authority. Until the first half of twentieth

century, Muslim religious authority in Indonesia was mainly in the hands of traditional clerical scholars who graduated from the Middle East or their students in local traditional Islamic schools in Indonesia. These Middle Eastern graduate scholars tended to promote a more literal approach to the study of Islamic law in Indonesia (Bowen, 2011). Since the late 1960s many Indonesian Muslim intellectuals have been sent to pursue their studies in western countries especially the United States and Canada. This different route of 'intellectual pilgrimage' has contributed to the development of an alternative approach to the study of Islamic law in Indonesia by introducing 'a social-contextual approach to Islamic history' and 'a more universalistic liberal approach grounded in human rights norms' (Bowen, 2011: 49). These Muslim intellectuals with western educational backgrounds started to bring an influence after the arrival of several influential Muslim scholars from their study in 1980s. One of the most prominent was Nurcholish Madjid (1939-2005) who holds a PhD degree from the University of Chicago. He promoted the idea of so called 'Islamic Indonesian-ness', a genuine identity of Islam in Indonesia which is in harmony with *Pancasila* as the basis of the Indonesian nation state (van Bruinessen, 1999).

The idea of Islam and Indonesian-ness (Islam dan keindonesiaan) brought by Nurcholish Madjid and his renewal (*pembaharuan*) group is in line with the idea of 'indigenisation of Islam' (pribumisasi Islam) introduced by another influential Muslim scholar from the traditionalist background, Abdurrahman Wahid (Burhani, 2013, p. 27). According to Burhani (2013), this integrated description of Islamic identity and national identity has become a central issue in the mainstream Muslim groups in Indonesia since the middle of the New Order era. Azra identifies these mainstream groups as 'non political, operating not only as religious

organisations but also as social, cultural and educational organisations' (Azra, 2013, p. 70). Furthermore, van Bruinessen (2008) differentiates mainstream Muslim groups in Indonesia into two categories, namely the traditionalists who maintain syncretistic practices found in early Islamisation in Indonesia (such as *Nahdhatul Ulama*) and the reformists (other scholars use the term modernists) who criticise those practices based on the argument that there is no justification of those practices in the Qur'an and the prophetic traditions (such as *Al-Irsyad*, *Muhammadiyah* and *Persatuan Islam*). Burhani (2013) further argues that although the concept of Indonesian Islam has been interpreted differently by the traditionalist and the modernist/reformist Muslim groups, the concept has been used by both of the mainstream Muslim groups in Indonesia to define their distinct identities. He contends:

For traditionalist Muslims, the concept (Indonesian Islam) reflects the efforts to define what is authentic in Indonesian Islam and to avoid a blind imitation of foreign influences... In modernist circles, Indonesian Islam is mainly used to solve the problems surrounding the relation between religion and state (Burhani, 2013, p. 27).

The effort of these mainstream groups to develop an authentic Indonesian Islam identity is parallel with the centralistic policy of the New Order regime which had already established a media system that allowed it to define and control a range of national discourses and to make itself the source of all authority in and about Indonesia (See for instance McDaniel, 2002; Sen and Hill, 2007). Media regulation during the Soeharto era was very tight. All media which expressed oppositional voices towards Soeharto were banned. Bouchier (2015) argues that 'in Soeharto's 'Pancasila Democracy', opposition and conflict were condemned as alien notions, deriving from individualistic western

culture' (p. 2). The idea of Indonesian Islam was supported by the New Order regime arguably because it was considered to be more relevant in the context of Indonesian nation building and it did not contradict the interests of Soeharto's authoritarian regime. After the fall of Soeharto's regime, the idea of indigenous Indonesian Islam which is compatible with democracy and *Pancasila* still remains a dominant understanding of Islam in Indonesia.

However, as a result of the freedom of information policy put in place after the fall of Soeharto, transnational Islamist elements have had far greater access to Indonesia's public spheres. Several Muslim clerics who were previously marginalised by Soeharto's regime such as Jafar Umar Thalib and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir and the proponents of the establishment of Islamic state in Indonesia are currently enjoying the freedom of expression in Indonesian public spheres and developed a counter-discourse against the mainstream understanding of indigenous Indonesian Islam (Hefner, 1999). The free and open media policy after the New Order era has strengthened the network model of the development of Islamic authority in Indonesia introduced by van Bruinessen (1999) and has also facilitated more diverse global influences to Indonesian Islam. These new global influences were mainly introduced by transnational and political Islamic movement such as *Hizbut Tahrir* and *Salafi Jihadi* movement (see for instance Platzdasch, 2009 and Solahudin 2011).

### Different imaginations of *ummat* in Indonesia

Previous studies suggest that the establishment of diasporic Muslim communities in many parts of the world and the proliferation of different Islamic religious authorities contribute to the polarisation of Muslim communities across the globe. This polarisation has also contributed to various

imaginings of the ideal form of Muslim *ummat* (See for instance Mandaville, 2001; Roy, 2004). In his book titled *Transnational Muslim Politics*, Mandaville argues:

When I speak of reimagining the umma, I am talking about more than Muslims simply stressing their similarities, de-emphasising their differences and living together in a single global community. Rather, I am speaking about Muslims *reconceptualising* the umma; that is revising their idea about who, what and where political community can be (Mandaville, 2001, p. 187).

Roy echoes Mandaville's argument that the contemporary *ummat* can be imagined in many different ways. He argues that in the context of Islamic neo-fundamentalist movement:

This imagined ummah can be expressed in historical paradigms (the Ottoman Empire), in political myth (the Caliphate), in legal Muslim categories (Dar-ul-Harb and Dar-ul-Islam) or in modern anti-US rhetoric (anti-imperialism), but it has never fitted with a given territory (Roy, 2004, p. 288).

Although all Muslims talk about *ummat* as the symbol of global Muslim solidarity, it is clear that many Muslims have different ideas about who can be regarded as a member of the *ummat* and how this *ummat* should be organised.

Despite the fact that *Pancasila* as the foundation of the state only mentions belief in one god in general and does not indicate Islam as the official religion of the state, Islam has been regarded by scholars and political leaders as one of the strongest bonding elements of Indonesian nationalism. As Vandenbosch argues:

For a country like Indonesia, divided over a large number of widely separated islands, and with its peoples strongly attached to their ethnological and *adat* communities, a unifying and integrating force was desperately needed. The one common

factor of Indonesian life was Islam. Here was a force that could be used to break down local patriotisms and help create national unity (1952, p. 182).

However, there are many different ways in which Muslim groups in Indonesia define the position of *ummat* within the discourse of national unity. Muhammad Ali (2011) identifies four different views with regard the relationship between Islam and national identity in Indonesia. First, those who declare 'Islamization yes, Indonesianization no'; Second, those who declare 'Islam first, Indonesia second'; Third, those who declare 'Formalistic Islam no, substantive Islam and Indonesia, yes'; and fourth, those who declare 'Islamization yes, Indonesianization yes' (pp. 2-8). The first category represents the view of transnational Islamic organisations such as *Hizbut Tahrir*, which consistently promote the re-establishment of global Islamic caliphate. The second category represents the view of Islamist political parties such as *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS)*, which prefer to participate in a democratic political process to promote the formalisation of Islamic law in Indonesia. The third category represents the view of the so called 'progressive' Muslim groups such as *Jaringan Islam Liberal (JIL)*, which promote the adoption of substantive Islamic values as part of the nation identity and reject the formalisation of Islamic law in Indonesia. The fourth category represents the view of 'mainstream' Islamic organisations in Indonesia such as *Muhammadiyah* and *Nahdhatul Ulama*, which promote an integrated construction of Islamic identity and national identity as discussed earlier in this article (Ali, 2011). According to Pringle, the identification of *Muhammadiyah* (founded in 1912) and *Nahdhatul Ulama* (founded in 1926) as the representation of mainstream Islam in Indonesia is based on two notions:

First, that the two organizations, although far from homogeneous themselves, represent collectively the view of most Indonesian Muslims, and second, that their views are predominantly middle-of-

the road in both religious doctrine and politics (Pringle, 2010, p. 115).

As a result of this understanding, these mainstream groups are usually associated with their 'moderate' approach of religious thinking and practice.

There is no single description about the term moderate Muslims. It is an ambiguous term which is 'understood differently by different people' (Fuller, 2007, p. 34). Therefore the description of moderate Muslims will depend on 'the politics or religious positions of the individual making the judgements' (Esposito, 2007, p. 26). For instance, Bokhari and Senzai identify at least four different groups of Muslims who claimed themselves as moderate Muslims, namely 'moderate Islamists', 'traditional Muslims', 'liberal Muslims' and certain regimes in the Muslim World. They further explain that:

moderate Islamists claim the mantle of moderate Islam in a bid to distinguish themselves from the radical and militant types. Traditional Muslims who are different from the moderate Islamists in that they do not advance a particular political ideology based on Islam are quick to point out that they have always constituted the majority of Muslims historically. They emphasize that they gained their status as the historical mainstream of Islam by refraining from adopting any immoderate tendencies to advance their cause. Most practicing Muslims (a great many of whom perhaps identify with the Sufi strand of Islam) fall in this category. Liberal Muslims represent the third group: those who might adhere to a certain minimalist degree of personal religious commitment but for the most part have embraced secularity in the public realm (Bokhari and Senzai, 2007, p. 143).

Esposito argues that the basic characters of moderate Muslims are 'those who live and work 'within' societies, seek change from below, reject religious extremism, and consider violence and terrorism to be illegitimate' (Esposito, 2007, p. 26). A prominent scholar of *Muhammadiyah*,



Syafiq A. Mughni, contends that there are several characteristics of moderate Muslims. Firstly, they consistently take the middle path in interpreting and implementing the teaching of Islam. Secondly, they are more concerned with the implementation of the justice system rather than the form of the state. Therefore any form of state is acceptable as long as it does not contradict Islamic principles of human rights. Thirdly, moderate Muslims acknowledge contextual understanding of Islamic law in connecting Islamic values with modernity. Fourthly, they believe in peaceful and gradual change in establishing a better Islamic society (Mughni, 2009).

As the representation of mainstream and moderate Muslim groups in Indonesia, both *Muhammadiyah* and *Nahdhatul Ulama* established branches from the provincial level to the sub-district level in almost all parts of Indonesia. The precise numbers of the followers of *Muhammadiyah* and *Nahdhatul Ulama* are not available, but their combined following is estimated around a quarter of the Indonesian population (Pringle, 2010). A nation-wide survey conducted by The Research Center for the Study of Islam and Society in 2002 showed that 75% of Muslims in Indonesia indicated a connection with either *Muhammadiyah* or *Nahdhatul Ulama* (Mujani and Liddle, 2004). *Muhammadiyah's* view of national identity can be observed in the official statement declared in its 46<sup>th</sup> national congress in 2010 to commemorate the centennial anniversary of the organisation as follows:

In the context of nationality, *Muhammadiyah* has sought to integrate Islam and 'Indonesianess' from the beginning. *Muhammadiyah* and the Muslim ummat are the integral parts of the nation and they have participated in the development of Indonesia since the national awakening movement to the independence. *Muhammadiyah* has actively participated in the establishment of the foundation of a nation-state based on *Pancasila* and the 1945 Constitution. [Dalam kehidupan kebangsaan Muhammadiyah

sejak awal berjuang untuk pengintegrasian keislaman dan keindonesiaan. Bahwa Muhammadiyah dan umat Islam merupakan bagian integral dari bangsa dan telah berkiprah dalam membangun Indonesia sejak pergerakan kebangkitan nasional hingga era kemerdekaan. Muhammadiyah terlibat aktif dalam peletakan dan penentuan fondasi negara-bangsa yang berdasar Pancasila dan Undang-Undang Dasar 1945] (*Muhammadiyah*, 2010, p. 17) (Unless otherwise indicated, translations from Indonesian primary and secondary sources are mine).

*Nahdhatul Ulama's* view can be observed in a statement published on its official website as follows:

The ideas of Islamic-ness and archipelagic-ness have fused tightly. Islam has become the primary binding agent when the archipelagic-ness transformed into Indonesianess as a nation-state, because Islam since that time has had an Indonesian face which has developed together with Indonesian culture. NU and the traditional boarding schools have played an important role in the creation of Indonesia as an Islamic nation. Prior to independence, NU has embraced the concept of nationality. Although at that time it was called the Dutch Indies, in the national congress in Banjarmasin, NU declared that defending the sovereignty of the nation in the Dutch Indies is compulsory, because it did not mean defending the Dutch but defending the existence of the nation within the Dutch colonial rule. [Keislaman dengan kenusantaraan telah melebur sebegitu erat, sehingga ketika kenusantaraan menjadi keindonesiaan sebagai sebuah negara bangsa, maka keislaman menjadi perekat utamanya, karena Islam pada waktu itu sudah berwajah Indonesia, tumbuh dan berkembang bersama kebudayaan Indonesia. Penciptaan Indonesia sebagai sebuah bangsa Islam dan khususnya Islam NU dan pesantren memiliki andil besar. Sejak sebelum kemerdekaan NU telah berpegang pada konsep kebangsaan. Walaupun pada waktu itu namanya masih Hindia

Belanda, tetapi NU dalam Mukhtamar Banjarmasin telah mengeluarkan sikap, bahwa mempertahankan kedaulatan bangsa yang ada di Hindia Belanda itu merupakan kewajiban. Sebab yang hendak dipertahankan bukan pemerintahan Belanda, melainkan eksistensi bangsa yang ada di dalamnya] (NU Online, 2004).

In these statements, both *Muhammadiyah* and *Nahdhatul Ulama* clearly indicate an imagination of an integrated construction of *ummat* in Indonesia as a combination of Islamic and national awareness.

In the aftermath of the September 11 tragedy, the description of moderate Muslims is increasingly used in contradiction to the term radical Muslims. The polarisation between the 'moderate' and the 'radical' is problematic because not all Muslims in the radical category support terrorism and the use of violence to achieve their goals (Barton, 2004). The term 'radical Muslim' is also interpreted differently by many scholars in Islamic studies. Fealy proposes a general description of radical Muslim as follows:

Radical Islam seeks dramatic change in society and the state by the unstinting implementation of shari'a (Islamic law) and the upholding of Islamic principles. Radical Muslims tend to have a strictly literal interpretation of the Qur'an, especially those sections relating to social relations, religious behaviour and the punishment of crimes, and also seek to adhere closely to the normative model based on the example of the Prophet Muhammad (known as the Sunnah) (Fealy, 2005, p. 12).

Based on this description, Fealy identifies four categories of radical Muslim groups, in Indonesia. First, non-violent political, educational and intellectual groups which include non-violent political groups such as *Hisbut Tahrir* and non-political *Salafi* study groups; Second, vigilante groups which have main agenda to stop prostitution, gambling and other 'sinful activities' such as The Islamic Defenders' Front (Front Pembela Islam—FPI); Third, paramilitary

groups such as *Laskar Jihad* and other 'fighting units' created by radical Muslim groups; Fourth, terrorist groups such as Jemaah Islamiyah (JI). (Fealy, 2005, p. 13).

Another important term which can be used to describe 'radical' Islamic groups which have political orientation to achieve formalisation of Islamic law is Islamism. According to Barton 'Islamism is a response to modernity that has transformed the religion of Islam into political ideology' (Barton, 2004, p. 29). Current studies on Islamism generally define Islamists as Muslim groups or organisations which promote the idea of the formalisation of Islamic law. This formalisation may be variously pursued with strategies ranging from the partial inclusion of Islamic law in the constitutions or regulations of governments in the local and national level, to the establishment of Islamic states or the establishment of a global Islamic caliphate (See for instance, Plattdasch, 2009 and Hilmy, 2010).

The term 'salafi' is also highly contested. The term is commonly used to claim the 'ambition' to return to the so called 'pure Islam' as 'practiced by the *Salaf al-Shalih* (pious ancestors)', namely the first three generations of the followers of the prophet Muhammad. The dominant *Salafi* movement tends to adopt 'a stance of political quietism' with the main concern to purify Islam 'for a revival of strict religious practice that would develop and guard the moral integrity of individuals' (Hasan, 2006: 31). They focus their activities on peaceful Islamic propagation through the mosques, Islamic schools and other types of educational institutions. In Indonesia, the idea of salafism is mainly introduced in various educational institutions such as Islamic schools and Arabic learning centres which receive funding from the government of Saudi Arabia or private institutions in Saudi Arabia (Chaplin, 2014). The *Salafi Jihadi* category is a small faction of global and transnational *Salafi* movement which has a political orientation to restore the existence of transnational Islamic caliphate by promoting militaristic Jihad as the instrument to achieve the power.

## CONCLUSION

The media with their distinct characteristics have specifically played an important role in the shift from the personal oral authority to the impersonal print authority and finally to the multimodal authority in the era of the internet. Islamic religious authority in Indonesia has transformed from the traditional 'centre-periphery' model to the more complex 'network' model. The old centre-periphery relations model between the holy city Mecca as the centre and Indonesia as one of the peripheries has been challenged by the proliferation of various centres of Islamic religious authority. This proliferation is mainly facilitated by the collapsed of the New Order authoritarian regime, higher mobility of Muslim scholars and the development of information and communication technology. This proliferation of religious authority has facilitated many different ways of imagining or re-imagining the *ummat* as the vision of Muslims.

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