

Ramadan Tradition and Social Piety Reproduction in Indonesia

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Abstract:

This article aims to illustrate the power of Ramadan as a social space where the Muslim community can reproduce piety. Data were obtained through interviews, documentation, and surveys. The findings of this study highlight two important aspects that characteristically mark Ramadan as a social space. First, Ramadan has become a social arena for Muslims where piety and generosity suddenly emerge as identities continually contested by Muslims. Second, the sudden social patterns of piety and generosity observed among Muslims during Ramadan are shaped by the intersection of religion and local traditions such as padusan and balimau, nyadran and ziarah kubro, along with perlon unggahan and magangan. Therefore, with these findings, we assert that Ramadan not only functions as a social arena but also becomes a third space where society blends religion and tradition, simultaneously strengthening their identity and social status throughout the month of Ramadan.

Keywords: Ramadan, Reproduction, Social Piety, Social Arena, Third Space.

INTRODUCTION

Ramadan, as the month in which fasting (abstaining from eating, drinking, and sexual activity) is obligatory, is believed by Muslims to possess many special virtues (Hellman, 2008). Among the unique features of Ramadan are its honor (QS. 97:1-3) and abundant blessings (An Nasai: 2079) (Muslim: 1266). As a special episode in the religious journey of the Muslim community (Shalihin et al., 2020), Ramadan encompasses universal values such as religious benefits, purification, strengthening of the community (Buitelaar, 1993; Hellman, 2008), generosity, food habits, social patterns, and dress codes (Antoun, 1968; Hellman, 2008) that apply to all Muslims.

In practice, the customs and meanings of Ramadan are also greatly influenced by local contexts. Studies by Buitelaar (1993) and Ostergaard (1996) in Morocco, Antoun (1968) in Jordan, Yocum (2020) in Turkey, Yamani (1987) in Saudi Arabia, Schielke (2009) in Egypt, and Frankl (1996) in Swahili regions show that local contexts color and give unique characteristics to how Ramadan is practiced and understood. For example, Kapteijns' (2008) study has shown that class, gender, and social position influence the way Ramadan is celebrated.

In Indonesia, local culture plays a significant role in shaping the meaning of Ramadan. Two studies by Jorge Hellman elaborate on local discourse and the meaning of fasting as empowerment, obedience, and self-control (Hellman, 2006) as well as the changing significance of food during Ramadan (Jorgen Hellman, 2008). Andre Moller's two studies explain the practice of fasting and various rituals intersecting with culture (Moller, 2005) and the rituals and prayers of Tarawih for the Muslim community (Moller, 2006). Leonie Schmidt's (2012) study on the transformation of spaces (shopping malls) during Ramadan into ideological spaces filled with religious symbols illustrates the negotiation of Islamic modernity through social imagination. Additionally, two studies by Shalihin outline the impact of Ramadan on enhancing social solidarity and social generosity (Shalihin et al., 2020) and the implications of Ramadan on social cohesiveness (Shalihin et al., 2021).

This article aims to show how Ramadan becomes an arena for contesting piety by capitalizing on various acts of worship and rituals during Ramadan. Ramadan is positioned as an arena where the Muslim community produces social piety. An arena can be understood as a social space where individuals engage in social practices. Social spaces are embodied in agents equipped with various distinct characteristics that systematically intertwine. As a social space, an arena does not exist in a vacuum (Bourdieu, 1994; Mutahir, 2011). It is an interwoven fabric of various social processes, whether in the form of transactions, contests, or other social interactions where individuals manifest their positions. Additionally, it should be understood that the sacredness of Ramadan has not only become a space for expressing piety but also a space for contestation among Muslims. At least two domains provide evidence of Ramadan as an arena for contesting piety: the special and excessive treatment of Ramadan and the sudden emergence of social patterns during Ramadan that are not found outside of Ramadan.

This article is part of a research project on Ramadan and social capital conducted in two locations: West Sumatra and Yogyakarta. The study on Ramadan and social capital used a qualitative approach supported by survey data from 600 samples across the two designated areas. West Sumatra was chosen as a research sample to represent a culturally and religiously homogeneous region. Three regencies/cities in West Sumatra were selected based on classifications representing inland and coastal areas. Yogyakarta was selected as a sample to represent a heterogeneous region. Three regencies/cities were chosen based on classifications representing rural and urban areas.

The data used in this article are from interviews and questionnaires related to generosity. Additional data were obtained from secondary sources, particularly social media. Therefore, two sources and two data collection techniques were used in this article: informants and documents, with interviews and documentation as the data collection methods. The data obtained through interviews and documentation were analyzed using Cresswell's (2015) four-step approach. First, data management, where the data obtained from interviews and documents were organized into files and converted into text units;

words, sentences, stories. Second, reading and memoing the data. The organized data in the files and databases were repeatedly read thoroughly. The data were then annotated with short, concise notes.

Third, describing, classifying, and interpreting the data. After reading and memoing the data, a detailed description was developed, themes or dimensions were created, and interpretations were made. The technique of data description was done by grouping text or visual data into smaller information categories, finding evidence for these codes from various databases used, and then labeling these codes. Once the data were described, the next step was classifying the data by sorting texts, finding categories, and themes. After classifying the data, the next step was interpreting the data, which involved developing codes, forming themes from these codes, and organizing themes into broader units of abstraction for interpretation. Fourth, visualizing the data. The interpreted data were presented in the form of texts, tables, and graphs. Data obtained from documents were presented in images, while data obtained from interviews were presented in text.

Discussion

The Position of Ramadan as a Social Arena

We position Ramadan as an arena where every Muslim who fasts becomes evidence of piety that can be contested among them. The field can be understood as a social space where individuals perform social practices. Social space exists in the form of agents equipped with various characteristics systematically interconnected. As a social space, the field does not exist in a vacuum (Bourdieu, 1994; Mutahir, 2011). It is a fusion of various social processes, whether in the form of transactions, contests, or other social interactions where individuals manifest their positions.

According to Bourdieu, social formation is determined through arenas that are hierarchically organized (Bourdieu, 2011; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). An arena is structured with its own rules of functionality and power relations. In any arena, agents occupy various available positions and engage in competition to control specific interests or resources. Actors use various strategies to maintain and enhance their positions.

The interests and resources at stake or contested in the arena are both material and non-material capital (Bourdieu, 2010). This refers to Bourdieu's concept which classifies four types of capital: economic capital, cultural capital, social capital, and symbolic capital (Field, 2013; Mutahir, 2011; Syakir, 2016). In the arena of cultural production, there are two forms of capital that are very important: symbolic capital and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 2010). Symbolic capital refers to the degree of accumulated prestige, recognition, fame, and honor. This is built on the dialectic of knowledge and recognition. Meanwhile, cultural capital refers to a form of knowledge or cognitive acquisition that equips social agents.

Like economic capital, other forms of capital are unevenly distributed within social classes. This inequality becomes the space in the arena to be contested by agents to gain certain positions (Bourdieu, 1994). Bourdieu argues that the driving force behind human actions or behaviors is the search for distinction, namely to be present in the social space and occupy a position in that social space (Bourdieu, 1994; Karnanta, 2013). Thus, the principle of the arena implies struggles, competition, and the pursuit of certain positions. The arena implies a dynamic social structure where agents can move from one position to another. Position shifts require a series of practices based on and influenced by the capital possessed by the agents. The agents' struggle is a process in which all capital is distributed in certain ways to win something contested within that space and arena.

Special Treatment And Sudden Social Pattern

Ramadan is so important to the Muslim community that it is treated as a special month, exceeding the significance of other months outside of Ramadan. The special nature of Ramadan can be identified through the way the Muslim community treats it. There are two important characteristics that mark the special treatment of Ramadan by Muslims. First, there is an excessive special attitude in treating Ramadan, and second, there is a sudden social pattern during the month of Ramadan. These two characteristics can be found in various religious rituals and activities before, during, and after Ramadan.

Ramadan Traditions and the Purification Time

Before entering the month of Ramadan, many activities or events are carried out by the Muslim community as preparation or to welcome Ramadan. As a form of expressing joy for the arrival of a good and blessed month, Ramadan is welcomed by the community with various rituals according to their respective traditions. Generally, there are three categories of rituals before entering Ramadan. The first is rituals oriented towards the purification of the soul and self-cleansing as prerequisites for entering Ramadan. Various rituals as instruments for purifying the soul and cleansing oneself from all forms of impurity are performed by the Muslim community, as seen in the tradition of *balimau* in Sumatra and *padusan* in Java.

Figure 1. *Padusan* and *Balimau* Ritual



Source; *Indonesia.go.id*, 2019; *Tempo.co*, 2018

Balimau is a ritual for cleansing the soul and body by bathing with lime water or bathing together in a river, conducted a day before entering Ramadan. Similar to the *balimau* ritual, *padusan* is also a ritual for cleansing the soul and body by bathing in a river, well, or a sacred spring. Both rituals aim to cleanse oneself from all forms of wrongdoings, sins, and physical and spiritual impurities accumulated over the year.

Both activities are oriented towards unifying oneself with the spirits of the deceased, as seen in the traditions of *ziarah kubur* (grave pilgrimage), *ziarah kubra* (large-

scale grave pilgrimage), and *nyadran* (a Javanese tradition involving cleaning and visiting graves).

Figure 2. *Nyadran and Pilgrimage Kubro* Tradition



Source; *KabarNet*, 2012; *Wikipedia.org*, 2019

These traditions are part of an effort to remind people of their deceased family members by praying for them so that their souls may rest peacefully in the afterlife. This ritual strengthens the spiritual bond between those living in the world and the spirits of their family members in the afterlife. Through these rituals, the separation between earthly life and the afterlife can be bridged.

There are also three activities oriented around food, evident in various regional traditions such as *malamang* in West Sumatra, *perlon unggaban* in Banyumas, *nyadran* in Java, *munggaran* in Sunda, *nyorog* in Betawi, *megengan* in Surabaya, *megibung* in Bali, and *suro' baca* in Makassar/Bugis.

Figure 3. *Perlon Unggaban and Magengan* Tradition



Source: *1001 Indonesia*, 2019; *Gaido Communication*, 2018

This activity is one way for Muslims to express gratitude in welcoming the holy month of Ramadan. This tradition is usually marked by communal meals where various traditional foods are served. Additionally, this activity involves distributing food to extended family members, including in-laws.

As an expression of gratitude, this ritual is intended to remind one another, seek forgiveness for past mistakes, and strengthen family bonds. The various traditions of welcoming Ramadan mentioned above can be considered an integral part of Ramadan.

During this period, there is almost no distinction between religious and non-religious activities; everything is done for the sake of Ramadan and is considered an act of worship.

Food; From Private to Collective Action

Eating and drinking become very important during the month of Ramadan. They not only mark the obligation of fasting but also demonstrate collective action. The significance of eating and drinking is evident in the requirement to abstain from hunger and thirst for those who are fasting. The essence of Ramadan lies in controlling the desire to eat and drink. Since refraining from hunger (eating) and thirst (drinking) is the core of the fasting obligation, those who are fasting must not eat or drink during this period.

Breaking the fast (Iftar) and pre-dawn meal (Suhoor) are integral parts of fasting and are closely related to eating and drinking. Iftar marks the end of the fasting period, where the control over hunger and thirst is concluded with eating and drinking. Suhoor, on the other hand, is the preparatory phase for fasting, where one eats and drinks before starting the fast. Both phases place food and drink as pivotal elements in determining the fast. Thus, fasting, Iftar, and Suhoor are activities closely connected with eating and drinking. While fasting requires one to abstain from eating and drinking, Iftar and Suhoor necessitate eating and drinking.

Figure 4. Luxury Food and Drink During Ramadan



Source; Resep Koki, 2021; Sun's, 2019; Talia, 2020

During Ramadan, Muslims often treat food in a special manner, sometimes even excessively. While eating is typically a personal and private activity outside of Ramadan, during Ramadan, it becomes a public and collective action. Eating and drinking at Iftar (breaking the fast) hold significant importance. They not only mark the end of fasting but also symbolize luxury, abundance, togetherness, and intimacy.

The food and drinks provided during Iftar and Suhoor (pre-dawn meal) are often of higher quality and quantity compared to those outside of Ramadan. These meals are carefully chosen, featuring superior taste and presentation. This emphasis on food during Ramadan highlights the communal aspect of the fasting period, where sharing meals becomes an essential and celebrated part of the daily routine.

Figure 5. Togetherness During Ramadan



Source; Altair, 2019; Liputan6.com, 2019; Nofalia, 2019

Eating and drinking serve as instruments that bring families together in one dining space, where they eat collectively. This collective action is performed regardless of whether one is fasting or not; during Iftar, everyone gathers to eat together, a practice that rarely occurs outside of Ramadan. Thus, food not only fulfills religious needs but also acts as a medium to strengthen togetherness and intimacy among family members.

Sudden Generosity

Generosity becomes the most distinctive characteristic that signifies Ramadan as a very special month. The importance of being generous during Ramadan is highlighted by the high perception of people regarding the significance of generosity during this period, as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Perception of the Muslim Community on Generosity During Ramadan

Varian/Dimension	Average	Percentage	Category
Generosity	3,27	81,75	High
Sedekah (alms)	3,49	87,25	High
Infak (Infaq)	3,23	80,75	High
Wakaf (waqf)	3,10	77,50	High

Source: Data processed by researchers, 2019

The table above illustrates the perception of the Muslim community regarding generosity during Ramadan. Out of 600 respondents, 81.75% have a high perception of the importance of being generous during the month of Ramadan. The significance of charity during this period is not only marked by the high levels of charitable actions but also by the increasing institutionalization of such practices. This includes the operation of donation boxes, lectures by preachers on the importance of giving throughout Ramadan, and the necessity for family heads to remind their members to donate, whether they are at home or abroad.

Through charity, the community demonstrates a commitment to sharing with others to help alleviate hardships. Besides being a religious command, acts of giving such as almsgiving and spending in the way of charity are also viewed as social responsibilities.

Giving is motivated not only by the promise of divine rewards but also by the social recognition received from the community.

Giving charity is no longer just carrying out religious orders, it has become a habit/culture where people are more generous in the month of Ramadan; Rich people are more generous in Ramadan and merchants give charity intentionally in Ramadan. In terms of religion, giving charity in the month of Ramadan, of course, the reward is doubled so that the number of worship increases. Some give charity, for people who are in rantau (live outside their hometown, it is intentional to give alms home in the month of Ramadan to look more prestigious (Interview with Akhyar Fuadi, Agam District community, 14th Mei 2020).

Individuals who give charity during Ramadan feel their existence is acknowledged. Even before entering the month of Ramadan, Muslims who are away from their hometowns are reminded by their families to prepare money for charity during Ramadan. If they do not have enough to give, they will ask their families (their parents) in their hometown to lend money to give charity on their behalf.

In giving, there is honor involved, where one's shame and self-respect are at stake, and dignity is maintained. In the Minangkabau tradition, for example, the tribal chief (Mamak) would feel embarrassed if their nephews do not contribute to the mosque or prayer hall. The demand to contribute is not about the amount of money given, but rather the act of giving itself. Thus, a person's social existence is determined by whether or not they give charity. Therefore, every time they go for Tarawih prayers or other communal night prayers at the mosque or prayer hall, each nephew is always reminded to bring money for charity. The giving of charity is done openly so that many people are aware of it. Those who do not give are usually scorned, while those who do give, especially in large amounts, receive praise, appreciation, and their names are mentioned throughout the day.

The main goal of donating is, of course, the way to heaven. In addition, donating shows social status. The material factor is important to show the existence. People go abroad to improve their lives while returning home to show their social status. If he is successful, especially when he was in the village that he is including the middle and lower economy, so when he donated he showed who he really was (Interview with Yurisman, Pariaman District Community, 20th Mei 2020).

During Ramadan, charity becomes competitive; people not only race to give but are also encouraged to outdo each other in giving to showcase their identities. Ramadan provides opportunities for such collective action, as evident in activities like Tarawih prayers, "nuzulul qur'an," and Eid prayers. These religious activities usually begin after the "badoncek" event, which involves the entire community. The "badoncek" event typically takes a considerable amount of time because this collective space allows for a "show of self" among participants.

The peak of this charity competition occurs on the morning before Eid al-Fitr prayers. All community members gather at the mosque to perform the Eid al-Fitr prayers. Prior to these prayers, fundraising in the form of alms, donations, and endowments takes

place. The fundraising starts from small amounts and increases progressively, in steps from IDR 50, 100, 150, 200, up to 500 thousand and beyond. Interestingly, this collection mentions the amount, name, profession, and tribe of the donors. This intensifies the competition, as donors try to outdo each other on this public stage.

This procession becomes an arena for everyone to showcase themselves, flaunting the amount of their charity in front of the public and peers. The size of the donations given directly reflects a person's social class. Those who donate more receive greater public appreciation, attracting attention and becoming the topic of conversation throughout the festival. Thus, during Ramadan, generosity as a form of religious expression not only demonstrates a willingness to share and care for others but also conveys recognition, honor, and prestige.

Suddenly More Religious

The social patterns established during Ramadan are marked by sudden changes. Suddenly becoming more religious or Islamic is a key characteristic associated with Ramadan. This sudden shift towards Islamic social norms during Ramadan is most notably reflected in increased forgiveness, tastes, preferences, and the ideological/Islamization of public spaces.

Firstly, outside of Ramadan, it is often difficult for people to apologize, but during Ramadan, there's a sudden shift towards humility, with many more willing to seek forgiveness throughout the month. This abrupt inclination towards forgiveness becomes apparent as Ramadan approaches, where almost everyone starts to apologize and accept apologies while exchanging greetings for the holy month. Similarly, as Ramadan draws to a close, nearly everyone engages in the same behaviors—asking for forgiveness, accepting apologies, offering Eid greetings, and forgiving each other. This transformation underscores a significant temporary shift in social behaviors during Ramadan, fostering a community spirit centered around reconciliation and mutual respect.

Figure 6. Type of apologizing greet during Ramadan



Source; Jung, 2021; Wulan, 2021

Secondly, tastes and preferences become crucial characteristics marking the sudden changes during Ramadan. Islamic tastes and preferences, such as choices in clothing,

reading materials, music, and films, become phenomenally significant in the lives of the Muslim community throughout Ramadan. The preference for Islamic readings, religious music, and religious films are strong indicators of the Islamic taste prevailing among Muslims during this month. Wearing traditional Islamic attire such as koko shirts, peci caps, turbans, sarongs, abayas, and hijabs during Ramadan is not only a sign of strengthened Islamic tastes during the month but also becomes a symbol of identity; markers of Muslim identity and religiosity. These choices reflect a deep engagement with cultural and religious elements that are particularly emphasized during Ramadan, showcasing a significant alignment with Islamic values and community identity.

Figure 7. Islamic lifestyle during the Ramadan



Source; Kompasiana, 2019; Palupi, 2020; Yuni, 2020; Zuniar, 2021

Thirdly, sudden social patterns also emerge through the imaging and ideologization of public spaces, such as shopping areas, offices, and streets. Public spaces, which are typically neutral and secular, suddenly adopt ideological and Islamic characteristics during Ramadan. Ramadan becomes the single most important theme displayed on billboards, banners, and stickers decorating public spaces. Shopping malls and stores are adorned with colorful decorations that signify Islamic themes. The typically neutral and subdued interiors of malls and stores are transformed into visually striking displays featuring prominent Islamic symbols.

Figure 8. Public Space Symbolization During Ramadan

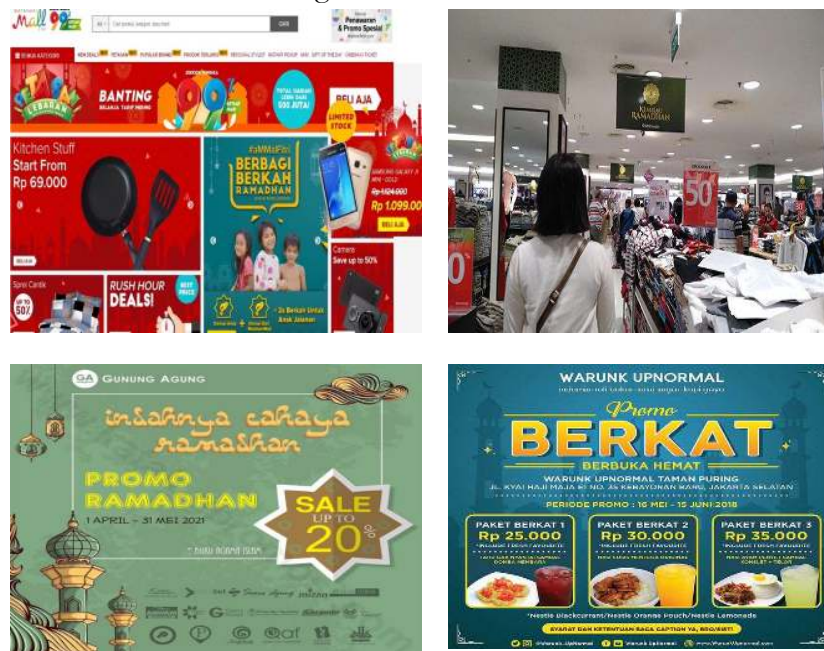




Source; Cirebon Bribin, 2019; Grand Indonesia, 2019; Indra, 2019; Kaltara, 2020; Ruslan, 2013

During Ramadan, retail spaces suddenly become generous and lavish in their offerings. Capitalizing on the blessings of Ramadan, shopping venues such as malls, stores, and even online retailers participate in offering significant discounts. This widespread practice is not just a marketing strategy but also ties into the festive and charitable spirit of the month, encouraging consumers to engage in shopping by making it more financially accessible and appealing during this sacred time.

Figure 9. Ramadan Sale



Source; Anggraini, 2018; Gunung Agung, 2021; Onky, 2016; TribunPontianak, 2019

The data above demonstrates that Ramadan has become a powerful force in driving massive changes. The sacredness, specialness, and blessings associated with Ramadan have shaped a pattern of sudden social changes throughout the month, giving rise to a lifestyle characterized by sudden shifts towards Islamic practices, sudden generosity, sudden adherence to Sharia, sudden piety, sudden scholarly behavior, and more. This phenomenon

reflects the profound impact that the spiritual atmosphere of Ramadan has on individual behaviors and societal norms, highlighting a unique transformation that aligns with the religious significance of the month..

Ramadan And The Space of Social Piety

This study reveals that treating Ramadan in a special and excessive manner has become a crucial factor in the emergence of sudden social patterns. The sudden onset of Islamic and generous behaviors during Ramadan illustrates how the sacredness of Ramadan has become a significant force in shaping Muslim social behavior. The emergence of these sudden Islamic and generous behaviors during Ramadan reflects that the month, with all its special designations, has provided a vast space for the Muslim community to attain as much nobility and blessings as possible. With its glory and blessings, Ramadan transforms into a competitive arena, where people strive and compete to achieve a higher status of piety (taqwa) as promised in the Quran (Al-Baqarah 2:183).

The excess and emergence of sudden social patterns are based on the assumption of Ramadan as a special, rare, and valuable month. This assumption is evident from the religious justifications for Ramadan's position as superior to other months; better than a thousand months (Al-Qadr 97:1-3), the gates of heaven are wide open (Imam Ahmad: 6851), forgiveness (Sunan Abu Dawud: 1165), prayers are answered (Thabrani: 1423), and good deeds are multiplied (Muslim: 1266). The religious justifications that place Ramadan as increasingly valuable and contested have made routine obligations like prayers performed during Ramadan more special and valuable than the prayers themselves. Because of Ramadan's special and valuable nature, every activity during Ramadan is counted as a virtue, and its worship value is calculated to exceed that of worship outside Ramadan (Shalihin et al., 2020; Shalihin & Sholihin, 2022). Simply put, the virtue and worship value contained within become special and valuable not because of the virtue itself but because of Ramadan. In this context, it can be understood that Ramadan gives excessive and special meaning to various religious practices (Odabasi & Argan, 2009).

The special and excessive treatment of Ramadan has brought fundamental changes to the lives of Muslims, both spiritually and socially (Odabasi & Argan, 2009; Shalihin et al., 2020). The sacredness of Ramadan and the worship value it contains (Blankinship, 1996; Shalihin et al., 2020) become determining factors in motivating Muslims to do many things during Ramadan. Worship becomes not just an important instrument determining piety but also a marker of devotion. Therefore, the quantification and expression of worship become an unavoidable necessity to show piety. The more abundant and expressive someone is in worship, the closer their piety approaches devotion. Therefore, although fasting is the essence of Ramadan obligations, activities other than fasting find a place comparable to fasting. If fasting is aimed at achieving taqwa through self-control; resisting hunger, thirst, and sexual desires (Hellman, 2008; Schielke, 2009; Schmidt, 2012), then activities outside fasting like tarawih, tadrus, iktikaf (Moller, 2006), and others not only support Ramadan, they also aim to strengthen piety.

Being pious during Ramadan is very important, surpassing the obligation of fasting itself. Piety is not just a means to achieve taqwa (Al-Baqarah 2:183) but also declares about Muslim identity. The attachment of piety with Muslim identity has positioned piety, which tends to be private and belonging to a certain class outside Ramadan, to become public and

contestable during Ramadan. Because piety is closely linked with the public space, Ramadan becomes an important space in expressing various piety. As a space, Ramadan is not only a place where the expression of piety occurs, but more than that, Ramadan is also used as a space to reproduce piety itself. Various ritual and worship practices during Ramadan (Hellman 2006 & 2008; Moller 2006; Schmidt 2012; Shalihin et al. 2020 & 2021) become prerequisites and essential capital in determining piety. While piety becomes the main prerequisite and capital to reach the position of taqwa. In this context, it can be understood that Ramadan has become a space that produces worship, piety, and taqwa.

As capital, piety can be used as a strength to affirm social identity (Jamil, 2021); obedience/devotion, as well as a resource to negotiate someone's social position in society. In this context, the above symbolic capital can be used as a strength to affirm social identity as well as a resource to negotiate someone's social position within the structure of community life (Bourdieu, 1994; Karnanta, 2013). The accumulation of various symbolic capitals becomes a determining factor in placing someone in an increasingly important social position (Bourdieu, 2010). The more worship a person performs, the more pious they are. The more pious a person is

CONCLUSION

From the analysis above, this study finds that Ramadan is perceived by individuals as a social space where sudden patterns such as social piety and generosity become capital that can be contested during the month of Ramadan. This reality makes every Muslim need to affirm and negotiate their social status and position during Ramadan, considered a sacred month full of glory. Moreover, sudden patterns like social piety and generosity not only emerge because Ramadan is viewed as an arena of contestation but also as a third space where religion and local culture can meet, making social piety and generosity new identities and cultures that can be acquired by every Muslim during Ramadan.

We recognize that this study has limitations in two aspects. First, the study has not yet been able to see how, in practice, piety and generosity are contested during Ramadan; and second, how piety and generosity are maintained and upheld throughout Ramadan. These two issues are suggested for further research by researchers focused on Ramadan studies and social life.

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