



Artists Religiosity on Social Media: Between Rules, Religious Commodification and Media Capitalism

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Abstract

This article analyzes the artist's religiosity on social media. The symbols of obedience to religion are often displayed by artists in various activities broadcasted on social media both when playing as an actor in a social media show or in their actual life that is covered on social media. The piety is shown by dressing sharia clothes, performing umrah, sponsoring orphans program, follow Islamic sermon and others. The artist's religious expression holds the meaning, whether the motive is actually behind what is seen on social media, whether purely as part of religious obedience, or there is a religious commodification and media capitalism deliberately displayed to generate greater public viewer which subsequently increase revenue for media corporation. this study will use a phenomenological approach to understand the true meaning behind reality seen on social media. While the dramaturgy theory is used to analyze the religiosity of the artist on social media. Dramaturgy theory by Erving Goffman there is the concept of front stage and back stage. Front stage to explain the artist's visible visibility on social media, while back stage to explain the true artist's life (behind the scenes), so it can be mapped the artist's religiosity -as a religious obedience-, as part of the religious commodification or media capitalism.

Keywords: *artists religiosity; rules; religious commodification; media capitalism*

A. INTRODUCTION

Social media is an integral part of today's life. Various messages can be conveyed on youtube, facebook, Instagram, twitter, tiktok and others. Any information and messages can be conveyed on social media, including those related to religious information and messages. The figure who often displays his personal life on social media is an artist. Artists who are attached to the world of entertainment use social media to narrate their lives, all aspects of this artist's life become something interesting to be displayed in the public space because it can also determine their popularity in society. Through social media, people

upload content, not only content related to personal life but also activities related to religious life.

This social media is used by artists to display a positive image of themselves in society, because the media can be a communication tool that can influence the public and vice versa, the public can influence the media agenda (Morissan, 2013). This is the basic reason for artists to get public attention, because apart from being able to express themselves, the media can also be a tool to get financial benefits. Likewise in religious life, artists often display religious life as an expression of their obedience to become followers of religion, but on the other hand it is also used for imagery and financial gain.

This article will describe the phenomenon of artist religiosity on social media. Erving Goffman's Dramaturgy theory with the concept of front stage and backstage will be used to analyze the artist's religious appearance on social media so that the motivation for their religious expression can be seen as a form of religious observance, or part of the expression of religious commodification and media capitalization.

B. METHOD

This research is qualitative study with the main focus on the religiosity of artists on social media. This research uses a phenomenological approach to reveal the meaning of religious symbols displayed by artists on social media, so that the true meaning behind the religious expression displayed by artists on social media can be known. Analysis of research results using Dramaturgy theory by Erving Goffman. The front stage concept in Dramaturgy theory is used to analyze the meaning of artists' religiosity on social media. Meanwhile, the back stage concept is used to analyze the true meaning according to the reality of the artist's life.

C. ARTIST'S RELIGIOUS EXPRESSION ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Religion is a system of values, doctrines, beliefs and teachings from God that are absolute truths, and their existence is needed to regulate people's lives. While religiosity is the practice and attitude of understanding the religion in people's lives. Religion and its practice in the lives of its adherents can be seen from the religious expressions carried out in everyday life. This religious expression is a response to belief and understanding of the religion, so it will depend on how individuals and social groups who believe in that religion understand and believe in the doctrines and teachings of their religion. Therefore, religiosity of community is always changing along with changes that develop in society.

In this context, religion will always be displayed in different forms by its followers and will always experience a dialectic in relation to the changes that occur in people's lives. So that religion can construct and at the same time be constructed by the community because in the realm of practice, religion can be a framework for interpretation of beliefs and their

understanding of religion. This interpretation of religion ultimately becomes religious which is reflected in the behavior expressed by religious adherents.

Stark and Glock framed religion in five dimensions. *First*, the belief dimension (trust). This belief dimension is a basic aspect that must be possessed by religious adherents because this belief is the basis of religious belief. *Second*, the practice dimension. This practice dimension includes rituals or worship practices carried out by religious adherents in carrying out their religious orders. *Third*, the intellectual dimension. This intellectual dimension concerns knowledge about the teachings of religion itself, both related to *aqidah* as the basis of faith and sharia as a form of practicing religious teachings. *Fourth*, the dimension of religious experience. This dimension of religious experience includes knowledge, attitudes and actions obtained from religious practices experienced with their social environment. *Fifth*, the consequential dimension. This consequential dimension includes the influence of thought on aspects of belief, religious practice, knowledge and religious experience (Stark, Glock, 1968).

Along with the times, the religious expression of the Muslim community is also heavily influenced by the development of increasingly sophisticated communication technology. Through new communication technology, it also gave birth to what became known as new media, namely, internet-based media, technology-based online media, flexible in character, potentially interactive, and able to function both privately and publicly (Mondry, 2008). This new media has unique characteristics, including blurring the boundaries between the print media model and the broadcasting model, thus enabling conversations involving many parties, enabling the reception, sending and re-distribution of cultural objects, communication that is not limited by region, and providing contacts. globally easily (McQuail, 2010). The new media is related to the use of the internet as a medium and is public oriented. One of these new media is social media.

Social media is a group of internet-based applications built on the ideological and technological foundations of web 2.0, which enable the creation and exchange of user-generated content (Kaplan, Haenlein, 2010). This means that all parties involved in social media have become more interactive and have become an area for all users. Included in the social media category are blogs/microblogs, twitter, facebook, instagram, youtube and others. Social media is one of the online media that supports social interaction by using web-based technology that turns communication into interactive dialogue.

The existence of social media also affects the religious life of the artist. Social media can deliver messages quickly and is not limited by place and time. Besides being able to display written messages, social media can also be used to upload videos, or broadcast live. The interesting thing about social media is that it can also greet viewers as well as interact directly or through the comments column. These facilities are deliberately offered by social

media such as Facebook, Youtube, Instagram and others to pamper users while increasing the attractiveness of their services.

The social media is used by the artist to narrate his life activities including to express his religion. Some of the artist's religious expressions on social media are shown in the following ways:

First, the appearance of Islamic content. Some of the content on the Instagram of several artists, such as Arie Untung displays content about the spirit of welcoming the Islamic new year 1 Muharram 1443 H. Arie Untung said that the past day had passed and a new day had changed with a new mystery. What we do determines what we get next. Stay obedient to the teachings of the Prophet SAW and follow the light that has come down with him (Instagram @ariekuntung, August 10, 2021). At another time, Arie Untung also brought in a figure who could be an inspiration to many people, namely Aditya Prayoga who has given his life to God by opening a free restaurant. The inspiration and values of Islamic teachings conveyed that when we can facilitate the affairs of others, then Allah will also facilitate the affairs of our lives (Instagram @ariekuntung, August 8, 2021). The Islamic nuanced content gives a message that everything we do in this world will come back to us. The good we sow, the good we will reap.

Second, share with poor people who need help. This can be seen from the post on The Sungkars Family's youtube account with the post title "*Kia Irwan Blusukan*" It seems that he is distributing basic food assistance packages for seventy thousand poor people. The event was the result of collaboration with IZI (Indonesian Zakat Initiative). The goal is to provide food security for families in need during the month of Ramadan (The Sungkar Family Chanel 2019). The spirit of the sharing artist was also seen in Atta Halilintar's youtube channel post with the title "Atta Aurel Buys a Luxury Truck". The post conveys Atta Halilintar's intention to use the truck which is designed like a kitchen and dining room to share free meals to people in need amid the Covid-19 pandemic situation (AH Chanel, 2021). The message to be conveyed to the public is to increase gratitude to Allah SWT because there are still many people who are economically deprived and live in limitations. One of the forms of gratitude is by sharing with the poor who need help.

Third, using the hijab and Muslim clothing. Several artists who have committed to emigration such as Zaskia Sungkar, Shireen Sungkar, Fenita Arie, Laudya Cynthia Bella and others always appear in clothes that cover their genitals. This can be seen in several posts on Instagram such as @zaskiasungkar15, @fenitarie, @laudyacynthiabella, @shireensungkar, and others. The commitment to cover the genitals is displayed in an elegant and fashionable manner. Some of these female artists still look beautiful with closed clothes. Some of their appearances on social media show the use of Muslim clothing in various models and styles so that they still look fashionable. This means that covering their

genitals as a form of religious observance does not prevent them from staying beautiful and expressing themselves with the style of clothing that is used every day.

Fourth, support orphans. Awareness of giving attention and affection to orphans is also shown by artists on social media. In the youtube account "The Princess Syahrini" with the title "*Santunan 6500 Anak Yatim Incess*" it appears that the artist Syahrini distributed compensation packages to orphans. The donation also received support from other fellow artists who also contributed to the donations for the orphans (The Princess Syahrini Youtube Chanel, 2018). The donations to orphans displayed on social media are part of the artist's form of caring for orphans.

Fifth, perform Umrah. The artist's awareness of performing Umrah is also shown in his social media posts. This can be seen on the Instagram account @gossipnesia about the departure of Maia Estianty and Irwan Mussry to perform Umrah (Instagram @gossipnesia, 26 September 2019). Posts about artists performing Umrah worship were also shown by Ikang Fawzi in his personal Instagram account (@ikangfawzi May 3, 2019). The artist's religious expression in performing Umrah worship narrates the awareness of visiting the temple as a form of obedience to Islamic teachings and has the value of worship. If during this time artists are perceived as figures who often go abroad for recreation, then Umrah is also a spiritual journey abroad that has the value of worship.

D. ARTIST'S RELIGIOSITY IN SOCIAL MEDIA: BETWEEN RULES, RELIGIOUS COMMODIFICATION, AND MEDIA CAPITALISM

It is interesting to compare the artist's religious behavior and social media. Religion is often associated with norms and values that must be followed as well as being the basis for the balance of society (Kahmad, 2002). Meanwhile, artists in their capacity as art workers engaged in the entertainment world are often associated with worldly things, demands for a luxurious lifestyle, perfect appearance, but sometimes full of pretense in order to maintain the image and image of top artists. Meanwhile, social media becomes a strategic stage to form the image of an artist. The narratives seen on social media also determine how the public perceives themselves.

On the other hand, artists are also part of religious people who also have the awareness to carry out their religious teachings as an obedience to God. This religious awareness is able to move the mindset of humans to control their behavior and even be able to change human life (Martono, 2014). The religiosity of artists on social media is an expression of religion that is heavily influenced by other factors that surround it. Both the religious awareness of the artist himself, as well as the cultural factors that characterize the world of entertainment which demands to narrate religion in various styles. Because basically religion in the context of social and cultural life always influences each other. Religion will

always experience dialectics in relation to the social and cultural life of the perpetrators (Berger, 1967).

Social media with an attractive audio-visual display shows the religiosity of artists and contributes to the formation of an artist's image. In addition, social media also makes it easier for followers to comment, evaluate or even ask questions in the comments column. Even social media can be a means of conveying religious messages that are not limited by space and time, are more varied and innovative. Social media also has a wide range of users so that it is more effective and efficient (Syamsuriyah, 2020). The various conveniences and attractions offered by social media also have another side to gain financial benefits, both for the benefit of the individual artist and the aspect of social media.

The religious narratives of artists on several social media can be grouped into three categories as follows:

First, the religiosity of artists on social media as part of the observance of running Islamic law. Some of the artist's religious expressions such as delivering Islamic content, sharing with poor people who need help, wearing the *hijab* and Muslim clothing, supporting orphans, and performing Umrah are forms of obedience of a servant to his God or obedience. as a follower of religion to the teachings of his religion.

The artist's obedience to religious teachings is believed to be a doctrine that must be followed. The religious doctrines are narrated in various forms, both in the form of religious rituals and religious social movements. Religious teachings in their function as doctrines can shape character and personality both individually and collectively. Meanwhile, religious rituals performed by artists are a reflection of religious behavior in society (Farihah, 2018). In addition, religion also motivates the emergence of a sense of social solidarity (Martono, 2014). In this context, the artist's religious behavior is an expression of their meaning of religious values.

Second, the religiosity of artists on social media is vulnerable to expressions of commodification of religion. This phenomenon is seen when some artists present themselves by using certain products in their capacity as brand ambassadors or models to promote these products. Many of them use things related to religion to attract consumers. Several female artists present themselves in Muslim clothing and hijabs with various accessories, and in these posts they are used to promote the brand of the clothes used. Among the artists who also promote *hijab* products is Oki Setiana Dewi. This can be seen from the Instagram post with the caption "*hijab by @merajutsaal*" (Instagram @okisetianadewi, August 16, 2021). The industrial world uses several artists who have migrated to become icons of their products. Artists with a religious appearance in their daily lives will further strengthen the market magnet to attract consumers so that the product will be more in demand in the market.

Likewise, the emergence of products with *halal* certification is increasingly attracting Muslim consumers in Indonesia. The *halal* certification is not only for food products, but also for beauty products. Oki Setiana Dewi's post on her Instagram page conveys about women's beauty standards, then it is emphasized that if you want to be beautiful, then women must be diligent in worship, be kind and use *halal* and herbal skin care products @batrisyiahherbalindonesia (Instagram @okisetianadewi, 15 August 2021). Posts that provide a religious touch will appeal to people who have an interest in Islam, so that the demand for products that are *halal* and nuanced in Islam is increasing (Amna, 2019). Some of these phenomena imply a religious commodification in the artist's religious display with the emergence of other motives seeking profit behind the religious display on social media.

Third, the religiosity of artists on social media is also vulnerable to media capitalization motives. This can be seen in the presence of several programs both on television and content on social media that feature artists to fill religious events that are not in accordance with their scientific capacity. The media prioritizes the popularity of artists to achieve high ratings rather than presenting figures who have strong religious knowledge capacity. The popularity of artists to fill religious content is more attractive to viewers and social media followers than religious expert figures. So, it is natural that artists who lack a strong religious knowledge capacity receive complaints from the public regarding the incompatibility of what is conveyed with the values of Islamic teachings. This was experienced by Teuku Wisnu when he was the host of the program "*Berita Islami Masa Kini*". Teuku Wisnu received a warning from Indonesian Broadcasting Commission KPI (*Komisi Penyiaran Indonesia*) regarding his mistake in saying that the practice of sending *al-Fatihah* to people who had died was an incorrect practice (Tribunnews, 4 September 2015). This phenomenon illustrates that the media prioritizes profit orientation by taking advantage of the popularity of artists to fill religious events which scientifically are not the capacity of the artist.

The phenomenon of artist religiosity in the public sphere, especially in the media, gives an ambiguous impression between one role and another. On the one hand, the artist is also a religious person who has the awareness to carry out his religious teachings, on the other hand, the artist is also a public figure who is known to the wider community with his popularity in the entertainment world so that the industrial world uses it to market its products. Likewise, the media often collaborate with artists to increase ratings so that they bring a lot of financial benefits. In the context of the artist's religiosity, it can be analyzed using dramaturgy theory by Erving Goffman.

Dramaturgy theory explains that social interaction in life is like a drama performance on stage. Humans are actors who seek to combine personal characteristics and goals with others, through their drama performances. Theoretically, dramaturgy refers to a drama stage in which there are actors who play roles, audiences or spectators, and stories. The

stage in dramaturgy theory is divided into two, namely the front stage and the back stage. The front stage is part of the stage of the social world that serves to introduce stories or introduce personal settings and faces (personal front) (Arisandi, 2015). Setting refers to the physical scene that usually has to be present when the actor appears to play his role. While the personal front consists of expression equipment that characterizes the relationship between the audience and the actor and is expected to be brought along in the setting (Syam, 2010).

Actors on the front stage also perform impression management or impression management in their performances. Impression management leads to caution on unexpected actions, in the form of unfavorable distractions and speech errors or wrong actions (Ritzer, 2014). Impression management includes certain techniques and methods used by actors to maintain certain impressions in dealing with problems and overcoming these problems (Ritzer, 2012). Thus, when the actor will present himself with words, certain actions and attributes can manage themselves to appear as desired.

The backstage was only witnessed by a few people, for example the team that was part of the theatrical drama. Team refers to a number of individuals who work together to perform something. With such assumptions, this team is fairly dynamic, benefits actors and maintains the ongoing routine (Ritzer, 2014). This backstage is essentially the release of all social attributes that are often displayed in public spaces. The back stage is an actual area, so it is private and forbidden for other parties to enter freely.

The religiosity of artists on social media in the perspective of dramaturgy theory cannot be seen from one side, only the front stage or the back stage. The religious narrative of the artist from the front stage has a lot of impression management, so that what is seen in the social stage space is probably the artist's image space. When an artist wants to be perceived as a philanthropist, they will see their social media activities carrying out humanitarian activities such as helping others, helping orphans, giving infaq and charity. Likewise, if the artist wants to be imaged as a religious person, it will be seen on his social media that he often follows religious studies, uses Muslim clothing, performs Umrah, and various other forms of imagery.

The front stage for the religiosity of artists on social media is likened to a stage where each individual can become an actor to play their respective roles. Artists can manage the impressions they want to display through symbols that will be expressed in front of the social media audience. The regulation and control of these impressions occurs through social interaction with other people, so that it has an impact on self-appearance either physically or symbolically (Johnson, 1986).

There are several symptoms of artist religiosity on social media which are full of religious commodification and media capitalism, which can occur in the artist's front stage

performances. For example, carrying out religious orders by including advertisements for certain products, whether in the form of Muslim clothing products, or other products that use the spirit of religious teachings to promote them. Likewise, the religiosity of artists who are arranged in such a way as to meet the demands of the media to match the demands of the market and bring the maximum financial benefits.

The backstage of the artist's religiosity on social media will be a picture of the artist's true religion in real life. This means that what the artist displays on his social media related to adherence to religious law is a real picture of the artist's religious awareness to carry out his religious teachings. Some artists who show their religiosity in real life and social media in general are artists who have migrated to live a better life. Their adherence to the teachings of their religion is carried out consistently, both in real life and in every display of their social media.

Based on the analysis using dramaturgy theory by Erving Goffman, the religiosity of artists on social media should be viewed comprehensively, both from the aspect of the artist's self and other aspects that surround it. The factors of the economic industry and the media industry also play a role in shaping the religiosity of artists on social media. Awareness of carrying out religious law becomes the self-motivation of an artist to obey his religion. Meanwhile, other factors such as the economic industry, which often uses the services of artists to promote their products, as well as the media industry, which also uses artists to meet market tastes and increase event ratings for greater financial benefits, trigger the emergence of commodification of religion and media capitalism on artist religiosity on social media.

Artist's religious expression in the public sphere, especially in social media, is a religious phenomenon that appears along with the strengthening of Islamic discourse as a form of religious awareness among the Muslim middle class. The rise of the *hijrah* discourse is a breath of fresh air for the Muslim middle class who are thirsty for spirituality and become a means of displaying self-pity (Muna, 2020). Along with this religious spirit, the Muslim community uses Muslim clothing a lot, attends recitations, gives *infaq* and *sadaqah*, performs Umrah, and supports orphans as a form of their religious expression. This is also followed by the artist. Even the awareness of migrating has recently become a new religious trend among celebrities (Lyansari, 2018).

Even the *hijrah* movement in Indonesia has developed into a new phenomenon that is widely campaigned on social media (Fitri, Jayanti, 2020). The *hijrah* campaign is increasingly being echoed in the digital era, which also influences artists to follow. Among them are Zaskia Adya Mecca, Dewi Sandra, Melly Goeslow, Alyssa Soebandono, Teuku Wisnu, Shireen Sungkar, Irwansyah, Zaskia Sungkar, Laudya Cynthia Bella, and others. Religious awareness and the desire to become a better human being are the main motivations. The attitude of religiosity of these artists is also often seen in their social media

displays. Some artists are seen often displaying verses of the Qur'an and their meanings as self-motivation to get closer to God and interpret the life of the world more straightly in the way of God.

On the other hand, the religious expressions of these artists are also a representation of popular Islamic culture that seeks to represent Islamic values in every aspect of their lives. Their orientation is more on the formation of personal social piety. This orientation is often associated with the emergence of the phenomenon of post-Islamism (Roy, 2003). The phenomenon of post-Islamism has experienced a shift from what initially led to the formation of an Islamic state, has shifted to the formation of an attitude of piety both individually and collectively (Bayat, 2007).

Dramaturgy theory provides a more comprehensive analysis of the religiosity of artists on social media. The religiosity of artists on social media is an expression of obedience to Islamic law that grows from the artist's religious awareness. This is narrated by the artist on social media in various forms such as efforts to cover the genitals by wearing Muslim clothing, making donations to those in need, raising funds for victims of natural disasters, performing Umrah, attending Islamic sermon and others.

The profession of artist as a public figure in the entertainment world is also widely used by the industrial world to make them icons of certain products to increase the attractiveness of the public to buy these products. In essence, the profession of an artist is a choice that requires them to be acquired to become a commodity. Likewise, matters related to religion have also become a trend for entertainment products (Einstein, 2008). In this aspect, religious commodification is prone to occur. The analysis using Dramaturgy theory also found that it was related to artist's religiosity on social media. This means that in addition to the artist's religious expression on social media as a form of personal religious awareness, it also raises a new phenomenon of making religion a tool for mutually beneficial economic commodification between the artist and the industry.

Meanwhile, social media is also a means or digital marketing activity. In this case, artists are often invited to collaborate in the field of social media endorsement. This means that social media is one of the services offered by digital agencies. Moreover, social media with sophisticated technological facilities can take various forms including internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, microblogging, wikis, podcasts, photos and images, videos, and others. Religious content is one of the interesting content, especially when it is juxtaposed with artists to present it, both as hosts and as performers. Even though scientifically the artist does not have a strong religious knowledge. The media also packs religious events with various interesting concepts and adapts to the wishes of social media connoisseurs. The business element in the media sector is more dominant than the spirit of spreading religion. This phenomenon indicates that there is a content of media capitalism

E. CONCLUSION

Religious expressions displayed by artists on social media show that religion can appear with different faces depending on how humans interpret it. Religion in practice also cannot stand, because it is always determined by other factors that always accompany humans as perpetrators and followers of religion. The determining factors include the factors of social and cultural life that always accompany human life. This cannot be used as an excuse to justify their religious life on a black and white basis or right and wrong. Because in essence religion will always experience a dialectic with the social and cultural life of its perpetrators, so that it will bring up different religious constructions from one person to another.

Dramaturgy theory can be used as an analytical tool to see the religious life of artists on social media comprehensively. *First*, the religiosity of artists as obedience to religious law. This first pattern is seen from the backstage that is displayed by the artist as a religious person who has an awareness of carrying out his religion. *Second*, the religiosity of artists as a religious commodification. This second pattern can be seen from the front stage of artists who often appear as brand ambassadors of certain products so that religious messages conveyed on social media are disguised with the mission of marketing products. *Third*, artist religiosity as media capitalization. This third pattern is seen when the artist's religious expression follows media orders which emphasize business and profit oriented elements, not the spirit to broadcast religion.

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