

## Strengthening the Indigenoussization of Islam by Gus Dur in the Middle of the Formalization of Religion

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### Abstract

*The focus of this article is to examine the process of Gus Dur's indigenoussization of Islam as a response to the increasing phenomenon of religious formalization. This topic is considered important because it is an effort to keep local culture and traditions down to earth. Apart from that, the indigenoussization of Islam is also a contra-naration against the conservative understanding of Islam which states that indigenous Islamic rituals are regarded as bid'ah, shirk or khurafat that must be rejected. This was raised because according to muslim fundamentalists, the religious practices of indigenous Muslims are opposite of the practices of salaf as-salih which conform Islam totality or kaffah and authentic Islam. In addition, the indigenoussization of Islam emerged as a response to the phenomenon of the formalization of religion which leads to the commodification of religion by making religion as a sale value. This writing employes socio-descriptive method which has come to conclusions as follows. First, the indigenoussization of Islam which was initiated by Gus Dur was the result of Gus Dur's long struggle with praxis in nature. Second, Arabization with its' formalization of religion has injured the diversity of the nation of the archipelago and opened up opportunities for the rise of ideological and political interests. Third, the common thread or root of the problem between conservative Islamic groups with their attitudes of formalizing religion and the indigenoussization of Islam lies in the differences in understanding the values of Islamic normativity and culture.*

**Keywords:** Indigenous Islam, Religious Formalization, Local Traditions, and Gus Dur

## A. Introduction

Humanity is a highly respected in social life. The reason is humanizing to other humans is a noble and non-negotiable thing. Humans who have a human nature are people whose good ethics. This is what has been glorified and echoed throughout the world so that division does not occur and every human being is able to live side by side without division and discrimination. Ironically, crises of humanity are still happened everywhere. The superpowers and developed countries should protect and give a good example to other country, but in fact, they are being the cause of many humanity problems. Prolonged cold war, discrimination everywhere, and authoritarian rulers make peace has no common ground. Advertisement is a medium to introduce and promote something. Recently, public service advertisements have appeared which aim to promote or raise the resolution of issues that occur in society.

The rise of the phenomenon of the formalization of religion in society cannot be separated from the growing movement of conservative religious groups.<sup>1</sup> This conservative religious group has existed for a long time and became stronger during the New Order era, and is now increasingly growing along with the emergence of various reformist and militant religious groups in society. One of the characteristics of these conservative religious groups is to perpetuate the attitude of formalizing religion among diverse groups of the nation.

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<sup>1</sup>The word Conservative is often equated with fundamentalists as the cause of the rise of radical Islamic movements in Indonesia. There are three streams of this, *first*, the revival of Wahabism centered and driven from Saudi Arabia. *Second*, the influence of the Muslim Brotherhood from Egypt. *Third*, the emergence of the *Ḥizb al-Tahrīr* movement which originated from Palestine, which aspires to the establishment of an Islamic khalifah. M. Dawam Rahardjo, *Merayakan Kemajemukan dan Kebangsaan* (Jakarta: Kencana Prenada Media Group, 2010), pp. 112. There are also those who say that the Muslim Brotherhood which later in its development experienced a split and some of its cadres metamorphose as leftist Muslims, became *Ḥizb al-Tahrīr* activists, started the *takfir wa hijrah* movement, and so on were representations of neo-wahhabi or neo-salafi. Read more, Nur Khalik Ridwan, *Sejarah Lengkap Wahhabi: Perjalanan Panjang Sejarah, Doktrin, Amaliah, dan Pergulatannya* (Yogyakarta: IRCiSoD, 2020)pp. 777-778).

Conservative groups view Islam as a religion can not be separated from Arab as nation. From that view, the conservative religious groups show Islam by using symbols of Arab nation with a spirit of purification and religious fundamentalism.

In the view of conservative religious groups, the most correct and ideal form of diversity is as what had been exemplified by the *salaf al-ṣāliḥ* circles. Therefore, the uniqueness of Islamic expression which is not closely related to Arabic characters is seen as a heresy which is certainly far from true, authentic, and genuine Islam. The implication is that the model of Islamic diversity in Indonesia which is closely related to local culture and traditions is considered heretical, *bid'ah*, *syirk* and *khurafāt* and therefore must be rejected. Efforts to purify religion by these conservative Islamic groups are not only in the realm of the struggle between Islam as a religion and culture, but also in the realm of ideology, especially the obsession of the establishment of the state and Islamic law.<sup>2</sup> This certainly has great potential to push polarization of society into primordial identities and divisions amid the pluralistic realities of Indonesian society.

Whereas in truth, Islam is not always Arabic. Indonesian society should take the substance or core values of the teachings of Islam, not traditions and cultures existed and surrounded Islam since its' emergence. Moreover, the view of pure Islam leads to an attitude of blaming and rejecting local cultures and traditions, as they see such cultures and traditions as superstition/*takhayyul*, *shirk* and *khurafāt*. In fact, Islam came to the archipelago as a religion of peace, accepted by indogenous people, because it was spread by accomodating local cultures and traditions existed before.

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<sup>2</sup>From the results of the surety conducted by two survey institutions Saiful Mujani Research and Consultin /SMRC in 2017 and the Indonesian Survey Circle (LSI) in 2018 on topics related to Pancasila and the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI). The survey results from the two institutions show similarities. Public Indonesia believes that Pancasila is the best and final ideology. However, what should be observed is that there are quite a lot of people (around 10 percent) who think that Indonesia should become an Islamic country. Then the results of the LSI Denny JA survey in 2018 showed a decreasing trend in support for Pancasila. On the contrary, at the same time support for Islamic law is getting higher. In a period of 13 years from 2005 to 2018, the public supporting Pancasila has decreased by 10 percent and vice versa, support for an Islamic state increased by 3 percent. Denny JA dan Tim, *Rumah Bersama Kita Bernama Indonesia: Dari Terorisme Menuju Toleransi dalam Masyarakat Majemuk* (Jakarta: Cera Budaya Indonesia, 20118), pp. 7-9.

Ironically, in modern times, Islamization movement has different approach far from what had been showed by the early muslim preachers who brought Islam to the archipelago. Islamic movements are identical with Arabization which gradually displaces and marginalizes local cultures and traditions. It is, at this level, the Indigenusization of Islam which was initiated by Abdurrahman Wahid, known as Gus Dur, played an important role in Indonesian Islam. Infact, Gus Dur's idea of the indigenusization of Islam is an effort of maintaining good old things and taking better new ones or it is always expressed in Arabic *al-muḥāfaẓah ‘alā al-qadīm al-ṣāliḥ wal-akhz bi al-jadīd al-aṣlah*. Although the idea of indigenusization of Islam is often misunderstood as anti-Arab, liberal and even syncretic by some religious groups, however, it plays a major role in maintaining indigenous traditions and culture.

The terms indigenous Islam and the formalization of religion are used in this paper based on the terms made by Gus Dur. However, it does not rule out many other terms, for example in terms of indigenous Islam and authentic Islam, moderate and fundamentalist Islam, and so on which almost refer to the same thing, namely highlighting the formalization of religion, especially in the form of law and the Islamic state. In practise, those who are affiliated into conservatives, often condemn modern system of the state, that is democracy.

## **B. Phenomenon of Religious Formalization in Society**

The term religious formalization refers to the term 'formalist Islam' which has an exclusive understanding and attitude towards Islam.<sup>3</sup> Generally, the religious formations found in the formalist Islamic movements emphasize four things, namely: *first*, the textual understanding model, *second*, the understanding model that rejects

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<sup>3</sup>The use of the term 'Islamic Formalis' is used by Ubaidillah Achmad to refer to the religious attitude of community groups who on the one hand are very firm in holding Islamic teachings related to the communal movement, but on the other hand ignore the teachings that emphasize the need to give respect to differences in understanding and beliefs of those who other. Apart from that, Ubaidillah Achmad also mentioned that formalist Islam has become an entry point for ideological and political interests. Ubaidillah Achmad, Islam Formalis Versus Islam Lokal: Studi Pribumisasi Islam Walisongo dan Kiai Ciganjur, *Jurnal Addin*, vol. 10, no. 1, Februari 2016, p. 236.

local traditions or small cultures. *third*, a model of understanding that makes Islam as religion of formality or a formal symbol of state law, and *fourth*, the claim of a single truth.<sup>4</sup> Although in fact religion contains two dimensions, namely, symbols represented by language and teachings stored in language. Actually the most important of both is the teachings, not the symbols. However, for a consumptive society, symbols often have a stronger influence than their teachings. Especially in today's digital world, consumptive people consume symbols, not what behind things.

There are at least five factors supporting the emergence of consumption of religious symbols in people's lives. *First*, religious symbols create objects of religion that can be sold and consumed through social processes. *Second*, religious symbols create religious defense in the social community. *Third*, religious symbols create religious performances or shows. *Fourth*, religious symbols used as medium for taking profit and psychological pleasures. *Fifth*, religious symbols function as a rational service developer.<sup>5</sup> Ironically, the formalization of religion always leads to the commodification of religion which is not only included in the realm of consumption, but, even worse, in the realm of thought or paradigm.

According to Pattana Kitiarsa in Nur Rif'ah Hasaniy's article that the commodification of religion is a conscious act of transforming religious symbols and institutions into commodities that can be marketed and suitable for consumption, despite the fatwa that profits and other forms of material acquisition are packaged secretly and carefully. In fact, religion actually prohibits the commercialization of material greed, desire, and madness. Religious beliefs and activities should be believed, not used as a means of generating money, moreover treated as a commodity. However, in reality, the power of religion and market culture seems to continue to expand and strengthen according to the times, so that religion has changed into something

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<sup>4</sup>Ubaidillah Achmad, *Islam Formalis Versus Islam Lokalis*...., p. 238.

<sup>5</sup>Nur Rif'ah Hasaniy, Fenomena 'Kiamat Lokal' di Ponorogo: Menyingkap Tabir Komersial di Balik Simbol-Simbol Agama, *Jurnal Muslim Heritage*, vol. 5, no. p. 50-51.

commercialized.<sup>6</sup> At least, the commodification and formalization of religion is often found in three aspects of community life, namely business, ideology, and practical politics.

The phenomenon of the commodification of religion can be witnessed as it occurred recently, that is the commodification of the Shari'a which is dramatized in such a way and, lastly, the vulgarity is aimed for selling products. In the business world, it is very often witnessed the use of the syar'i label. For example, the syar'i labeling used for socks, so, it is called syar'I socks, for syar'i swimwear, syar'i travel, syar'i housing, syar'i refrigerators, and the most common term, syar'i hijab. In addition, it is still in the business world, the tragedy of mass duping of the local apocalypse phenomenon occurred in Ponorogo in 2019. It was in March, 52 Ponorogo residents left their hometown to move to a Miftahul Falahin Mubtadin Islamic boarding school in Malang because of their belief that the world will end in the month of Ramadhan 1439, or May 2019. According to their belief, the end of the world will start in Ponorogo villages. Surprisingly, the refugees were asked to leave their belongings. Apart from that, the refugees were also asked to donate certain money and to buy goods provided by the pesantren at a certain price for the purpose of their savior heirloom. The obligation of buying these items, which are believed to be their savior's heirloom contains commercial interests, which consequently involves advantages of taking profit within such condition, in which they were in.<sup>7</sup>

In Edy AH Iyubenu's view, the phenomenon of formalization and commodification of religion is aimed at nothing, except gaining money and public duping in the name of religion which will only make people fall into deeper destructive artificial polarization. Again, this phenomenon is identical with *gharār*, deceit, because there is an element of ignorance, a deception between rights and false.<sup>8</sup> Ironically, this commodification and formalization of religion does not stop at the

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<sup>6</sup>Nur Rif'ah Hasaniy, Fenomena 'Kiamat Lokal' di Ponorogo..., p. 50. Ironically, there are many ways in the formalization of religion to form laws that were originally still ordinary in nature, which is a must, for example on the use of the hijab by Muslim women.

<sup>7</sup>Nur Rif'ah Hasaniy, Fenomena 'Kiamat Lokal' di Ponorogo..., p. 48-49.

<sup>8</sup>Edy AH Iyubenu, Islam with common sense: There is no religion for people who do not use their minds (Yogyakarta: DIVA Press, 2020), p. 303-310.

business world, but also occurs in the realm of ideology and political practices. It is still kept in the memory, how the brutal use of Islamic law labels, even the verses of the Koran and *hadīṣ* in the 2016 DKI Jakarta regional election, and continued to the 2019 election.

The politicization of religion in the 2016 Jakarta election to the 2019 presidential election by the 212 community religious groups is one example of the phenomenon of the commodification and formalization of religion in the realm of practical politics. Ironically, the phenomenon of the politicization of religion which perpetuates the sentiment of primordial identity also has implications for cracking and decreasing inter-religious tolerance in recent years.<sup>9</sup> This is evidenced by the results of observations made by Wahid Foundation in 2016 which found a number of alarming data. Of the total 59 respondents, 9 percent belonged to a hated group. The groups that are hated include those with non-Muslim religious backgrounds, Chinese groups, communists, and others. Of the 59.9 percent, 92.2 percent disagreed if members of the hated group became government officials.<sup>10</sup>

The community of religious groups in Indonesia that are involved in the politicization of religion and often become the main actors in the formalization and commodification of religion and are referred to as radical groups are mostly affiliated to the Muslim Brotherhood founded by Hasan al Banna in Egypt. The organization existed in Indonesia in a form of university missionary organization movement which later became Tarbiyah movement, and the gave birth to the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), *Ḥizb al-Tahrīr* Indonesia (HTI). The later organizations mostly support the idea of Khilafahism and Wahabism. They also tend to support organization such as; the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) and the Indonesian *Mujāhidīn* Council (MMI). Some of these religious groups are transnational, and operate in

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<sup>9</sup>From this 212 movement phenomenon, Aksin Wijaya was inspired by the writing of his book, which portrays the contestation of pursuing the truth of religious interpretation in it which is related to the problem of relations between religious communities, between religious communities and the government, and between Muslims in it. Read more, Aksin Wijaya, *Kontestasi Merebut Kebenaran Islam di Indonesia* (Yogyakarta: IRCiSoD, 2019). It is undeniable that after the 212 movement phenomenon, primordial identity sentiments were increasingly prevalent in society, such as between Chinese and Arabs, natives and non-natives, 01 and 02, and so on which resulted in a polarized society.

<sup>10</sup>Denny JA dan Tim, *Rumah Bersama Kita Bernama Indonesia...*, p. 11.

Indonesia with financial support obtained from Saudi Arabia to carry out a global Wahabization mission.<sup>11</sup>

In latest development, such religious groups, such as HTI and FPI in the formalization of religion struggled to establish an Islamic state in Indonesia and reject the ideology of Pancasila as the basis of the state because they considered that Pancasila is incompatible with Islamic law. Yet, it is very risky to lead to division because Indonesia has been founded within plural society with various religions and ethnicities. From that, it is not an exaggeration if those religious groups are regarded as radical, because studies on formalist Islam found that these groups had existed far before the emergence of the global Islamic radical movements. This happens because every religious symbol will easily attract sympathy of lay people, especially those who are in the spirit of identity hybridization, one of which is religion. Therefore, the majority of scholars do not use Islam as a formalist symbol of the movement with the aim of avoiding the religious model that actually clouded the understanding of Islam. However, the formalization of Islam or the formalization of religion will open up opportunities for world ideologies to use it as a vehicle of radicalism in all world ideologies.<sup>12</sup>

### C. Overview of Gus Dur's Biography

KH. Abdurrahman Wahid or commonly known as Gus Dur is the first son of the pair, Wahid Hasyim and Nyai Solichah who were born in Jombang on August 4, 1940.<sup>13</sup> Gus Dur's parents were born blue blood. KH. Wahid Hasyim is the son of the founder of the largest Islamic religious organization in Indonesia Nahdatul Ulama (NU) KH. Hasyim Asy'ari, while NYai Hj. Solichah is the eldest daughter of one

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<sup>11</sup>Aburrahman Wahid, *Ilusi Negara Islam: Ekspansi Gerakan Islam Transnasional di Indonesia* (PT. Desantara Utama Media: Jakarta, 2009), p. 77-78.

<sup>12</sup>Ubaidillah Achmad, *Islam Formalis Versus Islam Lokalis...*, p. 238.

<sup>13</sup>Actually, Gus Dur's birthday was not on August 4. Gus Dur was born on the fourth day of the eighth month. However, it is necessary to know that the calendar is based on the Islamic calendar, namely Gus Dur was born in the month of Sha'ban, the eighth month of the Islamic calendar, which is in the 7th September calendar. Greg Barton, *Biografi Gus Dur: The Authorized Biography of Abdurrahman Wahid* (Yogyakarta: Saufa, 2016), pp. 25.



of the great scholars of the Islamic religious organization, KH. Bisri Syansuri.<sup>14</sup>

As a descendant of blue blood, Gus Dur grew up since his childhood in the hustle and bustle of pesantren life. Starting from his grandfather's Tebuireng pesantren, Tegalrejo Islamic boarding school in Wonosobo to al-Munawwir Islamic boarding school in Yogyakarta. After studying at an Islamic boarding school, Gus Dur then continued his exploration of knowledge to Egypt. However, in Egypt, Gus Dur's scientific thirst was not satisfied because of the repetition of teaching materials. He got in in Egypt what he had got in Indonesia. From that, Gus Dur then moved to Baghdad. While living in Baghdad he married to a girl, named Nuriyah. Their marriage was unusual because marriage contract was signed while they were far away, Gus Dur was in Bagdad, and Nuriyah was in Indonesia. It is called an unusual marriage because when they signed the marriage contract, Gus Dur and Nuriyah were very far apart between the skies of Indonesia and Baghdad. Gus Dur and Nuriyah's wedding party was only held at the end of 1971, that was in September, after his return to Indonesia.

In Baghdad, Abdurrahman Wahid had a close friend named Ramin who came from a small Iraqi Jewish community in Baghdad. Gus Dur and Ramin worked for ar-Rahmadani as correspondence writers and translators and met regularly to discuss religion, philosophy and politics. Ramin spoke at length about the experience of the Jewish diaspora, the history of his family being trapped in Iraq, and in particular the ordeal experienced by Jews living in Russia. It was from this friendship that Gus Dur first learned about Judaism and the experience of the Jews, and began to learn to respect Judaism and understand the views of the Jews and the political and social concerns of Jews living in the diaspora as a minority who were often tortured. Moreover, during the last two years in Baghdad, Gus Dur focused on research on the history of Islam in Indonesia. Gus Dur's lecturers gave him permission to write a lot about Islam in Indonesia. Therefore, Gus Dur read all sources from orientalist and Indonesians about Islam in Indonesia and did not think that the Baghdad University library

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<sup>14</sup> Aksin Wijaya, *Satu Islam: Ragam Epistemologi* (IRCiSoD: Yogyakarta, 2020), p. 255.

provided such a vast source of information on this topic. By making use of these rich sources, Gus Dur became a person with academic authority related to Indonesian Islam.<sup>15</sup> Gus Dur saw religious developments in Indonesia as different from those of religious organizations that developed in the Middle East. In Indonesia, Gus Dur saw Islam as a way of life, in which everyone learns from one another and takes various non-religious ideologies and views from other religions.<sup>16</sup>

In addition to the life and education of the pesantren, Gus Dur was introduced to a wider range of social groups. The cosmopolitan Middle East education, especially in Baghdad which was secular and liberal in style, directly colored Gus Dur's thinking. Although Gus Dur did not formally study in the West, from a young age he was accustomed to Western thoughts. Therefore, Gus Dur was more ready to associate with major discourses of Western and Islamic thought, even though the two sources of Western and Eastern thought were combined critically-dialectically as the basis that later shaped his thinking.<sup>17</sup> In addition, Gus Dur's association, who did not differentiate between religious, ethnic, and racial status made Gus Dur widely accepted by various groups. Of course, from this, the most interesting thing from Gus Dur's thoughts is his liberal, progressive, inclusive, egalitarian thinking, and his seriousness in upholding democracy, justice, defending human rights, putting the interests of the people and the nation above everything. What is no less important than Gus Dur's lunge is that he always acted as defender of oppressed minorities.<sup>18</sup> These various things significantly influenced and shaped Gus Dur's mindset in seeing reality.

Gus Dur's scientific dynamics and varied life experiences made his thoughts and ideas interesting and difficult, not to mention challenging. According to Munawar Ahmad, there are at least two reasons so that Gus Dur's thoughts and ideas are both interesting and

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<sup>15</sup>Greg Barton, *Biografi Gus Dur: The Authorized Biography of Abdurrahman Wahid...*, p. 108-111.

<sup>16</sup>Aksin Wijaya, *Satu Islam: Ragam Epistemologi...*, p. 256.

<sup>17</sup>M. Khoirul Hadi, Abdurrahman Wahid dan Pribumisasi Pendidikan Islam, *Hunafa: Jurnal Studia Islamika*, vol. 12, no. 1, Juni 2015, p. 197.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 192-193.

difficult. First, it is said to be interesting because the ideas are very simple, but are able to provide their own insights in analyzing problems, both in Indonesia and in the world. Second, it is difficult because his thoughts sometimes leave the culture that raised him, namely the NU and Islamic boarding schools, as the background of his growth and development since his birth.<sup>19</sup> From the author himself, it was challenging, because not everyone understood Gus Dur's way of thinking. In fact, some easily judged Gus Dur as an infidel, liberal, communist, and so on without understanding what the alleged case was.

#### **D. Definition and Concept of the Indigenoussization of Islam**

Genealogically, the indigenoussization of Islam was first put forward by Gus Dur in the 1980s and is one of the agendas for renewing Gus Dur's thoughts from his dynamic ideas.<sup>20</sup> However, Gus Dur's idea of indigenous Islam was actually based on and took the spirit that Wali Songo had taught in his preaching around the 15th and 16th centuries in Java. Wali Songo succeeded in incorporating local values into Islam, and this what had made Indonesian Islam was unique without putting Indonesian people into Arabism.<sup>21</sup> Wali Songo's creativity, is undoubtedly, gave birth to a new cluster of Islamic reasoning that is not an imitation of Islam in the Middle East. On the other hand, Wali Songo actually accommodated Islam as a religious teaching that had experienced historicalization with culture.

In his epistemology of the indigenoussization of Islam, Gus Dur has three reasons. *First*, Islamic university. The first thing that becomes the source of the idea of Islamic universalism is the definition or definition of 'Islam' itself. Where, 'Islam' is defined as an attitude of surrender to God which of course is not only the teaching of God to his

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<sup>19</sup>Munawar Ahmad, *Ijtihad Politik Gus Dur* (Bantul: LkiS, 2010), p. 55.

<sup>20</sup>Ainul Fitriyah, Pemikiran Abdurrahman Wahid tentang Pribumisasi Islam, *Jurnal Teosofi*, vol. 3, no 1 Juni 2013, p. 42.

<sup>21</sup>Arabism or arabization is to equate all aspects of the life of the Muslims into Arabic symbolism. In his book, Gus Dur, entitled *Islamku Islam You Are Our Islam*, Gus Dur stated that the symbolization of the Arab nation had penetrated so deeply into the lives of Muslim nations that Arabization was implicitly equated with Islamization. See Abdurrahman Wahid, *Islamku Islam Anda Islam Kita: Agama Masyarakat Demokrasi*, (Bantul: Lkis, 20076), p. 243-245.

servants, but this resignation is taught by God by putting it into human realm. In other words, submission to God is taught as a fulfillment of the human nature, so that the growth of its manifestation in humans is always internal, not growing, let alone imposed from none. In addition, Islamic universalism as an attitude of surrender to God is also based on the similarity of the origin of the heavenly religions, namely Judaism and Christianity which originated in al-Islam because it is a continuation of the religion of the Prophet Abraham.<sup>22</sup> From this also has implications for the harmonization of relations between religious communities. Different from the concept of Islamic universalism Nurcholis Madjid as explained by Budhy Munawar Rachman, Gus Dur offered the concept that Islam is a universal religion. Islamic universalism manifests itself in various manifestations of its teachings which include fiqh, monotheism, and mysticism, which according to Gus Dur all show great concern to humans. The manifestation of Islamic universalism in its defense of humans is manifested in the five guarantees that human beings inherited, or what are often referred to as *maqāṣid al-syaī'ah*. From the guarantee of the five Islamic teachings, according to Gus Dur, it requires consequences such as one of which is that the guarantee of religious belief underlies the relationship between community members on the basis of mutual respect, thereby encouraging the growth of tolerance, great understanding and tolerance.<sup>23</sup>

*Second*, Islamic cosmopolitanism. Seeing that the principles and manifestations of Islamic universalism were still theoretical, Gus Dur finally announced that his principles and manifestations should also be balanced with an attitude of openness to other civilizations. This attitude of openness, according to Gus Dur, has been exemplified by his predecessors, even since the Prophet Muhammad organized society in Medina, and by thinkers who often had dialogues with the principle of openness with outside civilizations, such as Greek civilization. From the attitude of openness to outside civilizations, making Islam a cosmopolitan civilization. This sort of

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<sup>22</sup>Budhy Munawar Rachman, *Karya Lengkap Nurcholish Madjid* (Nurcholish Madjid Society: Jakarta, 2020), p. 966-975.

<sup>23</sup>Aksin Wijaya, *Satu Islam: Ragam Epistemologi...*, p. 258-260.

cosmopolitanism shows in the form of an electric religious life. This eclecticism emerged from the open dialogue between Islam and outside civilizations. Good muslim in turn will make corrections to his/her own culture, while considering others, or correct the other cultures by formulating his/her own culture. In addition, with Islamic cosmopolitanism the boundaries of ethnicity have also disappeared, cultural plurality is getting stronger, and political reality is increasingly heterogeneous.<sup>24</sup>

In its development, Islamic cosmopolitanism according to Gus Dur, as described by Aksin Wijaya, will reach an optimal point when a balance is achieved between the normative tendencies of the Muslims and freedom of thought. Religious norms are still used as a basis of thinking, but of course they should not let these religious norms shackle freedom of thought. If the balance between religious normative tendencies and freedom of thought occurs, then the civilization that will emerge will be creative cosmopolitanism. Because, in it each individual has his own initiative to seek insights farthest from having to hold on to the truth.<sup>25</sup>

*Third*, the term indigenous Islam was one of the manifestations of Islamic cosmopolitanism proclaimed by Gus Dur within Indonesian context (Nusantara). Indigenous Islam was born from the epistemology of indigenous Islam, namely the openness of Islam in dialogue and manifesting itself in Indonesian local culture. According to Aksin Wijaya, Gus Dur noted two trends in the manifestation of Islamic culture into Indonesian culture. First, the tendency to formalize Islamic teachings in all cultural manifestations of the nation. Second, the tendency to stay away from the formalization of Islamic teachings as much as possible in the manifestation of Islamic culture.<sup>26</sup>

Aksin Wijaya said Gus Dur's indigenous Islam was one of the manifestations of Islamic cosmopolitanism which he proclaimed in the Indonesian context. In line with that, indigenous Islam itself as an answer to textual Islam presupposes three things. First, indigenous Islam has a contextual character, namely Islam is understood as a

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<sup>24</sup> *Ibid* ..., p. 260.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid* ..., p. 260-261.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 261-262.

teaching related to the context of the time and place. From that, Islam will experience changes and dynamics in response to changing times. Second, indigenous Islam is progressive, that is, the progress of the times is not understood as a threat to deviations from the basic teachings of religion, but is seen as a trigger for intense creative response. Third,<sup>27</sup> Meanwhile, indigenous Islam is the result, while the indigenous Islam is the epistemological basis.

In line with Aksin Wijaya's view that there are two tendencies in manifesting Islamic culture into local culture, Nur Khalik Ridwan also stated that according to Gus Dur, the indigenization of Islam was based on the spirit of danger from the Arabization process or the process of identifying itself with Middle Eastern culture (*Ngarab*). This is a threat to uproot Indonesian society from the roots of local culture and traditions. More than that, Arabization does not necessarily match the needs of the Indonesian people, which are very plural with various religions, cultures, traditions and ethnicities. Apart from that, the indigenization of Islam was not Javanization or syncretism as alleged so far, because the indigenization of Islam only considered needs in formulating religious laws, without changing the essence of the law itself.<sup>28</sup> However, the indigenization of Islam is an inevitable process when religion meets local culture. Religion (Islam) is believed to originate from Allah's revelation, whereas culture is a product of human thought. Religion is permanent, while culture changes. But the relationship between religion and culture cannot easily be broken or separated, as oil and water both have a complex relationship, which can overlap and exchange. It is the overlap between culture and religion that according to Gus Dur, will continue to occur as a process that will enrich life and make it less arid.<sup>29</sup>

Gus Dur's use of the term 'indigenous Islam' was because he had difficulty finding other terms or words. Regarding the indigenization of Islam, Gus Dur wrote:

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<sup>27</sup>Tri Wahyudi Ramdhan, *Islam Nusantara: Pribumisasi Islam ala NU...*, p. 78.

<sup>28</sup>Nur Khalik Ridwan, *Ajaran-ajaran Gus Dur: Syarah 9 Nilai Gus Dur* (Noktah: Yogyakarta, 2019), p. 113.

<sup>29</sup>Abdurrahman Wahid, *Pribumisasi Islam*, dalam buku *Islam Nusantara dari Ushul Fiqih hingga Paham Kebangsaan* (Bandung: PT Mizan Pustaka, 2015) p. 33.

“... All of the above facts bring demands to reverse the flow of Islamic travel in our country, from formalism in the form of total Arabization to awareness of the need to re-cultivate local cultural roots and our own historical framework in developing Muslim life in this country. which is indigenized is a mere manifestation of Islamic life. Not teachings that concern the core of his faith and formal worship.”<sup>30</sup>

The privatization of Islam has made religion and culture not to overpower each other, but has manifested itself in a pattern of religious reasoning that no longer takes the authentic form of religion, and seeks to bring together the bridge that has been crossing between religion and culture.<sup>31</sup> In the next context, religious patterns (Islam) will be created in accordance to the local context in the form of "Indigenous Islam" in response to "Authentic Islam" or "Purificative Islam" which tends to carry out the Arabism project in every Islamic community around the world.<sup>32</sup>"Indigenous Islam" actually provides a variety of interpretations in the practice of religious life (Islam) in each different region. Thus, Islam is no longer viewed singly, but in various ways. There is no longer assumption of Islam in the Middle East as the purest and most correct Islam, because Islam as a religion experiences a continuing historicity.

### **E. How the Indigenoussization of Islam Works in Respond to the Current Religious Formalization**

Since the beginning, Gus Dur's idea of the indigenoussization of Islam emerged as a response to the religious attitude of authentic or

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<sup>30</sup>Abdurrahman Wahid, *Tuhan Tidak Perlu dibela* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 1999), p. 107-108).

<sup>31</sup>Imdadun Rahmat, Islam Pribumi: Mencari Wajah Islam Indonesia, *Jurnal Tashwirul Afkar*, no.14 Tahun 2003, p. 9.

<sup>32</sup>Indigenous Islam seeks to dialect the core teachings of Islam into local Indonesian cultures and tries to always consider the needs of society in formulating religious laws, without changing the core of religious laws (*maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*). Another case with Authentic Islam which is the opposite of the indigenoussization of Islam. In the view of authentic Muslims, Islam which is exemplified by salf as-salih circles is the most ideal and correct form of diversity. Therefore, the uniqueness of the Islamic expressions of a diverse society and not close to Arabic characters is seen as a modern form of ignorance that is far from true, authentic, and genuine. Edi Susanto, Islam Pribumi Versus Islam Otentik, *Jurnal Karsa*, vol. 13, no. 1, April 2008, pp. 21-22. Therefore, the term authentic Islam is the same as purificative Islam because both of them both want the purification of Islam from elements of outside Arab culture.

purificative Islamic groups that purify Islam. Two of the efforts to purify the religion carried out by the authentic Islamic group are efforts to liberate all indigenous Islamic rituals which they consider to be *syirk*, *bid'ah* and *khurafāt* rituals and efforts to make changes to ideology and laws in the country. Authentic Islamic groups deny that there is room for diversity for other Muslims, either in terms of frame of mind or viewpoint. This can be seen from the idea of being anti-diversity and adhering to the ideology of violence in their view of heretical experts, who according to them if they do not repent they can be killed, on the basis of *mu'ayyan al-takfīr*. This is the real source of the problem because the religious attitude of authentic Islamic groups in expressing this religious attitude is considered the most singular and valid in religion and culture. Ironically, with this Arabic-style of religious expression, it makes the basic legitimacy of the prohibition of existing local culture and traditions even becomes the basis for violent attitudes with persecution.

However, the struggle between religion and culture cannot be avoided throughout the history of religion itself because it continues to experience historicity. Social and cultural, these two domains are cultural developments in the context of society, where there is a dualistic development, on the one hand modernity has been achieved, but on the other hand feudal behavior is still used as a tool to find roots of the past.<sup>33</sup>In the struggle between religion and culture, the present indigenization of Islam was not intended to change Islam, but only to change the manifestation of Islamic religious life by authentic and purificative religious groups that are aggressively carrying out Arabization or Arabism. In fact, according to Gus Dur, Islam must remain Islam wherever it is. However, this does not mean that all external forms need to be equalized, in which there must be a meeting point between Islam as a religion and culture as the context and reality of the place of the religion. Departing from this, the way it works is inseparable from the struggles between state, religion and culture.

What distinguishes the indigenization of Islam as well as being interesting and unique from the reasoning of Arabism is the

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<sup>33</sup>In this case, the process of wrestling with historical reality does not change Islam, but only changes the manifestation of Islamic life.



embodiment of Islamic character as *Rahmah li al-‘Ālamīn*. As most scholars, Gus Dur often reinforced and called the character of *Rahmah li al-‘Ālamīn* as the most essential image of Islam. The spirit of Islam as a religion is mercy, love, peace with civilization and humanity. To embody the character of Islamic grace into all aspects of the life of Muslims in the midst of their struggles with a plural and dynamic world, Islamic teachings - to borrow Prof. Amin Abdullah's concept of integration and interconnection according to the reality that colors and underlies muslims' way of life. From that, normative Islam (revelation) and dynamic culture have their respective areas of identity.<sup>34</sup> Islam as a universal normative teaching that comes from God is accommodated in a culture that comes from humans without losing their respective identities. The privatization of Islam seeks to make religion and local culture not overpower each other, but to manifest in a rational pattern of religiosity which no longer takes its authentic and pure form from religion, but seeks to become a bridge separating the both religion and culture.<sup>35</sup> It is undeniable that the phenomenon of the formalization of religion is caused by the failure to interpret Islam as a religion and culture that comes from humans. The implication is that both of them are then considered as one unit, therefore, they consider Arabic culture as part of Islamic teachings.

In the work of indigenous Islam, a socio-cultural approach is used which describes a way in which society and environmental culture influence behavior so that a full understanding of one's behavior requires knowledge of the environmental context in which behavior occurs.<sup>36</sup> From that, it is inevitable if the indigenoussization of Islam tries to dialecticize the core teachings (substance) of Islam into Indonesian local cultures and tries to always take into account the local needs of the community in formulating religious laws, without changing the core religious laws. (*maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*). In fact, the

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<sup>34</sup>Edy AH Iyubenu, *Berislam dengan Akal Sehat...*, p. 171-173.

<sup>35</sup>Edi Susanto, *Islam Pribumi Versus Islam Otentik: Dialektika Islam Universal dengan Partikularitas Budaya Lokal*, *Jurnal KARSA*, vol. 13, no. 1, April 2008., p. 17.

<sup>36</sup><https://www.coursehero.com/file/p70upln/Pendunjuk-sosiokultural-Pendunjuk-sosiokultural-menj-sebuah-cara/> accessed at 16:19 WIB, 26 September 2020.

local tradition that is respected ('*urf ṣaḥīḥ*') has the authority to end the generality of a text, either the Qur'an or the hadis.<sup>37</sup>

In order to understand the position of religion and culture clearly and to put position correctly, and avoid being entangled with the understanding of cycretism, an operational framework called *ushul fiqh* is needed. It is in line with Gus Dur's idea of the indigenoussization of Islam which departs from the principles of *ushul fiqh al-muḥāfaẓah 'alā al-qadīm al-ṣāliḥ wal-akhz bi al-jadīd al-aṣlah* (maintaining good old things and taking new things that are better). So, in order to understand how the indigenoussization of Islam works in addition to mastering the basic tools regarding texts (*al-naṣ*) namely *ushul fiqh*, it is also necessary to have the ability to see the socio-cultural potential of society to make changes regarding to better social conditions, without changing the big system (including in Indonesia).<sup>38</sup>

In the realm of *maḥẓah* worship applies the rules of *al-aṣl fī al-'ibādah taḥrīmuhā illā iżā dalla al-dalil 'alā tajwizihā* (as long as the rules in matters of worship are prohibiting them, unless there are arguments that allow). In the realm outside of worship (*muamalah*) the rule of *al-aṣl fī al-mu'āmalah applies tajwizuhā illā iżā dalla al-dalil 'alā taḥrīmihā* (as long as the rules in *mu'āmalah* matter are permissible, unless there are arguments that prohibit it). On this basis, Gus Dur also did not hesitate to criticize the MUI fatwa which prohibited the sending of Christmas cards. For Gus Dur, this phenomenon was a clear example of the confusion between the *maḥẓah* and *mu'āmalah* areas of worship.<sup>39</sup> The phenomenon of confusing *maḥẓah* and *mu'āmalah* areas is even common in Indonesian society, especially towards the end of the Christian year. The problem of greeting Christmas and celebrating the new year has always been problematic in authentic Islamic societies.

Gus Dur's footing on other *ushul fiqh* rules can be seen in the tradition of marriage in Indonesia. Marriage in Islam must have consent, witnesses, guardians, and brides, but everything else is left to the community and can accommodate the needs of custom-locality

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<sup>37</sup>Edi Susanto, *Islam Pribumi versus Islam Otentik...*, p. 20.

<sup>38</sup>Nur Khalik Ridwan, *Ajaran-ajaran Gus Dur...*, p. 114

<sup>39</sup>Edy AH Iyubenu, *Berislam dengan Akal Sehat...*, p. 174-175.

(including the matter of guardianship and clothes used). Regarding zakat, the Prophet never mentioned rice, but wheat as *qutul balad* (staple food). In Indonesia, wheat can be turned into rice or so on. From that, it can be seen that Gus Dur maintains the locality of Indonesian society by avoiding standardizing the Indonesian wedding procession with the wedding procession in Arabia or the Middle East.

The use of ushul fiqh rules as a basis or principle in considering law is not practiced and is found in authentic Islamic groups, as used by Gus Dur in his part of the idea of the indigenoussization of Islam. This is also an implication of authentic Islamic groups who reject contextualization in the interpretation or understanding of the Qur'an. In addition, on the basis of the proposal of fiqh based on the consideration of social and cultural contexts, it certainly makes it friendly to local culture and traditions that return to the basic meaning of Islam as *Rahmah li al-Ālamīn*, one of which with grace to local culture and traditions is part of *Rahmah li al-Ālamīn*. This can answer the logic of the conservative Islamic group, how possible it is to struggle for concept of *Rahmah li al-Ālamīn* on earth without giving mercy for local traditions and customs.

The next thing that became the way of working for the indigenoussization of Islam was the implementation of *weltanschauung* or the Islamic worldview which in Gus Dur's idea was to put the basic Islamic values (*maqāṣid al-syaṁ'ah*) which were the most substantial and universal as the rudder for all the dynamic realities of Muslims life. *Maqāṣid al-syaṁ'ah* which became the *weltanschauung* of Islam was summarized by Gus Dur's successors who became known as Gus Dur's 9 values.

Therefore, what then becomes the basis of muslims' society is to make these universal values manifest into an attitude of life that prioritizes Islam, nationality, and humanity. Its operational principles can be detailed in sub-principles to become the operational framework of the Islamic *weltanschauung*. This is where the Islamic culture is to be filled. From this, it becomes clear how Gus Dur voiced that the paradigm of humanity, justice, nationality, and even democracy is not the opposite of secularism, but Islamic religiosity. Although from the surface there could be similarities in form and expression with human

values and universal justice displayed by secular countries, Gus Dur refers to the spirit of the basic sources of Islam.

In other words, Gus Dur's ideals regarding to the values of justice, humanity, equality, nationality, and democracy can substantively be stated as Islamic justice, Islamic humanity, Islamic equality, Islamic nationality, and Islamic democracy, but without the need to declare formal legal. –artificial unlucky as has been echoed by conservative Islamic groups so far, which are more concerned with and questioning the legal-formal-artificial sphere. It can be seen, for example, that one of the things strived for by conservative Islamic groups is to establish and enforce the law of the Islamic state (*khilāfah islāmiyyah*) by rejecting democracy and Pancasila because they think that it is un-Islamic, both of which are in reality born from a secular Western country. The struggle for *khilāfah islāmiyyah* which was initiated by this conservative Islamic group is none other than emphasizing the form of law in the sense of purely artificial legal-formal which of course leads to the formalization of religion in the state as previously described. This is certainly different from Gus Dur's idea mentioned above, which places Islamic content itself in the reference source of Islamic teachings and an operational framework based on *ushul fiqh* that responds to all dynamics of Muslim life in a fair, dynamic and democratic manner.<sup>40</sup>

According to Gus Dur Islam must not become the state religion as championed by conservative religious groups or formalist Islam whose ambition is to establish a religious state or *khilāfah islāmiyyah*. In relation to matters of religion and state, Gus Dur wrote:

"The size of a country that is conceptualized according to Islam, is also unclear in size. The Prophet left Medina without any clarity regarding the form of government for the Muslims. At the time of Umar bin Khattab, Islam was a world empire from the East Atlantic coast to Southeast Asia. It turns out that it is not clear whether an Islamic country is a global size or a nation alone (ethnic perspective), nor is it clear; a nation-state, or a city state, which is the conceptual form. This is very important, because expressing the idea of an Islamic state

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<sup>40</sup>Edy AH Iyubenu, *Berislam dengan Akal Sehat...*, p. 189-193.

without any conceptual clarity means letting the idea be torn apart because of the different views of the Islamic leaders themselves."<sup>41</sup>

The problem of governance and Islamic law or *khilāfah islāmiyyah* is actually a khilafah problem and should not be debated again, especially in Indonesia. It is clear that the establishment of an Islamic state did not change and influence Islam itself substantially or as a religion. The discussion of Muslims today should focus on human values, justice, upholding human rights, not just taking care of khilafiyah matters because that has already been completed. In line with that, Nur Khalik Ridwan explained, Gus Dur noted that Muslims in Indonesia need a way of how to fill Pancasila and the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia with a political system that uses Islamic insights that can culturally change people's lives by paying attention to the institutional context of society.<sup>42</sup> It is no longer a *khilafiyah* problem. After all, the problem of establishing an *khilāfah islāmiyyah* is none other than the failure to mediate between Islam as a religion and the context faced by Muslims.

Thus, the above is in line with the three reasons for the concept of indigenous Islam, namely, first, the indigenoussization of Islam is part of Islamic history, both in its home country and in Indonesia. Second, *pribumisasi* is a necessity for Indonesian local communities in Islam. Third, the indigenoussization of Islam is related to the relationship between *fiqh* and adat. In this latter case, Gus Dur adhered to the principles of *fiqh* which are commonly used in Islamic boarding schools, *al-‘ādah al-muḥakkamah* Court. With this rule, the indigenoussization of Islam does not mean declaring that adat changes Islamic norms, but rather manifests religion into local culture, because the manifestation of Islamic norms is a part of culture as was done by the Wali Songo in building mosques that are full of local architectural styles.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>Abdurrahman Wahid, *Islamku Islam Anda Islam Kita: Agama Masyarakat Demokrasi*, (Bantul: Lkis, 20076), p. 81-82.

<sup>42</sup>Nur Khalik Ridwan, *Ajaran-ajaran Gus Dur...*, p. 114-116.

<sup>43</sup>Tri Wahyudi Ramdhan, Islam Nusantara: Pribumisasi Islam ala NU, *Jurnal Al-Insiyroh*, vol. 2, no. 2 tahun 2018. p. 79-80.

## **F. Conclusion**

The privatization of Islam which was initiated by Gus Dur was the result of a long journey from the dynamic struggle of Gus Dur's thoughts which was praxis in nature. The idea of the indigenouization of Islam exists to protect Indonesian society from being deprived of local cultural roots and as a response to Arabization and an attitude of identifying with Middle Eastern culture. The attitude of identifying oneself with Middle Eastern culture is a phenomenon of the diversity of Indonesian society in recent years. Departing from this, the indigenouization of Islam is relevant, because the indigenouization of Islam makes religion and culture are not overpower each other, but brings together the bridge that has been crossing between religion and culture. Of the,

Generally, it can be concluded that the common thread between the logic of Arabism and the indigenouization of Islam lies in the difference in understanding and attitudes in understanding the value of Islamic normativity, in which Islam as a religion and culture as a product of human life. This can be seen from the different views on the meaning of the Koran, the Arabism that rejects the contextualization of the Koran and the indigenous Islam that gave birth to indigenous Islam with an understanding of the Koran based on the context at hand.

In the midst of the revival of the phenomenon of Arabization and the formalization of religion, it is hoped that with the indigenouization of Islam, the community will be grounded in its diversity. However, Arabization is not suitable in Indonesia with the background of a plural society, including religion, ethnicity, culture and traditions. In addition, the formalization of religion opens up opportunities for castration in the name of religion for various interests, especially in the practical political sphere. Therefore, Gus Dur also refused and did not use a religious model that was symbolic and formalist, because such a religious model would open up opportunities for other parties to take advantage of Islamic legitimacy to strengthen ideological and political interests that could divide Indonesia.

Zain Group is one of media which is a provider of public service advertisements, has been known to often advertise issues or

phenomena that are happened in society, including crises of humanity. Zain Group tries to describe condition of Palestinian children who are unable to enjoy their childhood and their days as experienced by children generally. In addition, discrimination that occurs in other parts of the world is also shown in this public service advertisement. The main star is a young child who feels anguish about what happened to his life. In addition, several state leaders also appear in this advertisement. Various symbols in the form of moving images certainly attract attention, take human's sympathy, and make everyone wonder about what is actually implied in this short duration advertisement. Because of many implicit messages contained, especially on human values, the researcher intends to analyse the relationship between micro texts and macro texts or the context in society using critical discourse analysis of Norman Fairclough.

Previous studies related to this material used a lot of Fairclough's critical discourse analysis, these are Fairclough (1993a) in his writing entitled "Critical Discourse Analysis and The Marketization of Public Discourse: The Universities". This paper describes the author's views on discourse analysis and describes an approach to analysing the discursive aspects of the marketization of public discourse in contemporary England, particularly in higher education. It includes a concise theoretical description of critical discourse analysis, a framework for analysing discursive events, and discussion of discursive practices (including their marketing) in the last capitalist societies, as well as a sample analysis of higher education discourse. This paper ends with discussion of the value of critical discourse analysis as a method in social scientific research and as a source of social struggle.

Furthermore, the studies are not only in commercial advertisement, but also in public service advertisements. However, it is very rare to raise issues of humanity. These studies include, Analisis Wacana Iklan Layanan Masyarakat Satuan Lalu Lintas Polres Buleleng di Singaraja: Kajian Wacana Kritis Norman Fairclough (Discourse Analysis of Public Service Advertisements for the Buleleng Police Traffic Unit in Singaraja: Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Study), written by Fatni et.al (2015) regarding public

service advertisements for the Buleleng Police traffic unit in Singaraja. This study aims to represent the problems that occur in traffic in Singaraja city, such as the problem of wearing a helmet, vehicle speed, and crossing the road. The relationship between the institution and the people of Singaraja is shown through the use of various languages, greetings, and types of sentences. The identity of the institution is displayed with the symbol and name of the institution. Meanwhile, the community is displayed with the words “Anda”, “Pelopor”, “Gek”, and “Bli”. In the practice of discourse, advertisements are made based on the theme given by the Central Korlantas and made by the Traffic Unit by paying attention to the programs they have and the traffic cases that occur. Sociocultural practices that also influence the appearance of advertisements are social conditions that prioritize appearance, tend to be inappropriate on time, corruption, and Balinese culture. This proves that critical discourse analysis of Norman Fairclough is relevant. Not only use in analysing Public Service Advertisement of language form, but also able to relate it to the wider community context. To reduce the number of accidents, the society need to interpret textual up to the social context of public service advertisements.

The next is “Critical discourse analysis of global warming public service advertisement: implication for students” by Wisudawati and Setyani (2018). This article aims to describe of analyzing 4 non-profit public service advertisements and investigating how governments or advertisers use discourse and semiotics to encourage people to commit global warming avoidance. The four advertisements analyzed are global warming advertisements which have been selected from government’s official website. This research finds that the teachers with their foresights can enlighten hidden values in public service advertisements.

Last is the article that informs the reader about “Zain Group”. The article is written by Alsbaity et.al (2018) who researched the Zain Group but not in terms of language or social society, but the article entitled “Application of Expansion and Retrenchment Strategies: A Case Study of Zain Group” explains the reader about economic problem, application Zain's expansion and austerity strategies and aims to advocate for alternative solutions regarding his division as part



of the supply chain. This article is based on the data collected and analyzed for the period 2012-2016 and The Zain Group's branches of focus are spread across eight geographic divisions (Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Bahrain, Iraq, South Sudan, Sudan). The paper result shows that great strategic management and a better understanding of environmental factors have a breakthrough impact on the performance of the Group as a whole.

From various studies related to this research, the author considers that the human aspect in public service advertisements is still rare, therefore the author considers this study to be very worthy to research, in order to explain detailed the human values contained in an advertisement, especially in Sayyidi al Rais public service advertisement by Zain Group.

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