At the Crossroads of Piety and Ageing: "Punk Hijrah" in Java, Indonesia

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Abstract: This article explores how some punks on the island of Java, Indonesia, negotiate piety and punk lifestyle against the backdrop of ageing. While punk originally served as a leftist platform for political protest on Java, the recent Punk Hijrah *phenomenon is causing debate within local scenes about the coexistence of punk and Islam. I argue that religious reorientation among Javanese punks may be a side-effect of ageing in a Muslim-majority country. I invoke the concept of transcendence (Andes 1998) to demonstrate how certain punks maintain a peripheral attachment to the scene while responding the new burdens of adulthood and parenthood.*

Résumé : Cet article se penche sur la façon dont certains punks de l'île de Java, en Indonésie, doivent transiger entre la piété et le mode de vie punk à mesure qu'ils avancent en âge. Alors que le punk, à l'origine, représentait une plateforme de contestation politique de gauche à Java, le phénomène récent du « Punk Hijrah *» suscite des débats au niveau local sur la coexistence du punk et de l'islam. J'émets pour hypothèse que la réorientation religieuse des punks javanais pourrait être un effet secondaire du vieillissement dans un pays à majorité musulmane. Je recours au concept de transcendance (Andes 1998) pour démontrer que certains punks conservent un attachement à la scène tout en se chargeant des nouveaux fardeaux que sont l'âge adulte et le fait de devenir parents.*

Ramadan 1439 was nearing its end when I first met Abdullah,[1] a local of Yogyakarta, Indonesia, in his late twenties. Although he was dressed head to toe in black, you probably wouldn't have been able to tell that he is an avid punk enthusiast and musician. In fact, he has been active in the punk scene since his teenage years. In addition to having the world's largest Muslim population, Indonesia is also home to a thriving underground music community for people like Abdullah and his peers. In Java, Indonesia's most populous island, punks

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have long found ways to reconcile their controversial punk lifestyle with Islamic norms, but this balancing act becomes all the more complex against a backdrop of adulthood and parenthood.

Like many other local punks, Abdullah's parents allowed him to participate in the scene as long as he practiced *sholat*[2] (daily prayer) and refrained from drinking alcohol. He respected these conditions, but, as time went on, he felt that his friends in the scene increasingly lacked respect for his abstinence from alcohol and their behaviours created a rather distasteful environment for him. In the mid-2010s, with a baby on the way, he decided it was time for a change: he embarked on the path of *hijrah* (migration). In Islamic doctrine, hijrah can entail either a physical or spiritual journey in which an individual "migrates" toward an abode of Islam. In the spiritual sense, it means leaving behind a profane lifestyle and identity in favour of a newfound sacred self, one that is fully consecrated to the Islamic faith. In Abdullah's case, this decision was partially motivated by his wife's pregnancy, and by the fact that he did not want his son to "grow up in the same haram (forbidden) environment of part[ies], alcohol, and drugs" that he had experienced as a youth in the punk scene (interview, June 8, 2018). He also confided to me that he felt increasingly uncomfortable in punk spaces and wanted to become a better Muslim — even if it meant alienating himself from his group of peers. While accomplishing hijrah, he observed that he "was more critical of people who did not practice Islam." During this process, he found himself dissociating not only from his former social circle, but also from the practice of Javanese Islam.[3] About a year later, however, Abdullah returned to the punk community. He told me that hijrah had caused too large a distance between himself and his friends in the scene. That same year, he released an album in which half the songs addressed the topic of Islam, exemplifying a "compromise between two worlds." After a period of limbo between what appear to be starkly different identities, he found a way to strike a sustainable equilibrium between piety and punk in his new role as a father (Abdullah, interview June 8, 2018).

For some of Java's punks, the decision to embark on hijrah is the result of a simultaneous process of disenchantment with punk and re-enchantment with Islam. For others, it is a response to the shifting pressures that adulthood and parenthood bring. For Abdullah, hijrah appeared as the most appropriate option at the individual level (i.e., a commitment to improving his faith, becoming closer to God) and at the collective level (i.e., distance from the negative aspects of the punk scene so that his family not be tainted by these influences). What Abdullah's case also reveals is a process of transcendence that allows individuals to negotiate their commitment to the scene while meeting the demands of adult life, as regulated by Indonesia's pervading moral order and socio-cultural norms. The notion of transcendence, which will be unpacked later, is particularly interesting

in this context because it speaks to the fluctuation of punk identity (Andes 1998: 212-231). Andes considers punk identity to be an "achieved status rather than an ascribed one" (218), thereby proposing that it is substantiated through tangible signifiers (dress, behaviour) and practices (attending concerts, displaying musical knowledge), which are typically renegotiated with ageing.[4]

The aim of this article is not to argue that punk and Islam are easily reconcilable nor to summon a theological debate on whether or not Western music is haram. Many scholars have commented on the place of music in Indonesia (Harnish and Rasmussen 2011; Heryanto 2008; Weintraub 2011b). While it is certainly valuable to reflect on the changing practices of Muslim piety in the 21st century and the creative strategies of consumer-oriented youth cultures, my goal here is to analyze how the socially constructed category of punk intersects with piety in the context of ageing. Specifically, this article deals with Punk Hijrah, a phenomenon I studied as part of a larger project on rising conservatism within the underground music community across Java.[5] Hijrah can be characterized as a trend among some Javanese punk scenes, in which individuals perform a "spiritual migration" to Islam. While this phenomenon appears at first glance to be an act of religious reorientation, I propose that it has a lot to do with the growing unsustainability of the punk scene for ageing members. I argue, drawing on Andes's concept of transcendence, that Punk Hijrah is often motivated by the pressures of adulthood rather than solely by religion, as many individuals conserve an affiliation to punk while developing a more socially acceptable adult persona. According to my field data, punks undergoing a dramatic shift toward greater religious practice tend to do so in response to the burdens of parenthood, financial instability, and social marginalization. Furthermore, this trend demonstrates how some punks may become disheartened with the punk scene while rediscovering religion in the wake of the Islamic revival.

Theoretical Approach

> While it began as an Anglo-American subculture, "punk" is an unbounded serial identity which can be and is embraced by young people from any culture. Therein lies its power. (Wallach 2014: 157)

Defining punk is one of the most challenging discursive tasks I face as a punk scholar. Many members of the underground music scene whom I encountered throughout my fieldwork circulate between more than one music genre and prefer not to be identified with a single label. I use the term "punk" in this article

to denote individuals who self-identify as such and those who participate in the punk scene, either as musicians or enthusiasts.

I focus on punk operating as a trend or a socially constructed identity rather than on the technical aspects of the music itself. Hebdige describes punk as a hybrid style of pre-1970s fashions anchored in the Do-It-Yourself (DIY) spirit, boasting overtly nihilistic aesthetics to upset dominant discourses (1979: 108). Stewart offers that punk was "more than social commentary or teenage angst; punk in its earliest incarnations was arguably a new way of understanding or articulating power in a technocratic, capitalist society" (2017: 21). Dunn postulates that punk can present an opportunity for personal empowerment by offering "resources for participation and access in the face of the alienating process of modern life" (2016: 28). As a musical genre stemming from social margins, punk is often perceived by its own members as a suitable refuge for marginalized people who feel discriminated against by the state or abandoned by other institutions. In theory, the punk scene is very tolerant, open, and inclusive, but in practice it is much more exclusive:

> Even though punk … is articulated as resisting the homogeneous and restrictive mainstream, the consequence of the emphasis on an intrinsic difference is the reproduction of punk as deeply homogeneous and restrictive. The combination of inclusion and exclusion means that the marginalized groups in terms of ethnicity, sexuality, and class were largely exempted from subcultural inclusion. (Hannerz 2015: 180)

Punk is often referred to as a youth culture, which is problematic since such groupings are now increasingly multi-generational (Bennett and Hodkinson 2012: 2). Therefore, it is important to consider how individuals entering adulthood articulate their participation in a given subculture with the new demands or expectations that result from the ageing process (see Bennett 2013). The commitment to punk identity fluctuates over time: teenagers perform certain activities and aesthetics to demonstrate their allegiance to the punk scene and these may change as they transition through different stages of their lives. Bennett suggests that ageing individuals like punks are not resisting social ageing but rather "evolving strategies through which to continue practicing and articulating such identities within the context of the other social roles they are required to perform, and openly accept, as part of their adult lives" (Bennett 2015: 51). From maintaining a DIY aesthetic to internalizing the punk ethos, some ageing punks succeed in embodying a "punk personality" across a spectrum of ageing (Bennett and Taylor 2012: 239-240).

On a similar wavelength, Andes developed the notion of transcendence: a useful conceptual tool to understand how individuals negotiate their membership in a punk community as they age. In her model of the "punk career," transcendence is perceived as the final stage, following processes of rebellion and affiliation respectively (1998: 212-231). During this stage, individuals internalize punk ideology and transcend overt aspects of punk lifestyle while detaching themselves, to varying degrees, from the punk community. While I disagree with the "career" model in itself because it is too linear and rigid to account for the nuances of punk experience over time, I do think Andes's concept of transcendence is valuable. She describes ageing punks as follows:

> They do not necessarily dress in the "typical" punk style, listen to punk or hardcore music, go to concerts, or hang out with punks. Being a member of the punk community is no longer their most important concern. They begin to define punk as a system of values and beliefs, and thus become concerned with expressing an ideological commitment to the subculture. (Andes 1998: 226)

By abandoning some aspects of punk practice yet transcending punk ideals, they remain engaged with the underground while responding to social, financial, or domestic pressure. As Bennett and Taylor point out, however, ageing punks are not simply transcending punk discourses but also reworking them (2012: 240). For the purpose of this article, I apply the concept of transcendence to help make sense of the recent punk hijrah trend impacting Java's underground community, but I also acknowledge that it is insufficient in itself to explain the phenomenon. This is partially due to the fact that such concepts have been developed for Western contexts, thus awarding little attention to the particular challenges of ageing among Indonesians: "The life trajectories of contemporary youth in non-Western countries challenge contemporary Western-derived theorizing about youth transitions" (Threadgold and Nilan 2015: 157). Few — if any — adequate conceptual frameworks have been conceived to discuss how the pressures of adulthood and parenthood shape the punk experience for scene members in the Global South. In order to understand the shifting patterns of practice and behaviour that occur among Java's punks, we must consider overlapping financial and socio-cultural dimensions. While some movements may appear to us as explicitly religious, it is important to consider how perceptions of ageing and personal socio-economic burdens play a role in the decision to embark on the path of renewed piety.

Method

I draw on first-hand qualitative data from three months of ethnographic fieldwork in Java. From May to August 2018, I carried out participant observation and 36 semi-formal interviews with members of the underground music community across a total of seven cities in Java: Jakarta, Bogor, Bandung, Yogyakarta, Malang, Sidoarjo, and Surabaya. In each city, I spoke with punks of various ages. Some were in their forties and even fifties and claimed to be founding members of the original punk bands and collectives of the 1990s. I also spoke with some people who composed the newer generation of Java's underground music scene, many of whom were students or young professionals in their early twenties. The majority of participants, however, were in their late twenties or early to mid-thirties. Interviews and informal discussions were held in music venues and other gathering spaces (i.e., collective houses, public parks, record stores, restaurants). Most interviews were conducted in English, and others in a combination of English and Indonesian. Despite my mediocre communication skills in Indonesian, interviewees often used slang and dialect (Javanese and Sundanese) in their speech, which I have trouble understanding. In such cases, translations were either facilitated on the spot by locals who were part of the discussion or carried out later with the help of friends in the scene.

Context

Situating Islam in Indonesia

As a friend explained to me in Jakarta, social life in Java is regulated by two factors: family values and religious norms. *Adat* (custom) is recognized by all and practiced by most; it instills holistic moral order among adherents of Javanese society (Headley 2004: 429). As the political centre of the Indonesian archipelago, Java was subjected to many forms of authoritarian and colonial rule over centuries.[6] These inevitably shaped the character of daily social life, framed institutional codes of conduct, and produced forms of overt and covert rebellion that developed throughout different generations, some of which still echo today.

Contemporary Indonesia was deeply marked by the Islamic revival of the 1970s (Howell 2001: 701). Since then, observance of religious laws in Java has become more prevalent and is strongly associated with elitism (Hasan 2009: 247). As Indonesia was recovering from the economic and political crisis of the 1990s, popular culture boomed at an unprecedented rate (Heryanto 2008: 5). In fact, the rapid expansion of popular culture in Indonesia coincides with the Islamic

revival. Over the last few decades, forms of mass media supporting and depicting Islam, largely targeting urbanized youths, have played a key role in Islamization (Weintraub 2011a: 4). The emergence of the "new" Muslim came in parallel with the early consolidation of a new bourgeois class between the mid-1980s and mid-1990s (Heryanto 2008: 14). With their own social aspirations, this new group of middle-class Muslims fuelled what one could call "Islamic chic": a cosmopolitan lifestyle characterized by new media and consumerism that advocates Muslim piety (Barendregt 2006: 10).

Religion and politics are deeply enmeshed in the Indonesian context (see Aspinall 2009; Fealy and White 2008; Hefner 2018; Menchik 2016; Ramage 1995; Robinson 2009; Sidel 2006). Suharto's New Order was perceived by many as anti-Islamic (Solahudin 2013: 6) and contributed to a yearning among Indonesian Muslims to reaffirm and reclaim their religious identity in the public sphere. Suharto sought to marginalize political Islam in the interest of foreign policy (Hoesterey 2018: 406) and discouraged public expressions of piety (Smith-Hefner 2007: 392). The occultation of Islam during the New Order plays a significant role in the success of political Islam from the end of Suharto's regime until today. That being said, religion is not only politicized, but is also regulated by the state.

In sum, religion occupies a central position in most — if not all — aspects of social life in Indonesia. It is inextricable from the political realm and plays an important role in shaping the moral order. It is part and parcel of national politics, interacts actively with popular culture, and underscores national identity. How, then, does it interact with punk?

Situating Punk in Indonesia

In Java, the vast majority of punks identify as Muslims — whether religiously or culturally — but this does not mean their scene is inherently "Islamic."

> In "the West" punk opposes religion, even if religion is far less concerned with punk. In Indonesia the "opposition" flows predominantly in the other direction, with religious groups actively repressing punks, while punks seek to maintain affiliation to a religious identity or culture. Any sense of an expected or "ordinary" relationship between punk and religion completely breaks down. (Donaghey 2018: 165)

Members of (so-called) mainstream society — particularly religious groups as Donaghey expresses above — may reject punks on account of their perceived

incompatibility with religion. However, I found that the vast majority of Java's punks have succeeded in reconciling piety and counterculture. Religion aside, it is also important to consider how the narrative of punk has evolved over the past three decades. Although punks are still subject to stigmatization, I would argue that the state and the public's general attitudes toward them are far more nuanced than they were in the 1990s. For example, through a case study of *Hai* magazine, Baulch demonstrates how "alternative identities" linked with rock music became tainted through association with the unlawful figure of the *preman* (gangster) after the 1993 Metallica riots in Jakarta (2002a: 227-229). Alternative appearances (including the punk aesthetic) were represented as destabilizing to local hegemonic discourses and tattooed individuals, in particular, were portrayed as criminal (227-229). This incident also caused the government to withhold permits for rock performances for over a year, "thus cementing the link between criminality, poverty and rock music in the official discourse" (Baulch 2002b: 282). In contrast, I attended several large-scale events in Java[7] in 2018 and 2019 celebrating counterculture and tattoos (as well as skinhead punk, street punk, and other alternative music-based scenes) that were granted permits and were not encumbered by police presence. Punk is still problematic across parts of Indonesia, but it is a vast oversimplification to label it categorically as repressed. I especially want to point out how some sensational media narratives have exaggerated the irreconcilability of punk and Islam in their portrayal of the 2011 Aceh province debacle, when 64 punks were arrested at a concert and detained for their non-compliance with Sharia law. Reports about this unfortunate incident often oversimplify the interplay between punk and Islam in Indonesia by presenting these two realms as wholly incongruous. While it is certainly important to acknowledge the situation in Aceh, I would strongly recommend consulting the works of punk scholars with prior experience in Indonesia (Donaghey 2015, 2016; Dunn 2016; Jauhola 2015; Tammiala 2016; Wallach 2014; Wilson 2013) rather than essentializing media reports.

Punk music, to briefly contextualize, entered Indonesian society during the 1990s as the reform movement toward President Suharto's regime grew more strident, thanks in part to a digital revolution that facilitated both music consumption and production (Mangoenkoesoemo 2017). This was initially catalyzed by exposure to commercially successful Western bands such as Green Day and the Offspring (Wallach 2008: 99). Punk was utilized as a platform of empowerment by many Indonesian youths involved in the struggle against Suharto, whose regime was eventually toppled by students — some of whom were specifically involved with politically engaged punk communities (Dunn 2016: 84). While this tumultuous period also gave birth to other scenes, punk served as a particularly effective means to process and boldly respond to tensions in the

immediate socio-political environment (Pickles 2007: 223). In a society where a repressive institutional force has long dominated and influenced the construction of identity, participation in the punk scene could be interpreted as a pragmatic way to reassert individual control over oneself, the shaping of one's identity, and the construction of one's own symbolic universe.

The expanding punk scene offered not only an opportunity for solidarity and musical creativity but also for activism spurred by a renewed consciousness. This was largely attributed to a newfound anti-establishment mindset anchored in provocative left-wing ideologies ranging from socialism to anarchism (Saefullah 2017: 265). Urban youths started to build their own grassroots networks of musicians while also creating zines and setting up independent record companies, concurring with punk principles (Wallach 2008: 99). Some went further, however, by establishing explicitly political collectives and organizations, feeding off the momentum of the reform movement. These include activist punk groups like the Anti-Fascist Front (FAF) and the Anti-Fascist Network (JAFNUS) (Pickles 2007: 239-240; Saefullah 2017: 266). This was arguably the height of politico-punk activism in Java, as many groups disengaged from political militancy before the turn of the century.

Over the past few years, punk ethos and imagery have been applied in a new context in which conservative Muslim groups are bridging the gap between alternative lifestyles and a particular standard of pious practice. Groups such as Punkajian, Punk Muslim, and Hijra Core offer services and support to youths in order to promote a more rigorous enforcement of Islamic practice in their daily lives, all the while seeking to destigmatize the image of punk in the eyes of the dominant public. These community-based movements have gained valuable traction and popularity among youths through accessible and effective branding, among other things (Fig. 1). In the following section, I will focus specifically on the Punk Hijrah phenomenon, which I consider to be one of many complex reverberations of the larger conservative turn within Javanese underground music scenes.

Exploring Punk Hijrah

> "Hijrah literally means going to a state of nothingness, completely purified of the past life and ready to become a new person." (Ari, interview, July 16, 2018)

Over the next few paragraphs, I will present the stories and accounts of some punks who have undergone personal transformations echoing the hijrah trend, and the responses of others who have witnessed it. I also include opinions from

Fig. 1. Artwork with slogan "It's time to change" posted by Punk Hijrah, Instagram.com/punkhijrah, July 4th, 2017.

some members of the underground community on why hijrah has been so popular among punks recently. At first glance, the Punk Hijrah phenomenon appears to be a direct ramification of the Islamic revival: an accessible opportunity for Muslims to become more devout in their everyday lives. However, religious motivations are seldom isolated, and a sudden religious reorientation — as documented in conversion trajectories — often attests to other life transitions, such as a change of partner, a cathartic experience, or a death in the family. I argue, therefore, that the Punk Hijrah phenomenon should be analyzed beyond an exclusively religious lens.

Overall, the majority of punks I encountered were not involved themselves in the hijrah trend, but eagerly debated its growing latency in Java's contemporary punk scenes. According to a young man in Malang, the idea of hijrah is drastic, yet respectable. He justified his view by explaining that punk and other underground scenes have limits, and that, in the end, a good Muslim should always "choose family life and responsibility over music scenes" (Johan, interview June 27, 2018). Punk musician Iwan explained that he is becoming more religious and taking some distance from the scene because he is "getting older and [wants] to follow this path" (interview June 28, 2018). Similarly, musician Eko told me he underwent a recent change, about a year prior, fuelled by a motivation to "learn more about [his] religion, become closer to God," and develop a better understanding of religious texts. Despite participating in the scene, he understands the stigma it is associated with, since "it goes against the cultural and religious norms" (Eko, interview June 28, 2018). Although these individuals did not claim to take part in the hijrah movement, their thoughts and actions reflect fluctuating commitments to punk and piety over time.

In West Java, I met Bobbi, a young man who shared his recent life changes with me. He said he went through a tough depression in the previous year and got through it thanks to religion and music. He said he had to stop participating in the punk scene in his late twenties because he wanted a steady income, so he could finally "make something out of [him]self." He had stopped drinking alcohol a few months prior and told me he planned on quitting smoking as well. He said he still applies punk ideology in his work and in his everyday life, primarily by implementing a DIY ethos in the production of his solo music project, but he is like the "common folk" now since he no longer dresses like a punk and works a stable 9-5 job. He rarely attends gigs, but still maintains regular contact with some of his peers in the scene, and utilizes his former networks to circulate his recent EP. During our meeting, he introduced me to his friend, a musician and DIY designer whom he criticized for not taking up full-time employment. Bobbi believes his friend needs to "grow up" and get himself a "real job" so he can sustain his family, especially since his wife

is about to give birth. Although he remains an active musician, Bobbi criticizes the punk lifestyle, stating firmly that "it's not sustainable" (interview July 15, 2018). Bobbi recognized that he was transforming from a punk into someone more respectable in the eyes of the mainstream public, and he was proud of this transition. He also expressed that religion was occupying a much more central place in his life, but he did not self-identify as someone partaking in the Punk Hijrah movement.

The decision to hijrah may be personal, but it causes both intrigue and confusion among members of the punk scene. Back in Jogja, Heru argued: "The essence of punk is harmony: if people want to hijrah or not, that's their own decision and that should be respected in order to keep the harmony between people and within the community" (interview August 10, 2018). However, he believes that the hijrah phenomenon within the punk community is only a trend that will fade out or be replaced in the near future. After a concert at the famous venue Houtenhand in Malang, punk enthusiast Jaya told me that many of his friends had recently embarked on the hijrah path, but he disagreed with their decision because: "God created music, so how can it be haram?" (interview June 29, 2018). In his opinion, it is no problem to "pray and play [music]." Punk veteran Hendra, on the other hand, laments the recent presence of hijrah on social media:

> When you're in the scene here, you'll see on social media, many friends go to hijrah. On the media, I don't care what they do. I understand what they're doing, but for me, I don't care. It's personal. But the social media really makes it more dramatic, it's essentializing. They make a reminder that I'm going to die, that I should be praying. It's useful for spreading Muslim propaganda.… People are making Facebook statuses about how to live, trying to control other people's lives. (interview July 30, 2018)

Nearly all the Javanese punks I encountered knew someone who had recently embarked on the hijrah path, and most of these transformations occurred after 2010. Angga, for example, recalls how a member of a local post-punk band suddenly converted to what he called "radical Islam" a few years back. In doing so, this ex-musician dramatically burned all his music-related possessions and drastically cut off all ties to the music scene (interview August 11, 2018). Jojo, a Jakarta-based punk musician, disclosed that one of the members of his old band decided to hijrah, consequently breaking up the band (interview July 9, 2018). Arguably, this trend coincides with the larger Islamic revival and the rise of conservative ideology across the archipelago. However, there are other

notable reasons pushing people to embark on the hijrah path that are important in grasping why this trend is affecting punks of a certain age group.

The first thing to consider is the socio-economic dimension. As Angga points out: "Bands tend to have a five-year expiry in Jogja because it's not sustainable to keep a punk band. Usually by the late twenties, people are more interested in stability and security" (interview August 11, 2018). The underground music scene, he suggests, is not economically profitable. Instead of remaining punk, people may instead go in the total opposite direction — including hijrah — because they find themselves unfulfilled by the lack of opportunities offered by the music scene. This may resonate particularly with older individuals who were part of the first wave of punk in Indonesia, since the decline of political activism has left many of them feeling apathetic toward their scene.

Another noteworthy factor is family pressure. As Wahyu remarks: "There is an important aspect of family ties in Java. If your parents don't want you to do something, it's very difficult to go against their wishes, disobey, or disappoint them" (interview June 20, 2018). He proposes that some punks, faced both with their parents' disapproval and increasing pressure to belong to the mainstream public, are likely to find the hijrah option appealing. Moreover, socio-economic factors and family pressures tend to overlap. Among the punks I encountered, hijrah usually coincided with a transition into a new life phase, prompted by marriage or children, that entailed a new set of responsibilities and increased financial burden. Yudi, in Bandung, jokes that nowadays: "Punk is not dead: punk is *Dad*," which humorously accounts for the rising numbers of punks becoming fathers and the compromises they must make in order to adjust their lifestyles accordingly (interview August 3, 2018). According to Hendra, this trend is triggered by a conservative mentality along with familial pressures:

> H: Punks who are feeling old, they go back to their parents' mentality. Some punks go to front, and others go [to] the back, in looking for their identity.
> E: Yeah. What I'm finding through my research, concerning the hijrah phenomenon, is that it's not just a religious thing.
> H: It's not connecting only with the punk and metal scene, but also affects ordinary people. Punk goes to hijrah is a phenomenon right now. My sisters are still waiting for me to hijrah. It's a conservative thing brought to me from my parents, they're very conservative.… My parents don't care about what I do, but they would be happy if I went to hijrah.
> E: Do you think it's just a trend?

> H: Something like that. The hijrah people, it's not the youngest kids. They start from 30. Maybe they have family. (interview July 30, 2018)

Hendra implies here that hijrah is a process of return to a more conservative state (going *back* to their parents' mentality), thereby confirming that "being punk" is perceived as a phase deviating from the normative course of Javanese adulthood. It should also be noted in this passage that the age of 30 is pinpointed as a threshold of transition among punks. But the trend also affects younger generations, especially those who are drawn in through social media and merchandise. Jojo affirms that "the market for Islam as a trend is huge," referring to the presence of Islam in all sorts of industries such as cosmetics (Fig. 2), fashion, TV, and of course, music. After all, he says: "Religion doesn't only become intermeshed with popular culture: it *IS* a popular culture" (interview July 9, 2018). Doni also tells me that he has noticed a rise in pro-hijrah and pro-Islam merchandise around the underground music community (interview August 4, 2018). Hijrah is so popular right now, he explains: "There's even a *Selebriti Hijrah*[8] series on YouTube" (interview August 4, 2018). Angga points out that many Indonesian celebrities, like Rhoma Irama,[9] embodied something similar to hijrah in the 1970s and 80s, but the context and the motivations for those accomplishing hijrah in 2018 are quite different: "It was a more personal, individual decision back then, but I think there is definitely more influence from outside and collective pressure now" (interview August 11, 2018). Indeed, hijrah is not uniquely affecting older generations, but for the purpose of this article, I only focus on and analyze the experiences of ageing punks.

Religious Reorientation or Consequence of Ageing?

Hijrah is, first and foremost, perceived as an act of religious reorientation in which an individual makes a conscious decision to embrace Islam as their central guiding force in life. However, the data presented in the previous section reveals additional layers to the curious Punk Hijrah trend. I consider here two main elements to argue that the Punk Hijrah phenomenon revolves around more than just personal piety: the normativity of Islam in contemporary Javanese society, and the punk lifestyle becoming unsustainable — or inappropriate — for some ageing punks faced with new responsibilities. I will also employ the notion of transcendence, which is useful in exploring how individual agency and personal choice are deployed to articulate the worlds of punk, piety, and adulthood. In this context, I view transcendence as a strategy articulated by

Fig. 2. Advertisement by Wardah, Indonesia's first halal cosmetics brand, with hashtag #HalaldariAwal, "lawful from the start" to target the modern Muslim woman. https://ecommerceiq.asia/brand-series-wardah-halal-cosmetics/, July 20th, 2017.

Java's punks to maintain a socially acceptable punk affiliation or an internalized punk ethos, thereby avoiding a strict rupture between the realms of punk and pious identity.

Many participants concur that punk remains stigmatized in the eyes of the dominant public in Java. This is especially problematic when it comes to family, since many participants reported that their parents disapproved of punk lifestyle and aesthetics, pointedly due to their anti-normative character. In Java, Islam acts as the normative framing device that shapes mainstream public opinion. People who adhere to a religion other than Islam or refuse to practice Islamic rituals are seen as deviating from that norm. Punk is still widely perceived as a Western import boasting an individualist, anti-conformist, and anti-institutional ethos, thereby appearing to deviate from the normative course of Javanese social order. If participating in the punk scene is an act of voluntary exclusion from mainstream society, then hijrah could perhaps be seen as the opposite: an act of reintegration into this same society. In this sense, a "return" to Islam through the practice of hijrah would be an effective way to reshape oneself in order to fit the mould of mainstream Javanese society. The fluctuation

of one's "punk personality" (Bennett and Taylor 2012: 239) in the context of ageing, therefore, may require more significant transformations to meet the demands of adulthood in the Indonesian setting.

Moreover, many punks in Java express that their lifestyle and aesthetics are an obstacle in landing a proper job and prevent them from being taken seriously by their non-punk peers. Living and working the DIY way independently of the commercial market is not always a personal choice to uphold punk philosophy; it is sometimes the only available option. Tattooed punks often encounter bias and suffer discrimination in the job market. Some event organizers have a very difficult time booking and hosting shows since suspicious local authorities often withhold the necessary permits, forcing members to hold activities illegally and thus reinforcing the same stereotypes of deviance and criminality. Very few — if any — of the participants I encountered were able to make enough money with their punk bands to live comfortably without a day job or some kind of part-time DIY enterprise. As many punks pointed out, the underground music scene nowadays is over-saturated with musicians, which further weakens the possibility of reaching financial stability with a musical venture. In sum, punk livelihood, whether it entails playing in a band or working independently in an underground DIY economy, seldom provides financial stability. Although I met many young and creative folk who managed to get by with their freelance silkscreen-printing business or their DIY coffee shop, the punk lifestyle becomes increasingly unsustainable with age, especially with the added pressures of parenthood. I thus propose that financial insecurity, familial expectations, and social burdens contribute to disenchantment with the scene among ageing punks. These, in turn, could be additional factors motivating punks to accomplish hijrah.

As Hendra pointed out during our interview: "The hijrah people, it's not the youngest kids. They start from 30. Maybe they have family" (interview July 30, 2018). This statement effectively demonstrates that the hijrah phenomenon is multi-faceted: there is no reference to religion in this sentence; only age and family status are mentioned. Many of my participants shared the opinion that the late twenties and early thirties constitute a socially acceptable time for settling down (i.e., getting married and starting a family). To meet new financial burdens, punks are expected at this time to "grow up" and "get a real job" (Bobbi, interview July 15, 2018). In other words, the prospect of "settling down" is the trigger leading some ageing punks to reconsider their place within the scene. Although Bobbi found it imperative to "settle down," he also found it useful to continue applying some aspects of punk in his ongoing daily life, such as the DIY ethos in the production, circulation, and promotion of his recent solo music project.

I recall here Andes's term of transcendence, which she uses to refer to the process by which ageing punks negotiate their membership in the punk community. She explains that punks crossing the threshold of adulthood may choose to distance rather than disaffiliate (i.e., completely detach) themselves with the scene, in which case they transcend certain aspects of the lifestyle or aesthetic while retaining the ideology, incorporating a DIY ethos, for example, into their careers, consumption habits, and leisure activities. I propose that the Punk Hijrah phenomenon (and other, more subtle forms of personal transformation) could be analyzed as a form of transcendence that specifically affects ageing punks faced with new pressures and realities. It can additionally be regarded as a personal process of reconciliation, allowing older punks to retain a covert, internalized affinity with the punk scene while responding to the social and financial burdens that adulthood brings forth.

If "punk is Dad," as Yudi contends, then punk fathers in Java are faced with the complex task of articulating the codes and practices of "punkness" against a framework of "fatherhood" in ways that allow for the two to coexist. Javanese men who wholly embrace the hijrah path conserve very little of their punk affiliation and instead prioritize piety and social respectability. Then again, the very fact of aligning themselves with a group named Punk Hijrah — which engages with punk symbols and ideas, but whose main purpose is to promote a sacred return to Islam — implies that they wish to remain at least peripherally involved with the punk scene. I believe that there is a covert process here of transcendence, in this case, which allows for the incorporation of the punk ethos and perhaps certain punk practices into a new life stage marked by Islamic piety.

Andes explains: "Commitment to an identity is a process which waxes and wanes over time for any given individual and may take different forms at different stages in the process" (1998: 215). Some Muslim punks continue to sport punk regalia, while others like Bobbi choose to dress like the "common folk" (interview July 15, 2018). Those who identify with the explicit Punk Hijrah movement participate in activities that are punk-inspired, even though they target a different audience and encourage vastly different practices. Adherents of Punk Hijrah eliminate the facets of punk lifestyle that they deem problematic, but they conserve the DIY ethos and certain symbolic and aesthetic features.

> Punks progress from *rebelling* against or resisting the norms and values of "normal" others, such as parents and peers, to *affiliating* themselves with a punk community and lifestyle, then finally to internalizing punk ideology. (Andes 1998: 299; emphasis in original)

Drawing on Andes's explanation above, the decision to hijrah may be a way for ageing punks to simultaneously internalize (what they perceive to be) the positive aspects of punk ideology and distance themselves from (what they perceive to be) the negative facets of punk lifestyle.[10] In this sense, therefore, they remain ideologically (and perhaps aesthetically) punk, but maintain a sufficient distance from the scene to satisfy the expectations of the dominant, non-punk public. In so doing, they dilute the boundary between the spheres of "mainstream" and "underground" that are starkly opposed in Western punk discourse, without necessarily "selling out." Davis similarly notes this in regard to punk parents:

> Becoming a parent is a strong pull for older punks to accommodate some aspects of mainstream adulthood. This still doesn't mean that they necessarily lose touch with their scene-related ideals, "sell out" or become absorbed into the system. But when it comes to making room for a child, for most folks the alternative lifestyle has to get flexible. (2012: 113)

Of course, another element to consider is that of class. While punks are historically associated with working classes and lower socio-economic ranks, the expanding Muslim Punk movement could challenge our perception of punks as financially precarious. The majority of the punks whom I interviewed throughout my research were far from wealthy, but ranged from lower to middle class, with a large number of them having accessed a university education. In Java, punk and religion can both serve as indicators of class, but they signal rather opposite socio-economic ranks. I note elsewhere that the broader Muslim Punk movement appears to appeal to both the financially affluent and destitute (Imray Papineau 2019).

Jakarta-based musician Sam proposes, on the one hand, that Punk Hijrah is more prevalent among punks of higher social standing because "the upper class is more religious and are more likely to hijrah" (interview July 6, 2018). On the other hand, Toni argues that "the majority of people who are prone to conservatism are urban poor," and, thus, he believes punks of lower classes are more likely to follow the hijrah trend (interview July 12, 2018). For street kids and youths of lower socio-economic standing, punk can offer not only a symbolic refuge, but also often provides a physical place like a squat or a collective house where punks can gather for activities or temporarily reside. The collective group structure also fuels sentiments of solidarity and contributes to a "strength in numbers" mentality, which can be both positive (by offering a network of support) and negative (by normalizing certain types of behaviour).

Conservative punk groups can entice impoverished youths with the prospect of socio-economic stability or with the offer to join an allied "Brotherhood." This attests to what Toni said about the urban poor being more prone to right-wing movements. On the flip side however, increased piety is seen as a marker of middle or upper class standing. Urban Muslim youths "[need] religion in a sense more in keeping with their new social class" (Muzakki 2007: 213). In this mindset, conservative punk groups appeal to urban, middle-class youths because they present them with a platform to showcase both their piety as Muslims and their agency as consumers. Associated today with wealth and modernity, Islam is situated "at the forefront of the production and consumption of popular culture" (Heryanto 2011: 63). This echoes what Sam said about the upper classes being more religious and thus more likely to become involved with something like the hijrah movement (Imray Papineau 2019: 125-27). Furthermore, individuals of middle-class standing may be more likely to accomplish hijrah if their immediate social environment (friends, family, religious and community groups) likewise endorse the safety and stability offered by the status quo, which is ultimately underscored by capitalist and consumerist principles. Unfortunately, I do not have sufficient details about my participants' socio-economic standings to establish a concrete pattern in regard to class, though it would certainly be valuable to explore this in future research.

Concluding Remarks

The call to hijrah has enticed Muslims across Java to undergo a personal transformation to solidify their commitment to Islam. This practice is not new, but more recent — and perhaps surprising — is the extent to which it has impacted members of the underground music community. Based on my findings, the decision to accomplish hijrah does not revolve solely around religion. Many ageing punks gradually distance themselves from the punk scene as they become entangled with the hefty responsibilities of adulthood and the growing pressures of a morally ordered mainstream society. Rather than remaining strictly punk or becoming wholly engaged in Islamic devotion, some of the ageing punks whom I encountered would give up certain aspects of a punk lifestyle in order to meet the demands of adulthood and parenthood without completely disaffiliating themselves from the scene. In some cases, a process of religious re-enchantment followed, thereby leading to hijrah, or smaller, gradual changes toward greater pious practice. I interpret this as a process of transcendence, although this may not be sufficient to account for the complexity of this phenomenon. Given the lack of literature on this topic, it is

important that we continue to develop terms and concepts to talk about ageing in a non-Western society where religion and moral order play a significant part in the socially constructed category of adulthood.

A major shortcoming in this research is the absence of female voices. Despite my initial goal to concentrate narrowly on Java's female punks, the overwhelming majority of my research participants were male, which is representative of the gender division in Java's punk scenes as I experienced them. This is not to say that women are wholly absent from Java's punk scenes, but the demographic did not figure prominently enough to address the issue of ageing from a gendered perspective. It should, however, be given more attention since "punk mothers" raise important questions about how gender-constructed roles and expectations in Java may impact the negotiation process between punk and pious identities for ageing women. Aware of this limitation, I plan to bring the female experience to the forefront in my upcoming research.

It also would have been highly interesting to contrast and compare more personal accounts of thoroughly transformed — or rather *converted* — hijrah punks. Though such cases surely exist, participants were near impossible to find. To fully accomplish hijrah, in the proper sense of migration, a person would have to cut all their ties to the punk scene. This curious and complex negotiation thus makes it difficult to find participants who have accomplished a complete rupture with the punk scene because, in principle, such individuals would no longer frequent punk spaces or maintain links with other members of the punk community. The accounts presented in this article rather reflect trajectories of people who oscillate between different identities without necessarily committing to the hijrah trend, thereby embodying the complex interplay between the realms of punk and Islam.

Finally, I close with an idea. Through their analyses of Indonesian punk, Baulch (2002b; 2007) and Wallach (2014) both challenge the binary claims of theorists of globalization. Drawing on their work, I propose that the Punk Hijrah phenomenon in Java (and the Muslim Punk movement more largely) be interpreted as a hybrid embodiment of punk practice that attests to "the myriad possibilities of indigenized popular culture forms" (Wallach 2014: 152). As Baulch found in her study of Balinese punks, members of the punk community circulate between various frames of reference to align the scene with their personal needs and intentions. Ageing Javanese punks may be doing the same by engaging with the Punk Hijrah trend, as they are actively reshaping punk frameworks to suit the evolving pressures of adulthood in a Muslim-majority country. This not only substantiates the creative agency of 21st-century Javanese punks, but also challenges the binary assumption that punk and Islam are inherently at odds.

Notes

1. All names have been changed to pseudonyms to ensure confidentiality.

2. Sholat, also called *salah* or *salat*, refers to the practice of daily ritual worship in Islam, which is to be performed at five prescribed times during the day.

3. Javanese Islam (or *Islam Jawa*) is a local practice of Islam with a particularly syncretic and mystical character. It ensures continuity between the Hindo-Buddhist kingdom of Majapahit and the Islamic kingdom of Mataram, which each reigned over Java before colonialism. It is often regarded as a less orthodox form of Islamic practice.

4. Further literature on the Bourdieusian notion of cultural capital may be of interest here to grasp how identity politics and status are negotiated within music-based scenes (see Connell and Gibson 2003; Hesmondhalgh 2006; Jensen 2006; Moore 2005, 2007; Prior 2013; Thornton 1996; Threadgold 2015; Whiting 2019).

5. This article is an adaption of a small section of my master's thesis, entitled "Hey! Ho! Let's Go [Back to Islam]! Exploring the Interplay of Punk and Piety on Java, Indonesia" (2019).

6. The Indonesian archipelago was subjected to Dutch colonial rule from the early 1800s until 1949 and was occupied by Japan during the Second World War between 1942 and 1945. In 1949, Indonesia officially proclaimed independence. Between 1966 and 1998, President Suharto's New Order regime took over. In 1998, following the Asian economic crisis, Suhato's dictatorship was overthrown by a vast reform movement led by student activists. That year also marked the beginning of the reform era, known as *Reformasi*.

7. Two noteworthy examples are: *Tattoo Merdeka* in Yogyakarta on August 17th, 2018, a huge tattoo convention featuring live music hosted by Gento YK (a group of Yogya tattoo artists) on Indonesia's Independence Day, and the *15th Anniversary of Indonesian Subculture*, held in Bekasi on July 27th and 28th, 2019 as a weekend of punk music and tattoo competitions, hosted by Masberto Kingdom (Alliance of Indonesian Tattoo Art and Body Piercing).

8. Selebriti Hijrah (celebrity Hijrah) is a YouTube series of profiles managed by Indonesian-based news portal Kumparan. URL: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLUt4UynbmUfuxeeJANVByclxxTHUZh6B0

9. Rhoma Irama is an Indonesian dangdut singer who became a famous spokesperson for Islam in the 1970s when he began advocating piety in his role as a celebrity, thereby contributing to the popularization of Islamic popular music.

10. To specify, punk ideology may refer to political inclination (e.g. anarchism, anti-establishment) and the DIY ethos, while punk lifestyle would rather denote the set of practices — conforming with ideological principles — that are commonly undertaken by punk participants (e.g. attending concerts).

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