

CONNECTING GLOBAL AND LOCAL INDONESIAN RELIGIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENTS THROUGH SPATIAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRAK

Artikel ini membahas hubungan antara gerakan sosial transnasional-lintas agama yang menangani perubahan iklim dalam skala global dengan ekspresi lokal agama dan ekologi di Indonesia. Artikel ini menghubungkan dua tren dalam literature, yaitu agama dan ekologi: 1) analisis spasial agama dan lingkungan alam dan 2) studi tentang gerakan sosial lingkungan religius. Banyak penelitian tentang pergerakan aktivis agama di pusat, yang menunjukkan bahwa mereka beroperasi di zona terpisah, agak terputus dari masyarakat lokal yang ingin mereka wakili dan direformasi. Artikel ini berpendapat bahwa gerakan lingkungan religius dapat dipahami dengan lebih baik dengan menempatkannya di tengah, sebagai aktor yang tertanam dan dibentuk oleh ruang global dan lokal yang tumpang tindih. Artikel tersebut diawali dengan tinjauan singkat literatur tentang agama dan ekologi yang relevan dengan analisis spasial agama dan gerakan sosial lingkungan. Tinjauan ini berpendapat bahwa studi tentang gerakan lingkungan religius dapat disematkan dalam konteks global dan lokal. Ini memberi contoh bagaimana konteks Indonesia (antara lain) telah membantu membentuk gerakan lingkungan religius global. Selanjutnya, artikel tersebut menyajikan studi kasus di Indonesia yang menunjukkan bagaimana wacana lingkungan diciptakan bersama oleh masyarakat lokal dan aktivis agama. Artikel ini diakhiri dengan saran untuk studi lebih lanjut tentang adaptasi kreatif terhadap perubahan iklim di tingkat lokal dan global.

Kata Kunci: *Agama; Aksi sosial antaragama; Ekologi; Gerakan lingkungan; Gerakan sosial global; Globalisasi; Indonesia; Perubahan iklim;*

ABSTRACT

This article discusses connections between transnational multi-faith social movements addressing climate change on a global scale with local expressions of religion and ecology in Indonesia. It connects two trends in literature on religion and ecology: 1) spatial analysis of religion and the natural environment and 2) studies of religious environmental social movements. Many studies of these movements put religious activists at the center, which suggests that they operate in a separate zone, somewhat disconnected from the local communities they aim to represent and reform. This article argues that religious environmental movements can be better understood by placing them in the middle, as actors embedded in and shaped by overlapping global and local spaces. The article begins with a brief review of literature on religion and ecology relevant to a spatial analysis of religion and environmental social movements. It then argues that studies about religious environmental movements can be enriched by studying how movements are embedded in global and local contexts. It provides examples of how the Indonesian context (among others) has helped to shape global religious environmental movements. Next, the article presents case studies in Indonesia demonstrating how environmental activists share a dynamic relationship with their contexts, and how religious environmental discourses are co-created by local communities and religious activists. The article concludes with suggestions for further study

about creative adaption to climate change at the local and global level.

Keywords: *Climate change; Environmental movements; Ecology; Global social movements; Globalization; Inter-religious social action; Religion; Indonesia.*

INTRODUCTION

“Throughout history, our religious traditions have provided support and inspiration during times of great challenge or transformation. We must commit to new ways of living that honor the dynamic relationships between all forms of life to deepen awareness and the spiritual dimension of our lives. We must draw on courage, hope, wisdom, and spiritual reflection to enable our young and future generations to *inherit a more caring and sustainable world*. Interfaith Climate Statement (ICS, 2016)”.

Our rapidly-changing climate poses an urgent challenge that is both global and local. As national governments and transnational institutions slowly acknowledge their role in reducing carbon emissions (with some exceptions), local communities are facing the negative impacts of rising temperatures and sea levels, increasing natural disasters, and spreading pollution of our air and water. The quote above from the 2016 Interfaith Climate Statement (ICS, 2016) demonstrates that the changing climate also changes our understanding of religion, “its practices, ideologies and images of God and the sacred” (Bergmann, 2009, p.103). Since 2016, the ICS has been signed by thousands of religious leaders and activists, who represent a growing religious environmental movement. What impact do these sweeping statements at the global level have for communities suffering from the effects of climate change?

This article addresses that question by exploring connections between transnational multi-faith social movements addressing climate change on a global scale with local expressions of religion and ecology in Indonesia. Many studies on these movements put religious activists at the center, view them as the driving forces of environmental movements.

This focus of study assumes that activists operate in a way that is disconnected from the context of the local communities they aim to represent and reform. In contrast, this article argues that religious environmental movements can be better understood by placing them in the middle, as actors embedded in and shaped by overlapping global and local spaces.

The article begins with a brief review of literature on religion and ecology relevant to a spatial analysis of religion and environmental social movements. It then argues that studies about religious environmental movements can be enriched by studying how movements are embedded in global and local contexts. It provides examples of how the Indonesian context (among others) has helped to shape global religious environmental movements. Next, the article presents case studies demonstrating how environmental activists share a dynamic relationship with their contexts, and how religious environmental discourses are co-created by local communities and religious activists. The article concludes with suggestions for further study about creative adaption to climate change at the local and global level.

In their thorough review of literature on religion and the environment, Jenkins and Chapple (2011, p. 457) suggest four interdisciplinary trends in research on religion and ecology. This article explores the connection between two of these trends: 1) spatial analysis of religion and the natural environment and 2) studies of religious environmental social movements.

Studying religion through its relationship to spaces is a growing trend in sociology of religion and religious studies. For sociologists of religion, studying religion in geographical sites rather than as an essentialized categories (e.g., unchanging and universal Hinduism, Christianity or Islam) enables a deeper understanding of the relationship between social processes and religious concepts (Lynch, 2009; Guhin, 2014). In religious studies, a focus on lived religion (McGuire, 2008), and studies of neighborhoods and religious congregations (Knott, 2008; Ward, 2004) have given new insights into how religion is inter-

preted, framed and re-framed in particular geographical places and spaces, adding a spatial v to the traditional chronological narrative of religion (Bauman, 2011). Bergmann (2017) argues that religion helps people to feel at home in specific times and places. In a changing world experiencing environmental crises, beliefs enable people live in, adapt to, and transform the natural environment (Bergman, 2017, p.17).

This is a good point to clarify what is meant by “religion” in this article. Drawing on Bauman (2011; 2016) and Tweed (2006) in a spatial approach to religion, religion refers to the complex processes of how people make meaning of their lives and how that meaning is continually re-made and re-interpreted in time and space. In particular, religion “functions to help us cope with existential matters such as life transitions, illness, and death” (Bauman, 2011, p.779). In dealing with life, religions enable people to cope with changes both existential and material (what Tweed calls “crossings”) and to construct a sense of meaning in the worlds people inhabit (what Tweed calls “dwellings”) (Tweed, 2006). Religion in this sense includes the World Religions, as well as traditional religious beliefs and practices (which Jenkins (2017) calls “cosmovisions”), and spiritualities which may fall outside the category of what is traditionally called religion (Jenkins, 2017, p.24).

Bergmann’s quote signals how a spatial analysis of religion is applied to the natural environment. The spatial analysis of religion is being applied as a way of understanding how religious ideas and discourses are embodied in local geographical contexts (Jenkins, 2017), and how “new interpretations of local community [are] informed by ecological relations and environmental studies” (Jenkins & Chapple, 2011, p.457). Jenkins (2017) argues that religion cannot be separated from ecology “because environmental issues are entangled with human ways of being in the world, they are entangled with religion” (Jenkins, 2017, p.23). Bergmann (2017) asserts that religion is not only a set of beliefs, it is a set of “skills of perception and action”, as human beings are

both “painted by the world and painters in the world” (Bergmann, 2017, p.17,19).

This rich spatial analysis of religion is not much used in studies of religious environmental social movements. These studies tend to focus on case studies of activists in a way that is not well-connected to their local and national contexts. This body of literature makes environmental problems rather than environmental spaces a starting point for examining how moral communities form “political movement[s] for adaptive social change” (Jenkins, 2017, p.28). These movements range from adapting to environmental crises (Eucker, 2014; Murphy *et al.*, 2016), local movements of resistance to exploiting natural resources (Witt, 2016; Grim, 1998) and broad-based social movements for changing global policy and practice on environmental protection and care (Gottlieb, 2009; Ellingson *et al.*, 2012; Veldman *et al.*, 2013; Martin-Schramm, 2010). Studies of religious environmental movements reveal strikingly diverse coalitions of religious groups and activists who apply their beliefs into message of care for the environment (Gottlieb, 2009, p.231; Veldman *et al.*, 2013).

Like religion, the term “ecology” incorporates multiple definitions (see Jenkins, 2017, pp.28–39 for an overview of definitions). Considering my focus on religion and environmental social movements, I use ecology as both “an ethical worldview about appropriate human relations to their environment” and “a political movement for adaptive social change” (Jenkins, 2017, p.28). Using these definitions of ecology, I would describe religion as being in an adaptive relationship with the natural environment. The changing climate changes expressions of religion (Bergmann, 2009) as people of all faiths and beliefs cope with a changing climate by forming and re-forming religious beliefs and practices (Jenkins, 2017, p.30).

As a global environmental challenge with severe local impacts, climate change has brought together a diverse coalition of movements in an unprecedented manner. The broad-based movement has enlisted multiple

actors: local governments (Castán Broto & Bulkeley, 2013), national governments (Abbott, 2014; Cao & Ward, 2016), the private sector (Hoffman & Badiane, 2010; Eucker, 2014) and civil society organizations (Newell, 2005; Hadden, 2014) among others. Climate change poses problems to society that are not simply technological; they are also ideological and ethical (Berry, 2016, p.78). The climate crisis is a moral as well as a scientific crisis (Bergmann, 2009). Thus, it is not surprising that religious groups increasingly participate in global climate justice campaigns and movements for local environmental reform. The motivations for religious groups to join environmental movements are varied and will be explored in the following paragraphs.

As civil society becomes more interconnected and global (Clarke, 2016; Chandler, 2004; Katz & Anheier, 2006), transnational social movements increasingly take on a global scope and diverse makeup (Joachim & Locher, 2008; Hadden, 2014). As the problems caused by globalization and the effects of climate change are increasingly felt, the responses to these problems have become increasingly transnational. We can now speak of a global justice movement (Della Porta, 2007, p.7) and a global environmental movement (Hoffmann, 2011; Hadden, 2014). Religious groups increasingly play a role in transnational social movements for the environment (see Veldman *et al.*, 2013; Gottlieb, 2009 for examples). Although there are many differences in beliefs and ethical frameworks among religious groups, Chaplin (2016) argues that the past three decades have seen a convergence as religious groups recognize the problems posed by climate change and have agreed that international and national policy must be changed to reduce global warming (Chaplin, 2016, p.2).

Many civil society groups are involved in addressing climate change (see Newell, 2005 for an overview). I have chosen to focus on religious groups for two reasons. First, religion (like climate change) has both global and local manifestations. Religion is global in its scope and transnational connections (Wuthnow &

Offutt, 2008), and environmental movements within religious communities regularly cross geographic boundaries (Ellingson *et al.*, 2012; Veldman *et al.*, 2013). Religion is also local, as people incorporate religious ideas into ways of life that may differ vastly between (and within) religious groups (Ellingson *et al.*, 2012; Li *et al.*, 2016; Wardekker *et al.*, 2009). In this way religious groups may simultaneously advocate care for environment and embody environmental awareness in local communities in a variety of locally-relevant ways (Veldman *et al.*, 2013; Posas, 2007).

In order to apply a spatial analysis to religious environmental movements, I have chosen Indonesia as the context for this paper. Indonesia is located on the frontline of climate change adaptation, and it has a long history of religious diversity and environmental activism (Bagir, 2015; Bauman, 2015; Mangunjaya *et al.*, 2015). Indonesia was also one of the early adopters of national policies to reduce emissions and protect rainforests (Johnstone, 2010; UNFCCC, 2007). Religious identity and practice is an important feature of private and public life in Indonesia. Its striking religious diversity, coupled with the state's formal recognition of religious communities, means that Indonesian responses to climate change regularly involve religious concepts, as well as religious leaders and activists (Mangunjaya & McKay, 2012; Mangunjaya *et al.*, 2015). Indonesia is also home to many indigenous groups, as well as accompanying indigenous movements to manage the environment using traditional environmental values and local customs (Abate & Kronk, 2013; Johnstone, 2010; Maarif, 2015).

DISCUSSION

After setting the scene, this article now addresses the main question of this paper: what can a spatial analysis add to studies of religious responses to environmental problems like climate change? Many of the studies of religious environmental movements describe how they communicate with moral authority on behalf of religious communities to a global audience (Posas, 2007; Schaefer,

2016). Other studies depict how they spark change of environmental attitudes and behaviors within religious groups (Chaplin, 2016; Bergmann, 2009; WCC, 2008), and through national and local initiatives for environmental care (Mangunjaya *et al.*, 2015; Amri, 2013; Veldman *et al.*, 2013). Religious environmental movements add religious voices and moral authority to calls for global policy reform and they encourage reform in their respective religious communities. This approach puts religious environmental movements at the center of analysis as depicted in Figure 1.

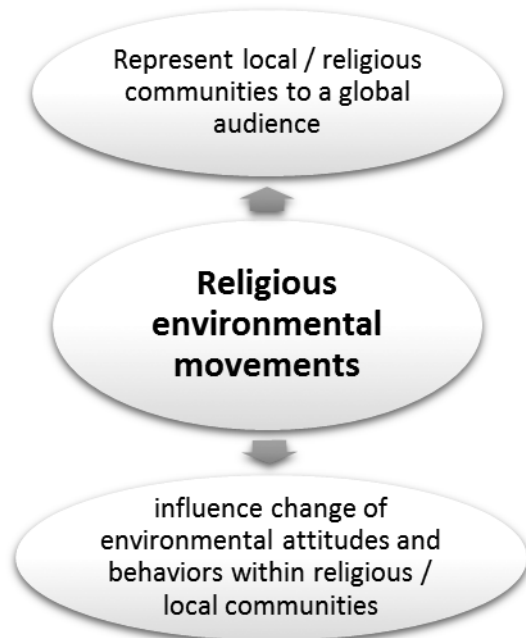


Figure 1. Religious Environmental Movements at the Center

A typical example of a study with religious environmental movements at the center is found in “Faiths from the Archipelago: Action on the Environment and Climate Change” by Mangunjaya *et al.* (2015). The article begins with an instance of Indonesian religious leaders joining together to call for environmental policy reform at the national and international level, adding their voices to others at the climate summit in Bali, Indonesia in 2007. Then it provides examples of how religious leaders and activists from Muslim, Catholic, Protestant, Buddhist and Hindu communities are

working on a range of initiatives within their respective communities to increase environmental awareness and spark changes in behavior. This pattern of putting movements at the center is followed by many of the research articles on religious environmental social movements (see Veldman *et al.*, 2013; Gottlieb, 2009; Ellingson *et al.*, 2012).

To some extent the “centering” on movements results naturally from them being the locus of study. Putting movements at the center of analysis demonstrates the amount of agency and power they have to motivate social change. For example, Mangunjaya *et al.* (2015) writes that religious leaders working for environmental change are “return[ing] to religion (*agama*) in order to study and inventory tangible actions that may be conducted according to each religion, in pursuit of environmental conservation” (Mangunjaya *et al.*, 2015, p.107). However, making movements or activists the starting point of study can result in depictions of environmental movements as disconnected from the natural and cultural context. Activists do not have absolute power to re-make the world, and their successes in changing environmental policy do not spring out of nothing. This perspective reinforces the false idea that people can act as autonomous individuals, which Bauman (2011) attributes as a major cause of the current environmental crisis. From this false perspective, when activists succeed or fail in their social movements, the responsibility is theirs. Successes spring from sparking dramatic social changes out of nothing (Bauman, 2011, p.789), and failures result from ineffective messaging (Li *et al.*, 2016) or ineffective top-down initiatives (Amri, 2013).

In order to provide a balance to depictions of movements as the center or starting point for social action, this article argues that movements should be studied as being “in the middle”. Their experiences of religion and ecology are grounded in specific contexts, and movements are being shaped by overlapping global, national and local contexts as they shape these contexts. This dynamic interaction is essential to their ability

'to make challenges to environmental science and moral culture into sites for adaptive learning and social change, thereby making inchoate threats into intelligible civic problems' (Jenkins, 2009, p.1). As depicted in Figure 2, movements are not made up of autonomous individuals: they are embedded in specific places and times, and their success and failures are shaped by their engagement with the contexts in which they work.

As social movements engage at the transnational level, they are being shaped by a global context. In an edited volume on transnational activism in the UN and EU, Joachim and Locher (2008) demonstrate how the structures of international agencies shape NGO strategies. Hadden (2014, p.9) shows, in a study of the involvement of the global justice movement in the climate justice movement in the mid-2000s, how the political climate and structures of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change shaped a response that made the UNFCCC summit activism in Copenhagen in 2009 more conciliatory than the highly-oppositional anti-globalization protests against the World Trade Organization in the early-2000s. In both studies, attention to the institutional context reveals the dynamic interaction between movements and contexts.

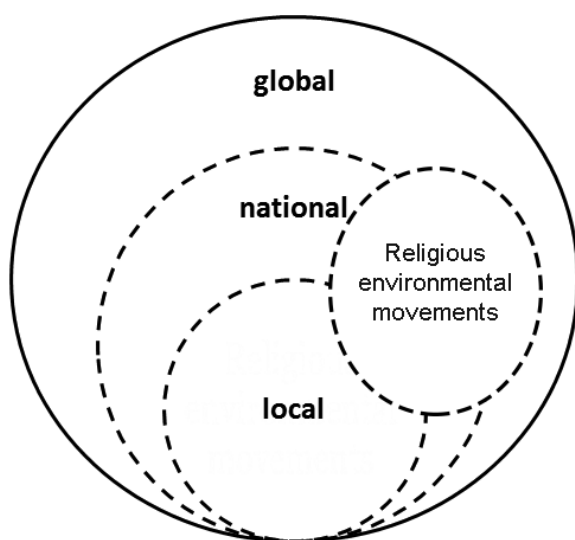


Figure 2. Religious Environmental Movements in the Middle

For religious environmental movements, the global context has shaped them in the crafting of inter-religious statements on climate change. These statements, the latest being the Interfaith Climate Statement (ICS, 2016) mentioned at the beginning of this article, blend policy prescriptions (such as calling on governments to reduce emissions) with an ethical discourse on care for the environment. The structure and function of these statements are shaped by the opportunities permitted by international policy frameworks such as the UNFCCC. In these annual meetings, representatives of different groups are given an opportunity to give a statement on the issue at hand. Such statements are more powerful and persuasive if they represent a broader base of support than a single group or organization. Accordingly, inter-religious statements on the environment have adopted an inclusive language that can incorporate people from all religions and beliefs:

"If we continue to damage our vital support system through over-exploitation, contamination and destruction of the climate that protects us, the life-giving minerals, soil that feeds us, the oceans and freshwater sources that sustain us, we do so at our own peril. We must take swift action, guided by our faiths and work in service together as a global Earth community (ICS, 2016)."

Movements are also shaped by local contexts. An interesting feature of annual climate conferences (called the Conference of Parties (COP)) held since 1995 is their location in different countries, which serves to locate transnational negotiations in a specific national context. Inevitably, the major concerns of that national context will influence the content and tenor of the discussions. The few climate conferences held in the Global South featured agreements addressing the concerns of developing countries. For example, the Least Developed Countries Fund to support developing countries climate reform launched at COP7 in 2001 in Marrakesh, Morocco (EESI, 2017). COP8 in 2002 in Delhi, India, saw the signing of the Delhi Ministerial Declaration, which called for transferring technology from developed to developing

countries (EESI, 2017). COP13 in 2007 met in Bali, Indonesia. It was the launching pad for the Bali Road Map, which included a larger role for civil society in implementing climate change policy. The Bali Road Map also included a focus on protecting rainforests, a major environmental issue in Indonesia with its large array of rainforests and biodiversity (UNFCCC, 2007).

There are other features of the Indonesian context which had an influence on the global discussion on climate change. As an archipelago, Indonesia is experiencing the impacts of climate change earlier than many other countries, with thousands of low lying islands vulnerable to rising sea levels, as well as vulnerability to typhoons and flooding from weather patterns sparked by rising sea temperatures (Mangunjaya *et al.*, 2010, p.117). The year after the Bali Conference in 2007, the government setup the National Climate Change Council (Dewan Nasional Perubahan Iklim - DNPI) to implement the national strategy to address climate change and to work in partnership with civil society organizations (Amri, 2013, p.75). Indonesia was also an early adopter of climate change measures, signing up to the Reducing Emissions from Deforestation in Developing Countries (REDD) in 2009 (Johnstone, 2010, p.93) and committing to reduce its carbon footprint by 26 percent by 2020 (Amri, 2013, p.75).

Another key feature of Indonesia that influenced its hosting of COP13 is the religious practice and diversity of Indonesia. Indonesia has the largest Muslim population of any nation in the world (Mangunjaya & McKay, 2012), and it benefits from a long history of recognizing and promoting religious diversity. Since the founding of the Indonesian state in 1945, the national ideology of Pancasila includes a belief in religious diversity and a formalized recognition of five religious groups - Muslim, Catholic, Protestant, Hindu and Buddhist (later Confucianism was added to make it six). As described by Tandirerung (2013), "the philosophy of Pancasila affirms the relationship amongst religious believers as a harmonious and tolerant one....

[it enables] a common platform where all religious groups can come together and discuss the future of Indonesia" (Tandirerung, 2013, p.47). In practice there are some challenges to religious freedom, particularly for religious groups that are not formally recognized (Magnis-Suseno, 2013, p.58). Yet because of the common platform for inter-religious engagement provided by the Indonesian state, religious leaders are expected to contribute to public discussions and work together on solving common problems at the local and national level.

The multi-faith Indonesian approach was exemplified in an event at COP13 in Bali organized by the Indonesian Ministry of Environment, Conservation International Indonesia and the State Islamic University of Jakarta (UIN). The event brought together ten religious leaders from the six religious groups to affirm the "commitments of each religious groups to respond to the global climate change and avoided deforestation and degradation" (KLH *et al.*, 2007). Each religious group presented a statement on behalf of its community, and an inter-religious joint statement was crafted. The inter-religious statement included these words of personal and global responsibility to address climate change:

1. *To commit ourselves in our continuous efforts to inspire and motivate our people at the grassroots level through religious preaching, speeches as well as cultural and traditional events and other forums at the grassroots level by campaigning and giving examples on how to develop the habit of a clean, healthy, and simple life, caring for the environment, using alternative energies, planting trees and reducing the consumption of fossil fuels and other activities to protect the earth from global warming as a part of basic religious teaching and local wisdom;*
2. *To enhance our commitment to promote good relationship with religious leaders from other countries to seriously address and anticipate the global climate change;*
3. *To appeal to the international community to significantly restructure the capitalistic global economic order as the cause of global warming* (KLH *et al.*, 2007, p.11).

While not the first inter-faith statement on climate change, the Indonesian inter-faith statement marked a relatively new phenomenon in 2007. The first statement was coordinated by the World Council of Churches at COP9 in Milan, Italy in 2003, but it was not until 2008 in Uppsala that an inter-faith statement brought together a broad base of 1,000 religious leaders and activists (WCC, 2008). What is distinctive about the Indonesian inter-religious statement of 2007 is its embedding of inter-religious consensus on climate change in a national context. An inter-religious statement on a social issue was not at all extraordinary in the Indonesian context, where religious leaders commonly work together and share platforms at the local, regional and national levels (Tandirerung, 2013). What was at that time a novel approach for religious leaders was a normal part of religious engagement in public life in Indonesia. The Indonesian context therefore had an influence on the global movement toward inter-faith statements on climate change.

Now that the argument for studying movements “in the middle” has been presented, the article offers examples of how this approach addresses two key areas of focus in studies of religious environmental social movements. First, the study of activists and networks is deepened by analyzing how global and local contexts shape religious activists as they shape movements. Second, the study of ecological discourses reveals a co-creation of hybrid religious-secular and global-local idioms, adding a richness to studies of social movements as translators. Both sections include examples from the Indonesian context which illustrate the dynamics of adaptive environmental learning in context.

Activists and Networks as Disconnected and Embedded

This section begins with an analysis of environmental activists at the center of sparking social change, and then gives examples of how activists occupy a middle space embedded in local and global contexts.

Scholars analyzing the impacts of economic globalization on societies have noted how globalization benefits people in an unequal manner. In *Globalization: The Human Consequences*, Zygmunt Bauman (1998) proposes that globalization produces two categories of people: global mobiles, who are able to use the benefits of mobile capital and ease of travel to maximize benefits from globalization; and local immobile, who are less able to shield themselves from the rapid social and economic changes wrought by globalization on local communities. From this level of analysis, religious environmental activists could be considered an example of global mobiles, as they jet around the world to international climate conferences and forge networks with international organizations (Bauman, 2011). As global mobiles, activists may become disconnected from local contexts and local problems, focused more on “rallying values to support climate action in general and less attentive to how specific action proposals use the idea of climate change to generate diverse models of cultural action” (Jenkins, 2009, p.15; Hulme, 2009).

The disconnection of activists from local contexts can lead to an imposing of top-down solutions to environmental problems on local people. Wisner (2010) envisions such “culture wars” around environmental adaptation as springing in part from a “long history of domination of rural people by urban elites, partly on the basis of the assumed superiority of urban or high versus rural, vernacular or low culture” (Wisner, 2010, p.136). In the Indonesian context, Amri (2013) reviews actions taken by Muslim environmental movements, finding that they tend to focus more on elites and take place primarily in urban contexts and centered in Java. The top-down approach makes these initiatives distant from the places where climate change adaptation may be most needed (Amri, 2013, pp.90-91).

The privileging of elite voices contributes to marginalizing indigenous voices, who represent a key population affected by climate change and an important site for lo-

cal religious expressions of environmentalism both historically and today (Grim, 1998; Schiller, 1996). Environmental policy such as the mandate to protect rainforests conflicts at times with indigenous rights, when rights to manage land are transferred from local to national actors in the name of conservation. Johnstone (2010) summarizes the problem faced by indigenous communities in Indonesia and elsewhere:

“The power differential between [legal] systems, and the immense global pressure on states and international institutions to deliver effective and timely climate change mitigations measures means that the rights of Indigenous peoples are among the first to fall off the agenda (Johnstone, 2010, p.122).”

Sometimes religious environmental movements marginalize indigenous voices, as these movements tend to be dominated by representatives from the world religions (with some notable exceptions – such as the Yale Forum on Religion and Ecology (Tucker & Grim, 2001)). Although attempts have been made to incorporate indigenous religious concepts into these movements, involvement of indigenous groups is low, particularly at the global level. Religious NGOs registered with the UN do not include indigenous groups directly (RNGOs, 2015), and the faith-based organizations involved in crafting the 2016 Interfaith Climate Statement also did not include indigenous groups (ICS, 2016). The Statement did mention the rights of indigenous people, but of the 304 signatories on the original statement, only four have some connection with traditional religions, and there are no indigenous leaders represented from Asia or Africa (ICS, 2016).

Indigenous peoples have had their own representatives at climate conferences through initiatives such as the Indigenous Environment Network (IEN, 2017), and their voices are slowly being recognized as vital to the global environmental movement. For example, the UNFCCC launched a platform in 2016 to increase engagement with indigenous communities (UNFCCC, 2016b). Yet the marginalization of indigenous groups in reli-

gious environmental movements presents a challenge for incorporating local interpretations of religion and ecology into the global network of activists. At the national level in Indonesia, indigenous beliefs are not considered religions, instead put into the category of *adat* (local customs). This designation limits the contribution of traditional leaders to national religious initiatives on the environment, and it can cause tensions in local communities as religious groups (e.g., Christians and Muslims) see indigenous groups as suitable for conversion rather than dialogue and mutual learning (Schiller, 1996).

As the analysis with movements as a starting point highlights the disconnection between activists and local contexts, analysis with activists in the middle reveals how activists are embedded in and foundationally-shaped by their contexts. The prominent role of Indonesians in the global religious environmental movement is evidence of the Indonesian context shaping the global engagement of activists. What follows are two examples of this phenomenon.

Nana Firman currently works for Green Faith, an inter-faith environmental organization in the USA. As Green Faith’s Muslim Director, Firman is responsible for engagement with to the Muslim community, including projects to promote environmentally-friendly “Green Mosques” (GF USA, 2017). As an Indonesian working transnationally and living overseas, Firman could exemplify the “disconnected” environmental activist described above. Yet in an interview with Public Radio International (PRI, 2016), she described her approach to environmental activism as shaped by her experiences in the Indonesian context.

“In her native Indonesia, Firman worked on recovery efforts after the 2004 tsunami in the religiously-conservative region of Aceh. She says it was hard to convince local people of the benefits of planting mangroves to reduce the impact of storm surges, until she remembered a verse in the Qur’an about planting trees. Firman says that’s when she first realized Islam could help her increase environmental awareness in Indonesia. Since then she’s taken that message worldwide.

Last year Firman helped draft the Islamic Declaration on Global Climate Change. It calls on Muslims everywhere to take action, from conserving water during the cleaning rituals of wudu to reducing plastic waste during the annual Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca" (PRI, 2016)."

In 2016 at the COP22 conference in Morocco, Firman along with the Indonesian Ministry of Environment hosted an event entitled "Interfaith Dialogue: Faiths and Action for the Planet". This event explicitly used Indonesian examples of religious environmental activism as models for other countries, such as the use of *fatwas* to protect rainforests (UNFCCC, 2016a). Nana Firman's story is an example of what Hadden (2014) calls "inter-movement spillover" as activists bring strategies across geographical and organizational boundaries, finding contextually-appropriate ways to fit into global and local contexts.

Another prominent Indonesian Muslim environmental activist is Fachruddin Majeri Mangunjaya. Mangunjaya has been involved in numerous national and international initiatives for Islamic environmental activism in Indonesia and globally. He was a key contributor to the international Islamic Statement on Climate Change (Mangunjaya & McKay, 2012). He was also involved in a multi-year project with Islamic and indigenous religious leaders to create a shared understanding of environmental management among the Minangkabau ethnic group in West Sumatra. The Minangkabau live in an area with a large area of rainforests, and their religious practices are influenced by *adat* (local customs) and Islam (Mangunjaya & McKay, 2012, p.299). Working with local government, international conservation NGOs and a diverse cross-section of local community groups (religious and traditional leaders, youth and women's groups, schools and local farmers), numerous initiatives to protect the environment and preserve local land rights were pursued together. These included "training on biodiversity survey techniques and community mapping of ecosystem services" ; "a conservation themed education curriculum and conservation campaign that focused on

the importance of ecosystem services, such as fresh water and carbon sequestration"; and "providing the necessary support required to formally apply for a customary forest governance system which will serve as a best management practices pilot for future government replication in West Sumatra" (Mangunjaya & McKay, 2012, p.300).

By working in cooperation with local leaders to create a system of environmental management that is culturally and religiously appropriate to the Minangkabau, this approach exemplifies what Jenkins (2009) calls local adaptive management using religious creativity. Rather than an imposition of "elite values" and national policies on local people, this project grounded a movement for environmental reform in a specific context. By drawing on the available religious and cultural resources and engaging with local people, the it could foster local ownership rather than impose external policy frameworks.

Environmental Discourses as Translation and Co-Creation

Another key area of analysis in literature of social movements is how they communicate with various audiences. Discourse is a primary feature of social movements as multiple messages are crafted to persuade governments, religious groups and local communities. Centering on movements shows how they expertly translate between religious and political/economic discourses, and between local and global languages. Studying movements in the middle shows how they co-create hybrid discourses that are embedded in particular global and local idioms.

In the essay "Who Shall Speak for the Environment?", the sociologist of religion, secularism and globalization Peter Beyer (2011) describes religion, science, politics and economics as systems of communication which exist in parallel spaces - though he also acknowledges that the systems are interdependent of each other. Beyer bases his argument primarily on the theory of social systems articulated by Niklas Luhmann (Luhmann, 1995). He argues that none of

these communication systems can own the argument for caring for the environment, so social movements contribute to environmental discourse as those who can “speak for the environment” (Beyer, 2011, p.32).

Drawing on social movement theory, Beyer observes that social movements can either form within the context of specific communication systems (e.g., religious institutions which have departments for environmental advocacy) or outside of them. In contrast to institutions, movements have the flexibility to center around any number of themes and questions. This flexibility of movements is due to their nature as more than organizations. They are expressions of ideas which can be reproduced through mobilizing financial and human resources (see Zald, 1982; McCarthy & Zald, 1977). Therefore, social movements are able to translate environmental ideas into “specifically religious idioms and symbolic clusters”, for example by translating the ecological concept of “environment” into the religious concept of “creation” (Beyer, 2011, p.28). Beyer argues that this expert translation by movements into religious discourses enables ‘religious remedies to a problem which has been articulated in religious language’ (Beyer, 2011, p.28). Movements have the ability to translate a message into different discourses, which can strengthen their message by reaching a variety of audiences.

Ample evidence exists for religious environmental movements translating into various discourses. In the Indonesian context, a good example of Beyer’s (2011) translation thesis is the initiative by the Indonesian Council of Islamic Scholars, (Majelis Ulama Indonesia - MUI), to deliver *fatwas* (religious edicts) on environmental conservation. In response to national initiatives to reduce emissions and protect forests, the MUI setup an Institute for Honoring the Environment and Natural Resources in 2011 (Mangunjaya *et al.*, 2015, p.110). This institute aimed to use Islamic approaches to protect forests, translating national policy into religious language.

The local branch of the MUI in Kalimantan issued a *fatwa* prohibiting burning the forest and illegal logging, which were common at that time. The *fatwa* declared:

“Logging and mining that degrade the natural environment and impoverish society or the nation are hereby declared to be haram (forbidden). All interests and profits gained from these businesses are not licit and are hereby declared to be haram. The effect /standing of this judgment is required (wajib) explicitly to be in effect, in accordance with the law (Mangunjaya & McKay, 2012, p.302).”

In another case, the MUI issued a *fatwa* in 2011 on “Environmentally-Friendly Mining” alongside the Indonesian Ministry of the Environment, which contained detailed guidelines for mining alongside rationales using Islamic language and arguments. Although there has not been research on the effectiveness of these *fatwas* in changing the logging practices in Indonesia (Mangunjaya & McKay, 2012, p.303), these *fatwas* represent innovative examples of experts translating environmental policy into religious language for the purpose of preserving forests and reducing global warming.

This example of Indonesian environmental *fatwas* exemplifies Beyer’s description of translating from a secular idiom (national policy) into a religious idiom (Islamic religious edicts) (Beyer, 2011, p.28). From the viewpoint of movements at the center, the emphasis of translation is on the translators and not on the context. Yet communication is a two-way process, as demonstrated by the uncertain audience for the *fatwas* on environmental care and questions about their impact in changing behavior (Mangunjaya & McKay, 2012, p.303). A spatial analysis asks the question, how are local and global contexts shaping environmental discourse, and where do religious movements fit into this discourse?

At the global level, religious environmental activists have worked together to translate religious language into a shared ethical discourse on environmental care, as exemplified by the inter-religious statements

on climate change discussed earlier. The global context that shapes these statements is the recognition of environmental crisis that calls for solutions beyond the solely scientific or technological (Bergmann, 2009). It is in this global context that the inter-religious statements on climate change fit, as religious ways of speaking aim to communicate to a wider audience than the followers of one religion. Posas (2007) argues that the creation of a global ethical discourse has an impact on individual religious leaders. Joint statements enable them to see what they share in common and, leading to “a way forward. Despite a diversity of ethical approaches to human problems, a convergence of ethical conclusions about some climate change issues is possible” (Posas, 2007, p.3).

The creation of a global ethical discourse on climate is more than just translation from religious to secular languages. Habermas, one of the early proponents of communication as translation between religious and secular discourses (Habermas, 2008; Habermas, 1984), spoke in a dialogue on religion and public sphere (Butler *et al.*, 2011) about the creation of an ethical discourse as something more than translation. He calls this phenomenon “mutual evocation”, where religious and secular arguments interact in the “muddy, informal communication network of the public sphere” (p.115):

“Some people’s languages are more open, and their reasons more accessible and appealing to wider circles than other people’s. If all goes well, the outcome is not disagreement, nor is it strict translation either, but lifting for wider public semantic potentials what would otherwise remain sunken in the idiom of particular religious communities (Butler et al., 2011, p.115).”

Charles Taylor, responding to Habermas’ idea of mutual evocation, calls this phenomenon “boundary-jumping” as the ideas of one social movement inspires another:

“When these insights jump over these boundaries and inspire people, and then they find, maybe, another language for it -- and you’re right [Habermas], very often the original spark is still burning there...it’s quite different--it is some kind

of real creative, inspiring move, which I think can very often bring everybody further ahead (Butler et al., 2011, p.116).”

Examples of linguistic boundary-jumping abound in the environmental movement, with a major example being the concept of “sustainability”. Johnston (2010) traces the roots of this term from the environmental movement in the Europe and North America in the early 20th century as it jumped boundaries into conservation (“sustainable resource management”), political economy (“sustainable development”), and cross-pollinated with “indigenous and other marginalized cultures, which have advanced their own understandings of such terms and their own constitutive values” (Johnston, 2010, p.176). Eventually the discourse of sustainability emerged as a global discourse, as evidenced by the use of the word “sustainable” in the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals. Rather than being translated from one domain to another, Johnston concludes that the “sustainability discourse is both decidedly religious and highly political”, where “religious ideation, language, imagery, and metaphor have been important in the ways that sustainability has been framed in the public sphere” (Johnston, 2010, p.176). Religious concepts about sustainability are not simply translated into economic models of sustainability, instead the concept of sustainability is a hybrid of religious and secular ideas and imagery.

This dynamic process of creating a hybrid discourse which blends religious and secular language is exemplified by the 2016 Interfaith Climate Statement (ICS, 2016). The statement incorporates policy language (calling for states to reduce carbon emissions) and religious language (“Mother Earth”, “spiritual dimension of our lives”) in crafting a statement of global ethical values. The statement aims to speak to both policy and religious audiences together in a shared sustainability discourse:

“At this critical juncture, as governments implement the [2015 Paris Climate] Agreement,

we must deepen our awareness and discern what it means to be in the right relationship with one another, our Earth and all living beings. Our desire for limitless growth and power is having devastating consequences – leaving our Earth community polluted, impoverished and vulnerable. We respectfully ask those who make decisions on how energy systems are financed, sourced and distributed to ground their decisions in a humble and compassionate reverence for the interconnectedness of all life.

*Throughout history, our religious traditions have provided support and inspiration during times of great challenge or transformation. We must commit to new ways of living that honor the dynamic relationships between all forms of life to deepen awareness and the spiritual dimension of our lives. We must draw on courage, hope, wisdom and spiritual reflection to enable our young and future generations to inherit a more caring and **sustainable** world (ICS, 2016)."*

It is notable how the statement both contains policy recommendations on energy use and religious teachings on the interconnectedness of life and the importance of spiritual reflection. The ICS describes sustainability as both a religious and a secular concept, thus enabling the statement to appeal to policymakers and people of different religions.

A similar process of co-creation can be found in more strictly 'religious' discourses as well. The Islamic Statement on Climate Change, formally launched in 2015 (IFEES, 2015) aims to speak to Muslims using an Islamic rationale for environmental care and sustainable living. From the perspective of social movements at the center, the creation of the statement was the product of expert translators, a transnational group of Muslim environmental activists (including Mangunjaya and Firman) and Islamic faith-based organizations such as the IFEES and Islamic Relief, who worked together to translate secular environmental discourse into an Islamic discourse (IFEES, 2015). Yet a closer look at the process of the creation of the statement reveals the co-creative process between activists and a diverse group of local Muslim leaders and scholars.

Again, Indonesia played a prominent role in forging connections between Mus-

lim leaders by hosting the first international Muslim Conference on Climate Change Action in Bogor, Indonesia, in 2010. Attended by around 250 participants hailing from 14 countries with significant Muslim populations, the conference produced a seven-year Muslim action plan for climate change, which included the creation of an Islamic Statement on Climate Change. The statement was not written by a small group of activists, but was the product of engagement with thousands of Muslim leaders in many countries (Mangunjaya *et al.*, 2015, p.108; Mangunjaya & McKay, 2012, p.295). As an example of this co-creation, Mangunjaya and others led workshops in 12 different regions of Indonesia from Aceh to Papua. At these workshops, hundreds of Muslim religious leaders, teachers, preachers and scholars read Qur'anic texts about the environment and engaged in vigorous discussions in order to reach a consensus (Mangunjaya & McKay, 2012, p.295).

Mangunjaya also shared this grassroots approach with Islamic scholars around the world in countries including the UK, Turkey, and Nigeria. The result of these consultations formed the themes for the Islamic declaration (Mangunjaya & McKay, 2012, p.291). By understanding the process of the creation of the Islamic Declaration, it would be more accurate to define it as a collaborative process of co-creation rather than as an act of translation, as multiple local understandings of Islam and the environment gradually built together into a wider ethical statement. This collaborate process exemplifies how global religious discourses can arise out of multiple local voices. The final product – the Islamic Statement on Climate Change – has been co-created by thousands of local voices in conversation, and with robust interaction between local and international scholars.

Turning now to the local level, discourses are not so much translated from global to local as embodied at the local level. According to Berry, local people's understanding of the environment are crucially important for two reasons: 1) although climate change is global, it affects communities at a local level,

and 2) local communities perceive climate change based on local frames of reference, frames which include religious worldviews (Berry, 2016, p.78). Throughout history, local communities have drawn on spiritual and material resources to understand and manage environmental crises such as drought and flooding. Rather than being objects of a process of translating global policy and national policy on de-forestation into local concepts, local communities are actors in shaping ideas of climate change and adaptation. Jenkins (2009) names this process adaptive management, as local people respond to environmental challenges by creative re-framing of environmental conceptions (Jenkins, 2009, p.16). Without this local participation and engagement in environmental discourses, climate science and policy remain discourses that are disconnected from daily practice.

Returning to the earlier example of local engagement with indigenous communities in Western Sumatra (Mangunjaya & McKay, 2012), one of its fascinating outputs was the creation of a shared Islamic-traditional religious discourse on environmental management. As a result of multiple workshops exploring Islamic principles and local traditional Minangkabau beliefs about the environment, participants co-created a discourse that incorporated Islamic teaching, indigenous concepts and the natural environment. They used Islamic concepts, but defined them in a way that fit with indigenous religious conceptions of the natural environment. The Islamic concept of *hima* was applied as “management zones established for sustainable natural resource use”; *harim* was used to designate nature reserves, and *Ihya Al-Mawat* for areas of neglected land that required reviving to become productive (Mangunjaya & McKay, 2012, p.300).

Rather than an imposition of global Islamic principles on a local population, the slow process of engagement through workshops with a range of local community members helped to uncover links between Islamic and indigenous beliefs (Mangunjaya & McKay, 2012, p.300). The resulting discourse of

environmental care reinforced a respect for local customs (*adat*) and local environmental management, as well as incorporating Islamic teachings to support care for the environment. This process exemplifies what adaptive management (Jenkins, 2009). It signals that researchers on environmental movements should pay attention to the processes of interaction and co-creation, noting how local movements “integrate and formalize religious principles” (Mangunjaya & McKay, 2012, p.300) into local conceptions of environmental management.

CONCLUSION

The case of Islamic-Minangkabau religious environmental adaptation is an apt ending point for this paper. This case locates the quest for climate adaptation at the level of a rural community in Western Sumatra living on the frontline of climate change. Global reforms to environmental policy and sustainable development will be determined ultimately by the actions of millions of local communities like those in Western Sumatra. This article argues that employing a spatial analysis of religious environmental social movements in Indonesia reveals crucial insights about the relationship between religion and ecology, and between local communities and transnational religious environmental movements. The process of environmental adaptation using religious creativity in Indonesia is one that people from other contexts can learn from, not so much in their specific outcomes as in the dynamic process whereby activists and communities co-create contextually-appropriate ways of adapting to the changing environment.

Social movements, and particularly environmental movements, are rooted in the global context of responses to climate change and the local spaces and places that enable movements to exist and act. These spaces incorporate the natural environment and a range of diverse cultural and religious resources that shape attitudes and behavior. As movements work to revise, recover, re-frame and reform religious beliefs and local

practices on ecology, activists and discourses are shaped by their interactions at global and local levels. By studying how activists and local communities co-create environmental discourses, researchers can glean insights about the relationship between religion and ecology and between transnational and local movements of resistance and reform.

In order to better understand the direction and impact of environmental social movements, more ethnographies and longitudinal studies of local communities adapting to climate change are needed. Particular focus could be given to the connection between global multi-faith networks and local movements of resistance and adaptation. Another useful contribution would be research analyzing the co-creation of contextually-relevant discourses of environmental care, using extended case studies in locations that engage indigenous communities in the co-creation process. These studies could help to answer challenging questions. To what extent is religious and secular language translated or co-created in the process of environmental adaptation? To what extent are religious institutions and governments adopting top-down approaches or imposing elite discourses on local communities?

These questions are crucial to understanding how local communities are adapting to catastrophic climate change. In a useful study of Christian and traditional religious ecological adaptation in two communities in Malawi and Zambia, Murphy *et al.* (2016) concludes:

"In the context of changing beliefs, adaptive capacity will be influenced by how different belief systems co-exist and how epistemological and intergenerational frictions are negotiated. As climate services become the focus of research and government interventions in vulnerable regions, avoiding culturally and economically expensive mal-adaptation will require giving attention to the complexity and dynamism of changing religious landscapes (Murphy et al., 2016, p.101)."

To avoid "mal-adaption" and increase "adaptive capacity", researchers and activ-

ists will need to pay close attention to local contexts while including vital interaction with global and transnational actors and discourses. As the climate changes global and local social structures, human efforts to adapt in diverse and collaborative ways are more possible and more perilous for the future of our shared planet.

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