THE DIGITAL *DA'WAH* MOVEMENT: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL QUESTION OF URBAN SUFISM WOMEN

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Abstrak

Gerakan sosial keagamaan dewasa ini tidak bisa dilepaskan dari pengaruh modernisme yang mengharuskan gerakan dakwah lebih dinamis, fleksibel dan tidak kaku dalam menghadapi problematika kehidupan masyarakat. Fenomena ini ditandai dengan maraknya dakwah digital yang telah masuk ke setiap lini kehidupan masyarakat, khususnya di Indonesia. Gerakan sufisme urban pernah muncul sebagai respon atas fenomena ini, namun bagaimana dengan sufisme urban kalangan perempuan? Di manakah posisi mereka hari ini? Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif. Sumber data diperoleh dari beberapa buku, jurnal, artikel dan karya ilmiah lainnya. Tulisan ini akan lebih dalam membahas kepustakaan dari masa ke masa, mulai dari bentuk tasawuf konvensional hingga tasawuf urban. Baik melalui tarekat agama, majelis dzikir, atau lembaga keagamaan tertentu yang saat ini terus berkembang di Indonesia melalui media digital. Kelompok sufi adalah gerakan "spiritual" yang juga berkontribusi pada masalah sosial dan keagamaan masyarakat. Secara spesifik, sufisme urban di perkotaan dalam gerakan tasawuf perempuan diharapkan dapat menjadi kekuatan mobilitas spiritual yang dihadirkan sebagai spektrum baru yang lebih disukai dan diindahkan. Ada dua poin yang bisa dijabarkan oleh mereka. Pertama, mencoba mengelaborasi kemunculan gerakan sufisme perkotaan perempuan yang sepanjang sejarah jarang tersentuh oleh dunia akademis bahkan dalam sejarah intelektual tasawuf. Kedua, tasawuf urban perempuan serta model dan gerakan dakwahnya melahirkan kebangkitan kekuasaan sebagai bentuk perlawanan terhadap perspektif marginalisasi perempuan sufi. Tulisan ini selanjutnya akan memaparkan secara detail dari literatur tasawuf dan beberapa contoh gerakan tasawuf perempuan perkotaan di era modernisme.

Kata Kunci: Sufisme Perempuan Perkotaan; Sejarah Intelektual Tasawuf; Gerakan Dakwah Digital

Abstract

Today's socio-religious movement cannot be separated from the explosion of the era of modernism which demands a more dynamic, flexible and not rigid propaganda movement in dealing with the problems of people's lives. This phenomenon is marked by the rise of digital da'wah that comes into people's lives, particularly in Indonesia. The urban Sufism movement once emerged in response to this phenomenon, but what about women's urban Sufism? Where is their position today? This research uses a qualitative approach. Sources of data obtained from several books, journals, articles and other scientific works. More deeply, this paper will discuss the bibliography from time to time, from conventional forms of Sufism to urban Sufism. Either through religious tariqa, majlis dhikir, or certain religious institutions that today continue to flourish in Indonesia through digital media. Sufi groups are "spiritual" movements which have also contributed to the social and religious problems of society. Urban Sufism in urban areas especially in the movement of women Sufism is expected to be a spiritual mobility power that is presented as a new spectrum that is more ogled and heeded. Primarily there are two points that can be elaborated. First, try to elaborate on the emergence of the urban Sufism movement of women who throughout history have rarely been touched by the academic world even in the history of Sufism intellectual. Second, women's urban Sufism and the da'wah model and movement gave birth to the rise of power as a form of resistance to the perspective of the marginalization of Sufi women. This paper will further describe in detail from Sufism literature and some examples of urban women's Sufism movements in the era of modernism.

Keywords: Women's Urban Sufism; Intellectual History of Sufism; Digital Da'wah Movement

Introduction

Entering the era of disruption 4.0, the development of digital technology increasingly extends unlimited, penetrates cultural barriers and community traditions. So that it delivers society to an urban climate of life and creates a paradigm of a pragmatic life, even cultural infiltration, and foreign values intensely and massively undermines the identity of national personality and religious morals through television and social media. Citing Mike Featherstone, the widespread of consumerism that leads humanity to spiritual poverty and hedonistic philosophy of life, no exception in the process of spirituality, social media is a strategic step to broadcast religious ideologies in the middle of feuds of technology in the cyber era. The digital da'wah approach is the only flexible communicative information flow to attract the attention of urban communities with the cacophony of dynamics that occur in them. The problem of globalization does not only stop at the point of economic and industrial territory but also comes into the cultural, social, and religious.[1]

The movement of digital da'wah is not strange anymore in any country no exception in Indonesia. Modern life that is completely mechanical can make people stagger, and even roll into the midst of the ideological upheaval of religious knowledge that is misleading, partial, and disjointed. It is obvious that there are negative and positive sides. All must be seen as opportunities as well as challenges to realize Islamic da'wah that is more effective, efficient, and globalized. Internet users, if calculated graphically, tend to be more to young people, millennials, and more educated people. Around 50% of internet users are classified as *actualizers*, academics, professionals, and *technically oriented*.[2] So, the big question written by Jeff Zaleski (1999), do mosques, churches, and places of worship still become the most pleasant places to do worship? or society has started to immerse themselves in cyberspace.[3]

Along with the progress and development of the times, the urban Sufism movement, called by Oman Fathurahman as a phenomenon of Sufism in urban areas (urban Sufism), must be flexible and adapted to the developing traditions, because Sufi teachings are always interpreted as movements that are flexible, not rigid, tolerant, holistic, and accommodating to the diversity of religious ideas.[4] Sufism is a means to follow the trends

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[1]Ian G. Barbour, *Religion and Science* (Harper Collins, 2013), 55.

[2]Anastasia DIANA, *Mengenal E-Business* (Yogyakarta: Andi, 2001), 145.

[3]Jeffrey P. Zaleski, *The Soul of Cyberspace: How New Technology Is Changing Our Spiritual Lives* (HarperEdge, 1997), 122–23.

[4]Clara Joewono, *Islamic Thought and Movements in Contemporary Indonesia* (Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 2007), 45.

and developments of religious discourse.[5] Awareness of the dimensions of Islamic spirituality of the modernists adopted the spirit of Sufism in general, but they negated the various hierarchical teachings of the tariqa. Therefore, among the urban Sufism groups, the jargon is known as Sufism without tariqa.[6] The point of the emergence of modern Sufis in Indonesia is inseparable from the emergence of the book Tasawwuf Modern (Modern Sufism) written by Hamka (1939)[7] and was first introduced by Julie. D. Howwel (2012)[8] represented by the Urban Middle-Class group from the background of the ideology of neo-modernism[9] so that Sufism group movements emerged which sought to treat the human heart or soul (tāzkīyātu an-nāfs) through introducing Sufism teachings by spiritual institutions that are different from the world of conventional Sufism.[10] This movement is not bound by any particular organization or tariqa, which runs as naturally as possible following the course of the life of modern society.

An intriguing question arises in the middle of digital da'wah, and the emergence of the urban Sufism movement "where is the location or role of urban Sufism women?" this becomes a discourse as well as a phenomenological question that needs to be answered and studied historically, sociologically, and psychologically. Indeed, throughout history, female Sufi figures have never surfaced. The phenomenon becomes an academic problem that needs to be solved together. Where is the position of women? this article will try to elaborate on the emergence of the women's urban Sufism movement that has hardly been touched by the academic world even in the history of Sufism. Women's urban Sufism along with the model and da'wah movements gave birth to the emergence of power as a form of resistance to the marginalization perspective of the Sufi invention.

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[5]Oman Fathurahman, *"Urban Sufism: Perubahan dan Kesinambungan Ajaran Tasawuf,"* Indonesian Islamic Philology, 2007, http://oman.uinjkt.ac.id/2007/01/urban-sufism-perubahandan.htm.

[6]Arif Zamhari, *Rituals of Islamic Spirituality: A Study of Majlis Dhikr Groups in East Java* (ANU E Press, 2010), 02.

[7]Mohammad Damami, *Tasawuf positif: dalam pemikiran HAMKA* (Fajar Pustaka Baru, 2000), 177–81.

[8]Julia Day Howell, "Sufism and Neo-Sufism in Indonesia Today," *Rima.* 46, no. 2 (2012).

[9]Julia Day Howell, "Sufism and the Indonesian Islamic Revival," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 60, no. 3 (August 2001): 701–29, https://doi.org/10.2307/2700107.

[10]In Indonesia, it is often linked to some names such as Ustadz Arifin Ilham with his majlis *Dzīkir Ād-dzīkra,* Ustadz KH. Abdullah Gymnastiar with his Management Qalbu (Management of soul), Ustadz Yusuf Mansyur with concept of the miracle of Shodaqah, Ustadz Jefri al-Bukhari with his characteristic voice and Ustadz Haryono with his *dzīkir* and alternative medicine.

The formation of marginalization does not depend on the perspective of the writer based on books and references that contain women's entry.[11]

This reality is inversely proportional to Sufism studies. Whereas in Sufism studies, women get a very high position. Women are unique. Even Ibn Arabi places them as the highest manifestation, which is the most perfect manifestation of God ever.[12] Women are very subtle, secret, sensible, and attractive that have no end to talk about them.[13] Perhaps the study of women practically needs to be more widely recognized by society in general that women are not merely as objects of study but as subjects or performers of the history of Sufism intellectuality.

Hacking the Paradigm of Women Sufism

This study proves that women have a special position even though the population of the emergence of female Sufi figures is still dominated by male Sufism figures, but women want to say out loud that the power to give birth to female Sufi figures is possible and qualified. First, women are positioned as objects of study in Sufism. Women are like archaeological objects that are neatly hidden, and only some archaeologists can dismantle the fragments of women's beauty, especially in Sufism studies that are favored and sought after by Sufi experts since a very long time—about seven centuries ago—while the mushrooming of attention from various Sufism circles on women's studies.

Behind the beauty of women, lies the substance of the true beauty of God.[14] It is not wrong to mention the names of women with a very familiar name in various Sufism literature marked by the emergence of a caliber of Rabi'ah al-Adawiyah (w.185 H).[15] The name Rabi'ah can be compared to Sufi figures of Hāsan al-Bāsri (110 H), Hashīm al-Kufī (d. 150 H), Sufyān as-Saūrī

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[11]Laury Silvers, "Early Pious, Mystic Sufi Women," in *The Cambridge Companion to Sufism*, ed. Lloyd Ridgeon, Cambridge Companions to Religion (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 24, https://doi.org/10.1017/CCO9781139087599.004.

[12]Henry Corbin, *Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn Arabi* (Princeton University Press, 2014), 50–51.

[13]Annemarie Schimmel, *Jiwaku adalah Wanita: aspek feminin dalam spiritualitas Islam* (Penerbit Mizan, 1998), 68.

[14]Imam Khanafi el-Jauhari, *Analisis Gender untuk Rekonstruksi Keadilan,* Muwâzâh, Vol. 1, No. 1, Januari-Juni 2009, 54.

[15]Margaret Smith, *Rabi'a The Mystic and Her Fellow-Saints in Islam: Being the Life and Teachings of Rabi'a Al-Adawiyya Al-Qaysiyya of Basra Together with Some Account of the Place of the Women Saints in Islam* (CUP Archive, 1984), 39. Fellow of the Institute for Advanced Research in the Humanities Margaret Smith and Margaret Smith, *Studies in Early Mysticism in the Near and Middle East* (Literary Licensing, LLC, 2013)., 218 and Sophia Pandya, *Muslim Women and Islamic Resurgence: Religion, Education and Identity Politics in Bahrain* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2012), 35.

(161 H), to al-Mūhāsibī (w. 243 H). Sufi women such as Rabi'ah carried the giant step of Sufism's epistemology that was so stomping and thrilling the world throughout history for up to seven centuries afterward. Previously female Sufis were only marked by the wives of the Prophet when, according to Margaret Smith (1928), female Sufis were unknown and did not exist in the early days of Islam.[16]

But the role of women is very fertile to give birth to qualified figures of Sufism. According to Annemarie Schimmel, women play a role in the lives of great Sufis like Ibn Arabi, where the spirit of Ibn Arabi's spirituality is in the figure of women. Ibn Arabi's love for women was very interesting, even his memories of the great ascetic women from Sevilla he had met when Ibn Arabi was young, were very clearly reflected in his memory. One of them was Fathīmā bint al-Mūsthānā from Cordoba, a woman living in the pool of poverty. Fathīmah was a consolation for the inhabitants of the earth because her words contained wisdom. As described in Ibn Arabi's book, Fathīmā as a "spiritual mother" gave birth to various poems in the form of Diwan (a collection of poems by one author, usually excluding his or her long poems).[17] There is another woman whose name is Nizam, daughter of Imam Māqam Ibrāhīm in the holy place. The woman met Ibn Arabi when he was walking around the Kaaba. At that time, Ibn Arabi sank into ecstasy and recitation of poetry. That meeting gave birth to a poem collected in the book *Tārjumān al-Āsywāq*, and the woman delivered Ibn Arabi to write the book *al-Fūtūhāt al-Makkīyyāh*.[18]

Besides Ibn Arabi, there are also very famous Sufis like Dzun Nun-Al-Mīsrīh (d. 859). He was very impressed with Fathīmāh from Nasyapur (d. 849), a female Sufi fifty years younger than the Rabi'a. Dzun Nun-Al-Mīsrīh admires her for her deep understanding of theology. Fathīmāh was the wife of Ahmad ibn Khāzrūyā (d. 864 CE). This woman often met with Abu Yazid al-Busthamī (d. 877) discussing spirituality with her. When her husband was jealous and denounced Fathīmāh, then she answered that there was only God in his heart.[19] There is no obstacle to the great potential of a woman to become a greater Sufi cleric, and many scholars wrote the female Sufi figures in the books of Sufism.

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[16]Annemarie Schimmel, *My Soul Is a Woman: The Feminine in Islam* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2003), 50. The increasing development of Sufism began when Imam al-Hāsan al-Bāsri pupils from Hūdzaīfah al-Yamani established the study of Sufism in Basra, establishing an epistemology called "Sufism"; up to three hundred years later there were Tariqat groups, one of them was Tariqat Al-Qadiriyah (470 AH).

[17]Schimmel, 77.

[18] Schimmel, 48.

[19] Schimmel, 56.

The following is a bibliography list of the book of Sufism which contains several female figures in it. In the book Hīlyat al-Āwlīyā, Abu Nu'aim al-Isfahani records 28 women; the book Nāfahāt al-Uns, Abdūrrahman Jāmi records 35 women, in the book Tābaqat al-Kūbrā, Abdul Wahab al-Shā'rani records 16 women. Most of the names of women mentioned in those texts are family members of the Prophet Muhammad, Companions or female figures in the Qur'an. The book of Kāshf al-Māhjūb belonging to Abu Hasan Ali ibn Usman al-Jūllabi al-Hujwīri records 12 women. In the book Tādzkīrat āl-Awlīyā, Fariduddin Āttar records 1 woman. In the Book of al-Bāyad wā al-Sāwad, Abu Hasan al-Sīrjani records 8 women. Ibn Sa'ad (168 H / 765 CE-230 H / 845 CE), the earliest Muslim biographer, wrote about 629 female companions of the Prophet Rasulullah Saw in his work, "al-Thābaqât al-Kabīr Volume VIII". The entries that contain women's names are strong enough to break down the negative paradigm about women who cannot play a role in the intellectual treasures of Sufism.[20]

Indeed, as objects of Sufism studies, women can fill any place at every stage of spiritual life. They can even become qūthb (poles or axis), the highest level in the hierarchy of saints. Female Sufis open up a vast space of interpretation. Perhaps, it is not just from the perspective of Sufism, but it can also be seen from a cultural, sociological and psychological perspective. In the tradition of primitive societies, women and men are divided into two different characters, men as hunters and women as gatherers. Society puts the position of men and women not determined by biological factors, but it is constructed by the culture of the community itself.[21] That construction 'almost' creates a very far-reaching bulkhead space, so that the status of women in Islam, which is held in high esteem, is sometimes very low in the eyes of men.[22] Such construction can already be broken in Sufism literature when placing the figure of women as the most special objects.

For example, in the tradition of Islamic mysticism, the figure of Maryam "Mary" is often used as a symbol of the spirit that receives Divine inspiration and pregnant with Divine light. That spiritual role is purely showing women as pregnant that can be fully accepted. The act of worshiping the tomb of Maryām proves that her example is a living fact in Muslim lands.[23] Aside from being the object of Sufism studies, women are also the subjects themselves. This article will not focus on one particular

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[20]For more complete about Sufi figures can be traced in Sufism books containing about Sufis biography. Refer to Ibn Mulaqqin *Tabaqāt al-Awliyā'*, (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub, 2011).

[21]Nasaruddin Umar, *Argumen kesetaraan jender: perspektif al Qur'ân* (Paramadina, 1999), 4–7.

[22]Jamal A Badawi, *Status of woman in Islam*, 1980, 4–5.

[23]Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (The Other Press, 2008), 247.

figure of Sufism but rather on the development of the urban epistemology of female Sufism. The female Sufi figure, who acts as a symbol of strength, is limited to the object of Sufism that moves to become the subject itself, as will be discussed below.

Intellectual Treasury of Sufism

The continuation of neo-Sufism gave birth to an "Urban Sufism" movement. This model of Sufism is simply interpreted as the passion of the birt of spiritual. Still, according to Howell, the difference between urban Sufism and classical Sufism is not too much. First, urban Sufism only artificially adopted, namely adopting a variety of *dhikr* and *wirid* only, and they left the rest. Secondly, the phenomenology of *majlis shalawat, dhikr,* and *hālaqohs* of Islamic teachings openly signify a shift in the model of preaching desired by all levels of society.[24] So, Howwel divides the modern Sufism model into nine characters; (1) varieties of transnationalism, (2) changes in the relationship of authority and association patterns in Sufism, (3) emphasis of Sufism as solemn, (4) accommodative attitudes of Sufism towards the new regime, (5) Sufism as the basis for political mobilization of civil society, (6) The development of forms unit local voluntary associations, (7) the solutive attitude of Sufism in the political vortex, (8) the merging of Sufism with the Salafi spirit and political activism, and (9) global and transnational relations.[25]

The urban Sufism movement slowly but surely shifted into a resistance movement against the government, religious social movements and could even later move on a broader spectrum including in the economic and political spheres.[26] Indeed, in the broader movement, many wars against the expansion of European power were championed by Muslim organizations that had Sufi origins.[27] Because the paradigm of modern Sufism is to give birth to contributive insights - not stagnation - its nature is always moving forward and dynamic. Perhaps that is what Martin van Bruinessen called the expansion of the formalization of Sufism in the Suharto era.

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[24]Ahmad Najib Burhani, *Sufisme kota: berpikir jernih menemukan spiritual positif* (Serambi Ilmu Semesta, 2001), 50.

[25]Sokhi Huda, "Karakter Historis Sufisme Pada Masa Klasik, Modern, Dan Kontemporer," *Teosofi: Jurnal Tasawuf Dan Pemikiran Islam* 7, no. 1 (June 2, 2017): 64–95, https://doi.org/10.15642/teosofi.2017.7.1.64-95.

[26]Martin Van Bruinessen and Julia Day Howell, eds., *Sufism and the 'Modern' in Islam* (I.B.Tauris, 2007), 112, https://doi.org/10.5040/9780755607983.

[27]Rabia Nasir dan Arsheed Ahmad Malik, "Role and Importance of Sufism in Modern World," dalam *International Journal of Advancements in Research & Technology*, Volume 2, Issue1 (January 2013), 8.

Before going further as one of the new isms, "urban Sufism of women" cannot be separated from the birth of the intellectual realm of Sufism. The spirit is breathing with the egalitarian spirit. Women as "subject" behavior are not limited to discourse. The historical gradation of Sufism from time to time has experienced adjustments to the conditions of the times. Sufism's intellectual history must be formed with a mature, well-established, and independent concept. This term will be well-established if academics can conduct research that focuses more on the happening reality. Previously, there was a research that wrote about the movement of Shaykh Ahmad al-Mutamakkin, a neo-Sufism who tried to break the hegemony of the political elite through epistemological criticism in his Sufism thought.[28]

In essence, the urban spirit of Sufism moves from grassroots communities to be accepted by urban communities whose lives are full of glamor, hedonism, and pragmatics. No longer bound by delicate boundaries of terms that deal with epistemological domains. While most people like being more pro-active and having a dialogue with the environment and civilization of their time.

The emergence of female Sufis is an extension of Sufi figures that existed previously around the VII century, such as Aisha from Andalus (705-750 H/1305-1349 CE), Bad'iah bint Siraj al-Din (890 H /1485 CE), a pious woman who delivered her knowledge of writing poetry, Ruqayyah (1317 H/1899 CE), daughter of the Shaykh of the Sya'diyah tarekat in Damascus. Besides, there was recorded a female figure from the African region, Sokoto, now included in the territory of the Republic of Nigeria named Nana Asma'u (1793-1865 AD), who was a teacher, poet, and female leader.[29]

In Indonesia, one of the women considered to be Sufis was Fatimah bint Maimun, daughter of King Carmen of Kedah. Fatimah bint Maimun died in 475 H / 1082 CE and was buried in Laren Gresik, East Java. There is another female figure from Madura, as Martin Van Bruinessen said, the woman became a *murshid* (a teacher or leader in Sufism group) of the Naqsābandiyāh Māzharīyāh in Madura. Some of these female murshids not only acted as assistants to their husbands. They were more dominant but truly independent. Some of these female murshids not only acted as assistants to their husbands. They were more dominant but truly independent. The female murshid was Nyai Thobibah receiving full *ijazah* or authorization from Kiai Ali Wafa and Syarifah Fatima in Sumenep. The

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[28]Argawi Kandito and Jajang Husni Hidyat, *Mbah Mutamakin: perjalanan hidup, pendakian spiritual, dan buah pikir emas sang legenda tanah Jawa*, (ogyakarta: PT LKiS Printing Cemerlang 2013) 90.

[29]Javad Nubrakhsh, *Sufi Women* (Khaniqahi-Nimatullahi Pub, n.d.), 167.

female murshid there has a large following, not only in the Madura region but also in West Borneo and South Malang.

Another female murshid is Syarifah Nor in Gondanglegi or popularly known as Pah Nong. It turned out that not only in the Naqsabandiyah tariqa were women leaders found but also in the Tijaniyah tariqa in Madura there was muqaddam.[30] In West Java, two female figures are quite phenomenal, namely Hj. Rd Ātikāh Qurtūbī from Garut, although not a murshid or caliph but her name is very popular in the Garut region, and Hj. Chamnah from Kuningan who became a leader in the tariqa. The two figures from West Java were the practitioners of the Tijaniyah tariqa. Hj Rd. Iktikāh Qurtūbī was a female figure in the world of the tariqa who was constantly aware of the meaningful, transcendent, and noble character.

Female figures from Tariqa Tijaniyyah, for example, Nyai Hj. Chamnah, have a president in the development of the Sufi world itself. Indeed, her name is not as popular as contemporary Indonesian female figures who have received extensive coverage and extensive studies. Nyai Chamnah was a local figure who struggled with rural communities carrying the spirit of Sufism urbanization. Her position as muqaddam in the Kuningan region in the Tijaniyah tariqa had a very central position.[31] The influence of these figures was very large on the role of women as leaders who were considered worthy and capable of overhauling cultural reconstruction in a patriarchal society.

The digital da'wah movement carried out by Mamah Dedeh (Dedeh Rosidah Syarifudin)[32], for example, is an example that has a very big jump. Starting since 1994, her activities of da'wah off air from village to village, town to town, and became a speaker at various study groups apparently attracted the attention of the community large. Digital da'wah activity carried out by Mama Dedeh is a form of contribution that flows the spirit of digital da'wah amongst an uncontrolled flow of information and technology. The urban spirit of women's Sufism arose from such preaching movements. Fazlur Rahman said that the combination of Sufism and Sharia gave birth to a popular and online form of Sufi groups.[33]

There are also millennial women's figures who appear to the public giving studies on religion. Although they do not have a formal congregation,

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[30]A term in Tijaniyah Tariqa for the leaders of Tariqa

[31]Martin van Bruinessen, *Tarekat Naqsyabandiyah di Indonesia: survei historis, geografis, dan sosiologis* (Bandung: Mizan, 1992), 170.

[32]The journey of her da'wah in media has been almost 22 years. She is a daughter of Kyai named Suhai and married to Syarifuddin who was also the son of Kyai from Betawi, namely KH. Hasan Basri.

[33]Fazlur Rahman, *Islam* (University of Chicago Press, 1979), 49.

they have a lot of fans on social media. One of them is like Oki Setiana Dewi, who was born in Batam on the 13th of January, 1989. Regarding the quality of religious knowledge, she can be considered to be qualified. Even she ever studied the Arabic language at Umm Al-Qura University in Makkah in 2012. Many people are interested in Oki's way of preaching on social media with her presentations that attract people's attention, especially among millennial communities. The da'wah instrumentalism will be discussed below.

Digital Da'wah and Development of Modern Sufism Teachings Model

The existence of da'wah is to broadcast the teachings of Islam in which the highest Islamic religious values exist in Sufism. This knowledge emerged as an effort to get closer to God. One of the contextualizations of Islamic teachings and values in people's lives is by way of preaching. Da'wah here is very broad in scope and even in very universal meaning. So, the development of the teaching of modern Sufism has a different direction from time to time. It is necessary to reconstruct the concept of da'wah that has been developing in the community.[34] One model of Walisongo da'wah in Nusantara is a bombastic example in the history of Islam in the land of Java. The contextualization of their modern Sufism da'wah approach was very similar, did not attack each other groups, did not condemn community behavior that was not good, did not bring a set of new teachings that were very foreign to the community, causing misunderstanding in the formulation, approach, and methodology.

One form of this digital da'wah model is not static because da'wah in the broader sense is very complex, where traditionalists heading to the modern, from rural to urban, from technological stuttering to technological society, from theological-traditionalist to liberal and even radical. The reason is that this phenomenon results in a gap between the preacher and the reality and sociocultural conditions that cause chaos between the preacher and the community who consider preaching as mere dysfunctional.

So, the model of the digital da'wah approach is a means of developing modern Sufism teachings with pure conventional Sufism spirit. First, is to spread the teachings of wisdom on social media, as the Koran calls on the wisdom of the *wājādīlhum billātī hīya ahsān.* In big cities like Jakarta, Bandung, Surabaya, and other cities, people feel that they have experienced spiritual drought. They feel very alienated from God, so they seek the peace of soul, heart, and mind through *the majlis of dhikr*, *halaqoh khatmil al-*

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[34]Moh Ali Aziz dkk, *Dakwah Pemberdayaan Masyarakat; Paradigma, Aksi, Metodologi* (Pustaka Pesantren, 2005), 11–15.

Qur'an, the blessings of the prophet and others. Da'wah, that is calmer and reassuring, is the choice of the people. The da'wah groups should be an oasis of life that refreshes the heart to pump up the spirit of faith and knowledge about the religion of Islam.

Second, society is not divided into polarizations based on identity or classes, and embraces all societies including those of sinners, and does not consider them all the same as long as they want to repent, because God's forgiveness itself is vastly unlimited. Many preachers spread da'wah on social media with provocative contents condemning certain groups or vilifying certain groups. This modern model of Sufism is mediating and even avoiding this. In Sufism, nothing is misleading and fighting over spiritual piety in the eyes of God.[35]

The third is not making da'wah content that is complicated and difficult to be accepted by the public in general, not bound by legal-formal concepts without having to go through the tariqa teacher, not have to go through *bai'at* and no one demands people to do certain practices every day. This model of preaching is pure as Julia Day Howell said as the birth of the spirituality of the urban middle-class community in Indonesia.[36] Even traditionalist communities also feel that passion as a form of something new and comfortable in their religious life. For now, the development of technology is not only absorbed by urban communities. The flow of digital information and social media has become a new lifestyle, including by rural communities. We cannot claim that people who are far from cities are still blind to information, because digitalization is creeping into remote villages. For this reason, the movement of digital da'wah must be touched with spiritual aspects containing Sufi characteristics. This is where the spirit of da'wah Sufism is transmitted in the form of a more active and modern model.

The International Sufi Ulama Conference or *Multaqa Sufi al-Alamy* in Pekalongan on April 8, 2019, invited the world's Sufis to color social media with the da'wah of positive and wisdom Sufi approaches. The Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia attended that *Multaqa* and asserted that the digital generation must understand. Sufism not only contributed to religious formation, social participation, and statehood but also contributed to the spread of Islam to various parts of the world.[37] Therefore, given historical experience, Islam entered Indonesia through peaceful means,

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[35]Khaled Abou El Fadl, *Speaking in God's Name: Islamic Law, Authority and Women* (Simon and Schuster, 2014), 14.

[36]Refer also to the article of Martin van Bruinessen & Julia D. Howell (eds.), *Sufism and The Modern in Islam* (New York dan London: IB Tauris, 2007).

[37]Refer to Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*.

including through the hands of Sufi scholars. Millennials have to know that Sufi scholars spread Islam with a noble character, which gave birth to Islam *rahmatan li al-alamin*.

Conclusion

The urban da'wah activities of Sufism are a rare phenomenon because most of those who play a role are men. In reality, what happens on the ground is not always the case. Apart from being the object of Sufism studies (which has no role), women are also the subject of a direct role in developing Sufism itself. Even, hierarchically women get the highest position compared to men in the study of Sufism bibliography. Although classified as a little, in fact, there are still emerging female Sufi figures from time to time in the treasury of the development of Sufism and who helped enliven the contestation of digital da'wah through the Sufistic approach.

In the turmoil of modernism, which is marked by the rapid information and technology that makes society more hedonistic, pragmatic, and consumptive, it is necessary to fight against it all through digital da'wah with a Sufiistic approach model, that touches the lives of people in various levels of spirituality. The people dream of an urban Sufism propaganda movement that is dynamic, flexible and reassuring. Da'wah can be accepted by all levels of society, invite them to the path of wisdom, facilitate the community, and not vilify certain groups or create classes that cause social inequality.

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