



Article History

Submitted:

30-07-2018

Reviewed:

04-09-2018

Approved:

29-09-2018



Urban Sufism And Transformation Of Islamic Culture In Millennial Society

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Abstract

This paper examines Sufism of urban society as a trend of popular Islamic culture in millennial society. Understanding Sufism is a foundation of searching for the alternative life problem solutions, which are currently criticized as being merely temporary and reactionary. Sufism develops from the private sphere into a popular Islamic culture through which to enhance social piety. This popular Islamic culture is a form of repetitive life habits (*habitus*) that is accepted collectively as a form of general habit. The formation of Sufism habits among urban society initiates the creation of urban Sufism symbols such as piety, hijab, robe, turban, sarong and others. This phenomenon gives birth to how the concepts and practices of Sufism are transformed by members of a *tariqa* group such as the Tarekat Naqshabandiyah Haqqani Pekalongan. Therefore, the focus of this paper is twofold. The first focus is on the discussion about the way the conventional Sufism transforms into urban Sufism. This transformation denotes a phenomenon of urban Sufism wherein a *kiai* (English: Javanese terminology referring to a Muslim cleric) acts as an agent of the social transformation in the Naqshabandiyah Haqqani in Pekalongan. The second focus is on the discussion about urban Sufism as a popular symbol of Islam in the millennial era.

Keywords: *Urban Sufism, Cultural Transformation, Popular Islam, Millennial Society*

Penelitian ini membahas tentang Sufisme masyarakat perkotaan yang menjadi tren budaya Islam populer di masyarakat milenium. Memahami tentang Sufisme menjadi bentuk untuk menemukan solusi masalah kehidupan yang hanya memiliki karakteristik temporer dan reaksioner. Sufisme yang semula di bidang privat kemudian berkembang menjadi budaya Islam populer untuk menciptakan kesalehan sosial. Budaya Islam populer itu adalah bentuk kebiasaan hidup berulang (*habitus*) dan diterima secara kolektif sebagai bentuk kebiasaan umum. Pembentukan kebiasaan Sufi di kalangan masyarakat perkotaan memulai penciptaan simbol Sufi perkotaan seperti kesalehan, hijab, jubah, serban, sarung dan lain-lain. Fenomena ini memicu lahirnya transformasi konsep dan praktik tasawuf dalam kelompok *tariqa* seperti Tarekat Naqshabandiyah Haqqani Pekalongan. Oleh karena itu, fokus makalah ini akan membahas tentang bagaimana transformasi konvensional tasawuf terhadap Sufisme perkotaan, fenomena Sufisme perkotaan terkait dengan *kyai* menjadi agen transformasi sosial di Tarekat Naqshabandiyah Haqqani di Pekalongan dan diskusi sufisme perkotaan sebagai populer simbol Islam di era milenial.

Kata kunci: *Sufisme Urban, Transformasi Budaya, Islam Populer, Masyarakat Milenial*

URL: <http://e-journal.iainpekalongan.ac.id/index.php/Religia/article/view/1508>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.28918/religia.v21i2.1508>

INTRODUCTION

Urban Sufism is a phenomenon which occurs in almost all major cities in the world as a manifestation and the emergence of urban community's attention to the spiritualism world. In Howell's point of view (2001: 715), Urban Sufism is simply defined as the birth of the spirituality urban middle class society in Indonesia. This spirituality passion is represented by the middle-class with a neomodernism background. This is a consequence of their alienation (Pals 1996; Ritzer & Goodman 2009) from their own world. Moreover, they feel aridity and emptiness spirituality even they feel something is missing from him.

A number of studies about Urban Sufism have been conducted (Endraswara 2006; Mustofa 2012; Howell 2012; Rofhani 2013; Rubaidi 2015; Makhasin 2016). Different with previous studies, this paper will discuss about how the transformation of conventional Sufism towards urban Sufism, the phenomenon of urban Sufism related with *kyai* become agents of the social transformation in the *Naqshabandiyah Haqqani* in Pekalongan and the discussion of urban Sufism as a popular symbol of Islamic millennial era.

Millennial society era, interpreting urban Sufism as a popular culture and become one form of finding solutions to life problems which are the only temporary and reactionary characteristic. This popular culture has purpose as a form of repetitive life habits (*habitus*) and it is accepted collectively as a form of general habit. The search for problem solutions is the main motivation for the formation of popular culture. Sufism which was originally in the private sphere then it developed into a popular Islamic culture. The formation of Sufi habits among urban society then spreads to the creation of urban Sufi symbols such as piety, hijab, robe, turban, sarong and so on. Eventually Urban Sufism became a trend of popular Islamic culture which was widely followed by urban communities. Mostly, they worked in an agency, wore shirts and ties, shoes then completed with their cars as their attributes. Their activity practically does not move the popularity of conventional *tarekat*, which it is commonly used before. This case triggers conventional Sufism which develops through *tarekat* organizations which can still develop in the midst of the hustle and bustle of modern society. However, in its application, the method of *Da'wah*, and the meaning of Sufism theology itself which has undergone a significant transformation.

DISCUSSION

A. The Transformation of Conventional Sufism into Urban Sufism

The term "transformation" refers to reality of the process of change. In the Big Indonesian Dictionary (Yandianto 1997: 208), transformation means changes in form, character, function, etc. Transformation can be interpreted as a process of gradual changes so that at the ultimate stage, changes are made by responding to the influence of external and internal elements that will direct the changes from the previous forms. According to

Dewi (2012: 13-14), the process of transformation contains the dimension of time and the changes of socio-cultural society through long process that is always associated with the activities happened at that time. This part elaborates the transformation as the process of changing social reality occurring in society influenced by modernization and their perspective on religion, especially on the concept of Sufism.

Etymologically, according to Amin (2012: 4), Sufism comes from Arabic, the word “*shafa*” and “*ism*” which mean clean, holy and pure. Another definition comes from *shaf* (line), or *shuffah* (terrace of a mosque), *shafwah* (the chosen ones), and *shuf* (big wool). Whereas, the word *isme* means concept. In other words, etymologically, Sufism is meant as a concept in which there are worship experts who like to perform worship behavior in the mosque. Whereas, in Greek, the word Sufi comes from the word *sophos* which is interpreted as wisdom. Then it can be interpreted that living as a Sufi is an attempt to be a wise person.

If it is examined historically, the Sufi history prevailing in Islam is not entirely derived from Islam specifically, but is an acculturation of previous cultural traditions. Some of them are inspired by various Christian, Zoroastrian and Greek traditions. From Christianity, the Sufis adapted the values of monotheistic and *ukhrawi* ascetic behaviors that were more concerned with the afterlife. In contrast to the Zoroaster culture that prioritizes soul purification through rituals, Greece concerns more on seeking the highest wisdom (Baldick 2012: 18). That indicates that being a Sufi is by taking the mysticism and syncretism paths such as asceticism, meditation, and *tirakat* performed in certain places in order to balance the human element as an element of micro cosmos with character so that it can direct their life orientation to the interests of *ukhrawi*. In Islamic tradition, Sufism began when Rasulullah (Prophet Muhammad SAW) got the revelation of the Qur’an in Gua Hira through self contemplation (Binpertais 1982: 35) which later became the practical basis of Sufi developed in Islam. Sufism paths such as meditation, *dhikr*, or other spiritual and other experiences are the choices for Muslims to express their desire to achieve the truth and happiness of true life.

The rapid development of Sufism has an impact on the transformation of Sufism. Sufism activities identified with the search for truth on a lonely road are now developing into efforts to collectively find solutions to urban society to rebuild their faith as a faith protection in facing the increasing life pressure. This condition encourages Sufism to become a major need which develops into the popular needs of the masses. Therefore, the existence of Sufism presented in this new model is then commonly referred to as “Urban Sufism”.

At the beginning, Sufism adherents are only *taklid* by emphasizing on aspects of conventional congregations (*tarekat*) according to what is taught by the *murshid tarekat* to draw closer to Allah. Unlike the modern era, there is a transformation of conventional Sufism into urban Sufism developed in urban society. The understanding of Sufism has

become a trend and is considered as one of the way to find solutions to life problems that are only temporary and reactionary. In general, people go through Sufism activities to find the problem solving after the ratio and reason are not successful in its resolution. That is what encourages people to find the problem solving through the spiritual path. This is a transcendental thinking transformation in all modernist and hedonistic societies.

Urban Sufism adherents will follow the Sufism practices when they are in troubles. Moreover, Sufism becomes a trend to show off their identity as a religious (*shalih*) Muslim (Oppong 2013: 12). This identity by urban society is characterized by the attitude of social faithfulness both individually and collectively (Bayat 2007: 9-10) so that it implies the point of view that religion and God in modernism era are exposed conditionally and pragmatically. The transformation of conventional Sufism into urban Sufism indicates a change in *madzhab*, methodological *da'wah*, as well as theological ties. Conventional Sufism emphasizes more on the aspect of faithful traditional ties between the students (*murid*) and *murshid* and traditional ties among fellow *tarekat* followers as a path to God. Whereas, urban Sufism emphasizes more on *solutive* system by emphasizing on taqarrub (self-approach to God) and soul purification (spiritual needs) as the way to look for temporary serenity due to the problem. This practical solution attracts the interest of urban Muslim society following Sufi activities.

Urban Sufism emphasizes more on the attitude of self-approach while looking for the problem solving by the society. In various aspects, there is a class segment for the urban Muslim who only follows Sufism when they are in troubles. Moreover, according to Sodikin (2018), when the problems that occur in urban communities have already successfully solved, then, they discard their Sufism practices. Unlike conventional Sufism, the adherents believe that basically, Sufism activities are long-term activities that are not limited to finding solutions to their problems, but also for the afterlife¹ performed in their entire life. The meaning of urban Sufism which states that Sufi activities are merely a solution to life has implications for the simplification of religious teachings to be better understood in practice and used in everyday life. Sufism in the urban Muslim class society in Indonesia is an expression of religiosity and the new religion movement (Barker 1999).

In addition, urban Sufism is a new form of *tarekat* in which *tarekat* in urban Sufism is not binding and hierarchical, but is built dialogically between *murshid* and *ummah*. Howell (2012: 2) stated that the urban Sufism indicated Sufism practices synergized by *syariah* and *fiqh* adjusted to modern life. Urban Sufism also refuses the attitude of *zuhud* and *taklid* as taught in traditional Sufism by honoring a *murshid* or *kyai*. This is the phenomenon that occurs in urban Sufism that makes a *kyai* an agent of social transformation that helps to

¹ An interview with Mr. Sodikin as a follower of the *tarekat* (Sufism) which has been discussed since 1996. He tells the story of the differences between conventional Sufism adherents and current Sufism adherents (urban Sufism), on September 2th 2018.

find a solution to the temporary problems of society when they have various complex life problems.

B. Urban Sufism phenomenon: *Kyai* becomes an agent of social transformation

Urban Sufism is a phenomenon that occurs in almost all major cities in the world. In Howell's view (2001: 715), Urban Sufism is simply defined as the emergence of the spirituality of urban middle class society in Indonesia. This spirituality excitement is represented by the middle class with a background of neo-Modernism. This group is in their spirituality enthusiasm by adopting *dhikr*, *amalan* (practice), and *doa wirid* which are adopted from Sufi masters such as al-Ghazali, Suhrawardi, and so on. Some of the *Majelis Zikir*, *Majelis Taklim*, even study institutions, were together followed in order to do *dhikr* and *wirid* as an effort of *tazkīyat al-nafs*. In following developments, Howell (2001: 716) realized and acknowledged that the excitement of spirituality was not only represented by the urban middle class society from the neo-Modernist background alone. Many *Majelis Shalawat*, *Majelis Zikir*, even the *tarekat* followed by the urban middle class from the ideological line of the "traditionalists" cannot be ignored. Besides being attended by thousands of worshippers, the members of *Majelis Shalawat* and the *Tarekat* follow their teachings and practices as generally in the teachings and the Sufism (classical) tradition.

This phenomenon is different from the Urban Sufism group. They only take Sufism artificially, by adopting various *dhikr* and *wirid* only and they ignore the rest. This is the emergence of attention from the urban community towards the world of spiritualism as a consequence of its alienation² they are from their own world so they feel spiritual monotony and emptiness and feel something is missing from him. Urban Sufism is often followed by urban communities, who often work in an agency, wear shirts and tie, wear complete shoes and drive their cars. Their activities in practice does not substitute the popularity of conventional *tarekat* commonly used before. This is because conventional Sufism that develops through *tarekat* organizations can still develop in modern society. But in the application, the method of da'wah, and the meaning of Sufism theology itself has undergone a significant transformation. As is the phenomenon of urban sufism that occurs in the *tarekat* group named Naqshabandiyah Haqqani.³

² Alienation is removing what is inside him as his essence then considers what is removed is something different from that essence, as a reality that is different and we against it. Finally, we suffer from self-alienation, deep feeling of inner separation from the proper human character. For example, in work, we work based on capitalist goals that pay us. In capitalism, work is no longer a goal as the expression of human abilities and potential but is reduced to be a way to achieve the goal: *earning money*. Human alienation occurs in four main forms: humans are exiled from the products of their work, production activities, their own social character, and their colleagues. (See Pals 1996; Ritzer & Goodman 2009).

³ *Tarekat Naqshabandiyah* is the *tarekat* which has the most adherents and has become an important part in the rise of Islamic politics in the 19th century. *Tarekat Naqshabandiyah Haqqani* has officially been active in Indonesia since April 1997. KH. Mustafa Mas'ud was pledged and appointed as (representative) Sheikh Nazim Haqqani. *Tarekat* activities took place in *zamiyah* in Kampung melayu (Jakarta), Nagrek (West Java),

Tarekat Naqshabandiyah Haqqani emphasizes the teachings on self-approach by releasing the needs of worldly desires (*zuhud*) by abandoning disgraceful morals which are prohibited by religion so that people live peacefully and always feel close to Allah⁴. This is the highest awareness (heightened *awareness*) that the people do to God that the afterlife is the goal of world life (Howell & Bruinessen 2007: 6). Therefore, the world is a place to obtain the afterlife.

The definition of Sufism has been divided between *pantheism* and *monism*. The definition of Sufi in pantheism is that between God and humans are not separated, but are united in God as a whole. Whereas in monism, it is defined as the existence of God, that God does not exist if it is not balanced by the presence of His creation (human). Both perspectives both construct unity between the two entities. In the end, Sufism discusses about "feeling" which is the process of intimate relations between God and His creation through inner satisfaction (Endraswara 2006: 62-63). Thus, the "feeling" is institutionalized in the form of *tarekat* which symbolizes the existence of bonds between fellow Sufi actors in order to be more directed and organized by providing a *murshid* as a spiritual teacher who guides his people. *Tarekat* Naqshabandiyah Haqqani in Pekalongan has a *murshid* named K.H.A. Taufiqurrahman⁵.

In groups of urban society, the existence of *murshid* is an *ulama* or *kyai* whose role is not only to provide solutions to the problems of life but also to drive social activities in society (Achidsti 2014: 163). *Kyai* as one of the non-formal leaders in society is considered a spiritual leader in the religious area. Usually, people will ask for consideration and seek solutions to the *kyai* about every activity carried out or problems experienced. This is why the *kyai* in the society are highly obeyed and their existence is taken into account. According to Nurkholis Majid (1997: 20), the word "kyai" means *old* or in Javanese is "Yahi", but this word also contains the purification towards the elders as the common trend among Javanese so that "kyai" does not only mean *old* (*syaiikh* in Arabic) but also sacred, holy, and powerful. This is what underlies the *tarekat* organization to have more militancy in transforming the change of this era. The activity carried out by the *kyai* is a

and Pekalongan. These *tarekat* adherents are provided with a pocket book entitled "*Sholat dan amalan bariyan Naqshabandiyah*". (Interview with Mr. Abdul Mufid as an Indonesia Haqqani adherent, on September 2nd 2018).

⁴ An interview with Gus Hakam, the son of K.H.A Taufiqurrahman on September 9th 2018.

⁵ K.H. Ahmad Taufiqurrahman was born in Pekalongan on July 17th 1947. His address is in Desa Rowokembu Kaum No. 154 RT 03 RW 02, Wonopringgo, Pekalongan. He is the eleventh child of twelve siblings. His father is H. Subki and his mother is Hj. Afiyah. The education he took in addition to the long *pesantren* education at Pondok Pesantren Al-Islah, Lasem, Rembang, he also received formal education. He was graduated from SD Islam YMI Wonopringgo, SMP Islam YMI Wonopringgo, MA Muallimat Wonopringgo, and Faculty of Ushuluddin at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. K.H. A. Taufiqurrahman married Hj. Chatimah, the daughter of his teacher in Pesantren al-Islah, K.H. Mashduqi bin Sulaiman al-Lasimi. He has four children, three daughters: Dzati Khikmah (1972), Dzati Hazmah (1975), Dzati Hashonah (1979), and one son: Muhammad Hakam Masduqi (1984). His four children were all married, and now he has six grandchildren: four granddaughters and two grandsons.

reflection of normative bonds that connects the theological message with social reality and functional bonds that move various kinds of system functions, values, and culture as a way of binding between *murshids* and their adherents.

The *ulama* (*murshid*) commonly referred to as part of televangelism⁶ in this class of urban Muslim societies are trying to show the existence of daily prayer (*do'a*) and philanthropic worship as a content in the soul of faith. The message of Sufism is presented with a new style and cosmopolite automatically carries an adaptive religious influence on modernization. This is what then forms the existence of *murshid* activity in Sufism not only performed as a problem-solving provider, but also an agent of social transformation. A *murshid* in society plays an important role as a religious figure which includes the spiritual role, education, agent of change, and socio-culture (Turmudi 2003: 96) which is seen by the society as the figure who can truly change society and give a good religious influence to people around the place or in the educational institution he built as K.H.A Taufiqurrahman as a *murshid* from *Tarekat* Naqshabandiyah Haqqani which is a central role as an agent of social transformation, especially urban society in the Pekalongan and the surrounding areas.

Tarekat Naqshabandiyah Haqqani has routine activities carried out every morning on Sunday with the recitation of the book of Sufism which is interspersed with the *ba'iat tarekat* and *dalailul khairat*. Whereas, the general recitation is held every Tuesday special for women and Wednesday night is for men. This paper, only focuses on the discussion of the special recitation of the morning recitation on Sunday from 08.00 to 10.00 or it is conditionally adjusted to its activities. The Sunday Morning Recitation is followed by people from various backgrounds and various professions, but lately it is more dominated by urban people with various professions, including a director, doctor, employee, and successful entrepreneur.⁷

In *Tarekat* Naqshabandiyah Haqqani, there are *wirid* practices divided into the three stages: daily *wirid* for the students, daily *wirid* for *Musta'id*, and daily *wirid* for beginner and *Muhib* (lovers). The adherents are encouraged to recite the prayers 300 times every Friday, 1 juz of al-Qur'an, surah al-Ikhlas (100 times) and 1 part of the book of *Dalā'ilul Khayrāt*. Daily *wirid* practiced in the *Tarekat* comes from Sheikh al-Dagestani (Kabbani 2004), it is hoped that with this daily *wirid*, his adherents can reach all the *maqams* in *tarekat* Naqshabandiyah.

⁶Televangelism as an example of popular digital media technology is a recent da'wah media. Televangelism is a hybrid genre between religion and entertainment that can be a manifestation of the dominant da'wah media in contemporary media culture. Televangelism became popular among urban Muslim societies because they regarded it as a new form of religious expression that was more modern in appearance and relevant to everyday life in accordance with the socio-historical context of Muslims in the twenty-first century. (Frankl 1987: 3-8; Bruce 1990; Helland 2004: 23-36; Campbell 2010; Campbell 2012: 64-93).

⁷ An interview with Gus Hakam, the son of K.H.A Taufiqurrahman on September 9th 2018.

There are two types of *dhikr* emphasized for this *tarekat* adherents: namely *ẓikr nafī itsbāt* and *ẓikr isim ẓāt*. *Ẓikr nafī itsbāt* is *dhikr* of Allah by saying the sentence of *tablīl "lā ilāha illā Allāh"*. This *dhikr* is the main of the *tarekat* teachings which are carried out in *jabr* (voiced); whereas, *dhikr isim ẓāt* is *dhikr* to Allah by saying “*Allāh-Allāh-Allāh*” in *sirr* or *khafī* (silently). This *dhikr* is also referred to as *dhikr latāif* and is a characteristic of *tarekat* Naqṣabandiyah. Both of these *dhikr* are conferred at once by a *murshid* (Aqib 1998: 80) on the first *Bai'at*.

The *shari'a* characteristics in *tarekat* practice can be seen from the six bases: *taubat* or repentance, *'uẓlab*, *ẓubud*, *takwa*, *qana'ab* and *taslim*. This *tarekat* also has six pillars: *'ilm* (having knowledge), *hilm* (roomy-hearted), patience or *sabar*, pleasure or *ridla*, sincerity or *ikhlas* and good morals or *akhlaq*; it also has six laws: *ma'rifat*, confident, generous, true, grateful, and *tafakur*. In fact, there are six obligations that are taught, they are performing *dhikr*, leaving desire, leaving the world (*ẓubud* which is interpreted by refraining from all forms of reprehensible morals and *ẓubud* from everything that is forbidden by Allah), performing religious duties earnestly, doing good to all of God's creatures and teach good deeds. Meanwhile, in this *tarekat*, the implementation of *suluk* will be perfect if it is in the three dimensions of Islam, which are Islam, Faith and Ihsan, or better known as *Shari'a*, *tarekat* and *hakikat*. In short, *tarekat* Naqṣabandiyah Haqqani emphasizes that the *tarekat* is practiced to strengthen the *Shari'a*.⁸ Thus, the adherents of *tarekat* Naqṣabandiyah Haqqani become a person who is in harmony between human with God and human beings with other human beings so that life is far from problems when the heart and mind are focused on worshiping Allah. However, in the construction of urban society today, *tarekat* is only a part of Sufism activity which is a symbol of Muslim identity or a popular trend for millennial urban society that is temporary and reactionary.

C. Urban Sufism as a Popular Islamic Symbol of the Millennial era

Millennial or millennium generation is also called Y Generation. This phrase began to be used in the editorial of the major US newspapers in August 1993. This generation uses a lot of instant communication technologies such as e-mail, SMS, instant messaging

⁸ Here, it is necessary to describe the *shari'a* orientation in the *tarekat* teaching which includes *taubat*, *ẓubud*, *tawakkal*, *syukur*, patience, pleasure, and honesty. According to Abdul Qadir Jailani, there are two kinds of repentance; repentance related to the rights of fellow human beings; and repentance related to God's right. In *ẓubud*, it is also divided into two parts; *ẓubud hakiki* is the essence of removing the world from his heart, and the inner *ẓubud*, which is removing the world in front of him. *Syukur* or thankfulness is also divided into three; verbal thankfulness, that is by acknowledging the existence of pleasure and feeling calm; physical thankfulness is by carrying out and performing worship according to the command of Allah; and thankfulness in the heart, that is by performing *ikhtikaf* to God and always maintaining God's right to do. While patience also has three kinds; to be patient with God by carrying out God's commands and leaving what is prohibited; be patient with God, that is to be patient with the resolutions of Allah and his actions, and to be patient with God, that is to be patient with the *rizq*, solving problems, the sufficiency, the help and the reward promised by Allah in the Afterlife (Mulyati 2011: 257).

and social media such as Facebook and Twitter, in other words Y generation is the generation that grew in the internet era (Lyons 2004: 441). Some characteristics of Y generation are different characteristics of each individual, depending on where he grew up, the economic and social strata of his family, his communication patterns are very open compared to previous generations, fanatical social media users and their lives are very affected by technological development, more open with political and economic views, so they look very reactive to changes in the environment that occur around them. This is one of the important phenomena of the globalization process that has emerged the generation of gadgets (Zuhail 2000), a term used to mark the emergence of millennial generations.

The discussion of "Popular Islam" in this context is very multi-interpretive because it can be explained by sharing a very broad scope. Weintraub (2011: 2-5) describes the definition of Popular Islam in four points. First, local traditions are influenced by the teachings of Islamic Sufism resulting in local Islamic customs. This is inseparable from the existence of Islamic *da'wah* patterns that adapt to local values as Hindu cultural heritage. Then, the pattern of Islamic syncretism in society was created. However, at the same time, there was also a *scripturalist* Islamic group which emphasized the literal teaching of Islam which refers directly to the Qur'an and *Hadith*. Secondly, Popular Islam is not interpreted as a form of modernization of Islam *an sich*. Popular Islamic Culture more emphasis on flexibility in understanding and applying Islamic teachings in life as long as still in the corridor of *shar'at*.

Furthermore, thirdly, the definition of Popular Islam is not generalized with the meaning of "populist" or majority. The definition implies more inclusive application of Islam that is able to adapt to the dynamics of society so that Islamic teachings can be practiced practically in society. Fourth, Popular Islam can be understood as a form of Islamic resurrection that emphasizes community development. Thus, in this context the presence of Popular Islam initiated by the Urban Muslim society as a form of the existence of a modernist Islamic culture in the public space that applies Islam flexibly and adaptively to be practically carried out according to the needs of modernist society today.

The heterogeneous environment of modernity has encouraged people to interact more freely and dynamically so that it forms the culture of Popular Islam and emerges Urban Sufism community (Neo Sufism). Urban Sufism is inseparable from the characteristics of Sufism which tends to be flexible, tolerant, and accommodative. These conditions make the urban society motivated to follow Sufi activities that have a *murshid* as a form of efforts to get closer to God through intense communication to the *murshid* when they bump into problems in their daily behavior. Therefore, religion through Sufism presents itself as a connection of relations between fellow human beings to respect each other and bring closer to God so as not to encounter severe problems of life. Komaruddin Hidayat sees that there are at least four perspectives on the reason Sufism is growing in

Urban society. First, Sufism is in demand by society because it is a way of searching for the meaning of life. Second, Sufism is a way of struggle and intellectual enlightenment. Third, Sufism as a psychological therapy. Fourth, Sufism as a way to follow the trend and development of religious discourse.

In the urban Sufism community who are the adherents of tarekat Naqshabandiyah Haqqani, they emphasize the aspects of *dhikr*, *shalawatan* and also *istighasab* which basically want to affirm their identity as a religious Muslim. Julia Howell said that the emergence of Urban Sufism in the experience of society as a form of actualization of social piety in the middle of modernity. Efforts to become religious with strict religious arguments tried to be implicated with a touch of modernity. That condition is what makes Sufism a *sunnah* worship which is prescribed to be present in community activities. In fact, Sufism is used as an effort to seek serenity and a temporary solution to life. This condition often makes Sufism called *eskapisme* (temporary problem escape). The point is that Sufism activity is only interpreted instantaneously and pragmatically as a form of temporary curative solution to gain sympathy and empathy for others by worship.

Sufism behavior in such an urban society is indeed inseparable from a high level of life stress. In addition, urban communities also believe that by doing *dhikr*, *shalawatan*, and *istighasab*, they will get inner peace. Therefore, with the attainment of calm, there will also be a solution to world problems so that it can be resolved as well as possible.⁹ Therefore, it is not surprising then, if the Sufism study group is also able to create the existence of militancy Sufism based on the love of Allah and the Messenger of Allah to become a symbol of faith and Islam which is the power of urban society facing the challenges of modernity.

In today's modern era, as illustrated by Naisbitt (1999) regarding high touch that touch of faith is now important to be discussed. This is because developing technological advances have made modern humans become afraid. When the use of technology becomes great and the mainstreaming of rational logic becomes the main thing causing humans to dry up their faith. The existence of genetic engineering and technology that became the icons of modern humans in solving problems actually did not find a curative solution. Basically, how rational human reason develops, it will not be able to defeat the power of God because there is already a clear line of separation that science only explains physical knowledge, while religion explains spiritual knowledge. Therefore, science will not be able to come through to explain immaterial things.

Although the demarcation (separation) between human and religious sciences is very clear, in the construction of the identity of urban Muslim society, the worship and religion are only the symbols of popular Islamic culture. The demarcation of the emergence

⁹ An interview with Mr. Miza, as a new adherent of *Tarekat Naqshabandiyah Haqqani*, on September 7th, 2018.

of popular Islam indicates that there is the ability of urban Muslim diplomacy and negotiation to express their identity. Social piety is the main goal in the construction of Muslim society within the framework of Popular Islam, namely Islamization and Post-Islamism. Islamization is defined more in its orientation to support the formalization of religion through efforts to gain influence, while Post-Islamism is more to practice that leads to behavior symbolic only. If Urban Muslims take the position of Post-Islamism, then it is more directed to the formation of social piety. Therefore, the return of religion to become a sign of life signifies the present is the era of understanding the religion as a sign and meaning presented as a medium of liberation of life problems world. This premise then applies in view of the emphasis on the existence of *sunnah* worship which needs to be multiplied rather than obligatory worship. In this case, according to Sodikin (2018), it is seen that very many people are present to participate in the activities of *bai'at tarekat* and *istighasah* but only a part of those who follow the *shalat berjamaah*.

Urban Sufism is the meaning of life solutions as popular culture. This popular culture is intended as a form of repetitive life habits (*habitus*)¹⁰ and is collectively accepted as a common form of habit. Searching for solutions to the problem becomes the main motivation for the formation of popular culture. Sufism that was originally in the private field then developed into a popular Islamic culture. Sufis in urban society then spread to the creation of urban Sufi symbols such as *baju takwa*, *hijab*, *gamis*, turban, sarong, etc. All of this is accepted as a Sufi popular culture. The growing Popular Islam in the commoditization of Islamic symbols is a form of response to industrial capitalization on the side of Islamic piety. In general, popular Islamic power is the main resistor in reducing the influence of Islamization offered by formalizing religion (Heryanto 2015 : 65). Popular Islam is still at the level of mass culture production which then constructs people to become Islam because of the "Islamic" products they use.

From there, there was an identity conflict between urban Muslim society in articulating their faith so that today urban Sufism is carried out in a crowd as an attempt to approach themselves to God. It means that nowadays, the important motivation of Sufism activities of urban society is to find solutions to problems, then also indicated by external appearances that must be fulfilled. It is hoped that with the consumption of various popular Islamic cultural products and with the intensity of following Sufism activities such as *tarekat*, then life solutions can be solved easily.

¹⁰ In the philosophical tradition, *habitus* is defined as a habit that is often referred to as habitual called self-appearance, which appears (appearance). It can be said that *habitus* is a historical product that produces individual and collective practices, and history, in line with the schemes described by history. *Habitus* which is manifested in certain individuals is obtained in the individual's historical process and is a function and point in social history where it happened (See Bourdieu 1977: 82; Ritzer & Goodman 2010: 581).

CONCLUSION

Urban Sufism has developed as a form of finding solutions to life problems which have the only temporary and reactionary characteristic. In addition, Sufism becomes a trend to show self-identity as a righteous Muslim, the implication is the religion and God in the modernism era are presented conditionally and pragmatically. This understanding has experienced a transformation from conventional Sufism followers who are only taqleed to the *tariqa murshid* to get closer to Allah. The phenomenon of Sufism in the *Naqshabandiyah Haqqani* in Pekalongan shows that the *Kyai's* role not only provides a solution to the problems of life but also drives social activities in society to become agents of the social transformation. Thus, Sufism which was originally in the private sphere then developed into a popular Islamic culture in order to create social piety and become a habitus. The formation of Sufi habit among the millennial urban community then creates urban Sufi symbols such as piety, hijab, robe, turban, sarong and others. Hopefully, with the consumption the product of various kinds of popular Islamic cultural symbol plus the intensity of following Sufism activities such as *tarekat*, the solution for living in an urban community can be solved easily.

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