

Transformative Islamic Da'wah: Back to Local Wisdom Values

Mohammad Isfironi

Antropolog, Dosen Tetap UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya

moh.isfironi@gmail.com

Abstract

Da'wah efforts have now entered the Post-Truth era, a condition where lies or misleading information are often spread more widely and faster than the truth. This condition makes Da'wah, which is understood as an invitation to do good, prevent evil and guide people to the right and straight path according to Islamic teachings, unable to achieve its goals. Da'wah in the Post-Truth era uses various internet-based platforms. This offers great opportunities for religious involvement in life, but also presents challenges related to the authenticity, quality of content and commercialization of religion, which has the implication of degrading the critical power of the people. For this reason, da'wah is needed that is centered on da'wah partners by understanding the situation of da'wah partners critically and deeply, then we find methods, media and da'wah actions that suit their needs. Transformative da'wah encourages people to be active in improving their surroundings, overcoming injustice and improving the quality of life through the application of religious values in daily life as local wisdom.

Keywords: Local Wisdom, Transformative, Emancipatory, Islam, Da'wah

Abstrak

Upaya dakwah kini telah memasuki era Post-Truth, yaitu suatu kondisi dimana kebohongan atau informasi yang menyesatkan sering kali disebarkan lebih luas dan lebih cepat daripada kebenaran. Kondisi ini menjadikan Dakwah yang dipahami sebagai ajakan berbuat baik, mencegah kemungkaran serta membimbing manusia ke jalan yang benar dan lurus menurut ajaran Islam tidak dapat mencapai tujuannya. Dakwah di era Post-Truth menggunakan berbagai platform yang berbasis internet. Hal ini menawarkan peluang besar bagi keterlibatan agama dalam kehidupan, namun juga menghadirkan tantangan terkait otentisitas, kualitas konten dan komersialisasi agama, yang berimplikasi mendegradasi daya kritis umat. Untuk itu diperlukan dakwah yang berpusat pada mitra dakwah dengan jalan memahami keadaan mitra dakwah secara kritis dan mendalam, lalu kita temukan metode, media dan tindakan dakwah yang sesuai dengan kebutuhan. Dakwah transformatif mendorong umat untuk aktif dalam memperbaiki keadaan sekitar, mengatasi ketidakadilan dan meningkatkan kualitas

hidup melalui penerapan nilai-nilai agama dalam kehidupan sehari-hari sebagai kearifan lokal.

Kata Kunci: Kearifan Lokal, Transformatif, Emansipatoris, Islam, Dakwah

Introduction

Da'wah as an effort to spread the teachings of Islam is a process that continues to adapt to the social and cultural context in which it develops.¹ Observing the practice of contemporary da'wah, its appearance develops into a model of da'wah that is not single. But in substance, it feels further away from the original meaning of da'wah, especially seen from the stronger tendency to identify da'wah with lectures, speeches. The content also shows a tendency of shallow understanding of Islam which is the material of the da'wah.

The above trend seems to be a logical consequence of the era called *post-truth*.² An era characterized by various new trends, where religion and religiosity have entered a new phase not only in the ways legitimized by religious institutions, but by the meanings of religion that began to shift. Religious meanings have lost the force and substance of teachings due to falsehood and imaging. More than that, the foundation of religion no longer lies in authoritative role models (due to depersonalization), but is determined by new media construction (meditization). Truth in this situation is no longer rooted in history and philosophy, but in images that are constructivistic (by interests). The concept of "*post-truth*" describes a situation where objective facts become less influential in shaping public opinion than emotions and personal beliefs.³ The term is increasingly popular in political and media contexts, where facts are often twisted or ignored in favor of a more attractive or favorable narrative.

In the *post-truth* era, lies or misleading information are often spread wider and faster than the truth. Social media plays a big role in this phenomenon as information can be shared quickly without verification. The *post-truth* era poses great challenges to democracy and good governance. When facts are ignored or twisted, rational and evidence-based decision-making becomes difficult. It can also exacerbate political and social polarization. Political campaigns that often use false or misleading information to influence voters, *fake news* that spreads widely on social media, and the use of propaganda in various contexts are clear examples of the *post-truth* phenomenon.

¹ Wahid, Abdul. 2018. Dakwah Dalam Pendekatan Nilai-Nilai Kearifan Lokal (Tinjauan Dalam Perspektif Internalisasi Islam dan Budaya) Jurnal Tabligh Volume 19 No 1, Juni 2018 :1 – 19

² The term was first used in 1992 by Serbian-American writer Steve Tesich in an article in *Nation* magazine, but only gained widespread attention in the decade of the 2010s, especially after the Brexit campaign in the UK and the 2016 US presidential election.

³ Oxford Dictionaries, 2016

In the *post-truth era*, religion plays a more complex role in the lives of individuals and society. Religion serves not only as a source of spiritual knowledge but also as a way to express identity and emotions.⁴ This phenomenon of internet-based religion shows that digital technology has changed the way religion is propagated, practiced and understood. It offers great opportunities for religious education and engagement, but also presents challenges regarding authenticity, quality of content and commercialization of religion. The internet is thus an opportunity but it contains challenges that must be taken seriously.⁵

Internet-based religion, or what is often referred to as "online religion," refers to the phenomenon where the practice, discussion, and dissemination of religion is done through digital platforms such as YouTube and Instagram. This is also known by terms such as "Instagdakwah." Some things that can be observed from this Instagdakwah phenomenon are: *First*, the expansive accessibility and reach. Platforms such as YouTube and Instagram allow the dissemination of religious information to a very wide audience at low cost. Religious preaching or lectures can be accessed by anyone, anytime, and anywhere, as long as they have an internet connection.

Second, visual and audio-visual content. Video and image-based content is easier to digest and more appealing to many people than long texts. YouTube allows the dissemination of religious lectures, studies, and discussions in video format, while Instagram utilizes images, short texts, and short videos to attract attention. *Third*, interactivity and Online Community. Social media allows for two-way interaction between the preacher and the audience. Comments, *likes*, and *shares* create greater dialog and engagement. This allows followers to ask questions, discuss, and feel more connected to their community. *Fourth*, personalization and Influencers. Religious figures who are active on social media often become influencers who have loyal followers. They can shape their followers' opinions and behavior in a very personal and direct way. Their more relaxed and relatable delivery style often appeals to the younger generation.

Fifth, Variety of Content. Internet-based religion offers different types of content, ranging from formal lectures, Q&A discussions, to lighter and more entertaining content such as religious memes. This makes religion more relevant and appealing to different age groups and backgrounds. *Sixth*, the distribution of Religious Knowledge. The use of digital platforms allows for a more equitable distribution of religious knowledge. Material from well-known clerics or scholars can be accessed by people in different parts of the world that may have previously been

⁴ Mofferz, M. W. (2020). Meretas Makna Post-Truth: Analisis Kontekstual Hoaks, Emosi Sosial dan Populisme Agama. *Societas Dei: Jurnal Agama Dan Masyarakat*, 7(1), 3. <https://doi.org/10.33550/sd.v7i1.141>

⁵ Hazbini: 2023

difficult to reach. *Seventh*, Social and Cultural Influence. Internet-based religion also influences religious perspectives and practices. Popular culture and social media trends often mix with religious messages, creating new forms of religious practice and expression that are more appropriate to the digital age. And *eighth*, Commercialization (monetization). Some religious figures and preachers use these platforms to generate revenue through advertising, sponsorship and donations. This adds an economic dimension to the spread of religion that may not have been so visible before.

The above reality has negative impacts such as: *first*, polarization. In this era people unwittingly tend to believe narratives that fit their views and ignore facts that contradict them. In other words, religion relies on the "emotional" facts of individuals and groups (not based on "ummah"). *Second*, various discussions or dialogues are no longer productive. Dialogue and discussion become more difficult because people are more likely to hold on to their emotionally based beliefs rather than opening themselves up to facts and rational arguments. And *third*, distrust in institutions. As truth becomes relative and subjective, trust in institutions traditionally regarded as guardians of truth (such as the media, academia, and government) can decline.

This phenomenon illustrates that religion is no longer built, understood and taught through a deep process, for example in a boarding school for a long time under the authority of a teacher who is usually called Kyai (read: Ulama). With the opening up of sources of knowledge, anyone can access religious literature as they choose. A person who is very knowledgeable in religion may lose popularity to a *content creator* because it is built through imagery supported by *speed* and *repetition*, which are the advantages of social media. From here we understand that religion becomes a contestative "object matter" because it is no longer something that is accepted or sought after but just an object and not a *reference*. Not surprisingly, compared to traditional phenomena, here religion is challenged or accused. Its purity is also questioned because there is no longer a known standard measure that is *speed*, *repetitive* and ultimately *viral*.

This de-authorization has clear implications. Various skills and knowledge that were previously only accessible through traditional institutions, such as schools and courses, are now provided on various internet-based social media platforms. In the past, someone who wanted to have English language skills no longer needed to go to a course institution such as the most popular English Village in Pare Kediri, East Java. Now English course services via the internet such as Eng Breaking, Speaking Partner and even English Village have provided online services that allow enthusiasts not to go to Pare Kediri. Under these conditions, I think that one day the religion programs at UIN could be closed, because religion no longer needs to be studied as philosophy

The notion of post-truth is understood not as the absence of truth but as post-

fact, objective fact. In this case, there has been an erosion of truth values. A light example can be taken, when MU lost 2:0 with City, the media talked about the referee playing MU. The media no longer talks about the course of the match as a fact but something else that is more of a framing that MU's defeat was due to the bad leadership of the referee. Similarly, religion is no longer based on objective facts, but images. The image displayed is then considered the truth because it is shown repeatedly. The important point here is that the process of denigration requires ignorant people, who are not interested in deep understanding. Philosophy is too difficult to be digested immediately. This mechanism indirectly reduces the strength of the ummah by making it no longer have a critical attitude. Religion is no longer the subject matter but the object matter, or the process of objectification of religion. For example, whether what is being conveyed by viral preachers is the example of the Prophet or the efficacy of *asyifa'* honey.

Here we can see a great danger, where religious institutions can become tools of political propaganda, commercial interests. Ummah is no longer understood as ummah, but followers. Religious institutions become nothing more than political and business propaganda tools. Religion becomes contemporary: now and for today (definitions can change in 24 hours to answer current issues). To borrow Orwell's term in his novel 1984, history can be changed every night, for propaganda purposes.

From what is described above it is clear that religion has undergone what Stig Hjarvard calls mediatization.⁶ Hjarvard argues that the media acts as a powerful agent of religious change, impacting both institutional religion and personal spirituality. Hjarvard's concept of the mediatization of religion refers to the process by which media shape and influence various aspects of society, including religion. He points out that the media not only transmits religious content, but also redefines and reconstructs religious meanings and practices. Furthermore, Hjarvard also mentions that the media as a cultural environment, so the media in reality creates a cultural environment in which religious symbols, narratives and practices are embedded. This environment affects how individuals and communities experience and understand religion.

Media, Hjarvard explained, facilitates a dual process of secularization and re-enchantment. While media contribute to the decline of traditional religious institutions (secularization), they also create new forms of spirituality and religious expression (*re-enchantment*). In this position Hjarvard finds the role of media in promoting religious pluralism by providing a platform for diverse religious voices and practices. This pluralism can lead to increased tolerance and potential conflict between different religious groups. In addition, the media also encourages the

⁶ Hjarvard, S. (2008). The Mediatization of Religion: A Theory of the Media as Agents of Religious Change. In Northern Lights 2008. Yearbook of Film & Media Studies. Bristol: Intellect Press: 7

individualization of religion, allowing people to customize their religious beliefs and practices. This individualization often leads to a more personalized and less institutionalized form of religiosity. In short, it is through the mediatization of religion that the contemporary religious landscape is shaped.

This paper generally aims to complement the shortcomings of previous studies that tend to assume that the phenomenon of da'wah in the *post-truth* era is a natural thing following the times. In the end, the appearance of da'wah that is far from deviating from Fiqh ad-Dakwah is considered a prevalence. Specifically, this paper, in addition to mapping the problems of da'wah in the *post-truth* era, which is characterized as requiring individuals to be more critical and skeptical in responding to information, as well as improving media literacy skills to identify and reject inaccurate or misleading information, also analyzes how transformative da'wah becomes a solution to various problems of the ummah. In line with all of that, three questions will be answered, namely: First, what is the real form of da'wah practice in the *post-truth* era. Second, what are the implications for the condition of the ummah and third, how transformative da'wah is understood as an answer to the two questions above.

This paper is based on an argument that da'wah that teaches religious truth must be dialogued in a digital space that provides *deepfake* technology and other digital manipulation tools that make it easier to create and spread fake content that appears real, thus increasing the challenge of distinguishing between right and wrong. This condition must be responded to by activating all the tools that make the community (ummah) committed to common sense. This is important to emphasize because when the ugliness of *post-truth* characters enters the realm of religion, it can have a destructive influence on socio-cultural life in general. Thus, fully realizing all the positive and negative potentials of the invasion of digital technology is a moral imperative.

Study Method

Considering Transformative-Emancipatory Critical Social Theory

If in the previous section it was said that the *post-truth* era has a strong potential to reduce the critical data of the ummah, then there is no other way but to restore da'wah as an empowerment effort. Ummah empowerment refers to the process of increasing the ability, strength, and potential of the community in various aspects of life, whether social, economic, political, or cultural, so that they can be independent, competitive, and play an active role in development. Empowerment is a series of processes that aim to create a more just, prosperous and sustainable society, where every individual has the opportunity to develop and contribute optimally. The theory whose study includes the keyword empowerment is none other than transformative-emancipatory critical social theory.

Transformative-emancipatory critical social theory is an approach in social science that emphasizes structural and radical changes in society to achieve social justice. It is often associated with ideas of emancipation, empowerment and deep social transformation. Conceptually, the theory rests on three things, namely: *first*, emancipation and critical consciousness. The main goal of this theory is the emancipation or liberation of individuals and groups from structures of oppression through critical consciousness. *Second*, social transformation. In this case, critical theory seeks not only to understand the world but also to change it, focusing on just and equal social transformation. And thirdly, this theory is interdisciplinary, combining various disciplines to analyze and critique power, ideology, and social structures.

Historically, transformative-emancipatory critical social theory has deep roots in philosophical and social thought traditions. The theory developed through various stages and was influenced by a number of key thinkers. Various reading sources can be traced to gain a comprehensive insight into the history, development, and application of transformative-emancipatory critical social theory, including: The Theory of Communicative Action by Jürgen Habermas.⁷ This book consists of two volumes: "Reason and the Rationalization of Society" and "Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason". Habermas develops the concept of communicative rationality and explains how domination-free communication can create social transformation. Still from Habermas can also be read, Knowledge and Human Interests (1968). In this book Habermas outlines the epistemological basis of critical theory and connects it with human emancipation. This book explains the three interests of knowledge: technical, practical, and emancipatory. Meanwhile, in Habermas's other book, Between Facts and Norms (1992) which contains the integration of communicative action theory with the theory of law and democracy. Habermas discusses how law and deliberative democracy can support a rational and emancipatory society.

Other sources can be read from Frankfurt School theorists, such as Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno's (1944), Dialectic of Enlightenment. In this book Horkheimer and Adorno analyze how the Enlightenment, which was supposed to liberate humans, instead created new forms of domination through instrumental rationality and the culture industry. While Herbert Marcuse (1964) in his book One-Dimensional Man, criticizes advanced industrial societies that create false needs and inhibit the potential for individual emancipation through mass consumption and technology.

Further books by postmodern and contemporary thinkers that can be referred to include Michel Foucault's (1975) Discipline and Punish. In this book Foucault

⁷ Habermas, Jürgen. 2007. Teori Tindakan Komunikatif I: Rasio dan Rasionalisasi Masyarakat (terj. Alimandan). Yogyakarta: Kreasi Wacana

examines the history of the prison system and how discipline and surveillance become tools of power. This book contributes to an understanding of how power structures work in society. Also Judith Butler's (1990) book, *Gender Trouble*, in which Butler develops a theory of gender performativity, which challenges traditional concepts of gender and sexuality. This book is relevant for critical social theory that focuses on emancipation. Also relevant to gender issues is Patricia Hill Collins' (1990), *Black Feminist Thought*. From this book we learn about black feminist perspectives and intersectionality, emphasizing the importance of understanding black women's experiences in the context of race, class, and gender. In addition, we can also refer to the work of Critical Race Theory thinkers, such as Kimberlé Crenshaw, Neil Gotanda, Gary Peller, and Kendall Thomas (1995), *Critical Race Theory: The Key Writings That Formed the Movement*. This book brings together key writings in critical race theory, highlighting how race and law interact to sustain injustice. Also relevant are books by Social Ecology thinkers, including Murray Bookchin (1982). In his book, *The Ecology of Freedom*, Bookchin combines social and ecological analysis to propose a more free and ecological society.

Transformative-Emancipatory Critical Theory essentially aims to dismantle unjust power structures and build a more just and equal society through critical awareness, active participation, and social transformation. The process of empowering people includes the following: *first*, education and training. This process aims to improve the skills and knowledge of individuals in the community. *Secondly*, economic development which involves all efforts to increase economic opportunities through small businesses, self-employment, and access to financial resources. *Third*, health improvement by providing health services and health education to improve quality of life. *Fourth*, strengthening social networks, which are useful for forming and strengthening social ties and solidarity within the community. *Fifth*, access to information by providing or seeking broad access to information relevant to personal and community development. And *sixth*, participation in decision-making is very important. This effort can encourage community involvement in the decision-making process, both at the local and national levels. In other words, if the goal is to create a just society under the idea of democracy, then participation is the key word. To borrow a term from Habermas (1981), such a society is referred to as communicative, a model where racialized and inclusive communication is the basis for social interaction and decision-making with the ultimate goal of achieving emancipation and social justice.

For the sake of the specific purpose of writing this article, it will focus on the thoughts of Jürgen Habermas' Transformative-Emancipatory Social Theory. Jürgen Habermas, one of the leading figures of the second-generation Frankfurt School, developed a Transformative-Emancipatory Critical Theory that focuses on communication and rationality as tools to achieve social transformation. Habermas'

critical theory is known as the Theory of Communicative Action. Habermas developed the Theory of Communicative Action which became the foundation of his transformative approach. This theory emphasizes that communication that is rational and free from domination is the main way to achieve consensus and just social change. By emphasizing the importance of rational and inclusive communication, as well as a strong public sphere, this theory offers a way to understand and overcome contemporary social challenges, such as political polarization, inequality, and corporate domination.

For a more detailed understanding, some of the key elements of Habermas' model are as follows: *first*, Communicative Rationality. Habermas distinguishes between instrumental rationality (focus on efficiency and results) and communicative rationality (focus on understanding and agreement). He argues that true social transformation can only be achieved through honest and open communication. *Second*, the Ideal Situation of Speech. This concept of the "ideal situation of speech" is explained that all participants in the discussion are free from external and internal pressures, allowing them to communicate rationally and equally. This is the ideal condition where consensus can be reached through rational arguments. *Third*, Validity Claims. In communication, each participant submits validity claims that include truth claims, normative accuracy claims, and sincerity claims. Other participants can accept or reject these claims based on rational arguments. *Fourth*, Public Space. In Habermas's understanding, the concept of public space is an arena where individuals can openly discuss and debate social and political issues. He emphasized the importance of a strong and democratic public sphere to achieve social transformation

Some of the main points about the public sphere⁸ are: *First*, Democratic Discourse. Habermas sees discourse in the public sphere as a way to achieve consensus and democratic legitimacy. Rational discussion and debate allow people to form public opinions that are based on good arguments. *Second*, Inclusion. Here Habermas provides a requirement that the public sphere must be inclusive, which allows participation from all members of society without discrimination. This inclusion is important to ensure that all perspectives are heard and considered. *Third*, colonization of the living world. This concept was introduced by Habermas to describe how economic and bureaucratic systems (the world of systems) interfere with and dominate the daily lives (the world of life) of individuals. Habermas argues that to achieve social transformation, society must resist this colonization and strengthen the living world through more rational communication and interaction.

Fifth, social transformation. Habermas believes that true social

⁸ To get a better understanding of the concept of public space, see: Jürgen Habermas, *Ruang Publik: Sebuah Kajian Tentang Kategori Masyarakat Borjuis*. ter. Yudi Santoso (Yogyakarta, Kreasi Wacana: 2007)

transformation must involve: (1) Increasing Communicative Rationality: Expanding and deepening rational communication practices at all levels of society; (2) Strengthening the Public Sphere: Encouraging active and inclusive participation in public discourse to build democratic consensus. And (3) Critique of the System: Continued critique of systemic structures that dominate and inhibit rational communication.

Sixth, implementation and relevance. Habermas' Transformative-emancipatory Critical Theory provides a framework for analyzing and promoting social change through communication and democratic participation. His approach has been applied in a variety of contexts, including education, politics and civil society, to address injustice and strengthen democratic processes. If Da'wah by definition is an effort to transform society to become sovereign in living life based on religious values, then transformative-emancipatory critical theory should be the basis of Islamic Da'wah praxis.

Discussion

Critical Da'wah Science: Key Elements

Critical, transformative, and emancipatory da'wah science is an approach that aims to change social conditions and increase public awareness through da'wah. Because it is centered on society, the main object of study is no longer the subject of da'wah, but the da'wah partner. By understanding the situation of da'wah partners in depth, we will find methods, media and da'wah messages that suit their needs. This is different from da'wah centered on da'wah subjects who have deductive thinking mechanisms starting from finding interesting Qur'anic verses about human morals. That verse is what we convey to them. Whether they take offense or not is their business. Our obligation is only to convey. This second approach is clearly non-empathetic and contradicts the principles of the transformative-emancipatory critical social theory that we make the theoretical framework.

Thus, Transformative-Emancipatory Da'wah is understood as an approach in da'wah that aims to liberate and empower people from various forms of oppression, injustice, and inequality. This approach integrates the principles of social transformation and emancipation with Islamic values. The following are the formulations and key elements of Transformative-Emancipatory Da'wah: *first*, theological and philosophical foundations. *Second*, tawhid which emphasizes that all humans are equal before Allah and only Allah has the right to be worshiped. Tawhid is the basis for fighting all forms of oppression and exploitation. This principle of tawhid is the foundation of equality in Habermas' emancipatory conception. *Third*, justice (*al-Adl*). This principle emphasizes the importance of social justice as one of the main values in Islam. And the fourth, maqasid al-Shariah. This principle refers to the main objectives of sharia which include the protection of religion, soul, mind,

offspring, and property.

Critical, transformative and emancipatory da'wah science plays an important role in shaping a more just, empowered and conscious society. With this approach, da'wah is not only a tool for spreading religious teachings, but also a means to bring about significant social change. This requires Da'wah Science to have its analytical character in the form of social and critical analysis which is characterized by always starting with identifying injustice. This is done by critically analyzing the social, political and economic structures that create and maintain injustice and oppression. This analysis is used to build critical awareness among people about the conditions of injustice they face and the structural causes behind them.

The participation and empowerment element has a character of inclusion and participation. It is intended to encourage the active participation of all community members, including marginalized groups, in proselytization and decision-making processes. Similarly, the empowerment model aims to increase the capacity of individuals and groups to take control of their lives and advocate for their rights.

At the methodological level, critical Da'wah Science has the following characteristics: First, dialogical and participatory. A dialogical approach is needed to encourage active participation and community involvement in discussions and decision-making. Second, contextualization. Adjusting da'wah messages to the social, cultural, and economic context of the local community in other languages does not ignore local wisdom. Third, mentoring. Conducting continuous assistance to the community to ensure that they are truly empowered and independent.

Furthermore, the social transformation elements are geared towards following three models, namely: *first*, advocacy and activism. This model is intended to advocate for changes in oppressive policies and practices and support social movements that fight for justice and equality. *Second*, the education and training model. This is done by providing education and training that increases people's critical awareness and practical skills. And the third is based on the principle of sustainable development. This principle of sustainability supports sustainable economic, social and environmental initiatives that empower communities.

The spirituality and morality element relies on akhlaq (Morality) which emphasizes the importance of good morals as the foundation for social and emancipatory action. As well as social piety that links personal piety with social responsibility, emphasizing that worship is not only ritualistic but must also be reflected in just and moral social action.

In the implementation element, Transformative-Emancipatory Da'wah can be directed to at least: (1) Education Program. This is done by preparing curriculum and educational programs that emphasize critical awareness, empowerment, and justice values. (2) Community Assistance. Engage directly in community mentoring to understand their needs and support local initiatives. (3) Policy Advocacy. Working

with non-governmental organizations and government agencies to influence more equitable and inclusive policies. And (4) Social Network Strengthening. Forming networks and alliances with other organizations and social movements that share the same vision and mission.

From the above description, Transformative-Emancipatory Da'wah seeks to change not only individuals but also the social structures that underlie injustice. By integrating Islamic values with the principles of social transformation, this approach seeks to create a more just, inclusive and prosperous society. If this is how da'wah is understood, then da'wah activities must certainly take sides on the real earth, namely on the earth that has its own wisdom as a result of the cultural process

Local Wisdom and National Identity to Build Da'wah Science

The term local wisdom, as Ahimsa-Putra⁹ notes has emerged into academic discussion since the New Order era, precisely in 1991. At that time Padjajaran University in collaboration with Leiden University established what was called INRIK (*Indonesia Resource-Centre for Indigenous Knowledge*). Furthermore, an international seminar on "*Indigeneous Knowledge System*" (IKS) was held in 1994. The term Indigenous Knowledge is what is later known as local wisdom. In global discourse, this term has become stronger since the 1960s decade called the *Development Decade*. During that decade all UN members were encouraged to mobilize resources and provide support for the steps needed by various developed and developing countries to achieve economic independence and social progress. Unfortunately, the program failed.

Anthropologists at that time came to the conclusion that the failure was due to the lack of understanding of scientists from policy makers about the people who were the targets of development themselves. Since then, the term "development from below" has emerged, which is the opposite of the previous *top-down* paradigm. This means that development programs should "*indigenous perceptions and practices must be understood and taken into account*". It is this principle of development from below that further animates the programs designed by the UN. The impact of this paradigm shift was only felt after the *development decade*. In Indonesia, after the reformation, the paradigm was strengthened to replace the New Order paradigm. This is evident from the emergence of *indigenous* groups in Indonesia, which are a form of "*indigenous people*".

The phrase traditional (local) wisdom consists of a noun and an adjective. This phrase can be interpreted as traditional knowledge. The term "wisdom" can be defined as a set of knowledge and practices that can be used to solve problems and/or difficulties encountered in a good, right and good way. The word "set" implies (a) the

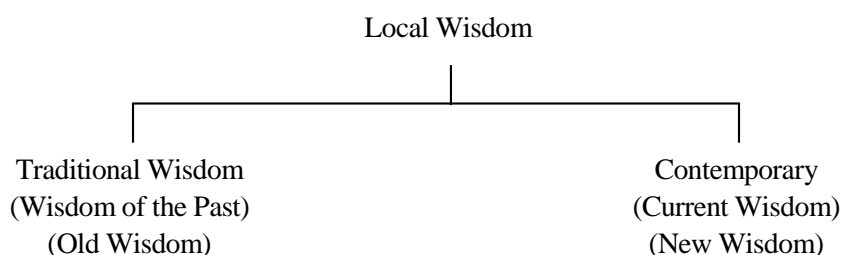
⁹ Ahimsa-Putra, Heddy Shri. 2016. *Paradigma Profetik Islam: Epistemologi, Etos dan Model*. Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada Press.

existence of elements, (b) the existence of relationships between elements but not empirical, (c) the relationship between elements is neither mechanical nor functional, (d) forming a unit without clear empirical boundaries for this unit. The last three elements (b), (c) and (d) are what make it different from the concept of a system.

Meanwhile, we can understand the word traditional by understanding the term tradition as a number of beliefs, views, values or practices passed down from generation to generation not through writing (usually orally or by example), which are accepted by a society or community so that they become established and have the force of law. So traditional means generally accepted and has the force of law. Thus, the violation or rejection of agreed beliefs, views and values and practices can lead to the application of certain punishments to the individual violator or rejectionist.

With the above understanding, the phrase traditional wisdom can be understood as a set of knowledge and practices (activation) to solve well, right and good problems and/or difficulties faced, and obtained from previous generations orally or through action examples. Wisdom can also be defined as "the ability to take good and right actions". This ability is basically the knowledge to determine the actions that are considered appropriate to solve certain problems.

The phrase traditional wisdom is literally different from local wisdom. In local wisdom, the emphasis is on the place, the locality of the wisdom, so local wisdom does not have to be a wisdom that has been passed down from generation to generation. Local wisdom can be wisdom that has recently emerged from a community. Local wisdom is therefore not always traditional and is therefore broader in meaning than traditional wisdom.¹⁰



Local wisdom includes a variety of knowledge, views, values and practices of a community both obtained from previous generations of the community, as well as those obtained by the community in the present that do not come from previous generations, but from various experiences of the present, including from contact with other societies or cultures. Therefore, local wisdom can be defined as a set of knowledge and practices (activation) in a community - both derived from previous

¹⁰ Ahimsa-Putra, Shri, Heddy. 2016. Kearifan lokal dan Jatidiri Bangsa - Pengalaman Indonesia – LAB: Lembaran Antropologi Budaya. Volume 1, Nomor 1, April.

generations and from its experience interacting with the environment and other communities - to solve well, right and good problems and/or difficulties faced.

Identity can be understood as a set of symbols or signs, whether physical, material or behavioral that make an individual or a group of individuals look different from other individuals or groups of individuals. This group of individuals can have physical, material or behavioral symbols or signs that distinguish them from other groups of individuals, which is commonly referred to as *identity*. In small groups of individuals, this identity is not very visible, but in large groups of individuals, it is often immediately apparent.

Likewise with a nation, if we have visited a country from different nations, for example China, India, Saudi Arabia, the Netherlands, Japan and others, of course we will immediately see that there are quite clear differences between these nations. In terms of physique, behavior, in speaking and interacting and so on. The various identities that distinguish one nation from another are what can be called national identity or identity. Among anthropologists, these various local wisdoms are sometimes named with the prefix, "ethno" which means ethnic group, or can mean a particular community. Terms such as *ethnomedicine*, *ethnobotany*, *ethnozoology*, *ethnoecology*, *ethnophilosophy*, *ethnoart* or *ethnohistory*.

Not all communities or tribes/nations are aware of the issue of identity and not all are aware of the local wisdom that they have and can use as symbols to express that identity. Now, as human life becomes more globalized, many people and communities are increasingly aware of their identity and feel the need to have and express it in their daily lives. It is in this context of life that local wisdom can be useful not only to fulfill physical and material needs, but also to fulfill social and cultural needs.

In Indonesia, there are as many local wisdoms as there are ethnic groups. However, not all of this local wisdom has been identified. In addition to the lack of human resources to do so, the attention to local wisdom is also still not so great, so the effort to explore and reveal it again is also still limited. However, this does not mean that there is no local wisdom that has been successfully explored and developed. Here are some forms of local wisdom that have been identified and are now being developed more seriously, such as: *Jamu*, local wisdom in the field of health. *Joglo*, local wisdom in the field of housing (ethnoarchitecture). Gamelan and shadow puppet, wisdom in the field of art (*ethnoart*). Batik, local wisdom in clothing

From the description above, it can be seen that local wisdom can also be a strategic means to realize national identity. However, this strategic potential has not been optimally understood and utilized so that various local wisdom in Indonesia is only felt by the community or community that owns the local wisdom itself. Related to the idea of formulating da'wah science by taking the source of local wisdom, then actually the first thing is to find various national identity by inventorying various local

wisdom that is worthy of being used as a means of strengthening national identity. Then build a local wisdom data system, publish it, activate it in everyday life and then develop it.

The link between religion and cultural reality is possible because religion does not exist in a vacuum, always original. To deny the connection between religion and cultural reality is to deny the reality of religion itself, which is always related to humans, who must be surrounded by their culture. Describing the close relationship between religion and culture, Gus Dur said it was as close as the delivery of songs in *qasidah dzibâ'iyah*, which is performed by millions of young NU children every week. This shows that the spread of Islam in this country, among others through culture, was delivered peacefully, not through war. It must be recognized that the power possessed by the Muslims, through power or not, has contributed to the peaceful spread of religion. So Islam in Indonesia has been constructed in such a way even since the beginning of its first spread, especially in the Wali Songo era.¹¹

Islam coming to the archipelago (Indonesia) cannot be separated from the nuances in which Islam was born. However, Islam entering the archipelago was able to adapt to local culture. The process of combining Islam with the archipelago makes Islam in the archipelago easily accepted by the community. There is no resistance, only welcome. Even if there are modifications, it is nothing more than the injection of Islamic values in the existing tradition. In its development, Islam in the archipelago with its moderate and appreciative nature towards local culture, and in favor of local people in facing challenges, caused Islam to be accepted as a new religion. Clear evidence of the process of integration between Islam and local culture can be found in the form of Babad, hikayat, lontar, suluk literature, mythology. In terms of architectural form, the roofs of the Demak mosques were nine-layered "from Meru" in pre-Islamic times, then changed by Sunan Kalijaga to three, symbolizing Iman, Islam and Ihsan. The culture of salvation, Maulid Nabi, Yasinan, Sekaten.

Conclusion

Transformative preaching encourages people to be active in improving their surroundings, overcoming injustice and improving the quality of life through the application of religious values in daily life as local wisdom. Traditional wisdom is strongly influenced by the local cultural and environmental context. It reflects the values and experiences of the community that have accumulated over the years. Therefore, traditional wisdom needs to be recognized and empowered in a modern context, as a solution to the various social, environmental and cultural challenges faced today. Traditional wisdom is an important heritage that must be preserved and applied in daily life to achieve balance and harmony in society.

In order to build a relevant science of da'wah to understand and find solutions

¹¹ Isfironi, Mohammad. 2015. *Islam dan Budaya Lokal: Sebuah Ancangan Teoritis*. Jember. IAI Jember Press

to various contemporary problems of the people based on local wisdom, the choice is the science of da'wah with a critical transformative-emancipatory perspective. This perspective is considered rational and logical and realistic because its orientation leads to all efforts to encourage people to be active in improving their surroundings, overcoming injustice and improving the quality of life through the application of religious values in everyday life as local wisdom which is the nation's identity.

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